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प्राच्या PRĀCYĀ

A Peer Reviewed (Refereed) Journal on Sanskrit & Related Studies

**Volume - XV
(PART - II)**

**ĀYURVEDAVIŚEṢĀMKAḤ
आयुर्वेदविशेषांकः**

धन्योऽयं भारतो देशः धन्येयं सुरभारती ।
उपासकाः तयं यत्र धन्या अहो परम्परा ॥



**DEPARTMENT OF SANSKRIT
MDK Girls' College, Dibrugarh, Assam
2023**

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Āyurveda in Ancient and Medieval Period: A Historical Overview



Sanjit Debnath

Āyurveda is one of the oldest and most holistic systems of medicine that originated in India. It has been practiced for thousands of years and continues to be a popular form of alternative medicine worldwide. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in Ayurvedic medicine, both in India and around the world. This paper provides a historical overview of Āyurveda in ancient and medieval periods, highlighting its development, significance, and influence. The paper reviews the literature on Āyurveda, including primary and secondary sources, to trace its evolution over time. The study identifies the key features of Āyurveda during the ancient and medieval periods and highlights its relevance to contemporary healthcare practices. The paper concludes that Āyurveda has been an important part of Indian culture and has contributed significantly to the development of medicine and healthcare.

Keywords: Āyurveda, ancient period, medieval period, India, medicine, health.

Introduction:

Āyurveda is an ancient system of medicine that has its roots in the Indian subcontinent. It is believed to be one of the oldest forms of healthcare in the world, with a history that dates back thousands of years. The word "Āyurveda" is derived from two Sanskrit words, "Āyur" meaning life and "Veda" meaning knowledge (Prasad, 2002). Thus, Āyurveda can be translated as the "knowledge of life." Āyurveda was also closely linked to the religious and philosophical beliefs of India (It was believed that the body, mind, and spirit were interconnected (Mukherjee, 2017), and the principles of Āyurveda were based on this belief. Āyurveda emphasized the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including diet, exercise, and meditation, as a way of maintaining overall health and well-being of an individual, and consider it as a comprehensive approach to healthy life. Āyurveda is based on the principles of natural healing, and it emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between mind, body, and spirit. It has been widely practiced in India and other parts of the world as an alternative form of medicine. But the journey of Ayurvedic tradition of medication from Vedic period to recent time is not horizontal at all. To trace the voyage of Ayurvedic medication in ancient and medieval periods, this paper provides a historical overview of Āyurveda.



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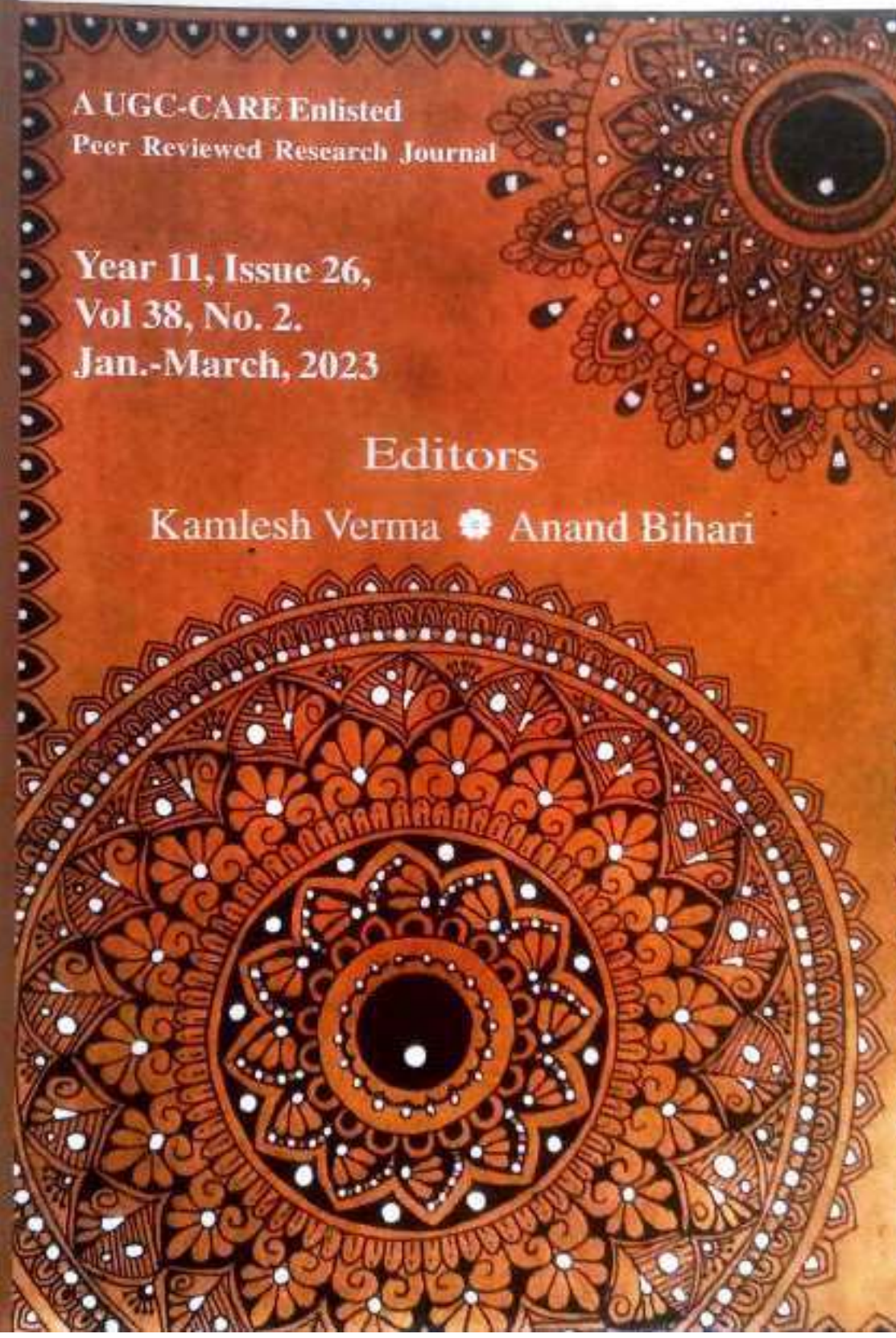
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Challenges of Rural Women's Higher Education with Special Reference to Purba Medinipur District, West Bengal

Sanjit Debnath

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Abstract

Women's education is not only important for women's empowerment; it is also very important for the overall prosperity of any nation. Higher education brings imaginative power and enhances human intelligence to its practitioners and is considered a tool for development. But the status of higher education in India as well as in West Bengal did not meet the expectations of its citizens, particularly those of rural women's higher education. According to the 2011 Indian census, 48.7% of West Bengal's population is female; 48.8% of them live in rural areas, but the rural female literacy rate is 65.51%, compared to 80.98% in urban areas. So, the present study will examine the challenges faced by rural women in the Purba Medinipur District of West Bengal in pursuing their higher education. In doing so, the researcher adopted a multi-stage sampling technique for selecting the sample. And the data shows that the female students in the study area confront severe problems in terms of family challenges, social challenges, economic challenges, and institutional challenges.

Keywords :

Literacy, Women's education, Higher education, social challenge, Economic challenge.

Introduction :

One of the most important components of every nation's development is its human resources. To turn its citizens into resources for development, it is necessary to form a sustainable education policy and implement it for all the people of the country, irrespective of gender, race, caste, class, and religion. At the elementary level, education establishes a solid foundation for higher education for its students; on the other hand, higher education improves the efficiency of decision making, planning, boosting human intelligence, management skills, developing the imaginative power of its recipients, and so on. In today's

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वर्तमानसमाजे कालिदासकृतकाव्यानां प्रासङ्गिकता

प्रसाद-रञ्जन-चक्रवर्ती

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: Nandigram : Purba Medinipur : West Bengal : 721156

न्यासारः साहित्यदर्पणे यथा समाजचित्रस्य प्रतिफलनं भवति तद्वत् समाजदर्पणेऽपि साहित्यस्य प्रतिफलनं भवति। अतः स्थास्यतः साहित्यं समाजश्च महीतले तावत् नियमोऽयं प्रचलिष्यति। कविवरेण कालिदासेन तत्कृतेषु काव्येषु कृतिचिह्नान्तानि प्रदर्शितानि येषां प्रासङ्गिकता इदानीन्तने समाजे अप्यस्ति। कविवरेण बृक्षपरिचर्या, पतिगृहे श्वधीः आचरणम्, विहितकर्तव्यस्य सुष्ठु परिपालनञ्चेति एतान् विषयान्नाधिकृत्य तत्कृतेषु 'अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्', 'मेघदूतम्', 'रघुवंशम्', 'मालविकाग्निमित्रम्' इति चतुर्षु काव्येषु ये दृष्टान्ताः प्रदर्शिताः तेषु केषाञ्चिद् प्रासङ्गिकता उपस्थाप्यतेऽस्मिन् प्रबन्धे।

कुञ्जिशब्दाः - मित्रम्, कर्तव्यम्, पूज्यपूजनम्, बृक्षपरिचर्या, प्रजापालनम्,

कालिदासस्य सर्वस्वम् अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्। मित्रं कीदृशं भवेद् किं वा तस्य कर्तव्यमित्यस्य सम्यक् बोधने नाटकस्यास्य प्रासङ्गिकता अस्ति। सखी नाम मित्रं वन्धुः वा। शस्त्रस्य विचारः यथा- यः आपदि विपदि च सर्वदा पार्श्वे तिष्ठति सैव यथार्थः वन्धुः।¹ शाकुन्तले शकुन्तलायाः सखीद्वयमास्ताम् अनसूया प्रियंवदा च।

- 1) ते सख्यौ शकुन्तलायाः दुर्दैवप्रशमनाय तस्याः भाग्यदेवतापूजने उद्युक्ते।²
- 2) वचनविन्यासेन दुष्यन्त-शकुन्तलयोर्मध्ये प्रेमपुष्टिबर्धनं ताभ्यामेव कृतम्।³

¹ "आतुरे व्यसने प्राप्ते दुर्भिक्षे शत्रुसंकटे।

राजद्वारे श्मशाने च यस्तिष्ठति सः वान्धवः ॥"

-पञ्चतन्त्रम्

² "णं सहीए सउन्दलाए सोऽग्गदेवआ अच्चणीआ" (ननु सख्याः शकुन्तलायाः सौभाग्यदेवता अर्चनीया)
-अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, चतुर्थोऽङ्कः

³ "सहि, ण जुतं अकिटसक्कारं अदिहिविसेसं विसज्जिअ सच्छन्ददो गमणम्।" (सखि न युक्तमकृतसत्कारतिथिविशेषं विसृज्य स्वच्छन्दतो गमनम्।)
"हला, ण दे जुतं गन्तुम्।" (हला न ते युक्तं गन्तुम्।)
-तत्रैव, प्रथमोऽङ्कः
-तत्रैव, प्रथमोऽङ्कः



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अनु- रामप्रसाद तिवारी, विक्रमोर्वशी, इलाहाबाद : इलाहाबाद सरकार, 1881.

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372	Sangeet Galaxy	Sangeet Galaxy Foundation	NA	2319-9695	from July-2021 to Present	View
373	Sangeet Natak (print only)	Sangeet Natak Akademi	0972-494X	NA	from April-2020 to Present	View
374	Sangitika	Rasikapriya	2348-5892	NA	from July-2020 to Present	View
375	Sanglap: Journal of Literary and Cultural Inquiry	Sanglap	2349-8064	NA	from June-2019 to Present	View
376	Sangna (print only)	Sangeet Natak Akademi	NA	NA	from June-2019 to July-2023	Discontinued from July 2023
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378	Sankalya (print only)	Hindi Akademi	2277-9264	NA	from July-2022 to Present	View
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380	Sanshodhak (print only)	Itihasacharya V. K. Rajwade Sanshodhan	2394-5990	NA	from April-2021 to July-2024	Discontinued from July 2024



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Bodies in Transition:

Exploring Queer Sexualities in Indian Cinema

Hiya Chatterjee

Keywords: Sexuality, transgender, Indian cinema, South Asian studies, gender studies

Abstract

The paper closely studies the representations of queer bodies and sexualities in four Indian films of the last decade: *Arekti Premer Golpo*, *Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish*, *Nagarkirtan* and *Super Deluxe*. Through the comparative study, the paper will try to explore if, and how, the representations of non-normative sexualities have changed in alternative and in regional cinema, despite the lack/misrepresentation of these individuals in mainstream Hindi cinema. In the process, the questions of the performativity of gender, self and

Bodies in Transition: Exploring Queer Sexualities in Indian Cinema

Hiya Chatterjee

Representations of alternative sexualities in Indian popular culture are conspicuous through their absence and invisibility. This lack, especially in Bollywood, corroborates the critique that despite the increased visibility of the LGBTQ movement in post-liberalisation India, the transgender¹ subcultures of Indian society still inhabit the periphery of the social consciousness. Most films centring on queer themes portray middle class characters and are reticent on queer sexuality, quite understandably so, in order to avoid censorship of a rigid and unimaginative Central Board of Film Certification of India. This is because popular culture in Indian society functions mostly as an ideological state apparatus intent on upholding the normative structures. Representation of sexuality in mainstream Indian cinema is circumscribed to the heteronormative, more specifically to cater to the (perverted) sexual fantasies of the cisgender, heterosexual male. The female body is not only a source of visual pleasure for the voyeuristic Indian male audience, but this act of deriving pleasure from the sexual otherisation of the female is considered essential to establish the self as ‘masculine’. This masculinisation of viewership has other consequences as well: it perfectly serves the patriarchal agenda of the heteronormative family in which the woman has to be tamed by the man to maintain the societal power relations and the sexual hierarchy.

