

## DIRECTOR'S DESK

The Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS), India has been endorsing and manifesting the development spectrum of Eastern India through its Chapter of “Purvodaya”. The policy “Mission Purvodaya” aims to leverage eastern India as a primary domain of focus and development, as the region itself holds the capacity of taking India to newer heights of congruence and correspondence to greater multilateral platforms and intrinsic engagements with neighboring nations. Even though the concept has started with emphasis on the creation of an integrated steel hub encompassing the states like Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and parts of Andhra Pradesh in India for the transformation of crude steel to value added steel, the mission is much beyond this framework and will undoubtedly establish a holistic regional harmony in South Asia and beyond.

The Institute through various activities, research work within the Chapter and the English/Odia Bi-Monthly has laid the groundwork over a year to validate how Purvodaya, a land with an enviable historical legacy, religious connectivity and ancient trade routes can become a larger platform for new age India to facilitate transnational connectivity, cross border supply chain, up to date transportation, e-commerce integration as well as border infrastructure and mitigate operational challenges including small-scale insurgencies, migration, environmental stress and like.

The given edition through a range of diversified articles highlights how the policy can become a vital aid for the country to build diplomatic partnerships as well as physical connectedness with its partners in Southeast Asia and secondly how Purvodaya through a multipronged approach, support ‘Act East’ and become an efficient means of collaboration with ASEAN members, states like Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, as well as multilateral forums like Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal (BBIN), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

Perusing this will definitely rouse the drooping spirit.

— Arindam Mukherjee, Director, ISCS, India



Dreamstime

## HOW THE PURVODAYA MISSION CATALYSES INDIA'S VISION FOR ITS EAST, DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

**Dr. Shrabana Barua\***

2023 is an important year for India. Its position as a global leader is being tested as it chairs both the G-20 and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) forums, culminating into the respective Summits to be held in 2023. At the same time, India's increased engagements with its Eastern neighbourhood resulted into its relationship with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) being elevated to the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) level in November 2022. Further, India overtook the UK to become the fifth largest economy in September 2022, is the second most populous nation in the world and is the 'mother of democracy', as Prime Minister Narendra Modi puts it. As India's international posture improves by the day, there is a need to synchronize domestic policies that not just compliment India's vision of the world, but also catalyse it to have greater impact. One such policy of the Indian Government at home is the Purvodaya Mission, an affiliate of India's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' programme, which not only aligns with India's foreign policy vision for its Eastern neighbourhood, such as Act East Policy (AEP), but has the potential to accelerate progress within it.

## **Purvodaya led by the Steel Sector**

On 12 January 2020, the Purvodaya mission was launched under the Ministry of Steel, Government of India. As Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel, Mr Dharmendra Pradhan noted during the launch in Kolkata, Purvodaya is “a new chapter which will script the rise of eastern India by accelerated development of steel sector through an integrated steel hub.” But what really is the Purvodaya mission? Within a narrow understanding, Purvodaya is a scheme that recognizes the potential of India’s natural resources, such as iron ore, coking coal, chromite, bauxite and dolomite in the Eastern states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and northern parts of Andhra Pradesh. It is a vision that believes that the socio-economic growth in the Eastern states in particular and India’s march towards being a USD 5 trillion economy in general, can be achieved by harnessing the steel capacity of the Eastern states. This alone can push ahead the numbers envisioned in the National Steel Policy of India by 75%, while 66.6% comprising 200MT of steel capacity expected by 2030-31 can come from the East itself.

The next question that comes to mind is – how can this be achieved? Under Purvodaya, a proposed Integrated Steel Hub incorporates 3 aspects for achieving the vision outlined. One, to make setting up of greenfield steel projects easy. Greenfield projects are those that begin on fresh sites where no prior structures exist. India has a large demand for steel as it surges ahead towards a phase of Industry 4.0. Further, India’s National Infrastructure Pipeline has projects worth Rs 102 lakh crore lined up in the roadways, railways, inland waterway and other sectors. As such, investment in greenfield steel projects have also witnessed foreign investments since the 2000s, but not without hurdles. The case of POSCO in Odisha is a befitting example, where land acquisition and environmental clearance problems halted the project for long, where the South Korean company

invested. The Purvodaya scheme aims to increase the steel production in India by making it easier to set up and invests in greenfield projects. Two, to develop steel clusters near integrated steel plants and demand centres. In this regard, the role that Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) plays has been highlighted by the Government. SAIL has 5 integrated steel plants that it owns and operates, namely Bhilai, Bokaro, Burnpur, Durgapur and Rourkela. In December 2020, visiting the IISCO Steel Plant (ISP at Burnpur) and the Durgapur Steel Plant, Mr Pradhan stated that Purvodaya will help unleash the true potential of these steel plants and that “these integrated and modernized steel plants must work towards creating a sustainable production model which also facilitates the growth of downstream industries in and around the region.” Three, transform logistics and utilities infrastructure. It is expected that integrated steel hub will spur development in various other sectors and push towards upgradation of social infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, skill-centers, etc. in surrounding areas, including in the Northeast Region (NER) of India. Consequently, for instance, the NER which has received boost in its infrastructural developments, through projects under the Ministry of DoNER and otherwise, gains from Purvodaya. At the same time, schemes such as the North East Special Infrastructure Scheme (NESIDS), which focuses on both physical and social infrastructure creates demands for the steel sector. This allows the Purvodaya mission to dovetail well into other policies and catalyse progress.

### **Purvodaya’s broader vision**

At first glance, Purvodaya appears as a scheme that is confined to one sector, that of steel. However, the manifestations of focusing on this sector are multipronged. At a broader level therefore, Purvodaya must be read as a mission which acknowledges that India’s development can be led by states in the East. It helps the idea of ‘look east’ to better transform into the policy of Act East, where the East and NER of India are seen as arrowheads for engaging with India’s Eastern neighbourhood. This means, to implement upon plans that will make India



self-reliant and convert it into a manufacturing hub in the coming times, into a region that will attract more investments and tourism and one that can find efficient means of collaboration with states such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, ASEAN members as well as multilateral forums such as Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal (BBIN), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), etc.

To elaborate, one can look at the energy sector. India is the third largest energy consumer today. Also, given that climate action and accelerated implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDG) remain part of India's G-20 agenda, focus on the energy sector is important. To fulfill India's energy needs in line with global norms, New Delhi has come up with the concept of 'Panchamrit' aimed at five targets –increase non-fossil capacity to 500GW by 2030; meet 50% of energy requirements by 2030 through renewable sources; reduce carbon emissions by 1 billion tonne till 2030; reduce carbon intensity of its economy by more than 45%; and, achieve its net zero target by 2070. In this regard, focusing on the hydropower potential that NER holds, which is almost 40% of the country's potential, to increase its share in renewable energy production is pertinent. Even prior to the Purvodaya mission, the North East Council (NEC) has worked on 7 hydro/ thermal

projects, with a total installed capacity of 694.50 MW, adding about 30% of the current installed capacity in the region. Additionally, under the BBIN framework, talks are underway to consider integrated power transmission grid, given that power transmission links already exist between India-Bangladesh (Bheramara-Baharpur and Comilla-Tripura), India-Nepal (more than six) and India-Bhutan (about eight). With Purvodaya in place, it is expected that building of hydropower projects and related infrastructure will increase demand for steel as well as boost India's hydropower collaborations with its neighbouring countries thus.

