

The Inter - State Council reconstituted

Newsdesk: The Inter-State Council, which was abolished along with the Planning Commission three years ago, has been reconstituted. Chief ministers of all states and Union territories having legislative assemblies will be members of the council. Prime Minister will be its chairman and six Union ministers, Rajnath Singh (Home), Sushma Swaraj (External Affairs), Arun Jaitley (Finance), Nitin Gadkari (Road Transport), Thaawar Chand Gehlot (Social Justice and Empowerment) and Nirmala Sitharaman (Defence) will also be members of the reconstituted council. Eight other Union ministers have been made permanent invitees to the council. They are Suresh Prabhu (Commerce), Ramvilas Paswan (Food), Harsimrat Kaur Badal (Food Processing Industries), Jual Oram (Tribal Affairs), Prakash Javadekar (HRD), Dharmendra Pradhan (Petroleum) and Piyush Goyal (Railway).

Inter-State Council is a constitutional body. The Article 263 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of an Inter-State Council which is mandated to investigate and discuss subjects in which some or all of the states, or the Union and one or more of the states, have a common interest and also to inquire into and advise upon disputes which may arise between states.

In another gazette notification, the government reconstituted the standing committee of the Inter-State Council with the chairmanship of Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

Seven chief ministers and four Union ministers are members of the new standing committee of the council. The chief ministers are N Chandrababu Naidu (Andhra Pradesh), Amarinder Singh (Punjab), Raman Singh (Chhattisgarh), Manik Sarkar (Tripura), Naveen Patnaik (Odisha), Vasundhara Raje (Rajasthan) and Yogi Adityanath (Uttar Pradesh) whereas the Union ministers are Sushma Swaraj, Arun Jaitley, Nitin Gadkari and Thaawar Chand Gehlot.

The standing committee will have a consultation and recommend matters for consideration of the council, process all matters pertaining to Centre-state relations before they are taken up for consideration in the council.

It will also monitor the implementation of decisions taken on the recommendations of the council and consider any other matter referred to it by the council. The standing committee may, if necessary, invite experts and persons eminent in specific fields to have the benefit of their views while deliberating upon the related subjects.

It is hoped that management of

Promise by Ministers to Bengali speaking Linguistic Minorities of Bihar

In the Inaugural Session of ongoing Platinum Jubilee Celebration of Bengalee Association of Bihar Sri Khurshid Alam, Hon'ble Minister of Minorities Welfare and Sugar Cane, Sri Pramod Kumar, Hon'ble Minister Tourism and Md. Salam, Chairman, Food Commission promised all out effort to fulfill the two assurances given by the Chief Minister on 17th April 2016 at A. N. Sinha Institute to the Bengali speaking Linguistic Minorities of Bihar which have remained unimplemented till now .



Newsdesk- Hon'ble Khurshid Alam, Minorities Welfare and Sugar cane, Hon'ble Pramod Kumar, Tourism and Md. Salam, Chairman, Food Commission graced the occasion. Khurshid Alam is the Minister of the department concerning the interests of the Bengalees of Bihar as a linguistic minority community. He is also an MLA from West Champaran and



knows the Bengalee community, particularly the refugee settlements very well. Whereas Pramod Kumar is MLA from East Champaran; he also knows the Bengalee community of his area. Md. Salam was earlier the Chairman of Minorities Commission. Presently he is the Chairman of the Minorities cell of the ruling party in Bihar. To all of them, the president of the



Bengalee Association, Bihar Dr. (Capt.) D. K. Sinha placed the situation that even after passage of 19 months, the two assurances given by the Chief Minister on 17th April 2016 at A. N. Sinha Institute remain unimplemented. The Linguistic Minority Cell has not been opened in the Minorities Welfare Deptt. of Govt. of Bihar. And, the Bengalee students with 60%

marks in 10th and 12th are not being paid one-time reward of Rs. 10,000/- only.

All the dignitaries assured all possible help for earliest implementation of these assurances by the Chief Minister.

Song & dance performances in the evening of 11th Nov'17

Newsdesk – Colourful evening of 11th Nov'17 began with the team of Samastipur branch, elders and children, presenting a dance and music show on 'Barnoporichoy' by Vidyasagar and Sahaj Path' of Rabintra Nath Thakur. The show was directed by Jayati Das and Dr. Supriyo Mukherjee.

Sravani Saha Roy from Katihar presented some solo numbers accompanied on tabla by Manmatha Roy and on harmonium by Saurabh Das Gupta Then the children of Aghore Prakash Shishu Sadan presented some beautiful dance numbers on Nazrul geeti and other songs.

