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TURNING NATIONAL ICONS INTO CASTE LEADERS

In older times in suburban India, the homes which had school going children, ubiquitously adorned a symbolical chart of famous national leaders. This would hang alongside another chart, which told us succinctly about our national bird, national animal, national game and so on. It was taken for granted, courtesy these charts, that children would know who the first president of India was and who was the inaugural chief of army staff. The television was still to arrive and these leaders were recalled with certain respect and dignity attached to their name.

This editorial doesn't purport to discuss the ill-effects of television on school-going children. There is no immediate need for it; television hasn't got better or worse during the past week to invite a discussion. It's the increasing evolution of historical and national icons as caste leaders which worries your reporter today. The most recent has been Prime Minister Narendra Modi encouraging an attempt at canonization of Hindi poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar as leader of the Bhumihar community, whose support would be pivotal to electoral gains proposed to be made by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the upcoming assembly elections in Bihar.

Dinkar was a great poet and when Jaya Prakash Narayan, at a historic rally in New Delhi at Ramlia Grounds in 1975, recited the famous lines from Dinkar's 1956 poem, "Singhasan Khali Karo Ki Janata Aaati Hain (Vacate the throne for the people are coming)", he did not do so to attract Bhumihars to his movement. Dinkar was called Rashtra Kavi, the national poet, given the tenor and theme of his poetry, which evoked profound nationalist sentiments. To have the national poet presented as a caste-icon would be extremely unpalatable to the lovers of Dinkar's poetry, so much so that some might hate the BJP for taking such liberties.

This is not the only instance of the BJP going overboard with its deconstructing of national icons as caste leaders. Bihar BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi recently celebrated the 2320th birth anniversary of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka under the aegis of a group promoting the interests of Kushwaha caste. As historian Nayanjot Lahiri said in a recent article, "We don't know, for instance, when exactly Ashoka was born - neither the particular day, month or year. Very few ancient writers share our modern obsession with recording such events with calendrical exactness, and certainly, Ashoka's scribes cannot be counted in this category. Similarly, we don't know when he married or, for that matter, how many times. We certainly don't

know which caste he belonged to but considering that he lived for large parts of his life in royal surroundings, we imagine that he would have enjoyed a pretty cushy life, which was neither economically nor socially deprived as are the lives of many backward castes in Bihar."

Ashoka commands a place of pride in our national identity. Our national emblem - the Lion Capital - is inspired by the pillar he built at Sarnath. It's said that guided by his wife Vidisha Devi, he built the famous stambh (pillar) to identify the site where Buddha delivered his first sermon and Buddhism was founded. In his quest for enlightenment, Ashoka tried to rise above sectarian thought and for him deep seated associations with caste identity must have been odious. But a Sushil Kumar Modi would have the populous Kushwaha community believe that he belonged just to them and not to the nation at large.

Bhumihar and Kushwahas together with Sushil Modi's backward Vaishya community have the potential to propel the BJP to power in Bihar. Whether the deconstruction and co-option of national icons as caste figures could serve as an electoral catalyst is very doubtful. This deconstruction also runs contrary to the ideology of 'inclusive' cultural nationalism professed to be pursued by the BJP.

The definition of Cultural Nationalism, as enumerated by the Rashtriya SwayamsewaK Sangh (RSS) mentions, "The term Hindu in the conviction as well as in the constitution of the RSS is a cultural and civilizational concept and not a political or religious dogma. The term as a cultural concept will include and did always include all including Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Muslims, Christians and Parsis. The cultural nationality of India, in the conviction of the RSS, is Hindu and it was inclusive of all who are born and who have adopted Bharat as their Motherland, including Muslims, Christians and Parsis. The answering association submit that it is not just a matter of RSS conviction, but a fact borne out by history that the Muslims, Christians and Parsis too are Hindus by culture although as religions they are not so."

This statement was made by RSS General Secretary in his submission before the Tribunal constituted under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 to hear the case on the RSS. Spurring development and ending jungle raj have been the platforms on which the BJP has fought last two elections in Bihar. This time around it's going hammer and tongs against its erstwhile ally Nitish Kumar for having joined hands with the symbol of jungle raj, Lalu Prasad Yadav. However, in matching the might of the caste combinations built by the coming together of Kumar and Yadav, the BJP leadership is trying to create a counter through its own combination. This would be counterproductive electorally in the short term and ideologically in long-term.



15 JUNE 2015

Sidharth Mishra

secretary's desk

Once again we are here and presenting before you with great pride the April-June 2015 issue of The Discussant. This is the second issue of third volume. Earlier this year, we successfully entered the third year of regular publication as an RNI registered quarterly periodical. We had received the ISSN accreditation a year earlier. In this time and era when publication industry is increasingly coming to be controlled by corporate bodies, it's no mean achievement for a think tank, still in the state of impoverished infancy, to have managed to publish the journal regularly.

Towards this end I am greatly indebted to the body of intellectuals and well-wishers, who have always been forthcoming with their support both intellectually and financially. It's their love and patronage which gives us the strength to move on. I am happy to share with you that our online edition is crossing new frontiers and getting accessed from new territories, which gives our writers a global exposure unthinkable for any journal of our vintage.

This edition, like the predecessor issue, is extra-ordinary but for different reason. While in the last issue there were contributions by three very eminent intellectuals viz. Professor Mahendra Prasad Singh, Shri Shakti Sinha and Dr Rajiv R Thakur, in this issue we are carrying some very thought provoking papers and articles from young scholars. Like previous issue, we also have a a very voluble book review.. Their contributions are in areas as varied as Indian politics, English literature, Ethics, Media and Governance.

With Warm Regards,



15 JUNE 2015

Dr Sanjeev Kumar Tiwari

INDIAN DEMOCRACY- EXPERIMENTING ACTIVISM AND GOVERNANCE

HARI K SHARMA*

"A patriot must always be ready to defend his country against his government

—Edward Abbey

ABSTRACT

Indian democracy is currently passing through a phase of revived activism with the emergence of anti- corruption movement fame Aam Aadmi Party. Earlier, it had witnessed that how after emergency a mass movement and its affiliates, which translate into a political alternative, ultimately failed to hold, govern and sustain in the long run. Numerous attempts of reforming Indian democracy and making it more transparent, accountable and pro-people have been made by leaders and activists of different socio-political movements. They have definitely improved and impacted upon the system; but only in a limited way. It is a matter of grave speculation to analyse and predict the future of this current phase of experimentation of activism and governance in Delhi. It is especially stimulating knowing the fact that activism and governance rarely form an alliance

INTRODUCTION

India is the most complex, most interesting and most challenging democratic experiment on Earth. It is not just the world's biggest democracy but also the most vibrant and stimulating one, taking into account its turbulent past, heterogeneous society, and multifaceted internal and external hiccups. Pakistan which begins its democratic journey alongside India failed soon after the death of its architect, Mohammad Ali Jinnah while India sustains its democratic credentials and successfully

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countered all the challenges to its stability. India's biggest success as a democracy lies in its sustenance and people's enduring faith in it.

At the time of independence, India had a stagnant economy with mass poverty and under development, largely uneducated population and a deeply entrenched socio-religious hierarchical society. Many have argued that India would face the same democratic fate as Pakistan or many other newly independent states. India was dubbed as a unique democratic experience with an overwhelmingly illiterate, poor and agrarian population suddenly became the part of a modern democratic state with all the best of democratic institutions and practices of the world. Its constitution was also termed as a borrowed one which contradicts its grass root level realities. But despite all that Indian democracy has proved out to be a grand success, not in the sense that it had no weaknesses or drawbacks; but that it largely remains a triumphant force in countering all and moving ahead. Democracy in India has succeeded despite the absence of classic pre-conditions such as mass literacy, egalitarian society, and social cohesion which were seen in western democracies at their formative stages.

Over the period of time many changes have occurred in India's polity, economy and society, which definitely have a direct bearing on its democratic set-up. Presently, it is passing through a phase of experimentation and trying new forms and developing new alternatives for ensuring better governance, transparency and accountability. It became significantly important in the wake of huge corruption cases, poor governance and deliverance record, unaccountable political class, rising expectations of the people and changing political dynamics especially in the semi-urban and urban areas and particularly among the urban middle and lower class.

Mass Media, particularly social media networks are becoming the biggest source of political awareness that help in moulding public opinion and drive public mobilisation on issues of general concern. Highlighting social media's role and importance Ghannam has stated that these social networks inform, mobilize, entertain, create communities, increase transparency, and seek to hold governments accountable . In the recent past social media, particularly blogging, Facebook and Twitter, have played a key role in initiating, accelerating and even organizing some of the uprisings and revolutions that have been taken place in the Middle East. They have played a significant role in organising the youth, channelize their strengths and empower them in their fight against domestic repressive regimes. They have also successfully raised their cravings for more freedom and openness and garner assistance and support at the global level.

POLITICS AND ACTIVISM

Activism is not new to politics. In different countries at different point of times activists have played a crucial role in socio-political change. Activism consist the use of direct, often confrontational action, such as a demonstration, disobedience of laws, protests, campaigning, boycotts or strike, in opposition to or support of a cause. Activists also used certain other and comparatively more peaceful ways such as lobbying, writing letters, internet activism, petitions and attending meetings. Although, the term connotes peaceful means; it sometimes got violent. Often it is concerned with 'how to change the world' in different ways, and may be probably that's the reason for different forms of activism available that try to bring or guide change in different directions- social, political, economic, environmental and so on.

Global activism against the hegemonic control of the West over the world economic system have mobilised large number of people cutting across different countries and continents to register their opposition in an organised way. There are numerous evidences of the globalization of protest on broad range of issues such as global warming, nuclear weapons, anti-war protests, LGTB rights, human rights, humanitarian interventions, civil wars, and ethnic genocide and so on, which involves the coordination and scheduling of simultaneous events in diverse locales. Advanced global communication techniques, especially the internet has helped in increasing the speed, reach and effectiveness of mass mobilisation for a common cause.

Activism in Indian politics has a long history; although in recent times with new rapid and more convenient means of diffusion and dissemination of knowledge and information, it has occupied a significant space in political activity. The role played by social media is commendable in the sense of guiding public opinion, spreading awareness, garnering people's support and mobilising them for a cause of common concern; which has actually changed the dynamics of Indian politics. Activism was also closely linked to different movements and even remains one of the biggest sources of socio-political leadership in India. From India's freedom struggle to JP Movement and from different social movements (peasants, workers, students, women's or environment) to Anna Hazare's anti-corruption movement- a lot of leaders emerged that have changed the course of India's political history.

In the recent past many new changes; albeit not all positive ones, were visible on the political front in India. One of them was of the meteoric rise of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and activist politics. Many political parties have social activists as their members, some of them might turn out to be activist politicians; but AAP is the only political party which was dominated by activists. Most of its founder members were either activists or turned out to be activists once they have joined the party. With its coming to power in Delhi populism touches new heights in terms of its way of public consultation, vigilante justice, delivery mechanism, and ensuring governance through activism or say avoiding governance through activism. The party rose to power circles because they were able to galvanize public anger against corruption and traditional brand of politics to their favour and were successfully able to project themselves as an honest political alternate. Most of its initial members were basically civil society activists who have raised a number of issues related to transparency, good and effective governance and corruption. Since they have raised the issues of general public concern, most of their demands and policies were populist in nature, and for obvious reasons got enough public support.

The recent revival of activist politics is significant in a number of ways. Firstly, civil society activists have actually filled the gap between the rulers and the ruled, held them accountable for their misdeeds, and generate at least some transparency in the forms of new laws and policies. Secondly, activists generally try to bring political reforms and changes from outside and once they become the part of government machinery they avoid indulging in activism, but this time they have even broken this barrier. Thirdly, all the political parties have activist leaders as at times they all have to sit in opposition and make their presence felt among the masses. Fourthly, activism has become one of the most successful ways of catching media and public attention, which can help in raising the popularity graph of its perpetrators. Fifthly, it has opened up the door of political opportunities for the activists and the common man as now even they can explore their leadership potential. Sixthly, with its rising level and frequent practices it has successfully been able to assimilate India into the global populist-activist trend. Seventhly, it has raised the level of public debate by posing new questions on a comparatively larger platform and enhanced public participation in the democratic process. It can be seen as a step in the direction of deliberative democracy. And lastly, it has given a hope to the hopeless, especially to the marginalised sections of the society. Considering all these facts, political activism can be seen as a welcome step and with its renewed thrust to change the traditional brand of politics will certainly improve India's post-independence democratic experience.

ACTIVISM AND GOVERNANCE

Politics, activism and governance are all different; although many leaders have emerged out of different movements and many a times socio-political activism has ensured better governance and functioning. Activism and governance form a rare alliance especially when the activists themselves have been given the task to govern. This was not just bizarre and puts a question mark on a party's governing capability; but also ushered a new phase in Indian politics where activism is seen as a fair replacement of governance. Different political parties and leaders have criticised it but some of them were smart enough to even follow that 'copycat activism' and sit on a dharna and protest against their own political parties. It was also seen as political gimmickry where a person or group of persons registered their protest, keeps their voters

amused and anxious, and balanced their party's stand to evade possible fallout of their decisions/policies. If a party can't govern or overlook governance and if a leader disagrees with the stand of its own political party; then better they should quit and sit in opposition or indulge in activism. But such actions are not comparable with any movement or justifiable in the name of the democratic right to protest.

With a hope of change the people of Delhi have given a chance to the much hyped, media backed Aam Aadmi Party. The party claims to differ from all the traditional political parties in terms of its emergence, membership, organisation, policies and leadership. Since it has emerged out from the Anna Hazare led anti-corruption movement, it has declared it as their prime focus area of struggle. They also got much public support and riding on populist promises they were successfully able to not just win considerable seats in the assembly elections; but were also able to form the government, interestingly with the support of the same political party against whom they have started their movement. The party also remain largely successful in declaring the AAP as the benchmark of honesty in Indian politics. Here one notable thing is that from its cadre and leadership's outlook, to their methods and practices, everything have been tactically planned to not just look familiar to the common man; but also grab the attention of both the national and international media. Their populist style and organisational capabilities have even forced the established political parties to copy their style, behaviour, activities and policies. Political parties of similar names were formed not just in India but also abroad to catch the momentum of political change and match its success in Delhi.

At one point, it seems that definitely a huge change has knocked at India's political set-up; until the party once again indulge in activism by avoiding governance, disobeyed the Indian constitution, challenged the entire system by questioning the credibility of nearly everyone and ultimately runs away from its responsibility of providing stable and more effective governance. The party faced huge criticism for its style of functioning, miscalculated policy decisions, political dictates and failed to provide better alternate governance. Sociologist Dipankar Gupta believe that AAP came to power too early and may be because of this particular reason they're still not ready or prepared to govern.

During AAP's 49 day stint in Delhi, political activism touches new heights. It has a spill over effect and other political parties have followed the AAP's strategy to register their protest, bypassing all political courtesies, norms, traditions and even constitutional practices. The Delhi state president of the Congress party was personally involved in multiple protests against the AAP lead government, which was thriving on their political support. Interestingly, they have criticised each and every move of the government, indulged in protests; but didn't topple the government due to some political compulsions. After a lot of political spectacle, which also includes a sitting Chief Minister protesting in his own state for not granting his unconstitutional demand, the party has finally resigned in name of Janlokpal Bill; but was quick enough to declare it as their sacrifice by the putting the entire blame on its political opponents. It didn't even spare the media, which has helped them rose to power and criticised them for being biased and even paid by its political rivals.

MASSIVE MANDATE AND MESS-UP

Balance of power and strong opposition are two key prerequisites of a responsive and accountable government in any democratic set-up. Sometimes, too much public support is also dangerous as it increase public expectations beyond all reasonable parameters of possibility. Lots of media and public attention expose the government in face of any, even minor, miscalculated decision or action. It seems that AAP is facing the challenges that arouse from its invincible position in the assembly. Despite AAP's poor show in the general elections when 96 percent of its candidates have lost their security deposits, once again the people of Delhi have trusted AAP's leadership and their populist promises and this time it has won the Delhi assembly polls of 2015 by a huge majority of 67 out of 70 seats, which has not been witnessed by the state so far. The dream of 'Paanch SaaL Kejriwal' has been realised and the party secured historic majority and the strongest ever position in the assembly. But once again it seems that that all its promises and claims of 'party with a difference' are going into doldrums.

There were again a number of key issues which puts a question mark on AAP's internal party democracy and external performance in terms of ensuring governance. Good governance can't be ensured without coordination, cooperation and a broader consensus on issues of general public interest. Alongwith weak opposition in the assembly, the AAP government is at loggerheads with the central government, with the office Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, with the leadership of civic bodies, with police, with media etc. The party with a difference turns into any other political party in a short span of time. On the front of internal party democracy it has given a clear signal that centrality of decision making and leadership will continue and voices of dissent will be curbed to anonymity even if it comes from its founding pillars. Transparency and accountability becomes things of the past. The party leadership also shed its image of a common men's party and all its top brass readily accepted the facilities and comforts against which they have lunched a struggle. All austerity measures were put on rest and the VIP culture got a backdoor entry. Its callousness towards public misery and absolute love for popularity becomes the key reason of a farmer's suicide in the same rally that was planned to secure their larger interests. Rather than finding solutions to long standing challenges and fulfilling the aspirations of millions of people the party embraces escapism and didn't hesitate to put the onus of all its unfulfilled promises and tall claims on the central government.

CONCLUSION

The recent changes in the political scene were quite phenomenal, not just in the sense of having a new political option, but also in the form of rising people's expectations for honesty, transparency, accountability, better governance and deliverance of public goods. Aam Aadmi Party's emergence itself was the result of the corrupt system and the arrogance of the dominant political elites. Although, honesty was always a sought after virtue in Indian politics but in the recent past with the increasing social acceptability of corruption in Indian society, it was losing its sheen. They have at least successfully raised many of the untouched issues in politics.

