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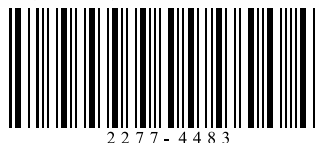
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The "East Indian Society for the Studies of Social Sciences" was established more than a decade ago; and its official journey was flagged off on the 5th of April, 2011, when it was registered under the societies Registration Act (West Bengal XXVI, 1961) with the Reg. No. S/1L/79269 (2011-2012) of the Government of West Bengal. It is a Non-Government and non-profit organization pledged to carry on the mission of research in social sciences with India in general and Eastern-India in particular as the main theme in its objective of inter- disciplinary explorations. As a part of multi-faceted social activities of the society, two bi-annual peer reviewed Journals namely "East Indian Journal of Social Sciences" (in English language) & "Purva Bharat" (Manus O Sanskriti) in Bengali Language with ISSN are being published regularly. Seminars and debates on significant topics are held as many times as financially possible in a year.

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Editorial Column

Just as the previous occasions, this time as well, the present issue of our journal, the 'East Indian Journal of Social Sciences' is out in the hands of the contributors and readers; and certainly the time is globally a sort of turning point with some new adjustments and accommodations in international situations and balance of power. China has signalled to the realization of her own limitations of power while willing to take on Taiwan and Philippines in opposition to the US at a time of military challenge of direct engagement all along the Himalayas against India; therefore, belated awareness, most probably, under covered tutelage from Vladimir Putin to arrange the signing of a peace process and military withdrawal across the Line of Actual Control along the highest peaks and ridges of the world. The rise of India as the fourth hypersonic missile power plus self-reliant nuclear submarine power of the world has added to her burgeoning self-defence in the environs of enemy encirclement. In Europe, peace most likely is going to sway as soon as Donald Trump is scheduled to enter the White House with olive branches to Putin by accommodating Russian aspirations in Ukraine. Peace in the Middle East will equally come as well when Hamas will tread in the way the Hezbollah in Lebanon sued for peace with Israel. The turning of Bangladesh from a moderate Islamic country to a votary of Islamic extremism plus from a friend to foe and her secretly growing understanding with Pakistan has modified the cultural and national political scene in South Asia, and that with direct impact on India. Can anyone ignore the change in the educational atmosphere and thought in Bangladesh while the front-ranking professors and students of Bangladeshi universities take on the streets and the helms of the government just shouting slogans of Islamic Fundamentalism and death to the non-Muslims? This apparent turning certainly will have natural modifications and ramifications of outlooks and opinions in Eastern India as well; and all these, of course, are going to rapidly change our secured world of thoughts, education and researches.

Sailen Debnath
Alipurduar.

November, 2024.

Content

CULTURE AND IDENTITY: THE URGE OF ETHNIC MOVEMENTS OF THE NEPALI COMMUNITIES OF WEST BENGAL IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Asudha Mangar
Assistant Professor of History
Mekliganj college, Coochbehar

Abstract

Identity aspirations and a sense of identity have added a new dimension to ethnic communities' assertiveness. A feeling of identity encompasses both self-awareness and connection to a community's future, history, and mythology. The Nepali community of India has gone through a turmoil phase in Bengal as well as in neighboring states like Sikkim, Assam, etc. The 19th century where brought them, under the one umbrella term as Gorkhali or Indian Nepalis, at the same time the later half sowed the seed of separate identity and revival of distinctive culture. The process of ethnic revivalism fragmented the communities in the sake of identities and led the foundation of various ethnic associations. A particular Nepali caste got united and formed uniform code of cultural traits to follow. In the process some of the backward castes achieved the status of Schedule tribe and some continued their efforts to fulfill the criteria set up by the Government to achieve so. Hence, the culture and identity became the urge of the ethnic movements of the Nepali communities in Bengal in the 20th century.

Key words: *Culture, Customs, Traditions, Identity, Ethnicity, Uniformity, Unity.*

INTRODUCTION

Identity aspirations and a sense of identity have added a new dimension to ethnic communities' assertiveness. A feeling of identity encompasses both self-awareness and connection to a community's future, history, and mythology.[1] The history of Nepalis in the 20th century reflected a turmoil phase of identity crisis and fight for the identity. In this process of identity and cultural revivalism, the community went

11

through cultural uniformity and cultural distinctiveness with the other Nepali communities. In the early phase where they fought for a one umbrella term of Gorkhali or Nepalis, by the end of the century a separate identity and revival of distinctive culturebecame the prime concern of all the communities. A race of distinctiveness of culture and identity became the urge of the ethnic revivalism among Nepalis during the era.

THE THEORITICAL BACKGROUND

According to the Relative Advantage- Disadvantage theory, advanced by Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan in the edited book entitled 'Ethnicity: Theory and Experience (1975)', the ethnic group is an interest group, and to them the interest of living as a group is common to both the advantaged and disadvantaged groups. The latter's interest lies in overcoming its disadvantages and former's in consolidating itself to protect its advantages. Otherwise, they ask "why on earth would wish one to be a Pole and when one could be worker?" [2]

According to the Cultural Distinctiveness Theory advocated by Anthony d. Smith, drawing examples from the 19th century ethnic upsurges of the Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Greeks, Bulgarians, and Rumanians, he concludes:

Ethnic separatism… is based upon the reality or myth of unique cultural ties, which serve to demarcate a population from neighbors and rulers and as a result separation became not only an end in itself, but a means of protecting the cultural identity formed by those ties. The uniqueness of each ethnic community demands political separation, so that it can run its own affairs according to inner laws of the external influence. [3]

The theory helps us to explain many ethnic movements in India, however the theory may not be accepted fully, since 'culture' is a vague concept.

As per T.B.Subba, every community shares the sense of cultural distinctiveness but every community does not herald an ethnic movement and try to make 'culture community into a political community.'[4]Culture may be seen as a symbolic system within which a group of people operate in order to perpetuate or fight against a hegemony, which is defined as "the political forging"- whether through coercion or elite bargaining- and institutionalization of a pattern of group activity in a state, and the concurrent idealization of that schema into a dominant symbolic framework that reigns as

common sense.[5] In other words, culture is not an independent or isolated symbol in harmonious equilibrium with another culture but it is a system in constant conflict within and with other cultures for better appropriation of the available sources of a state.[6]

THE SETTLEMENT OF NEPALIS IN INDIA: -

The Nepalis are a group of people who share a common language and that are Nepali.They are both Aryans and Mongoloids, having Austric and Dravidian substrata within the racial dispersion. S.K. Chatterjee, a noted linguist, says that well before 1000 B.C., some of these early Tibeto-Burman had come across the southern slopes of the Himalayas or by means of Tibet heading up to Tsangpo.[7]There are two sorts of Nepalis in India: those who were born and raised in India possess Indian citizenship, or own property there, second, those who have settled in India or own property there but also hold Nepalese citizenship.According to the Census of India 1961, 1971, and 1981, Nepalis lived in practically every state and union territory in India. However, they are concentrated in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Arunachal Pradesh.[8]

The majority of the Nepali-speaking population in West Bengal lives in the districts of Darjeeling and Kalimpong. They are also settled in Jalpaiguri and the Dooars regions of West Bengal. Darjeeling's Nepali-speaking population has traditionally been more socially, culturally, and politically conscious than their counterparts elsewhere in India.A number of civil society organizations, including the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan (1924), the Gorkha Dukkha Niwarak Sammelan (1932), the Sri Hitkari Sammelan (1945), the Himalaya Kala Mandir (1950), and the Gorkha League, were the first to carry out cultural identity activities based on the concept of kinship--Nepali daju bhai. The founding of Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) in 1981 and demand for a separate state spurred the Nepalese nationalism movement worldwide.[9]

NEPALIS' RISING CONSCIOUSNESS AND DEMAND

The consciousness of the Nepali people about their representation in the Government records added a new outlook to them.Except for Sikkim, the majority of Nepalis or Gorkhalis in India feel extremely insecure. The West Bengal Gazette and the 1961 census contain the most essential information about Nepali-speaking individuals..[10] The Socio-Cultural table of the 1961 census report presents Nepali-

speaking individuals based on dialects. In 1961-62, in the parliament, T. Manen said that the Linguistic Minority Commission had produced misleading and incorrect information that Nepali-speaking people form only 0.66% of the total population in West Bengal and only 25% of them were in the district of Darjeeling. He justified it with the same source,[11] which was contradictory to the earlier one. According to the Handbook of the District of Darjeeling, there were 290,000 Nepalis in the Darjeeling district, and the district's overall population was 445,241. As a result, Nepalis constituted 70% of the district's population.

In 1907, the inhabitants of Darjeeling petitioned the British government for a separate administrative structure for their region outside of Bengal. The Simon Commission received the same demand in 1928. Until 1935, the government of Darjeeling was kept distinct. The Gorkha League submitted a memorandum to the State Reorganization Committee in 1955, but their request was denied once more. In the 1940s and 1950s, Ratanlal Brahmin (an ex-MP and CPI (M) leader) often requested regional autonomy for Darjeeling District. The Communist Party's demand helped him secure a seat in the West Bengal Council in the 1946 election.[12]

The acceptance by the then Chief Minister B.C. Roy, Nepali as an official language in the hill subdivision of the district of Darjeeling in 1961, sensitizes the issue of Nepali language.

FORMATION OF UNITED FORUM OF LEPACHAS, BHUT-IAS AND NEPALI

Until the formation of the Hillmen's Association, there was no common forum for interaction between the three main hill communities of the Darjeeling hills, however an informal existence was evident in 1907. According to Bagchi and Danda, the Hillmen Association came into existence in1921, 'to safeguard and advocate the legitimate interests of the hill people in the sphere of politics.' Under the leadership of Bahadur Rai, Hari Prasad Pradhan, and Laden La. However, the one of the problems that increasingly affected the smooth functioning of the Hillmen's Association was the deteriorating fraternity among the Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalis. The recommendation of Nepali as a medium of instruction in Darjeeling was one of the significant events in the unification of Hill people. They could be one unanimous in this regard and created mutual distrust among them.[13]

Laden La could foresee the consequences so, he organized a meeting in Darjeeling on December 23, 1934 to resolve the internal

squabbles among the three hills communities. In this meeting about 600 people gathered from various places like Kalimpong, Kurseong. Sukiapokhari, Ghoom, and surrounding tea gardens. After the exchange of ideas in the meeting, Parasmani Pradhan proposed the establishment of Hill Peoples' Social Union for fraternity among Lepchas, Bhutias, and Nepalis and their social development. (Nebula 1935:10)

The Executive Committee of this Union comprised of the following members:

President	: Sardar Bahadur S.W. Laden La
Vice-President	: Sardar Bahadur Lt. Gobardhan Gurung
	Dr. Yensingh Lepcha
Secretary	: Rupnarayan Sinha
	A.J.Dewan
Treasurer	: Harkaman Rai

The 16 members of the Governing body were: Hanjit Dewan Rai, Motichand Pradhan, Kalu Singh Peters. Rai Saheb C. Tendupla, Dr. Madan Thapa, Krishna Bahadur Gurung. T.Wangdi, Chandra Bahadur Kumai. Indradev Singh, W.D. Ladenla, Kajiman Rai, Man Bahadur Thapa, Lama Nima Norbu, Chumbey Tshering, Luksujan Pradhan, and N.B.Rai (Nebula, 1935:11).[14]

THE NEPALIS AS DIFFERENT SUBJECTS

Having political motive soon the fragmentation in Nebula was started isolating Nepali as different subject and in the consequences years the Union was swept away by the first ever election in Darjeeling when a seat was offered for Provincial Legislative Council in 1937. It lost its soul after the death of Laden La in late 1936 and lingered on till the end of the Second World War under the veteran lawyer and litterateur, Rup Narayan Sinha.In the early 1940s the freedom struggle in India was gradually reaching its climax. Every Indian community no matter what religion or race it belonged to participated in that struggle in whatever way and to whatever extent it was feasible for it. But along with the growing urge for independence, the minority communities had a growing fear of uncertainty in future. In such a situation there emerged a young lawyer from Calcutta whose very concern for his people had inspired him to study law. Dambar Singh Gurung soon grew as the messiah of Gorkhas. He began to meet noted persons from Kurseong and Darjeeling and discuss the problems of the hillmen in particular the Gorkhas. After a couple of such discussion

a meeting was held on March 7, 1943 at George Mahbert Subba's School in Siliguri. The Hillmen's Association had become defunct by then but its spirit had not gone. Thus some 60 odd Lepcha, Bhutias and Nepalis gathered there and resolved to form an association called All India Nepali Bhutia and Lepcha Association. [15] Rup Narayan Sinha was the first secretary of this association but it could not function smoothly due to his unavailability. Later, the Bhutias withdrew from this association and on May 15, 1943, this association was renamed as All India Gorkha League in a formal meeting held at Rink Hall, Darjeeling and D.S. Gurung was made its first president. The renaming was proposed by the Shiva Kumar Rai who declared its objective to fight against the pathetic condition of the Gorkhas spread over India, uncertainty of their political status and their perilous future.[16]

During the time the All-India Gorkha League (AIGL) was already established in Dehradun. On February 1, 1944. D.S.Gurung, sent a memorandum to Viceroy Wavell, complaining of not recognizing them as a community by then . Until 1947, the AIGL worked hand in hand with the undivided Communist Party of India. Later AIGL separated from it and continued their movement for protection of Nepali people and their language. On March, 31, 1961 an all-party convention was held at Gorkha DukhaNivarak Sangh (GDNS) Hall in Darjeeling and Bhasa Manyata Samiti or the Darjeeling District Hill Peoples' 'Language Implementation Committee (DDHPLIC)was constituted. The DDHPLIC in its press release jointly signed by the educated leaders like Ganeshlal Subba of the CPI and Bahadur Rai of the AIGL questioned about the anomaly figures shown in the census of 1951 of Nepali people.[17]

By 1980's the formation of Pranta Parishad in April, The Swantra Manch in May and the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), united demand of separate statehood created a chaos in the Darjeeling hills by invoking the Article 3 of the Indian constitution. There on a new chapter began in the history of identity concern Nepali people with a political aim of separate statehood.In 1986, the GNLF demanded the protection of the hill people of Darjeeling district from "Outsiders' 'domination". [18] The 'Sons of the Soil' had been the central concern as articulated by the movement leadership. Soon, this ethnic conflict became a very socio- economic force and influenced the balance of power in the Hills as well as to the adjacent parts of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar district where Nepalis were settled. The agitation ultimately led to the establishment of a semi-autonomous body in 1988 called the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) to govern

certain areas of Darjeeling District. But, the crave for a different state kept continued among them. Amidst all these political scenarios the urge for preservation of one's cultural identity geared up when Subhash Ghising circulated to the ethnic communities in Darjeeling for submitting ethnic bio data so as to secure tribal status under Sixth Schedule of Indian Constitution.

Since the 1990's, each community devoted themselves to prepare their respective qualifying paper as a 'tribe' based on the features laid down by the Government of India:[19]

- They possess an old dialect and language.
- They have their traditional language and scripts.
- They have a traditional dress code distinct from others
- The rituals and customs are unique which do not resemble with others.

THE MANDAL COMMISSION AND ITS EFFECT ON THE NEPALI COMMUNITIES

It is to be mentioned here that the Mandal commission report on the Backward Classes was one of the major causes which influenced the Nepalisresiding in West Bengal. A letter written to the then President Sri Morarji Desai on 31st Dec, 1980 by B.P. Mandal, the then Chairman of Backward Class commission it is clearly mentioned that a commission was set up for Backward Classes of India on 20th Dec, 1978.The Commission was set up along with four other members namely, I. Dewan Mohan Lal II. R.R. Bhole III.Din Bandhu Sahu IV.K.Subramaniaru. In exercise of the powers conferred by the Article 340 of the constitution, the President appointed a Backward Classes Commission to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes within the territory. The commission in Dec, 1980 submitted the 2nd part of report with Volume III & VII, where theNewar, Mangar, Rai, Bhujel, etc, were included in the Backward Class list of West Bengal. [20] It is interesting to note that the Tamang Community was also included in the Backward classes of the same list with serial no. 167, which was later recognized as Scheduled Tribe.[21] The development had certainly influenced all the Nepali community inhabiting in Darjeeling Hills and terai of Jalpaiguri district in seeking their individual identity among identities. Meanwhile the formation of GNLF in the year1981 gave impetus to all the community to find out their identity. Later, the process of identity crisis issues opened path to search out their individuality through their distinctive culture. Hence

the search of identity led down the foundation of distinctive cultural politics among them.

ETHNIC REVIVALISM OF THE INDIAN NEPALIS

So far, the Gorkhali communities tried to unite themselves under different umbrella with a political motive. But, Subhash Ghising, emerged as a champion of the Nepalis of Darjeeling and surrounding areas after the formation of GNLF. The Gorkhas or the Nepalis of Darjeeling fought together in the Gorkhaland movement in the 2nd half of 20th century in order to get a distinct identity of the Indian Gorkhas or Nepalis. The formation of the DGHC in 1988 and insertion of the term' Gorkha' in the Hill Council, was the boomerang for the identity seeking Gorkhas of area. In 1988 with the formation of the DGHC and with the name "Gorkha" inserted in the Hill Council, they felt that their identity issue was solved. Though, soon the circulation of ST status for ethnic communities under the sixth schedule, showed a scenario of search of respective identity amidst identities in Gorkhas or Nepali of Darjeeling hills and terai.

Moreover, the United Nations declaration of 1993 as the 'Year of the Indigenous Peoples' gave further impetus to the already changed political climate and brought a new lease of life to the marginalized and subjugated communities in the region. They began to organize themselves vigorously in search of lost identities.[22]

According to T. B. Subba, there was an insurgency of "subjugated knowledges" and the many Nepali ethnic groups were regaining their lost identities. Various ethnic organizations of the Newars, Tamangs, and other communities existed in Darjeeling as early as the twentieth century, but the environment made it difficult for them to become active.[23] These communities in Darjeeling had been attempting to resuscitate their languages and culture, as well as to be recognized as tribal or indigenous people of a specific area. Following the Gorkhaland agitation's failure to provide the inhabitants of Darjeeling of Nepali descent with a defined status and other perks, the only other option was to seek Scheduled Tribe status in order to receive numerous benefits from New Delhi.

Darjeeling had several ethnic organizations, including the Newar Samaj, Thami Association, Lafa Mangar Samaj, Mangar Association, and All India Kirat Yakha (Dewan) Chumma (organization). Limbu Tribal Association, Gurung (Tamu) Kalyan Sangathan, and Gurung Association. Kirata Rai Association, Mukhia Samaj, Tamang Buddhist Gedong, All India Tamang Buddhist Association, and Bharatiya

Gorkha Khas Hitkari Samellan are some of.[24]

EVALUATION

According to J. Pandian, Ethnic identity system generally incorporates political goals. The need to protect the autonomy of one's own group, culture, language, or religion is what often dramatizes ethnicity. The thrust of identity evolved the cultural revivalism in the community,leading birth of numerous social groups, instead of 'we' concept, 'mine and me' concepts became more evident. Some of theassociations were basically engaged themselves for the protection of their rites, ritual and customs without any support from the Govt, Most of the backward class communities aimed at the unity of all people scattered throughout West Bengal and neighboring states like Sikkim, Assam, etc.under one umbrella term.The trends showed the acute assertion of their respective ethnic identities and revivalism of their own culture. With increase in population and scarcity of resources, the only way to seek protection and security of their interests, seemed to be by picking ethnicity as their main tool or instrument. The division of the Nepali community into tribals, non-tribals, scheduled castes could snowball into a major conflict in the Darjeeling Hills, Terai and Dooars of West Bengal. Hence, in the first phase of 20th century the community stood for a uniform identity and termed themselves as Gorkhali, but by the end of the century a separate identity with distinctive culture became the urge of the ethnic movements, turning into the undercurrent of tension and displeasure among them.

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Engaged Buddhism and Fourteen Precepts: As theWay of Living

Avhijit Ghosh
Research Scholar
Department of Philosophy
University of North Bengal

Abstract:

The principal contention of this paper is to describe the concept of Engaged Buddhism and how its fourteenth precepts, given by Thich Nhat Hahn in 1963,can solve contemporary global issues.Thus, socially engaged Buddhism is to be considered the contemporary movement of Buddhists. In this regard, Thich Nhat Hah said Buddhism has always been socially engaged. It was by nature engaged as it was started from the time of Gautama Buddha.Engaged Buddhism should not be taken as a particular Buddhist sect; rather, it can be considered as the logical explanation of Buddha Dharma. It also helps to realise the meaning of liberation in Buddha Dharma. Despite this, engaged Buddhismism actively involved with the problems of the world in terms of Buddhist teachings .In order to deal with the global issues of the world, there are fourteen precepts in engaged Buddhism which are significant in this regard. These precepts are constructed based on Buddhist teachings and bring mindfulness, compassion, selflessness, loving-kindness, etc.,within us and also help improve our way of living because the future peace of our lives and, thereby, the world is dependent on how we live. The paper makes a conscious effort to show the philosophy of engaged Buddhism in response to issues in life and the world by improving our way of living.

Keywords: *Engaged, Buddhism, precepts, Dharma, mindfulness, compassion, selflessness, loving-kindness.*

Introduction:

Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hahn coined the termEngaged Buddhism in 1963, also known as socially engaged Buddhism. It was developed whenthe Vietnamese war occurred because he intended to bring peace and form a non-aligned, non-belligerent Buddhist coalition, also known as *an enemy of neither combatant.* He intended to implement anti-war protestsand alsogave importance

to international peace talksto implement peace.Now,the question is, what is called socially engaged Buddhism? Has Buddhism ever been socially engaged? In reply to the first question,we can say that engaged Buddhism perhaps playsan active involvementinsociety to solveits problemsfollowing Buddhist teachings.With this involvement, they try to implement traditional Buddhist wisdom and compassion in today's world. That is why, in the words of Prof. Sailen Debnath, it can be said that 'It so happened that Buddha's logical, rational, humanistic and scientific teachings alongwith the high philosophy of non-violence(Ahimsa) and compassion (Karuna) automatically set a socio-religious and philosophical discourse that in the first hand set in unending protest against many of the Vedic religious practices, rituals, beliefs and conventions; and thereupon set the second immediate line of reforms of Vedic practices or as a whole of the early stage of Hinduism.'[1] Likewise, Ken Jones writes, 'Engaged Buddhism appears as a movement in society with traditional Buddhist morality and values as per the need of the present day society. That means it includes a significant aspect of Buddhist teachings.'[2]

This is how engaged Buddhism deals with the present global issues such as post-modernism, the Cold War, international terrorism, environmental balance, democracy, social justice, women's rights, etc. That is why it is said by Kraft that talking about Enlightenment will simply be meaningless as long as people are trapped in delusion.Now, come to the second question, i.e., has Buddhism ever been socially engaged? According to Thich Nhat Hah,Buddhismhasalways been socially engaged. Actually, it is by nature engaged. So, seeing whether Buddhism is engaged or disengaged is clearly incorrect. According to him, when we use the term engaged Buddhism, we are just reminding ourselves of a significant feature of Buddhist teachings. Accordingly, speaking about engaged Buddhism means it is an engagement with a particular Buddhist practice. We find the active involvement of engaged Buddhism in the past as well as inthe present time. The proponent of this view is Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, the Dalai Lama, Robert Thurman, and so on. That is why, in this regard, S. Singh said, 'As a specific term engaged Buddhism might have emerged at present but as a concept, undoubtedly took place from the time of Gautama Buddha as soon as herenounces his householder life for the sake of society and thereby humanity.'[3]

It is also engaged in social services through the different Buddhist communities around Asia and European countries.For example, the movement called Shramadana in Sri Lanka, another movement named

the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, and in the Tibetan and Vietnamese communities,the name Dalai Lama andThich Nhat Hanh were prominent as engaged Buddhists. They aim to implement Buddhist moralities, medical and educational care, Buddhist laws,principles, mindfulness, etc., into economically marginalised communities and cast communities,including women and children. These are the issues about which Buddhism was concerned not only in the past but also in the present for the better development of the world.

Engaged Buddhists and their social activism:

In this section, I would like to draw some names of the engaged Buddhists from past to present and how they were socially engaged or active. If we look at the past, the name Vimalakirti as a socially engaged Buddhist wasprominent. He was a super saint, which Gautama Buddha himself described. He was a man of virtue and wisdom andis also considered one of the much-respected saints among the major disciples of the Gautama Buddha. He was a completely transformed human being and also was socially active as an engaged Buddhist.

He used to wear white clothes and live a life like a religious devotee. He was married and had a family, but despite that, he maintained continence, lived like a monk, and worked for the welfare of society. As a Mahayana philosopher, Nagarjuna, the author of *Mulamadhyamakakarika,* is also considered an engaged Buddhist, as he mentioned the societal application of Buddhist values in his writing. Robert Thurman beautifully described these values. Thurman said there are four principles that Nagarjuna prescribed to us. According to Thurman, Nagarjuna gave importance to individualistic transcendentalism,i.e., also known as the attainment of *Nirvana*. Second, he gave importance to self-restraint, detachment, and pacifism. Third, he said to focus on transformative universalism based on the commitment to a pluralistic society where people's values are respected and education,i.e., enlightenment-oriented.Fourth,according to him, a welfare state of sympathetic socialism is comprised of equality among the people in each and every sphere of society.

In the Buddhist Philosophical school of India, Vasubandhu is considered a renowned thinker and a Buddhist scholar-monk due to his contribution to Buddhism and association with Nalanda University. Among the seven prominent masters of Nalanda, Vasubandhu and Asanga were two of them. In his writing, the *Treatise of the Abhidharma,*Vasubandhu beautifully describes the seventy-five *dharmas*, also known as (phenomenal events), and talks about the

practices of meditations to eliminate social and moral problems. He also outlines the theory of rebirth, causal theories, and the qualities of a Buddha, and all such things were for the sake of humanity, proving his deep social engagement. In another of his writings, *Treatise on the Three Natures*, Vasubandhu clearly explains how to establish wisdom in our daily lives and activities. In this treatise, he also shows the path for practising freedom from harmful personal as well as family patterns, trauma, oppression, etc. It also shows the path of personal and communal healing. Likewise, Asvaghosa, in his writings known as *Buddhacharita* and *Saundarananda,* beautifully describes Buddhist doctrines and ascetic practices for the Enlightenment. He also travelled almost all over India to proclaim Dharma, wisdom, as the guiding means. That is why he is called The Sun of Merit and Virtue. Thus, Buddhism of the past was deeply engaged with social involvement.

Another name of the engaged Buddhist was the ruler of the Mauryan Empire of north-eastern and central India, Asoka. Early in Asoka's life, he won victories over his enemies through bloodshed and cruelty. But later on, he converted himself to Buddhism and led everything in his kingdom, nearly following the path of the Gautama Buddha. He intended to implement a welfare state based on religious tolerance and economic and social well-being. That is why it is said that 'In the Asian Buddhist world, the politically oriented Buddhism of Asoka's time was tremendously significant due to its highly moral-social ideal.'[4]Another engaged Buddhist named Whalen Lai from China is of the view that donating to others, such as those who are needy, below poverty, the old, and even hungry dogs, will help one cultivate the virtue of compassion in his mind.

