

Agriculture at Cross-Roads in the undivided Kalahandi of the KBK: Need to Look in the fresh Perspective

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Abstract: Agriculture in the undivided Kalahandi region of Odisha, part of the KBK (Kalahandi-Bolangir-Koraput) belt, remains in a state of deep crisis. Despite substantial agricultural potential, the region suffers from systemic challenges such as erratic rainfall, inequitable land distribution, poor irrigation infrastructure, and exploitative market practices. Field studies reveal persistent poverty, marginalization of Scheduled Tribes and Castes, and failures in land reform implementation. The study emphasizes that climatic factors, coupled with policy neglect and globalization pressures, have worsened rural distress—leading to farmer suicides and forced migration. A re-evaluation of agrarian policies, focusing on equitable land access, infrastructure development, and sustainable farming practices, is urgently needed to secure the livelihoods of millions dependent on agriculture.

Keywords: Kalahandi, agriculture crisis, land reforms, farmer exploitation, irrigation, climate change

Introduction:

Odisha is an agrarian state as about 70% of its people are dependent on agriculture. It has often been said that the culture of Odisha is deeply linked with agriculture. Agriculture currently contributes around 18–20% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) (as per Odisha Economic Survey 2022–23). The state has about 64.09 lakh hectares of cultivable land out of a total geographical area of 155.71 lakh hectares, which accounts for 41.16% of the total area.

The total cultivated land is about 61.50 lakh hectares. Of this, around 40.17 lakh hectares of cultivable land suffers from acidic soil, about 4.00 lakh hectares from salinity, and approximately 3.00 lakh hectares is affected by waterlogging, totalling nearly 7.00 lakh hectares under problematic soils.

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Agriculture, being the backbone of the state economy, contributes a significant portion to livelihoods, if not to output. It provides employment to about 48–50% of the workforce (NSSO PLFS, 2022–23), though this share has declined from earlier estimates of 65%. The average size of landholding in the state is around 1.25 hectares, and the small and marginal farmers account for nearly 83% of the agricultural population. Odisha is classified into 10 agro-climatic zones, based on parameters such as soil structure, humidity, elevation, topography, vegetation, rainfall, and other agro-climatic factors.

The state receives an average annual rainfall of 1452 mm, with about 80% of it concentrated in the monsoon months from June to September. The total irrigation potential of the state is about 41.41 lakh hectares as of 2023, with 27.63 lakh hectares (approximately 44.92%) available for Kharif crops and 13.78 lakh hectares (approximately 33.27%) for Rabi crops.

The main crop in the state is paddy, and total food grain production has shown improvement. During 2022–23, total food grain production in Odisha was recorded at approximately 97.5 lakh tonnes, up from 85.92 lakh tonnes in 2007–08, contributing around 4.1% of the national food grain output. However, the agricultural sector in Odisha continues to face numerous challenges, including:

- Low productivity due to problematic soils (acidic, saline, and waterlogged),
- Inadequate and uncertain irrigation facilities,
- Low seed replacement rate (around 33% vs. desired 50%+),
- Low level of fertilizer consumption, currently around 58–60 kg/ha, which still falls short of the national average of about 135 kg/ha,
- Low use of mechanization and modern technology,
- Insufficient capital investment in rural agricultural infrastructure and innovation.

In the KBK region (Kalahandi, Bolangir, and Koraput), about 80% of the population is dependent on agriculture, which is higher than the state average of 70%. Despite having a significant portion of geographical area under cultivation, the region continues to be marked by low productivity, poor infrastructure, and chronic poverty.

Approximately 39% of the total geographical area in Odisha is cultivable. Within this, upland, middle land, and lowland account for 57%, 24%, and 19% respectively. Among the farming population, 68% are small

and marginal farmers, while the remaining 32% are medium and large farmers (as per Agricultural Census 2021–22). Paddy remains the primary crop in the KBK region, occupying around 56% of the total cultivable land. Other significant crops include wheat, maize, ragi, jhudang, kosala, green gram, black gram, horse gram, til (sesame), groundnut, mustard, potato, jute, and sugarcane.

The average paddy productivity in Odisha currently stands at 2.6 tonnes per hectare (2,600 kg/ha), a significant rise from the earlier estimate of 1.5 tonnes/ha. However, there remains wide inter-district variation in yields. The fertilizer consumption per hectare across the KBK districts is still below the national average. For example, in 2022–23, average fertilizer use in these districts ranged from 50 to 90 kg/ha, while the national average exceeds 135 kg/ha.

The average rice yield per hectare (2022–23) in quintals (1 quintal = 100 kg) across major KBK districts is approximately:

- Balangir: 22.3
- Kalahandi: 23.5
- Koraput: 24.1
- Malkangiri: 25.4
- Nabarangpur: 26.7
- Nuapada: 21.8
- Sonepur: 24.6

Crop Production Data – Nuapada District (Latest available data, 2022–23):

Crop	Production (in quintals)
Paddy	2,43,887
Wheat	93
Maize	3,376
Ragi	1,340
Green gram	4,325
Black gram	12,058

Kolath (Horse gram)	2,861
Til (Sesame)	1,007
Groundnut	12,700
Mustard	25
Potatoes	1,435
Suger cane	5,086

In Nuapada district, the net sown area in 2022–23 was approximately 1.94 lakh hectares, while the net sown area in Odisha as a whole was about 56.54 lakh hectares. The total fertilizer consumption in Odisha for the agricultural year 2022–23 stood at approximately 992.44 thousand metric tonnes, comprising:

- Nitrogen: 800.00 thousand metric tonnes
- Phosphate: 302.1 thousand metric tonnes
- Potash: 234.34 thousand metric tonnes

The average fertilizer consumption per hectare in Nuapada district is 69 kg, compared to the state average of 135 kg/ha and the national average of 146 kg/ha (Source: Ministry of Agriculture, 2023). The average landholding size in Nuapada district is now 1.15 hectares, slightly below the state average of 1.25 hectares, as per the Agricultural Census 2021. The cropping intensity of the district remains around 118%, indicating moderate use of multiple cropping practices. The district has 49.27% of its total geographical area under cultivation.

The per capita food grain production in the district is about 69 kg per year (2022–23 estimate). According to the 2011 Census (latest available full data), rural main agricultural labourers constitute 44.79% of the rural workforce, while main agricultural farmers account for 32.94%. The average annual rainfall in Nuapada district is approximately 1,378.2 mm, although this varies widely year to year, with recent fluctuations due to climate variability. Despite 80.34% of the population in the district depending on agriculture, a critical question arises: has it truly been a profitable venture over the past decades? While landholding size, rainfall, and cropping intensity suggest a potential for prosperity, the grassroots reality tells a different story.

Field studies and local analysis indicate that the vulnerable segments—Scheduled Tribes (STs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), women, and children—continue to face significant hardships. Instances of starvation deaths, farmer suicides, reports of child trafficking, cooked food theft, distress sale of labour, and forced migration highlight persistent poverty and systemic failures.

These raise critical concerns: Has democratic India failed its agricultural citizens? Why are such severe issues still unresolved decades after independence?

Major Agricultural Issues in the District

The problems identified in this study fall into two broad categories—natural and man-made—including:

- I. Irregular and erratic rainfall
- II. Inequitable distribution of land
- III. Improper implementation of land reforms
- IV. Distress sale of crops and exploitative systems
- V. Inadequate irrigation infrastructure
- VI. Impact of Global Warming on Agriculture and
- VII. Negative Impact of Globalization

Irregular & Erratic Rainfall

The district, along with the entire KBK (Kalahandi-Balangir-Koraput) belt of Odisha, is predominantly rain-fed and hence faces a highly uncertain agricultural pattern. Although rainfall supports the majority of agricultural activity, it does not provide a secure livelihood. A significant number of researchers argue that rainfall alone is not the principal cause behind recurrent droughts in the undivided Kalahandi district and its neighboring regions. They cite long-term rainfall data—from 1977 to 1991—which shows that rainfall in the region has been inconsistent. For instance, 1988 recorded the lowest rainfall at 978 mm, while 1990–91 witnessed the highest at 2,247 mm.

This school of thought, represented by scholars like Jagdish Pradhan and Mohapatra Rajesh, suggests that drought and poverty in the region are not merely results of meteorological or agricultural factors. Conversely, Dr. Deo and Barma (2000) refute this, arguing that relying solely on rainfall data provides an incomplete and potentially misleading picture. Their analysis indicates that the situation is more complex,

particularly due to the paddy-centric assessment, which overlooks other crops often grown by marginalized communities and used as emergency food buffers.

Furthermore, rainfall and drought situations vary significantly from block to block and even between Gram Panchayats. In Nuapada district, for instance, Sinapali block suffered less crop failure than Khariar block during the drought year of 1996–97, despite Khariar receiving more rainfall. This contradiction underlines that soil moisture retention capacity plays a crucial role—an aspect ignored by many analysts. Notably, 84% of the land in undivided Kalahandi has low moisture retention, exacerbating drought impact. Also, erratic rainfall, marked by intermittent dry spells, intensifies moisture stress conditions for crops (Deo & Barma, 2000).

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Nuapada district and its Padampur Sub-division (now part of Bargarh, formerly Sambalpur) are classified as ‘Drought-Prone Areas’ in both geographical and meteorological terms. These regions, part of the Eastern Ghats, experience scanty, irregular, and unpredictable monsoons, primarily because they depend on the Southwest Monsoon—which travels through the Narmada-Tapi valley, located between the Vindhya and Satpura ranges. This topography causes rainfall to be inconsistent and unreliable for sustained agricultural success. It is noteworthy that the Arabian Sea branch of the southwest monsoon gets squeezed between the Vindhya and Satpura mountain ranges, losing much of its moisture after traveling over 1,200 km. As a result, it discharges most of its remaining rainfall in the western portion of Nuapada district, which leads to a very low water table—even at depths of 200–300 meters. According to a study, the borewell irrigation scheme of the Government of Odisha has largely failed to address this issue.⁹

Inequitable Land Distribution

Unequal landholding patterns in the district have been highlighted by various researchers. Pradhan (1993) denies such inequality, citing that the per capita cropped area in the district is 0.592 hectares—one of the highest in Odisha, where the state average is 0.332 hectares. Furthermore, the total number of landholdings per population ranks second in Odisha, just after Balangir district.¹⁰ However, Dr. Deo and Barma (2000) present contrasting evidence. Their analysis reveals that land ownership is highly skewed. Households with secure Kharif crop lands are predominantly those of traditional landlords, a result of historical inequalities.¹¹

Surprisingly, even less than 1% of households own over 95% of best-quality lands, while 5% of total landholdings are controlled by a staggering 99% of the population, mostly consisting of marginal and small farmers. Larger landowners dominate the quality land segments. The study further notes that none of the households owning less than 2 acres of land possess high-quality or high-productivity land. Consequently, only 6% of households in undivided Kalahandi district can sustain themselves solely through cultivation. Just 1% of cultivators are reported to have surplus food, while the rest are dependent on alternative sources for food security.¹²

Improper Implementation of Land Reforms

Access to land and control over land resources is not only a prerequisite for rural development but also vital for poverty alleviation. Odisha was among the first Indian states to enact land reforms, introducing land ceiling rules to redistribute surplus land to the landless. However, despite this early start, the implementation of land reforms in Odisha has been severely lacking. Many landless people still do not possess legal titles or physical access to redistributed land. The Land Ceiling Act, introduced in 1974, aimed to acquire surplus land from large landowners and redistribute it to the landless in order to improve their socio-economic condition and enhance agricultural productivity. As per the law, 0.7 hectares per individual was considered the ceiling for irrigated land, while a larger area was permitted for unirrigated land. Standard acres were distributed to the landless for agricultural purposes, along with wastelands and homestead lands. In recent years, to evaluate the efficacy of the Land Reform Act, a social audit was conducted jointly by the Odisha Gabesana Chakra, Khariar Chapter and the Council for Social Development, New Delhi (which included the involvement of the author). The audit was carried out in the Ranimuda and Birighat Gram Panchayats (GPs) of Khariar Block. The audit had four main objectives:

1. To assess the status of implementation of the land distribution program.
2. To evaluate whether the land distribution program had met its basic objectives.
3. To examine how the program has contributed to improving the living standards of the landless.
4. To involve officials of the concerned departments in taking spot-action to ensure effective land distribution to the landless.

For the purpose of this audit, 6 villages from Ranimuda GP and 5 villages from Birighat GP were selected as focus villages—all of which were revenue villages. The total number of households (HHs) surveyed was

1969, and the total population was 7974. Among them, 47% were tribals, and the remainder were Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). The Below Poverty Line (BPL) percentage was as high as 81%. Based on the criteria set by the Government (i.e., one standard acre), 59% of STs, SCs, and OBCs were found to be landless. In total, 72.78% of landless households possessed less than one standard acre. Of these, 27.22% were Sukhbasi (squatters residing on government land) in both GPs.

There were:

- 336 HHs (17.06%) who were homestead land beneficiaries.
- 92 HHs (4.67%) who held ceiling-surplus land.
- 69 HHs who had encroached land but had gained right of settlement through informal or formal processes.

The audit of the joint venture identified the following seven key problems associated with the land reform process:

1. Patta (land title) is issued to 16.6% of households, but they are not in physical possession of the land.
2. Pattas are given, but only for a portion of the total land actually under their possession.
3. In many cases, land is under possession, and taxes are being paid, but pattas have not yet been issued.
4. Pattas have been issued, but lands are not demarcated. In many cases, even when lands are demarcated, they are not taken into possession due to poor quality (e.g., hilly terrain, rocky soil, graveyards, etc.).
5. Beneficiaries have applied for pattas, but they have not yet been allotted.
6. 41.6% of beneficiaries possess pattas, land, and are cultivating it. However, 75% of these beneficiaries are in cases of encroached land, which they have been cultivating for a long time and could now claim legal ownership over.
7. Some landless households have still not applied for land allotment due to various reasons.

From the social audit, it was also revealed that 50% of beneficiaries have not physically taken possession of the land, though they are regularly paying taxes on it.

Thus, the study demonstrates that land reforms over the past 30 years have largely failed to produce the desired outcomes due to the following reasons:

1. Non-possession of land by the beneficiaries.
2. Lack of access to formal records of rights.
3. Allotment of unproductive lands.

As Stiglitz rightly points out, "It has to be done properly, peacefully and legally ensuring that workers get not only land but access to credit and the extension services that teach them about new seeds and planting techniques, which could provide an enormous boost to output." An empirical social appraisal of the Boden Block during 1990–93 shows that an average family of five could maintain a normal livelihood only if they had access to 8 to 12 acres of cultivable land during a normal monsoon year. If the family held less than 8 acres, survival was difficult. In fact, more than 70% of households in the district owned less than 5 acres, primarily among Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs)—the most vulnerable groups.

Distress Sale of Crops & an Active Presence of an Invisible Exploitative System

In the district, there exist invisible exploitative systems that force farmers into the distress sale of paddy, a trend that has persisted for the past few decades. This finding is both recent and unique, and so far, no detailed explanation has been offered. Despite the persistence of this issue, little to no attention has been paid to this invisible exploitative system affecting farmers.

A study was conducted by an ex-teacher-turned-farmer during 2009–10 at Khariar Mandi, where farmers from Khariar, Boden, and Sinapali blocks of Nuapada District and neighbouring Kalahandi and Balangir districts rely heavily on paddy sales. Together with another farmer, he undertook a detailed investigation into the Fare & Average Quality (FAQ) standards of paddy.

The study followed a scientific methodology with government staff support. A total of 11 samples of paddy were randomly taken from farmer stocks at the market yard. The testing was carried out over two consecutive days, and the Moisture Content (MC) of the paddy was measured using official instruments by the Regulated Market Committee (RMC) staff. Measurements were authenticated by both farmers and government officials. However, due to lack of scientific equipment, immature paddy and other non-paddy items were excluded from the study.