From AAP's emergence to its electoral debut and political performance the following conclusions can be drawn: Firstly, The Aam Aadmi Party's meteoric rise and its repeated remarkable performance in Delhi assembly elections was more of the outcome of public distrust and anger against corruption and traditional politics and less of people's faith in its yet to be proven credentials. People have actually given a chance to a newcomer who remains successful in projecting themselves as an honest political alternate. Secondly, although, AAP was able to channelize public angst against corruption and traditional politics towards their electoral success in Delhi; it largely failed both at the governance and deliverance level. Thirdly, most of its initial leaders have no background or prior experience of providing good governance. Fourthly, it makes a sense if somebody claims to be honest; but it seems more of rhetorical thrust when a party or a person claim that only they are honest and nobody else could be trusted anymore. Fifthly, Honesty alone can't become the parameter of electing a person as India also need capable, efficient and educated leaders who preferably also have a proven record of governance. Sixthly, it has also highlighted that politics and activism can still form an alliance; but activism and governance can't be possible at the same point of time. Seventhly, social activists who joined politics should focus more governance rather than trying to evade governance by indulging in activism. Activists can help in improving governance; but from outside only. Eighthly, it seems that over the period of time AAP came out to be another political party with no difference from its political rivals. It was getting evident from its list of candidates, their selective targeting, methods and strategies, win all and catch all slogans etc. Ninthly, the party seems to ride more on rhetoric and less on governance and policies. Rhetoric's are short lived and ultimately people wants deliverance of all promised public goods. And lastly, AAP will have to become and behave more of as a political party and shed its movement-like persona especially, when it'll fulfil the main demands/goals of its political movement. The party must focus long-term issues.

**INDIAN DEMOCRACY- EXPERIMENTING
ACTIVISM AND GOVERNANCE**

It is beyond a reasonable doubt that AAP has successfully grabbed the public consciousness and media attention in projecting themselves as an honest and more pro-people political alternate. The party needs some time to take roots, and now it should focus more on fulfilling its past promises rather than making new ones. Activism, rhetoric and populism are all short lived strategies and with changing time it must be transformed into a stable political option with a well-defined ideology, a long term policy and plan of action to sustain. Activism can never replace governance and the party must deliver whenever people will show their faith and give them a chance to govern. It may still take some more time to predict whether this current phase of activism in Indian politics can actually translate populism into action and make democracy more transparent, accountable and efficient or proved to be another failed experiment to do so.

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BODIES AS NATIONAL METAPHORS IN THE INDIAN ENGLISH NOVEL

SOMESHWAR SATI*

*Discourse is imposed not without violence. It defines and confines, exhibits and inhibits, expresses and silences. But there are resistances to such discursive bondage - resistances that tend to conflict with and even disrupt the regime of a particular cultural script. In this paper, I would like to examine one such form of resistance - the resistance offered by the Indian English novel to the cultural script of nationalism. The text that immediately comes to mind is, of course, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) and its unsparing parody of Nehru's tryst with destiny. But what often goes unnoticed is the fact that at the heart of this narrative there lies the ever-fragmenting and fragmented body of its semi-grotesque protagonist-narrator, Saleem Sinai:*

I am not speaking metaphorically; nor is this the opening gambit of some melodramatic, riddling, grubby appeal for pity. I mean quite simply that I have begun to crack all over like an old jug, that my poor body, singular, unlovely, buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drainage below, mutilated by doors, brained by spittoons, has started coming apart at the seams. In short, I am literally disintegrating, slowly for the moment, although there are signs of acceleration. I ask you only to accept (as I have accepted) that I shall eventually crumble into (approximately) six hundred and thirty million particles of anonymous, and necessarily oblivious dust." (Salman Rushdie; 1980; 15) He described the Indian political system as one of consensus-building, marked by a federal state structure as well as a federally organized ruling party. Even though the Congress party thoroughly dominated the system, it allowed for the articulation of a variety of contradictory interests within its own organization and had evolved democratic mechanisms for arriving at decisions that reflected a broad consensus.

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Saleem may here claim not to be speaking metaphorically. But, the figure of his body crumbling into particles of dust, numbering approximately the Indian population at the time when *Midnight's Children* was being written, is undoubtedly an enduring metaphor - an image that has been appropriated by the critical establishment as a formal index of the post-structuralist fracturing of the narrative capacity of representation. What gives credence to the above line of argument is Rushdie's very own confession, in *Imaginary Homelands*, wherein he states that in trying to write about that one real physical India, we inevitably end up writing about a plurality of invisible ones - 'Indias of the mind.' Within this frame of reference, Rushdie's narrative of the nation tends to disseminate into an almost endless play of signifiers, something akin to the radical infinite ambiguity of meaning. More importantly, however, Saleem's body in *Midnight's Children* is symptomatic of the state of the body polity of the Indian nation itself. Like India, Saleem is born at the midnight hour of August 15, 1947, and from hereon, his life and destiny is irrevocably linked to the life and destiny of the newborn nation. The image of his fissuring body figuratively captures the dissolution of the constitutionally-defined 'We, the People of India,' underlining in this way the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force.

The homology between the fissuring human body and "this historic failure of a nation to come into its own" once again surfaces in Rukun Advani's *Beethoven Among The Cows* (1994). The protagonist of this novel seems inevitably destined "to see India crack up like the fragments of my multi-channelled mind" (Advani; 1994; 210). Other novelists like Amitav Ghosh in *The Shadow Lines* (1988) and Mukul Kesavan in *Looking through Glass* (1995), to name only two, also have, in their own respective ways, deployed the figure of the human body in their narratives to problematize and even transcend the nation. Small wonder, then, that the literal cracking-up of Saleem's body is regarded as a literary marker that metaphorically signals the beginning of the new cycle of the Indian English novel. In this new cycle, the Indian English novelist is ceaselessly attempting to dissolve the nation, both at its inward and outward boundaries of culture. In the ensuing pages, I shall attempt to examine the above novelistic practice, and understand how the figure of the human body has been strategically deployed within the ideologically-regulated contours of the Indian English novel as a site of discursive refusal to conform to the rhetoric of nationalism.

I

In hegemonic postcolonial discourse, the nation has been conceptualized as a form of narrative elaboration. What are the political implications of such a concept? An answer to this question has a crucial bearing on the ensuing discussion, and to find it, we have to first understand the changing academic attitude towards the narrative form itself.

The advent of post-structuralism brought about a sea change in the way a narrative was intellectually perceived. From a rather politically benign, world-disclosing cognitive structure, it suddenly became an ideologically-surcharged, world-structuring discursive formation. Most importantly, this seismic shift generated in the academic world a pervasive sense of scepticism towards all forms of narratives. A narrative is now seen as proceeding by imposing an artificial sense of unity upon heterogeneity. It is seen as proceeding by excluding and even subordinating other discourses in order to produce coherent and comprehensible forms. In other words, a narrative today is conceptualized as a coercive discursive formation that banishes 'difference' to promote identity and teleology.

As the nation has been conceptualized, in academic circles the world over, as a form of narrative elaboration, it automatically follows that all nationalist claims to representation and representativeness are allegedly implicated in the same narrative logic and laws of domination, exclusion and instrumentality. At least this is what the Indian English novel tends to suggest. In *Midnight's Children*, for example, Rushdie attempts to problematize the nationalist narratives of our freedom struggle. According to him, such accounts tend to simply gloss over the contributions made to this movement by the Indian Muslim nationalist subject; that is, by those Muslims who were opposed to the Partition and who consciously chose to stay back in India after Independence. Their existence, Rushdie feels, has been swept under the

carpet in such accounts. In *Midnight's Children*, Rushdie therefore brings this theme to the fore of his narrative through a telling metaphor. He makes the representative of this group in the novel literally reside in a cellar, under a carpet.

But it is Mukul Kesavan in *Looking Through Glass* who provides us with a full-length novelistic treatment of this issue, and he does so through an ingenious narrative device. In his story, Kesavan strategically deploys both the notion of the disembodied subject and the trope of invisibility to measure the nationalist agency of his characters. Read from this perspective at the heart of this remarkable imaginative account of the Quit India Movement is the indefatigable figure of Masroor, the Muslim Indian nationalist subject "who believed in the Congress and its dream of India, free and united, and for whom it was critical that the Congress continued to believe in him" (Kesavan 1995, 247). But before going on with Masroor's story in more detail it is imperative to say a word about the way the subjectivity of an Indian Muslim was perceived during the 'history-laden' years leading up to India's independence.

Masroor and many other Muslims like him were ostracised by the members of their own religious community for opposing the Muslim League and its demand for an Islamic homeland. Within the circles of their very own religious community they were seen as traitors and their identity was defined not in religious terms but in terms of their political and territorial allegiances. This is why it was important for the Indian Muslim nationalist that the Congress should continue to believe in him. But, the figure of the Indian Muslim had been appropriated in the popular nationalist discourse as the enemy within, as a separatist with extra territorial loyalties and it was particularly so during the 1940s. His subjectivity was defined primarily in terms of his religious rather than proposed national affiliations. Predictably, as the plot of *Looking Through Glass* unfolds, Masroor's hopes for United Independent India recedes. This calls express attention to the national movement's inability to resist the communal interpolation of its politics- a failure that had inevitably culminated in the partition of the subcontinent along religious lines. As a Muslim opposed to the creation of Pakistan, Masroor tries to insert himself into the national movement through a passionate effort to stop a communal cricket match organized by the British Government between the Aligarh Muslim University and the Banaras Hindu University. This unsuccessful attempt at somekind of non-communal political activism ironically finds him failing to register his presence in history, literally disappearing into invisibility on August 9, 1942 - the very day the Quit India Movement began. The coming into being of the Quit India Movement, in a sense is made to parallel the Muslim Indian nationalist subject's suspension into an absence. Historically speaking, the Quit India Movement did indeed develop by suspending the long-standing question of Hindu-Muslim unity in the name of 'do and die' for the nation. An earlier promise made by Gandhi that there shall be no civil disobedience campaign until and unless the Hindu-Muslim problem had been solved, had thus been breached. To Masroor, this breach of promise constitutes the ground from which his predicament and that of millions of other Indian Muslims like him originates:

"I had prayed so hard that the Congress wouldn't pass the resolution, said Masroor through egg and toast. For the first half of the year, he wasn't worried because each time some radical asked for mass civil disobedience, Gandhi said no. There was to be no direct action to push the British out till the Muslims had agreed. Then suddenly, he changed his mind. Suddenly the Muslim Mind became closed to him, suddenly the masses became irresistibly urgent. Inspired by him, the members of the Congress Working Committee met in Bombay and passed the Quit India resolution, which sidestepped Muslims in favour of the masses. Like a bunch of yogis fired by the power of the mind, they concentrated on the Hindu-Muslim problem and made it vanish. Along with the problem, said Masroor, we vanished as well." (Kesavan 1995, 247)

Even Masroor has a disembodied presence in the momentous events of August 9. While reading about the news of the events in the paper he simply becomes an invisible presence in the plot. One moment he is on his knees "reading on all fours this confirmation of everything he feared"(46), and the next moment, the narrator sees him disappear into a military lorry hurtling down the road. Masroor has literally vanished into invisibility. As the truck picks up speed the narrator finds Masroor's image flattened on a recruiting poster printed on the side of the truck: "Take the King's Commission: The Noblest Life in Earth"(47). The narrator cannot tell what has become of Masroor; whether he is alive or dead, an image or a person.

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Masroor's predicament is indeed a precarious one. According to Challakere: "Masroor can become an authorized nationalist (read Congress nationalist) only in so far as he expunges his Muslimness. In effect, Masroor has only two choices: either to strip his identity of Muslimness and become invisible, or else emerge as the very stereotype of the "Muslim separatist" who will undo the dream of a single united India. In effect, the Congress Muslim must either unquestioningly accept the Quit India resolution and the Congress' revised program for the satyagrahi (revolutionary), or inhabit the nationalist narrative as an impediment. It is the predicament of being hyper visible to the Hindus and to the British, while at the same time that he is invisible as a Muslim body to the Congress party (the party that has the power to set the agenda for nationalism), that Masroor knows too well" (Padmaja Challakere, 1998, 11).

Based on the above observation, one can safely argue that in *Looking Through Glass* Kesavan presents us with a rather sympathetic account of Masroor's futile struggle against the communal blindness of a so-called secular political party.

"Eighty...million Muslims. This is the truth, the government's own truth printed, bounded, and published. But for us Muslims, the whole truth is that there are eighty million Musalmans in this country who are invisible...Not visible to everyone. Not to the British who count us. Not to those Hindus who hate us, who see us everywhere circumcised monsters who bathe once a year and breed all the time. It is the congress which can't see us...It first bleaches us with its secularism till we are transparent and then walks through us, as you and I walk through fins and ghosts...when we are for it, we are for human beings, transparent in our humanity. When we are against it, we still are not Muslims, because then we are feudal or bourgeois, some abstract sort of anti-social villain." (Kesavan; 1995 ;190).

A critical reading of Masroor's account suggest that Mahatma Gandhi literally becomes the touchstone against which an Indian can measure the degree of his patriotism.

"The degree of disappearance was in inverse proportion to the victim's commitment to the Congress. Some just became lighter skinned which they did not mind. Others, more involved with the party, sometimes became translucent. With Inayat Sahib, a veteran of the great Khilafat Campaign who had grown away from the Congress after the Kanpur riot, the most that happened Owas during a meeting of the Municipal Board he found himself completely naked in the middle of an argument...The more committed they were, the less they left behind. One just left his name behind in the novel he had been reading when he heard the news. He had been reading Forster and when they found the book by the empty armchair, Aziz had become Salman on every page...His brother Saleera had been subbing the late city edition when the news came down the wire...he was translated into the left hand corner of the day's cartoon, just under the last fold of the Mahatma's loincloth"(Kesavan; 1995;248) But what is striking about this account is the way in which the trope of invisibility figuratively captures the inability of the Indian national movement to generate a legitimate and authorized public space for a genuine non-communal activism (Challakere 1998, 577-8). This puts the very possibility of an Indian national imaginary in which there exists no political discord between the two religious communities under erasure. In the absence of such a public space, Masroor's attempt to prevent the communal cricket match from commencing does indeed provide us with an alternative site for undertaking a genuine secular political activity.

But more importantly it is around the absent bodies of the Indian Muslim National subjects that Kesavan writes his history or, rather, non-history of these subjects. By recording their absence in nationalist accounts of our past, Kesavan is in effect registering their presence in history. After all, discourse is a conglomeration of submerged voices, or, should I rather say, absent bodies and disembodied subjectivities.

II

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, first published in 1983, initiated postcolonial analyses of the relationship between the idea of the nation and literary forms. To Anderson: 'nationness or nationality are cultural art ifacts of a particular kind.' What is being underlined here is undoubtedly the discursive underpinnings of the sense of nationness.

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Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' is however politically benign. It is so largely because his book centres primarily round investigations of the various narrative forms that generate a sense of national belonging. The primary focus of his concept lies on the inclusive community that is imagined into being through the narrative form of the novel and the synchronized daily reading of newspapers.

Perhaps the best summation of the relationship between nation and narration is to be found in Homi K. Bhabha, who recasts Anderson's emphasis on the nation's discursivity within an ideologically-surcharged conceptual mould. In his writings, Bhabha seems to suggest that the very idea of the nation is a coercive discursive art ifact that restrains the national population. To him, nationalism is a domineering force that manifests itself primarily through the discursive mode of pedagogy. Pedagogy, in this way, becomes an ideological state apparatus that disseminates a sense of nationness and nationalism and conditions the national population into conforming with its ideology. Bhabha, however, creates within his conceptual formulation a space from where this ideology can be resisted. According to him, challenging the ideology of nationalism is the performative mode, that is, the lived life processes of the people. In this way, the national population becomes both the pedagogical object of a nationalist rhetoric and the formative subject that disrupts its ideology, generating in the process a counter-narrative that evokes and erases the totalizing boundaries of the nation. Thus Bhabha, unlike Anderson, is not merely interested in investigating the narrative forms that discursively constitute the nation. He is, rather, interested in deconstructing and altering the object of enquiry; that is, the nation

This is precisely what the Indian English novel seeks to achieve. In the introduction, we saw how Salman Rushdie in *Midnight's Children* uses the figure of his narrator-protagonist to both evoke and erase the nation. Here, I would like to once again return to *Looking Through Glass*. At the heart of Kesavan's narrative is his unnamed narrator____, a postcolonial subject living in the India of the 1980s. Significantly, this postcolonial subject grows up listening to the epic accounts of the Indian national movement narrated to him by his grandmother.

"In the early days it was an epic tale; she gave me a wide-angle picture of the Gandhian decades, but after the first few visits she zoomed in on the great salt satyagraha led by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930. There, in the high theatre of civil disobedience, Dadi replayed, with even more detailed props, the single scene of which she was the heroine. With my unweaned father at her breast, Dadi had answered Gandhi's call by picketing the liquor shop at Kashmere Gate arcade. She lay on its threshold daring customers to step over her. No one did, but the police finally dragged the picketers away - so Dadi and my father spent six months in a colonial jail." (Kesavan 1995, 3) In a sense, he becomes the pedagogical object of his grandmother's stories. But, Kesavan destabilizes Dadi's nationalist rhetoric through an interesting narrative move: he makes his protagonist literally travel back in time to the 1940s, where he witnesses first-hand the Quit India Movement and the history-laden years leading up to our independence.

Having arrived in the temporal space of the past, the voyager through time expects to witness a revolutionary spectacle. Such an expectation is quite understandable, for the stories of the national movement that he had heard from his grandmother had been narrated to him, as already mentioned, in the language of 'high theatre.' But to his great disappointment, what he encounters during the revolt and in particular, during the storming of the Madhubanathanat Azamgarh turns out to be otherwise.

First of all, he is disenchanted with the ideologue of the national movement - the Bengali intellectual, Bose Madam, who tries but fails to win over the Muslim population of Azamgarh in the name of 'the revolutionary cause.' The narrator's disillusionment with Bose Madam intensifies even further as the narrative unfolds. He is shocked to note that while she travels first class in a train to Azamgarh, her student followers are packed like sardines into the general compartment. The narrator is thus made to realize the dissonance between the leadership and the masses which in Kesavan's novel, appears to be a hallmark of the Quit India Movement.