In India, the name Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as a socially engaged Buddhist is very well known due to its deep social-political engagement. He started a new Buddhist movement called *Navayana* in India among the Dalits to provide them dignity in society. It started in 1956, and during this movement, half a million Dalits joined him on 14 October 1956. Through this movement, he rejected Hinduism and turned himself into Buddhism in 1950. He also challenged the caste system of Hinduism in India and fought for the rights of the Dalit community. In India, this New Buddhist movement is characterised as the first engagement of Buddhist teachings at the societal level. So, there is no mistake in considering Ambedkar as an engaged Buddhist in India. That is why the movement of Dr B. R. Ambedkar can be characterised as a socially and politically engaged form of Buddhism in India.

Kenneth Kraft, an engaged Buddhist, believes that 'one can pursue social work, considered as inner work, from a social-political perspective with the aims to cure the very ills of the society. In all Buddhist social activism, this is the fundamental Buddhist principle for Kraft.'[5]Similarly, as a socially engaged Buddhist, Thich Nhat Hahn said that if we can make our steps peaceful, the world will automatically have peace. Tenzin Gyatso (14[th]Dalai Lama) is considered the world's renowned engaged Buddhist. He says, 'We should not think only of ourselves but for all humanity in the sense that other people are our brothers and sisters. So, we have to work for the well-being of all humanity to make them free from their sufferings. To do this, we should not think of the benefit of ourselves only; rather, we should be concerned with the benefit of all humankind.'[6]Also, the names of others who are significant as engaged Buddhists are Christopher Chappell, Donald Swearer, Robert Thurman, Gene Sharp, and so on.

The Fourteenth Preceptsas the Way of Living:

In his book *Interbeing: Fourteen Guidelines for Engaged Buddhism,* Thich Nhat Hanhspoke about the fourteenth precepts as the guidelines of engaged Buddhism. According to Thich Nhat Hanh, the term precept is to be understood based on three principles:*sila* (precepts),*Samadhi* (concentration), *and Prajna* (insight).These three are related to each other in the sense that precepts lead to concentration, andconcentration leads to insight. Thus, precepts for him are the way to mindfulness. Hence, those who follow the fourteen precepts can lead their life to open-mindedness and cultivate compassion in reality and human relationships. In this regard, it has been said that 'Fourteen precepts are necessary to change themselves those who follow it, to bring change in society and to live a happy and mindful life.'[7]That is why Buddha said the mind is the king of all *Dharma* and the mind is the painter who paints everything. These precepts are not only a set of rules but also the guidelines for our day-to-day life. These fourteen precepts follow and support one another like *a string of pearls*.

Today, the world is at the peak of its development. The economic, social, and political character of the world is continuously changing. So, now the question is how these fourteen precepts based on Buddhist teachings can solve different issuesin our lives and, thereby,the world. To answer this question, I will first discuss about these fourteen precepts of engaged Buddhists given by Thich Nhat Hanh. After that, we will try to understand how it may help us to solve global problems.Let's see what these fourteen precepts are one by one and

their significance for the sake ofthe betterment oflife and societyin the following ways.

In the First Precept, it is said that we should not accept any doctrine or ideal as absolute truth, even the Buddhist ideology as well. Hence, instead of understanding the Buddhist system of thought as absolute truth, we should apprehend them as the guiding principles.It means that we should not bindourselves to any doctrine, theory, or ideology. Let us not even be bound by the doctrines of the Buddha; rather, his thoughts are to be taken as means, not absolute truth. It also helps us understand Buddhism's total openness and absolute tolerance. So openness and tolerance are the gateways through which we can overcome the boundaries of our understanding for the realisation of the way. If we look carefully at the literature of Buddha, then it can be seen that Buddha is speaking to us in the tone of *the roar of a lion*. This remark says that it is to be considered 'the compassionate voice of Buddha in an ocean of hatred and violence.'[8]That is why Buddha said those who have understood my teachings will understand 'it waslike araft, not for carrying but for crossing over.'[9]The remark says that the Buddhist *Dhamma* aims not to make people Buddhist but rather to make us great humanbeings. That means the term crossing over can be understood to free us from both inside and outside evils. Thus, it can be said that Buddha's teachings are the means of helping people and protecting life. So,there is no place for fighting or killing; thus, all weapons become useless.

The Second Precept comes from the first one, which tells us thatthe knowledge we currentlyhold is not unchanging and,hence, it is not absolute truth. We have to avoid being narrow-minded because it narrowsrather than expands the boundaries of our knowledge.It also gives importance to practising non-attachment, whichhelps us realise the truth, i.e., truth is not there in conceptual knowledge; instead, it can be discovered only in life. So,the reality of our whole life and world helps us attain a life of knowledge that works like a ladder, leading us to the right way of living. It means thatour knowledge should not imprison us. However, it also says that knowledge is necessary to live our day-to-day life to think or to judge anything but not the highest truth. Therefore, this precept advises us to practice non-attachment and mindfulness to grow our concentration and insight to understand reality properly, which means truth can be seen in life.

The Third Precept teaches us thatwe should not force or impose our thoughts on others by means of power, intimidation, wealth, misinformation, or even education. However, it also says compassion

is the means to renounce fanaticism and narrowness.Thus, this precept is concerned with the issue of freedom of thought.It follows from the second in the sense that maintaining the attitude of total openness and non-attachment means respecting the freedom of others, including children. It is concerned with the *freedom of thought* of all human beings, as freedom is our right. So, if we can free ourselves and others from attachment and fanaticism, we can only respect others' freedom. This is possible using compassionate dialogue, which is the essence of non-violence. *Non-violence* includes *tolerance* and *loving-kindness,* which can turn people's hearts.

The Fourth Precept tells us that we should not close our eyes in fear when we encounter suffering. We have to be aware that life is full of suffering, but there are also ways to get relief from suffering,as said by Gautama Buddha. Therefore,we have to try to rouse ourselves and others about the truth of suffering in humankind.So, the fourth precept is concerned with the *awareness of suffering*. It says that suffering has therapeutic power, and thereby, it can open our eyes so that we can find its causesand destroy them. That is why it is said that 'interconnections are considered as intimate between the other beings and us. So, livinga joyful and peaceful life with mindfulness and loving-kindness means being kind to others and easing the sufferings of others in society. Therefore, the meaning of Mahayana is to be understood as the great vehicle to liberate ourselves and others.'[10]

The Fifth Precept gives importance to*simple living*. Living a simple life includes things such as not saving up wealth andother thingstoo much if others are hungry. So keep as much as you need and divide the rest among others. It also says that the aim of our life should not be to achieve profit, fame, sensual pleasure, etc.;rather, the aim must be simple living that teaches us to share our things such as time, material resources, wealth, etc.,with those who are in need. Thus, simple living helps people to achieve *prajna,*i.e., insight,and *maitri,*i.e., helping others. Living a simple life also helps us to stay stress-free. So, to live a stress-free life, you have to accumulate fewer possessions. Therefore, if we can live simply,it will be easy to help others.

The Sixth Precept gives importance to the concept of*compassion,* i.e.,*understanding*. It teaches us that we should keep ourselves away from anger and hatred. We can do this only when we can uproot its seeds from our consciousness. For that, we have to understand the nature of our anger and hatred. And to do that, we have to turn our attention to our breath as soon as they arise. The moment they arise

within us, we need to consciously turn our focus to breathe in and out or convert our mind into something else. This is how if we can control our anger and hatred, then no one can be the cause of our anger and hatred. Meditation and conscious breathing may help us in this regard. That is why it has been said that 'Looking at other beings with the eyes of compassion are considered as the eyes of understanding. Compassion is likened to the sweet water that emerges from the foundation of understanding. Therefore, both compassion and understanding are medicines for anger and hatred.'[11]

The Seventh Precept advises us to maintain a *mindful and joyful living*. This kind of living is possible if we do not misplace ourselves in dispersion and in our surroundings. For that, we have to practice mindful breathing to have the knowledge of what is happening in the present moment around us. We must keep in touch with the astonishing, refreshing, and curing things inside and outside of us. To make the work of conversion in the depths of our consciousness, it advises us to cultivate the seeds of peace, joy, and understanding within us. Therefore, it is clear to us that the practice of mindfulness is important here. This is so because having mindfulness means living in the present moment. It helps us develop wisdom, concentration, joy, and happiness within us to make our lives worth living.

The Eighth Precept tells us not to perform any action or utter any words that can causediscord and break our community. So, we should do those things or utter those words that are able to reconcile and resolve all the conflicts and discord in our society, no matter how small they are. Thus, *bringing harmonyto the community* is the main theme of the eighth precept. Accordingly,harmony in the community and, thereby, in the world is possible only through togetherness, sharing material resources and understanding of *Dharma*, observing the same precepts, reconcilingdisagreement in viewpoints, and practising kind speech to resolve conflicts. Since the time of the Buddha,such concords have been practised by Buddhist communities till today.

The Ninth Precept talks in favour of *mindful speech* that includes not speaking untruthful things to fulfil personal interests and impress others. Speaking about untruthful thingsmay cause division and hatred among people. It also tells us not to speak about anything that is uncertain because it may create a disturbance in others' mental peace. Always try to speak truthfully and raise our voices regarding injustice despite the threats. Therefore, this precept also advises us to be careful about what we are saying and the way we are saying it. This is so because it totally depends on us whether our society and, thereby, the

world will be a world of love, happiness, or a world of hell.

The Tenth Precept follows from the ninth precept. It tells us that we should not take Buddhist communities for our personal interest and keep our community away from political parties. It also says, 'A religious community should not support any kind of oppression and injustice; rather, they should protest against those oppressions and injustices. It further says that a religious community should strive to bring change to sluggish situations without being involved in conflicts.'[12]This is so because political parties sometimes want support from religious communities to achieve their political interest. Guiding people in the right direction is to be considered as the purpose of the religious communities. It is said, 'To be helpful, we must provide selfless service to others and come out from the shell of selfishness. In order to do that, we have to be kind to others, which is considered the essence of religion from ancient to present.'[13]Thus, this precept is concerned with the view of *standing up to injustice and oppression* of any kind.

The Eleventh Precept deals with *right living,*which is a part of the *Eight Fold Path*. It says that we should not associate ourselves with any profession that is harmful to others and nature. So we should choose that kind of profession that is not harmfulbut rather helpful in realising the nature of compassion. It teaches us not to invest in any company that deprives others of their right to live. Finally, it has to be said that living the right way is good for oneself and society, i.e., the *right livelihood* is a matter of concern of the eleventh precept.

The Twelfth Precept tells us to refrain from killing and advises that we should protect lifeand prevent war that is good for humanity. Non-killing includes all living beings. But it is difficult to maintain because without knowing, we kill many living beings when we walk or boil water. So, this way,we kill many tiny living beings. But we have to do our best to follow this path, though it is difficult to succeed completely, even for Bodhisattva as well. The Buddhists say to prevent war, we need to bring peace within society and, thereby,the world. Therefore, if we can follow this path,it can be said with certainty that the number of killings in society will decrease; as a result, the violence between different countries will also be reduced, and peace can be maintained worldwide. Thus, the twelfth precept talks in favour of *protecting life.*

The Thirteenth Precept advises us not to be greedy about the things that belong to others. That means we should respect others' property and prevent others in the sense that to makea profit from the sufferings

of humans and other species on Earth is completely unethical. This shows that this precept is closely connected to the twelfth precept. This precept aims to implement a more liveable society by bringing social justice within society and, thereby, within the world. Thus, this precept talks in favour of *social justice.*

The Fourteenth Precept is the last one that urges us to take care of our body with respect instead of mistreating it. As we know, Shakyamuni Buddha abandoned the ascetic practice because he realised that such practice leads to the mistreatment of our body, and he abandoned that practice. He soon came to realise that indulging in sensual pleasure and mistreating the body is extremely difficult to avoid, and that may cause degeneration of mind and body. That is why he took the middle path between these two extremes. It also tells us to preserve vital energy such as sexual, breath, and spirit in order to realise the way. This is so because, as per Oriental medicine, as soon as these energies are depleted, we will feel weakness in our body, and illness may arise as a result of that; so, it will be difficult for us to practice and realise the way. As we have seen, Mahatma Gandhi practised abstinence and told others to do the same during nonviolent struggle. According to this precept, without love and commitment, we should not indulge ourselves in sexual relationships to avoid future suffering. We have to be careful and responsible for bringing new lives into the world. Happiness for everyone can be maintained if wecan respect each other's rights and commitments. Thus, this precept is concerned with the above three sources of energy.

Concluding remarks:

From the aforesaid discussion, I can conclude by saying that the above fourteen precepts are closely connected to each other. That means each precept contains every other precept, and one follows from the other. These fourteen precepts are essential for society and, thereby, the world to make it a better place of adherence. It is so because the future of our life, society, and, thereby, the world depends on the way we live today, i.e., *our forms of life*. Until we are conscious and take proper caution about things such as exploiting our ecosystem, arms race among different countries,the world's population, etc., then it will be difficult to make our society and the world a better placeto live. So our ways of living, i.e., *forms of life,* are to be considered as the pillars for building our future peace by solving the present global issues. Therefore, studying and practising these precepts can only change how we live, i.e., into our forms of life by solving socio-

politicalissues, and peace can be established both inside and outside of us. In a study, I do reckon, and it is seen that if we are somehow able to stop or slow down the manufacturer of the weapons, then we will have enough money to feed the hunger, we can rub out poverty, can cure many diseases, can help directly or indirectly under privilege people or those who are needy and can remove ignorance from the world and so on. Once this is possible, then most of the present global issues can be solved, and this is how it can bring future peace for us.

Another thing I would like to put here is that knowing and practising these precepts means understanding that we cannot think only of ourselves or be alone because we are all interconnected with each other and everything else.If we practice these precepts based on Buddhist teachings,we can be aware of what is going on in our body, mind, and, thereby,the world. Engaged Buddhists think that theory and practice are one. So meditation leads to self-transformation, which leads to social transformation. Thus, these three are closely linked to each other. In this regard, it is said that'meditation is the powerful means to understand our inner engineering of life and alsobring peace and mindfulness within us. It also makes us awareof happenings both inside and outside of us. Mindfulness also guides us to choose the right path for what to do and not to do for the welfare of humanity.'[14]Thus, it can be said that meditation can be taken as the means to solve deep problems related to us and can establish peace and compassion both inside and outside of us. Accordingly, Thich Nhat Hanh said, 'Meditations help us to see deep into the essence of things. It also helps us get relief from anger, anxiety, and fear, and as a result, we can realise liberation, peace, and joy.'[15]Thus, I want to end by saying that if we can live our life as prescribed above, then we will not think only for ourselves but for the sake of humanity as well, and this way of living will definitely bring change in society. Therefore, practising these precepts, meditation, and *Brahmahviharas,* i.e., *Maitri, Karuna, Mudita, and Upeksha* are considered the universal values crucial to understanding our well-being and the well-being of others.

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Shashadhar Tarkchuramoni, Krishna Prasanna Sen and Emergence of New Hindu Reawakened Movement against the Brahmo Samaj in the Princely State of Cooch Behar: A Historical Analysis

Rahul Kumar Deb
Ph.D scholar
Kalyani University

Abstract

In 1878, after the marriage of Sunity Devi, the daughter of Keshab Chandra Sen, with Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, Brahmo religion got the rare status of 'State Religion' in Cooch Behar. The largest Brahmo temple in South East Asia was established along with various organizations. But the propaganda, and expansion of the Brahmo movement in this area were not much easy. Cooch Behar was not detached from the influence of the Neo-Hindu reawakened movement that was prevalent against the religious practices of the Brahmo Samaj throughout India. This community of Cooch Behar set up 'Arya Dharma Sangrakshini Sabha' to put up a fight against the Brahmos. As enthused by this institution Krishna Prasanna Sen and Shashadhar Tarkachuramani went to Cooch Behar to create an even greater movement by uniting the Hindus against the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo of Cooch Behar lodged a complaint to Maharaja to take steps by the King's decree so that the sphere of work of these preachers might not be expanded. Not only that an essay regarding 'Araya Samaj and idolatry' was reprinted and distributed among the local peoples. It contained a few words with an eulogy for Aryanism and a few words against Hindu society. The dramatic climax of the Brahmo-Hindu conflict reached its culminating point when a Hindu youth of Cooch Behar received initiation to Brahmoism at first and then shortly after some days gave up Brahmoism and received Hinduism again. The contradictory Statements that appeared in various newspapers on the subject of this conversion were absolute examples of politics based on religion. However, at the advent of the two leaders, the Hindus restored and set up many institutions to fight back against the Brahmo Samaj. In order to continue this fight, the leaders of the neo-Hindu movement kept visiting Cooch Behar duly in the time of the relocation

of the Royal family's deity, Madan Mohon and the course of further times.

Key words: Arya Dharmarakshini Sabha,Brahmo-Hindu conflict, Conversion, Dharma Sabha, Hari Sabha, Keshab Chandra Sen,Religious politics, Relocation of the Madan Mohon temple,*Sanatan* dharma, Social movement, Younger generation.

In the late 19th century, a significant religious or social movement emerged, aimed at safeguarding Hindu religion and society against what was perceived as the encroachment of progressive Brahmoism and Christianity across India. This reaction was known as the Neo-Hindu movement or the Hindu revivalist movement.[1]The Hindu revivalists harbored a predisposition towards reintroducing the heritage of ancient India. Their solemn pledge was to return to the erstwhile golden age. The aspiration of the Brahmo, or progressive reformists, stemmed from the experiences of European socialism and rationalism. Conversely, the ambition of the revivalists was rooted in Hindu scripture and the annals of Indian history.[2]Shibnath Sastri delineated the era spanning from 1870 to 1879 as the period heralding the diminishing influence of the Brahmo Samaj and the commencement of a revivalism within Hinduism.[3]But during the period from 1884 to 1890, the intensity of the movement was significantly marked by several notable events. One of the most remarkable occurrences during this time was the publication of the Prachar, Nabajivan Journal, alongside a novel interpretation of Hinduism. Furthermore, in the same era, the interpretations of Hinduism presented by Krishna Prasanna Sen (1849-1902) and Shashadhar Tarkachuramani(1851-1928) further enriched the discourse.The neo-Hindu movement throughout India strengthened its base against the Brahmo Samaj through the establishment of various institutions, including the Hari Sabha, Dharma Sabha, Sanatan Dharma Rakshini Sabha, Hari Bhakti Pradayini Sabha, Arya Dharma Rakshini Sabha, and others.[4]

Cooch Behar also was not immune to the influence of the Neo-Hindu Revivalism Movement. Since the reign of Maharaja Nara Narayan, a tradition of caste Hindu and Brahmanya classes for five centuries in Cooch Behar was maintained. They enjoyed a dominant position in the realm, with their expertise extended from the literature and culture of the Royal Court to administrative duties and religious activities. Naturally from late 19th century when the Brahmo Samaj

began to take roof in Cooch Behar on account of the marriage of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, even the big administrative posts of the state were monopolized by the outsider Brahmos, at that time it was natural for the upper-class Hindus in long power to oppose them. This Hindu community ofCooch Behar established 'Arya Dharma Sanrakshini Sabha' as a means to challenge the Brahmos. In 1875, spurred by Krishna Prasanna Sen, the 'Arya Dharma Sangrakshini Sabha' became the first to be established in Monger, Bihar, followed by the 'Bharatbarsiyo Arya Dharma Prachariani Sabha' in Haridwar in 1878.[5]It is posited that the Arya Dharma Pracharini Sabha's branch in the state of Cooch Behar was established subsequent to the activities of this societies. However, in 1890, the initiative of the members of this society, Krishna Prasanna Sen and Shashadhar Tarkachuramani visited Cooch Behar intending to foster a more extensive movement by rallying the Hindu populations across the entire State in opposition to the Brahmo Samaj. According to the 'Vedavyas' Journal, upon the return of Shashadhar Tarkachuramani from Assam, he arrived in Cooch Behar via Fultala, a region that had already been submerged in religious fervour. On one hand, Krishna Prasanna's motivational speeches wetted the fervor of the desert-like hearts of the audience. On the other hand, Shashadhar Tarkachuramani was meticulously planting the seeds of religion bit by bit in those wet hearts.[6]*Dharma Pracharak*, the spokesman for the Arya Dharma Pracharini Sabha, wrote in this context that Cooch Behar is an independent state. Here, the king liked to don English robes and indulged in luxury, but more significantly, his wife, the Maharani, was the daughter of Keshab Chandra Sen, making her a staunch supporter of her father's faith. Consequently, there was a growing concern regarding the potential erosion of the *Sanatan* Hindu religion. This was particularly so because Keshab Babu harboured the hope for the ascendancy of non-Hindu Brahmoism here. But by God's grace, Keshab babu's hopes and aspirations were ended when Kumar monk stepped here under the supervision of Aryadharma Sangrakshini Sabha.[7]

Krishna Prasanna Sen and Shashadhar Tarkachuramani embarked on their journey to Cooch Behar towards the final days before the commencement of the Doljatra festival in March 1890.[8]They remained at the location for 15 days, during which they delivered a total of 13 to 14 speeches across various localities within Cooch Behar.[9]The emergence of these two preachers sparked fervent enthusiasm within the conservative Hindu society. This zeal for propaganda efforts of Hinduism was vividly illustrated through the account provided by the

journal 'Vedavyas'. This journal noted that an impressive number of two thousand individuals flocked daily to listen to Krishna Prasanna's speeches, seeking to quench their thirst for religious knowledge. Devotees, non-devotees, and those with a penchant for unorthodox habits and unsavory foods were all inevitably drawn to the sophistication of his eloquence. Judges, magistrates, and other high-ranking Hindu officials in the community made it a regular practice to attend the Monk's devotional sermons, gaining insight into the profound wisdom passed down by their ancestors through his teachings. The spiritual influence of this duo was so pervasive that people flocked to their homes both day and night to seek their guidance. For a brief period, Cooch Behar was captivated by a devotional song in praise of Lord Sri Hari. No one could count how many hundreds of flower offerings were showered on the monk's head as he went out into the streets. From the inner royal apartments to the royal court, a great echo of slogans of Aryan religion broke out and it stirred the hearts of all the people with great enthusiasm and devotion. As a result of the burning rays of Aryanism, the glory of Brahmo religion was hidden somewhere. However, only due to the lure of being financially established, two or three people accepted the membership of the Brahmo Samaj.[10] That is, one could easily understand that the majority of the conservative Hindu public of the Cooch Behar state then found their ideal leader who fit to fight against the Brahmo Samaj.

The way the insubstantiality and baselessness of Brahmo Samaj came to light by the preachers of the Neo Hindu movement and the long-held policies of Brahmoism were refuted, put the Cooch Behar Brahmoists into a state of distress. Despite this, the Brahmoists occasionally attended Hindu religious meetings out of royal courtesy. However, later they stopped it and secretly lodged complaints to Maharaja Nripendra Narayan against Krishna Prasanna Sen. They made it clear to the Maharaja that the Monk was making an excessive attack on Brahmoism and, in doing so, was violating the religious faith of the Maharaja, Maharani, and the Maharaja's father-in-law. It was seen as necessary for the king's decree to take such steps to prevent the spread of such an irreligious influence within the state.[11] Furthermore, the Brahmos likely believed that under Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's autonomous rule, the laws and administration of Cooch Behar were distinctive compared to British-occupied India. Thus, the Maharaja had the power to halt Kumar Monk's lectures in Cooch Behar at any time or to expel him from his own state if he wished.However, although the Maharaja himself was a Brahmo, herecognizing the

necessity of maintaining the spirit of *Rajdharma*and the high regard for Hindu preachers' independence, voiced his reluctance to take any direct action.[12] According to the *Dharma Pracharak* journal, the main reasons behind the Maharaja's dissent in this regard were:- firstly, Maharaja held that it could not be called an attack on the other religion if the scriptural teachers ascertain the insubstantiality of the other religion while preaching their own religion. All religious preachers find it necessary to emphasize the substantiality of their own religion and the pointlessness of the other religion. Secondly, some of the sheltered persons were only members of Brahmo Samaj, but his subjects and most of his officials belonged to the traditional religion, and when all the Hindus were very much attached to the speeches of the monk, being his fans, it was unbecoming for a king to prevent him from doing such an honest price of work. Thirdly, if the monk's mission was faced with hindrance, he would leave the state and would be making such speeches from Mogol Hat to the remotest frontiers of Cooch Behar, and then Maharaja would have nothing to do. Rather, in that case, his disrepute would be brought into an even more miserable publicity. So the royal power in the name of the rule should not be exercised here. Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, therefore, had his say that they should make a protest in another form.[13] The statement of the king was also supported in Sabitri Devi's account.[14]This decision of Maharaja gave evidence of his diplomatic wisdom if judged by contemporary social and religiopolitical standards. For, history in a crucial hour did not glorify a monarchy when it saw people's religious freedom and preaching prevented through political power.The 'Dharma Pracharak', with its keen insight, sharply and significantly ridicules the Brahmoists' grievances against the Hindu preacher duo to the Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. The journal penned, Alas, Brahamos!We were unaware that you had been so badly torn and suffered such profound distress. Instead of seeking shelter from God, the king of kings, the sage of religions for your pursuit of expanding your faith, you had to submit yourselves to the Maharaja of Cooch Behar. It became apparent to us that the Nababidhanists had lost the vigor in their hearts and the prospects of their survival were faint.[15]

However, being mentally upset by the Maharaja, in this particular scenario, the Brahmos of Cooch Behar adopted a strategy of tit for tat. Following the advice of Maharaja, they opted for protested measures to dampen any form of dissent. In a meeting focused on providing counsel to members of their own religious sect, they orchestrated a series of speeches aimed at discrediting Hinduism. The following

day, during a city-wide *sangkritan*, they launched a campaign of propaganda against Hinduism and advocated for the supremacy of Brahmoism among the populace, thereby fortifying the resolve of the Brahmos. Furthermore, they reprinted an essay titled *'Arya Samaj and Idolatry,'* sourced from the Brahmo journal *'Sulav Samachar O Kushdaha,'*and had its pages circulated among the residents of Cooch Behar. This document articulated in favaour of Aryanism along with the eulogium of Dayananda and condemned aspects of Hindu society. It also was to prove from Dayananda's numerous speeches, arguments and references to texts of 'Vedavassya' that suggested that idolatry had no place within the Vedas.[16] However, on behalf of the 'Arya Dharma Rakshini Sabha', criticism was leveled against this book of Brahmo's in the 'Dharma Pracharak' Journal.[17]

During the stay of the Hindu preacher duo, the dramatic climax of the Brahmo-Hindu conflict reached its zenith when a young Hindu Brahmin from Cooch Behar initially embraced Brahmoism, but shortly thereafter, renounced Brahmoism in favor of Hinduism, seeking atonement. This conversion sparked unprecedented and controversial statements in the newspapers of both communities in Cooch Behar and Bengal, serving as a stark example of politics intertwined with religion. At the age of 31, Krishnanda Chakraborty, residing in Cooch Behar's Hiberkuthi, received his initiation into Brahmoism according to the 'New Samhita' on the day of the 6th Magh festival of Cooch Behar Nababidhan Brahmo Samaj.[18]In the absence of Prankrishna Dutta, the local Upacharya of the Nababidhan Brahmo Samaj, during the occasion of Doljatra, Krishna Prasanna Sen travelled to Cooch Behar to conduct traditional religious preaching's and deliver speeches therein. Krishnananda was in attendance at that event and occasionally interacted with the preacher. This event served as the catalyst for a proliferation of rumors and speculations, particularly in Cooch Behar and other locales. Subsequently, these rumors were documented in various journals with excessive pomp and grandeur, which depicted that under the imitative of the Hindu preacher, the said initiated Brahmo youth, had a conversion to Hinduism using the sacred thread after undergoing a process of atonement.[19]However, the account disseminated through the Hindu-endorsed Journal 'Dharma Pracharak' has been subjected to significant criticism by the Brahmo Samaj. 'Dharmatatwa', the organ of the Brahmo Samaj of India, confirmed that Krishnananda has not undergone any significant changes and he continues to participate in the worship ceremonies of the Brahmo Samaj in due course. Moreover, the accusations regarding

the writing drive and the spread of rumors have been found to be entirely baseless.[20]

A series of letters penned by Krishnananda warrants a special attention. The Brahmo Journal, 'Dharmatattwa', and the Hindu Journal, 'Dharma Pracharak', both have individually published a letter written by Krishnananda Chakraborty. Subsequently, utilizing this specific letter as evidence, they endeavored to designate him as a member of their respective community. In the letter published in 'Dharmatattwa' Krishnananda wrote to Prankrishna Dutta, the *Upacharya* of Cooch Behar Nababidhan Brahmo Samaj that after being initiated to Brahmoism he went to listen to the lecture of Kumar monk in Cooch Behar, and as such, the people rebuked him as a Hindu. His point was to know whether or not he would be able to go to any other believers after embracing Brahmo faith. That is, there was no indication of a possibility of Krishnananda's reverting to Hinduism, but rather emphasized his lifelong commitment to his new religious affiliation.[21]On the other hand, in the letter published in the 'Dharma Prahcarak', Krishnananda wrote to Krishna Prasanna Sen that he had never ever written such a letter to Prankrishna Dutta. He already paid the price of the Dharmatattwa and he had written to him a letter for receiving that paper. He mentioned that acts he had performed like the bath in the Ganges after going to Naihati. He could not accomplish the formal ritual of holding the sacred thread for want of money, and had been seeking to perform that. The written letter of his that published in the 'Dharmatattwa' was based on falsehood. As he was ready and willing to be initiated into Hinduism, and for this reason, he appeared in that meeting of Cooch Behar.[22]Therefore, it can be inferred that the statements made by the same individual in both letters present conflicting narratives. It is significant that the way in which the Brahmo Samaj and the Hindu Samaj were engaged in a tug-of-war over the religious and social status of an individual and the entry of conflicting statements into the press and heated debates, use of obscenities, sarcasm, language and finally became the major issue of religious politics in various leading newspapers of Bengal, treating it as such truly reveals the ugly and brazen nature of the Brahmo-Hindu conflict.

