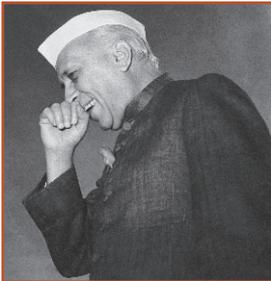




Bimonthly Journal of Jawaharlal Nehru University



A University stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards ever higher objectives. If the Universities discharge their duties adequately, then it is well with the Nation and the People.

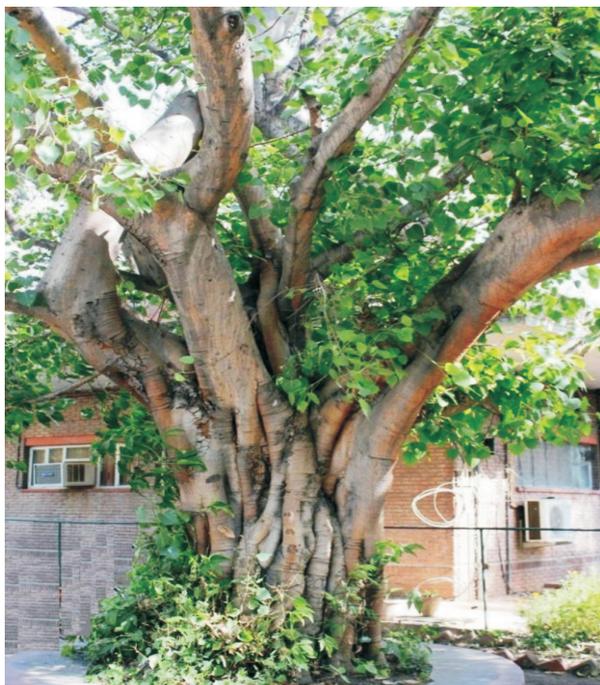
Jawaharlal Nehru



The symbol is a graphic statement which stands for international academic exchange and onwards search of knowledge for the betterment of the human being.

The overlapping circular segments of the design denote global interaction, creating a flame emitting enlightenment, this flame emerges out of the traditional Indian 'diya' (lamp)-a source of Light, Understanding and Brotherhood.

The design is also representative of the rose-bud closely associated with the name of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.



JNU News is a bimonthly journal of Jawaharlal Nehru University. It serves to bridge the information gap and tries to initiate constant dialogue between various constituents of the University community as well as with the rest of the academic world. Views expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily of JNU News. All articles and reports published in it may be freely reproduced with acknowledgment.

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An Interview with Prof. C.P. Bhambri, Professor Emeritus



Mansi: How and when did your association with JNU begin? How was your experience here over the years you were here?

Prof. Bhambri: JNU was a very exciting journey for me. I was a well-established scholar with Rajasthan University. The only reason I agreed to come here was because Rajasthan University was showing signs of decline and there was a movement towards making Hindi the medium of instruction and examination. It still was difficult for me, I was well settled there, respected and had no reason to move. So when the offer from JNU came, I thought let me take a chance. I found that some of the students and colleagues at that time were really interested in the pursuit of knowledge. That was the kind of assurance that made me feel that maybe I hadn't done something wrong in leaving an established place. After that there was no turning back. From 1972, when I formally joined, to 28 March, 1998 when I formally retired, I enjoyed every moment of it – while teaching as well as while interacting with colleagues, with whom I thought I should interact for knowledge. And every moment here was a great pleasure. In my farewell function, I said that I always got good education from my school days, and I taught at the best institutions, so retirement from here is a privilege. I have no regrets, only immense professional and social satisfaction.

Mansi: You have been with this university from almost the very beginning, how do you think this place has changed?

Prof. Bhambri: A question should be asked, what was the need for creating a new university? There already existed the prestigious Delhi University, so what was the rationale behind this move? The idea was that there should be a new university with a new mandate. The philosophical foundations of this institution were different then, compared to other established universities. Here in JNU, it was a real belief-system that we have to protect, in a very possessive manner – our autonomy. Autonomy of intellect was a belief system linked with another belief system, that we have to be responsive to social challenges and problems. JNU came to be known as a centre of dissent and criticism and its first test came during the emergency in 1975-77. Powers that be at that time knew about the non-conformist JNU but there was no direct threat as such, still we did resist.

The second test came when L.K Advani started rath yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya for the construction of Ram Temple, by destroying a Mosque. If you destroy secularism democracy

gets destroyed. Democracy implies equality of everyone - discrimination against gender, class and religion has no place in it. There were so many meetings in JNU to explain why they were doing it and why it should be opposed. The Centre of Historical Studies came out with a document to prove that this has nothing to do with historiography which the Sangh Parivar has been claiming. That was a glorious period for the university, you stand for some values. The issue is do you have as an academic courage of conviction and take a public stand. JNU did precisely that. This was the best period for student activism and teacher active involvement not only in the pursuit of knowledge but also involvement in social issues. Some of us were very active from before. When militancy was going on in Punjab, a delegation went from here.

From the 1990s when India accepted globalization and free flow of funds, foreign funds became the need/focus, even in the area of Higher Education. The economists of JNU organised many seminars to analyze the impact of integration of Indian Capitalism and the State with Global Capitalism. Earlier, Mrs. Indira Gandhi's decision to approach the IMF for a mega loan for US\$ 5 billion was opposed by JNU's socially aggressive intellectuals. There is a big turn now; it is all linked to autonomy. You cannot preserve your autonomy if you are funded by imperialist fund – giving foundations. JNU faculty has abandoned its earlier attitude of hostility, contempt and benign indifference and showed willingness to play by the rules of the game for getting foreign funds for research; which implies that topics are given by the Foundations or donors.

Mansi: You have been to different universities and places, as a researcher and a faculty member. How do you think JNU is different from these places?

Prof. Bhambri: In from the beginning we had to prove ourselves, because our system was new, our faculty was under scrutiny, grading system was different, every appointment was under scrutiny, there were so many people who applied who were rejected, there was constant vigilance over us. You decided the contents of your courses, the bibliography, the grading system - it was absolutely different from other universities. We knew we had a responsibility, as our students would not get jobs- we could not play with their lives. So we established ourselves. They came to recognize grudgingly, hesitantly, against their own will, that here is something which is to be taken seriously. Our students and our faculty, after a few years, they were all over the map of India, there is no ambiguity about it.

It is for the present generation to continue with that tradition of scholarship, the tradition that we are special – but which means being regular, 90 day semester meant 90 days, no mid – sem puja holidays. The slogan of the Student Union was 'Study and Struggle'. All our faculty meetings were also held at 4'o clock, Academic council, EC, Centre's meetings, all of them – you teach the whole day; the question is, is it happening now? Is the present generation, faculty and students, are they interested in scholarship? The Student Union should answer, is it all struggle and no study? Earlier generation of students did not attach so much importance to IAS, it does not mean that some of them did not appear for the exam, or did not successfully complete it. But IAS was not considered the goal, to do a Ph.D was considered something great, to go into politics was considered important. This student body should answer why they demonstrated in the city, in front of the UPSC, to increase the age limit for Competitive exams; why was JNU involved in such demonstration? These are hard questions of accountability and responsibility that students and faculty must answer.

Mansi: You are a Distinguished Professor in JNU, what are some of the things that the University needs to change or adopt?

Prof. Bhambri: Either you change or you perish. Change is not for the sake of change, it is necessary for the very growth of an institution; for the survival of a very good institution-adaptation, innovation and adjustment are crucial. We need updating of courses, of bibliography and addition of new knowledge. What I was taught, they were strong foundations, but that's not what I am practicing or teaching in classes. Most important change which I would suggest is a lot of academic interaction should have been taking place and is not taking place among the faculty members. One purpose of JNU was interdisciplinarity – Science and Society. Indian academics have failed miserably in creating a spirit of enquiry, questioning and investigation among those who come to study with us; scientific method of investigation, asking questions, interface between science and society, modern philosophy and modern science, beginning with Descartes, Copernicus, Galileo, Darwin, and Newton. Humanities implied human science and natural sciences – you prepare a thinking person. You do whatever you want to do, you believe in whatever you want to believe in, you accept whatever you want to accept, but your education should equip you mentally to analyze, to ask questions and new questions. If you believe in worshipping, yes, these are the reasons and those reasons should be provable, verifiable, and that's the difference between scientific knowledge, whether natural or humanities, and an unquestioning belief system. We require an interface between science and social science, dynamic, living interface.

We had a Prof. H.K. Das – once I was coming to my Centre, I saw some school buses standing there, near the SSS-I auditorium, Prof. Das told me that he had organized lectures for science school going children. I felt very proud; reaching out, creating confusion and bewilderment in young minds. The purpose of modern philosophy, modern science is questioning and search for answers, this search continues. If this search stops, we are already perished. There are huge houses on campus, new cars; we did not have this infrastructure when we came. When I went to give a lecture for the first time, there was this Hall in Old Campus, I was talking, pigeons were coming from outside and circling at top, but we continued the lecture. It does make you happy that your present students and colleagues have these facilities which have been created from scratch. It also makes you demanding. You have the facilities; new schools have come up, but do these new schools have anything to do with humanities or social sciences? What is your contribution? Attending international conferences is a necessary condition, but it is not sufficient, you have to move from international to local and let others also scrutinize you.

Mansi: What do you think are new challenges to the knowledge sector in the second decade of 21st century?

Prof. Bhambri: I think knowledge sector is threatened by the growth of global inequalities and the rising wave of religious fundamentalism and fanaticism. Both these social processes are interlinked. JNU is under challenge from both global and indigenous Right-wing fundamentalist forces. Is JNU intellectually equipped to stand up against these socially regressive forces? This is the task before JNU intelligentsia and I wish they have the intellectual capacity to confront them.

Mansi: Any message for the students of JNU?

Prof. Bhambri: Since you have asked me I will answer this. India is a poor country, the people who are at the giving and receiving end of Higher education are the rich. It is not only a poor country; it is a country where a little more than half of the population has never got any financial, educational or social help from the state or society. In this society of absolute inequalities, there exist great disparities of income and wealth. Education, especially higher education should be considered a precious gift given by the society. Are you aware that you are privileged, a microscopic minority? In return, are you intellectually and morally equipped to make society around you aware of causes of inequality, causes of social exploitation? Are you yourself aware of the causes? Give in return what society has given you. If human beings are abusing and burning one another, you have to be the torchbearers of Ideas. You have received university education here, now it's time to give back.