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Furthermore, The peasants participating in the assault on the thana, in Kesavan's novel, appear to be there more out of curiosity than any ideological conviction in or a sentimental attachment to the national movement. In Kesavan's hands, even the students become an object of ridicule. When the student leader Chaubey, a wrestler from Banaras Hindu University, meets Tojo, his opposite number among the peasants, he is delighted to be on level terms with an authentically plebeian leader at the head of genuine peasants, the Indian masses made flesh. Instead of showing Chaubey as a committed and active participant in the national movement, the novel depicts him along with the other students as simply cheering the peasants on and then falling silent on seeing them die. He undoubtedly comes across as a man without any sense of commitment to the movement. He is more interested in preserving his semen in the name of Hindu virility and the Indian nation rather than in any concerted action. Kesavan also makes Rat Face, another student, an object of humour. He is there amidst the 'revolutionary students' because of his desire for Bose Madam instead of any ideological conviction in the movement. Jon Mee suggests that Kesavan appropriates both the characters of Chaubey and Rat Face to expose the unruly excesses of the body, which suggests the illusory nature of the nationalist desire to discipline the self to fit a single image of the nation. This narrative technique to him undermines the epic conception of the nationalist struggle through the lowly comedy of physical desire (see Mee 1998).

However, Bose Madam remains the prime target of Kesavan's ridicule. During the event of the assault, she is depicted as a passive onlooker watching the incidents unfold from a safe distance. On the top of an elephant, she sat hunched forward, drinking in the battle with hungry eyes [...], so consumed by the spectacle in front of her that she probably thought it natural that others would push their way up for a ringside view of the revolution [...]; like all academics, Bose Madam couldn't tell watching from doing. (Kesavan 1995, 113)

Thus what the narrator experiences in the time zones of the past does not appear to be in tune with the epic accounts of the national movement that he had heard from his grandmother. Both the accounts of his grandmother and his experience of the past appear to be at a dissonance with each other. Small wonder then that, at the end of the story, Kesavan's unnamed narrator finds himself trapped in a family photograph as a blur caught between two discursivities. This is because our postcolonial subjectivity can only be properly understood in terms of a nationalist discourse and a counter-discursive disruption of it. It is in this overlap that the radical edge of our subjectivity is to be located. Significantly, the unnamed narrator's sojourn into time is predicated on Dadi's death. It is when he is on his way to Benaras to immerse the ashes of her mortal remains that he falls into time.

III

The insertion of the figure of the nation into an identity script of postcoloniality as the prime structuring category of postcolonial subjectivity is to many a coercive act of violence. It is particularly so for the diasporic postcolonial subject, who, by virtue of having migrated away from the country of origin, can no longer hold on comfortably to the nation as a source of identity formation.

The diasporic movement of a postcolonial subject across continents in the case of post colonial Indian English Novelists clearly has autobiographical dimensions. Rushdie, for example, was born in India at the twilight of the empire - the day the nation attained independence - and went to school in England. Later on, he made London his home and currently happens to live in New York City. Even Amitav Ghosh seems to have dwelled in a truly diasporic location, despite being born and brought up in India. He has also lived in Egypt and New York. Vikram Seth, Vikram Chandra, Allan Seally, Rohinton Mistry and a number of other novelists also exhibit a profile that is not dissimilar - one in which what constitutes their identity can no longer be referred to through a close sense of nationness. Small wonder, then, that such diasporic subjects yearn for a post national subject space from where they can re-centre their identity.

Amitav Ghosh is an obvious case in point. A look at *The Shadow Lines* substantiates the above claim. Tridib, who

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represents the ideal mode of living in the world in the novel, yearns to inhabit a space beyond nations. He is endowed with an all-inclusive global consciousness, and, more importantly, falls in love with a woman across the seas. In fact, throughout the novel, he expresses the desire to physically enter May's body. To me, this erotic longing is synonymous with the desire to live in a world beyond national frontiers. After all, the foreign female body is an entity over which the state has no claims; it is a realm that lies well beyond the specificities of geographical demarcations. Moreover, such physical desires are instinctive, and cannot be explained away by the narrative of reason, of which the discourse of the nation is an integral part. It therefore comes as a matter of no surprise that a novel that interrogates the notion of national frontiers ends with the image of its narrator and May looking deep into each other's eyes, and literally in each other's arms beyond the geographical and political confines of the nation.

Thus the figure of the human body is strategically deployed in a variety of ways within the ideologically regulated narrative contours of the post colonial Indian English Novel, as an effective trope for resisting the discourse of nationalism. Whether it is the fragmented and fragmenting body of Saleem Sinai or the disembodied subjectivity of Masroor or the image of the post colonial subject caught between two discursivities or the longing for and ultimately inhabiting a foreign female body, the body polity of the nation stands problematized and transcended.

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INDIAN MIDDLE CLASS UNDER GLOBALIZATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Indian middle class was the product of interaction between British colonialism in India and the Indian National Movement.¹ The creation of native elite to look after and assist in the administrative task for the British power was the main impetus for the emergence of the Indian middle class. The famous statement of Lord Macaulay in his Minute on Indian Education (1835) said: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. [emphasis added]."² Historically, this segment of the Indian population later came to be termed as middle class.

This paper deals with the middle class in the urban context, its evolution, maturity and its role in the modern Indian social setup. The paper argues that the most important social transformation in the Indian middle class was brought about by two factors i.e. first, gaining of freedom in 1947 and the second, opening up of economy in 1990s. After independence, government jobs in different sectors ensured proliferation of middle class. Different steps were also taken by the new government to speed up the industrialization process and bring in development in a socialist framework. The Constitution of India also provided some safeguards for ensuring the empowerment of the oppressed castes, but that was never sufficient to change a lot. The upper caste people formed the majority of the middle class and heavily dominated all service sectors. Too many loop holes in socialist planning ensured that the benefit did not reach the bottom i.e. the low caste people, but was appropriated by the upper castes. Thus the caste-class nexus remained unchanged.

However the opening of the economy in 1990s was a blow to class-caste nexus that continued till that time.³ This event made sure that the notion of upper caste synonymous with upper class was no longer true in Indian society. The

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economically rich but hitherto socially marginalized group within middle class gained importance and wielded its power with the coming of 1990s when the economy opened up. A new form of lifestyle came along with consumer culture. With purses in hand and zeal to assert their arrival, this class began to assert its dominance in the modern social setup. At the same time, the traditional middle class sought consumer culture to save their territory of influence. The paper accepts that this relationship between identity formation and consumer culture is not one-to-one relation rather it is more complex and the process is influenced by various factors like gender, age, etc.⁴

DEFINING INDIAN MIDDLE CLASS

The emergence of middle class in India was related (among other things) to the creation of multiple (and 'function-less') intermediary rights in land; the need for subaltern administrative-professional functionaries to assist in colonial governance; and the advent of western-style educational institutions.⁵ With such powers, it played a significant role in the national movement and consequently became very strong in the post-independence society.

Despite its inaccuracy in terms of number in 1947, its main adherents came from those in government service, qualified professionals such as doctors, engineers and lawyers, business entrepreneurs and the more well-to-do traders, teachers in the bigger cities and in the institutes of higher education; journalists, the partially or fully educated among the middle-level peasantry, the white-collar salariat in the private sector; and a substantial section of university student.⁶ This class was at that time representing tiny section of the Indian population.

The opening up of the Indian economy had a huge impact on this middle class. It was not only characterized by the flooding of goods in the market to be consumed, it also brought the money into the hands of vast population. This population garnered the benefits of globalization in various ways. The most significant was the benefiting from the new forms of occupations (new service class which was mostly technology driven).⁷ On one hand, the abundant cheap labour in India provided the world market its labor force and on the other hand the later in the form of multinational companies provided the former the money.⁸

It is agreed by the economists that India's middle class is growing rapidly, estimating its size became difficult as there is no consensus on its definition. According to a ranking system devised by the National Council of Applied Economic Research in New Delhi, the category of "very rich" is attributed by car ownership. Based on those definitions, about 550 million of India's 1.14 billion people could have been considered middle class in 2000, the latest year for which data are available; in 1990, the number was estimated at about 310 million.

The theoretical understanding of class in terms of economic, social and political criteria gets obscured when these enter into empirical social analysis. The most straightforward economic definition of class based on levels of income and wealth. If there were a list of all citizens that also told us about their incomes, we could 'classify' each person, determine the size of each class at the national or regional levels, and so on. Of course, there is no such list, so we have to begin improvising.

It is clear that one can not speak of a one "concrete homogenous middle class". One single entity is neither useful nor possible. Most of the market surveys divide this class according to their respective capacity of consumption. The various levels may be 'upper-', 'middle-', and 'lower-middle class', and so on.⁹ Now, all these fragments can be again bonded by one single lifestyle (educational and occupational distinctiveness) which is characteristic of middle class.

The data presented establishes two general features of the Indian middle class considered as a class of consumers. First, in terms of absolute numbers, it is a very large class. Second, and paradoxically, it is a very small proportion of the Indian population. At the same time, the size of the middle class does not determines its strength it wields in the affairs of Indian scenario. It is just that the "consumer-approach" to define middle class is too narrow to capture the whole of middle class. The criteria of defining middle class become fluid. In this criterion, one can add bases of Monthly Per capita

Consumption Expenditure Data, Possession of Consumer Durables by Indian Households, etc.

RUPTURES IN CASTE-CLASS NEXUS¹⁰

The caste-class nexus and its ramifications on the middle class is an important stage wherein the erstwhile "united and homogenous" characteristic of Indian middle class tended to get diluted. The caste system influenced the class system in India to a great extent.¹¹ The Indian middle class at the time of independence represented absolute harmony along the class and caste dimension.¹²

The various changes which have taken place in the caste system have led it closer to class system. These changes have been understood in two opposite views. One view is characterized by the stand that changes in caste are functional adjustment made by the system for its own survival and maintenance. The other view sees modernization as a linear and universal force of history. This modernization force has transformed the caste-class nexus and the caste system into a polarized structure of economic classes.

On the whole, changes in caste-class can be observed along these two dimensions of secularization: de-ritualisation and politicization. This secularization of caste, brought about through its de-ritualisation and politicization, has opened up a third course of change i.e. for a lack of more appropriate term is called classisation (a process by which castes, but more frequently their individual members, relate to categories of social stratification of a type different from that of caste).¹³ Modernization of India's economy and democratization of its political institutions released new economic and political power in the society. The organizational structure, of the caste-class system i. e. hierarchical feature is changed into its horizontalisation. With the new opportunities being given by the state at the political level, caste-class consciousness is taken over by the political consciousness of groups staking claims to power. The traditionally integrated system of statuses was to some extent overpowered by the new power structure wherein political as well as social policies of state (affirmative action) played an important role.

With Nehru, at the helm of affairs of independent India, one can expect that the emphasis on industrialization and the consequent urbanization was an indirect attempt to undermine the caste-class nexus and to lead India into a socialistic society. As the notion goes, land produces caste and factory produces class, the increasing labour force in the industries made sure that class will matter more than caste. Due to it, fundamental changes occurred in the occupational structure of the society.¹⁴ Vast number of non-traditional and unbound-to-caste occupations emerged. It led to emergence of a new type of social relations among occupational groups. The nexus between hereditary ritual status and occupation (one of the caste-system's defining features) was undermined in urban areas

As a natural corollary to the increased industrialization and urbanization, the erosion of this caste-class nexus was more prominent in the urban areas and at the macro-system level of social stratification. Yet, it will be more than a mistake to say that rural India was left untouched. Here also, the traditional social relationships were being redefined and restructured by the economic relations but to a much lesser extent.

The caste-class nexus in rural India was also getting disturbed.¹⁵ At the time of independence the rich upper caste farmers were in this class, but gradually, the regional dominant castes (which were not necessarily upper castes) became involved in this process.¹⁶ A rural-based middle class marked its presence in it. The caste composition has also changed. With the entry of various lower castes (as a consequence of state's affirmative actions), the representation of upper castes has reduced in today's middle class, for the old middle class was almost entirely constituted by them.

"Green Revolution" boosted the agricultural production. It increased the surplus production of the farmers. Lucrative off-farms activities were taken up. Profitable diversification within agriculture took place. A new class of "bullock capitalists" grew which was anxious to get into middle class via its economic power. Apart from 'green revolution', this new economic power was the outcome of various factors such as more visibility of the state in the rural areas,

monetization of food production and distribution and above all, the commercialization of agriculture gave a new dimension to the social relationships.¹⁷

Land came to play a very important role in the wake of various land reform measures taken up by the state. The social inter-relationships in the rural India among the various groups were crystallized in accordance to land ownership.¹⁸ It is between castes of land holders/operators and those of the landless labour. Again, this new scenario is not so simple, as various intervening factors like political consciousness and economic interests of these groups are also important in the changed situation.

The caste-class nexus was further more diluted as the ritualism in the economic transactions among the social groups further diminished. The decline of "jajmani system" also weakened the ritual importance in economic transactions.¹⁹ The decline of 'jajmani system' replaced the relationship between 'jajman' and 'kamins' by relationships of employer and employee, of capital and wage labour. The imposition of religious values in the economic transactions resulted in intercaste conflicts. Religiously assigned roles in the society were disturbed. The system of ritual, obligations and rights of the caste-class nexus gave way to the status explained on the basis of economic relationship with other groups.

The politicization of castes gave another dent to caste-class nexus. It was a process wherein the lower castes and classes were to play an important role in political scenario. It further divided the middle class and paved the entry of other castes and class in to it. The lower castes soon became aware of their numerical strength and also saw it as an opportunity to achieve their share in political power. The numerically strong and upwardly mobile dominant, but traditionally of lower status, castes of landowning peasants, e g, the Marathas in Maharashtra, the Reddys in Andhra, the Patidars in Gujarat, the Jats in Uttar Pradesh, and so on took on the political opportunities and started representing their interests in the wider social framework.²⁰

The proposal put forth by Second Commission for Backward Classes (the Mandal Commission) to extend reservations in jobs and educational seats to the other backward classes all over India gave a serious blow to the traditional middle class.²¹ The upper castes opposed this move as the new politicized castes were forcing their way into the middle class (particularly into white-collar jobs). The "Mandalisation of politics" resulted in a new type of middle class in India having new socio-political features.²²

The new middle class was different from the early middle class (at the time of independence) as the former changed the closed ritualistic status groups in to an open system of stratification. Here caste was not so much synonymous with class. Now, within middle class, there were two clear segments. The first one was the traditional vanguard of middle class who was upper caste and was rich. This segment was having the resources which were traditionally attached to their caste in traditional hierarchy. The second segment was that of new entrants from the lower castes. These castes managed to enter into the middle class due to the affirmative actions of the state and other changes like land reforms, green revolution, etc.²³ In both segments, the elements of caste are there, the former is characterized by having caste resources and latter was lacking these traditional resources.

Yet these elements of caste were now not so important. Earlier, rituality and process of sanskritisation were looked as means to get into the middle class, but now it is not the case. The new middle class has an open membership. It was very much economic in nature. New forms of consumption patterns, ownership of economic assets coupled with educational qualification, political power to some extent were some of the eligibility criteria (irrespective to caste membership) to enter into new middle class.

In brief, the middle class in India today is not a simple demographic category comprising of certain ritual-status groups. It is a social-cultural and economic formation in which as individuals from different castes and communities enter, they acquire new economic and political interests, and life styles, in common with the other members of that 'class'. Within this new middle class, caste identities of its members survive, but operating in conjunction with the new,

overarching identity of middle class, they acquire a different political and cultural meaning.²⁴

income consumer households in China alone - approximately four times as many as there were in 2004.8 According to Goldman Sachs, 70 million people each year are entering an income bracket equivalent to between US\$ 6,000 and US\$ 30,000 in purchasing power parity terms. This phenomenon may continue for the next twenty years, accelerating to 90 million new middle-income consumers per year by 2030. If this proves to be the case, then 2 billion people will have joined the ranks of the middle class by that date, bringing almost 80% of the world population into the middle-income bracket

GLOBALIZATION AND INDIAN MIDDLE CLASS

The 1990s were very important in the context of Indian middle class. The liberalization package for the upgrading and making the Indian economy competitive enough on the global standard suddenly put the spotlight on the middle class for an entirely new reason: its ability to consume.²⁵ The middle class which is very much urban in nature has been engulfed by this culture of consumption brought in by the liberal economic policies. It accommodated in itself the new standards and modes of consumption which were alien to it earlier. The global flow of goods became accessible to the individuals. By the virtue of increased purchasing power, not only the individuals had the means to buy them but also they were being lured into it with own explanations.

Herein enters the complex relation between identity formation through consumer culture and Indian middle class. Till now the paper has explained briefly the homogenous nature of middle class at the time of independence, its fragmentation into various groups (ultimately two) due to various social changes and its adaptation to market economy. Now the paper moves on to explain how these two camps (old and new, urban and rural) within middle class have tended to use the consumer culture to formulate their new identity and to assert their influence.

The link is sequential. The opening up of economy brought in various commodities. These commodities were marked by its lifestyle and way to consume. Media became a potent vehicle to diffuse this consumer culture into the large segment of society. Advertising and marketing agencies became very active in ascertaining the size and composition of this class. The reasons were obvious, it was the class having the capacity to spent money and it was more than ready to do it.²⁶

The idea of contested identity at the contested place (middle class) emerges over here very sharply. This process is characterized by imitating the lifestyle of the next higher status group. Now, in the consumer culture, goods are not just goods, they are the symbols of the status or social position in the social order. The uniqueness as well as the expensiveness defines the rank of that commodity. The individual who wants to get ahead of the others will consume that commodity in order to satisfy his/her egoistic needs as well as his/her need of separate identity from others.²⁷

As Veblen pointed out that the people tend to differentiate themselves from others through conspicuous wastage of time and goods, the same tendency can be seen in the Indian middle class. Leisure becomes an activity in itself. The growth of various markets driven commodification of leisure has provided the antagonistic individuals in Indian middle class an opportunity to distinguish themselves from other. A holiday trip or package has become a thing to be consumed and are not seen as a family or group outing. The everyday advertisements of the holiday packages and the places (mostly abroad and exotic locations) have become an "in thing" not to be missed. It is not products that are on sale, but their attributes. Some attributes of a particular product are found to be important, while others are not preferred. This preference is again based on the social hierarchy of the attributes.

