

Roots and Routes

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GRFDT
Global Research Forum on
Diaspora and Transnationalism

A Seminar on “Indian Diaspora: Historical and Contemporary Issues” on 27th April, 2013”



Roots and Routes disseminates the latest information on research and policy developments in Diaspora and transnationalism

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Editor's Message



Dear All,

Recently we have been witnessing intensive policy debates on immigration all over the globe; epicenter being the United States of America. For the first time we have also witnessed such an active participation on the issues of immigration across the globe. Various stakeholders such as corporates, politicians, civil society organizations, individuals have actively registered their voice. It is understood that immigration not only poses challenges but also create opportunities. However, the real challenge is how to govern or manage the human migration which is an ubiquitous phenomenon.

Immigration has impacted the society, culture, economics and politics of both sending and receiving countries. Certain issues are deeply rooted in history while some other are recent outcomes. The GRFDT monthly seminar titled "Indian diaspora: Historical and Contemporary Issues" featured three paper presentations covering wide spectrum of issues such as nationalism, gender and power relations.

Another issue that has recently been seriously debated in the parliament of UK is related to the atrocities on Dalits. An interview with Dr. Meena Dhanda will throw light on the various issues relating to Dalits in UK like, ranging from new form of marginalization in the diaspora, dynamics of power relations, inter and intra religious issues, challenges of mobility, new technology and the international Dalit consciousness. We are grateful to Dr. Dhanda who has been kind enough to respond to our request for an interview.

A review on the book, "Diaspora" by Dufoix examines the evolution of the concept of diaspora over the last decades, evolving from a narrow concept to a dynamic one. The reviewer Dr. Mahalingam mentioned that Dufoix's conceptualization of diaspora appears to be more appropriate in the contemporary context.

The article titled, "Nitaqat: Manifestation of new immigrant vulnerabilities" by Ajmal Khan and Muneer Illath has brought out several important issues that are already affecting the lives of thousands of innocent marginalized labourers in India, particularly in the state of Kerala. The authors opine that if no policy measures are taken back home, it can result in a huge disaster for millions of people. The issue also covers news and events across the globe in the "Global Update" column.

Sadananda Sahoo

GRFDT Seminar

Indian Diaspora: Historical and Contemporary Issues

GRFDT organised a seminar on "Indian Diaspora: Historical and Contemporary Issues" on 27 April 2013 featuring three presentations. The session was moderated by Dr. Ankur Datta, South Asian University, New Delhi.

Old Diaspora were deeply involved in Indian Nationalism

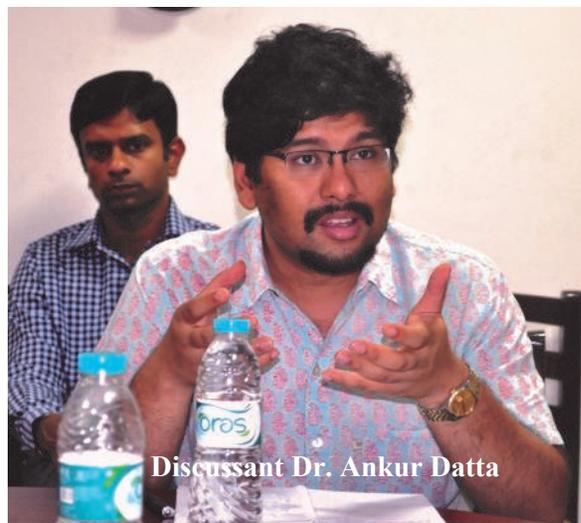
The first presentation was based on the "Lala Brindavan: A Returnee Emigrant" by Ajay Mahurkar, Faculty of History, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi where he discussed the case of the Lala Brindavan who returned from Mauritius to take part in the Nationalist movement in India. He was one of the early diasporans to be part of the national movement. Historically, the Indian nationalism has had both secular and religious strands. Some of the early movements were mostly religious in its character including Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 to till the recent movements led by Tilak during first decade of twentieth century.

Based on his work on the archival records in Mauritius and in India, Mr. Mahurkar highlighted the journey of Lala Brindavan in the national movement. Lala Brindavan originally hailed from Punjab and went to Mauritius as an indentured labour. The central issues raised by him in the national movement were related to the issue of religious defilement and physical ill-treatment (whipping by lash) to which the Indian labour was subjected to, in Mauritius plantations. He alleged that beef was used in the production of Mauritian sugar. He opposed the use of beef in the sugar factories of Mauritius. He also opposed the task of carrying night soil to which the Indian labour was regularly assigned on the grounds of religious defilement. In contrast the paper highlighted the role of Mr. Manilall Doctor, an associate of Gandhi, who had been tasked to look in to Brindavan's complaints by the British government in Mauritius. It was shown in the paper how Manilall Doctor was able to take a broader view of the question by also taking into account the conditions of hundreds of small planters of Indian origin who had been supplying sugarcane to the factories in Mauritius. The stopping of export of Mauritian sugar to India, as Brindavan was demanding, would have affected the very large number of Indians themselves. Instead



(From L-R Mr. Ajay Mahurkar, Ms. Atinder Pal Kaur, Dr. Rajneesh Gupta)

from a perspective of economic nationalism Manilall Doctor suggested an integration of Mauritian and Indian sugar interests. While Brindavan's campaign found an echo in the religiously oriented nationalism of the first decade of the twentieth century and perhaps provided the symbolic impetus for abolition of indentured labour system, Manilall Doctor's campaign perhaps helped to broadbase the mass economic nationalism of the subsequent decades of the twentieth century.



