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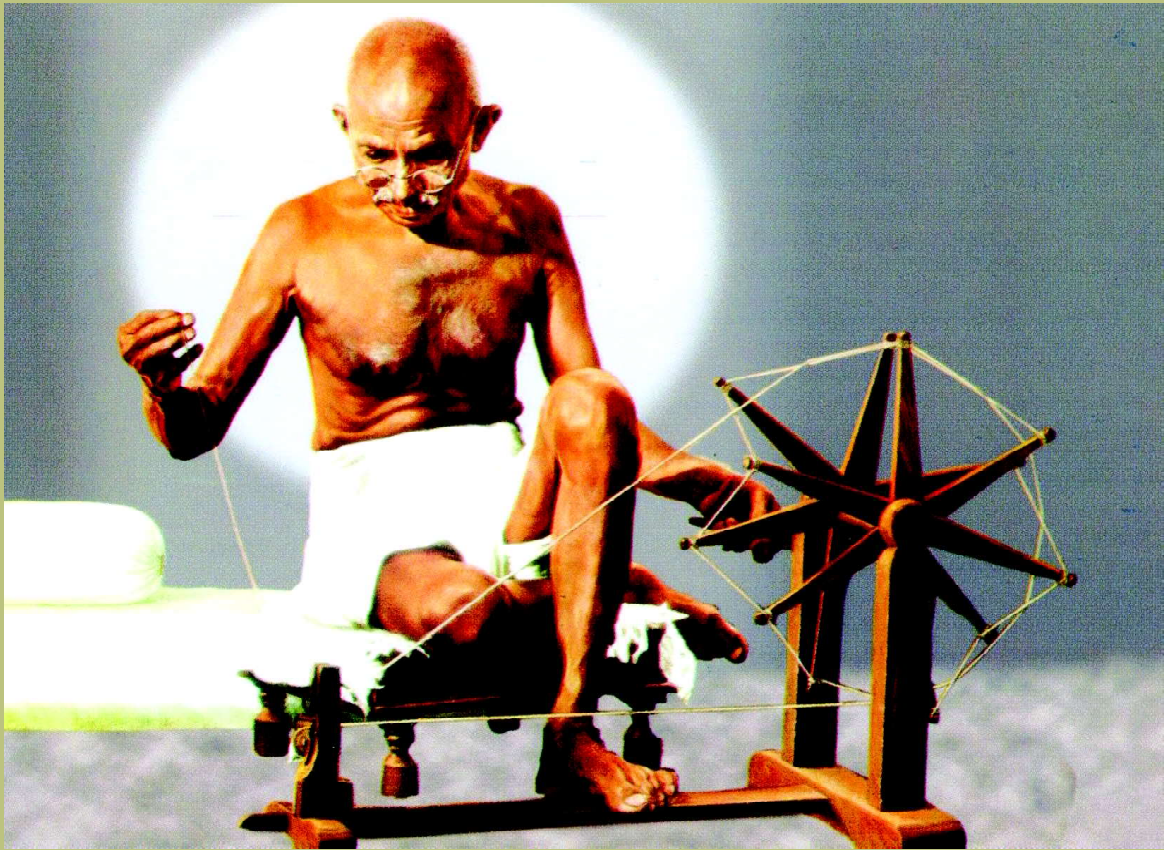
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BIRTHDAY TRIBUTES

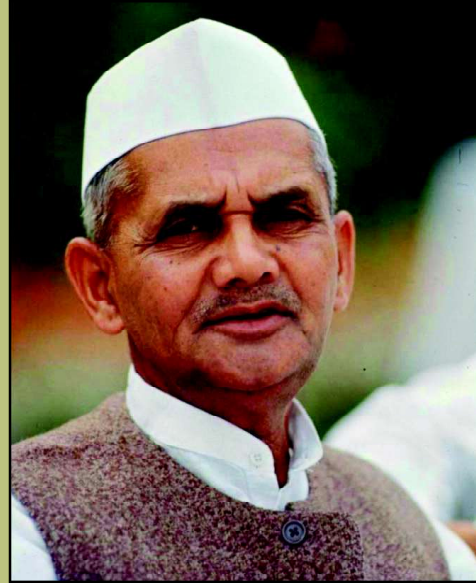


Mahatma Gandhi
2.10.1869 - 30.01.1948

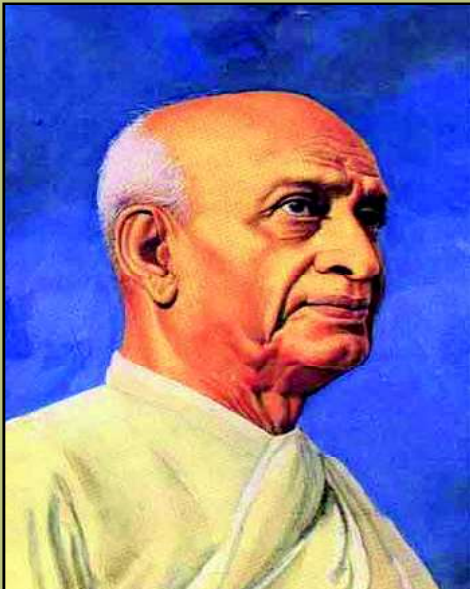
BIRTHDAY TRIBUTES



Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das
09.10.1877 - 17.06.1928



Lal Bahadur Shastri
02.10.1904 - 11.01.1966



Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
31.10.1875 - 15.12.1950



Jaya Prakash Narayan
11.10.1902 - 08.10.1979

TRIBUTES TO MARTYR



Baji Rout
(Shot dead on 11.10.1938)



Thousands of devotees lighting lamps on the occasion of Deepavali in front of Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik felicitating the families of Puri for voluntarily giving away their land for the security and beautification of Jagannath Temple in Puri.

Editor's Note



**AUM Asato Maa Sad-Gamaya |
Tamaso Maa Jyotir-Gamaya |
Mrutyor-Maa Amrutam Gamaya |
AUM Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||**

**"O Lord ! Keep me not in the Phenomenal World of Unreality, but
make me go towards the Reality of Eternal Self,**

**Keep me not in the Ignorant State of Darkness, but make me go
towards the Light of Spiritual Knowledge,**

**Keep me not in the World of Mortality, but make me go towards the
World of Immortality of Self-Realization."**

Devan Koley

Editor, Odisha Review



Mahisasuramarddini in Odishan Iconography

Sanjaya Kumar Mahapatra

One of the most impressive and formidable Goddess of the Hindu Pantheon is Mahisasuramarddini. A popular form of Durga, Mahisasuramarddini plays a vital role not only in the spiritual life, but also in the socio-religious life of the Odishan people from the earliest time to the present day. The primary function of the deity is to combat demons who threaten the stability of the cosmos. In this role She is represented as a great battle queen with many arms each of which wields a weapon. She rides a fierce lion and is described as irresistible in battle. The demon She is most famous for killing is Mahisasura, the buffalo-demon. Her most popular epithet is Mahisasuramarddini, the slayer of Mahisasura and Her most common iconographic representation shows Her killing the demon.

During the 8th - 9th centuries, possibly due to the influence of the Bhaumakara rulers, the image of Mahisasuramarddini replaces that of Parvati as the Parsva-devata in the north raha

niche of many Saiva temples at Bhubaneswar and else where in Orissa. Although earlier images of this form of the goddess are known they were not enshrined in the raha niche but rather placed in the niches of the subsidiary pagas or in caitya-

medallions on the *gandi*. In the Somavamsi period, with new rulers from the upper Mahanadi valley assuming power, Parvati is returned as the parsva-devata at Bhubaneswar and most other sites throughout Orissa. There are in fact no surviving images of Mahisasuramarddini as a Parsva devata at Bhubaneswar in the post-Bhauma temples. Her



image virtually disappears from the decorative programme at Bhubaneswar except for an image on the Lingaraj, and there are few surviving detached images from independent shrines, outside of Bhubaneswar, on the other hand, the images of Mahisasuramarddini continues to be popular though only in a few cases She is enshrined as a *parsva-devata*. For the most part



Her image was housed in a special shrine generally on the north side of the compound. In some cases Her images are now found within the sanctum. Next to the linga, or on latter Vaisnava Temples, next to Vishnu in a few cases as at Tangi or Garudipancana, She is housed in the niche of a subsidiary *paga* though Her image is quite small and occupies a relative unimportant position in the overall iconographic programme of the temple.

Iconographically these Orissan images do not appear to conform exactly to any specific canonical text in respect to the weapons or attributes wielded by the goddess in Her fight against the buffalo demon. In general the number of arms of Durga varies from two to twenty with early images having the fewer arms and the number of arms does not increase uniformly. Moreover Mahisasuramarddini images of Orissa can be placed into three modes or groups based on the shape and form of the buffalo-demon. In group (1) the demon is represented completely in animal form. In group (2) the demon is represented with human body and a buffalo head, in group (3) it is depicted in human form issuing from the decapitated carcass of the buffalo. The second mode was most popular during the early phase whereas the third mode became popular during the 8th-10th centuries outside of Bhubaneswar, becomes standard mode for most later images. The first mode is extremely rare but examples appear sporadically on both early and later temples, in rare cases two or more modes may be found on the same temple, as on the Parsurameswar which has both mode (1) and mode (2) or on Durga temple at Baideswar where all three modes are found. By the 10th century mode (2) disappears completely in Orissa though images can be found elsewhere in India, including an example in the Indian Museum at Calcutta dated to the 11th Century.

It is evidenced from the various research journals and texts that in Orissa as many as 200 images of Mahisasuramarddini from two-armed variety to 20 armed one flourished between 4th century A.D. and 15th century A.D. These images while indicating the varieties signify the efflorescence of the cult in Orissa and development of plastic art over the ages.

Viraja at Jajpur, the earliest Sakta Shrine in Orissa is a two armed Durga engaged in killing the buffalo demon. Riding on a lion She holds a spear (Sula) in Her right hand which pierces the body of the buffalo and pulls its tail in Her left hand. Her right foot presses the head of the animal. The date of the image is assignable to pre-Gupta or Gupta period. R.P.Chanda indicates the two armed Durga appears to me to be the earliest form of the goddess conceived by her votaries and Viraja represents the earliest phase of the cult of the goddess. Next in order of chronology may be placed an image of four-armed variety at Jahambira in the district of Keonjhar. She holds a sword in Her upper right hand, a shield in the left upper arm, the right fore arm piercing the trident on the neck of the buffalo-headed demon while the left fore arm presses the demon on his head. Here the demon is half animal and half human with a sword in one of his hands. Lion is absent here. This image may be placed to the post-Gupta period. Another two-armed image of the same period is noticed at Someswar in the district of Puri.

There are several four-armed Durga sculptures of Ganga period (1078 A.D.-1435 A.D.) which give iconographic features different from the earlier ones. The image enshrined in the Durga temple at Motia in Prachi valley holds conch shell, disc in upper two arms while the lower two ones are engaged in piercing the trident



on the neck of Mahisasuramarddini who is shown fighting with shields and with her left leg in the decapitated body of the buffalo. The ferocious lion is seen pouncing upon the demon. Another image of this type is noticed in a house attached to Gangaswari temple at Bayalisbati in Puri district. She is identical to Durga image of Motia except that She holds a bell in places of disc in the upper hand.

Six-armed images are rare in Orissa. Out of seven images of this variety, three of which are at Bhubaneswar and the rest in Prachi valley. One such sculpture is peculiar in the sense that it presses the mouth of the buffalo-headed demon with one hand while other five holding sword, arrow, bow, shield and trident. In three sculptures of this group the demons are buffalo-headed with human body and others are fully developed human form.

Eight-armed and ten-armed variety of the goddess are very common in Orissa. Of the numerous images I can cite here only a few representative ones in good state of preservation. This variety of the goddess was made extremely popular during the rule of Bhaumakaras, who patronized Tantric Buddhism and Tantric Saktism. Most of the Shakta temples and shrines are assignable to this epoch. Two remarkable images of eight-armed variety are noticed in Vaital and Shisireswar temples. Here Goddess is shown as pressing down the head of the demon (a buffalo-headed human figure) with Her left fore arm, thrusting a trident through his body with the right fore arm. The weapon of war in Her other arms are sword and shield, the bow and arrow, the thunderbolt and snake. The mount of goddess bites a hand of the demon. This type of sculpture is placed to about 7th-8th century A.D.

Another image of this variety is the presiding goddess of Seragad Durga Temple,

placed in the elegantly bejewelled pedestal. Devi here conveniently catches hold the demon with the lowest left hand and with a *trisula* held in the lower most right pierces the latter head. The remaining three left hands respectively carry a serpent, bow and a shield while attributes in Her right hands are sword, arrow and while attributes in Her right pierces the latter head. The remaining three left hand respectively carry a serpent, bow and a shield while attributes in her right hands are sword, arrow and wheel. Stylistically the image may be placed to 10th or 11th century AD. Another image of this variety is also seen in the same temple. The presiding goddess in the Durga temple at Baideswar, of the same variety, with Her right foot on Her vahan the lion, and the left foot on chopped head of the animal. Of Her right hands the natural one pierces the head of the demon who springs forth from the decapitated body with Her Trisula, next hand holds a Chakra' the third brings out arrow from quiver and the upper most holds above Her head a sword, the left natural hand firmly catches the chins of the demon, the next holds a snake which encircles the demon's body, third a shield and fourth a bow, two other images of this class are seen in the northern and southern niches of the temple. These may be placed to 8th century A.D.

Dasabhuja Mahisasuramarddini was even more common and more popular in Orissa. Availability of this variety of image in different parts of Orissa either as presiding deities or as side deities indicates its wide distribution. She in this form is depicted as the war-goddess with full energy produced from the flames of the gods and bearing the *ayudhas* of the gods such as Shiva's trident, Vishnu's disc, Varuna's conch, Agni's darts, Yama's iron-rod, Vayu's bow, Surya's arrow, Indra's thunderbolt, Kuvera's mace and various weapons of other gods. Of the numerous



Dasabhuja Mahisamarddini images mention may be made of the beautiful ones found at Pitapura, Lataharan, Niali, Jageswar on Prachi valley, in Bhattarika temple near Baramba, Kanak Durga near Remuna at Khiching, Padhuan near Basudevapur at Bhubaneswar and at many other places. All the images of this variety are seen fighting vigorously with the demon who emerges out of the decapitated trunk of the buffalo. Standing in *pratyaldha* pose She is planting Her right leg on the back of the mount lion and pressing the buffalo with Her leg. She has in Her hands, the trisula, khetaka, tanka, tira, khadga (in right hands) and dhanu, parasu, ankusa, nagapasa and such mudra.

Twelve-armed Mahisasuramarddhini sculptures are not many in Odisha. However two such images are indicated by the scholars one in a new temple on the eastern edge of Bindusarovara tank at Bhubaneswar known as Dwarabasini and other known as Dakeswari near Chandrabali in the district of Balasore. In this variety ball and pasa are added to the other Ayudhas. Two eighteen armed Mahisasuramarddini images are noticed, one such image is found as a presiding deity in the Kapileswar Temple of Dia near Nirakarpur and the other as the presiding goddess in Prachi valley. An image of 20 armed Mahisasuramarddini from Salebhata in the district of Balangir is the only one representing this variety.

Thus the images of Mahisasuramarddini in Orissa can broadly be classified into three groups with regard to the form of buffalo-demon.

In the first category the demon appears in buffalo form in different poses. In some cases the buffalo is squeezed by the throat or lifted by the tail or by the snout or caught by a long noose. In the second category the demon has buffalo head and human body. Generally in this form the demon is shown kneeling attitude combating with his weapons. In the fourth variety the demon is shown in human form emerging out of the severed neck of the buffalo. In this shape the demon is pressed on the chest by the hand or the foot or a trident is plunged into his chest.

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Divine Mother as Described in Devi Mahatmya

Durga Madhab Dash

Salutations to Devi Mother. She exists in all beings as the symbol of intelligence, mercy and beauty. She is Durga. She is Laxmi. She is also Saraswati. But in spiritual expositions, She is manifested as one Supreme Divine Mother although She is expressed through different names. The whole universe is the cosmic play of Her three Gunas namely the Satwa, the Raja and the Tama. She is the generator of illusion i.e. Maya. No one can get success in life without Her divine grace. She is the primal energy. She has two aspects of Her existence namely-the Peaceful and the Terrible.

The worship of Divine Mother dates back to the early days of human civilization. As time passed by, the concept of patriarchal order gained supremacy in the process of human relationship despite matriarchal order of adoration. These two concepts of adoration became simultaneously prevalent in the religious life of people over the period of time. Hence the concepts of both motherhood and fatherhood of

god came to be gradually developed in the society and people began to adore the divine entity in both the female and the male forms like Sita and Rama, Laxmi and Narayan, Radha and Krishna and so on. Thus, in the conscious relationship with the Providence, God was identified as the creator of the universe with the Divine Mother as the supreme energy shorn of which creation of the universe was not possible. This Tatwa is elucidated in Sakta philosophy in greater details. The Divine Mother is thus adored as the creative aspect of the Absolute.



Devi Mata is symbolized as the Cosmic Energy. The five elements of creation namely the space, the air, the fire, the weather, the sky and the earth known as Panchabhuta are Her external manifestations. Factors like

intelligence, discrimination, psychic power and will power are Her internal manifestations. Humanity is Her visible form. So service of humanity is deemed as the worship of the Divine Mother. The



nine days of Navaratri ritual are considered the most suitable occasion for doing intensive Sadhana pertaining to Devi Mata as the Supreme Mother. This Tatwic elucidation is nicely contained in the Devi Mahatmya which is also known as Durga Saptasati. The gist of this concept is that the Almighty Brahman is static, being all-pervading in nature. It spreads to all parts of the universe. The Supreme Sakti manifested through the idealizing of Divine Mother is both the internal and the external divine force which make the divination of the Universe possible through the Para-Brahman. This is the general principle of creation.

As per the reading of Devi Mahatmya, also known as Chandi Patha, the Divine Mother is described as Chandi. During Nava Ratri Puja, the reading of the scripture is done in a very scientific manner. As laid down in this scripture, there is a strict procedure for this purpose. In the first part of the scripture, there is a detailed exposition of Devi Tatwa. The scripture contains seven hundred verses relating to Divine Mother. So the scripture is known as Durga Saptasati. The cult of Sakti worship is portrayed here in the form of a story which runs as follows.

In good old days, there was a king named Suratha. He belonged to the Surya Dynasty to which Sri Rama once belonged. In course of his rule, King Suratha was defeated by his foes and overthrown from his kingdom. The king fled from his kingdom leaving his kith and kin behind. He left for the forest and roamed about like a forlorn destitute. One day he came in contact with a sage known as Medha. The king liked the surrounding of his hermitage. He liked its peaceful atmosphere. He lived there with the permission of the sage.

In the hermitage, the king found another person who was once upon a time a big merchant. His name was Samadhi. He was also in deep distress like king Suratha. He too had lost all his wealth due to the mischief of his own people. The king and the merchant became good friends in the hermitage but they spent their time in deep distress.

One day both of them met the sage in the hermitage when the latter was alone. They explained to him the causes of their sorrow and wanted to know the way in which they could retrieve their peace of mind. At this, sage Medha gave his wondrous spiritual exposition as follows.

The sage said that human mind is the dwelling place of mysterious delusion. By this, pure reason of man is clouded with delusion which is the cause of all sufferings in life. Delusion is the mysterious veiling power of the Divine Mother. This is called Maya. This power has got to be overwhelmed for peace and glory in life. It is the Divine Mother who is the cause of Maya. She is also the destroyer of Maya. Control over Maya can be achieved through practice of Yoga and Sadhana by worshipping the Divine Mother. Propitiated, She becomes manifest to his devotees and bestows Her Divine grace on them. Thus the desires of the devotees are fulfilled. Rishi Medha advised Suratha and Samadhi accordingly. This Tatwa is explained in the 700-versed scripture of Durga Saptasati. Thus, the king and the merchant worshipped the Divine Mother and got back their past glory.

It is also explained in Devi Mahatmya that Maya and Brahman are one. In Devi Tatwa, the Divine Mother is the supreme Sakti of Para-Brahman. Apparently, they appear different in outward dispensation but they are actually one



like fire and heat, milk and its white colour and so on. Swami Chidananda Saraswati says, the Supreme Brahman is described as perfectly beyond all movement and motion because, being in the nature of limitless Infinity, the very nature of motion does not occur in His case. The Supreme Divine Power whom we call Devi is described as the dynamic moving aspect of the Para-Brahman. The Devi Mother is the mysterious link between the manifest and the un-manifest. She makes the creation possible through Para-Brahman.

The Devi Mahatmya gives a beautiful description of three aspects of the Mother as Mahakali, Mahalaxmi and Mahasaraswati - the Tamasic, the Rajasik and the Satwik aspects of the Divine Mother. There is a beautiful description in this regard in Durga Saptasati. According to this description when the 'Devas' were oppressed by the Asuras, the former invoked the blessings of the Divine Mother. The Divine Mother appeared in the above three forms and destroyed the Asuras and protected the gods. The Divine Mother thus gave to men as well as the gods Her infallible promise that whenever the gods/men would remember Her in the vortex of danger or in the case of difficulties, She would save them from the evil force.

In the Maheswari Khanda of Skanda Purana, Siva and Sakti being inseparable, they are seen by Narada with one body-half male on the right side and half female on the left side of Lord Siva- in the form of Ardhanariswara. This portrays the manifestation of Para-Brahman in Saguna form with the Devi Mother i.e Maya Sakti intermingled as the Supreme Mother of the universe. This also signifies the fact that without Siva, Sakti has no existence and similarly, without Sakti, Siva has no expression. It is through Sakti that the impersonal Supreme Being i.e. Siva or,

for that purpose, the Nirguna Brahman becomes the Personal Being or Saguna Brahman.

In the first three days of Navaratri Puja, Maa Durga is worshipped by the devotees with great devotion. She is worshipped as the mystic symbol of both delusion and deliverance. Mother is adored in these three days as the great Transcendental Power at the back of all manifestations. She is worshipped as the dissolver of the world.

Devi Mother as Durga is the symbol of delusion through Avidya Maya. She is also the image of deliverance through Vidya Maya in the Sakti cult of Devi worship.

The puzzling form of Durga worship displays to the world the Mother as an all destructive terrible and fearful being. Mother Kali, religiously synonym to Maa Durga, dances on the chest of Lord Siva expressing a terrible form. But she is not really terrible. She is all merciful and gentle. She wears a garland made up of skulls. This means that she wears the heads of her devotees as the lovely and affectionate Mother. She is the dynamic aspect of Lord Siva who lives like a dead corpse. He is absolute, calm, motionless and breathless with His eyes closed in Samadhi. He is not touched by the cosmic plays of the Universe. The Mother who walks on His chest makes Him moving and full of motion with Cosmic Lilas.

Durga Mata is the Divine symbol of destiny and prosperity. She generates the growth of the universe. As the destroyer, She destroys ignorance and darkness to create light. She destroys all pains, all sorrows etc. to bestow on us the divine achievements like bliss, joy and



immortality. Thus She is the destroyer of all shackles that bind the Jiva to this terrible Sansara.

We worship Sri Mahalaxmi in the next 3 days of Navaratri Puja. This is the significant phase of adoration of the Divine Mother. She is worshipped during this period as the sustaining force of the Supreme Sakti. She is the one Great Power who makes life possible and living on earth. Basically life on earth is one of pain and death. It is Mother Laxmi who makes life bearable by balancing pain and destruction with the elements of love, luster, prosperity and happiness. Mother Laxmi is Kalyani. She is Mangalam. Thus Mother Durga and Mother Laxmi maintain the balance in the material life of the world. When Mother Laxmi is propitious, there is peace in the universe. It is therefore said that if a village has no place for worship, there is no religious life in such a place. Laxmi does not dwell where Tama Guna is present. Tamas is the mark of slavery. It persists among drab characters. We should therefore take life with a realistic attitude seeking revival and dynamism in a state of spiritual evolution.

This brings us to the concept of Indian women-hood in our society. In domestic life, our scriptures identify women with the concept of Goddess Laxmi. Indian women are adored as Grihalaxmis which mean mothers who preside over auspiciousness, welfare and progress of home-life. It is said in scriptures that when women are happy and remain in peace, the Gods are ipso facto satisfied. This is a symbolic expression which actually means that happiness of women leads to actual happiness of the human society. This is the concept and meaning of Laxmi worship during Navaratri Puja. Durga Saptasati eulogizes the effulgence of Mother in this order. Wealth

remains in position as long as proper care is taken to maintain the same with proper love and adoration. Not only this. Cleanliness is one important way in which the prosperity of a family can be well maintained. Dirt and Dust of the house is displayed as Alaxmi. In Bastu Shastra, there are specific descriptions on this score. Gurudev Chidananda Saraswati says that money comes in plenty through Avidya. But money earned through Avidya is always short-lived. Mother Laxmi should be worshipped and adored as the symbol of Vidya Maya. Hospitality to guests is another aspect of Laxmi. Hospitality, charity and generosity are the divine qualities of Mother Laxmi. No house in our day-to-day life should ever be without a Tulsi Plant. In good old days, without Cow-worship a devout Hindu woman was not taking her food. These customs are fast vanishing from our day-to-day life. These customs should be revived and restored. They are conducive to welfare and prosperity of human society. Under these circumstances, we need to have a realistic approach to the problems of our national and social life. We should try to give to our society and its people all these aspects of Laxmi through a disciplined learning process by which we can have a life of health, well-being, and all round prosperity. We should remember one thing that poverty stultifies all higher aspirations of human life. When hunger engulfs man's stomach, there can be no aspiration of higher education. We should not speak harsh words. We should not lose our temper. By losing temper, we do not gain anything in the order of a prosperous life. Grihalaxmi is always to be respected. We should not waste or throw away our food. This is the implication of worship of Mother Laxmi in the second three days of Nava Ratri worship.



Next we worship Mother Mahasaraswati. We worship Her in the last three days of Nava Ratri Puja. Mahasaraswati is in the form of Sabdabrahma. She presides over commencement of all manifestations and all projections of names and forms. She has in Her hands the Veena, the Spathik Mala and Veda Grantha. The significance of the Mala is equated to the practice of Yoga in its practical form. Mahasaraswati is spotless and clad in pure white raiment. The Veena is the symbol of vibration and manifestation. It is Nada articulated in the forms of countless names expressed through relatively countless forms. Mother Saraswati is the annihilator of darkness and ignorance. She is the outflow of the process of creativity. She is also the Goddess of Commencement which is the point, from which all creativity starts. In Hindu religion, Mother Saraswati is worshipped as the Goddess of all Arambha i.e beginning. In that way, Lord Ganesh is also worshipped at the beginning of all religious celebrations. We should remember one thing here that Lord Ganesh is worshipped as the God of avenger of all evils in religious practice. If Lord Ganesh represents wisdom, Maa Saraswati represents the creative aspect of wisdom. Likewise if Ganesh is worshipped for blessings to ward off evils, Maa Saraswati is worshipped for a positive bestowal of grace in the form of success on all things started in spiritual worship.

Mother Saraswati manifests both in Vidhya Maya and in Avidya Maya forms. In both these forms, She places upon the world stage in all human activities. In Her Vidya Maya form, She is all creative-activity shorn of ego etc. In a

more general way, She is manifest to the aspirant as the instructions of his or her Spiritual Guru. Mother Saraswati is present to a spiritual aspirant in the form of scripture and we seek Her blessings before Svadhyaya. Without Her grace, no aspirant can ever proceed with prosperity and wisdom in life. Mother Saraswati blesses a spiritual aspirant having the holy power of sweet and cogent expression. So an aspirant should never utter vulgar words at any point of time.