### Conclusion

One of the reasons for the launch of China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) in 2013 was the over-capacity in the steel (and cement) industry. Gradually, as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was expanded, with six branches each, and connectivity corridors sprawling across estimated 300 projects, it was expected that by 2020 China will be left with only 32.1 and 58 million tons of crude steel. Today, while China continues to be the largest producer of crude steel, India has replaced Japan as the world's second largest producer, at a time when it is holding global leadership positions. This translates to the fact that opportunities are lined up in ample, to transform India into a country with improved domestic consumption, aimed at development and facilitation of efficient manufacturing environment within the country, as well as become a global exporter of steel and related products. This will further push India into the path of self-reliance that it advocates, along with catalysing multi-sectoral growth within and beyond the country. For this, the Eastern states of India have found a means through the Purvodaya mission to lead India's development story at a time when the country is commemorating its 75 years of Independence. The point however is to analyse the Purvodaya mission not simply as a scheme focusing on the steel industry, but a broader mission that has the potential to catapult India's East into the world map with time.

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Dreamstime

*Terminal of the Port of Haldia, West Bengal*

## WEST BENGAL: CATALYSING INDIA'S INDO-PACIFIC OUTREACH

**Soumya Bhowmick\***

China's increasing economic importance in the last decade have aptly coincided with the changing viewpoints in New Delhi's geoeconomic domains with foreign policy frameworks like 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East Policy' (AEP), as well as initiatives to interact with the larger Indo-Pacific region. These foreign policy advancements highlight the nation's attempts to build diplomatic partnerships and physical connectedness with its partners in Southeast and East Asia, by considering new realities and challenging situations, especially in the post-pandemic world. India's foreign engagement at the sub-national levels, particularly with the neighbouring countries, will have a significant impact on the operationalisation of these efforts. West Bengal's strategic location (see Map 1) may operate as a starting point for the implementation of India's expansion to the East. Through connectivity networks such roads, rail, and maritime channels - domestic objectives and geopolitical aspirations need to be reconciled.

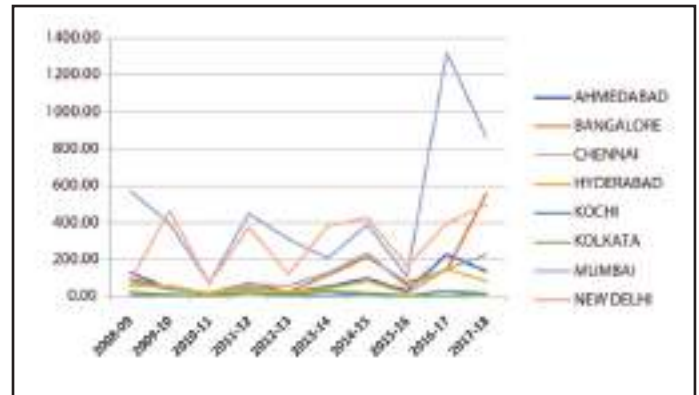
Map 1: West Bengal's Strategic Location



Source: Encyclopedia Britannica

West Bengal shares borders with Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh; in addition to the states of Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa, Sikkim, and Assam. It also has maritime relations with Myanmar and Thailand. In terms of India's interconnectedness with its Eastern and Southeastern neighbours, Kolkata is the largest and closest metropolis. As a result, even though the Northeast Region (NER) forms the Easternmost part of the country, it is West Bengal that connects the NER to Central India in assisting the country's Act East Policy (AEP), notably in terms of the last-mile connections. Despite Kolkata having an enormous natural and human resource base, with low living costs, the foreign direct investments (FDI) in this part of the country remain substantially lower than the other significant centres in India (see figure 1).

Figure 1: FDI Inflow into Reserve Bank of India's Regional Offices (in INR billion)



Source: Authors' own; data from Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India

A number of initiatives have been launched to link India with Southeast Asia, including the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Corridor and the Chilahati-Haldibari Rail Link, all of which depend on West Bengal as a key linkage point. Additionally, it is not impossible to imagine the India-Bangladesh train lines being extended to Myanmar and then on to Thailand, Laos, Singapore, Cambodia, and Vietnam. This will make Bengal actively involved in achieving the 3Cs of India's international affairs: Connectivity, Commerce, and Cultural commonalities. These connections are interlinked in a variety of ways: for example, improving connectivity between Bangladesh and India will have positive externalities on the NER.

The North Bengal Region (NBR) has contributed to the development of the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) sub-region even before the emergence of multidimensional networks of connectivity. The short "chicken's neck" corridor that the NBR shares with Bhutan, NER to the East, Nepal to the West, and Bangladesh to the Southeast has been beneficial to the region's commerce for many years. In the same vein, West Bengal's participation in the expansion of AEP can only strengthen the state's economy by boosting jobs and tax income. By strengthening its connections with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation

(BIMSTEC) economies on a physical, commercial, socioeconomic, energy, and cultural level, Bengal can increase its participation in the AEP.

Today, Nepal and Bhutan conduct a sizable amount of business with India. Subject to the elimination of the numerous tariff and non-tariff barriers, the BBIN project has the potential to grow into a robust regional market. The respective nations signed the BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement (BBIN-MVA) in 2015 as a step to facilitate the full potential of trade and people-to-people connectivity fostering stronger sub-regional cooperation. Even while such efforts may present prospects, Bengal may not be able to profit from them for several reasons. For instance, areas in NBR lack adequate infrastructure (Land Customs Stations and banking services at border crossings) and have poor levels of economic productivity (neglect of resource-linked advantages such as tea and tourism both of which hold immense potential for these districts). Additionally, unrestricted migration of illegal immigrants across borders is caused by the same insufficient infrastructure and inadequate securitisation in the area. If programmes like the BBIN-MVA are successfully implemented, it would spur growth in areas that have mostly stayed isolated for decades. Robust industrial growth would be attracted to the BBIN sub-region as a consequence of the reduction in transportation and energy costs as well as increased availability of inexpensive labour and capital.

### **Bay of Bengal and the Kolkata Port**

In addition to land connections, sea connectivity and trade are essential for strengthening India's connections with its neighbours. Like the larger Indo-Pacific, the Bay of Bengal (BoB) has attracted growing geopolitical attention from regional and extra-regional entities in recent decades. The Bay has played a significant role in linking the subcontinent and the neighbouring areas to the East all the way up to the Southern coast of China, notably during the 16th century. It is especially crucial for the ports on India's Eastern coast. The

current refocus is intrinsically tied to elements like China's rise in the region and the safeguarding of maritime communication sea lanes, particularly for trade, including energy. It is true that the Bay has emerged from obscurity to recover its geostrategic space, and the littoral nations have attempted to adjust to the ensuing policy imperatives.

The port of Kolkata was quite important throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Suez Canal's opening in 1869 increased the port's significance for British trade with the rest of the world. However, following India's independence, Mumbai, Kandla, and Chennai, as well as Vishakhapatnam, gained the top spots in cargo handling from Kolkata. Since Nepal and Bhutan—two important landlocked customers—were assigning more than half of their cargo shares to ports in Bangladesh in 2013, the Kolkata port's viability became even more jeopardised.