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AIBA Conference - Session on 12th Nov'17

Newsdesk – All India Bengalee Association had its four annual conferences at New Delhi (foundation conference), Baroda (2nd), Chennai (3rd) and Ahmadabad (4th). Now it held its 5th conference at Patna. This 5th conference was also the first after AIBA got its registration from the Registrar of Societies, New Delhi. It was also the conference in which the formal modalities for the affiliation to be given by AIBA to the organisations in various states were decided upon, viz. Rs. 5000.00 (five thousand) onetime for registration and Rs. 5000.00 (five thousand) as annual fee. In fact the Chennai organisation presented a cheque of Rs. 10,000/- (ten thousand) on the spot to the President of AIBA Tapan Sengupta.

Along with the National President of AIBA, Tapan Sengupta, New Delhi, and General Secretary, Malay Roy, Chennai (TN), delegates present from out of the state were D. Bhowmick, New Delhi, Tapan Kumar Das, Hyderabad (Telengana), Shyamal Kumar Guha, Gurgaon (Haryana), Prasenjit Dutta, Ahmedabad, Ajoy

group is a member of AIBA since the beginning. She was also a delegate to the conference. Chandan Sen, Balurghat (WB) was also present in the conference.

Nitish Biswas, General Secretary, Sarba Bharatiya Bangla Bhasha Mancha, Kolkata and Tanmay Beer, renowned writer and editor, Kolkata were present in the conference as guests.

From Bihar, the Vice President of AIBA, Dr. D. K. Sinha (President of BAB) along with General Secretary of BAB, Sunirmal Das, the Working President, Dr. B. B. Mandal, all the Zonal Vice Presidents, other office bearers and Executive Committee members were present.

Proceedings were conducted with much emotions and poetic fervour by Prasenjit Dutta of Ahmedabad. One of the oldest leaders of Bengalee Association, Bihar, ex-chairman of Bihar Bangla Academy and eminent litterateur from Bihar, Purnendu Mukhopadhyay presided over the conference.

At the outset, the General Secretary, Malay Roy, while

Bihar Bangla Sahitya Sammelan – 2017 and 5th Conference of All India Bengalee Association, the two-day event of 11th & 12th November 2017 was dedicated to the memory of founder-president of Bengalee Association, Bihar Prafulla Ranjan Das, the renowned barrister and brother of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das.

Kumar Chakraborty, Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Tapan Roy, Dhanbad (Jharkhand), Utpal Sengupta, Jaipur (Rajasthan) and Gopinath Bhar, Ludhiana (Punjab). Maitreyee Roy Coudhury, Kolkata (WB), who runs a all-woman folk musical group 'Ektara' and also does philanthropic work through this

presenting his report reminded everyone the main objectives of AIBA: (1) Campaign for Bengali language, (2) All India campaign for Bengali culture, (3) To extend helping-hand to resolve day-to-day problems in the lives of Bengalee communities, as – (i) Financial help to needy students, (ii) Scholarship for meritorious

Girija Devi

Born 8 May 1929
Varanasi, Banaras State, British Raj
Died 24 October 2017 (aged 88)
Kolkata, Western Bengal, Republic of India
Genres Hindustani classical music vocal
Years active 1949–2017



Photo Courtesy- thehindu.com

Cold rains, bitter tea and Girija Devi

About 4 decades back in the timeline. At that time Patna was more Magadhi and densely musical. Street-side Musical nights at the time of Durga puja were annual routines. While the brats and rogues held their swaying heads steady till ten or eleven in the evening till the orchestra etc. were on, they remained mostly out of the fence; the audience for the classical artists, flaunting invitation cards, filled up the pandal area by that time. The lesser people crowded outside as the kathak artist came on the stage and bowed to the audience.

This happened to be the scenario either in Children's Park (though never became a children's park), Veena Cinema, Govind Mitra Road, Patna Collegiate School, Nala Road and all other places. Venues changed with time – Gandhi Maidan, Sachivalay Maidan.... And then there was SBI, LHO at the time of Diwali.

By the time of Raag Lalit, prized vocalists or instrumentalists used to come. With their voices or notes on the instruments autumnal sun would rise in the east.

It was such a dawn when Girija Devi came on the stage at Patna Collegiate School. By the time she ended the rendering of a Khayal for the first, sky could be seen to be overcast. It started drizzling. And, lo, the tarpaulin roof on the stage began leaking! The organizers immediately rushed to the stage with umbrellas and requested her to come down. Audience shouted, "No, arrange more umbrellas, she will sing her fill today morning." Half of the audience was outside the fence, standing getting wet and cold with increasing drizzle. They shouted more, "You sing, Girijaji, we shall not move!" Girija Devi herself was in a mood to sing. She had just completed the Khayal. Now she must go for some Thumris, Kajris, Bhajans... and then some of the audience from the rain had already demanded 'Nanadiya re, jiyara naa laage mor'.

So, five umbrella-holders were 'punished' to stand for more than an hour, giving cover to Girija Devi, her microphone, the tabalchi and his microphone, the drone(tanpura)-player and her microphone and the singing went on.

Such was Girija Devi. And she is no more. We deeply feel lost, Girijaji!