With Navaratri worship thus over, we next proceed on to Vijaya Dasami day. This is the 10th day of Dussehra function. The Vijaya Dasami day is observed as the most auspicious day of victory with Maha Maya manifest in Her purest and absolute Vidya aspect. We gaze in Her face, Para Sakti of the Para Brahman. She is worshipped on this day as the transcendent force of infinite consciousness. On Vijaya Dasami day, new shops are opened and new ventures undertaken for a good beginning and enterprising prosperity. Gurudeva Sivananda says that on Vijaya Dasami day the worshipper of Mother, in addition to usual rituals, should also read Devi Mahatmya and Lalita Sahashranama and perform the worship with purity, dignity and absolute devotion. This will bring him prosperity in life.

In brief, this is Divine Mother as described in Devi Mahatmya.

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Bijaya Dasami-the Victory of Good Over Evil

Dr. Dina Krishna Joshi

Introduction:

All Hindus celebrate this festival at the same time in different ways in different parts of India as well as around the world. In the northern part of the country, the first nine days of this festival, called *Navaratri*, is commonly observed as a time for rigorous fast, followed by celebrations on the tenth day. In western India, throughout the nine days, both men and women participate in a special kind of dance around an object of worship. In the south, Dussehra or the tenth day is celebrated with a lot of fanfare. In the east, people go crazy over Durga Puja, from the seventh till the tenth day of this annual festival. Although, the universal nature of the festival is often found to transcend regional influences and local culture, the Garba Dance of Gujarat, Ramalila of Varanasi, Dussehra of Mysore, and Durga Puja of Bengal need special mention.



Mythology :

Mahishasura, the king of Asuras, through years of austerities, was once granted a boon by Lord Brahma, that no man or deity would be able to kill him. The immense power filled in him urge to rule over the world. He started to terrorize heaven and the inhabitants. He pervaded the world with his battalion of Asuras and plundered and ruthlessly killed the people. Chaos and anarchy reigned. Gods were driven from heaven and Mahishasura usurped the throne. The Gods scared and unable to combat him requested Lord Shiva, Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu to stop Mahishasura's tyranny. In answer, the three Gods combined their divine energy and summoned up a feminine form so brilliantly glaring that it illuminated the heavens. This combined power fell on the residence of Sage Kattyana in the Krishna Chaturdashi in the month of Ashwin (*Sep-Oct*).



From the glow emerged Devi Durga, a beautiful yellow woman with ten arms riding a lion. Despite Her grace She bore a menacing expression, for Durga was born to kill. Fully grown and armed by the gods, beautiful Durga was named “Kattayani” as She was born in the Ashram of sage Kattayana. The sage worshipped Her during Suklasaptami, Asthami and Navami Tithi then on the Tithi of Dashami She killed Mahishasura. She was sent forth against Mahishasura armed by symbols of divine power; Vishnu’s discus; Shiva’s trident; Varuna’s conch shell; Agni’s flaming dart; Vayu’s bow; Surya’s quiver and arrow; Yama’s iron rod; Indra’s thunderbolt; Kubera’s club and a garland of snakes from Shesha and a lion as a charger from Himalayas.

History:

The festival of Durga Puja comes with its own retinue of mythological stories. There are various legends associated with its origin but the most important and prevalent among them is the legend of Lord Rama (the incarnation of Lord Vishnu). When Lord Rama was fighting a battle with Ravana (the demon king) to rescue his wife Sita whom Ravana abducted and held as hostage in Lanka, his kingdom. That time a fierce battle ensued. In that battle Ravana could not be defeated. So Lord Rama decided to seek the blessings of Shakti (Goddess Durga) in order to defeat the demon. For that Puja, which Lord Rama was performing 108 blue lotus were needed for the worship of Goddess Durga but Rama could manage only 107. But without that one lotus his Puja would be incomplete, so he was on the verge of laying one of his eyes that was lotus-shaped and blue in colour at the Goddess’s feet when Goddess Durga appeared and being satisfied with his devotion, granted Her blessing and eventually he won the battle against Ravana.

The time he worshipped was spring season so from that time onwards Durga Puja is being celebrated.

Legend:

Another legend, which is associated with the celebration of Durga Puja, is the story of the defeat of the demon king, Mahishasura at the hands of Goddess Durga, the incarnation of Shakti (the power). This demon was almost invincible because of a boon granted by Lord Shiva whereby no male could defeat him. So to find a solution to this all the God amalgamated their power and gave birth to Shakti (the power) in the form of Goddess Durga. She defeated the demon king and killed him. That’s why She is called Mahishasuramardini (the slayer of Mahishasura). The holy battle symbolizes the victory of Good over Evil. However, according to another legend about Durga, She was a manifestation of Parvati, Shiva’s wife.

The history of Durga Puja is dated back in the ancient period. However, there is much debate regarding the origin of Durga Puja. The most popular story is found in the Ramayana where Lord Rama of Ayodhya invoked the goddess Durga in his battle against Ravana. Although the goddess was traditionally worshipped in the spring, due to contingencies of battle, Rama had to invoke Goddess Durga in the autumn; hence the *Akaalbodhan* was performed by him. In fact, the term *Akaalbodhan* can be found in Kritibas’ Ramayan and not in the Valmiki Ramayan (the original Ramayan). The term “Akal” means “untimely” and the term “Bodhan” means “awakening” or “invocation”. Maa Durga was untimely awakened from Her peaceful slumber by Lord Rama at the time of



Ashwin (Autumn) which is considered as an inauspicious time in Hindu mythology.

According to Hindu mythology, the time period between 23rd December and 21st / 22nd June or Spring Equinox (Summer Solstice) is the perfect or the auspicious time for worshipping Gods and Goddesses as they remain awake and active during this time. This is the time of Uttarayan and is popularly known as the Days of the Gods. During this time the days are longer and nights are shorter. The actual worship of the Goddess Durga as stipulated by the Hindu scriptures hence falls in the month of Chaitra, which roughly overlaps with March or April. On the other hand autumn or the time of Dakshinayan is the resting time for Hindu Gods and Goddesses. Scientifically speaking it is the time for autumnal equinox (Winter Solstice) or the time period between 22nd / 23rd June and 22nd December when the sun shines in the southern hemisphere and so it is winter in the northern hemisphere. Days are shorter and nights are longer. It is popularly known as the Nights of the Demons. And since Goddess Durga is invoked at the wrong time, it is called “Akal Bodhan” in Bengali.

Dussehra: While most Hindus end their Dussehra celebrations by burning the effigy of Ravana to symbolise the victory of good over evil, the ten-headed demon king of Hindu mythology is worshipped in different places. When temples across the nation will resonate with prayers to Lord Rama, a small temple to Ravana in Vidisha district's Ravangram village will echo with the prayer, “Ravana Baba Namah”. The temple has an ancient idol of Ravana in a reclining position believed to have been constructed between the ninth and fourteenth century. The villagers believe it would be a bad omen to have the ten-foot idol

stand erect and say that whenever this was done, some unexpected incident had occurred in the district. In the village, the demon king has been worshipped as a symbol of prosperity for over 600 years by Kanyakubja Brahmins, a Brahmin sub-sect to which Ravana was believed to have belonged. He is regarded as a scholar and people worshipping him believe burning the learned king, who knew all the Vedas (ancient Hindu scriptures) and was a devotee of Lord Shiva, is not justified. This is not restricted to Ravangram village. Ravana is also worshipped in Ravana Rundi in Mandsaur district and Shajapur district's Bhadkhedi.

Durga Puja: The festival of Durga Puja starts with Mahalaya, the first phase of the waxing moon in Aswin. Thousands offer prayers to their ancestors at the city's river banks, a ritual called Tarpan. The inauguration of the Goddess idol starts on Mahashasthi. The main *puja* is for three days - Mahasaptami, Mahaastami, Mahanavami. The *puja* rituals are long and very detailed and complicated. Three days of Mantras, Shlokas, Arati and offerings - need an expert priest to do this kind of Puja. Because of these facts, the number of Pujas held in the family has reduced and Durga Puja has mostly emerged as a community festival.

Mahashasthi: On this day Goddess Durga arrives to the mortal world from Her heavenly abode, accompanied by Her children. She is welcomed with much fanfare amidst the beats of *dhak*. Unveiling the face of the idol is the main ritual on this day.

Mahasaptami: Saptami is the first day of Durga Puja. Nabapatrika is given a pre-dawn bath. This is an ancient ritual of worshipping nine types of



plants. They are together worshipped as a symbol of the goddess.

Mahaastami: The day began with a recital of Sanskrit hymns in community *puja* pandals as thousands of devotees offered *anjali* to the goddess. Kumari Puja or the worship of little girls as the mother goddess was a special part of the rituals observed in a number of traditional and household Pujas. As the day wore on, it was time for the important Sandhi Puja, which marks the inter-linking of the Maha Ashtami and Maha Navami.

Mahanavami: This is the concluding day of Durga Puja. The main Navami *Puja* begins after the end of Sandhi Puja. The Navami Bhog is offered to the goddess. This is later partaken as *prasad* by the devotees.

Mahadashami (Bijayadashami): After the three days of Puja, in Dashami, in the last day, a tearful farewell is offered to the Goddess. Most of the community Pujas postpone the farewell as long as possible and arrange a grand send-off. The images are carried in processions around the locality and finally immersed in a nearby river or lake. Vijaya Dashami is an event celebrated all over the country.

As the night of Mahanavami fades away, the morning of Bijaya Dashami makes one feel that it is time for Durga to leave earth and go back to Her home in Kailash. A tinge of sadness is in the air, but it is also the time when a year long wait begins for the Mother Goddess to return next year same time. The week long celebration and festivity is finally going to get over today as the idol will be taken to the river Ganges and other water bodies and then immersed. Before

immersing into the water the idol is worshipped by the women with *sindur* (vermilion powder). Sweets are distributed among each other to mark the mood of festivity and the occasion. The male of the species greet each other with warm embraces while the juniors of the family show respect to elder by bending down to touch their feet.

Different forms of Durga:

As the ten-armed Goddess, Durga presents a radiantly beautiful form that is bewitching to behold. That special form is somehow simultaneously wrathful and benign and transmits profound spiritual teachings in an exacting manner. The nine-day period from the new moon day to the ninth day of Ashwina is considered the most auspicious time of the Hindu Calendar and is hence the most celebrated time of the year as Durga Puja. The nine different forms of Devi are worshipped over the nine days. These are the most popular forms under which She is worshipped.

Durga Shailaputri (Daughter of Mountains):

She is a daughter of Himalaya and first among nine Durgas. In previous birth She was the daughter of Daksha. Her name was Sati - Bhavani. i.e. the wife of Lord Shiva. Once Daksha had organised a big Yajna and did not invite Shiva. But Sati being obstinate, reached there. Thereupon Daksha insulted Shiva. Sati could not tolerate the insult of Her husband and burnt Herself in the fire of Yajna. In other birth She became the daughter of Himalaya in the name of Parvati - Hemvati and got married with Shiva. As per Upanishad She had subdued the egotism of Indra and other Devatas. Being ashamed they bowed and prayed that, "In fact, thou are Shakti, we all-Brahma,



Vishnu and Shiva are capable by getting Shakti from You.”

Brahmacharini: The second Durga Shakti is Brahmacharini. Brahma is who observes penance (tapa) and good conduct. Here “Brahma” means “Tapa”. The idol of this Goddess is very gorgeous. There is rosary in Her right hand and Kamandal in left hand. She is full with merriment. One story is famous about Her. In previous birth she was Parvati Hemavati, the daughter of Himalaya. Once when She was busy in games with Her friends, Narada came to Her and predicted seeing Her palm-lines that, “You will get married with a naked-terrible ‘Bhole Baba’ who was with you in the form of Sati, the daughter of Daksha in previous birth. But now you have to perform penance for Him.” Thereupon Parvati told Her mother Menaka that She would marry none except Shambhu, otherwise she would remain unmarried. Saying this she went to observe penance. That is why Her name is famous as Tapacharini - Brahmacharini. From that time Her name Uma became familiar.

Chandraghanta: The name of third Shakti is Chandraghanta. There is a half-circular moon in Her forehead. She is charming and bright. She is Golden colour. She has three eyes and ten hands holding with ten types of swords, weapons and arrows etc. She is seated on Lion and ready for going in war to fight. She is unprecedented image of bravery. The frightful sound of Her bell terrifies all the villains, demons and Danavas.

Kushmanda: Name of fourth Durga is Kushmanda. The Shakti creates egg, i.e. Universe by mere laughing. She resides in solar system. She shines brightly in all the ten directions like Sun. She has eight hands. Seven types of weapons are shining in Her seven hands. Rosary is in Her

right hand. She seems brilliant riding on Lion. She likes the offerings of Kushmanda (Pumpkin). Therefore Her name “Kushmanda” has become famous.

Skanda Mata: Fifth name of Durga is “Skanda Mata”. The daughter of Himalaya, after observing penance got married with Shiva. She had a son named “Skanda.” Skanda is a leader of the army of Gods. Skanda Mata is a deity of fire. Skanda is seated in Her lap. She has three eyes and four hands. She is white and seated on a lotus.

Katyayani: Sixth Durga is Katyayani. The son of “Kat” is “Katya”. Rishi Katyayan was born in this “Katya” lineage. Katyayan had observed penance with a desire to get Paramba as his daughter. As a result She took birth as a daughter of Katyayan. Therefore Her name is “Katyayani”. She has three eyes and eight hands. There are eight types of weapons in her hands. Her vehicle is Lion.

Kalratri: Seventh Durga is Kalratri. She is black like night. Her hairs are unlocked. She has put on necklaces shining like lightning. She has three eyes which are round like universe. Her eyes are bright. Thousands of flames of fire come out while respiring from nose. She rides on Shava (dead body). There is sharp sword in Her right hand. Her lower hand is in blessing mood. The burning torch (mashal) is in Her left hand and Her lower left hand is in fearless style, by which She makes Her devotees fearless. Being auspicious She is called “Shubhamkari.”

Maha Gauri: The Eighth Durga is “Maha Gauri.” She is as white as a conch, moon and jasmine. She is of eight years old. Her clothes and ornaments are white and clean. She has three eyes. She rides on bull. She has four hands. The above left hand is in “Fearless - Mudra” and lower left



hand holds “Trishul.” The above right hand has tambourine and lower right hand is in blessing style. She is calm and peaceful and exists in peaceful style. It is said that when the body of Gauri became dirty due to dust and earth while observing penance, Shiva made it clean with the waters of Gangas. Then Her body became bright like lightning. Therefore, She is known as “Maha Gauri”.

Siddhidatri: Ninth Durga is Siddhidatri. There are eight Siddhis, they are- Anima, Mahima, Garima, Laghima, Prapti, Prakamya, Iishitva and Vashitva. Maha Shakti gives all these Siddhies. It is said in “Devipurana” that the Supreme God Shiva got all these Siddhies by worshipping Maha Shakti. With Her gratitude the half body of Shiva had become of Goddess and therefore His name “Arddhanarishvar” has become famous. The Goddess rides on Lion. She has four hands and looks pleased. This form of Durga is worshipped by all Gods, Rishis-Munis, Siddhas, Yogis, Sadhakas and devotees for attaining the best religious asset.

Durgatinasini : She is the mother of world. A small ray of Her kindness is enough to remove all the sorrows and obstacles. She is the mother Who is always there to remove all the worriness of the people of world, and those who worship Her really never face any problem in their life, because the loving mother removes their problems by Her smiles. Again at one time She is Maha Laxmi (The Goddess of wealth), Maha Saraswati (The Goddess of Knowledge) and Maha Kali (The Goddess of destruction), that means the goddess of creation, caring, and destruction. The Goddess is worshipped by the people as the Goddess to grant fortune. The goddess Durga is worshipped as the mother of all twice in a year

that is in the month of autumn and in the month of spring. The worships which are done on these two occasions are called as Sharadiya Durga Puja and Basantika Durga Puja.

The Divine Story of Durga and Dasamahavidya:

Durga is a wrathful form of Parvati (consort of Shiva). She is represented with many arms with a weapon in each hand, shown sitting astride Her mount, the lion, holding celestial weapons. Though popularly She is depicted with ten hands, but other of Her popular forms present Her with four, six, eight, sixteen, eighteen, and even, a thousand hands. Her face always remains calm and gentle. As Durga, the Goddess is "beyond reach" or "inaccessible". She is Devi Mahishasuramardini (Goddess Killer of the Buffalo Demon) Who appears to Her devotees as both *saumya* (gentle and mild) and *ghora* (frightful and terrible). According to Skanda Purana, She is none other than Parvati Who takes on the role of warrior at Siva's request to kill a giant demon. The demon cannot be killed by any of the gods because he is protected against the torments of any male by a special boon. Thus Parvati alone is able to kill him, and in doing so, the goddess is named Durga. The demon then takes the form of a buffalo, an apparition that again appears in the famous Devi-Mahatmya tale of the slaying of Mahishasura, the buffalo demon (Mahisha means buffalo).

Goddess Durga has been glorified by ten different aspects of the manifestation of Her “Shakti” or ‘Power’, called “Dasha-Mahavidya” as also Her nine different forms called “Nava-Durga”, without knowing which, trying to know the real power and divinity of Durga will be in vain.



In Tantra, worship of Devi-Shakti is referred to as a Vidya. Of the hundreds of Tantrik practices, the worship of the ten major Devis is called the Dasa Mahavidya. These major forms of the goddess are described in the Todala Tantra. They are Kali, Tara, Maha Tripura Sundari (or Shodasi-Sri Vidya), Bhuvaneshvari, Chhinnamasta, Bhairavi, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi, and Kamala. These ten aspects of Shakti are the epitome of the entire creation. There are several “levels” at which these Devis can be worshipped with the prescribed Mantra and Yantra. Like a simple worship of the Yantra with the Mantra recitation, as a remedial astrological measure, elaborate worship with all Tantrik rituals for attaining various Siddhis associated with these Tantras and for spiritual salvation. Successful *sadhana* of these Vidyas gives several boons to the practitioner. The Tantrik-Yogi who has control over his senses and positively inclined uses the boons to guide people and for the benefit of mankind. The last chapter of Todala Tantra equates Vishnu’s ten incarnations with the ten Mahavidyas as follows: “Shri Devi said: Lord of Gods, Guru of the universe, tell me of the ten Avatars. Now I want to hear of this, tell me of their true nature. Paramesvara, reveal to me which Avatara goes with which Devi.” Shri Shiva said: Tara Devi is the blue form, Bagala is the tortoise incarnation, Dhumavati is the boar, Chhinnamasta is Nrisimha, Bhuvaneshvari is Vamana, Matangi is the Rama form, Tripura is Parashurama, Bhairavi is Balabhadra, Mahalakshmi is Buddha, and Durga is the Kalki form. Bhagavati Kali is the Krishna Murti”. (Todalatantra, Chapter-10)

The Dasha-Mahavidya:-

Kali (The Eternal Night): The first Mahavidya is Kali. Seated on a corpse, greatly terrifying,

laughing loudly, with fearful fangs, four arms holding a cleaver, a skull, and giving the *mudras* bestowing boons and dispelling fear, wearing a garland of skulls, Her tongue rolling wildly, completely naked (digambara - clad in the directions), with just a garland of demon-hands round Her waist, with heaped locks of a black cascade of hair. Thus one should meditate on Kali, dwelling in the centre of the cremation ground.

Tara (The Compassionate Goddess): Tara is the second of the Mahavidyas. She is described as seated in the *pratyaleerrha asana*, on the heart of a corpse, supreme, laughing horribly, holding cleaver, blue lotus, dagger and bowl, uttering the *mantra* Hum, coloured blue, Her hair braided with serpents, the Ugratara. She is bestowed with all supernatural powers. She is the Tantric form of the Goddess Saraswati.

Shorashi (The goddess Who is sixteen years old): The third Mahavidya is Shorashi (16-year-old), also known as Tripura-Sundari and Lalita, among a string of other names. She is the zenith of the creative cycle when the entire universe, like a flower, is in full bloom. She is the chief deity of the Sri Vidya form of worship, and is contacted either in the central circuit of the Sri Yantra, or in Her own Yantra, the Nava-Yoni Chakra. Her anthropomorphic qualities are brilliancy, manifestation, sweetness, depth, fixity, energy, grace, and generosity. She is seated on the lotus, that has bloomed out from the navel of Lord Shiva. She is a beautiful young girl of sixteen years with four arms. Her complexion is like molten gold and Her beauty is continuously being viewed by Lord Shiva. She is, at one point, being made one with Goddess Lakshmi, the consort of Lord Vishnu.

Bhuvaneshwari (The Creator of the World): Means the Queen of the Universe, Maya, power



of love, peace within, as void. She is like the red rays of the rising sun, with the moon as Her diadem, and with three eyes, a smiling face, bestowing boons, holding a goad, a noose and dispelling fears. On the right side of Bhuvaneshvari, Who is in the heavens, on earth, and in the underworlds is known as the Adya. She is the fourth Mahavidya.

Chhinnamastaa (The goddess Who cuts off Her own head): The fifth Mahavidya, Chhinnamastaa, looks like the red china rose (*hibiscus*). Her left foot forward in battle, She holds Her severed head and a scimitar. Naked, she drinks voluptuously the stream of the blood nectar flowing from her beheaded body, along with Her two female celestial companions. The jewel on Her forehead is tied with a serpent. She has three eyes. Her breasts are adorned with lotuses. Inclined towards lust, She sits erect above the god of love - Madana, who shows signs of lustfulness, engaged in the act of love with his consort Rati. The image of Chhinnamastaa is a composite one, conveying reality as an amalgamation of sex, death, creation, destruction and regeneration. It is stunning representation of the fact that life, sex, and death are an intrinsic part of the grand unified scheme that makes up the manifested universe.

Bhairavi (The goddess of decay): Tripura Bhairavi is Supreme Energy, Supreme Goddess of speech, as Tapas, as woman warrior. Her head is garlanded with flowers, resembling the red rays of 1,000 rising suns, smeared with red, holding milk, book, dispelling fears and giving boons with Her four hands, large three eyes, beautiful face with a slow smile, wearing white gems. Bhairavi embodies the principle of destruction and becomes present when the body declines and

decays. She is an ever-present goddess Who manifests Herself in, and embodies, the destructive aspects of the world. Destruction, however, is not always negative, creation cannot continue without it.

Dhoomavati (The Goddess Who widows Herself): The colour of smoke (“dhoom”), wearing smoky clothes, holding a winnowing basket, dishevelled clothes, deceitful, always trembling, with slant eyes, inspiring fear, terrifying, sitting in a chariot, with the symbol of a raven on Her chariot-flag. Symbolically, She has devoured Her own husband Lord Shiva in hunger, and hence, in the form of a lustreless widow. This symbolises the supremacy of the Devi (Nature) over all other forces (even Shiva, Who himself is the cosmic force of destruction). She is the great death of the death Herself. She is the embodiment of “unsatisfied desires”. Her status as a widow itself is curious. She makes Herself one by swallowing Shiva, an act of self-assertion, and perhaps independence.

Bagala (The goddess Who seizes the tongue): Bagala or Bagalamukhi is the eighth Mahavidya in the famous series of the ten Mahavidyas. She is identified with the second night of courage and is the power or Shakti of cruelty. She is described as the Devi with three eyes, wearing yellow clothes and gems, moon as Her diadem, wearing champaka blossoms, with one hand holding the tongue of an enemy and with the left hand spiking him, thus should you meditate on the paralysing of the three worlds. Bagalamukhi means “The Crane-Headed One”. This bird is thought of as the essence of deceit. She rules magic for the suppression of an enemy’s gossip. These enemies also have an inner meaning, and the peg She puts through the tongue may be



construed as a peg or paralysis of our own prattling talk. She rules deceit which is at the heart of most speech. She can in this sense be considered as a terrible or Bhairavi form of Matrika Devi, the mother of all speech. According to Todala Tantra, Her male consort is Maharudra. Seated on the right of Bagala is the Maharudra, with one face, Who dissolves the universe. The pulling of the demon's tongue by Bagalamukhi is both unique and significant. Tongue, the organ of speech and taste, is often regarded as a lying entity, concealing what is in the mind.

Matangi (The goddess Who loves pollution): Dusky, beautiful browed, Her three eyes like lotuses, seated on a jewelled lion-throne, surrounded by gods and others serving Her, holding in Her four lotus-like hands a noose and a sword, a shield and a goad. Texts describing Her worship specify that devotees should offer leftover food with their hands and mouths stained with leftover food; that is, worshippers should be in a state of pollution, having eaten and not washed. This is a dramatic reversal of the usual protocols. She is the ninth Mahavidya.

Kamala (The goddess of creation, sustenance and prosperity): Kamala, the tenth, or the last of the Mahavidyas, is with a Kamala (Lotus), the tenth, or the last of the Mahavidyas, is with a smiling face. Her beautiful lily-white hands hold two lotuses, and show the *mudras* of giving and dispelling fear. She is bathed in ambrosia by four white elephants and stands upon a beautiful lotus. She is the real embodiment of Goddess Lakshmi, the consort of Lord Vishnu. The name Kamala means "the lotus" and is a common epithet of Goddess Lakshmi. Lakshmi is linked with three important and interrelated themes: prosperity and wealth, fertility and crops, and good luck during the years to come.

Divine powers/forces associated with Durgapuja:

Kartik (The war Lord): Kartik, the general of the divine army, the handsome bachelor god, is shown in some accounts as the off-spring of the union of Agni, the fire god, and Ganga, the river goddess. Ganga failed to go through with the pregnancy and expelled Agni's burning seed from her body. The seed became a baby and was deposited on her banks from where six Krittikas, or demi-goddesses, rescued it.

But the more popular myth, based on Skanda Purana, makes Kartik a son to Shiva and Parvati. Once Surapadma, the demon king, became powerful by Shiva's boon. He defeated and enslaved the gods. The humiliated gods flocked to Kailash, Shiva's abode. Shiva took pity on them. After all, it was according to His boon, that none but He could defeat Surapadma. He transformed Himself into a six-headed figure and produced six glowing masses of light.

A divine pronouncement followed—the child born out of the glow would be the saviour of the gods. Shiva instructed that the balls of light be transported to Ganga, the river goddess, who would deposit them in the bulrushes near Mt Uday. As soon as the glowing balls reached the base of the mountain, they metamorphosed into six newborn babies.

They were spotted by six Krittikas, who adopted them. But when the gods reached the river bank, the babies became a six-headed boy. Shiva named the boy after each of the agents who played a part in its creation. The name by which he is known today is Kartik, a derivation of Kartikeya, son of the Krittikas. Soon after, Kartik was sent to war armed with Shiva's spear he



defeated the demon Surapadma in battle. In the throes of death, Surapadma expressed repentance and sought his protection. Kartik forgave him and accepted him as his mount, the peacock.

Ganesha (The giver of success): According to Shivapurana, Ganesha came into being as the result of a domestic squabble between Shiva and Parvati. Shiva let his rowdy followers into Kailash at ungodly hours. Parvati felt She had no privacy. So in consultation with her companions Jaya and Bijaya, She created a boy who would take orders only from Her. The boy was put on duty at the gate with instructions to bar everyone. Soon, Shiva and company arrived but were stopped at the gate by the intrepid boy. They reasoned with him, they pleaded with him, they threatened him—all to no avail. Instead, he beat up Shiva's henchmen, Nandi and Bhiringi.