Bengal can gain from investing in a deep-sea port and get beyond the limitations of the riverine ports of Kolkata and Haldia in terms of depth and routine dredging, even if the Kolkata and Haldia ports are the closest points of entrance and exit for third-country commerce for Nepal and Bhutan. Similar to other significant ports on the Eastern coast of India like Vishakhapatnam and Kattupalli, the Kolkata port has fallen behind in terms of infrastructural growth and operations. To improve the Kolkata port's capacity to draw business and manage heavier loads of cargo, the provincial government must take a proactive role in programmes like the Sagarmala project. In this regard, the Sagar deep-sea Port, the Tajpur Port, and the little Kulpi Port are all expected to increase trade statistics in Bengal.

### **Other International and Domestic Initiatives**

Recognising the economic viability and geostrategic significance of resurrecting maritime interoperability linkages, India and Myanmar finalised their coastal shipping agreement in late 2020, allowing Indian ships to travel via the Kaladan river interlink to Mizoram via Sittwe Harbour on the Bay of Bengal. Furthermore, the Sittwe port will have a direct connection to the Kolkata port, enabling West

Bengal to benefit from the opportunities provided by the Sagarmala project. Inland waterway connection, which permits the controlled bilateral use of rivers for the movement of commodities, must also be mentioned as an extension of maritime and coastal commerce connectivity. The Jal Marg Vikas Project, which will connect Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh with Haldia in West Bengal, is currently one of the largest waterways projects in India. It would also result in the creation of thousands of jobs in the area.

A important method for establishing cross-border connectivity ties is the India-Bangladesh Agreement on Inland Water Trade and Transit, which stipulates a 50:50 share ratio based on tonnage for inter-country freight transit. Bhutan and other

third nations intend to utilise the Chittagong port via India's National Waterways 1 and 2. An encouraging move in this regard is the recent 2019 MOU inked by the seaport trusts of Chennai, Vishakhapatnam, and Kolkata with the Thai port of Ranong.

Despite the advantages of its location, West Bengal has not yet reached its full potential. Governments at the state and federal levels must thus modify their strategies for dealing with one another and create a framework for an operation that is more productive and based on the principles of effective paradiplomacy. At the scales of cities, states, nations, and larger regional structures, development and integration are expected to take place concurrently as the world adjusts to the evolving landscape and implications of politics, trade, and technology in the post-pandemic world.

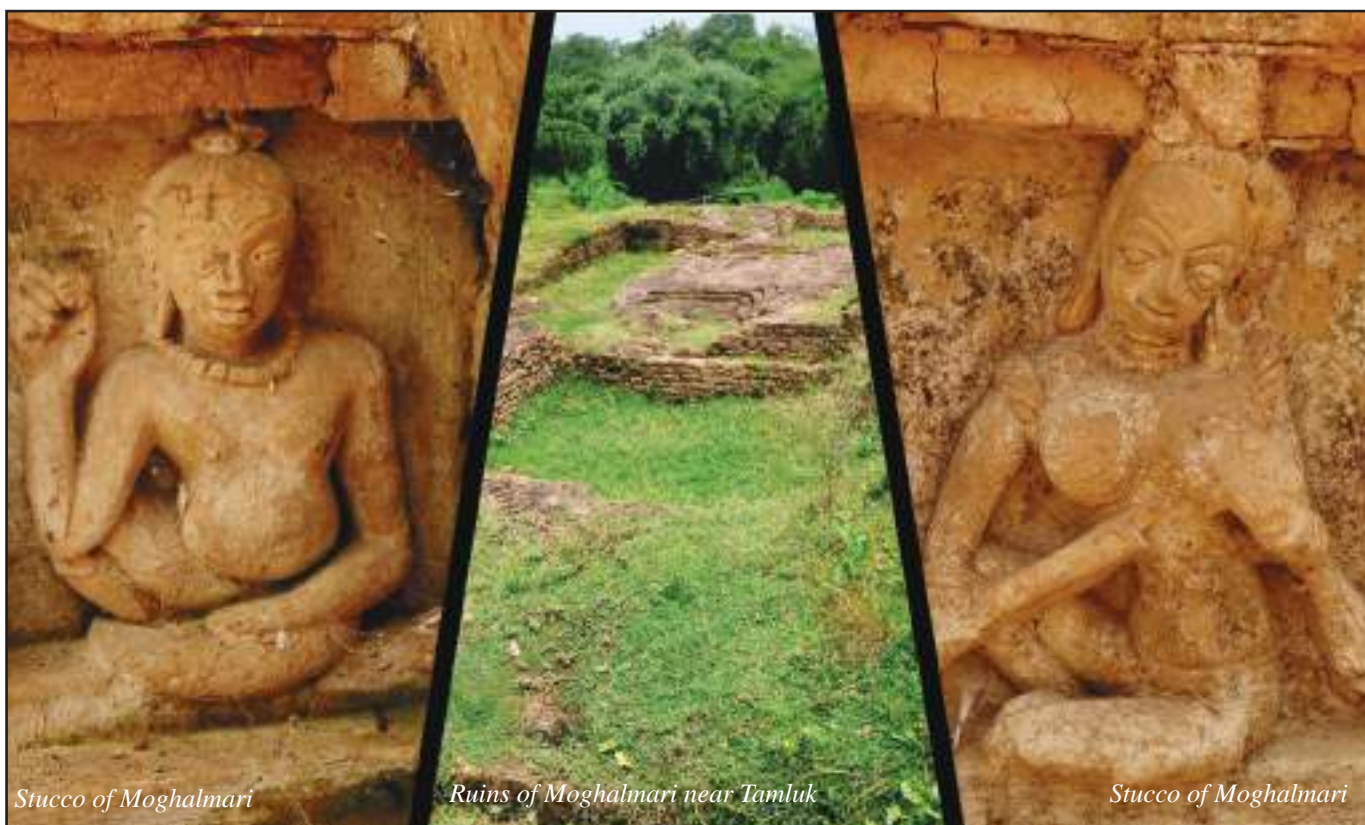


Dreamstime

*The gate of Druk Yul from Phuentsholing, Bhutan towards Jaigaon, West Bengal*

*\* Associate Fellow, ORF, Kolkata*





*Stucco of Moghalmari*

*Ruins of Moghalmari near Tamluk*

*Stucco of Moghalmari*

Heerak Nandy

## THE ANCIENT PORT OF *TAMRALIPTI* : INDIA'S WINDOW TO THE BAY AND BEYOND

**Dr. Kashshaf Ghani\***

Much like the rugged passes which penetrate the towering mountain ranges guarding India's northern frontiers, the sea ports dotting India's long coastline act as windows – opening up to the vast oceans and the civilizations that lies beyond. More than being just hubs of commerce and immigration, ancient ports played a critical role as facilitators of India's civilizational influence on the east and west. Bengal marks the easternmost limit of the Indian coastline, one of the longest in the world. The major port of this region – Tamralipti – has historically also been the most significant, till it came to be rivaled by newer ones spanning the Coromandel coast.

