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Elenchus

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Handique Girls' College



Changing Contours of Social Science

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A Periodical of the Department of Political Science of Handique Girls' College, Guwahati

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Contents:

About Elenchus

Editorial Note

Changing Contours of Social Sciences: The Challenges Ahead

Kuladhar Saikia

Diplomacy and Sustainability of '*Peace and Trade networks*' between India and Bangladesh for security and growth

Dr. Anna Nath Ganguly

Environmental Ethics: A need for Environmental Sustainability

Rashmi Bhattacharyya

An exploratory study on Indigenous Engagement in Environmental Management in Northeastern States: Implications for Integrating Knowledge and Sustaining Social-Ecological Systems

Madhu Thakur

Global Democracy: A Critical Understanding

Sneha

India and the Third Gender

Devahuti Mahanta

Unmasking Green-washing: Political, Economic and Environmental Insights

Gargi Saikia, Prapti Borah

Women in Public Spaces: Rights and Resistance

Dr. Pallavi Deka

About Elenchus

Elenchus is the Socratic Method, also known as method of Elenctic method or Socratic Method, is a form of cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals. This method is based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking in order to draw out ideas underlying presuppositions. So we find it to be a suitable name for the annual periodical of Political Science Department. The periodical is theme based and the theme is selected around the topic of preceding Annual Lecture of the department. The first volume started with the theme Migration, the second volume was on the theme Democracy; International Relation was the third volume, India's North-East was the fourth volume and the last volume concentrated on Women's Issues. The current issue is on the Changing Contours of Social Sciences. This is our humble attempt to provide a platform to young scholars, researchers, academicians and students of the department to express their views and to stimulate their critical thinking. We apologise for any unwanted mistakes.

- Editor

Editorial Note

"Changing Contours of Social Science" examines how the field of social science evolves in response to new challenges, technologies, and societal shifts. It highlights the impact of globalization, digital communication, and interdisciplinary approaches on traditional methodologies and theories. The work emphasizes the need for adaptability in research practices and the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives to better understand complex social phenomena. By exploring these dynamics, the text calls for a reevaluation of social science's role in addressing contemporary issues and fostering inclusive discourse. The interdisciplinary, data driven researches are inclusive and representational in character which are featured by ethical considerations and have appropriate policy relevance. These trends indicate a dynamic field that is responsive to societal changes and challenges, continually adapting to better understand and address the complexities of human behavior and social structures.

This is the theme of the current issue of *Elenchus* and articles were invited to contribute for the same. Shri Kuladhar Saikia in his paper 'Changing Contours of Social Science- the challenges ahead' carried out a critical review of need of fruitful social science researches for good of the society and also highlighted on the lacunae present in them.

Dr. Anna Nath Gangualy in her paper 'Diplomacy and Sustainability of *Peace and Trade networks* between India and Bangladesh for security and growth' focus on India-Bangladesh relation and it has been argued that the relationship is reciprocal and of precarious nature. In the age of multilateral networking and diplomacy, when India actively pushes for Act East Asia policy connecting Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Northeastern states of India, the significance of Bangladesh and relation between both countries for conflict resolution needs to be strategic, paramount and indispensable.

The paper 'Environmental Ethics: A need for Environmental Sustainability' by Rashmi Bhattacharyya argues that environmental ethics is one of the major concerns of mankind, and the explorations in that field has noticeably improved. Proposals for environmental laws are being formulated, non-governmental organizations for the protection of the environment were created, the formation of institutional assumptions for environmental ethics as a science is carried out, and many articles and studies focusing on the problems regarding the protection of the environment are being published. Environmental ethics alone can solve environmental problems and save the world. It makes us aware of the indiscriminate and nefarious human activities.

Madhu Thakur in her paper 'An exploratory study on Indigenous Engagement in Environmental Management in Northeastern States: Implications for Integrating Knowledge and Sustaining Social-Ecological Systems' explores the different aspects and use of traditional ecological knowledge of northeastern regions since the region has an abundance of traditional knowledge about species, ecosystems, and their interactions.

Sneha in the paper 'Global Democracy: A Critical Understanding' explored Global Democracy and its complexities. By examining the complexities of globalization,

interdependence, and inequality, this paper investigates the potential avenues for achieving a more democratic world order.

Devahuti Mahanta in her paper 'India and the Third Gender' explores the atrocities faced by the third gender people in every sphere of their life. This paper discusses in detail about the denial of education, healthy lifestyle to these people making them the most vulnerable section of the society. The main purpose of this research is to bring the trans-genders to the forefront and construct it as the most leading topic of discussion.

'Unmasking Green-washing: Political, Economic and Environmental Insights' is the paper contributed by Gargi Saikia, Prapti Borah. In the paper the writers engaged analytically on the concept of Green-washing and they have argued that resolving the issue of green-washing has become crucial for fostering genuine environmental stewardship, preserving consumer confidence and advancing global sustainability agendas.

'Women in Public Spaces: Rights and Resistance', the paper contributed by Dr. Pallavi Deka discusses about the spaces that play important role in making and unmaking of women life; public spaces also are sites of resistance to women women's rights.

-Editor

CHANGING CONTOURS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES: THE CHALLENGES AHEAD¹

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As a social scientist one has to be connected and rooted to the society; otherwise there is no point calling oneself to be a social scientist. If one look at the history of social sciences, when one look back to the time when philosophy was developing with theological aspect of it. In ancient times Religion and supernatural things were primarily concerned philosophical thought processes. The importance was given at that time to the connection of philosophy, mind and religion. Slowly and gradually as the time proceeded, during the industrial revolution, science became the important aspect of philosophical studies. Natural and physical sciences laws became so important. There is an allegation that social science has become the poor cousin of society; there is lot of emphasis of physical and natural sciences today and less importance are given to social sciences.

There is a need to analyse the reason behind such developments. In the first place, historically speaking a lot of institutions and research organizations like ICSSR (Indian Council for Social Science Research), ICHR (Indian Council for Historical Research) etc were established. These institutions have emphasized the importance of social science researches. The physical and natural science development like that quantum mechanics and hybrid production is no doubt important; however if we really want to see real benefit of people and society then the role of social science research is uncompromising. Researches in social science lead to framing of policy guidelines with regard to issues concerning the society. The important aspect here to ponder upon is about the decreasing importance of social sciences and the most common reason cited is that researchers are not been carried out according to the societal needs.

To write anything we use language; language is not only an identity of individual but it is also the tool of expression and communication. In the aspect of social science research as well language plays a very important role and researches in different languages are needed for greater societal reach. Everybody thought digital movement will bring democratic structure in the society. Everyone thought that all languages will have equal opportunities and they will thrive and prosper. However it has been seen of late that only few languages, mostly 4-5 languages are getting the digital prominence. If we search something in internet today we tend to use only two or three languages; of late due to dominance of few of these languages others are losing their visibility in internet. English have dominated almost fifty percent of internet visibility. So it is not only a problem of Assamese language, many other languages throughout the world. The

¹ Lecture delivered on 11th November 2023 on the occasion of fifth Annual lecture of Department of Political Science, Handique Girls' College, Guwahati

languages spoken in countries like Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; in Europe many languages are facing the same muse.

So the question is where we stand today, if we are doing research in Assamese language or any other vernacular languages then very few responses will come. The reason is there is dearth of sources. So the existence of all smaller languages is in danger. Many languages are getting extinct because less number of people is speaking them. Many can be of the opinion that let the language die, we can continue with our research in English. However language have the capability of giving identity, means of communication and language are repository of indigenous knowledge. If a language dies and if no one remains to speak that language, then the oral traditions and oral cultural inputs running with those languages will also become extinct. That means we will be losing our indigenous knowledge system. So losing a language is big concern for any social scientist. There are many institutions like IIT Guwahati who are working on smaller languages where there are very few speakers; they are working on different projects to keep them alive. So there needs greater consciousness among people engaged with social science about the necessity and awareness about languages. Researches in indigenous languages are significant.

In context of creative writing as well there are problems like few big conglomerations have taken up the business of publication; the kind of writings writers are directed to produce are all decided by these big business houses. These conglomerates direct the writers with the demands of market. So where is the creativity of the writers? - Writings are bound to think according to the wish of the booksellers. The independence of creation of the authors is compromised. This has become a big challenge for humanity now; if we cannot think independently the creative writing is in threat.

There is a big booming issue in the world today that is of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The platforms like 'Chatgpt' have not only affected the creativity of the writer but also it has become a threat to the professional engagement of human beings as works like data analysis, repetitive desk jobs, accountants etc. these jobs can be better done by machines through artificial intelligence. Yuval Noah Harari recently wrote about the superfluous nature of human existence due to advancement and greater role of AI.

However there is also a counter argument to this; where it has been argued that AI may be able to do super human tasks but the human touch like compassion and human emotions will be always missing. Thus humanity will not be superfluous. We have (me and Aranyak Saikia) written about creativity and AI in Economic Times recently. If we do not segregate the tasks to be done by AI and human beings, then the creativity or innovation gets lost. Creativity of human beings surely gets affected if there is continuous interference of AI. In recent case in California, Hollywood film scriptwriters gathered for strikes against too much use of AI in filmmaking and also writing scripts. This is against the use of past scripts by AI in making new ones as well as future of human engagement in the process. The question was also raised why my creative works will be used by AI to give to others. The creative literature we are producing and the research we

are doing are been taken away by AI without any authority. This is a huge challenge for social scientists.

In social sciences when research is done according to random sample surveys through questionnaire, the issue remains about the authenticity of genuine replies by the respondents. In 1972, national security advisor of USA Brezinski said that whatever newspaper or news channels say in previous night will be spoken by the masses in the subsequent days. That means our thinking, consciousness are all guided by the press and media; whatever we are believing, thinking and speaking are all manufactured. There is a new vocabulary called 'Illusion of Truth': the trial of making false things to be true is increasing. A lie will be told repeatedly, a number of times; through repetition one creates an illusion of truth. People start believing it to be the truth even though it is a lie. Booker Washington said long back that a lie does not become true even if a majority accepts it; an evil does not become good even if majority accepts it. A lie does not like to be questioned, a truth does not fear of being challenged. But in the world today there is a very thin difference between truths and false.

Now there is a rising concern of the society as to how to make the young minds given lessons on truth and honesty. Since the meaning of them is ever changing so it has become very difficult. For a social scientist also a society connected research has become very difficult. Mind manipulation has become so common that we start believing something which is not true. Even the learned people know factually what is correct but they will not believe. So this is a problem everywhere. However the big companies today are looking for innovative brains rather than degree or background. Innovation is the new way of thinking and along with that the human qualities like compassion and empathy are also important.

Tasuko Honjo, the Nobel laureate for medicine once said that the creativity, innovation and accepting challenge are the highest qualities of human beings. Leonardo Da-Vinci once said that everything is connected to the other. So in today's educational system liberal arts are introduced, emphasis is on studying multidisciplinary. All the subjects are interlinked today. Today language is going through very difficult times. Languages, particularly small languages are losing their grounds and in 1965 an American economist explained in his book 'Economy of Language'. The economics of language is very crucial in making a language thriving. Some languages have more market value and we experience that in our day to day life. We tend to learn and practice those language those have more market value in terms of employability etc. Many languages are dying because of employability crisis and thus many people stop speaking that language.

Social scientists are invariably connected with the society; that means connection with the community is a must. However our community lives are disrupted. Community rebuilding has become a big challenge for all of us and social scientists have an important role to play.

Diplomacy and Sustainability of ‘Peace and Trade networks’ between India and Bangladesh for security and growth

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ABSTRACT

India-Bangladesh relation has been reciprocal and of precarious nature, with hope and wariness mixed in the same bowl of shared curry. The two countries are culturally and resourcefully rich South Asian nations that seek to constantly work together and are affected by perpetual natural tide and terror attacks. In the age of multilateral networking and diplomacy, when India actively pushes for Act East Asia policy connecting Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Northeastern states of India, the significance of Bangladesh and relation between both countries for conflict resolution needs to be strategic, paramount and indispensable. Till date the Teesta River water distribution remains contested, also the identification of undocumented migrants and case of illegal migration has led to analogized verbal exchanges and distrust that hinders mutual understanding and cooperation. Success of Act East Policy in India depends on better ties between Bangladesh and India’s Northeastern Region and hence the study explores the aspect of paradiplomacy and major diplomatic networks of trade, peace and rights issue. The Neighbourhood first policy of India needs to be measured by the bi-lateral and regional diplomacy led by India. The BCIM forum (Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation) and the emergence of multilateral network and multi-track diplomacy are to be examined within and outside the cooperation and whether the regional powers are moving constructively to meet their shared and self-goals.