The news of the scuffle soon reached the other gods, who challenged the boy to combat. Yet so successfully did the boy parry the charges that the gods had to resort to mischief. Vishnu engaged him in direct combat while Shiva chopped off his head from behind. Parvati was overwhelmed with grief at the news of Her son's death and wreaked havoc on Creation. In order to propitiate Her, Shiva ordered his followers to collect the head of any creature they set eyes on in the northern direction. They came back with the head of a one-tusked elephant. The elephant's head was attached to the torso of the beheaded boy who sat up and all was well again. Shiva blessed him, saying that he would be worshipped at the start of all rituals and gave him the name Ganesha (Lord of the masses).

Saraswati (The goddess of learning): The origin of the veena-bearing goddess is not as

distinct as that of the other figures. In the Vedas, especially the Rig Veda, She is referred to as both a river and a river deity. The Saraswati river was a boundary of Brahmavartta, the home of the early Aryans, and was to them as sacred as the Ganga has been to their descendants. Gradually She became associated with the rites performed on Her banks and started being regarded as an influence on the composition of the hymns that were an important part of the rituals. This might have led to Her identification with yak, the goddess of speech. In later mythology She finds mention as the spouse of Brahma and the goddess of wisdom, eloquence and the arts.

The father of the universe prepared Himself for Creation and sunk in deep meditation. The sublime quality of His spirit (sattvaguna) accumulated in His mind and was emitted from His forehead as Speech or Saraswati. He ordained Her to stay on the tip of everyone's tongue and exist on earth as a river. A part of Her was also to stay in him.

Laxmi (The goddess of prosperity): During Creation, a beautiful female form emerged from the left side of Paramatma, the Supreme Being. At a command from Paramatma, She split Herself into two enchanting figures, both equal in splendour and majesty. One was Laxmi and the other Radha. Both wanted Paramatma as their consort. So He divided Himself into the two-armed Krishna and the four-armed Vishnu. While Radha chose Krishna and stayed on earth, Laxmi wedded Vishnu and left for the heavens.

Durga, the demon-slaying goddess:-

According to Hindu Mythology a demon named Durgamasura once went under continuous meditation. By his meditation he also became able to make Lord Brahma to grant him



blessings. But the demon after getting the blessings of Lord Brahma became highly powerful and started disobeying the Gods of heaven. Again the idiot demon found it that the Gods of heaven are getting their strengths from the offerings in Yajna which are performed according to the norms of Veda. So he cleverly looted the Vedas. After the Vedas were stolen by him the condition of the living world became miserable. Droughts and lack of rain like situation happened in earth. So the living world started suffering and praying the Gods of heaven to save it. The Lords like Brahma, Bishnu and Shiva became unable to kill the demon and to get Vedas back from him. Finally all the lords came together and shared their power. From the sharing of all their powers the Goddess took birth. She killed the demon and saved the world. But as She killed the demon Durgamasura and saved the world by releasing the Vedas from the demon She got the name Durga.

Devi is the great goddess of the Hindus, the consort of Shiva and She is worshipped in various forms corresponding to Her two aspects: benevolence and fierceness. She is Uma, “light”; Gauri, “yellow or brilliant”; Parvati, “the mountaineer”; and Jagatmata, “the-mother-of-the-world” in Her milder guise. The terrible emanations are Durga “the inaccessible”; Kali, “the black”; Chandi, “the fierce”; and Bhairavi, “the terrible.”

Durga, a beautiful warrior seated upon a tiger, was the first appearance of the great goddess. The circumstance of Her miraculous arrival was the tyranny of the monster-demon Mahishasur, who through terrific austerities had acquired invincible strength. The gods were afraid of this water-buffalo bull because neither Vishnu nor Shiva could prevail against him. It seemed that the joint energy of Shakti was only capable

of vanquishing Mahisha, and so it was the eighteen-armed Durga Who went out to do battle.

Durga in the Battlefield: She went to battle on Her ferocious mount lion, armed with the weapons given to Her by the other Gods. Durga is one of the angry and aggressive aspects of the goddess Shakti, Whose role in Hindu mythology was to fight and conquer demons and also personify the Shakti or female aspect of any male deity. In the battle, She fought and killed the evil Mahishasura and restored heaven to the Gods. Since then the goddess is invoked for protection from the powers of evil. Durga Puja is observed in Her honour, to celebrate Her victory over evil.

Meaning of the divine name Durga: Durga, in Sanskrit means “She Who is incomprehensible or difficult to reach.” Goddess Durga is a form of Shakti worshipped for Her gracious as well as terrifying aspect. Mother of the Universe, She represents the infinite power of the universe and is a symbol of a female dynamism. The manifestation of Goddess Durga is said to emerge from Her formless essence and the two are inseparable. She is also called by many other names, such as Parvati, Ambika, and Kali. In the form of Parvati, She is known as the divine spouse of Lord Shiva and is the mother of Her two sons, Ganesha and Karttikeya, and daughter Jyoti. Destroyer of demons, She is worshipped during an annual festival called Durga Puja.

Appearance: There are endless aspects of Durga described in the Puranas. She is usually pictured as having ten arms holding Sword, Conch, Discus, Rosary, Bell, Winecup, Shield, Bow, Arrow, and Spear. She is most often shown riding a lion from which comes Her august name, Simhavahini, “She who stands astride the king of beasts”. She is gorgeously dressed in royal red cloth and has



several ornaments decorating Her personage. Her hair is dressed up in a crown which then flows out in long luxuriant tresses that are darkly luminous and soothing to the eye. The various tools reflect the eminent supremacy that helps in controlling the universe and obey Her will.

Goddess Durga exists eternally, always abiding in Her own sweet nature and inhabits the hearts and minds of Her ecstatic devotees. As Shakti, She shapes, nurtures, and dissolves names and forms, while as subtle spiritual energy called Kundalini, She lights the lotuses of the seven centres of awareness in the sacred human body. Goddess Durga killed the powerful demon Mahish and all his great commanders. When demonic forces create imbalance all gods united become one divine force called Shakti or Durga.

Goddess Durga: This festival is devoted solely to the Mother Goddess — known variously as Durga, Bhavani, Amba, Chandika, Gauri, Parvati, Mahishasuramardini — and Her other manifestations. The name “Durga” means “inaccessible”, and She is the personification of the active side of the divine “Shakti” energy of Lord Shiva. In fact, She represents the furious powers of all the male gods, and is the ferocious protector of the righteous, and destroyer of the evil. Durga is usually portrayed as riding a lion, and carrying weapons in Her many arms.

Genesis of the form Durga: Each of the figures in Durga’s entourage has a story of origin. Often, there is more than one account of the birth. Sometimes, for the whole picture to emerge, pieces have to be stitched together from a number of myths revolving round separate gods or goddesses. This is because in Hindu mythology, divine power is manifest in myriad figures with different names. Individual myths emphasise one

aspect of the god or goddess while assuming it is linked to many others. The details vary from region to region and from text to text.

Durga-The unity of power: The scriptures often refer to Laxmi and Saraswati as other forms of the one Female Power. ‘Shree Shree Chandi’, the section of Markandeya Purana, which dwells at great length on Durga, sees this power manifested in three faces—Mahakali (the great Kali), Mahalaxmi (the great Laxmi) and Mahasaraswati (the great Saraswati).

That all the female forms are one is clearly stated by the Devi Herself in the Shumba-Nishumba myth. Locked in combat with demon-king Shumba, She was conducting raids on the enemy’s army in multiple female forms. The demon complained that there was no glory in victory gained with help from so many quarters. She told him that there was no power in the Universe other than Her. The demon king beheld with amazement how all the female forms with different appellations and appearances, that were so long waging war separately, melted into Her one by one.

Importance of the name Durga: The Durga Puja which is done in autumn is called as the Sharadiya Durga Puja. Again there is also a reason behind it. Because according to Hindu mythology when the demon Ravana kidnapped Goddess Sita at that time Lord Sri Ram planned to worship Goddess Durga to remove Her troubles and to win over the demon Ravana. But that was not spring. So, Sri Ram worshipped the Goddess in autumn. The Goddess was pleased with him, and blessed him, which finally made him to win over the demon.



Demons associated with Durga Puja:-

Madhu and Kaitabha: Once Lord Vishnu withdrew His power of Maya and went into a Yoga Nidra (sleep). The whole Universe at that time was dissolved in the causal waters. Brahma, the creative power of the Lord had also gone to sleep. The earth had been broken up and was floating around in the causal waters. These pieces of dirt lodged themselves in the ears of the Lord. He swept these out with His fingers. That dirt, because of the Lord's touch sprang into life and became enormous demons 'Asuras'. They were called Madhu and Kaitabh. They attacked Brahma. The latter invoked the Divine Mother to wake Vishnu. The Lord took the Asuras and placed them on His thighs and cut their heads off. The Lord then created the earth with the fat (Medas) of the demons. That is the reason for the earth being called 'Medini'. It is believed that the earth is situated in the thighs of the Cosmic Body of the Lord. It is interesting to note that the earth was created again from the fat of the same demons, Madhu and Kaitabh.

Mahishasura, the buffalo-demon: According to the Bhagabat Purana, the brothers Rambha and Karambha were both childless. Aspiring for a child, they started a long and rigorous meditation. While Rambha sat amid blazing flames, Karambha immersed himself in neck-deep water. Indra, the king of the gods, became worried at the intensity of their meditation, lest they win the right to rule the heavens by their piety. So he took the garb of a crocodile and devoured Karambha. Rambha went on with his ascetic rites but when nothing yielded fruit, he tried to chop his own head as sacrifice to the fire. This appeased Shiva who appeared and offered Rambha a boon. Rambha prayed that Shiva himself be born as his son in

three successive births. The son would be conquerer of the gods, more spirited than fire, celebrated, truthful, long-living, and possessor of all treasure. Shiva agreed and Rambha returned, joyful at having gained immortality through an illustrious line. On the way, he saw a handsome, healthy buffalo. This buffalo was Mahismati, daughter of the sage Biprachitti. A willful girl, She had taken the guise of a buffalo and scared sage Sindhudweep so much that his long meditation was disturbed. The angry sage had cursed Mahismati that She be locked in the buffalo's body. This is the buffalo that Rambha saw wandering in the forest. He fell in love with Mahismati and married Her. Mahishaasura was the product of their union.

Mahishaasura was a buffalo-headed demon. He was granted a boon whereby he would be protected from anyone. Intoxicated by the above gift, he set out to conquer the world. Mahishaasura defeated Indra, the king of the gods. Indra implored Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh to help him. The Divine Trio amalgamated their *shakti* (power) and created Durga. Maa Durga fought Mahishaasura for nine days and beheaded him on the tenth day. The nine days are those of Navratri and the tenth victorious day is called Vijaya Dashami.

Dhoomra-lochana and Chanda & Munda: Dhoomra-Lochana was a powerful general of the terrible Asura, Sumbha. The Goddess uttered the sound 'Hum' and the demon turned to ashes by the powerful vibration of the sound. The form of Maa Kali Who emerged from the forehead of the angry face of Ambika (form of Durga) killed the Asuras Chanda and Munda. Chanda means a person who is short-tempered and Munda means a shaven-headed man. Together they imply the anger of a champion fighter. Because of this



victory over Chanda and Munda, Kali Mata is known as Chamunda.

Raktabeej: Hearing the news of the death of Chanda and Munda, the infuriated King Sumbha mobilised the Asuric forces and surrounded the Mother from all sides. Then, from the Great Devas (Spiritual Beings) emerged Powers which entered the form of the Mother. From Lord Vishnu emerged the power of Vaishnavi, and subforms from His 'avatars' - Vaaraahi and Naarasimhi... from Brahma, emerged the power called Brahmaani. .. from Lord Shiva, emerged Maheshwari and Veer Bhadra... from Lord Shiva's son Kartikeya (or Kumar), emerged the power of Kaumari ...from Indra emerged the power of Aindri.

Raktabeeja was the son of Krodhaavati, the sister of Shumbha and Nishumbha. Krodha means anger. Raktabeeja was an Asura who enjoyed a unique blessing. If a drop of blood were to drop from his body and touch the earth, then a demon of his might and form would spring from it. So if he were to get wounded during battle, the drops of blood would give rise to a thousand demons like himself. It is for the above reason that Kali spread Her tongue so that She could suck Raktabeeja's blood before it touched the earth. Raktabeeja fell on the ground dead as his body was completely drained of blood.

Shumbha and Nishumbha: Finally Shumbha and Nishumbha were slain by Devi Mahasaraswati. Mahasaraswati stands for knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge and Wisdom are forever victorious over ignorance and delusion. The first three days of 'Navratra' are dedicated to 'Maa Kali' to annihilate the enemies within. The next three days are dedicated to 'Maa Laxmi' and the last three days are dedicated to Maa Saraswati.

After nine days of struggle, Maa Durga beheaded Mahishaasura on the tenth day. This victorious day is called Vijaya Dashami. On this day Shree Ram killed the ten headed Ravana. This day is known as Dussehra.

Divine occasions during Durga Puja:-

Kumari Puja: Goddess Durga arrives to Her earthly abode with Her two children - Kartik and Ganesh, and Her two other forms - Lakshmi (wealth & prosperity) and Saraswati (knowledge). We worship Her as the Goddess of Shakti who overpowered the evil to establish peace and prosperity on earth. She is also the daughter making Her yearly visits at Her parent's place.

The Goddess is worshipped in various forms during Her stay Here. One of those forms is the "Kumari", the virgin form. This mould is the most powerful form of Mahashakti. A girl aged between one to sixteen, symbolising the Kumari form of Devi is worshipped in front of the idol of Goddess Durga. The Kumari form of the Goddess was emphasised as the most dynamic form by the devotees since long as Kumari Shakti is the basis of all creations. Our scriptures have emphasised Kumari Puja particularly to evolve the purity and divinity of the women of the society. Diminishing the larger than life stature of the Goddess to someone much nearer and closer is the real reason for this form of worship. Sri Ram Krishna had said that Kumari is another form of Devi Durga and he himself worshipped Sarada Maa as Kumari. To imagine the Goddess in the mould of a Kumari is an age old concept. In Mahabharata Arjuna had performed Kumari Puja. The Puranas mention the Kumari form of Chandika. This is also vividly and specifically mentioned in the "Kubjika Tantra".



Selection of Kumari: The scriptures mention the great care with which the Kumari is selected to be worshipped as the earthly representative of Devi Durga. The qualities required in the girl has to match the dynamism, purity and serenity of the Goddess. A calm, serene and an unmarried girl with a bright disposition between one to sixteen years, who has not yet reached Her puberty and is bereft of desire, worldly pleasures and anger is the right requisite for the Kumari Puja. Depending on the age of the girls they are worshipped in the various forms of the Goddess. A one year old girl is worshipped in the Sandhya form of the Devi while a two year old is worshipped in the Saraswati mould of the Devi. A three year old girl is worshipped in the Tridha form of Durga and a four year old is worshipped in the Kalika mould of the Devi. Subhaga and Uma are the forms of Durga for a five and a six year old girl respectively. Malini form of the Goddess represents a seven year old while Kujjika represents a eight year old girl. Kalsondarbha and Aparajita stand for a ten year old girl and an eleven year old girl. Bhairavi is represented by a twelve year old girl and Mahalakshmi by a thirteen year old girl. Pitnayika, Khetrageya and Ambika are represented by a fourteen, fifteen and sixteen year old girl respectively.

Worshipping the Kumari: Kumari Puja is held on Ashtami or sometimes Nabami. Kumari Puja is performed in Annapurna, Jagatdhatri and even Kali Puja as without Kumari Puja, the Yajna remains incomplete. In the dawn of Ashtami or Nabami, the Kumari is bathed in Ganga water and is clad in a red Benarasi *saari*. She is then adorned with flowers and jewellery, *alata* is applied to Her feet and a 'tilak' of *sindur* on Her forehead. The young Kumari fasts the whole day until the *puja* is over. On a decorated chair She

is made to sit before the goddess and a flower from the Devi's hand is placed in Her hand. Placed before Her are flowers, bel (wood apple) leaves, incense sticks, lamps, 'naividya' and other things required for *puja*. The priest then chants the *mantras* and the sound of *Dhaks* fill the atmosphere. After the *puja* the divinity of the Goddess Durga is said to be seen in the girl. It is customary to gift the girl with gold, silver and clothes. To gift the Kumari is considered to be a pious act. Kumari Puja is very much prevalent in Belur Math. In 1902, Swami Vivekananda performed Kumari Puja for the first time in Belur. In the premises of the Math, in the Mandap, in the presence of Sarada Ma, Swamiji worshipped nine Kumari girls. He offered pushpanjali at their feet, gave them sweets and 'dakshina' (gift). He touched their feet after the completion of the *puja*. Later with meditation and mantras he worshipped Sarada Maa as Goddess Durga. Kumari Puja, somewhere, is celebrated on the Ashtami, yet somewhere, on the Nabami.

Sandhi Puja: An integral and important part of Durga Puja, Sandhi Puja, is performed at the juncture of the eighth and ninth lunar day. Sandhi Puja lasts from the last 24 minutes of Ashtami till the first 24 minutes of Nabami. During this juncture (the "Sandhikshan"), Durga is worshipped in Her Chamunda form. Devi Durga killed, Chanda and Munda, the two *asuras* at "Sandhikshan" and thus acquired the name of "Chamunda".

Myth behind Durga being worshipped as Chamunda: While the Goddess and Mahishasura were engaged in a fierce battle, the two generals of Mahisha, Chanda and Munda attacked the Devi from the rear. Durga appeared to them, a brilliantly glowing woman with Her hair knotted on Her head, a crescent moon above Her



forehead, a 'tilak' on Her forehead and a garland around Her neck. With golden ear-rings and clad in a yellow *saari* She emitted a golden glow. Her ten hands possessed ten different weapons. Though She appeared beautiful Her face turned blue with anger when She faced Chanda and Munda. From Her third eye then emerged a Devi with a large falchion and a shield. She had a large face, bloody tongue and sunken blood shot eyes. She was Chamunda. With a blood curdling shriek She leapt forward and killed them. This moment was the juncture of the eighth and ninth lunar day.

Ashtami & Nabami: Long back devotees in order to perform the Sandhi Puja at the exact juncture used a number of methods. With the last 24 minutes of the Ashtami Puja still left, a bronze bowl with a tiny hole was placed in a bucket full of water. The bowl with the tiny hole was made in such a way that it took exactly 24 minutes for the bowl to submerge in the water. The moment the bowl submerged in the water cannon balls were fired announcing this moment of Sandhi Puja. This yardstick for measuring the "Sandhikshan" was very popular ages ago in many "Rajbaris".

Mahalaya: The traditional six day countdown to Mahasaptami starts from Mahalaya. Goddess Durga visits the earth for only four days but seven days prior to the Pujas, starts the Mahalaya. Sarat in its bloom, mingled with the festive spirit of Durga Puja reaches its pitch on the day of Mahalaya. From this day starts 'Devipaksha' and marks the end of 'Pitri-paksha'. It is the day when many throng to the banks of river Ganga, clad in *dhotis* to offer prayers to their dead relatives and forefathers. People in the pre-dawn hours pray for their departed relatives and take holy dips in the Ganges. This ritual is known as 'Tarpan'. This day bears immense significance for the Hindus. It

is according to the myths that Sree Rama hastily performed Durga Puja. Sree Rama had performed this in "Uttarayan" and the Puja was not held when the Gods and Goddesses rested called "Dakshinayan". It was on the day of Mahalaya, the beginning of "devipaksha", the Gods and Goddesses woke up to prepare themselves for Durga Puja.

Navratri: 'The Festival of Nine Nights', is celebrated during the first nine days of the Hindu month of Ashvin (*Sep-Oct*). The festival is dedicated to the worship of Mother Goddess or Shakti and Her nine forms. This season is considered to be an auspicious one as it is generally associated with the sowing of seeds. People sow seeds on the first day, consecrate the plants, watch the sprouting and worship Goddess Durga during this festival. The last three days are especially considered most important. The nine-day is equally divided in worshipping three Goddesses. The first three days are dedicated to Goddess Durga. The next three days are spent in worshipping goddess Lakshmi and the last three days are dedicated to Goddess Saraswati. The day after Navratri, the festival of Dussehra is celebrated.

Ramlila: Dussehra, as the name suggests occurs on the "tenth" day following the Navratri. It is a festival to celebrate the triumph of good over evil, and marks the defeat and death of the demon king Ravana in the epic *Ramayana*. Huge effigies of Ravana are burnt amidst the bangs and booms of firecrackers. In northern India, especially in Varanasi, Dussehra overlaps with "Ramlila" – traditional plays in which scenes from the epic saga of the mythical Rama-Ravana strife are enacted by professional troupes. The Dussehra celebration of Mysore in southern India is a



veritable extravaganza ! Chamundi, a form of Durga, is the family deity of the Maharaja of Mysore. It's a wonderful scene to watch the grand procession of elephants, horses and courtiers wending a circuitous way to the hilltop temple of Goddess Chamundi !

Symbolic synergy (Bahana):-

Lion: Durga's mount was a gift from Himalayas when She went to war with Mahishasura. It fought ferociously on its own in the deciding battle. The lion stands for power. In the pose in which She is worshipped, the Devi has Her right foot firmly planted on the lion's back.

Owl: The mount of Laxmi is a nightbird. While men are busy with their worldly pursuits through the day, it is deep in a sleep of disinterestedness, it chooses to stay up and meditate in the calm of night, and guard its store of spiritual wealth. The choice of such a mount for goddess of prosperity sends out the strong message that spiritual attainment is as important as material acquisitions for a person to prosper.

Swan: The feathered mount of the fair goddess Saraswati is said to have a unique gift. It can separate milk from water when the two are mixed. Hence it symbolises the power to distinguish between good and evil, and choose the pure over the impure. This is a quality that wisdom is supposed to bestow on one.

Mouse: There are two accounts that explain why the mouse is the mount of the elephant-headed

god. Yajurveda writes how Agni, the fire god, was once terrified of Shiva's rage and metamorphosed himself into a mouse to hide underground. Therefore, the mouse has a fiery quality. Like the flames, it can yield many benefits if it is in harness, but will wreak havoc if it spins out of control. In another account, a curse had transformed a Gandharva (one of a semi-divine race) to a mouse. As it was scampering about in the abode of the sage Parashar, Ganesha threw a dice at it and brought the restless creature in his grip. This gave the god of prosperity the power to rein in fickle-minded Fate. The puny creature also makes a virtue of accumulation and storage, another necessity for commercial success.

Peacock: Kartik's mount is as beautiful as its Lord. Yet it stands for control over the six inherent vices in man-passion, anger, greed, wine, infatuation, vanity and envy. No wonder, the war Lord is himself a bachelor.

Every year during the lunar month of Ashwin (*Sep-Oct*), Hindus observe ten days of ceremonies, rituals, fasts and feasts in honour of the supreme mother goddess. It begins with the fast of "Navaratri", and ends with the festivities of "Dussehra" and "Vijayadashami."

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Goddess Kali Temples at Srikshetra

Dr. Ratnakar Mohapatra

Introduction

Srikshetra popularly known as Puri, is situated (Latitude 19° 47' 55" North and Longitude 85° 49' 5" East) on the shore of the Bay of Bengal in the state of Odisha.¹ It is located about 59 kms

to the south-east of Bhubaneswar.

The place of Srikshetra is well-known for its historic antiquities and religious sanctuaries in India. The term 'Sri' before kshetra denoting either goddess Lakshmi or simply

beauty.² On the basis of Puranic tradition, Lakshmi is the mistress of the kshetra and hence the place (Puri town) often called as Srikshetra. A survey of the extant temples of the Srikshetra reveals that there was brisk architectural activities started from the Somavamsi period (10th century A.D.) and completed in the Maratha period of Odishan history. Being an important cultural site as well as the political headquarters, the native rulers tried to develop the religious tradition through the



construction of temples in all parts of the kshetra. Before the British occupation of Odisha, this kshetra was the political headquarters of the eastern part of Odisha. Prior to the advent of Vaishnavism, the kshetra was a Sakta pitha and it

can be substantiated both by the literary texts containing the list of Sakta pithas in Tantric texts and archaeological evidences. Kali or Mahakali, the first Mahavidya, is the most popular deity in India as well as Odisha. The present form of Kali

worship is mainly based on the Kali Tantra and Tantrasara. Goddess Kali is being worshipped by local people of Puri town in different names / forms like Bedhakali, Dakshinakali, Shyamakali, Smasana Kali, Gachhakali, etc. Of all the forms of Kali, Dakshina Kali is very popular and is also known as Adyakali.³ For the spread of worship of goddess Kali, the native rulers of Puri had constructed some Kali temples at Srikshetra. From the religious point of view, temples of



goddess Kali are also famous like other Sakta shrines of Srikshetra. Those devotees who visit Lord Jagannatha temple of Srimandira, they also do visit the Kali temples of Srikshetra. A modest attempt has been made in this article to highlight the detailed art and architectures along with the religious importance of the extant Kali temples of Srikshetra (Puri).

1. Bedhakali Temple

The temple of Bedhakali is situated in the north-west corner inner enclosure of the Jagannatha temple complex of Puri. This temple is built in sand stones. The temple consists of two structures such as vimana and mukhasala. It faces to east.

Vimana

The vimana of the Bedhakali temple is a navaratha rekha deula and its height is about 32 feet from the surface of the temple complex. The structure of the vimana is erected on the platform of 4 feet high. The base of the bada is square of 18 feet. The bada of the vimana has three fold divisions such as pabhaga, jangha and baranda. All the elements of the bada are devoid of decorative ornamentations. The central niches of the three sides of the bada are remained vacant.

The bada of the vimana is surmounted by the curvilinear superstructure, which displays nine pagas. All the pagas of gandi are thickly plastered with lime mortar. So the decorative ornamentations of the gandi are not prominent. Dopichha lions are fixed on the top of kanika pagas of the gandi. Deula Charini figures are inserted in the four cardinal directions of the beki above rahas.

The mastaka of the vimana consists of beki, amalaka sila, khapuri, kalasa, ayudha (chakra) and dhvaja.

The sanctum preserves the image of goddess Kali as the presiding deity of the temple. The two armed devi Kali is carved in seated posture on the pedestal. She displays khadga in right hand and a pana patra in left hand respectively. The background slab of deity is decorated with the trefoil makara headed arch. The image of goddess Kali is made of black chlorite. Inner walls of the sanctum are completely undecorated.

The sanctum has one doorway towards the jagamohana. The jambs of the doorway are decorated with creepers, lotus petalled designs and flower devices. The figures of Gaja-Lakshmi and navagrahas are completely absent in their respective places. A symbol of chakra is finely carved on the centre of the architrave above the doorway lintel.