Discussant Dr. Ankur Datta

Indian Diaspora has played an important role in the evolution of the political system in East Africa and pioneered in the development of market economy

The second paper was on "Indian Diaspora in East Africa: Challenges of Integration" by Dr. Rajneesh Gupta, Faculty in Delhi University. He touched upon issues of power relations, racism, mobility of Indian diaspora in East Africa. Indian migrants to East Africa go back to 3000 years back. However, majority of Indians immigrated to East Africa during colonial time and surprisingly a significant number of them also went during 1990s. During colonial time, Indians went to East Africa as army to Tanganyika under German recruitment, as administrator to Portuguese colonies most of whom were Goan catholic and about one lakh as railway colliers in British Ugandan railway construction. Dr. Rajneesh highlighted the role of Indians in political, economic and cultural spheres in East Africa. Indian Diaspora has played an important role in the evolution of the political system in East Africa and pioneered in the development of market economy. Indians were instrumental in forming strong Trade Union movement against the labour exploitation.

However, the existences of Indians were always not smooth both during Colonial times and after that. They were being perceived as exploiters and taking away the benefits from the locals. Such perceptions often created ethnic rivalry in many of these colonies. Incidences of Uganda dictator Idi Amin who expelled several Indians subsequently settled in UK were one of the most unfortunate incidences of the ethnic rivalry. Dr. Rajneesh also mentioned that the Indians have been active in certain sectors while not active in certain other sectors. They are well represented in judiciary and economy while very less significant in politics.

"run away grooms" and "holiday wives" in Punjab

The third paper titled "Socio-Economic Conditions of Left behind Brides by NRI's in Punjab " was by Atinder Pal Kaur, Ph.D. Scholar of Punjab University, Chandigarh. The paper is part of her Ph.D. research for which the field work was conducted in two district of Punjab namely Hoshiarpur and Kapurthala with a sample size twenty in the age group between 20-30. She found that many a time when marriage is solemnized, the NRI's husband proceeds back to his country of residence leaving behind his newlywed wife on the pretext that he will make necessary arrangements and bring her to the adopted country. But very frequently, this doesn't happen and she waits indefinitely only to discover that she has been sexually, economically and socially exploited and has been dumped in home-land forever. The concept 'run away groom' and "holiday wives" came to surface in the recent past to describe such phenomenons which are growing in number.

Kaur finds that the marriages were usually conducted through middle man and no enquiry was made before the marriage. There are three important reasons (1) Parents want the marriage to happen quickly before other competitors rush in and (2) The dream of sending their sons abroad as well as family at the earliest possible and (3) blind faith on the middle man in the absence of any other medium. Most of the decision about marriage negotiation was taken by girl's parents not by herself. Most of the people in the Punjab who are interviewed are found that they are using their daughter, a channel through which the whole family will be able to migrate and they will live a luxurious life in west. Another vital aspect investigated relates to registration of marriages. It was quite astonishing that in majority of the cases (55%) those marriages were never registered. Dowry remains the main cause of separation in case of 75% cases where as second marriage was the cause for separation for 25% cases. After separation 60% of brides had sleepless nights due to nightmares of social stigma and facing health problems as they were visiting to doctor very frequently. 70% of the brides were still emotionally attached with their husband's as they were looking forward to reunion.

Ms. Kaur also highlighted the policy inadequacy and inability of civil society mechanism among the Diasporas and at home state to tackle the growing incidence. She also highlighted the patriarchal mindset of the parents which causes these issues as they want their son to go abroad using daughter's marriage as pretext. To fulfil their dreams of sending their son abroad, parents are willing to marry their daughter's off to any one whether they are divorce, widower or even mentally challenged.

Dr. Ankur Datta, Faculty of Sociology, South Asian University, New Delhi gave critical remarks on transnational networks, power relations and impact of the various dynamics at the national and international levels. The seminar ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. Smita Tiwari.



Internet Social networking has speeded the exchange of information between Dalits in India and abroad: **Dr. Meena Dhanda**

...I have heard stories of sudden change in friendly relations when caste becomes known, although, this sort of expression of prejudice in personal relations does not get legally classed as discrimination, observes **Dr. Meena Dhanda**, a well known scholar in Philosophy and Cultural Politics, while sharing her views on various issues relating to the Indian Diaspora in general and Sikh Dalit Diaspora in particular in an interview with **Vinod Sartape**



Dr. Meena Dhanda, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Vinod Sartape (VS): Dr. Dhanda, your academic works are wide ranging from both disciplinary as well as subject of study. Your research on issues such as personal identity, women, Dalits, Punjabi identity is well known and your recent works on Dalit Diaspora explores some of the new dimensions of identity within the diasporic context. Dalits are not a monolithic category even in India. How do you differentiate the Dalits originated from other parts of India and Dalits from Punjab?