If violation of a woman’s privacy to gratify one’s perverse desires is considered manly, homophobia or transphobia (think of the repulsion among men—and even women—when *hijras/kothis*² try to touch them and coax them into giving them money at traffic signals in many South Asian countries) in heterosexual males is also considered normal behaviour. In one scene of a raunchy Hindi sex comedy called *Masti* (2004), one of the lead characters, after kissing a woman, accidentally catches her urinating standing up. He is shocked on discovering her ‘real’ identity and acts as if he—or rather his masculinity—has been defiled

by kissing the transgender. The scene reinforces the stereotype of the trans person as a sexual predator, something which Janice Raymond in her damning essay on transsexuals had warned against. Raymond cautions ‘real’ lesbian-feminists in her essay against ‘transsexually constructed lesbian feminists’ because,

All transsexuals rape women’s bodies by reducing the female form to an artefact, appropriating this body for themselves...Rape can also be accomplished by deception.
(Raymond 134)

Raymond views the transsexual body as a tool of dissimulation to attain power over ‘real’ women by sabotaging their femininity and re-establishing what might be called a warped patriarchy. Raymond’s transphobia and her misdirected fears for “a small group of vulnerable women” (Riddell 157) while ignoring the overarching mechanisms of patriarchal oppression end up legitimising the very structures of oppression she goes out to undermine. Indian mainstream cinema can also be said to have harped on this fear of the trans body. While the gay/lesbian individual threatens the patriarchal foundations of the heteronormative family structure, the transgender subverts the binary of gender identity by questioning “compulsory heterosexuality” (Rich 651). The body of the transgender, which eludes ‘defined-ness’, further intensifies the deep-seated male anxiety of castration and emasculation, relegating the trans body to the realm of the monstrous.

The parallel between the transgender and the figure of the monster is not, of course, a recent theoretical proposition. What is unfortunate, however, is that it has been expounded most vehemently by radical feminists such as Raymond, as quoted earlier, and by Mary Daly. Daly, while alluding to Frankenstein and his monster, labels transsexualism as “necrophilic invasion”: “...it is an example of male surgical siring which invades the female world of substitutes.” (Daly 71).

The trans body trying to pass off as the gender which it was not biologically assigned at birth is grotesque and treacherous. Susan Stryker explains why this is so:

The attribution of monstrosity remains a palpable characteristic of most lesbian and gay representations of transsexuality, displaying in unnerving detail the anxious, fearful underside of the current cultural fascination with transgenderism. Because transsexuality more than any other transgender practice or identity represents the prospect of destabilizing the foundational presupposition of fixed genders upon which a politics of personal identity depends... (Stryker 246)

The liminal position of the trans body and trans sexuality invokes fear and subsequently an identity crisis for patriarchal and (certain) feminist ideologies which predicate gender on fixed notions of the body, i.e., for the exponents of biological essentialism. Furthermore, the trans body, by choosing to be defined by its sexuality, a 'private' sphere of existence, rather than by other 'public' identity categories such as race, class, caste, nationality, religion or even gender—all of which are imposed and not chosen by the subject themselves—poses a direct peril to the static bastions of power by attempting to own its identity.

The societal treatment of the transgender as the deviant 'other' is reflected in contemporary Hindi cinema. The handful of Hindi films which do have transgender characters either reduce them to comic caricatures (*Hum Hai Rahi Pyaar Ke* 1993, *Raja Hindustani* 1996); or to the demonised eunuch as the embodiment of evil (in *Sadak* 1991; *Sangharsh* 1999). Yet, to read the transgender body and sexuality as oppressed and ostracised would be to delimit its potential as an agent of change. Power, as Foucault has maintained, does not always operate top down,

Power comes from below: [...] there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations and serving as a general matrix... (Foucault 63)

Power does not operate only on bodies and subjects but also through them, and thus the trans body cannot and should not be seen as a mere object of a hierarchical system on which power is exercised but also as subjects working within that system. The stereotype of the abject victim is thus no less reductive than that of the comic caricature or the evil monster.

This paper analyses four films from the last decade which depict characters that are not merely queer in their sexual preferences but are also gender non-conforming, a term which encompasses people who identify as intersex, transgender, third gender and transvestite alike.³ Out of these, one was directed by renowned queer Bengali director Rituparno Ghosh—*Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish* (2012)—and the other one involves him as actor and as creative director—*Arekti Premer Golpo* (2010). This second one is directed by Kaushik Ganguly whose 2018 film *Nagarkirtan*, also a part of the analysis, was dedicated to Rituparno Ghosh after his untimely death in 2013. The other film is Thyagarajan Kumararaja's Tamil film *Super Deluxe* (2019) which interweaves four overlapping narratives, one of them dealing with the story of a middle-aged transgender woman. Through the comparative study, the paper will try to explore if, and how, the representations of non-normative sexualities have changed in alternative and in regional cinema. In the process, the questions of the performativity of gender, self and identity, desire and resistance of the queer subject and queer bodies will be addressed against the backdrop of queer theory and politics in global as well as in local contexts. Finally, the paper will propose an intervention of intersectional feminism into queer theory through a primarily thematic investigation of the

four films as contemporary narratives which deal with questions of performance of the self on the one hand, and the expression of desire on the other.

Self as performance: *Arekti Premer Golpo* and *Chitrangada*

Cinema has played a multifaceted role in Indian society: if it operates as an ideological state apparatus, it also serves as a political tool intended to undermine structural hegemony. When *Fire* released in 1996, the members of the Shiv Sena took to the streets to protest the attack on Indian culture. The objections against the film were made on various levels: it blatantly portrayed women's desire and sexuality, it threatened the heterosexual family structure⁴ and it scandalized Hindu middle-class morality. The opposition was thus not only on the basis of 'alien' sexuality, but also on class and religion.⁵ Interestingly, the counter-protests saw the LGBT communities marching for their rights along with the women's organisations led by director Deepa Mehta to lift the ban on the film. Before this, the *Aids Bhedbhav Virodhi Andolan* (ABVA) had conducted protests in Delhi against the harassment of gay men by the police (Narrain and Bhan 11), but this was probably the first time that a film, a cultural artefact, had spawned socio-political protests on questions of alternative sexuality in India. The long-drawn controversy and the different statements of the Shiv Sena protestors underscored the inextricable connection between race, class, caste, gender, sexuality and desire, thus unwittingly initiating a dialogue that contributed to the full-blown LGBTQ rights movements in India. In 2010, Bengali filmmaker Kaushik Ganguly released the film *Arekti Premer Golpo* (*Just Another Love Story*) which not only had queer characters and relationships as its central theme, but also highlighted the tensions within queer identities predicated upon class, caste, profession and so on. Featuring the late Rituparno Ghosh, the queer filmmaker and actor, *Arekti Premer Golpo* juggles the parallel narratives of a Delhi-based upper-class documentary filmmaker Abhiroop Sen and the real-life thespian Chapal

Bhaduri, the well-known *jatra*⁶ actor and impersonator of female roles of the 1960s who plays himself⁷ in the film. The film employs the *mise en abyme* narrative style, in which a film plays within a film, a ‘metareferential’⁸ technique revolving around the making of a documentary on the life of Chapal Bhaduri by Abhiroop Sen. In the process, the lives of the two queer characters—one established, articulate and sophisticated and the other submissive, marginalised and dispossessed—intersect to throw light on the dynamics of power between two classes of sexual minorities. *Chitrangada—A Crowning Wish*, also an example of a metareferential film—as it is an interpretation of Tagore’s play *Chitrangada*—traces the journey of an androgynous choreographer Rudra Chatterjee in love with a troubled drug-addict Partho who almost performs sex reassignment surgery in order to adopt a child and live as a family with his lover. In *Arekti Premer Golpo*, Abhiroop is confident of his androgyny and condescendingly dismisses Chapal Bhaduri’s claims that she is a woman trapped in a man’s body. Ghosh himself had declared that “sex reassignment surgery” was pointless because it conformed to the heteronormative notions of gender. (Ghosh 240) As Aniruddha Dutta rightly points out,

...the films thus establish a *double* distancing from lower class/caste narratives of gender variance, and construct a script of gender choice and fluidity premised on bourgeois trajectories of modernisation. (Dutta 173)

Dutta contends that Ghosh’s films, instead of engaging with the intersectional categories of class, caste and gender, tend to confine notions of gender non-conformity to the understanding of the liberalised Bengali *bhadrolok*. Resistance to patriarchy is comfortably couched in drawing and dining room conversations about gender fluidity, individual identity and choice. As a result, even among sexual minorities, the gaping chasm between the different classes is exposed. For instance, when Abhiroop begins filming Chapal Bhaduri’s

life, zie is portrayed as sympathetic and protective of his filmic subject, getting infuriated when an interviewer asks him if he would be exploring Chapal Bhaduri's sexual preferences in his film. While Abhiroop's anger is righteous, he does focus on Chapal's (played by Ghosh himself in the film within the film) personal life, mostly on his relationship with other men, than his career or his contribution to Bengali theatre.

While this seems to be a commentary on the character of Abhiroop, it also turns about to be a self-reflexive comment on the film itself. The title of the film seems to be corroborating this idea. Evidently, the director Kaushik Ganguly was conscious of the film feeding the public imagination of Ghosh's identity and sexuality as was Ghosh himself when he was directing *Chitrangada*. In an interview to Kaustav Bakshi, Ghosh reveals,

Kaushik (Ganguly) had a very romantic understanding of homosexuality. I really had to bring in my 'lived' experience of the same. Therefore, as evident from the title cards, I looked after the production design of the film; and was also the creative head. Perhaps that's why the film might be mistaken as a Rituparno Ghosh film. It isn't. (Ghosh 244)

Ghosh was probably suggesting that in addition to a sympathetic portrayal of the queer characters, incorporating his 'lived experience' within the film's fabric would make it more authentic. However, Ghosh must have also been aware that his lived experience did not encompass that of all queer persons, such as that of Chapal Bhaduri, on account of the former's socio-economic privilege. Ghosh probably fails to take into account the other categories of identity which pre-empt solidarity among different LGBTQ communities; those of class, caste, race, religion and even profession. A commercial theatre actor like Chapal Bhaduri would not of course have access to the same cultural capital as a Rituparno Ghosh, and would therefore never have his voice heard. The unidimensional portrayal of

Chapal as oppressed and disenfranchised is indeed counterintuitive to the idea that the queer subject's 'lived experience' is necessary to authenticate one's story because in the film, Chapal is hardly given any narrative agency. When it is made clear in the film itself that the documentary is becoming a love story and that Abhiroop is merely using Chapal's life narrative to present his own story, it inevitably raises questions of the self, subjectivity and the performativity of the self. The 'conflation' of the identity of Ghosh and those of the characters in the films is probably a conscious act, and therefore 'self-reflexive'. In *Chitrangada*, when Subho, Rudra's imaginary counsellor asks if the dance drama choreographed by Rudra was becoming too 'autobiographical', the latter replies, "That's because you're in the know." (*Chitrangada*) Bakshi and Sen observe: "In Rudra's rejoinder, one might read an auto-reflexive irony directed at the audience of *Chitrangada* who has entered the theatre with extradiegetic knowledge of Ghosh's personal life and is expecting a confessional narrative" (Bakshi and Sen 210).

In the domain of cinema, self-reflexivity is construed in terms of the self-referential nature of the media. Jean-Marc Limoges differentiates between self-reflexivity and reflexivity in the following manner: "The latter [reflexivity] refer to devices that do not reveal 'the' device (i. e., the film itself), but rather 'a' device (such as, for example, a film within the film)" (Limoges 392). According to Limoges, self-reflexivity is achieved when the illusion of the diegetic autonomy of the filmic world is intended to be broken. Although neither *Arekti Premer Golpo* nor *Chitrangada* can be called cinematically self-reflexive, they contain what can be called narrative self-reflexivity owing to Ghosh's public declaration of his sexuality and the transformation in his physical appearance⁹ when he was making these films. The illusion of the audience (that the film is a fictional product) is broken because they can immediately identify the on-screen protagonists with that of Rituparno Ghosh's off-screen persona; they no longer remain fictional characters but become cinematic extensions of

Ghosh's self. In the interview mentioned earlier, when asked if *Chitrangada* was autobiographical, he says,

Rudra contemplates sex-change, but abandons it eventually. ... he chooses to stay the way he is, reveling in his in-between-ness... That's the best way of celebrating gender fluidity. This is where Rudra is closest to myself ... the resemblance ends there. (Ghosh 241)

The marked similarity between the queer characters portrayed by Ghosh and the real-life Ghosh himself reinforces not only the performativity of gender, but also that of self. Performance is a leitmotif in both the films: Chapal is an actor who impersonates female roles on stage, and Rudra in *Chitrangada* is not only the choreographer but also plays the role of Madan in the adaptation of Tagore's dance drama in the film. Apart from the theatrical references in the films, the gender performativity of the queer subjects underscores the sexual politics of selfhood. The queer subjects project their selves through their body and their sexuality, and in this way, destabilise and defuse the boundaries between the public and the private spheres of existence. Robert A. Padgug elucidates how

Sexuality is the realm of 'nature', of the individual, and of biology; the public sphere is the realm of culture, society, and history. Finally, sexuality tends to be identified most closely with the female and the homosexual, while the public sphere is conceived of as male and heterosexual. (Padgug 23)

The queer subject, by putting up the performativity of gender and sexuality on display, undermines the dualistic notions of 'private' and 'public', 'pure' and 'impure', 'natural' and 'unnatural' upheld by the heteronormative forces. Moreover, as discussed in the introductory section, the queer subjects define their identity through their sexuality, demonstrating the inherently fluid, mutable and performative nature of the body as soon as it is released from

the social, biological and cultural language of normativity thrust upon it at the moment of its materialization. The deconstruction of the Tagorean text in *Chitrangada* subsequently leads to a deconstruction of the fixed notions of the body, gender and the construction of the self.