EDITORIAL

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AIBA Conference ...

students, (iii) Help to students who cannot take home tuition, (iv) Arrangement of cheap stay for Bengalee people in tour and travel, (v) Help for Bengalee people arriving for medical treatment, (vi) Keeping communication with Bengalee institutions all over India, (vii) Making opportunities for jobs as per educational qualifications, (viii) Helping Bengalee businessmen, (ix) Extending cooperation in other areas as needed, (x) Extending legal help etc.

Lively discussion was there on the report in which delegates from each of the states participated. The guests also intervened in the discussions. Particularly the problems of Bengalees of some other states, e.g. Assam were discussed with concern. It was suggested that the tagline of AIBA, 'connecting people' will be more effective with a website.

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financial federalism, particularly after implementation of GST will be better with reconstitution of this Council as the all the Chief Ministers will be in a position to discuss among themselves the needs of their respective states and evolve recommendations to be placed in the Council.

In pictures - AIBA Conference - Session on 12th Nov' 17



(1) Inauguration (2) AIBA New Committee (3) (2) AIBA ECM in session (4) Audience (5) Audience (6) Tamilnadu giving Subs. (7) Hounoring Hyderabad (8) Host Prasenjit Dutta, Ahmedabad (9) Tanmay Bir, Guest, speaking (10) Nitish Biswas, Guest, speaking

In Memorium

Daphne Caruana Galizia



Newsdesk - Daphne Caruana Galizia, 53, a Maltese investigative journalist who exposed her nation's links to offshore tax havens through the leaked Panama Papers was killed on 16th October 2017.

She had just driven away from her home in Mosta, a large town on Malta the island-nation's main island, when the bomb went off, sending the vehicle's wreckage spiraling over a wall and into a field.

Caruana Galizia's death resulted from a "barbaric attack" that also amounted to an assault on freedom of expression, said the Prime Minister of Malta while he also described her as "was one of my harshest critics, on a political and personal level".

Caruana Galizia is survived by her husband and three sons. One son, Matthew, was on the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists team that won the Pulitzer Prize for its work on the Panama Papers scandal. Caruana Galizia for many years was a harsh critic of Malta's Labor party and government. More recently she had expanded her criticism to include the opposition Nationalist Party. Her slaying drew swift denunciations in the tiny EU nation.

"Daphne played a vitally important role in unearthing serious allegations of money laundering and corruption in Malta, including those involving senior figures in the Maltese government," said Sven Giegold, a Greens member in the European Parliament. Italian newsweekly L'Espresso, which has also written about alleged corruption linked to Malta, said the reporter's murder demonstrated that a well-documented expose' "is perceived as a danger by the powerful and by organized crime."

European Parliament President Antonio Tajani in a tweet called the development a "tragic example of a journalist who sacrificed her life to search for the truth."

We, the team of Behar Herald pay our tributes to this brave journalist.

(News details sourced with courtesy from: <http://time.com/4985188/malta-journalist-daphne-caruana-galizia-panama-papers-killed-car-bomb/>)

"What we require is to extend the benefit of education to the mass of the people. Let us establish a number of vernacular schools, let us prepare a series of vernacular class-books on useful and instructive subjects, let us raise a band of men who should be perfect masters of their own language, possess a considerable amount of useful information and be free from the prejudices of their country. To raise up such a useful class of men is the object I have proposed to myself..."

Bihar Bangla Sahitya Sammelan-2017

Newsdesk: Bihar Bangla Sahitya Sammelan - 2017 was first of its kind.

As the leaflet insertions in the local newspaper said the programme was mainly for those blessed with the wish (ichchhedhanya) to write in Bengali and not for those blessed with fame (swanamdhanya). On a purpose to rejuvenate the use of mother tongue Bengali as a medium of expression amongst the Bengalee community, adults and young who have been ignoring to do that due to social pressure, such an appeal was made.

Not that many young people came out. But what was achieved was not mean for the first year. The programme succeeded to evolve a very good poetess in Bandana Roy. Anjan Dasgupta from Bhagalpur mesmerized with his vibrant voice. Supti Sengupta, always a good poetess, read some of her new poems. Then Devdutta Lahiri's stories with satire. Altogether eleven persons read there creative pieces from the Mukta Mancha. Malay Roy from Chennai and Gopinath Bhar from Ludhiana, though came to attend the conference of AIBA,

came on the stage and expressed the inspiration they derived from such a programme and promised to arrange such Bangla Sahitya Sammelan and Mukta Mancha in their states from next year. Prof. Mamta Das Sharma and Prof. Purnendu Mukhopadhyay presided over the session. In the evening, Mohd. Salam, Chairman of the Food Commission (erstwhile Chairman. Minorities Commission) honoured the poets and writers with the 'Uttoriyo' of Bengalee Association, Bihar.