Dr. Meena Dhanda (MD): It is right to note the diversity of Dalits in any location. Cultural tradition, history, socio-economic relations and even relationships between Dalit groups vary in different regions. The position of Dalits within Punjab is in some respects similar and in others remarkably different from their position in other parts of India. The similarity lies in that sanitation work is done largely by Valmikis and the leather industry largely employs Chamars/Ad Dharmis. There is some mobility, as some Dalits are small shop keepers, electricians, video cable operators. In cities with a high concentration of Dalits, such as, Navanshahr, one would find Dalits in many different strata: doctors, teachers, shop keepers, bank officials. One would have expected more mixing and greater mobility in larger cities, but my data from the most industrialized and largest city of Punjab, Ludhiana, with the lowest concentration of Dalits in Punjab, shows that amongst the Valmikis, there is very low literacy and very high unemployment amongst young Dalit men. The difference in the position of Punjabi Dalits lies in the salience of Punjab's rootedness in the Sikh ethos, which has largely eroded untouchability, as noted by many researchers. But equally one must also note the resilience of casteism. I have paid some attention to inter-caste runaway marriages in Punjab, majority of which are inter-caste marriages between upper-castes, but I also found that there is perhaps a silent revolution taking place in that the border between the so called 'savarna' jatis and Dalits is also being breached. Dalits are forthcoming in accepting this change, not so the 'upper-castes'. In the villages, there are frequent clashes between Majhabhi Sikhs (Dalits amongst Sikhs), who are mostly landless agricultural labourers (though in some regions of Punjab Dalits are small landowners too) and upper-caste Sikhs (Jat landowners) attesting to the growing assertion amongst Dalits. The political leadership in Punjab, of the ruling party as well as of the opposition, actively seeks to keep 'good relations' with Dalits. This is largely a vote-seeking measure and not a genuine concern with improvement in the lives of Dalits in Punjab.

VS: Dalit has had its origin in Hindu religion but now it is quite visible among the Indian communities from all major religious background found in India. How do religious identity, Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim intermediate among the Punjabi Dalits?

MD: Sikhs like to proclaim that casteism is alien to their religious traditions. Yet there is evidence that even in some Gurdwaras, some voluntary duties, for example, distribution of Prashad, are denied to Dalits. The conundrum that is faced by Ravidassias (largely drawn from the Chamar caste) is whether or not to retain their fraternal ties with upper-

caste Sikhs implied by their hitherto common worship of Shri Guru Granth Sahib ji, the uniquely designated Guru of the Sikhs or to sever these ties by adopting a separate Ravidassia identity differentiated symbolically through adopting the Amrit Bani, a recently popularized compilation of the verses of their Guru Ravidas (or Bhagat Ravidas as Sikhs would refer to him). Similarly, on the religious front, Valmiki, led by Darshan Ratan Raavan, are seeking to consolidate a religious identity distinct from Hindus. The annual gathering in Amritsar on 31 December (Yogima Parv) is a remarkable one with over 70,000 people, who take a procession on 1 January to Valmiki Teerath, on the outskirts of Amritsar, making a statement of religious solidarity, and giving inspiration to the younger generation of Valmiki to forge their destiny away from the debilitating superstitions and hierarchies of upper-caste Hindus. I have not done any work with Punjabi Muslim Dalits so I am not able to comment on how their religious practice impacts upon their caste status.

VS: What are the basic grounds where Dalits are being discriminated on the caste lines within the Indian diasporic community? Is there any institutional mechanism in Indian Diaspora to deal with the caste atrocities against Dalits?

MD: I am mostly familiar with the Dalit community in Britain, not in U.S.A. or Canada. Discrimination here is usually subtle but just under the surface. It erupts now and again. Within private employment, some people report cancellation of contracts when caste is divulged. In public jobs, refusal to offer services (e.g. in nursing care) has been reported when 'touching' might be involved across the caste border of 'untouchability'. I have heard stories of sudden change in friendly relations when caste becomes known, although, this sort of expression of prejudice in personal relations does not get legally classed as discrimination. Thus far there is no institutional mechanism specifically to deal with Caste discrimination/prejudice.

VS: Recently the UK parliament had discussed the issues of caste. What are the complexities involved in dealing with "caste" a category quite alien to the British society? Do you think the caste discrimination will be prohibited if the laws against caste discrimination enacted in Britain and will have some impact elsewhere?

MD: The Sikh Council of UK has precisely challenged the definition of caste in the Equality Act 2010, Section 9 (5), a section which is yet to get activated. The ministers have relied on consultations with community groups e.g. CasteWatch UK, Voice of Dalit International (VODI), Dalit Solidarity Network (DSN), Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance on the one side and various South Asian religious organizations on the other. There is no consensus, as must be expected, in ideology, intent, or purpose of including 'caste' as a category in the law.