KEYWORDS: Diplomacy, Multilateral Governance, Foreign Policy, India and Bangladesh

Introduction

India- Bangladesh relationship is built on the pillars of peace, shared and mutual respect and diplomacy. Th history of the creation of Bangladesh is the momentous development for South Asia that establishes India’s commitment to peace and diplomacy in the region. South Asian

politics has always been divisive and inconclusive where many issues remain haunting and bittersweet memories. Bangladesh creation while is a happy ending to a saga of trauma and pain, simultaneously the birth of the nation remains in the history of South Asia a remarkable event for love for language, peace within and quest for sovereignty commissioned by diplomacy. While the world watched the horrors unleashed in East Pakistan, it was Bangladesh call for help to India, that fostered the willingness to extend support in dire situations. India was the only country to support the cause of an independent Bangladesh later followed up by The Soviet Union in November in 1971. The land was brutalized by military crackdown and loss of civilian lives on March 25, 1971, and the violence led to massive impact and emergence of public sympathy and diplomatic support from India for Bangladesh. India took a strong view of East Pakistan vulnerability and right to self-autonomy finally accepting the demands that all possible assistance be given to the liberation movement. On March 29, the Indian parliament unanimously adopted a resolution voicing solidarity with the people of East Bengal and calling upon all countries to prevail upon the Government of Pakistan to put an end an immediate end of systematic decimation of people and genocide.

Border and Defense Diplomacy

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman challenged the disparity between East and West Pakistan and being subjected to grave sequence of events that displayed unparalleled suppression and negligence, he raised the demand for self-autonomy for East Pakistan. To further the cause the inception of the 'Mukti Bahini, or the 'freedom fighters' took place. The Mukti Bahini, were not just a political movement but a movement for broader self-determination for the people of East Pakistan. The Mukti Bahini did not emerge out of impulsive or selfish goals but the need for survival. The character and structure of the Mukti Bahini reveals two components. The first, consisting of the regular forces, was the Niyomito Bahini. The fighters in the Niyomito Bahini consisted of those who were experienced in either the police, military, or paramilitary. More importantly, some of the soldiers were the dissenters from the East Bengal Regiment of the Pakistan Army. The second part of the Mukti Bahini was the Gono bahini. It constituted those volunteers who were not from a military/police background but nevertheless, wished to join the liberation forces. The Mukti Bahini was considered the resistance force, and for them, it consisted of the 'Mukti Fouj' and the "civilian freedom fighters" or the Gono Bahini emerged as the voice for unity and peace. It is imperative to understand that India's intervention in the war, support for the Mukti Bahini, were shaped by the need for stability in the region, border peace and resolution of refugee crisis mounting on India, Nickeled & Dimed (2022). On May 1, 1971, General Sam Manekshaw issued the Indian Army Operational Instruction No. 52. With a structured policy to provide training facilities and logistical and operational support for the liberation of Bangladesh prepared by Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) Eastern Command. The Indian Army was responsible for training, equipping, and providing logistical support to Mukti Bahini. Selection of personnel, discipline, motivation,

planning and execution of operations were an exclusive prerogative of the Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) Bangladesh.

Since the days of inception of Mukti Bahini till the bilateral meeting with H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of People's Republic of Bangladesh as part of the G-20 Leaders' Summit on 9-10 September 2023, India's relationship with Bangladesh is rooted in history and future leadership in regional peace. Both India and Bangladesh have been engaged bilaterally and multilaterally, and Bangladesh has extended support to address hostility within the North-East part of India for border security by helping in the arrests of top militant leaders belonging to insurgent groups like the Chairman of the United Liberation Front of Assam(ULFA) Arabinda Rajkhowa and Ranjan Daimary of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland(NDFB). Terrorism remains a grave challenge in South Asia and by extending support in combating the same and the move proved to be a turning point for the bilateral relationship, Joyeeta Bhattacharjee (2023). India and Bangladesh last year in order to enhance India and Bangladesh defense cooperation between them and deepening bilateral relations, cultural understanding, and mutual benefits commenced the 11th edition of annual joint military exercise, SAMPRITI scheduled on 03rd October 2023 in Umroi, Meghalaya. Sampriti-XI in Umroi, Meghalaya. It was a joint exercise, alternately organised by both countries with the idea that took birth in Jorhat, Assam year 2009 where the exercise witnessed in subsequent ten successful editions till 2022, Joyeeta Bhattacharjee (2023). In 2022, Indo-Bangladesh bilateral Joint Military Exercise "Ex SAMPRITI-X" was concluded at Jashore Military Station, Bangladesh with the emphasis to examine and investigate each other's tactical drills and operational techniques, and mutually share experiences and strategy on Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorism, Peace Keeping and Disaster Relief Operation under the United Nations mandate of security. The same move has boosted regional security goals.

In 2017, Bangladesh Prime Minister Hasina's visit to India, witnessed the signing of two agreements and MoUs in areas of defence and security partnership between the India's Defence Services Staff College and Dhaka's Defence Services Command, Staff College for enhancing cooperation in the field of strategic operational studies. Strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Dhaka's National Defence College and India's Defence College were signed for enhancing cooperation in the field of strategic studies for extending a line of credit worth US\$500 million for the purchase of defence equipment and between the coast guards of the two countries.

Water Diplomacy and Trade Cooperation

India -Bangladesh also shares total of 54 rivers between them including the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. In Bangladesh the surface water is received from other states and water from the Bhagirathi for navigation. Bangladesh has in its side 230 rivers of which 57 are transboundary. Of those 57 rivers, 54 are shared with India under the 'Statute of the Joint Rivers Commission' as signed on 17 March 1972 which lays down how it governs all rivers common to both nations. The agreement took the shape of a Joint Rivers Commission. The treaty on the Ganges signed in

1996, a water sharing agreement on the Teesta River and after years of deliberation finally it was ready for presentation and signing in 2012. India and Bangladesh committed to each receive 40 per cent of the actual flow available at Gazaldoba Barrage in West Bengal while 20 per cent of the actual flow available at Gazaldoba promised to be reserved as environmental flow. The Indian share of the Teesta water was planned to be made available at Gazaldoba, while the Bangladeshi share at Teesta Barrage (Doani in Bangladesh). The need for an organized formula for sharing the water has been given in the agreement in Annexure-I of the Draft Teesta Agreement. The sharing arrangement was planned to be reviewed in an interval of five years as necessitated by the party. A party can seek the first review after 2 years once the interim agreement comes into force. The signing of the Teesta agreement was of priority during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Bangladesh in September 2011. However, the Chief Minister of West Bengal opposed the agreement and unexpectedly dropped out of the Prime Minister's entourage to Bangladesh that led to hurdles in the joint mission. The statement issued by the West Bengal Chief Minister was that water was a State subject under the Indian Constitution and federal policies, and the state needed to give its consent to the central government prior to any agreement with Bangladesh. While water relations between India and Bangladesh have been contentious at times, they have not been sources of conflict yet.

Arsenic contamination in groundwater also remains a grave challenge in Bangladesh and is a serious public health issue matter. In Bangladesh, the core tributaries of the Teesta River are the Buri Teesta and the Trimohini and the same play's eminent role in health and livelihoods of people. These two tributaries join Brahmaputra (Jamuna) in Bangladesh, Teesta Bazaar in West Bengal and on the border of Sikkim and West Bengal. Distortions and divergence with regard to water flow have been reported frequently in the side of India and Bangladesh. These distortions are said to be caused by regeneration effecting the aquifers that run beneath the Teesta. Also it is unknown the exact number of aquifers and their volume or how exactly they impact the river. There are also 2 hydro-electricity dams in Sikkim, including one at Kulekhani. The Teesta Low Dam (TLD) Project, producing 332 MW of electricity and is split into four stages with two in Sikkim and the other two in West Bengal. Four barrages which have been constructed – over River Teesta as Gazaldoba, over River Dauk at Chopra and two pick up barrages over Mahananda and Fulbari Rivers. Many news reports suggest that the scope of the Teesta Barrage project in India has been highly exaggerated. Critics suggest that the area of the Indian Teesta Irrigation Project must be reduced to a realistic figure as too large an area. Teesta Barrage Project (TBP) is the largest irrigation project in Bangladesh Raj, Anumita (2013). The construction of the Farakka Barrage in India made Bangladesh apprehensive of getting the desired volume of downstream water and the largest irrigation project in Bangladesh is creating much resistance at both levels mostly inside Bangladesh mass protest has also taken place a few times. The diplomacy on Teesta is at crossroads as proper mapping and impact of the barrage has not been conducted properly.

Meanwhile while India -Bangladesh defence, border and water diplomacy has earned a remarkable status of balancing and sustaining the odds, on matters of trade, peace, women

empowerment, ethnicity issues the relationship has grown in leaps and bounds. Two years back, as per OEC World latest trends update in 2022, India exported \$13.8B to Bangladesh and the same year Bangladesh exported \$2B to India. By January 2024, India's exports to Bangladesh have exponentially grown. As per the official status the bilateral cooperation between the two countries has taken a positive turn with multi-modal connectivity, one of the most flexible and reliable approaches. In 2024, the inauguration of Sultanganj port between Bangladesh's Rajshahi and India's Murshidabad and re-opening of the Maia-Sultanganj River route that will boost local trade and also enhance naval connectivity. The promising Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) free trade agreement between India and Bangladesh will foster trade relation by reducing or eliminate custom duties on maximum number of goods traded between both the countries. To promote the same, focus on augmenting infrastructure, logistics, Land Customs Stations/ Integrated Check Posts, border haats etc. The Act East Policy earlier known as Look East Policy has been a groundbreaking diplomatic method and the approach has encouraged partnerships, reliance and diplomatic engagement. Simultaneously Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement with intention of promoting safe, economical efficient and environmentally sound road transport in the sub-region, mutual cross border movement of passenger and goods for overall economic development of the region. The BBIN agreement is a diplomatic move that encourages subregional connectivity and while New Delhi and Dhaka keeps the river of partnership flowing, West Bengal, Assam and administrative divisions in Bangladesh act like the stream that flows in fresh and energy to boost the relation between the two countries.

Track 5 Diplomacy and India – Bangladesh Knowledge Partnership

While Bangladesh has recently been much closer to China, as South Asia remains engulfed in trust deficit and absence of vibrant Confidence Building Measures (CBM's) in political matters. Yet Bangladesh and India share a dynamic relationship in knowledge creation, sharing and foreign Policy matters. Whether it is cultural connect with Tagore being the catalyst or Food diplomacy or arrangements like the BIMSTEC network of Policy Think Tanks, a roadmaps created for emerging and new research in understanding society, culture, knowledge and technology between the two countries. Knowledge partnership between the two countries has been deep and intense taking off to heights of common and shared goals. To mention the Centre for Bangladesh and Global Affairs (KRF CBGA) which began as a study circle has emerged as a centre for research, diplomacy and foreign relations where mutual partnership between two countries is developed academically to work on global affairs. A crucial effort was made by India and China in alignment to Track II diplomacy where it an strategic partnership was conceived to bring Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Forum under the Look East Policy (LEP) and to work together trade, connectivity and people connect. However Indian government disinterest and China's hegemonic goals led to the failure of the BCIM, which could have been a platform for cooperative engagement. The BCIM forum, also known as Kunming

Initiative, initiated interesting events like Car Rally in 2013 and the Kolkata-Kunming (K2K) meetings. From Indian side diplomats and think tank personals were participatory working towards regional growth with focus on North-East development and regional integration. A unique effort is to set up of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM-EC) Study Group, to explore the possibilities of development mechanisms, inclusive approach and social realities. However, commitment to such forums is essential, in the absence of which the forum failed. Bangladesh in 2013 organized the Dhaka Forum and expressed plan to boost ports and connectivity plans. A challenge is that countries engaged in the forum were setting their own ambitious plans and without collective benefit. In regional development, federal roles and responsibilities are vital and so groupings should first make a risk assessment and benefit sharing model.

Such groupings have been challenging, while BBIN model are more workable with possibilities of more success. In conclusion, one can state that India and Bangladesh despite challenges have believed that connecting through a network one can become bolder to push the boundaries and encourage each other through their willpower. The larger goals have been India -Bangladesh individual competitiveness to create regional security and stability.