The increase in the foreign based holiday trips and the growth of tourist industry have become a symbol of modernity and thus defying the traditional norms of 'crossing the sea'. Earlier a holiday trip anywhere in India was desired but now these have become absolute and packaged tour to abroad have become more in demand.²⁸ The new entrants to the middle class see this foreign holiday package as a means to get into the rich and modern middle class.²⁹ It is not surprising to see that the within a short span of time many world class traveling agencies like Cox and Kings, SOTC World Famous

Tours, Thomas Cook, etc. have entered into the vocabulary of Indian middle class. Tour packages for Europe, Singapore, Malaysia, South Africa and Australia are gaining popularity.³⁰

It is not that this likeness towards the tour syndrome is limited only to the urban people; rural counterparts travel more and contribute more significantly in the growth of tourism. A recent study conducted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) pointed out that total estimated domestic tourist in 2002 at the national level was about 550 million, of which about 71 per cent were from the rural areas and 29 per cent from urban areas. Top five states ranked according to their relative shares in total tourists are Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.³¹

One way of redefining the current notion of assertiveness of new middle class would be to consider the three M's -- shopping malls, multiplexes and multi-cuisine. In fact the galloping spread of suburbia dictates that all the three forms of entertainment go together. Multiplexes are best located in shopping malls. Here identity and place bound together in the practices of shopping. Shopping malls and the shopping activities both get together on the identity formation plane.³² A new form of 'captured market' is in the process where 'taking consumption to the consumer' has become very important. This one can witness in the habits of new entrants to the Indian middle class where new shopping malls are coming up in the rich terrains irrespective of rural or urban bias. In here, those sites have been taken over by the shopping malls and places which were intended for other purposes as in the case of major pizza company tying with IOC for its outlets.

Crowds thronging the malls at the weekends for shopping or just for having fun (window shopping) tend to refocus the connections between the commodity and post-traditional identity in the notion of 'lifestyle'. It is not a surprising thing that most of the people here belong to the new rich who just have to buy anything which is new and modern for a new pairs of identity. The regular shopping shows like 'Times Summer fest' at MMRDA Grounds, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Mumbai and across the country are very successful in terms of people visiting there. The media over here plays its own role by publicizing and making it as an 'in thing' which again attracts further crowds. These provide an option to choose new lifestyles in status orders different from traditional ones. The acts of purchasing commodities go beyond commodities.

A new means to be exploited by the new entrants as well as the 'old ones' in middle class is the dynamism of the food and restaurant industries which is reflected in rapid increase in the fast food restaurants in India. Various outlets like McDonalds, Pizza Corner India, which owns the Chennai-based Pizza Corner chain along with the two other major players, Domino's Pizza India Ltd. and Tricon Restaurants International (which owns the Domino's Pizza and Pizza Hut chains) have witnessed exponential growth in Indian urban as well as rural areas. The first outlet of Pizza Hut was set up in India in 1996. First in its history, a 100-per cent vegetarian restaurant was established in Ahmedabad. This Rs. 150-crore industry, growing at an annual rate of 50 per cent, is expanding at a frantic pace. The regular visitors at these places are the people for whom the money has brought a new means to make them more visible on the social screen.

CONCLUSION

The opening of the Indian economy not only brought the goods and services in the market earlier unheard of, as a natural corollary, these also brought the ways and methods of consuming them. A new form of "life style" emerged which was based on consuming these goods and services. The relationship between consumption culture and identity formation does not follow a straight line but is dialectical in nature. Creation of hegemonic identity via media is there i.e. Americanization, McDonaldization, etc. It simultaneously encouraged new forms of individuality promising liberation from both traditional and conventional roles. The fragmented middle class understood it very well

The issue of increasing consumerism and the role played by the culture industry and advertisements in promoting consumer culture is also very important here. The media has taken up various sites of identity formation which are free

from the social backgrounds of the consumer. The new generation often is the target of such practices. Children tend to absorb the aspirations, desires, and tastes of parents who are adjusting to the growing consumer economy. The signs and privileges of higher status are exhibited and their longings are given at least tacit legitimacy by the media.

As the commodities have become more real and effective than the self, the consumption of these is marked by some degree of self realization. The self realization is important for the survival of new entrants to the middle class as well as for the traditional one also. The notion of identity in the consumption process ceases to be an already existent 'fixed thing', a possession of the self; rather they are unstable and fluid. It gives rise to 'identity-in-process' rather than identity. Consequently, the Indian middle class has become 'class-in-progress' wherein the entry and exit of its members is based on the relationship with the symbolic world of consumption rather than through a direct relationship with the material world.³³

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 11. The word caste derives from the Portuguese caste, meaning breed, race, or kind. Other Indian terms that are sometimes translated as caste are varna, jati,jat, biradri, and samaj. Varna, or color, actually refers to large divisions that include various castes; the other terms include castes and subdivisions of castes sometimes called subcastes. Various features of Caste system among others are: (a) Caste as a hierarchy, with brahmans at the top and 'untouchables' at the bottom; (b) untouchability as linked to the idea of 'pollution'; (c) existence of a plurality of 'castes' separated from each other by endogamy, occupation and commensality; (d) application of sanctions by castes to maintain their own customs and rules; (e) relationship of caste with political organization.
 12. The upper castes dominated the Indian middle class. Prominent among its members were Punjabi Khatris, Kashmiri Pandits and South-Indian Brahmins. Then there were the 'traditional urban-oriented professional castes such as the Nagars of Gujarat, the Chitpawans and the CKPs (ChandrasenyaKayasthaPrabhus) of Maharashtra and the Kayasthas of North India.' Also included were the 'old elite groups which emerged during the colonial rule: the Probasi and Bhadralog Bengalis, the Parsis, and the upper crusts of the Muslim and Christian Communities.' Education was the common thread that bound together these pan-Indian elite. Pp: 27. The Great Indian Middle Class.Pavan K Verma.Penguin Books (1998).
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 16. Srinivas identified the notion of 'dominant caste' in the 1960s. His identification of a 'dominant caste' was by six attributes; namely, (1) 'sizeable amount of the arable land locally available', (2) 'strength of numbers', (3) 'high place in the local hierarchy', (4) 'western education', (5) 'jobs in the administration', and (6) 'urban sources of income'. Pp: 10-11. Social Change in Modern India. M. N. Srinivas. Allied Publishers, Bombay (1966).
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 20. With the formation of non-Congress governments in 1967 came the first inkling of the impact this new class would have on Indian politics. For a variety of reasons, therefore, a significant segment of the country side began to emerge as an aspirant to middle-class status. It was the beginning of a process which would see its explosive culmination in the adoption of the Mandal Report about a decade and a half later. Pp: 94-95. The Great Indian Middle Class. Pavan K Verma. Penguin Books (1998).
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SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

DR RAGHAVENDRA MISHRA*

ABSTRACT

Social media has become a key forum for debate, organization, motivation, response and counter-response on human right issues. Social media tool such as blogging, Facebook, Twitter, and video sharing sites have played great part in political mobilization and generating public protest against suppression, exploitation and attempts of restricting freedom of expression and speech.

In last few years social media has played important role in the protection of democratic values and human rights. In recent years social media has become mainstream media of public communication and it has influenced and changed the patterns of communication, interaction and advocacy for human right issues. Organisations, activists, defenders, and citizen journalists through their increasing online presence expand their strength to reach global audience and raise the issues of human rights violation, which are often ignored by mainstream conventional mass media. In number of incidence social media campaigns have successfully created pressure on system to take the incidents of human rights violation seriously and provided alternative view for mainstream media to report the incident. As agenda setter social media has highlighted the issues by catching the eyeballs of the aware public and secured justice for marginalised and weaker sections of the society.

The present paper is an attempt to understand the patterns and adeptness of presence of organizations, human right activists, and civil society members on social media and effectiveness of such media for human rights advocacy, and conducting thematic campaigns and use of social media to mobilize common people and raise the voice of protest against the human rights violation.

Key Words- Human Rights, Social Media, Facebook

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INTRODUCTION

The article 19 of universal declaration on human rights (UNO, 1948) and International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (1966) have acknowledged the free flow of information, freedom and pluralism of the media, and the freedom of expression and speech as human rights. These rights are very crucial and vital to protect the human rights of common people suffering from social disparities, suppression and sidelined by the dominant class. Despite of making commitments for human rights protection India has significant problems of human rights violation. ' There are increased restrictions on Internet freedom, continued marginalisation of Dalits, tribal groups, religious minorities, sexual and gender minorities, and people with disabilities; and persistent impunity for abuses linked to insurgencies, particularly in Maoist areas, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, and Assam' (www.hra.org front page).

India has a vast and strong mainstream media. It plays crucial role in political change and agenda setting of the democracy. Indian mainstream media is a complex institution where number of factors play decisive role in its functioning. If we look at the growth of mainstream media in India ownership and control dimensions, representational dimensions, general social structural dimensions, and regulatory frameworks have been decided their line of action, understanding, and picking and presentation of human rights issues. It is popular notion that mainstream media in India is functioning under the parental guidance of state and effective control of market forces. Support the purpose of the state and follow the agenda of the stakeholders and investors has been seen as one of the main philosophy behind functioning of mainstream media. ' The significant corporate power and economic clout wielded by media owners has led to the perception that the media is a force vying for power outside the political process, ([south_asia_roundtable_report.pdf](#), page 10).

The pattern of guidance has influenced the power of mainstream media to examine and present the reality with principles of objectivity and reliability. This dynamics of power and market has set a gauge for mainstream media and often resulted in presentation of guided reality. This dominant framing of human rights tries to draw a pro-establishment vision for media and sometimes justifies the non-reporting of human rights violation of marginalized people, groups, minorities and people with different political view. Such obligations and control dynamics restricts the ability of mainstream media so issues of human rights sometimes overlooked or covered inappropriately.

On the other hand social media has emerged as a powerful tool of public interaction with no or minimum limitations and free from such restrictions. With its collaborative and interactive model of communication social media has become one of the most preferred platform of human communication now days. With mainstreaming of social media availability of information has become faster and available to each and every user who is connected to the network. Social media or digital media has altered the practice of conventional models of human interaction and role of communication in political and social change. 'Digital media changed the tactics of democratisation movements, and new information and communication technologies played a major role in the Arab Spring' (Howard & Hussain (2011) p.46)

'Social media is an important new tool for promoting social and political change. Social media allows eyewitness accounts to be made widely available and expands access to information. Reporting is no longer confined to traditional sources of journalism. Through social media information has spread faster and farther, available now to local, regional and global audiences. In the context of human rights movements, this element of spreading messages and bringing attention to a cause is crucial' (Yeaza (2014), p. 644)

SOCIAL MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS: SUCCESSFUL STORIES-

Social media is being utilized by various organizations and activists for mobilization, information and connecting with like-minded people around the world. 'Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) uses social media for online

mobilizing and urgent human rights emergencies. For example, AIUSA used Twitter (and storify) to successfully prompt a statement from the United States Departments on imprisoned activists in Bahrain- and to report back to activist in real time. This one of many examples of the strategic use of social media by human rights groups' (www.newtactics.org) indicates its importance as the forum of communicating human rights issues by established organizations.

'Human Rights Campaign'- an organization working for online and offline mobilization of public and 'to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender American' (www.hrc.org) has also used social media at global level to gain the public support. The HRC changed its iconic logo on their Facebook page to red to show support the marriage equality debate. 'The red logo immediately went viral as people everywhere shared the photo and changed their Facebook profile photo to the image in support of marriage equality' (www.postano.com). The campaign was heart touching and has successfully secured over 114 million views, 3rd most shared ad of all time. Campaign was uploaded in 25 languages and seen in 110 countries and 1,800 blog posts were written about the campaign.

India has witnessed the power of social media in Nirbhaya case. Social media has raised awareness, stimulated debate, changed the attitudes of public and a massive movement was generated against the horrific-rape case that has also changed the directive and action for respect and protection of women in India. Social media and online communication tools were utilized to inform, mobilise and organise people and case became focus on across the media platforms.

Recently a social media campaign has gone viral after two gang rape videos went viral on whatsapp. The videos were later uploaded on You Tube and Facebook by social activist SunithaKrishanan, asking people to help identify the alleged rapists. Immediately Supreme Court of India taken up the case and asked the CBI to register a case and immediately investigate the video.

Success of such cases and many more other cases tell the strength and effectiveness of social media used as a weapon of protection of human rights and creating awareness on the issues of social interest. Most mainstream human rights organizations, activists, and campaigners use social media as important part of their information and communication activities. Facebook, Twitter and many more social media platforms have been used to share information, advocacy and calls for action. The Arab springs and the Anna Hazare movements are best examples of using social media to spread messages of human rights, and mobilize people for action against political suppression and the corruption. Social media has played a key role in the Egyptian revolution in the year 2011. 'Social media introduced speed and interactivity that were lacking in the traditional mobilization techniques, which generally include the use of leaflets, posters, and faxes. For instance, social media enabled domestic and international Egyptian activists to follow events in Egypt, join social-networking groups, and engage in discussion' (Eltantway&Wiest (2011), p. 1213).

The Human Rights Commissions of different countries have also embraced social media to provide instant and accessible support for needy people. Some have given facility to register online complains, get updates on the cases, statistics, and the actions and e-learning portals to be acquainted with procedures, rules, rights and remedies. On the website of National Human Rights Commission one can register complains, search status of complaint updates and activities of the NHRC.

OBJECTIVES

The present paper is an attempt to attain the following objectives with the help of analysis of the relevant data-

1. Evaluating the role of social media in protection of the human rights

2. Effectiveness of social media to encourage and motivate people for human rights protection
3. Analysis of behavior of profiles and nature of communication for human rights protection through social media

METHODOLOGY

A content analysis research design was selected to complete the study. The main purpose of this study was to conduct an exploratory content analysis of the use of Facebook as a tool of information, sensitization and mobilisation of public for protection of the human rights. The study was conducted by collecting one month’s posts from the selected Facebook profiles or pages of the activists or organizations working for human rights protection in India. From the list available on the NHRC website (core group NGOs) [page/profile \(http://nhrc.nic.in/Documents/NGO_CORE.pdf\)](http://nhrc.nic.in/Documents/NGO_CORE.pdf) profiles of JavedAbidi, Lenin Raghuvanshi and CRY (Child Rights and You) was selected and the contents posted from 1st to 28th February was analyzed with the help of subject, proximity, nature- informative or analytical, approach- text, audio-visual, photograph, graphics or mixed, and source of the post. The result was presented by using simple percentage analysis.

DATA INTERPRETATION

Among all, on the wall of Lenin Raghuvanshi total 28 posts were analysed placed during the select period i.e. February 2015.

From the wall of JavedAbidi total 14 posts, posted during the said month were chosen for analysis.

From the wall of the CRY page total 43 posts analysed which were posted during the month of February 2015.

Type of updates, subject of the updates, Nature of updates and source or origin of the updates was selected as the criterion of the analysis. Under the type of the updates nature of the content presentation i.e. only video updates, only text updates, only picture updates, updates using picture-cum-video, and picture-cum-text update categories were used for analysis and interpretation of data. Under the subject category data were arranged into issues related with official negligence/torture, political suppression, women empowerment, girl education/girls rights, personal information, organizational information, child trafficking, supporting women/marginalised/weaker/disabled people, child rights, and comments on the current political activities.

To show the familiarity of the user with social media origin of the content i.e. originated by self, referred material, shared from other online sources, and use of hyperlink is used.

Table 1-Type of Updates

S. No	Subject	Lenin R. (Total posts=28)		Javed S. (Total posts=13)		CRY (Total posts=45)	
		Frequency (F)	Percentage (P)	F	P	F	P
1	Text only	6	21.42	3	23.07	2	4.44
2	Video updates	3	10.71	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	Picture updates	8	28.57	4	30.77	0	0.0
4	Pic-cum-video updates	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	4.44
5	Text-cup-pic updates	11	39.28	6	46.15	41	91.11

SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

As the table shows most of human rights activists through their personal profile and pages of organisations prefer to provide newsfeed or status updates in text-cum-pictures mode. This pattern is observed greater in feeds from pages than the feeds by individual profiles. Video feed facilities found less explored by both individual profiles and organizations. All three selected profiles have used photographs with descriptive/supportive texts for newsfeed.

Table 2- Subject wise Profile analysis

S. No	Subject	Lenin R. (Total posts= 28)		Javed S. (Total posts= 13)		CRY (Total posts= 45)	
		F	P	F	P	F	P
1	Official Negligence/ Torture	3	10.71	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	Political suppression	4	14.28	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	Girl education/girls rights	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	35.55
4	Personal information	9	32.14	4	30.77	0	0.0
5	Organizational activities	9	32.14	5	38.46	14	31.11
6	Child trafficking	1	3.57	0	0.0	2	4.44
7	Support for women/marginalized/weaker/disabled section of the society	0	0.0	4	30.77	5	11.11
8	Child rights	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	15.55
9	Political comments	2	7.14	0	0.0	0	0.0
10	Women empowerment	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.22

Subject wise variety of newsfeeds and status updates were observed on all three walls. On the CRY page most of stories were addressing the issues of girls' education, child rights and organizational activities. On the wall of JavedAbidi most of posts were focused on organisational activities and issues of disabled people. Most of Lenin posts were related with the political suppression or comment on the political issues, organisational activities, and personal status updates. Data reveals that Human right activists and organisations use social media to promote their issues, thoughts, and programmes and to connect and sensitize the likeminded people. Most of posts appeared in shape of newsfeed that is indicating the placement of good length posts on the wall. This was observed as the major trends in all three cases.