The results were startling. All 22 samples revealed that the Moisture Content (MC) ranged between 12% and 13%, well below the FAQ standard of 17% set by the Government of India for all of India. This discrepancy is significant. To explain, under the national FAQ standard, 1 quintal of paddy should have 17 kg moisture and 83 kg actual paddy. But in Nuapada district, the MC was only 13 kg, implying that farmers

were delivering 87 kg of actual paddy. As a result, 4 kg of paddy per quintal went uncompensated, leading to major losses. This systemic under-accounting results in direct monetary losses for farmers, as shown below:

Loss Calculation:

- Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy in 2011 = ₹1110 per quintal
- Price per kilogram = $₹1110 \div 100 = ₹11.10$
- Loss per quintal (4 kg unaccounted) = $₹11.10 \times 4 = ₹44.40$
- Loss per metric ton (1000 kg) = ₹444.00
- Total procurement during 2010–11 in the district was 32,000 tons.
- Thus, the loss moves to $444 \times 32,000$ quintal = Rs. 14,20,80,000 (Rupees Fourteen Crore Twenty Lakh Eighty Thousand)

Indeed, it is certainly a huge loss where a ruralite under BPL lives on Rs. 17.50 per day as per the Planning Commission calculation. This invisible exploitation of the farmers has been continuing since decades. This is for the first time that this truth has come out. The loss in other non-paddy items like Jhari, Gurji, Madia, Kodo and the pulses items like rehel (harad), chana, mung, biri, kolthi etc. are yet to be calculated where small and marginal farmers are the direct victims. There are still other losses which are not counted here.

The question is how & why this phenomenon is occurring over the years unlike in rest of India and coastal districts of Odisha, the farmers of the district and other KBK districts do not bring the cut paddy plants to the threshing ground soon after cutting them. The farmers traditionally allow those crops to dry to the extent possible in their fields for days together. This is how the paddy loses its moisture content. This is well known to the officials who do not disclose or make it public for fear of public disclosure and for their easy profit. According to the researcher, the farmers of the district are regularly being cheated of their hard-earned money which ultimately lead them to where they are, e.g., to penury.¹⁷

Problem of Irrigation

Despite repeated claims of the Government to provide 35% irrigation to every block of Odisha, nothing has come out yet. The district's potential for irrigation is only 14%, compared to the state's 33%. The startling result is that none of the irrigation projects of the different areas of the district is living up to their potential.

The Upper Jonk project has the potential of irrigating 9110 hectares, but during the drought year 2002 it could provide irrigation to only 300 hectares; the Sunder irrigation project only to 250 hectares compared to its potential of 4452 hectares; Saipala irrigation project failed to irrigate even an acre of land during the same period though its potential is 561 hectares. When we look at the potential of the Minor Irrigation it could afford to irrigate little more than 17.03% hectares. The following table shows the clear picture thus:

Serial No.	Name of the Irrigation Project	Potential (In Hectares)	Irrigation Provided (In Hectares)	Percentage (%)
1	Upper Jonk	9110	300	3.29
2	Sunder	4452	250	5.61
3	Saipala	561	0	0.00
4	MIPs 42	5204	2760	53.03
Total	3 + 42 Projects	19417	3310	17.03

Source: District Statistical Handbook – 2007. Dr. Deo F. Roots of Poverty

Low Literacy & Low Awareness

The major cause of exploitation in the district is low literacy and low consciousness among the people in general and STs, SCs and OBCs in particular. Because high rate of literacy and deep consciousness lead to assertion of one's rights and entitlement. The local landlords, moneylenders, traders, contractors and the local officials are hand in glove with each other and they guarantee that the locals are where they are. Coupled with this, anti-poverty programs are insufficient and most of it does not reach the needy. Further, agricultural labourers are most neglected and therefore vulnerable to easy exploitation. 30% of the total population entirely depend on wage labour and another same percentage partly. Thus, the district is labour surplus agrarian economy. Till date, agriculture is not that advanced which requires to be at this stage.¹⁹

Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture

Global warming owing to climate change is the most worrying factor not only for the environmentalists and policymakers but also for the small and marginal farmers living in arid and semi-arid zones of India. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), climate change can adversely affect global environment, agricultural productivity, and the quality of human life. It says, it will be more difficult for farmers to carry on farming in the increased temperatures. Further, it says that it affects every one of us on earth. The worst sufferers would be hundreds of millions of small and marginal farmers and people—

especially the tribals—depending on forests who are already in great vulnerability due to rapid deforestation. The rise in global temperature due to climate change would affect agriculture. In temperate zones, a rise in temperature may help countries increase food productivity, but it will have adverse effects in India. The monsoon, which accounts for India's 75% rainfall, to a great extent impacts its agriculture and livelihood of tens of millions of small and marginal farmers. It is likely to intensify the variability of monsoon dynamics, leading to a rise in extreme seasonal aberrations like increased precipitation and devastating floods in some parts of the country, as well as reduced rainfall and prolonged drought in other areas. The western districts of Odisha have already started witnessing those entire phenomena.

Further, the World Bank report on climate change impact based on case studies in drought-prone regions of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha are on the threshold of climate tolerance limits. It indicates the possibility of declining yields of major dry land crops in the above-mentioned states. Like WMO, the World Bank report also apprehends that the poor and marginal farmers will be the worst hit.²⁰

Negative Impact of Globalization

The then Minister of Agriculture, Government of Odisha, replying to the question of an Honorable MLA, Katabanji, on the floor of the Assembly on farmers' suicide, stated that the Government of Odisha has received 96 cases of farmer suicides in the state²¹ (12.12.11, *Sambad*), where 5 suicide cases were from the Nuapada district itself. Since then, onwards, two more cases of farmer suicides have occurred in the district²² (*E TV, Khariar office*), and the chain may continue in the future. The reason behind such cases was ascribed to debt trap due to crop failures. Duryodhan Majhi, present ex-minister of the ruling Naveen Patnaik Government and an inhabitant of the same district, confessing himself of the said cases, holds that the suicides have occurred in the irrigated areas of the Sunder Irrigation Project and Upper Jonk Irrigation Project of the district. The single reason for that is indebtedness of money on ...high interest rate for agricultural purposes. When crops—especially high-yield varieties, paddy and other cash crops—failed, the farmers of the said areas, finding no way out, committed suicides.

According to Sunil, General Secretary of Samajwadi Jan Parishad and an economic analyst, there is a direct co-relation between open market policy on agriculture prevailing in the country and the farmers' suicides. He cites examples of the farmer suicides cases in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, and

Punjab in India. ²³ the trend had started initially in Andhra Pradesh, when Chandra Babu Naidu was the Chief Minister an ardent advocate and leading practitioner of the LPG (Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization) in India. It was he who expedited the LPG process, particularly with regard to agriculture. When the fruits of the said process started bearing over the years, cases of farmers' suicide cropped up one by one in the state. It was followed by Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, and Karnataka, where thousands of farmers committed suicides. And now the state of Odisha is no exception in this regard. The suicide chain is continuing in India.

In today's globalization process, the farmers' community and the agriculture sector are at the forefront of the frontal attacks of the US-led capitalist countries' monopolistic policies. And no such report from other sectors is pouring in as from the agricultural sector. Even GoI's Rs. 3750 crores package to the farmers could not stop suicides by the farmers. On the one side, input cost is ever rising on seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, labour, diesel, electricity, etc., and on the other, the output cost of agricultural produce is decreasing due to this factor or other factors compared to other commodities (Interview with Pradhan J, an expert on agriculture and the President of the Paschima Odisha Krusijibi Sangh).

Even a farmer of the Boden block explained the input cost of a mineral drinking water bottle is Rs. 1.25 paise and sold at the price of Rs. 12.00 to Rs. 15.00. This is what makes the difference (Interview with Singh Atindra) with the farmers. As if these were insufficient, the Government under directives from IMF, World Bank, and WTO, started withdrawing subsidies from the agricultural sector gradually. ²⁴

On July 18th, 2005, the then UPA Government-I signed an agreement with the US on agricultural relationship to take Agricultural Knowledge Initiative (AKI). The agreement states that the US, along with the MNCs of the industrialized capitalist countries, will have 80% share in agriculture and 14% shareholding in retail marketing in India. The IMF and World Bank, together, will prepare agricultural policies for India. The National Knowledge Commission of India, after obtaining necessary agricultural know-how from the MNCs, will impart teaching and training to the agricultural universities and scientists in India.



India's objective was to bring its agriculture on par with that of the capitalist countries. For this, the only option left with India was to go for application of transgenic seeds—available with those countries. The agreement states that the US will control four areas of Indian agriculture. Those are:

1. Universities of agriculture, National Agricultural Research Institute to control syllabus, research, and training;
2. Regulate and control food processing, chemical fertilizer, pesticides, and agricultural machinery;
3. To ensure application of biotechnology, genetically modified seeds (GMS) in the hands of the US; and
4. To improve the lot in irrigation on a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) mode.

The other conditions of the agreement are: both the Central and State Governments will provide necessary infrastructure from their own budget. Cotton, Jatropha, flowers will be produced on orders from the MNCs. MNCs will trade without any hindrance on GMS & seeds, to make fisheries, poultry, and dairy farming profitable. GMO will be applied, Americans' MNCs will train Indian agricultural scientists for the Second Green Revolution, and all related institutions will be handed over for their control. Both the Governments will provide necessary Jal, Jamin (water, land) and infrastructure to the MNCs for contract farming and future trading, food processing will be taken care of by the MNCs themselves, and there will be no limitation on FDI on food and agriculture.

In his speech of Independence Day, 2011, Dr. Manmohan Singh reiterated that India is in need of the Second Green Revolution. Critics apprehend that in the given emerging scenario, the role of the farmers will be too little and they will lose their rights over the resources. The US will establish 30 numbers of Agri Hubs in Eastern India including Odisha to help India achieve her Second GR objectives. This seems more like pretension on the part of the US to take indirect control of the rich natural resources of Eastern India—reflective in the AKI.²⁵

Hence, agriculture of this region is gheraoed from all around to have an all-out attack both natural and man-made to break the backbone of the farming community. Recently, the CAG report (dated 31st March 2011 on agriculture) placed and tabled in the State Assembly shows that 2% of the total 64.09 lakh hectares of agricultural lands in the state are converted into homestead lands for commercial use. This all happened due to the lack of proper coordination between the Revenue and Agriculture Departments of the

Government of Odisha. Definitely, this will affect agricultural production at a time when the population of the state is ever rising. ²⁶

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An Introspection of Transgender People's Rights in India

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Abstract: Transgender individuals in India are often stereotypically depicted as men wearing women's clothing, engaging in street-based begging. Commonly used terms to describe them include Hijra, Kinnar, Chakka, Kothi, Shiv-Shakti, and Aravani, among others. Unfortunately, transgender people face significant deprivation of basic rights, which has a detrimental impact on their well-being and the welfare of their community. This has resulted in the transgender population becoming one of the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups in society. This study aims to examine the entitlements of transgender individuals and critically analyse the deficiencies within the existing legal framework that addresses transgender issues in India.

Keywords: Transgender, Gender Identity, Transgender Rights, Constitution, The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

Introduction:

The transgender community has been an integral part of Indian society since ancient times, with historical documentation affirming the recognition of a 'third gender'—individuals who do not conform to the conventional male or female roles—within early Indian texts and scriptures. The concept of 'tritiyaprakriti' or 'napumsaka' has been deeply ingrained in Hindu Vedic and Puranic literature for centuries.

Illustrations of many memorable transgender characters are found in Indian mythology and epics. Indian mythology is full of stories depicting deities changing their gender and manifesting as opposite sexes. Ardhanarishvara – the androgynous form representing the unity of Shiva and Parvati., i.e., half male and half female, known as 'Ardhanarishvara' (meaning Lord who is half woman in Sanskrit), is still widely revered and worshiped. And the famous avatar of Lord Vishnu as the beautiful and enticing celestial nymph 'Mohini' during the churning of amrit (the elixir of immortality) and distribution of the same among the Devatas and Danavas is known to all.

Epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana also provide ample references to transgender characters. One of the main protagonists of the Mahabharata tale, Arjuna himself, during the time of their exile, assumed the

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identity of a eunuch named "Brihandala." And who can forget the character of Shikhandi, who found himself in Kurukshetra war in spite of being a transgender.

The conventional perception of transgender individuals as bestowers of blessings is rooted in a mythological belief that these communities possess divine powers of benediction, a notion that can be traced back to the Ramayana. In the epic, when Lord Rama embarked on his 14-year exile, he instructed everyone to leave the city, symbolizing a broader context in which the transgender community is revered for its sacred role in imparting blessings. However, the hijras (transgender people) stayed behind out of devotion. Pleased with their loyalty, he blessed them with the power to give auspicious blessings during events like marriages and childbirths. This is how the tradition of Badhai, where hijras sing, dance, and bless, began.

Transgender people were also highly revered during the Mughal period. They were considered fiercely loyal, intelligent, and trustworthy. They were appointed as political advisors, administrators, and guards of the harem. Transgender people, especially hijras, enjoyed prestigious positions during the medieval period in India. However, the drastic downfall in the status and position of transgender people in India was witnessed during colonial rule. The introduction of the Criminal Tribal Act, 1871, brought drastic changes in the attitude and perception of the masses towards the transgender community. The Act portrayed the Hijra and transgender community as inherently criminal, requiring their registration and surveillance. They were charged with grave offenses such as abduction and forced sterilization, prohibited from wearing women's clothing in public spaces, and subject to arrest without a warrant for performing in public, with potential penalties including jail time or monetary fines. Thus, creating a negative image among the masses about the transgender community, which has peacefully existed in our society since ancient times. This act, when combined with the criminalization of homosexuality (section 377), had a devastating effect on the transgender community in India.

In the last few years, efforts have been made to undo the injustice that was meted out to the transgender community. The judiciary had played a crucial role by giving the right to self-identification and creating the category of third gender to accommodate transgender people in India. The decriminalization of Section 377 was a landmark decision taken by the Judiciary, paving the way for transgender and homosexual people to choose their sexuality openly and without any fear of being prosecuted.

Who is a Transgender?

People often mix up the term's "sex" and "gender," but they actually refer to different things and shouldn't be used interchangeably. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "sex" is all about the physical and biological traits that distinguish males from females—like chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive anatomy. In contrast, "gender" is about the roles, behaviors, and identities that society associates with being male or female. These social constructs of masculinity and femininity vary across cultures and can change over time.

These gender norms are not static; they fluctuate across cultures and historical periods and are subject to transformation over time. Thus, while sex is a biological construct, gender is shaped by social, psychological, and cultural influences. Societies establish gender expectations, which manifest in concepts of masculinity and femininity. Through the process of socialization, individuals internalize these norms and ultimately form their own sense of gender identity. Importantly, gender identity does not necessarily align with one's biological sex.

According to the Yogyakarta Principles, gender identity is a person's deep and innate sense of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth. This identity may encompass a personal perception of one's body, which could involve a desire to modify its appearance or functionality through medical or other interventions. Gender expression can take many forms, including how someone dresses, speaks, and behaves. Not everyone identifies with the gender they were labeled with at birth, and this is particularly relevant for transgender individuals. Transgender people are those whose sense of their own gender or how they express it differs from the conventional expectations linked to the sex they were assigned at birth. They often push back against rigid definitions of 'male' and 'female,' challenging established gender roles. It's important to understand that being transgender is related to one's internal sense of gender and outward expression—not necessarily to their sexual orientation.

In the Indian context, transgender individuals are often referred to as the "third gender," representing an identity beyond the male-female binary. This group includes people who may present with traditionally feminine appearance and behaviours, often seen in public spaces such as traffic intersections, railway stations, or ceremonial events like weddings and births. Their presence is often marked by distinctive clapping, colourful attire, and ritualistic blessings. Common terms used in India to refer to transgender individuals include hijra, kinnar, kothi, shiv-shakti, and aravani, among others.

In India, "transgender" is a broad legal term. According to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, it refers to anyone whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth. This includes trans men, trans women, intersex individuals, genderqueer people, and members of traditional communities like hijras, aravanis, and jogtas, whether or not they have undergone medical changes.

Broadly, transgender people in India can be grouped as:

1. Male-to-Female (MTF): Those assigned male at birth but identify as female.
2. Female-to-Male (FTM): Those assigned female at birth but identify as male.
3. Intersex: Individuals born with both male and female sexual characteristics, or with ambiguous genitalia.
4. Third Gender: Persons who do not identify strictly as male or female but as a separate gender altogether.

Rights of transgender in India:

Everyone is born with basic rights like freedom, equality, and dignity. These rights shouldn't be denied to anyone because of their gender identity or sexual orientation. Sadly, these personal traits are often misused as reasons to exclude or mistreat individuals—even by governments or institutions. But every person deserves to enjoy their full human rights, without discrimination.

Transgender individuals across the globe are particularly vulnerable to stigma and systemic discrimination. In India, due to deeply rooted societal mistrust and prejudice, transgender people are frequently denied equal participation in social and cultural life. This exclusion severely limits their access to essential services and opportunities, including education, employment, healthcare, public welfare schemes, and political representation. Such barriers have resulted in widespread marginalization, relegating many members of the transgender community to the periphery of society.

Moreover, transgender persons in India often face harassment not only from the general public but also from law enforcement authorities. Despite being citizens of the country, their lived realities are frequently more distressing than those of refugees.