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Environmental Ethics: A need for Environmental Sustainability

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Abstract:

Our world is facing an ecological crisis and that over the centuries people have always been expressing their concern in a variety of ways at its deterioration, due to the effect of human action on the environment. The society's concern for this sorry state of our environment is heightened by a desire not to put in further jeopardy the world to be bequeathed to the future generation and this concern has led emphasis on the concept of Environmental Ethics, which is, human responsibility to nature and the remote future. Various proposals for environmental laws are being formulated, tens of non-governmental organizations for the protection of the environment have been created, and many articles and studies focused on the protection of the environment are being published. But, there are still lots more to do regarding the sustainability of the environment through the medium of Environmental Ethics.

This write up is an attempt to focus upon the various objectives of Environmental Ethics and the steps that can be undertaken by the government as well as other organizations and individuals to make one realize the values of the various resources of the environment so that it contributes towards the sustainability of the environment which has become an issue of serious concern today.

Key words: Environment, ethics, crisis, sustainability

Introduction

Our world is facing an ecological crisis in present times and people have always been expressing their concern in a variety of ways at its deterioration. This deterioration is largely due to the effect of human action on the environment, like, destroying of forest cover and habitat for human settlement, plundering of flora and fauna, overpopulation and unplanned urbanization leading to loss of biodiversity, construction of roads and railways, a materialistic attitude towards life and a

host of other related issues. The society's concern for this sorry state of our environment is heightened by a desire not to put in further jeopardy the world to be bequeathed to the future generation. This concern for the environment has led emphasis on the concept of Environmental ethics which needs to be discussed in the changing contours of social sciences.

The word 'Ethics' is derived from the Greek adjective 'ethica,' which comes from the substantive 'ethos', which means customs. The other meaning of ethics is 'Set of moral principle', and it teaches us, what is right and what is wrong. All of us know that ethics is beliefs, attitudes or norms that form the basis of customs. Not only in India but all over the world, there is a growing concern for ethical norms in all spheres of human activities. Our duties towards the environment and living beings are also referred to as Environmental ethics.

Environmental ethics emerged during the early 1970's, when environmentalists started urging philosophers to consider the philosophical aspects of environmental problems. It is a branch of environmental philosophy that studies the ethical relationship between human beings and the environment. It has given a new dimension to the conservation and preservation of natural resources. Human beings are a part of the society and so are the other living beings. When we talk about the philosophical principle that guides our life, we often ignore the fact that even plants and animals are a part of our lives. They are an integral part of the environment and hence have a right to be considered a part of the human life. On these lines, it is clear that they should also be associated with our guiding principles as well as our moral and ethical values.

Human beings are disturbing the balance in nature causing a threat to the foundations of global security. The harm we, as human beings, are causing to nature, is coming back to us by resulting in a polluted environment. The depletion of natural resources is endangering our future generations. The imbalance in nature that we have caused is disrupting our lives as well. But Environmental ethics brings about the fact that all the life forms on Earth have a right to live. By destroying nature, we are depriving these life forms of their right to live. We are going against the true ethical and moral values by disturbing the balance in nature. We are being unethical in treating the plant and animal life forms, which coexist in society. Therefore, the urgent need is to develop a culture of ecological consciousness, duty and responsibility comprising tasks to preserve the ecosystem on which all life depends, to abstain from polluting and poisoning the air, water and soil which sustain life, to minimize depletion and to maximize efforts to replenish and include all life in our view of the universe and this is the issue that environmental ethics takes up.

Ethical standards are necessary for a long-term conservation and maintenance of nature and its resources. Today, environmental ethics is one of the major concerns of mankind, and the explorations in that field has noticeably improved. Proposals for environmental laws are being formulated, non-governmental organizations for the protection of the environment were created, the formation of institutional assumptions for environmental ethics as a science is carried out, and many articles and studies focusing on the problems regarding the protection of the environment are being published. Regular seminars and conferences organized on the theme,

suffice its importance. Environmental ethics alone can solve environmental problems and save the world. It makes us aware of the indiscriminate and nefarious human activities. It enables us to inculcate moral values towards nature and learn to respect various life forms through environmental ethics.

The various objectives with which Environmental Ethics deals with are---

- To become acquainted with concepts and methods of philosophical ethics which apply to issues regarding mankind's dealings with the natural world.
- To critically assess alternative approaches to, and defenses of, a code of responsibility to nature.
- To gain a clear understanding of the obstacles in moral philosophy, public policy-making and public attitudes to a coherent and sound system of environmental ethics.
- To offer resources and skills with which one can formulate his/her own environmental ethic and articulate and defend these ideas with clarity, consistency and coherence.

However, the path to attain these objectives is not very easy. There are a number of hurdles but it is not impossible to overcome the hurdles and obtain the objectives if certain steps are taken strategically and thereby contributing towards the sustainability of the environment which has become an issue of serious concern today. Some such steps are---

- We are required to be genuine stewards of nature and thereby co-creators of a new human world. This will require both new attitudes and new actions. The new order can only be achieved through the persevering exercise of moral responsibility on the part of individuals, voluntary organizations, governments, and transnational agencies. *Scientists, environmentalists, economists, and other experts* should continue to help us understand the challenges we face and the steps we need to take. Faith is not a substitute for facts; the more we know about the problems we face, the better we can respond
- *Teachers and educators* should emphasize in their classrooms and curricula, a love for God's creation, a respect for nature, and a commitment to practices and behavior that bring these attitudes into the daily lives of their students and themselves.
- *Parents* who are the first and principal teachers of children must help their children develop the feeling of love towards earth and delight in nature. It is at home that they develop the habits of self-control, concern, and care that lie at the heart of environmental morality.

- An appeal can also be made to the *business leaders and representatives of workers* to make the protection of our common environment a central concern in their activities and to collaborate for the common good and the protection of the earth.
- Social organizations, activists, NGOs who are creating awareness of the crisis of environment deterioration need to be given credit and accolades.
- The concept Environmental ethics that is imparted must not be a compulsory subject to be mugged by the students to pass their examinations. Instead, it should be framed in such a way giving emphasis on the practical aspect which will be able to draw the attention of the students.
- Children must be made aware that since they are a part of the problem, therefore they must also be a part of the solution.

Conclusion

Human beings have certain duties towards their fellow beings. On similar lines, we have a set of duties towards our environment. Environmental ethics says that we should base our behavior on a set of ethical values that guide our approach towards the other living beings in nature.

Environmental Ethics is about including the rights of non-human animals in our ethical and moral values. Even if the human race is considered the primary concern of society, animals and plants are in no way less important. They have a right to get their fair share of existence. We together form our environment. The conservation of natural resources is not only the need of the day but also our prime duty.

The society needs to be provided with opportunities to achieve some level of environmental sensitivity so as to promote a desire to behave in appropriate ways with a sensitive attitude towards the eco system. A person who is aware of the positive effects of a healthy and clean environment will definitely express concern at the effect of garbage dumps and open cast coal mining on the environment or effect of industrial waste and pollutants on individual and social health. Such awareness comes through the habit of frequent interaction with nature in informal outdoor settings over long periods of time. Environmental ethics entails the human moral responsibility towards the environment. It seeks an appropriate respect for life and sustainable development. Environmental ethics emphasizes upon the development of a sustainable ecology and society with the help of a reciprocal and holistic attitude, where all comprehensive aspects and parts of nature are preserved, protected and do coexist with harmony. Therefore, the human society should take the moral responsibility of protecting the environment so as to maximize the welfare of both the present and future generations.

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An exploratory study on Indigenous Engagement in Environmental Management in Northeastern States: Implications for Integrating Knowledge and Sustaining Social-Ecological Systems

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ABSTRACT:

The notion of "traditional ecological knowledge" (TEK) describes the understanding, inventions, and customs of indigenous and tribal people concerning the composition and operation of nearby natural ecosystems and how to utilize them for the benefit of humankind. The northeast region has an abundance of traditional knowledge about species, ecosystems, and their interactions. This includes utilizing and managing these resources sustainably in forestry, fisheries, agriculture, food production, crafts, and health care. Certain TEK-based knowledge systems are on par with, or even better than, resource management techniques that have developed within the context of contemporary knowledge. Even though a sizable portion of the traditional knowledge of the tribal communities in Northeast India has been recorded, vast amounts of this knowledge are still unreported and therefore in danger of disappearing. A glimpse of Knowledge Systems and Practices in northeastern states: In Assam forest biodiversity, Indigenous knowledge help identify forest resources for sustainable practices and maintain biodiversity. Homesteads and patch vegetation near villages are significant ex-situ biodiversity conservation sites. Nagaland's NEPED (Nagaland Environment Protection and Economic Development Project) is a registered society funded by the Government of Nagaland, has focused on preserving indigenous knowledge and practices through three phases. Sikkim has fifteen different indigenous farming systems and supplements made from wild bio resources. To preserve biodiversity and manage natural resources sustainably, broader partnerships and coordinated action among stakeholders are needed. The use of indigenous knowledge in agriculture in Manipur is still unexplored, but a survey was conducted to identify and document indigenous traditional knowledge. Tripura's indigenous plant protection practices (IPPPs) are not well-studied. Mizoram is focusing on the link between the native population and the natural world, particularly the importance of fruits and flowers as seasonal markers. This paper tries to look at the different aspects and use of traditional ecological knowledge of northeastern regions.

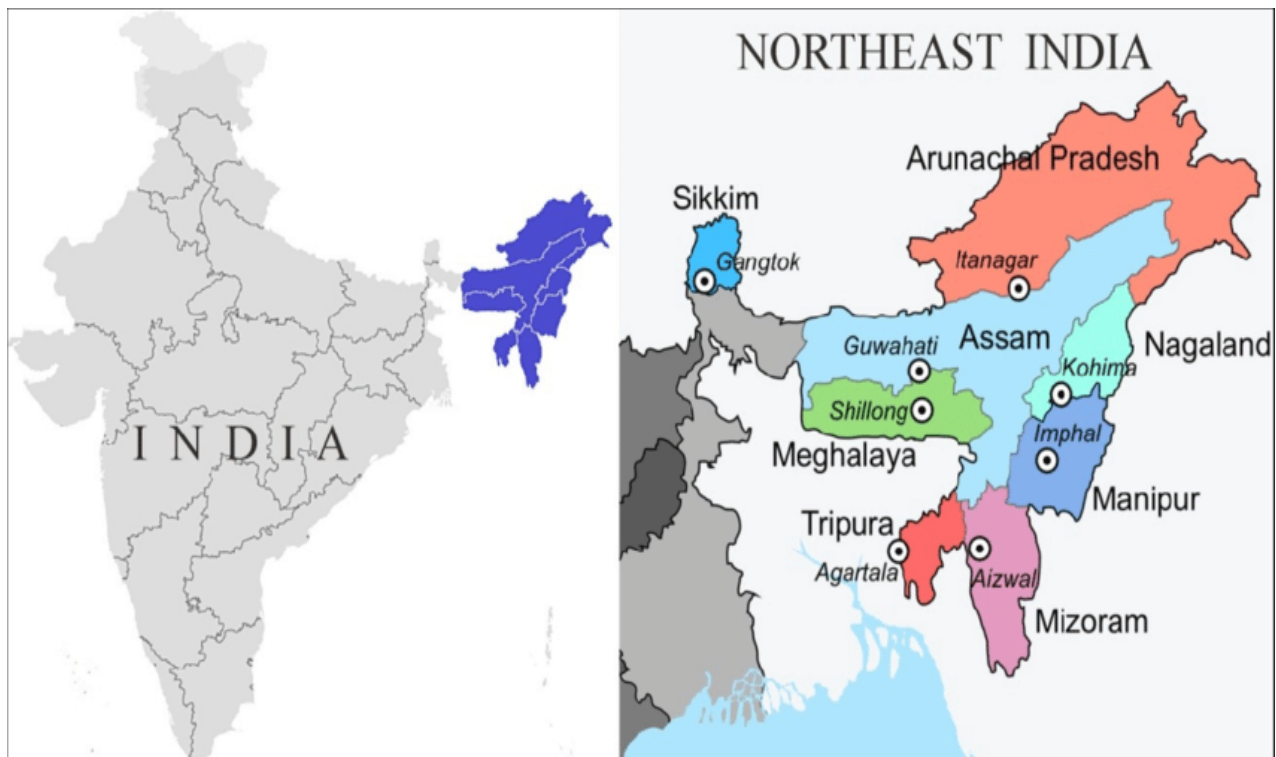
Keywords: Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Northeastern Region, Indigenous knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