In our times Tamralipti, is identified with the town of Tamluk in the Midnapore district of West Bengal. It carries an enviable historical legacy going as far back as 5th century BCE, mentioned in important literary works and epics of India and Ceylon like the Mahaharata (3rd century BCE), Mahavamsa (5th century CE), Dipavamsa (3rd to 4th century CE), and the Dasakumaracharitha of Dandin (7th to 8th centuries CE), among others. Tamralipti was the gateway for

traveling to Ceylon, Burma, Java, Sumatra, as far as China in the east, and the Persian Gulf in the west. It is no surprise then, that the port served as a trading emporium in ancient Bengal, where exotic items were exchanged, and people from the east and the west mingled with each other. Hence the port is mentioned by the Roman scholar Pliny (d. 79), the Greek geographer Ptolemy (d. 170), Chinese pilgrims like Fa-Hien (d. 422), and Chinese travelers like Xuanzang also known as Hiuen Tsang (d. 664). Likewise the Jataka stories mention people traveling from various parts of India via Tamralipti to Ceylon and Burma.

Internally, Tamralipti was linked via an elaborate road network to all major towns of north and northwest India – Champa, Rajagriha, Pataliputra, Vaishali, Varanasi, Kausambi, Mathura, Pushkalavati, and Taxila. Geographers hint at a possibility that this route extended beyond Taxila, in modern-day Peshawar, towards Babylon, in modern-day Iraq. The famous royal physician Jivaka, who also treated Buddha, followed this route from Taxila to Rajagriha.

Tamralipti also supported the rise of Buddhism in the Gangetic region from 6th century BCE. Historically religious establishments have enjoyed generous patronage from merchants and trading communities who sought blessings, teachings and social legitimacy from monks and saints. Donations from businessmen and traders visible through the numerous finely-built Buddhist monasteries (viharas) in the entire Gangetic region as far as eastern Bengal, along with gifts of land, are material evidence of this deep social bond.

The port of Tamralipti played a critical role in the spread of Buddhism beyond Indian shores, through diplomatic links between the Mauryan Empire and Ceylon whose principle port was Jambukola. Embassies were regularly exchanged between the Mauryan Emperor Asoka (d. 232 BCE) and the King of Ceylon Devanampiya Tissa (d. 207 BCE). The relationship was further consolidated through thriving trade and commerce. Asoka received from

Ceylon priceless jewels, precious stones, and pearls. He in turn sent a decorated fan, diadem, sword, parasol, shoes, turban, ointments, yellow sandal wood, special herbs, rice, and pitchers filled with Ganga water.

When Asoka embarked on his mission to spread Buddhism within India and beyond he sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra to Ceylon via Tamralipti. The journey took close to two weeks,



*Terracotta goddess of C. 100 BCE was found in 1883, from a river bank at the ancient port of Tamralipti. Source: Wikimedia Commons*

and they carried a sapling of the Bodhi tree, under which Buddha attained enlightenment; symbolic of Buddhism being planted in Ceylon. Thereafter Tamralipti developed into an important centre for Buddhism, and regularly carried Buddhist monks and missionaries to Suvarnabhumi (The Golden Land), the ancient name for modern South-East Asia.

The Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien who passed through Tamralipti in the 4th century on his way back to China saw this port as a flourishing centre for trade and commerce dealing in goods like cotton, silk, spices, aromatic plants, tortoise shells, pearls and herbal oils. The volume of trade not only contributed towards bolstering the economy of the Gupta Empire (4th to 6th century CE), but secured great social prestige for the trading class at Tamralipti. They were directly involved in the administration of the Gupta Empire through the institution of the merchant guilds. These trading guilds enjoyed such social influence that they were allowed tax-free status for undertaking foreign trade. In turn, these guilds engaged in activities of social welfare by distributing the surplus wealth generated from trade to the villages and urban centers.

The creation and sustenance of a vibrant cultural world around Tamralipti can be glimpsed through the writings of travelers who stayed in this region as Buddhist pilgrims and scholars, but also as students of Sanskrit language and literature. Buddhist and Hindu institutions which thrived across Bengal regularly attracted scholars and students from Ceylon, Southeast Asia and the Far East. These institutions attracted continuous patronage through the wealth generated from trade. The social world of the elite traders suggest a luxurious lifestyle in large houses with gardens and water bodies, served by female attendants, use of fragrant ointments and exotic perfumes along with other substances. These luxurious items were regularly imported from East and Southeast Asia as they were in demand not only among the wealthy but the royalty as well.

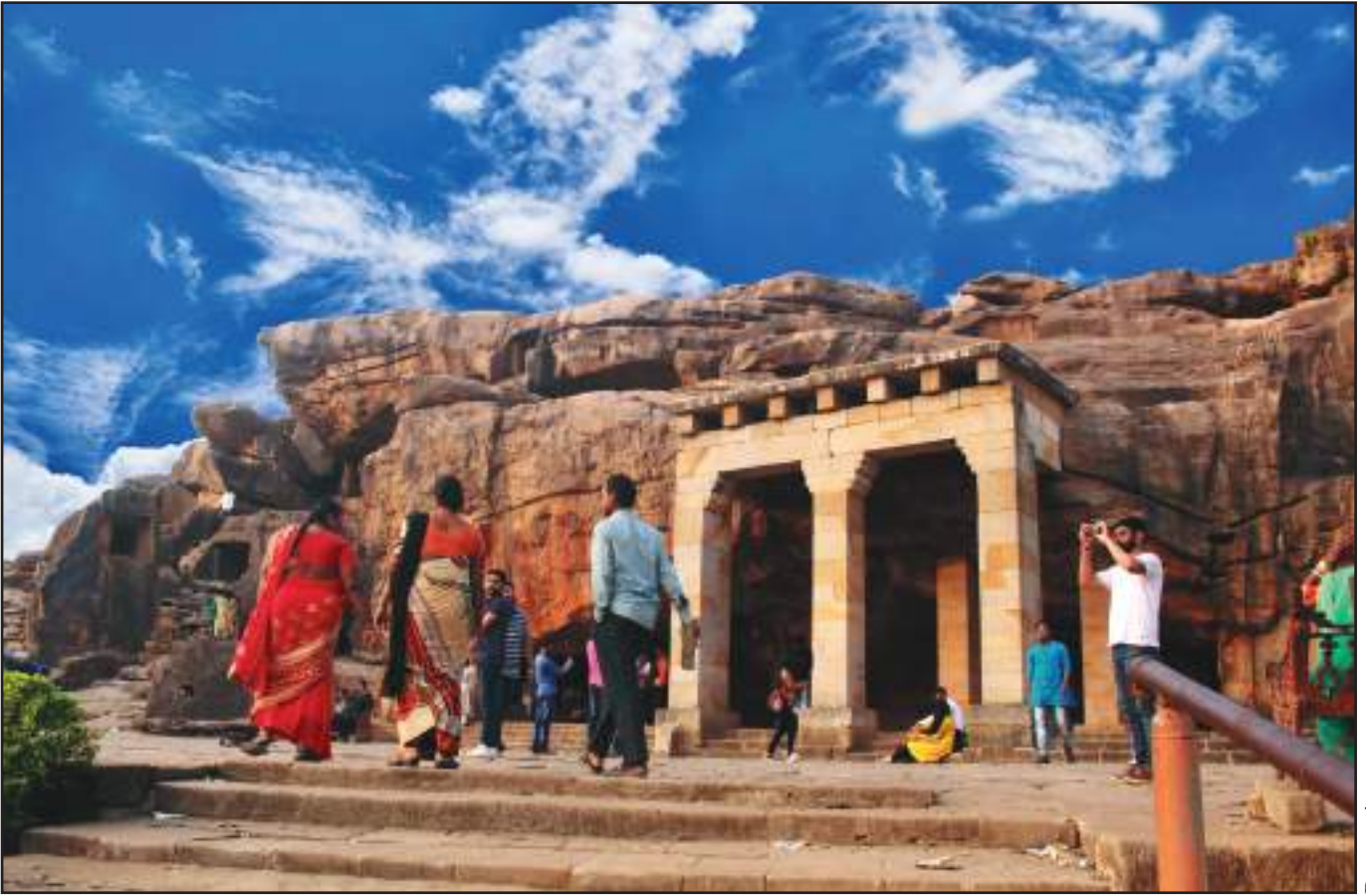
The twilight of Tamralipti arrived in the 8th century through a confluence of multiple factors – socio-political as well as geographical. As the later Gupta rulers found themselves incapable in asserting political authority similar to their predecessors, the Empire disintegrated into competing polities. The Gangetic Valley became a political battleground where weaker powers were devoured by their stronger neighbors, only to be defeated by even stronger ones. The situation is compared to the classical *matsyanyay*, where the big fishes in a pond eat the smaller ones in a competition to survive. The direct casualty of this instability was trade and commerce, seen through the diminishing silver coins from this period. Complementing this chaos was the rise in Arakanese piracy in the coastal areas of Bengal, which affected the movement of Buddhist pilgrims and scholars. The Sena dynasty being devotees of the Shaiva cult carried an unfavorable, rather hostile, attitude towards Buddhism, leading to the desertion of numerous monasteries. Combined with this, the death blow to Tamralipti was the change in the natural course of the river, and the resultant drying of the rivers Saraswati and Bhagirathi – a phenomenon connected to the formation of the alluvial plains in deltaic South Bengal. This ecological setback shifted trading activities to the ports of neighboring Orissa.