All India Bengalee Association 5th Annual Meet: 12th November, 2017, Patna Minutes of the Meeting

The 5th Annual Meet of All India Bengalee Association (AIBA) hosted by Bengalee Association, Patna Bihar on 12th November, 2017, at Raja Ram Mohan Seminary premises, Patna. Eighteen delegates from twelve states attended the Meeting. The Meet was represented by the host, Patna, Bihar (Capt Dr Dilip Sinha and Sunirmol Das), and other constituent states, Delhi (Tapan Sengupta, Bijoy Choudhury, Debasish Bhowmick and Dr Tapan Mukherjee), Baroda (Ashok Gupta), Chennai (Ajoy Chakraborty, Moloy Roy and Saumyo Dasgupta), Gurugram (Shyamal Guha), Ahmedabad (Kanak Das Adhikari and Prashant Das), Hyderabad (Tapan Das), Jaipur (Dr Subir Debnath and Ujjal Sengupta), Purnea, Bihar (Ashish Kumar Das), Kolkata (Maitrayee Ray Choudhury), and Bangla Bhasha Mancha (Nitish Biswas) and others. AIBA Annual General Body Meeting was preceded by Meeting of Ad hoc Committee. The Meeting was

chaired by Capt. Dilip Sinha, President Patna Bengal Association. Mr Sinha welcoming the delegates briefly mentioned the activity and future plan. AIBA Chairman, Shri Tapan Sengupta thanked the delegates for their participation. Mr Sengupta briefed about the inception of AIBA in 2015 at Delhi and purpose, aim/objectives of AIBA. He then informed the members that AIBA has been registered under Society Act in Delhi. After active deliberations, following decisions were proposed unanimously subject to AGM ratification: Bank Account of AIBA to be opened at any Nationalised Bank in Delhi. Any Two Office Bearers amongst Chairman, Convenor and Assistant Treasurer will operate the Bank Account. For Bank transaction purpose, signature of Assistant Treasurer is mandatory. Next AGM (two days) will be held in Delhi in June 2018. New Working Committee will

replace the existing Ad Hoc Committee. Each and every constituent (Bengal Associations and others from State) of AIBA will pay One time Admission-Registration fee of Rs 5,000/- (Rupees five thousands only). This amount will be deposited in the Bank as Corpus fund. Each and every constituent member (Bengal Associations and others from State) of AIBA will pay Annual Subscription fee of Rs 5,000/- (Rupees five thousands only). This may be revised after ratification of AGM in future. Each and every constituent member of AIBA will contact similar associations and bring them under the AIBA umbrella. The criteria of becoming member of AIBA among others will include Registered Body, doing social and other activities at least for the last three years. The Meeting ended with Vote of Thanks to the Chair. The Annual General Body Meeting of AIBA started after the Ad Hoc Committee Meeting. All outstation delegates and members of host Bengal Association attended the Meeting. The Meeting was chaired

Resolution on Mother-tongue proposed

Newsdesk - The General Secretary of Bengalee Association, Bihar proposed a resolution on mother tongue in the Delegate Session of AIBA. Conference decided to take it up for adaption in the 6th Conference to be held in June 2018 at Delhi. The Resolution read as follows:-

Resolution on Mother Tongue
 "This 5th Conference of All India Bengalee Association held at Ram Mohun Roy Seminary, Patna on 12th November 2017 is observing with grave concern that in implementing three-language or two-language formula in school syllabi all over the country teaching of mother tongue is not being given the needed importance. This is harming the formation of the mind of the new generations of the country exactly the same way a child's physique is harmed if deprived of mother's milk or breast milk. All over the world, the learned ones have spoken about the need to get education in mother tongue. And in this country today, what to talk of education in mother tongue, the teaching of mother tongue itself is being ignored.
 "This Conference unanimously appeals to the Central government and various State governments that first place be given to mother tongue as a language-paper in the school syllabi as per the essence of language formula, irrespective of it being two-language or three-language in any particular case.
 "Secondly, same rule should be followed for the linguistic minorities of each of the States.
 "Thirdly, as learning one's mother tongue is the right of every child, teaching mother tongue should be legally enforceable duty for the officers of the schools and education departments of the governments."

Jholawala Economics: Putting Fraternity Back Into Development

Public-spiritedness does not always require self-sacrifice or deep ethical thinking, though ethics, of course, can help.

- Jean Drèze

(An excerpt from Jean Drèze new book, Sense and Solidarity: Jholawala Economics for Everyone, published by Permanent Black in September 2017)

Word has it that most people are self-interested. At least that is what an unsuspecting reader of mainstream economic theory might conclude. The literature makes constant reference to "rational self-interest" as the prime motivation of economic agents. Of course, there is also a specialised literature on other possible motives, such as compassion and commitment. And even in the mainstream literature, a discerning economist would point out that the crucial assumption is not really that people are self-interested, but that they that have consistent "preferences", whatever these are – not necessarily selfish. But most of the time, these subtleties are ignored, and the assumption of rational self-interest is taken at face value. The assumption is so pervasive that rationality and self-interest are often conflated. As Nobel Laureate Robert Aumann puts it: "The assumption of rationality – that people act in their own best interests, given their information – underlies most of economic theory and indeed of economics as a whole."