The conception of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) refers to the knowledge, inventions, and practices of native and endemic people regarding the make-up and functioning of girding natural ecosystems and how to use them to profit humanity. There's a wealth of traditional knowledge regarding species, ecosystems, and their relations in the northeast. This covers the sustainable use and operation of these coffers in husbandry, forestry, fisheries, food product, crafts, color, and medical. Some TEK-grounded knowledge systems are moreover as good as or superior to resource operation strategies that have evolved in the environment of ultra modern knowledge. The traditional knowledge (TEK) of the ethnical communities in Northeast India has been proved to a considerable extent, but much of it remains unreported and thus in peril of vanishing peep at Northeastern countries. In Assam, Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) contributes to the identification of timber coffers for sustainable practices and biodiversity conservation of timbers. Important ex-situ spots for the conservation of biodiversity are spreads and patches of foliage close to townlets. In Nagaland the three phases of Nagaland's NEPED (Nagaland Environment Protection and Economic Development Project), a registered society supported by the state government, have been devoted to the preservation of indigenous knowledge and customs. In Sikkim fifteen distinct of indigenous husbandry systems and supplements deduced from wild boi coffers are set up in there. In Manipur comprehensive collaborations and coordinated action among stakeholders are needed to cover biodiversity and manage natural coffers sustainably. Although there's presently little exploration on the operation of indigenous knowledge in husbandry in Manipur, a check was carried out to identify and record conventional wisdom. In Tripura, the indigenous factory protection practices (IPPPs) of Tripura aren't considerably delved. The relationship between the indigenous people and the natural terrain is crucial area of emphasis for Mizoram, specifically the significance of fruits and flowers as pointers of the seasons. Unlike other intellectual property, traditional knowledge (TK) has not been precisely defined anywhere. This is not because it cannot be defined; rather, it is difficult to define because it comprises a broad range of components. Older people's information, skills, medical expertise, traditions, and procedures that have been ingrained in a society for a very long time and passed down from generation to generation are known as traditional knowledge (TK). This knowledge connects people with a shared spiritual and cultural heritage. While traditional knowledge literally refers to knowledge that is independent of a certain or specific practice, technique, and abilities that culminate in an intellectual activity, in a more general sense it refers to knowledge that encompasses all conventional elements related to it, including expression, signs, and symbols. Since traditional knowledge (TK) is a living resource that has been passed down orally and informally from generation to generation, even though it is used in scientific, medical, and agricultural processes, it is not officially protected by the present intellectual property laws. It doesn't just stick to conventional wisdom; it also incorporates innovations and developments that have been made throughout the years as this knowledge has

evolved. These insights and traditional knowledge are regarded as sacred and hidden in North East India since they were created in accordance with customary laws. In this region of the nation, the transfer of information from one generation to the next establishes duties and rights that govern how it is used, how profits and benefits are shared, and how disputes resulting from the application of this knowledge are resolved. All of this is governed by customary law, which is not protected by any of the present laws. Therefore, it is imperative that laws pertaining to intellectual property regimes include measures for safeguarding the traditional knowledge.

MAP OF NORTHEASTERN STATES OF INDIA



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

A study on IKs (Indigenous Knowledge Systems) in Assam reveals their role in identifying and managing forest biodiversity. The study found that homesteads and patch vegetation near villages are crucial conservation sites, with 373 plant species recorded in 27 villages. Some species are rare, endangered, and endemic. The study also identified indigenous knowledge, skills, and practices for bioresource cultivation and processing. The Arunachal people's traditional knowledge practices, including harvesting plants, rearing animals, and food consumption habits, have evolved over time due to social association, local culture, and natural

testing. These practices are used in weather forecasting, seed germination, soil fertility management, insect pest management, and value-added food production. These practices are preserved and passed down to the current generation, preserving agricultural resources and preserving biodiversity. Sikkim faces challenges in food production due to limited land availability and mountain specificities. Despite this, the indigenous people have developed fifteen farming systems and wild bio-resource supplements, backed by field verification studies. Mizoram, a northeast Indian state, is highly susceptible to natural and anthropogenic hazards such as landslides, forest fires, water scarcity, and hydrological drought. It is classified under zone V of high seismic activity. The indigenous knowledge of the native people can be valuable for disaster risk reduction and management. The study investigates the indigenous plant protection practices (IPPPs) in Tripura, India, focusing on insect and vertebrate pest management, highlighting the rich heritage and biodiversity of the region's inhabitants. The traditional alder-based agroforestry system, practiced by indigenous tribes in Nagaland, India, involves intercropping crops with alder trees, resulting in a remunerative and sustainable land use model. This method, which requires low soil fertility, allows for the conversion of wasteland into agricultural land. The only practitioners in Manipur, North-East India, continue to practice traditional health care practices, ensuring comprehensive and effective healthcare services. The Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion (IBDLP) is a flagship Meghalayan government program aimed at reducing poverty, food insecurity, and enhancing livelihood options through transparent, community-driven institutional mechanisms and effective knowledge generation, management, and dissemination.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

A growing number of countries that protect cultural heritage are investigating digital preservation and/or enhancing access to collections, for example. Virtual Repatriation: The Traditi Digital Libraries and the Project the Digital Library of Traditional Knowledge Therefore, the indigenous groups are also necessary for maintaining the knowledge system and for cultural revival. They are gathering, sharing, and preserving knowledge for future generations through the use of video, gadgets, knowledge management systems, and technologies. While many scholars caution that use revitalization initiatives may result in "colonialism," the scope used for IKM offers benefits as well. The scientific community prioritizes IK management over administration by and for a living system. While the initial focus of knowledge management technologies was on storing, capturing, and distributing knowledge, current efforts are more practically oriented toward creating knowledge. Knowledge is a vital resource for indigenous people, on which governance actions and procedures must be concentrated. The issues—such as the lack of privacy protection for personal information, the lack of statistical knowledge, and the data/digital divide among Indigenous people—are increasing the gap and reducing the number of Indigenous people. One example is Open Dwellings, which led to the digitized land record

system in Bangladesh, which is used by higher income individuals, and the corporate ownership of property from the marginalized community, which empowered individuals offered to buy for their own benefit, further marginalizing those who were already marginalized. Hence, knowledge governance to prevent empowerment. Additionally, there is a lack of indigenous knowledge-related literature in the social and cultural context in which this knowledge is based, which makes it difficult for ICT researchers to develop indigenous knowledge-designing methodologies. Specifically, there is a need for a general indigenous knowledge management.

PROPOSITIONS FOR THE UPLIFTMENT OF TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

1. Positive protection is examined from two angles. First, intellectual property rights are needed to prevent traditional knowledge from being misused. Examples of this include when a pharmaceutical company patents a traditional medicine or remedy, or when a folk song is appropriated for a documentary or motion picture without giving due credit to the community or allocating a fair portion of the profits. The original community itself must actively exploit positive protection. IP protection means that the legitimate owner of TK has the sole right to use it, and anybody else is not allowed to use it for commercial purposes without permission. Other nonproprietary forms of protection like moral rights, control over commercial exploitation, incentives for creation, equitable sharing of earnings or compensation, and legal protection are also included in the shielding from competitors employing unethical tactics
2. A Contracting Party shall, subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain indigenous and local communities' knowledge, innovations, and practices that embody traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. It shall also promote the broader application of these practices with the consent and involvement of the holders of these knowledge, innovations, and practices, and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use.

INTERNATIONAL PROPOSITIONS

1. UN Convention on Desertification Article 18.2(a) stipulates that the parties involved must safeguard, advance, and utilize pertinent traditional and local technology, know-how, and practices. To this end, they must engage local populations in the process of creating inventories of these resources and their potential applications. Additionally, they must, when necessary, collaborate with relevant intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations to disseminate the information they gather. "Preparing inventories of technologies, knowledge, know-how and practices, as well as traditional and local

technologies and know-how, and promoting their dissemination and use" is one of the additional regional activities it offers.

2. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, United Nations As per Article 31 of the Declaration, Indigenous peoples are entitled to preserve, govern, safeguard, and advance their traditional knowledge, along with the various expressions of their sciences, technologies, and cultures. These include human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge about the characteristics of flora and fauna, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports, traditional games, and visual and performing arts. Additionally, they are entitled to the upkeep, management, defense, and advancement of their intellectual property related to such traditional knowledge (...) Additionally, it states that "States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights in conjunction with indigenous peoples."

INDIAN LAWS REGARDING THE UPLIFTMENT IN THIS REGARD

Particular Section of Indian Law Safeguarding Traditional Knowledge in India

1. Sections 3 (b), (c), (d), (f), (h), (i), (j), and (p) of the Patents Act 1970 (Amendments of 2002 & 2005) - The Act's primary flaw is how disconnected it is from the concept of TK patenting. This could be as a result of the fact that intellectual property was still developing and that very little emphasis was placed on traditional knowledge at the time this Act was passed. The legislature can now review and make changes to this Act that will directly aid in the development of medications utilizing TCM or in other forms of treatment or agricultural systems technologies, as well as safeguard TCM through particular provisions
2. Geographical Indications Act 1999 sections 11, 24 and 25 - It is a fairly fresh and nascent sector of IP regime in India and this field is still expanding and will keep on evolving with time. We may anticipate that TK will eventually be reinforced and safeguarded by robust laws
3. Trademarks statute 1999 section 29 - Congress should review the statute because not all of the marks employed in the creation of TK can be registered as trademarks, unlike in the case of large industrialized nations
4. Biodiversity Act 2002 section 6(1) - Needs very robust implementation in order to provide support and protection to TK. Even after the act was passed, not much has been done to ensure that its stringent enforcement is applied in order to safeguard the fundamental purposes for which it was created. Strict enforcement of the law is required, since this will aid in protecting traditional knowledge (TK), from which many components of traditional medicine are derived. Since many of the medications used in Northeast India have been known to the public for decades, their patentability is nullified on the basis of previous usage. Since novelty and non-obviousness are prerequisites for patent law, it considers it to be prior art.

CONCLUSION

Indigenous people have long since developed a thorough understanding of their territories, surrounding natural resources, and way of life (TEK). With an emphasis on localized cultural adaptation to the biophysical environment, this information system may be highly integrated. This review demonstrates the critical nature of documenting traditional and indigenous knowledge (TEK) to protect the intellectual property rights of these people and to ensure the survival of these knowledge systems for current and future generations. Due to a lack of advancement and scientific understanding gained by firsthand experience, the indigenous tribes of Northeast India use technology-enhanced knowledge (TEK) in all facets of their lives, including forestry, agriculture, food production, health care, insect pest management, crafts, belief systems, and dye. Sustainable natural resource management requires an understanding of indigenous people's traditional knowledge (TEK) within the system of resource management. Numerous studies also indicate that by incorporating the local community, TEK is becoming recognized as a more effective and useful strategy for managing forests. TEK is ingrained in indigenous societies' customs, conventions, and belief systems and is used in their traditional forest management system. Native Americans typically possess exceptional knowledge on the life cycle and reproductive patterns of various plant and animal species. Furthermore, it is significant because it provides ecological and biological insights. Water availability, livelihood, food security, biodiversity preservation, and public health are all impacted by traditional forest management. Every ethnic community's traditional forest knowledge (TEK) management system could provide useful information for creating conservation plans.

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GLOBAL DEMOCRACY: A CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the results of a study which explored Global Democracy and its complexities. By examining the complexities of globalization, interdependence, and inequality, this paper investigates the potential avenues for achieving a more democratic world order. Both primary and secondary source of data were collected and utilized. Further, the role of technology, state and global institutions have also been examined here.

KEYWORDS- complexities of globalisation, Global Democracy, global institutions, inequality, technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "democracy" itself comes from ancient Greece demokratia -rule of the people. Athens in the 5th century BC is often considered the birthplace of democracy, with a system involving direct citizen participation in voting and assemblies. However, Athenian democracy had limitations. It excluded women, slaves, and foreigners from full participation. Democracy in simple is a form of government in which supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodic free elections. Democracy has come to imply universal suffrage, competition for office, freedom of speech and the press, and the rule of law.