Movements & Appointments

New Appointments/Deans/Directors/Chairpersons

- ◆ Prof. Shyamal K. Goswami, School of Life Sciences as Dean of Students, for a period of three years.
- ◆ Prof. Aditya Mukherjee, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, as Dean, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Prof. Anuradha Mitra Chenoy, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, as Dean, School of International Studies, for a period of two years.
- ◆ Dr. Atul Sood, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences, as Director in North East India Studies Programme, School of Social Sciences, for a period of two years.
- ◆ Prof. Bhupinder Zutshi, Centre for the Studies of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences, as Director (Admissions), for a period of two years.
- ◆ Prof. Saugata Bhaduri, Centre for English Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, as Associate Dean of Students-II, for a period of two years.
- ◆ Prof. Himadari B. Bohidar, School of Physical Sciences, as Chairperson, Special Centre for Nano Sciences, for a period of two years.
- ◆ Prof. Rekha Vaidyarajan, Centre of German Studies, School of Language Literature & Culture Studies, as Chairperson, Centre of Indian Languages, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies.
- ◆ Dr. Rajib Dasgupta as Chairperson, Centre for Social Medicine and Community Health, School of Social Sciences, for a period of two years.
- ◆ Dr. Mahalakshmi R., Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, as Associate Dean of Students for a Period of two years.
- ◆ Prof. Tiplut Nongbri as Nodal Officer to take care of the grievances, safety and security of the North Eastern Students on JNU Campus, for a period of two years.
- ◆ Dr. Dhananjay Singh, Centre for English Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, as Co-ordinator, Linguistic Empowerment and Capacity Build up Programme.
- ◆ Prof. Biswajit Dhar as Professor in the Centre for Economics Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Dr. Paulraj R. as Associate Professor in the School of Environmental Sciences.
- ◆ Dr. V. Bijukumar as Associate Professor in the Centre for Comparative Politics & Political Theory, School of International Studies.
- ◆ Dr. Rupesh Chaturvedi as Associate Professor in the School of Biotechnology.
- ◆ Dr. Navaneetha Mokil Maruthur as Assistant Professor in the Women's Studies Programme, School of Social Sciences.

- ◆ Dr. Ratheesh Kumar P. K as Assistant Professor in Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Dr. Manoj M. Munde as Assistant Professor in the School of Physical Sciences.
- ◆ Dr. Manoj K. Sharma as UGC – Assistant Professor in the School of Biotechnology.

Administration

- ◆ Shri Pankaj Kumar Maurya, Deputy Registrar (Admission) as Nodal Officer for all student related grievance issues.
- ◆ Shri Bankey Lal Yadav as Senior Assistant in Administration Branch-I.
- ◆ Shri Yadubir Singh as Senior Assistant in Administration Branch-I.
- ◆ Shri Hemant Gautam as Senior Technical Assistant in Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Shri Deepak Singh as Professional Assistant in Central Library.
- ◆ Ms. Heena Solanki as Stenographer in Communication and Information Services.
- ◆ Shri Surender Kumar as Assistant Archivist in Archives on Contemporary History of India, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Shri Manish Kumar as Khalasi (Civil) in Engineering Branch.
- ◆ Shri Satya Narayan Majhi as Wireman in the Engineering Branch.
- ◆ Shri Ravi Shankar Misra as Laboratory Attendant in School of Life Sciences.
- ◆ Ms. Veenu Talwar as Laboratory Attendant in Advanced Instrumentation Research Facility.
- ◆ Shri Ghanshyam Gupta as Laboratory Attendant in School of Biotechnology.
- ◆ Shri Anand Bahadur as Cook (Mess) in Shipra Hostel.
- ◆ Shri Imtiyaz Ahmed as Cook (Mess) in Inter Hostel Administration.
- ◆ Shri Om Prakash Tiwari as Mess Helper in Brahmputra Hostel.
- ◆ Shri Vikram as Office Attendant in Dean's Office, School of International Studies.
- ◆ Ms. Uma Devi as Office Attendant in Recruitment and Data Cell.
- ◆ Shri Vikas Gupta as Office Attendant in Central Dispatch.
- ◆ Shri Subhash Saudhay as Office Attendant in Rector-II's Office.

Retirements & Resignations

- ◆ Prof. Anand Kumar, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences.

Movements & Appointments

- ◆ Prof. S.K. Thorat, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Prof. Arvind Sinha, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Prof. Rodrigues, Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Smt. Kavita Madanpotra, Assistant Finance Officer in Bill Section.
- ◆ Smt. Pushpa Arora, Assistant Librarian, Central Library.
- ◆ Dr. Saurabh Bhayana, Medical Officer in the Health Centre of the University.
- ◆ Shri Ramesh Chander, Section Officer in Project Finance Cell/ F&A Department.
- ◆ Shri Rajinder Kumar Khurana, Private Secretary in Deputy Finance Office.
- ◆ Ms. Kavita, Senior Assistant in Administration Branch-I.
- ◆ Shri Surender Mahrotha, Stenographer in Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Shri Dhani Ram, Professional Assistant, Central Library.
- ◆ Shri Om Prakash Nagar, Professional Assistant, Central Library.
- ◆ Shri Jai Prakash, Assistant in Inter Hostel Administration.
- ◆ Shri Meer Singh, Assistant in Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences.
- ◆ Shri Jagar Singh, Assistant in Salary Section-II.
- ◆ Shri Daya Nand, Library Attendant, Central Library.
- ◆ Shri Phool Chand, Mess Helper, Ganga Hostel.
- ◆ Shri Ram Niwas, Security Guard in Security Branch.
- ◆ Shri Bhagirath Singh, Security Guard in Security Branch.

Notification

The University has reconstituted the Environmental Task Force (ETF) for a period of two years with the following members to assess environmental aspects of proposed new construction activities and other cases:

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Prof. I.S. Thakur, SES | - Convener | 2. Prof. A.L. Ramanathan, SES | - Member |
| 3. Dr. K.B. Usha, SIS, NSS Chairperson | - Member | 4. Dr. S. Sreekesh, CSRD, SSS | - Member |
| 5. Dr. Y.S. Alone, SAA | - Member | 6. Chairperson CDC or his/her nominee | - Member |
| 7. In-charge, Engineering | - Member Secretary | | |

Notification

The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) has been reconstituted for a period of two years with effect from 25 July, 2014. The composition of the reconstituted IQAC Cell is as under:

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---|----------|
| 1. Vice-Chancellor | - Chairperson | 2. Prof. Parul Dave Mukherjee, SAA | - Member |
| 3. Prof. R.N.K. Bamezai, SLS | - Member | 4. Prof. S. Ghosh, Dean, SPS | - Member |
| 5. Prof. Alok Bhattacharya, SLS | - Member | 6. Prof. B.S. Chimmii, CILS/SIS | - Member |
| 7. Prof. Vaishna Narang, CL/SLL&CS | - Member | 8. Prof. Kunal Chakrabarti, CHS/SSS | - Member |
| 9. Prof. Ravi S. Srivastava, CSRD/SSS | - Member | 10. Prof. G.J.V. Prasad, CES/SLL&CS | - Member |
| 11. Prof. S.K. Goswami, Controller of Examinations | - Member | 12. Prof. Indira Rajaraman | - Member |
| 13. Prof. Krishan Lal, President, INSA | - Member | 14. Prof. Shantha Sinha, Padmashri, | - Member |
| 15. Prof. Manoj Pant, CITD/SIS | - Director IQAC & Member Secretary | Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights | |

Change of Name of a Centre

The Centre for Francophone Sub-Saharan Studies, School of International Studies is now known as Centre for African Studies as per notification.

Jawaharlal Nehru University Staff Association (2014-2016) The newly elected office bearers of the JNUSA are:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Shri Basant Yadav | President | 2. Smt. Asha Sharma | Vice President-I |
| 3. Shri Ajit Kumar | Vice President-II | 4. Shri Ajay Kumar | General Secretary |
| 5. Shri Basant Lal Sharma | Joint Secretary-I | 6. Shri Hari Babu | Joint Secretary-II |
| 7. Shri Vinod Singh | Treasurer | | |

Achievements/Awards



- ◆ **Dr. Dinesh Mohan**, Associate Professor, School of Environmental Sciences, has been listed in “The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds 2014” published by Thomson Reuters (04, 2014). Thomson and Reuters released the researcher's lists of some 3,200 individuals who published the greatest number of highly cited papers in one of 21 broad fields, 2002-2012. Highly cited papers rank in the top 1% by citations for their field and year of publication. These papers are featured in the Essential Science Indicators database of Thomson Reuters.



- ◆ **Dr. Nandita Saikia**, Assistant Professor, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, SSS have been awarded Prof. P N Mari Bhat Medal for the best doctoral thesis in Population Studies by IIPS, Mumbai during academic years 2010-11 to 2012-13.



- ◆ **Dr. S. Gourinath**, Associate Professor, School of Life Sciences, has been selected for the National Bioscience Award for Career Development (DBT), 2013 by Government of India, Ministry of Science & Technology Department of Biotechnology.



- ◆ **Prof. Anvita Abbi**, Centre for Linguistics, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, has been selected for the Kenneth L Hale Award 2015 by the Linguistic Association of America. Anvita Abbi is the recipient of the 2015 Kenneth L. Hale Award, given to scholars who have done outstanding work on the documentation of a particular language or family of languages that is endangered or no longer spoken. Prof. Abbi's decades of work documenting and evaluating the minority languages of India, particularly Great Andamanese, have contributed to our understanding of the history of language migration in India and have had a positive impact on revitalizing local cultures. Prof. Abbi recently retired as Professor of Linguistics at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi.



- ◆ **Dr. Abhinav Grover** to be conferred prestigious NASI Young Scientist Award 2014. Dr. Abhinav Grover, Asst. Prof; SBT, has been selected for the prestigious NASI Young Scientist Platinum Jubilee Award for the year 2014. Dr. Grover will be honored by the National Academy of Sciences India for his significant contribution in the field of Plant Biotechnology.