Right to Self-Determination of Gender Identity:

In the past, transgender people in India weren't allowed to choose their own gender identity. Instead, they were forced to live according to the gender assigned to them at birth, which often didn't reflect who they truly were. This absence of legal acknowledgment of a self-determined gender identity hindered many transgender individuals from obtaining formal government-issued identification documents.

Since the Government of India only recognized male and female genders, those who fell beyond the gender binary were virtually left without any identity of their own. Due to the lack of legal identification documents, most welfare schemes, health care schemes, banking, and even the right to contest elections were denied to transgender people. As a matter of fact, they were not even included in the census of the country; it was only in 2011 that, for the first time, transgender people were included in the census and accepted as a part of the general public of India.

In 2014, the Supreme Court of India made a landmark decision in the *NALSA v. Union of India* case. It expanded the meaning of "sex" in the Constitution to include "gender," affirming that every person has the right to identify as male, female, or transgender. This right, protected under Article 21, reflects an individual's personal sense of identity. The Court also ruled that transgender and intersex people are entitled to all fundamental rights, including equality and non-discrimination under Articles 15 and 16. This judgment marked the first legal recognition of a "third gender" in Indian law.

Right to Education:

Education plays a crucial role in driving social change. It forms the bedrock of development and progress in any society, providing individuals with the tools needed to overcome challenges and access better opportunities for a dignified life. As such, education is a central component of government policies worldwide. India has long placed high value on education. It was first formally mentioned in Article 45 of the Directive Principles, calling for early childhood education for all children up to age six. Later, the 86th Constitutional Amendment in 2002 made education a fundamental right by adding Article 21A, which took effect in 2010. Apart from this constitutional protection, the Indian government has also created the National Policy on Education, which acts as a framework for regulating and growing the education industry.

However, the educational status of transgender individuals in India remains dismal. Due to the nature of their gender identity, transgender children often face bullying, harassment, and discrimination, leading many to leave the school and fail to complete their even basic schooling. This mistreatment occurs not only

at the hands of fellow students but also sometimes from teachers. They are subjected to derogatory terms, lack of access to gender-appropriate facilities like restrooms, and insufficient support from school authorities. Moreover, the absence of effective government policies to address these challenges results in lower enrolment rates and higher dropout rates among transgender students. The overall population's literacy rate is 74%, whereas transgender people's is just 46%, according to the 2011 Census.

The 2019 Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act has significantly improved access to education for the transgender community. Any discrimination against transgender people in educational settings, including rejection, cessation, or unfair treatment in schools, is expressly prohibited under Section 3 of the Act. Section 13 mandates that all government-recognized or supported educational institutions must ensure inclusive education for transgender individuals, providing them equal access to sports, leisure, and recreation without any discrimination.

Right to Equal Opportunity in matters of employment:

No individual shall be considered unqualified or face discrimination in employment or public service appointments based on factors such as religion, race, caste, gender, ancestry, birthplace, residence, or any mix of these characteristics. According to Article 16 of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees equal opportunity in public service. Nonetheless, India offers protective discrimination in the form of reservations to aid in the advancement of the socially, economically, and educationally underprivileged segments of society. The Schedule caste, Schedule tribe, and other backward class people in India have reaped the benefits and uplifted their socio-economic position. Transgender people were not included in these categories of educationally, socially, and economically backward classes, and no special policies were formulated for them like those for SCs, STs, and OBCs.

Transgender individuals in India face significant workplace discrimination and barriers to employment. They are often subjected to violations of privacy, denial of job opportunities, and harassment, all of which contribute to higher rates of unemployment and poverty. Prior to the 2014 NALSA judgment, hiring practices in most institutions were strictly based on a binary gender system, which excluded the third gender. Even when transgender individuals were employed, they frequently faced ridicule and ostracism, leading them to eventually leave their positions. Low literacy rates among transgender people also contribute to the problem of unemployment. Lack of steady employment and poverty force the majority of transgender people in India to engage either in begging, sex work, or both. It makes them vulnerable to

sexually transmitted diseases, sexual abuse, physical and mental abuse, and prosecution by law enforcement.

The case of Nangai vs. the Superintendent of Police shows the lack of established employment rules regarding transgender people. Nangai (name change) was directly recruited as a grade II police constable by the Government of Tamil Nadu, and during her training she was asked to go through a medical check-up. After her physical check-up, the medical officer remarked on her as 'transgender'. She was instructed to undergo an endocrinological evaluation for genetic analysis (sex determination) at the Government Hospital in Chennai. She has to go through a lengthy procedure to determine her gender, and as a result, she missed her training days. Upon examination, she was declared male as her chromosomal examination showed a male pattern and she had ambiguous external genitalia. And because of that, she was terminated from her job. Although she was assigned female at birth and all her documents, including her birth certificate, reflected this, the matter was taken to the High Court of Tamil Nadu. The judiciary determined that the petitioner was entitled to assert her gender identity, affirming her status as female. Consequently, the directive for her dismissal by the superintendent of police was annulled. This case forms part of a broader series of legal actions addressing the rights and identity of intersex individuals within India.

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 was passed with the intention of resolving the difficulties that the transgender population faces in the workplace. In particular, Section 3 of the Act forbids discrimination on the basis of certain grounds: Section 3(b) forbids discriminatory practices and unfair treatment in the workplace; Section 3(c) forbids unfair termination or denial of job prospects. Section 3(h): Prohibits unfair treatment or denial of opportunity in the run for public or private office.

Additionally, Section 9 underscores the principle of non-discrimination in employment, ensuring that no employer may engage in discriminatory practices concerning the transgender community in areas such as recruitment, promotion, and other employment-related matters. The Act also directs the government to design inclusive and non-stigmatizing social welfare schemes aimed at improving the welfare of transgender people in India.

Following the enactment of the law, Article 16—which ensures equal employment opportunities—was meaningfully extended to the transgender community, a right that had been previously denied. Several states have moved toward offering reservations for transgender people in public employment. In 2021, Karnataka became the first state to reserve 1% of positions in all public service sectors for transgender individuals. The state government was ordered by the Rajasthan High Court in February 2022 to abide by

the Supreme Court's directives on the reservation of employment for transgender people. In a groundbreaking move, the Chhattisgarh police department also hired 13 transgender constables in March 2021.

Right to vote and to be elected:

Democracy thrives on the active participation of all its citizens. When certain segments of society are excluded or denied the chance to engage politically, it undermines the very essence of democracy. In India, voting and standing for elections are basic political rights, guaranteed to all citizens under the Constitution. The universal adult franchise, which gives rights to everyone above eighteen years of age to vote and be a part of democracy, is a significant and salient feature of the Indian constitution.

However, a larger section of the transgender community was deprived of the right to vote and be elected for a longer period of time. As the electoral roll had only two genders to choose from, i.e., male and female. And for transgender people, no option was available. And if at all they want to use their franchise right, they have to choose the gender they were assigned at the time of their birth, which does not match the gender identity they perceive. This created genuine confusion. As the person donning female attire and mannerisms comes to vote, and in her voter ID, she is identified as a male, As a result, many turned back and were not allowed to vote. But the process of getting an electoral ID itself was a monumental task, as many transgender people were rejected due to confusion over where to place them in the column where the sex of a person has to be identified. This prevents many transgender people from enrolling themselves in the electoral roll and using their franchise rights.

The 2014 ruling by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) represents a pivotal moment for India's transgender community, as it officially recognized them as a distinct third gender. This landmark decision by the Supreme Court dismantled barriers that had long excluded transgender individuals from various societal privileges. Following this decision, the Election Commission of India added a new category, "others," on voter IDs. This allowed individuals who don't identify strictly as male or female to register as voters and run for elections. This judgment not only granted political recognition but also paved the way for the transgender community to actively participate in public life. One notable achievement was the election of Madhu Bai Kinnar, a transgender woman, as the first elected transgender mayor of Raipur, Chhattisgarh, after defeating a BJP candidate. This victory symbolized a new era of political engagement for transgender people, inspiring others to enter politics. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, five transgender candidates contested from various states like Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Kerala.

Although none were victorious, their participation sparked greater awareness and encouraged many transgender individuals to assert their political rights.

While many transgender candidates have run as independents due to limited party support, political parties like the Aam Aadmi Party, INC, and BJP are increasingly considering transgender individuals for electoral tickets. Many transgender individuals have contested elections at the panchayat, state assembly, and parliamentary levels, signalling growing acceptance.

Conclusion:

The transgender community in India faces widespread misunderstanding and discrimination. Transgender individuals have been a part of Indian culture for centuries, once being respected and holding prominent positions in society. However, over time, their status has declined. Systemic neglect by mainstream society, compounded by their exclusion from government welfare policies and schemes, has led to their marginalization.

Despite this, recent years have witnessed significant legal and policy reforms that offer hope for improvement. The Indian Supreme Court has made pivotal decisions, such as recognizing gender identity as a part of 'sex' under Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution, establishing a third gender category, and decriminalizing Section 377, which criminalized same-sex relations. These landmark judicial decisions have ushered in a transformative era of progress for transgender individuals within the nation. The most recent and relevant legislative advancement, the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, has instilled renewed hope for the empowerment of the community and promises a more inclusive and prosperous future.

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Civil society's role in democratizing governance: an analysis of the Soochana Adhikar Abhijan movement in Odisha

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Abstract: Civil society is the fulcrum of today's democratic polity. It strengthens and sustains the democratic fabric of society. In fact, we cannot think of a democracy today without active involvement of civil society groups in the decision-making process and governance. In other words, for democratic politics and governance to prevail, the existence of civil society organisations is inevitable. This paper explores the interplay between civil society and state in the context of the Soochana Adhikar movement in Odisha and underscores its significant role in democratising the governance process by promoting citizens participation, transparency and accountability in the state administration. It also briefs the institutional aspects of this grouping by analysing its structures, functions, and role in managing the movement. Then It proceeds to highlight the challenges faced by the activists and argues that a robust civil society is essential for building a vibrant democracy that fosters citizens' engagement and holds the government accountable.

Keywords: Civil Society, Citizens, Governance, Democracy, Transparency, Accountability

Introduction:

Recently, civil society has garnered significant attention from a wide range of stakeholders, including academics, policymakers, government bodies and international organisations, due to its crucial role in fostering and reinforcing democracy, emphasising responsible government, and tackling global issues. It is essentially a complex and contested concept that encompasses a broad spectrum of interpretations and conceptualisations. For the purposes of this paper, it can be viewed as a "third sphere" of governance where the state and society interact and influence each other. In other words, it constitutes the collective forum of people that operates outside of the formal institutions of state and market, where people congregate to deliberate and discuss various issues pertaining to them and initiate actions based on their shared interests and values. They strengthen the democratic governance by promoting the participation of citizens, defending human rights, upholding the rule of law and ensuring that collective interests prevail. In addition,

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civil society groups also play a vital role by acting as a watchdog to ensure that democratic norms are followed in the process of governance in the state. In the event of any deviation, they democratise the governance by exposing it to the larger public and put a check on such maladministration and authoritarian exercise of state power with an advocacy of transparency and government accountability in the process of governance. A host of institutions, starting from universities, clubs, media and non-governmental associations to various social movements, constitutes the sphere of civil society. This paper centres its focus particularly on Odisha's Sookhana Adhikar Movement as a major civil society organisation of the state that has played a major role through the RTI Act in democratising the governance process by promoting citizen participation and exposing corruption and irregularities of the government officials, local politicians and the mafias. Along with this, the paper proceeds to underscore the challenges that the organisation faces on its way, and finally, it concludes with the underlying importance of a robust civil society.

The Sookhana Adhikar Abhijan Movement:

Inspired by the National RTI campaign of organisations like the Mazdoor Kishan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and the National Campaign for People's Right to Information (NCPRI), the Sookhana Adhikar Movement of Odisha had a modest beginning in 2006, a year after the passage of the Right to Information Act. It started with very few activists and public-spirited citizens. The architect of the movement was Chiita Behera, a social scientist who provided an intellectual contribution to it. Their initial objective was to sensitise the people through campaigning about the Importance of the RTI Act. With the passage of time, it turned into a major civil society grouping at the state level in Odisha that operates through its institutionalised forum of Odisha soochana adhikar abhijan (OSAA).

Structure and Functions:

This institution lays down the border framework within which the movement activities function. The highest decision-making body of this institution is the State Working Committee, which consists of the state convener, ex-officio members and elected members. The state convener of the committee presides over the meetings that sit quarterly in a year. The major function of the committee is to delineate policies, plans and programmes for the successful running of the organisation. Along with this, the committee finalises the budget and expenditure of the organisation and issues publications and materials. Despite top-

down styles, the institution takes all its major decisions in a democratic way by seeking inputs from various of its stakeholders. Though it had a very modest beginning, the movement has reached out to every corner of the state, with a significant number of activists working for it tirelessly today. The membership of the organisation is open to all. Any individual who abides by the institution's ethos is eligible for taking membership.

Objectives and Strategies:

Over time, their objective has also been broadened. Apart from organising campaigns to make the people aware of the RTI Act, which fosters citizens' engagement in the governance process, it exposes the corruption practices and irregularities of government officials and holds them accountable. In order to realise these fundamental objectives, activists have employed numerous strategies. In order to generate awareness of the RTI Act among the people, they organise campaigning programmes at multiple locations, including villages, bus stops, dairies and government offices. They utilise various campaign materials like booklets, posters and pamphlets and distribute them to the general public in the course of their campaigning. They conduct training programmes and seminars to disseminate knowledge of the Act and conduct workshops to educate people on its implementation and various ways of addressing the challenges emanating from it. Public meetings and rallies, door-to-door campaigns and community-based initiatives are also organised by them to engage the public in the process. So as to better utilise the technological platform, they outreach to the local and national media outlets for broadcasting their activities and launch campaigns on social media platforms to raise awareness. They issue newsletters and publications online to share their best practices with the people. In addition to this, they also strategies by developing networks with other compatible organisations to augment the movement advocacy efforts. By using all these tactics, they achieve their objectives.

Significance and Achievements:

The significance of this movement lies in its role to democratise the governance process through the RTI Act by compelling the government authority to strictly adhere to the democratic norms while performing their duties. It takes the forefront to ensure that democratic principles are followed in the governance process by empowering citizens through awareness of the act on the one hand and, consequently, exposing

corruption of the government officials on the other. Armed with the information obtained through the RTI Act, the movement employs the aforementioned strategies and tactics to expose and check the corrupt practices and maladministration in the state's governance systems. It has been effective to a greater extent in exposing corruption and irregularities of government officials, local politicians and the mafias. It has succeeded in exposing irregularities in various government initiatives in the state, including MGNREGA, ICDS, and PDS. Additionally, it has revealed the instances of favouritism, nepotism and manipulation in government appointments; unlawfulness in the allotment of mining operations to the companies; illegal occupation of government quarters by former MLAs and government officials; and illegality in land allotment by the General Administration Department and State Housing Board, Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA), Cuttack Development Authority (CDA) and Odisha Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) to politicians, bureaucrats and private educational institutions like KIIT, KISS and Sri Sri Rabi Shankar University. In order to take up the issue for justice, it has approached the High Court, Human Rights Commission, Central Vigilance Commission, Central Bureau of Investigation, and National Green Tribunal with the information obtained through RTI. One significant achievement of this movement in this regard is the Green Tribunal's order of 2017, where the government of Odisha returned the 18 acres of forest land unlawfully acquired by KIIT and KISS.

Challenges:

Notwithstanding these initiatives and successes, the movement faces multiple challenges on its way to promote transparency and accountability in governance. Physical attack, threats, harassment and registration of false cases against activists pose a serious challenge to the movement. Some of the notable instances to cite are the attack on Sarbeswar Behura, humiliation of N. A. Saha Ansari and a false allegation registered against the state convener of the Sookhana Adhikar Abhijan. Sarbeswar Behura had to suffer a bomb attack because of his activism in exposing corruption and irregularities of government projects in Jajpur District on March 27, 2021. He had faced a similar attack twice before this event. His activism has exposed the destruction of road scams, irregularities in housing allotment and misappropriation of funds by OAS officers in Jajpur Tehsil. Pradip Pradhan, a prominent activist and state convener of the movement, against whom a false case was registered in revenge for his activism against corrupt practices. The instances of humiliation include N. A. Shaha Ansari, who was harassed by BDO for seeking information under RTI in 2008. Despite such threats, attacks and humiliation being a mundane affair, the movement lacks

cooperation from the government and suffers from inadequate protection for its activists. In addition, the movement confronts financial and resource limitations that make it challenging to sustain. The technological access too is limited, as most of the citizens live in rural areas. The power dynamics also Present a hurdle to the movement where certain individuals or groups hesitate to provide information in order to intimidate and silence the activists. Along with this, delays in adjudicating appeals by the inefficient government system and the exemption of some government entities from the purview of the RTI Act also put them in difficulty.