Mukhasala

The mukhasala of the temple is a pidha deula and its height is about 25 feet from the surface of the temple complex. It is also erected on the platform of 4 feet high. The base of the bada is rectangular and it measures approximately 15 feet in length and 9 feet in width. The bada of the mukhasala is panchanga type i.e. having fivefold divisions such as pabhaga, tala jangha, bandhana, upper jangha and baranda. All the component parts of the bada are also devoid of decorative ornamentations. The bada of the mukhasala is surmounted by the pyramidal superstructure. It consists of two potalas; the lower and upper potalas, which contain 3 and 2 pidhas respectively. The centre of the recess between the two potalas in eastern side is filled with jhapa simha as the decorative element of the gandi. Dopichha lions are fixed on the top of the kanika pagas of the gandi. Deula Charini figures are also inserted in the four cardinal directions of



the beki above rahas. They are acting as the supporting elements of the amalaka sila of the mastaka.

The mastaka of the mukhasala consists of beki, ghanta above which there is another beki, amalaka sila, khapuri and kalasa. Here the ayudha and dhvaja are completely missing.

Inner walls of the mukhasala are devoid of decorative ornamentations. The doorway of the mukhasala is also completely plain. Jaya and Vijay figures are standing on both sides of the doorway. They are acting as the dvarapalas of the temple. Both the vimana and mukhasala are thickly plastered with lime mortar. At the time of survey, the temple was being renovated by the Archaeological Survey of India; Puri Circle.

Date of the temple

There is no authentic record with regard to the exact date of the temple of Bedhakali. On the basis of the architectural features, the construction period of the Bedhakali temple can be tentatively assigned to the 16th century A.D.

2. Dakshinakali Temple

The temple of goddess Dakshina Kali is situated ½ km distance from the Lion's gate of Jagannatha temple towards the left side of Svargadvara road in the Dakshinakalika Sahi of Puri town. The temple is exactly located on the right side of the Kalikadevi lane (Dakshinakalika sahi) branching from Bali Sahi road in Puri. Dakshina Kali temple has important religious associations with Lord Jagannatha. The deity is enshrined in a modern temple at a higher raised platform from the road level. The Puranic tradition asserts that in the Srikshetra or Puri, Jagannatha is Dakshina Kali Himself and hence this goddess is visited by a number of devotees. Goddess

Dakshinakali plays an important role in the 'Niti' of Saptapuri Amavasya. Pilgrims and tourists come to visit Lord Jagannatha temple and they also visit the Dakshinakali temple of Puri town.

Art and Architecture of the temple

The temple of Dakshina Kali is a small deula and it consists of four structures such as vimana, jagamohana, natamandapa and bhogamandapa. The vimana and jagamohana were constructed in the same period but the natamandapa and bhogamandapa are added at a later period. All these structures are erected on the platform of 10 feet high. This temple is built in both sand stones and bricks. It is a renovated temple and faces to east.

Vimana

The vimana of the temple is a pidha deula and its height is about 30 feet from the road level.⁴ The base of the bada is square of 12 feet. The bada of the vimana is panchnaga type i.e. having five fold divisions such as pabhaga, tala jangha, bandhana, upper jangha and baranda. All the elements of bada are completely undecorated.

The three side central niches of the bada are housed with parsvadevata images of Nrusimhi, Ganesha and Varahi. They are fashioned with as usual attributes in hands. These parsvadevata images are made of black chlorite. The bada of the vimana is surmounted by the pyramidal superstructure. It consists of nine pidhas and each is decorated with tankus in all sides.

The mastaka of the vimana consists of beki, ghanta (bell shaped member) above which there is another beki, amalaka sila, khapuri, kalasa, ayudha (chakra) and dhvaja.

The sanctum preserves the image of goddess Dakshina Kali as the presiding deity of



the temple. The presiding deity is a four armed Durga locally known as Dakshina Kali. The image Dakshina Kali is made of black chlorite. It measures approximately 1 ½ feet in height and 1 foot in width.⁵ Here goddess Dakshina Kali is four-armed and seated on a corpse. She displays khadga in upper right hand, akshamala in lower right hand, pana patra in upper left hand and a cutting or severed head in lower left hand respectively. The pedestal of Devi is decorated with a lion figure. She (presiding deity) is installed on the simhasana of 1 ½ feet high. Inner walls of the sanctum are completely undecorated. The sanctum has one doorway towards the jagamohana. Doorframes of the sanctum are devoid of decorative ornamentations.

Jagamohana or Mukhasala

The mukhasala of the temple is a pidha deula and its height is about 25 feet from the road level. The base of the bada is rectangular and it measures approximately 15 feet in length and 10 feet in width. The bada of the jagamohana is bereft of decorative ornamentations. The bada of the jagamohana is surmounted by the pyramidal superstructure. The mastaka of the jagamohana consists of usual elements of Odishan pidha deula. Inner walls of the mukhasala are completely plain. The doorway of the jagamohana is unornamented.

Natamandapa

The natamandapa of the temple is a flat roof structure and its height is about 22 feet. The base of the structure is rectangular and it measures 25 feet in length and 18 feet in width. Inner walls of the natamandapa are depicted with paintings of pancha mukhi Ganesha, Varaha-Lakshmi, Siddhesvari, Siva, Krishna, Kali, Mangala, Bagala, Shyamakali, Jaya Durga, Vana-Durga, Ugra-Tara, Narayani and Sarasvati.

In a niche of the inner side wall contains an image of Mahavira- Hanumana. The two handed Mahavira image has been installed on the plain pedestal. His right hand displays a huge rock (i.e. Gandhamardana parvata) and the left hand holds gada.

Lion is installed on the centre of the floor of natamandapa. It has one doorway towards the bhogamandapa. The doorframes of the natamandapa are relieved with nagabandhas, lotus petalled designs and flower devices. The Gaja-Lakshmi image and navagrahas are completely absent in their respective places. Two gaja-simha figures are installed on the both sides of doorway of the natamandapa.

Bhogamandapa

The bhogamandapa of the temple is a pidha shaped structure and it is about 30 feet in height. The sikhara of the bhogamandapa is relieved with various panels relating to goddess Kali. Dopichha lions are fixed on the top of kanika pagas of the gandi. There is a mastaka on the top of gandi. The outer as well as inner walls of the bhogamandapa are devoid of decorative ornamentations.

The entire temple complex is enclosed by a masonry wall of 25 feet in height. There is only one gateway in the northern side of the temple. Two lions are installed on both sides of the main gateway of the temple. Masonry steps of ascending order are arranged for approach toward the bhogamandapa as well as the sanctum.

Date of the temple

Local people say that the temple was constructed during the contemporary period of the Jagannatha temple but it is not accepted by the scholars of History as well as Archaeology. B.K. Ratha has referred that the Dakshina Kali



temple was built in the seventeenth century A.D.⁶ The architectural features of the temple indicate that the vimana and jagamohana were constructed in coeval of the 2nd half of 16th century A.D. and both the natamandapa and bhogamandapa are built in later period. This temple has been completely renovated in 1957 A.D. by the Department of State Archaeology, Bhubaneswar.

3. Shyamakali Temple

The temple of Goddess Shyamakali is situated at Balisahi of Puri town and it is also exactly located 1 km to the southern side of Lord Jagannatha temple. This temple is exactly located on the right side of the Shyamakali Sahi, leading from Shyamakali Chowk to Tiadisahi. As per the local tradition, the Shyamakali temple was built during the reign of Mukunda Deva, the King of Odisha and later on renovated by the local rulers. This temple is built in both sand stones and bricks. From the architectural point of view, this temple is not so important. It consists of three components such as vimana, jagamohana and natamandapa. The temple faces to east.

Vimana

The vimana of the temple is a pidha deula and its height is about 20 feet from the surface of the temple complex. The base of the bada is square of 15 feet. The bada of the vimana is panchanga type i.e. having five fold divisions such as pabhaga, tala jangha, bandhana, upper jangha and baranda. All the component parts of the bada are completely undecorated.

The central niches of the three sides of the bada are housed with parsvadevata images of devi Kukutamukhi, Srugalamukhi and Asvamukhi. Devi Kukutamukhi is the parsvadevata of the northern side. The two armed Devi (Kukutamukhi) has been installed on the plain

pedestal. Her left hand displays a pana patra and the right hand holds a club. Dog, the mount of Devi is carved on the left side of the pedestal.

Devi Srugalamukhi is the parsvadevata of the western side. The two handed image of Devi Srugalamukhi has been installed on the plain pedestal. Her right hand displays katuri or khadga and the left hand holds a panapatra. Here Devi is in seated posture. Jackle, the conventional mount of Devi is installed on the left side of the pedestal.

Devi Asvamukhi is the parsvadevata of the southern side. She has been installed on the backside of a horse. Her right hand displays a katuri and the left hand holds the rein (lagam) of horse. All the side deities are in ugra form.

The bada of the vimana is surmounted by the pyramidal superstructure, which consists of four pidhas. Small dopichha lions are fixed on the top of kanika pagas of the gandi. Deula Charini figures are inserted in the four cardinal directions of the beki above rahas.

The mastaka of the vimana consists of beki, ghanta (bell shaped member) above which there is another beki, amalaka sila, khapuri, kalasa, ayudha (chakra) and dhvaja.

The sanctum preserves the image of goddess Kali as the presiding deity of the temple. Here the presiding deity is called as 'Shyamakali' who is the first of the ten avatars (incarnations) of Goddess Durga. Shyamakali is the fearful and ferocious form of the mother goddess Durga. She is four armed and stands in pratyaldha pose on the chest of Lord Shiva. She is engaged here in reverse cohabitation with Lord Siva. She displays khadga in left upper hand, cutting head in left lower hand, abhaya mudra in upper right hand and varada mudra in lower right hand. Her iconography confirms to the dhyana of goddess



Dakshinakali of Puri town. The height of the slab of deity measures 3 ½ feet.⁷ It is also carved with dog, jackle, kite and crow. The images of goddess Vimala and Mangala are also worshipped in the sanctum. They are installed on both sides of the presiding deity and made of brass. Both these additional deities are about 1 ½ feet in height. Goddess Vimala displays snake in lower right hand and amrutakalasa in lower left hand respectively. Devi Mangala displays candra in upper right hand, rosary in lower right hand, padma in upper left hand and lotus flower with a stalk in lower left hand respectively. She has been worshipping in the sanctum since 1980's and acting as the calanti pratima of Devi Shyamakali. Raja Narasimha Deva (1621–1647 A.D.) is stated to have built the palace at Balisahi. It is believed that Devi Shyamakali must have been installed some time during that period.⁸ G.C. Tripathy has mentioned that goddess Shyamakali is the tutelary deity of Gajapati Maharaja of Puri.⁹ The shrine of Devi Shyamakali is one of the famous holy spots of the kshetra. Goddess Shyama Kali was the presiding deity of the old palace of Puri. As per the local tradition, Shyamakali has been the official deity for the Gajapati Maharaja (King) of Puri for hundreds of years. Shyamakali is one of the famous Goddesses of Puri. She was possibly established at Bali Sahi, Puri town by the Bhoi dynasty after it shifted its headquarters from Khurdha to Puri. She is worshipped in Dakshina Kali mantra and confirms to the dhyanā of first Mahavidya Kali.

The sanctum has one doorway towards the jagamohana. Door frames of the sanctum are completely undecorated. The Gaja-Lakshmi image is carved on the centre of the doorway lintel. Navagrahas are absent in the architrave above the doorway lintel. Two female figures named

Simha mukhi and Vyaghra mukhi are installed on both sides of the doorway. They are acting as the dvarapalas of the temple.

Jagamohana or Mukhasala

The jagamohana of the temple is a flat roof structure and its height is about 12 feet. The base of the bada is rectangular and it measures 25 feet in length and 15 feet in width. The outer walls of the bada of the jagamohana are bereft of ornamentation. Inner side niches of the eastern wall contain two Mahavira (Hanumana) images. The jagamohana has five doorways; one on eastern, three on western and one on southern side respectively.

The doorjambs of the eastern side are decorated with naga-bandhas. The centre of the doorway lintel is decorated with a khadga (sword). Navagrahas are carved on the architrave above the doorway lintel. They are all in yogasana posture with usual attributes in hands. Ganga and Yamuna are acting as the dvarapalas of the eastern side doorway. Other doorways of the jagamohana are completely undecorated.

Natamandapa

The natamandapa of the temple is a flat roofed structure and its height is about 15 feet. It is built in 1950's by the cooperation of devotees. The outer walls of the natamandapa are completely plain. Lion, the conventional mount of Devi is installed on the plain square sized pedestal, which noticed in the centre of the floor of natamandapa. Open windows are provided for ventilation of air and sunlight towards the interior of the natamandapa. Inner wall niches of the natamandapa are housed with sculptures of various deities and they are also finely painted with different colours. The niches of the western inner wall contain images of the Dasamahavidyas



such as Ma Adya-Kali, Ugra-Tara, Tripura-Sundari, Bhubansvari, Chhinna Masta, Bhairavi, Dhumabati, Kamala, etc. The western inner wall of the natamandapa also contains other deities in its niches. They are viz: Mahakali, Maha Lakshmi, Maya, Chhaya, Maha Sarasvati and Maha Gauri.

The northern side inner wall of the natamandapa contains some other deities in its niches. They are Maa Kala Ratri, Ashtabhuja Durga, Bhagavati, Kalika, Saila Putri, Lord Krishna, Kuvera, Bhagaban, etc.

The inner side southern wall of the natamandapa contains images of Devi Vaishnavi, Rudrani, Siva, Katyayani, Skanda Mata, Indra Devata, Siddha Datri and Maa Tarini.

The inner wall of the eastern side of the natamandapa also contains some deities such as Maa Brahmani, Dasabhuja Durga, Brahma, Vishnu, Maa Candra-Ghanta and Brahma Charini.

All the above deities are made of modern cement and they are executed in 1970's by the local artists of Puri.

Paintings

The inner walls of the natamandapa are depicted with paintings of Durga Madhava, Siva and Parvati, Ardhanarisvara, Maa Chamunda, Maa Yogamaya, Maa Mahamaya, Maa Jvalamukhi and Sri Ganesha. These paintings are also executed by the local artists of Puri.

The natamandapa has two doorways; one on the eastern side and another on the north-east corner. The doorjambs of the eastern side are decorated with flower medallions and lotus petalled devices. The centre of the doorway lintel is carved with an image of Ganesha.

Two lions on couchant elephants are installed on both sides of the eastern doorway.

There is a small Siva temple noticed in the southern side of the Shyamakali temple complex. It consists of two structures such as vimana and jagamohana. The sanctum of the vimana preserves dvadasa (twelve) Jyoti lingas as the presiding deity of that additional shrine, which is built in a much later period.

The temple complex of Shyamakali is enclosed by a boundary wall of 12 feet in height and it is made of bricks. The eastern and western side walls measure 60 feet while the southern and northern sides measure 100 feet respectively. The main entrance porch of the temple in eastern side is surmounted by a flat roof and it is about 12 feet in height.

Date of the temple

There is no authentic record with regard to the exact date of the Shyamakali temple of Srikshetra. According to Hari Hara Bahinipati, the Shyamakali temple was possibly built by one of the Ganga rulers of Puri.¹⁰ On the basis of the architectural style, the construction period of the Shyamakali temple can be tentatively assigned to the 2nd half of the 17th century A.D. Both the jagamohana and natamandapa are built in a later period in the 2nd half of the twentieth century.

Besides the above three Kali temples, the shrines of Smasana Kali and Gachha Kali are also found at Srikshetra. These two modern shrines are not significance from the architectural point of view. Hence, these two temples are not purview of our discussion.

Conclusion

Thus it is known from the above discussion that the presence of Kali temples



proves the popularity of Kali worship at Srikshetra. The temples of Bedhakali, Dakshinakali and Shyamakali were constructed in the late medieval period of Odishan history. Really, beautiful images of goddess Kali are found preserved inside the shrine represent the Odishan classical art of the medieval period. As per the tradition, most of the devotees visit goddess Bedha Kali, Dakshina Kali, Shyamakali, Gachha Kali and Smasana Kali after visiting Lord Jagannatha of Srimandira. Festivals like Kali Puja, Deepavali, Durga Puja, Kumara Purnima, Chaitra Mangalabara, etc. are observed in all the above Kali temples of Srikshetra. On the Kalipuja day lot of devotees arrive here to offer their prayer to Goddess Kali to get Her blessings on this auspicious day. Although the architectural features of the Kali temples of Srikshetra are not of so importance but from the religious point of view, these temples are of very significance, for which a large number of devotees do visit goddess Kali shrines of Srikshetra with great enthusiasm and devotion.

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Sakti Centres in Cuttack District : A Historical Perspective

Pareswar Sahoo

With its bountiful nature, Odisha is an enchanting state of old charms and new glamour. Having thirty districts in her heart it has a kaleidoscope of tourist attractions. Cuttack, the previous capital city of modern Odisha, is famous for filigree silverware, horn and brass work. The old Cuttack district is known for its silk and cotton textiles, besides the Buddhist golden triangle and also for Sakti pithas (Bhattarika, Charchika and Maa Pragala). These places are associated with Devi Durga, the symbol of power and strength and are therefore regarded as traditional *Sakti Kshetras* of Odisha dedicated to Brahmanical *Panchadevatas*.¹ These centers are honeycombed by glamorous scenic beauty and the religious potentialities are intended for all sections of visiting tourists, both inland and outland. The domestic tourists belong to the eastern belt and the southern belt, although few of them are from the central region also. Abhinaba Varanasi Katak, the earlier capital city of medieval Odisha and British time Odisha has river Mahanadi on the north and river Kathajodi on the south. The stone embankment protecting the river banks speak eloquently of the engineering skills of the earlier era and is regarded as an interregnum in the history of the Somavamsi rule in Odisha.

The origin of Sakti cult is shrouded in mystery. Since time immemorial the worship of Sakti (power) has been an important religious pursuit. The archaeologists, historians, indologist, philosophers and scholars of many other disciplines have expounded various theories with regard to the origin and evolution of the Sakti cult. It is easy to understand that Sakti means power and strength, which is expressed through different phenomena. In *Devisukta*, the *Saptasati* records,² intelligence, satisfaction, pity etc. as the various forms of Sakti.³

The Sakti or goddess in her different manifested aspects and forms represent various phenomena. For instance, Saraswati depicts learning and wisdom, Laxmi means wealth, Durga and Kali represent benevolent and malevolent aspects respectively and Maa Sarada Devi represents the socio-religious aspect of the philosophy of humanism and so on.⁴ Archaeological evidences prove the concept of Sakti, which can be traced back to 2200 B.C. - 1700 B.C. As a result of the fusion of the Vedic concept of Sakti, known as 'Uma' with the cult of Stambha there emerged the worship of Stambheswari who is considered to be the universal mother, the supreme reality.⁵



Both Mahenjodaro and Harappa discoveries have corroborated the concept of Sakti in the pre-Vedic period. A seal from Harappa showing on the obverse a nude female figure, head downwards and legs stretched out upwards with a plant issuing out of her womb, may be regarded as the proto-type of the mother goddess Sakambari.⁶ Macdonald remarks, "Goddesses occupy a very subordinate position in the Vedic belief and worship. The important goddesses of this period were Aditi, Usha, Saraswati, Prithvi, Ratri, Riti, Revati, Indrani, Rudrani."⁷ Although, Saktism was developed in the ancient times, now in Europe, the female worship is conducted through the worship of Virgin Mary.⁸ There are instances of mother worship in Far-Eastern Asian and African countries. The Tantra legends speak of the Sati and Dakshya Prajapati⁹ episode which reminds us the terrible sacrifice of Sati in the *Yajna kunda* due to the unbearable insult meted out by Dakshya, her father. It also tells us how Lord Siva in anger cut off the dead body of Sati into several pieces and threw the pieces all over (*Matsya Purana*). The places where the parts of the Sati's body fell are known as Sati's *pithas*.¹⁰

Odisha has taken the root of every major religious sects of Hinduism. Lakhs of pilgrims pay a visit to Puri to have a glimpse of Lord Jagannath, who is regarded as the epicenter of Tantra cult. Historians like Dr. S.C. Behera has pointed out that, Saktism in Odisha too, has absorbed the tree worship of the aboriginals into its fold. The worship of 'Stambha' or a pillar made of stone or wood as the Divine Mother, is prevalent now also among the tribals and aboriginals of Odisha in various places. We learn from the Maranjamura Charter¹¹ that the tutelary deity of Somavamsi rule was Panchambari

Bhadrambika,¹² identified with Stambheswari. It seems very probable that it is the result of fusion of the cult of Stambheswari and Bhadrabika which contributed to the evolution of Goddess Subhadra, the central wooden figure in the Jagannath temple.¹³ In the evolution of the Saktism in ancient Odisha, primitive tree worship of the aboriginals was an important aspect. The assimilation of two cultures viz. the Aryan and the aboriginal also led to a synthesis of religious beliefs which characterized the growth and development of the various forms of religious beliefs like Vaishnavism, Saktism and Saivism in Odisha down the centuries.¹⁴

There are several *Sakti Pithas* all over Odisha. They include the seats of Goddess Bimala at Puri, Goddess Viraja at Jajpur, Goddess Bhubaneswari at Bhubaneswar, Goddess Mangala at Kakatpur, Goddess Charchika at Banki, Goddess Sarala at Jhankada, Goddess Tarini at Ghatagaon, Goddess Samaleswari at Sambalpur, Goddess Pataneswari at Patnagarh, Sambalpur and Bolangir, Goddess Bhagavati at Banpur, Goddess Bhattarika at Baramba, Goddess Pragala at Narasinghpur, Goddess Katak Chandi at Cuttack, Goddess Mahakali at Kharuda, Goddess Dakshinakali at Bandhahuda. I would like to focus here one of the traditional but much informative topics relating to the *Sakti Pithas* in Cuttack district. The district of Cuttack was consisting of six old Garhjats i.e. Narasinghpur, Baramba, Tigiria, Athagarh, Banki, Saranda. These Sakti pithas are closely associated with the cultural and social developments of the people of the district.¹⁶ They draw great inspirations from the worship of Katak Chandi at Cuttack, Charchika at Banki, Bhattarika at Baramba, Maa Pragala at Narasinghpur, Mahakali at Khurda, Dakshinakali at Bandhahuda.



Saktism in Odisha is a long tradition. Banki, which was one of the old Garhjats of Cuttack district, has been famous as a seat of the presiding deity, Maa Charchika since 14th Century A.D.¹⁷ It is located on the picturesque mountain named Richika, where the sacred river Renuka washes its feet. On their way from Bhubaneswar to Narsinghpur, via Govindpur, tourists, both inland and outland, visit the temple in the month of October and offer their worship to the Goddess. Especially a large number of visitors come to this *Pithas* in autumn due to *Mahastami puja*.¹⁸ Several other festivals are also observed in the temple with high testimony.

In ancient time, the whole region was a beautiful fertile land, with green paddy fields, dense forest with casuarina trees and some tall palm trees. Usually the tribals like Kondhs,¹⁹ Sabaras,²⁰ use to live there. Historically speaking, the region was inhabited by the Aryans and some ruling dynasties, viz. Airas, Somas, and Gangas. Some historians believe that Goddess Charchika, known as "Mother Earth"²¹ is being worshipped on the Blue Mountain Richika, in Banki since 3rd century B.C. According to Gibbon, precious stones were exported from Banki region to the ancient Roman empire. Ptolemy and Hiuen Tsang supported the view of Gibbon.

The goddess Bhattacharika at Baramba, in Cuttack district has a sprawling complex, to the west of Ratnagiri hills, overlooking the river Mahanadi. The hills encircling Bhattacharika on either sides of the river are Basistrunga, Ratnagiri, Nilagiri, Bankamunda, Gayaldiha, Baigani and Manibhadra, which are considered to be sacred by the local people. Besides the scenic beauty is truly exotic and a heart throb to any visitor, devotee or tourist. This place occupies the central position in the sacred *panchakosha*²²

(distance of 10 miles) extending from Simhanath to Nilamadhab. Devi Narayani exists on the Southern bank and Narayana, Nilamadhava to the West. Vindhyabasini is worshipped to the north in a beautiful forest. Simhanatha Maheswar lies to the West of Vindhyabasini. All these sacred pithas spread in an area of Panchakosha wash the sin of the people.

The existence of the presiding deity Maa Bhattacharika can be traced back to the 7th century A.D.²² The iconography of Bhattacharika image can give an idea whether it was a Buddhist and Hindu Sakti pitha. The Deity image of Bhattacharika is seated on *Lalitasana*, the left hand holding a lotus stalk, and the right one in the *Varada* pose associated with the pedestal having eight very small images five in *Padmasana* and left in *Lalitasana* with the *Ayudha* as the central figure. The Odia book '*Bhattacharika*' identifies the associated images of this temple as Prabha, Maya, Jaya, Sakshama, Visuddha suprabha, Avaya, Brahmani, Maheswari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani, Chamunda and Mahalaxmi. Now the head priest Nilamani Mahapatra and his associates worship the Goddess as Raja Rajeswari, Mahamaya Tripura Sundari and Siddha Bhattacharika by reciting the Durga *mantras*. So it is believed that the iconography of the Goddess is similar to Maa Astabhuj Mahisamarddini Durga. The local people say that the goddess worshipped here is very powerful with divinity. In earlier times, the practice of human sacrifice or *Balipratha*²³ prevailed here. Gradually that practice was given up and only the practice of animal sacrifice continued. On the full moon day of Mahastami puja the people from all over Odisha come to the sacred place and offer their prayer. The three great *Sankrantis* like *Raja*,



Mahavisuba and *Makar* are celebrated here with a great interest and fervour.

A historic place of pilgrimage, Narasinghpur is located on the bank of the river Mahanadi, which has the sacred *Sakti pitha* of Maa Pragala. Narasinghpur is situated at a distance of 144 kms from Bhubaneswar, and 124 kms from Cuttack by road. The location of this place is beautiful, and therefore it is a natural picnic spot for the picnickers. Especially for the celebration of New Year, on January 1st, thousand of visitors come to this place only to enjoy its calm and quiet natural scenery. The attraction of this place is the small waterfall.

The background of Maa Pragala is also ancient in origin and its existence has been traced back to 8th - 9th century A.D. According to the head priest Braja Dehuri, the early name of Maa Pragala, was Balangi,²³ the daughter of the then king of Angul. When Narasinghpur garh (fort) was ruled by Anantavarman Singh Deo, in a bloodiest war he defeated the king of Angul. Then Balangi turned into the manifestation of Maa Pragala. She said to the king Anantavarman Singh Deo in a dream to take her away and worship in his palace by offering one goat in each step. It was a difficult task for the king to fulfill this wish of the Goddess. He collected a large number of goats from all parts of the Garhjat which were not sufficient. The dense forest where the *Sakti pitha* is located, the king constructed a house with brick walls and straw thatched roof and installed the goddess there. Since those days Maa Pragala is worshipped as the Sakti, the source of power by the people. Apart from the place like Bhattarika at Baramba, Katak Chandi at Cuttack, Charchika at Banki, the place bears the testimony of the history and culture of Odisha in some way or other. The village Pragala is constituted with

the tribal people like Kondhs, Savaras, Santals and Kolhas. In early period the priesthood system was based on tribal heredity.²⁴ Gradually the practice has deteriorated and taken over by Mahapatras and Dehuries.²⁵ Therefore, Maa Pragala is accepted as the tribal deity. Now the goddess is worshipped in the form of a metal idol with 12 feet long sword by her side.

These *Sakti Pithas* in the district of Cuttack, provide enough evidence to support the notion that once upon a time Saktism played a dominant role here.