Global democracy is a concept that goes beyond the idea of having individual democratic nations. It delves into how democratic principles can be applied at a global scale. However, democratic backsliding is an overwhelming fact of contemporary global politics and this paper tries to explore that on a broader aspect. If one were to ask any reasonably diverse group of policymakers or experts why so many countries have moved backward on democracy recently, one would hear a wide range of answers and little consensus. Some would point the finger at Russia and China, arguing that their support for autocrats and efforts to undermine democratic governments are a decisive factor. Others would highlight the role of technology, citing the host of ways in which digital developments, from the exponential growth of social media to the rise of enhanced forms of surveillance, may be hurting democracy. Still others would underline domestic sources of discontent, emphasizing socioeconomic factors like rising inequality and anaemic economic growth. The rise of populism and intensifying political polarization would also likely receive some blame. Taking into consideration the above-

mentioned issues, the study reported in this research paper investigates about democracy around the world and its sustainability. The research commences with a short overview of relevant literature, statement of problem and objectives. Next, the design of the study is described, namely a research question, description of participants, data collection tools and analysis. This is followed by the presentation of the results of the study. The article closes with discussion and conclusions.

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Democracy has died many times round the world. ***COUP-**The following dialogue traces back to history which happened in Athens that led to the first stone to democracy which is nothing but a coup. On April 21, 1967, a group of right-wing army officers, led by Brigadier Stylianos Pattakos and Colonels George Papadopoulos and Nikolaos Makarezos, staged a coup d'état in Greece. The coup, which occurred just weeks before scheduled elections, marked the beginning of a seven-year period of military dictatorship. The colonels, seizing power through a surprise takeover of key locations in Athens, quickly established control over the country. This period was marked by severe political repression, censorship, and human rights abuses. The junta suppressed political opposition, curtailed civil liberties, and imposed strict censorship on media and public discourse. The coup had far-reaching consequences for Greece, leading to a period of political instability and social unrest that lasted until the restoration of democracy in 1974. They told him: 'The coup was done in your name to save the country. When the furious king demanded, 'Where is my prime minister? Where is my government?' he was told, 'You have none. We have arrested them all.' The people of Greece went to bed one night believing they were living in a democracy and woke up next day to find that this was no longer true. Trust in democratic politics is at an all-time low. In Cambodia, Guatemala, Poland, Turkey, and Zimbabwe, incumbents tried to control electoral competition, hinder their political opponents, or prevent them from taking power after Election Day. Military forces also ousted the elected government in Niger, leading to the second-largest score decline of the year, and adding another case to the wave of coups in the Sahel region of Africa that began in 2020. ***CATASTROPHIC-** Sleepwalking and tightrope walking are both features of contemporary democracy. It is what gives our politics its peculiar double quality of attentiveness and carelessness. Other factors under this might include- Tyranny of the majority: Dominant cultures could oppress minorities? Gridlock: Endless debates could stall important decisions? Instability: Special interests or extremists might hold undue sway? ***TECHNOLOGICAL MENACE** -For Gandhi, the ideal was a return to something more like the face-to-face politics of the ancient world, where human interaction was unmediated by machinery. India gained independence in 1947 but Gandhi's version of democracy never took hold. Computers may not have to learn how to think for themselves. But we have learned how to let them think for us. Unintelligent but super-efficient machines are already doing a lot of the work in contemporary democracies. Political parties rely on large automated databases to help run their campaigns. Example might include-In Stockholm, online voting is used to help pre-determine what politicians get to decide. Spain, Australia and Argentina all have 'Net' parties, whose members use digital tools to decide on party policy. In

Italy Beppe Grillo's Five Star Movement crowd-sources many of its policies, for better or for worse. In the political version of the nightmare, our dependence on this technology leaves us ripe for exploitation. Its visible signs are fake news and the micro-targeting of voters with machine generated messages designed to trigger their individual prejudices. The power of computers to press our buttons could spell the end of democracy if it falls into the wrong hands. David Runciman (2018). *How Democracy Ends*. Profile Books Ltd.

These are some underlying issues which must be looked upon and not ignored because it was one said by Martin Luther King Jr. that "**Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.**" The paper mainly revolves around these issues and other such issues which can treacherously be a problem to democracy.

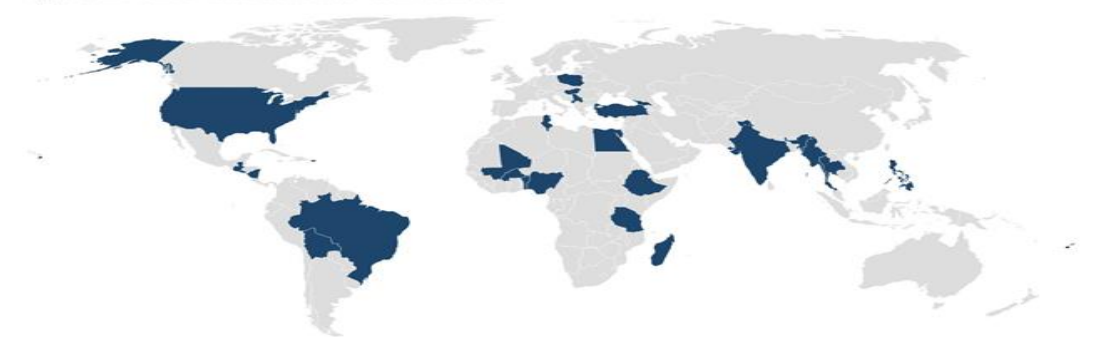
3. LITERATURE REVIEW

As already mentioned Global democracy delves into the idea of extending democratic principles beyond the nation-state. It also explores how power and decision-making can be made more democratic on a global scale. However it has been observed that People around the world are widely dissatisfied with democracy in their country and believe that elected officials don't care what people like them think, according to a new [Pew Research Center survey](#) **By Aidan Connaughton, Nicholas Kent and Shannon Schumacher** (February 27, 2020). Across 31 nations polled in spring 2024, a median of 54% say they are dissatisfied with their democracy, while 45% are satisfied. Here are some important aspects of it which likely causes a challenge to Global Democracy in modern times-

3.1 AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

As shown in Figure 1 (<https://carnegieendowment.org/>) 2022.

Figure 1. Democratic Backsliders Since 2005



Global levels of democracy have steadily declined since the mid-2000s. Central to this global democratic recession is democratic backsliding—processes of political change in which countries that enjoy a certain level of democracy become significantly less democratic. The democratic recession also includes two related phenomena: first, the hardening of autocratic rule in countries that have moved from some form of partial or soft authoritarianism to a harder form of authoritarianism (as in Belarus and Cambodia in recent years) and second, democratic tremors, where the rise of illiberal forces in a democracy. Authoritarian regimes have become more effective at co-opting or circumventing the norms and institutions meant to support basic liberties, and at providing aid to others who wish to do the same. In countries with long-established democracies, internal forces have exploited the shortcomings in their systems,

distorting national politics to promote hatred, violence, and unbridled power. Those countries that have struggled in the space between democracy and authoritarianism, meanwhile, are increasingly tilting toward the latter. The global order is nearing a tipping point, and if democracy's defenders do not work together to help guarantee freedom for all people, the authoritarian model will prevail. The leaders of China, Russia, and other dictatorships have succeeded in shifting global incentives, jeopardizing the consensus that democracy is the only viable path to prosperity and security, while encouraging more authoritarian approaches to governance. Figure 1 shows the countries which faced backsliding. (<https://carnegieendowment.org/>)

3.2 GLOBAL DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT (International Institutions)

As the number of the transnational institutions has increased with globalization, so too has their capacity to exercise authority (Zürn et al. 2012). Many scholars have noted that this authority often enables international institutions to wield pervasive forms of *public power* that impact (and potentially constrain) the lives of individuals (Macdonald 2008). Correspondingly, and resultantly, individuals within each state have no direct say in how global rules are forged. This gap—between individual rule-takers and transnational rule-makers—is referred to as the global democratic deficit. The global democratic deficit is compounded by at least three additional factors. First is an issue of procedure: international bodies often operate with unaccountable and non-transparent processes. The second factor is scope: current arrangements of transnational institutions seem incapable of tackling the most pressing issues of a globalizing world—climate change, spread of infectious diseases, volatile financial markets, enormous poverty rates, unjust supply chains, just to name a few. Third is an issue of constituency: globalization is actually reshaping who constitutes 'the people' due democratic standing in decision-making processes. As Andrew Linklater (1998) notes, globalization generates post-national communities of fate not based on national boundaries but upon shared problems and mutual allegiances.

3.3 CHALLENGES AND THE SOLUTION OF SOCIAL CONTRACT

Current challenges, such as an impending recession, the rising cost of living and the increasingly severe effects of climate change highlight this weakness. People's faith in the importance and effectiveness of democratic institutions is thus decreasing to a worrying extent. The paper will further discuss about the statistics and data regarding this in the findings section of the research. But it is important to point out that these challenges should not put the nations at a standstill. Given current trends, democracies are under urgent pressure to deliver.

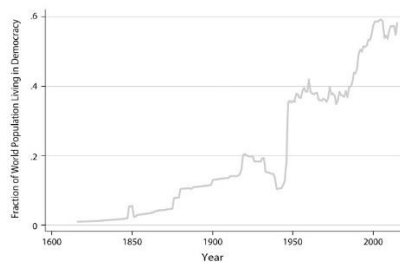
Fortunately, as this report details, efforts are already underway to put the appropriate and corresponding mechanisms in place. One key mechanism is the social contract, which must be reconceptualised to reflect a new reality and respond to new and evolving public needs and demands. Around the world, groups are attempting this reconceptualization through a variety of channels, including new constitutions, citizens' assemblies, local political associations and governmental dialogue mechanisms. Governments, civil society, media, expert groups,

academics and individuals each have a role to play in supporting and participating in the renovation of social contracts.

(<https://www.idea.int/democracytracker/g sod-report-2022>) **Global State of Democracy Report 2022**

4. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The main objectives of the study is to highlight the importance of this particular topic i.e democracy in the global arena while looking upon its implications which it is facing and might face in the future. It delves into the question of the possibility of Global Democracy and why we as Homo sapiens should opt for global democracy. Figure 2 represents the growth in democracy since history-



The rise of modern democracy. Calculated and presented by Our World in Data based on data from the Polity IV database. Democracies here are those with a combined Polity score of six or higher.

As shown in Figure 2(<https://freedomhouse.org/>)2023.

The challenges have already been mentioned in the previous figures and here are some reasons to endorse Global Democracy:

4.1 Global democracy is a field of academic study and political activism concerned with making the global political system more democratic. This topic has become a central area of inquiry for established literatures including political philosophy, international relations (IR), international law, and sociology. The most common intrinsic claim relates to cosmopolitanism, which many proponents of global democracy have drawn upon as a moral foundation motivating the project (Kant 1991[1795]). Thomas Pogge (1992: 48–9) has argued that cosmopolitans share at least this set of beliefs: 1) that human beings are the ultimate units of moral concern; 2) this status applies to all humans equally; 3) everyone should be treated as ultimate units of concern by all others. Global democracy helps realize this cosmopolitan ideal by treating all individuals as moral beings capable of exercising equal control over shared destinies.

4.2 Several other intrinsic arguments, though, have been made in literature. These claims all suggest that global democracy is morally desirable irrespective of the benefits generated. For instance, many scholars have suggested that global democracy embodies equality, autonomy, non-domination, and human rights (see respectively: Erman 2012; Held 1995; Bohman 2007; Goodhart 2008). In this vein, proponents have maintained that global democracy is required for epistemic, problem-solving, justice, and legitimacy-based reasons. Laura Valentini (2012) has claimed that global democracy is required for global justice. Finally, Michael Zürn and his co-

authors (2012) suggest that global democratic procedures can help provide IOs with important stocks of sociological legitimacy and hence avoid complications of politicization (see also Buchanan and Keohane 2006).

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Question

In response to assertions about the presumed inevitability of globalization, Robert Dahl (1999: 34) commented that ‘The last three centuries are a graveyard packed with the corpses of “inevitable” developments. Claims that all paths to global democracy are blocked by the lack of inevitable ‘prerequisites’ should be approached with the same sceptical outlook, since world politics is clearly capable of surprising even the most disenchanting observers. One of the questions related to future research and practice is that whether global democracy is achievable or not achievable. Taking this important matter into consideration, and in view of the fact that democracy is the future of people, the method of questionnaire had been used in this paper to understand perspectives of different people on it.