This self-interest assumption, read literally, has no theoretical or empirical support of any sort. It is a kind of superstition. Anyone who has bothered to look around, or to read the world's history and literature, or even just to watch a few Bollywood films, would notice that people often act on the basis of other-regarding motives – love, kindness, solidarity, compassion, reciprocity, patriotism, public-spiritedness, and more. Some even make great sacrifices for their friends, families, community, or country. Further, it is not always clear where self-interest ends and concern for others begins. Human beings, by nature, are interested in each other's lives. Whether an active schoolteacher, a committed trade unionist, or a passionate artist are acting out of self-interest may be hard to tell – not only for others but even for themselves. It is difficult to imagine what a totally selfish person might look like (perhaps hard-core egoists don't have babies, so they are not around any more).

Even in the animal world, there are many instances of co-operative behaviour or even self-sacrifice, as Peter Kropotkin pointed out long ago in his wonderful book Mutual Aid. From ants to elephants, animals have learnt to behave in ways that further not only their own interest but also that of other members of the species. Ants work hard to build common nests, migratory birds fly in formation, elephants help the wounded – examples are aplenty.

These instincts are not based on any sort of ethical reasoning – they are the product of biological evolution. Human beings, however, do not have to wait for long-run evolution to develop habits of co-operation or public-spiritedness. Social norms can also change, more rapidly, through ethical reasoning, public discussion, value education, institutional innovation, and other means.

With this preamble, let me turn to a specific type of non-selfish motive: public-spiritedness, broadly defined as "a reasoned habit of consideration for the public interest". The use of the term "habit" acknowledges the fact that we often act on the basis of habits of thought or behaviour rather than case-by-case optimisation. For instance, many people are used to standing in a queue at the bus stand or railway counter, without getting into a cost-benefit analysis of the choice between joining or jumping the queue (based for instance on the length of the queue, the cost of missing the bus, the risk of being beaten up for jumping the queue, and so on). Of course, we may be able to justify these habits if need be – hence the term "reasoned habit", which also helps to distinguish public-spiritedness from the sort of instinctive co-operation behaviour that can be found in animals.

The term "public interest" may or may not be well defined, depending on the situation. The public interest of British citizens in Brexit is not clear – it is a matter of judgement. But the public interest of Indian and Pakistani citizens in avoiding nuclear war is reasonably clear. So is the public interest of humanity in avoiding self-destruction through global warming. The term "public" need not refer to the society at large – depending on the contexts, it could mean a smaller group such as a family or local community.

The importance of public-spiritedness in social life, and for human development, can be conveyed with two simple examples. The first is punctuality. When we go to (say) a meeting, there is a temptation to go a few minutes – say five minutes – late, to avoid the inconvenience of waiting for others. But then, others may also reason that way, so ten minutes may be safer. Extending the argument further, we may end up going very late indeed, if we stick to this self-interested reasoning. Formally, the situation has the basic structure of an "escalation game". Game theory tells us two important things about escalation games: first, things can go badly out of hand in such situations, and second, many

escalation games are such that there is no rational way to play. Both insights (already discussed in the section on "War and Peace") are consistent with real-life experience. Stories of trivial quarrels that got out of hand by escalation, sometimes ending with a murder, are reported almost every day in the newspapers. Even the First World War, as mentioned earlier, can be interpreted in those terms.

In these circumstances, it may be best (from a collective point of view) not to play the game at all. That is what punctuality is about. In societies with punctual habits, people refrain from embarking in this escalatory reasoning – they simply turn up on time, as a matter of social norm or habit of thought. For whatever reason, some societies have cultivated habits of punctuality, others have not. The contrast struck me a few years ago when I spent some time with a mixed team of Indian and Japanese visitors. The Japanese were obsessively punctual, the Indians blissfully oblivious of time. This is not to say that the Japanese are somehow less selfish than Indians, or that they have more evolved ethics. Punctuality is just a habit of thought they have cultivated.

This may seem like a trivial example. Punctuality may or may not matter much for development. R.K. Narayan, the celebrated writer, argued that it does not: "Personally speaking, I feel, under normal circumstances, most things can survive a little delay . . . In a country like ours, the preoccupation is with eternity, and little measures of time are hardly ever noticed." It is, however, not difficult to cite examples where a modicum of punctuality would make a big difference. For instance, punctuality can greatly facilitate collective action. In some parts of rural India, gram sabhas (village councils) have proved very difficult to convene because people have no sense of time: many turn up hours late, and by the time the laggards arrive, the early birds have lost patience and left the venue.