Recently, the House of Lords (4 March 2013) has passed an Amendment Clause to the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill with an impressive majority (256 Contents; Not Contents 153) to include 'caste' as an aspect of 'race'. I am proud to say that I was present at the demonstration outside the Houses of Parliament to support this move and spoke to some of the peers before they went in to vote. Now, if the Amendment Clause is voted FOR by MPs in the Commons, MPs committed to removing caste discrimination, then Equality Act Section 9(5)a will be activated, as indeed it should be, truly to become a legal safeguard for victims of caste discrimination. The government's alternative to legislation is to set aside £20000 for a programme called 'Talk for a Change'. I think that talk of strengthening community relations is a smokescreen for avoidance of the real issue of bringing offenders to book. What is needed is that caste discrimination should become a legal offence as the Early Day Motion 1183 (primary sponsor Labour Party MP, Jeremy Corbyn) clearly states: "That this House supports the majority vote passed in the House of Lords to outlaw caste discrimination in the UK by including caste as an aspect of race in the Equality Act 2010; notes the UK's international human rights obligations; and calls on the Government to reconsider its position and to uphold the essential British value of equality and justice." There is a vigorous campaign underway to lobby MPs to ratify the Lords decision and there is also a lot of opposition to the legislation from the Hindu and Sikh Councils in UK. It would be a historic development if the Amendment clause, introducing caste discrimination under the definition of race discrimination, in the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill is passed in the House of Commons, thus activating Section 9(5) in the Equality Act 2010.

VS: Dalit movement is crucial factor behind assertion of Dalits in India. Do you find the Dalit movement in India impacting on the Dalit mobilization abroad especially in UK, USA, Canada, etc? If so how does Dalit movement work in these places?

MD: I think that social networking through the internet has speeded the exchange of information between Dalit groups in India and those abroad. But so has the opposition to the Dalit movement redoubled its offensive through social networking. On balance, I think that the sharing of ideas, thinking of revolutionary steps to take the Dalit movement forward, and gaining support from like-minded individuals in India has visibly grown. There still is much work acutely

needed on consolidation of ideas and ideological clarity.

VS: While taking a decision to migrate, people aspire for better opportunities. Migration most often facilitates the transformation in economic, political and social domains. In your view, what are the major transformations experienced by the Dalits in Britain?

MD: The main transformation is in economic advancement, but also specifically for women, in the far greater freedom of movement, without the threat of sexual assault. Both these transformations have opened many doors for Dalit men and women in Britain. Ownership of housing and other material assets, as well as upward professional mobility for the second generation has evidently taken place. Second and third generation Dalit men and women in Britain are highly educated.

VS: Most women from the South Asian countries are first or second generation migrants. Quite a substantial number of them are from middle class background. How do you find the position of South Asian women, and especially women from Dalit backgrounds, in the diaspora negotiating their place in a multicultural British society?

MD: Migrant Dalit women from India to Britain are likely to have come by way of marriage, or to join a parent who has previously migrated. There would be very few Dalits amongst middle-class women who migrate to Britain independently as students or, more recently, as employees in MNCs. I have already mentioned the greater social mobility that women experience even though many of them, like women everywhere, shoulder dual burdens of housework and holding on to jobs. Nonetheless, one must appreciate the relative autonomy that comes with economic independence. South Asian working class women in Britain have also been at the forefront of protests against bad employment conditions.

VS: In recent years we find scholars finding more interest on Diaspora studies. This can also be the case in the policy domain in developing as well as developed countries. At least a hundred major institutions across the globe including multilateral institutions such as UN bodies are working on the issues related to Diaspora. How do you see Diaspora as field of study within the Social Sciences or Humanities and what bearing it will have in the policy domain in the coming years?

MD: I think Diaspora as a field of study within the Social Sciences and Humanities addresses three main needs. Firstly, there is the need for the generation of ideas that address problems of assimilation or inclusion faced by host societies and of alienation and hostility experienced by migrants. Secondly, such studies might enable a better understanding for various investors of how best to forge links with India, amongst other emerging economic powers, perhaps, also by considering a greater mobility of labour across international borders. Finally, and most importantly for me, from the point of view of those who want to resist the worst effects of global capitalism, Diaspora studies could provide comparative perspectives, which show us the pitfalls we must avoid and the danger signals we must learn to read (e.g. the ill-effects of the slide towards privatization of essential services).

VS: Dr. Dhanda, it is nice to have your views on very important aspect of the diasporic existence today. We would like to hear about your present research work/project on Diaspora studies.

MD: Thank you. You might want to see the first ever televised public debate on Caste Discrimination in the U.K. (hosted by Apache Indian) aired in the programme 'Real Talk' on Brit Asia TV on 21 and 28 February 2013, in the attached link (for those who cannot watch it in its entirety, and want to know what I said, you'll find me at segments 18:34 to 24:42; 30:15 to 31:22; 1:17:15 to 1:21:09; about 11 minutes in all).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8OsHyZ7mo&feature=youtu.be>

VS: Thank you for providing your precious time and ideas.