5.2 Participants

A total of 21 subjects were taken who were dominantly between the age category of 17-30 years. The following table represents the participants with their respective age and professions-

AGE	PROFESSION
17	Student
18	Student
19	Student
19	Student
19	Student
19	Student
19	Student
19	Student
20	Anonymous
20	Student
20	Student as well as an employee
20	Student
20	Student
20	Student
20	Student
20	Student
Unknown	Employee
20	Student
21	Student
21	Student
27	Public servant
30	Accountant

5.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The data were gathered by means of an online survey. This method was chosen to collect the data because it would allow the subjects to attempt the questions in a logical and aware state of mind whenever and wherever they wanted to. Global democracy is a complex topic and giving views on it would require the subjects to have some knowledge about it beforehand. Hence according to me the survey/questionnaire method chosen is the most appropriate way through which subjects will be able to respond more vigilantly by getting some idea before, if they wanted to.

The following were the questions which were asked to the subjects and these Qs were chosen because they were related to our previous findings, getting more views on it will make our research paper more practical–

- Do you believe a strong global democracy is achievable in the future? (Yes/No/Uncertain)
- In your opinion, is global democracy more likely to promote peace or conflict? (Peace/Conflict)
- Should a global democracy prioritize protecting human rights or cultural traditions? (human rights/ cultural traditions/ Both equally)
- How important do you think it is for all countries to have similar political systems in a global democracy? (Very important/ Not very important)
- Is it true that some countries still face challenges in establishing democracy? (Yes/No)
- Do you think MNCs and other such international organisation have an important role in establishing peace around the world? (Yes/No)
- How satisfied are you with the level of democracy in your own country? (Very satisfied/Not very satisfied/ Somewhat satisfied)
- How important do you think technology is for facilitating communication and participation in a global democracy? (Very important/ Not very important/ Negligible)
- How concerned are you about the potential for cyberattacks to disrupt a global democracy? (Very concerned/Not very concerned/Somewhat concerned)
- Can existing national democracies effectively represent their citizens in a globalized world with transnational issues like climate change or pandemics? (Yes/No/Maybe)
- How can we overcome the challenges of ensuring informed participation in global issues, considering the vast amount of information and the spread of misinformation?
- Is global democracy a myth or a truth? Give reason.

The initial 10 questions were based on Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) format and the later 2 were based on open ended format.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Survey results

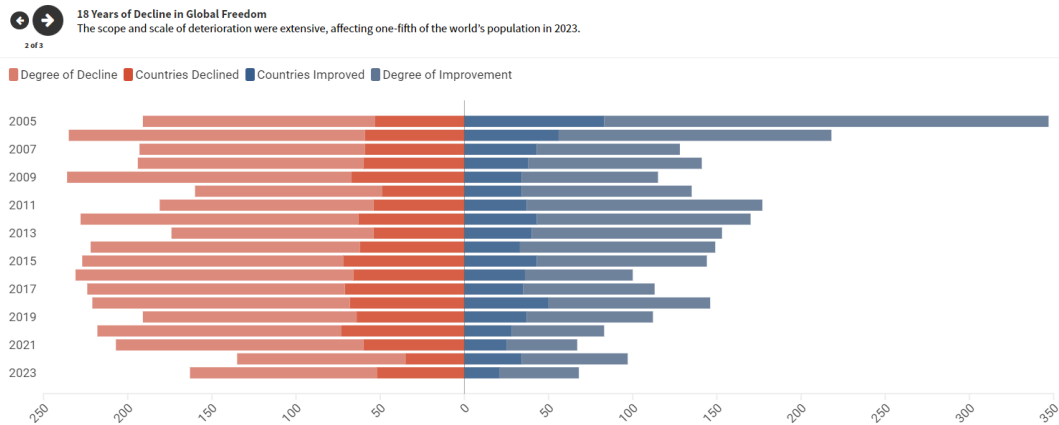
As mentioned earlier already , there were a total of 21 participants in which majority of them were students and the findings we got were very shocking and interesting at the same time. About 57.7% said uncertain , 38.1% said yes and 4.8% said no for the question of whether a strong global democracy is achievable in the future. 76.2% said global democracy is more likely to promote peace while 23.8% said it will lead to conflict. For the third question 23.8% said a global democracy should prioritize protecting human rights while 0% went for cultural traditions, 76.2% voted for both equally. 52.4% agreed it is very important for all countries to have similar political systems in a global democracy while 47.6% considered it not very important. 81% people answered yes and 19% said maybe for the question that some countries still face challenges in establishing democracy while 0% said no. 52.4% thinks maybe , 4.8% thinks no , 42.9% thinks yes that MNCs and other such international organisations have an important role in establishing peace around the world. 9.5% are very satisfied, 19% are not at all satisfied, 71% are somewhat satisfied with the level of democracy in their own country. 100% think technology is very important for facilitating communication and participation in a global democracy. 57.1% are very concerned , 38.1% are somewhat concerned while 4.8% are not at all concerned about the potential for cyberattacks to disrupt a global democracy. 23.8% said yes and 76.2% said maybe that existing national democracies effectively represent their citizens in a globalized world with transnational issues like climate change or pandemics.

For the paragraph type questions, people answered that overcoming challenge can be done through media education, improvising journalism, To ensure that there is participation , it is important to first establish the ideals of democracy which may include freedom, equality, justice. Also strict regulations on social media platforms to prevent the spread of misinformation should be implemented and they also suggested that users should always check whether the sources through which they receive news are reliable or not by doing some self research i.e Promoting digital literacy. Majority believed that Global democracy is the truth of the world and not a myth.

5.2 Others reports

In Figure 3 , the Y axis highlights the respective year while the X axis represents the no. of countries. The chart shows the overall degree of improvement and decline in freedom of the different countries with their respective year.

As shown in Figure 3 (<https://freedomhouse.org/>) 2023.



Researchers found that across the planet – from Europe to Africa, as well as Asia, Australasia, both Americas and the Middle East – the share of individuals who say they are “dissatisfied” with democracy has jumped significantly since the mid-1990s: from 47.9% to 57.5%. The research team, from the University of Cambridge’s new Centre for the Future of Democracy, say that the year 2019 “represents the highest level of democratic discontent on record”. Detailed stocktaking of global political sentiment began in 1995. [The report](#) used a unique dataset of more than 4 million people. It combines over 25 international survey projects covering 154 countries between 1995 and 2020. As of the end 2021, nearly one half of the 173 countries assessed by International IDEA are experiencing declines in at least one subattribute of democracy.

6. CONCLUSION

By summing up everything, we can arrive at a conclusion that Global Democracy is not impossible but it is only when the major challenges which were mentioned earlier some like technology, authoritarianism etc are overcome. There are a number of reasons why a country should adopt democracy but this gets ceased by looking at the negative consequences of the countries which have already adopted it. The data and reports says that ultimately, the future of global democracy depends on the collective efforts of citizens, governments, and international organizations. **Strengthening democratic institutions, promoting civic education, fostering intercultural dialogue, and addressing global inequalities are essential steps towards a more just and equitable world.**

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INDIA AND THE THIRD GENDER

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ABSTRACT

This research put forward the atrocities faced by the third gender people in every sphere of their life. This paper discusses in detail about the denial of education, healthy lifestyle to these people making them the most vulnerable section of the society. The main purpose of this research is to bring the transgenders to the forefront and construct it as the most leading topic of discussion. Secondary data are collected to complete this research. Role of the government in ensuring the rights and giving recognition these people is also discussed in detail.

Keywords: Third gender, transgender, vulnerable, government, rights and recognition.

INTRODUCTION

The existence of Third Gender people is not a modern phenomenon. They have been living for time immemorial. Those people who do not belong to these two typical genders- male and female are considered as Third Gender. There's a distinction between the terms Sex and Gender. Sex is the biological aspect of an individual and gender is a sociological or psychological phenomenon. The concept of Third Gender is related to how one would like to identify themselves in the society which may not coincide with the sex assigned to them at birth. This is a broad concept that accredit people to express themselves in their best form.

Hijras are India's third gender, straddling the threshold between men and women. They are described as transvestites or cross-dressers, but that's a limited, superficial description (Judika Illes: Encyclopedia of Spirits).

In Hindu mythology, we have seen the presence of such people. In the Mahabharata, Shikhandini (born as a daughter after transformation called Shikhandi) the sister of Draupadi also belonged to the third gender.

According to Kamasutra, an ancient Hindu text, the people belonging to Third Gender are called as Tritiya-Kriti. It acknowledged the existence of a gender other than the two conventional genders- male and female. The Kamasutra describes the sexual activity of gays, lesbians, intersexed as well as transgendered people. There are even descriptions of same-sex devotion to

each other that culminates in lifelong relationships and also marriage. This third gender in the Kamasutra includes not only the intersexed but the entire LGBTQ community ([Hinduism And The Third Gender - LGBTQ in Hinduism - Jothishi](#)).

These people are presumed to be very low in status, thus, denying them various opportunities or rights. But people of India also consider them **shamanic** (people who are deemed to possess the quality of connecting with the other world and has the power to communicate with spirits and heal sickness). Thus, the society is fearful of these people. Many Hindu families consider their presence in marriages or baby showers as blessings. They are even called by people in such events. There are even incidents of their appearance in such events unannounced but as the people are afraid of their curse they get them seated and arranges food for them. Police also fear to arrest them if some crime is committed.

These people are not mentally secured. The Hijras often faces anxiety and depression. The parents, in most of the cases, are the primary factor for these health issues. They (the parents) who are too concerned about what the society would speak in such situation forces their child to take the sex assigned to them at birth.

After much struggle, especially by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, they are recognized legally in 2014. Laxmi Narayan Tripathi who was designated the male gender at birth, is a transgender person and a hijra activist. She worked in umpteen NGOs and fought for the rights of the third gender. She united with Kabir who appealed [Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code](#) and along with National Legal Services Authority petitioned to the Supreme Court for recognizing them as the third gender in India. It was then that the transgendered people have been entitled to the Fundamental Rights and instructions are given by the Supreme Court of India to reserve seats for them in jobs and education. But this reservation will be based on horizontal line.

Even today, where we talk about AI (Artificial Intelligence), in such an advance era, people consider Hijras to possess some superficial capability like if they curse an individual the curse turns to reality. The society failed to accept them as individuals. People's mindset cannot be changed in a single day, so continuous effort of the government may help their cause. Although the constitution of India considers them as equal individuals but the society even today don't treat them equally. Feminists are playing an eminent role in giving them equal status in the society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The presence of the third gender people can be traced back to ancient times. They had acquired a respectable position since those times. But they had been denied of their basic rights since last 3 decades. After the arrival of Britishers, these third gender people or Hijras (as called in India) were labeled or tagged as Criminals. They had faced many forms of violence. But, the Britishers

were not to be blamed solely for their degrading status. Even after Independence of India, the government didn't give any recognition to these people. The constitution repudiated the existence of these groups. The constitution held many provisions that worked for uplifting the conditions of women, scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, etc. but not a single provision for these people.

Transgender or Hijra is not a term limited to people whose genitals were intermixed, but is a blanket term of people whose gender expressions, identity, behaviours differ from the stereotypical norms expected from their birth sex.

The Hijras were discriminated in societies, harassed and faced various forms of violence. They were denied education, treatment in hospitals and so on. They were rebuffed employment opportunities. Because of denial of these basic requirements, they were forced to work as prostitutes, dance in bars, begging, etc. Although they engaged themselves in such works but they were not assigned adequate payment. They sold themselves every day for a minimum payment in order to earn their daily bread.

These groups of people were excluded from the mainstream societies. They suffered the atrocities of the people, especially males. They also suffered alcohol abuse, homelessness and discrimination throughout their lives. The Hijras were raped, sexually abused but their problems were never hearkened. Their rape or sexually abused cases have faced numerous discrimination, where the police were not very active in filing the complaint or even if they did they faced harassment from police or due to systematic discrimination only a few were taken to courts.

Trafficking, begging, dancing at celebrations, sex work, unemployment, lack of medical facilities, no inheritance of property, no provision for adopting a child, etc. had been some other problems. Most of them didn't have their own accommodation.

Thus, acceptance of the transgendered people by the society is necessary to ensure equality and respect for their identity. Even after getting legal recognition they are being secluded and faces discrimination in employment, education, health care, etc. People should be more human-like. They should respect transgenders as humans.

Hijras are the oldest ethnic transgender community. In the present scenario where majority of the policy-makers and leaders are men, people should come together as a feminine strength (Tripathi, L; "Me Hijra, Me Laxmi"). Only this would lead to a change in the outlook of the orthodox people inhabiting in India. Feminists, although had made significant effort in securing their identity and dignity in the society. But the government should also address the difficulties of the Third Gender.