वर्ष 2013 का ज्ञानपीठ पुरस्कार हिन्दी के कवि केदारनाथ सिंह को दिया गया। ज्ञानपीठ पुरस्कार को देश का सर्वोच्च साहित्य सम्मान माना जाता है। केदारनाथ सिंह यह पुरस्कार पाने वाले हिन्दी के दसवें लेखक हैं। इससे पहले सुमित्रानंदन पंत, रामधारी सिंह दिनकर, सच्चिदानंद हीरानंद वात्स्यायन 'अज्ञेय', महादेवी वर्मा, नरेश मेहता, निर्मल वर्मा, कुंवर नारायण, श्रीलाल शुक्ल और अमरकांत को यह पुरस्कार मिल चुका है। केदारनाथ सिंह ने अज्ञेय द्वारा संपादित 'तीसरा सप्तक' के एक सशक्त कवि के रूप में ख्याति प्राप्त की थी। उनकी प्रमुख कृतियों में 'अभी बिलकुल अभी', 'जमीन पर रही है', 'यहां से देखो', 'अकाल में सारस', 'बाघ', 'सृष्टि पर पहरा', 'मेरे समय के शब्द', 'कल्पना और छायावाद', हिंदी कविता में बिंब विधान', 'कब्रिस्तान में पंचायत', 'ताना बाना' और 'तालस्ताय और साइकिल' शामिल हैं। सिंह 'अकाल में सारस' के लिए साहित्य अकादेमी पुरस्कार (1989) के साथ साथ मैथिलीशरण गुप्त पुरस्कार और व्यास सम्मान सहित अनेक प्रतिष्ठित पुरस्कारों से सम्मानित हैं।

एक जेएनयू के भीतर कई जेएनयू हैं

ज्ञानपीठ पुरस्कार से सम्मानित कवि प्रो. केदारनाथ सिंह से मानसी की बातचीत

प्रश्न : आपकी चर्चा देश के प्रसिद्ध कवियों में होती है। लेकिन सबसे पहले मैं यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि जेएनयू में आपका सफर कब शुरू हुआ और वह कैसा रहा?

उत्तर : मैं जेएनयू में आया 1976 में, उससे पहले मैं यूपी के एक कॉलेज में पढ़ाता था, जो एक छोटे से कस्बे में था। उस समय कुछ पढ़ता-लिखता था, जो पत्र-पत्रिकाओं में आने लगा था, नाम भी थोड़ा-बहुत हो गया था। इसलिए जेएनयू के बारे में जानता था कि एक नई संस्था आ रही है। मैं जेएनयू आने के लिए

बिल्कुल उत्सुक नहीं था, इसके लिए मैंने कोई प्रयास नहीं किया और न ही आना चाहता था। उस समय यहाँ एक नया केंद्र शुरू हुआ, भारतीय भाषा केंद्र। उसमें जब नए शिक्षकों की जरूरत पड़ी, तब यहाँ के एक लोकल व्यक्ति ने कहा कि आप भी वहां आवेदन भेज दीजिए। तो मैंने चयन की चिंताओं से दूर रहते हुए एक प्रार्थना-पत्र बहुत सामान्य ढंग से भेज दिया। छोटी जगह मुझे बहुत अच्छी लगती है, बड़ी जगहों पर मैं घबरा जाता हूँ। खैर, मेरा यहाँ चयन हो गया। सन् 1975 में शायद मेरा साक्षात्कार

Achievements/Awards

हुआ और मैंने उसके बाद विश्वविद्यालय में आकर ज्वाइन कर लिया। उस समय मैंने सोचा था कि अगर मेरा मन नहीं लगा तो मैं अपने पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश में फिर से वापस लौट जाऊंगा। मेरी उच्च शिक्षा संपन्न हुई है बनारस हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, बनारस में। बी.एच.यू. के पास मैंने जमीन का एक टुकड़ा लिया था। सोचा था वापस लौटने की स्थिति में, मैं वहीं अपना घर बनाकर रहूंगा पर ऐसा हुआ नहीं। जेएनयू में एक बार आ गया तो फिर यहीं रह गया। मैं रिटायर्ड हुआ हूँ 2000 में। यानी इतने दिनों, इतने वर्षों तक मैं वहां रहा और यह मुझे अच्छा लगा। जेएनयू में रहने, पढ़ाने के साथ ही दूसरे लोगों के साथ जुड़ने का जो अवसर मिला, अपने सेंटर के अतिरिक्त दूसरे सेंटर्स के साथ जुड़ने का मुझे जो मौका मिला, वह मेरे लिए विशेष लाभदायी रहा।

प्रश्न : उस समय का माहौल कैसा था?किन लोगों के साथ आपने काम किया और अनुभव कैसा रहा?

उत्तर : मैं भाषा संस्थान से था, तो वहां जो दूसरे सेंटर्स थे, खासतौर से रशियन, जर्मन और स्पेनिश इन सेंटर्स या विभागों से मेरे बड़े अच्छे संबंध थे। और इनके कई लोग मेरे मित्र थे, जिनमें से अब शायद ही कोई वहां है। जैसे— प्रोफेसर वरयाम सिंह, जो रशियन में थे और अब रिटायर्ड हो गए हैं। स्पेनिश के प्रो. चट्टोपाध्याय, जो मुझसे काफी कनिष्ठ थे और अब सौभाग्य से केंद्र के अध्यक्ष हैं। दूसरे, SIS में प्रो. तुलसीराम भी अभी हैं, समाजशास्त्र के प्रो. आनंद कुमार भी मेरे मित्र हैं, किन्तु वे भी रिटायर्ड हो गए हैं। लेकिन मेरे लिए सबसे अधिक सुखद था इन दूसरी भाषाओं के साथ जुड़ना, जिससे मैंने अपने को सर्वाधिक समृद्ध किया। दूसरी भाषाओं के साथ मेरे दो प्रकार के अनुभव रहे, एक तो भाषा संस्थान में विदेशी भाषा के जो केंद्र थे, उनसे अच्छे संबंध बने और उन भाषाओं से परिचय बढ़ा। अंग्रेजी को तो हम सभी सामान्यतः थोड़ा-बहुत पढ़ते हैं और समझते हैं, पर, दूसरी भाषाओं जैसे— फ्रांसीसी, जर्मनी, रूसी आदि के साथ उतना निकट का संबंध नहीं बन पाता। अतः इनको जानने का मौका नहीं मिल पाता है। यह मेरे लिए बहुत ही समृद्ध करने वाले दिन थे। एक तरफ अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर साहित्य और भाषा की जो दुनिया थी और है, उस दुनिया से जुड़ने और जानने का अवसर मुझे जेएनयू ने दिया। जेएनयू के पहले वह संभव नहीं था, अंग्रेजी के जरिये जो थोड़ा-बहुत पढ़ता था, वह नाकाफी था। दूसरा, यह कि जेएनयू अपनी संपूर्ण संरचना में बहुभाषी विश्वविद्यालय है। शिक्षक और छात्र एक क्षेत्र विशेष से न होकर भारत के सभी क्षेत्रों से आते हैं, तो यहाँ जो भारतीय भाषाओं का संसार है वह बहुत बड़ा है। अब तो भारतीय भाषा केंद्र में कुछ और भारतीय भाषाएँ पढ़ाई भी जा रही हैं, तब केवल हिन्दी और उर्दू थीं, अब बढ़ गयी हैं। तो भारतीय भाषाओं के जो लोग थे, भले ही वे दूसरे सेंटर्स में पढ़ाते थे, लेकिन थे दूसरी भारतीय भाषाओं के ही। जैसे प्रो. देशपांडे, पढ़ाते थे चीनी भाषा, किन्तु थे मराठी के। मराठी संसार के बारे में, मराठी साहित्य के बारे में और मराठी क्षेत्र के बारे में उनसे बहुत जानने को मिला था। मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि मैंने

जेएनयू में अपने को दो स्तरों पर समृद्ध करने का मौका पाया। एक, यहाँ के अंतर्राष्ट्रीय संसार की संस्कृति, खासतौर से उसके साहित्य को जानने का, देखने-सुनने-समझने का और कभी-कभी अनुवाद करने का अवसर मिला। मेरे सबसे ज्यादा संबंध रूसी, जर्मनी और स्पेनी इन तीन भाषाओं के साथ थे। मैं ये भाषाएँ नहीं जानता हूँ लेकिन उनके लोगों से हिन्दी में, अंग्रेजी में, इसके बारे में समझता रहा हूँ। और उसके बाद फिर भारतीय भाषाएँ और साहित्य उनसे जाना जो दूसरे केंद्रों में लोग थे, उनमें थे तेलगू, बंगाली, उड़िया, मराठी आदि सारे लोग शामिल हैं। यहाँ तक कि मणिपुर से भी।

यहाँ एक बात का उल्लेख मैं प्रशंगवश करना चाहूंगा। मणिपुर में जेएनयू का सेंटर भी था उस समय। और उसका हमारे केंद्र से भी संबंध था। हमारे सेंटर के लोग वहां जाते थे, रहते थे पढ़ाते थे और फिर आ जाते थे। प्रो. महाले जो फ्रेंच के थे, उन्हें वहां का पहला उप-कुलपति बनाया गया। बाद में वह एक स्वतंत्र विश्वविद्यालय के रूप में परिवर्तित हो गया। मेरा ख्याल है कि ऐसा 90 के दशक में हुआ है। लेकिन किस दिन, किस माह ऐसा हुआ मुझे याद नहीं है। उसके कारण मणिपुर के बारे में, उसके साहित्य के बारे में, उसके जरिये पूरे नार्थ-ईस्ट के बारे में जानने-समझाने को मिला। इधर नार्थ-ईस्ट मेरा काफी आना-जाना रहा है। मैं मानता हूँ कि इस समय नार्थ-ईस्ट में साहित्य के सन्दर्भ में बहुत अच्छा काम हो रहा है। मणिपुरी साहित्य की अत्यंत समृद्ध परंपरा है, तो वहां तो अच्छा लिखा जाता रहा है, लेकिन दूसरी कम विकसित भाषाएँ हैं जैसे खासी है, केदारो भाषा है, यहाँ तक कि नगमी भाषा। इन सभी भाषाओं में पिछले तीस-चालीस-पचास साल से बहुत अच्छा काम हो रहा है। मैं नार्थ-ईस्ट में घूमा हूँ वहां मैंने पाया है कि एक छोटा-मोटा रेनैसांस इस समय नार्थ-ईस्ट में काम कर रहा है और वह राजनीतिक रूप से काफी चेतना संपन्न है। वे अपनी मांगों के लिए लड़ भी रहे हैं। उनकी कई सारी मांगें ऐसी हैं जो वाजिब हैं, और वह सब प्रतिबिम्बित होता है वहां के साहित्य में। इस बीच हिन्दी में पूर्वोत्तर के साहित्य का बहुत अनुवाद हुआ है। वह सब मैं देखता रहा हूँ। इन सब की प्रेरणा मुझे जेएनयू में मिली।

जेएनयू से यह जो मेरा संबंध है, करीब-करीब बीस-बाईस वर्षों का। उसके बाद भी मैं जेएनयू से रिटायर्ड हुआ, किन्तु संयोगवश मैं पूरी तरह रिटायर्ड नहीं हुआ। मैं अभी भी प्रोफेसर इमिरेटस वहां हूँ और इस नाते सेन्टर से मेरा संबंध बना हुआ है। कमरा भी पहले वाला है, कभी-कभी जाता हूँ बैठता हूँ कुछ लोग मेरे साथ पीएच.डी. करते हैं। यह संबंध आज भी बना हुआ है। तो यह जेएनयू में एक उदारता है। उनके कोर्ट का सदस्य हूँ, सेंटर का सदस्य हूँ, तो मीटिंग होने पर जाना पड़ता है। प्रोफेसर इमिरेटस का मामला तो ऐसा है कि जब तक आप दुनिया में हैं, तब तक आप वहां हैं— मतलब आजीवन है।

प्रश्न : आपने इतने वर्ष जेएनयू में बिताए हैं। इस दौरान आपने जेएनयू को किस प्रकार बदलते हुए देखा है?