*Mughalmari ruins*

Heerak Nandy

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Dreamstime

Udaygiri cave in odisha

# ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନର ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ତ୍ରିଭୁଜ

Lakshmi Narayan Mallick\*

ସ୍ଥାପତ୍ୟ, ଭାସ୍କର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ହସ୍ତଶିଳ୍ପ, ଚିତ୍ରକଳା, ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ଓ ନୃତ୍ୟ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ପରମ୍ପରା ସହିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ହେଉଛି ଏକ ଉନ୍ନତ ଏବଂ ବିବିଧ କଳାତ୍ମକ କୃତିତ୍ୱର ରାଜ୍ୟ। ଏକ ସୁଦୀର୍ଘ ଐତିହାସିକ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟାର ପରିଣାମ ସ୍ୱରୂପ ଏହାର ଜନଜୀବନ, କଳା ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକ, ଦାର୍ଶନିକ ଏବଂ ମାନବବାଦୀ ଭାବଧାରା ସମ୍ମିଳିତ କରି ଏକ ସଭ୍ୟ, ସଂଯତ, ମାର୍ଜିତ ଜୀବନର ସର୍ବଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ମାର୍ଗ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରିଆସିଛି କେଉଁ ଆବହମାନ କାଳରୁ। ଏହି ଐଶ୍ୱର୍ଯ୍ୟମୟ ଐତିହ୍ୟ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ଧରି ଆକୃଷ୍ଟ କରିଛି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକମାନଙ୍କୁ ବିଶ୍ୱର କୋଣ ଅନୁକୋଣରୁ। ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟଭରା ଆକର୍ଷଣୀୟ ନଦୀ ନାଳ, ହ୍ରଦ ସମୂହ, ପାହାଡ଼ପର୍ବତ, ଗୁମ୍ଫା ଶିଳାଲେଖ, ଜଙ୍ଗଲ, ଝରଣା, ବନ୍ୟଜନ୍ତୁ, ଜଳପ୍ରପାତ, ଉଷ୍ଣ ପ୍ରସ୍ରବଣ, ବିସ୍ତୃତ ସାମୁଦ୍ରିକ ତଟ ସହ ମନ୍ଦିର ସମୂହର ଉକୃଷ୍ଟ କାରୁକାର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ଦେବ ଦେବୀଙ୍କ ଆସ୍ଥାନ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନର ସ୍ଥିତିକୁ ସୁଦୃଢ଼ ଓ ସମୃଦ୍ଧଶାଳୀ କରିରଖିଛି।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ମାନଚିତ୍ରରେ ପୁରୀ, କୋଣାର୍କ ଏବଂ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ତ୍ରିଭୁଜ ଭାବରେ ସବୁ ସମୟର ଆକର୍ଷଣର କେନ୍ଦ୍ରବିନ୍ଦୁ ହୋଇ ରହିଆସିଛି। ବୀରତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଐତିହାସିକ ଗାଥା, ଅସଂଖ୍ୟ ମନ୍ଦିରର ପ୍ରସ୍ତର ଗାତ୍ରରେ କୁଶଳୀ ଶିଳ୍ପୀର ନିହାଣ ମୁନରେ କଥା କହୁଥିବା ପାଷାଣ ପ୍ରତିମା ଓ ଜୀବନ୍ତ କାରୁକାର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ବିସ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବେଳାଭୂମିରେ ସୁନୀଳ ଢେଉ ଓ ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣାଭ ବାଲୁକାରାଶି, ନୈସର୍ଗିକ ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟର ଭଣ୍ଡାର ଏହି ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ତ୍ରିଭୁଜର ବିଶେଷତ୍ୱ ଯାହା ଭାରତର ଅନ୍ୟ କୌଣସି ପ୍ରାନ୍ତରେ ବିରଳ କହିଲେ ଅତ୍ୟୁକ୍ତି ହେବନାହିଁ।

ସର୍ବମତ ଓ ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ସମନ୍ୱୟ ଏବଂ ବିଶ୍ୱ ମୈତ୍ରୀ ଓ ଭାତୃତ୍ୱର ବାଣୀ ପ୍ରଚାର କରୁଥିବା ଜଗତର ନାଥ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କର ଅଧିଷ୍ଠାନ ପୁଣ୍ୟ ପବିତ୍ର ଧାମ ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ପୁରୀ ବହୁ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ଧରି ଧର୍ମୀୟ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନର ଏକ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ସ୍ଥାନ ଅଧିକାର କରିଥିବା ସଂଗେ ସଂଗେ ବଙ୍ଗୋପସାଗରର ସୁଦୀର୍ଘ ମନୋରମ ବେଳାଭୂମି, ପରିବେଶ ଅନୁକୂଳ ସମ୍ମାନଜନକ 'ବୁ ପ୍ଲାନ' ମାନ୍ୟତାପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ୮୭୦ ମିଟର ସ୍ତୂଣ୍ଡାଭ ବେଳାଭୂମି ପ୍ରକୃତିପ୍ରେମୀ ଓ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟସନ୍ଧାନୀ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକମାନଙ୍କୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆକର୍ଷିତ କରିଆସୁଛି।