RESEARCH GAP

- ❖ There isn't umpteen information about LGBTQ community in India. Only a few of the sources states about the atrocities they face.
- ❖ A research on the living conditions of the people belonging to Third Gender and the insecurities they face at every step could be done to bring up the cause to limelight.
- ❖ A survey on the quality of education, health care facilities provided to them should be done.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To see their position and status in the society.
- ❖ To look into the problems faced by the people belonging to third gender.
- ❖ To make an initiative to uphold their cause.
- ❖ To see what measures would help them to raise to the level of others in the society.

METHODOLOGY

- ❖ Area of Study: India
- ❖ Source of Data: Secondary Data refers to those data that are collected from published sources like internet, magazines, etc. other than the source of origin. Secondary sources of data are used to conduct this study. Various articles are being collected from internet, magazines, etc. Information from interviews are also collected.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

- The 2011 census estimates that around 4.88lakh, which is around 0.03%, of the total population of India identify themselves as the Third Gender. (<https://nhrc.nic.in>)
- According to Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry around 71.7% of the Third Gender population lives in Slum areas and majority of them are dependent on sex works or begging for their livelihood.(Resilience Among Transgendered Persons Indian Perspective by Virupaksha, Hasiruvalli Gangappa; Muralidhar, Daliboyana)
- The estimated HIV infected Third Gendered people is 8.82% which is about 20 times higher than the general population. ([https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6176758/#:~:text=Transgender%20persons%2C%20whose%20gender%20identity,with%20men%20\(NACO%202014a\)](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6176758/#:~:text=Transgender%20persons%2C%20whose%20gender%20identity,with%20men%20(NACO%202014a)))

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The third gender people got recognition lately in 2014. The Transgenders have the right to be recognized as the Third gender and are entitled to legal protection under law. The landmark judgement of the Supreme Court in 2014 in NALSA (National Legal Service Authority) versus Union of India gives recognition to the people, belonging to gender apart from the two stereotypical divisions- Female and Male, as Third Gender. They are bestowed the same Fundamental Rights as enjoyed by the rest of India. The judgement ordered the center to make provision for ensuring education, health facilities, employment opportunities under the category of Third Gender.

In 2018, the IPC section 377 the Supreme Court has decriminalized and affirmed that homosexuality is a variation of sexuality. In 2019, another case, the Arunkumar & Sreeja versus the Inspector General of Registration case, has given the transgender people the right to marry. The Transgendered persons (Protection of Rights Act) 2019 stated that these people should not be discriminated mostly in the prominent sectors like education, employment, health care facilities, etc. and the District Magistrate should issue certificate for identifying them as the Third Gender.

Although it is a big step taken to make the third gendered people accepted in the society but no specific guidelines are laid down for implementation. These people continue to experience stigma and discrimination. The society is not progressive enough to open their hands for these people. They are humiliated and abused. They are failing to get a secured job due to the narrow outlook of the heads. The judgement has failed to capture the full range of gender expression and the numerous identities that exist in the society.

The Transgendered people are not yet being provided separate public toilets nor has the right to choose whether they want to go to the male or female toilets. They are declared as faulters even if they are not. Their voices are suppressed.

All these factors continue to be barriers to the full realization of the rights of Third Gender.

Only two states in India namely Kerala and Andhra Pradesh have formulated welfare schemes especially for the people belonging to Third Gender. This shows the inefficiency of the governments who failed to take up steps to protect these people and make them acceptable in the society.

CONCLUSION

India has taken a lot of time to accept the Third Gendered people who have been an integral part of our civilization since last 4000 years. But as time changes people should be able to widen their

outlook to learn about these people and respect them. Societal isolation is the major cause of lack of education, employment opportunities, homelessness, depression etc. of these people.

Government should make efforts to change the orthodox thinking of the people. New welfare policies concentrating the Third Gender should be adopted, reservation for them like the SCs, STs, OBC, EWS, women in every sphere should be ensured. This would help them to rise to the level of other people in the society and only then they would be able to make proper use of their rights.

Study of the genders beyond the two traditional genders is more interesting and has a vast reservoir of knowledge. Going beyond our comfort zone and learning something that has been in existence since long back will help the cause of these people. and we might be able to help them in ensuring them security, dignity and the basic rights.

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UNMASKING GREENWASHING: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL INSIGHTS

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ABSTRACT

With the banning of advertisements from a few popular airline companies in December 2023 by the United Kingdom's Advertising Standard Authority (ASA) facing accusations of allegedly misleading their consumers by falsely claiming the sustainability of their flights and downplaying the environmental impact of air travel and some other instances the topic of "greenwashing" has come into the scene again and has emerged as a global issue in the 21st century, threatening sustainable development. The term "greenwashing" was first used in 1986 by an American activist Jay Westerveld. It is a deceptive process practised by companies and even governments exaggerating their actions and efforts of mitigating climate change by providing false and misleading information and by labeling various activities and products as eco-friendly or climate friendly without verifiable evidence in the name of "green politics", "green marketing" and "green products". Despite the various efforts and initiatives taken by international organizations like the United Nations Organization (UNO) and the European Union to prevent it, cases of greenwashing have been emerging at an alarming rate, worsening climate change which is already showing its adversities in the form of heat waves, rising sea level, frequent floods, scarcity of water, etc. The rising cases of greenwashing are the result of the growing interest of people in sustainability, green products and green services, who are completely unaware about how they have been deceived into the utilization of fake green products. Resolving the issue of greenwashing has become crucial for fostering genuine environmental stewardship, preserving consumer confidence and advancing global sustainability agendas.

KEY WORDS: Greenwashing, climate change, green politics, green marketing.

INTRODUCTION

You may be familiar with the word "whitewashing", it usually rings the bell of something whose unethical background or deeds had been concealed and painted in such light that one is presented with a different perspective of the same thing but in a way that it garners the receiver with the front face showing ethicality and credibility of the same subject. In other words, it's an act of deception. Likewise, recent trends of going green has brought to the limelight another act of

deception called “Greenwashing”. Greenwashing also known as “green sheen” is the deceptive art of misleading the public to believe that a company or other entity is doing more to protect the environment than it is. Greenwashing promotes false solutions to the climate crisis that distract from and delay concrete and credible action [un.org/en/climate change/science/climate-issues/greenwashing]. American environmentalist Jay Westerveld coined the term “Greenwashing” in an essay published in 1986, in which he claimed the hotel industry falsely promoted the reuse of towels as part of a broader environmental strategy when in fact, the act was designed as a cost saving measure [<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenwashing>].

Greenwashing manifests itself in several ways:

- Companies or other such entities might claim to be on track to reduce a company’s polluting emissions to net zero when no credible plan is actually in place.
- Company or other such entities may provide the consumers with products whose composition materials information would be purposely misleading or vague in nature.
- Consumable products may be tagged with labels like “green” or “eco-friendly” which it actually is not.
- Entities could be seen claiming to have avoided illegal or non-standard practices that are irrelevant to a product.
- They may communicate with the sustainability attributes of a product in isolation of brand activities and vice versa. For example: a garment may have been produced in a high emitting factory that pollutes the air and nearby waterways.

METHODOLOGY

This particular paper has been prepared through the use of secondary sources whereby materials have been taken into consideration, present in the official websites of United Nations and other

such reliable websites along with various other research based academic and official articles published by various institutions and research organizations. A proper and systematic approach has been adopted to bring the full essence of the topic undertaken for study.

OBJECTIVE

This paper aims to bring upon the deceptive concept of “greenwashing” to the forefront and lead the society towards the truth of such deceptive art which deceitfully lure consumers to buy products under the veiled concept that products generated by a particular entity is in tune with the sustainability of the environment and the health of the planet. Such entities through the use of “greenwashing” try to maximize their profit percentage and give an additional push to the health of the environment towards degradation and destruction. This act causes the environment to suffer a step ahead because more or less the consumers share their part towards such degradation without being intentional towards it. When entities launch products claiming them to be eco-friendly, the environment conscious section of our society considers that it’s their moral obligation to contribute towards environment and hence are inclined to purchase such products.

These moral ideas and ideals of such section of society suffers a setback when entities use greenwashing as their marketing strategy. Hence this paper intends to aware people and consumers of such deceptive marketing strategy and to make them conscious about the fake labels and other information pasted in the products to be thoroughly verified before purchasing it so that their noble thoughts don't get betrayed and taken advantage of.

CAUSES

Greenwashing is currently increasing around the world, raising the question of how to mitigate this negative trend. To end this, we should examine some of the main causes of greenwashing.

- Governmental policies:

In recent years, environmental safety rules have been put in place. However, environmental regulations are not well applied (Du, 2015) and many firms misuse greenwashing to look environmentally friendly. Government rules related to environment may contain governance strategies and principles that range from strategic facts involving environmental specialists (Zhu et al., 2008; Walls & Hoffman, 2013) to operational issues, as the integration of environmental accounting, management systems, green supply chains (Henri & Journeault, 2010), the government punishment and government tax subsidy mechanisms (Sun & Zhang, 2019).

Companies can apply these government mechanisms for many reasons, including meeting environmental regulatory requirements, exceeding competitive benchmarks and improving the company's reputation (Holme,2010; Archel et al., 2011; Contrafatto,2014). Nevertheless, these authorized resource allocations cannot guarantee the development of more environmentally friendly products (Christmann & Taylor, 2006; Boiral & Henri, 2012). The government plays a major role in business operations. The extent of this role varies from country to country and industry to industry. In host emerging markets, there are restricted regulations on greenwashing but uncertain implementation. Therefore, Multi-National Companies can use greenwashing if their operations are governed by profit maximization. Moreover, political parties and the governments in many countries often promote their policies and services by greenwashing them, faking "green politics" in order to gain public trust and use it as an agenda during elections in democratic nations, promising them a sustainable future. Hence, green parties promoting green politics also fuels greenwashing.

- Competitive Pressure:

Many firms apply greenwashing to project an environmentally friendly reputation or/and image. Therefore, greenwashing is a general technique that allows institutions to get ahead of their opponents (Parguel et al., 2011). Firms often interact with their rivals in product market to win over consumers and increase their market share or even fight for their survival (Testa et al., 2018). The behaviour of a firm is affected by competitive pressure via certain channels through actions undertaken by other firms to reach the same group of consumers in the market. Greenwashing is a phenomenon linked to

scandals that often occur at the supply-chain level (Pizzetti et al., 2019). In other words, greenwashing acts as a short cut for businesses and companies to surpass their rivals with less efforts and in less time and so it has become more of a common practice among various business organizations with the increase in competition in the market.

- **Market Opportunities:**

Market opportunities are identified by a new demand that a firm can meet, as it is not supplied by competitors. MNCs have great market opportunities as they often produce products that either serve a new market or respond to a growing demand from domestic market segment that is not satisfied by others. Due to growing concern over global warming, customers have become more environmentally aware (Lu et al., 2008; Chen & Chang, 2012). Corporations use greenwashing to attract green consumers and increase positive word-of-mouth (Laufer, 2003; Parguel et al., 2011). Greenwashing has become common for corporations to take advantage of these market opportunities (Horiuchi et al., 2009).

- **Creation Of Image:**

From a company's point of view, developing a positive image among its customers is the first and foremost step to be taken before stepping inside the competitive market. The concept of image building, but also the overall philosophy of a company based on social and environmental needs, is known as corporate social responsibility (CSR). It is defined as a plan of running a company under which business activities are integrated with social and environmental issues on a voluntary basis (Nyilasy G., Gangadharbatla H., Paladino A., 2013). So, if a company is obliged by law to manage its waste adequately, then you cannot call it CSR, but if a company voluntarily limits production of waste, or tries to reuse it, then we may talk about social responsibility. Such a good image, for example, can be built by "green promotion", understood as promotion of actual environmentally-friendly products. But instead of "green promotion" companies prefer greenwashing their products so that they can produce and sell whatever kind of products they want to without putting any genuine effort to show the proof of their authenticity, earn profits and develop an environmentally sensitive and socially responsible image as well.

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

Greenwashing, which is the practice of making false or misleading claims about the environmental benefits of a product, service or policy can have several Political consequences, including the following:

- **Erosion Of Trust:** repeated instances of Greenwashing can lead to public skepticism and mistrust of government and corporate environmental claims.