The persuasive and emotive oratory delivered by Shashadhar Tarkachauramoni and Krishna Prasanna Sen in favor of traditional Hinduism in Cooch Behar significantly influenced the consciousness and the intellectual landscape of the younger generation in the region. Numerous impressionable adolescents, who had succumbed to the

prevailing trends and temptations of Brahmo Samaj, were subsequently reawakened to their faith in traditional religion at the precise moment. Charu Chandru Dutta, the son of Kalikadas Dutta, a distinguished Brahmo Dewan of Cooch Behar,said that Pundit Shasadhar Tarka Churamani and Krishna Prasanna Sen were their contemporary leaders. Bangabasi was revered as an oracle of that time. The papers of their childhood, the 'Sanjeevani' and 'Nabya Bharat', the 'Liberal' and the 'Indian Messenger' were all swept away, while the 'Bangabashi' and the 'Janmabhumi' occupied their intellectual spheres. Towards the end of his school life, he began to believe in many things like idolatry, caste, a tuff of hair on hold, a lizard and sneezing. While staying in Cooch Behar, he had a bounden duty to plait hair. But after being a member of the Bangabashi, he stopped wasting time on that. Charu Chandra did not know what people thought of him when they saw him rough-haired, dressed in worse clothes and holding a bamboo stick in hand. He had no doubt about the electrical power of the tuft of hair but was unable to keep it intact. He used to apply sectarian symbol on his forehead sometimes but hesitating to go out on the streets in that condition. Charu Chandra also stated that he was born in a Brahmo idealistic environment. So, when bigotry comes, it comes most strongly.[23]It was easy for the readers to guess what happened to other youths in the state when such a change happened to the tender-aged son of Brahmo Dewan.That year, it was disclosed through a report provided by Mr. Wood, the Principal of Victoria Collegethat the moral lessons imparted by the Brahmo missionaries to the students of Jenkins' School did not resonate with them as expected.[24]Indeed, skepticism regarding the revered Brahmo doctrines was present among the student body of Cooch Behar at that juncture, as they were fervently embracing the fervor of New Hinduism. Consequently, the students were not drawn to the moral lessons that were based on that Brahmo doctrine.

However, upon the arrival of Krishna Prasanna Sen and Shashadhar Tarkachuramoni, the Hindu community of Cooch Behar witnessed significant restoration of their lost power and the establishment of multiple associations to oppose the Brahmo Samaj. Furthermore, the initial associations established earlier were extensively renovated and restored. The 'Arya Dharmarakshini Sabha' had already achieved its formal establishment. Additionally, in response to Krishna Prasanna's proposal, a pucca building was constructed for Cooch Behar 'Dharma Sabha' to continue the opposition against the Brahmos.[25]When Raja Rammohan Roy started agitating for Brahmoism the famous

conservative Hindu landlord Radhakanta Deb first established a Dharma Sabha in Calcutta in 1830 and started a war against Brahmo Samaj. Subsequently, during the era of the Neo-Hindu movement, its branches extended their influence across India, with the primary goal being to propagate the traditional religion as a counterargument to the Brahmo Samaj's activities.[26]Although the 'Dharma Sabha' was officially established in Cooch Behar a few years prior to the construction of its permanent edifice, upon the arrival of Shashadhar Tarkchuramoni for the first time in 1884.[27]Nevertheless, the challenge of conducting religious affairs within the confines of a temporary mud-walled structure necessitated the decision to construct a permanent house, in the spirit of Krishna Prasanna Sen's endeavors. Later in 1897, a devastating earthquake caused significant damage to the Dharamsabha, resulting in a strong need for its reconstruction. In response, from 1907 to 1908, a zealous religious individual Aularam Saha, a resident of Khagrabari, undertook the task of reconstructing this association. He utilized his personal funds to rebuild the temple on the government-owned land, as per the intention of Cooch Behar's Dewan, Kalikadas Dutta.[28]The 'Dharma Sabha' served as a pivotal instrument in dispelling the populace of Cooch Behar's misconceptions about Brahmoism through the religious discussion, the reading out the holy extracts, *Kathakata*, the devotional songs like *Kirtan* and arranging the religious session by famous monk at different times.[29] In addition to the Dharma Sabha, during this period, the establishment of a 'Sunity Sancharini Sabha' was initiated by Krishna Prasanna Sen in Cooch Behar. The primary aim of this association was to impart moral teachings to the general populace, adopting a traditional Hinduism model for the dissemination of these principles.[30]Apart from this, evidence suggests the establishment of more than one 'Hari Sabha' groups within the town of Cooch Behar and in other *moffusil*areas during the same year. Referring to Brahmo Samaj as the reason for the birth of 'Hari Sabha', 'Arya Dharma Pracharak Brahmin Pundit'journal said, *"Just as Rama's advent was made for Ravana and Lord Krishna's birth was predetermined for Kangsa, so also the Hari Sabha was meant for Brahmo Samaj."*[31]Information has been derived from the 'Sukatha' Journal regarding a significant donation made by affluent trader brothers, Aoula and Durga Saha of Cooch Behar, in 1890. These brothers consented to contribute five thousand rupees for the construction of a Hari Sabha temple building.In this regard, the intention was that the local Arya Dharma Sangrakshini and the Hari Sabha would work in a joint effort.[32] Additionally, that particular

year on the 10th Pous, a select group of gentlemen residing in the nearby village of Ghughumari gathered together to establish a Hari Sabha. Jagan Mohan Gope of that village generously donated a plot of land on which the structure was built. A few employees of the state, the learned Pundits residing at Khagrabari and several gentlemen attended the said programme and gave rise to the enthusiasm of the members. The joyful auspicious programs have been conducted with great pomp and grandeur for two days. The roles of Secretary and Vice-Secretary of this Sabha were assumed by Kushal Chandra Pal and Din Dayal Sarkar, who in turn oversaw the execution of the inauguration ceremony with the support of other close acquaintances of the village.[33] The Hari Sabha, located in the New Town area, is believed to have been constructed during the same period. It has been officially documented by the royal government as a place of worship for use by the Hindu community from the time before the land survey of 1905. The initial measurement of its original land was two bighas and two kathas extended by six yokes. Here, the sacred images of the family deities of Hemanta Kumar Karje were placed. This family organized the daily worship services for these deities and in return, received a monthly allowance of Rs.5/- from the Cooch Behar *debutter* trust. It also witnessed numerous celebrations related to the Vaisnavite religion.[34]It is worth noting that all these Hari Sabha served as competitors against the worshipping practices of the Brahmos. The distinguished pundits used to conduct scripture interpretations within the confines of the Hari Sabha, during which vedic hymns were recited in conjunction with the performance of bhajanas, imitating the pattern of Brahmo Samaj.[35] Indeed, these events significantly bolstered the religious fervor among the Hindu population in Cooch Behar and played a pivotal role in countering the rise of Brahmoism in the region. In order to continue the resistance against Brahmo Samaj, the leaders of the neo-Hindu movement kept visiting Cooch Behar duly in the course of further times. Ambika Charan Vidyaratna, the propagator of 'Arya Dharma Pracharini Sabha' arrived in Cooch Behar in 1894 and delivered a lecture on Aryanism in the premises of Madan Mohan temple.[36]Additionally, in the early 1900s, Krishna Prasanna Sen came again to this state to deliver religious sermons in the town of Cooch Behar and Dinhata, both in support of traditional Hinduism and in opposition to Brahmoism.[37]

Another incident worth mentioning occurred in 1890. This year, discontent among the Hindu masses erupted due to the relocation of the royal family's deity, Madan Mohan, from the palace to a

new temple. This shift sparked opposition from a group led by the priests, who were influenced by their vested interests and led against Brahmoism. In 1828, Maharaja Harendra Narayan moved the capital from Dhaluabari to Cooch Behar. The original palace, now referred to as *'Puranabas'*, was located to the north of the current palace, and it housed several deities, including Madan Mohan.According to the diagram prepared by an English expert, the construction of the present palace was completed in 1887. After Maharaja Nripendra Narayan moved into this palace with his family, there were discussions about relocating the temple to a more central location. There were speculations about whether the temple should remain on the palace grounds or be moved closer. The temple was a place of morning and evening deity greetings, sacrificial rites, the sound of bells, the presence of devotees and visitors, and vibrant chants. Meanwhile, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan embraced Brahmoism, leading the majority of the royal family to convert. As a result, the practice of idolatry, the use of bells, and animal sacrifice were forbidden within the Brahmo royal family. This shift was a natural progression towards a more Brahmoist way of life, aligning with the family's religious beliefs.[38]Again, there was an apprehension that something untoward might happen to the royal family and the kingdom if the family deity was removed from the palace premises. When the Maharaja was just a minor, then Hotton Sahib once planned to get to deity removed, but at night due suddenly to the bleeding from the mouth of the Sahib, he had to give up that plan.[39]In the amalgamation of these concerns, a conflict emerged between the age-old customs and the modern, non-idolatrous monotheistic Brahmo philosophy. Opposition began to arise from the ranks of royal officials and priests attached to the temple. For just fear of losing their dignity, they fanned the flames of propaganda that the state would face with inauspicious events. The whispering publicity continued that all this was happening because the Maharaja had become a Brahmo.[40] In spite of the prevailing discontent, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan laid the foundation of the construction of the temple through a series of celebratory events, culminating on the 8th of July 1889 and formally inaugurated on the 21st of March 1890. During this auspicious occasion, a vivid procession, laden with elephants, horses, soldiers, toll-post structures, English orchestras, and thousands of Hindu devotees, singing hymns to Lord Hari and carrying the elegantly clad deities, dressed in grand robes, departed from the royal palace and headed towards the temple premises.[41] After a lot of spending money *Nahabat* was brought form Beneras and many more

arrangements were made to please Gods and Goddesses.[42] In the midst of an ecstatic atmosphere of joy, a subtle aura of melancholy persisted, primarily due to a rising suspicion among the populace. For this, they attribute the royal family's new patronage towards Brahmoism. The king's governing body was also aware of the people's grievances. The Maharaja was also anxious that the religious sentiments of the people should be fully respected. Consequently, at the time of the temple's reopening, they extended invitations to the renowned Pundit Shashandhar Tarkachuramoni and Krishna Prasanna Sen. During the inauguration ceremony, both speakers reassured the community with their full endorsement of the meticulous arrangements for the relocation of the deity. They outlined the state's commitment to the welfare of the community, providing comprehensive explanations for the changes, thereby establishing a sense of certainty and reassurance among the worshippers.[43]Nonetheless, the negative perception held by the populace against Brahmoism did not diminish.

Thus, a resurgence of Hinduism occurred in Cooch Behar, spearheaded by the leaders of the emerging Hindu religious movement, in opposition to the Brahmo Samaj.After the relocation of Madan Mohon, *Hindutva* consciousness and emotions centered on the lord Madan Mohan got more widespread. During this period, the prevailing caste Hinduism significantly contributed to the erosion of the idealistic momentum of Brahmo harmony. Concurrently, a new wave of social dynamics began to emerge. Consequently, the stability that was characterized in the early years under the governance of Nripendra Narayan started to wane. Indeed, it was apparent, not only within the royal court but also in the broader social fabric of the state, that the increasing dominance of caste Hindus undoubtedly paved the way for the emergence of caste distinctions and social narrowness. Above all, that flow became one of the principal causes of the social crisis of the future years in this state.[44] Despite the implementation of numerous measures against it, the Brahmo Samaj in Cooch Behar demonstrated remarkable resilience and longevity, lasting over six decades under the leadership of its secretaries and activist. During this period, the Brahmo Samaj continued its mission by engaging in compromises with various caste-Hindu groups. Activities at the temple, the arrival of preachers, public welfare initiatives, and the establishment of new institutions were ongoing, although predominantly on a limited scale. While there was a marked decline in the fervor and zeal for propagating Brahmoism and a reduction in the number of new converts, but the social reform, charitable and educational efforts remained intact,

which indirectly benefited the non-Brahmo individual as well.

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Courage and Care: The Evolution of Military Nursing Service in India

Arup Dam
Research Scholar
History Department
Burdwan University

Abstract:

Nurses have a major responsibility for the provision of health care. The history of military nursing in India reflects a journey of courage, dedication, and significant evolution. From its inception during the British colonial era, where European nurses tended to the needs of British troops, to the establishment of the Military Nursing Service. Florence Nightingale significantly influenced the establishment of the Indian Military Nursing System despite never having visited India. Her advisory role in nursing spanned over four decades, providing crucial guidance to military officers. Since the Military system was a major pillar of British imperialism, the British government was a little more concerned about their health.But the narrative of nursing services in India has predominantly focused on societal factors such as caste, socioeconomic class, religious dynamics, women's status, the gendered portrayal of occupational domains, and the impact of colonial influences. Gradually the inclusion of Indian women during World War I marked a pivotal moment, leading to a more diverse and integrated nursing workforce. World War II further expanded the role of military nurses, highlighting their crucial contributions to the society. It exploresthe pivotal contributions of Indian military nurses in various conflicts and peace keeping missions, highlighting their resilience and dedication in challenging environments. Hence, this paper attempts to highlight the transformative journey of military nursing services in colonial India.

Keywords: Military, Nurse, Hospital, Colonial India, Indian Military Nursing Service (I.M.N.S.),

Nursing is a service which includes ministration to the sick, care of the whole patient, his environment health education and health services to the individual family and society for the prevention of disease and

promotion of health. In the early stages, the provision of nursing care was assigned to females because women provided nurturing care to their infants, and it was assumed that they could provide the same type of care to the sick and injured people. Before colonial influence, healthcare in India was predominantly managed through traditional systems like Ayurveda, Unani, and Tibetan medicine. The nursing system was not that advanced at that time. Imperial colonisers who came to India like the Portuguese, the French and the British contributed to an established order for nursing. Due to their long stay in India, the British had to take into account the long-term interests of their troops and the general conditions in India. During the early colonial period, nursing system in India was significantly shaped by European practices. The East India Company and later the British Raj set up hospitals and medical facilities primarily for British soldiers and officials. That is, it can be said that Military Nursing was the earliest type of Nursing. The foundations of this military nursing system were first laid in the 16th century. Military nurses make tremendous sacrifices on behalf of our country to care for our nation's wounded, injured, and sick service members. Military nurses are one of our country's greatest assets as they serve the nation anywhere, anyplace, any time. Florence Nightingale, renowned for her pioneering work in nursing, played a crucial role in the development of the Indian Military Nursing System. But Military nursing in colonial India was deeply intertwined with the social fabric of the time, reflecting issues of caste, class, religion, and gender. The British government, recognizing the critical role of the military in maintaining their imperial stronghold, prioritized the health and well-being of their forces, leading to the establishment of a structured nursing system.

The present study explores the origins and development of the military nursing system in India, highlighting the key influences and changes that have defined its journey. It sets the stage for a comprehensive examination of the challenges, milestones, and significant contributions of military nurses, providing a deeper understanding of their role in both historical and contemporary contexts. Finally, it will be viewed appreciate the enduring legacy and continuing evolution of military nursing in India.

The modern medicine including Nursing was introduced in India by the Portuguese, followed by the French and the British who established and consolidated modern medical and nursing services in India.In 1600, the medical officers who arrived along with the East India Company's first fleet of ships also brought Western medicine in

India. The emergence of Western medicine in India was closely tied to the colonial need to address the health of the British population, particularly the army, which faced numerous diseases in the Indian environment. Initially, medical departments, were setup to provide medical relief to the troops and employees of the East India Company.[1] In 1664, the East India Company established a hospital for soldiers at Fort St. George in Madras, where nurses were employed to care for sick soldiers. Military hospitals were later established by the East India Company at various locations including Fort William in Calcutta and Fort St. George in Bombay. In Bengal, one can see the Dutch establishment at Chinsurah and the French at Chandannagar making tents for the soldiers. Small military hospitals were built inside these tents. These tents evolved into dispensaries with a small number of beds.[2] Despite these developments, there was no formal training program for Indian women in military. Many widows and destitute women provided care for soldiers during conflicts without any formal training. As a result, the British sent some nurses from western countries to India. The first sisters were sent from St. Thomas Hospital in London to this Indian military hospital and gradually began training Indian women in military nursing. Some of the nurses who arrived in India were part of a group of better-educated "elite professional nurses" concerned with constructing "the basis of an Indian nursing profession modeled on the styles and standards of nursing in the West."[3] This move highlights the British effort to professionalize and standardize military nursing care in India. The general need for improving nursing care in military hospitals had been recognized, and the first steps to train women for this purpose were taken in Madras.

Nursing in India has long faced issues of underdevelopment and widespread stigmatization. Prior to the eighteenth century, Western medicine in India was mainly limited to European-dominated ports such as Pondicherry, Bombay, Calcutta, Surat, Goa, and Dhaka.[4] By the eighteenth century, the British had established Indian medical services and hospitals in Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. These hospitals were primarily accessible only to members of the Royal families, with most Indians excluded from receiving services. Despite this, Indians performed most of the nursing work in these hospitals. They served as dressers and were informally trained in various medical tasks, which enabled them to assist surgeons. In 1775, hospital boards which comprised the Surgeon General and Physician General were formed. These were essentially constituted by staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Indian Army in each presidency. The battalion

hospitals, established in 1785, treated Indian soldiers serving in the British Army alongside European soldiers. Most of the Indian soldiers were Hindus and adhered to caste rules that prohibited them from receiving medicine from anyone outside their caste. As a result, they were nursed by their family members. For high-caste Hindu women, visiting these hospitals was deemed unrespectable.[5]Throughout this period however the nursing sisters of India have struggle to achieve the authority and autonomy that the title implies. The troubles of nurses in India are commonly ascribed to aspects of culture, seemingly accepted as immutable the strength of the caste system, which stigmatises work with bodily fluids, strong limitations on female mobility in many part of India and disapproval of work that requires women to work intimately with male strangers.[6]In the Indian caste hierarchy, notions of purity and pollution within the body came to be signified through rituals and social practices that separated higher and lower castes in the public arena.[7]For the reason, the cultural stigmatization surrounding nursing as a profession further hindered the participation of women, particularly those from upper-caste families. As a result, during the colonial period, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians were predominantly recruited into the nursing profession.

Florence Nightingale, through her work in the Crimean War of 1854, was instrumental in bringing about some pioneering reforms in the Army Nursing Service.In her early career of hospital improvement and nurses' training, Florence Nightingale showed some reservations about women being trained as doctors. She considered nursing, along with midwifery, as natural aptitude of women. She wanted to see that nursing as a profession should get a strong and respectable foothold in society, and the issue should not get lost in the wider political question of women's place in the medical profession.[8] Florence Nightingale was influential and a pioneer in the hygiene conditions of the soldiers and nursing education in India. St. Stephen's hospital in Delhi was the first school to begin nursing education in 1867. Many nursing schools were established thereafter with the help of British nurses.[9]Today, transformation of the nursing profession is a vision of Florence Nightingale's vision in the design of hospitals, hygiene, evidence-based medical care, and holistic patient centred care.

As Miss Nightingale never visited India, her accurate knowledge of conditions in the hospitals here is all the more remarkable. She obtained her information from answers to detailed questionnaires, which she drafted for a 'Circular of Enquiry' which was sent to all military stations in India. In addition to this she also wrote to two

hundred of the larger stations asking for copies of all regulations, including those relating to the health and sanitary administration of the Army.[10]Nightingale has been advising medical and military officers in India on health and sanitation for over ten years. She wrote a paper suggesting that Hindu religious teachers could be used in the community as "health missionaries," liaisons between the villagers and the sanitation officers because the Hindu religion emphasized purity and cleanliness.[11]From his writing, it is understood that religion influences healthcare in India, and these health missionaries were human beings. The Royal Commission of the Army in India was appointed in 1859 and established in 1861. It may be noted that, before 1864, the employment of female nurses in Indian Hospitals was limited to Vicereine Lady Canning and some institutions in Calcutta and Allahabad. Service in Military Hospitals is provided mainly by untrained male coolies. With the formation of the Bengal. Sanitary Commission in 1864, it was seen that several steps were taken to improve the staff of Indian Hospitals. The Commission, promoted by the Viceroy, sir john Lawrence, decided to seek advice from Florence Nightingale.[12]In late 1864, sir John Lawrence decided to introduce female nursing to army Hospitals. European and Anglo-Indian women were initially recruited as nurses in Indian Hospitals. Female nurses had been employed on a limited scale in the General Hospital and the medical college Hospital in Calcutta. The nurses working there were under the management of the Calcutta Hospital nurses institution, which was a lady's committee initiated by Lady Charlotte Canning. The organization was officially funded by private donations, including monthly contributions and some income from private nursing. In 1864 only twenty-seven female nurses were employed. Some women joined Allahabad Hospital in 1858 as nurses. Most of the nurses were European and Anglo-Indians."[13]However, the presence of Indian nurses gradually began to increase. Indian women, initially drawn from missionary and Anglo-Indian communities, slowly started to join the nursing profession. Despite facing societal prejudices and cultural barriers, these pioneering Indian nurses played a crucial role in the healthcare system. Their contributions were significant, not only in providing care but also in challenging and changing societal norms regarding women's roles and capabilities.

After many delays and setbacks the reform of the military barracks and hospitals gradually became an accomplished fact, for British and Indian soldiers alike.All this work inevitably led on to similar reforms in civil hospitals, and to an effort to provide a health service for all the

people of India. Miss Nightingale gave a tremendous amount of time and thought to the ways and means by which this could be carried out, and so really laid the foundation of public health work in the country.[14]There are references to women performing nursing functions for the army – but they were not professionally trained. Colonial ladies (wives of colonial officials), took up the nursing of wounded soldiers during the uprising of 1857.[15] Wives and widows of British soldiers, and native women also worked as amateur care-givers in the military hospitals.[16] The Commission recommended the employment of trained female nurses in the British military hospitals in India, reflecting the professionalisation and feminisation of nursing underway in Britain.[17] But this suggestion was not immediately implemented.

In nineteen-century India, the regiment was stationed in garrisons throughout India. British and European officers and men also served in the Indian Army. Nursing at the Indian military Hospital was conducted by the male medical order of the Military subordinate medical service. Many sick or wounded British soldiers died due to a lack of skilled nursing, but in 1867 Florence Nightingales plan for trained female nurses in Indian military Hospitals was rejectedas unnecessary. The Indians' new commander-in-chief, Lady Nora Roberts, found further success twenty years later. Raising money from the regiments, Lady Roberts established a station Hospital and special ward for sick officers. As a result, the Indian Army Nursing Service (I.A.N.S.) was started in 1888 by Lord Roberts, a British soldier.[18]The Indian Army Nursing Service,introduced a system of training and examination which made Nursing a profession requiring qualification and proof of competence. Mission hospitals, set up more or less at the same time under different aeges, brought to Nursing in India an additional dimension: that of the quality of person-to-person care. The Christian Medical Association of India set up the Nurses' Auxiliary with a programme and system of registration on the lines of the Indian Army Nursing Service Scheme." By the end of the nineteenth century, full-fledged Nurses' Training Schools appeared in the premier cities of India, as adjuncts to hospitals, such as at the Cama Hospital in Bombay, the Aitchison Hospital at Lahore, the Victoria Zenana Hospital in Delhi and the Gosha Hospital in Madras.[19] These developments marked significant advancements in the field of nursing in India, establishing a more structured and professional approach to healthcare.

By 1891, fifty-two I.A.N.S. members had served in some of the largest military stations in India and Burma, sometimes two, three, or even along, over vast distances. In India, an army nurse had to be

very self-reliant, physically strong to withstand the working weather and season demands, sustain good relationships in a small community, and not attract gossip. For this reason, the selection was restricted to well-bred gentlewomen for fear of bringing nursing into disrepute. Since 1894, the training of soldier orderlies, who perform most of the nursing duties, has become more formal. The nursing Sisters worked shifts, so there was always one on duty, in charge of several wards."[20] This shift system not only provided continuous care for the patients but also established a disciplined and structured environment within the hospitals. The introduction of trained female nurses and the formal training of soldier orderlies significantly improved the quality of medical care in military hospitals. The commitment and resilience of these early nurses laid the foundation for the professional nursing standards that would continue to develop in India.