Achievements/Awards

उत्तर : देखो, पहली बात तो यह कि पहले जेएनयू राजनीतिक रूप से बहुत अधिक चेतना संपन्न था। जब छात्रसंघ के चुनाव का अवसर आता था, तब उनके छात्रों के भाषण सुनने शिक्षक भी जाते थे। वे बहुत अधिक तैयारी करके आते थे, राजनीतिक रूप से बहुत सजग होते थे। उनके भाषण सुनने लायक होते थे। संसद की बहसों उनके आगे फीकी हैं। तो वह एक माहौल था जेएनयू का। उस समय बहुत अच्छी साहित्यिक एकजुटता थी। इससे जुड़ा एक छोटा-सा उदाहरण देना चाहूंगा। बात शायद 78 या 79 की है। पाकिस्तान के एक बहुत बड़े शायर फ़ैज अहमद फ़ैज, जिनका नाम आपने सुना होगा, उनको हम बुलाकर लाए थे। उस समय जेएनयू की क्लासों पुराने परिसर में चलती थीं। तब जेएनयू में कोई खास बड़ा हॉल नहीं था, अब तो बन गए हैं। इसलिए एक बहुत बड़ा शामियाना लगाया गया। उस समय लोगों की जितनी भीड़ वहां जमा हुई थी, वैसी आज-तक नहीं हुई। आप इसका अंदाज इस तरह लगा सकते हैं कि "The last man not sitting standing in the last row was Makbool Fida Husain" अर्थात् मकबूल फिदा हुसैन वहां आए, किन्तु उनको बैठने की जगह नहीं मिली और वे सबसे पीछे खड़े थे। उस प्रकार का वह दौर था। इस प्रकार के बहुत अच्छे सांस्कृतिक, साहित्यिक, राजनीतिक कार्यक्रम होते रहते थे। तुम्हारा छात्रसंघ तो आदर्श हुआ करता था। मुझे लगता है कि इसमें कमी आई है। मैं उसका विस्तृत रूप से वर्णन नहीं कर सकता। यह कितना कम हुआ है, कितना नहीं हुआ है, इसका कोई ब्यौरा मेरे पास नहीं है। दूसरा, तब जेएनयू में इतनी घनी बसावट नहीं थी। जेएनयू की उस समय कुल आबादी क्या थी, आज लगभग 10,000 के आसपास होगी, उस समय 3,000 के लगभग थी। तब कैम्पस में तीन हजार का पता ही नहीं चलता था। अब भीड़ बढ़ गयी है। शायद एक और बदलाव आया है जो नए लोग आ रहे हैं, छात्र आ रहे हैं, वे अपने भविष्य के बारे में ज्यादा सोचते हैं, उन्हें सोचना भी चाहिए, रोजगार के बारे में। पहले रोजगार के बारे में इतना नहीं सोचते थे। पहले इस पर जोर नहीं था। उस वक्त पढ़ने-पढ़ाने पर और अधिक से अधिक अपने को तैयार करने पर जोर देते थे, तब आजीविका के बारे में सोचते थे। अब शायद लक्ष्य बनाने में, अपना उद्देश्य तय करने में ध्यान देते हैं। नई पीढ़ी अपने करियर को लेकर ज्यादा सजग है। मैं इसे बुरा नहीं मानता हूँ। ये एक परिवर्तन हुआ है। ऐसा पहले नहीं था। पहले तो ऐसे लोग आते थे, फिर जेएनयू में आ गए तो आ गए। एक शब्द चलता था, अब नहीं चलता होगा कि कोई विद्यार्थी आया, तो लगभग 6 साल, 7 या अधिकतम 8 साल रहता था, तो इसके लिए एक शब्द चलता था "आमदजाति"! यानी आ गए तो आ गए, अब नहीं जाएंगे। इतनी सुविधाएं थीं, मैस के चार्ज भी कम थे, अब बढ़ गए होंगे, एक कमरा मिल गया, सुरक्षा अधिकतम है, मेडिकल की भी सुविधा उपलब्ध है। फेलोशिप तब भी छोटी-मोटी मिल जाती थी, अब बढ़ गई होगी। आदमी को और क्या चाहिए।

प्रश्न : क्या आपको लगता है कि हाल के वर्षों में जेएनयू का विस्तार हुआ है? खासकर अकादमिक माहौल का?

उत्तर : अभी मैं देखता हूँ, जब मैं नया-नया जेएनयू में आया था, तब मेरी क्लास में एक विद्यार्थी पढ़ता। छात्रों में भी काफी विस्तार हुआ है वे कई क्षेत्र से आ रहे हैं, नार्थ-ईस्ट के छात्र तब कम थे अब संख्या बढ़ गयी है, अच्छी बात है। और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर भी काफी विद्यार्थी आ रहे हैं। यानी कुल मिलाकर जेएनयू समुदाय का दायरा बढ़ा है, छात्र समुदाय का भी और शिक्षकों का भी। जिन पुराने लोगों के कारण जेएनयू का देश-भर में नाम था, अब वे सभी चले गए हैं, पर नए आ रहे हैं, कुछ दिन में पैदा होंगे और लोग, ऐसा ही होता है। बहुत सारे नए शिक्षक बहुत अच्छा काम करके आए हैं, विदेशों से पढ़कर आए हैं। ऐसा सुनता हूँ कि अपने-अपने क्षेत्र में अच्छा काम करेंगे। अभी उतना बड़ा नाम भले ही न हुआ हो, किन्तु आगे प्राप्त कर लेंगे। एक छोटा अंतर और आया है, तब जेएनयू वामपंथी विचारधारा का संसार था। वामपंथ में भी कई धाराएं हैं। वे सभी यहाँ पाई जाती थीं। वह शायद अब कम हुआ है। खत्म नहीं हुआ है, किन्तु कम हुआ है। मैं अपने सेंटर के बारे में कोई टिप्पणी नहीं करूंगा, क्योंकि ऐसा करना अच्छा नहीं है। भाषा संस्थान के दूसरे केन्द्रों के भी बहुत से पुराने लोग चले गए हैं। लेकिन ऐसा लगता है कि कहीं कुछ कम हुआ है। अभी भी जेएनयू का नाम बहुत है, बाहर जाता हूँ, विदेश जाता हूँ, तो वहां भी कोई न कोई जेएनयू वाला मिल जाता है। चीन गया था जब पिछले दिनों तो वहां भी एक छात्र जेएनयू का— जो रशियन में था, मुझसे मिलने आया। उसने बताया कि "Biejing is very costly city". बीजिंग एक बहुत महंगा शहर है, उस बीजिंग शहर में वह ठाठ से रह रहा था। बोला मैंने दो काम किए हैं, एक तो चीनी लड़की से शादी कर ली, और मैं अब हिन्दी का टीचर बन गया हूँ, अपने घर में ट्यूशन करता हूँ, हिन्दी को पढ़ाता हूँ। यह मैंने पेरिस में भी देखा। वहां भी जेएनयू का एक लड़का मिल गया। उसने कहा कि मैं ट्यूशन करता हूँ। मैंने पूछा कि ट्यूशन से कैसे काम चलता होगा? तो ट्यूशन करके वह इतना कमा रहा है कि वहां ढंग से जीवन-यापन कर सके। इस समय जेएनयू सारी दुनिया में फैला हुआ है, हिन्दुस्तान में तो है ही। जहां भी जाओ जेएनयू का व्यक्ति मिल जाएगा। JNU is everywhere. अभी भी, देश के बहुत सारे विश्वविद्यालयों से बहुत बेहतर काम कर रहा है जेएनयू। देश के बाहर भी जेएनयू का नाम है। लोगों में जेहन में है, दिमाग में है, अकादमिक संदर्भ में। कुल मिलाकर मेरा यह अनुभव है। मैं अंत में यह कहूंगा कि मैं जेएनयू से अभी भी अलग नहीं हूँ। जेएनयू का हिस्सा बना हुआ हूँ, Part of JNU.

प्रश्न : आप भारतीय साहित्य के महत्वपूर्ण रचनाकार हैं और आपकी कर्मभूमि अध्यापन रही है। तो क्या इन दोनों भूमिकाओं का निर्वहन करते हुए आपको कुछ कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ा?

उत्तर : एक घटना मुझे याद आ रही है, मैंने कहीं पढ़ा था कि इंग्लिश के बहुत बड़े लेखक थे, उनको जॉब ऑफर हुआ किसी विश्वविद्यालय में, "And he refused" ! बोले मैं नहीं जाऊंगा, क्योंकि अध्यापन सशर्त होता है। आपको एक बना-बनाया कोर्स

Achievements/Awards

का ढांचा मिलता है। शेक्सपीयर को पढ़ना है, टी एस इलियट को भी पढ़ना है, बाद के सारे लोगों को भी पढ़ना ही है। आप जिनको पसंद नहीं करते उनको भी पढ़ना-पढ़ाना है। और वह भी एक लाइन पर। अगर आप कहें कि 'I don't like this', तो छात्र तो घाटे में रहेगा और वह तो फेल हो जाएगा। पढ़ाते समय आप जिसको पसंद नहीं करते, उसको भी जस्टीफाई करना पड़ता है। यानी अपनी जो रुचि है, पसंद है, उस पसंद को थोड़ा दबाकर काम करना पड़ता है। ऐसा होता है, क्योंकि यह उसका हिस्सा है। संयोगवश मुझे ऐसा नहीं करना पड़ा। मैं जो चाहता था, वह पढ़ाता था। मैं कविता पढ़ाता था। जो मेरी पसंद की चीजें थीं, वही कोर्स में थीं। तो मुझे यह समस्या नहीं आई। मैंने अपने अध्यापन कार्य और लेखन में कभी कोई तनाव महसूस नहीं किया। कुल मिलाकर माहौल भी जेएनयू का अच्छा था, बस यह समस्या मेरे सामने नहीं आई। यह मेरा सौभाग्य था कि मैं साहित्य में था और साहित्य में भी मैं कविता से जुड़ा हूँ, तो मुझे कविता ही पढ़ानी होती थी। और कोर्स भी ऐसा बना था कि वह मेरी पसंद का था। इसलिए मुझे यह समस्या नहीं आई।

प्रश्न : एक सवाल मेरे मन में बार-बार आ रहा है आप जेएनयू में प्रोफेसर इमिरेटस हैं। आपने भारत और भारत के बाहर अनेक विश्वविद्यालयों को निकट से देखा-समझा है। इन विश्वविद्यालयों के सन्दर्भ में जेएनयू को किन बदलावों की आवश्यकता है, जिससे इसका और विकास एवं विस्तार हो सके?