Table 3- Nature of the posts

S. No	Subject	Lenin R. (Total posts=)		Javed S. (Total posts=)		CRY (Total posts=)	
		F	P	F	P	F	P
1	Informative	10	35.71	6	46.15	15	33.33
2	Inspirational	1	3.57	0	0.0	5	11.11
3	Promotional	2	7.14	1	7.69	8	17.77
4	Personal	8	28.57	4	30.77	0	0.0
5	Criticism	2	7.14	0	0.0	1	2.22
6	Mobilising support	2	7.14	1	7.69	10	22.22
7	Probing	3	10.71	1	7.69	6	13.33

Most of status updates found informative in nature giving newsfeeds on the issues, events, or happenings. This is a common priority observed across the page or profile. In case of personal profiles good number of personal posts like travel information, family photographs, and family moments are also observed which is not found in case of page

feeds. Mobilising support from the connected people is found as the second preference therefore it can be generalised that social media is positively used by human rights activists to inform the people concerning new happenings, issues of interest, latest developments. Social media is also used in mobilising and sensitising people on the human rights issues.

Table 4- Origin of the Post

S. No.	Subject	Lenin R. (Total posts= 28)		Javed S. (Total posts= 13)		CRY (Total posts= 45)	
		F	P	F	P	F	P
1	Self origin	20	71.42	9	69.23	38	84.44
2	Referencing link or source	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	4.4
3	Shared information	8	28.58	4	30.77	5	11.11

As the table shows most of the profile holders or the page administrators themselves originate newsfeeds found on the walls. It shows their involvement as the first communicator. Variation is also observed as sharing others information is comparatively less on the CRY wall than the personal profiles.

Table 5- Using Hyperlinks

S. No	Subject	Lenin R. (Total posts=28)		Javed S. (Total posts=13)		CRY (Total posts=45)	
		F	P	F	P	F	P
1	With hyperlink	6	21.42	11	84.61	39	86.66
2	Without hyperlink	22	78.57	2	15.38	6	13.33

Most of feeds from the page of CYR and profile of JavedAbidi has used hyperlink facility to provide detailed information therefore it can be said that hyperlink feature is extensively used by the human rights activists and thus a detailed background material is available for interested users. This uses pattern shows the understanding and smart use of the social media.

Table 6- Nature of Support

S. No.	Nature of Support	Lenin R	Javed S.	CRY
1	Total friends/likes on page/profile	4370	4999	245162
2	Frequency of Status update	Daily	Daily	Daily
3	Like	960	574	15606
4	Share	28	4	1215
5	Comments	111	34	192

Facebook uses specific terminology to define the activities of the users. With upper limit of having 5000 friends any individual profile with 3 or 4000 friends can be named as the popular profile on the social media. With 4370 (Lenin Raghuvanshi) friends and 4999 (JavedAbidi) friends on the profiles and with 245162 likes on the page of Cry it can be said that all selected samples are very popular on social media and therefore able to connect with a large amount of people across the globe.

In Facebook communication like a post on Facebook is an easy way to let people know that a person is enjoying the content without leaving a comment. During the month of February profile of Lenin Raghuvanshi has received 960 likes, 111 comments, and 28 shares. JavedAbidi's profile also received 574 likes, 34 comments, and 4 shares on his posts. On the wall of CRY page 15606 likes, 1215 shares, and 192 comments were scored. The data indicates that a good number of people are enjoying by giving likes on the posts or updates. In total profile of Lenin has recorded 25.1 percent active support from his friend list, JavedAbidi's profile has 12.2 percent, and CRY has received 6.9 percent active support from the connected people. Here profiles of individual activists have received more support from the engaged users than the pages. On the basis of the data we can say that with regular updates by profiles and pages can secure good support of the engaged users and this rate is high for personal profiles than the pages of organizations or business. These engage users not only support the cause, also the visibility of the post is increased and such bumping posts spread among friends of friends too.

DISCUSSION

Social media platforms have given activists and organizations opportunity to draw attention to the issues concerning to them. It has literally lent voice to the people who otherwise had no means to convey their grievances or put their ideas across. It has exactly provided voice to people who otherwise had no means to convey their criticisms or place their ideas across. Social media provides 24x7 connectedness in an interactive manner where a community and support can be created and sustained. It helps people and organizations to garner the valuable public support around their activities by sensitizing them, mobilizing them and prepare them for action and change.

Katz and Lazarsfeld have established that 'the formation of well-considered political opinions is a two-step process. The first step requires access to information; the second, use of that information in conversation and debate' (Katz, Lazarsfeld(1970).

Personal Influence — The part played by people in the flow of mass communications.

Under this framework the findings suggest that social media profiles of the activists and organizations are attempting to sensitize the people to form the positive opinion by informing and motivating them on the critical human rights issues that is widely accessible and more people than ever are able to develop their point of view on such issues.

Social media platforms, with mainstreaming of the social media have become a cultural space for communicators and they use it to convey the meaning, languages, ideas, expressions, remix activities on human rights issues mentioning from irony to criticism and motivational stories, from cozy places to the frontline. It has been observed by the engagement patterns of the users that the culture of generating and sharing, practices of crowdsourcing, and the forms of collective production are contributing new forms of human rights literacy, new forms of knowledge and ultimately new forms of solidarity, social awareness and reflexivity on human rights issues. This communication corresponds successfully to the rights of members to freely participate in the creation, and sensitization of the community without pressure of gatekeeping of the mainstream media or censorship issues by other agencies.

Social media also constitutes space for community sharing large human rights contents, and, as the analysis shows are often extensively used as platforms for information, education, distributing, and exploring public support. In this way social media also contributes to the formation of human beings as competent members of a community by mobilising and supporting them in gaining critical intellectual capacities to participate in the political and cultural spaces of their online and offline communities for human rights support.

Freedom of expression through online social media platforms, the formation of a common culture based on humanitarian values, the possibilities of constituting associations across the boundaries, and organizing social

mobilization are structural contributions practiced by activists, organisations, and the aware people that will further form a self-aware public support for human rights in the public sphere.

With the samples of the well-recognized profiles and pages this study reveals that the persons and organisations that thrive in the conventional news media also do well in the social media and gain good support online. Online communication and use of social media provides them to frame better communication strategy to reach the global audience. Curbing the reach and connectedness of social media has not been an easy task for government so during situation of confrontation, bans, and censorship on the traditional channels of communication social media can come on the front and people can be organised speedily and without much obstructions and risk.

CONCLUSION

Activists and organisations as a promising space for enhancing public support across the regions on human rights issues have recognised social media, but they have to consider the inherent problems of the medium also. Information overload, big data and securing visibility by unknown organisations is a big challenge for people who want to use social media platforms for advocacy on human rights issues. Here, no one can deny the power and potential of social media in the coming days as industry predictions indicate the rising and mainstreaming of online communication. Therefore, in term of human rights protection and sensitisation social media can be used effectively to attain the goals of issue literacy.

With a careful approach concerning issues of freedom of expression and speech and respecting privacy of others such platforms can be established as the forum for human rights sensitisation, awareness, and voice of protest. These social media platforms have power to break the rigid structures of undemocratic practices. With liberating capacities of social media and by exploring their possibilities as multipliers, diffusers, and forum of debating human rights issues a better and participatory democratic environment for promotion and protection of human rights can be created.

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DESPITE AN ODYSSEY OF 200 YEARS, GORKHA CITIZEN STILL TO FIND POLITICAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

As far as Nepal is concerned at the end of the day it must be a win- win situation for both India and Nepal with the scales tipped for security reasons in India's favour. The earthquake has put Nepal back by a decade at least, the Indian state needs to guard from the Chinese because they deliver and walk their talk on development, thus the refugee influx will increase and so will traffic of Nepali vulnerable girls by modest expectations scores of whom are working in brothels all over India. There is a need to protect the dignity of all vulnerable people of society.

INTRODUCTION

Recently a Gorkha Regiment celebrated its 200 year of raising, ipso facto, implying that the Gorkha citizen different from the Nepali with whom they are commonly mixed up are two hundred years old or many generations in the service of the motherland. During this period of time the identity of the soldier has flourished, it has acquired international recognition, as the bravest of the brave, yet in civil society the Gorkha citizen has not flourished, unlike the refugees who came from Pakistan post '47. Today hardly any Gorkha is a national level political leader, no ambassadors, civil servants may be a handful worth, just two three star generals, and around twenty odd star ranked officers, in the forces which is their forte. The language has been recognized in the eight schedule of the Indian constitution and Gorkhas in reality show are busy displaying their talent. The other sides of the picture is grim, Gorkhas lack political identity, their role in the freedom struggle is hardly mentioned, are spread thin all over the hill states of India, are prone to discrimination as happened during foreigners agitation in Assam and recently at Uttarakhand, wherein a written state government order,

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stated Pakistani and Gorkhas will not be given ration cards. In spite of the fact no Gorkha can ever be seen begging, they are commonly associated with domestic help and watchmen, are called chinky, and in vote bank politics have been consigned to Gorkha cell along with their brethren the ex-servicemen, who too are confined to the cells in various national parties. A cell is a restricted place and Gorkhas have lacked political maturity. Thus in this journey Gorkha civil society has lost out while the soldier has gained, the reasons are many, but state patronage for soldiers is a major one, whereas, political identity brings with it reservations and preservation of language and a state in the Indian union preserves one culture, all is which is sadly lacking for the Gorkha civil society.

ANCESTRY

The process of unification of modern Nepal started from Gorkha district. The ruler who unified Nepal was Prithvi Narayan Shah (1743-75). The Gorkhas are followers of an Indian saint Guru Gorakhnath (11th century), credited to have given the Kukri as a weapon. The Guru fought to prevent cow slaughter. The ruling deity is the four hundred year old temple dedicated to Guru Gorakhnath, built in Gorkha Durbar (1636). There are three main theories regarding ancestry doing the rounds for these brave people. The first and commonly known is that they belonged to Rajasthan with Muslim persecution shifted to Nepal and reemerged as Gorkhas the conquerors of Garhwal, Kumaon, and the areas up to the Teesta river, but there are no cross references linked to migration from Rajasthan thus modern historians are reviewing this age old theory. The second theory now emerging is that they are an offshoot of the Khasa Malla Empire of Semja, which existed in 13-14th century. The third is that they were part of the Kirat Empire. People settled anywhere and that as and when the Westphalia nations drew their respective national boundaries people just happened to belong to various nations, thus the acute similarity between the arts, culture, and religious practices of Western Nepal and Kumaon. The stock of the people in Nepal is of two types. The first is Indo Aryan representing Brahmin, Chhetris, Thakuri, lending belief to the various theories, and the second Monogoloid, representing Magars, Gurungs, Shepras, Limbu, again to name a few, showing cross pollination. In India collectively all groups now are colloquially addressed to as Gorkhas. In Nepal although at one stage the Gorkha nation ruled, war cry (Ayo Gorkhali, -the Gorkhas are coming), and the army was called the Gorkha Army yet today there is no ethnicity, race, clan or community, called Gorkhas, in the 102 castes or ethnic groups of Nepal. Gorkha is a tradition in Nepal, a regiment in India and England and an identity for Indians of Nepali origin in India, who may belong to various clans, like Magars, Gurungs, Tamangs etc, and these clan identities are pulling the Gorkha people apart in India. Thus loosely defined "Gorkha is a homogenous, multi-faith, multi-religious, group, intrinsically linked to soldiering, seeking a state in India, so as, to ensure its culture and way of life is preserved, generally mixed up with migrant Nepali worker whose migration carries on unabated".

THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS

The Gorkhas have not been able to outlive the deeds of the first hundred years in the next hundred years. There are many tales of poor Gorkha administration doing the rounds in Garhwal and Kumaon, and the British were keen to exploit the same. Civil society has a long memory and the average Gorkha with his demeanor hardly inspired confidence to shed this image. On the other hand the need for soldiers' pre and post independence typed their image. Gorkha civil society post independence too was unable to cope with the herculean effort of identity, mixing it up with citizenship. Today there is no doubt in any one's mind about citizenship. Gorkhas are Indian citizens but identity still has a question mark and Gorkha civil society needs to address the same. After the war with the British and the signing of the treaty of Sagauli (1815) the Gorkhas surrendered areas to mark the current boundary of Nepal and as the British were so impressed with their fighting prowess that Gorkhas were recruited in the British Indian Army. It was a win-win situation for all. The British got good excellent material as soldiers and the King of Nepal sold the Gorkha soldier and later citizen for tea and other

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labor as currency. Historical records now emerging show that the Nepalese Prime Minister gained 10,000,00 (ten lacs) every year as royalty. There also was an understanding that these people will be officered by Gorkhas thus ensuring that they stay insulated from civil society, and cannot rise beyond a certain level. Historians claim that this ensured that language and custom were maintained on the other hand it maintained isolation, thus in the first war of independence (1857), the King of Nepal stayed loyal to the British and the troops were forced to do the same. The First World War saw the troops go out and the impact that it had on Indian civil society today is still being gauged, needless to say it brought a whiff of fresh air and openness in society which was badly choked by the British. The Indian political class today is capitalizing on the role of the soldier in the First World War. The first hundred years saw the Gorkha colluding with the British, whereas, now gradually winds of change were starting to blow. It took too long for the British to get raw material for soldiers from Nepal, they wanted men to tame the North East, they required labor for tea and other plantations in the North East, and so, they started slowly settling these people in Dehra-Dun, Shillong, far off Aizawal and a host of other places, giving them education as well. The Gorkha identity too is carried by the women and children, thus slowly they became sons of the soil, but in other parts like Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Dooars, the population density and the local caste records suggest that Gorkha castes dominated that area.

THE SECOND HUNDRED YEARS

This period started poorly with the British exploiting the alienation of the Gorkhas by using them Jallianwala Bagh. The Gorkha was a victim of circumstances as the British used them to perpetuate their colonial designs. During this time the All India Gorkha League was also started in Dehra Doon. As news of this political organization spread the Nepali papers got active in India the King of Nepal and the British both got after the League and this organization which mysteriously goes off from Dehra Doon, resurfaces some years later at Darjeeling. The second hundred years also saw a lot of social service organizations nationally come up all over the Indian nation where ever the Gorkhas have settled. One of the greatest contributions for the Gorkhas has been in the freedom struggle of India. Major Durga Mall and Dal Bahadur Giri both will always be remembered in the freedom struggle of India. A total of 250 Gorkhas joined the Indian National Army; Captain Dalbahadur Thapa was also executed at Delhi central jail. The magical song of the Indian Army "kadamkadamdayeja", was composed by Captain Ram Singh Thakuri. In the constituent assembly Damber Singh Gurung and later Ari Bahadur Gurung both took part in the proceedings. All said and done the second hundred years saw them merge with the Indian nation trying to forget ones roots, but in Hinduism, melting pot culture does not work, and the Gorkha being a Hindu he needs to get back to his roots to reconnect at the macro level although at the individual level, most are very well connected with their neighbors. The Gorkhas live in peace are civil by nature and merge very well with their surroundings.

POLITICAL IDENTITY

Identity varies with place and circumstances. Individuals have an identity of an ex-serviceman, of a school or a sense of belonging, but political identity for the Gorkha is the key to other vexed identity issues, which is also now being threatened by a review of the 1950 treaty between India and Nepal. Gorkha civil society because of its small numbers and being spread out cannot play a decisive role in vote bank politics, but collectively the Gorkhas add up to around more than a billion people. It is this frustration that has led to the struggle for Gorkhaland. In vote bank politics numbers count and the Gorkhas have not been able to unite and show their numbers. This disarray has brought Gorkha society to this sorry state of affairs, wherein, today the main identity of Gorkha is challenged by clan identities, such Magar, Gurung Samaj etc. The three step identity process for the Gorkhas is firstly creation of a state, secondly all India OBC status, and thirdly linguist minority status. Though the Gorkha as a soldier may exist in the main stream of the Indian nation and the political

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classes, Gorkha as a citizen only exist in the periphery vision of the Indian state. Politically the Gorkha has been very poor. Twice in parliament elections from Darjeeling a non Gorkha who had no idea of Gorkha identity was sent to represent the people. These are people's representatives and when a community sends a non-community person to the highest representative body of the nation it shows how bankrupt that community is for good people. The politics of Darjeeling has thus slapped the all India identity of the Gorkhas for petty political gains in Darjeeling. All this is going to be compounded even more if the Indian political class does not foresee the aftermath of the earth quake wherein Nepal will go back by a few decades and pressure on the Indian nation will mount due to migration.

THE 1950 TREATY AND GORKHAS IN INDIA

The 1950 treaty allows unabated migration from Nepal, with similar sounding names, expressions, mannerism and religion, the state and individuals are not sensitive enough to differentiate between a Nepali migrant and an Indian Gorkha. The word Nepali has a distinct identity is wholesome and denotes as belonging to Nepal. It has an aura and standing of its own, and represents citizenship of that country. Gorkhas often get mixed up with migrant Nepali labor thus the word Nepali which incidentally is also the language confuses not only the community but also the other Indian. It is this crisis of identity at the generic and individual level that needs to be clarified, and the Indian state made sensitive to this issue. In its Delhi election manifesto of 2015 the BJP was quick to give special concession to the people of North East why not the Gorkhas as well who are from the states of India. On the other hand Nepali migrant labor is required by the Indian economy but often gets mixed up with the Gorkha the state needs to find ways and means outside the treaty to sort out this issue.

THE ROLE OF MIGRANT LABOR IN INDIA

The citizen of Nepal is honest, sincere, loyal and hard working. These qualities are universally accredited to them and they have lived up to the same. Than PM designate Mr. Modi while addressing an election rally at Silguri had emphatically stated that they make the best watch keepers, much to the chagrin of the Gorkha community in India. It takes two to three generations for anyone to join up into the ever expanding middle class of India. The first generation the family is at status quo, the second generation toils and gets education and might or may not do well; the third generation gets educated and does well. Gorkhas today are more than three generations in India, thus what PM designate Modi and the rest of India generally refer too is the migrant Nepali worker, all clubbed as Gorkhas. Migrant labor is required for the border roads of India because of their ability to work under stressful conditions. They are required for labor in the high altitude of Uttarakhand, the apple industry of Himachal, as upholders of valve while working domestically, at Leh where all the non-vegetarian cooking is done by them, in all the eating joints that spring up each year during the tourist season. All over India they work and have earned a name for themselves as hard working honest dedicated people. In Mumbai a Nepali newspaper is published. Thus are they men or women working as care givers they can be seen all over India but one has yet to see a Gorkha beggar? They are a hard working race and the growing Indian economy requires people with such skill sets. Should they travel all over India without documents while a great security threat looms large is not acceptable in national interest?