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Goddess Durga : Divine Symbol of Power

Prabhudutt Dash

You represent the primordial energy of the Universe.
 You are the Goddess of power and motherhood.
 You are the very basis of the World.
 You are the symbol of courage and beauty.
 O Mother ! You are beyond all explanation.
 You are the object of worship of all.
 You are the remover of difficulties and
 bestower of peace, intellect, prosperity and bliss.
 You are Karma, Mahamaya (the great illusion)
 and Moksha (enlightenment).
 You are the End and You are the Beginning.
 You are the life force of the creation of the Universe.
 You are the Embodiment of sacrifice, purity,
 knowledge, salvation, truth and self-realization.
 You are the original manifested form of mother
 Parvati or Adi-parashakti.

You are the symbol of creation,
 preservation and destruction.
 I bow to You O Goddess Durga,
 the bestower of happiness.
 I bow to You O Goddess Parvati,
 who ends all miseries.
 I bow to You O Goddess Laxmi,
 Who grants wealth and prosperity.
 I bow to You O Goddess Saraswati,
 Who provides knowledge and enlightenment.
 May Mother Durga drive out the darkness
 from our lives and lead us to the Truth.

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Beware ! Our Oceans Would be Turning into a Thin Soup of Plastic Soon !

Santosh Pattanaik

“We Made Plastic. We Depend On It. Now We’re Drowning In It... Because plastic wasn’t invented until the late 19th century, and production really only took off around 1950, we have a mere 9.2 billion tons of the stuff to deal with. Of that, more than 6.9 billion tons have become waste. And of that waste, a staggering 6.3 billion tons never made it to a recycling bin. Most of it isn’t thrown off ships, but is dumped carelessly on land or in rivers...”

- National Geographic, June 2018

Plastics have been permeating our life for quite some time now. Plastic is everywhere - in our grocery stores, our restaurants, our toiletries, toys, furniture, clothes and whatever you name it. We consume millions of pounds of plastic every day. Sadly though, the majority of plastic we consume is used once and discarded. Just 9% of all plastic created is ever recycled, while 12 per cent is incinerated. The rest 79% is sent to landfills, or what’s increasingly common, it ends up in the environment, in our rivers and lakes, beaches, and our oceans. Nine million tons of waste plastic ends up in the sea each year. Fish eat it, which subsequently return to our dinner plates. We’re on the edge of a major ecological disaster !

Plastic pollution is a real threat to marine life, and the problem continues to grow each year. By 2050, it’s estimated the weight of all plastic in the oceans will outweigh fish ! Plastic enters the

ocean in a number of ways: through the rivers, drainage systems, in rain runoff, and by wind, to name a few. Some plastic washes ashore. Yet, a majority of ocean plastic gets stuck at sea. And these pieces of plastic are pulled by currents around the globe. Plastics take a beating by currents and waves, as well as the sun, and they slowly break down over time. A single plastic bottle, therefore, turns into tiny, nearly microscopic fragments of plastic called “micro-plastics”. These smaller bits of plastic are consumed by hundreds of marine species. Hundreds of thousands of sea turtles, whales and other marine mammals die every year from eating discarded plastic bags mistaken for food. Turtles think the bags are jellyfish, their primary food source. Once swallowed, plastic bags choke animals or block their intestines, leading to an agonizing death. On land, many cows, goats and other animals suffer a similar fate to marine life, when they accidentally ingest plastic bags while foraging for food.

Most of the commonly used types of plastics contain harmful chemicals and artificial dyes. Animals are exposed to these chemicals, which cause Cancer and reproductive problems. Marine plastic pollution has effected over 267 species worldwide, as a result of ingestion, starvation, suffocation, infection, drowning and entanglement. Fifty to eighty per cent of all sea



turtles found dead have ingested some form of plastic. Seabirds unintentionally feed their chicks plastic, mistaking it for food. A study found that 98% of the chicks sampled had ingested some form of plastic. There are several accounts of various whale species found dead after plastic consumption, such as in 2002 when a whale was found with 800 kg of plastic bags in its stomach or in 2004 when another whale was found with tightly packed black plastic bags blocking the entrance to its stomach. An estimated 1 million seabirds and more than 100,000 marine mammals are killed every year due to ingesting or getting tangled in marine plastics. Recent studies have found that more than a quarter of all fish contain plastic, including those that we consume as seafood.

The evidence of the plastic's impact on marine life is ever mounting. It is expected that there will soon be more plastic in our oceans than fish. Plastic disrupts the nutrient balance in our oceans. It affects everyone – from the animals, to the plants, and even to us, as we're likely to eat seafood tainted with plastic waste. Plastic destroys coral reefs, which provide habitats to many marine organisms, besides adjusting carbon and nitrogen levels in the water and producing essential nutrients for marine food chains. 70% of the Earth's oxygen is produced by marine plants, while the remaining 30% is produced by rainforests. Just as deforestation is decimating the amount of oxygen produced by trees, plastic is drastically reducing the capability of our oceans to compensate for our increasing carbon dioxide emissions.

World's consumption rate is now estimated at well over 500 billion plastic bags annually, or almost 1 million per minute ! In the last 70 years, production of plastic has grown from 50 million metric tons to over 300 million metric tons per year. Since the 1950s, when plastics became popular, the amount of plastic produced

weighs as much as 1 billion elephants ! As production and consumption of plastic materials increase, so does the struggle for proper disposal. We have already seen the effects of our mass consumption, but projections suggest, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Now it's a matter of whether we want to move forward or keep drowning in a crisis of our own creation. It's time to wake up from our slumber, ideally before the ocean turns into a thin soup of plastic.

What you can do?

- Say NO to single-use plastics, ditch plastic bags.
- Support Bans to help reduce our reliance on single-use plastics.
- Go with reusable items - reusable mug, water bottle, shopping bag etc.
- Attend Beach Cleanup Events. These are a great way to get involved.
- Start Recycling, the quickest way to reduce plastic waste.
- Support Cleanup Organizations - Join a cleanup club in your area. If you don't have the time, consider a donation to a worthy cause.
- Don't release balloons.
- Don't discard your fishing line into the water.
- Refuse straws at restaurants.

Pick up Litter. If you're out for a stroll along the beach or river trail, pick up any trash and litter you see. There's a good chance, it could end up in the ocean.

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Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

Dr. Nirmala Kumari Mohapatra

“All education is, on the one side, a search for truth; on the other side, it is pursuit of social betterment. You may discover truth but you should apply it to improve the status of society”.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975) was recognised as one of the best philosophers and statesmen in the world. He was born on 05-September 1888 in Thirutani in the present state of Tamilnadu. His mother Sitamma and father Sarvepalli Veeraswamy could manage a big family with a meagre income. The talented boy S. Radhakrishnan continued his education with scholarship. He had his education from Lutheran Mission School in Tirupati, then Voorhees College in Vellore, then Madras Christian College. He did his M.A in Philosophy.



By kind appreciation of his Prof. Dr. A. G. Hogg, Radhakrishnan's M.A. Thesis was published, when he was only 20 years old. The scholar S. Radhakrishnan had his mastery over several Indian Philosophies like Vedanta, Upanishadas, Brahmasutra, Bhagawad Gita, works of Buddhism, Jainism etc. By the by he

studied the works of Plato, Plotinus, Kant, Bradley, Bergson, J.S.Mill, Herbert Spencer, Fichte, Hegel, Karl Marx etc. His works abridged the thoughts of Eastern and Western philosophies.

As a genuine academician he taught in Madras Presidency College, Madras, (now Chennai) (1909), University of Mysore, Calcutta University and several Universities of India and abroad. As a great scholar he was given with the prestigious King George V Chair of Mental and Moral Science at the Calcutta University in 1921. In 1931 he became the Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University of Waltair. He served there for five years. In 1936 he was offered with a Chair in the Oxford University, Oxford. That was H.N. Spalding Chair of Eastern Religion and Ethics. By way of lecturing he spoke on India's freedom fight. By the by he expressed “**India is not a subject**

to be administered but a nation seeking its soul”. In 1939, he became the Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University, Benaras. It was the time of 2nd World War. He served there till the middle of January 1948. He was delegate to the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) several times



between 1946 to 1952. He also served as a member of the Indian Constituent Assembly. At the same time he also served as the Chairman of the University Education Commission (1948-49) and Prof. of Oxford University. He could manage his time and talent in finer way.

In free India Dr. S. Radhakrishnan adorned the chair of the University Education Commission. In busy schedule of his life time it was seen that he was appointed as the ambassador to the Soviet Union. There he faced Joseph Stalin, an ardent Communist. Policy of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan could change Stalin's attitude. It was the wonder. Any way he developed friendship and amity between India and USSR. In 1952 Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was elected as the Vice-President of India. In 1954, he was conferred with the title 'Bharat Ratna'. He was Vice-President of India for two terms. (1952-62)

In 1962 Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was elected as the President of India. His tenure as President (1962-67) was eventful due to Indo-China war (1962), Prime Minister Sri Jawaharlal Nehru's death (1964), Indo-Pak war, and victory of India over Pakistan in 1965. During the Prime Minister, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri the guidance of Dr. Radhakrishnan President was very valuable in those days.

At the age of 79 Dr. S. Radhakrishnan got retired from public life and returned to his house 'Girija' in Mylapore, Madras, (now Chennai). His demise on 17, April, 1975 was a great loss to the nation.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's main publications may be enumerated as such; i.e., The Ethics of the Vedanta and its metaphysical presuppositions (1908), The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore (1918), The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy (1920), Indian Philosophy, Vol-I

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Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was awarded knighthood in 1931. In 1963 he got honorary D. Ph. from Teheran University, honorary D.Litt degree from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, honorary Doctor of Law from Pennsylvania University. In 1964 he got honorary Ph.D. degree from Moscow University and honorary Doctor of Law from the National University of Ireland. He was given with a lot of honorary degrees from about all over the globe including - Oxford, Cambridge and Rome. He was also given with the honorary member of the Order of Merit from Buckingham Palace in 1963. He was given with opportunity to tour several countries like Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Hungary, Bulgaria, Africa, Great Britain, U.S.S.R. Ireland, Nepal etc.

As a very prominent person in Education and Statesmanship he was found to be very simple in living. He was gentle in dress and dealings. As a great teacher his birthday 05, September is observed as Teachers' Day in our country. We pay our highest devotion and regards to this celebrated Teacher of the humanity.

Dr. Nirmala Kumari Mohapatra, Sector-2/426, Niladri Vihar, Bhubaneswar-21.



Sakti Consciousness in Tantra

Himanshu Sekhar Bhuyan

There are eight great Sakti pithas in the land of Lord Jagannath surrounding Srikshetra such as; - Bimala in Puri, Mangala in Kakatapur, Bhagabati in Banapur, Charchika in Banki, Biraja in Jajpur, Sarala in Jhankad, Bhattarika in Badamba, Cuttack Chandi in Cuttack. Apart from these prominent eight Sakti Pithas, there are many Chandi Pithas in different places of Odisha. There are thirty four Sakti Pithas and nineteen Saiva Pithas, which are surrounded by sixteen Mahasakti Pithas for the sake of their preservation.

The other 'Sakti's names of Divine Mother are as such; — Baseli of Choudwar, 'Barunei' of Khorda, Gouri of Bhubaneswar, Bhadrakali of Bhadrak, Bhairavi of Boud, Hingulai of Talcher, Budhi Thakurani of Angul, Sidhakali of Keonjhar, Bindhyabasini of Redhakhol, Ghanteswari of Chipilima, Lankeswari of Junagarh, Maa Pindari of Navarangapur, Sureswari of Subarnapur, Patamaheswari of Jeypore, Pataneswari of Patana, Manikeswari of Bhabanipatana, Majhighariani of Rayagada, Narayani of Nuagada, Kichakeswari of Khiching, Jhadeswari of Dhama, Kalijai of Chilika, Harachandi of Brahmagiri, Ramachandi of Konark, Shyamakali of Balisahi, Sanabhauni of Jagulai, Batamangala near Puri,

Ugratara of Bhusandapur, Daskhinakali of Harekrishnapur, Narayani of Barakul etc.

Out of general evidences, it might be mentioned here that most Chandi Pithas are being placed in four corners such as- Samaleswari in Sambalpur, Tarini in Keonjhar, Tara in Ganjam and Ambika in Baripada. Out of many expressive figures of Sakti, a few goddesses are having terrible postures like Chandi, Chinnamasta, Chamunda are related to tantric rituals. Many sacred spheres of divine goddesses still remain unworshipped. All of those are based on sound foundation of Tantra and most of those are out of common views.

A few aspects are seemed to be the same in 'Agama'. The 'jyotisha' or 'jyotisha tatwa', seen in the scriptures of 'tantra' as well as 'yamala' of 'AGAMA', although appear to be almost same, it varies from its ways of appliances. Similarly 'Yugadharma' term is seen to be there in both 'Tantra' and 'Yamala' which is included in 'Agama'. Apparently the entire procedure of worships was held at first on the basis of Sakta norms and forms. Even the followers of one originally existed religion or Adi-dharma, the Jain-saints also used to offer prayers before an embodiment of 'Sakti' form like 'Chakreswari' etc. The theories of 'Agama' were not only



attractive for having ideal ideas of Saktas but also spread the spectrum of various exemplars of religions like Saiva-Dharma and Vaisnav-Dharma etc. So like 'Saktagama' the other two terms 'Saivagama' and 'Vaisnavagama' had also erupted. Accordingly an event elucidated in Purana, after being offended by Her father Dakṣya's unenduring words towards Siva, Sati jumped into the fire of altar and passed away. Then carrying Sati's body on his shoulder, Lord Shiva started dancing with anger so terribly that the whole universe was thrilled. The entire universe was on the brink of destruction. Then in response to the bewildering deities' prayer offered to Lord Vishnu, the body of Sati was scattered and cut into pieces through the sharpened edge of Sudarshan Chakra thrown by Lord Vishnu. The pieces of the body were fallen in many places at sixes and sevens. The spots where the main part and parcel of her physique were fallen, those were identified as main places of Divine Mother. In this event, the roles of 'Sati', 'Siva' and 'Vishnu' are authentic to each other. In this context, Saktism, Saivism and Vaisnavism came to the limelight together to be one with Sakti consciousness. Here is the criteria to synthesize- saktagama, saivagama and vaisnavagama to each other.

It is being said that for the achievement of Sakti consciousness Buddhists most of the time had taken shelter in the power of Bija Mantra (dharini). Each Mantra was meant for specific invocation of different spheres of energies. Buddhists could manage to awake Supreme Sakti by dint of Mantra's invocation. (It is being referred from 'Sadhana Mala' and 'Sadhan Samuchaya')

Synthesis of Saktas' and tantrics' processes - P.C. Bhanjdeo- a glimpse- Since past life Tantrik Prafulla Chandra was a seeker of goddess Chinnamasta. He could manage to

assimilate divine power by virtue of this worship. Late Tantrik Prafulla Chandra Bhanjdeo not only was a prominent king of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh, but also was a member of Parliament. He could manage to give some sight regarding few goddesses of Odisha where their histories are being evolved and shaped by tantric foundation. It is being maintained in his elaborated essay regarding Goddess Kuru Kulla of Mayurbhanja district of Odisha. Sir John Woodroff also has mentioned in his book 'Tantra-raj Tantra' regarding this Goddess. This 'Sakta' religion is being spread from Aryans to Dravidians. This is being elaborately mentioned not only in 'Nigama' or 'vedic sastras' but also in various 'Tantric' scripts. More prominently this concept is being illuminated in Rig Veda, 'Ratri Sukta' and in Sama Veda. But it is also true that many could not find the pearls of Tantra in these Suktas and Shastras. Even then the Puranas which being inspired by these Suktas are quite elaborate and profound in mentioning of Sakta Dharma. In the beginning of first Mantra of 'Atharva Veda' the word 'Devi' is being mentioned.

‘Samaso ‘Devi’ ravistaya apo bhabanti
Pitaya samajo abhisrabantu nah.’

As in many Sakta manuscripts tantra is being clearly mentioned similarly in many tantric scriptures there is profound in expression of Sakta consciousness. In Tantric scriptures like 'Gouri Tantra', some words indicating 'Sakti' and 'Tantra' prove the clearance of indifferences between these two terms - 'Kumari Tantra' and 'Yogini Tantra'. These two examples are enough. Most of the titles of tantric scriptures are likely seen of this style. In 'Gauri Tantra' as well as in 'Sammohana Tantra' (Tantra of mesmerization) most probably Sakta's emotion is being observed there. Initially Sakta philosophy has come from



‘Veda’ or ‘Nigama’. Besides these, Sakta philosophy was accepted in Boudh, Saiva and Vaisnab religion also.

Anomalous, yet theoretical-In Sakta conspicuousness some exceptional rituals are observed in most occasions. A sort of difference was observed in Sakta consciousness. One of its example is known from the prayer of Rudra and Ambika for availing best brooms for the brides. Rudra and Ambika were not only known as brothers and sisters but also were co-related with each other as husband and wife. (Bajasaneya Samhita, Taitaria Brahmana and Taitaria Aranyaka)

Yugannadha (cosmic couple): One thing to be noted here that devi Subhadra is worshipped near Lord Jagannath. Even if she is His sister, it is being said that she is known as his Sakti also. (...”Tara yantre pralambaghno Subhadra bhubaneswari..”) She is being prayed by devotees as Jagatjanani, Parameswary, Mohini, Tripura Sundari and Yogamaya etc (Niladri Mohodaya, chapter 26). Cosmic couple’s idol (amorous idol) is being originated from the concept of concert of Gods. Like Brahma’s Brahmani and Sabitri, Visnu’s Baisnabi or Laksmi and for Maheswara or Rudra’s Ambika, Sivani or Siva are being treated as Sakti. Like that Indra’s Indrani, Jama’s Yami and for Baraha She is Barahi—these pictures of feminine figures are mentioned in Manduky Upanishad, being treated as Sakti.

The American Historian Dr. Thomas E. Donaldson’s visit to Odisha was remarkable for his research work (books containing of three volumes) regarding the temples of Odisha. Another authentic one was his best composition and compilation named Kamadeva's 'Pleasure Garden;-Orissa'. This sort of titling or naming of

the book by the author was the only root cause of opposing him. In an encounter of short period in 1991, in the room no.127 of Hotel Kalinga Ashok, Kalpana square-Bhubaneswar, when he came to Odisha. This humble writer’s polite appeal before him was all the amorous postures depicted on temples were not only based on ‘kamasashtras and silpasashtras, but also those were constructed on the basis of the sakta-tantric rituals mentioned in tantra-sastras. The American researcher has also supported it by giving many references in the subjects of his book. Therefore the book could have been titled as- ‘Fifth-‘M’s Tantric Cult; Odisha’. This was the opinion of mine which was published in a highly circulated weekly magazine of Odisha at that time. I don’t know how far Dr. Donaldson realized and remembered it or not, but certainly the eastern thought is always higher than the western, which is being emphasized by this humble writer in almost every sphere of this kind of speculation.

This humble writer had already stated also the views by delivering a speech in A.I.R. in 1991, January in support of the temple’s statues of amorous couple as total divine, which were depicted in accordance with tantra’s sacred rituals. Another talk (in Hindi) of this writer was also broadcast in 1995 in A.I.R. in favour of the sanctity of the syntaxes used by the chariot-driver in Car-festival or Rath-yatra, the ritual of uttering was the source of pleasure for Mother Durga as a mystery in Sakti consciousness. Even wise people also severely criticize it generally in public by blatantly blaming it – ‘obscene’. To call a spade a spade there is nothing obscenity in addition or presentation of amorous thoughts in divine art, culture and sculpture. Because certainly those are almost based on some sort of tantric divinities like ‘bajrajani- boudha-tantra’ of ‘Indravuti’ as well



as 'sahaj-jana' of his sister 'Lakshmingkara' or sacred sakti consciousness of Odisha or India

Accordingly ancient concept, as Siva and Sakti were co-related with each other, Aryas have visualised other deities' Saktis (wives) also. In some spiritual processes of Adya Sakti (Primordial Goddess) Karala, Karalanala and Katyaini, these names were inducted by the Aryas. Lord Siva was identified as the husband of Uma and Ambika. In this way according to 'Taittiriya aranyaka', Aryas had mentioned the names such as Vedamata, Kanyakumari, Saraswati, 'Chhandasam Barada', Karali, Katyayini and Durga etc. as the strong high-oriented symbol of Sakti consciousness.

Umahaimavati & Others

It is known from this last mentioned 'Durga' name that she is generally regarded as Uma and Ambika both. Her 'Uma Haimabati' name has a special meaning. Her 'Haimavati' name along with 'Uma' is mentioned in Upanishad. Supreme Existence indicated in Kenopanishad is 'Uma Haimabvati' as described by Vedic annotators.

Name of Karali is found in Mandukyopanishad. Agni, Saptajihwa and Kali's name is also found there. Vadrakali's name is found (Sankhyaana guhya sutra) in the very beginning. From these three divided Devis- as 'Sampradaya' Devi, 'Prasad Devi' and 'Kula Devi', Kali' and 'Vadrakali' belong to 'Kula Devi'. These two Devis are known as Tantrik Devis.

This 'Uma' name of Devi has different meaning. Sayanacharya and Sankaracharya have mentioned the meaning of 'Uma' as Jnana or Knowledge and Vidya or teaching. This 'Haimavati' name is mysterious... Srimat Anirvan, disciple of Swami Nigamananda had given a

glimpse of Uma Haimavati as Omnipotent Supreme Goddess.

Anirvan—A glimpse- This Haimavati's name is found in the writings of Anirvan—a Bengali Pandit. Anirvan's real name was Nirvanananda, whose Guru Swami Nigamananda was a great sage having four excellent Sidhis (spiritual perfection); tantra, jnana yoga and prema or Bhava Sadhana. Primordial Goddess was serving Him as His Shakti. This great saint was a great tantric named Brahmananda Giri in his previous birth. Brahmananda had married Mahamaya (Adishakti) and was blessed with two children. This wonderful incident had taken place and had drawn the attention of many saints all over India and abroad. From a reliable source it is known that Nirvanananda one day became uninterested to do his Guru's work and quit his Guru due to the hidden attraction towards Haimavati (name of Adishakti's another form). Anirvan's secret penance was to get and realize Her like his Guru's achievement. According to some other's views, it was almost a 'Bairabi' - based tantric austerity. We don't know how far he successfully practised it or not but he repented for quitting his Guru and declared himself as 'Anirban' and chose it more in lieu of the initiated name 'Nirvanananda'.

Supreme Goddess – Ista Devi (Worshipping Goddess) in Tantra — The matter of relationship between Shakta consciousness and tantric practices in the names of goddesses is clear from the aforesaid narration. Many known and unknown names of goddesses are there where Tantra is directly related to those. Accordingly the reference of 'Mahabharat', 'Banaparba' — Durga was pleased with flesh, blood and wine etc. It was to a great extent equivalent to the almost external tantric 5Ms



rituals of 'Madya' and 'Mansa' etc. Except these, we see certain applied words of the worship of Maheswari' and 'Bhagadeva'. If there is a little glimpse of Shakta religion, that is also tantamount to the consciousness of tantric rituals.

Despite these, wise men and experts know that Supreme Goddess is the almighty leader of Tantra. In the climax stage of tantric practice, the performer feels the oneness between his lady partner and the divine goddess. The performer or Sadhak (spiritual practitioner) also realizes within himself the same oneness with supreme Goddess in the last period of the process. At that time the doer's limited power mingles with the Supreme Goddess' power. The performer's will- power becomes one with that of supreme Lord.

The Almighty, who is generally known as God— He appears to be Supreme Goddess or Mahashakti in the realization of the spiritual practitioner. Many incidences of this universe are taking place by dint of the controlling power of Supreme Goddess. A great super power exists behind these events on the upper side of this mundane world. That is the stage or level of — 'tripadasya mritam-divi'—as proclaimed by Vedas.

It is described in Kena Upanishad that once upon a time all deities including 'Agni' and 'Bayu' etc. became proud of their own potentialities. They had to face a typical test one day presented by Omnipotent Supreme Goddess. SHE was called in the name of 'UMA HAIMAVATI'. All Gods were defeated by Her. Devraj 'Indra' acquired Brahma-jnana (knowledge about supreme conception) from 'Uma Haimavati'. 'Uma Haimavati' was really mysterious.

Serpentine Power slept in Muladhar Chakra-

The Supreme Goddess is beyond word, mind and sight as well as expert in transforming and leading the mis-happenings. It is also noted in scriptures that primordial mother Goddess is sleeping in subtle (muladhar) chakra, near anus portion of the physique of every creature, specifically of human being. If She is awakened from sleeping, then the power of secret seed sowed in the human form gets energized. This is practiced in yogic processes through meditation of subtle Chakras from Muladhar to Sahasrara. It is called yoga Kriya and Kriya Yoga both. The method of meditative clues were followed by tantrics. The process was called —'Tantra- Yoga'. Its various practices are followed in the scriptures of Tantra. Tantric scripture is the only guide in the path of spiritual perfection. It is called—Agama'. Lord Siva has clarified it in 'agama' or tantra that pain- stricken people of kali-yuga cannot proceed on the principles of 'nigama' or 'veda'. 'Agama' is spoken by Lord Siva or Sambhu (Mahadev) where 'Nigama' or 'Veda' is spoken by Swayambhu (Brahma). This 'Siva-spoken' tantric process is excellent and easy-following for kali-yuga's self-centered people.

Speciality of tantra -Tantra accepts a special stature in spiritual consciousness, though it does not oppose Veda. Atharva-Veda indicates about all sorts of tantric –applied processes. All sorts of teachings of Mantra (surcharged words), tantric (an extending process), Marana (killing), Basikaran (mesmerisation) and Uchchatan (lesson of creating lunatic reaction) etc. are included in 'Atharva Veda'. Besides these, Tantra's theories are wide-spread up to health –science, medical science, science of alchemy (Rasayana Vidya) and metaphysics (spiritual science) etc. It acquires highest spiritual position and is fruitful in the



worship of form and formless (Sakara and Nirakar). Along with so many spiritual techniques, a vast path is open here for all irrespective of honest and worldly people.

Though tantra possesses a special community it was deeply connected with the development of Saivism. Tantric processes were in vogue probably from the age of Upanishads. Possessing a special and independent stage at that time this process was mentioned in Baraha Purana, Padma Purna, Skanda Purana, Brihaddharma Purana, Devi Bhagavad and Srimad Bhagavat etc. The tantric processes as proclaimed by 'Agama' were based on worshipping of Saktis. It is clear from the term of 'Saktagama' as 'Saivagama' and 'Vaisnabagama'. The opinion of 'Agama's scripture is above the consideration of sex, religion and caste irrespective of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Baisya, Sudra and men, women etc. This scripture is full of excellent examples of spiritual practices about direct realization of Gods and Goddesses.

A Practitioner in Preliminary Stage, called Sakta —

To analyze it theoretically, Sakta and Vaisnab, these two indicate the level of spiritual feeling. In the preliminary stage of penance, tantra is only inspiring, which is interesting and mysterious in this process to realize the taste of detachment through attachment or indulgence. Here a most wordly person also feels encouraged to dive in to the stream of sacred tantric rituals. Everyone might be called -'sakta' at the outset of this practice. It is a common notion for a new practitioner here that he would think every unmatured or general creature of this world as 'Sakta' in his gradual progress and process of achieving higher sense. Accordingly the opinion of Thakur Sri Sri Nigamananda—'A Shakta in

its supreme realized state is called a Vaisnab.' To express it in other words someone being a same Shakta might be also called a Vaisnab accordingly, his own real realized highest state of spirituality. This term 'Vaisnab' is a state or level neither a position nor a name of any community. To consider it in this view, Saktas Chandi Das, Ray Ramananada and Sriramakrishna etc were rather Parama-Vaisnabs. Though generally not understood but it is true in spiritual sense that the seekers of metaphysical path or practitioners before realization might be called Shaktas.