*Dr. Meena Dhanda is a Reader in Philosophy and Cultural Politics at the University of Wolverhampton. She was a Commonwealth Scholar and a Rhodes JRF at the University of Oxford. Her publications include *The Negotiation of Personal Identity* (Saarbruken: VDM Verlag, 2008), *Reservations for Women* (ed.) (New Delhi: Women Unlimited, 2008) and several papers. As a Leverhulme Research Fellow (2010-12) she conducted primary research on Punjabi dalits, which she is currently shaping into a book: *Caste Aside: A Philosophical Study of Cultural Identity and Resistance of Punjabi Dalits* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2014).*

Vinod Sartape is a Ph.D. scholar working on Diaspora issues at the Centre for Study of Social System, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

Book Review

Diasporas, Stephane Dufoix, University of California Press, Paperback, 160 pages ISBN: 9780520253605 February 2008

As we all very much aware that the word 'diaspora' referred only to religious group and Jewish migration experience at early stage. Later, it has assumed different connotations due to its application in diverse fields. In 1990s, the word was applied to world people who had migrated to different parts of the world due to various reasons and the word was further being applied to professional groups. At present, Diaspora means that it is nothing but the idea of displacement and the maintenance of a connection with a real or imagined homeland. The critics argued that owing to wider application, the usage of the term has become ambiguous. At this juncture, the scholars like Robin Cohen and Steven Vertovec tried to concretize the theoretical meaning of the term. In this light, the contribution of Stephane Dufoix is note worthy.

The book was originally written in French and it was translated to English by William Rodarmor. It is an indispensable guide for those who want to understand Diaspora as intellectual phenomenon and a social process. The book starts with a brief introduction by citing the popular usage of term in different fields and the divided views on Diaspora as a concept. Dufoix suggests a broader analytical framework for depicting the homeland relations of dispersed populations which is a unique theoretical contribution by Dufoix. Further, he has coined a new term 'referent origin' instead of calling it homeland as envisaged by others. The first chapter entitled as what is a Diaspora? exemplifies the etymological origin of the term in the beginning and then, he provides two classic examples of different diasporic experiences such as the 'Jewish Diaspora' and the 'Black Diaspora' as it is linked and opposed to each other. Followed by, he describes the recent historiography of the term. Having discussed that, he surveys and distinguishes three kinds of existing definitions on the term such as open, categorical and oxymoronic. For instance, oxymoronic definitions are based on the postmodern thought which is radically different from open and categorical definitions. Postmodern definitions focus upon paradoxical identity, the noncenter, and hybridity. The works of Stuart Hall, James Clifford and Paul Gilroy can be put under this category. A phenomenon called Diaspora to happen, first of all, dispersion should take place. He analyses the dispersion of the people around the globe in the second chapter called as 'the spaces of dispersion,' which throws light on the nature, patterns, and phases of migration of people.

Dufoix discusses about four kinds of migratory groups namely the Greeks, Indians, Chinese, Armenians and their global spread. Having spread over space and time by diasporas, the establishment of connection with the referent origin is another important feature of dispersed population. He addresses this aspect in the third chapter entitled as 'maintaining connections' in which he develops a broader framework for homeland relations and collective experience abroad. He uses the Max Weber's methodology 'Ideal type' to identify as well as to structure the different dimensions of homeland relationships. He proposes four ideal types such as 'centro-peripheral,' 'enclaved,' 'atopic,' and 'antagonistic' which are fluid in nature. Drawing on wealth of examples, he shows how populations can move from one mode to another. He shows that the Jewish Diaspora had transformed from atopic mode to centro-peripheral mode after the creation of the state of Israel. By doing so, he brings out the dynamic aspect of Diaspora relations rather than static thinking on the term. Besides, he shows with illustrations and tables the shifting nature of collective experience of the dispersed populations. In Chapter four 'Managing Distance' where he exemplifies the management and leverage of one's diasporic population and also explains the construction and imagination of Diaspora draws one's attention. For instance, he discusses about long distance nationalism by diasporas and the arrival of internet has reduced the distance which has paved the way for creation of 'imaginary community.' He concludes by saying that Diaspora has become a global word and is a common noun at present. It is no longer refers to misery, persecution and punishment of immigrant groups, he delineates that the term is perfectly suited to the modern process of Diasporic phenomenon.

Dufoix must be appreciated for analyzing the travel of the term from past to present with innumerable examples drawn from around the globe. He tries to make the term very inclusive given its position in the modern context. Over all, the book is a comprehensive and thorough account on the phenomenon called Diaspora. Though it is a small volume but it has all the ingredients. It is very much coherent, well structured and lucid written one. The illustrations and tables are self explanatory. The contents of the book aptly stands up to the title of the book 'diasporas.' Certainly, Dufoix differs from other scholars for his dynamic approach in terms of conceptualizing and interpreting the term. The book will be a rewarding one for the scholars, students and those who are perplexed over understanding the term.