THE WAY FORWARD FOR TREATY AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY

There are two issues here one for the Gorkha community, and one for the government of India. The community must stand united and ensure that its political class which is Darjeeling centric ensures that a Gorkha candidate reaches the parliament. The community must clench its fist and punch above its weight. The fingers of a palm lack strength, and thus the Gorkha community spread all over the nation lacking leadership is rudderless. As far as the treaty is concerned the

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current people friendly articles have not worked in India's favour. The Nepali worker is required in the Indian scheme of things but the open border which is a historical precedent is being misused, by miscreants, ISI agents and Maoist. The spate of documentation being carried out in India for her citizens will make owning property more difficult, but migration from Nepal will continue, as Indian economy grows it requires people with appropriate skill sets and good sturdy hard working labor. This will lead to exploitation of manpower along with law and order problems as well; the earthquake has destroyed the economy of Nepal thus migration will only increase. The government of India needs to protect the identity of the Gorkhas as it deems fit best and this should be outside the treaty as the Gorkhas are Indians. The home ministry can protect their identity, by fast track courts to prevent them from discrimination, protect the Nepali language by giving linguist minority status, ensure Gorkhas get reservation by declaring them OBC across the board for all India and consider their demand for Gorkhaland, in national interest, small states are better states, as well as Gorkhas have no similarity in linguist state with Bengal. As far as Nepal is concerned at the end of the day it must be a win- win situation for both India and Nepal with the scales tipped for security reasons in India's favor. The earthquake has put Nepal back by a decade at least, the Indian state needs to guard from the Chinese because they deliver and walk their talk on development, thus the refugee influx will increase and so will traffic of Nepali vulnerable girls by modest expectations scores of whom are working in brothels all over India. There is a need to protect the dignity of all vulnerable people of society. To the Gorkha India is home, these people are children of a lesser God they are not welcome in Nepal as well and don't have a choice, the pressure from the earthquake will drive more into India, luckily they do not upset the demography pattern nor do they create a law and order problem, but as a nation India needs to ensure those inimical to Indian interests do not get a chance to fish in troubled waters.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS: THE INTENDED VS. THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

SHINU VIG* SAURABH DUBEY**

INTRODUCTION

International Labor standards shape the national laws of the countries and also provide direction for framing national labor policies. But the debate about the significance and impact of international labor standards has become quite serious in the context of accelerating economic globalization in the last three decades. Labor, being the most important factor of production, plays a paramount role in the economic growth and development of any country. But in the wake of increasing globalization and international trade, labor is the worst affected factor in the developing countries. Globalization is leading to the exploitation of the labor and depriving them of dignity, social justice and basic social protection. Workers are denied their basic rights at work and least attention paid to their working conditions. Since the adoption of the Fundamental Declaration on Rights and Principles at Work by the member states of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1998, the discussion about the adoption of international labor standards at national level, and their assimilation into global trade and financial regimes, has gained considerable momentum. But while it has obtained relevance at the political and academic level, reality in developing countries still lags far behind. The aim of the paper is to discuss the role and impact of international labor standards on economic and social development, and their potential to link globalization with social progress.

KEY WORDS: Labor standards, ILO, globalization, India

INTRODUCTION

Labor, being the most important factor of production, plays a paramount role in the economic growth and development of

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any country. But in the wake of increasing globalization and international trade, labor is the worst affected factor. Globalization has reduced labor to a simple economic variable, rather a cost, where the emphasis is on reduction of this cost. This has led to the exploitation of the labor and depriving them of dignity, social justice and basic social protection. Workers are denied their basic rights at work and least attention paid to their working conditions. This has further resulted in industrial disputes and degradation of the industrial relations in many industries across the globe. In this scenario, though the businesses can expect some short term gains but cannot be sustainable in the long run. As rightly said by MahbubulHaq, the founder of the Human Development Reports (UNDP):

"Unless societies recognize that their real wealth is their people, an excessive obsession with creating material wealth can obscure the goal of enriching human lives."

The ultimate objective of development is to ensure human well-being through a sustained improvement in the quality of life of people, particularly the poor and the vulnerable segments of the population. With this background, the paper tries to assess the role of labor standards in improving the condition of workers and thus contributing to sustainable development of businesses.

THE ILO

International Labor Organization (ILO) is the international organization responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labor standards. It is the only 'tripartite' United Nations agency that brings together representatives of governments, employers and workers to jointly shape policies and programs promoting Decent Work for all. The ILO was founded in 1919, in the wake of the First World War, to pursue a vision based on the premise that universal, lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice. The ILO became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946. The primary objective for the establishment of the ILO was to foster joint international action to improve labor conditions world wide. There were other interrelated motives as laid down in the Preamble to the Constitution of the ILO.

"Whereas universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice; And whereas conditions of labor exist involving such injustice hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperiled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required; Whereas also the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labor is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries"

Since its constitution in 1919, ILO has produced a broad range of minimum labor standards defining fundamental rights of the labor and principles at work. The main objective of these standards is to promote 'decent work for all'. The primary objective of ILO is to promote "opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity (ILO, 1999). This objective definition has a very wide coverage as it covers all workers irrespective of the sector they work in. It even includes the workers working in the unorganized sector and also the domestic workers. Decent work has been explained by ILO with reference to employment, social protection, workers' rights and social dialogue.

The ILO has undoubtedly played a central role in the definition of rights which are to be taken into account in international discussions of labor rights. The labor standards listed in various bilateral free trade agreements, in national formulations and in the work of international organizations in have all been largely influenced by the work of the ILO (Alston 2005). The ILO has had a major impacting defining the international labor standards agenda.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS

International labor standards are legal instruments drawn up by the ILO's constituents (governments, employers and workers) and set out basic principles and rights at work. They are either conventions, which are legally binding international

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treaties that may be ratified by member states, or recommendations, which serve as non-binding guidelines. In many cases, a convention lays down the basic principles to be implemented by ratifying countries, while a related recommendation supplements the convention by providing more detailed guidelines on how it could be applied. Conventions and recommendations are drawn up by representatives of governments, employers and workers and are adopted at the ILO's annual International Labor Conference. ILO has indeed become the primary international organisation involved in promoting international labor law.

International Labor standards shape the national laws of the countries and also provide guidance for framing national labor policies. ILO sets the standards that the member nations are expected to adhere and ILO promotes ratification of its conventions by the member states. Ratification of ILO Conventions by a country means that it has committed itself to the application of the standard in both law and in practice.

Some of the major topics covered by International Labor Standards are:

- Freedom of association
- Collective bargaining
- Forced Labor
- Child labor
- Equal Remuneration
- Minimum Wages
- Occupational safety and health
- Social security
- Maternity protection
- Migrant workers

CORE LABOR STANDARDS OR CORE CONVENTIONS

ILO has identified eight fundamental conventions which cover the subjects considered as fundamental principles and rights at work.

Table 1: ILO's Fundamental Conventions

Subject	Convention
1. Freedom of association	C 87- Freedom of Association and Protection of Right to Organize Convention
	C 98- Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention
2. Forced Labor	C 29- Forced Labor Convention
	C 105- Abolition of Forced labor Convention
3. Discrimination	C 100- Equal Remuneration Convention
	C 111- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention
4. Child Labor	C 138- Minimum Age Convention
	C 182- Worst forms of Child Labor Convention

ENFORCEMENT OF LABOR STANDARDS

The enforcement of the ILO's resolutions and conventions are dependent on their ratification and enforcement by individual countries. This process is supported by the delivery of technical assistance programmes, by ILO, for countries that lack the resources to meet these core labor standards and the impact of negative publicity on the countries that refuse to comply (Elliott,2000).Many governments across the globe have either not ratified the relevantLabor conventions or not adopted legislation reflective of their norms. An international system to promote respect for standards is required because the self-interest of governments around the world does not match the interests of workers. Thus informal system of negative publicity has been quite effective in these cases where the countries have been bent into compliance of the standards.

Further, the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work was adopted at the International Labor Conference in 1998. After its adoption, all the member countries that had not ratified one or more of the eight core conventions associated with these rights are required to report annually on what they are doing to promote the principles involved.

THE NEED FOR LABOR STANDARDS

Due to the decreased value placed on labor in the capital-labor relationship it is very important to pay special attention to female workers, migrant workers, workers in the unorganized sector, in short, all those who are least protected. Karl Marx gave a theory of value and surplus value which analyzes the fundamental relation of capitalism. The theory shows that how capitalist profit originates as surplus value produced by labor but is appropriated by capital. The capitalist employs labor-power to create a value greater than the value of that labor-power itself. If the workers and their families do not receive a fair share of the wealth they create, then it can endanger the rate and the sustainability of any future economic growth. Therefore, the labor standards can play a crucial role here by helping advance the creation of decent work for all by guiding the member countries develop policies and devise programs for it.

Growing inequality in income, in terms of functional and personal income distribution is also reported by ILO Wage Report 2013. Functional income distribution is a measure of how national income of a country has been distributed between labor and capital. The report shows a long run trend towards a falling share of wages and rising share of profits in many countries.

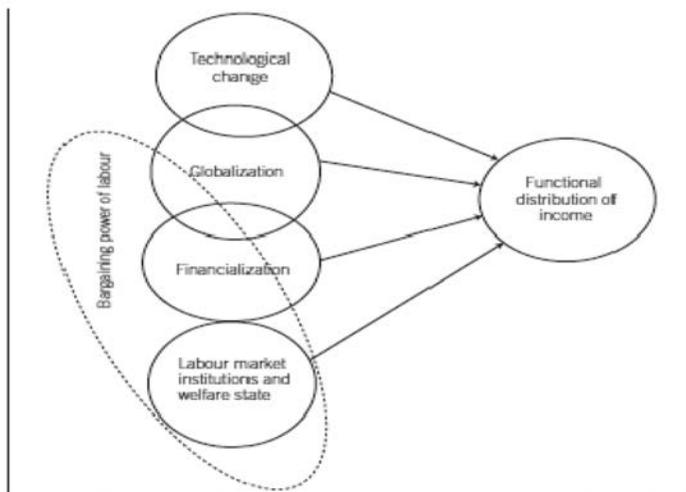


Fig1. Source: Stockhammer (2013)

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In figure 1, Stockhammer (2013) shows that the major reasons for decreasing share of wages are technological changes, globalization, financial markets, labor market institutions (i.e. trade unions), and the decline in the bargaining power of labor. The figure also shows that the bargaining power of labor is directly dependent upon labor market institutions but is also affected by globalization and financial markets.

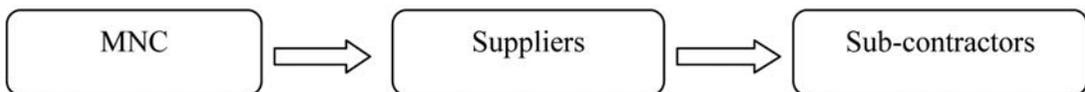
GLOBALIZATION LEADING TO 'RACE TO THE BOTTOM'

The discussions held at International labor conference, 98th session in Geneva (2009) highlighted that informalization of the formal sector had become common in all countries, during the process of capitalist globalization, because that all tried to buy labor at the cheapest rate, without any heed being paid to the workers working conditions and without paying them even the living wages. The sole objective being the maximization of profits in the context of global competition. IMF (2007) in its report 'Globalization of Labor' concludes that "globalization is one of several factors that have acted to reduce the share of income accruing to labor in advanced economies, although rapid technological change has had a bigger impact". Several other authors are of the opinion that national labor regulations and the international moral pressure created by the international bodies, have together failed to prevent unjust labor practices and disrespect of the basic rights of the workers (Elias 2003). A common view in the existing literature is that the increasing global competition has increased the pressure to cut down the costs, a major part of which is the labor cost. Because of this the firms are compromising on the existing levels of labor standards. (Lee, 1997). In the absence of cooperative international action, increasing global economic competition will lead to downward pressures on labor standards (Bhagwati and Hudec, 1996). Another negative effect of globalization is the increased competition for foreign investment in which the lowering of labor standards is used as a major inducement to potential investors. There are some trading countries which resort to such unethical behavior whereby the remaining countries wishing to preserve higher labor standards are adversely affected. Such countries are then placed at a competitive disadvantage if they do not follow suit. (Lee, 1997) The problem actually lies in the fact that in this existing scenario, the governments no longer possess the capacity and/or willingness to effectively enforce labor standards and regulations. (Elias 2003)

THE ROLE OF MULTI NATIONAL CORPORATIONS (MNCs)

In an attempt to reduce labor costs global companies have resorted to labor intensive manufacturing in the developing countries which are abundant in unskilled labor. Several industries like ready made garments, toys and electronics became the key to the export-led development policies of the Asian countries like China and Bangladesh. These countries have created Export Processing Zones (EPZs) and provided several other incentives for attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). These countries have a large number of sub-contracting factories in the unorganized sector which employ thousands of workers in inhumane working conditions, for manufacturing low cost goods for multi-national giants. The role of MNCs in the plight of these workers working in their global supply chains has largely been debated.

Fig2. The Global Supply chains



The MNCs have made codes of conduct for their suppliers and some times even for sub-contractors which typically contain a statement of minimum labor conditions covering the basic issues such as the working environment and health and safety standards, along with an assurance that the firm will comply with local laws. But these codes are self-regulatory or voluntary and depend upon the firms' own commitment to labor standards. They lack a legal

framework for compliance or punishment.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF LABOR STANDARDS

Labor Standards aim to promote good industrial relations. Palley(2004) presents an economic case for international labor standards and says that these standards are an institutional mechanism for enhancing the quality of growth and raising the standards of living in both developing and developed countries. They are a win-win solution. He concludes that the only way to realize the gains from international labor standards is through official intervention that makes the labor standards the globally applied 'rules of the game'.

Labor standards tend to formalize the labor relations by making provision for the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. This results in sound industrial relations between employers and employees which in turn can lead to a stable economy and prevent industrial disputes that are detrimental to the functioning of the economy. To achieve this much desired win-win position, labor standards need to go hand in hand with building institutional capacity and trust between the three pillars of industrial relations i.e. workers, employers and the government.

Labor standards promote rights at work for human capital development and economic growth. In fact, there would not be any economic growth if workers are not protected against exploitation, which could only be removed through adequate protection of the employment contracts, working hours, occupational safety and health, the right to education and training and to social protection.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST LABOR STANDARDS

There are several arguments against the augmentation of labor standards raised mainly by the developing countries (ILO, 1997). The main argument is that linking labor standards to trade is a disguised instrument of protectionism, which is aimed at raising labor costs in developing countries in order to reduce their international competitiveness which is largely based on lower wage costs. Underlying this apprehension over protectionism is, the belief that higher labor standards are contrary to the growth prospects of developing countries, interfering with their comparative advantage and creating market distortions. (Lee, 1997) The suspicion of developing countries that any link between trade and labor standards will lead to increased protectionism is almost correct. (Anderson 2002)

LABOR STANDARDS AND CSR

The primary responsibility of a business is towards its most important stakeholders i.e. its workers, because they are both the vital human resource as well as the prospective customers of a business. Being responsible means that the business must be willing to respect the dignity of every worker as a human being, provide adequate opportunities for every individual to develop to his potential, to ensure fair wages to them and to provide a healthy and safe work environment. An important aspect of CSR is compliance of labor standards. But this aspect is often neglected in the CSR activities of the firms. The ILO itself reported in 2003 that 300 separate corporate social responsibility initiatives that it had surveyed 'contain relatively few references to the fundamental international labor standards, and that some even contain language 'that could be interpreted as undermining' those standards.

LABOR STANDARDS AND INDIA

India is a founder member of International Labor Organization. The ILO instruments have served as guidelines for the evolution of labor legislation and practices in India. The ILO conventions have had a significant influence on Indian regulatory framework in the area of labor practices. India has so far ratified 39 Conventions of the ILO. Though India may not have ratified certain ILO Conventions, but India has generally voted in favor of the Conventions for reserving its position for future

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ratification.

The Core Conventions ratified by India are:

- Forced Labor Convention (No. 29)
- Abolition of Forced Labor Convention (No.105)
- Equal Remuneration Convention (No.100)
- Discrimination (Employment Occupation) Convention (No.111)

The Core Conventions which have not yet been ratified are:

- Freedom of Association and Protection of Right to Organized Convention (No.87)
- Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention (No.98)
- Minimum Age Convention (No.138)
- Worst forms of Child Labor Convention (No.182)

Indian labor market is highly segmented in terms of organized and unorganized sectors. Labor market institutions such as unions and regulatory and welfare regulation also tend to widen rather than reduce segmentation in the Indian labor market. Labor laws have differentiated criteria of application to different workers which tends to divide workers into several categories with respect to the degree of job and social protection. Most of the regulation applies to a relatively small part of the workforce. Employment has grown relatively well but most of it has been of the informal kind. Table 2 indicates that there has been no major change in the regular workers. Whereas the major change has occurred in the other two categories, where self employed workers have moved into the category of casual labor.