The T.N.A.I. (Trained Nurses Association Of India) has always had the full support of the Indian Military Nursing Service which may be said to have originated in 1914.[21]On the outbreak ofWorld War 1, British officers informed need for nurses to take care British officials and soldiers in India. Then it was decided to recruit nurses temporarilyfrom India; they were attached to the Queen Alexandra's Military Nursing Service (Q.A.I.M.N.S.) for duty in British Military and Indian Station Hospital.Their service was at first only temporary but was made permanent in 1926, and in 1927 received the description of the Indian Military Nursing Service (I.M.N.S.).[22]Two hospital ships, the LOYALTY and MADRAS, were staffed entirely by nurses from India. Due to the improvements in hospitals where these nurses served, theservice was made permanent on 1st October, 1926. It was known as the Nursing Service from Indian Troops Hospitals (N.S.I.T. H.) and the designation was changed by April 1927 to Indian Military Nursing Service (I.M.N.S.). The Service was composed of 55 trained nurses, i.e., 12 Matrons, 18 Sisters and 25 Staff Nurses. Although the Indian Army was expanding, this number (55) remained stationary till 1939 when World War II broke out.Some of the improvements made during the War were as follows:

(a) Abolition of the rank of Staff Nurse in December, 1941.

(b) Increase in rates of pay and allowances from time to time.

(c) Provision made for nursing officers to take courses in administration and teaching at College of Nursing, Delhi.

(d) Appointment by selection to higher administrative posts e.g. Principal Matrons. (Previously the highest rank in the I.M.N.S. was Matron).

(e) Commissioned Ranks were introduced in September, 1943.[23]

The Service is now composed of qualified State registered nurses who are nationals of India including those by birth or domicile. They are employed for nursing duties, supervision, instruction and training of students and Nursing Sepoys of the Indian Army Medical Corps (I.A.M.C.). However, the formation of this Service was fully justified by results. It has continued to expand and there is no doubt that now it ranks high amongst the Army Nursing Services of the world.

During the Second World War the I.M.N.S. was gradually expanded, and served in India and overseas under the direction of the Chief Principal Matrons of the Q.A.I.M.N.S.After the end of the war there was further development in the training of personnel for the Indian Military Nursing Service. The full three years' training started being carried out entirely in selected Military hospitals. The Preliminary Training Schools which were established during the Second World War were continued and others were opened. These came under the charge of fully trained Sister Tutors. After completing the course in the Preliminary Training School those Student Nurses who had been successful proved satisfactory, passed on into other Military Hospitals for their full training. When the final State examination was passed and the student became a Registered Nurse, she was then commissioned as a member of the Indian Military Nursing Service.[24]This structured pathway ensured that only those with the necessary competence and dedication advanced, thereby maintaining high standards within the service. The rigorous training and commissioning process underscored the commitment to professionalism and excellence in military nursing. The expansion and formalization of nursing training during and after the war played a crucial role in elevating the standards of military medical care in India.

But this period, the appalling shortage of Trained Nurses in India (there being only one Trained Nurse to every 50-60,000 of the population) the Second World War faced Government with the vast problem of providing adequate Nursing services for the Indian Defence Forces in the various fields of operations. As a first step towards meeting the need, the Government initiated a very short course of intensive training in Nursing, which led to the formation in 1942 of the Auxiliary Nursing Service (A.N.S.). Candidates for this Service were given a basic training for six months in selected civil hospitals, after which those who passed the examination were sent to

Military Hospitals in the country and overseas to serve In the capacity of Assistant Nurses. Between two and three thousand young women of India, of all castes and creeds, were given this intensive training and enrolledin the Auxiliary Nursing Service.[25] The Auxiliary Nursing Service was an entirely new and untried organisation. It sought to provide an adequate supply of Nursing personnel for the Indian Army, while safeguarding the rightful status of the Nursing profession.

After the war, a small number of these Indian Nurses were retained. With the advent of independence in August 1947, all the foreign Nurses had to be repatriated. As a result, one of the first Indian nurses, Mrs. D. G. Howard, was appointed to the post of Chief Principal Matron (equivalent to a colonel in the military at that time). Due to the demand for a large number of nursing personnel to meet the needs of the military, eight Army Nursing Training Schools were opened one after the other in the following locations: Delhi, Lucknow, Jalandhar, Secunderabad, Kolkata, INSH Ashwini (Bombay), CH Air Force (Bangalore), and INSH Sanjeevani (Cochin) Military Hospitals.[26]However, due to continuous recruitment from Nursing institutions, the Military Nursing Service grew into full-fledged service. The Military Nursing Service not only expanded in numbers but also evolved in terms of training and specialization, ensuring that the nurses were equipped to handle a wide range of medical situations. This growth was instrumental in setting high standards for military healthcare and professional nursing in India.

Regarding the nursing cadre, the highest officers of the Indian military department initially lacked a proper sense of importance and perspective. As a result, the advancements in military nursing services that had begun in other countries started late in India. However, after gaining independence, the Indian Army had to undertake significant international responsibilities in various conflicts, such as wars and border skirmishes with neighbouring countries and civil wars in different nations, including Korea, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Congo, Iran, Afghanistan, and many more. Naturally, the demand for military nurses increased significantly both in foreign engagements and in border wars. Consequently, India was compelled to establish a military nursing corps with appropriate status and recognition. As previously mentioned, the inception of modern nursing systems in India essentially began in British India's military department with trained white nurses. Subsequently, it gradually developed over time. Military nurses have played a crucial role in both World Wars as well as in national and international military, social, and natural disasters.[27] Military nurses

were not only involved in direct patient care but also contributed to medical logistics, planning, and the implementation of health policies within the military. Their expertise was crucial in establishing field hospitals, managing large-scale medical emergencies, and ensuring the well-being of troops in diverse and often challenging environments.

In conclusion, the establishment and evolution of the Military Nursing in India represent a remarkable journey of resilience, dedication, and progress. The nursing service for the army provided an important arena for the unfolding of female in the British empire. The introduction of trained female nurses in colonial India was initially resisted on considerations of cost, and over concerns regarding the moral implication of feminine presence in a masculine military environment. Nursing was considered a servant, 'dirty work' involved cleaning and bathing the patients and coming in contact with stigmatizing body fluids, which has 'polluting aspects similar to tasks ascribed to the lower castes in Indian society. A status hierarchy had taken shape within nursing during the colonial period. The evolution of the Military Nursing also had a ripple effect on civilian healthcare systems. The high standards and practices developed within the military nursing framework were gradually adopted by civilian hospitals and nursing schools, leading to an overall upliftment of nursing standards across the country. In recent times, military nurses have continued to play a pivotal role in peacekeeping missions, disaster response efforts, and humanitarian aid programs, reflecting their enduring importance in both military and civilian contexts. The legacy of the Military Nursing Corps stands as a testament to the dedication, resilience, and professionalism of its members, who have consistently risen to meet the demands of their critical role in safeguarding health and lives.

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Shadows of the Mangroves:
The Imperial Hunt for Tigers in the Colonial Sundarbans c. 1881-1912

Kausar Ali
Doctoral Research Fellow
Department of History, Raiganj University

Abstract:

My article shall provide a historical overview of tiger hunting and its impact in the Sundarbans during the British *Raj*. Tiger hunting popularly known as *shikar*, emerged as a widespread and prestigious sport among the British colonial elite, symbolizing social status, hyper masculinity and colonial supremacy. The Sundarbans, with its unique mangrove habitat, became a prime location for tiger hunting expeditions. The pursuit of tigers was characterized by elaborate preparations, involving members of royal families, British aristocracy and high-ranking officials. The influence of extensive hunting on the local tiger population was significant, leading to a decline in numbers. Different camps were set up in the wilderness, complete with luxurious accommodations and professional *shikaris* were employed to assist in tracking and hunting tigers. In 1878, the 'alien' rulers officially killed 1,579 tigers pan-India including the Sundarbans, as well as 80,000 tigers were killed in India between 1878-1925. In the same way, between 1881-1912, more than 2400 full grown tigers were killed in that area. Through this paper I will try to showas to how colonial imperialism and its trend of tiger hunting developed and changed. This paper also focusses onhow colonization of forest was an integral part of a much broader strategy of power which aimed at imposing new cultural patterns and new susceptibilities on the forest and its people in the Indian society, culture and environment. The shift from the pursuit of tigers as trophies to conservation efforts reflects changing attitudes toward wildlife and the recognition of the need to protect the threatened species and this very theme shall be the founding ground of my paper.

Key words: *colonialism, shikar, Raj, tiger, hunt, Sundarbans*

Introduction:

If we notice at the expansion of human society, we unearth three distinctive typologies in tiger tracking. The primary one is survival hunting; it was an important pecuniary activity among the primitive men who lived primarily in food hunting/gathering frugality. The second one is resistancechasing; it means extermination or trapping animals for the protection of crops or human subsists. And the third one is hunting as sport or social gratification; it was mainly practiced with the advancement of civilization such as the ancient Greeks and the Romans. This category was largely followed during the British imperialism in India throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth aeras. The relationshipsbetween the Royal Bengal Tiger and the British*Raj* during the colonial epoch in the Sundarbans was a multifaceted and multidimensional one and genuinely intertwined with ecological dynamics, socio-economic factors, the colonial forests and economic policies. The Bengal tiger was not only a powerful marauder in the environment but also a symbol of colonial power, a target for hunting and a subject of beguilement for British officials and hunters.[1]During the British colonial statute in India, the Bengal tiger was often associated with power, strength and coolness.

The whitebureaucrats and officials sought to emphasize their power over the land and its resources, which included the environment. The pursuing of tigers wasoccasionally seen as evidences of dominance and control over the local environment and wildlife.[2] Tiger hunting was a popular entertainment activity among the British elites during the transcontinentalepoch. The British executives and nobility organized tiger shooting expeditions, often escorted by local guides and experienced hunters. Tigers were hunted for sport and as trophies, with their skins and body parts collected as commemorations. This pursuit had a significant impact on the tiger population in the Sundarbansconstituency.The extensiveseeking of tigers by the British privileged for sport and prestige had disadvantageous effects on the Bengal tiger population in the Sundarbans. The indiscriminate killing of tigers, combined with habitat destruction and human-tiger conflicts, contributed to a decline in their numerals.The deterioration in tiger numbers could have caused shifts in the ecological balance of the Sundarbans.[3]The Royal Bengal Tigers play a crucial role in maintaining the populations of their prey species, thereby influencing the entire sustenancesequence. With less tigers, certain prey populations might have increased, leading to cascading effects on flora and other manners. The receptiveness grew about the decline of

tiger populations and the ecological importance of these apex hunters, conservation determinations started gaining grip. Personalities like Jim Corbett, a British hunter turned conservationist, advocated for the safeguard of panthers. The organization of protected areas and wildlife conservation initiatives aimed to safeguard remaining tiger inhabitants. While conservation efforts have been ongoing, modern challenges such as habitat loss, poaching, and human-tiger conflicts continue to threaten the Royal Bengal tiger population in the Sundarbans. The *Raj's* presence in the colonial Sundarbans significantly influenced the Bengal tiger population and the ecological dynamics of the region. The tiger's role as a symbol of power, along with its exploitation for sport and trophies had profound ecological magnitudes.[4] The legacy of this complex history continues to shape conservation efforts and discussions surrounding the Royal Bengal tiger and its atmosphere.

The history of the upbringings of Bengal tigers, in the Sundarbans, stretch back to prehistoric times when these majestic creatures first established their territory in the rich, mangrove-laden estuary. The Sundarbans with itsunique environment and intricate network of tidal waterways, provided a natural haven for these apex marauders. The Bengal tigers adapted to the ecosystem, developing swimming skills and a taste for aquatic prey, such as fish and crabs, which abounded in the marshy countryside.[5] Over the period, indigenous communities living around the Sundarbans learned to coexist with the Bengal tigers, respecting their place in the ecosystem and finding ways to minimize encounters with the beasts. The Sundarbans, also,served as a vital buffer, mitigating the impacts of cyclones and tidal surges while providing a safe haven for miscellaneous wildlifehabitation.

The computerized advancements, such as camera traps and DNA examination, have enabled researchers to monitor tiger inhabitants more meritoriously. Worldwide agreements and partnerships have strengthened cross-border conservation determinations.Considering ahead, the history of the Bengal tiger in the Sundarbans continues to change. The territory's fate remains intricately linked to global efforts to combat climate change, mitigate human-wildlife conflicts, and promote sustainable enlargement. For example, the world wrestles with the urgent need for biodiversity conservation, the story of the Bengal tiger in the Sundarbans serves as a reminder of the complex interplay between nature and human involvement, and the critical importance of ensuring the survival of this iconic classes.The Bengal tiger's interface with the British Raj, the period of British colonial rule in India from 1858 to 1947, was marked by a mix of fascination, exploitation, and

conservation grits.[6] The colonial government had a significant impact on the tiger population in India, including the Bengal tiger, due to factors such as hunting, habitat modification, and changing attitudes toward wildlife.This led to a considerable decline in tiger populations, as hunting was largely unfettered and unmanageable.[7] The tiger tracking became a symbol of colonial power and supremacy. The British officials systematized grand hunting expeditions to showcase their authority and competence. The killing of a tiger was often seen as a display of courage.

Conserving the Tiger: Discussions, Conflicts and Game Laws

The establishment of protected areas, such as national parks and reserves, aimed to provide a safe haven for tigers. Ingenuities to regulate hunting and protect wildlife were gradually introduced.The British Raj left anundying impact on India's biodiversity and wildlife conservation determinations. The widespread hunting and exploitation of tigers during colonial times contributed to the decline of their inhabitants. Nevertheless, the shift in attitudes toward conservation also began during this era, setting the stage for more comprehensive efforts to protect tigers and their habitats in the post-independence period. Nowadays, the legacy of the British Raj's impact on tigers in India serves as a reminder of the complex relationship between colonial powers, wildlife, and conservation. Efforts to recover and sustain tiger populations continue, with a greater emphasis on protecting their habitats, curbing poaching, and fostering coexistence between humans and tigers.

The Bengal tiger's persistence is now a priority for both India and the global conservation community, as they work to ensure the continued existence of this iconic species in the uninhabited.The history of man-eating tigers in the Sundarbans is a complex tale that intertwines the lives of humans and tigers in this unique bionetwork. The Sundarbans delta region of Bangladesh and India, has been the backdrop for numerous incidents involving tigers attacking and killing creatures. This singularity has its roots in a combination of ecological, social, and economic factors. Here's an outline of the history of man-eating tigers in the Sundarbans.The original recorded incidents of tiger attacks on humans in the Sundarbans date back to the nineteenth century.[8] As the colonial management expanded its presence in the region, human activities supplemented. The structure of roads, railways, and settlements encroached upon tiger habitats, leading to more frequent encounters between individuals and the Royal Bengal

Tigers.The Sundarbans is home to a variety of wildlife, including several species of deer that are the primary prey of tigers. Nonetheless, the availability of these natural prey species can fluctuate due to factors such as seasonal changes, disease, and habitat adjustments. At times when usual food becomes scarce, some tigers might turn to alternative sources of food, including human beings.The human communities in the Sundarbans region have archaeologicallyaffianced in activities such as fishing, honey collectionand woodcutting within the woodland. These accomplishments expose people to the same areas where tigers roam, increasing the chances of confronting the big cats. Enlightening practices that involve entering the forest for resource extraction put humans at risk of tiger occurrences.As inhabitants grew and economic activities expanded, human settlements and agriculture encroached further into tiger surroundings. This encroachment led to habitat fragmentation and reduced the tigers' access to their natural prey. Tigers adapting to these changes might see humans as a potential food source due to increased collocation.In the end of the twienth century, awareness about the issue of man-eating tigers propagated. Conservationists, researchers, and local authorities introduced efforts to address the human-tiger conflict in the Sundarbans.

The Royal Bengal Tiger, technically known as *Panthera Tigris* is a subspecies of tiger native to the Indian civilization. It is the furthest well-known and iconic of the tiger subspecies due to its majestic appearance and historical significance in the population. The Royal Bengal Tiger is characterized by its distinctive orange coat with dark vertical stripes, which serve as excellent camouflage in their natural environment. The coveringcolor can vary from pale yellow to reddish-orange. They have a white underbodywith a few black stripes around their appearance. The tigers are found primarily in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and so on. They inhabit a range of ecosystems including tropical and subtropical rainforests, grasslands, mangrove swamps and mixed forests. Bengal tigers are self-contained creatures and adult males have larger territories that overlap the smaller territories of females. They are principallynighttime hunters, preying on animals such as deer, wild boar, and hoofed creature. Their hunting technique involves stalking and ambushing their objective. It is classified as Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Wildlife. The population of these tigers has been significantly threatened by habitat loss due to deforestation, poaching for their valuable body parts, and human-wildlife divergence. Various safeguarding organizations and governments in the tiger range countries have been working

to protect and conserve theBengal Tiger. Determinations include establishing protected areas, implementing anti-poaching measures and promoting community-based conservation ascendancies. In the Indian subcontinent, where a significant portion of the world's Bengal tigers reside, there are dedicated tiger reserves aimed at conserving these majestic creatures. Some well-known tiger reserves in India include Jim Corbett National Park, Ranthambore National Park, and Sundarbans National Park and so on. The Royal Bengal Tiger holds cultural significance in many countries where it is established. It is often seen as a symbol of strength, power, and loveliness. The tiger has also been featured in art, literature and religious contexts throughout history. Adult male Royal Bengal Tigers can reach a length of around nine to ten feet and weigh between four hundred to five pounds. Adult females are generally diminished. In September 2021, the global population of Royal Bengal Tigers was estimated to be around two thousand five hundred.[9]

The account of the Royal Bengal Tiger is interweaved with the cultural, historical, and ecological contexts of the Indian history. The tigers have held a significant place in the region's mythology, art, literature, and traditions for times.[10]The tigers have been a part of the Indian cultural landscape for epochs. They materialize in ancient Indian texts, such as the Rigveda, where they are associated with strength and supremacy.The tiger is often depicted in ancient Indian art, sculpturesand manner. They were considered symbols of royalty and muscle. Tigers were sought after by rulers for hunting. The practice of royal tiger hunts, known as "*shikar*," was a display of power and bravery among the graciousness. The tigers were considered prestigious trophies.Throughoutthe colonial period, tiger hunting became popular among the British elite, and large numbers of tigers were killed for entertainment.The nineteenth century saw the beginning of some efforts to protect panther. Thecolonial management established some wildlife sanctuaries, notably Jim Corbett National Park (formerly Hailey National Park) in 1936, which was one of the first wildlife reserves in India.Conservationists like Jim Corbett himself played a role in raising awareness about the need to protect tigers and their environments.After India gained independence in 1947, there was an increased focus on wildlife safeguarding. The government enacted laws and established protected areas to safeguard the country's biodiversity, including tigers.Project Tiger, launched in 1973, was a pioneering conservation initiative aimed at protecting the Royal Bengal Tigers.[11] It focused on habitat preservation and anti-

poaching determinations.

Now let us look back at how brave or weak the masculine colonial white ruler were in-front of the Royal Bengal Tigers of the eastern forests and what kind of relationships they developed with the tiger clans of the Sundarbans region. According to one British administrator officer namely W.W. Hunter, the Sundarbans was a sort of drowned land broken up by swamps, intersected by a thousand river channels and maritime black water, but gradually dotted, as people receded from the seaboard, with clearings and patches of rice surface-dwelling.[12]Various disagreements have arisen regarding the origin of the name Sundarbans. All of these, however possible explanation. The name probably derived from the abundance of the *Sundari* tree (*HeritorsLittorales*), which grows most abundantly in the region.[13] The lower part or the end of these two famous rivers formed a region half filled with brackish soil and half fill with the brackish sea water.[14] These creeks connected to the sea have jointed each other to form a branch system and later formed numerous small creeks that crisscrossed the entire region, as if the water flow has painted a detailed picture like sea moss. A French traveller, Francois Bernier,toured the Sundarbans in the year 1665 and gave a lot of information about the Sundarbans' Royal Bengal Tiger.[15]He wrote about the Sundarbans in his travelogue, during the Mughal reign. He mentioned that in those islands, it was dangerous to land ashore at random places as most of the places were dangerous and great care must be taken while fastening the boats to trees, during the night,and must be kept at some distance from the shore, for it constantly happened that some persons or another fellprey to tigers. This ferocious animal has been very apt and conditioned to break into the boat itself while people were asleep, and to carry away some victims. If we are to believe the local boatmen, this victim generally hapen to be the stoutest and fattest of the party.[16] From this event, we get some great information about the hunting patterns of the Bengal Tigers of the Sundarbans.

The Royal Bengal Tiger is born in the special environment of this unique salty and muddy mangrove forest in the world and especially in the undisturbed tidal water of the sea and it struggles with that environment from birth and adapts to protect its existence. A special feature of this mangrove forest is the entire forest floor is semi submerged by the following water currents and jungle animals of an app to claim to the trees like reptiles. So, the tire here is a skilled swimmer. They can also swim well in this swear healing currents. In this circulate it dark jungle the tiger food is wild boar, deer, monkey,

chameleon, birds, crap, fish, honey and drinking water is salty sea water. They had to go out to collect food and fight with big crocodiles according to experts the qualification fight of African lion with Royal Bengal tiger does not last more than four minutes. There is nothing surprising about these pairs of between Bengal tiger, origin of the name Royal Bengal is known it may be that the Duke of Windsor killed a Bengal tiger when he was the Prince of Wales. Sincethen, perhaps Bengal tigerswere called Royal Bengal. It is not an easy task for all creatures to survive in this in waterlogged jungle.[17] The main tiger hunting technique of the Sundarbans hunters was to build dens on tree branches and sit on the dens. The strategy of their hunting was definitely to save themselves. There are many examples of hunting in colonial writings, as a way of avoiding danger and asserting the masculinity of hunting and adopting a weaker pray. Throughout the colonial period in India three kinds of hunting systems were known, viz. (1) tiger hunting on foot which was mainly in the Himalayas, (2) Tiger hunting on the back of the elephants, royal family member or princess used to hunt like this when they were young. For the British colonial masters, this traditional hunting method was of the 'Moguls' and (3) making a *macha* or a temporary makeshift bamboo-made loft ona tree branch and sitting on the loft, this is the hunting method of the natives, the native hunters where are used to hunting in this way to avoid a danger. This method of hunting was not considered acceptable by the colonial authorities. Their hunting style was different from the others. Their 'masculine' style of hunting was much more regal and daring, mostly on elephant backs or on foot accompanied by local hunters who knew the forest too well.

The Economy of the Tiger Hunt:

The Imperial government realized that all tigers of the Sundarbans were 'cannibals' and exterminated. The colonial government announced a policy of reward for killings tigers by the native poachers. The notification dated 16th November 1883by the Government to hunt tigers was published in the Calcutta Gazette. Rangers and forest in charge at four major toll station in the Sundarbans reversed forest area announced rewords for poachers for killing tigers. In 1883, the reword was INR. 50 for each full-grown tiger and INR 10 for each cub. The hunters used to get rewords from the forest officials by submitting tiger skins and skulls.[18] The value of the rewards was increased from time to time, and was related to the increase in the tiger power in the *jungle*. In the year of 1906, the rewards increased to INR 100 for the

full- grown tiger and INR 20 for a cub. In 1909, the prize money was again increased to INR 200. Between 1906 and 1909, more than 500 lives lost to tigers in the Sundarbans region.[19] So the white hunters got a golden opportunity to prove their powers under the colonial rule in the mangrove forest region of the Sundarbans for prize of tiger hunting. But those of the native hunters who were skilled but whose skills was looked down upon were more or less engaged in this hunting for the sake of prize. Between 1881 and 1912, more than 24,00 full-grown tigers were killed in the Sundarbans region.[20] The authorities have made no mistakes in their efforts to tame the Sundarbans tiger. Denigrated native's hunters as a feminine or a spouting but did not object to following native technique for catching animals, such as generally using trap leaves or spring bowls with traps or poisoned arrows. Such a trap could only be successfully used in winter because trapping leaves was impossible at other times of the year when the forest was flooded. In the year of 1918, a revenue official on a reward of Rs.100 for catching a tiger for trapping in the Sundarbans. But most of the tigers catch in the traps were killed immediately. Even the small cubs where not left out.

After 1910, some areas of the Sundarbans where are protected and some tigers and cubs where is sold to various zoos. One such full grown tiger was captured in 1915 and a cub in 1930 was sold in the Calcutta Zoo.[21] Native hunters obtained permits to kill the numerous Bengal tigers from the Sundarbans reserved forest. The massive killing of tigers in the Sundarbans had an immediate impact on the ecology and the environment, as annual statistics showed that the number of the tigers in the Sundarbans has steadily decline. In 1928 CE, the forest departments admitted that the number of the tigers in the Sundarbans division had decline comparatively. But the colonial authorities could not understand the reason for the decline in Bengal Tiger numbers. Of course, it is also true that the life of the indigenous people would have been endangered due to lack of prey. However, many have pointed to the rapid decline in the number of deer needed for the tiger's natural diet as a reason for tiger attacks on humans. This way the tiger become a man. Poachers would enter the forest on the pretended of hunting tigers for reward and indiscriminately hunt deer with guns. An example of the government reports revealed that poachers in the Sundarbans have poached large number of deer in anticipation of tiger poaching. Throughout from 1915-1940 is the period when most evidence of deer hunting has been found.[22] The department of forestry has admitted that there is a need to stop poachers to poaching deer in the Sundarbans. A

forest department report of 1939, sates that all pleasure seekers who were permitted to visit the forest were allowed to hunt one deer each.

Conclusion:

Present discussion demonstrate that the Sundarbans are dwindling in volume due to the massive desertification for people settlements. Deforestation has caused uncharacteristic coexistence or the balance between living organisms and people. Currently, the wildlife courses and human trajectories are in struggle. It wasoccurred not only in the colonial Sundarbans but also in Kumaon, Nilgiris, and everywhere in India where the colonialism was recognized. Subsequently destruction of the forests, the imperial government preserved the forest in their own fashion. Correspondingly, the beauty of the tropical Indian forest has overflowed with luxury. Definitively, it can be said that native hunters never behaved weakly or cowardly in front of the tigers, as it character of the Sundarbans, and it can also be said that the British did not always show the expected masculinity that they hoped for. They miscarried to demonstration the courage required of the British rulers in front of the Bengal Tiger in the mysterious forest of the Sundarbans.