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We invite Students, Researchers and Faculty Members to submit Stories, Reviews, Articles, Working papers and other academic notes to the editor. It will provide the scholars a platform to connect with peer groups working on themes related to Diaspora and Transnationalism. Information related to seminar/conferences/events can be sent to the Editor at: editor@grfdt.com

Nitaqat: Manifestation of new immigrant vulnerabilities

Ajmal Khan and Muneer Illath

I. Introduction: Contextualizing Nitaqat

Nitaqat has been a buzzword among the Keralites for the last two months. The Arabic word Nitaqat means 'differentiating' or 'differentiation' from the other. The Government of Saudi Arabia has been trying for a Saudization in their labor market for the last one decade in order to tackle increasing unemployment among the Saudi nationals and the drive has been more rigorous in the light of recent democratic uprisings in the Arab world. The Saudi officials have informed all the emigrants that in some particular sectors in the country, the Saudi nationals have to be appointed within a particular time frame. The employers and companies having more than ten people were instructed to have at least one Saudi national working in it. The organizations having less than ten people were exempted from Nitaqat. But considering the nature of the country and its demography, it was not possible to implement it completely. Nitaqat was introduced in 2009. Saudi Government has categorized the companies and business organizations in those lines. Various sectors where emigrants were employed were further categorized into 41 types. According to the types of jobs, a particular number Saudi citizen has to be employed in the organization. Employers who followed this rule were given blue and green cards and were also given other benefits in recruitments. Organizations which did not follow this were given red cards and were reminded of rules and consequences. Meanwhile, the government has also increasingly started to trace out people who have emigrated to work with free visa (the visa in which the kind of work that the emigrant is going to take up has not been mentioned) and are working illegally as against the rules of the Saudi government. Emigrants who are working with this free visa were caught and sent back to their home countries. As a consequence of these strict measures several states in India felt the impact. Kerala has been the most seriously affected by Nitaqat.

However, such immigration policies should be seen in the context of stringent labour legislations adopted and practiced by state mechanisms of different countries at global level and continuing pressures of push factors from the emerging countries of south Asia and Africa. In this context, the existing chunk of unskilled labour force in the Gulf and increasing number of illegal and unauthorised workers in the region would only add on to the immigrant vulnerabilities that the sending countries will have to seriously deal with. In the light of relatively poor international migration policies for the Gulf south Asia countries have been accused of dealing with 'consequences' more than 'causes' thereby overlooking the actual conditions shaping vulnerabilities of the migrants. It is in this backdrop shockwaves of stringent policies of Nitaqat assume greater significance, especially to regions like Kerala which has been in thick of this debate.

II. Stock of Gulf migration from India

Migration from India to the gulf countries has been one of the most important phenomena in terms of reducing unemployment and instilling cultural confidence among many groups and communities in India in general and those in the state of Kerala, in particular. Migrant workers from India comprise of huge labour force in the countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Kuwait and Qatar. Though India was historically been connected to West Asia, this migratory movement got accelerated only during the post oil-boom era which was marked by the huge investments in the infrastructure and many other sectors. Indian emigrants especially from Kerala were largely dominated in dock facilities, roads, airports, office buildings, industries, restaurants, supermarkets, etc.

There were 42,000 labour migrated to West Asia in 1976 which reached its peak with 2,72,000 in 1981. It declined slowly towards 1986. The annual outflow would have been, therefore, on the average around 1,07,000 during 1976-80, 2,14,600 during 1980-85 and 1,15,500 during 1985-87. The unskilled workers constituted 40 per cent of the total emigrants and skilled workers were about 50 per cent while the white collar workers and high skilled workers were less than five per cent (Lakshmaiah-1991).

A recent study published by Rajan and Zachariah (2011) demonstrates that the majority of the emigrants in Kerala are Muslims (41.1%), followed by Hindus (37.7%) and Christians (21.2%). These communities form 24.7%, 56.3% and 19% of Kerala's population, respectively, according to the 2001 Census. The difference across the three religious communities is more glaring in terms of the number of emigrants per 100 for the households: Muslims (56.4%), Hindus (18.7%) and Christians (29.9%). Rajan and Zachariah (2011) also gives the recent profile of community-wise breakup of return emigrants of which Muslims constitute the largest community. The study reveals that propensity to return is higher among the Muslim migrants (56 % of the total emigrants) when compared to other religious communities (47 % among the Hindus and Christians in the state). The paper also observes that while only 7 % of the households among Hindus and Christians had one or more return emigrants the proportion was as high as 26 % among Muslims in the state (Rajan and Zachariah 2011: 27).

III. Immigrant vulnerabilities in the era of Nitaqat

Now why this Nitaqat will affect the emigrants from Kerala? The obvious answer is its dependency on the foreign remittance. Kerala receives about 31.2 % of its GDP as remittance in 2011 according to the CDS study published

recently. The problem also lies in the composition of the labour themselves. Unlike the other migrations from India, migration to gulf is different, it is a migration of skilled, under skilled, semi skilled and unskilled labors. Most of them are working in super markets, construction sites and other laborers and as salesmen in different shops. They belong to all regions of the state and hail from Muslim, Hindu and Christian communities. Absorbing them in local economy is not an easy task as Kerala does not have similar sectors as diverse and in terms of size to absorb them back home.