Labor Standards such as the standard on occupational health and safety becomes all the more important in a country like

Table 2: Distribution of workers by their status of employment

NSS Year	Self-employed	Regular Employees	Casual Labor
1993-94	54.70	13.53	31.77
1999-00	52.61	14.65	32.75
2004-05	56.38	15.35	28.27
2009-10	50.58	16.63	32.79

Source: Papola T.S. (ILO 2013)

India where hundreds of millions of workers from rural areas have entered the industrial sector and services without any kind of adequate training. But if observed there are several irregularities which are evident from Table 3 that shows that despite having labor legislation i.e. Factories Act, for ensuring workers health and safety at work, the objective is defeated by inadequate implementation and supervision, as can be seen in Table 3 hereafter:

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Table3: The Status of Labor inspections in Indian states in 2009

State	Factories Registered		Factories Inspected	
	All	Hazardous	All	Hazardous
Maharashtra	39963	4944	11950	1940
Uttar Pradesh	14026	2338	2733	1937
Andhra Pradesh	42924	0	5504	0
Tamil Nadu	40515	812	25022	113
Gujarat	34860	5871	12002	1406
West Bengal	14888	3289	3198	427
Karnataka	12633	1109	7362	1002

Source:DGFASLI (Directorate General, Factory Advice Service and Labor Institute)

Though India has a plethora of labor laws dealing with different labor issues and practices but they have created different categories of workers to whom different laws apply. There are no laws which are uniformly applicable to all the workers. There is an urgent need for reforms in the regulatory framework for removing some irrationally restrictive and often antiquated provisions discouraging growth of good quality employment and for ensuring a minimum floor of fair employment conditions and social protection to the vast mass of the informal workers.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that though labor standards may have some negative side effects but their contribution in maintaining industrial peace and social justice can not be denied altogether. The unintended consequences must be weighed against the intended consequences. Apart from legal interventions the promotion of labor rights requires political will and economic support by embedding them into economic and political policies as well.

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ETHICAL & MORAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE USE OF HUMAN EMBRYOS FOR RESEARCH

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SUDIR PADROO**

This article focuses on outlying the various facts for the Ethical & Legal concerns for the use of Human Embryos in Research & Development. Conducting Research on Human embryonic stems (hES) is currently high on ethical & political agenda in many countries, Despite the potential benefit of using Human hES cells in the treatment of disease, The use remains controversial because of their derivation from Early Embryos. Human embryonic stem cells (hES) are derived from the inner cell mass of human blastocysts. Five days after an egg is fertilized by sperm, the resulting cell, smaller than the dot on this "i," is known as a blastocyst. The extraction of hES qualifies as research on human embryos.

There are a number of lawful but incompatible views on the moral and legal status of the human embryo. One school of beliefs says, that human embryo is just a collection of cells and is not different from skin cells or other cells in the body. According to this belief, there is no need to treat these cells differently than other cells and research on them is permissible, provided the donors of the cells give proper consent. Other opinion believes that human embryo is a person with the same moral status as a baby, child or adult - and consequently, with all the rights those people possess. According to this belief it is not possible to condone experimenting on embryos, just as we do not experiment on living persons without their consent.

The other objections for creating embryos specifically for research is based on both the intentions of the person creating the embryo and the corresponding chance the embryo might be implanted. The ethical issue is whether creating embryos is for an entirely instrumental purpose, a research purpose. Even for people who do not believe that embryos are people in the same sense as children and adults, their connection to the human community may require that they also not be treated as a

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means to an end. According to this opinion, creating embryos without any chance that they will be implanted does not respect their special status as human life. To create embryos for possible implantation and then decide to donate them for research does not use them as a mere means, but as ends (with the intention to reproduce and with the possibility for implantation) and subsequently as a means (to potentially life-saving research).

Though it is believed that research in understanding genetic diseases, and testing drugs therapies on those diseases can be greatly aided by studying stem cell lines created to express various genetic disorders. These cell lines can be created either by using an embryo that researchers know to manifest the genetic disorder.

Ethical issue with embryo research where the fertilized egg has to be destroyed

The moral status of the embryos used to derive stem cell lines is debatable. Embryonic stem cell research poses a moral problem, as it brings into tension two fundamental moral principles that we highly value: the duty to prevent or alleviate suffering, and the duty to respect the value of human life.

The harvesting of human embryonic stem cells violates this second duty as it results in the destruction of a possible human life. Both principles cannot simultaneously be respected in the case of embryonic stem cell research. The question then is which principle ought to be given precedence in this conflict situation. Should we give more weight to the first, and permit destructive embryonic stem cell research because of its potential benefits? The aim of stem cell research (to cure diseases and relieve suffering) is universally recognized as a good aim. Or should we give more weight to the second, and prohibit destructive embryonic research because it violates respect for the value of the embryo as the very beginning of a possible human life ?

What moral status does the human embryo have?

The moral status that the human embryo is given varies. Three different main positions with variations can be separated.

1. Having full moral status after fertilization of the egg

This point of view can be divided into two: considering embryos worthy of protection simply because they are human or considering them as potential persons. Philosophers differ on this question.

Whereas many philosophers, particularly utilitarians, do not consider a fertilized human egg before implantation to satisfy the criteria of personhood, others take a different view. However, the criteria of personhood are notoriously unclear. The perspective of the same point of view is that fertilized eggs are worthy of protection simply because they are human.

Arguments: There is no non-arbitrary point, a morally significant dividing line in the continuum of physical growth between an embryo and a developed human. Since a developmental point at which personhood is acquired cannot be pointed out, individuals are counted as human beings at their embryonic stage as well as their fully developed stage. If our lives are worthy of respect simply because we are human, it would be a mistake to think that at some younger age or earlier stage of development (e.g. when we began our lives as fertilized eggs) we were not worthy of respect.

Therefore, if we do not accept fertilization as a morally decisive moment from which full protection should be guaranteed, there is no other similarly decisive moment. Human embryos differ from other human beings not in what they are, but in their stage of development. A human embryo is a human being in the embryonic stage, just as an infant or an adolescent is a human being in the infant or adolescent stage.

Counter-arguments: Even if it is not possible to point to an exact dividing line in human development at which personhood is acquired, it may be argued that whenever the transition occurs, early preimplantation stage embryos do not have the psychological, physiological, emotional or intellectual properties that we associate with personhood. It, therefore, follows that if human embryo does not fulfill the criteria for personhood, it does not have any interests to be protected and thus may be

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used instrumentally for the benefit of those who are persons. The fact that every person began life as an embryo does not prove that embryos are persons either. For example, although every oak tree was once an acorn, it does not mean that acorns are oak trees or that we should treat the loss of an acorn

Human embryonic stem cell research and ethics as the same kind of loss as the death of an oak tree. There is an opinion that instead of the end of the process of fertilization of the egg, a human embryo becomes worthy of protection at around day 14 after the fertilization. There are several reasons for this opinion:

- It may be argued that it is the implantation of the blastocyst in the uterine wall that is the best landmark for the definition of human life. Indeed, this is the first stage at which the individual is defined because the embryo is past the stage in which it can split to form twins. The end of the possibility of twinning is around day 14 after fertilization. Before this time, a researcher in a laboratory could divide a four-cell embryo into four embryos and, on the other hand, fuse four early embryos into one. It is only after twinning is not possible any more, when the life of one individual starts as a recognizable one.
- It may also be argued that it is the formation of the nervous system that is the landmark for the definition of life, since this is then that the possibility of sensation first exists. Up to embryonic day 14, the blastocyst has no central nervous system and, therefore, cannot be considered sensate. If we can remove organs from patients who have been declared brain dead but are still alive in some sense in order to save the lives of those who are alive, we can use two hundred-cell embryos as cell donors at the same moral status as brain dead individuals. Embryological studies now show that fertilization is itself a process (not a "moment"). Therefore, it can be argued that an embryo in the earliest stages (including the blastocyst stage, when stem cells would be extracted for the purpose of the research) is not sufficiently individualized to have the moral weight of personhood.

Arguments: Although embryos do not currently exhibit the properties of personhood, they will, if allowed to develop and fulfill their potential. Since embryos are potential persons, they ought to be accorded the moral respect and dignity that personhood requires. For example, we still treat unconscious individuals as persons even though they are not able to exercise the properties of personhood in their present state.

Counter-arguments: The embryo in itself cannot develop into a child without being transferred to a woman's uterus. It needs external aid to enable its development and hence it does not have an active potentiality to develop into a human being without help (9). Even with the external aid provided, the probability that embryos used for in vitro fertilization will develop into full-term successful births is low.

This probability is also very much context-dependent: e.g. on the quality of external human intervention, such as transferable to uterus, and on other factors such as whether the embryo will implant and grow to term or even on the conditions of giving birth. Thus something that could potentially become a person should not be morally regarded as if it actually were a person. Contrary to the previous statement, the temporarily unconscious persons already had all the properties of personhood before falling into unconsciousness and will have them again when they come out of it.

2. Having a moral status that begins with deserving protection and increases as the fertilized egg becomes more human-like

Arguments: The main point of the gradual view is that the moral status and the protection of the embryo should increase as the fertilized egg becomes more human-like. There are several reasons for such a position:

- There are degrees of value of a life depending on the stage of that life. Consequently, there are degrees of respect that ought to be shown to that life at those stages. They can be identified as follows: the implantation after the sixth day, the appearance of the primitive streak at the end of the second week, the viability phase or even birth itself. At different stages of the end of life we tend to make different judgments of how great that loss is. Human embryonic stem cell research and ethics depending on the stage of the lost life. Thus a fertilized egg before implantation in the uterus could be granted a lesser

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degree of respect than a human fetus or a born baby.

- There is a natural embryo loss in pregnancy, where more than half of all fertilized eggs either fail to implant or are otherwise lost. Therefore, if natural process entails the loss of some embryos for every successful birth, the loss of embryos that occurs in stem cell research should not worry us either. Those who view embryos as persons might reply that high infant mortality would not justify infanticide. But the way we respond to the natural loss of embryos suggests that we do not regard this event in the same way as the death of an infant.

Counter-arguments: However, there are also several reasons why human embryos at the very beginning of their existence should have the same protection as more developed embryos or fetuses:

- Whatever moral status does the human embryos have, the life that it lives has a value to the one who lives this life. We protect a person's life and interests not because those interests are valuable from the point of view of the universe, but because they are important to the entity concerned. Therefore, the life of the human embryo should be protected because it has a value to the embryo itself.
- We should be cautious and refrain from destruction of fertilized eggs even if we are not sure about their dignity, simply because being uncertain as to whether a particular organism is a human being, it would be more reasonable to refrain from destroying it. For example, a hunter refrains from shooting if he is not sure whether the particular object at which he is aiming is a deer or a man.
- Judging the moral status of the embryo from its age is making arbitrary definitions of who is human. For example, even if we consider that the appearance of the primitive streak at day 14 after the fertilization of the egg is the threshold of when the embryo acquires moral worthiness, we must still acknowledge that patients who have lost part of their cortex from a stroke or Alzheimer's disease are no less human than they were before.

3. Having no moral status at all, regarded as organic material, with a status no different from mother body parts

Arguments: Fertilized human eggs are merely parts of other people's bodies until they reach a certain autonomous or independent developmental stage. Accordingly, they have no independent moral status at all, and are merely the property of the people from whose body they came. The only respect due to these blastocysts is the respect that should be shown to other people's property.

The blastocysts before implantation cannot be harmed by being destroyed. To be harmed means to have an interest or interests defeated. For a being to have an interest, this being must have beliefs, desires, expectations, aims, and purposes. The nervous system of such early embryos is not developed enough for this. Because they are not the subjects of interests, such early embryos cannot be the subjects of basic rights that protect interests. A pre-implantation embryo contains potentially all the cells of the human body, and by conducting research one is not destroying it, but merely directing it to become certain cells and not others, since the cells of such an embryo are still totipotent (e.g. they are still capable of multiplying into twins). It can also be argued that a new human organism (at the embryo stage) is only the predecessor of the organism that the human being ultimately born will be.

Counter-arguments: By directing an embryo to "become certain cells", the embryo is prevented from developing in its normal complete fashion. It is completely reprogramming an embryo and thus preventing it from becoming what it was programmed to become - a human being.

The view concerning the moral status of the early human embryo before the time of its implantation in the uterus differs depending on religion.

- **Roman Catholic, Orthodox, conservative Protestant Churches:** Since a human embryo is believed to have a status of a human individual from the moment of the fertilization of the egg, it has the right to its own life, and every intervention not in favor of the embryo is a violation of that right. No end believed to be good (e.g. using stem cells to prepare other

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differentiated cells to be applied in what look to be promising therapeutic procedures) can justify the destruction of the embryo, which is believed to be a wrong action (15). The Orthodox Christians as well as Roman Catholics and Conservative Protestants affirm the sanctity of human life at all stages of development and believe that the process toward authentic human personhood begins with the zygote, which is committed to a developmental course that will ultimately lead to a human person.

- Less conservative **Protestant Churches** believe that the embryo has a potential human status, reflecting its gradual development from basic cells to a fetus. Thus some embryo research may be permitted. The life of the embryo is weighed against the possible benefit for the society from embryo research. The life of the human embryo is sacred from conception, but there are circumstances under which embryo research might be allowed prior to the "primitive streak" stage (around 14th day after the fertilization), bearing in mind the seriousness of certain medical conditions that could possibly be treated.
- **Judaism:** The Jewish religious tradition emphasizes the importance of the saving of life and considers the ultimate goal of human embryonic stem cell research to be life saving. Healing in Judaism is not only permitted, it is required to be an active partner in the world's repair and perfection. Man is obliged to build and develop the world in every direction favorable to humanity. Therefore, any activity that contributes to advancements in the world cannot be considered as contradicting God's decrees. It is also believed that it is God who has given the power to create new technologies. Anything, which has no reason to be prohibited is permitted without having to find a reason for its permissibility. In Judaism the human fetus less than 40 days old and certainly the pre-implantation embryo does not have a full human status. After those first 40 days the embryo in the uterus is considered a part of the woman until birth.
- **Islam:** The majority of Muslim thinkers through the ages have accepted the morality of abortion through either the fortieth day or the fourth month of pregnancy. It is believed that the soul is "breathed in" to the human embryo on the 40th day after fertilization and this is when life becomes sacred. All schools of thought in Islam accept that the fetus is accorded the status of a legal person only at later stages of its development, when perceptible form and voluntary movements appear. The thinkers make a distinction between a biological and a moral person, placing the stage of the moral person after the first trimester of pregnancy. However, Muslim jurists differ over whether "breathing-in" of the soul takes place in 40 or 120 days. Also, it is believed that there is no disease that does not have a cure, and therefore the cure should be sought. Medical progress is a strong value and stem cell research is acceptable due to its therapeutic benefits. According to the Muslim faith, the supernumerary embryos cannot be donated to other couples, as the lineage of the father must be respected. In this view, conducting research on supernumerary embryos that will no longer be used for in vitro fertilization purposes rather than destroying them is choosing the lesser of two evils.
- **Buddhism and Hinduism:** Buddhism prohibits harm to any sentient beings, which presents possible restrictions on embryo and animal research. Also, every action (e.g. killing) that treats human beings as non-humans is considered immoral. For Buddhists, however, not all areas of medical biotechnology lead to ethical problems: more advanced medical biotechnology (where research is conducted on molecular level) is likely to be acceptable.

Molecular human parts, such as cells, are hardly seen as human beings, thus their destruction in the process of research is not likely to be seen as morally wrong. Regarding the research on human stem cells, the intention is important.

If the intention of the research is to help and benefit humankind, such research is considered ethical. On the contrary, if the research is done just for the sake of making money out of it, it is considered as unethical. But since Buddhism places great importance on the principle of non-harming, it has grave reservations about any scientific technique or procedure that involves the destruction of life, whether human or animal. However, the principle of non-harming can be interpreted as prohibiting only the harm on sentient beings that is those who are able to feel.

Therefore, Buddhism could accept research on non-sentient embryos before the day 14 of their development. Hinduism,

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like Buddhism prohibits injuring sentient beings. The Hindu tradition rejects both animal research and the destruction of sentient embryos.

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TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

ANUPMA KHANNA*

On August 15, 1947, India achieved independence from over three hundred years of British rule. Leaders of free India avowed absolute faith in the institution of democracy—"a government of the people, for the people and by the people" in its constitution.

Sixty-seven years hence, India has given to the world a shining example of democratic experimentation. The country has accomplished rapid economic growth, sustained increase in agricultural and industrial production, wide expansion of the service sector, an enviable quality of human capital and impressive progress on human development indices.

India has a clear distinction of roles among the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. However, there are some pitfalls that these establishments have tripped over during these past years that have created a set of inter-related challenges for the country.

In May 2015 India held its 16th general election, held every five years, with an estimated 150 million first-time voters. The new government has brought with it a resurgent wave of hope of positive change. As the country turns a new page in its democratic consolidation, it is necessary to reflect upon present day challenges to have a better tomorrow.

To begin with, the mid-nineteenth century Whitehall model of civil service remains largely unchanged. The Indian Civil Service (ICS) during British India was a strictly repressive regime to prevent any people's uprising. Jawaharlal Lal Nehru famously remarked that someone had once defined the Indian Civil Service, "with which we are unfortunately still afflicted in this country, as neither Indian, nor civil, nor a service." ICS during the British Raj was arrogant and pro-Britain. Yet, at India's Independence the only real change was that of the title, as the ICS became the "Indian Administrative Service" (IAS), with the organization, the top people and its roles remaining the same. Since India's Independence, there have been about fifty

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Commissions and Committees at the Union Government level to look into administrative reforms as well as incremental reforms, but many of the recommendations involving basic changes have not been implemented. There exists a strong disconnect between IAS officers and the public marked by a “ruler-subject” relationship of power imbalance with little accountability. There is also a high degree of political interference in the working of civil servants.

A functioning judiciary is the great leveler in a democracy. But, the legal system in India today faces many challenges that have led to an alarmingly high amount of case pendency. In 2013, around 3.25 crore cases were pending in different courts in the country (1). Of these, only 2.25 lakhs were one- year old cases, 1 crore of cases were pending for three to five years and more than 2 crore of cases had been pending for more than five years. As they say, justice delayed is justice denied. The underperforming legal system is one of the biggest maladies of the Indian democracy today, as it leaves the victimized and the overlooked without a redress mechanism. Closely interlinked is India’s poor police-reform report card. The police lack transparency and public accountability. Misconduct, abuse of power and human rights’ violation are rampant, investigation is very tardy and people are seen to distrust the very force delegated to protect them.