Turning to a more significant example, it is often forgotten that the entire edifice of electoral democracy rests on a simple act of public-spiritedness: voting. Every voter knows that his or her vote will not make any difference (except in the miraculous situation where there would be a "tie" without it). Yet a large proportion – typically a majority – of people do vote in democratic countries. Many people even vote in difficult circumstances, trekking long distances or queuing for hours in chilly weather. This is a telling example because many of the arguments that are often invoked to explain co-operation within the self-interest paradigm (e.g. repetition of the game, reputation effects, and so on) do not apply in this case – in the framework of game theory, this looks like a one-shot Prisoners' Dilemma. Even social norms are of little help: there is, typically, no social norm against abstention from voting. Plausible interpretations of the situation must clearly go beyond self-interest. One of them is that voting is a simple act of public-spiritedness.

As these examples illustrate, public-spiritedness does not always require self-sacrifice or deep ethical thinking. Ethics, of course, can help: someone who considers it unethical to make other people wait for no good reason is more likely to develop a habit of punctuality. But often we act – or can act – in a public-spirited way as a matter of habit. Punctuality, for one, is a habit that many people imbibe in the course of a healthy upbringing or social life. If called to justify this habit, they may invoke ethical principles, but some may give other reasons, like "I hate being late".

Someone who acts out of habit may sound less than perfectly rational, because he or she misses the opportunity to "optimise" (make the best of a situation) on a case by case basis. This argument, however, is deceptive. One of the main insights of game theory is that, in situations where people's decisions are interdependent, optimisation may not be well defined (this point has already been illustrated with reference to escalation games). In these situations, it often helps to fall back on some sort of rule of thumb or "bounded rationality". A related escape route (proposed by Robert Aumann) is "rule rationality" – settling for a rule of behaviour that serves us well in general, even if it may not be the best thing to do in every single case. There is, thus, nothing wrong in acting on the basis of habits of thought.

All this may sound like hair-splitting, but I believe that it has an important bearing on the scope for cultivating public-spiritedness in social life. If public-spiritedness required strong ethical commitments, we might be sceptical of the possibility of it spreading beyond a minority of principled individuals. On the other hand, if it takes the form of sensible habits of thought that can be rationalised (if need be) with light-touch ethical reasoning, public-spiritedness may have much more of a future. This is not a small matter – it could help not only to avoid many day-to-day tragedies (from vandalism to violence) but also to build social institutions that reconcile liberty and equality. Dr Ambedkar put it very well in his stirring speech to the Constituent Assembly on 25 November 1949: "Without equality, liberty would produce the supremacy of the few over the many. Equality without liberty would kill individual

initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality would not become a natural course of thing." Public-spiritedness is not quite fraternity (alias solidarity), but it is a step in that direction at least.

Note

This is an unpublished paper. I have written elsewhere on related matters, including the reasons why habits of thought are important in social life.

I have quoted Aumann on the pervasive nature of the self-interest assumption in economics, but similar statements can be found all over the economic literature, starting at least as early as 1881 when F.Y. Edgeworth, one of the founders of modern economics, stated in his Mathematical Psychics that "the first principle of Economics is that every agent is actuated only by self-interest". The self-interest assumption, of course, has its critics, notably Amartya Sen. One branch of mainstream economics does depart in a fundamental way from the rational self-interest paradigm –

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<https://thewire.in/180134/public-spiritedness-way-putting-fraternity-back-development/>

From page-2

All India Bengalee ...

by AIBA Chairman, Shri Tapan Sengupta. The Meeting started with customary lighting the lamp, followed by welcome song rendered by Ms Maitrayee Ray Choudhury. Welcoming the participants, Mr Sengupta emphasised on the Aims and objectives of AIBA. He mentioned that AIBA has been created mainly for the purpose of dissemination of Bangla; to bring all Bangla Associations under one umbrella, interaction with fellow Associations, exchange of Bangla literary, cultural and other activities, to provide assistance to fellow Associations, and others. Captain DilipSinha, AIBA Vice Chairman Ashok Gupta, AIBA Convenor Moloy Roy, Sarva Bharat Bangla BhashaParishad President NiteshBiswas welcoming the participants shared their views. Host Bihar Bengal Association Patna, felicitated the outstation delegates and members of various Bengalee Associations. First of all delegates and members unanimously ratified and adopted all proposal of AIBA Ad Hoc Committee taken on 12th November, 2017. Delegates representing their states spoke their mind about AIBA and its future activities:

Delegate from Bengali Association Hyderabad, Tapan Das representing a 76 years old organisation briefly mentioned the annual activities. These included among others Health awareness camp, Medical tourism, Visits to old age homes for providing social services, maintaining a Guest House. Future plan includes construction of Old age Home. Mr Das appreciating the AIBA concept, promised to work wholeheartedly.