- **Undermining Of Environmental Policies:** Greenwashing can weaken the effectiveness of environmental regulations and policies by creating confusion and skepticism among the public.
- **Delayed Action On Climate Change:** by creating a false narrative of environmental progress, greenwashing can delay meaningful action on climate change and other environmental issues.
- **Political Polarization:** Greenwashing can exacerbate political polarization, as some groups may deny the existence of environmental problems or dismiss legitimate concerns.
- **Lack Of Accountability:** Greenwashing can make it difficult to hold corporations and governments accountable for their environmental impact.
- **Distraction From Real Solutions:** Greenwashing can distract from genuine solutions and innovations hindering progress towards sustainable development.
- **Damage To Legitimate Environmental Efforts:** Greenwashing can tarnish the reputation of legitimate environmental initiatives and organizations.
- **Political Backlash:** Greenwashing can lead to a political backlash as the public may become disillusioned with environmentalism and skeptical of political claims.

Overall, greenwashing can have significant political consequences undermining efforts to address environmental challenges and creating a lack of trust in institutions.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Greenwashing affects the environment adversely both directly and indirectly. Some of the environmental consequences of greenwashing are discussed below:

- **Delayed Transition To Sustainable Practice:** By creating a false narrative of environmental progress, greenwashing can delay the transition to genuine sustainable practices.
- **Increased Pollution:** Greenwashing can lead to increased pollution as companies prioritize image over actual environmental improvements.
- **Resource Depletion:** Greenwashing can perpetuate the overexploitation of resources as companies claim to be sustainable while continuing harmful practices.
- **Climate Change:** By downplaying the severity of climate actions, greenwashing can contribute to delayed action and worsening climate impacts.
- **Ecosystem Degradation:** Greenwashing can lead to continued habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation.
- **Water Polluton:** Greenwashing can result in continued water pollution, as companies claim to be environmentally responsible while engaging in harmful practices.
- **Waste And Plastic Pollution:** Greenwashing can perpetuate waste and plastic pollution as companies prioritize image over reducing waste and increasing recycling.

- **Lack Of Investment In Clean Technologies:** Greenwashing can divert investments away from genuinely clean technologies and sustainable solutions.
- **Perpetuation Of Harmful Practices:** Greenwashing can perpetuate harmful practices such as deforestation, overfishing and unsustainable agriculture.
- **Undermining Of Environmental Regulations:** Greenwashing can lead to weakened environmental regulations, as companies claim to be self regulating and responsible.

Hence, by prioritizing image over actual environmental improvements, greenwashing can have severe environmental consequences, delaying the transition to a sustainable development.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

In recent decades, fake “green marketing” which is a common means of promoting greenwashed products in the market, has increased. Green marketing is a marketing strategy or promotion of products or services which are presumed to be sustainable and environmentally friendly. Almost all companies use this strategy to benefit from increased customer loyalty and develop a positive brand reputation. An increasing number of producers and service providers, in an attempt to gain competitive advantage, resorts to marketing through representation of ecological virtues of their products, and this representation is not always true or most of the times exaggerated. The growing environmental conscience and increased interest in sustainable products has led to the formation of green markets. And as there is an increase in green markets, it is followed by the phenomenon of economic greenwashing, which can have various consequences:

- Almost all critics have agreed that greenwashing is disadvantageous for the environment and consumers’ health. For instance, some authors showed the effects of increase in greenwashing and argued that it negatively affects the confidence and trust of shareholders and consumers in green products (Delmas & Burbano, 2011; Guo et al., 2018; Pizzetti et al., 2019). Additionally, Ramus and Montiel (2005) and Horiuchi et al. (2009) argued that greenwashing prevents customers from understanding the consequences of their acquisition behaviour when trying to choose between reliable and non-reliable claims.
- Loss of consumer and investor trust in the companies engaged in greenwashing and their products might further lead to damage of brand and company reputation. This later results in decrease in sales, loss of market share, decrease in the company’s stock prices and make it difficult for the company to raise capital.
- It leads to misallocation of resources where investments flow into companies and products based on misleading environmental claims rather than genuine sustainability, which hinders effective progress towards sustainability and economic development and contribute to price distortions.
- Greenwashing leads to financial losses of consumers by making them pay more for greenwashed products as such products are mostly sold in comparatively costlier prices than other products in the market to earn profits by falsely labeling them as 100% eco-friendly.

- Greenwashing can hinder and delay real change by misleading consumers and making it difficult for them to make right choices about the products they buy and the businesses they support. This can make it difficult for the actually sustainable businesses selling actual eco-friendly products to succeed and can delay the transition to a more sustainable economy. **This also hampers fair and healthy competition among various business organizations or companies which is essential for the proper functioning of an economy.**

Thus, though greenwashing can give short-term economic benefits through increased sales and market share, it might not be fruitful for the companies in the long run as its long term economic consequences are often negative leading to instability in the functioning of the companies green washing their products and services and the economy encompassing such companies.

WAY FORWARD:

Though this act has landed a gloomy stance on the sustainable and eco friendly development that we as humans aim to achieve, there are some available options for us, as consumers that we can step into to mask off such deceitful operations:

- **Learn More:** As a consumer, understanding the common greenwashing tactics and what constitutes sustainable practices and products is crucial to recognizing and avoiding greenwashing.
- **Spend Wisely:** When possible, take time to research and choose products from companies who use resources responsibly and are committed to cutting their emissions and waste. Keep an eye on the company's values in alignment with any of the United Nation's climate and sustainability initiatives, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC's) "Race-to-zero" campaign or "the fashion industry charter" for climate action and the UN Alliance for sustainable fashion, along with others.
- **Consider A Product's Life Cycle:** It's imperative to look for the entire life cycle of the product that is from its starting point of manufacturing, keeping an eye on the raw materials used in the product, taking into account the environmental consequences associated with its materials and packaging.
- **Look For Transparency And Accountability:** When as consumers we take our dive into products, it's our prime duty to look out for the transparency and accountability that the company holds in account of their products that they sell, claiming that it aligns with the standard eco-friendly practices and guidelines that the UN has mandated. [un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/greenwashing]

CONCLUSION:

Hence in conclusion we can say that, greenwashing is an attempt to capitalize on the growing demand of environmentally sound products. Although the rate of increase of greenwashing cases has increased all over the world with the coming out of many reputed brands and companies of

products and services ranging from airlines to fashion, being accused and penalized for alleged greenwashing practices, resulting in a global issue, many institutions and organizations have come forward to help mitigate this issue globally. For instance, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres convened a Climate Ambition Summit at the UN Headquarters in New York on 20 September 2023, designed along three tracks: ambition, credibility, and implementation - leaving “no room for back-sliders, greenwashers, blame-shifters or repackaging of announcements of previous years”. In his pivotal speech on World Environment Day 2024, the Secretary-General called for a global ban on fossil fuel advertising and urged creative agencies to stop helping fossil fuel companies in greenwashing. Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, an increasing number of companies have pledged to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to net zero - a level where any remaining emissions would be absorbed by forests, the ocean or other “carbon sinks.” However, those claims are often based on questionable plans, including emissions offsetting and “insetting” – rather than actual emission cuts. As such, the transparency and integrity of such claims remain critically low and risk creating a failure to deliver urgent climate action. In response to the rise in greenwashing in net-zero pledges, the Secretary-General established a High-Level Expert Group tasked with developing stronger and clearer standards for net-zero emissions pledges by companies, financial institutions, cities and regions, and speed up their implementation. In fact the Indian consumer rights watchdog, The Central Consumer Protection Authority of India also released the draft “**Guidelines for Protection of Consumers against Greenwashing**” **earlier this year on February 20, 2024**, in accordance with the Consumer Protection Act of 2019. The Guidelines prescribe various disclosures that would be required to be made by the company making green claims. However, the objective of mitigating and preventing this deceptive practice cannot be accomplished without spreading awareness among the people and discussing greenwashing widely, as much as other topics affecting environment and sustainable development, which is why this paper has been brought forward as an attempt to spread awareness about how the simple choices that we make as consumers in our fast paced lives can affect our surroundings and our decisiveness while buying or consuming a product or service. Future research should give more importance on developing more efficient methods to detect and expose greenwashing, as well as exploring the long term impacts of greenwashing on consumer behaviour and environmental outcomes in order to foster an environment where true sustainability is rewarded and deception is penalized through which the society can move closer to achieving actual and meaningful environmental goals as responsible citizens.

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WOMEN IN PUBLIC SPACES: RIGHTS AND RESISTANCE

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ABSTRACT

Public spaces are not gender neutral and it has been the case since time immemorial. Gendered nature of public spaces has created vulnerability to the position and freedom of women. Even very common actions taken by women in public spaces are looked upon with curiosity and many a times women embark them with fear. This paper locates these aspects of relationship of women and public space historically and looks for a way forward.

KEY WORDS: Public space, women, patriarchy

Dr. R.G. Kar of Kolkata will have the same fate of Nirbhaya. So many other women are facing the brutality of a patriarchal society for being women. The cases happen and fade away; whether it is the GS road pub incident, Jubli Tamuli's case of denial from sitting in exam for unacceptable dressing or Rita Orang stripping case in Guwahati. Not just common public, but women holding different positions in public bodies faces the same music. Whether it is Angkita Dutta (former President of Assam Pradesh Youth Congress) who was expelled from her party last year for alleging harassment charge against Indian youth Congress President or Women wrestlers' battle for justice against BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in 2023 has been widely discussed and debated. But not for long, they have and will also fade soon.

Public memories are short; short not because it is a problem of human intelligentsia, but because it is gendered. Women related incidents- be it success stories or stories of crime rarely comes to light and those coming are for negative reasons or women being portrayed negatively, fading away much hurriedly. This is related to the perception the society (patriarchal) has nurtured towards public spaces and women's presence in it. The presence of women in public spaces continues to be subjected to violence, aggression and discomfort. When it comes to women at midnight, the problems increase manyfold.

That is why hanging out at a park, eating a meal alone, finding a public toilet, taking a solitary stroll at night, breastfeeding a baby, using public 'transport without any inhibition, mingling in a crowd- these are simple things that women cannot fully take for granted yet. Public spaces and their use is still a task of feat for them.

So when Nirbhaya case happened, not only the perpetrators of the act but also the public in general was interested in her going out at 'that' hour with a 'male' with whom she was not married. In case of the victim in GS road incident, the focus was on the women and other women

who dare to come out from a 'pub' (being drunk or smoking is also gendered here) again at 'that' hour of time. So not only women's character is judged on space they use but also the time they use them. As there are male space and women spaces (still to a large extent restricted to home or women only spaces like ladies clubs), but also predominantly about male time (anytime) and women time (before the dusk). But in Jubli Tamuli's case it was not only about the time or the space but the attire she wore to give an entrance examination (her pant was not full length, which might have been her last priority in her thought at that time).

The cases of women being excluded from public spaces or questioned and harassed for using them has been a continuous process. Early examples like the Greek Agora or the Roman Forum followed the aesthetic sensibilities of the privileged power bearers. And women, typically not having this privilege, were not allowed to participate actively in political life. Even 'noble' women's presence was not expected in the Agora, nor their attendance in the socio-cultural activities associated with it.

The fifteenth-century notion of urban public space also limited women's participation in these spaces to socializing almost always accompanied by men. The perspectives towards women in such spaces reduced her body to an objective value and assigned it to the man she was accompanying. Such notions reflected the position of women in the society of the time.

Women's exclusive identification with the family and the "weaker" sex, not strong enough to associate with strangers city life in coffee houses, cafes, restaurants, clubs, and pedestrian parks emerged in the eighteenth century, put them at risk when in these places. The presence of women in such spaces was a provocation and could incite violence or anger, thereby limiting women's accessibility to public space and their freedom.

Working women in the nineteenth century did participate in activities that involved working for their livelihoods and thus their access was not limited to private spheres. However, their ventures were not completely undeterred by the perception of their presence in public spaces by men. The activities they performed in public social life were also very much sex or gender segregated. Their activities were a replication of their domestic responsibilities of caretaking for others through the emergence of exclusively women spaces and clubs.

Crime and fear were identified as two of the most crucial aspects, limiting women's use of public spaces. While extensive studies show a majority of women cite fear as the primary deterrent in avoiding public spaces, a feeling of their personal lack of competence to combat possible attacks was also reported (thanks again to the patriarchal notion about women's body and feminine behaviour). These continuously reinforced through cultural biases, male dominated spaces, inefficient design and objectification of female bodies through media, graffiti and advertising.

While surveillance is sought as a remedy in common administrative parlance to combat violent attacks, there has to be more than that. Continuous intervention, awareness activities, empowering techniques and stringent laws are needed to reclaim the public spaces without fear.

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