Conclusion:

Every creature of this world is servant of desires and madly hankering after illusion and pleasure of Rupa (Appearance), Rasa (Taste), Gandha (Smell), Sparsha (Touch) and Sabda (Sound). A human being who wanted to go above these had to follow a typical type of Shakta-tantric way which was practiced and materialized by metaphysicians or real selected spiritual seekers. By the by the objectives of non-indulgent practices were forgotten and the misconduct in the tantric path of indulgence was inducted due to the response of a sort of misconception in the name of Shakta consciousness. Induction of indulgence-oriented process of tantric 5 'M' was prevalent to avail higher speculation of Shakta consciousness. But the main objective of the feeling of soul's oneness or self-realisation through this sakta-tantric practices became alienated from its prime purposes. Gradually all those were damaged and demoralized. 'Tantra' is the first and foremost topic of 'Agama'. At least nineteen classifications are included in Tantra. Even 'Sakuna / sakunta vidya' (knowledge of taking forms of animals and others from one to another) etc. are also included in the periphery of practicing Tantra. Agama scriptures opine that rituals of



Tantra and recitation of Mantra - these both are beneficial in Kali-yug. Rishi Yagnyabalkya, Bhṛigu, Basistha, Brihaspati, Pulasta, Kapila, Garg, Bhargava and Jaimini had known about tantra along with Shakti consciousness (Divine Goddess's spirit). It is also assumed that tantra-based Garuda Vidya, Bana Vidya and Go vidya etc. were expertised by Lord Srikrishna with the succour of Goddess's spirit successfully in Dwapar-yug and the appliance of 'Akalabodhana' by Lord Sri Ramchandra in Tretaya-yug was included within the principles or theories of tantra.

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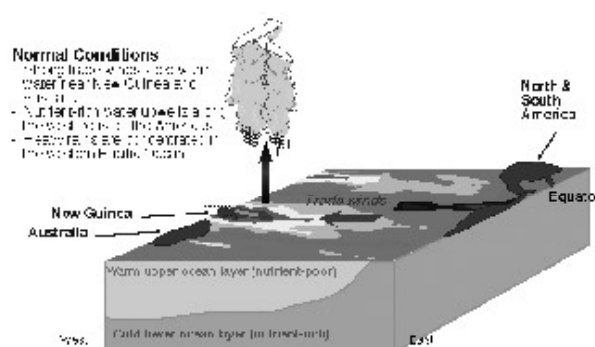


EL NINO and Intense Tropical Cyclones

Dr. Manas Ranjan Senapati

INTRODUCTION

El Nino and La Nina are all terms referring to a major ocean-current together called as El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO)^{1, 2}. This is associated with a band of warm ocean water that develops in the central and east-central equatorial Pacific, including off the Pacific coast of South America. Fishermen in Peru were the first to notice these irregular cycles of rising ocean temperatures because the fish disappeared when the water warmed. They named this as El Nino (Spanish for the little boy) since they often occur around Christmas time. La Nina (little girl) results when the eastern tropical Pacific cools. Climatologists determined that El Niño occurs simultaneously with the Southern Oscillation. The Southern Oscillation is a change in air pressure over the tropical Pacific Ocean. When coastal waters become warmer in the eastern tropical Pacific (El Niño), the atmospheric pressure above the ocean decreases. Climatologists define these linked phenomena as El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). The ENSO cycle, both El Niño and La Niña, cause global changes of both temperatures and precipitation. As El Niño brings rain to South America, it brings droughts to Indonesia and Australia. These droughts threaten the region's water supplies, as reservoirs dry and rivers carry less water. Agriculture, which depends on water for irrigation, is vastly threatened. In overall El Nino influences global climate as well as extreme weather events such as floods, droughts and tropical cyclones leading to large societal impacts.



EFFECT ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Developing countries depending on their own agriculture and fishing, particularly those bordering the Pacific Ocean, are mostly affected. El Niño was first recorded in 1986 which originated in the central Pacific. Advanced research and reanalysis techniques have managed to find at least 26 El Niño events since 1900, with the 1982–83, 1997–98 and 2014–16 events among the strongest on record^{3, 4}. El Niño events of 1982-83 and 1997-98 were the most intense of the 20th century. Since 2000, El Niño events have been observed in 2002–03, 2004–05, 2006–07, 2009–10, 2014–16, and 2019.

An especially intense El Niño event in 1998 caused an estimated 16% of the world's reef systems to die. The event temporarily warmed air temperature by 1.5 °C, compared to the usual increase of 0.25 °C associated with El Niño events.



As a case study it has been observed that El Niño is having severe impacts on climatological conditions of Odisha. During the El Nino event 1997-98 people of Odisha experienced sunstroke in the year 1998 and Super cyclone in 1999. Similarly El Nino 2014-16 gave tropical cyclones Phailin and Hudhud. Recently during the ongoing El Nino 2019 Odisha faced again another super cyclone **Fani** which has devastated a vast area covering three districts (Puri, Khordha and Cuttack) of the state. Further it may affect also the regular monsoon causing severe drought in our state. Alternatively it may intensify the monsoon causing severe flood.

Extreme weather conditions related to the El Niño cycle correlate with changes in the incidence of epidemic diseases. For example, the El Niño cycle is associated with increased risks of some of the diseases transmitted by mosquitoes, such as malaria, dengue fever, and Rift Valley fever. Cycles of malaria in India, Venezuela, Brazil, and Colombia have now been linked to El Niño. Outbreaks of another mosquito-transmitted disease, Australian encephalitis (Murray Valley encephalitis—MVE), occur in temperate south-east Australia after heavy rainfall and flooding, which are associated with La Niña events. A severe outbreak of Rift Valley fever occurred after extreme rainfall in north-eastern Kenya and southern Somalia during the 1997–98 El Niño.

ENSO conditions have also been related to Kawasaki disease incidence in Japan and the west coast of the United States, via the linkage to tropospheric winds across the North Pacific Ocean.

CONCLUSION

The role of Science & Technology cannot be ignored. Right kind of technologies and policies are required to strengthen the capacity

of communities to cope effectively with climatic variability and changes due to El Nino^{5,6}. Adaptive actions may be taken to overcome adverse effects of climate change on agriculture. Innovative agricultural practices and technologies can play a role in climate mitigation and adaptation. This adaptation and mitigation potential is nowhere more pronounced than in developing countries where agricultural productivity remains low; poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity remain high; and the direct effects of climate change are expected to be especially harsh. Creating the necessary agricultural technologies and harnessing them to enable developing countries to adapt their agricultural systems to changing climate will require innovations in policy and institutions as well.

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Future of Our Higher Education System

Prof. Kumar B. Das

Free market policy after globalization has generated an over optimism across the country. The pragmatism of globalization of knowledge is expected to create unprecedented new opportunities. It is being projected throughout the globe, as an impetus having no alternative. It is being regarded substantively as the modernity. This paper examines the effect of neo liberal policy on quality of higher education of India. It highlights the prospects of higher education in the long run.

Introduction:

All sectors of Indian Economy seem to be vibrating with economic buoyancy after globalization. The impact of liberalization has become all pervasive. It has generated an atmosphere of over optimism of instant economic growth. Economic growth has been accepted as a sacrosanct objective. There is expansion of trade, investment, market, and increase in GNP, productivity, per capita income, profit, efficiency, salary etc. Life styles of metro people have become more attractive, comfortable and fashionable than ever before. Premature replication of features of the industrially advanced countries are observed with hyper economic growth of India. The new reform process pursues economic growth to the best of its ability until it is distracted by other issues like education, health and environment. It puts over emphasis on economic efficiency and modern urban sector at the cost of the larger society. Economic growth

is partly superficial, based on borrowed money and technology, with no inner dynamism generated by indigenous technological capacity. There is hyper growth of the tertiary sector, in which education constitutes the major component. The quality of higher education and research is deteriorating. The realities of the ground regarding higher education are worse than the scenario that is published in reports and newspapers. The statistical mirage underestimates the ground reality and depicts a misleading picture.

The Higher Education system in India has undertaken a series of reformatory measures after globalization. The privatization of higher education has become unfettered. It has been aiming at curtailing subsidy and downsizing higher education through public funding. We are closing many old courses and neglecting old colleges/ universities, which has less or no job prospects. It is encouraging new colleges and new courses



having job-market orientation for the urban sector. The academic load and number of papers in various degrees for the students has increased. Donations and course fees have increased like anything. This trend is also endorsed by the academic circles. Indian parents in cities have become too crazy to analyze the real worth of the degree. They used to sell their property to invest in the admission of their son/daughter in these courses. Therefore higher education has remained more an instrument: 'means and end' of luxury of the upper class only. The trend has become more pronounced and pervasive during last two decades of liberalization.

The job market indication has become very powerful. It is widely accepted in India now. It has created an attractive wave, but very deceptive. It is highly transient and inconsistent. It is unfortunately deciding the fate and future of the emerging knowledge-base of the society. The job market fluctuates for several temporary causes and spurious external factors. The educational reform has now linked all grants and public funding with the assessment of performance of the academic institutions. Unfortunately it has become counterproductive. As a result, the quality of education and examination/evaluation standards has been deteriorating in academic institutions more so in so-called autonomous institutions. It has encouraged self-financing courses in both public and private universities/colleges. Many courses have started under PPP mode. It has introduced many study loan schemes for the students going abroad. But the returns from higher education to the society in real terms have remained very low. This argument does not uphold the view against privatization of higher education. The fact remains clear that commercialization of education is becoming a very powerful process

where the return to the society in the long run remains a question. Ironically it is widely accepted among the educated class of urban society. The policy makers sit on the ivory tower of success and remain increasingly insensitive to this perverse trend. But it only promotes individual interests at the cost of social welfare.

Neo Liberal Orientation

Education as an investment in the social sector is given wide publicity in last two decades. These trends suggest a movement towards a neo-liberal economic orientation in which capital and the market gain hegemony. The World Bank's rationale for investment in the education sector is based on mainly four economic arguments:

- (a) inducing higher rate of returns by having an educated –skilled labour force
- (b) increasing the flexibility, efficiency of labour market through higher quality education
- (c) raising willingness to accept new technologies for higher productivity
- (d) enhancing women's education so as to raise women's participation in labour force

All these are popularly known as the 'human capital' perspective, in which education is regarded as a 'productive investment'. It is quite convincing and logical. Although not stated in such reductionist terms, the education policy of the Government of India has been framed by the same perspective since the 1990s.

Therefore educational reform has created more an euphoria and fake optimism rather than real quality-improvement in educational system. Perhaps we are heading towards a techno-economic fragile transformation but not towards the prosperity of people or social transformation



The entire educational system has been veering around the vagaries of job market. But the fate of a subject/degree/college should not fluctuate with the fluctuations in the job market. The subject should not sink or swim in accordance with the degree of buoyancy in the job market. Knowledge-base of the country should not be prone to dance according to the tuning of the market. Because knowledge has permanent value. Knowledge is always universal. It is never contextual, temporal, national or regional or personal property of anyone. Downsizing higher education in India is done at the behest of the World Bank. Contractual and temporary appointments are very common in all public universities of India. Eventually it leads to 'intellectual marginalization' and isolation. It is by design but not by default. It has series of social and economic implications beyond perception. Thus the role of the state has become very critical and more indispensable. There is an urgent need for higher education to derive from a policy that is built on the norms of quality, democracy, equity and sustainability.

Educational Vacuum

Globalization has brought fundamental changes in the approach to higher education and research in India. It has substantially reduced the subsidy and financial support to academic institutions of India. It may help the advanced countries to promote their intellectual properties as their 'captive resource'. It is providing incentives for the growth of informal education. *Because the formal education is the formidable adversary to the informal education system.* It helps to create sufficient space for non-public universities such as transnational cyber universities and franchised institutions, which

operate only on the basis of commercial parameters. It has become very attractive for all in the short run. But the private sector, left to its own devices, pursues short term gain with no vision of long term development. There is sharp increase in enrolments and fees, but we still do not have any reliable information on functionality and quality in these educational institutions. It ensures only quantity (not necessarily the quality) and satisfies all criteria of economic viability. They have beautiful infrastructures and modern academic environment. The outward glamour hides the reality of inward deficiency. It does not ensure better quality of education. It does not necessarily fulfill the criteria of long term sustainability.

Now the aim of higher education is merely to prepare students for different jobs or employment opportunities or to train students to become robotic labourers or so called professionals. Placement of students has become the hallmark of success of academic institutions. Centers of learning have become centers of job. At best, the aim of primary and secondary education and polytechnics, Industrial training institutes can be that much. But the wide ranging attributes and advantages of higher education and research are undermined and dictated by the market demand for efficiency, economic viability, returns, profitability and productivity. *Market-relevance does not necessarily imply social desirability.* Maximization of the short run individual objectives is being done at the cost of long run social objectives. The society ultimately remains neglected and bypassed. The academic system without research becomes ultimately stale and sterile. The education which tends to remain relevant to the market and more so for job market is unlikely to remain relevant to the society and



even to its own sustainability. Because an educational system, which is viable and economically efficient may not be socially just and desirable. The knowledge-based society never emerges from this kind of regressive educational system.

Quality Deterioration

Privatization of higher education is not bad. But the unbridled commercialization of higher education unfortunately, may result in the ossification of creativity in the educational system. By commercialization the mathematician can be happy at the cost of Mathematics and physicist can become rich at the cost of Physics. The disciplines of knowledge are remaining neglected, sterile and stagnant. Indian IITs hire brilliant professor from outside, but it has failed to produce a good professor of its own. Because all brilliant IIT students after B Tech degree migrate abroad for lucrative packages. It has become the national norm. Most brilliant students have no interest for higher studies and research. Students are not responsible. They choose a career before they spell the word career. They are made to believe that education is means to an end. As a result each branch of study remain as the stepping stone for the stakeholders and eventually it itself perishes. The quality of higher education is benignly neglected. As a result higher education suffers from mediocrity. There is improvement of examination system but not in the educational system. The appointment of faculty members including the Vice Chancellors of different state and central universities suffers from match-fixing syndrome. Mediocrity prevails in the universities, which are supposed to be centre of excellence. There is no space for the talent and intelligence. Gresham's law: Bad money

drives out good money out of circulation persists. The Vice chancellors are very busy in establishing their own legitimacy and self-aggrandizement. Majority of them are good managers who remain hooked in convocation, meeting with the chancellor, visit of NAAC or UGC team, syndicate- senate meetings, annual day celebration, sports day, Campus cleaning, and various non academic and routine matters. They boast about their achievements, success, boldness and honesty. Ultimately there is gross neglect of teaching and research. There is no vision of an academic leadership. The grading system of NAAC committee is great hoax and functioning of AICTE are all eye-wash. The outlandish criteria led down by the UGC and bureaucracy for improvement of quality of higher education are utterly perfunctory. The quality of the highest degree of Indian universities is rapidly falling. Plagiarism has proportionately increased with the spread of internet culture. We are not ready to confess that Indian degrees are not recognized in western countries, but our IIT degrees are recognized in America for techno collie jobs. India has no place in the world educational map. Not a single higher educational institution appears among the top 200 list of the world. Therefore the education system of India flourishes at the top but perishes at the bottom. It has a built-in-doom. The intellectual capital erodes. Thus quality and sustainability of higher education of India is at stake in the long run.

The success of higher education system (HES) thrives on social polarization. As a result the renteer economy expands very high and parallel economy grows very fast. All corrupt people in the world are educated though vice versa is not true. All stakeholders of the parallel economy are highly educated. The social priorities



regarding education in India are never reflected in the budgetary allocations. It does not give due weightage to the quality of education. Thus educational reform should not mean privatization per se, but genuine quality improvement. Educational dualism manifests in difference in employability, contractualisation of jobs, gender inequity and economic marginalization and income inequality. Though women empowerment is widely debated, the gender bias is becoming more pronounced in higher education system of India. The loudness of the concern is directly proportional to the degree of hypocrisy and indifference. The professionals are more insensitive and isolated from the society. They are mercenary and socially disoriented. There is also a trend of intellectual marginalization in India.

Conclusion

The global situation is changing so fast, it is dangerous to make any kind of projection for the social sector, particularly for the education sector. The quality of higher education is very essential. It should be considered as a non-negotiable factor. Thus higher education system should aim at promoting quality and 'neo-professionalism'. There is urgent need of autonomy of higher educational institutions. Autonomy is the most essential ingredient of excellence. It can be achieved both by private institutions and public institutions. The 'quality' is important not the ownership or nature organization. None should be blamed or pampered. The goal of sustainability in higher education does not involve the change of ownership. It involves the shift in emphasis and approach for genuine quality and social relevance

but not necessarily for job-market-relevance. One needs to distinguish between society and market; and their imperatives. The higher educational system should have a strong and meaningful 'feedback system' which enhances the self correction and self direction.

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The Unique Festival of Lanka Podi at Subarnapur

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According to the historians the Subarnapur region was known as Paschima Lanka or western Lanka around the 10th/ 11th centuries. The evidence comes from a copper plate charter issued in the late 10th centuries by Somavamsi prince named Kumar Someswaradeva of Subarnapur. The Prince had identified himself with the king of Paschima Lanka. It was further found that the Mahada copper plate grant of Kumar Someswaradeva registered on the Bank of the river Chitrotpala (Mahanadi) and near the province of Lanka. The presiding deity of Paschim Lanka was Goddess Lankeswari.

The district earned the name of “Subarnapur” during the time of Somavamsi rule. The district was established on 1st April of 1993.

Lanka Podi or Lanka Pudi (the burning of Lanka is a festival celebrated in Sonapur region of western Odisha). Many say this festival is a further evidence that Sonapur was known as Paschima Lanka.

Sonapur lies roughly 125 miles from the sea at a place where a major tributary, the river Tel, flows into the Mahanadi; river junctions are auspicious as well as strategic in India. Sonapur is a city of temples of the 18th and 19th century except for one very ancient shrine dedicated to

the Goddess Lankeswari, which is located on an island in the middle of the river Mahanadi. The name of Lankeswari means Goddess of Lanka, the capital of demons in the epic Ramayana. “Sonapur” itself (Subarnapur in Sanskrit) means city of gold, an epithet of Lanka is identified with the island to the south known today as Srilanka. For inhabitants of Sonapur the epic has vivid local reality every year in the festival of Lanka Podi, which commemorates the burning of Lanka.

The basic plot here begins with the incarnation of god Vishnu as a heroic prince. Rama, in order to save the earth of the demon king Ravana, who lived in Lanka, while Rama was dwelling in exile in the forest. His devoted wife Sita was kidnapped by Ravana. Rama and his brother Laxmana were assisted by the forest dwelling monkeys in winning her back. The monkey general Hanuman used his super natural powers to leap to the island of Lanka, circumventing the guardian Lankeswari and made contact with Sita. Hanuman was then captured and brought before Ravana who ordered his tail bound with oily rags and set on fire. The mighty monkey escaped magically becoming small and then bounded over the roofs of the golden fortress of Lanka, reducing to ashes with the torch of his tail before he returned safely to Rama. Eventually



Rama and his brother led an army of monkeys in a war killed Ravana and won back Sita. It is Hanuman's initial raid that is annually celebrated in Sonepur.

Lanka Podi falls on the new moon of the lunar month of 'Bhadra' to mark the epic event of Lord Hanuman's raid on the kingdom of Ravana. The town twinkles with the countless flames that indeed create the illusion of Lanka burning. As the night wears on, acrobats and gymnasts perform in the streets. The sense of adventure and festivity is contagious. Sonepur is a town rich in craft of many kinds including energetically patterned ikat textiles, locally known as *bandha* or "bound" because the thread is tie-dyed before weaving. Women wear their best sarees made of this material. Old men may pass the time with a game of tiny round cards or *Ganjapas*, organized in twelve suits that correspond to the major actors in the Ramanaya, a version of the game peculiar to Sonepur where it played year-round. But the day of Lanka Podi essentially belongs to the town's children.

From early morning, boys up to the age of eight or so pull wheeled wooden toys throughout the streets. While such toys are used for play at other time in the year, they are repainted or replaced and paraded en masse with particular pride on Lanka Podi. Many of the carving represent travellers riding on horses or elephants.

While little boys pull their wheeled toys, the girls of Sonepur are busy assembling sets of miniature clay cooking pots and utensils, toy replicas of the object in their mothers' kitchen. Towards the middle of the day the pubescent teenage girls take over in arranging these utensils in front of the household after decorating with

flowers and with *chitta* or patterns of rice flour on the ground beneath. The entire rituals is said to prepare the girls for their household duties.

But all day long Sonepur has been preoccupied with clay images of Hanuman himself, which must be purchased either in the bazar or from the house of the potter. To make the image of Hanuman, the potters collect clay from the river bank, formed deftly on a manually operated wheel and the products are later on dried in large piles in open. The monkey images of the most traditional type join units from the potters ordinarily repertoire. Thus the head is a money bank, its mouth where a slit for coins could be eaten. And the legs and bodies are cylindrical tubes that could be sliced with a wire while still wet to form a pair of roof tiles. Twisted "wicks" of clay form teeth and other features, a spiky crown, and the all important tail (which the potter constantly warns the buyer is not a handle for carrying). Some are dusted with powdered mica after firing, which gives them a sparkling, slightly gilded skin. Not all images are of this imposing "standard" type, twenty inches high. Some are smaller with legs of solid clay rather than hollow roof-tile tubes. These are cheaper and traditionally thought of as appropriate for small children. Virtually every family in Sonepur buys a Hanuman, sometimes one for each child. At home they are assembled with bamboo axles to attach the clay wheels. Decorations continue daubs of white paint, stalks of leaves and yellow flowers are added. Some are transformed by coloured paint like folklore images, each different are the product of the community at large, beginning with the professional potter but radically varied by other people. At nightfall the tail is wrapped in old cloth. Then a dish or container is attached at the very tip and filled with oil or kerosene, which is set on fire.



Children from the age of three grasp a rope attached to the front and roll their creations over the streets with pride. Among groups of teenagers there is often lively competition. Very young children are usually accompanied by an adult. The monkeys regularly used to be taken to the courtyard of the temple of the Goddess Samalei and broken early in the morning following Lanka Podi. This follows a pan-Indian pattern invoking supernatural presence to inhabit a clay image and then after a dramatic ritual, destroying the inert body. Even in the past, however, Hanuman might occasionally be placed on a roof top, an apotropaic guardian of the town.

At present various competitions are being organized by the Lankapodi Mahotsav Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Shyama Om Prasad Mishra, Advocate and social activist for the years together. The best well decorated terracotta Hanuman as well as various competitions i.e. essay and debate are held among the students and awarded by the committee too. Veteran potters are also felicitated by the committee. It would create a social attraction for

outsiders, if a huge Hanuman Statue (like terracotta Hanuman of Lankapodi) will be installed in any Chowk of main road of Sonepur Town, they might be aware about this unique tradition and culture of Sonepur.

Let us upkeep this unique tradition in tact, otherwise it may disappear in this digital world.

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Biren Mitra : A Political Leader

Dr. Sudarsan Pradhan

The day Biju Patnaik resigned i.e., October 2, 1963; the Congress Legislature Party met at Room No.54 of Orissa Legislative Assembly and elected Biren Mitra as its leader. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, who was a cabinet minister in the Biju Patnaik's cabinet unsuccessfully contested for the office of the Chief Minister. In view of the groupism prevailed in the party, All India Congress Committee (A.I.C.C) had sent Rafi Ahmed

Kidwai, a Senior Congress leader as observer. On the auspicious day of Gandhi Jayanti Day, October 2, 1963. Biren Mitra took oath of office and secrecy as the first graduate Bengali Chief Minister of Odisha.¹ The same day he declared that he shall carry out all the plans and programmes of Biju Patnaik as did 'Bharat' for Ramachandra during his exile for 14 years in respect of Ayodhya.

Biren Mitra's Ministry from 1963-1965.

Sl. No.	MINISTER	PORTFOLIO
1	Sri Biren Mitra	Chief Minister, Minister of Finance, Industries, Mining and Geology, Irrigation and Power, Cultural Affairs, Health, Planning and Co-ordination and Commerce
2	Sri Brundaban Naik	Minister of Community Development
3	Sri Satyapriya Mohanty	Minister of Education, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Co-operation, Forestry
4	Dr. P.V.Jagannath Rao	Health
5	Sri Sadasiva Tripathy	Revenue Excise, Co-operation and Forestry
6	Sri Nilamani Routray	Political and Services, Home, Labour and Supply
7	Sri HariharSingh Mardaraj	Works and Transport
8	Sri Toyaka Sangana	Tribal and Rural welfare
9	Sri Banamali Babu	Law



Deputy Ministers

1	Sri Prahallad Mallick	Irrigation and Power
2	Sri Bira Bikramaditya Singh Bariha	Works & Transport, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry
3	Smt. Saraswati Pradhan	Education
4	Sri Chandra Mohan Singh	Labour, Home (Jails)
5	Sri Santosh Kumar Sahu	Health, Cultural Affairs, Co-operation and Forestry

‘Biren Da’ as he was popularly called by the local people, rose from the rank of Cuttack town with no ostensible means of livelihood after release from jail during the Quit India Movement and occupied the highest post of Chief Minister by virtue of his sincerity, hard labour and loyalty to the party. A Marxist supporter till 1946, he was a man of masses. A switch over to Harekrushna Mahtab faction had soon disillusioned him and he had joined Biju’s band wagon. It is said that he had spent days sharing the verandah of the ‘Town hall’ set up by Gouri Shankar Roy for his rest and depended on Raj Kishore Sahu (Known as Raju Sahu, subsequently owner of Rajmahal Hotel at Bhubaneswar) for his bread. The precarious situation he was placed in arose for the reason that his father Bipin Bihari Mitra, a Muktyar by profession of Cuttack under British rule disowned him because he had participated actively in the freedom struggle. ‘Biren Da’ was an unusual combine of flamboyancy and sobriety. He was holding ‘Durbar’ where people of different ranks, positions, and races flocked around almost every day to get relief and assistance.² None was disappointed. He used to collect money from the affluent and distribute the same to the poor people. It was a regular practice with him even during his tenure as Chief Minister. The flow of charity reached such a great height that he found

it difficult to meet the requirements and finally, he created an organization called ‘**ODISHA AGENTS**’ in the name of his wife Ishwaramma, which ultimately was responsible for his downfall from political career.³ Mitra was a popular man no doubt but administration was not forte. He had practically brought the secretariat to the lawn of his official residence where he used to hold a ‘Durbar’ with common people and high officials and take important administrative decisions. His soft attitude towards law and order issues created serious problems for him and the administration as well.