ବୈଷ୍ଣବ, ଶୈବ, ଶାକ୍ତ, ସୌର, ଗାଣପତ୍ୟ, ଦ୍ୱୈତବାଦୀ, ଅଦ୍ୱୈତବାଦୀ, ବୌଦ୍ଧ, ଜୈନ, ଶିଖ, ନାଗା ଆଦି ବହୁ ମତାବଳମ୍ବୀ ମାନଙ୍କର ଉପାସନା ସ୍ଥଳ, ମଠ, ମନ୍ଦିର ଓ ସର୍ବୋପରି ବିଶ୍ୱ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ନିମିତ୍ତ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ଦେଶବିଦେଶରୁ ଲକ୍ଷ ଲକ୍ଷ ସାଧୁସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାସୀ, ଭକ୍ତ, ଯାତ୍ରୀ, ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକଙ୍କର ଗହଳି ଲାଗିଥାଏ ପୁରୁଷୋତ୍ତମ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ।

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜାତିର ଗୌରବର ପ୍ରତିବିମ୍ବ ତଥା ବିଶ୍ୱ ଐତିହ୍ୟସ୍ଥଳୀ ମାନ୍ୟତାପ୍ରାପ୍ତ କୋଣାର୍କ ସମଗ୍ର ବିଶ୍ୱରେ ଧାର୍ମିକ ସ୍ଥାପତ୍ୟର ଏକ ଚମତ୍କାର ସ୍ଥାନ। ତ୍ରୟୋଦଶ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀରେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଉପାସନା ନିମନ୍ତେ ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ନିର୍ମିତ ଏହି ମନ୍ଦିର କଳିଙ୍ଗ ଶିଳ୍ପକଳା ଓ ସ୍ଥାପତ୍ୟର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠତମ ଓ ସୁନ୍ଦରତମ ଉଦାହରଣ ସ୍ୱରୂପ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଭାଗା ବେଳାଭୂମିର ଅନତି ଦୂରରେ ବିଦ୍ୟମାନ। ବର୍ଷସାରା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକମାନଙ୍କ ଭିଡ଼ ଲାଗିଥାଏ ଏହି ଜାଗାରେ ଯେଉଁଠି ପଥରର ଭାଷା ଜୀବନ୍ତ ମଣିଷର ଭାଷାକୁ ପରାସ୍ତ କରିଛି।

ମନ୍ଦିର ମାଳିନୀ ନଗରୀ ବା ଏକାମ୍ର କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ନାମରେ ପରିଚିତ ପ୍ରାୟ ତିନି ହଜାର ବର୍ଷର ପୁରୁଣା ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କାଳର ପ୍ରାୟ ଛ'ଶହ ମନ୍ଦିର ରହିଛି। କେଶରୀ ବଂଶ ଏବଂ ସୋମ ବଂଶର ରାଜାମାନଙ୍କ ସମୟରେ ନିର୍ମିତ କାରୁକାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ପରିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଏହି ଭବ୍ୟ ମନ୍ଦିର ମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ଲିଙ୍ଗରାଜ ମନ୍ଦିର, ରାଜାରାଣୀ ମନ୍ଦିର, ମୁକ୍ତେଶ୍ୱର, ଭାସ୍କରେଶ୍ୱର, ବ୍ରହ୍ମେଶ୍ୱର, ମେଘେଶ୍ୱର, ପର୍ଶୁରାମେଶ୍ୱର ଆଦି ଦେଶବିଦେଶରେ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଦର୍ଶନୀୟ ସ୍ଥାନ ଭାବରେ ପରିଚିତ। ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟପୂର୍ବ ୩୦୦ ରୁ ୩୫୦ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ମୌର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବଂଶର ନରପତି ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଗୁପ୍ତ ମୌର୍ଯ୍ୟଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ନିର୍ମିତ ଶିଶୁପାଳଗଡ଼, ଅଶୋକଙ୍କ ସମୟରେ ଧଉଳିର ବୌଦ୍ଧସ୍ତୂପ, ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟପୂର୍ବ ପ୍ରଥମ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀରେ ଚେଦୀ ବଂଶର ସମ୍ରାଟ ଖାରବେଳଙ୍କ ସମୟରେ ନିର୍ମିତ ଜୈନ ଧର୍ମର ଖଣ୍ଡଗିରି, ଉଦୟଗିରି କୀର୍ତ୍ତିସ୍ତମ୍ଭ, ହାତୀଗୁମ୍ଫାର ଖୋଦିତ ଶିଳାଲିପି ସହିତ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରସର ଗୁମ୍ଫା, ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟୀୟ ସପ୍ତମ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀରେ ଭୌମ ବଂଶ ରାଜା ଶାନ୍ତା ଏବଂ ରାଣୀ ହୀରାବତୀଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ଶିଶୁପାଳଗଡ଼ ନିକଟବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ହୀରାପୁରଠାରେ ଚଉଷଠୀ ଯୋଗିନୀ ପୀଠ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଐତିହ୍ୟ ଏବଂ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧିର ମୂଳସାକ୍ଷୀ ଭାବରେ ଅସଂଖ୍ୟ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକଙ୍କୁ ଆକୃଷ୍ଟ କରିବାରେ ଲାଗିଛି।

ଏହି ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ତ୍ରିଭୁଜ ପ୍ରମାଣ କରେ ଯେ, ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀ ମାନେ ବହୁ ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ସମୟରୁ ସୃଜନଶୀଳ ପ୍ରତିଭାସମ୍ପନ୍ନ ଥିଲେ। ଶ୍ରୀ ମନ୍ଦିର,

ଲିଙ୍ଗରାଜ ମନ୍ଦିର ଓ କୋଣାର୍କ ମନ୍ଦିର ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ପୃଷ୍ଠଭୂମି, ଉତ୍ତମ ଜ୍ଞାନ କୌଶଳ, ପ୍ରଯୁକ୍ତି ବିଦ୍ୟା ଓ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ କଳାର ସର୍ବଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଉଦାହରଣ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରିଛି।

ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଶିଳ୍ପ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ବ୍ୟାପକ ସମ୍ଭାବନା ଥିବାବେଳେ ଉଭୟ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଓ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ମଧ୍ୟ ଏନେଇ ଯୋଜନାବଦ୍ଧ ଭାବେ ଆଗକୁ ବଢ଼ୁଛନ୍ତି। ବିଶେଷକରି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରକୁ ପୁଞ୍ଜି ନିବେଶ ପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ନୀତି, ୨୦୧୬ ପ୍ରଣୟନ କରାଯାଇଥିବା ବେଳେ ଏହା ବେଶ ଉପଯୋଗୀ ହୋଇପାରିଛି। ଅନ୍ୟପକ୍ଷରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରଗୁଡ଼ିକର ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ମାଷ୍ଟର ପ୍ଲାନ ଏବଂ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ସମ୍ଭାରର ପ୍ରଚାର ପ୍ରସାର ପାଇଁ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ବିବିଧ ଯୋଜନା ରାଜ୍ୟ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ପାଇଁ ଏକ ନୂଆ ସମ୍ଭାବନା ଆଣିଦେଇଛି। ରାଜ୍ୟର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ବିଭାଗ ଉଭୟ ସ୍ୱଦେଶୀ ଏବଂ ବିଦେଶୀ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆକର୍ଷିତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଏହି ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ତ୍ରିଭୁଜ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରର କୋଣାର୍କରେ କୋଣାର୍କ ନୃତ୍ୟ ମହୋତ୍ସବ, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଭାଗା ବେଳାଭୂମିରେ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଜାତୀୟ ବାଲୁକା କଳା ମହୋତ୍ସବ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ରାଜାରାଣୀ ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ମହୋତ୍ସବ, ମୁକ୍ତେଶ୍ୱର ନୃତ୍ୟ ମହୋତ୍ସବ, ଧଉଳିଗିରି ଠାରେ ଧଉଳି କଳିଙ୍ଗ ମହୋତ୍ସବ, ତିଲିକାରେ ଜାତୀୟ ତିଲିକା ପକ୍ଷୀ ମହୋତ୍ସବ, ପୁରୀରେ ବେଳାଭୂମି ମହୋତ୍ସବ ଆୟୋଜନ କରିବା ସହିତ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଘରୋଇ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନକୁ ଅନୁଦାନ ପୂର୍ବକ ବ୍ୟାପକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ବିଭାଗ ଆନୁକୁଲ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହେଉଛି। ରାଜ୍ୟ ବାହାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ମହୋତ୍ସବ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ରାଜ୍ୟର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ବିଭବ ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧରେ ସଚେତନତା ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଅଭିଯାନ କରାଯାଉଛି।