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Flavours of Bengal:
Unveiling Portuguese Culinary Influences

Dr. Swati Basak
Assistant Professor
Department of History, Mahishadal Raj College,
Purba Medinipur, West Bengal

Abstract

The Portuguese influence on Bengal, distinct from other European traders, extended beyond commerce to cultural realms. Their attempt to convert Bengalis to Christianity led to the establishment of settlements, particularly in regions like Hooghly, Chittagong and Bandel. These interactions resulted in a unique blend of Portuguese and Bengali cultures, impacting various aspects of life, including cuisine, language and religious practices. The introduction of new ingredients like potatoes, tomatoes and chillies had a lasting impact on Bengali cuisine. The process of making channa, leading to the creation of iconic sweets is another significant contribution. The Portuguese influence is indeed significant and can be seen in various dishes and culinary techniques. Moreover, their method of preserving food, like making pickles and using spices also had a lasting impact on Bengali cuisine.

This paper explores the depth of Portuguese influence on Bengal and the reciprocal cultural exchanges that enriched both cultures. By examining culinary impact we can appreciate the lasting legacy of Portuguese presence in Bengal and how it shaped the region's cultural landscape. Food indeed plays a significant role in shaping societies and culture. The Portuguese influence on Bengali cuisine is a fascinating example of cross cultural exchange. The blending of Portuguese and Bengali culinary traditions has resulted in a unique fusion that highlights the dynamic nature of cultural exchange and the enduring impact of historical interactions on local cuisines.

Keywords: Portuguese, Culinary Culture, Cuisines, Bengali, Cross-Cultural Tradition.

Discussion

Bengal is a place rich in natural resources and also a land of diversity. A variety of food items are grown in Bengal. Its important geographical location has helped in cultivating an exclusive culture. Historian Niharranjan Roy discussed the identity of the Bengalis in his work *Bangaleer Itihas*.[1] It is the comprehensive history of the Bengali people exploring their cultural, social and political achievements. The work is regarded as a seminal text in Bengali historiography, offering valuable insights into the identity and heritage of the Bengali people. His *Bangaleer Itihas* delves into the culinary culture of Bengal, tracing its evolution over time. He explores how Bengal's cuisine has been influenced by various factors including geography, agriculture, trade and cultural exchanges. In this paper we will discuss in detail the influence of the Portuguese on the culinary culture of Bengal which is quiet significant and dates back to the 16th century when the Portuguese established a strong presence in Bengal.

The arrival of European traders, particularly the Portuguese, in Bengal significantly impacted both the economy and the food habits of the region. European traders introduced new vegetables, fruits, and other food items to Bengal. These introductions enriched the local cuisine and diversified the agricultural practices. Examples include potatoes, tomatoes, chillies, and various tropical fruits. The exchange of goods and ideas between Europeans and Bengalis had cultural implications. New culinary techniques, ingredients, and cooking methods were adopted, blending with local traditions to create unique dishes and flavours. Even though European traders were eventually displaced from many areas by local powers or other European competitors, their influence on Bengali cuisine and agriculture persisted. Many of the introduced foods became staples in Bengali cooking and remain popular to this day.

In essence, the arrival of Europeans in Bengal for trade purposes not only transformed the economy but also left a lasting imprint on the food culture of the region, marking a significant chapter in its historical development.

Vasco da Gama reached Bengal in 1498AD. From then the Portuguese merchants made trading relation with Bengal. They established trading factories in Chittagong and Saptagram in 1517 AD. In 1579-80 AD the Portuguese got the permission to build up a factory on the bank of the river Hoogly which strengthened their trading relation with Bengal.[2] Apart from that the Portuguese set up their business outposts in Hijli, Sripur, Dacca, Jessore, Barisal, Noakhali.

Sandip, Dakshin Sahabazpur and many other places were occupied by them in the 17th century. But they could not stay back there for long. The Arakanese killed the Portuguese traders and occupied Sandip.

The Portuguese traders employed firearms to intimidate both Bengal and the Mughal authority. Upon Shah Jahan's ascension to the throne of India, he devised a strategy to expel the Portuguese traders from Bengal. Acting under his command, Qasim Khan, the subahdar of Bengal, compelled numerous Portuguese individuals to either convert to Islam or face enslavement. In 1632 AD, Qasim Khan dispatched nearly 400 individuals as slaves to Delhi, effectively diminishing the influence and power of the Portuguese in Bengal. Subsequently, the Dutch arrived in Bengal in 1653 AD and established a stronghold in Chinsurah, along with additional factories in Cossimbazar and Patna. Later, French merchants entered Bengal, establishing their own factory at Chandernagore in 1673 AD. The English merchants were granted permission to engage in trade in Bengal in 1650 AD, subsequently founding a factory in Dacca in 1668 AD, followed by establishments in Rajmahal and Maldah. In 1717 AD, through a firman issued by Farukshiyar, the English East India Company obtained the right to trade in Bengal, paying an annual fee of Rs 3000/-. Nawab Alivardi Khan fostered cordial relations with the English traders, shielding them from various challenges while ensuring they operated within prescribed limits. In 1755 AD, Danish merchants similarly secured permission to establish a factory in Serampore.[3]

Let's get back to the point. This paper illustrates the culinary culture of Bengal influenced by the Portuguese. Historian Colleen Taylor Sen pointed out that in the 16th century; the Portuguese controlled the Indian Ocean trade.[4] They used the term 'Estado da India' which means state of India. The Dutch and the British came to India to change their fate and earn money but the purpose of the Portuguese was completely religious. They were more interested in conversion. They also adopted Indian culture. They kept slaves, made harems, prepared Indian dresses, chewed betel nuts and even habituated with Indian food by appointing Indian cooks. The first Europeans who came to Bengal by crossing the Sunderban area were the Portuguese. Pedro Tavares got the permission to build up a church and town from the Mughal emperor Akbar and established a church and a town at Ogli which was a famous salt port during that time. He named it as Bandel.[5] It derived from the Persian word Bandar. By getting the permission of the Mughal emperor Akbar, the Portuguese settled in a village on the bank of the river Hoogly. By 1670 AD almost

2,000 Portuguese people and their descendants lived there.[6] They completely adopted Indian culture, their style and dress. Sen pointed out that they dressed completely in the style of the local nawabs, kept slaves and cooks and many other things. The Mogh cooks arrived from Sylhet and the Chittagang Hills showed their expertise in making bread, cakes and pastries. In the later period the British also hired them for cooking.

The Portuguese engaged in plundering and looting in the Chittagong hilly track area. However, following the arrival of the English in Calcutta, the Portuguese relocated their settlements to the English Tank Square area. Goan cooks subsequently arrived, introducing Goan flavors into the cuisine of Calcutta. This convergence fostered a synthetic culture in Calcutta, blending Portuguese influences with local traditions. In Bengali culinary style we cannot forget the contribution of the Portuguese in making cheese. Historian Sen said "India's only indigenous Western-style cheese, Bandel, a soft, smoky cow's-milk cheese still sold in Kolkata's New Market."[7] It is also pointed out by Sen that they first made channa which was used for making sweets in Bengal. It brought a revolution among the sweet lovers of Bengal. K.T.Achaya said that from ancient India curdling milk was a taboo and could not be used.[8] The Vedic people used to offer milk, ghee, butter etc. to God. Kaushik Majumdar in his book *Nola* pointed out that as noni and butter were two favourite items of Sri Krishna, these were considered as very much sacred.[9] According to Manu, channa was the waste part of milk and so cannot be offered to God. So it is true that people were little familiar with channa but as there was a religious taboo on making channa, it was not popularly used. In Vaishnava texts the word "chenna" has been used to make different curries but sweets were not prepared with channa. Channa was used in making curry or some other preparations. We, Hindus generally offer food first to God and then we have it. So sweets prepared from channa cannot be offered to God and it was rejected for a certain period of time. Curdled milk cannot be consumed. It is separated from milk and so it is known as 'channa.' Sukumar Sen wrote in *Kolikatar Kahini* that kheer, butter, ghee, curd all these are the natural by products of milk but channa is the perversion of milk.[10] There is no mention of channa in the sanskrit texts also. Kaushik Majumdar pointed out that Niharranjan Ray in his *Bangaleer Itihas* did not mention the name of sweets prepared from channa.[11]

Arthur Berriedale pointed out that the Rig-Veda referred to a type of cheese, but Otto Schrader countered this idea, suggesting it was

"a skin of sour milk, not cheese in the proper sense." Historian K.T. Achaya highlighted a taboo against curdling milk. He further noted that 'dadhanwat' mentioned in Ayurveda was akin to paneer. The process of making channa was described in the 12th-century Indian text Manasollasa, where sour substances were added to milk, and after the milk solids separated, rice flour was added to form balls that were then fried to make sweets. Historians B.N. Mathur and Sunil Kumar also affirmed the existence of cheese in ancient times. Additionally, the Portuguese introduced various types of fruits and vegetables to India.

Chilli without which no cooking is complete in the present day is the gift of the Portuguese in India. Chillies were used in Mexico in 500 BCE. When the Portuguese came to Goa, they brought it with them. After thirty years of the coming of Vasco da Gama in India, three varieties of chillies started growing in India.[12] It is believed that cumin was originated in Egypt. From there it arrived in Iran and from there it reached India. [13]

Potatoes, tomato, chillies, papaya, cashew, guava and many other vegetables and fruits which are very much essential for our everyday cooking were originated somewhere and planted by the Portuguese and some other European traders and became popularized in India.[14] Though chilli was introduced by the Portuguese but it became very popular rapidly because of its versatility, flavour and the ease with which they could be cultivated. We found the reference of *moricher jhal* in *Chandimangal Kavyas*. Pepper was produced in the Malabar Coast and Bengal and was a famous trading item. When the Portuguese came to India they first cultivated chillies in Goa and then in South India. In the 17th century when the Maratha army reached North India chilli was introduced there also. There were three types of chilli plants grown in India. Chillies were named as 'Pernabucio pepper.'[15] They came from Brazil and after that reached Lisbon and from there came to India. Gowai mirchi or Goan pepper was grown in Bombay during that time.

Many crops and vegetables which were grown in India started cultivating in India by the initiative of the British. Potato, sweet potato or cassava was cultivated in India in the 16th century but there was no record of mass consumption of these vegetables. Utsa Ray in her book highlights a critical perspective on the British colonial approach to agriculture in India. The British government promoted the cultivation of Western crops, deeming them scientifically superior. This was part of a broader colonial strategy to establish the dominance of European

cultural practises and undermine indigenous farming methods.[16] They propagated that these crops were superior to any other Indian crop and it was their noble agenda to civilize Indians. It was not a new picture during that time because the British felt that India is the land of the uncivilized people and they came here to civilize the Indians. On the one hand they failed to cultivate American rice and this could not replace the Indian type and on the other hand they became very much successful in cultivating potato without which no dish is complete now. The British became very much successful in their civilizing mission and cultivated cauliflower, tomato, okra and many other vegetables and fruits.[17] But it is also true that till 19th century these items were not very common among us and never included into the diet of the common people. The 18th century text named *Annadamangala* which depicted the life of the common people did not mention these food items like tea, cake, pastries, biscuits, chop, cutlets which are very common now-a-days. During that time all these food staffs were confined among the English educated middle class people.

Sweet potatoes were first discovered by the Europeans in America in 1537 AD and a Spanish ship first brought potatoes to Europe in 1570 AD. It was thought first that the names of Raleigh and Drake were associated with potatoes though it is believed now that this information is not true. Potatoes were called batata and papa in South America when John Gerard gave the details of it first in English in 1597 AD.[18] Some believe that sweet potatoes were present in India before the coming of the Europeans because Sir Thomas Roe was served with sweet potatoes in the dinner in Ajmer. Warren Hastings was very much happy to get a basket full of potatoes as a gift. From this description it is quite obvious that potato was a very precious item during that time and was not consumed by the masses regularly. In the later half of the Eighteenth centuries that is in the 1780s there was a huge craze for potatoes, peas and beans in Calcutta. From a report in 1860 it is said that the Dutch were the first who introduced potatoes and from them the British introduced different types of vegetables in Calcutta which were confined to a section of people during that time and after a long time they were used for mass consumption.[19] After the Europeans, the Muslims accepted the consumption of potatoes in India. In the plains of India the potatoes started growing in abundance.

Importation of fruits and vegetables was not a new phenomenon in India. Babur also planted the seeds of watermelon in India which gives some solace to our thirsty soul during summer.[20] But varied kind of fruits and vegetables and fruits were introduced and planted by the

Portuguese and the British without which our meals are incomplete now.

The cashew nut came from Brazil and brought to Goa by the Portuguese. Both the Goan people and the Brazilians took the nut as a fruit but unlike them in the rest of South America the outer part of cashew was enjoyed by the people. It is believed that it was originated from South East Brazil and came to India. It was found in 1578 AD when Acosta came to India and he discovered it in the gardens of Santa Cruz in Cochin.[21] The famous drink in Goa which is known as feni prepared from cashew. The Jesuits priests of Goa popularized the drink in Goa. In Tamil cashew is known as mundiri. The Keralites call the nut as parangi-mav or andi which means foreign stone and the fruits as gomanga because it arrived from Goa to Kerala. There was a tribe in Brazil named Tepi who used to call it acaju and cashew derived from it. [22]

The South and the Central part of America which is known as Tropical America, is the birthplace of many fruits which has been Indianised now. Guava originated in Peru in South America and planted by the Portuguese in Asia. It is known as Jambu Portugis in Malaysia.[23] The Spanish word of guava is guajava. It is believed that guava existed in India a long ago because from Blochmann's translation of Ain-i-Akbari we came to know the fact that guavas were served at Akbar's table. But originally Abul Fazl used the word amrud which means both the guava and pear. So there is a confusion regarding the existence of guava in India before the coming of the Europeans. In 1550 AD Benzoni described the existence of this fruit in the eastern part of India and later on Fryer mentioned the name guava in 1673 AD.

It is believed that pineapple which is a favourite fruit of us originated in the lowlands of South America.[24] Columbus first noticed it when he was travelling towards an island named Guadeloupe in 1493 AD. The local name of the fruit was nana and it was known as ananas in the writings of a clergyman. In Malayalam language in India it is known as poruthu-chakka.[25] The description of pineapple has been found in 1564 AD in India. It was an expensive fruit because it costs 4 dams each with which ten mangoes could be bought. People had affection for this fruit because during the reign of Jahangir it was grown in thousands in the gardens of Agra. Berneir also pointed out when he described the beauty of Bengal that along with different other fruits pineapples were grown in Bengal in abundance in 1665 AD. The Portuguese and the Spaniards preferred to call it 'the pine of the

Indies' for a short period of time and later on it changed into pine apple and 'Indies' has been excluded.[26] In many parts of India and Asia people use the word 'anana' still now. We not only relish the raw fruit but also use it in different cooking. In Bengal we make chutneys with pineapple which is very popular. But before the advent of Columbus there were no traces of pineapple in India.

Cabbages were cultivated in Europe, while pineapples originated in South America. Pomegranates came from Iran, and potatoes originated in South America before reaching Europe and subsequently India. Apples were first introduced by the British in India in 1865, with additional varieties introduced later. Sweet cherries were popular in making desserts before India gained independence in the 20th century. Tobacco was introduced by the Portuguese, and coffee, originally from Ethiopia, later found its way to India.

400 years ago tobacco was introduced in India by the Portuguese.[27] Though it is said that there were some local varieties of tobacco which were grown in India but the Brazilian type was the best. It became an important trading item in the 17th century. In the later period the British introduced the modern type of cigarettes.[28] Historian K.T.Achaya pointed out "shredded tobacco leaves, Indianized to thambaku, are frequently chewed in India packed in a betel quid, making the product a food of sorts."[29] He also said that tobacco plant was originated in South America but it was cultivated in India in the 16th century. Akbar also tasted the essence of it which was gifted by his courtier Asad Beg.[30] The practise became so widespread that Jahangir prohibited the sell of it but of no use.

Tomato which is an indispensible item in the present day cooking came from the New World by the initiative of the Portuguese spice traders in the 16th century.[31] It completely changed and brought a revolution in the food habit of the people. It is used almost everywhere in every item now. It is the most indispensible vegetable in our country revealed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. All these arrived in India with Vasco da Gama when he reached Calicut in 1498 AD. But it is true that though it has arrived in India in the 16th century but it was absent in the diet of the common people of Bengal till the introduction of the British rule in India. Historian Lizzie Collingham mentioned that when Portugal discovered the sea route from India to Europe to facilitate their spice trade, tomatoes arrived in India. This event marked the beginning of a cross-cultural tradition in the culinary history of Bengal.[32]

Watt pointed out in 1880 AD that tomatoes were grown in India for

the European people who consumed it.[33] When it was first introduced in this country the Bengalese and the Burmese added it to enrich the taste of their sour curries. It was originated in Mexico or Peru and may be in some other places of Central and coastal America. It was first used by the Italians among the Europeans who used it in their pastas. In England it was consumed much later because it was associated with the fatal plants belladonna and mandrake.[34]

Papaya which is another favourite fruit of us and we consume both the ripe and raw form of it and which helps us to keep our digestive system cool, originated most probably in Mexico according to Delle Valle.[35] Some believe that it started its journey from South America to Spanish East Indies and from there reached Malacca. Christopher Columbus found the plant in America and brought it back to Europe and papaya came to be considered as "the noblest of all the fruits of India."[36] It was popularized by the Portuguese and later on the English.

The most interesting thing which we have mentioned earlier is that the Portuguese adopted Indian culture and they became indianised in their dresses, habits, food etiquettes etc. A Dutch personality named Jan Huyghen van Linschotan reached Goa in 1583 AD and surprised to see the Portuguese people who were enjoying Indian food there. Lizzie said "A typical meal was boiled rice with a thin watery soup poured over it, salt fish, mango pickle, and a fish or meat sauce."[37] He was surprised that during that time the Europeans used to have bread and meat. Surprisingly and interestingly enough they ate with their hands like the Indians. They became completely indianised in their habit.[38] Even the women in the Portuguese household laughed at the people who used to take food using spoons.[39]

Another interesting fact is that women in the Portuguese families who settled down in this country practised purdah and veils. The rich women also wore jewelleries, rosaries made of gold and silver but also dressed in Indian attire and they were habituated with it. They wore thin Indian clothes and slippers on feet.[40] They became accustomed with chewing betel nuts like the indigenous Indian ladies and also used perfumes and sandalwood.

Calcutta has witnessed the invasion of many people who came to Calcutta from different parts of the world in different time and left the flavour of their culture in this city. In the book named *Calcutta Cookbook* Minakshi Das Gupta pointed out 'Like the city, Calcutta's cooking pots have opened lids into which Portuguese Bandel cheese, Armenian dolma, Jewish mahashas, South East Asian malai kari and Chinese chow have arrayed themselves to cook with a special

flavour.'[41]

It is a well known fact that the Portuguese were famous for introducing channa in Bengal. They trained the mogh cooks who were originally Bengali Buddhists, the art of making different types of mouth watering confectionaries.[42] These moghs or the Bengali Buddhists worked in Arab ships as cooks or deckhands which were sailing towards South East Asia.[43] When the Portuguese established their settlements on the bank of the river Hooghly and exercised their control on trade and commerce by ousting the Arabs from there and employed Moghs as their cooks and taught them the art of Portuguese cooking. The moghs were very good cooks, bakers and expert in preparing delicious confectionaries. They were very much famous in Bengal because of Bengal's love for sweets. Even other Europeans felt that Bengal was very much suitable for them to live in especially in those places where the Portuguese used to live in. The English people also admitted the superior quality of Portuguese bread after a long time Portuguese left India. They never questioned the quality of Portuguese food found in Bengal because the Indians were trained very well in making Portuguese food but many ingredients have been replaced by indigenous staffs because of the availability of resources. Coconut milk was replaced by almond or fresh cow's milk, jiggery was used instead of refined sugar. Ghee was used instead of fresh butter. Wheat flour was supplemented by rice flour. The confectionary item prepared in Goa have been Indianised now.[44]

Food plays a crucial role in shaping society and culture. The fusion of Portuguese and Bengali culinary tradition in India is a prime example of how food can bridge different cultures and create a unique gastronomic heritage. This cross cultural exchange significantly enriched Indian cuisine, introducing new ingredients, cooking techniques and flavours.

In the 1950s and 1960s, social scientists began to study these culinary traditions more systematically. One of the early proponents of studying the cultural significance of food was Marvin Harris, an anthropologist known for his work on cultural materialism. He explored how food practices reflect and shape social structures, beliefs and identities.[45] His work highlighted the importance of food in understanding human societies and their development over time.

Conclusion

It can be said that the Portuguese introduced several key ingredients to Bengal that have become staples in Bengali cuisine. These include

potatoes, tomatoes, papayas, pineapples, guavas, cashews and chillies. They had a considerable impact on Bengali sweets by introducing channa or fresh cheese which led to the creation of many iconic Bengali sweets such as sandesh, rasagolla, channa payesh etc. The Portuguese influence is also seen in the introduction of breads and bakery items. The concept of baking bread which was not traditionally present in Bengal was introduced by the Portuguese. Items like pao (bread) and cakes have Portuguese roots.

Over time there emerged a fusion of Portuguese and Bengali flavours and techniques, creating unique dishes that blend the culinary traditions of both cultures. For instance, the dish "prawn malai curry" is said to have been influenced by the Portuguese way of cooking food. These influences have become so deeply integrated into Bengali cuisine that they are now considered as the integral part of the region's culinary identity.

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Imperial Attitude towards Detainees[1]:
A Perspective of Detention Camps in Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur, and Deoli

Subhamay Dutta
Ph.D. Research Scholar
Department of History
Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University

Abstract:

The detention camps were associated with the colonial jail system in India.The detention system was initiated after the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act was implemented in 1930. Throughout colonial regimes, the prison systems in India were transformed gradually. The colonial government reformed and revamped the jail system without any organized judicial and prison system in India.The jail administration supervised the 'detainees' or 'detenus' treatment policy.

In 1930, the government of Bengal started contemplating alternative accommodation for Detainees—those detained without a judicial trial.The colonial detention camps were introduced by the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act in 1930. During the time of Militant nationalism, the *Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur, and Deoli* detention camps were carried in prime role in colonial detention camps in India. The objectives of colonial detention camps were set up far away from the mainland because the British authority ensured safe custody. The revolutionaries were detained in these camps withouta judicial trial. All the detention camps had significant effects on historical interpretation. Practically, the imperial policy towards the detainees was codified with various phenomena. Several rules, regulations, and laws were implemented fordetainees in various contexts. This research article mainly designed the colonial policy of detention camps and detainees.

Keywords: *Detainees, Detention, BCLA 1930, Funeral Law, Prison Discipline*

Introduction:

The useful modes of jail, prison, and detention camps are the same. Cambridge English Dictionary defines 'jail' as '*the building where*

criminals are forced to live as a punishment.' But*,* a little difference between jails and detention camps is mainly, that the detained persons entered the camp without a judicial procedure.In colonial India, The*Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur, and Deoli* detention campswere carried in historical watermarks.Noticeably, all the detention camps were located far away from the mainland.

In other words, the cellular jail in Andamans a penal colony, remained a deathtrap in the British period. Several central and district jails, including those at Salem, Lahore, and Allahabad, were built on the Pentonville model in the 1860s and 1870s, prompted partly by the events of 1857–1858 and the reform of the Indian Penal Code.[2]Similarly, *Buxa*, *Hijli*, *Berhampur*, and *Deoli*have consisted of the same Pentonville model, Jeremey Bentham a pioneered figure who popularised the term 'Panopticon' and 'Pentonville model'. In his book '*Panopticon or, The Inspection- House, Dublin T.Y Payne 1791'.* French philosopher Micheal Foucault's*'Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la Prison* (French) *'Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison' (1975)* established a new perspective on prisons and the political treatment of imprisoners.Jeremy Bentham's 'nomography' principles also significantly affected the authorized system's draftsman ship.[3]

After the Chittagong armoury(18th April 1930) raid by revolutionaries, the British government modified to suppressive rules with various strict measures. Revolutionary terrorists attempted to murder multiple Indian-born government officials and agents at various times in addition to assassinating nine more British officials.[4]The term *'revolutionary terrorist'* was coined by a sedition committee report in 1918.[5]Terrorist groups were restructured into smaller units between 1924 and 1928, and the Revolt Group was established to coordinate revolutionary actions. Many young revolutionaryterroristswere deeply involvedin political activity in Bengal between 1905 and 1930.[6]Practically, the British government set up the colonial detention camps, which were enacted by BCLA in 1930. The Government proposed action against important members of revolutionary parties andarrested dangerous members of a terrorist party under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act1930. The Detention camps were necessary for further expansion in various modes when that time detaineeswere spent in local jails.[7]

Afterimplementing the colonial suppression, the number of terrorist incidents decreasedin 1933.[8]The government constructed four detention camps in the 1930s that were created with the revolutionary activists in mind to keep the revolutionary terrorists apart from other

prisoners.The officials considered it appropriate, therefore, to confine the Detenus in camps where they could be segregated from outside contacts, without at the same time provoking any public distrust.**⁹** In 1932 June, William Prentice, the Home Member of Bengal, said *'the primary object of detention should be reformative as well as preventive'*[10]

First phase ofthe colonial jail system, there were no accumulated laws and rules in the detention camps, therefore British Government issued several treatment policies to detention camps mainly affectingthe *Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur,* and *Deoli*. According to order, Rulenumber 19 of the instructions for the treatment of Detenus of camps supplemented by Government order 20802-3-X-dated 26th November 1933, 13(1) of the BCLA 1930 authorizes the local government to set rules for the place and manner ofdetention of all people arrested, committed, or detained in custody under the act.[11]The detainees in the camps became civil prisoners, and the jail code prohibited the possession of knives, guns, ropes, strings, bamboo, ladders, and sticks. When a detainee visits headquarters for advice, there isno charge to the civil surgeon—transferring all records kept by each jail or camp related to a detainee to his next location or transfer. All officers accept this idea; the superintendent of police in Jalpaiguri mentioned that rule 31(B) of the DIB manual provides this. The commandant of the *Buxa* camp proposed the use of Bengal Form 5080 for anything categorized as detenu details, as well as a form for recording a detenu's medical history. The Commandant of Berhampur proposed that punishment be shown in red ink on the history sheet and that cases of Detenus, or dangerous character, be reported separately. The commandants of the camps at Buxa and Berhampur provided special direction, which ought to be considered. There won't be a decline in the number of arrests shortly, according to the information obtained regarding the terrorist group in Chittagong, Noakhali, Trippera, and North Bengal. In 1933 Mr. Jones stated that Detainees shouldn't be permitted to have a camera.