There was no let up in the tirade against Biju and Biren by Mahtab group. On June 19, 1964 Mahtab wrote a letter to the then Home Minister. Gulzarilal Nanda complaining that “Orissa Government has been virtually converted into a business concern in which not only the top Ministers but also many officers participate. The entire administration, if allowed to go in this process, will definitely collapse sooner or later. It should be remembered that the Orissa administration is not the creation of the Orissa people, it is the creation of High command and they should hold themselves responsible for whatever is happening here. This is just to remind you, that there is a problem here which needs your urgent attention.”⁴ On July 28, 1964 a



memorandum was submitted to the President of India by 63 opposition members of Orissa Assembly along with opposition leader R.N.Singh Deo alleging misuse of the administration by Biju Patnaik and Biren Mitra for personal gains. Later on Pabitra Mohan Pradhan (the President of U.P.P.C) was repeatedly complaining to High command against the Government. Bijay Pani was instructed by Kamaraj to convene a meeting of different dissident groups to reach in to an amicable settlement and avoiding all scope to avoid this type of awkward happenings. When the latter staunchly denied to oblige Biju Patnaik by signing on the draft made by him to be sent to the Centre by telegraph. The draft contains, “whatever allegation and complain, I have made against Biju and Biren are all false which were made at the instigation of Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab . Begging due apology, I would like to withdrew all applications made against them.”⁵ Biju Patnaik’s anger against Pabitra Mohan was raised due to latter’s act of sending repeated allegation to Congress President Kamaraj Nadar against Biju and Biren from time to time. After this incident, the opposition leader R.N.Singh Deo and others took advantage of the situation by exploiting Pabitra Pradhan’s sentiment. A memorandum with the signatures of opposition leader and sixty three other M.L.As was sent to President of India containing certain allegations of irregularities and corruption on the part of the Government. The Government of India, at the behest of the then Home Minister Gulzarilal Nanda constituted a six member Cabinet Sub Committee comprising of M.C. Chagla, (Union Education Minister), Ashok Sen, (Union Law Minister), T.T. Krishnamachari, (Finance Minister), Sardar Swaran Singh, (External Affairs Minister), Gulzarilal Nanda (Home Minister), and eminent leader Y.B. Chavan to go into the allegation and submit a report. The

then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri took a serious note of the observations of the Cabinet Subcommittee and asked Biren Mitra to tender his resignation. As a faithful and obedient Congressman, he resigned from the office of the Chief Minister of Orissa on February 21, 1965.⁶ Biju Patnaik who was at that time the Chairman of State Planning Board also stepped down.

However, the short tenure of Biren Mitra’s administration witnessed two memorable events. Firstly, All India National Congress session in early 1964 at Bhubaneswar and secondly, the historic students strike of 1964 which claimed 5 innocent lives of students. Taking it a challenge to make the A.I.C.C session successful, dynamic steps were taken like building the new Railway station at Bhubaneswar on modern lines. A cluster of government quarters galloping speed were built in Unit-VIII with named as ‘*Gopabandhu Nagar*’ after the name of Pandit Gopabandhu Das who was known as ‘Bhagirath’ of Odisha Congress, to accommodate the delegates. The session is memorable because a resolution was adopted to incorporate, ‘Democratic Socialism’ in the policy and programmes of the Indian National Congress. This session was attended by personalities like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Kamaraj Nadar, and Indira Gandhi. Pandit Nehru fell sick and was air lifted from Raj Bhavan to Delhi but thereafter, he did not recover from his illness and passed away on May 27, 1964 after suffering for about five months.⁷

On September 2, 1964 over a hundred students forcibly entered the State Assembly premises from all sides. They damaged car, smashed window panes and furniture’s and ransacked the chamber of the Minister Lokanath Mishra, Deputy Speaker presiding on that date



in the absence of Speaker, adjourned the house but this was not end. The students and hooligans entered inside the Hall and caused damage of which the dignity and solemnity of the pious house was shattered. The then Inspector General of Police Srikanta Ghose,⁸ after assessing the situation, sought orders of the speaker for police action against the students. Chief Minister Biren Mitra, who had no jurisdiction inside the Assembly premises firmly ordered the police not to take any action. Then the agitations left the place, after ransacking and damaging the properties of the House.⁹ Two Ministers, Jagannath Rao and Banamali Babu, who were outside the lobby escaped through the latrine window. The students' dispersed after the Chief Minister had come out and addressed them with folded hands. For this soft attitude to the students and the failure to protect the sanctity of the assembly, Mitra had to face severe criticism from the opposition and his own partymen as well hurt emotionally and prompted by desire to get rid of the administrative burden, Mitra sent his resignation letter to the Congress Parliamentary Board in Delhi.¹⁰ This development led to a hot situation in the state Congress. The majority group under the control of Biju Patnaik was for maintaining the status quo as any vacuum in the Chief Ministers office at that time might have been against their interest as the Mahtab group was only waiting for such an opportunity so pressure was brought to bear on Mitra to change his decision and continue in office. Then Biren Mitra agreed to honour the party resolution and the 16 day old crisis over the leadership issue ended for the time being at least.¹¹ Though the students strike occurred due to less important affairs, but it got widespread due to provocation created by mischievous role of the press that utilized by some

political leaders and for their self-gains. The first tussle occurred on 2nd September, 1964 between a student of Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT), Bhubaneswar and a bus conductor on the issue of the payment of Bus ticket. The wounded student lodged an FIR against the conductor who was arrested and also put behind the jail. The enraged students of O.U.A.T and the B.J.B College went in procession to the police station claiming the surrender of the bus conductor.¹²

The Bhubaneswar student strike was shortly followed by other one at Cuttack on 26 September, 1964, which was of course a historic one as it encompassed the whole of Orissa. The immediate cause was very flimsy. In the last week of September 1964, Sasankadhar Das, a student of Cuttack Engineering School, went to a shop to take delivery of his radio set which he had given for repair. There was an exchange of words between the shop owner and the student over non-payment of some dues. In the course of quarrel, the shop owner assaulted the student.¹³

In the evening, the students of Cuttack Engineering College including the Ravenshaw and Madhusudan Law College carried out an act of looting and destroying that shop. Some unsocial elements took the advantage of the situation and the incident took a furious turn for which the Police and Collector of Cuttack intervened in the affair. A tough and serious engagement occurred between the police and the students in which the latter threw the stones and pebbles towards the former. It spread to different parts of Odisha. The out raged students climbing on the Collectors house replaced tri-Colour Flag with hoisting a black one. This incident was followed by other students in different districts where the students hoisted the black flag.



It continued for 53 days, drawing its sustenance from the opposition and the anti Biju faction, in the Congress Party. Four persons were killed in the police firing and many more injured. Many students were also arrested. During the disturbances all the wrath of the students and the agitators was directed at Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra, and other Ministers and Officers who were considered favourites of the Chief Minister. The houses of Biju Patnaik and of Himansu Ghosh, Finance Secretary, were ransacked by the mob. The House of Education Minister Satyapriya Mohanty was burnt ironically, Biren Mitra who was criticized by his own party men and other opposition leaders for his leniency towards the students who had raided the Assembly on September 2, was now condemned by the student agitators.¹⁵ From September to November 1964 was a horrible stretch at the end of which, on 5 November 1964 the Government declared the acceptance of all terms and conditions of the agitating students. All these along with the promised non-victimization were proclaimed by the Government on 6 February, 1965. The Government appointed a judicial Commission to probe the incident connected with the agitation. The Burman Commission was appointed to investigate in to the agitation. The Government agreed to pay compensation for loss of life and property during the agitation as the proposed Commission promised that no action would be taken against any student connected with agitation.¹⁶ The Government honoured its commitment by appointing the one man judicial enquiry Commission headed by Justice Satya Bhusan Burman of Odisha High Court. The agitation subsided but it thoroughly shook the foundation of the Government so much so that on February 1, 1965 the popular 'Dada' of

Cuttack had to bow out of office.¹⁷ To add to their already overflowing cup of misery, Biju and Biren found themselves guilty of administrative impropriety though not leading to personal gain. This verdict came from the Cabinet Committee appointed to give its report. The Committee had all the stalwarts of the Congress Party as its members, like Y B Chavan, MC Chagla, Nanda, TTK and Swaran Singh. Their Report in January 1965 absolved the two of charges of misappropriation of public funds for their personal gain but criticized the two of "administrative impropriety not leading to personal gain." Biju chided Nanda regarding this anachronism. Prime Minister Shastri was under pressure of the 'Syndicate' leaders to leave Biju alone. Biju was reaping the whirl wind now for having sown the wind of Morarji's succession to Nehru. Prominent 'Syndicate' leaders including Biju and Atulya Ghosh met at a mini AICC at Ranchi to spell out further strategies. Biju Patnaik wrote a letter of protest against "administrative impropriety" to Shastri and then resigned from Chairmanship of the State Planning Board. Surprisingly Nandini Satpathy rebuffed Bhupesh Gupta, AB Bajpayee and other critics of Biju Patnaik in the floor of the Parliament and hailed her mentor as the precursor of a new era in Odisha with its imperative need of fighting "against monopolists". Biren Mitra resigned from the office of the Chief Minister of Orissa on February 21, 1965. But the infightings had become so intense and ardent that party discipline had not been able to suffocate the fire of factionalism. The principal villain of the "Oust Congress" movement, Mahtab would walk out of the Parliament disgruntled and disillusioned. Along with his group of trusted seven followers he would form Jana Congress Party to spin out new intricate patterns of coalition-cobwebs just to "Oust Congress from power."



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Nabanna

Dr. Bhubaneswar Pradhan

Being brought up on the lap of agriculture,
The cultural heritages emerged very better.
Offering of new cooked rice to Samaleswari,
That is Nabanna in West Odishan territory. (1)

King Balaramdev of the Chouhan Kingdom,
Found once the Samaleswari in deity form.
Then believing a lot he duly established her,
So she became the goddess of entire empire. (2)

By order in dream he worshipped well her,
Offering wild paddy he offered his prayer.
For the vast wellbeing of his own subjects,
That is being followed well up to the date. (3)

This is a festival of pre-harvesting season,
People observe it with full ritual tradition.
The members of family from far and near,
Come regularly to gather once in a year. (4)

Various cultural functions are to be found,
Those unite us too really in every ground.
Maa Samaleswari the divine mother for us,
Gives her bless to make us well prosperous. (5)

Who is also believed to ruin the Kalapahar,
With all reverences we offer salutes to her.
We like to acknowledge our total sufferings,
Become changed to a boon of all wellbeing. (6)

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Binode Routroy, The Unsung Artist

Akhil Chandra Pradhan

Odisha is known as the best land of rich art and crafts having so many fine artists, painters, graphic artists, sculptors, craftsmen, artisans of national and international calibre. Binode Routroy was one among them. He was a famous contemporary painter, graphic artist, teacher, poet and writer as well. I have got the opportunity and proud of being one of the disciples of him.

Binode Routroy was born on 30.12.1930 in the village Kalikapur of undivided Cuttack district now parted one is Jagatsingpur, surrounded by natural scenic beauty which inspired him to be an artist. He was brought up in the lap of Choudhury Janakinath Routroy Mohapatra and Padmabati Devi belonging to a zamidar family. His childhood family name was Choudhury Binode Behari Routroy Mohapatra. Father Janakinath, a prolific writer used to buy drawing materials from Calcutta inventing child Binode's painting talent. After schooling from Salepur High School he took admission in newly started N.C. College, Jajpur, completed Intermediate Arts but due to intense appreciation towards visual arts he entered Shantiniketan Kalabhaban, Vishwavarati University, became a meritorious student of principal Master Moshai Nandalal Bose, the legendary artist of our country. Afterwards there he was honoured as the best artist in West Bengal Youth Festival, returned in

1955 with first class four year Fine Art Diploma and one year Postgraduate Diploma. He then got a graphic artist job but dissatisfied with the work which is not related to his learning and left it. In 1961 he married to Barada Kumari Routroy, his only daughter Banaja Routroy is now a professor of Botany.

He then worked as an artist in Odia literary monthly "Dagara" edited by late Nityananda Mohapatra, the son of famous poet Laxmikanta Mohapatra. There he met educationist Satrugna Nath who had arranged to stay him in Angul Basic Training College as Art Teacher, after 9 years of service he joined as a lecturer in Govt. School of Art and Crafts, Khallikote which now turned into a premier art college of the country. Retired as the principal of this college Routroy had many laurels, his paintings and graphics were displayed in prestigious art galleries. Two times awardee of the Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi, his works have been placed in Salarjang Museum, Birla Academy, Odisha Rajbhawan, several galleries besides a large number of private collections. He was adorned with many awards, honours from different govt. and private organisations for art and literature with the rare talent of being an excellent writer and consummate painter.



Both in pen and brush he made a different world of creativity with humble imagination. Nature, specially village life and culture were the basic themes of his artworks and writings. In poetry, essay, children story, art criticism, folklore he has showed extreme calibre what we can see in least persons. Internationally acclaimed artist Dhirenkrishna Deburman once said - "His bold composition shows his success as an artist of great merit. He is a writer, an art critic, poet whose creative mind expresses itself both in pen and brush."

When a student at Shantiniketan he was honoured by "Prajatantra Prachar Samiti" in Bisuba Milana function, other honours from Ganjam Kala Parishad, Charukala Parishad, Eastern Zone Cultural Society, Utkal Pathak Sansad, Sarala Art Samman etc. Some of his paintings are preserved in Odisha State Museum, Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi, Academy of Fine Arts, National Museum and Japan, France, Italy, Germany, England. Many of his precious paintings are Shakuntala, Meghaduta - I, Meghaduta - II, Marriage Ceremony of Hilly Tribes, Miracles, Legends, Fishing, Washing Day, Duck Shooting, Tany, Playmates, Cock and Hens, Toilet, Ogle to Chilika Lake, Oasis of Life, Amaru Satak, Radhamadhaba, etc.

His graphic works are - The Harvesting, The Riverbed, Flower Seller, Daskerenda Flower, The Mother, Ghumura Dance, Broken Heart, The Library Memory, The Mother Divine, The King, Echo, Wait For in the Morning, Staircase, Aim, Rope-Way, Fish-Form, Spirit Vats etc. Vivid descriptions of subjects and objects, minutely executed brush line narration in paintings, the panoramic effects of black and white woodcut, wood engraving, linocut reproductions enchant us vibrantly.

As a brilliant orator his speeches on art, art education, art history, literature were very noteworthy. His writings, poems, essays, criticisms appeared in many Odia magazines, periodicals, papers such as Dagara, Jhankara, Asantakali, Sahakara, Nabarabi, Jibanaranga, Chitraklekha, Chhayapatha, Samaja, Prajatantra, Matrubhumi etc. Sometimes he was an art critic of the English publication "Rhythm". He has written 41 books to his credit in different streams of art and literature. In collaboration with Central Lalit Kala Akademi and Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi a book about Odisha traditional art and folkart was published, he had translated C.Sivaram Murty's book Indian Painting by National Book Trust of India into Odia. The children poetry book "Chhuti" biography - "Pilanka Abanindranath", story book "Benga Baida" were awarded by Odisha Govt. Shishu Sahitya Samiti, "Kala O Kahani" by NCERT, Govt. of India. Among his students well-known artists P.K.Mahanandia (resides in Switzerland), Prahallad Behera, Mohendra Prasad Mahapatra, Ashok Mohanty, Srinibas Padhiary and many others are established in their fields. After retirement Routroy was active with the chair of President of Odisha Lalitkala Akademi. It is ironical to say that whereas his lesser known colleagues were conferred with the coveted "Dharmapada" award Binode Routroy was deprived of this at his term due to a unnecessary controversy. He breathed his last at his Bhubaneswar residence on 17th June 2005. Nothing has been done in the memory of this great artist writer only last year the birth anniversary of Binode Routray was observed the collaboration of Odisha Language, Literature, Culture Department of Odisha, Lalit Kala Akademi and Government College of Art and Crafts, Khallikote.

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Status of Elementary Education in Sambalpur of Odisha

Dr. Antaryami Behera

INTRODUCTION:

Sambalpur is the most important district of Western Odisha. It is situated between 20° 44' and 22° 11' North latitude and between 83° 49' and 84° 23' East Longitude.¹

The district divides itself into three prominent natural tracts. Firstly, it is the flat open boundary in the south west covering a part of Bargarh district. It is regarded as the granary of Odisha being highly fertile and well irrigated by Hirakud Reservoir, resulting in intensive profitable cultivation. The second is undulating sub-mountainous tracts with isolated hills rising abruptly from the plains and rocky ridges here and there and deep ravines cut by drainage channels. The region covers the area around Sambalpur town extending North

ward to Jharsuguda district. The third natural tract is the table land with regard ranges of hills on the North and the east traversed by hill streams running in confusion in all directions.² It covers Deogarh district in eastern sector, Kuchinda in the North and Rairakhol, main forest areas are in this tract.

It is universally accepted that education is the basic input for any sustainable development, especially in the context of socio-economic development. It is also recognized that with a substantial proportion of population in abysmal ignorance and poverty, the Nation, the State can not develop. There have been continuing national

efforts at the promotion of education, in accordance with the constitutional provisions.

Pre-Independence Era:

From the ancient times, Sambalpur was remembered for her glorious cultural heritage. But there is no definite information regarding the ancient centres of learning in Sambalpur in the remote past. During medieval period, the land of Sambala (modern Sambalpur) was a seat of Tantric Buddhism'.³ It is said to the land where the Sambara Tantra was propounded by Pitopada, a famous Siddha. The Sambara Tantra was translated into Chinese by Jayadratha of Lanka (modern Sonepur and Bolangir district). Acharya Pitopada, who was a famous teacher in the Ratnagiri Mahavihara is said to have attained the Siddhi of invisibility at Sambala'.⁴ A great Buddhist Vihara (monastery) is said to have developed during the medieval period of Muchalinda (identified with Melchhamunda in Padampur Sub-division). This Muchalinda Vihar, the ruins of which are still to be seen, was a famous centre of learning where Buddhist and Hindu philosophies were being taught.

A system of education firmly rooted in the tradition of the people flourished in Odisha as well as Sambalpur long before the advent of the British to power. That the people were interested in learning was reflected in the numerous indigenous schools established and maintained by



the spontaneous effort of village community since time immemorial. Education in Sambalpur was not a choice of parents alone but was regarded as a matter of community interest also. From information relating to intellectual condition of the Odias in the first half of the 19th Century one could have a glimpse of indigenous education in Sambalpur in the pre-British days.

In 1849, Sambalpur came under the direct control of the British and was administered by an Officer styled the Principal Assistant of the Agent. The first Administrative Agent of Sambalpur was Kidden Hadge,⁵ who had founded a middle vernacular school at the heart of Sambalpur town in 1851.⁶ It became converted into a Middle English School in 1852 and it was a new era in Sambalpur, when the Western Education was introduced in the district.⁷

From 1862 to 1868 there were 249 schools opened in the district and 13276 students were admitted.⁸ The people were very much interested to learn. But there were no such facilities extended by the local ruler or the British Government. The annual expenditure of all the school was RS.19,600/- out of which Rs.7,700/- was donated by the local people.⁹ In 1903-04 six upper primary schools were maintained by the Sambalpur District Council located at Sambalpur

town, Rampella, Attabira, Bargarh, Barpali and Padampur. The rest of the schools were aided by Government.¹⁰

The period from 1905 to 1936 was of great importance in history of Elementary Education in Sambalpur. The period under review saw not only considerable expansion in elementary education of Sambalpur but also its noteworthy improvement from qualitative point of view. The measures like modernization of Elementary syllabus, the organization of training schools for the primary teachers and enhancement of salary of primary teachers went a long way in bringing about qualitative improvement in elementary education.

In the year 1914-15, there were 229 primary schools for boys at a distance of 4:39 miles from one another.¹¹ It is evident that in the coastal districts of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore, if the schools were evenly distributed and the maximum distance which a student covered to reach his school scarcely exceeded half a mile. But in the district of Sambalpur the students were required to cover greater distance as the number of schools was less in comparison to the coastal belt. The percentage of school children of school going age in the district during the year 1923-24 to 1928-29 was as follows.¹²

Table No.1

District	Year	Number of children of school going age		Number of children at School		Percentage of children of school		
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Total
Sambalpur	1923-24	58184	60236	15873	2847	27.3	4.7	15.8
	1924-25	58184	60236	17367	3045	29.8	5.0	17.2
	1925-26	58184	60236	17806	3370	30.6	5.6	17.9
	1926-27	58184	60236	19321	3907	33.2	6.5	19.6
	1927-28	58179	60230	19701	3880	33.9	6.4	19.9
	1928-29	58179	60230	19507	4001	33.5	6.6	19.9



Odisha was made a separate province on 1st April, 1936 by the Government of India (Constitution of Odisha), Order 1936 and was placed under the personal rule of Government till the end of March, 1937.¹³

In 1937-38, the district of Sambalpur had 62 upper primary schools, out of which 56 were for boys and 6 for girls in a ratio like 4590 boys students and 410 girls students respectively.

In this year, there were 357 lower primary schools, out of that 341 for boys and 16 for girls as 15882 boys and 668 girls received instruction in the district.¹⁴

After the second world war a comprehensive educational plan was formulated by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1944. It is popularly known as Sergeant Report after the name of John Sergeant, Educational Advisor to the Government of India. The central advisory board of Education had also taken up the work in 1938 but the finalization of the report of various committees could be done only in 1943-44.¹⁵

Post Independence Period:

India achieved her long cherished independence in 1947. In 1947, the area of Sambalpur district was 6764 sq. miles and its total population was 1202584 (1941 census) with the density of population was 192.¹⁶ The literate persons in the district were 211918 comprising 183975 males and 27943 females. The report of 1947-48 stated that the district had 528 primary schools, one training school for elementary education and two other schools and also 10 no.

of Sub-Inspector of Schools were the controlling authorities served in Sambalpur.¹⁷

Education plays a vital role in the life of all of us. Of course, the primary education is what we could call it as the minimum level of it. In India, we will work for a socialistic pattern of society, this is what we have made pledge in the Constitution. The article 38 directs the state to secure a just social order for the promotion of welfare of the people. This is to be done for them irrespective of their religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Of course the article 41 directs the state to provide education for all. The article 45, though included in the Directive Principles, in fact orders the state to provide free and compulsory education for all children to the age of 14 years within ten years of the promulgation of the Constitution i.e. by 1960.¹⁸

The elementary education is the base line education of the system as a whole. It serves as the primary layer of the concrete floor of its pyramid. To sustain the system as a whole it needs to be made very broad based. What kind of it is provided to its budding citizens, determines the quality of life in their playful childhood days. Of course, this has an impact on what they do in their life as a whole for themselves and the society.

During 1951 census, there were 725 primary schools and this number rose to 1634 in 1961. During 1965-66 the number of schools further increased to 1976 attended by 138189 scholars.¹⁹ The following table (No.2) indicates the number of students in primary schools of Sambalpur from 1961-62 to 1965-66.²⁰



Table No.2

Year	No. of students in primary schools (Education Deptt.)			No. of students in Primary schools (No. of students in Sevashrams (TRW Department))			No. of students in Semi Basic Schools			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	G.Total
1961-62	79464	40415	119879	7640	3110	10750	2337	1027	3364	13993
1962-63	85394	44793	130187	8065	3399	11464	2170	1068	3238	144889
1963-64	89432	45283	134715	7619	3258	10877	2336	1089	3425	149017
1964-65	89727	47351	137078	8538	3920	12458	2482	1337	3859	153395
1965-66	90081	48108	138189	8476	3785	12261	2419	1049	3468	153918

In the National Policy on Education, there is a scheme known as the scheme of Operation Blackboard (OB). It is meant to assure that all the primary schools should have at least minimum essential facilities to work with.

The Operation Blackboard Scheme in its old form should continue. It should reach all the schools that have yet not taken advantage of. In this context it was especially mentioned that the schools in the SC and ST areas must get benefit of it.

It is also proposed that at least 50% of the teachers appointed should be female to insure girls enrolment and retention about 30% of the eligible schools will be provided three rooms and three teachers by the end of the Eighth Five year Plan. All the primary schools will be covered by the year 2000 AD.²¹

The population of Sambalpur district according to the 1991 census is 2688395 occupying 6th position in the state.²² But the Govt. of Odisha had decided to increase its districts from 13 to 30 in numbers in 1993-94. In this context the district of Sambalpur was divided into four districts namely Sambalpur, Bargarh, Deogarh and Jharsuguda. As per the 2001 census the total population of Sambalpur district is 935613.²³

There had been a steady advance in the primary education in Sambalpur District. The total number of primary schools and students were 926 and 87473 in 1993.²⁴ It was increased up to 1033 and 92619 respectively in 2001.²⁵

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched in Odisha in the year 1996-97 with a view to achieve the long cherished goal of universalization of primary education in the state through district specific planning. The basic objectives of the DPEP schemes are as follows:

1. Providing access to primary education for all children.
2. Producing the dropout rate to less than 10%.
3. Increasing learning achievement of primary school children by 25%.
4. Reducing the gap among gender and disadvantaged social groups to less than 5%.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a programme on a nationwide scale to achieve the constitutional goal, to universalize primary education and provide useful and quality education to all children in the 6-14 years age group by 2010. The scheme is under implementation in all



the thirty districts of Odisha, including Sambalpur since 2003-04.²⁶

Findings and Discussion:

The problem of wastage and stagnation continued to be most formidable obstacle in the spread of primary education in Sambalpur. Some formidable factors hindered the progress of primary education in the district.

Firstly, the growing poverty of the people continued to be a stumbling block in the path of educational path. Secondly, the caste prejudices continued to be strong in every part of Sambalpur and the children of the so called lower class did not find easy to enter into the schools.

Thirdly, because of the remoteness of rural areas and lack of communication, proper supervision and inspection of schools by the educational agencies could not be possible. Many schools remained out of sight and many came under scanty attention.

Due to various problems the spread of primary education in Sambalpur was not up to mark. The development failed to keep pace with other aspects of social and economic progress.

However, attempts had been made to improve quality and quantitative elementary education in the district through various programmes since 1950.

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Our Rule in our Villages : A Proposal to Institutionalize Autonomous Tribal Governments

Sudhansu Sekhar Das Mangaraj

The discussion in Part II of this paper exposes the wide schism between the Indian Parliament's vision of participatory democracy and the tribal aspiration for self-governance. The discussion also convinces me the cosmetic changes in the form of the legislation, or reforms in civil administration.

Alone would make a negligible difference in the long run. If tribal local governments are truly to become institutions of self-government, they should exercise autonomous powers rather than devolved authority. In following sections I propose just such an alternative where constitutionally recognized autonomous tribal governments are supplemented by federal and state statutes conducive to tribal welfare. The local government forms that I recommend are more legitimate than those established by PESA because they are not only built on the (now) accepted foundation of the tribes' ability to self-government but are also modelled to avoid the pitfalls identified in Part II.

WHY "Autonomy" is Preferable to Decentralization

In order to set the scene for my proposal, it is worth addressing the question of why an alternative structure of tribal governance should be premised on autonomy rather than on a different method of decentralization. I answer this

question in three gradual steps: first, by briefly explaining the theoretical superiority of autonomy that the advocates for tribal governance in India often ignore; second, by explaining how decentralization fosters 'agency capture', which is perhaps the most important debilitating factor in the exercise of tribal rights in a country where inequalities abound; and third, by arguing that tribal autonomy has now firmly replaced decentralization as the preferred model of governance even in international legal instruments.