Already with in this short span of time, about 1500 emigrants have come back at different air ports of the state from Jeddah, Riyadh, Damam and other places of Saudi Arabia, and this will continue in the coming months¹. As far as Saudi Arabia is concerned, none of them can settle permanently, they all have to return some day or the other. This poses serious question "whether the state of Kerala is prepared for that?" Will the economy of the state which runs on the remittances be able to face this?, How far the state policies are prepared to handle this emerging scenario?

Recent statistics and ethnographic studies suggest that although return emigration has affected all communities and caste groups in Kerala state Muslims have been the most vulnerable by virtue of their share in the return flows as well as their bleak socio-economic support back home. Since Muslims constituted the bulk of early stock of immigrants to the Gulf in an era of unskilled and uneducated labour force, their return to the otherwise weak economic environment of Kerala further demonstrates the susceptibility of their development horizons. Newer policies like Nitaqat and stringent measures to streamline the labour migration will only add to the economic worries of such vulnerable communities.

There is another issue which may equally be challenging is related to the internal migration. Kerala is the state which has about 250000 internal migrants from the states like Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Utter Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand and they work in sectors like construction, hotels and restaurant, manufacturing units, as trades and even in the agricultural sector. There is a huge scarcity of labor in all these sectors which are filled by the migrant workers from other states. How far these labors could be replaced by the emigrants who work in higher salary in Saudi Arabia? Besides, all of them are not skilled enough and even if they are skilled there is no demand for their skill at the state level.

It is time 'return preparedness' as a policy and practice put in place so as to ensure economic and social sustainability of the people who have returned. This should involve, as J.P Casserino (2008) observes, having the ability, although not always the opportunity, to gather the tangible and intangible resources needed to secure one's own return home. In the era of imminent crisis welfare and rehabilitative measures need to be initiated at least keeping in view that when they were abroad they had made significant contributions to the state in terms of foreign remittances. Beyond conflicting sovereign interests, countries of origin and destination are expected to share common objectives protecting the economic capabilities of the immigrants while channelizing their

potential for mobility towards constructive economic returns.

The state mechanism is used to get up only when there is a crisis rather than anticipating the issues for better preparedness. There is a need for learning from the best practices from countries like Philippines who have already put their mechanism in place. It may be noted that policies like indegenisation and naturalisation should have been effectively tackled had the emigration process in the sending countries been stringent and the illegal travel agents and middle-men who manipulate and mislead the potential migrants by offering fake visas and job cards were effectively checked. There should be a preventive mechanism in place to rehabilitate the unskilled and poor migrants who are coming back. There should be proper debates and policy preparedness at state as well as national level. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is a platform to engage stakeholders to prepare the ground for better policy measures. The pressure from the employers and bilateral negotiations with the government of India has forced the government of Saudi to postpone the proceedings of Nitaqat for another two months. But it is sure that the government will go ahead with what they have started and there is going to be an exodus again. If that is the case number of laborers who are going to come back will be huge. Such eventualities further call attention for greater state intervention at home.

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Notes.

According to the number of people who came in the three different airports of the states and people who have registered with NORKA, Government of Kerala.

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Budding Tibetan Film maker reaches out to the Diaspora

Film making is a challenge that requires not only creative passion and skills but also entrepreneurship of different kind. The film makers not only have to possess the entrepreneurship skills but also skills that can convince entrepreneurs to invest in the films. The audience, situation, market forces all decide the success of a film. An interactive session with the budding Tibetan film maker Sonam Tseten at India International Centre on 14 April 2013 revealed many interesting facts about the challenges and opportunity for budding film makers, especially with scarce budget. A talk was organized titled "Diaspora: A Tibetan Perspective" at Seminar Hall III, Kamaladevi Block, India International Centre (IIC), New Delhi. It was an initiative of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness The Dalai Lama and Empowering the Vision in collaboration with India International Centre. It was an initiative to provide a dialogue platform to young Tibetans in exile to present and discuss their ideas and suggestions to stimulate dialogue & improve networks of the vibrant Tibetan diaspora. The exciting interactive discussion was moderated by Youdon Aukatsang, Executive Director of Empowering the Vision. About 30 participants mostly Tibetans youths and some non-Tibetans had brainstorming discussions on the issue of film and the Tibetan diaspora.

Sonam Tseten was the guest speaker, who is a filmmaker and directed two small documentaries on Tibetans issues. Youdon Aukatsang was the moderator of the programme. The talk was not formal rather informal chat with the audiences where Sonam Tseten explored his personal and professional experiences. Starting from his exile stories to life journey he narrated his education and career and interest in life. He has a small film production house called CreativeYakFilms.com. His first film Tsampa to Pizza was released in 2006. The film explored the experience of exiled Tibetan youth in new location and the life aspiration, change of ideology, intergenerational gap and their quest for lost root. His second film A Girl from China which is a story of discovery, relationship and eventual change in perception.