उत्तर : देखिये, प्रोफेसर इमिरेटस के बारे में एक टिप्पणी करना चाहूंगा कि यह एक "Figure of the speech" की तरह की चीज बनकर रह गई है। ठीक है, आपने यह पद दे दिया जिसका कोई मतलब नहीं है। मेरे ख्याल से अगर इसका कोई अर्थ है तो इसे वहां के जीवन से और ज्यादा जोड़ना चाहिए, कुछ और सुविधाएं दी जाएं इसके लिए। फर्ज करो कि मैं जेएनयू जाना चाहता हूँ, अगर मैं मीटिंग में जाता हूँ तो मुझे आने-जाने का भुगतान मिलेगा। लेकिन अगर मैं छात्रों से मिलने जाना चाहता हूँ तो तब मुझे यात्रा-भत्ता नहीं मिलेगा, तब मुझे अपने खर्च पर आना-जाना पड़ेगा। मुझे लगता है कि विश्वविद्यालय को न्यूनतम सुविधाएं प्रोफेसर इमिरेटस को और एक और विशिष्ट विद्वानों की जो श्रेणी बनाई है, इन दोनों को दी जानी चाहिए। मैं नहीं जानता की उनके लिए किस प्रकार यह श्रेणी बनाई है और क्या उसकी भूमिका है। लेकिन प्रोफेसर इमिरेटस को कोई सुविधा नहीं है, सिवाय इसके की आपको एक कमरा दे दिया गया है। अगर मैं नहीं जाता हूँ तो उस कमरे में कोई और बैठेगा या वह खाली रहेगा। खैर, इसे थोड़ा और वहां की कार्य-प्रणाली से जोड़ा जाना चाहिए। मुझे लगता है कि यह नहीं हो पा रहा है।

प्रश्न : आपसे मेरा अंतिम प्रश्न यह है कि जेएनयू में पढ़ने वाले छात्रों को आप क्या संदेश देना चाहेंगे? जेएनयू के छात्र किस तरह से अपना अध्ययन करते हुए अन्य रचनात्मक कार्यों में भाग ले सकते हैं?

उत्तर : क्या है कि एक जेएनयू के भीतर कई जेएनयू हैं। एक संपूर्ण ईकाई है वह। लेकिन अलग-अलग रुचि, अलग-अनुशासन, अलग-अलग जरूरतें हैं, तो सबको एकसाथ लेकर चलना पड़ेगा। लेकिन मेरा ख्याल है कि जेएनयू का सांस्कृतिक जीवन और बेहतर होना चाहिए। जो उस जमाने में जब छोटा था जेएनयू, तब होता था। लोग एक-दूसरे के यहाँ जाते थे, मिलते थे, बैठकें होती थीं, लोग पढ़ते थे, बहसें होती थीं। ये बहसें नहीं जो सिर्फ चुनाव में होती हैं, बल्कि बहुत गंभीर बहसें होती थीं। उसे और बढ़ाना चाहिए। चीजों (कोई भी पाठ) का पठन बार-बार होना चाहिए। यह नहीं हो कि कोई बाहर से आया या मैं जाऊँ और साहब सिर्फ मैं पढ़ दूँ। सिर्फ ऐसा नहीं हो, बल्कि छात्र समुदाय भी इसमें भाग ले। यह सबसे रचनात्मक दौर है जिसमें आप लोग हैं। तो उनके भीतर जो कुछ है उनकी भाषा में, उनके विचारों में निकलना चाहिए। रचनात्मक अगर वे हैं और कहानी, कविता आदि जो भी वे लिख रहे हैं, तो उसका आपस में आदान-प्रदान होना चाहिए, छोटी-छोटी बैठकें होनी चाहिए। पहले तो अलग-अलग हॉस्टल अपना-अपना करते थे। वे बैठक बहुत अच्छी होती थीं, उसमें बाहर के जो लोग आते थे वे भी शिरकत करते थे और छात्र भी करते थे। ये बहुत उपयोगी होती थीं। कई बार शिक्षक भी उनसे सीखता था। खैर, इसको और बढ़ाने की जरूरत है। लाइब्रेरी हमारी बहुत समृद्ध है, मैं इन दिनों पुस्तकालय को अन्दर से देख नहीं पाया हूँ, लेकिन उसको शायद जर्नल्स के मामले में और ज्यादा समृद्ध होने की जरूरत है। स्तरीय पुस्तकें तो आ जाती हैं, लेकिन कुछ बड़े महत्वपूर्ण जर्नल हैं उनका आना जरूरी है। "Not only from England", अमेरिका है, इंग्लैंड है, आस्ट्रेलिया है, अफ्रीका है। इन देशों में इतना कुछ निकल रहा है। इतनी अच्छी पत्रिकाएँ निकल रही हैं। तो यह प्रयास करना चाहिए किस प्रकार ये हमारे पुस्तकालय में उपलब्ध हो सकें। जरूरी हैं कि इन्हें बाहर के लिए जारी (Issue) न किया जाए, वहीं जाकर देखें। वैसे भी, पत्रिकाएँ इस तरह की चीज नहीं हैं। उसे वहां जाकर ही देखना पड़ता है। जर्नल्स खंड इतना समृद्ध नहीं है जितना होना चाहिए, तो उसे और बढ़ाया जाना चाहिए। इसी 'JNU News' में यह सिर्फ 'News' नहीं होनी चाहिए, उसमें 'Views' भी होना चाहिए। एक बड़े विश्वविद्यालय की पत्रिका केवल खबरें ही नहीं दृष्टि भी देती है। वह दृष्टि का निर्माण भी करती है। यह पत्रिका ठीक काम कर रही है अपना। लेकिन इसे और बेहतर होना चाहिए। जेएनयू के पास साधनों की कमी नहीं है। जो साधन जेएनयू के पास उपलब्ध हैं उनके जरिये वह यह कर सकता है। एक समस्या और है कि इसमें हिन्दी भी है, अंग्रेजी भी है। क्यों नहीं दोनों अलग-अलग हों। बेहतर तो यह होगा की सारी भाषाओं में निकले, लेकिन यह संभव नहीं है। लेकिन एक बात कहूँ हिन्दी में इतना ज्यादा अनुवाद हो रहा है। अकेले पूर्वोत्तर का इतना अनुवाद इस बीच हुआ है, कई खंड शायद छपकर आ गए हैं। कविता भी, उनका वैचारिक लेखन भी। तो यह सब JNU News में किस प्रकार शामिल किया जाए? इस पर विचार किया जाना चाहिए।

Campus Activities

Centre of Arabic and African Studies starts monthly wall magazine



To enhance creative writing skills, some students of Centre of Arabic and African Studies have started a monthly wall magazine in the Arabic language titled “Khwatir” under the supervision of faculty members.

This initiative has been appreciated by the Dean of School Prof. M. Aslam Islahi, Chairperson Prof. Mujeebur Rahman, other Faculty Members and Students of the Centre.

Mohammad Ahmad
Editor-in-Chief, “Khwatir”
Centre of Arabic and African Studies, SLL&CS

Seminar/Conference

School of Life Sciences in JNU Celebrated four decades of its existence

The completion of Four Decades of the establishment of the School of Life Sciences at JNU, was observed in three days of intense scientific sessions, “Vistas of Life Sciences: now and beyond” starting from 13 February, 2014 onwards. The School of Life Sciences, one of the first institutions for interdisciplinary biology teaching and research, was conceived in 1970 by an expert committee consisting of the Father of Green Revolution in India Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, Prof. M.G.K. Menon, Prof. G.P. Talwar, Prof. Obaid Siddique, Prof. T.S. Sadasivan and Dr. A.Gopal Ayengar. They envisioned a significant development in the area of sciences encompassing revolutionary discoveries in the field of biology involving Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics that appears to be true in present times. In order to provide a holistic and comprehensive dimension to the study of Life Sciences, the expert committee proposed to set up the School of Life Sciences with an initial budget of 0.25 million dollars and invited outstanding Indian Scientists working abroad. The concept of SLS is a big success that has been achieved and nurtured by the efforts of all the past Deans and faculty mem-

bers, many of whom have been nationally recognized with Padma awards, Vice-Chancellorships, membership of Planning Commission, Bhatnagar awards and fellowships of national academies, etc. The success of SLS has been emulated as a model for creation of new centres of Life Sciences across India.

The Chairperson of the event and the Chancellor of JNU, Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Vice-Chancellor Prof. S.K. Sopory and the Dean of SLS, Prof. B.N. Mallick welcomed the members of expert committee, Prof. Swaminathan, Prof. Menon and Prof. Talwar. Besides them, past Deans of SLS including Prof. P.N. Srivastava, Prof. Asis Datta (both former VCs of JNU) and Prof. Rajendra Prasad (former Rector of JNU) were felicitated. The event was an occasion to commemorate the achievements of the SLS and to chart out a strategy for future challenges. Dr. Kasturirangan emphasized that basic research in Life Sciences should be able to translate through biotechnological and industrial collaborations for the service of mankind. Prof. Sopory emphasized the uniqueness of the School for its multidisciplinary nature including all the facets of biological systems. He also said that the limitations of resources or instrumentation should not be an excuse and that we can do a lot within what is available with us. Prof. Swaminathan expressed satisfaction over the fact that the purpose of establishing SLS has effectively been achieved as is evident from the high quality of education and research undertaken by the School. The other members of the Expert Committee Prof. Talwar and Prof. Menon emphasized on the importance of Physics and Maths in understanding the complex mechanisms of biological systems which should be taught in every



Seminar/Conference

University in laying the foundations of concepts of Biology. The contributions of Late Prof. G.S. Singhal, Prof. Sipra Mukherjee, Prof. P. K. Mohanty and Prof. Sivatosh Mookherjee were acknowledged through a message sent by the first faculty of SLS, Prof. P. C. Kesavan.