Conclusion:

In the contemporary times, Indian democracy is struggling with corruption. It has posed a serious threat to democratic politics and permeated every aspect of governance. Odisha, being a state of this larger entity, is not exempt from its impact. Generally, it is observed that the state does not adhere to the democratic norms like fairness, equality and rule of law in the administration of the public. Therefore, civil society like Sookhana Adhikar Abhijan in Odisha continues its significance in democratising the governance process that strengthens the democratic fabric of society. Its role in ensuring transparent and accountable governance in the state cannot be undermined. Given its significance, the state should enact a whistleblower act in light of threats and attacks against activists to ensure that a vibrant and robust civil society operates inside the state and the democratic governance is upheld.

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Educational and Career Aspirations among Young Females in Aalo, West Siang & Arunachal Pradesh

Mani Shankar Singh¹ & Sudip Chatterjee²

Abstract: This study digs into the educational and career aspirations of young females aged 15–24 in Aalo, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh. It emphasizes on different kinds of challenges they face varying from inadequate infrastructure and challenging terrain to social, cultural and economic impediments based upon interviews and group discussions with 200 participants. The study attempts to show the importance of focused actions such as infrastructural development, extending financial assistance, mentorship, and community awareness programs. It contributes to the discussions on gender and education with special reference to insights and solutions especially suited to development studies in hilly and remote regions.

Keywords: Educational aspirations, Career choices, Gender and education, youth empowerment.

Introduction:

The educational and career aspirations of young women are important indicators of social and economic development but until now they remain one of the under-studied topics in remote places like Aalo, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh. Aalo, inhabited predominantly by the Galo tribe of the Abo Tani group, throws back a distinctive social, cultural and historical conditions determined by factors such as colonial neglect, strategic isolation, and gradual post-independence integration. Since its attainment of statehood in 1987, development in education, health, and infrastructure has progressed slowly in Arunachal Pradesh but lagged behind mainland India. Historically, Aalo has evolved from an unadministered frontier during the colonial era to a strategic administrative centre in present-day Arunachal Pradesh. Recent educational advancements in Aalo include schools like Kendriya Vidyalaya, Siyom Army Public School, government higher secondary school, Ramakrishna Mission School, ITBP public school etc., HEIs such as the SFS College (2007), The Teachers Training College (2012), North East Frontier Technical University (2014), and an 84.88% literacy rate (2011), surpassing state (65.38%) and national (74%) averages. Health infrastructure is improving with a 60-bedded hospital under construction, and cultural tourism thrives through festivals like Yomgo River festival (January) and Mopin (April). Among significant infrastructure,

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mention can be made about the vast highway networks mostly constructed by the BRO, Patum Iron Bridge (146 m), a proposed railway to Silapathar, an Advanced Landing Ground etc. All of these development measures have surely expanded opportunities but have not fully bridged historical inequalities. Moreover, inequal regional development favours urban centres like Itanagar, leaving Aalo with limited healthcare and employment (7,656 workers out of 20,684 residents). Factors like border issues diverting funds to security, and social challenges, including gender disparities (female literacy 78.47% vs. male 90.24%), a low child sex ratio (920), compounded by slow policy implementation and tribal diversity, have left Aalo lagging behind mainland India in quality of life and economic opportunities.

Understanding the aspirations of young women in Aalo requires placing them within both intrinsic motivations (personal development, intellectual fulfilment) and extrinsic factors (economic security, social status). From educational aspirations, one can know about an individual's desired academic achievement, while from career aspirations, it can be known about long-term professional goals and how they are shaped by one's personal interests and fundamental opportunities. It is therefore crucial to distinguish between aspirations and realistic expectations, especially in socio-economically transitional societies. This study examines the educational and career aspirations of young women in Aalo, identifying the social, cultural, economic, and institutional factors that either contribute to or hinder their aspirations. By doing so, it seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of gendered youth transitions in India's frontier regions, offering insights relevant to implementing policies, undertaking educational reforms, and broader debates on aspiration formation in marginalized contexts.

Existing literature on youth aspirations are mostly shaped by instruments like the Educational Aspiration Scale and frameworks such as Social Cognitive Career Theory. This is largely centred on urban or general populations, often overlooking tribal or rural contexts. This study addresses that gap by exploring how educational and career aspirations co-evolve among tribal girls in Aalo, Arunachal Pradesh, through a qualitative-dominant, context-sensitive lens.

While offering in-depth insights into Aalo, the study's geographic specificity may limit broader applicability, and its focus on immediate aspirations does not account for evolving trajectories shaped by migration, digital access, or policy shifts.

Research Methodology:

This study investigated the educational and career aspirations of young females (aged 15-24) in Aalo, Arunachal Pradesh, using a hybrid research design. Quantitative data on the distribution of aspirations were collected via structured questionnaires from 200 participants using purposive sampling. This was complemented by qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to explore underlying motivations and challenges. Quantitative data on educational aspirations were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation, frequency distributions) after assigning numerical values based on participant perceptions. Career aspirations were analysed using frequency counts and thematic interpretation to account for cultural context. Thematic analysis was also applied to qualitative data to identify recurring influences on both educational and career aspirations. The interpretation of findings was rooted in Social Cognitive Career Theory, Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise, Super's Life-Span, Life-Space Theory, and Eccles' Expectancy-Value Theory.

Findings and Analysis:

(a) Demographic Profile of Respondents:

Academic aspirations of Aalo ST females across age groups (15-17: 17.5%; 18-21: 55%; 22-24: 27.5%) show younger cohorts prioritizing schooling/undergraduate studies, while older participants pursued professional/postgraduate courses. 32% migrated for education. Employment increased with age; 3% (oldest group) were married.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

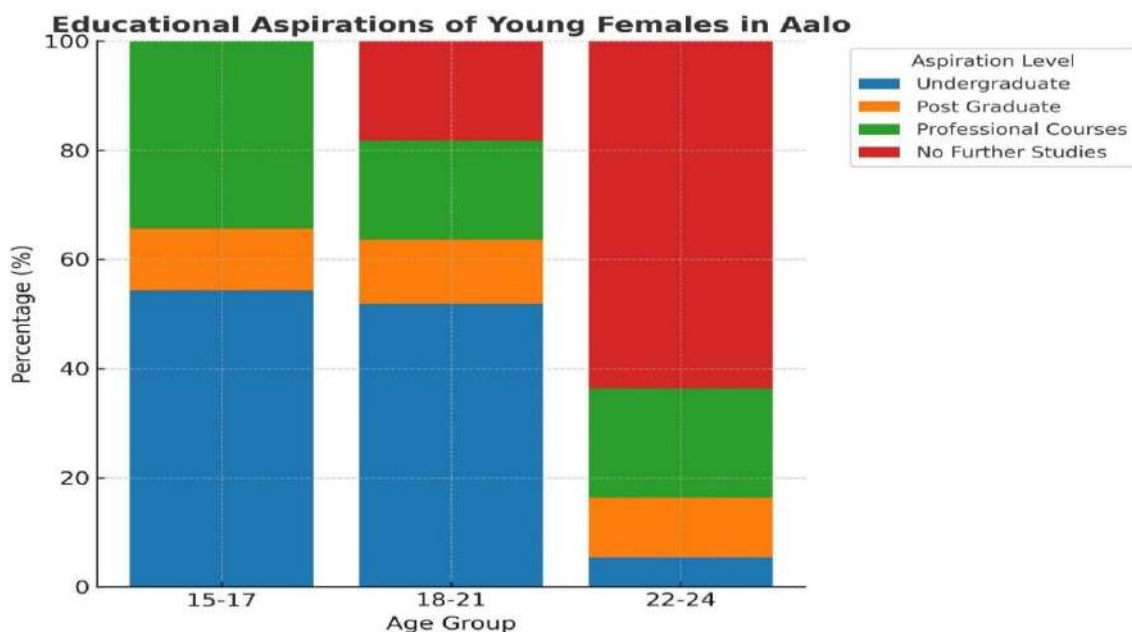
Age Range	Educational Level	Number of Respondents	Number of Married Females	Number of Respondents Working
15-17	Secondary and Higher Secondary	35	0	0
18-21	Higher Secondary and Undergraduate	110	0	4
22-24	Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Professional	55	6	15

Source: Primary Data

(b) Educational Aspirations of Young Females in Aalo:

The graph in Figure 1 illustrates distinct patterns of educational aspirations across different age groups, highlighting both the ambitions that shape the academic trajectories of young females in Aalo. Three primary categories of educational aspirations have been identified: Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Professional Studies, along with an additional category for those opting for No Further Studies. Notably, none of the respondents indicated a desire to terminate their education at the schooling level, underscoring a strong inclination toward higher education.

Figure 1:



Source: Primary Data

School-Going Non-Adults (15–17 Years): Among school-going non-adult females, 54.29% aimed for undergraduate studies, though many were unsure about further plans. Meanwhile, 45.71% preferred postgraduate or professional programs like nursing, law, and teacher training. None intended to discontinue, reflecting strong motivation and career focus.

Young Adults in Transition (18–21 Years): Most young adults pursued undergraduate degrees, with 51.82% committed to completion but less inclined toward further studies. Only 18.18% chose career

courses like teacher training, 11.82% preferred postgraduation, and 18.18% planned to discontinue. A few (3.6%) worked part-time for financial support.

Mature Adults Making Practical Choices (22–24 Years): Among mature adults, 63.64% showed limited interest in further studies, often after recent discontinuation. About 20% chose professional courses, and 10.91% aimed for postgraduation. This group had the highest share of married (10.9%) and employed (23.3%) females, prioritizing financial stability and career growth.

Summary Statistics

Educational aspirations in Aalo show a central tendency towards undergraduate studies (mean 1.17, mode/median 1) with moderate variability (SD 0.96). A slight positive skew (0.44) indicates some pursuing higher education, while a flat distribution (kurtosis -0.75) suggests varied aspirations. Age-wise, mean aspiration decreases from 1.57 (15-17) to 1.24 (18-21) and 0.78 (22-24), with the mode shifting from Undergraduate to No Further Studies. A significant association between age and aspiration ($\chi^2 = 64.045$, $df = 6$, $p < 0.0001$) suggests evolving ambitions with increasing age, potentially influenced by changing circumstances.

Key Observations

Undergraduate studies, particularly in the Arts, are initially popular, with Political Science emerging as the most preferred subject due to its perceived connection with public sector employment. However, interest in subjects requiring mathematical proficiency, such as Economics, Commerce, and Science, is notably low. As students grow older, their interest in undergraduate education declines, driven by increasing financial pressures and concerns about future employability, often leading to either completion or discontinuation of their studies.

Professional courses show fluctuating demand due to limited support and finances, though societally respectful professions like Education and Law remain preferred. Doctoral and technical fields relevant to the state are mostly unexplored due to poor awareness and infrastructure. Younger students pursue intrinsic goals such as interest and growth, which shift toward extrinsic aims like security and jobs with age. Weak infrastructure and a lack of career counselling suppress early ambitions. Although gender barriers are minimal, significant knowledge gaps exist among the young females of Aalo.

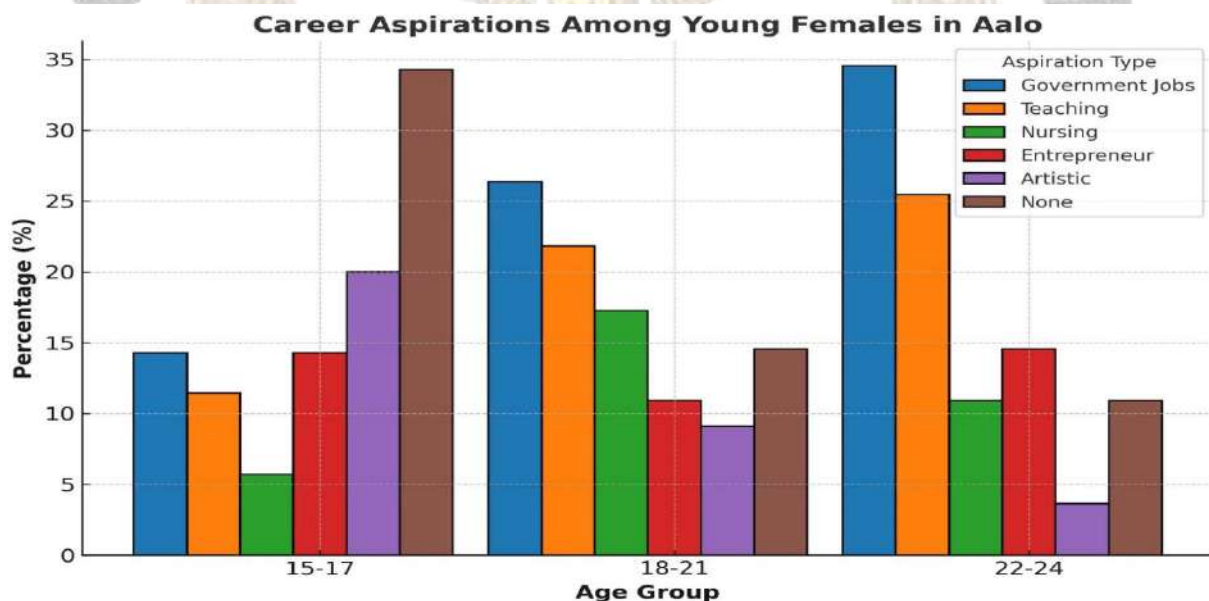
(c) Career Aspirations of Young Females in Aalo

The career aspirations of young females in Aalo are distributed across various professions, exhibiting variations by age group. The data indicate that career preferences shift as individuals age and gain exposure to social and economic realities.

School-Going Non-Adults: Among females aged 15–17, 34.29% lacked defined goals, while others leaned toward artistic and entrepreneurial careers. Teaching and government jobs had moderate appeal; nursing saw little interest. Limited career awareness continued to hinder broader exploration and informed choices.

Career Aspirations Among Young Adults: Among young adults, aspirations shifted toward stability—26.36% preferred government jobs, 21.82% public teaching, and 17.27% nursing, valued for security. Entrepreneurial and artistic interests fell to 20%. Only 14.55% remained undecided, though choices stayed limited by earlier constraints.

Figure 4



Source: Primary Data

Career Aspirations Among Mature Adults: Among mature adults, 34.55% aimed for public sector jobs and 25.25% for teaching, driven by financial stability. Entrepreneurial interest rose with a desire for

independence, while nursing and artistic paths declined due to practical barriers. This group showed the highest career clarity, reflecting age-based refinement in aspirations.

Key Observations

Growing older, respondents strongly prefer stable, respected public service and teaching jobs for financial security and societal contribution. While aspiring for government roles, their understanding of diverse opportunities and preparation is limited, often based on a potentially misleading perception of easy access due to reserved categories. Entrepreneurship is the main alternative for older adults, yet it is aspired to with scepticism. Academic research is largely unconsidered. Artistic aspirations decline with age, favouring practical careers, while entrepreneurship remains stable but often dependent on securing a stable job first. Nursing interest fluctuates with awareness and infrastructure access. Career uncertainty is high among younger students, decreasing with age and exposure, however, choices remain constrained by financial stability and societal norms, limiting exploration of broader avenues. Overall, increasing education leads to more structured, pragmatic career choices, but a lack of guidance and support hinders diverse aspirations.

(d) Challenges Faced by Young Females in Educational and Career Choices:

Young females in West Siang, particularly Aalo, face several key challenges impacting their educational and career aspirations:

- **Limited Access to Higher Education and Training:** A shortage of HEIs and training centres in specialized fields (STEM, arts, business, law, agriculture, healthcare) limits local options, forcing costly and emotionally taxing migration or compromised aspirations. Despite better school access, higher secondary and specialized education infrastructure remain inadequate, especially in neighbouring districts.
- **Lack of Structured Mentorship:** Absence of structured educational and career counselling leaves young females unaware of opportunities, recruitment processes, skill needs, and higher education pathways, hindering informed choices and growth.
- **Economic Constraints:** Economic pressure to secure stable jobs for family support limits the pursuit of entrepreneurial or artistic careers, especially in the absence of training centres and financial aid for such paths.
- **Geographical Mobility and Infrastructure:** Despite improved mobility, the lack of specialized institutions in West Siang forces relocation, creating financial and logistical challenges for students.