Since detainees are merely detained under restriction under the BCLA of 1930 under Section 2(1)(d), a detainee in a village or their house is, for all real purposes, in the same situation as a detainee in a detention camp. The BCLA Acts do not allow for the removal or confiscation of problematic articles, nor do they permit a warrantless search of a detainee's residence. Rule 4 of the instructions for the treatment of persons detained in the various camps (U/S 13) states that no articles shall be passed into the possession of a detainee. For

his usage, outside the commandants' orders. There was no paperwork in this office demonstrating the district's practice of paying travel and daily allowances to detainees who relocated from one location to another.[12]The jail authority prohibited using the jail hospital for Detenus treatment. They issued rules for the government to pay for imprisonment in jail and significant allowances for detainees. As a result, they were receiving care in a police or civil hospital.[13]

H. Tufnell Barrett, ICS, Additional Deputy Secretary Government of Bengal instructed the commandant of *Buxa, Hijli, and Berhampur* camps on 11th December 1934.[14] The rules were Governments that detenus with a credit balance in their accounts were frequently sent to village domicile for domicile from *Hijli* detention camp—the detenus allowances in the final adjustment of accounts before their transfer to village domicile. Following the discovery of a knife and a hacksaw in one of the detention camps, the government is considering the publication of a rule under Section 13 of the BCLA, under Clause 6 of Rule 19 of the guidelines for the treatment of detainees. Coins, financial notes, weapons, safety razors, iron, and stone were all prohibited.

In the case of detainees under the BCLA of 1930, the superintendent of the detention camp had complete power to initiate prompt prosecution. If an investigation reveals that a hunger striker's stated grievances are baseless, Detainees in detention camps should be investigated immediately and given thorough explanations for their acts. In the matter of state inmates under Regulation 3 of 1818, no hunger striker should be tried without the prior approval of the Indian government.[15]Various rules were implemented by the British prison authority, the detainee will not be entitled to his monthly allowance during his stay in the hospital, and a special hospital allowance of 3 annas per day will be substituted to meet the cost of such requirements as stamp paper.[16]Detenus should not be allowed to learn any signal coding or signalling system.[17] All detention camp commandants were authorized to reduce the personal allowance of a Detenus by not more than 8 annas.[18] Detainees who were seriously ill in a camp, jail, or village domicile informedtheir relatives directly by telegram,[19]Granting to detainees certificates of good character which under the rules are required by universities and other educational authorities.[20]All the Detenus tried to finish their academic career during their detention life. Therefore, when applying for the sit for examinations while in a village or home domicile, the certificates of good character should be issued by D.M, detainees allowed to play badminton will help then

preserve their health as well as govt.—the supply of badminton set at the police station.[21]

The government started many skill-development courses for the self-improvement of Detenus. Following extensive discussion with the camp commandants, it has been determined that individuals detained in Bengal's multiple detention camps might be permitted to enroll in these classes. Detenus provides all exam and tuition costs. On 14th March 1934 government report showedany Detenus who was transferred from one camp to another while taking correspondence courses should be allowed to continue the courses in the camp to which he was transferred even though the limit of 3%.

In the context of *Buxa* camp, detaineesare confined at the camp of *Buxa*, where climatic conditions demand a greater supply of warm clothing Detenus are entitled to a special winter allowance of Rs. 25 on one occasion only at the beginning of their first cold weather. 10 Rupees was sanctioned fora special *Buxa* winter allowance being withheld for the future year.[22]Government proposal for action against important members of revolutionary parties. The arrest of important and dangerous members of a terrorist party under the BCLA 1930. Detention camps were necessary for further expansion in various modes when that time Detainees was sent in local jails.[23]

The British Government frequently revised the terms for Detainees and state prisoners. During their imprisonment time, detenus was given access to a large number of books and magazines—especially, Fiction and poetical works, Rabindranath Tagore, Hari Lakshmi, and Sharat Ch. Chatterjee's books were allowed. Besides, Prabhat Mukherjee, Nirupama Devi, D.L Roy, Sailaja Nanda Mukherjee, Prabodh Sanyal, Buddhadeb Basu and Premendra Mitra.[24]

Mc. D. Clark, a member of the governor council, issued an order directing the provision of books and periodicals to the detainees. '*The statesmen', 'The Englishmen', 'Calcutta evening news', 'Calcutta morning news', 'The pioneer', 'Sanjivani', 'Mymensingh Samachar', 'Sishir', and 'The Leader'*. The newspapers, magazines, and books delivered to the detainees, in addition to any magazines published in Great Britain (except those excluded under the Sea Customs Act). The government of Bengal had no objection to '*Sanjivani', 'Englishmen', and 'Statesmen'*being supplied toall superior classes of prisoners. All the detaineeswere allowed to play badminton for daily refreshments. The Government supply of badminton set from the police station.[25]

All the detainees tried to finish their academic careers during their detention life. Therefore, when applying for the sit for examinations

while in a village or home domicile, the certificates of good character should be issued by D.M. Interestingly, revolutionaries were engaged in their academic careers and qualified duringdetention life, eight detainees were permitted by the senet of Calcutta University law examination. Nalindra Mohan Sengupta passed the final law examination at Buxa camp, Prafulla kr. Ghosh, Jagannath Majumder passed the final exam at *Buxa camp* and Manoranjan Ray at *Deoli*, Bishnu pada Chakraborty, Sibasis Lahiri, Jasodha Ranjan Chakraborty. Academic achievement was observed among detainees in the *Buxa* and *Hijli* detention camps. Narendranath Ray, Gurupada Ray, Dhurjati Ranjan Nag, BholanathDas, Sibendra Mohan Mitra, and Binod Bihari Kanjilal all received first-class matriculation grades from Calcutta University. In *Hijli* Camp, a Female Prafulla Nalini Brahma secured first class, and Ksirode Ray, Gouri Prasad Sen, Hari Rakhal Dutta, and Himangshu Sengupta obtained first class in the examination— besides, Subodh Ch. Biswas, Nalini Ranjan Banerjee, Kshit Chandra Basu, Rohini Ranjan Barua, Suresh Ch. Datta obtained a second class in the examination.[26]

The Hijli incident : framing the funeral rules

Revolutionary Santosh Kr. Mitra and Tarakeswar Sengupta died of a gunshot by*Hijli* jail police, during the turmoil at the *Hijli* detention camp on 10th September 1931. Due to funerals, the local administration refuses to hand over to the relatives or duly authorized friends the corps of a detenu.[27]Two Detenus were detained in the *Hijli* detention Camp, they are not under trial prisoners. There were no codified rules for a funeral for the detainees. In Lahore jail, Jatin Das died due to a long hunger strike, but Jatin Das was an under-trial prisoner, not a detenu.Following Jatin Das's passing in Lahore, the British authorities modified the jail code.[28]

But the matter of *Hijli*, the district magistrate believes that the handing over of the body to the relatives is likely to lead to a political disturbance of publicity tranquillity. The government strictly notified all camps to maintain the rule of the *Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur, and Deoli.* Santosh Kr. Mitra, Tarakeswar Sengupta's Funeral ceremony procession was reported to all district administration. Government officials examined the powers of the district magistrate in the matter of the discipline of two detainees. Judicially, they are not under trial criminals nor are they convicts, and the Hijli detention camp was not a jail. Therefore rules 925 and 1000 of the jail code do not apply.[29]After the funeral customs were held in Keoratala burning ghat.

Escort system, strength, and handcuff for detainees:

TheBritish Jail authority prepared a decorum escort system for Detainees, mainly detained persons are ordinarily not handcuffed, the jail authority only allowed handcuffed while sending detainees to Deoli detention camp, not to be used unless essentially necessary, not a single Detainees was handcuffed here although some had to be handcuffed on the way – when they revolted of the Deoli escort, the officers are armed with revolver and head constables with muskets and the constable with lathis. Any dangerous detainee was transferred to another detention camp without prior consent from the intelligence bureau, and the camp administration increased the escort and police presence. If an important detainee is transferred to another jail or camp, an assistant sub-inspector or higher-ranking official may be included at times, and all employees are escorted with arms and transferred to Deoli in batches of twenty-five with special escorts arranged. The officer in charge was a European sergeant acting as an inspector, armed with revolvers. There were five head constables equipped with muskets and forty constables armed with lathis. A railway Howrah train was also reserved. Then one or two Detainees are transferred to Deoli, the officer in charge of the escorts, who is almost always a S.I. armed with a revolver.[30]

The government arranged the escort system mainly Buxa, Berhampur, and Hijli detention camps, and introduced special measures. When Bengal revolutionary terrorist state prisoners were transferred from one location to another, the question of whether it was legal to use bounds to secure their safety during travel appeared. Indeed, the Indian government had not set any rules on the matter.[31] A state prisoner was classified as a civil prisoner and treated accordingly under the rules of the jail code and Section 46 of the Prison Act. They were not subject to being chained, fettered, or whipped as punishment for any of the offences listed in Section 45 of the legislation. Despite the ban on the use of iron, local governments tended to chain state detainees during transfers, despite the higher costs and manpower needed. The state government of India maintains that Section 56 of the Prison Act IX of 1895, which provides for the safe custody of all prisoners, applies to state prisoners. Accordingly, it is acceptable to report to irons to guarantee the safe custody of state prisoners.[32]

In the subjects of *Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur*, and *Deoli* detention campsrelaxation the Detainees cannot be handcuffed while traveling under the current regulations. At the numerous rests stops along the way, detainees have been allowed to wander about without restriction.

In certain instances, it has been determined that stopping them from interacting with or forming relationships with the general public is not practicable and Jail Authority classified the escort issues in various directions.[33]

The British Jail Administration furnished the rules and regulations in Escort strength, unless there are pressing reasons to increase that amount, there shouldn't be more than six people in each batch. When important Detainees are included in any batch, the officer providing the escort shall additionally depute a literate Bengali officer of or above the rank of A.S.I. (the actual rank of such officer to be determined by him) to accompany the escort. The number of escorts shall never be less than two constables per Detainees with at least one head constable for each batch. If there are more than six Detainees to be guarded, or if some of the Detainees in the batch are particularly dangerous or bothersome, the officer providing the escort may assign a European sergeant or inspector to accompany the convoy if he considers it essential. [34]

Rules for departure:

All detainee should be examined before their departure to stop any attempt to carry messages to their allies outside. The government has taken enough precautions, but as a further measure, observe these guidelines. The detenu obtained a transfer order. The concerned party should only be made aware of his transfer, not knowing where he is going until he leaves; and b) in the cases of the transfers mentioned below, the receiving authority should also have the detenu's personal belongings thoroughly searched so that two checks can be made—one upon departure and the other upon arrival.

In the first stages, the government used several improvement schemes for the detainees, primarily at vocational training initiated in July 1932, with lessons held at Berhampur camp on cleanliness and first aid. However, official narratives lament the failure of such endeavours because of the detainee's unwillingness to cooperate. The classes on hygiene, for instance, had to be discontinued because of low attendance. The government issued various instructions for treating persons detained in the Buxa Camp under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act 1930. The government classified the orders in the field of newspapers, Periodicals, and Magazines which may be supplied to the Detainees. According to ordersselective newspapers, Magazines, and periodicals were supplied to camps. Enlisted magazines, newspapers, and periodicals were supplied by authorities

-'*The Statesman*', '*The Bengalee*', '*Mymensingh Samachar*', '*Tippera Guide*' and '*Rangpur Darpan*', '*Hindu Ranjika*' '*Sonar Bangla*', '*Bharat Barsha*,*' Indian Review*', '*Mashik Vasumati*', '*Calcutta Review*', '*India Medical Gazette*','*Panjab Shahib Magazine*', '*Asia*', '*Uttara*'.

The government was responsible for supplying the dress, with two pairs of plain cotton drill trousers, one cap, one pair of sandals, or slippers, one pair of shoes, three towels, Four Banians, twelve handkerchiefs, two pairs of shorts, one pair of Tennis shoes, Six pairs of Dhuti (khaddar) or Two pairs of mill dhotis.Two-bed sheets, one mosquito net, two pillows, four pillow cases, one mattress, three Gamchas, four Langgoties, two Ganjis, one trunk, one woollen rug and two blankets, one woollen suit, or a coat or Alwar, two pairs of woollen shocks, one sweater, two fannel shirt, one overcoat, a pair of Gloves.

The British government constituted new rules for the ex-detainees, who had already completed imprisonment time. Amiya Kanta Maitra, Tarapada Deb, Mani Mohan Ray, and Niranjan Mohan Das were involved in the Rajsahi jute department. [35] Interestingly, the government used several techniques for the treatment policy towards detainees. Moreover, the mainstream jail policy did not apply to the detention camps namely Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur, and Deoli.

In these circumstances, the two official reports mainly focused on the rules and discipline in jail and detention. '*The Jail of Bengal 1878*' and another report were delivered to parliament in London, '*East India Jails Committee, 1919-20*'. Both reports adhere to jail standards. However, there was nopaperwork about detention camp rules. After the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1930, it was necessary to codify detention procedures. Various laws and orders were issued to alter the British government's incarceration policies and implement the *Buxa, Hijli, Berhampur, and Deoli* detention camps.

Conclusion:

During the ultra-nationalist surge in Bengal, the government implemented many rules governing the treatment of detainees and detention camps. Detainees and detention camps were involved in every significant event in the history of colonial India. During colonial times, detention camps reflected British attitudes towards Indian jail policies. The British and Indian scholars independently interpreted the jail policy during the colonial period, The British government implemented several measures for improvement according to law and

rules. Many detention camps were set up throughout India but the *Buxa (Duars)* and *Deoli (Rajasthan)*detention camps were located far from the mainland. Berhampur and *Hijli* were in a suitable location in Bengal.

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Urban Metamorphosis of Darjeeling Plains : The Influence of Colonialism

Rudrani Bhattacharya
Assistant Professor& Head
PG Department of History
Acharya Brojendra Nath Seal College
Cooch Behar, West Bengal

Abstract:

The Terai region, located at the base of the Himalayas, was once densely forested and teeming with wildlife and insects, rendering it uninhabitable due to its harsh conditions in the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Following the Anglo-Nepalese War in 1816, the British gained control over the entire Terai region, from the east bank of the Mechi River to the Teesta River, as per the Tetulia Agreement signed between the East India Company and Nepal. Initially, the governance of the area was entrusted to the King of Sikkim. However, recognizing its political and economic significance, the British permanently annexed the Terai from Sikkim in 1850.Since then, the British, driven by economic interests, implemented distinct policies in agriculture, land revenue, trade, and commerce, leading to rapid changes in the demographic and socio-economic landscape. The influx of outsiders not only resulted in overpopulation but also brought about economic and moral shifts in the lives of the predominantly agrarian population. Simultaneously, as various landowners began selling their land to tea garden owners at higher prices, the plight of agricultural laborers, such as Adhiars, became increasingly precarious. This paper endeavours to delve into the intricate relationship between land devolution and demographic patterns in the Terai region, particularly focusing on the Siliguri sub-division within the Darjeeling district. By examining the colonial and post-colonial legacies, it seeks to unravel the multifaceted land-related challenges that continue to shape the socio-economic fabric of the region.

Key Words : Siliguri, Indigenous, Migration, Immigration,

Urbanization, Darjeeling

Before British control in 1850, the Terai region was governed at different times by Nepal, Kochbehar, and Sikkim. In 1780 AD, Nepal took control of the Terai, also known as 'Sikkim Morang,' due to Sikkim's vulnerability. Following the Anglo-Nepalese War's conclusion in 1816, the British acquired the entire Terai region, from the east bank of the Mechi River to the Teesta River. This acquisition was in accordance with the Tetulia Agreement, signed between the East India Company and Nepal, and the territory was then handed over to the King of Sikkim[1] During the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Terai region was shrouded in dense forests and inhabited by an array of wild animals and insects, rendering it inhospitable for human habitation. Nonetheless, despite these daunting conditions, the indigenous tribes residing in this area primarily comprised the Mech, Dhimal, Tharu, and Rajbanshi peoples. However, as the British recognized the political and economic significance of the region, they established permanent control over the Terai in 1850, displacing Sikkim. The imposition of British rule precipitated significant changes in the land revenue system within the Darjeeling-Terai region. Yet, due to the absence of clear governmental oversight, no coherent land settlement initiatives were implemented in this region.In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, agricultural practices in the Terai region diverged markedly from those prevalent in other parts of Bengal. Agriculture served as the primary occupation for the majority of the Terai population. Following the British annexation of the Terai in 1850, initial plans entailed placing the southern portion under the jurisdiction of the Purniah Collector, while attaching the northern portion to Darjeeling. However, due to vehement opposition from the inhabitants of the southern Terai to being transferred to Purniah, the British government opted to unite the entire tract with Darjeeling. Before this consolidation occurred, the Collector of Purniah had reached a three-year land revenue settlement with the Rajbansi and Muslim inhabitants of the lower Terai. Simultaneously, Dr. Campbell facilitated a similar settlement for the upper Terai, predominantly inhabited by the Mech community at the time.[2] Thus, while the Terai region presented formidable challenges to human settlement due to its rugged terrain and inhospitable conditions, its strategic importance led to its eventual integration into British-controlled territories. This integration brought about changes in governance and land revenue

systems, albeit without comprehensive land settlement initiatives, reflecting the complex socio-political dynamics of the region during that era.

Darjeeling-Terai, being a non-regulated area, did not adhere to the provisions of the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 for granting land settlement to tenants. Instead, the Company's Waste Land Rules, applicable elsewhere in India, were enforced in this region. However, the Permanent Settlement Regulation of 1793 governed fifteen mouzas under the Siliguri Police Station and three mouzas under the Phansidewa Police Station.[3] The Siliguri Subdivision encompasses 22% of the district's area and is home to approximately 24% of the district's population. With a population density of 349, slightly higher than the district average, population distribution is uniform across the subdivision, ranging from 342 in Siliguri to 366 in Phansidewa. Although the subdivision has limited forested areas and some wasteland, a significant portion is well cultivated, particularly for tea production. Despite being predominantly situated in the plains, the population density remains lower than expected compared to the neighboring Sadar Subdivision in Jalpaiguri District, which hosts a population density of 540 individuals per square mile despite sharing similar characteristics.The historical lack of healthiness associated with the Terai has been identified as a factor contributing to its limited population growth. This highlights the importance of involving indigenous tribes from areas such as Chota Nagpur and the Santal Parganas in the establishment and operation of tea plantations in the region.[4]

In ancient times, the Terai region was sparsely inhabited by indigenous Koches and Meches, while the hills were occupied by the indigenous Lepchas. These groups adhered to animistic beliefs and practiced primitive agricultural methods, such as jhum cultivation. However, subsequent exploitation significantly altered the racial makeup and greatly increased the population. Initially, there were conversions of Koches to Islam in the Terai, along with a growing influence from Tibetans (including Bhutanese) from the north, leading to their dominance over the Lepchas. Ongoing conflicts between the Nepalis, Tibetans, and Chinese further marginalized the indigenous populations and positioned the Nepalis to exploit the region, a situation that intensified with British political intervention.British exploitation primarily focused on the advancement of tea cultivation, engineering projects, trade, and education, without leading to a significant permanent British settlement. This era witnessed substantial

immigration, particularly in the hills, with the influx of Nepalis who proved to be more adept as tea garden laborers and cultivators compared to the indigenous Lepchas of the Terai. Additionally, tribes from Chotanagpur migrated to the region. Consequently, the influence of Lepchas and Tibetans in the hills waned. The development of infrastructure, communication, and trade attracted Marwari, Behari, and Bengali traders and professionals to the area. Despite their numerical superiority, these groups economically dominate the Nepalis. Consequently, the region exhibits a diverse population, including Nepalis, Lepchas, Bhitias, Tibetans, Bengalis, Marwaris, and Biharis in the hills, while the plains are inhabited by Bengalis, Muslims, Marwaris, Beharis, Rajbangshis, Santals, Oraons, and Mundas.[5] After independence, Siliguri subdivision and Siliguri city became important due to geographical location and communication .At that time , some former tea workers bought agricultural land in Siliguri subdivision and started farming independently. Most of them are Christians. This was a most significant incident in this region. Dash pointed out that, in 1947, the number of Oraons in the agricultural fields of Terai rose sharply, with 6,867 Oraons subsequently employed in agriculture.[6]

The British administration introduced new agricultural and land systems, which were later abolished on April 15th, 1955. Before British rule, the region relied solely on agricultural laborers. However, starting in 1850, a diverse array of religious and ethnic groups migrated to the area. Notably, many Marwaris belonged to the Agarwal and Oswal communities, while among the Biharis were the Hazam and Benia. Tea cultivation began in the Darjeeling hills in 1840 under Campbell's initiative, leading to a rush for land acquisitions for tea plantations across the mountains. Commercial tea production commenced by 1856, with European owners and employees managing Darjeeling tea estates, while Nepalese workers formed the labor force.[7]

In 1862, tea cultivation expanded to the Terai region due to the depletion of available land in the hills by 1860. Consequently, tea production expanded to the plains. During the nineteenth century, forest and government-owned lands in the Terai were leased for thirty years. Workers from various tribes, such as the Munda, Oraon, Kheria, Sauria, Malpaharia, Ghasi, and Turi, migrated from Santhal Pargana to work in the tea plantations of the Siliguri subdivision. This influx of laborers from diverse backgrounds reshaped the demographic landscape of the region, facilitating the growth of tea cultivation as a major industry and contributing to the cultural diversity of the area. After the advent of railways in Siliguri, a significant migration of

Bihari people from North Bihar, particularly Saran, Muzaffarpur, and Darbhanga districts, began towards Darjeeling. Primarily engaged in trade and various occupations, they frequented markets in Siliguri, Bagdogra, Naxalbari, Phansidewa, and Matigara. Many opted to settle in Siliguri, finding opportunities in commerce across the Terai region. By the late 1880s, extensive road construction projects in the area employed Bihari laborers. This migration pattern marked a significant demographic shift in the region, facilitated by the development of transportation infrastructure and economic opportunities.

Urbanization entails population concentration, structural transformation, and socio-psychological changes affecting both individuals and their surroundings. Siliguri experiences significant population growth due to immigration from neighbouring countries, as well as migration from adjacent states, rural areas, and nearby regions. Siliguri subdivision, acting as the gateway to North-East India, serves as a narrow land corridor connecting the mainland of India with its North-Eastern states and Sikkim. Situated at the convergence of four international borders (Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and China), it holds strategic significance as a crucial meeting point between various nations. In 1901, Siliguri's population was 738, which surged to 10,487 by 1941. Post-Independence, the town experienced accelerated growth, primarily driven by migration and immigration.[8] This influx fostered Siliguri's structural transformation and socio-economic development, culminating in urbanization. Immigration began from East Pakistan following the partition, with thousands of refugees resettling in Siliguri.Subsequently, in the 1960s, Assamese refugees, displaced by anti-Bengali riots, sought refuge in the town. These demographic shifts profoundly affected both the population and the landscape of Siliguri, shaping its trajectory towards becoming a thriving urban center.[9] The Indo-China conflict in 1962 and the 1971 war with Pakistan, which led to the formation of Bangladesh, significantly contributed to a substantial influx of refugees into Siliguri. Between 1941 and 1951, the town witnessed a population growth of 29.4%, followed by a 36.4% increase from 1951 to 1961. Initially, rapid urbanization fueled population growth until 1941. However, thereafter, the demographic composition of Siliguri and its surrounding areas underwent rapid changes due to the arrival of refugees from what is now Bangladesh, shaping the town's population dynamics in subsequent years.[10] Immigrants, particularly Bengali Hindus from former East Pakistan, emerged as a significant demographic in the Siliguri subdivision, as noted in the West Bengal

district gazetteer, Darjeeling 1980. Additionally, Indian nationals who had settled in Burma were compelled to return to India in 1964, with many resettling in Siliguri as "Burmarefugees," some venturing into the retail medicine trade. The Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950 facilitated substantial Nepali migration to North Bengal, including Siliguri. Following China's invasion of India in 1962, numerous affluent communities relocated from the north-eastern states to Siliguri, establishing homes and businesses. Furthermore, during the Assam riots from 1980 onwards, a variety of non-Assamese, including Bengalis, found refuge and opportunities for development in Siliguri. These successive waves of migration and resettlement have contributed significantly to the evolving social and economic landscape of Siliguri.[11] Many entrepreneurs from regions like Bihar and Rajasthan migrated to the town, drawn by its burgeoning business prospects. They sought to capitalize on the town's growing economic opportunities, contributing to its commercial expansion and diversity through their ventures and initiatives.[12]

The igration influx has resulted in a disproportionately rapid population surge in Siliguri:

Year	Population of Siliguri City
1901	738
1931	6037
1941	10487
1951	32400
1961	65471
1971	97484
1981	131820
1991	216950
2001	472374
2011	509709

Source: As per S.M.C. and Census report

According to the 2011 Census data released by the Government of India, Siliguri is categorized as an urban agglomeration (UA) with a total population of 701,489. Currently, it is estimated that the urban agglomeration population of Greater Siliguri exceeds approximately 1.5 million. Siliguri Municipality was established in 1949. Situated within the Darjeeling district, a portion of the city extends into the

neighbouring Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. The city spans a total area of 48 square kilometres. This growth underscores Siliguri's evolution from a modest town to a bustling urban centre, reflecting its significance in the region's socio-economic landscape.Siliguri has witnessed significant waves of immigration over time, shaping its demographic landscape into a vibrant mosaic of diverse cultures and linguistic traditions.[13] From this perspective, it can be observed that a significant portion of Siliguri's population originates from elsewhere. Historically, Siliguri has served as the educational nucleus of the Terai and Dooars regions. In addition to residents, students from states like Sikkim, Nagaland, and Assam flock to Siliguri for superior education opportunities. Moreover, the region has witnessed an influx of students from neighbouring countries such as Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh, further enriching its educational landscape and fostering cultural exchange on an international scale.[14] Siliguri, as a commercial hub for North Bengal, attracts migrants from various states and regions. The presence of CRPF, BSF, SSB, Assam Rifles, and Army base camps surrounding the city significantly contributes to the local economy. However, alongside legal migration, Siliguri experiences a substantial influx of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and Nepal, as well as migrants from Assam. Additionally, people from other cities seek employment opportunities, further swelling the population. This burgeoning population necessitates the development of essential facilities such as education, drinking water, healthcare, and transportation. According to excerpts from the West Bengal district gazetteer, Darjeeling, refugee influx has played a pivotal role in the growth of Siliguri, catalysing its development in various aspects.[15] These trends underscore Siliguri's dynamic demographic landscape and its vital role as a magnet for both legal and illegal migration, shaping its economic and social fabric in multifaceted ways.

The Refugee Rehabilitation Department extended support to Siliguri College and Siliguri Commerce College for constructing buildings. Established in 1950, Siliguri College was followed by Siliguri Commerce College in 1962, with the subsequent establishment of several more colleges. Land grants were allocated to Siliguri Girls Higher Secondary School to address the escalating demand for education among newcomers. The state government provided over 1.5 lakhs for constructing buildings for Siliguri Girls Higher Secondary School, recognizing the imperative to cater to the educational needs of the growing settler population.In 1962, North Bengal University, the sole university in the region, was founded near Siliguri at Shivmandir.