On the political front, the country has been a cauldron of political vibrancy with a thriving multi-party system. However, 30 percent of the Members of Parliament and Members of Legislative Assemblies had criminal cases registered against them in 2013. Systemic corruption has caused big government scams, the rise of a parallel black economy and inequitable growth. Some samples of these are:

- India’s female literacy rate is 66 percent compared to 82 percent for males (3),
- 69 percent of India’s 1.2 billion population is rural, but there is a wide gap in India’s rural and urban literacy rates that are 69 percent and 85 percent respectively.
- The Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE), the main indicator of income in India, is a whopping 84 percent higher for urban India than the average rural MPCE.
- Female parliament members form only around 11 percent of the Lok Sabha against United Nations’ Millennium Development Goal of 50 percent (2). Last, but still important, a large section of mainstream media in India seems to be driven more by commercial interests than editorial objectivity and the ethos of public service. In many Indian media organizations today, it is not the editor who counts as much as the advertising manager and circulation manager or the people who look after television ratings and audience reactions. The public broadcasting service, PrasarBharti, is also not entirely free from governmental interference. The two main factors to which the current challenges of the Indian democracy may be attributed are a lack of transparency and accountability in the government. This deficiency has caused corruption and many disadvantaged and indigenous groups in India to be excluded from national development and governance processes, with few opportunities for redress. Responding, the Government has undertaken a series of transparency and accountability initiatives recently.

“Clean and inclusive governance” was Modi’s key election pitch that brought him a landslide victory last year. It is only when a government adopts transparency, i.e. openness in sharing with the public information about its actions, decisions and policies and assumes responsibility for these that people participate in the process of governance. People’s participation in governance creates an enabling environment wherein local needs and aspirations are met by government actions. Conjoined with this is government accountability, i.e. various branches of the government answering to the public. The developmental aspirations and egalitarian character of a democracy cannot be achieved without transparency and accountability. The most notable reform in this regard has been The Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005. Before this Act was enacted, there was no obligation upon the government to disclose information to the public. The RTI Act provides citizens access to information and the creation of a Central Information Commission and State Information Commissions. The RTI Act has been hailed as the master key to good governance in India by allowing the democratization of government knowledge and information. The fear

of being caught is gradually acting as a self-limiting measure for corrupt government officials. The RTI Act is also generating a grassroots revolution in India with even village children securing public services like water, electricity, roads, housing, teachers and doctors through RTI applications. The most marginalized are asking for information regarding the many government welfare schemes available to them. The RTI Act is definitely a milestone in India's democratic journey. Yet, the government must attend to implementation bottlenecks like low motivation and lack of training of Public Information Officers, inadequate infrastructure and capacity building.

Another important step is the institution of LokAyukta, or ombudsman, to inquire into allegations of corruption among politicians and government officials. The LokAyukta along with the Income Tax Department and the Anti Corruption Bureau has been given powers to investigate complaints. Nineteen states in India have enacted such measures to date. Frequently, LokAyuktas conducts raids upon complaints of disproportionate assets and malfunctioning government institutions as well as catches officers taking bribes red-handed. However, lack of uniformity in the powers, functioning and funding has engendered inter-state differences in the effectiveness of LokAyuktas.

e-Governance has been another big effort to create transparency and accountability for inclusive governance in India. The Government National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of 2006 aims to make all government services available to citizens through online access, thus, creating almost paperless departments. NeGP has done well in providing infrastructural and technical support. There have also been success stories like the MCA21 mission mode project that addressed challenges faced by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in providing services to corporate entities, e-filing of income tax returns and land record management systems. Poor inter-departmental co-ordination, a gap in governance process re-engineering, and no alignment with the broad socio-political principles mar the NeGP efforts.

The government has also passed the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act on January 1, 2014 to bring about transparency to the process of land acquisition; to set up factories, buildings, or infrastructural projects; to provide fair rehabilitation of even the least affected people, and to provide prior approval of local bodies and landowners.

Another effective initiative is the "social audit". The Central Government implements various socio-economic developmental schemes to autonomous agencies/societies. Since these agencies/societies are outside the traditional State Government administrative structure, accountability of such fiscal allocations has effectively remained outside the State legislative and administrative accountability loop (4). Also, given the large scale of these schemes it is not possible for a departmental survey to verify everything on the ground. Thus, social audits must be made popular in India as they ensure local stakeholder's role in the grassroots level implementation of public sector programs. However, social audits have limitations of informal and unprocessed monitoring and at times exist only on paper.

THE WAY FORWARD

The gap between legislation and implementation must be plugged deftly. Lack of training, poor infrastructure and low motivation are systemic problems that the government should tackle better.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission of India has submitted 15 reports to the government suggesting measures to achieve a proactive, responsive, accountable and efficient administration for the country. Most of these blueprints for revamping India's public administration system are lying in limbo. The government must speed up action taken on these reports. The government should also explore how it can officially adopt 360 degrees of feedback for elected members in local, state and central government positions as well as for employee promotion in the public sector.

Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choices are prepared to choose wisely. Though a majority of the Indian population depends upon government education, its quality is quite substandard. The Indian government must now shift its focus from enrolment to the learning level.

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India has over 200 million Internet users and this number is growing fast. Herein is an unprecedented opportunity. Internet based grassroots mobilization can bring the common man into the seat of government. The government should adopt crowdsourcing and data-driven decision making for inclusive governance and growth. For example, the administration can apply a bottom-up approach in preparing city budgets, asking local residents what they want to spend their money on before coming up with plans. Social tools and media on the Worldwide Web such as Twitter, Facebook, blogs and YouTube should be used as accountability apparatuses to achieve political results.

Non-governmental organizations should play important roles in mobilizing marginalized citizens.

There is also a need to revamp monitoring and evaluation systems to correct accountability deficits in the government. A very small example is installing closed circuit televisions and biometric equipment in all government schools. Technology has an essential role to play in better governance.

These are important social accountability tools that India should adopt earnestly: participatory budgeting, budget and aid transparency, participatory planning, campaign transparency, social audits, public expenditure tracking surveys, citizen report cards, citizen score-cards, budget analysis, citizen based vigilance committees, mandatory fulfillment of services mentioned in citizen charters, participatory research for evaluating outcomes and decentralizing the plan process to include even the poorest. Kerala is an Indian state where this experiment has been very successful and other states must take cues.

Grants are a primary tool used by a democratic government to achieve its objectives. The grant process in India in its current form is perforated with loopholes and has immense scope for improvement at all stages.

Legislation alone cannot put a stop to unethical behavior. There should be mandatory ethics training for all bureaucrats, politicians and government functionaries. Premier training institutes and reputed NGOs engaged in capacity development should be engaged in this task.

Not to forget, the media has the onus of furthering the reform agenda in every democracy by spreading awareness and acting as an independent watchdog. Indian media needs self-regulation to curb commercialization and denationalization of the news.

Above all, it is important to understand that successful reform is not an event but a continuous cycle of change that builds on its own successes. "For only in change and reform, paradoxically enough, is true security to be found" (5).

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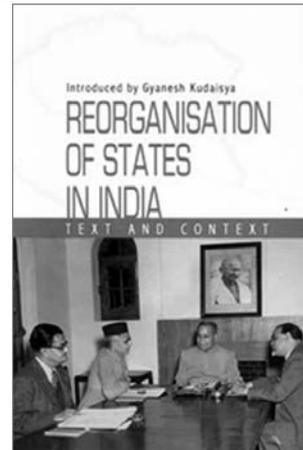
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PROVIDING INSIGHT INTO INDIAN FEDERALISM

DR.NAVED JAMAL*

To understand the effects of 'reorganisation of states in India', which were formed on the basis of language, on Indian politics one should know the reasons and process of the reorganisation. GyaneshKudaisya, in the introductory part of the book which is basically a text of the recommendations of States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) 1955, says that this commission is one of the four commissions of twentieth century which have left a decisive imprint upon India's political life. National Book Trust (NBT) published book provide important insights for those who interested in the study of federal India, state politics in India and in the history of contemporary India. The book is loaded with the concrete findings of the commission, its ideas, its method of working and way in which its recommendations were dealt with by the Government of India.

The introductory essay and introduction of the book examines the historical context in which the SRC came to be formed. As we know on 22nd December, 1953, the Prime Minister made a statement to the effect that a commission would be appointed to examine the objectivity and dispassionately the question of the



**REORGANISATION OF STATES IN INDIA:
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reorganisation of the states of Indian union. Writer says that it was constituted for the welfare of the people of each constituent unit as well as the nation as a whole is promoted. The introduction essay also looks at SRC's mandate and terms of reference, the individuals who made up the commission and the manner in which they worked. As we know that the three members SRC was constituted under the chairmanship of S. Fazal Ali with two other members H. N. Kunzru and K. M. Panikkar.

Apart from the introduction rest of the text (text of the recommendation of SRC) is divided in four parts. First part deals with the conditions and rationales in which the reorganisation has taken place. In this part the commission briefed about the existing structure of the states at the time of independence. The SRC opined that the it was the result of accident and the circumstances attending the growth of the British power in India and partly a by product of the historic process of the integration of former Indian states. It also said about another important feather of the states of the Indian union is that none of them represents a pre-existing sovereign unit. Giving one of the rationales of reorganisation, the SRC said that the movement for redistribution of British Indian provinces was a direct outcome of the phenomenal development of regional language in the nineteenth century which led to an emotional integration of different language groups and the development amongst them of a consciousness of being distinct cultural units. It also consider the formation of Andhra Pradesh as igniting point as after the death of PottiSriramulu the government of India announced to establish the state of Andhra Pradesh on language basis consisting Telugu-speaking areas. The SRC mentioned the J.V.P. committee's (earlier constituted for state reorganisation) view which did not consider the time (just after the independence) and the language basis reorganisation but differing to it SRC recommended the the state reorganisation.

Second part consists of the factors bearing on reorganisation like cost, language, culture and finance. Considering the unity and security of India The SRC gave a principle in its recommendation that it should be the first essential objective of any scheme of state reorganisation. The SRC beautifully opined that it will be unrealistic to disregard the patent fact that there are in India distinct cultural units; the unity of the country, therefore, should not be sought in terms of an imposed external units. It said that the unity of the country should be a fundamental unity of reorganising diversity of language, culture and tradition of Indian people. In this way The SRC had an eco in its recommendation of the principle of 'unity in diversity'. Legitimising the language base for the reorganisation the SRC gave a rational that the constituent states in a federal republic must each possess a minimum degree of homogeneity to ensure the emotional response which is necessary for the working of democratic institutions. It also said that the state of Indian union can achieve this internal cohesiveness only if they are constituent on a unilingual basis, because language being a vehicle for the communion of thought and feeling provide the most effective single bond for uniting the people; besides this language is also important for administrative and other purposes. It also discusses the debate on the issue of smaller states verses larger states.

The third part is related to proposal and recommendations of the SRC in which it had suggested to form seventeen states namely Madras, Kerala, Karnataka, Hyderabad, Andhra, Bombay, Vidarbha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, The Punjab, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, Manipur and Orissa.

Final part of the book consists administrative and allied matters of the SRC which discuss the safeguards for linguistic groups, integration of services and financial and other administrative measures. In the last chapter, 'The Unity of India', of this part the SRC has shown the importance of English language for the unity of the country. Concluding the recommendations the SRC says that it is the union of India that is the basis of our nationality. It is in that union that our hopes for the future are centred. The states are but the limbs must be healthy and strong. Any element of weakness in them should be eradicated, it is the strength and the stability of the union and its capacity to develop and evolve that should be the governing consideration of all changes in the country.

Scholars who want to look into the federal politics in India and history of making of states and state politics should include the text in their readings.

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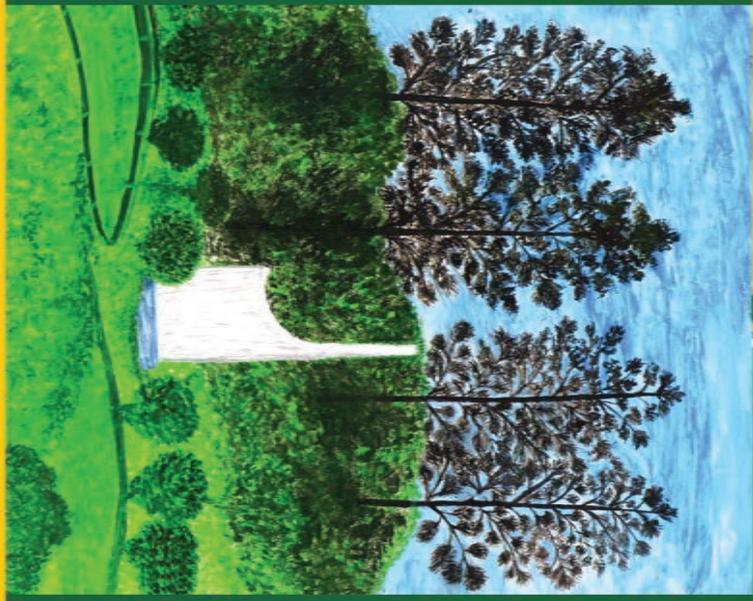
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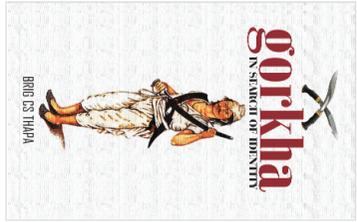
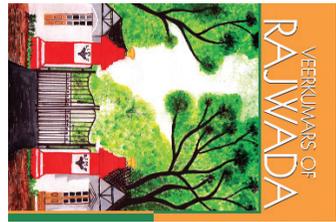
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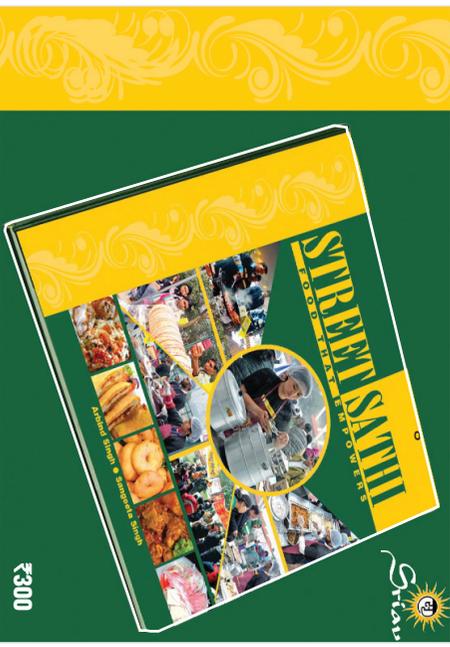
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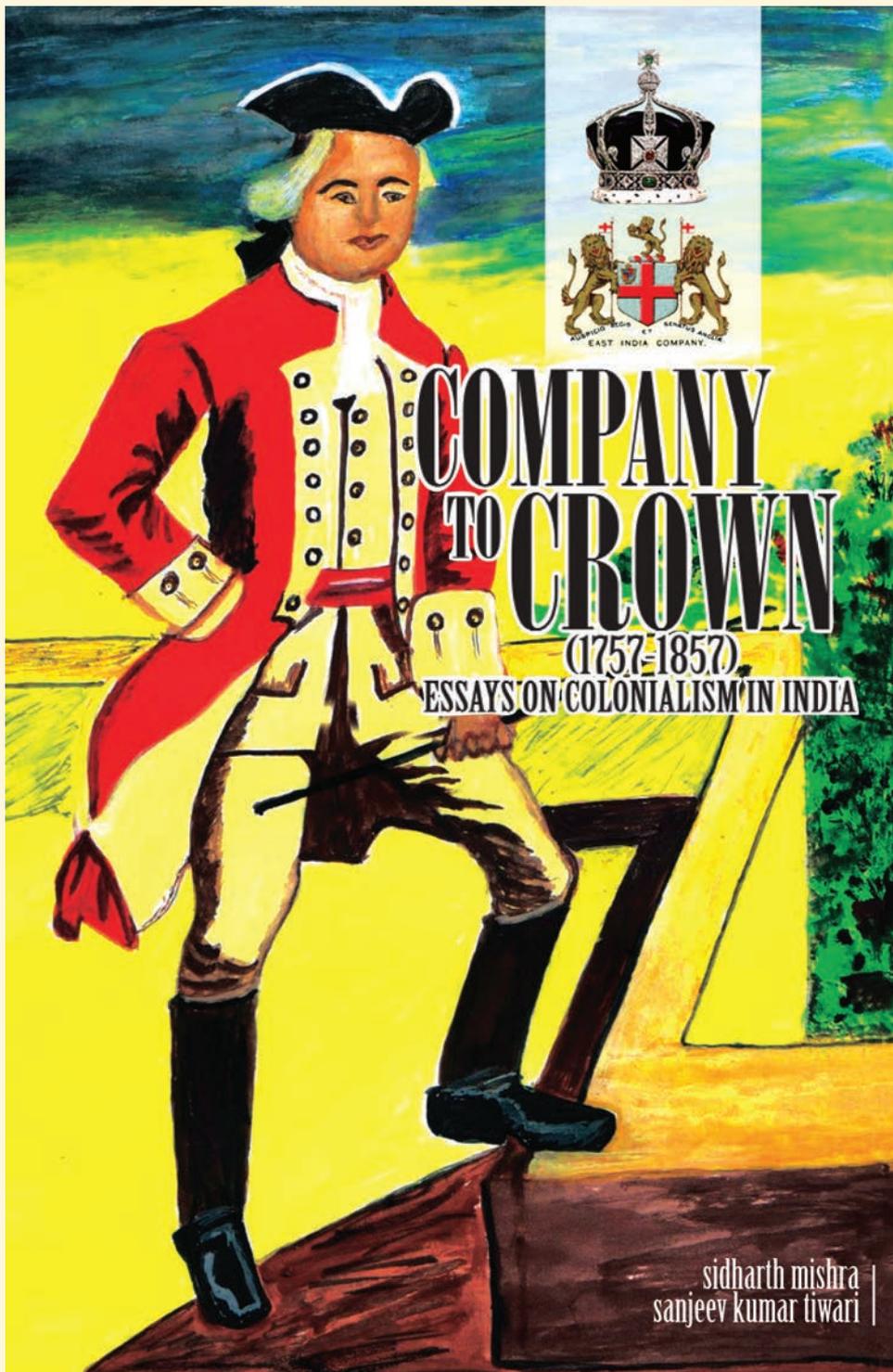


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