Theoretical Interpretation

Educational and career aspirations of young females in Aalo are shaped by individual drive and local barriers, reflect adaptive responses. Social Cognitive Career Theory suggests early self-efficacy drives ambition, but structural limits (finance, access, support) and lack of mentorship diminish it later. Gottfredson's theory explains how practical/socially acceptable "secure" choices (teaching, public sector) replace initial artistic/entrepreneurial interests due to systemic constraints. Super's theory shows a shift from intrinsic youthful ambition to pragmatic choices aligned with stability as life evolves. Eccles' theory highlights how limited local higher education access tempers the perceived value of education and expectations of success, recalibrating aspirations to fit attainable options. Aspirations are dynamic, context-dependent, demanding policy interventions (guidance, diverse local institutions, financial aid) to broaden possibilities in underserved regions like Aalo, preventing aspirations from mirroring constraints.

Suggested Solutions:

- **Expand Educational Opportunities:** Introduce more diverse and specialized programs locally.
- **Establish Mentorship Programs:** Create accessible, structured career counselling at the district level.
- **Increase Financial Support:** Broaden scholarships and seed funding for entrepreneurship and non-traditional careers.
- **Leverage Existing Policies:** Strengthen implementation of NEP 2020 and ST support schemes.

Conclusion:

Empowering young females in Aalo through education and careers drives community progress. Their resilience despite challenges demands tangible institutional support. Addressing constraints in arts, entrepreneurship, and STEM is urgent to nurture ambition and ensure equal opportunity. A supportive ecosystem with family engagement, economic aid, and mentorship is crucial to bridge aspiration and achievement, enabling young women to reach their full potential and uplift their communities, fostering a future of boundless opportunity.

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From Starvation to A Justiciable Right: Realizing the Role of Public Interest Litigation in Redefining Right to Food in India

Pooja Naik Gaonkar¹

Abstract: India has long reflected a culture grounded in empathy and social responsibility, where hunger has been addressed through both age-old customs and present-day grassroots initiatives. The idea that "no one should go to bed hungry" is not merely a sentiment but a foundational principle that guides the nation's conscience. Over time, the Right to Food has transformed from a moral obligation into a legal entitlement, signifying a significant shift in socio-economic rights. This change has been largely influenced by Public Interest Litigations (PILs), which have led the judiciary to reinterpret Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. The courts have progressively expanded the meaning of the "right to life" to include not just survival, but a life with dignity, thereby recognizing food as a fundamental component of this right. Instead, it now includes the entitlement to essential conditions for a dignified life—such as access to adequate nutrition. This judicial development has significantly influenced both legal interpretations and public policy, affirming that a life of dignity necessarily requires fulfilment of basic human needs, including proper nourishment. By transforming starving India from a systematic failure to providing Indians democratized access to food, the country has honoured and operationalized its cultural ethos of feeding the hungry in both symbolic and practical ways. This paper explores the critical role played by PIL in defining and institutionalizing the Right to Food security in India. It further reflects on the legislative challenges encountered in implementation of policy legislations and a need of vigilant, collective yet reflective efforts from the stakeholders towards upholding Right to Food as a living right.

Keywords: Food Security, Constitution, Judiciary, PIL, Fundamental right

Introduction

In a country like India, which is one of the world's largest fast developing democracies, it is quite ironical to see a significant portion of its population facing persistent hunger and malnutrition. India is rated 105th out of 127 nations in the global hunger index, according to the Global Hunger Index, 2024 Report.

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This paradox raises questions not only about availability and access to food but also about legislative framework addressing food security. Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has become a potent instrument in India during the past 20 years for revising the boundaries of socioeconomic rights, especially the Right to Food. Through persistent strategic litigation and proactive judicial intervention, Right to Food has evolved into a justiciable and enforceable right under the Indian Constitution. This transformation marks a significant shift in fixing greater accountability on legislature to protect fundamental human rights of its citizens through policy initiatives. Judicial activism, driven by civic society has expanded new dimensions of ensuring food security in India.

2. UNDERSTANDING FOOD SECURITY AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

Though not explicitly stated in the Indian Constitution, the right to food has been judicially recognized by the Supreme Court as an essential component of the right to life under Article 21. This interpretation affirms that living with dignity necessitates access to adequate food and nutrition. In supporting this view, the Court has also drawn on the DPSP, especially Articles 39(b) and 47, which emphasize fair resource distribution and the state's role in improving citizens' living conditions and nutrition. Although the Directive Principles are non-justiciable, they provide a crucial constitutional context that guides and strengthens the interpretation of fundamental rights in favor of ensuring food security and human dignity for all citizens.

It is quite evident that the legislative intent clearly stipulates imposing accountability on state to provide food security to its citizens. Nonetheless, the judiciary has transformed the right to food from a directive policy objective into an enforceable legal right, mandating government action to expand and implement food security programs. The state has a fundamental obligation to ensure everyone has access to adequate food, as this is included in Indian constitution.

The Public Distribution System (PDS) is a vital mechanism through which India seeks to uphold the constitutional mandate of ensuring food security for all. Although the Constitution does not specifically inscribe the principle of PDS, its foundation is rooted in the broader constitutional framework. The Public Distribution System (PDS) has emerged as an essential mechanism in the nation's efforts to combat hunger and promote equitable access to food. By ensuring the availability of basic food supplies to vulnerable sections of society, it significantly contributes to the broader objective of achieving social justice and alleviating food insecurity across India.

3. THE ROLE OF PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION IN ADVANCING THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO FOOD

Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has emerged as a powerful legal instrument that has significantly reshaped the socio-economic framework of the country. One of its most impactful outcomes has been the advancement of food security, especially for marginalized and vulnerable populations. Through the mechanism of PIL, socially conscious individuals and civil society groups have gained direct access to the judiciary to challenge instances where fundamental rights have been compromised. This legal avenue, often bolstered by an assertive judiciary, has functioned as a means to compel the government to fulfil its constitutional and statutory responsibilities.

India's constitutional development has highlighted the judiciary's pivotal role in establishing the Right to Food as an integral aspect of the Right to Life under Article 21. A significant advancement occurred in the 1981 Supreme Court case "*Francis Coralie Mullin v. The Administrator, Union Territory of Delhi*," wherein the Court broadened the scope of the right to life to encompass the right to live with dignity. This interpretation underscored adequate nutrition and shelter as essential components of a dignified human existence.

Further judicial affirmation came in the 1989 judgment of "*Kishen Pattnayak v. State of Orissa*". In this matter, the Court was moved by reports highlighting incidents of starvation deaths in certain regions of Odisha. Reacting to these disturbing developments, the Court directed the state authorities to implement proactive measures to mitigate hunger and prevent further loss of life.

Over time, the Supreme Court expanded its interpretation of the right to life to include essential needs. In "*Chameli Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh (1996)*", the Court emphasized that the right to shelter is integral to living with dignity, hinting at the broader need for access to essentials like food. Similarly, in "*Paschim Banga Khet Mazdoor Samity v. State of West Bengal (1996)*", the Court highlighted the state's responsibility to ensure access to basic health services and adequate food, reinforcing these as vital to human survival. A major development came in 2001 with *PUCL v. Union of India*, where the Court recognized the Right to Food as part of the constitutional Right to Life under Article 21. This ruling transformed food security from a policy goal into a legal entitlement, ensuring that programs like ICDS, the MDM Scheme, and the PDS became enforceable rights.

These schemes, which were once seen as administrative initiatives subject to governmental discretion, were recharacterized as legal obligations, enforceable through judicial intervention, thereby reinforcing the state's duty to guarantee food access to all citizens as an essential component of dignified living. Through successive interim orders, the Supreme Court mandated the widespread implementation of these programs and entrusted specially appointed Commissioners with the responsibility of monitoring state compliance.

This development in jurisprudence was not limited to the early 2000s. In "*Swaraj Abhiyan v. Union of India* [(2016) 7 SCC 498]", the top most Court emphasized its ongoing dedication to ensuring food security, reinforcing its stance on the issue. The Court criticized the state's inadequate handling of drought relief and its failure to effectively implement programs like MGNREGA to provide food and employment.

It emphasized the government's responsibility to uphold the right to food and water, especially during crises. In the case concerning migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic (Suo Moto Writ Petition No. 6 of 2020), the Supreme Court reiterated that the state has a constitutional duty to ensure the right to life, which includes securing food access for vulnerable groups during national emergencies.

Through these judicial pronouncements, it is evident how PIL has played a prerogative role in serving as a bridge between constitutional ideals and ground realities, thereby transforming food security from a policy aspiration into a legally enforceable right.

4. ROADMAP TO POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Judicial activism, while instrumental in advancing socio-economic rights, cannot achieve tangible outcomes in the absence of robust legislative execution. Without the practical implementation of legislative policies, judicial rulings risk remaining symbolic and ineffective. Recognizing this, the Indian government introduced a landmark piece of legislation in response to persistent judicial advocacy (NFSA) of 2013. This statute represents a pivotal shift in India's commitment to eradicating hunger by legally recognizing access to food as a fundamental, enforceable right rather than a discretionary policy measure.

The NFSA 2013 elevated food security from the realm of welfare initiatives to a constitutional obligation, thereby empowering citizens through justiciable entitlements. The primary objective of the Act was to make essential food grains available at subsidized rates to a significant portion of the Indian population. Specifically, it sought to benefit nearly three-quarters of individuals living in rural areas and around half of those residing in urban regions. By doing so, the legislation aimed to promote widespread access to food

and ensure that economically disadvantaged groups across the country could meet their basic nutritional needs. This inclusive approach underscored the government's commitment to addressing food insecurity on a national scale. In addition to institutionalizing several judicial directives, the Act established mechanisms to enhance transparency, ensure accountability, and facilitate effective grievance redressal. By embedding the right to food within the legal framework, the legislation laid a strong foundation for addressing chronic issues such as malnutrition, hunger, and food insecurity.

To reinforce and expand the impact of the NFSA, the government aligned its goals with nutritional security and initiated a range of targeted programs. The Government of India has introduced several targeted programmes with the primary objective of enhancing the nutritional well-being of its most vulnerable populations. These important programs include the Anaemia Mukht Bharat (AMB) campaign, the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), and POSHAN Abhiyaan (also called the National Nutrition Mission). These schemes have been systematically implemented to address the pressing issues of undernutrition and malnourishment, with a special emphasis on supporting women, especially those who are pregnant or breastfeeding, as well as children. By offering nutritional supplements, financial assistance, awareness programmes, and health interventions, these efforts aim to foster healthier communities and ensure long-term developmental benefits for the nation's future generations. Through this integrated, rights-based approach, India has made significant strides toward ensuring not only food availability but also holistic nutritional well-being, reflecting the broader values enshrined in its Constitution.

5. ROADBLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

Despite judicial and legislative efforts, several challenges mushroom in ensuring food security to the optimum. Critics argue that the judiciary, by assuming a quasi-legislative role, oversteps its boundaries thereby undermining democratic processes. However, given the present times, judicial intervention has often been the only recourse for marginalized populations to enforce their rights. The subject of food security is largely part of state policy, which implies that state governments are free to evolve creative measures while addressing food security. This in many cases result in varied implementation strategies amongst states. More centralized and concrete efforts are mandated if we have to truly address food and nutritional security issues. Selection of target population to be included in TPDS requires immediate revamp in order to monitor under-inclusion and over-inclusion of beneficiaries. Additionally, illiteracy and lack of awareness amongst beneficiaries about their entitlements impact accessing their right to food

effectively. Inadequate storage facilities, transportation challenges, and logistical bottlenecks hamper timely and efficient distribution of food grains in remote and tribal areas.

Addressing these challenges requires solidification of governance, enhancing transparency, ensuring accountability, improving targeting mechanisms and integrating nutrition-sensitive approaches to honour the constitutional promise of the right to food for all.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Food security in India is a multi-faceted issue, encompassing agricultural production, distribution system, nutritional access and socio-economic factors. Triggered by public interest litigation, ensuring 'Food for All' has been instrumental in advancing the right to food in India. Once started as a civic movement, food security has since then been an integral part of developing India's manifesto. Through judicial activism, courts have emphasized the availability, accessibility and affordability of adequate and nutritious food to its citizens, thereby compelling necessary state intervention and policy reforms. However, it is pertinent to note here that, while legal victories are significant, the ultimate success lies in ensuring that every citizen can access adequate food, not as charity, but as a matter of fundamental right.

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Role of Indian Diaspora: Navigating opportunities and obstacles

Dr. Amrita Jaiswal¹

Abstract: The term ‘Diaspora’ refers to the displacement of an individual, community or groups of people from the original homeland to an alien territory. A country’s Diaspora, and the Diasporas it hosts, can be a huge asset for its development. In the 21st century the Indian government has taken various positive steps to foster reconnection between India and its Diaspora. Indian Diaspora based on their knowledge, expertise and skill can really contribute in a constructive way in the development and the growth of the country. The present paper attempts to understand and explore the concept of diaspora, reviews government policies, and analyses benefits and challenges of diaspora engagement.

Keywords: Diaspora, Migration, Soft Power, Brain Drain, Brain Gain

1.1 Introduction

Migration is not a new phenomenon in human history. It has shaped and reshaped the entire course of mankind’s development and Indian’s are no exception to this rule. In the ancient period, Indians have mainly migrated as priests, merchants and traders and this has resulted in the emergence of various Indianized kingdoms like Funan, Champa, Khmer, Sri Vijaya, Sailendra, Majapahibetc and also led to the spread of Buddhism in China, Korea, Japan and parts of South-East Asia. The migration among ancient Indians was rare which got a boost during British era and is continued in the post-independent years as well (Singh, 2018: 1154). For the most part in Indian history, Indian emigration has been a peaceful process unlike the Jews Diaspora. Probably that was the reason for the Indians not associating their migrant population with the term ‘Diaspora’- Greek term meaning ‘to sow widely’ used initially in a positive sense to describe the various migrant population but later, when used mainly in context of Jews it became a terminology associated with the forcefully involuntarily exiled population. ‘Indian Diaspora’- the term became popular only in the 21st century with the ‘Reports of High-level committee on Indian Diaspora in 2001. This community was previously addressed as ‘Indians Abroad’ or ‘Overseas Indians’ (ibid). Present paper is an attempt to understand the changing trends in Indian Diaspora, and to understand their increasing role and the shift in the government policies in the last few decades and examines if India’s attempt at

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engaging the Diaspora in a high volt manner in public places. Therefore, present paper will also provide systematic understanding of Diaspora and the role and the contribution of Indian Diaspora in India's growth story.

1.2 Understanding Diaspora

The term Diaspora, owing to its growing usage, has proliferated and "dispersed" so much from its core meaning that Roger Brubaker (2005) has gone to the extent of calling it "Diaspora" (Pande, 2013:59). It has become more or less a "generic" term, sharing meaning with words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community (Tololian, 1991: 3-7). The Indian diaspora is a generic term to describe the people who migrated from territories that are currently within the borders of the Republic of India. It also refers to their descendants (Agarwal, 2018:1385, Vrajlal, 2015). The Diaspora is currently estimated to number over twenty million. Residing in distinct land, Indian Diaspora members have succeeded spectacularly in their chosen profession by dint of their single-minded dedication and hard work. What is more important they have retained their emotional, cultural and spiritual links with the country of their origin (Vrajlal, 2015). As far as the Indian Diaspora/overseas Indians (the two terms are interchangeably used) is concerned, it has taken the widest possible outline to include the wide variety of people living outside India. On deconstruction, the term comes out with specific groupings, i.e. persons of Indian Origin (PIOs), who are no longer Indian citizens and the ones who continue to be full-fledged citizens of India holding Indian passport, non-resident Indians (NRIs) (Pande, 2013:50). According to N Jayaram (2011: 34) *"It is a heterogeneous and complex phenomenon subsuming under it many diverse phases, patterns and processes. There is a long way to go before we could confidently theorize the Indian Diaspora, what is important is that to unravel as many aspects of diversity as we can, from as many perspectives as we can, so that in due course we will have sufficient building blocks of data and conclusions to build a theory upon."*

1.3 Brief History and the Government Policies

Migration of Indians to various parts of the world got a boost during British era. The various voluntary migrants like merchants, traders, travellers etc were accompanied by the labourers as well. The abolition of slavery in 1833 in the entire British Empire led to the mass migration of Indian indentured labourers, beginning with Mauritius in 1834, soon followed by demands of such cheap labours, especially as plantation workers from other colonies of British Empire like Guina, Malaya, Trinidad and Fiji etc. These

contract labourers were so beneficial to the colonies that they even tried to legally restrict their right to return but were unsuccessful in their attempt (Singh, 2018: 1154).