Bengal Association Chennai representative, Ajay Choudhury representing a 89 years old organisation, informed about their CSR activities, including Distribution of sarees to weaker section, Eye donation camps in association with Shankar Netralaya, arranging discount on pathological tests and treatments as a Health partner of SRM Institute of Medical Sciences. Mr Choudhury expressed satisfaction of AIBA progress.

Representing Ektra from Kolkata, Ms Maitrayee Ray Choudhury briefly shared their various social activities which included empowerment of women folk.

Representing Bengal Association Ahmedabad, Prashant Das highly appreciated the progress of AIBA in a very short span of time. Mr Das promised full support to AIBA.

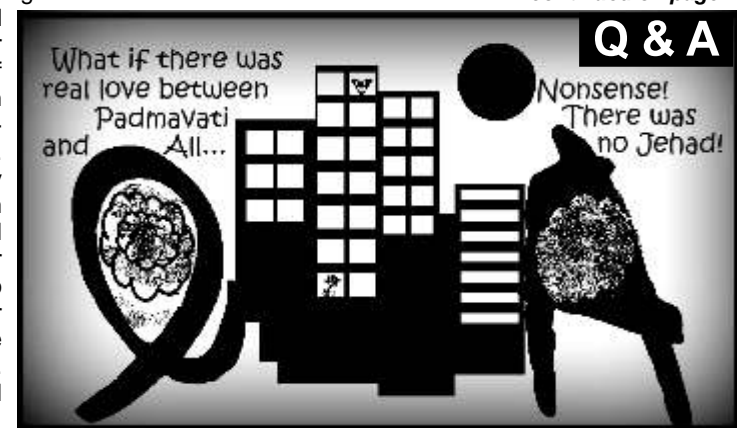
Bengal Association Jaipur representative, Dr SubirDebnath briefly mentioned their activities. He shared that to uphold the Bangla culture away from their mother state, they are emphasising on Bangla culture amongst populace of Jaipur. Some of the steps include inculcating Bangla language amongst children, no audition is taken for songs, recitation, etc for their participation in various cultural programmes. Bangla dress code has been strictly followed in their functions.

Shyamal Guha representing Gurugram Bengal Association spoke about various activities being carried out in tune with AIBA motto of Bangla Prochar and Prosar.

Speaking on behalf of Bihar Bengal Association Patna, Capt (Dr) DilipSinha appreciated the concept of AIBA and congratulated for its progress, particularly Registration of AIBA, which he felt was a difficult and cumbersome step. Dr Sinha informed the gathering about their success in making Bangla, second official language of Bihar, able to get the vacancies of Bangla teachers filled, lying vacant for years and inclusion of Bangla syllabus in CBSE. Dr Sinha also reminding the audience about the problems faced by Bengalese of Assam and Telengana suggested working for them in future.

After sumptuous lunch, the meeting started with presentation by Tapan Roy of Jharkhand Bengalee Samiti, Jharkhand. Mr

continued on page-4



On the Birth Centenary of Great Indian Poet

Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh

[On his Birth Centenary year, we remember Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, the great Indian poet in Hindi, and pay tributes to him by republishing the article by Nikhil Govind published three years back in The Hindu. We also reproduce the translation of a section of his poem 'Brahmarakshas' translated by Nikhil Govind]

Stars scatter the sky's edge...

- Nikhil Govind

Literary Review

On the 50th death anniversary of Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, a look at the poet's difficult life and enduring poetry.

It is arguable that the oeuvre of Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh (1917-1964) will outlast other 20th century Hindi poets. Though born in a Maharashtrian family, Muktibodh wrote almost entirely in Hindi. He began to publish when young, and received acclaim when he published in the germinal first edition of Tar Saptak(Upper Octave), brought out in 1943, by Hindi novelist and poet Agyeya.

Despite this initial success, Muktibodh lived a difficult, painful life that ended with a prolonged illness. His difficulty with authority led to some of his books being banned. He led a wandering life in small-town provincial India, trying to make ends meet by taking up a school-teaching job here or writing a textbook there. Though known within Hindi literary circles, his financial troubles never abated.

The Tar Saptak collection definitively broke with the idiom of an earlier generation of Hindi poets, the famous Chayavadi (roughly translated as poets of mystery and shadow), a group that included names like Prasad, Nirala, Pant, and Mahadevi Varma. To generalise, the Chayavadi generation wished to revive many of the myths of the Sanskrit tradition, in an idiom made modern by Tagore, and English Romanticism. The Chayavadis had themselves broken from the earlier dominant north Indian model of Braj, and begun to write in what had, by the first decade of the 20th century, become modern standard Hindi. In Muktibodh's view, however, the Sanskrit tradition was not available for such direct upgrade. No more could one meaningfully attempt to write an ancient figure or myth into contemporary coherence — as Prasad tried in his long poem 'Kamayani', or as Nirala tried in 'Ram ki Shakti Puja'.