ଏହି ଯୋଜନା ଅନ୍ତର୍ଗତ ଗୋଟିଏ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଅନୁସାରେ ଦେଶର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନସ୍ଥଳୀ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ହସ୍ତଶିଳ୍ପ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ସଂଯୁକ୍ତ କରାଯାଇଛି ଏବଂ "ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ସହିତ ବୟନ ଶିଳ୍ପ ସଂଯୋଗୀକରଣ" କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଗତ ଭିଡିଭୁମି ସହାୟତା ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯାଉଛି । ପକ୍ଷ ଚିତ୍ର ପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଶିଳ୍ପ ଗ୍ରାମ ଭାବରେ ପରିଚିତ ପୁରୀ ନିକଟବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ରଘୁରାଜପୁରରେ ଏବେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ସହିତ ବୟନର ସଂଯୋଗ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଅଧୀନରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଏକତ୍ର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଏବଂ ଶିଳ୍ପର ପ୍ରଚାର ପ୍ରସାର କରାଯିବ ।

ଶିଳ୍ପ ଗ୍ରାମ ହସ୍ତଶିଳ୍ପକୁ କାରିଗର ମାନଙ୍କ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଏକ ସ୍ଥାୟୀ ଏବଂ ଲାଭଦାୟକ ଜୀବିକା ନିର୍ବାହର ବିକଳ ରୂପରେ ବିକଶିତ କରିବ ଏବଂ ଏହି ଭଳି ଭାବରେ ଦେଶର ସମୃଦ୍ଧ କାରିଗରୀ ଐତିହ୍ୟର ସୁରକ୍ଷା ହେବ । ଏହି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ କାରିଗର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଲାଭ ହେବା ସଂଗେ ସଂଗେ ଶିଳ୍ପ ଗ୍ରାମ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକ ମାନଙ୍କର ଆଗମନରେ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ଘଟିବ ।

ପରିସଂଖ୍ୟାନ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଗତ କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ରାଜ୍ୟକୁ ଉଭୟ ବିଦେଶୀ ଏବଂ ରାଜ୍ୟ ବାହାରୁ ଆସୁଥିବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକଙ୍କ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଛି। ୨୦୧୪ ମସିହାରେ ୧୦ଲକ୍ଷ ୮୦ ହଜାରରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ସ୍ତରରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକ ଏବଂ ୭୦ ହଜାରରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ବିଦେଶୀ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆସିଥିବା ବେଳେ ୨୦୧୯ ମସିହାରେ ଏହି ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଯଥାକ୍ରମେ ପ୍ରାୟ ୧୫ ଲକ୍ଷ ୩୦ ହଜାରରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ଏବଂ ୧ ଲକ୍ଷ ୧୫ ହଜାରରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ରେ

ପହଞ୍ଚିଥିଲା। ଏ ବାବଦରେ ୨୦୧୪ ରେ ୧୦ ହଜାର ୫୦୦ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କାରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ରାଜସ୍ୱ ଆଦାୟ ହୋଇଥିବାବେଳେ ୨୦୧୯ରେ ପ୍ରାୟ ୧୫ ହଜାର ୩୦୦ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କାରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ରାଜସ୍ୱ ଆଦାୟ ହୋଇଛି। ଏଠାରେ ଉଲ୍ଲେଖଯୋଗ୍ୟ ଯେ ଆମରାଜ୍ୟ ଜି.ଡି.ପି.ର ପ୍ରାୟ ୧୩% ଭାଗ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଶିଳ୍ପରୁ ଆସିଥାଏ। ତେବେ କୋଭିଡ କାରଣରୁ ୨୦୨୦ ଏବଂ ୨୦୨୧ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକଙ୍କ ଆଗମନ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ହ୍ରାସ ପାଇଥିଲେ ହେଁ ୨୦୨୨ ଏବଂ ଆଗାମୀ ବର୍ଷଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ଏହି ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ଦ୍ରୁତ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି ହାସଲ ହେବ ବୋଲି ଆଶା କରାଯାଉଛି।

ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରକୁ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଦେଇ ୧୬ଟି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ମାଷ୍ଟରପ୍ଲାନ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରିଛନ୍ତି। ସାତକୋଶିଆ, ହୀରାକୁଦ, ଭିତରକନିକା, ଚିଲିକା, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଭାଗା ବେଳାଭୂମି, ଦାରିଙ୍ଗିବାଡ଼ି, ତାଳସାରି, ଖଣ୍ଡଗିରି-ଉଦୟଗିରି, ଦେଓମାଳି, ନୃସିଂହନାଥ-ହରିଶଙ୍କର, ଧବଳେଶ୍ୱର, ମହେନ୍ଦ୍ରଗିରି, ବାଲୁଖଣ୍ଡ, ଧଉଳି, ରଘୁରାଜପୁର ଏବଂ ଶିଖରଚଣ୍ଡୀ ଏଥିରେ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଭୁକ୍ତ ରହିଛି।

ଅନ୍ୟପକ୍ଷରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନସ୍ଥଳୀ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଭିତ୍ତିକ ଶିଳ୍ପ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା ପାଇଁ ସିଙ୍ଗଲ ଓଷ୍ଟୋ ସିଷ୍ଟମ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ଅନୁମୋଦନ କରାଯାଉଛି। ସେହିପରି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ନୀତିର ନିୟମାନୁଯାୟୀ ଘରୋଇ ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ବିଭାଗ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସବୁଜି ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯାଉଛି। ଯାହାଫଳରେ ବହୁ ଯୁବ ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗୀ ଏହି ଶିଳ୍ପ ପ୍ରତି ଆକୃଷ୍ଟ ହେଉଥିବା ବେଳେ ଖୁବ୍ ଶୀଘ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପୂର୍ବ ଭାରତ ସମେତ ସମଗ୍ର ଦେଶରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକ ଏବଂ ଏହି ଶିଳ୍ପ ପାଇଁ ଏକ ନୂଆ ସମ୍ଭାବନା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିପାରିବ ବୋଲି ବିଶେଷଜ୍ଞମାନେ ମତପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଛନ୍ତି।