The second and third day of this event were dedicated to exhibit the various cutting edge researches being currently followed across the past decade in India, particularly the present faculty and alumni of SLS. The major themes of discussion on the second day were pathogens, parasites and diseases, neuro and behavioural biology, epigenetics, cancer and degenerative diseases, cellular and molecular signaling pathways. The research on various mechanisms of pathogenesis by *Candida* and HIV were exhibited by leading scientists, Prof. Prasad (SLS, JNU), Dr. Kaustav Sanyal (JNCASR) and Dr. Uday Kumar Ranga (JNCASR). The imminent discovery of vaccines against *Streptococcus* and *Leishmania* were proposed by Dr. A. K. Johri (SLS, JNU) and Prof. R. Madhubala (SLS, JNU). Aspects of mental health encompassing epilepsy, neurodegenerative diseases and rapid eye movement sleep were discussed by Dr. S. Sikdar (IISc), Dr. N. R. Jana (NBRC) and Prof. B. N. Mallick (SLS, JNU), respectively. The prospective application of the use of chemopreventive agents such as silibinin, from plants, for controlling tumour angiogenesis thereby starving the tumour growth and progression of cancer was discussed by Dr. R.P. Singh (SLS, JNU). Breast cancer which is reported to be one of the most prevalent cancers in both developed and developing countries is being deeply researched through the works of Dr. T. Kundu (JNCASR), Dr. Rajkumar (Cancer Institute, Chennai) and Dr. Gokul Das (Roswell Park Cancer Institute, USA). Dr. Sandhya Visweswariah from IISc stressed on Guanylyl Cyclase C that it may be a target for bacterial enterotoxins and proposed its clinical relevance as a key regulator of intestinal cell proliferation during colorectal cancer. The phagocytosis, a key process of engulfing extracellular materials inside the cells, has been deciphered to be a calcium dependent process in *Entamoeba histolytica* by Prof. A. Bhattacharya (SLS, JNU).

The final day was marked by lectures on response systems in plants, macromolecular structures in biology and genomics and systems approaches to biology. Prof. Asis Datta emphasized on the role of genetically modified (GM) food for the need of growing population. Prof. A. Pareek (SLS, JNU) discussed the mechanisms for improving salinity stress tolerance in crop plants. His previous patents of rice and development of stress tolerant plants has provided a new hope for tackling the challenges of salinity for plants in India. In continuation to this, Prof. B. C. Tripathy (SLS, JNU) stressed on the use of genetic manipulation for enhancing photosynthesis and crop productivity while Dr. A.K. Sharma from University of Delhi talked about the latest use of gene silencing in improving crop varieties. Research on molecular modeling and protein structure in India is gaining attention through the work done by

Dr. S. Gourinath, Prof. Manju Bansal (IISc), Dr. Bhupesh Taneja (IGIB) and Dr. R. Sankaranarayanan (CCMB). They delivered talks on diverse fields ranging from the role of the protein structure on genetic code to gene expression. Dr. Gourinath, talked about the biosynthetic pathway of enzymes in *E. histolytica* while Dr. Taneja discussed the structural and functional insights of ribosomal nucleotide methyltransferase proteins of *Mycobacteria*. In the final scientific session, Dr. Kanury Rao (ICGEB) elucidated how *Mycobacteria* evade macrophage and immune system for its survival during tuberculosis. Dr. R. Gokhale (IGIB) explained the mechanisms of controlling skin pigmentation while Prof. R.N.K. Bamezai (SLS, JNU) gave an overview of the role of genes in various human diseases. Prof. S. Galande (IISER, Pune), Prof. B. K. Thelma (University of Delhi) and Dr. R. Mishra (CCMB) also spoke on the epigenetic regulation and genome wide studies on various model organisms.

The final session was a panel discussion by some of the eminent scientists and educationists including Prof. S. C. Lakhotia (BHU), Prof. A. Bhattacharya (SLS, JNU), Prof. P.C. Rath (SLS, JNU), Prof. Jayanta Pal (University of Pune) and Prof. B. K. Thelma (University of Delhi). They discussed the current challenges of higher education and charted out a roadmap for the future aspects of research and teaching in Life Sciences in the University system of India.

The panelists unequivocally stressed on the need for up-gradation of syllabus and the way teaching is imparted in the current scenario. Most of the panelists were of the opinion that knowledge of classical subjects of Biology such as taxonomy, cell biology etc. apart from the contemporary subjects such as Molecular Biology and Biotechnology are important for understanding the diverse aspects of Modern Biology. They emphasized that research in biology has been lately affected by the use of expensive, readymade kits which are impeding the understanding of techniques and basic principles driving biological processes. They proposed that students should be imparted with basic concepts and should be left open to challenge themselves with new questions and to solve the problems themselves. There were suggestions that the students from Physics, Chemistry, Maths and Computer Sciences should be encouraged to join Life Sciences. The present entrance exam process sometimes hinders their entry and therefore it may be modified accordingly. Stress should also be given for making the Life Sciences curriculum more inclusive, offering remedial courses and hosting field trips from the high schools. It was also argued that in order to motivate students there is a need of a better introspection among teachers themselves. Lastly, all the panel members including the Chair, Prof. Lakhotia, unanimously expressed that the current curriculum of SLS is by and large the best available in India; however, it could be further improved. They also proposed that such a Life Sciences programme needs to be replicated in other University systems through proper integration and

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management of classical, contemporary and technology based syllabi. The panel urged that in the near future, the faculty of SLS, spearheaded by Prof. B.N. Mallick (Dean, SLS), would prepare a report based on the various suggestions provided by the panel members keeping in mind the core structure of Life Sciences, as

envisaged by the first Academic Advisory Committee, to incorporate changes in order to deal with the new challenges evolving the Life Sciences education.

**B.N. Mallick, Dean
School of Life Sciences**

Building Community Resilience: JNU-DRG Meet on Resilience Framework, Indicators and Measuring tools

The last day of June 2014, became the curtain raiser for Disaster Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) as the Vice Chancellor Prof. S. K. Sopory declared the launch of the 'JNU-Disaster Research Group (DRG)' composed of faculty drawn from seven Centres at JNU. In collaboration with UNDP-GoI, the JNU-DRG hosted the Focus Group meeting on Community Resilience Framework, Indicators and Measuring Tools at the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance. Many prominent personalities in the discipline of disaster research shared their views and perceptions to identify indicators for resilience of affected communities during emergencies. The Head of UNDP India's Disaster Management Unit, Shri. G. Padmanabhan and Dr. Sunita Reddy from the JNU-DRG team coordinated the discussion. Valuable experience was shared by Smt. Neelkamal Darbari, Joint Secretary of NDMA, Prof. Vinod C. Menon, former member of NDMA, Dr. Nivedita P. Haran, Home Secretary of the Government of Kerala and Prof. Janaki Andharia from TISS's Disaster Studies Department. The workshop was widely attended by not only faculty from Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Delhi, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) but also a large number of non-governmental organisations and academic bodies looking into the problem of disaster risk reduction (DRR). Prof. Amita Singh, Prof. Vaishna Narang, Prof. GVC Naidu and Dr. Sunita Reddy represented the JNU-DRG.

The workshop aimed to discuss community resilience framework in India, formulate resilience indicators and the measuring tools. In doing so, social sciences would need the support of

environmental sciences. Prof. I. S. Thakur, Chair of the School of Environmental Sciences, extended his support to the group as workshops and teaching programmes begin on the much cherished initiative undertaken by the Vice Chancellor for 'trans disciplinary research clusters' within JNU. Prof. Sopory insisted that development in education and capacity building should take note of many other Asian countries such as Taiwan which has made very innovative utilization of technology in skill building and holistic personality development of students. He hoped to see the meaningful collaboration between JNU-DRG, UNDP and NDMA reach new heights in disaster management and holistic planning. Smt. Neelkamal Darbari highlighted that the government of India's policy on disaster management has changed in the last nine years, from response oriented to mitigation and resilience building, particularly after the earthquake at Bhuj, Gujarat. Dr. Nivedita P. Haran, architect of the Kerala Disaster Management Authority, reiterated the need to bridge the chasm between administrators and academia in the interest of knowledge based governance. Prof. Andharia and Prof. Menon analysed the concept of resilience to argue that it should imply 'bouncing back' as well as 'bouncing forward' and provided a peek at the role of macro structures in inhibiting community capacity development.

Using the lessons learnt from the implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) initiatives, the workshop witnessed strong suggestions of multi-dimensional monitoring indicators and tools for measuring community disaster resilience. There was unanimous consensus that indicators should be reflective of reality and applicable in both pre - and post - disaster stages. The indicators ranged from social, economic, institutional and governance, to infrastructural and service delivery. Members of the DRG opined that this workshop was a continuation of the objectives enshrined in the 2013 NAPSIPAG conference on "Leadership, Land and Local Resource Management at the eve of the MDG deadline of 2015" held at Ecoashram, Doiwala, Dehradun. It was here that an Asia specific network of scholars deliberated at the foothills of the devastating Uttarakhand disaster on the need for more legitimate and ethical consumption from land and its resources such as water bodies, rivers, forests, mountains and mines. Disasters imply caution on the



limitless extraction from what has come to us from nature besides exposing gaps created within governance structures due to corruption, fuzzy legal frameworks, speciesism and iniquitous social structures which display a vulgar power configuration in societies.

**Sanghamitra Nath, Research Scholar
JNU-Disaster Research Group
Centre for the Study of law and Governance**

Other News / Report

Report on the Activities of the Committee for Sensitization and Orientation

The Committee for Sensitization and Orientation which was set up following the Report of 10-Member Committee has organized four workshops/ plays between November 2013 and April 2014. In meetings where representatives of the GSCASH, the EOO office, the Cultural Committee and the JNUSU representatives were present, an Annual Programme which followed the Academic Calendar of JNU was drawn up. The idea was that the programs would be organized in collaboration with these bodies as all these above mentioned bodies have a very important role to play in creating a just and gender-sensitive atmosphere in JNU.

According to the schedule drawn up, we were to organize a certain number of events each semester focusing on different issues of diversity to be held in different sites at the University. These would encompass the entire working community of this University. We have successfully organized four such events –

1. On 16 November, 2013 in collaboration with the Cultural Committee of the campus a play Hum Inkaar Karte Hain (Street play) by Parindey (Dramatics Society, Mata Sundari College, University of Delhi) was performed at Poorvanchal and the core theme was the status of women in society. This was organized through Prof. Manjushree Chauhan.
2. In January, 2014 Must Bol, an organization which works with young people in Delhi on issues of how dominant gender norms create restrictive and violent situations for women held a two day dialogic workshop for B.A. I students on the theme of “Shame was a place inside my heart. Conversations about sex, sexuality and the body” based on an audio installation by Priyanka Chhabra. This took place on the 16 - 17 January, 2014 and on the 18 January, 2014 a one day workshop for GSCASH volunteers on the theme “Love, control and violence” was conducted by Manak Matiyani and Vaishali Singh. This three day workshop was organized in collaboration with GSCASH.
3. On 23 January, 2014 a film on Caste (India Untouched: Stories of a People Apart) was screened at the SSS Auditorium

followed by a discussion with Prof. Gopal Guru, Centre for Political Studies, and Dr. Sachidanand Sinha from the Centre for the Study of Regional Development. This programme was organized in collaboration with the EOO's office. “India Untouched - Stories of a People Apart” is perhaps the most comprehensive look at Untouchability ever undertaken on film. Director Stalin K. spent four years traveling the length and breadth of the country to expose the continued oppression of Dalits who suffer under a 4000-year-old religious system. Spanning eight states and four religions, this film makes it impossible for anyone to deny that untouchability continues to be practiced in India till date.