By mid-twentieth century (largely after Second World War), there emerged a new trend in the migration and settlement of the skilled and highly skilled professionals to the developed world. In the initial years such migrations were United Kingdom (UK) centric. However, as the United States (US) immigration regime became more liberal during the mid-1960s, the wave got diverted towards the US (Gottschlich 2008:156). Approximately 5 million people of Indian origin represent the Indian community there. Marked by what has been termed as the “brain drain”, this process came under severe scrutiny and prejudiced the Indian public opinion against the highly affluent Diaspora who mostly got their degrees from the publicly subsidized institutions in India (Jayaram, 2011: 62). The policies of the Indian government towards the Indian Diaspora in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s reflected many contradictions. The message that they conveyed to the Diaspora was that it should not look to India, but should identify itself with the local population wherever they lived.

The policy of disentangling of India from Indians abroad continued for a long time. During the sixties when India had a closed economy, another phase of migration, began which continued in nineties, where the educated Indians mainly belonging to the skilled service sectors like doctors, nurses, teachers and in later years IT professionals, etc started migrating to the developed countries in search of better economic gains leading to “Brain Drain” in India. These skilled Indians were seen as a liability on the motherland rather than an asset. The migrants Indians were seen to be voluntarily contributing in the development of other countries rather than their own motherland and thus were supposed to be responsible for the problems they faced in the foreign land without the support of India. But, the government and Indian in general closed their eyes to the fact that the migration of these skilled and semi-skilled workers most of the time was not voluntary, but subtly forced due to lack of opportunities in the democratic market (Singh, 2018: 1156). Moreover, with the opening of India’s economy in the early 1990s, the so-called brain drain started yielding unexpected positive results in terms of brain-regain, investments, remittances, philanthropy, and transfer of technology and skill. While the motherland connections always existed in the section of diaspora in some form or the other, but after the 1990s, it became more pronounced (Pande, 2013: 62).

The policy of reaching out to the Indian Diaspora began during the tenure of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. In 1998, the Indian government brought out NRI bonds. The Indian Government also set up a high-level committee of L.M Singhvi. On the recommendations of this committee, the government under the then prime minister

of India, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee decided to celebrate Pravasi Bhartiya Divas. It was decided to celebrate Pravasi Bhartiya Divas on 9th January to mark the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India in 1915. It is celebrated once in every two years to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots (Mitra: 2016). During the convention, selected overseas Indians are also honoured with the prestigious Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award to recognize their contributions to various fields both in India and abroad. The Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award (PBSA) is the highest honour conferred overseas Indians. PBSA is conferred by the President of India as part of the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) conventions organized since 2003 on the Non-Resident Indian, Person of Indian origin or an organization or institution established and run by the Non- Resident Indians or Persons of Indian Origin, who have made significant contribution (Agarwal, 2018:1388).

Indian government also introduced various scheme especially for the India national abroad which includes various welfare policies, insurance schemes along with emergency economic support facility to even granting voting rights to the NRIs in 2011. The shift in the policy was the result of the gradual shift in India's perception towards its Diaspora as observed by Dr. L.M Singhvi, the chairman of the High-Level Committee on Indian Diaspora- *"Overseas Indians are a smaller force but they are a resource, which can be harnessed. NRIs were at one time spurned as non-required Indians"*. (Singhvi, 2012: 214).

1.4 Role of Indian Diaspora

A country's Diaspora, and the Diasporas it hosts, can be a huge asset for its development. In the 21st century the Indian government has taken various positive steps to foster reconnection between India and its Diaspora. Indian Diaspora can really contribute in a constructive way in the development and the growth of the country based on their knowledge, expertise and skill. According to the world migration Report 2018, published by the international organization for migration, the United Nation Migration Agency, the Indian Diaspora is the largest in the world, with over 15 million people from India living abroad. If we take into consideration the overseas citizens of India, this number may well cross 30 million. The Indian Diaspora constitutes 6% of the total number of international migrants (people living outside the country of their birth), which was estimated at 243 million in 2015. UAE remains top destination for Indian migrants with around 3 million Indians migrating there. There have been many Indians migrating to United States also. The Indian Diaspora in developed countries, especially in the United States, is highly organized with many regional and pan-Indian cultural, professional, religious and charity organization (Agarwal, 2018:1386).

The people who migrate to foreign countries in such condition are creating some benefits in the country. Because they reduce unemployment burden and their remittances are raising the standard of living of the family. The remittances pushing up community consumption level and hence, raise welfare as a whole (Singh, 2020: 886). Surveys have shown that nearly 95 percent of overseas Indians send money to their families or close friends to support education, health, or other personal concerns in the homeland (Sampradaan. 2001). For years, India has been the largest recipient of remittances, estimated at \$ 54 billion per year today (World Bank 2009).

India's diaspora is a huge soft power asset. Therefore, Diaspora is an invaluable source of 'soft power'. A new form of power— 'soft power'— has become increasingly discussed in the post-Cold War era. There are millions of Indian diasporas spread across countries as far as Fiji, Guyana, Malaysia, Mauritius, Surinam, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Trinidad. They have contributed immensely to the countries they have settled in and command influence and respect in these countries. Diaspora members can help a country's build soft power, or, as it sometimes referred to today in the US, 'Smart Power'. World Bank's Dilip Ratha has highlighted because of huge population of its Diaspora; India continues to be the top recipient of remittance from its Diaspora. In 2017, India gathered USD 69 billion. The amount is nearly 1.5 times India's defence budget for 2018-2019 and an increase of nearly 9.5 percentages from 2016. While remittance increased 9 times worldwide from 1991 to 2017, remittances to India from its Diaspora increased 22 times to USD 69 billion in 2017 from USD 3 billion in 1991 (Shreehari:2018). Diasporas contribute to the economic development of the country of origin through Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and transnational entrepreneurship, including support for entrepreneurs, start-ups, and small businesses in the country of origin.

The constructive contributions of Diasporas to development in their country of origin are transfer of acquired knowledge. These Diasporas are a great source of transfer of technical knowledge and skills in the form of "*brain gain*" where knowledge exchange is concerned, Diaspora contributes to their countries of origin through philanthropic engagement in many areas. Philanthropy has a crucial role to play in advancing global equity. Diaspora organizations are seen to be getting increasingly vocal and influential in their countries of origin and of settlement (Agarwal, 2018:1387). Our PM Mr. Modi sees tremendous potential in the Diaspora. Therefore, want to see them contribute to India's growth story. At the 2017 Pravasi Bhartiya Divas in Bengaluru, Modi announced that India is moving from "Brain drain to "Brain gain", making his vision clear-that "there is only one dream (within all of us): Bhartiyata". PM Modi also praised the contributions of the diaspora, noting their role in upholding Indian social values abroad. "World leaders

praise the Indian diaspora in their country. A reason for this is the social values the diaspora brings to the societies there,” (The Times of India: 2025)

1.5 Challenges faced by Indian Diaspora

Increased focus on the Diaspora comes with its own challenges. While the Government's initiatives are laudable, India is likely to face some important challenges as a result of the changing economic and geopolitical environment. The Indian Diaspora is experiencing uncertainty due to layoffs in the Middle East, predominantly in the construction sector as the number of government projects fell following the oil crisis. In general, there has been a significant dip in the number of Indian workers being employed in Saudi Arabia and GCC countries because of the economic slowdown. It was found that in 2016 the number of Indian workers who went to work fell by half in Saudi Arabia and by 33 percent in other Gulf countries while the number of expats in the region increased by 12.17 percent (Asif:2017). These statistics reveal the heavily reduced remittances rehabilitation centres for returning workers.

Secondly, support of the Diaspora is neither automatic nor continuous, and their interests need not be India's priorities. For example, the Indian community in the US was not vocal enough in criticizing President Donald Trump's proposal to restrict the H-1B visa programme that has benefited many Indians. Another challenge is that remittances may not always be used for beneficial purposes. For instance, India faced problems due to foreign funding for extremist movements like the Khalistan movement (Rubinoff, 2002). Moreover, the Diaspora is unfair in expecting India to stand by them at all times of need. This contradictory attitude of the Diaspora and the Indian government will need to be worked out.

1.6 Conclusion

Indian Diaspora presents in every part of the globe play an important role in India's external relation with many countries; moreover, they are a strategic asset to India. A country's Diaspora and the Diasporas it hosts can be a huge asset for its development. They are a channel through which not only money, but also much tacit knowledge, can flow, and they are a potential source of opportunities for trade, investment, innovation, and professional networks. However the Indian government's efforts to reach out the Indian Diaspora for looking towards India, the results seem to be not up to mark. Therefore, Indian policy makers should design well-orchestrated policies to attract its Diaspora (Subramanya: 2015). The present paper has provided systematic understanding of Diaspora and the role and the contribution of Indian Diaspora in India's growth story.

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The Reimposition of Protected Area Regime (PAR): Reasons, Implications and Challenges

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Abstract: On the 17th December, 2024, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) reimposed the Protected Area Regime (PAR) in the states of Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram. The PAR was introduced under the Foreign (Protected Area) order, 1958 for all areas falling between 'Inner Line' and the international border in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Uttarakhand for security purpose. As per instructions issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs on 30th December, 2010, the entire area within the states of Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram were relaxed for a particular time period but had been extended from time to time. The reimposition of PAR aimed at addressing security concerns primarily, the alleged illegal immigration from Myanmar. The withdrawal for PAR in the above states now restricted the entry of foreigners in the protected area except under and in accordance with a permit issued by the central Government at any office authorized by the central Government. This article will discuss the reason, implications and challenges on the reimposition of Protected Area Regime within the states of Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram.

Keywords: Protected, Security, Regime, Foreigners, Reimposition

Introduction

On 17th December, 2024 the Union Home Ministry announced the reimposing of Protected Area Regime (PAR) in the states of Manipur, Mizoram, and Nagaland. The central government took such initiatives due to rising security concerns over foreign influx from neighbouring countries. With this the relaxation of the restrictions which had been in place since 2010 has been withdrawn. The new regulation requires foreigner to acquire prior permissions and Protected Area Permits (PAP) for visiting the above mention states (Singh V. , 2024).

What is Protected Area Regime (PAR)

Protected Area Regime is a regulation under the Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, of 1958, which restricts the entry of foreigners into certain areas close to international borders due to security, cultural

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sensitivity, or strategic importance. All areas falling between the 'Inner line', as defined in the said order, and the International Border of the State have been declared as Protected Area whereas, areas falling between the 'Inner Line' and the 'Territory occupied by indigenous tribes' as "Restricted Areas" (Affairs, 2025). Protected Areas are located in the following States-

- (i) Whole of Arunachal Pradesh
- (ii) Parts of Himachal Pradesh
- (iii) Parts of Jammu & Kashmir
- (iv) Whole of Manipur
- (v) Whole of Mizoram
- (vi) Whole of Nagaland
- (vii) Parts of Rajasthan
- (viii) Whole of Sikkim (partly in Protected Area and partly in Restricted Area)
- (ix) Parts of Uttarakhand

Relaxation of PAR for Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram

The Ministry of Home Affairs on the 30th December, 2010 issues an instruction for the relaxation of PAR in the States of Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram as a measure to promote tourism. The orders will be effective from 1st January 2011, which was initially framed for one year but had been extended from time to time. Under the new regulations any Myanmar nationals visiting the States of Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram are also exempted from the requirement of obtaining a Protected Area Permit (PAP) till 31st December, 2022 due to special considerations such as -

1. All such Myanmar nationals shall obtain a visa from the Indian Missions/ Posts abroad or e-Tourist Visa facility which has been made available to the nationals of Myanmar under the existing procedure.
2. All such Myanmar nationals shall have to compulsorily register themselves with the Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) of the State/ District they visit within 24 hours of their arrival. No such registration would be required if the Myanmar nationals are only passing through the State by road with no intention of staying in that particular State.

India's Problem with Immigrant and Asylum Seekers

India shares a 1,643 km border with Myanmar. Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram share borders with Myanmar, a country experiencing instability since a military coup in 2021. The Suspension of the Free Movement Regime (FMR), allowing unrestricted movement within 16 km of the border, has heightened security risks and border control concerns. Over 40,000 refugees from Myanmar's Kuki-Chin-Zo ethnic group have entered Mizoram, with around 60,000 more entered Manipur and estimated of 5000-6000 Nagas from Myanmar also seek refuge in Nagaland (Vijaita Singh, 2024). In addition to this, since November last year, over 200 Kuki Chin people have fled their homes in Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts to take shelter in the Indian state of Mizoram, fleeing military operations by the Bangladesh security forces in the restive Chittagong Hill Tract.

Since India is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, New Delhi does not recognize asylum seekers from Myanmar as a refugee. Instead, the Central ministry informed State government not to welcome nor give refuge to Myanmar who seeks refuge in India. However, Mizoram and Nagaland states decided to accommodate asylum seekers from Myanmar since the Zo-ethnic tribes in Mizoram has close ties with Chin people in Myanmar and the Naga in India shared historical and cultural lineage with Nagas of India (Jangu, 2024). In Manipur, the state government lately wanted to enforced strict laws in order to stop influx of people from Myanmar. However, since border areas with Myanmar are occupied by the Kuki-Zo ethnic tribes, many asylum seekers from this community were sheltered.

India's Rising Security Concerns

The India-Myanmar frontier is an open border with a free movement regime, permitting tribes residing on both sides of the border to travel up to 16km across the boundary for up to three days without visa restrictions. This regime was suspended in 2021, but that has failed to check the inflow of Myanmar nationals into India. The continuing political instability in Myanmar and the long-term influx of refugees are straining the security and commercial activities in Northeast India. The ongoing clashes between the Kuki-Zo ethnic community and the Meitei people since 3rd May 2023 have resulted in over 250 deaths and 60,000 displacements. The state government suspects the involvement of "foreign hands" in the unrest (Singh R. , 2024). The outgoing chief minister fanned ethnic tensions by pointing to the arrival from Myanmar of Chin refugees, tribal kin of the Kuki-Zo, claiming that the latter were fostering illegal immigration. Another concern is the trade connects to the wider "Golden Triangle" region of South-east Asia, which includes Myanmar and harbours a thriving opium economy.

In addition to this, insurgency had resurfaced in Manipur over the past years. Majority of insurgent groups from Manipur have historically operated from bases in Myanmar including the Kuki and Meitei insurgent groups. Over the past decades, illegal drug trafficking from the Golden Triangle via Manipur and Mizoram has been a serious concern for Central Government. Mizoram and Manipur being a border with Myanmar is a prone to the illicit trafficking of abusive drugs and narcotics substances. The insurgency groups were having nexus with drug syndicates and arms smugglers as a means of generating funding for their operations (Hazarika, 2024).

Due to the above factors the Ministry of Home Affairs with concern decided to take the initiatives to tighten security matters in the Indo-Myanmar border areas. After 14 years of relaxation, the reimposition of Protected Area Regime (PAR) reflects heightened security concerns, particularly the influx of people from Myanmar and Bangladesh. Myanmar nationals, previously exempted, must now compulsorily register with the Foreigners Registration Officer (FRRO) within 24 hours of arrival. Accordingly, the Ministry of Home Affairs announced the reimposition of PAR focusing on the following reasons –

1. Growing instances of illegal migration and cross-border movement from Myanmar due to political instability and ethnic conflicts.
2. Concerns about insurgent activities and other security challenges in the region.
3. To regulate the movement of foreigners and prevent misuse of entry points for illegal activities, and
4. Protection of sensitive indigenous cultures and traditions in the region.

Implications of Reimposing PAR

The reimposition of PAR directly or indirectly will have impact on the social, economic and political life of the people as follow-

1. **For Foreign Visitors:** Foreigners visiting the area will now require special permits and approvals from government officials. Visitors who could easily obtain permission earlier now have to go through much more intricate procedure for visiting the area. Since permits are not easily available and accessible it could potentially discourage tourism.
2. **Impact on Tourism and Development:** States in Northeast India are mostly economically less productive and largely dependent on income from all sectors including tourism. The imposition of restrictions may slow down international tourism and investments in the states since tourists and side seers might find it extra burden to find the trouble in getting the permit. In addition, the Ministry

of Home Affairs discourages visiting of protected area unless there are extraordinary reasons to justify the visit. This could greatly reverse the benefits gained during the relaxation period.

3. **Enhanced Security:** The military coup in Myanmar has led to migration into India. Over 40,000 refugees have settled in Mizoram, with around 4,000 entering Manipur. Many of these migrants belong to the Kuki-Chin-Zo ethnic group, which has cultural ties to communities in the Northeast. This demographic shift has raised concerns about security and social stability in the region. Facilitates better control over foreign movements and addresses illegal migration concerns became first priority of Indian Government.
4. **Border Control:** India-Myanmar border stretching has been recognized for its illegal activities such as smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal drug trafficking and insurgent movements. Strengthens India's border management by reducing unauthorized cross-border activities became one of the main targets for New Delhi.