At the beginning of the film, Rudra interprets the play as the fulfilment of a wish: a wish that one can choose one's gender. Ghosh's collation of the transformation of *Kurupā* to *Surupā* (which happens with divine intervention) with Rudra's sex reassignment surgery (which would happen with medical assistance) underscores that the body, like all other identity categories, is always in transition. The manner in which hegemonic structures try to appropriate the body within the heteronormative discourse is also a prominent trope in the film. Unless and until Rudra biologically 'becomes' a woman, zie and Partho cannot legally adopt a child and start a heteronormative family. For the law, biological attribution of gender is essential to be accepted as male or female. On the other hand, in *Arekti Premer Golpo*, the gender-fluid Abhiroop is repeatedly identified as female. The conflict between social constructionism and biological essentialism is distinctly played out in the two films; if the first one is encountered on a daily basis, the latter is an ideological tool enforced by the state machinery to preserve the sanctity of heteronormative institutions such as marriage and family. Rudra's withdrawal from the sex-change surgery is perhaps due to Partha's refusal of hir feminised body, but the decision also signifies a self-acceptance as well as a strong resistance to the norm. If the body is mutable, so is the self, and by embracing their sexual identities as integral and inextricable part of their public selves, both Abhiroop and Rudra critique the sexual/non-sexual; public/private; nature/culture binaries upon which the self is believed to be predicated. Moreover, by refusing to be co-opted into the heterosexual duality of the self, they combat power with desire, not erotic or romantic desire which they feel for their lovers, but a different life-affirming force. Chapal, on the other hand, is not allowed to make such a political statement of resistance through hir life choices and hir journey, and

chooses to go back to live with Kumar as his domestic help despite his exploitative treatment. Yet, Chapal's narrative and the treatment of his narrative raise critical questions: does the queer self need to be publicised in order to be political? Does resistance always have to come in terms of bold iconoclasm or open activism? Can merely the public proclamation of one's sexuality be termed as radical? These are the questions raised by the next two films discussed in the paper.

Politicising Desire: *Nagarkirtan* and *Super Deluxe*

While visibility among queer communities has empowered some, it has also endangered others who have neither a community nor socio-cultural privilege to fall back upon, subjecting them to increased discrimination. Moreover, the demand that all queer people must feel a sense of solidarity and participate in their kind of consumerist extravaganza undercuts the very concept of 'choice' that queer politics so strongly advocates. The Australian queer comedian Hannah Gadsby wryly wonders, "Where are the quiet gays supposed to go?...The pressure on my people to express our identity and pride through the metaphor of party is very intense." Although the identity of the Western urban queer is nowhere remotely similar to that of the marginalised transgender communities in South Asian countries, the urbanisation of the queer movement in India propels similar questions: would people like Chapal Bhaduri and Puti (the transgender woman played by Riddhi Sen in *Nagarkirtan*) feel comfortable flaunting their lifestyles in the Gay Pride Parade held in the metropolitan cities? And would it be fair to denounce them as 'closeted' or as living in 'self-denial' if they chose not to? For Chapal and Puti, the ability to undergo sex reassignment surgery and become a woman would indeed come as a boon. They cannot, even if they wanted to, "revel in their in-betweenness".

Parimal¹⁰ (the name that Puti is given at birth), a young boy living in a semi-urban area in Bengal, would not be familiar with the queer vocabulary of the English-speaking middle-class and upper middle-class gay men and thus would consider changing their sex to dispel the constant confusion and anxiety with one's own body and self. Although the class conflict within the queer community is not highlighted in *Nagarkirtan* or in *Super Deluxe*, both the films underline the struggles of the transgender subject in the society and even within their own community. If Parimal aka Puti shows signs of 'effeminacy' at a very young age, Manickam aka Shilpa (played by Vijay Setupathi) runs away from home and becomes a transgender even when zie is married with a grown-up son. Puti joins a ghetto of *hijras* in Kolkata, and in order to be accepted, zie has to adapt to their lifestyle, after which some of them opt for 'Nirvan' or castration, a rite of passage for most *hijras*.

The uniqueness of the *Hijra* community lies in the extraordinary blending of the biological body, gendered identity and sexuality in complex permutations and combinations within a specific social and cultural milieu. (Goel 537)

Despite the security and protection offered by the community to its individual members, life in the *hijra* community is by no means utopic. Brought up in a middle-class suburban Bengali household, the coy and shy Puti clearly faces difficulties adapting to the loud and garish lifestyle of the *hijras* of hir *dhera*¹¹ at first. Apart from the fact that they live in constant deprivation, the *hijra* community also has an inviolable power structure. If the community provides the *hijra* with security, its rigid hierarchy could also smother one's individuality and individual desires, as happens with Puti. Hir 'Guruma' Arati succinctly sums up their condition through a dark analogy:

They (people like Puti) aren't sent by anyone. They come on their own...Once the Sole fish enters the well, it doesn't go back to the river. (*Nagarkirtan*)

Once initiated within the community, it is rather difficult for the *hijra* to return to the mainstream, which underscores the stringent demarcation between the centre and the periphery. If Puti has to be tutored into ‘performing’ like a *hijra*, Manickam aka Shilpa’s transformation in *Super Deluxe* appears almost seamless. In a brilliantly shot scene, a balding, overweight middle-aged Manickam drapes a saree, dons a wig and magically turns into a voluptuous and beautiful middle-aged transwoman, as his wife watches in dismay. Puti looks longingly at Madhu’s (his male lover, played by Ritwick Chakraborty) sister-in-law while she changes her clothes, evoking a deep desire for possessing a female body.¹² What they experience is termed ‘gender dysphoria’ by Western medicine and biological sciences. While neither Puti nor Shilpa have access to the vocabulary of Western medical science, what they have access to is the language of desire because it is gender that predates desire, and not the other way round. And since the transperson too is not exempt from normativity; they too are affected by prevalent socio-cultural standards which associate beauty with femininity. This is further accentuated by the reaction of the men in their lives, men like Madhu who tell Puti, “Always come to me dressed...I don’t like patchwork.” (*Nagarkirtan*). *Super Deluxe*, in a similar but perverse demonstration of male sense of entitlement, shows SI Berlin telling Shilpa when he says his male name before he sexually assaults her, “Don’t ruin my desire with a man’s name.” (*Super Deluxe*)

The illusion that these men require the transsexual women to maintain the façade of femininity in order to desire them, for consensual or non-consensual sexual acts, underscores the central argument of McKenna and Kessler’s 1978 study that for heteronormative society, gender is more of a cultural attribute based on superficial elements such as hair, clothes, and other visual markers of identity than it is a biological fact (McKenna and Kessler 297). Gender is thus presented as an illusion, a fiction to preserve normativity. Butler has famously established that:

Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being. (Butler 44)

Although Butler's theories on the performativity of gender have broken new ground for feminism and queer theory, transgender studies scholars would contest those because they insist on the materiality of the body. Jack Halberstam elaborates on this idea in her work *Trans: A Quick and Quirky Account of Gender Variability*, quoting Jay Prosser:

Queer's alignment of itself with transgender performativity represents queer's sense of its own 'higher purpose,' in fact there are transgendered trajectories, in particular transsexual trajectories, that aspire to that which this scheme devalues. Namely, there are transsexuals who seek very pointedly to be nonperformative, to be constative, quite simply, to be. (Qtd. in Halberstam 121)

For both Puti and Shilpa, the inner physicality of being female is important because it offers them a sense of self-affirmation required for self-definition and self-determination. Moreover, it is through this that they can fulfil not only their erotic desire of becoming desirable to someone else, but also of reclaiming their own body from the hegemonic systems that name them and their bodies without their consent. Sandy Stone succinctly sums up the relationship between the trans body and this nexus:

Here on the gender borders at the close of the 20th century, with the faltering phallocratic hegemony and the bumptious appearance of heteroglossic origin accounts, we find the epistemologies of white male medical practice, the rage of radical feminist theories and the chaos of lived, gendered experience meeting on the battlefield of the transsexual body: a hotly contested site of cultural inscription, a meaning machine for the production of ideal type. (Stone 223)

The trans subject tenaciously hangs between the normative discourses of gender and the radical understanding of sexuality, promised liberation by both but given by none. When Puti's wig comes off during a *Kirtan* ceremony¹³ in Nabadwip on the eve of Holi, zie runs away from Madhu and his family, unable to face the humiliation. Another group of *hijras* mistake her as an imposter trying to collect money from shopkeepers. Zie is stripped naked in public and lynched, until the police come and rescue hir. The police officer later tells Madhu how gangs of men often impersonate as eunuchs and commit crimes. The fear of intrusion into women's spaces that Janice Raymond expresses in her essay (see above), is inverted in this case as in reality, it is men who invade the *hijras'* spaces and violate their identities. The shame of public humiliation is unbearable for Puti and zie commits suicide in the police lockup. As if in response to the abuse Puti is subjected to, Madhu dresses up as Puti and goes to hir *dhera* at the end of the movie, giving up his manhood and becoming a transgender. The scene, though artistically moving, might appear politically problematic and unconvincing because of the closed nature of the *hijras'* spaces and selves. What was probably intended as a subversion of heteronormative notions of gender as fixed and permanent could signify a violation of the secure space of the *hijras*.

In *Super Deluxe*, self-assured and confident in hir body, Shilpa seems perfectly at ease until zie reveals how she had unwittingly participated in child trafficking when she was asked to drop two children at a designated place for a measly sum of money after she had run away from home. Zie is caught by a police officer who erroneously assumes that zie is sexually assaulting a child (hir son Raasukutty) in a public toilet. Despite being bigger than SI Berlin, Shilpa is forced to perform sexual acts with him in the police station in broad daylight. Without the protection of their communities, both Puti and Shilpa become vulnerable not only to enforcers of power like the police but also to the communal mistrust of

the other *hijras*. The films demonstrate how the trans body becomes an instrument as well as a site of violence, both epistemic and systemic, affirming their status as sexual subalterns.

In charting the individual journeys of Puti and Shilpa, both the films tend to evade a deeper exploration of the lives of the *hijra* communities which they belong to. Shilpa barely talks about her life in Mumbai as a *hijra*, although zie takes money from a shopkeeper as one, as if performing a magic trick for hir son. Puti treats hir community as an oppressive space quashing her individual desires, rarely acknowledging the protection they provide hir. Neither of the films shows the distinct subculture of the *hijra* communities, their coded language or their religious practices and ritualised way of life. *Nagarkirtan* sets the last part of its narrative in Nabadwip, the native land of Sri Chaitanya.¹⁴ The film repeatedly employs the symbolism of Sri Chaitanya's androgynous persona perhaps to emphasise the inherent androgyny of Bengali culture, accessible to the *bhadralok*, instead of referring to the subaltern myth of the Goddess Bahuchara Mata.¹⁵ Indeed, Puti is never seen to adapt to the customs of the *hijra* community, and is mostly shown as disgruntled or anxious in hir *dhera*, while more at ease with Madhu and his family. Both Puti's and Shilpa's decisions to leave their families behind and then again leave their 'adopted' family, their respective *hijra* communities behind, highlight their status both as victims and as users of the same power that exploits them.

Therefore, it would be simplistic to perceive sexual subalterns such as *hijras* and *kothis* always as helpless subjects at the receiving end of the power spectrum. The term "sexual subaltern" was probably introduced by Kapur in her article on sexual minorities and the law in India:

The term sexual subaltern is at one level intended to capture the extraordinary range and diversity of the counter-heteronormative movement...The subaltern subject is not simply a member of a minority group. By virtue of her subaltern location and

performance in a postcolonial space, the subaltern subject resists the assimilative gestures of the imperial and liberal project. (Kapur 38)

It should not be assumed that transgender subjects like Puti opt for sex reassignment surgeries because they do not have a choice; on the contrary, the choice to live as a *hijra* or the choice to undergo surgery and change one's gender is self-assertion that automatically becomes a political statement against the mechanisms that suppress desire. Shilpa dramatically puts a death curse on Berlin like a traditional *hijra*, which comically comes true later. Yet this is not the only so-called agency Shilpa is shown to have. Hir act of leaving hir family behind, especially hir son, is portrayed as selfish and inconsiderate. After zie finds Raasukutty at home, zie asks him why he had run away and says "Did you even think of the trauma I would go through?" and he replies, "That's exactly what we have been suffering, asshole!... Be a man or be a woman, just be with us, damn it!" and hir wife Jyothi says, "Did you think only your life was difficult?" (*Super Deluxe*) stressing on her condition as a woman abandoned by her husband. *Supr Deluxe* captures the complex dynamics between a subject, in this case a sexual subaltern subject, and the hegemonic structures which shape its subjectivity. Oblivious to the trauma inflicted on hir wife and son, Manickam finds himself in a similar position to that of other men who abandon their families for other women or for selfish reasons. The narrative thus endows Manickam aka Shilpa with agency where zie thought zie had none.

Nevertheless, empowerment of the trans subject remains a polemical subject that requires intersectional intervention. Western scholarship on transgender subjectivity is more attuned towards the brand of revolutionary gender non-conformity propounded by the likes of Rituparno Ghosh. In her rejoinder to Janice Raymond's article, Sandy Stone argues that

The transsexuals must take the step of problematizing the concept of the ‘wrong body.

Under the binary phallocratic founding myth by which Western bodies and subjects

are authorized, only one body per gendered subject is right. (Stone 232)

However, while publicly acknowledging one’s gender fluidity is one form of resistance, combating social forces to negate biological determinism and social constructionism is no less an act of subversion. Puti compares the disparity between her desire and her reality as an error of calculation, whereas Shilpa calls it divine oversight. For both, it is something that can be fixed, a wrong that needs to be righted. The films show how sexual subalterns like Puti strongly desire either to erase their past or to live closeted lives to escape social stigma and ostracism. Despite the introduction of the transgender bill¹⁶ and the inclusion of the ‘third gender’ as a category, the Indian society still has a long way to go as far as social acceptance of transsexuals is concerned.