4. On the 11 – 12 April, 2014 a two day legal literacy workshop on Gender Based Violence and the Law was organized for the faculty and students of the University at the Convention Centre. This was organized in collaboration with the Centre for Law and Governance (through Dr. Pratiksha Baxi). The resource person who conducted this workshop was Jhuma Sen from the Jindal Law University. The workshop aimed at enhancing the knowledge base of the participants by focusing on some specific areas of gender based violence and its interaction with the law. The idea behind this workshop was to assist the participants to understand the nuances of the legal system and the legitimate expectations that one can have from the system. Over a two day period the workshop offered an understanding of the criminal justice system, the criminal laws related to violence against women, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005, the Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013, some practical approaches in specific contexts etc.

All participants were given a participation certificate at the end of this workshop.

**Madhu Sahni, Professor
Centre of German Studies, SLL&CS**

Extra-terrestrial solar event triggered Uttarakhand cloudburst – Research an SES

Unplanned human activities in the Himalayan terrain coupled with some unusual extra-terrestrial events triggered the massive cloudburst over Kedarnath resulting in the catastrophic 2013 floods in Uttarakhand region of India, according to new research.

Using NASA satellite data, Saumitra Mukherjee from the School of Environmental Sciences at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) suggests that a sudden rise in 'proton flux' from the Sun was responsible for the catastrophe. The change in land use pattern (such as construction of reservoirs on the Ganges and Alaknanda rivers) added fuel to fire and created havoc in Uttarakhand.

“The rise in proton flux – an unusual solar event where protons emitted by the Sun are accelerated to very high energies – was responsible for the anomalous rise in atmospheric temperature. High concentration of aerosol trapped in the atmosphere and glaciers in Indo-China border initiated a nucleation process in the concentrated water vapour to trigger formation of clouds for the torrential rain and cloud burst on 16 and 17 June 2013,” Mukherjee told Nature India.

NASA's Sun Observatory Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO) satellite recorded a steep rise in solar proton flux above 10 MeV for 12 days from May 15 to 26). During the same period, the cosmic ray intensity was also recorded at an all-time high at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), which represents the regional cosmic ray data in the Space Environment Viewing and Analysis Network (SEVAN) of the Asian office of Aerospace Research.

This was just before the anomalous rise in atmospheric temperature in the Himalayan region, which Mukherjee says was initiated by the release of heat energy from the trapped proton drift. “After this event anomalous rise in cosmic ray was

recorded. Rise in cosmic rays was instrumental in condensation of the clouds leading to the cloudburst in Kedarnath,” he explains.

The scientist suggests that it took 20 days and 6 hours for the mechanism (of heat transfer to cloud appearance) to initiate the cloudburst in Kedarnath. The heat from the Sun was captured in the 'Van Allen's belt' (between the Sun and Earth), which further accelerated the protons. This extra-terrestrial influence led to rise in temperature to release the aerosol trapped in the glaciers and atmosphere in the Indo-China border to initiate the cloudburst.

Generally, increase in aerosol heating over the Indo-Gangatic plains in the pre-monsoon period leads to a strengthening of the Indian monsoon. The heat transfer from the protons to the atmosphere has affected not only the atmospheric water vapour but has been responsible for melting of glaciers which feed the river Ganges.

Mukherjee says the influence of the Sun, along with anthropogenic activities, on climate change needs more study, especially its manifestation in torrential rains. “This is a radical departure from previous principles but is consistent with existing observations,” he adds. Mukherjee says his hypothesis does not change the general conclusion that increased proton flux from the Sun reserves trapped heat in geospecific locations which influence temporary change in the atmosphere.

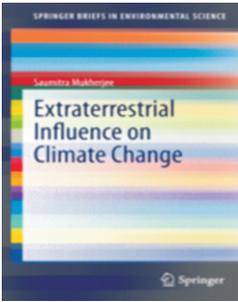
The Kedarnath extreme weather event is a clear manifestation of climate change, he adds. The devastating flood in Uttarakhand was a combined impact of cloudburst in Uttarakhand, quick melting of glaciers at high altitude due to beating of ice sheet by raindrops and breaching of natural embankment of Chorabari Tal (north of Kedarnath) due to accumulation of excess surface runoff. Within 48 hours, 280 mm rainfall was recorded and about five feet of snow precipitated at higher altitudes.

Apart from Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, northeast Rajasthan and Delhi also received torrential rainfall. In Delhi, it was an advent of early monsoon that broke the past record of 150 years.

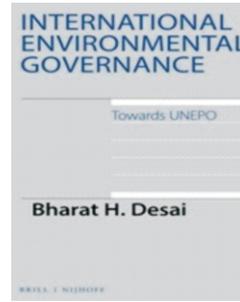
**S. Mukherjee, Professor
School of Environmental Sciences**



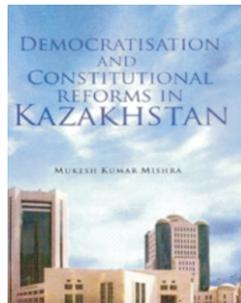
Our Publications



Extraterrestrial Influence on Climate Change, Springer Briefs in Environmental Science, edited by Prof. Saumitra Mukhejee, School of Environmental Sciences, published by Heidelberg: Springer, 2013. ISBN: 978-813220730-6.



International Environmental Governance, Towards UNEPO, edited by Prof. Bharat H. Desai, Centre for International Legal Studies, School of International Studies, published by BRILL/NIJHOFF. ISBN: 978-9004214545.



Democratisation and Constitutional Reforms in Kazakhstan, edited by Dr. Mukesh Kumar Mishra, Central Asian Area Studies Programme, Centre for Inner Asian Studies, School of International Studies, published by Pentagon Press. ISBN: 978-8182747678.

Alumni Corner

An interview with Shri Robin Hibu, Joint C P, Delhi Police



Davidson: How and when did your association with JNU begin? What was your first impression of the campus?

Robin: I appeared for JNU entrance exam in Guwahati, Assam. I used to hear a lot about JNU through newspapers and other sources. I was lucky to be selected. The first impression was that it looked like my hometown, full of greenery around and I felt very good. The kind of back-up, help and assistance, sensitivity of the student leaders and faculty members were really heart touching. Despite coming from a really far off place, it made me feel at home. For instance, during admissions, the kind of assistance they gave in dealing with the office and administration staff made a stranger like me feel at home. It was also like a Gurukul. The teachers were very approachable, down to earth. They were available at any time of the day. We were living in the same campus. All these made it look more like a family. I got admission in the Sociology Centre but the entire campus was one, like a big family.

Davidson: Did the first impression last long for you? Was the campus sensitive to so called “northeasters”? What was your experience?

Robin: There was nothing as so called “northeast” or other groups as such in JNU. It was always more like a big family. There were people from not just all over India but from abroad as well, who had preconceived notions about being in a new place. However, the culture of JNU as I have mentioned before, did not make them feel alienated. Everyone; professors, students, library staff and even dhabawallas welcomed the students. And all these made JNU a perfect home and institute for the students. I had been to some other campuses and JNU is much better off in this regard. People were cordial and there was always a smile on their face. Everyone, including the Vice-Chancellor, Proctor, other staff, was keen in helping the students. These experiences are nostalgic to me now.

Davidson: How would you describe your years in JNU? How is it different from other institutions?

Robin: Frankly, I had not studied in any other university,

except for colleges. Of course I had stayed for short periods, say a couple of months, in other universities. The difference as I have said earlier is the close-knit, familial, more informal and student-centric nature of JNU which included a lot of student-welfare activities. No one is left behind on the basis of any ground. All these small things made people feel that if the need arose, there was always somebody to look up to on the campus for any help. The student activities were very positive; the presidential debates were unforgettable. Every student participated in the activities. A sense of connectedness, understanding and participation among the students who come from different classes, castes and so on possibly give them the right atmosphere for training themselves in the right way. Leadership was a value quite apparent. Support system was always there. Participatory debates would happen before any decision was made for whatever problem.

Davidson: What was the trajectory your career took after you left JNU?

Robin: Team spirit, fellow feeling, social responsibility, patriotism, value for down to earth behaviour, hard work with original ideas, made me tough to face the world. I was a topper in the state civil services written examination, selected for the UGC fellowship, got it, but didn't choose, joined as first IPS from Arunachal. I was even honoured with Esprit de corps medal, won the election at IAS/IPS Training at Mussouri, went to command UN police at Kosovo and Bosnia, led operations from the front, recovered 15 crore cash, won two gold medals for exceptional service from the Arunachal Govt, police meritorious medal from the President of India. The sound grounding I got from JNU helped me lead my men with care and caution, and maintain the interest of the nation at the highest pedestal. My journey continues

Davidson: You have been associated with bringing to focus the plight and discrimination of the marginalised communities here in Delhi, especially the people from the northeast. What are some of the steps which can sensitize people in this context?

Robin: There are problems no doubt and to solve it one needs a holistic approach. Firstly, the problem has a number of connotations and causes. There are too many issues to be understood here. Unfortunately, the problem is projected as a security issue with which I wish to differ. The security issue is just a symptom of the actual problem. Secondly, having no idea of the different groups of people and places within the country at large is ignorance and hence there is lack of interaction as well. Thirdly, the apathetic attitude of the authorities who

should address that issue and fourthly, the very sense of feeling left out in a metropolitan city. There seems to be a gap between the authorities and the youngsters who come to the city from the part of the country that we are talking about. Fifthly, the lack of forums to ventilate these issues. The amalgamation of all these issues lead to a state of mind called "anomic" in sociological terms. It is the feeling of being left alone with no one to look forward to and thereby being vulnerable. Keeping these things in mind, there are so many steps the authorities have taken up. For instance, Delhi Police have started a 24X7 helpline with the no. 1093 for the "northeasterners"; there is also a special unit for the northeast in Delhi Police now. An officer of IGP rank has been appointed as Nodal Officer for the northeast. We have co-opted more than 40 students and employees as Delhi Police representatives for the northeast, something like ambassadors. We give them training in how to handle crisis, basic knowledge in law, how and where to approach authorities. They are given official identity cards; they also often take the role of translators. Sixthly, now after the setting up of the Special Unit in the Delhi Police headquarters, there is strong monitoring of security related issues, and checking if cases are registered under appropriate sections etc.