Challenges by Nagaland and Mizoram

Soon after the announcement for reimposition of PAR was made, an inquiry immediately arises from Mizoram and Nagaland government. In Mizoram the Zoram People's Movement government under the leadership of Chief Minister Lalduhawma expressed their concern over the central government decision for reintroduction of PAR fearing negative impact on tourism and movement between Zo-ethnic groups particularly in Bangladesh, Myanmar and Mizoram (Baruah, 2025).

Mizoram's tourism sector witnessed a total of 2, 19,149 visitors during the 2023-24. According to report released by the state's Tourism Department, of this number, 3,818 were foreign tourists, with Americans being the predominant group (Vanlalruata, 2025). Most importantly, Mizoram represent an example for being one of the most peaceful states in India where the government today is moving towards development in tourism sectors. The Mizoram Peace Accord which was signed between Mizo National Army and Indian Government represent the most successful peace accord in India. The reimposition of PAR could hinder government initiatives making Mizoram a tourist destination.

Moreover, Chief Minister Lalduhawma is also a ardent believers of the idea of Zo-reunification. During his visit to USA as a Chief Guest of Mizo Day Lalduhawa openly said, 'The main objective of ZORO Movement in 1988 was Zo-Reunification within India. Can the 'Zo' people in India, Burma and Bangladesh today, aspire to be re-united under India? Looking at the geopolitical realities of our time, it may not be so

farfetched to think this could be a possibility one day. Perhaps, fate has this reunification in store for us in the future' (Lalrinchhana, 2024). In other words, Mizoram is landing a helping hand towards the Zo-ethnic people who fled atrocities from Myanmar juntas. The Mizo opened their doors for food and shelter to their brother and sister who did the same towards them when they faced famine in the past. Therefore, the bond and attachment share by Zo-ethnic groups in Mizoram and Myanmar compelled them to even question the standpoint of Indian government on PAR.

However, Lalduhawma also express his government did not totally oppose the imposition of PAR, though initially opposed by them (Wire, 2025). The state government felt the necessity of restricting movement across the India-Myanmar border and agreed with the Centre in the introduction of a new protocol to regulate cross-border movement under the Free Movement Regime (FMR).

Chief Minister of Neiphiu Rio however expressed his strong opposition with the reimposition of the PAR in Nagaland. Highlighting the state has a peaceful atmosphere representing one of the lowest crime rates among Indian states (Rhakho, 2025). He also expressed his government concerns over the reintroduction of PAR could have negative impact on the thriving tourism industry. It's a known fact that among Northeast states Nagaland represents the most tourist destination. During the Hornbill festival Nagaland received 2, 05,968 visitors among which 2,527 are foreigners. A resolution was passed by members of Nagaland Legislative Assembly highlighting that Naga people live on both sides of the international border, and removing the FMR and fencing the border would severely disrupt the age-old historical, social, tribal, and economic ties of the Naga people.

Challenges associated with PAR in the Northeast

1. **Administrative Bottlenecks:** Obtaining permits can be time-consuming and cumbersome for foreign nationals, deterring tourism and investment. Tourism, especially eco-tourism, contributes significantly to the economy by generating revenue and creating jobs. Local communities often depend on tourism for their livelihood, necessitating open access to protected areas.
2. **Security Concerns:** The region's proximity to international borders and the presence of insurgent groups pose security challenges. Some protected areas, particularly in conflict-prone regions, are used as hideouts for insurgent groups or other anti-national activities. Many protected areas are located near international borders, making them vulnerable to illegal activities, infiltration, or smuggling. The reimposition of the PAR reflects the Government of India's prioritization of security in its northeastern states.

3. **Preservation of Indigenous Cultures:** The military coup in Myanmar has led to migration into India. Over 40,000 refugees have settled in Mizoram, with around 4,000 entering Manipur. The influx has led to demographic changes, increasing tensions between local communities and refugees. Balancing cultural preservation with tourism and development remains a challenge. A strong border security can maintain ethnic harmony and prevent conflicts.
4. **Lack of Infrastructure:** Due to lack of development in some areas, poor road connectivity and limited facilities could hinder the effectiveness of PAR relaxation policies. Besides, security measures can enhance the perception of safety, encouraging domestic and foreign investment.

Conclusion

Considering the situation in Myanmar and the level of illegal immigration in the three states of Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland the reimposition of PAR is justifiable from security point of view. However, considering the vulnerability of situations at border area and the people who lives within the area the government must come up with exceptional provision. The Government can introduced special permit to boost tourism in the region. For this the authority can also create a special tourist zone within the three states. For security and surveillance purpose Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies can be used for real-time monitoring of protected areas. In addition, a digital pass for tourist with tracking devices can be issued for further observation. Most importantly, not restriction but connectivity between people from both sides of the border could alone keep up with cultural identities, traditions, and family relationships so that they may conserve their heritage.

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Analysing the Role of Regulatory Agencies in India's Economic Landscape

Dr. Madhu Thawani¹

Abstract: Regulation, broadly defined as the control of public and private sector activities to ensure societal well-being, is fundamentally executed by independent regulatory agencies. Following India's 1991 Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization policy, a robust regulatory framework emerged to govern diverse economic sectors. While these government-created institutions are crucial for preventing market failures, curbing anti-competitive practices, fostering balanced economic growth, ensuring environmental protection, and promoting social justice, their implementation through extensive rules, guidelines, and penalties often raises concerns. This paper analyses the multifaceted role of regulatory agencies in India, examining their indispensable contributions alongside the challenges they pose to economic efficiency, particularly for new ventures due to perceived procedural complexities and corruption. Through a review of key regulatory bodies, their evolution, and the practical issues encountered in their functioning, this study reaffirms the critical necessity of regulation for long-term societal welfare despite the acknowledged impediments.

Keywords: Regulatory Agencies, Competition Commission of India, Reserve Bank of India, Securities and Exchange Board of India, Economic Efficiency, Governance.

Introduction

The advent of independent regulatory agencies marks a significant evolution in governance, particularly in economies undergoing liberalization. In India, the economic reforms initiated in 1991 under the Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization (LPG) policy led to a profound shift from a state-controlled economy to a more market-oriented one. This paradigm change necessitated the establishment and strengthening of various regulatory authorities to manage the newfound freedoms and complexities of the market. These agencies, established through legislative acts, are designed to operate with a degree of independence, setting and enforcing standards across specific fields of activity or economic operations

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(Britannica, n.d.). They perform a unique blend of executive, quasi-legislative, and quasi-judicial functions, making them pivotal in shaping policy outcomes across diverse sectors (CPR India, n.d.).

This article delves into the theoretical underpinnings, historical evolution, fundamental rationale, and practical challenges faced by regulatory agencies in India. By examining the types of regulators, their powers, and their real-world impact, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of their indispensable yet often contentious role in fostering a stable, equitable, and efficient economic landscape.

Theories of Regulation

Understanding the motivation behind regulation requires examination of theories of regulation. Two prominent theories of regulation are as follows:

1. **Public Interest Theory:** This theory posits that regulation is a governmental response to market failures, aiming to correct inefficiencies and protect the general public. From this perspective, regulatory intervention is seen as a benevolent act by the state to maximize overall social welfare and achieve equity. The goal is to ensure that markets operate efficiently and fairly, preventing abuses such as monopolies, information asymmetries, and negative externalities.
2. **Capture Theory:** In stark contrast, the "capture theory" suggests a more cynical view of regulation. It argues that regulation, once established, tends to be manipulated or "captured" by powerful interest groups—typically the very industries or entities it is meant to regulate—to their own advantage. These interest groups, often possessing significant financial resources and lobbying power, exert influence over the regulatory process to shape policies, rules, and enforcement in a way that maximizes their own incomes or market positions. This can lead to regulations that create barriers to entry for new competitors, protect incumbents, or even result in outright favoritism. The theory highlights the potential for a symbiotic relationship between regulators and the regulated, where the public interest takes a backseat to the private interests of a few dominant players (OECD, n.d.a).

Understanding Regulatory Authorities

A regulatory agency is an independent governmental body created by a legislative act. Its core mandate is to set and enforce standards within a specific field of activity or economic sector, impacting both public and private operations (Britannica, n.d.). Functions performed This institutional design enables them to perform a unique combination of functions:

- **Executive Functions:** They implement and administer the laws and regulations within their purview, issuing licenses, conducting inspections, and monitoring compliance.
- **Quasi-Legislative Functions:** They have the power to create detailed rules, guidelines, and standards that flesh out the broader statutory mandates given by the legislature. These regulations often have the force of law.
- **Quasi-Judicial Functions:** Many regulatory bodies also possess the authority to adjudicate disputes arising from their regulations or to impose penalties for non-compliance. This allows for specialized and expeditious resolution of industry-specific conflicts (CPR India, n.d.).

Broadly, Indian regulators can be categorized into three types:

Regulatory agencies in India are established at both central and state levels, focusing on different sectors of the economy.

- **Professional Regulators :** These agencies oversee professional bodies and ensure ethical conduct and standards of practice within professions. Examples include the Medical Council of India (now National Medical Commission) for doctors, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) for chartered accountants, and the Bar Council of India for lawyers.
- **Regulators of Markets:** These bodies are responsible for maintaining the integrity, stability, and efficiency of specific financial or commodity markets. Key examples include the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for the securities market and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) for insolvency professionals and corporate insolvency resolution.
- **Regulators of Utilities:** These agencies regulate essential public services, often characterized by natural monopolies or significant public interest. Examples include the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for telecommunications, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) for the oil and gas sector, and the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) for the real estate sector.

Evolution of Regulatory Authorities in India

The notion of an independent regulatory agency largely originated in the United States, with the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), established in 1887 to control railroads, often cited as the pioneering model (Civils daily, n.d.). India, post-independence, initially relied heavily on parliamentary control of the



executive to ensure accountability and efficiency, through mechanisms like debates, questions, and committees.

However, certain regulatory mechanisms were embedded in the Indian Constitution and its laws from the outset. Examples include:

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) (under Article 324) for legislative, presidential, and vice-presidential elections.
- The Union and State Public Service Commissions (UPSC and SPSC) (under Articles 315-323) for civil service recruitments.
- The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) (under Articles 148-151) for auditing government accounts.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), established under the RBI Act of 1934 (prior to independence), but its role expanded significantly post-independence.

Beyond these, the judiciary and the electoral mandate served as ultimate recourse.

A significant "second wave" of independent regulatory authorities emerged in India with the economic reforms of the early 1990s. The P.V. Narasimha Rao government's shift towards neoliberal policies – characterized by bureaucratic deregulation, privatization, and business liberalization – fundamentally altered the economic landscape. This led to a proliferation of new IRAs, established under parliamentary statutes, with varying degrees of autonomy across sectors previously under direct ministerial and bureaucratic control. These sectors included industrial licensing, banking, stock markets, telecommunications, electricity, and insurance. Many of these new bodies report annually to Parliament (Singh, 2003, pp. 215–222, cited in journals.sagepub.com).

The Sixth Central Pay Commission Report (2008a) provided an illustrative list of thirty-six 'regulatory bodies' established under various Acts of Parliament, demonstrating the breadth of their reach. This list included diverse entities such as the Central Aquaculture Authority, Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Veterinary Council of India, Coir Board, APEDA, TRAI, IDSAT, Office of Controller of Certifying Authorities, Cyber Regulations Appellate Tribunal, Competition Commission of India, Forward Markets Commission, SEBI, IRDA, Food Authority, various Medical Councils (MCI, Pharmacy Council, Nursing Council, Dental Council, Homeopathy Central Council, Indian Medicine Central Council), PNGRB, various river boards, Central Silk Board, Commissioner of Payments Textiles, Manufactures

Development Council, Textiles Committee, National Highways Tribunal, CERC, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, Central Pollution Control Board, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority, and National Rain-fed Area Authority.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC-II) Report (2008b) also highlighted major professional self-regulating authorities, including the Bar Council of India, Medical Council of India (now National Medical Commission), Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India, Institute of Company Secretaries of India, and Council of Architecture. ARC-II recommended making their councils more inclusive by incorporating civil society members.

Among the new financial regulatory bodies, besides the RBI, key institutions like the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), Forward Markets Commission (FMC), and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) were established. In other sectors, the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) became prominent (journals.sagepub.com).

Post-independence, India's "socialist mixed economy model" saw the state controlling key industries and utilities, while the private sector was subjected to extensive controls like licensing and quotas. This meant the government was both a producer and a direct regulator. The reforms starting in 1985, and especially from 1991, involved delicensing, allowing private entry into government monopolies, and liberalizing trade and foreign investment. As private and government firms began to coexist in sectors like electricity and telecommunications, there was a growing consensus among policymakers that independent regulation was crucial to ensure a level playing field. This led to the rapid constitution of independent regulators in these and other sectors, a process that continues to evolve.

Rationale for Regulation in India

The primary rationale for regulation is to influence private behavior in a desired direction by imposing costs on undesirable actions or prescribing specific conduct. This fundamental objective translates into several key justifications:

1. To Prevent Market Failure: Market failure occurs when the free market mechanism fails to allocate resources efficiently, leading to a sub-optimal social welfare outcome. Regulation steps in to correct these failures.

- Natural Monopolies: In industries where a single firm can serve the entire market more efficiently than multiple firms due to increasing returns to scale (e.g., water distribution, electricity transmission/distribution), competition is impractical. Regulation becomes necessary to protect consumer interests by controlling prices and ensuring service, often barring new entry to maintain the incumbent's monopoly status for efficiency. While telecom was once a natural monopoly, technological advancements and regulatory reforms in India have introduced competition. However, segments like water remain natural monopolies, largely government-controlled.
 - Asymmetric Information: This occurs when one party in a transaction possesses more or superior information than the other, leading to potential exploitation or inefficient outcomes. For instance, in healthcare or education, providers often have more information than consumers. Regulation can mitigate this by mandating information disclosure, setting quality standards, or licensing professionals, as seen in India's health and education sectors.
 - Externalities: These are positive or negative effects of production or consumption activities on uninvolved third parties. Negative externalities, such as pollution from industrial plants, impose costs on society not borne by the producer. Regulation (e.g., environmental laws, pollution control boards) is essential to internalize these costs, restore economic efficiency, and protect public health and the environment, which is particularly relevant given unregulated production and consumption externalities in India.
2. To Check Anti-Competitive Practices: Firms may engage in practices like price fixing, market sharing, or abuse of dominant power, which harm consumers and stifle fair competition. Regulatory laws empower authorities like the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to deter such practices. Through transparent, consistent, and non-discriminatory rules, regulation fosters a competitive and dynamic environment, ensuring that market outcomes are socially optimal. Without such oversight, anti-competitive behaviors can prevent markets from yielding their full benefits.
3. To Promote the Public Interest: Beyond economic efficiency, regulation is often justified by broader public interest objectives, such as ensuring fair access to essential goods and services, non-discrimination, or affirmative action.
- Examples in India include government support pricing for agricultural produce (e.g., wheat, rice), the Public Distribution System (PDS) providing subsidized food grains, and policy decisions like free piped water or free power to agriculture. While these stem from policy stances aimed at public welfare, it's also acknowledged that such "public interest" regulations

can sometimes be manipulated by lobbies to serve vested interests, highlighting a constant tension between ideal and reality.

Problems of Regulators at the Field Level

While the theoretical rationale for regulation is strong, the practical implementation of regulatory frameworks in India faces several challenges, impacting their effectiveness and the broader economic environment.

Tackling Market Failure and Anti-Competitive Practices

Competition Authority versus Sector Regulators:

A fundamental challenge arises from the interface between economy-wide competition law (enforced by the Competition Commission of India - CCI) and sector-specific regulatory laws (enforced by various sector regulators like TRAI, CERC, etc.). Both are crucial for fostering competition, but their approaches differ:

- **Sector Regulators:** Operate "ex-ante," prescribing what firms *must* do. They delve into industry-specific issues of technology, cost, and process. Their focus is narrow, aiming to promote healthy competition within their regulated sector through structural and behavioral measures, mimicking competition where natural monopolies exist or regulating where markets fail.
- **Competition Authority (CCI):** Operates "ex-post," dictating what firms *should not* do (e.g., price fixing, predatory pricing, cartels). Its role is adjudicatory, acting against anti-competitive practices across the entire economy.