Autonomy as a "New Deal" between the State and the Tribes

Contemporary theory about decentralization identifies four major arrangements:

- (1) devolution (characterized by subnational units that have the responsibility for governing and whose activities are substantially outside the direct of central government);
- (2) Delegation (where sub national units are assigned specific decision-making authority with respect to functions defined by a central government)
- (3) Deconcentration (that is a spatial relocation of administrative responsibility to inferior levels within the central government); and,



(4) Divestment (where administrative responsibility is transferred to non-governmental institutions and is synonymous with privatization). In India, decentralized governance in the tribal regions follows the traditional top-down approach of defining the political administrative and fiscal powers of a self contained community, such as a tribe with the expectation that the empowered entity would function within the parameters (and towards the objectives) envisioned by the retreating state. Therefore in times of the decentralization theory described above the extant Indian model governance can hardly be considered devolved authority because even though there has been a transfer of some degree of responsibility for governing (which is one constituent of devolution), the activity of the tribal government “(which is the second inextricable determinant) essentially decentralized tribal governance in India is an [a]ssignment of [the] specific decision making authority stipulated in PESA thereby reducing in intensity to delegation in such a paradigm where the state sets out the legal terms and conditions for exercising power in its stead subordinate groups such as the tribes and woman invariably remained is advantaged pending a redistribution of the assent and entitlements amongst community members on the other hand autonomy is an equality facilitating step where the state accepts that its definition and vision of what a community can (or should) achieve does not necessarily reflect the aspirations of the target community to develop indigenous political administrative and fiscal structures with the conventional bureaucracy playing a sport function.

This is bottom up approach where governance evolves from the members of the community. An autonomous government is therefore anchored in a new deal between the state and the tribes (with civil society as a mediator) to design governments according to tribes culture and tradition because of [this] legal character the life of an autonomous entity is not subject to simple administrative measures or decisions made by a higher authority. It is in this sense that autonomy is more than mere decentralization.”

Autonomy also ensures “a dramatic increase in [tribes’] representation in the political system and their participation in decision-making processes that affect their own development.” The extant policies of decentralization should accordingly be participation that can be cultivated into independent decision-making. In other words, “autonomy lies at the end of a progression.

Decentralization Becomes an Instrument of Elite Hegemony

A top-down approach also raises the specter of agency capture where interest groups with a comparative advantage are able to influence sufficiently higher levels of administration involved in policy-making. In the context of tribal governance in India, that interest group is usually a (non-tribal) political and bureaucratic clique. For convenience, I will analyze PESA’s statutory scheme to explain my point. As a blueprint for tribal self-government, PESA actually achieves the opposite. Despite the seemingly radical language, the image of the tribal as primitive societies incapable of governing themselves is the subtle under one of this legislation because it was born from the entrenched belief of politicians, bureaucrats and nation and subnational institution that the tribes only chance of salvation was



benevolent rule by the State. In other words, the elite believed that the tribes could be “civilized” in time by State-directed development programmes and proper administration. The National Tribal policy also subtly hints at this belief when it says that the central and state governments should ensure the “welfare and protection of [the Scheduled Tribes] and their tribal domain” by bringing them “the benefit of development” as the foremost objective. Social scientists supplement the flawed perception with studies alleging that the tribal “concept of development is narrow, and the realization of which is completely based on government grant.” The convergence of the opinions of politicians, bureaucrats and federal and state administrations in a decentralized paradigm has been shown to almost always result in high-discretion laws which allow the executing agencies (the states) considerable freedom to decide the fate of target populace (the tribes).

That is precisely what has happened: PESA has granted state administrations ample latitude in formulating the scope and structure of devolved authority. This result is expected, considering that federal (or decentralized) structures encourage parties to write more detailed, low-discretion legislation only when “the national-level authors of policy at the sub national level.” people. The international labour organization (ILO) convention 163, which is the only binding international treaty dealing with indigenous peoples and land rights, replaced the ILO Convention 107 that had focused “on the goal of integration and assimilation rather than on the protection of [I]ndigenous peoples['] lands, culture, and distinctiveness.”

The ILO Convention 169 takes a different approach by requiring state parties to the conventions to respect the cultures and

institutions of indigenous and tribal peoples, their right to continued existence within their national societies, their right to establish their own institutions and to determine the path of their own development. ILO convention 169 was therefore designed to reverse the integrationist policy which “came to be associated with destruction and absorption”. “India ratified the ILO convention 107 but did not sign the 1989 convention, objecting to the latter’s use of the term “indigenous”, and what was perceived as a dangerous shift in favour of autonomy. Yet, curiously enough, domestic laws like PESA guarantees tribal participation in governance; environmental protection and management of natural resources in tribal territories; enforcement of national laws; and the protection of tribal interests in land ownership, employment opportunities, rural entrepreneurship and education. However, more fundamental issues concerning the imposition of alien systems of governance that contradict tribal “values, practices and institutions,” disregard for the tribes’ “right to decide their own priorities for the process of development a site affects their lives, beliefs, institutions and spiritual well-being and the lands they occupy” and the absolution of states from securing the “free and informed consent” of the tribes prior to land acquisitions remain pressing domestic concern. The irony is that the values of tribal autonomy cherished in ILO Convention 169 were also initially the principles guiding independent India’s tribal policy. Five decades ago, India’s first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, espoused the Punch as heel doctrine that the tribes could flourish and develop only if the State interfered minimally and functioned chiefly as a support system. 170 somewhere down the years, those values were lost and the very same bureaucratic stranglehold that Nehru warned



against ultimately led India to reject the nation of autonomy in the 1989 Convention. Recently, however, India appears to have softened its stand against autonomy for tribal people. In September 2007, India voted in favour of the United Nations Declaration on the rights of indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration)¹⁷¹ which affirms various rights to autonomy that are inherent in the tribal peoples of the world.¹⁷² The UN Declaration, although not binding, has been variously described as an “international norm-building document”¹⁷³ that reflects the “widespread agreement”¹⁷⁴ with respect to indigenous rights among many nations,¹⁷⁵ and which, along with other developments, “can be seen as giving rise to a body of customary international law on the subject.”¹⁷⁶ by

supporting the UN Declaration India agreed that nations must respect some form of autonomy for indigenous people, but the vote was conditioned on the fact that the UN Declaration recognized.

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Analysis of the Right to Education to a Girl Child in India

Rajalaxmi Das

Introduction

Human rights advocates claim that every child has a right to education. This claim is based primarily on two promises. First, rights advocate endorse the right to education because they believe that if children receive basic primary education, they will likely be literate. Second, rights advocate recognize that despite this reorganization of education as a right by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), for example many children fail to benefit from even basic primary education. This gap between the positive recognition of the right to education and the negative reality facing many children has led rights advocates to conclude that education must be considered a human right issue on a par with the right to food or the right to freedom.

Education for a girl child is very necessary to prevent child marriages and sexually transmitted diseases. As a result government has introduced many important strategies like “Five year plan” to achieve literacy level by providing free primary school for all children. All the plans by Government were not quite successful. For example “The pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act fails to understand the reason behind the discrimination against girls in India as well as the explanation behind gender biases. Simply putting ban on sex

detecting technologies cannot help to change the traditional views of some societies and consequently girl child still faces the problems of malnutrition and infanticide. Education is far from their reach. It is really a duty of elected representatives to gap the bridge between customs and traditional beliefs of that society. It is also very important for Indian government to recognize the failure of anti-discrimination laws in general and the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (regulation and prevention of misuse) Act, in protecting the rights of a girl child in Indian society.

It is important to understand how the women’s convention administers the issues of girl child. The introductory paragraph of Article 10, suggests all state parties to “take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education.” Education of a girl child determines the quality of her life. A girl child can’t understand her freedom without education. Right to education is a civil and political right similar to economic, cultural and social right.

There are many factors which contribute to gender discrimination in education. The most prime factor is social disinterest. The society in which a girl child is rising determines the availability of education to her. Sometimes it is religion which



restricts a girl child from enjoying her right to education.

Schools are the most important platform to disseminate sex education at early age to avoid sexually transmitted diseases. Gender gap keeps the girl child away from this information, without the benefit of this information the risk being forced in early intercourse and the girl child becomes victim of early pregnancy and infections.

The misinterpretation of culture plays the role of biggest obstacles in the way of the right to education of a girl child. Many families consider that the marriage of their daughter is more important than education. Marriage grants girls an adult status and makes them accept responsibilities of parenting and domestic works causing sexual, emotional and physical abuses. Education is the only way to empower a girl child socially and economically.

Facilities available to a Girl Child

The most important role of various conventions is to consider a child as an individual and a member of family and community. In order to ensure more female representatives in the legislative bodies, the Indian government amended the Constitution in 1992 (with seventy third and seventy fourth amendment) to reserve one third of seats for female in local government. This amendment helped women understand that their participation in politics would solve many problems they face as women and it gives them a good social status.

The legislature also introduced the MTP, anti-dowry Act, Anti- Sati laws. Again the sixth five year plan (1980-85) focused on educationally backward states and socially deprived groups innovatively. It recommended changes in school hours which were more appropriate to local

condition and planned a non-formal system of education with the exact objective of retaining as many children in school as possible. To increase in admission and preservations of girls in schools, it planned to assign day care centres, known as Balwadi cum creeches for babies in order to enable girls who started sibling care duties to attend the school. It also planned income generation work for girls outside school hours to increase family income and the policy of employing female teachers in rural areas to inspire girl's education.

The seventh five year plan (1985-90) supported the current systems and amenities and also highlighted the role of local communities. Programmes such as operation blackboard and other programmes for teacher's education were launched to advance school amenities and study non-formal education. Programmes like Open Learning system (OLS) was introduced for the needs of girls.

The Ninth five year plan mainly focuses on the abolition of gender inequality in admissions and removal of gender bias and stereotypes in programmes and text books. The 93rd amendment of the Constitution also states that "the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen. The world declaration provides special attention towards the girl child, it states "girls must be given equal treatments and opportunities from the very beginning. Hence the government considers SHG (Self Help Groups) as one of the main policy to improve rural girl's livelihood.

Problems faced by a girl child

- It is observed from various sources that a girl child has no independence at all. Every where she faces many problems.



- A Girl has no independence at home sometimes family violence restricts her freedom.
- Sometimes early marriage restricts the educational opportunities to her.
- The Government introduces many laws against child marriage or abuses but these are not successful due to lack of education particularly in rural areas.
- Many girls chose prostitution as their way of earning to escape poverty due to lack of education opportunities.
- Lack of sex education at school and colleges which results in spread of diseases like HIV/AIDS.

It is a common belief in rural India that the uneducated and inexperienced girl is considered as untouched and virgin and she ultimately receives better proposals for her marriage.

A number of workshops, seminar, discussion etc should be organized to remove the differences between boys and girls.

Education is essential for individual dignity and individual growth. It certainly provides a

resource to train children to become valuable members of society and to contribute effectively in democracy and freedom.

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Goddess Subhadra : The Paramount Mysterious Energy

Er. Raghunath Patra

Are you celestial mother Subhadra
Beloved sister of Balabhadra, Jagannath
Are you Ekanansa, 'Vijulibati Kanya'
Whom demon Kansa threw to death.

Are you vibrant titanic energy
for eternal creation, preservation, devastation
Are you that peerless force of delusion
'Maya Sakti' of Vast Cosmic creation.

Are you paramount energy through Whom
Balabhadra and Jagannath, both perform
majestic pastimes in the Universe and
import highest logic and form.

Are you Brahma consecrated in disguise
Are you manifestation of Prakruti or Nature
Which gives birth, nourishes all
from insects to highest human being ever.

Are you that supreme energy - goddess
Issue garland of order for Durga festival
Your creation is 'Durga Madhav worship'
Bhairavi Bimala, Bhairav Jagannath, well !

Are you supreme serpentine power
in Susumna nerve which leads
to Ajnachakra to look at
Brahma jyoti of Sahasrar of Yogis.

Are you supreme power, helped
Sri Rama, conquered Lanka killing Ravan
Are you Radha, romantic energy of Rasalila
Mahalakshmi goddess of wealth, opulence,
so on.

Are you Adibasi's tantric deity
Tana penu or Stambeswari, say
gradually metamorphosed to Subhadra
worshipped as Bhubaneswari, devotees pray.

On Car, Sudarshan remains combined
Power of desire, action mingled together
Twelve wheels of your Car, represent
twelve suns of stalwart power.

Jagannath consciousness is composite
cascade of religion, cults and faith
You are beloved daughter of this poet
Both brothers are his sons, all make him
great !!!

Er. Raghunath Patra, Brundaban Dham, Lokanath Road,
Patanahat Sahi Chhak, Puri -752001.



Shola Shasana of Puri and Lord Shree Jagannath

Jatadhari Mishra

Before 1568 AD Bhoi dynasty rule in Odisha Sixteen shasans of Cuttack was established by Gajapati Purusottama Deb of solar dynasty in Avinava Varnasi (most probably Avinav Bidanasi) in the year of 1469. 1st shasan was established in the name of the king on 17.02.1469 named as Prasana Purusottama Pur. Gajapati Purusottama Deb ruled Odisha from 1466-1497. All the sixteen shasans and 32 karbadas were established in the ruling period of Shree Purusottama Deb which seems to be older than the shasans established at the time of Bhoi dynasty in Odisha as well as in Puri.

It is prevailed that Gajapati Kapilendra Deb, the first ruler of solar dynasty established shasans at his time in Puri and Ganjam. Gajapati Kapilendra Deb ruled Odisha from 1435-1466. During his tenure he established shasana named Kapileswarpur in his name near Puri town. The shasan established by Kapilendra Deb was definitely older than the shasans established by Gajapati Purusottama Deb at Cuttack. Though the shasan of Kapileswarpur was oldest one but its link with the temple of Lord Shree Jagannath has not been established so far. The name of Kapileswar Pur is not seen in the list of shasans in the record of rights of the Jagannath temple prepared in 1952.

So many litigations have been noticed with Kapileswar Pur shasan, with Muktimandap and with the temple administration. Civil cases and Administrative cases are pending centering Kapileswar Pur since long in different forums which not been finalized yet.

A small book named Chakada Pothi and Chainy Chakada edited by Krupasindhu Biswal published by Friends Publisher, Cuttack in the year 2000 contain some important informations relating to the sixteen shasans of Cuttack.

Gajapati Purusottama Deb had two state Headquarters, one at Cuttack and other in Puri and both the Headquarters were used by the king frequently. It is mentioned in this Pothi that the plan for construction of palace and sixteen shasans of Cuttack was finalized in Puri Headquarter. A committee was formed for implementation of the above project, like site selection, worship of Deity, construction of temple and date for laying foundation stone for shasan villages of Cuttack etc.

The following members were nominated to the committee by the king. a) Gopinath Praharaj (b) Dharadhar Brahma (c) Kapila Khadenga (d) Nityananda Basistha (e) Markand Acharya (f) Biswanath Paharaj (g) Tribikram Routray (h) Padmanav Patnaik.



After formation of the committee Mr. Nanda Pauranik Raiguru was included as an additional member. The committee visited the site of Cuttack, finalized the valley of the Mahanadi river to establish the shasans. The site for the palace was also finalized. In the most sacred Odia month Magha in its bright fortnight tithi Trayodashi-Thursday in Utaraphalguni Nakshatra, Gajapati Purusottama Deb laid foundation for sixteen shasans villages. It was the 5th Anka of the king Purusottama Deb. The date was also finalized for laying the foundation of the palace on the bright fortnight Tithi panchami-Day of Bhrugu (basare) in Rohini Nakshatra. The month is not mentioned. From the above facts, it may be ascertained that the palace in Purusottama Kshetra or at Puri was older than the palace at Cuttack.

The foundation of first shasan Prasan Purusottama Pur was laid on 17.02.1469 by Gajapati Purusottama Deb. The Shasan was divided into 600 parts, 600 Brahmins received the shasan gift. The Deity “Shree Gopal” was the “Ista” of these Brahmins and a temple for the Lord Shree Gopal was constructed. However the sixteen shasans at Cuttack was completed in the tenure of Sri Purusottama Deb.

Out of 16 shasans 3 shasans were established by Gajapati, 9 shasans by the queens and 4 shasans in the name of Panigrahies.

A temple of “Laxmi Nrusingh” was constructed by Gajapati Purusottama Deb which was managed by these Brahmins. The Deity “Laxmi Nrusingh” was brought from Kanchi Puram by the Gajapati Purusottama after he

invaded Kanchi for Padmabati. He also married Padmabati, the princess of Kanchi purama.

Laxmi Nrusingh Upasana was continued in Shree Purusottama Kshetra till Chaturddha Murti or Darubrahma adorned Ratnasinghasana. During the time of establishment of shasans in Cuttack Chaturddha Murti was worshipped in the temple at Puri. But Brahmins of Cuttack were not provided any sevapuja of Lord Shree Jagannath. From the above facts it is presumed that the worship of Chaturddha Murti in Shree Mandir was performed by other Brahmins separately engaged.

In Solar Dynasty or Surjya Dynasty rule in Odisha from 1435 to 1568 the following shasans were established in different places mostly in three districts at Puri, Cuttack and Ganjam.

Gajapati Kapilendra Deb-1st ruler of Solar dynasty established Tulasi Pur at Cuttack, Kapileswar Pur, Gopinath Pur and Damodar Pur near Puri Town. Gajapati also established a Brahmin shasan in his name Kapileswarpur at Ganjam.

Gajapati Purusottama Deb- Established 16 Shasans and 32 Karbadas at Cuttack.

Gajapati Pratap Rudra Deb- Bir Pratap Pur shasan near Puri town.

King's General Gobind Bidyadhar –(1536-1546) Birgobindpur Shasan

King's Minister Janardan Bidyadhar-(1534-1559)Danei Bidyadhar Pur Shasan, Near Satyabadi.



Bhoi dynasty rule- 1568-1805 (Total Period of ruling- 237 years)

Gajapati Rama Ch. Deba	1568-1600	Bir Ramachandra Pur Sri Rama Ch. Pur Pratap Ram Ch. Pur Bijay Ram Ch. Pur Uvaya Mukhi Ram Ch. Pur (Durga Dash Pur Dash Bidyadhar Pur Rai Chakradhar Pur)
	1600-1621	Gajapati Purusottom Deba
	1600-1621	Birpurusottom Pur Sri Purusottom Pur Pratap Purusottom Pur
Gajapati Narsingh Deba	1621-1647	Bir Narsingh Pur
Younger Brother Biswanath Ray		Biswanath Pur
Minister Kanhei Bidyadhar		Kanhei Bidyadhar Pur
His Asst. Damodar Chhotray		Damodar Pur
Do Basu Samantray		Basudei Pur
Gajapati Balavadra Deb	1647-1657	Bir Balavadra Pur
Gajapati Mukund Deb	1657-1689	Shree Mukund Pur Trilochan Pur
Gajapati Dibyasingh Deb	1689-1716	Dibyasingh Pur
Gajapati Harekrushna Deb	1716-1720	Bir Harekrushna Pur
Gajapati Gopinath Deb	1720-1727	_____
Gajapati Ram Ch. Deb	1727-1737	Raiguru Pur Patajoshi Pur
Gajapati Birkishor Deb	1737-1793	Bir Kishori Pur Lalita Patpur Kasi Jagannath Pur Gokul Pur Samasar Pur Malatipatpur Gopinath Pur Jagannath Bidyadhar Pur Sarikia Birkishoripur Satyabhamapatapur



The following villages found in the undivided District of Puri in Purnachandra Vasakosha

And

Annexure-Mukti Mandap O Pandita Sabha written by Bhaskar Mishra (P-46-47)

Bir Harekrushna Pur, Bir Balavadra Pur, Bir Narsingh Pur, Biswanath Pur, Bir Kishori Pur, Sri Rama Ch. Pur, Nilambra Pur, Basudei Pur, Damodar Pur, Raychakradhar Pur, Birpratap Pur, Pratap Purusottom Pur, Jagannatha Bidyadhar Pur, Pratap Ramchandra Pur, Kanhei Bidyadhar Pur, Dash Bidyadhar Pur, Birgobinda Pur, Bhima Dash Pur, Ganganarayan Pur, Bijay Ramchandra Pur, Malatipata Pur, Somjajapur, Kapileswar Pur, Gokul Pur, Kasi Hari Pur, Kasi Jagannath Pur (Korua), Bhimepur, Shree Purusottama Pur-P-Lembe, DeyPur, Shree Makunda Pur-P-Sirei, Lalitapata Pur, Sarikia Birkishora Pur, Matri Trilochan Pur, Satyabhama Pata Pur, Manibandha Patapur (Panchagarh-Khurda), Makunda Pur, Jagannath Pur, Manikagopa, Dibyasingha Pur, Ichha Pur, Badapokharia Gopinathpur, Achhutarajpur (Banapur-Khurda), Kusadipa Jagannathpur, Gopal Pur, Samatra Pur, Jibandei Pur, Gangadhar Pur, Chhotaray Pur, Shrinivas Pur, Basant Pur, Bir Ramachandra Pur, Sri Rama Ch. Pur, Pratap Ram Ch. Pur, Bijay Ram Ch. Pur, Uvaya Mukhi Ram Ch. Pur, Durga Dash Pur, Dash Bidyadhar Pur, Rai Chakradhar Pur

In the Record of Right the following shasan villages enrolled and entitled to sit on Mukti Mandap.

1) Bir Harekrushna Pur, 2) Bir Balavadra Pur, 3) Bir Narsingh Pur, 4) Biswanath Pur, 5) Biswanath Pur (Nuagaon shasan) 6) Bir Kishori Pur, 7) Sri Rama Ch. Pur, 8) Bir Ramachandra Pur, 9) Basudei Pur, 10) Damodar Pur, 11) Raychakradhar Pur, 12) Birpratap Pur, 13) Pratap Purusottom Pur, 14) Jaganntha Bidyadhar Pur, 15) Kanhei Bidyadhar Pur, 16) Birgobinda Pur, 17) Gokul Pur, 18) Kasi Jagannath Pur (Korua), 19) Shree Purusottama Pur-P-Lembe, 20) Shree Makunda Pur-P-Sirei, 21) Sarikia Birkishora Pur, 22) Gopinathpur 23) Patajoshi Pur and 24) Rayaguru Pur.

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Utkal Itihasa Ajnyaata Adhyar Chakradha Mohapatra.
Chaini Chakada and Chakada Pothi
Torch Bearers- Dr. Nityananda Pattanaik
Khurda Itihasa- Kedarnath Mohapatra
Records of Rights- Sri Jagannath Temple, Puri
Mukti Mandap and Pandit Sabha- Dr. Bhaskar Mishra
And other relevant records

Jatadhari Mishra, Bira Harekrushnapur, Puri.



5Ts and Our State

Charudutta Panigrahi

Every time we need not build a new Odisha. A target based approach with timelines is the simplest and the best way to achieve all round development. A transformed Odisha can always be the 'new' Odisha. The government has set a management paradigm, 5T for itself and has vowed to review the targets set after a year on May 29, 2020. This commendable and futuristic approach would put valid pressure on the public systems. Gradually accountability and appraisal would come out of the closet and public services can't avoid public scrutiny. The appraisal has started with the Police and the Forest Department now, but I am sure that if this performance monitoring system sustains, nothing can stop it from naturally progressing to other Departments. I have always maintained that the office of the Collector is the fulcrum of district development. If the Collector's office is equipped with smart HR and technologies, 'competitive federalism' can simplify to 'competitive districts'. Progress card would say it all. This would augur well for the career of a fresh and young IAS or an IPS or an IFS officer and hence in turn, for all the other officers in the districts. District as a unit of development and the collector's office as the secretariat of district development is the best way to implement 5Ts – or rather demonstrate 5Ts.

The 5Ts-Teamwork, Transparency, Time, Technology and Transformation, as propounded by the government, should inch Odisha closer to be a \$ 1 trillion economy. If it works at the last mile, it would soon become a practice in the state. Rhetoric at the state level would reduce it to a catchphrase or a management case study with limited appeal or application for the people. Odisha needs action on the ground.

The mining districts need the 5Ts to impact the following:

1. Health, Education and Employment to record at least 3X improvement in one year.

This is not a pipe dream. All the below surface, super-wealthy areas of the state are the tribal districts. This paradox needs ironing. The needs of the communities need to be assessed; resources allocated with department people tasked as programme managers. The implementation of the programmes should be done by the experts, hired for a limited period. I would suggest lateral entry of experts into the programmes, both at the state and the sub-state levels.

2. The district GDP should be formulated, calculated and shared with the government



implementers, the civil society of the district. This is a good way of making the district development targets transparent and decipherable for everyone in the district. The college students might like to intern at the Collectorate. That way, they would be more mainstreamed. Today the youth of the district is at a distance from the development story. This way civil society engagement in the development process would increase. The social media would be rightfully and productively used. The entrepreneurs in the district would be more engaged. The CSR programmes would be more targeted. Today the CSR programmes are off the mark and mere rigmarole. Have you seen any impact report of any CSR in any district website? We have to lend more voice to the tribals about their own development and not ‘peddle’ development politics in their name, like we have been doing with ‘poverty in Odisha’ for about three decades now.

3. Sustainable Development Framework (SDF): Mining is going to add tremendous value to the national GDP (north of 2%) immediately in the next 3-5 years. India’s socio-economic and political standing would be positively impacted due to the mining in Odisha. There is a direct correlation. But what about the community people?

The Collectors should make the Sustainable Development Framework (SDF) to be mandatorily adopted by the mining companies. If we can make the SDF work for all our mines areas, believe me, Odisha would make a global example in “Mining Best Practice”. The people should be made aware of the mining activities and nothing should be encouraged to be done surreptitiously. In the past we have been looted

by crony capitalism and have been willfully impoverished by the hideous business practices. Please encourage genuine Gram Sabhas.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Mission Shakti is one of the most impactful programmes in a low income economy which has changed the standing of women in the society. For the SHG members, the average income from direct benefit and from linkages with government schemes, has risen north of 5X in the last six years. This is legitimately unprecedented. 5Ts should help galvanise and make this movement a large scale, pan state cooperative platform. This platform can make and trade a wide range of ethnic products and boost our identity, tourism, ethnicity and household incomes. It is not only the government business (1,000 crore has been earmarked for self-help groups) but the women should also look at global business. The NROs and NRIs should be roped in.

The state has approved increasing the number of Kalia beneficiaries from 42 lakh to 75 lakh (about 16% of the population) and sanctioned disbursement of funds. The 5Ts mantra should now roll into action and measure the benefits and the impact. Otherwise we would complete the circle of inefficiencies scuttling last mile reach of development.

If 5Ts can help us in effective investments and RoI for the communities, our state would have no impediments to reach \$ 1 trillion size comfortably. We possess the resources, so our people should be the primary beneficiaries, not secondary. 5Ts can help reverse this anomaly in roles.



5T formula, if percolated to the frontline functionaries of the government, has the potential to change the character of the state – one from dependence to assertive ownership.

My trust in the Collector is unflinching and I firmly believe that 5Ts can deliver only with the active championing by the Collectors. They are closest to the ground and they know the best. We, in the periphery should do our best to support the Collectors. They need a lot of support in data, staff capacity building, contractual expert appointments, a fixed tenure for themselves and regular dissemination of the development work they do, etc.

5T secretariat should utilise the local resources to do a quick situation analysis and

tackle the imminent requirements to plug the holes in access to public services. At the end 5T should result in rapid increase in the average value of assets of people in rural areas and urban areas. Presently it is estimated at Rs 2.81 lakh — which is lowest in the country. Even in urban, people having an average value of assets of Rs 7.9 lakh, is the poorest.

For the economy, state governance and the future of the people, 5T is indispensable.

Let's do everything possible to preserve the splendour of our beloved state.

Charudutta Panigrahi, Bhubaneswar.