By engaging with the diverse lived experiences of queer subjects, the films illustrate the various ways in which they negotiate with their identity in a society that is still latching on to the gender binary as absolute and non-negotiable. Even within the LGBTQ movement, the *hijras* occupy a liminal space because of the barriers of class, caste and language. Instead of universalizing the experience of the trans body and presuming the ‘appropriate’ ways of resistance, the queer movement in India should focus on studying and theorising the lived experiences of the peripheral transgender communities and individual subjects by engaging in multiple dialogues over extended periods of time. The transgender body is ‘akin to the ‘inappropriate/d other’, which according to Donna Haraway means,

to be in critical, deconstructive relationality, in a diffracting rather than reflecting (ratio)nality-as the means of making potent connection that exceeds domination. To be inappropriate/d is...not to be originally fixed by difference. (Haraway 2004: 69)

On the one hand, Haraway's notion of the cyborg and the monster representing the non-essentialised world of synthesis between animal and machines shows promise for transgender studies and its attempts to debunk the problematic dualisms of heteronormative society, but on the other, Haraway's "utopian dream of the hope for a monstrous world without gender" (32) tends to ignore the material conditions of class, caste, religion and other identity politics that shape the subjectivity of queer individuals in the global south. Susan Stryker's reclamation of the 'monstrous' perhaps offers a more enabling approach to queer studies owing to its emphasis on the trans body and trans rage as the armour as well as the weapon against the machinations of the social cohorts rallying against transgenderism. Stryker appeals to all transsexuals to wrest their selves and their identities from the medico-legal and state apparatus and become like the Frankensteinian monster with an independent individuality (Stryker 251). Stryker's work could serve as an excellent entry point into transgender studies in India. What is required therefore is a coalition between intersectional feminism and queer theory to address the specific subjectivities in different societies and communities. Though a lot still remains to be done, by foregrounding the body and sexuality as essential identity categories, these films attempt to redefine ways of negotiating identity and subjectivity beyond the given parameters of heteronormativity. They also situate global queer politics within the local sites and queer identities in individual contexts to throw light upon the lesser known sexual minorities of the world.

Notes

1. The usage of the term 'transgender' in this paper is similar to Stryker's in her essay 'My Words to Victor Frankenstein'. Stryker uses it "as an umbrella term that refers to all identities or practices that cross over, cut across, move between, or otherwise queer socially constructed sex/gender boundaries." See works cited for reference.

2. The *hijras* are a sexual minority community living in the margins of mainstream cities. The term *hijra* is used as an umbrella term to refer to the institutionalised ‘third gender’ in India. The English term for them was ‘eunuch’, but human rights activists have included them within the category of ‘transgenders’. *Kothi* is a term used across southern India to refer to MSM who take a feminine role and impersonate women in public events such as theatres, dances etc.
3. The paper uses the term ‘queer’ to refer to non-normative sexualities and politics, and does not intend to homogenise the lives and experiences of sexual minorities. The paper argues against such universalisation of ideas and politics, and believes in a more individualised and inclusive understanding of queer politics.
4. Shiv Sena member Mina Kulkarani had remarked: “If women’s physical needs get fulfilled through lesbian acts, the institution of marriage will collapse, reproduction of human beings will stop.” (Qtd. in Mehra, Joseph and Menezes)
5. Then Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray commented that if the names of the women were changed from Radha and Sita to Muslim names, he would withdraw his objections.
6. *Jatra* is a folk theatre form popular in Bengal, Odisha and other parts of the Indian subcontinent such as Bangladesh. Chapal Bhaduri was a renowned *jatra* performer who played many legendary female roles at a time when women were allowed to perform in theatres.
7. The paper uses the pronouns ‘zie’ and ‘hir’ to designate the gender non-binary individuals. See, Anon., ‘The Need for a Gender Neutral Pronoun. The Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog or The Search for a Polite Specific Gender-Neutral Third-Person Singular Pronoun.’
8. Wolf describes metareference as a transmedial phenomenon, and uses the term ‘metareferentiality’ as “a heuristically motivated umbrella term for all meta-phenomena occurring in the media.” See Wolf.
9. Rituparno Ghosh had publicly declared himself as ‘third gender’ by the first decade of 2000 and embraced his androgyny through his sartorial choices. See his 2010 interview in *The*

Telegraph, Anon. 'I don't want to become a woman.' *The Telegraph online*. Published 22.12.2010, 12 AM.

10. The name 'Parimal' is shortened to a female name Pari meaning fairy. Chakraborty's *Holde Golap* is probably the first novel in Bengal language that extensively documents the lives of the marginalised sexual minorities and also genderqueer people from different socio-economic backgrounds.
11. The spaces inhabited by *hijras* have various names like *dheras*, *mahallas* or *gharanas*, according to their culture. See Mal and Mundu.
12. In *Holde Golap* (Yellow Rose) Swapnamoy Chakraborty relates the experience of a young gay boy, perhaps inspired by the scene in *The Danish Girl*, looking at himself in the mirror and concealing his penis between his legs to feel like a 'real' woman.
13. See note 14 below.
14. Sri Chaitanya was a 15th Century Bengali saint born in Nabadwip, Nadia district of Bengal, whom many consider to be an incarnation of Lord Krishna. He was the founder of Gaudiya Vashnavism, a religious movement which propagated equality and harmony among all individuals and communities, opposing the casteist and hierarchical nature of Brahminism. He introduced the *Kirtan* tradition of singing and dancing in public places and streets as a way of worshipping Lord Krishna, and his movement formed a part of the bigger Bhakti and Sufi traditions that had swept large parts of South Asia at that time. In *Arekti Premer Golpo*, Rituparno Ghosh's character Abhiroop calls him the epitome of the cultural androgyny of this country due to the belief that he was the synthesis of Radha and Krishna, the male lover and the female beloved. See <http://jagadanandadas.blogspot.com/2007/02/chaitanya-mahaprabhu-and-androgyny.html>
15. Bahuchara Mata is a female deity, an incarnation of Goddess Sakti, and the patroness of the hijra community. In most of the legends, she appears as an empowered figure who either castrates men who abuse her or identify impotent men and command them to serve her. Her temple is located in Gujarat.

16. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights Act) 2019 fails to take into account the demands of the queer community such as the right of the transgender person to declare their self-determined gender identity without undergoing sex reassignment surgery, and reservations in jobs and educational institutions.

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জুলাই, ২০২১

সম্পাদক

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সহসম্পাদক

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ড. পরিমল মন্ডল

ভজ্ সেব্যাম্ ধাতু থেকে জিয়াং ক্তিন্— এই সূত্র অনুসারে ক্তিন্ প্রত্যয়ের
ভক্তি শব্দ উৎপন্ন হয়েছে। ভক্তি শব্দের অর্থ হল সেবা, আরাধনা, ঈশ্বরের
সমর্পণ ইত্যাদি। যোগ শব্দ সংস্কৃত যুজ্ ধাতু থেকে উৎপন্ন হয়েছে। যোগ শব্দের
অর্থ হল সংযোগ। তবে এখানে ভগবানের সাথে সংযোগ হওয়াকে যোগ বলা
হচ্ছে। অতএব ভক্তিয়োগ বলতে— সেবা, আরাধনা অথবা সমর্পণের দ্বারা ভগবান
ঈশ্বরের সাথে যুক্ত হয়ে মোক্ষপ্রাপ্তি করাকে বোঝানো হয়েছে। এই ভক্তিয়োগই
হচ্ছে গীতার সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ শিক্ষা। গীতাব্যাখ্যাকার রামানুজাচার্য, ভাস্করাচার্য, বল্লাভাচার্য,
চৈতন্য মহাপ্রভু ইত্যাদি দার্শনিকগণ ভক্তিয়োগকে গীতার মুখ্য বিষয়বস্তু বলেছেন।
ভক্তিয়োগ গীতার সর্বত্র দেখা গেলেও ভক্তিয়োগ নামক দ্বিতীয় স্টাকের সপ্তম অধ্যায়
থেকে দ্বাদশ অধ্যায় পর্যন্ত বিস্তারপূর্বক আলোচনা করা হয়েছে। শোধপরিধির সীমা
বিশাল থাকার কারণে প্রস্তুত শোধপত্রকে প্রধানত দ্বাদশ অধ্যায়ে বর্ণিত ভক্তিয়োগ
সম্পর্কে সংক্ষেপে আলোচনা করা হল।

ভগবান শ্রীকৃষ্ণ ভক্তির স্বরূপ সম্পর্কে বলেছেন—

মন্যনা ভব মন্তস্তো মদ্যাজী মাং নমস্কুরু।

মামেবৈষ্যসি যুক্তৈবমাগ্নানং মৎপরাষণঃ।।^১

অর্থাৎ তুমি আমাতে চিত্ত অর্পণ কর, আমার ভক্ত হও, আমার পূজা কর
এবং আমাকেই নমস্কার করো। এরূপ করলে তুমি আমাকে অবশ্যই প্রাপ্ত করবে।
এই জন্য আমি তোমাকে সত্যই প্রতিজ্ঞা করে বলছি, যেহেতু তুমি আমার অত্যন্ত
প্রিয় ভক্ত।

গীতার দ্বিবিধ ভক্তির কথা উল্লেখ আছে— সগুণ ভক্তি এবং নিগুণ ভক্তি।
সগুণ ভক্তি বলতে কোন ভক্ত ঈশ্বরকে কোন রূপ বা আকার হিসেবে স্বীকার করে
নিজে নিজের সম্পূর্ণ কার্য সেই ঈশ্বরের সেবাই নিয়োজন করাকে বলা হয় এবং
নিগুণ ভক্তি বলতে ন নিরাকার ব্রহ্মের উপাসনাকে বোঝানো হয়েছে। এখান অর্জুনি
ঈশ্বরকে জিজ্ঞাসা করলেন যে দুইপ্রকার ভক্তির মধ্যে শ্রেষ্ঠ ভক্ত কে?—এই প্রশ্নের

উত্তর ভগবান গীতার বিভিন্ন অধ্যায় দিয়েছেন, যেমন ষষ্ঠ অধ্যায় ভগবান বলছেন—
 যোগিনামপি সর্বেষাং মঙ্গাতেনাস্তরাশ্বনা।
 শ্রদ্ধাবান্ ভজতে যো মাং স মে যুক্ততমো মতঃ।।*

অর্থাৎ সমস্ত প্রকার যোগীদের মধ্যে যে যোগী শ্রদ্ধাসহ আত্মাতে অধ্যয়ন সমর্পণপূর্বক আত্মস্থান করেন তিনিই আমার কাছে শ্রেষ্ঠ ভক্ত। দ্বাদশ অধ্যায় ভগবান বললেন—যে সমস্ত ভক্ত আমার মধ্যে মনোনিবেশ করে শ্রদ্ধাপূর্বক আমার উপাসনা করে আমি তাদের শ্রেষ্ঠ বলে মনে করি*। এর বিপরীত যে সমস্ত ব্যক্তি নিজের ইন্দ্রিয়সমূহে সম্পূর্ণরূপে সংযত করে মন এবং প্রাণীমাত্রের হিতের জন্য, সর্বদা পূর্ণ অচিন্তা, অচল, কূটস্থ, অনির্দেশ্য, ধ্রুব, অক্ষর, নিরাকার রূপের চিন্তন করেন তিনি হলেন জ্ঞানযোগী*। তিনি আরও বলেছেন জ্ঞানযোগে মানুষকে অন্তিম লঙ্ঘেই নিত যায় কিন্তু এই অব্যক্তের উপাসনা অত্যন্ত কঠিন। সাধারণ মানুষের পক্ষে এই পন দিয়ে চলা অত্যন্ত কঠিন*। তাই ভগবান জ্ঞানযোগ আলোচনা করে ভক্তিব্যোগের সম্পর্কে আলোচনা করতে গিয়ে বললেন যিনি অনন্য ভক্তিব্যোগের মাধ্যমে নির্মিত আমার স্থান এবং ভজনা করেন, যিনি তাঁর সমস্ত কাজ আমাকে সমর্পণ করে নিত সত্ত্ব রূপের উপাসনা করেন তিনি আমার কাছে প্রিয় ভক্ত*। গীতার অষ্টম অধ্যায়ে বলা হয়েছে—যে ব্যক্তি অনন্য চিন্তে আমাকে সদা সর্বদা স্মরণ করেন, সেই নিরন্তর স্মরণশীল যোগীর কাছে আমি সহজে প্রাপ্ত হয়* এবং মঙ্গাতচিন্ত সেই সর্ব প্রেমিক ভক্তকে আমি জন্মমৃত্যুরূপ চক্র থেকে উদ্ধার করি*। কিন্তু কোন ব্যক্তি চি অনন্যচিন্ত আমাকে প্রাপ্ত করতে না পারলে তাহল তুমি নিজের মন এবং বুদ্ধির আমার উপর মনোনিবেশ করবে, একরূপ করলে তুমি নিশ্চয়ই আমার মধ্যেই নিত করবে এবং এই মন এবং বুদ্ধিকে কিভাবে নিবেশ করতে হবে সেই বিষয়ে ভগবান বলছেন যে তুমি যদি আমাতে চিন্ত স্থির রাখতে ব্যর্থ হলে তখন অভ্যাসযোগ দ্বারা আমাকে প্রাপ্ত করার চেষ্টা করবে*। তারপরে বলছেন কেউ যদি অধ্যয়ন করতেও না পারে তাহলে মৎকর্ম পরায়ণ অর্থাৎ আমার জন্য কর্ম করার চেষ্টা না আত্মার জন্য (আমার জন্য) কর্ম করলে পরাসিদ্ধি লাভ করতে পারবে। তিনি আরও বললেন যিনি উপরোক্ত যোগের সাধনা করতে অক্ষম হন, তিনি মন-বুদ্ধি সর্বমুখী সর্বকর্মের ফলত্যাগ করেও আমাকে প্রাপ্ত করতে পারবে*। তারপরে ভগবান কর্মফল ত্যাগের শ্রেষ্ঠত্ব ব্যাখ্যা করেছেন—

শ্রেয়ো হি জ্ঞানমভ্যাসাজ্জ্ঞানাক্ষানং বিশিষ্যতে।

খ্যানাৎ কর্মফলত্যাগস্ত্যাগাচ্ছান্তিরনন্তরন্।।**

অর্থাৎ সমস্তবর্জিত অভ্যাসের থেকে জ্ঞান শ্রেষ্ঠ, জ্ঞান থেকে পরমেশ্বরকে স্থান শ্রেষ্ঠ। জ্ঞানযুক্ত স্থান থেকে কর্মফলত্যাগ শ্রেষ্ঠ। কারণ ত্যাগের দ্বারা তৎকাল পরম শক্তির অনুভব প্রাপ্ত করা যায়।