This is more from a security point of view. Otherwise in a more general sense, in order to curb the lack of ignorance, my personal opinion is that there should be massive exposure through school and college syllabi. There has to be more interaction and one should encourage for instance a case study of a region in the northeast, including onsite trip and field studies in an academic institution. There should be more exchange programs as well, in the form of NSS, NCC, etc. There should be more exposure through festivals, cultural programs, media and television. The problem needs multiple approaches. For instance, why can't we have northeast centres in Delhi and other metropolitan cities which can provide counselling, information centres, community meeting halls, research cell, audio-video cell, etc with social media connectivity of course. A cultural centre like let's say the Islamic Centre. I think all these things will make a difference. And eventually we also have to organise ourselves properly in the sense that if any problem comes up and the individual is not being able to take up the issue, then people should come together. Various authorities should also be pro-active: state bhawans, women cells, NHRC. State tourism needs to be developed and promoted. State ambassadors like Mary Kom or Baichung Butia can be cultural ambassadors exposing the northeast, which is part of this beautiful garden called India.

Davidson: What would you say is the best part of your work and which is the most challenging and different one?

Robin: I just love the uniform. Though I was selected for Foreign Services, I did not go for it. And I think hope is very important. Starting from the remotest part of Arunachal Pradesh where I used to walk for two hours every day to reach school to JNU, UGC JRF scholarship and topping the State Civil Services Exam, NDA and whatsoever and ultimately getting a job I wanted, I think it is more like “bano aur banao” in Hindi which means set your own example and others will follow. This is the most exemplifying part of my career; instead of preaching it's more like setting an example. I do not want to make it sound pessimistic but every student has to struggle to achieve something in life. I came to Delhi by Brahmaputra in third class reserved compartment. I reached Delhi and stayed in a godown for 20 days while waiting for the result. It was a herculean effort. It was an everyday struggle starting from the remotest village. Likewise I want to convey this message to those who are struggling: God is giving you all an opportunity in life to achieve something. And it's not just about Civil Services, the world is too big. We love to see more journalists, activists, advocates, professors, doctors who are accomplished in their own field. And I want to say this particularly to those who come from the northeast: JNU is an island of opportunity, make the best use of it, every minute, focus like Arjun from the Mahabharata, only on the eye of the bird. Then only success will come to you.

And lastly, after going around the world from Cambridge to Kosovo to Yugoslavia having commanding UN Police served in Delhi and Arunachal Pradesh now I am a Nodal Officer for the northeast. I feel lucky. I have been blessed by God. I feel particularly privileged to be able to make some difference, set an example. I can tell from my own example, I have acquired some power to intervene, guide and advice the marginalised section of society as a Nodal Officer. And this is really a good feeling. And to those who are still struggling, I just want to say that they should always smile. And today, when I see the 615 bus I feel nostalgic to the point of almost crying. The cost of living in Delhi was too high and wherever you were, you were only looking for 615. What I want to tell the JNU students is that, coming to Delhi in itself is a mission for many people. So having managed to reach JNU, which is a lifetime opportunity, make the best use of it.

Davidson: Being in the police you have come across cases of violence against women in the city while

you have also lived in a campus like JNU where women are more powerful and safe. So how do you see this difference and dynamics? Can JNU be a model for gender sensitisation and empowerment?

Robin: I have no empirical study to support this view point of being safe or not at one place. But I believe JNU being a closed space where men and women live together as students naturally makes it a more secure place. And I agree that JNU is still the ideal place for women of course for many reasons. It's a closed campus, student unions are very active, activists are always ready to support women and most importantly it's a vibrant campus where everyone stays together under one roof.

Also women's issues do not arise in just one region or section but unfortunately in the whole of India, as we have seen from the cases and records of crime against women. Here again I personally feel that apart from sensitization, firstly there has to be a much larger awareness from childhood, starting from the school level. Secondly, interaction with girls has to be encouraged while growing up. Thirdly, there has to be what is called systematic effort of exemplary punishment against the culprits by the concerned authorities. A strong forensic laboratory is essential to deliver the forensic results within stipulated time, a special public prosecutor to present the case in the court, a special court to try on a day-to-day basis, more women police with the enforcing authority and more effective empirical studies to measure the effects and results of prosecutions, nature of crimes, etc. This kind of empirical study will give a roadmap for which JNU can take a lead. JNU can give what is called a co-relative evaluation of the strategy one is adopting. Then the lacuna, loopholes of the existing system can be understood. A number of these cases come from some specific places like Munirka, Mubarakhpur or Mukherjee Nagar. Why can't JNU do a “land to lab” study by going out there? Let it be a policy-guideline for us. Jamia Milia Islamia did a good job by going around the country and studying in the field. And JNU can also set an example likewise, considering that it already has a northeast centre as well.

Davidson: Any fond memory of JNU that you would like to share with us?

Robin: There are so many memories of JNU to share. But I can share one or two. Firstly we had no problem organising our mess. I used to have my own choice of food in the mess. I used to have boiled food which I do not know if other universities would allow. Secondly, I had such a caring and comforting student circle. During and post admissions there was a strong

Alumni Corner

back up by the students union regarding any student oriented problem. Thirdly, teachers like Prof. Yogendra Singh and exemplary student leaders Sujit John, Rohan D Souza, Mohamad Tanvir Akhtar, Adam Kudruc from Maldives, Zuberi (who fought MP Lok Sabha Election from Brahmputra hostel)) were so supportive. I remember how they used to cater to even the most personal of problems. For instance, if a student looks silent and lost in a class they used to come up and ask about it. It was like they were taking care of their own child. This I doubt would possibly happen in any other campus. Fourthly, students' participation in the activities was really good. I never felt that I was from the northeast. Fifthly, we often tried to co-relate our issues and debate with those at home. That really led to fruitful discussions and debates. For instance, there will be a seminar on let's say "the roadmap of northeast?" Everybody used to come, participate and contribute in their own way. This sense of participation was not limited to just faculty and students but also to other staff and even the workers on campus.

I remember once a worker in SSS with his wife who was also a construction worker was with their child. Their child felt sick and somehow we got to know. We rushed there, admitted her to the hospital, donated blood and spent our own money. I do not know if that will otherwise happen elsewhere. Even now when I meet somebody from JNU outside I suddenly feel nostalgic and my heart starts beating faster. But I feel somehow JNU has left us after we left the campus. There has been no contact. We alumni could share our experiences, sweet memories, the small things about JNU which meant the whole world to many of us. One personal experience would be how we used to try and make everyone from wherever, US,

Maldives, Pakistan feel at home. We used to drag each other out to fresher's meets, theatre sessions, debates, etc. We thought we would have such a rapport, interaction with each other and JNU like an umbilical cord that remains forever. But unfortunately, after I left I guess JNU abandoned me and I abandoned JNU as well. The nature of my job which demands extra hours of work became a hurdle. So with a salute in hand, I request and also suggest that JNU students' unions, staff and the authorities should promote the JNU alumni union on social media. Please upgrade the IT, use Facebook and upgrade the website. The Facebook page "Delhi Police for Northeast Folks" was started on 9th May this year and till 1 July, 2014 the page has received 2882323 likes. This is an example how to reach out to people. If such is the case we can enhance the old connection with JNU. Now we get to hear of JNU only when there is a case of scandal, rape or violence. This old connection between the ex-students and the alma mater can be strengthened.

Davidson: You have been an inspirational figure to many students now. What is the message you would like to give to the JNU student community?

Robin: First thing, you are lucky to be in JNU. Have a vision in life. Do everything hundred and ten percent for it. Second, one should take care of one's health, both physical and moral health. If these three things are taken care of, rest will be history. One should have a vision and do something out of the box for the country and for mankind as a whole. I think these few things sum up my message for the JNU student community.

OBITUARY



Prof. Bipan Chandra (27th May 1928 - 30th August, 2014. The Jawaharlal Nehru University community pays its tribute to Prof. Bipan Chandra, eminent historian, Professor Emeritus, JNU, founding member of the Centre for Historical Studies, and former Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Chairperson of the National Book Trust of India, who passed away in the early hours of 30th August, 2014.

Shri Suresh Kumar Bhatt, Junior Assistant-cum-Typist, passed away on Saturday, 16 June, 2014

We extend our condolences to the bereaved family.

JNU News welcomes contribution about Alumni Achievements/Awards. Please write to pro@mail.jnu.ac.in, pro@jnu.ac.in or poonamskudaisya@gmail.com

Public Relations Officer

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Photo Gallery



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1. Mr. Mentor Villagomez, Ambassador of Ecuador in India and Mr. Patricio Garces, Minister in the Embassy of Ecuador called on Prof. Mohd. Aslam Islahi, Dean, SLL&CS on 20 June, 2014 and discussed the possibility of academic collaboration between Ecuadorian academic institutions and Centre of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies. Photo shows: The Ecuadorian visitors having a meeting with Prof. Islahi and Prof. Anil Dhingra.

2. Central Library organized a "Tree Plantation Programme" by school children (to plant more trees to keep the environment safe) on 1 July, 2014. Photo shows: Dr. Ramesh C. Gaur, University Librarian with School children.

3. A delegation from the Great Zimbabwe University led by Prof. R.J. Zvobgo, Vice-Chancellor visited JNU on 2 July, 2014. Photo shows: Prof. R. J. Zvobgo, Vice-Chancellor, Great Zimbabwe University and Prof. Sudhir Kumar Sopory, Vice-Chancellor, JNU.



4

4. The School of Life Sciences organized a "Summer Research Programme" on 4 July, 2014. Photo shows: the School of Life Sciences Faculty, Staff members and Students.

5. The University organized a felicitation function on 11 August, 2014, for Officers/Staff Members of the University who retired between February 2014 and July, 2014. Photo shows: University officials with the retired employees.

6. The Central Library organized a one day National Seminar on "Changing Role of Librarians in Digital Era" on 12 August, 2014 along with the Indian Association of Special Libraries & Information Centre, the Association of Media Libraries and Archives, and supported by Informatics (India) Limited. Photo shows: Dr. Ramesh C. Gaur, University Librarian and other invited guests.



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विश्वविद्यालय की विशेषताएँ होती हैं; मानववाद, सहिष्णुता, तर्कशीलता, विचार का साहस और सत्य की खोज। विश्वविद्यालय का काम है उच्चतर आदर्शों की ओर मनुष्य जाति की सतत यात्रा को संभव करना। राष्ट्र और जनता का हित तभी हो सकता है जब विश्वविद्यालय ठीक से अपने दायित्वों का निर्वाह करें।

—जवाहरलाल नेहरू



7

7. The Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe Employee's Association organized a two day Orientation Programme on "Skill Development" on 16 – 17 August, 2014. Photo shows: University officials along with participants.

8-10. Independence Day Celebrations in JNU



8



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