This separation of ex-ante and adjudicatory functions is often imperfect, leading to confusion and "turf disputes," especially concerning rule infringements stipulated by the regulator. The differing domains (narrow sector focus vs. economy-wide remit) also result in divergent views and tensions. There is an urgent need to encourage cooperation and formally legislate working arrangements between the CCI and sector regulators to ensure coordination and avoid conflicts of jurisdiction and needless battles over authority.

Actual Implementation of Regulations

The effectiveness of regulatory mandates often falters during actual implementation on the ground.

Tariff Regulation and Competition:

Tariff regulation is a primary function of many regulators, especially in utility sectors. Historically, government control of utility pricing led to heavy cross-subsidization. While reforms intended to shift tariff fixation to regulators (e.g., TRAI), in sectors like power, tariffs are still often determined politically rather than truly regulated.

- Cross-Subsidization: Few regulators have proactively phased out cross-subsidization, with government interference in state service providers often ensuring high levels of it. This distorts market signals and can hinder efficiency.
- Telecom Sector: Competition in telecom largely resulted from technological progress, but effective regulation was crucial to translate this into consumer benefits. Despite a fall in long-distance rates and increased consumer choice, anti-competitive practices persist. A significant conflict of interest exists where the government, owning large operators like BSNL, is also involved in licensing, policymaking, and operations. Allegations of collusion among private operators also highlight regulatory challenges.
- Power Sector: In contrast to telecom, attempts to encourage competition in the power sector have been limited. Government-owned electricity boards largely remain privatized and inefficient. Regulatory uncertainty, particularly concerning tariffs, deters private investment. Governments frequently grant free power to farmers for electoral reasons, illustrating political interference that undermines regulatory autonomy and financial viability.

Quality of Service (QoS):

Despite being a crucial regulatory function, ensuring quality of service has received inadequate attention from most regulators.

- In India, there's limited evidence that regulation has significantly improved quality. In some competitive sectors, intense price competition leads firms to neglect quality due to insufficient consumer awareness and weak enforcement mechanisms.
- Regulatory authorities that set standards (safety, performance) often lack the "teeth" to effectively implement them and penalize non-compliance. Without stringent penalties, service providers have little incentive to invest in QoS improvements.

- Consumer awareness about safety standards is often low, reducing "demand pull" for quality improvements from the industry side.
- While TRAI has shown initiative in drawing attention to QoS and establishing standards in telecom, providing guidelines and publishing survey reports, it cannot directly penalize operators for non-compliance. Penalties can only be imposed by the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) if a specific matter is brought before it. This highlights a disconnect between standard-setting and enforcement powers, limiting the regulator's immediate impact. Consumer groups theoretically have the option to file generic complaints with TDSAT, but this mechanism is not frequently utilized.
- Overall, the impact of regulatory measures on efficiency or quality of services, outside of some aspects of the telecom sector, remains largely invisible, with consumer satisfaction in sectors like power remaining very low (OECD, n.d.b).

Conclusion

Regulatory agency's fundamental purpose is to steer and control economic activities across the public and private sectors towards the holistic well-being of society. As this analysis has shown, they serve as critical bulwarks against market failures, staunchly combat anti-competitive practices, and are instrumental in fostering balanced economic growth, ensuring environmental protection, and promoting principles of social justice and equity. However, the journey of regulation in India has been fraught with significant operational and implementation challenges. The persistent issues of procedural complexities, the burden on economic efficiency, and the pervasive concerns regarding corruption and bureaucratic delays continue to deter new investment and entrepreneurial spirit. The tension between sector-specific regulators and the overarching competition authority, coupled with the slow pace of meaningful tariff reforms, governmental interference, and insufficient enforcement of quality-of-service standards, further complicates the regulatory landscape. Despite these acknowledged impediments, the enduring necessity of robust, independent, and effective regulatory agencies cannot be overstated. They are the essential institutional architecture that ensures a stable, fair, and competitive economic environment, protecting consumers, investors, and the broader public interest from the vagaries of an unregulated market.

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Major Themes in The Works of Chitra Bannerji Divakaruni

Dr. Manoj Kumar Chaturvedi¹

Abstract: Chitra Bannerji Divakaruni is an Indo – American writer of great repute. She is a fine messenger of Diasporic sensibility felt by her during her migrant from India to America. She deals with the subject of Diasporic immigrant experience and highlighting the condition of women protagonist in her works who are living between two cultures. Her experience regarding the said theme occupies a great place in her works. Though several writers of Indian background like Sashidesh Pandey, Bharti Mukherji and Nayantara Sehgal, who somehow or with their personal reasons left India their motherland and stayed in the foreign land felt deeply the experience of immigrant experience. These writers have also worked. But the experience shared by Chitra Bannerji Divakaruni in her works is unique and different in analysing and elaborating the things in her own way. Before going over the works of Chitra Bannerji what depict her to be a diasporic writer dealing with women who are living in two cultures; let us have a glimpse of the theme and definition.

Keywords: Emigrant Experience, Historical Dilemma, Patriarchal System.

Introduction

The people who migrate from one country to another with the hope to have the better employment opportunities happiness and to make their lives better; but on reaching another country they find a clash of their own culture to that of another country in the Diasporic community. This makes their own tradition and culture to forget and adopt new culture and tradition.

Sunita in Arranged Marriage

Sunita finds herself helpless what to do. Her own Indian culture makes her learn to serve her fathers-in-law and mother-in-law's together with other members younger or elder to serve them like a good Indian woman. She does not get chances in doing so far what she finds herself guilty. She wants to wear a Sari and follow all the traditions of India. This will not be allowed to do in a foreign land. She comes under the grip of

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nostalgia; so, she remembers her home, her parents and country very much. The tradition of that foreign land seems her queer and awesome. She becomes very impatient and reminds her home town again and again. The memory of her home town haunts her time and again: at other times I feel caught in a world where everything is frozen in place, like a glass paper weight. It is a world so small that if I were to stretch out my arms, I would touch its cold unyielding edges. I stand inside glass world, watching to scream. Then I'm ashamed. Mita, I tell myself; you are growing westernized. Back home you'd never have felt in is way. (P. 26) It is to be pertinent to mention here that Sunita has homesickness but her life in the foreign land goes on as an Indian woman. She wears clothes as an Indian woman, server her husband and worship the gods and celebrate the festivals as an Indian woman. She, therefore does not want leave the land. After sometime her husband murders a person at the store which becomes dangerous for her and her husband but even when she is not ready to leave the place. She tries to assimilate to the present condition which is quite different from consciousness: That's when I know I cannot go back. I don't know yet how I" ll manage, here in this new dangerous land. I only know I must. Because all over India at this very moment, widows in white series are bowing their veiled heads, serving tea to inflows. Doves with cut off wings. (P.33)

Tara in Desirable Daughters

Like Chitra Bannerji Divakaruni, Bharti Mukherjee is a name who has written parallel to Divakaruni in the respect of Divakaruni. She is Indian born American writer has depicted the condition of Tara Late, the character in her novel Desirable Daughters, similar to Sunita the central character in Arranged Marriage. Taralata has also nostalgic sense during the days she passes on the foreign land. Like her two sisters she is forced to leave India and to reside in the Diasporic community. She does not want to leave the land but she remembers the past life passed in Calcutta. Once a theft was done in the apartment Parvati her neighbours, she reminds the village deity, Shitala story of the olden days of Ballygunge park road. The three women of Calcutta is got caught in the grip where they are to choose an oppressive but known Indian tradition and liberating unknown fact of life. Tara reminds the city of Calcutta her own native place as: The city was Calcutta in the late fifties and sixties.... to be Calcutta Bhadra Lok, as we Bhattacharjee were was to share a tradition of leadership, of sensitivity of achievement, refinement and beauty that was the envy of the world. That is the legacy of the lost generation of Calcutta high society, a world into which we three sisters were born and from which we have made our separate exist. (Desirable Daughter, P.22)

Dimple in Wife

Bharti Mukherjee's characters have nostalgic sense in their heart and mind as the characters of Chitra Bannerji Divakaruni. All these characters are hanging between two cultures what to adopt and the rest to leave. The characters like Sunita in Arranged Marriage and Taralata in Desirable daughters are hanging between the cultures; they don't know what to do. But these characters have sense of alienation and cross culture. Sunita is very much worried about her own country India as the Taralata. Nearly the condition of the both similar. Mukherjee's second novel wife is a psychological novel narrates the story of her migration from Calcutta to New York with her husband. She being a Bengali by birth cannot cultivate the transforming atmosphere inside of herself. Though she is middle class woman; but adjustment with the Diasporic family of three place as the novel is divided into three parts, the first is known Calcutta where all the ceremonies of marries held and where the childhood of the lady together with half of life passed; and the second part of the novel develops in America and the third one in Manhattan where both husband and wife live together by hiring an apartment. Amit and his wife Dimple reside in the hired apartment. The writer focuses upon the mental condition of Amit and his wife Dimple who are searching new identities on a new place. They are dislocated and displacement by some reasons. Dimple the heroine of the novel is very much suffered because of changing the identity, culture and religion. They have to face challenge in adjusting on a new place in the multicultural society of Diasporic community. They are immigrant, Dimple, therefore cannot go here and there to pass time because nobody is there familiar to her. Under such condition she passes most of her time in watching T.V. and Sleeping. She becomes full of pain when she comes to know that she is pregnant; but very soon she gets success into abort her child by skipping. She remembers that her son if born in India, Known as the child of India. What name she should give her to the child born on the foreign land. For the fear and shame, she does not give birth to the child but aborting is the final solution for her. Dimple cannot wear the effect of changing of the atmosphere and she comes under the grip of insomnia. Thus, the condition of Dimple is much pain able. She comes under the frustration because of living in an atmosphere in the Diasporic family where there is nobody to change the ideas. Under position of frustration, she murders her husband and later on commits suicide. This effect of Diasporic is seen in the novel.

Jyoti/Jasmine in Jasmine

Her most novel Jasmine depict the life of the character Jyoti, the heroine of the novel. Her identity of name is changed by her husband and called her from Jyoti to Jamine. Her original name is Jyoti; when she transformed on the foreign land she is known as Jasmine. If we change anybody is name: the identity of the person is changed automatically. Very interesting incident happens with Jyoti we she was a child a

soothsayer comes and tells Jyoti that she would become widow at the age of 17yrs and that comes true. After the death of her husband; she runs away to America for better change; but on reaching there she is raped by a brutal sea captain what she does not like. She plans to murder her and as a plan she gets success in murdering the captain. Due to dislocation she works like a man which does not suit to her personality. Jasmine passes from one situation to another to get comfort but what she was searching nowhere that. Jasmine suffers physically as well as mentally turmoil and torture on the foreign land. She does not get rest anywhere. After sometime she gets under the psychological pain changes of culture and life.

Ashima & Gogol in The Namesake

Like Bharti Mukherjee and Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni, Jhumpha Lahiri is also the writer of two cultures effect and Diasporic sense in her works. All these writers have made a neign in the field of Diasporic sense and sensibility in the reason they have also rooted up from their own origin and went to another land where they faced the problems and issues; through the characters they have created tell the pains and sufferings of these writers as a Diasporic. These writers, when lift their own mother land felt the feeling of displacement, alienation and nostalgic sense what they could brought in light through their characters which are their mouth speakers. Jhuma Lahiri is also one of the Diasporic writers whose novel The Namesake depict the condition of Ashima Ganguli. The novel focuses on cross cultural tale of a Hindu Bengali family who travels to booster. The story has gone to narrate the family's tradition bound and deep-rooted life in Calcutta and travel to America. We fine the character's name Ashok and Ashima who feels the jolt of the changing of place from India (Calcutta) to America (Boston). In this work we have the protagonist's name Gopal Ganguli coming from the second generation is very much suffered to find his particular name and identity. He faces difficulties in naming him and far that he struggles hard in the Diasporic community. He tires his best to adjust in the family where is alone and all alone and for his own self-definition he is ready to adjust in the family where and ready to leave his old traditional named. But he will not forget the memory of the past name and life. He thinks by changing his name, the Diasporic community will accept him. But he will not forget India to America suffers some kind of Diasporic difficulties. Being a foreigner a short of lifelong pregnancy A perpetual wait, a constant burden a condition feeling out of shorts. It is ordinary life only to discover a continuous feeling out shorts. It is an-going responsibility, a parenthesis in what had once been ordinary life only to discover that previous life was vanished replaced by something more complicated and demanding like pregnancy being a foreigner Ashima believes is something that elicit the same curiosity from strangers the same combination (The Namesake, PP. 49-50) Those people get caught under the two world the problem arises out what tro choose and what to leave out: people today, who go to foreign land



cannot assimilate the culture that is different to their own motherland. What happens to the character of Chitra Bannerji Divakaruni, Jhumpa Lahiri and Bharti Mukherjee generally happens with the same public person.

Divakaruni's Broader Themes in Arranged Marriage

To maintain the old human values reaching on a new. Place becomes the cause of mental conflict. Under such condition a man comes under dilemma what to do and what not to do. It is very difficult for one to run parallel both the cultures together. And on the foreign land if one practices one's own culture; he will not see with society of Diasporic community and very soon he will be out. Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni born in India and at the age of 19 years in the year 1976 notice the cruelty of whites against blacks who were expatriate. She is very much careful about rootlessness and discrimination, alienation and abuses what she herself noticed in the foreign land. Her earlier work Arranged Marriage is the fine example of expressing the ill condition of Indian woman expatriate to America, how Americans behave and their intention towards these women have been highlighted. Bannerjee is the first writer who is an eye witness to notice the ill-condition of immigrant women what she has brought in light in her short story work Arranged Marriage. Divakaruni highlights the problem of identity, isolation, alienation and non-communication which cause a serious problem for Indians. She has established herself a reputed writer writing on a wide range of themes relating to Diasporic. Divakaruni feels pain and suffering when she sees the ill-condition of her own country people and says as: Expatriate have powerful and poignant experiences when they live away for their original culture and this becomes home and never white and then you can't really go back and he quite at home there either. (Divakaruni profile by Arthur J. Paris P.3) Diaspora happens when one is away from one's country; in the globalization age it is very common to go from one country to another for different reasons. In reaching such a place a person feels alienated due to not knowing language, culture, behaviour another component for that he could not assimilate to others which causes non-communication and setting up behaviour for these reasons one is left behind.

Theoretical Perspectives on Diaspora

Uma Parmeswaran a noted Indo-Canadian writer has highlighted the Diasporic consciousness as follows: The first is nostalgic for the homeland, felt behind with fear in strange land. The second is a phase in which one is so busy in adjusting to the new environment that there is little creative output. The third phase is shaping of Diaspora existence by involving themselves in ethno-culture issues. The fourth is when they have arrived and started participating in the larger world of politics and national issues. (Uma, P.108) The

next story we have in Arranged Marriage is Silver Pavements, Golden Roofs depicts the condition of Jayanti faces dilemma of an immigrant while she travels from Calcutta to America as migrant; praises her past life and memories the things which make her restless. While she is on the foreign land she does not like the system of Chicago what she rejects thoroughly. Her main object is to imbibe her own culture even while living in Chicago. She finds herself alienated and does not feel happy as nobody is there to set up communication with her and asks her how are you. She fully faces the role of Diasporic community living in Chicago. She has a nostalgic sense where she is caught in the world from whence, she could never get out: My monogrammed leather cases are an embarrassment in this household. I push them under the bed in the tiny room I am to occupy – it is the same size as my bathroom at home. (Arranged Marriage, 44) Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni, due to, coming of the second generation of poet, novelist and short story writer depicts the modern man's nostalgic, homesickness, identity crises on the foreign land. She has depicted when the two cultures are different how can they similarly be and become one. She is the pioneer in the field of depicting the painful anguish of Diasporic identity and the sense of alienation in her work Arranged Marriage. In her story Silver Pavements, Golden Roofs she has expressed Jayanti who comes on the foreign land in search of golden opportunity after her husband's death but she finds her opposite to her dreams. Her bitter experience and anguish for future becomes a question mark upon her dreams. She recalls her olden days with playing boys shouting at her and Pratima about with her racist slurs and attacked them with the fistful of slush; Jayanti who was proud to be an upper class Indian question her relation to American race categorization and her entire perception of her own race is thrown into question after this incidence: Now the others take up the word, chanting it in high singsong voices that have not broken yet, nigger, until I want to scream or weep or laugh because can't they see that I am not black at all but an Indian girl of good family? (P.51)

Conclusion

The conflict of culture between countries, alienation, nostalgic ruin the career of woman who go on the foreign land to fulfil their dreams, to earn money to make their lives colourful on the other hand the memories of the past haunt them time and again; so, their existence on the foreign land a question mark. Whether they would continue or leave for that is uncertainties. These women are passing their day under uncertainties.

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