The Medical College and Hospital came into existence in 1967. Siliguri Municipal Corporation was established in 1994, with the state government allocating over 1.5 lakhs for road construction, sanitation, and water supply within municipal limits, especially in refugee-concentrated areas.Moreover, the Refugee Rehabilitation Department facilitated the creation of Bidhan Market, spanning three acres and costing over Rs. 10 lakhs, to accommodate approximately 800 refugee traders. This market initiative aimed to provide a platform for refugee traders to conduct business and contribute to the local economy. These developmental initiatives underscore the concerted efforts to address the infrastructural, educational, and economic needs arising from the influx of refugees and settlers in Siliguri, transforming it into a vibrant urban centre with enhanced facilities and opportunities.The rapid population growth in the town by migration from rural areas and neighboring regions poses significant challenges. [16]

Presently, Siliguri stands as a major cosmopolitan city in India, embodying a microcosm of the nation's diverse ethnicities, cultures, and languages. Given its pivotal role as a trade and commerce hub in the region, the city offers significant prospects for consumer goods industries such as bakery and confectionery, sports goods, mineral water, and more. This burgeoning market presents a ripe opportunity for small entrepreneurs to thrive. Additionally, there is a robust demand for steel utensils, leather shoes, ready-made garments, and other household essentials, as well as a bustling wholesale market for fruits, vegetables, and fish. Consequently, the rural surroundings are transforming due to urban influences emanating from the city centre. The economic development of Siliguri is primarily driven by industries like tea, tourism, transport, and timber, further solidifying its status as a dynamic economic powerhouse in the region.[17] Siliguri accommodates a significant business machinery market and readymade consumer goods markets, comprising retailers, wholesalers, dealers, distributors, and small-scale entrepreneurs. This phenomenon has resulted in a concentration of population due to economic opportunities, further emphasizing Siliguri's role as a bustling commercial center.[18] Besides meeting the daily commuting needs of consumers and others, the development of transportation and communication infrastructure has linked Siliguri with neighbouring regions. Presently, Siliguri boasts an airport situated in Bagdogra, approximately 16kilometres from the main city. It also features an IOC terminal, a tea auction centre, and various recreational facilities including indoor and outdoor stadiums, shopping malls, and modern healthcare facilities, enhancing its appeal

as a comprehensive urban centre with diverse amenities. The attraction of this plain region cityscape has drawn migrants from rural regions, motivated by factors such as poor living standards characterized by low incomes and scant employment opportunities.Simultaneously, the pull factors of improved urban living standards, higher wages, enhanced job opportunities, and better social services have propelled rural-to-urban migration. Employment and wage prospects emerge as primary drivers of this migration phenomenon. Typically, individuals seek more lucrative and appealing work opportunities beyond their birthplaces. Migration motives vary considerably, influenced by diverse factors.

Migration entails significant costs, which generally act as deterrents, particularly for long-distance moves. Limited knowledge about distant opportunities, coupled with higher relocation expenses, often hinders migration. Moreover, social, cultural, and religious disparities between rural and urban settings can further impede migration. These factors collectively shape migration patterns, with individuals weighing the potential benefits against the associated costs and challenges.[19] Thus, while economic incentives play a crucial role in driving rural-to-urban migration, various social, cultural, and logistical considerations also influence individuals' decisions to relocate.Migration often exhibits cumulative causation, wherein the underlying forces gradually diminish the costs associated with relocating from one place to another. This pattern is commonly observed in rural-to-urban migration worldwide. Previous migrants not only share valuable information about employment and wage prospects in their new locations with those left behind but also extend informal social security benefits to newcomers, offering assistance with food, clothing, accommodation, and social integration. They create a supportive linguistic, cultural, and religious environment that fosters a sense of belonging for new migrants. Consequently, prior migrants effectively lower the barriers to current migration, prompting subsequent migrants to follow the paths established by their relatives and friends. This typically leads to a migration pattern from rural origins to nearby urban centres, such as Siliguri, where prior connections and established social networks facilitate smoother transitions for newcomers.

In conclusion, the historical evolution of the Terai region, particularly the Darjeeling Terai, reflects a complex interplay of colonial policies, socio-economic changes, and demographic shifts. From its initial state as a sparsely populated area inhabited by indigenous tribes

to becoming a focal point of British economic interests, the region has undergone significant transformations over time. The influx of outsiders and the introduction of British policies in agriculture, land revenue, and trade profoundly altered the socio-economic landscape, leading to both opportunities and challenges for the local population. The process of land devolution, marked by the sale of land to tea garden owners and other outsiders, has had far-reaching implications for the demographic patterns and livelihoods of the region. While it contributed to overpopulation and economic shifts, it also brought about new opportunities and challenges for the predominantly agrarian communities, particularly agricultural laborers. Understanding these historical dynamics is crucial for comprehending the contemporary land-relatechallenges faced by the Terai region, especially the Siliguri sub-division in the Darjeeling district.

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HISTORICAL ANALYSIS ON THE REANG UPRISING OF 1942-1943 IN PRINCELY TRIPURA

Dr. Lincoln Reang
Associate Professor
Department of History
Tripura University

Abstract :

The Reang have a rich social and cultural heritage. The Reang uprising of 1942-43 which occurred during the reign of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya was one of the most important events in the twentieth century Tripura. Economic as well as social and religious factors were the main reasons behind the uprising led by Ratnamoni.

The Reangs by nature are peace loving tribe. The relation between the Reangs and the Maharaja of Tripura since the days of Maharaja GovindaManikya was cordial until the Reang uprising of 1942-1943. The Reangs came into confrontation with the representative of the Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya in 1942. The conflict arose owing to the social and economic exploitation by the self-proclaimed Rai (community head) Khogendra Reang. Traditionally, the title Rai (community head) is bestowed by the Maharaja of Tripura in consultation with the community elders as per customary usage. DevsingReang was the Rai of the Reang community in 1942 but was contested by KhogendraReang. The main issue of the uprising against the authority includes forced recruitment of the Reang youths for the Maharaja force Tripura Rajya Raksha Bahini for the purpose of Second World War, collection of house tax (gharchukti) and extra excise duty imposed on the sale of the bamboos.

Keywords: Revolt, Uprising, Unrest, Reang, Rai, Chudri, Economy, Swadeshi

105

INTRODUCTION:

The root of any unrest lay on account of economic crisis befalling on the general masses that lived in utter poverty. It is of utmost necessity to find out the causes of tribal unrest inorder to suggest their possible remedies. The possible causes of such unrest are (a) land alienation, (b) indebtedness and poverty, (c) unemployment, (d) non-implementation of welfare programmes, (e) illiteracy, etc. The history of tribal unrest's in Tripura may be undertaken on the backdrops of the 18th century when Samser Ghazi, a revenue clerk with a group of peasants campaigned against Nasir Mohammed, the Zamindar of Dakshinik Pargana in ChaklaRoshnabad. ChaklaRoshnabad was a part of plain Tripura territory under the Nawabs of Bengal. But in due course of timeChaklaRoshnabad formed a part of British territory after their acquisition of Dewani. Therefore, the hilly parts of Tripura remain independent, while the plain of ChaklaRoshnabad remains as Zamindari revenue of the Maharaja of Tripura.

The tribal uprisings in Tripura in the nineteenth century arose out of economic, cultural, social and political factor. The imperfect taxation policy coupled with oppression of a corrupt set of officers destroyed the tribal economy. The various economic measures taken by the Maharaja of Tripura to increase the revenue enormously aggravated the problems of the tribals. The British imperialism introduction of the 'Doctrine of Lapse' and 'Subsidiary Alliance' which was in practice by 1857 guaranted the native Princes in the possession of their dominions under British protection. Naturally, Maharaja Ishan Chandra Manikya (1849-1862) was very eager to appease the British in the interest of the security of his Kingdom. The Maharaja also appointed BalaramHazari as his *dewan* and entrusted the sole management of his Kingdom. BalaramHazari and his brother Sridam exploited the situation by cruel exaction of revenue.

The tribal unrest also occurred on account of oppression and injustice meted by the feudal authority. The rent of the Kukis and the Reangstribes had been enhanced enourmously and they were at all time liable to oppression of some kind.So, discontentment was growing among these tribes against the feudal authority. The Reangs during the difficult days made by the extraction of rent by the Maharaja (money lender) used to take money as loan at a very high rate of interest. Naturally, to free themselves from the clutches of the cruel Mahajans (money lender), the Reangs joined the Kukis. Therefore, the root of any revolt thus lay in the acute economic crisis and the unbearable poverty of the people. The boundless method of cruel exaction of

revenue, misrule and injustice added the common people grievances.

BACKGROUND TO THE REANGUPRISING:

In order to understand the uprising of the Reangs, we have to understand the interaction of the major historical, cultural, economic and political factors underlying the ethno-social movement among the Reangs. The uprising may also be studied in terms of combination of traditional cultural elements and values with the new themes derived from the oppressing by the authority. Though, one particular aspect of the uprising is that, in varying degrees; economic as well as social and political with an overtone of religious fervor.

ECONOMIC CAUSE TO THE REANG UPRISING:

The important sources of Tripura's revenue comes from the rent mainly collected specially from the fertile plain lands (ChaklaRoshnabad) and also from the family tax in the hills areas, duties on the forest products like cotton, bamboo, canes and from the elephants that were captured in the state. Actually, no rent or land revenue was demanded from the hill tribes who were accustomed to *jhum* or shifting cultivation. Rather, each family of the hill tribes was liable to pay only a tax called *gharchukti*or house tax, which varied in amount according to the tribe to which the family belonged. The Tripuries and the Jamatias used to pay the lower rate as they had to render their personal service to the Maharaja. But the Reangs and the Noatias had to pay the maximum with no adequate or satisfactory explanation for their burden.

The administrative system of Tripura was very simple and inexpensive in the past. The people used to pay a very nominal tax in kind and performed civil and military duties if required by the ruler. It is generally believed that Maharaja RatnaManikya (1325-1350 A.D.) first introduced some administrative changes and in doing so he followed the system of contemporary Bengal administration. The changes however touched only the fringes of the areas inhabited by the people of Hill Tripura but it had far-reaching effects. As the administration became more and more complex the number of officials had to be increased and their expenses too increased. The tribals in the hills who were accustomed to *jhum* (shifting) cultivation were in general poor and so the burden of taxation weighed heavily on them. Apart from being the victims of enhanced taxation, the tribals had to pay heavy duties on their forest products. Such exploitation could not be tolerated by the Reang and were thus looking for a way to solve

their grievances.

The Reangs therefore turned towards Ratnamoni for the redressal of their discontents and for the peaceful mutual negotiation with KhogendraReang. But all attempts for mutual negotiation failed, and due to the reactionary measures of Khogendra Reang, it compelled the Reangs under the guidance of Ratnamoni to rise against his oppression and tyranny. As this uprising had coincided with the Second World War; taking the advantage of such situation, KhogendraReang provided false report to the Maharaja of Tripura that Ratnamoni had started mastering soldiers as an agent of Japanese Government with a view to dethrone the Maharaja. In response to the report, the Maharaja sent his troops to encounter the possible danger. The uprising of the Reang under the leadership of Ratnamoni was then suppressed when the Maharaja of Tripura dispatched a strong force. After being severely suppressed and exploited with tremendous inhuman torture; several Reangs with no other alternative started to seek for new shelter and settlement thereby leaving their permanent homesteads. So, socio-economic and political grievances led to the Reangs to look for a new leadership to solve their problems, which they saw in Ratnamoni.

REANG SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND THE NATURE OF THE UPRISING :

The Reangs were dominated by their community head called *Rai*. There also existed *Chudri* or the village head alongside the *Rai*. The*Chudriship* (village head) among the Reang community was started by Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya. The authority and the powers of the *Chudri* were enhanced and supported by the policy of the Maharaja. They collected tax through the *Chudri*and in return they were exempted from paying any tax to the Maharaja. The *Chudries*by dint of their special privilege position made various exactions from the ordinary Reangs. The ordinary Reangs protested against this oppressive system.

The Reangs had been under a process of series of cultural and administrative changes, caused by the attitude of the *Rai*.Various reasons may be traced in their long socio-economic and political exploitation such as:

1. The Maharaja discriminated among the tribes regarding the imposition of the common house tax (*gharchukti*) on his tribal subjects in the hill areas. The *jhum* (shifting) cultivators, however primitive, were not free from taxation and have to

pay thehouse tax (*gharchukti*). Since 1904, the Maharaja of Tripura asserted his authority by subjucatingthe tribes of Reang,Noatia, etc. The various house taxes that were implemented on the various tribes also soured the relations between the ruling family and the subjects in Tripura. Such inequality among various tribes in terms of separate identity tends to bore seeds of discontenment and strained the inter-tribes relationship in Tripura. They approached Ratnamoni and it was under his guidance that the socio-economic movement among the Reangs and the Noatias gathered its strength.

2. The Reang Rai and Choudries enjoyed enormous power and even exercised judicial authority according totheir traditional administrative system.Theycollect taxes by whatever means for the Maharaja and in return they were rewarded. Moreover, assessment of taxation was also not carried which further gave scope for oppression and exploitation by the agents against the Reangs.

3. The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 dragged Tripura in supporting the British.The Japanese and the *Azad Hind Fouj* were also enhancing their activities against the allied forces of the British in Nagaland, Manipur and Chittagong Hills. For war purposes, Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikyaorganized *Tripura Rajya Raksha Bahini* by drawing young men from various tribal societies of the Jamatias, Noatias, Reangs and Halams through their concerned village heads. The Maharaja also informed the Viceroy of British India of his full support. In Tripura harsh measures were taken to increased and collect the tax for the war purposes.During 1938-45 there was a high rise of price on the foodgrain, the staple crops of the people.

The year 1939-40 being a war period had been particularly difficult for the Reangs. The Maharaja ordered DevsingReang, the *Rai* (community head) to collect soldiers from the Reang Community. But he failed to recruit as the people were suffering from rent hardship and impoverishment. During such situationKhogendraReang, son of AmaniyaReang, the then influencialvillage priest began intriguing to obtain the *Raiship.* In order to achieve his cherished dream, he assured the Maharaja that his son would be able to realize all dues and prevail

upon the Reang youths to enlist in the State forces. The Maharaja under some pressure from the imperial British power for war contributions violating an established tribal administrative normdismissed Devsing and granted the title of *Rai* to KhogendraReang.

1. Khogendra Reang and his associate *Choudries* instead began to create more problemsfor the Reangs. There was one such report of the non-Reang Brahmin and Khogendra*Rai*'s influencial*Choudries* exploiting in the name of religion at the *tirthamukh*pilgrimage at Dumbur in Amarpur sub-division. So, the followers of the deposed *Rai* DevsingReangapproach Ratnamoni to show them the way.Infact, DevsingReangin 1937 sent Khusikrishna, KantoraiReang and some others for Ratnamoni to come to Tripura from Ramgarh (now in Bangladesh) so that they could get some enlightenment and help against the exploitation of the newly self-proclaimed *Rai* KhogendraReang. Ratnamoni took up the cause of the Reangs with the *missip* (liason officer) Horendra Chandra Devbarma at Agartala. Instead Ratnamoni was confined and put into the special royal custody known as *alangghar*. Hefreed himself with the help of one close royal attendant BhromorDevbarma, who was inspired by Ratnamoni's personality.Although Ratnamoni and Devsing made another attempt through the Lushai Chief Hrangbunga but did not succed. Maharaja was furious with Devsing to the fact that he was deposed from his *Rai*ship because he failed to implement his orders of recruitment of Reang youths to the Maharaja's force and also to collect rent.

At last the reactionary measures of KhogendraReang and his *Choudries* and the non-cooperation of the Maharaja compelled the Reangs to save themselves and rise against the corrupt *Rai*KhogendraReang and his associate*Chudries*.

The Reang uprising of 1942-43 under the leadership of Ratnamoni was also due to the economic crisis caused by the World War that too seriously affected the people of Tripura. In this background, the Reangs from Amarpur and Belonia divisions rose against the oppressive *Rai* and *Chudries.* The Reang who were under the clutches of economic sufferings had been more vibrantly exploited by their self-proclaimed *Rai*KhogendraReang. The *Rai* along with his close associates of *Chudries*inflicted excessive torture and oppression over

the people of their community. The recruitment order of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya for the State's force perhaps gave them more opportunity for repressing the people of their community.

Ratnamoni was arrested by the British police while trying to cross the Burma border and put in the Rangamati Jail (now in Bangladesh). The Maharaja of Tripura made a request to the British Political Agent on 29th November 1943 to issue extradition warrents for the arrest and prosecution of the accused persons before the Sadar Magistrate, Agartala. Later he was lodged in the Agartala jail where he died a tragic unnatural death. But the following morning, Maharaja's source declared that Ratnamoni died of Cholera. In one source, it was reported that the Maharaja has an intention of having a conversation with Ratnamoni but before that Mj. B.L. Devbarma, his highness bodyguard and who was also the Maharaja's paternal uncle's son had already beaten Ratnamoni to death. Many of his close associates and followers were either killed by the British police or the Tripura police. Some of his other followers were tried by a special court under a special judge and convicted in July, 1944. With the passing away of Ratnamoni, the Reang uprising against KhogendraReang and his associate *Choudries*for perpetrating economic, social and religious exploitations of Reang commoners came to an end.

IMPACT OF THE REANG UPRISING IN PRINCELY TRIPURA :

The history of Princely Tripura after the second half of the nineteenth century is meted with uprisings like theKukis (1860), Jamatias (1863) and the Reangs (1942-43). By 1940s, the existing feudal pattern of society being oppressive in nature was opposed by the Reangs under the leadership of Ratnamoni. Like other tribal societies in Tripura, the Reang society was also dominated by the village headmen who were locally known as *Chudri*. Now the authority and powers of the *Chudries* was enhanced and supported by the policy of the Maharaja. They collected tax through the *Chudries*. Being endowed with such privilage position, he did not hesitate to make various exactions from the common people. The Reangs under Ratnamoni protested this oppressive feudal system and were highly dissatisfied with the unequal taxation system of the Maharaja. The ratio of the tax varied according to the tribes. The Tripuri and the Halam paid the minimum tax while the Reang and the Noatia were made to pay the maximum tax. The Reang paid the highest house tax, bamboo tax and cane tax. The Reang protested such discrimination but

their protest went without any effect. So, Ratnamoni was approached and under his guidance, the socio-economic movement gathered its momentum. Whatever be the cause and nature of the Reang unrest, it certainly gave a jolt to the Maharaja's idea in respect to his subjects.

The Reang uprising of 1942-43 under the leadership of Ratnamoniwhich occurred during the reign of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya (1923-47) was one of the most important unrest in the twentieth century Tripura. The uprising was also partly an anti-feudal movement due to the fact that it was a protest against the existing feudal pattern of society which was oppressive in nature.

A special committee was formed in September 1945 to enquire into the causes of the Reang's disaffections and unrest and to recommend measures for restoring peace and order among them. The committee reported that the Reangsunder the leadership of Devsing and Ratnamonitried different peaceful means to redress their grievances. The report submitted by the committee must have made the Maharaja rethink over his scheme of reforms granting rights and privileges to his subjects.

Ratnamoni's martyr death opened up a new horizon for the tribal movement in Tripura. SeveralReangs after the death of Ratnamoni were also compelled to shake off *saivism* and embrace *vaishnavism*. While most of Ratnamoni's followers left for Jampui Hills in north Tripura and in due course of time after their acqantence with the Lushais; were converted to Christianity. Ratnamoni is still honoured as a religious preceptor by many of his followers. Many of his followers also received pension from the Government of Tripura.

The economic life of the Reangs which was barely above the subsistence level was totally destructed during the course of the uprising. Their hamlets were burnt to ashes along with their commodities. It may also be noted that when the *jhum* (shifting) cultivation oriented Reangs migrated to new areas they could not take their livestocks, a vital source of their economy. Later, among the depressed Reangs, the *mahajans* (money lenders) emerged to provide loans on high interest. It helps them to facilitate their cultivation of paddy and other cash crops like cotton, jute, spice, etc. taking the advantage and privilege of a new chapter of exploitation. The forced conversion to *vaishnavism* had enraged the Reangs so much that they embraced Christianity. The Reangs remained unreconciled to the *Rai* (Community Head) who in violation of their customs had been imposed on them by the Maharaja of Tripura. The institution of *Rai* became irrelevant. He was no longer powerful and in no position to enforce his authority over the scattered

Reangs.

The Reang movement was an indigenous tribal mass movement, which was a powerful factor in Tripura politics, as it attracted considerable attention of the repressive state apparatus engaged in putting it down.

CONCLUSION:

A vibrant feature of ethnic situation was the increasing politicization of ethno-cultural aspiration and concurrent assertion of separatism. Ethnicity is premised to be ubiquitous in contemporary situation and is manifested in virtually autogenous ethnic process in the context of dialogical relationship. Also specific feature of social structure provides necessary conditions of ethnicity of varying intensity to flare up as and when a trigerring factor comes to operate in the situation. Several factors such as development processes, emergence of educated middle class, rise of Christianity and minority syndrome induced assertions of identities.

It is indeed common sense to talk of multiple ideologies of identification such as ethnicism, localism and ethnic-nationalism in the same analytical breath.Unrest and people's movements are thus inspired and shaped by one or more factors in varied degrees at different stages.Ethnicity has emerged as one of the most significant social issues. It touches upon the political, cultural and social sphere. Peace may be a difficult proposition to realize in a multi-dimensional ethnic conflict, because appeasement of one can lead to incitement to violence by another.

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Food Security Challenges: A Review of Factors affecting Availability, Accessibility, and Safety

Amanda Kordor Thabah,
Research Scholar, Department of Social Work,
Assam University, Silchar,
Corresponding Author: Dr. Aditi Nath,
Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work,
Assam University, Silchar.

ABSTRACT:

A collective voice echoed from the corridors of international organisations, sounding an alarm that the world is straying off course in its efforts to battle against food insecurity as set forth by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Targets 2.1 and 2.2. This issue is especially critical when considering India, a country that struggles with high rates of undernourishment, stunting, child wasting, and mortality, as indicated by the Global Hunger Index (GHI) rating, which is declining annually and indicates widespread food insecurity. Despite improvements in a few indicators, the country continues to grapple with food insecurity. With less than seven years left to accomplish the lofty SDGs, a critical question arises: What hinders the achievement? In light of this pressing concern, this paper aims to identify and understand the challenges hindering Food security in India, focusing on factors affecting food availability, accessibility, and safety. The review highlights the profound challenges India faces in safeguarding food security, including climate variability, land degradation, the land use gap, unsustainable farming methods, rising food demand, governance inefficiencies, socio-economic inequalities, and food safety concerns including the use of untreated wastewater, adulteration, hygiene issues, and inadequate processing facilities. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive policy interventions aimed at enhancing agricultural sustainability, improving governance in food distribution systems, and strengthening food safety regulations. By addressing these challenges holistically, policymakers can contribute to advancing food security goals and promoting the well-being of India's population.

Keywords: Food Security, Challenges, Availability, Accessibility, Safety, SDGs.

INTRODUCTION

The concern for food security dates back to the 1974 World Food Conference held in Rome on 5-16 November, during which a declaration 'every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties' was made.[1] Since then, ensuring food security has remained a prominent concern and has been one of the top agendas of the policy maker. Currently, it is at the core of the SDGs. Despite concerted global efforts, concerns persist as food insecurity remains a significant issue, evidenced by ongoing levels of hunger and malnutrition. As per the United Nations report of 2022 on 'the state of Food Security and Nutrition in the World', the estimated number of people impacted by hunger worldwide during 2021 was from 702 to 828 million. In Africa, 278 million people were affected, 425 million in Asia, and 56.5 million in Latin America and the Caribbean; a percent of 20.2, 9.1, and 8.6 percent of the continent's population respectively. Regarding the level of severity, according to the Food Insecurity Access Scale (FIES), which is an indicator to measure SDG 2, 29.3% of the world's population, or 2.3 billion people, were estimated to be moderately or severely food insecure in 2021, while 11.7%, or 923.7 million people, experienced severe food insecurity.[2]

In India, food insecurity is not foreign but a serious concern considering its rampant nature. It is termed as 'home to a quarter of all undernourished people worldwide'.[3] Also, as shown in Table 1, its Global Hunger Index (GHI) stood at 38.4, 35.5, 29.2, 29.1, and 28.7 during 2000, 2008, 2015, 2022, and 2023, respectively, thereby escaping the alarming zone.[3] This indicates an improved situation. However, the ranking of 101 in 2021, 107 in 2022, and 111 in 2023 means a worsening situation. Although India has escaped from the alarming zone, the ranking and index suggest that it is still a serious concern. Besides that, the percentage change is only 0.5 since 2015, i.e., in 8 years.

From 2000-2002 to 2020-2022, there has been a fluctuation in the percentage of undernourished population in India. It decreased from 18.3% in 2000–2002 to 14% in 2014–2016 but then increased to 16.6% in 2020–2022.The percentage of children under five years old affected by wasting fluctuated over time with 17.8% in 1998-2002, increased to 20% in 2006-2010, decreased to 18% in 2013-2017, and slightly increased again to 18.7% in 2018-2022. However, in the case of the prevalence of child stunting, which indicates malnutrition, a

positive trend has been observed with a decrease in each period from 51% in 1998-2002 and a decrease to 35.5% in 2018-2022. Similarly, a decrease in child mortality, reflecting the number of children who die before reaching the age of five, has also consistently decreased over the years from 9.2% in 2000 to 3.1% in 2021. Though these show a positive trend, the percentage of undernourished people and the notable figure in the other 3 indicators still point to the fact that India's state of food security is a serious concern.[4] In addition, the evidence of the prevalence of food insecurity at a household level provided by multiple studies revealed people's plight concerning their food insecurity experiences.

Considering these facts the point is with only 7 years left to the target of the SDGs, If 0.5 % is the only change that could be made in 8 years in this particular goal, there is no way that India could reach its O-hunger goal set by 2030. This led to the birth of a critical question: what hinders the achievement? In light of this pressing concern, this paper seeks to undertake a review of existing literature to identify and understand challenges that are prevalent in India that hinder the achievement of food security and the factors influencing them. By synthesizing challenges, this paper is expected to help identify target areas so that strategies for addressing these challenges can be tailored thereby contributing towards the development of effective and sustainable solutions to address the looming crisis of food insecurity.

GHI Indicators	Period	%
Undernourishment (% of population)	2000-02	18.3
	2007-09	16.2
	2014-16	14
	2020-22	16.6
Child wasting (% of children under five years old)	1998-2002	17.8
	2006-10	20
	2013-17	18
	2018-22	18.7
Child Stunted (% of children under five years old)	1998-2002	51
	2006-10	47.8
	2013-17	38.3
	2018-22	35.5

	2000	9.2
Child mortality (% of children under five years old)	2008	6.5
	2015	4.4
	2021	3.1
Table 1: GHI Indicators during 2000, 2008, 2015, and 2023		

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of the study is to identify and evaluate challenges hindering food security in India with regard to the following:

Challenges concerning availability

Challenges concerning accessibility and

Challenges concerning safety

This study employed a review-based methodology in addressing its objectives. Articles were sought from prominent databases like Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Scopus. The search was conducted using key terms like 'food security', 'challenges', 'availability', 'accessibility', and 'safety' for the last fifteen years (2009-2023). The study found twenty five articles relevant to the study's purposes which were reviewed for analysis and interpretation. The findings of the review are presented in three sections like 'challenges concerning availability', 'challenges concerning accessibility', challenges concerning food safety.'