ভক্তের কাছে যেমন ঈশ্বর সবার প্রিয়বস্তু ঠিক তেমনই ভগবানের কাছেও
 তার ভক্ত হলে কি কি লক্ষণ থাকার দরকার সেই লক্ষণগুলি বর্ণনা করছেন— তিনি
 সবকুণ্ডের প্রতি ঘেঁষাঘিঁষা, সকলের প্রতি মিত্রভাব এবং সকলের করুণা বা দয়াভাব,
 তিনি আমার আমার ভাবহীন, নিরহঙ্কার এবং সুখ ও দুঃখে সমভাবাপন্ন, ক্ষমাশীল
 এবং যিনি সদা সঙ্কট, দেহ-ইন্দ্রিয়-মন যার সদা সংযত। যার মন ও বুদ্ধি আমাতে
 (আমাতে) অন্তর্ভুক্ত থাকে। যিনি আমাকে অর্থাৎ আমাকে ভালোবাসেন তিনি আমার
 কাছে অত্যন্ত প্রিয়^১। যিনি কাহাকেও উদ্ভিগ্ন করেন না, যিনি কাহারও দ্বারা উদ্ভিগ্ন
 হন না এবং যিনি হর্ষ ও বিবাদ, ভয় ও উদ্বেগ হইতে মুক্ত, তিনি আমার প্রিয়
 ভক্ত। যিনি নিঃস্পৃহ, বাহ্যভাস্তর শুচি, দক্ষ, পক্ষপাতশূন্য, ভয়হীন এবং সকাম
 কর্মের অনুষ্ঠান-ত্যাগী, তিনি আমার প্রিয় ভক্ত। যিনি ইষ্টপ্রাপ্তিতে হস্ত হন না,
 অনিষ্টপ্রাপ্তিতে ঘেঁষ করেন না, প্রিয়বিরোগে শোক করেন না, অপ্ৰাপ্ত ইষ্টবস্তু
 হারান্না করেন না এবং শুভাশুভ সকল কর্ম পরিত্যাগ করিয়াছেন, তিনি আমার
 প্রিয় ভক্ত। যিনি আসক্তিহীন এবং শত্রু ও মিত্রে সমবুদ্ধিসম্পন্ন, যিনি মানে ও
 অপমানে বিচলিত হন না, যিনি শীতোষ্ণজনিত সুখে ও দুঃখে নির্বিকার, পরমাত্মাতে
 বিরুদ্ধি, প্রশংসায় আনন্দ ও নিন্দায় বিবাদশূন্য সুতরাং সংযতবাক্, সর্ববিস্তার
 হৃৎকিঞ্চিৎ-লাভে সঙ্কট এবং নিদিষ্টবাসস্থানহীন তিনি আমার প্রিয় ভক্ত^২। যে-সকল
 হৃৎকরণে ভক্ত এই মোক্ষদায়ক ধর্ম উক্তপ্রকারে শ্রদ্ধাসম্পন্ন হইয়া সাধন করেন,
 তাহারাই আমার অতীব প্রিয়^৩। ভক্তির ফল বর্ণনা করতে গিয়ে ভগবান বলেছেন
 যে ভক্তির দ্বারাই কেবল পরমেশ্বরকে পূর্ণরূপে জানা যায়। তাই এই প্রকার ভক্তি
 দ্বারা ভগবানকে যথাযথ জানলে ভগবদ্ ধামে প্রবেশ করা যায়^৪।

আমাদের ভারতীয় সনাতন পরম্পরায় ভারতীয় সংস্কৃতি বিশ্বের দরবার
 সর্বপ্রাচীন ছিল। কিন্তু সেই মহান পরম্পরা বিভিন্ন বৈদেশিকদের আগমনের পর থেকেই
 ধীরে ধীরে ধ্বংস হতে শুরু করেছিল এবং পরবর্তীকাল আমাদের সংস্কৃতিকে
 পরিবর্তন করে পাশ্চাত্য সংস্কৃতিকে প্রবেশ করিয়ে বৈদেশিকরা স্বাধীন ভারতবর্ষ দিয়ে
 দিল। এজন্যই বর্তমানে ভারতবর্ষ স্বাধীনতার এতবছর পরেও পাশ্চাত্য সংস্কৃতিকে
 অনুসরণ করে চলেছে। তাই এখন ভারতবর্ষের অধিকাংশ মানুষ নিমিত্তমাত্র পূজা
 অর্চনাকে ভক্তি বলে মনে করে। এখন সমাজে ভক্তির আধুনিক রূপ পাওয়া যায়
 মেন— পূজার আগে থেকে শুরু করে পূজা শেষ হওয়া পর্যন্ত নাচগান, মদমাংস
 গ্রে ভগবানের পূজা অর্চনা করে নিজেকে ভগবানের ভক্ত বলে প্রচার করা। তাই
 এই শেষপ্রবন্ধে প্রাচীন ভারতীয় গ্রন্থ গীতার দ্বাদশ অধ্যায়ে বর্ণিত ভক্তিয়োগ সম্পর্কে
 সংক্ষেপে সহজ সরল ভাষায় সাধারণ মানুষকে বোঝানোর উদ্দেশ্যে লেখা। গীতায়
 বর্ণিত ভক্তিয়োগকে যদি মানুষ নিজের জীবনে প্রয়োগ করে এবং অন্যকে প্রয়োগ

করার জন্য প্রেরণা দেয় তাহলে সুন্দর সমাজ গড়ে ওঠার পাশাপাশি সমাজের সকল মানুষও জন্মমৃত্যু চক্র থেকে সহজে মুক্তি পেয়ে মানবজীবনের পরমলক্ষ্যে উপনীত করতে পারবে।

তথ্যসূত্র :

১. শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ১৮/৬৫।
২. এবং সততযুক্তা যে ভক্তাঙ্ঘ্রাং পর্যুপাসতে।
যে চাপ্যাক্রমব্যক্তং তেষাং কে যোগবিস্তমাঃ।। শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ১২/১।
৩. শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ৬/৪৭।
৪. মধ্যাবেশ্য মনো যে মাং নিত্যযুক্তা উপাসতে।
শ্রদ্ধয়া পরয়োপেতাঙ্স্তে মে যুক্ততমা মতাঃ।। শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ১২/২।
৫. যে তক্ষরমনির্দেশ্যমব্যক্তং পর্যুপাসতে।
সর্বত্রগমচিংত্যাং চ কৃটস্থমচলং ধ্রুবম্।।
সন্নয়ম্যেন্দ্রিয়গ্রামং সর্বত্র সমবুদ্ধয়ঃ।
তে প্রাধুবন্তি মামেব সর্বভূতহিতে রতাঃ।। শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ১২/৩-৪।
৬. ক্লেশোধিকতরন্তেষামব্যক্তাসক্তচেতসাম্।
অব্যক্তা হি গতির্দুঃখং দেহবন্দিরবাধ্যতে।। শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ১২/৫।
৭. যে তু সবাণি কমাণি ময়ি সন্ন্যস্য মৎপরাঃ।
অন্যন্যৈব যোগেন মাং ধ্যায়ন্ত উপাসতে।। শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ১২/৬।
৮. প্রয়াগকালে মনসাচলেন ভক্ত্যা যুক্তো যোগবলেন চৈব।
ভুবোর্মধ্যে প্রাণমাবেশ্য সম্যক্ স তং পরং পুরুষমুপৈতি নিবাম্।।
শ্রীমদ্ভগবদ্গীতা ৮/১০।
৯. তেষামহং সমুজ্জর্তা মৃত্যুসংসারসাগরাৎ।
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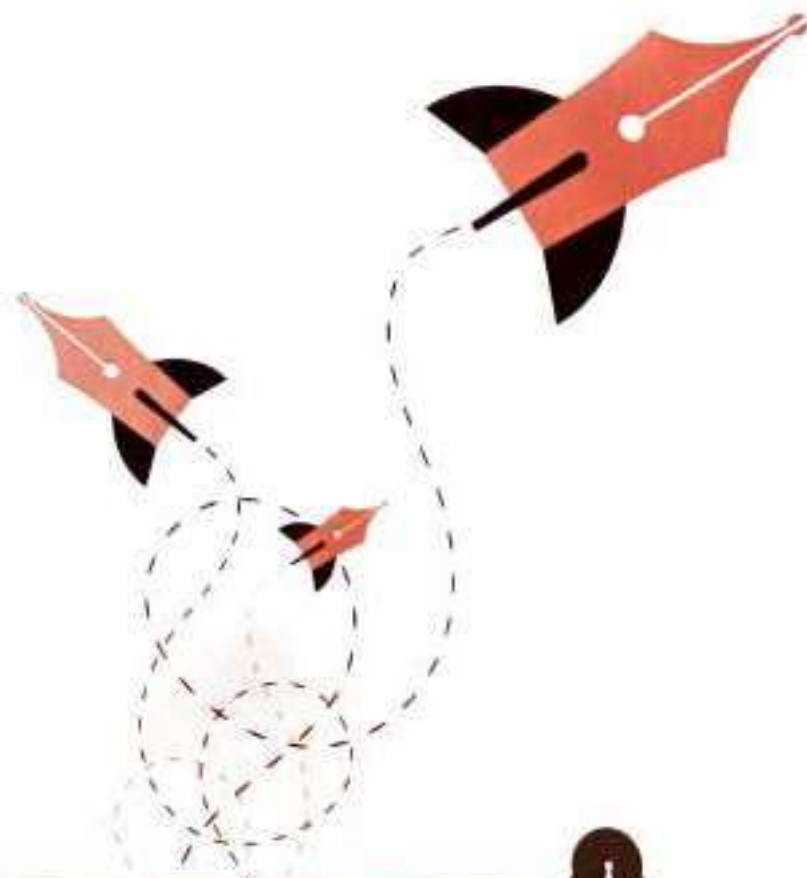
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TRIBES OF PASCHIM MEDINIPUR DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL

□ Aparesh Mondal*

Prof. Uma Sankar Malik**

ABSTRACT

Forest is the pristine motherland of tribes, forest has nurtured them, give them food, shelter and the livelihood opportunities. A large number of tribal communities in India had been deriving their livelihood directly from the environment. By the very nature of their habitat and ecology, the tribes rely heavily on forests for their survival. They used and optimised the utilisation of the forest resources in a balanced productive ecosystem. Most of the tribal communities of West Bengal highly depended on forest for their livelihood since the medieval period. The tribal villages of Paschim Medinipur district are not exception in this regard. An immense impact of forest on their society, culture, economy and polity is seen at large scale. In this research work, the inter-relationship as well as inter-dependency between tribal community and the environment will be analysed properly. This study will find how the forest ecosystem controls the tribal economy, how their occupation and livelihood pattern determined by the forest environment etc. in an objective and qualitative manner.

Keywords : Tribes, forest, livelihood, inter-dependency

1. Introduction

In India it has been observed that wherever there is a large concentration of forest, there is also high concentration of tribes in particular, and the rural population in general. Rural tribes are dependent on forest resources for their livelihoods. For many of them, not only do the resources provide economic sustenance, but the forest is also a way of life socially and culturally. It meets basic needs like fuel wood, fodder and timber that are important for them and their livestock. Their economic activities such as food-gathering, pastoral life, cultivation, handicrafts and other activities are largely based on the forests.

The western province of Bengal, comprising the parts of Bankura, Purulia and Paschim Medinipur have one of the largest concentration of tribes. In the lap of dense forest, thousands of tribes from Santal, Munda, Bhumij, Lodha-Sabar etc. community used to reside

there. A unique life-style, a typical livelihood pattern and a distinct socio-cultural system depending on forest ecology have been developed in the tribal villages of Paschim Medinipur district. A symbiotic relationship between forest ecosystem and various determinants of economic practices have been found there. The present study will try to understand the interrelationship between forest and tribal economy, how the forest determine their livelihood pattern, what are the forest produces available to them and challenges faced by tribes.

2. Significance of the Study

The researcher tries to find out the symbiotic relationship between the mother nature and tribes. From the time immemorial, it has been considered that the forest is the mother of tribes as they are directly as well as indirectly dependent upon forest for survival. Their society, culture, livelihood everything else determined by forest ecosystem.

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**A GEOGRAPHIC APPRAISAL ON URBAN SEWERAGE SYSTEMS FOR SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT OF WASTE WATER AND
STORM WATER IN BOLPUR TOWN, WEST BENGAL**  **Aparesh Mondal***

ABSTRACT

Urban sewage and sanitation system in India faces many challenges. More than 55 million people in urban areas lack access to improved sanitation arrangements and almost two-thirds of wastewater is let out untreated into the environment which pollutes the land as well as water bodies. Now in India, urbanisation is marching at a rapid strides and Bolpur is not excluded from its impact. Growing urbanisation promotes the generation of wastewater which includes all types of domestic and commercial effluent as well as storm-water runoff during rainy season. This is because, urbanisation in most of the towns like Bolpur are not well associated with rapid improvement of urban amenities and their governance. Therefore to improve the quality of urban environment of Bolpur and for its sustainability, proper and scientific management of sewage is utmost necessary. In this paper, basically the drainage types, drainage quality, facility provided by the Bolpur municipality etc. are discussed. The paper further highlighted the problems associated with water logging and suggests an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach for sustainable drainage design.

Keywords : Urban drainage, Sewage, Urbanisation, Stormwater management.

1. Introduction

Rapid urban growth in developing countries has resulted in the unplanned proliferation of both formal and informal settlements. But the sanitation plan with adequate sewerage system cannot meet with the pace of urban growth.

In developing countries like India and other South-Asian countries, the shift of population from rural to urban area is a very alarming phenomenon and therefore population is increasing rapidly in the urban areas. As per 2011 census, almost 31.2% of total population are living in the urban areas.

The unscientific and haphazard process of urbanization generates various serious challenges to towns and cities and promotes generation of waste water and its poor management is one of those challenges. Municipal wastewater refers the 'unwanted' water of a city, includes all types of domestic, commercial and

industrial effluent as well as stormwater runoff during times of rainfall. Exponential growth of population, coupled with the improvement of living standard, have resulted the increase in the amount of waste water generation throughout the world, mostly in developing countries.

In this paper, a concise discussion on waste water generation, types of drainage, drainage quality, municipal facility regarding stormwater management in Bolpur town with proper facts and figures has been discussed.