ସେହିପରି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ବିଭାଗ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ୪୯ଟି ପ୍ରମୁଖ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ସ୍ଥଳୀର ଇନଫ୍ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରକଚର୍ ଗ୍ୟାପ୍ ଆସେସମେଣ୍ଟ କରାଯାଇ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟ କ୍ରମେ ଅର୍ଥ ମଞ୍ଚୁର କରୁଛନ୍ତି। ଅନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ପଦକ୍ଷେପଗୁଡ଼ିକ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରାମଚଣ୍ଡୀ ଏବଂ ତାଳସାରି ସମୁଦ୍ରକୂଳରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକଙ୍କ ଚଳାବୁଲା ପାଇଁ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା, ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀ ଇକୋ-ଟୁରିଜମର ଆୟୋଜନ, ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ନୌ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଭିତ୍ତିଭୂମିର ବିକାଶ ମଧ୍ୟ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ପାଇଁ ଅନୁକୂଳ ସାବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ହେବ ବୋଲି ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରାଯାଉଛି ।

ଏହି ମାସ ପ୍ରଥମ ସପ୍ତାହରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଯାଇଥିବା 'ମେକ୍ ଇନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା କନକ୍ଲେଭ' ର ତୃତୀୟ ସଂସ୍କରଣରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ଶିଳ୍ପ ଉପରେ ଆୟୋଜିତ ଅଧିବେଶନରେ 'ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ନୀତି-୨୦୨୨' ଉନ୍ମୋଚିତ ହୋଇଛି। ରାଜ୍ୟର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ବିକାଶ ଏବଂ ଇକୋଟୁରିଜମ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ 'ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଟୁରିଜମ ରୋଡମାପ-୨୦୨୩' ଏବଂ 'ଇକୋଟୁରିଜମ ରୋଡମାପ-

୨୦୨୩'କୁ ରାଜ୍ୟର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଉନ୍ମୋଚନ କରିଛନ୍ତି। ଏହି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ପ୍ରାୟ ୮୫ ନିବେଶକ ୬,୮୦୦ କୋଟିରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ନିବେଶ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ଦେଇଥିବା ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ଘୋଷଣା କରିଛନ୍ତି।

ନୂତନ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ନୀତିରେ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଇକୋଟୁରିଜମ, ଗ୍ରାମୀଣ ଓ କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନକୁ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି। କାରାଭାନ, କ୍ୟାମ୍ପିଂ, ଡାକ୍ତର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ, ନଲେଜ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ, ହାଉସବୋଟ ଏବଂ କ୍ଲବ୍ ଆଦିକୁ ଏହି ନୀତିରେ ସ୍ଥାନ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି। ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ୨୦୨୩ ମସିହାର ପ୍ରାରମ୍ଭରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହେବାକୁ ଥିବା ବିଶ୍ୱକପ ହକି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ପାଇଁ ବିଶାଳ ସୁଯୋଗ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବ। କୁଶଳୀ ତୁର ଅପରେଟର ଏବଂ ଗାଇଡ୍ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ବିଦେଶୀ ଭାଷା ପ୍ରଶିକ୍ଷଣ, ବୃତ୍ତିଗତ ପ୍ରଶିକ୍ଷଣ ଦେଇ ବିଦେଶୀ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକ ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସୁବିଧା ଯୋଗାଇ ଦିଆଯିବ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ।

ସମ୍ପ୍ରତି ଭାରତ ଶକ୍ତିଶାଳୀ ବିଶ୍ୱବ୍ୟାପୀ ପ୍ରଭାବଶାଳୀ ଜି-୨୦ ଗୁପର ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ପଦ ଅଳଙ୍କୃତ କରିବା ଅବସରରେ ନିକଟ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ଅନେକ ନୂତନ ଆଶା ଓ ସମ୍ଭାବନା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିଛି। ୨୦୨୩ ଏପ୍ରିଲ ମାସରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଶିକ୍ଷା ବିଭାଗ, ଶକ୍ତି ବିଭାଗ ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ମନ୍ତ୍ରଣାଳୟର ଜି-୨୦ ସଭା କମିଟି ବୈଠକ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହେବା ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଯେ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସହ ଏହି ତିନୋଟି ବିଷୟର ନିବିଡ଼ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ରହିଛି।

ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ତ୍ରିଭୁଜରେ ତଥା ସମଗ୍ର ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଆହୁରି ବହୁ ସ୍ଥାନ ରହିଛି ଯାହାର ଭିତ୍ତିଭୂମି ବିକାଶ ହୋଇପାରିଲେ, ସେସବୁ ସ୍ଥାନ ଲୋକଲୋଚନକୁ ଆସିବ। ସହ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକମାନଙ୍କ ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ଘଟି ଆର୍ଥିକ ଲାଭ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଓ ଅପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ କର୍ମନିଯୁକ୍ତିର ବିପୁଳ ସମ୍ଭାବନା ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୋଇପାରେ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ସ୍ଲୋଗାନ ହେଉଛି, "ଅବିଶ୍ୱାସନୀୟ ଭାରତର ଆତ୍ମା : ମନୋରମ, ଶାନ୍ତ, ମହିମନ୍ୱିତ" (Soul of Incredible India : Scenic, Serene, Sublime). ଏହାକୁ ସାକାର କରିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଉଥିବା ସମସ୍ତ ବିକାଶମୁଖୀ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ଦ୍ରୁତ ସଫଳ ରୂପାୟନ, ସମସ୍ତ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ସ୍ଥଳୀ ଗୁଡ଼ିକର ଭିତ୍ତିଭୂମିର ବିକାଶ, ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟକମାନଙ୍କ ସୁରକ୍ଷା, ସୁବିଧା ସୁଯୋଗ ନିଶ୍ଚିତ କରିବାପାଇଁ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ, ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଅଧିବାସୀମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଭାଗିଦାରୀ ଏକାନ୍ତ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ। ବାରମ୍ବାର ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟର ସମ୍ମୁଖୀନ ହେଉଥିବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନସ୍ଥଳୀ ଗୁଡ଼ିକର ଦୀର୍ଘମିଆଦୀ ସୁତ୍ରରେ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଏବଂ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ଏକ ବଡ଼ ଆହ୍ୱାନ ଯାହାର ମୁକାବିଲା ମଧ୍ୟ ସୁନିୟୋଜିତ ଢଙ୍ଗରେ କରିବାକୁ ହେବ। ଏ ସମସ୍ତ ଯୋଜନାର ସଫଳ ରୂପାୟନ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ବିଶ୍ୱ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ମାନଚିତ୍ରରେ ଏକ ମର୍ଯ୍ୟାଦାଜନକ ସ୍ଥାନ ସୁନିଶ୍ଚିତ କରାଇବା ସଂଗେ ସଂଗେ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଏବଂ ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀଙ୍କ ଆର୍ଥିକ, ସାମାଜିକ, ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ବିକାଶ ଓ ସମୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରଶସ୍ତ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ କରିବ।

\* Retd. ED (Logistics)SAIL Multilingual Writer & Speaker