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following section covers findings from the conducted review and is presented in 3 parts: challenges concerning availability, challenges concerning accessibility, and challenges concerning safety.

Challenges concerning availability:

In India, achieving food security depends on overall agricultural production, and the issue of food security is closely associated with the level of agricultural production.[5] However, it faces multifaceted challenges. Agricultural productivity in India is climate-sensitive, and food grain crop production is adversely affected by it through fluctuations in temperatures and rainfall patterns.[6] This is strengthened by the observation made in which a prediction that changes in temperature, solar radiation, and precipitation will affect crop productivity and livestock agriculture[7] aligned with the evidence of crops were damaged and a substantial decline in food grain production, including fruits and vegetables, observed because of the rainfall deficit

119

in 2002 and 2009, the severe cold wave during the winter of 2002–2003, and lastly, abnormal temperature rises in March 2004.[8] Furthermore, it was also predicted that agriculture in states that include Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh will be highly and very highly vulnerable to climate change from 2021 through 2050 (Fig. 1).[9] This prediction indicates that agricultural productivity is likely to be threatened by climate change in the future, thereby hindering availability and posing a significant threat to the nation's food security.
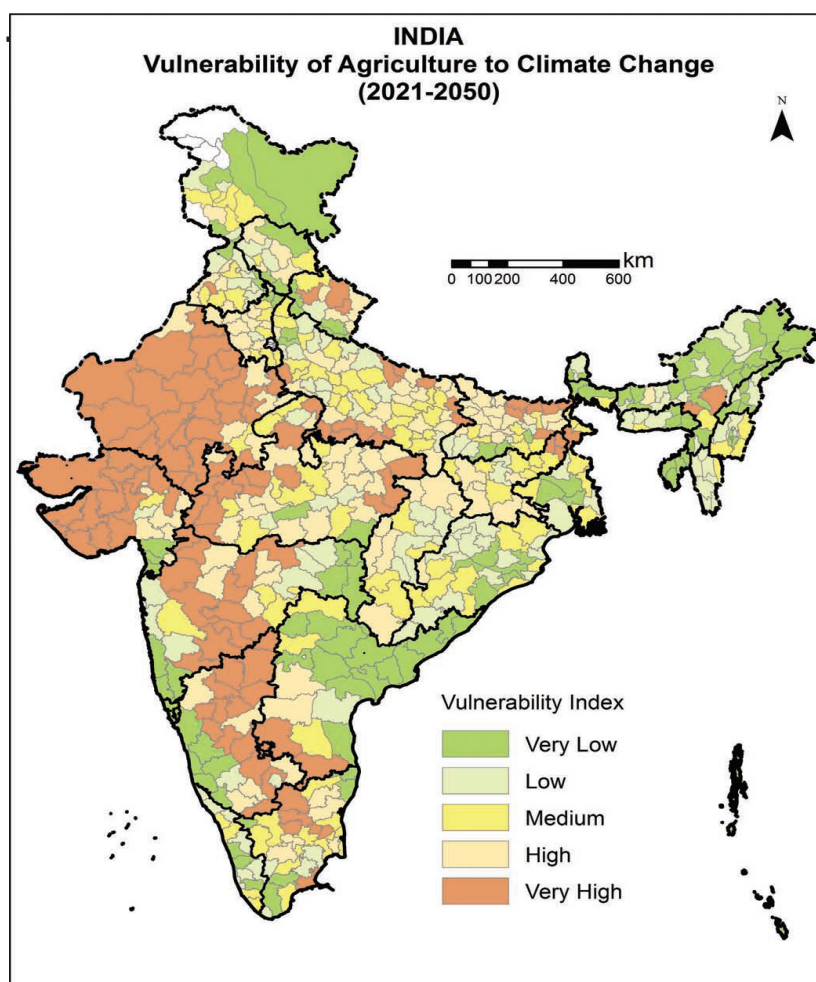

Figure 1: Vulnerability of Indian Agriculture to Climate Change (2021–2050) Source: Rao et al., 2013.

Secondly, land degradation is a significant issue in India, with nearly 147 million hectares of land experiencing various forms of soil degradation. This includes 94 million hectares affected by water erosion, 23 million hectares by salinity, alkalinity, and acidification, 14 million hectares by water logging and flooding, 9 million hectares by wind erosion, and 7 million hectares by a combination of factors.[10] Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, droughts, avalanches, landslides, volcanic eruptions, floods, tornadoes, and wildfires often contribute to land degradation, along with man-induced factors such as livestock overgrazing, deforestation, agricultural encroachment into forested areas, careless forest management practices like cutting beyond permissible silviculture limits, unsustainably extracting fuelwood and fodder, and mining.[11] These looming land degradation issues add pressure to agricultural land, thereby hindering productivity. Issues with land use are another factor that hinders productivity. A big shift in land use was highlighted, in which areas previously used for crop cultivation are being used for infrastructure, housing, and roads, and land around cities are allotted to resorts, hotels, and so on. Besides that, land cultivated for food grains is being converted to fruit crops, and fertile land is proposed for bio fuel crops.[12] A similar issue in Tamil Nadu, where the expansion of non-food crops like biofuel and medicinal plants has, in some cases, jeopardized the land traditionally used for food crops. Furthermore, the establishment of socio-economic zones as per the Land Acquisition Bill, led to urban encroachments, which resulted in agricultural land loss or displaced farming activities, thereby having adverse effects on the country's overall agricultural productivity and posing a threat to food security.[13] Thus, the expansion of industrialisation, urbanisation, and infrastructure development, along with the lack of proper regulation in the amount and nature of land for non-food crops, gradually removed substantial tracts of land for food crop production.

Apart from the inefficiencies in land use, agricultural practices also exhibit loopholes that impede productivity. Pest control methods demonstrate this phenomenon. Many pest control methods, including the use of plant-based products, cultural practices, biopesticides, and biological control agents, have become available over the years. However, the widespread use of these methods remains limited. Instead, people have overused or misused synthetic pesticides such as insecticides, fungicides, weedicides, and nematicides.[12] This indicates a foul agricultural practice that can lead to ecological hazards impacting agriculture, thereby threatening the sustainability of food. There is

also a gap in the practice of crop diversification, where optimizing crop choices based on agro-climatic regions is lacking in agricultural practices in India, leading to lower production and a lower net return.[13]

Growing food demand also raises concerns about the availability of food grains. Estimates indicate that the country will need approximately 966.3 million tons of food grains by 2030, comprising 122.4 million tons of rice, 114.6 million tons of wheat, 47.2 million tons of coarse cereal, 284.2 million tons of total cereals, 26.6 million tons of pulses, 310.8 million tons of food grains, 21.3 million tons of edible oil, and 39.2 million tons of sugar. The projection for high-value food commodities, such as vegetables, fruits, milk, poultry, bovine meat, eggs, and fish, indicates a need for 491.5 metric tons. However, the projected supply-demand gap for 2030 suggests a likely shortage of rice, pulses, edible oils, poultry, and bovine meat, with a gap of 0.3 Mt, 0.2 Mt, 2.1 Mt, and 0.8 Mt, respectively.[14] As a result, meeting this demand will be a challenge in the near future, particularly given India's growing population.

In addition, India's rapid economic growth has sparked significant shifts in food demand based on the premise that food demand will continue to rise substantially with income growth. Besides that, the income elasticity of food demand, i.e., the premise that the greater the income elasticity of demand, the greater the change in demand with a change in income, shows a growing trend for diverse food item demands, including pulses, fruits, meat, milk and milk products, beverages, confectionaries, and sweets.[15] This rising economic prosperity will significantly intensify the demand for food.

Furthermore, it was observed that while India's agricultural foundation is robust, food waste rates are high, and the country's processing of food products accounts for only 2% of its overall agriculture and food production. This is because the food processing industry is underdeveloped, lacking in skills, has poor workforces, lacks upgraded technology, has poor access to affordable capital, lacks adequate infrastructure, particularly rural road connectivity, and lacks information and marketing linkages.[16] All these factors hinder the efficiency of these industries, which otherwise would have been able to preserve the food commodities required to feed the growing demand in the long run.

- *Challenges concerning accessibility*

' It is strongly believed that there is enough food in the world

to feed everyone adequately, but the problem is distribution and management'.[17] This is particularly true in the Indian context, a nation whose performance in reducing hunger and malnutrition has been considered 'a national shame'.[18] This poor performance of India in addressing food security is observed through the poor quality of governance in the management of the Public Distribution System (PDS). A high level of inclusion and exclusion errors in identifying beneficiaries observed within the PDS was observed alongside the struggle of Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Decentralized Procurement (DCP) to increase their procurement due to insufficient storage capacity and high transportation costs, leading to operational inefficiencies in distribution and allocation. There are also discrepancies between the allocated and actual off-take due to insufficient storage by the states, a lack of working capital to purchase commodities, and inefficiencies in the role of PDS dealers.[19] A similar issue, noticing not only leakage and targeting errors, but also the presence of illegal cards and corruption was pointed out and is further worsened by fraudulent practices in fair-priced shops.[20] Besides that, losses during storage in FCI go-downs due to rodents and bad practices and large-scale losses due to bad storage, transit, and theft,[21] led to substantial losses, thereby limiting access.

Secondly, socio-economic backwardness is another factor hindering people from having the means to afford food. Low income is one of the reasons for poor food access and malnutrition.[22] This is established based on the premise that, with an increase in income, access to food can be improved. Numerous empirical studies in India have reported that people belonging to lower economic classes are more likely to experience food insecurity. Similarly, data on the undernourished population, in which the number is higher in cases of those below the poverty line as compared to those above the poverty line[14] supports the premise of the poor population's vulnerability to food security. This signifies the idea that having access to food commodities is a challenge for people in lower or poorer economic conditions. Poverty further limits the amount of food available to children and is particularly worse in the case of female children, who are at a disadvantage because of the patriarchal system that prefers males. In addition, gender-specific wage disparities further contribute to the economic disadvantages faced by women. Women often earn significantly less than men in both rural and non-agricultural sectors, limiting their purchasing power and overall productivity.[23]

- *Challenges concerning food safety*

India has witnessed multiple food safety hazards, with 37 outbreaks of food-borne disease and 3,485 people affected by food poisoning from 1980 to 2009.[24] Similarly, one state witnessed 10 instances of food poisoning affecting 996 individuals during 2003–2005.[25] One of the channels through which food safety is compromised stems from limited water resources, poor management of urban waste, and inadequate water treatment. This is particularly acute in the context of urban agriculture in developing countries that experience substantial population growth, like India. The risks are particularly high when crops are irrigated with untreated or poorly treated wastewater, thereby leading to the possibility of crops being exposed to contaminants during irrigation.[26]

Secondly, food adulteration also compromises food safety and risks human health. It has been noted that Retailers employ various malpractices like coloring, sweetener injections, and hormone usage to manipulate food quality. Synthetic colors, often derived from harmful chemicals like coal tar and petrochemicals, enhance food appearance but pose health risks such as nervous system malfunctions, learning disabilities, cancer, etc. Manipulation of fruit sweetness through the injection of saccharine also has harmful effects on DNA, while gibberellic acid, copper sulfate, and such used for food sweetening can lead to significant health risks like uterine cancer, male impotency, loss of energy, etc. Furthermore, improper application or insufficient drying of wax coatings, as well as the use of potentially harmful residues like petroleum-based waxes containing wood rosins or solvents, can lead to contamination and microbial growth on the produce surface, posing health hazards to consumers.[27]

Poor hygiene in food handling, food preparation, and serving is another challenge to ensuring food safety. A lack of awareness and practice fuels this problem. A research investigation evaluating the rural population's awareness, knowledge, and practice of food safety in Tamil Nadu discovered that only 29.5% (59) had adequate knowledge about washing, overcooking, and reheating vegetables, as well as consuming fresh foods in their entirety. Nevertheless, only 25 of the 59 participants followed proper food handling procedures. This research indicates that there is insufficient understanding of food handling practices, and even those who possess adequate knowledge often fail to implement them consistently.[28] Street food vendors in Delhi also displayed poor hygiene practices, with 72% of them discarding

garbage in uncovered bins and 16% directly onto the road. Only 3% of vendors wore gloves, and only 2% washed their hands before and after handling raw or cooked food. Most respondents had short, clean nails, with only a small percentage (4%) having open wounds. Flies or mosquitoes were noted at 45% of the vending sites, and 19% were observed washing utensils openly.[29] Such a situation exposes food items to bacterial contamination, which, when consumed, may lead to food poisoning.

Food processing presents another challenge to food safety. The Indian food processing industry is characterised by poor infrastructure for storing raw food materials, including warehouses and cold storage facilities, which poses a significant food safety risk. Pests infesting grains due to a lack of monitoring, inadequate use of pesticides, and improper ventilation can lead to contamination and spoilage of food products. Additionally, power outages can disrupt the optimal functioning of cold storage facilities, compromising the quality and safety of stored food materials. Besides that, improper processing techniques or packaging practices, such as packaging cut vegetables without proper sanitation, can increase the risk of foodborne illness for consumers.[16] All these collectively jeopardize the quality and safety of food products available to consumers, potentially leading to health risks.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This review illuminates the complex and multifaceted obstacles hindering India's progress towards food security, which include factors that impact food availability, accessibility, and safety. Agricultural production appears to be intricately linked with food security based on the premise that enhancing agricultural productivity is essential for ensuring an adequate food supply. However, climate variability, as evidenced by fluctuations in temperatures and rainfall patterns, poses a significant threat to agricultural productivity in terms of crop damage and yield reduction. Furthermore, shifts in land use patterns, coupled with land degradation such as soil erosion, salinity, water logging, and deforestation, exacerbate the problem by converting previously cultivated areas for food crops to non-food crops and urban infrastructure, thereby diminishing agricultural productivity. While agricultural unproductivity hinders availability, it may also negatively affect the economic capacity of the population to access food due to any increment in food prices. This perspective underscores the pivotal role of agriculture not only in providing sustenance but also in

bolstering economic well-being.

Population growth and rising incomes are driving a projected increase in food demand, which, when combined with high levels of food waste affects the supply-demand bridge. Furthermore, governance failures plague the PDS which aims to guarantee food availability and affordability through Fair Price Shops (FPS), impeding the equitable distribution of food. In addition to this, socio-economic backwardness and social inequality also pose significant challenges.

Challenges to food safety in India encompass hazards from production to consumption stages. It highlights the risks posed by poor agricultural practices, including the use of untreated wastewater for irrigation, which can introduce contaminants into crops. Furthermore, the addition of harmful substances to food products for profit, known as food adulteration, jeopardizes consumer health. Poor hygiene in food handling and preparation further exacerbates food safety concerns, with inadequate knowledge and practices among both consumers and food handlers contributing to the problem. Furthermore, deficiencies in the food industry's infrastructure and processing techniques increase the risk of contamination and spoilage of food products.

It is also reasonable to argue that both nature and human are responsible in contributing or in influencing the challenges of food security. While land degradation and climate change emerge from a complex interplay of natural and human-induced factors, unsustainable agricultural practices, rapid industrialisation, population growth, food wastage, governance shortcomings, socioeconomic inequalities, and unscrupulous food handling and processing practices stem from human actions and are exacerbated by ineffective governance or societal practices.

Given the persistent nature of food insecurity, deeply ingrained in historical trends and compounded by a myriad of contemporary challenges, addressing these issues becomes paramount. As the global community races against time to achieve the SDGs by 2030, it is imperative to confront these obstacles head-on through multifaceted policy interventions.

►Comprehensive strategies must be developed to adapt to the impact of climate change on agricultural productivity. These strategies should include climate-resilient practices, crop diversification suitable for specific agro-climatic regions, and investment in research to develop climate-resilient crop varieties and sustainable farming practices.

Land degradation must be controlled, and this can be achieved through

►reforestation, agro-forestry, crop rotation, and organic farming to enhance soil health. Regulations to prevent deforestation, overgrazing, and unsustainable mining practices, as well as investment in land rehabilitation programs, are crucial. Promoting sustainable integrated pest management strategies reduces reliance on chemical pesticides.

►Preserving and prioritising agricultural land use can be achieved through strengthening planning regulations, optimizing crop cultivation, and ensuring sustainable urban planning to minimize encroachment.

►The PDS should be reformed to rectify governance inefficiencies and strengthen food distribution networks, improving targeting mechanisms and monitoring to reduce leakages and corruption.

►Finally, strengthening safety regulations is crucial for food security, ensuring food quality, and minimizing contamination risks. This includes upgrading food processing infrastructure, adopting modern technologies, and establishing robust irrigation water quality monitoring systems. It is also critical to enforce strict laws against food adulteration and hygiene standards in food establishments and processing facilities. Training programs on food safety and hygiene practices should be provided to food handlers, and public education campaigns should be conducted to increase consumer awareness about the risks of consuming adulterated foods and the importance of proper food handling.

CONCLUSION

Addressing these challenges is imperative, especially as the global community aims to achieve the SDGs by 2030. With less than six years remaining to achieve the SDGs, India must accelerate its efforts and make significant strides to ensure food security and uplift the well-being of its population. By adopting a holistic approach and fostering collaboration among all stakeholders, India can overcome these challenges and pave the way for a more prosperous future for all its citizens.

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Book Review

Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History, **Edited by Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990, pp. 372, Price 3800rs (Hard cover).**

Dr. Sulagna Som

SACT, Dept. of History, Syamaprasad College

'Recasting Women', published by Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid, attempts to give a theoretical explanation of the caste and class structure of nineteenth-century Indian patriarchal society and the socio-economic position of women in colonial India, as well as the inequalities and obstacles that women endure within the patriarchal structure of society. In eleven chapters, thirteen historians and academics examine the position of women from historical, social, political, and economic dimensions. This book has illustrated the changing condition of women with the regional differences. They aim to rebuild the former historical perspective of British colonialism with all of its ominous, hidden overtones during the most turbulent periods of nationalist struggle. Scholars have also criticized the Euro-centric explanation of Indian society and its own superior masculine presentation.

The first introductory chapter clarifies the purpose of writing the book. Feminist historiography has been redefined in this book that incorporates a lot more than only women's history. According to the editors the writing of history ought to be gender-neutral. By defining modern feminism, the book has thereby evolved into a historical documentation of feminist history writing. Modern radical feminists blame the British for their lack of empathy for women and the Bengalis for being preposterous patriarchs, in contrast to a previous generation of Indian feminists who praised the social reform movements of nineteenth century enlightened Indian males for attempting to end sati, child marriage, polygamy, and advocating for widow remarriage and higher education for women.

The history of Hindu Aryan identity construction in the context of colonialism is examined in the second chapter. She has examined women's history from the perspectives of colonial era - Orientalists, Anglicists, and Evangelicals. She has investigated the ideologies of the Indian social reformers and how they tried to change society through

changing the condition of women in society. Uma Chakroborty tries to analyse the new ideologies of feminism through the light of ancient Vedic texts rediscovered by the British orientalists. She explains in the article how the real circumstances of the nineteenth century differed from the notion of an ideal women's society. In the **third chapter,** Lata Mani addresses a crucial argument that women are not the primary cause of social reform's issues, rather the ideological dilemma of the society to define the authentic tradition of society. She chose to present her argument on the early 19th-century debate over the prohibition of sati-immolation by analyzing the conflict between conservative and liberal groups of Indian society, as well as the perceptions and attitudes of British government officials regarding *Sati*. Additionally, the author claims that patriarchal ideals are present in both orthodox and modern liberals. She argues for a more complex comprehension of them than the one-dimensional approach. In the **fourth chapter,** Sumanta Banerjee talks about the efforts made in nineteenth-century colonial Bengal to educate women by the British government, Christian missionaries, and Indian social reformers and their masculine responsibilities. In nineteenth century the rural women, who were independent to work, helped their male family members, brought their folk culture to the city when they came here for work, and the street literature of Calcutta, including song, dance, theater, recitation, and *Vrata* words, created a connection between these working women of the lower class of society and the veiled women of the upper class *andarmahal* or *zenana*. However, education gave rise to a new middle-class woman who, through their works, developed a new culture distinct from the previous indigenous culture, which was eventually discarded by their fellow lower class women. Sumant Banerjee has tried to show the cultural changes that took place in society through educating women.

In the **next chapter,** Vasantha Kannabiran and K. Lalitha examined the condition of women in the Telangana region in the first half of the 20th century. They demonstrate how social stratification and discrimination based on caste left women in utter misery. However, the status of veiled women from both upper caste Hindu and Muslim households changed in 1946 with the onset of the Telangana People's struggle, "the magic time". Apart from their primary responsibility of raising their children and taking care of the family, women were granted education and the ability to write, join political gatherings, voice their thoughts. The **sixth chapter** by Vir Bharat Talwar addressed the social reform initiatives for Indian women in the context of nationalist movements.

While researching the fundamental reasons behind gender disparity in colonial Indian society, he found that the primary factors differentiating men and women were illiteracy and veiling. The **seventh chapter** is written by Partha Chatterjee. He identified the apparent opposition of the nationalist movement in India and the question of women's development. In this article, Sumit Sarkar, Ghulam Murshid, and Partha Chatterjee agree that nationalist leaders identified women as bearers of Indian heritage and symbols of culture. Partha Chatterjee has shown the patriarchal mentality that was inherent in the nationalist leaders while advocating for women's development and reforms. They opposed women adopting western modernism. Their primary objective in educating women was to make them suitable wives; they could not easily accept women in professions. In the **next chapter**, Susie Tharu explains how the myth of the Indian chaste woman has been portrayed in the nationalist and post-independence periods of Indo-Anglican literature. In **chapter nine**, Nirmala Banerjee examines how industrialization affected working women's lives in rural areas during World War II. She demonstrates how the war affected the way of life and mentality of rural women who joined the city factories. According to the huge numerical data presented by Nirmala Banerjee, the rural social structure changed as a result of women entering supposedly fields that were traditionally male-dominated. Prem Chowdhury in the **tenth chapter** examines the overall condition of women in Haryana's Jat patriarchal society, regardless of their caste and class. By examining political and economic factors in the colonial context, he identified the reason and objective of Haryana's social reformers' efforts. The **last article** of this book has been contributed by Kapil Kumar. In this article, he has drawn attention to Ayodhya's working-class women's history of exploitation and difficulties. He has investigated the political identity of women in Ayodhya in regard to their involvement in Baba Ramchandra's freedom movement.

This book examines the situation of Indian women by examining historical perspectives on colonialism, reform movements, and patriarchal nationalist movements of different parts of India. However, the situation of Muslim, Dalit, or tribal women—the so-called backward class of society—has been overlooked in the book. Regarding this issue, the book's editors believe that understanding the relationships between people of different races and religions in society is essential if women's history is to be documented on the basis of caste, religion, and race. This is not feasible within the book's constrained scope. A separate study analysis would be required to address that

issue. Another flaw of this book is that, although it makes an effort to place women's history and feminism within the framework of colonial control, these chapters fail to address how British rule changed as a result of regional variations. However, it is indisputable that the book sparked an entirely new wave in Indian feminist historiography. This book presents an alternative analysis of the Bengal Renaissance's social reform movement for women's empowerment.

David Kopf, in his review of this book, has acknowledged the excellent quality of the research in this book, despite his strong criticism of the authors for failing to analyze the historiography of the subject they wrote about. He contends that it is not acceptable to disregard the works of past historians who have made significant contributions in shaping social history of India. Nevertheless, it shouldn't be disregarded for developing a new genre for writing about women's history. It cannot be considered an elitist style of writing. This book is an essential read for scholars studying women's history or gender-based historiography because of its well-written and cohesive chapters.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF EISSS (2024-25)

Sl	FULL NAME	Occupation / Professional Status
1	DEBAJIT DUTTA	Professor (College / University)
2	SUPRIYA CHANDA	Student / Research Scholar
3	DR. KARTIK CHANDRA SUTRADHAR	Professor (College / University)
4	KRISHNA KUMAR SARKAR	Professor (College / University)
5	ARPITA SARKAR	Professor (College / University)
6	SUDIP BHATTACHARYA	Professor (College / University)
7	PRASAD DAS	Teacher (School)
8	DR. PRASHANTA BISWAS	Professor (College / University)
9	MOSIRA PARVIN	Professor (College / University)
10	SROBON KUMAR MONDOL	Professor (College / University)
11	SHANTA BARMAN	Student / Research Scholar
12	JAHIRUL HAQUE	Professor (College / University)
13	JOYDEEP SINGH	Professor (College / University)
14	RATNA ROY	Professor (College / University)
15	SUJAY DEBNATH	Professor (College / University)
16	DR. AMIT KUMAR BATABYAL	Student / Research Scholar
17	SUBHAMAY DUTTA	Student / Research Scholar
18	DR. AKHIL SARKAR	Professor (College / University)
19	DR. RUMAN SUTRADHAR	Professor (College / University)
20	BILTU SAHA	Others
21	RAMENDRA NATH BHOWMICK	Professor (College / University)
22	RUDRANI BHATTACHARYA	Professor (College / University)
23	BONI DUTTA	Professor (College / University)
24	PRANAY RAJAK	Professor (College / University)
25	POULAMI RAY	Professoinal / Self - employed.
26	DR. SUBHAS SINGHA ROY	Professor (College / University)
27	NIRMALYA BARMAN	Professor (College / University)
28	ANINDITA GOSWAMI	Teacher (School)
29	ANINDYA BHATTACHARYYA	Professor (College / University)
30	BISWAJIT ADHIKARY	Professor (College / University)
31	KARTIK KR BHUNIA	Professor (College / University)
32	DR. ARUN GHOSH	Professor (College / University)
33	DR. SUDARSHANA SEN	Professor (College / University)
34	DEBASISH DEY	Student / Research Scholar
35	BAPPA MOHANTA	Professor (College / University)
36	DR. SANTANA MOCHARY	Professor (College / University)
37	TRISHNA KARATI	Professor (College / University)
38	ANINDITA DUTTA	Others
39	TBBAI SARKAR	Professor (College / University)
40	DR. ASUDHA MANGAR	Teacher (School)
41	Dr. BIPUL MONDAL	Professor (College / University)
42	Dr. KRISHNA BARMAN	Professor (College / University)
43	DR.PRAJNA PARAMITA SARKAR	Professor (College / University)
44	SUBINAY DAS	Teacher (School)
45	SWATI GHATAK	Professor (College / University)
46	KAUSAR ALI	Student / Research Scholar
47	DR. TAHITI SARKAR	Professor (College / University)

48	DR. NAJU HANSDA	Professor (College / University)
49	LAKI KAR	Student / Research Scholar
50	SAYAN DEBNATH	Student / Research Scholar
51	SANJIB PATRA	Student / Research Scholar
52	BIDYABHARATI HALDER	Student / Research Scholar
53	ANUJA LAMA	Professor (College / University)
54	PRIYANKA DUTTA	Student / Research Scholar
55	DR. AMRITA KUMAR SHIL	Professor (College / University)
56	MANDIRA PAUL	Professor (College / University)
57	SWADHIN JHA	Professor (College / University)