2. Significance of the study

The twenty-first century has been called the urban century where more than half of the world's population is living in towns and cities. Urbanisation is the physical growth of urban areas and a result of rural migration and even suburban concentration into cities. But such urbanisation sometime creates different problems in waste-water management, sanitation, sewage etc. as the

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Municipal Solid Waste Characterisation and Quantification as A Measure towards Effective Waste Management in Bolpur Municipality, West Bengal

Apresh Mondal

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Abstract

Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and its management is now becoming a matter of headache as well as challenges for the civil bodies. Growing urbanisation promotes the generation of solid waste and its unscientific handling causes health hazard and degrades the quality of urban environment. This is because, urbanisation in most of the cities and towns of India are not well associated with rapid improvement of urban amenities and their governance. Being an emergent urban centre, urbanisation in Bolpur town is marching at rapid strides. As per 2011 census, its population almost touches one lakh but increasing population does not always mean increasing level of urban development. Rather high population promotes waste generation as it is an intrinsic part of human existence. According to a report from Bolpur municipality, the solid waste generated in this town is around 95 metric tonnes per day which can be a serious threat to the environment as well as urban life if it cannot be disposed or managed properly. In this paper, an attempt has been made to evaluate the major parameters of MSW, in addition to a comprehensive review of solid waste generation, its characterization, collection and disposal as a measure towards effective waste management.

KEYWORDS- Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), urbanisation, governance, waste management etc.

Introduction

India is an agriculture based developing country. But in the last few decades, India is shifting from agro-based country to an industry and service-oriented country and these industrial and service sectors are basically concentrating in the urban areas. As a result, population is rapidly increasing in the urban areas. As per the 2011 census, almost 31.2% of total population is living in the urban areas. In developing countries like India, and other South-Asian countries, the shift of population from rural to urban area is a very rapid phenomenon in present globalised society. The unscientific and haphazard process of urbanization generates various serious challenges to towns and cities and generation of different kinds of solid waste is one of those challenges. Municipal solid waste includes commercial and domestic wastes generated in municipal or notified areas in either solid or semi-solid form excluding industrial hazardous wastes but including treated bio-medical wastes. Exponential growth of population as well as urbanization and the development of socio-economic condition, coupled with the improvement of living standard, have resulted in an increase in the amount of MSW generation throughout the world, mostly in developing countries. On average the developed countries typically generate 521.95–759.2 Kg/Capita-year and 109.5–525.6 Kg/Capita-year typically by developing countries. Recent estimates suggest that the generation of MSW globally exceeds 2 billion tons per year, which is a potential threat to environmental degradation. Therefore, MSW management (MSWM) seems to be one of the key topics for environmental protection in present days and also in the future. In this paper also, a concise discussion on waste

generation and composition, collection and segregation of waste of Bolpur municipal town with proper facts and figures has been discussed.

1. Significance of the study

The twenty-first century has been called the urban century where more than half of the world's population is living in towns and cities. Urbanisation is the physical growth of urban areas as a result of rural migration and even suburban concentration into cities. But such urbanisation sometime creates different problems in waste management, sanitation, sewage etc. as the town grows in an unplanned way. Bolpur is such a town which is growing in all aspects as it possesses an international importance due to Visva Bharati, Santiniketan. On the other hand, this town is well connected with railways and roadways. Educational, medical and other administrative facilities are also available here. So, it means there is ample reasons behind the growth of this town. But as an emergent town, Bolpur suffers from lots of waste generation with their poor management which deteriorates the urban quality. This study will help to identify the major issues related to solid waste generation, collection, disposal in the Bolpur municipal area and at the same time, the measures and strategies for effective waste management.

2. Objective of the study

The present study is concerned with the following objectives -

1. To identify the different types and sources of solid waste.
2. To figure out the amount of solid waste generation, their collection pattern and disposal system.
3. To highlight the problems associated with prevailing solid waste management system.
4. To focus an overview on current waste management practices.
5. To give some recommendation and suggestion for the improvement of Solid Waste Management system.
6. To highlight the scope for future development.

3. About the study area

Bolpur is now a well-known town with the international importance was merely a tiny village under Supur Porgana some 150 years ago. The name 'bolpur' comes from the word 'boli-pur'. In Bengali 'boli' means slaughter and 'pur' means town or city. The town is situated in Birbhum district, in the state of West Bengal, India and it is 145 km. north of Kolkata. Bolpur sub-division is located at south border of Birbhum district. The Bolpur sub-division consists of Bolpur- Sriniketan, Nanoor, Labpur and Ilambazar blocks.

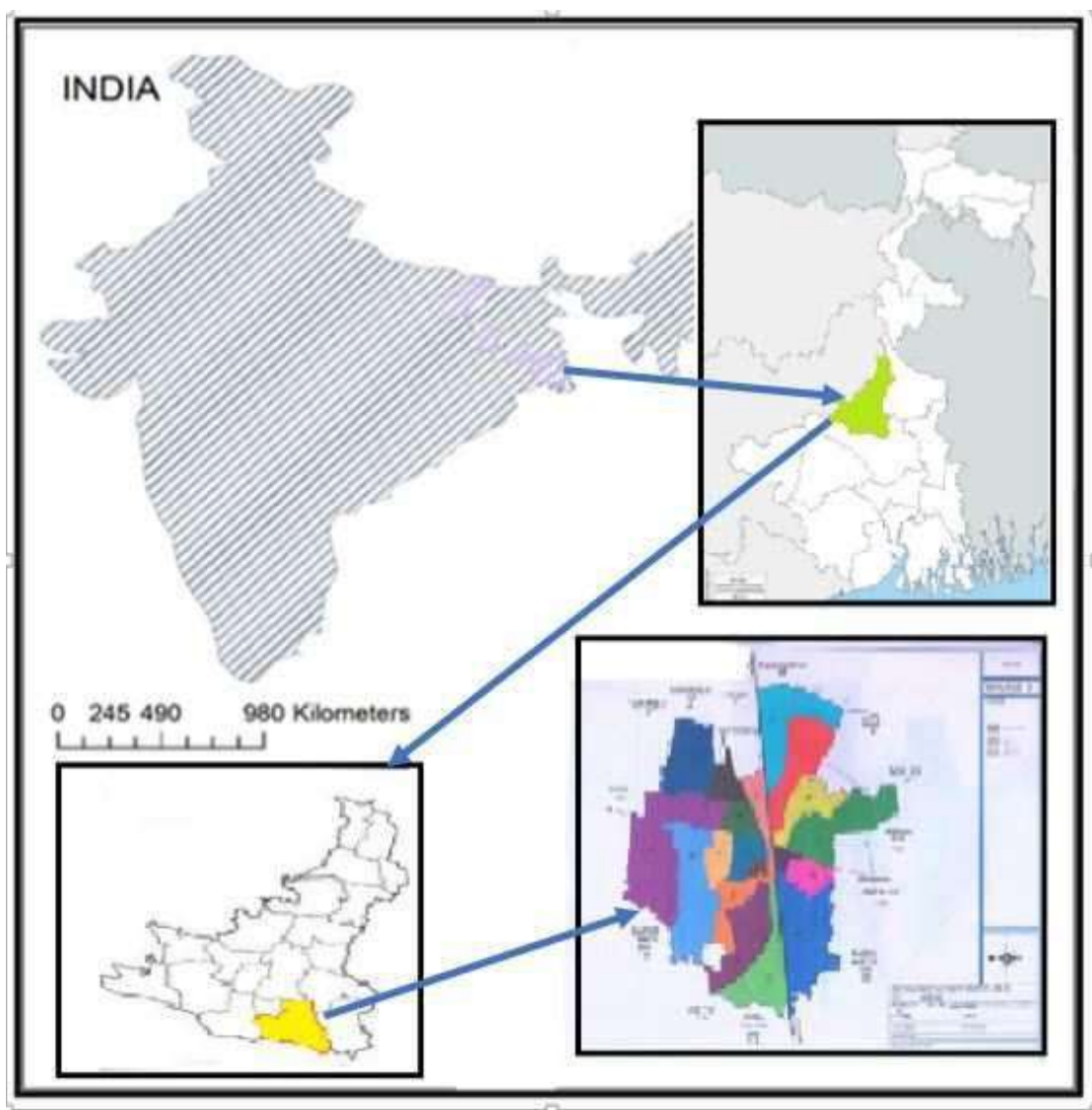


Figure 1: Location map of the study area

Table 1: Location of the Study Area

Country	India
State	West Bengal
District	Birbhum
Sub-division	Bolpur
Police Station	Bolpur
Latitudinal extension	23°38'30"N. - 23°40'55"N.
Longitudinal extension	87°40'30"E. - 87°43'E.

The study area (Bolpur and its adjoining areas) is located in the interfluves of Ajay and Kopai River. Physiographically this region is characterized by more or less plain surface with smaller undulating topography. The elevation of the area ranges between 46 metres to 62 metres. The Soil type is red sandy soil. But the northern part of this region is characterized by highly undulating (smaller scale) bad land topography locally known as 'Khowai'.

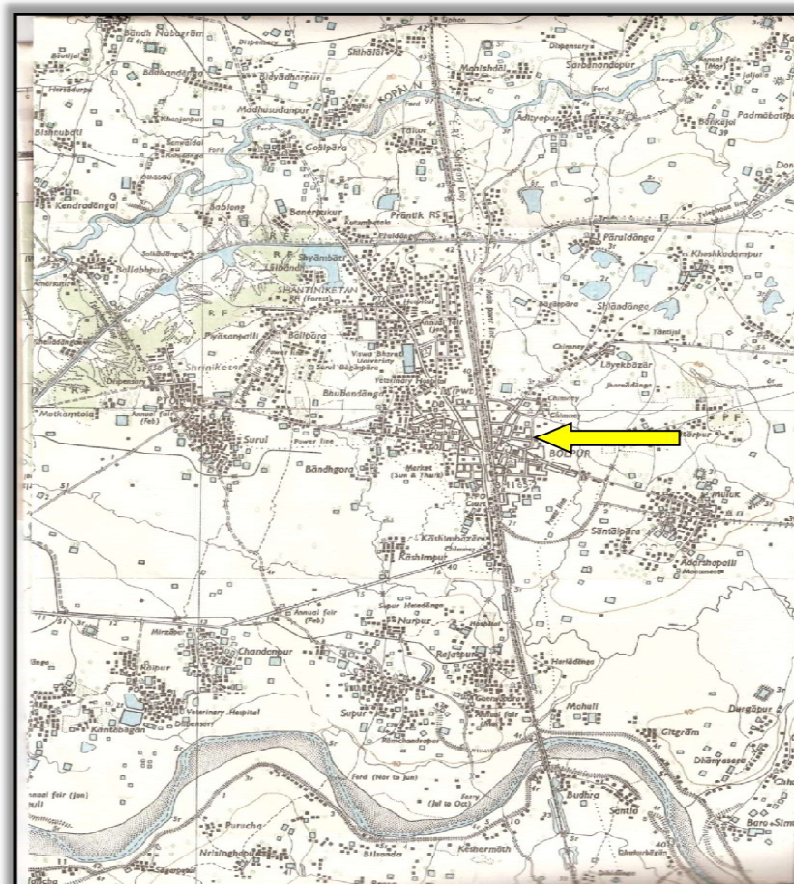


Fig 2: Topo-sheet extract (73M/10) showing the location of BolpurTown (R.F.- 1:50,000)

4. Materials and Methods

This study is mainly based on secondary data and to some extent primary data. Primary data has been collected from the field through questionnaire survey and interviews and secondary data has been collected from Bolpur Municipality Office. Due to the unavailability of adequate secondary data, as researcher I have to rely mainly upon the primary data. With the help of primary data, the direct contact to the respondents become possible, whereas the secondary data provides various information like demographic information, physical infrastructure, services etc.

Table 2: Data base

Types of data	Sources of data	Data collected from	Remark
Data on waste generation, collection, segregation	Secondary Data	Bolpur Municipality Office	Quantitative justification and analysis
Census data	Secondary Data	Census of India	Demographic information
Topographical map	Secondary Data	Survey of India, NATMO	Locational information
Data on status of public responses	Primary Data	Field survey	Qualitative analysis

5. Results and Discussion

6.1 Waste Generation

The area of Bolpur Municipality is 13.13 sq. km. According to 2001 census, the total population of this town was 65,693. But in 2011 census, the total population of Bolpur has increased to 80,882. So around 15 thousand population has increased within ten years. As the population increases, the generation of solid waste also increases at a rapid stride. The solid waste generation in the Bolpur Municipality area is around 95 metric tonne per day. These solid waste materials include plastic bags, bottles, medical waste etc. But out of the entire solid waste, plastic bags cover a major portion with different sizes like small, medium, large plastic bag etc. It can be said that plastic bag is the major source waste generation. So, here emphasis is given more on the generation of plastic bags.

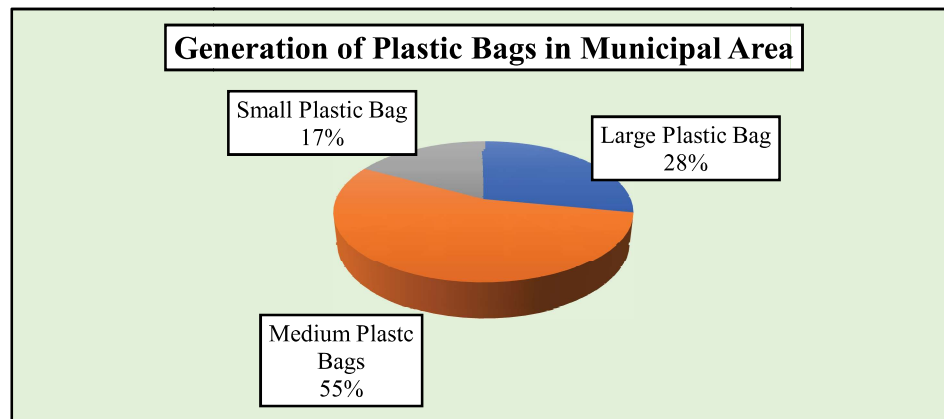


Figure 3: Generation of Plastic Bags (in %) in Municipal Area. (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

The above diagram indicates the generation of waste materials (mainly plastic bag) by the households of Bolpur town. Every household is the frequently user of plastic bags. It is very much common to all places. From grocery shop to shopping mall, now all peoples are very much dependent on it. But after using, it is thrown to the outside from their houses. As plastic is a non-biodegradable element, therefore it can never mix up with the soil. As a result, it is adversely affected to the open environment. As for example, drainage lines are choked up, increases infertility of soil, toxicity level of soil is raised up also etc. In case of Bolpur town, about 55 percent of households generates medium plastic bag, 28 percent generates large plastic bag and 17 percent households generates small plastic bag to the total municipal level.