It is perhaps the allure of Muktibodh that he did not entirely dismiss the Sanskrit tradition. Figures from the tradition do careen across the lunar, blasted urbanscape of the present. One of his most famous, enduring and oft-cited poems is 'Brahmarakshas', a class of demons mentioned in the Kathasaritsagara and the Panchatantra. Muktibodh's brahmarakshas is a wanderer found at the edge of a city, an erudite man who cannot manage his wealth of knowledge, and hence mutters senselessly, even as the "stars scatter the sky's edge/from uncountable decimals/come decimal-drops on all sides:/in the transposed spreading field/ beaten, he comes to use/ and lies spread..."

Muktibodh did not live to see his prescience, regarding the destruction of individuality by governmental authoritarianism, rewarded by their actual unspooling in history. More than any event, the Emergency led to a revival of interest in his work, and the bleak, talismanic images in his works — of the claw-fingered brahmarakshas stalking the street at night — will remain in our unconscious, awaiting resurrection every time authoritarianism crushes distinctive poetic individuality.

Published on: October 04, 2014, Updated: May 23, 2016

Courtesy: <http://www.thehindu.com/books/literary-review/a-look-at-poet-gajanan-madhav-muktibodh-poetry-and-life/article6470975.ece>

That side of the city near the ruins
an abandoned, empty well
and within, in cold darkness
in waters deep within
amid deep-sunken stairs
in the old stale puddle...
I can not follow these seeming-foundations
these depths

surrounding that well, entangled
silently stood the fig trees
in those hang the nests of the night bird
abandoned,
brown, round

The smells of a hundred past pieties
green, jungly, raw
swim in the air and become the weighted doubt
of some unknown eminence
that rattles the heart

on the railings of the well, beguiling, green
elbows resting
sits the white flower-star tree

and nearby,
a flashing redflowered cluster
my kanher
calling me to that edge of danger
where the black mouth of the well
glances upward toward the sky's void

in the void of the well's thick darkness
sits the brahmarakshas
where from within rises echo after echo
like the mutterings of the insane
speculations,
impurity.

to wash away, at every moment
the shadow of — impurity
day and night, to make clean—
brahmarakshas, scouring his body
with the claws of his hand, again
and again hands chest mouth
still it remains...
still it remains

and...from the lips
wondrous strotas, mantras
fevered, chaste sanskrit curses,
crevices on the forehead weave
glistening strands of thought
in a continuous bathing's insane flow
-- life's sympathy blots
but, in the well's deep inner wall
diagonal sun-rays fall and
motes rise, when
light surfaces
he thinks the sun has bowed and saluted him.

when moonlight forgets its way
and its rays bounce off the walls
he thinks it adores him as the
Venerable knower.

body and mind pierced, yet
he rejoices, feeling the sky
too has humbly accepted.
and with a twofold, frightening virility
his understanding mind ranges
through the folk-tales of Sumar-Babylonia,

Brahmarakshas

- Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh

mellifluent Vedic hymns
today's chands, mantras, theorems, theories
of Marx Engels Russel Toynbee Heidegger Spengler Sartre
even Gandhi

everyone's proof afresh commented on —
all this as he bathes in the well's dense greenness.

...this thundering, echoing, moving
darkness-- bringing up phonemes
obscure words revolving anew
each word cutting up its resonance
each form battling its reflection
maimed
becoming
the echo that wars with its echo

upon the well's rails
beguiling green elbows rest, and the
white flower-stars listen
-- to these echoes
the delicate fruits of the gooseberry tree
listen, the ancient fig
listens, listen too to the tragedy that meanders
in this insane allegory
-- all barred within this old well

(A section of the long poem titled 'Brahmarakshas')

<http://nikhil-govind.blogspot.in/2009/11/translation-of-section-of-muktibodhs.html>

From page-3

All India Bengalee ...

Roy congratulating AIBA for its initiative for Probashi Bengalimentioned about various activities and steps taken in this direction.

From Bahir Banga Kolkata, Tanmoy Bir reminded the audience about the history of Bengali Association in India. Mr Roy emphasised on documentation of old texts, Newspapers, Records carrying history and activities of Bengali Association movement in India. Mr Roy on behalf of Bahir Banga Kolkata conveyed best wishes to AIBA.

Mr Purnendu Mukherjee also spoke and conveyed best wishes to AIBA.

Representing Bengal Association Delhi, Tapan Sengupta expressed satisfaction on overhaul activities and progress of AIBA. Mr Sengupta suggested that every constituent Member State should put AIBA logo along with their respective organisation Logo on their Letter head. He requested members to celebrate 2018-19 as VidyasagarBicentennial year on the occasion of 200th Birth Centenary of Vidyasagar. Mr Sengupta also exhorted members to celebrate 3rd April as AIBA ProthistaDibas.

Mr Sunirmal Das representing Bihar Bengal Association proposed Vote of Thanks.



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Samastipur Br. Cultural Unit



Sravani Saha Roy from Katihar

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