Mr Tseten talked about how he got inspired from filmmaking while working in journalism. To do something creative was always in his mind. While working in 'Gustakhi Maaf' programme in NDTV, he learnt a lot and got inspired to try his talent in filmmaking. His motive was to explore Tibetan culture and religion among new



Youdon Aukatsang (L) and Sonam Tseten

generation Tibetans through representing the folk-tales of Tibet. Folk-tales are important to promote among youth Tibetans. The Film is one of the best medium to promote culture and folk tales among Tibetans and creating a social bond.

Some of the issues that Mr. Tseten touched upon include the theme of his films that are mostly based on identity and social issues based in Tibet and among the Tibetan diaspora mostly in India. He said that film making is determined by market forces. Profit making attracts resources. Tibetan diaspora being a small have very less entrepreneurs, thus poses more challenge for resource mobilisation for film makers. He said most of the successful Tibetan entrepreneurs reside in Australia and Germany, almost all of them don't wish to take risk of investing in films as they find there is no profit. He said that mobilising social and cultural network is essential to convince the corporate to fund for the film projects and take risk for the sake of larger social cause.

Mr. Tseten also talked about the new generation Tibetan diaspora who are born and brought up outside their homeland and have different taste as compared to their older generation. They want to see films which are more diverse and inspiring rather than confining to the activism type. Tseten's films are related to issues of struggle in Tibet as well as in the Diaspora. He plans to make movies for larger audiences in the future which can go beyond the Tibetan audience. Tseten take the risk of taking the unknown actors for all his films and most of them are low budget.

Tseten wish that the film making needs a peer group composed of skilled people for mobilising resources, talents which can work as a cooperative group to produce films in professional way. He said the young generation should go for courses available in different Universities to learn the art and skills required for film making. Simultaneously he also mentioned that the film makers should have the passion for their profession, which is more important than anything else.

After the initial discussion, a film titled A Girl from China was screened followed by a short discussion on the film. The plot of the film is based in Delhi and Dharamsala narrate the story of a boy and a girl (hails from China) who became friend accidentally and then fallen in love. The relationship went through a usual contradiction as the issue of identity surfaced. The girl discovered the hostile sentiments of the Tibetans in exile toward communist China (Government, not the people of China) as she wit-

nessed a street protest in Dharamsala. She was not able to accept this hostility. However, as the situation unfolded she discovered the pain of the Tibetans in exile and especially her boyfriend's family all of whom lost their life in the prison. As the time passes, they discovered that there is something beyond this identity issue. The film successfully depicted trauma of the Tibetans in exile and the longing for the home. At the same time the film brought out the universal human values that transcend beyond narrow identities.

At last, there was an open-discussion session in which audiences asked various questions to Mr. Tsetan. The talk was ended with a Vote of Thanks by Youdon Aukatsang, Executive Director, Empowering the Vision, NGO.

A Report by Monika Bisht, Research Scholar, SOITS, IGNOU

KNOMAD to harness knowledge and policy expertise on migration: World Bank

Migration has become a defining feature of globalisation having serious implications on the development and growth. The World Bank has recently initiated the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), envisioned to become a global hub of knowledge and policy expertise on migration issues. This is a very timely initiative keeping in view the rapid growth in migration and remittances over the last decade, especially to the developing countries. The report estimated that the remittance flows to developing countries have more than quadrupled since 2000. Global remittances, including those to high-income countries, are estimated to have reached \$514 billion in 2012, compared to \$132 billion in 2000. Besides the developmental implications, migration has profound impact on social-cultural, economic and political aspects. It is very important for sustaining the livelihood of the millions of people, transferring skills and resources that can be leveraged for development and growth.

The KNOMAD will focus on very important thematic areas that are crucial for development of any country. These includes improving data on migration and remittance flows; skilled and low-skilled labor migration; integration issues in host communities; policy and institutional coherence; migration, security and development; migrant rights and social aspects of migration; demographic

changes and migration; remittances, including access to finance and capital markets; mobilizing diaspora resources; environmental change and migration; and internal migration and urbanization. It will also address several cross-cutting themes, such as gender, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building, and public perceptions and communication. Drawing on global expertise, KNOMAD's outputs will be widely disseminated and will be available as global public goods.

The data released from recent World Bank's Migration and Development Brief 2012 mentioned that India stood number one among the remittances receiving countries for the second successive, followed by China (USD60 billion), the Philippines (USD24 billion), Mexico (USD23 billion) and Nigeria and Egypt (USD21 billion each) according to the recently released World Bank's Migration and Development Brief. The report mentioned that the remittance flows to developing countries grew by 5.3 per cent which is estimated USD 401 billion in 2012. This is expected to grow further in the future i.e an annual average of 8.8 per cent for the next three years and are forecast to reach USD 515 billion in 2015, the report projected. Thus, the impact of remittance and migration has become key development factor for many sending and receiving countries and hence need to be managed well in order to harness the potential for development.

We invite Students, Researchers and Faculty Members to submit a small write up of their achievements and awards to the editor. It will provide the scholars a platform to connect with peer groups working on themes related to Diaspora and Transnationalism. Information related to seminar/conferences/events can be sent to the Editor at: editor@grfdt.com