Few sources of solid waste in Bolpur town:

- Waste from households (human and animal faeces, plastic packets, vegetable and fruit peels, silage etc.)
- Wastes from hotels and restaurants.
- Industrial or commercial waste.
- Bio-medical waste, originated from hospitals or health centres.



Figure 4: Heap of garbage along the road (Bolpur Municipality, 2011)
 The following multiple bar graph shows ward wise various types waste generation of households of Bolpur town:

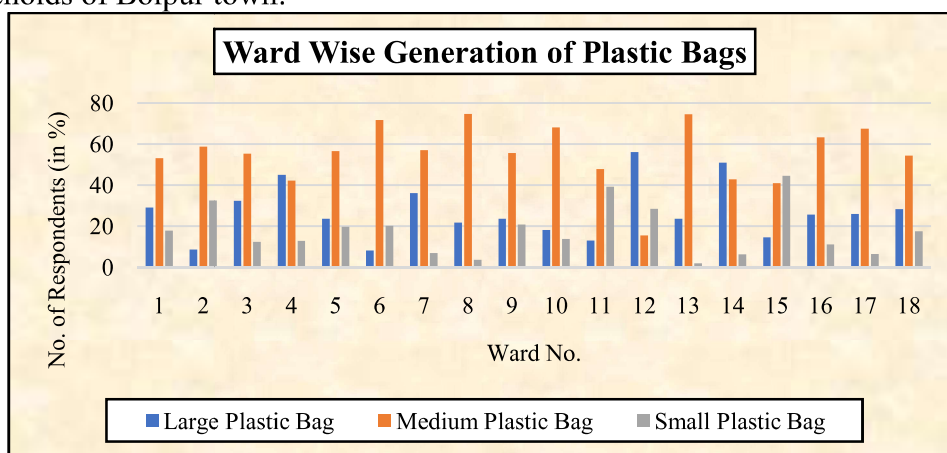


Figure 5: Ward wise generation of plastic bags. (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

The above diagram indicates percentage of households and their waste generation in different wards of Bolpur town. Plastic bags are taken into consideration as a waste material mainly, with various sizes. Here one thing should be mentioned that households from all wards generate medium plastic bags as waste materials than the large and small plastic bags. If we further analyse the municipal survey report to each and individual ward, then it will provide a better scenario for waste generation of the households. The percentages of households, who generates waste mainly medium plastic bag, are more in case of ward no. 6, 8, 10, 13 & 17. But the percentages of households are less in ward no. 12. Large plastic bag generates more in ward no. 4, 12, & 14, but it is low in case of ward no. 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 15. The percentages of households in regard to small plastic bag are more in ward no. 2, 11, 12 & 15 and it is less in ward no. 3, 4, 7, 8, 13, 14, 16 & 17. But if we can generalize the all results then it is cleared that, in ward no. 6, 8, 10, 13, 16 & 17 where the percentage of households generates waste in a large volume. Other municipal wards also generate various types of waste materials daily in a regular manner.

6.2 Collection of Waste

Man power and vehicles are mainly used for collection of solid waste. Generally, wastes those are generated by the households and other institutions, deposited either in the municipal dustbin or any particular place. Sometimes heap of wastes are found

to be deposited along the road. Now a days such practices become very much common to all urban centres.



Figure 6: Garbage collection and disposal vehicles.

In Bolpur town, clearance of garbage is done by Bolpur Municipality. The amount of solid waste collection is around 40 metric tonne per day. Every morning municipal sweepers are engaged for collection of waste as their routine work. For proper collection of garbage, municipality incorporated some vehicles (mainly tri-cycle van and tractor). These garbage clearing vehicles or tractors are assisted the sweepers. They collected garbage from different places and put them into the vehicles. This system is being conducted in all the municipal wards. The process is very much dynamic. The major advantage of this process is clearance of large amount of garbage for a larger area is possible within a short time. After collecting the garbage, usually dumped outside the town. As the waste management is concerned, these wastes need a treatment to make it eco-friendly. But the municipality has no such kind of treatment plant. Therefore, requirement of a treatment plant is necessary.

The following pie diagram shows the status of waste collection of Bolpur town:



Fig 7: Waste Collection Status in Total Municipal Area. (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

The above diagram indicates nature of waste collection in the total municipal area of Bolpur town. Here we can divide the nature of waste collection in the following three ways:

Regular: Clearing of garbage takes place every day by the municipality.

Irregular: In this case, the municipal sweepers used to clear the garbage not a regular manner but very much occasionally.

Uncollected: Clearing of garbage is never done by the municipality in some places.

According to socio-economic survey, around 40 percent people said that garbage is regularly cleared by the municipality. Around 30 percent people think, it is cleared very irregularly and rest 30 percent people said that waste is never collected. Such kind of practices are not expected from municipal authority. Any types of uncollected garbage cause diseases, emits odour, clogs the drain and above all deteriorates the urban quality and life style. Garbage free town always enrich the environmental quality.

6.3 Status of Waste Collection

If we give emphasize on more detailed study of the municipal survey report, then it will clearly showing the nature of waste collection and its percentage over all the municipal wards each and individually of Bolpur town.

The following multiple bar graph shows the mode of waste collection in percentage in individual wards:

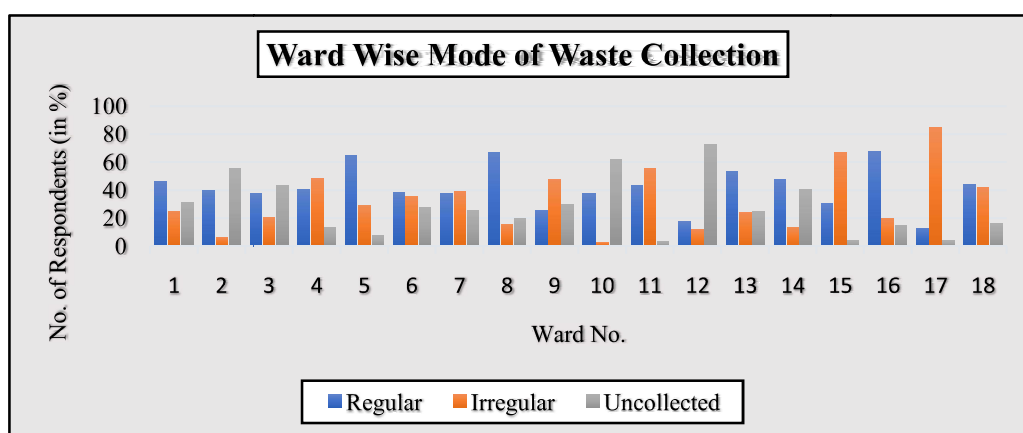


Figure 8: Ward wise mode of waste collection (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

The above diagram indicates nature or mode of waste collection in different municipal wards of Bolpur town. Here the mode of collection means either garbage is cleared regularly or irregularly or remains uncollected. In ward no. 5, 8 and 16 more than 60 percent people said, garbage is cleared regularly. But in case of ward no. 15 and 17 more than 60 percent people thinks that it is not cleared regularly that means it is very much irregular. In ward no. 17, where 85 percent people said that waste collection is totally irregular. But in ward no. 2, 10 and 12 more than 50 percent people said, garbage remains uncollected. If only ward no. 12 is taking into consideration, then it is found that the uncollected garbage is in a maximum level and the respondents were more than 70 percent against regular collection (based on socio-economic survey). So municipality should give more emphasis to those areas where garbage is uncollected as well as irregularly cleared.

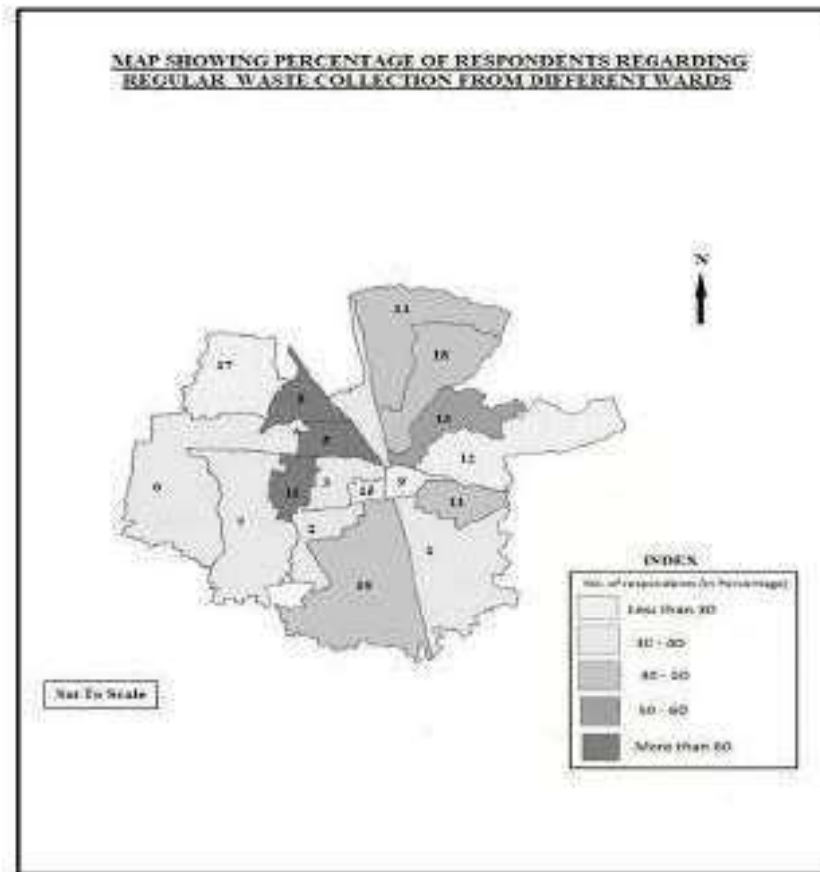


Figure 9: Choropleth map showing percentage of respondents regarding waste collection

A choropleth map is drawn on percentage of respondents regarding regular waste collection in different wards. It is shown in the map that ward no. 8,5,16 has the maximum respondents regarding regular waste collection. In the ward no. 10, 14, 18 has moderate response and in ward no. 15, 3, 17 has a meagre response regarding regular waste collection. It should be remembered that the heaps of garbage are much unhygienic and unhealthy for human health. Sometimes it is also seen that the domestic wastes are overflowing the bins and spread over the roads. Therefore, the municipality authority should very regular about the collection of wastes from dustbin and store them at a definite place like outside the town area at a far distance.

5.4 Time of Waste Collection

5.5 Under the following we can get an idea about time wise waste collection in the municipal area. In general, the municipal sweepers use to clear the garbage during morning. But in some municipal areas like Gurupally, Professor Colonyetc. (ward no. 6, 7, 8) which are considered as high-class residential wards, the clearance is conducted during afternoon and evening also. Rest of the areas are facilitated ones a day basically at morning. Sometimes few zones like bus stand area, bazar areas are ignored in case of waste collection.

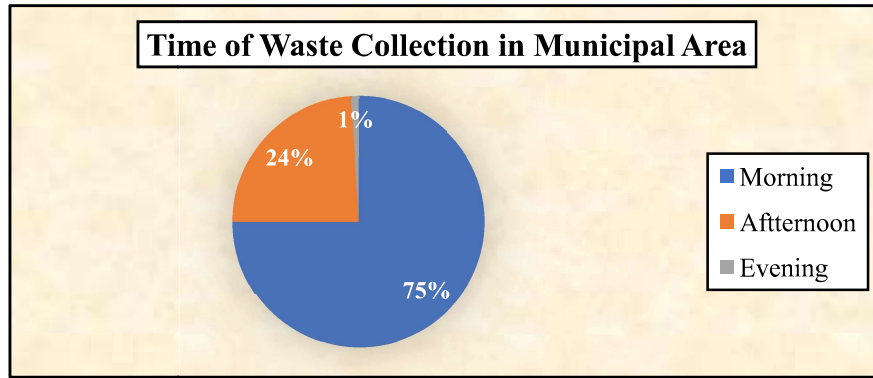


Figure 10: Time of waste collection in municipal area (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

Above diagram indicates waste collection in different time period. Generally, it is seen that most of the respondents i.e. more than 75 percent people said that garbage is cleared during morning. Where around 24 percent people responded that it is cleared in afternoon and a very little amount of garbage that is less than 1 percent people think waste is cleared in evening. Sanitation department of municipality should take an effective role to collect the garbage at the morning. Such kind of practice will help to keep the town clean, healthy and hygienic.

The following multiple bar graph shows time wise of waste collection in different wards of Bolpur town:

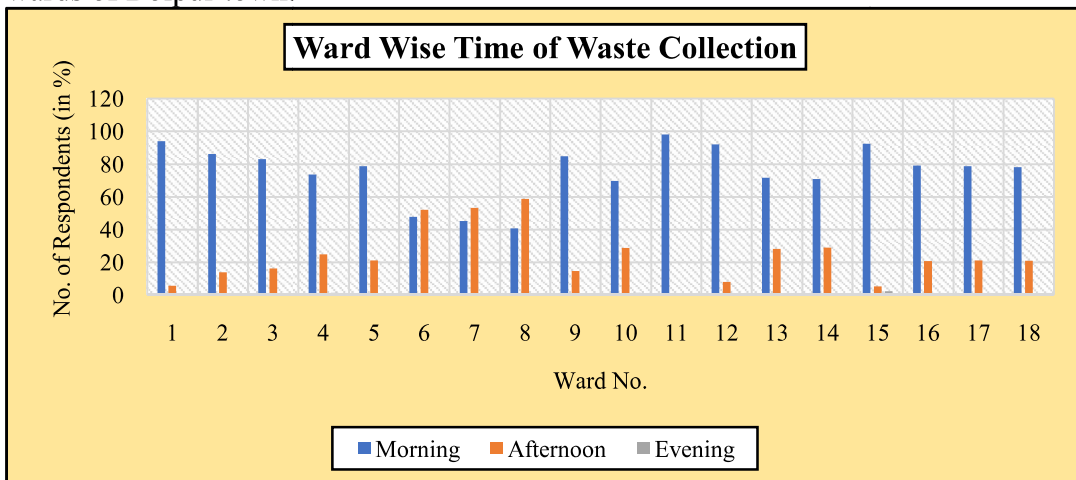


Figure 11: Ward wise time of waste collection

One thing is very much prominent from above diagram that is most of the waste is cleared in the morning from all the wards. At an average 75 percent people think garbage is collected during morning. In case of ward no. 11 where the success is highest and 98 percent people responds in favour of morning waste collection. But in ward no. 6, 7 & 8, where more than 50 percent people think garbage is cleared during afternoon. Only a very little percent of people think garbage is collected in evening (based on socio-economic survey). So municipal authority will give priority to those areas where garbage is not cleared during morning. They should assure to the citizens that 100 percent collection of waste in morning from all the municipal wards.

6.5 Doorstep Waste Collection

Doorstep collection means house to house collection of waste. It is an important parameter for waste management. To make the city clean and garbage free doorstep collection of waste from each household is necessary.

The following pie diagram shows doorstep waste collection in municipal level:

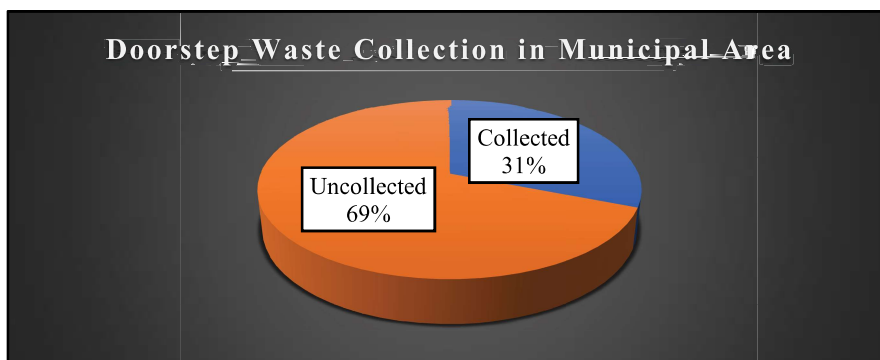


Figure 12: Doorstep waste collection in municipal area (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

The following multiple bar graph shows doorstep waste collection in different wards of Bolpur Municipality:

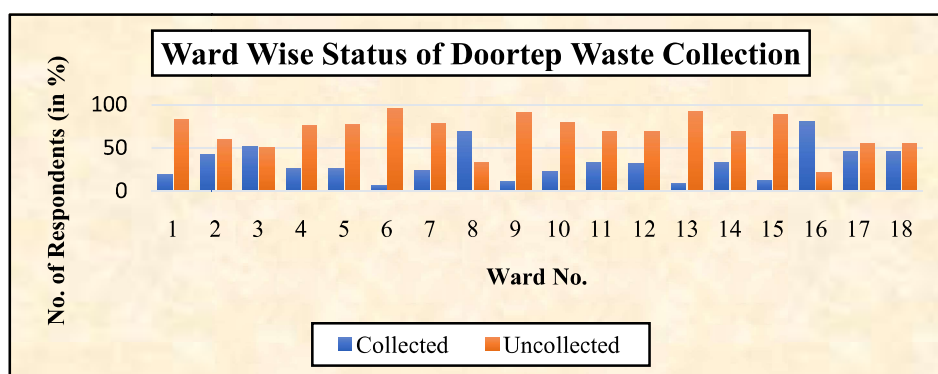


Figure 13: Ward wise status of doorstep waste collection

From above diagram it is cleared that doorstep waste collection is conducted in a low rate. It is not organized in an efficient manner. So, the rate of collection is least. In case of ward no. 1, 6, 9, 13 and 15 where less than 20 percent people think garbage is collected from door to door. In ward no. 6, response is disappointing where only 5.51 percent people gave positive response. Only in ward no. 16 where about 80 percent people think waste is collected from the households (based on socio-economic survey). Therefore, it is necessary to increase the level of efficiency of doorstep waste collection of the municipal sweepers. In this regard, it is worth to be mentioned that municipal authority had decided to provide a container to each household to store the domestic waste and then hand it over to municipal garbage collector. But this scheme has not got that much of success because of lack of people’s participation.

6.6 Segregation of Municipal Waste at Source

Segregation of waste is the key principle of waste management and to reduce the quantity of waste at the source. Only 19 percent of total generation get segregate at source.

The following pie diagram shows the percentage of segregation of municipal waste at source in Bolpur town:

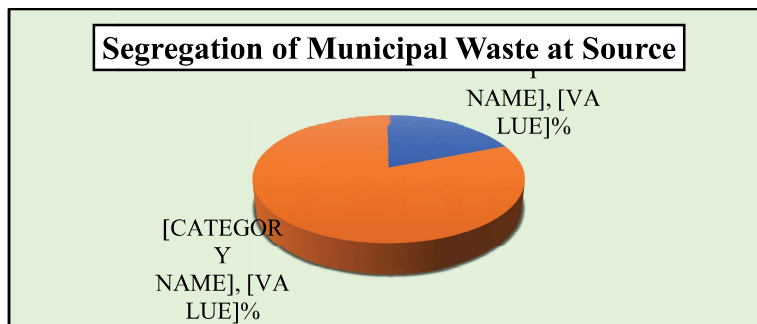


Figure 14: Segregation of municipal waste at source (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

The following table shows the quantity of segregation of waste at source by Bolpur Municipality:

Table 3: Gap between Waste Generation, Collection and Segregation

Waste Generation of Households	95 metric tonne/day
Waste Collection by Municipality	40 metric tonne/day
Waste Segregation at source	18.05 metric tonne/day (19% of total generation)

Source: Socio-Economic Survey and Analysis Report, BolpurMunicipality (2011)

In Bolpur Municipality 95 metric tonne waste generates every day. Where 40 metric tonne waste is collected daily that is around 42 percent of total generation. But only 19 percent waste is segregated at source regularly and the figure is about 18.05 metric tonne. So, it can be said that segregation of waste at source is very low in Bolpur town. But to reduce the quantity of waste at source it is essential to increase the level of segregation.

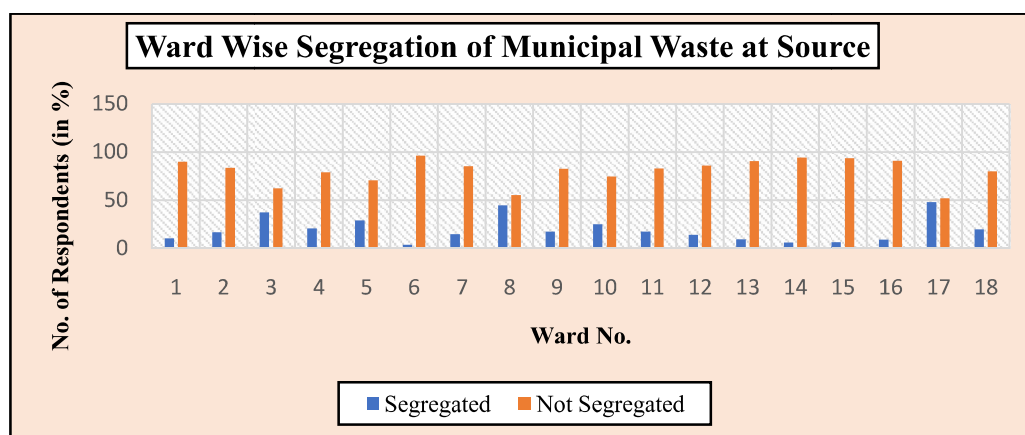


Figure 15: Ward wise segregation of municipal waste at source (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

From the above table, one thing is clear that the capacity of segregation of waste at source is very low. A very little portion of waste is segregated at source throughout the all municipal wards. Only in case of ward no. 8 & 17 the result is exceptional where more than 40 percent people think that waste is segregated at source. But in case of ward no. 6, 13, 14, 15 & 16 the respondent is below 10 percent. In these wards above 90 percent people said that waste is not segregated at source. So municipal

authority should give more importance regarding the capacity of waste segregation at source in different municipal wards.

6.7 Level of Satisfaction of Local People Regarding Waste Management

Questions were also put forward to the local residents of Bolpur town to know about their levels of satisfaction with the municipal services on waste collection.

Table 4: Satisfaction Index (Yen, Hall & Tan, 1975)

Level of Satisfaction	No. of satisfied respondents (<i>fs</i>)	No. of dissatisfied respondents (<i>d</i>)	Do not know	Total no. of respondents (<i>N</i>)	Satisfaction Index (<i>Is</i>) $= (fs - fd) / N$
Waste collection	342	190	8	540	0.28
Municipal service	216	319	5	540	-0.19
Dustbin clearance	324	206	10	540	0.22

Sample Size: 540

The following bar diagram shows the index of satisfaction with some of available facilities:

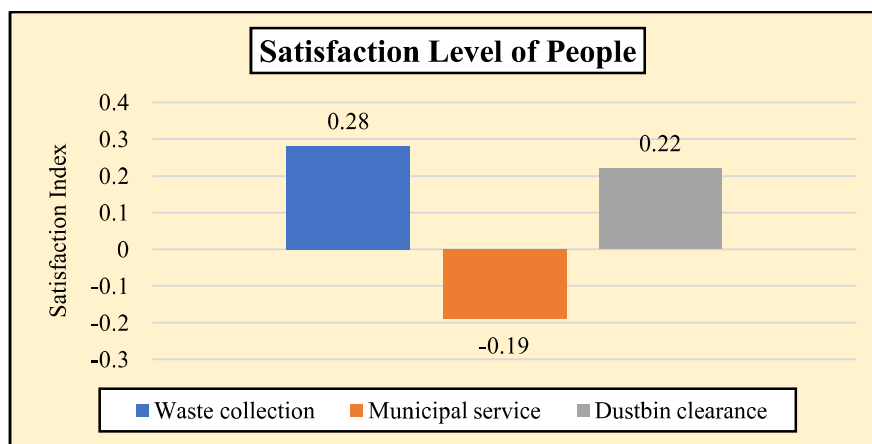


Figure 16: Level of Satisfaction (Source: Bolpur Municipality, 2011)

To evaluate the satisfaction level of the peoples, the index of satisfaction with some of available facilities has been calculated. This shows the strong and weak sides regarding some important and mandatory facilities. The value of this remains within +1 and -1.

As researcher I have selected some of the important facilities like, waste collection, municipal services and dustbin clearance. All of these activities are performed by Bolpur Municipality. In case of waste collection and dustbin clearance, the satisfaction index is 0.28 & 0.22 respectively. So, these two facilities are low to moderate which is provided by the municipality. Overall the local resident gives a positive response against these facilities. But if we consider the municipal services in terms of conservancy services, then the value of satisfaction index is -0.19 as for

majority of people shows a negative response. It is really a matter of concern. If we take the percentages then it is 59% people who are dissatisfied with municipal conservancy services. According to them, municipal services are not at a satisfactory level.

6. Major findings and problems associated with the Solid waste Management in Bolpur

- 1) The municipality garbage cleaning van does not come door to door for collecting the domestic wastes and the municipal workers like sweeper, garbage collector etc. are very much irregular in performing their duties.
- 2) The municipal workers those who are engaged with the waste management are not well trained. Most of the time, they have to rely on man power like tricycle van etc. There are lack of modern equipment and machineries regarding waste management.
- 3) The number of bins are not adequate for that much size of population. As a result, people used to through the garbage on the road, sometimes even into the drains.
- 4) Placement of bins is a serious issue in this town. People usually used to deny to install or place a bin around his house as it spreads odour. Sometimes allotment of bins driven by any political leader creates disparity.
- 5) As the urbanisation is marching in every nook of the town, therefore there is serious lack of sufficient area for open dump or landfill.
- 6) The number of people engaged with the waste collection and management and the allotted duty hours is not sufficient enough.
- 7) There is no scope for the segregation of waste at source as well as at dumping site. This is because of advanced equipment and trained workers.
- 8) Above all, the waste management system in Bolpur municipal town is not that much of updated regarding the modern and advanced society.

7. Suggestions and Recommendations

- 1) Urban local body should conduct awareness programmes and campaign among the peoples particularly in slum areas so that their perception towards waste management may change.
- 2) Training programme can be arranged for the municipal workers who are engaged with waste management so that they perform efficiently. Number of municipal workers regarding waste collection and management should also be made sufficient.
- 3) Mechanisation should be introduced in waste management. Advanced technology and machineries should be installed instead of tricycle van or other outdated vehicles.
- 4) Involvement of local community is another means to get rid off from poor practice of waste disposal. A collective participation with a common interest can make a better management.
- 5) Municipal authority should provide adequate bins, chemicals to the residents for keeping the environment clean and safe.
- 6) If sanitary landfill instead of open dumping, facility of segregation of waste, recycle of plastic and metallic waste etc. can be implemented properly, then Bolpur municipality will be a waste free healthy town.

8. Conclusion

We can stop neither urbanisation nor commercialisation as both the processes are the major driving force of an urban area. Therefore, waste generation is very much

natural as it is the inherent result of any human activity. Our ultimate aim should be like to minimise the ill effect of solid waste on human as well as on environment. Thus, waste management is required. From the above study, it is found that local Govt. i.e. Bolpur Municipal Authority is very much careless regarding waste management. On the other hand, population is also increasing day by day. To reach the goal of cent percent waste collection, their transportation and disposal, treatment municipal authority would first need to prepare a proper plan which will identify the quantity of waste generated in the whole area. Authority should demarcate few areas outside the town for dumping or landfill and invest more on waste management purpose. From the study, we have found that plastic is the major solid waste in Bolpur. If it can be recycled or used as resource, then a large percentage of waste can be managed. But above all, people's participation is most necessary. We should through the waste at the right place instead of on the road or into the drains. We can also utilise the ease of social media to make the people aware regarding impact of solid waste. So, from the above discussion, it can be conclude that though waste management is very poor here in true sense but a positive vibes with collective participation may change the situation.

9. Acknowledgement

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