

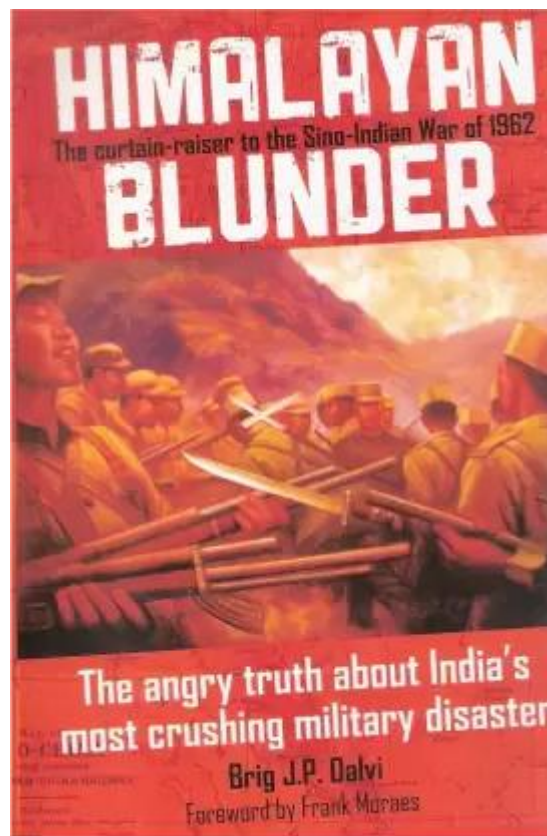
Ecological Governance - Revisiting Laudato si

XINRM and more

Edited by Viren Lobo

An Especioza Trust Production

(The great Himalayan blunder and the case of taking the Mountain to Muhammed)



[Himalayan Blunder](#)

Forward¹

My dear brothers and sisters of the North East,

Background:

All fingers of the hand are not alike yet they work together to produce many marvelous and unheard of things. So too are the seven sisters of the North East. Not alike I mean. The table below provides a glimpse into this diversity. While Assam has one third of the population of the North East it has 70% of the population. On the other hand while Arunachal Pradesh has slightly more land than Assam it has only 3 % of the total population. Why so ? While Assam lies in the Brahmaputra plains, Arunachal is mountainous.

Brief Profile of the North East

Sr No.	State	% Geographical Area	% Population	Population Density
1.	Assam	2.4	2.6	397
2.	Tripura	0.32	0.31	350
3.	Meghalaya	0.69	0.25	132
4.	Manipur	0.68	0.25	122
5.	Nagaland	0.50	0.16	119
6.	Mizoram	0.64	0.09	52
7.	Arunchal	2.54	0.11	17

The historical development of mankind shows the pivotal role played by water and topography in availability of food and consequently the demographic growth of populations. As the Honorable Minister Temjen Imna Along said, before going to Old Delhi Station, he never saw so many people in one place. The mountainous North East made dispersed settlement necessary for survival .

The diverse and colourful traditions and cultures of the North East are born out of conditions in which people lived and worked. The North East Indigenous People's Forum, while recognising this diversity calls for Unity on the basis of preservation of this rich cultural and ethnic diversity.

The arrival of the British and the puncturing of this rich tapestry.

¹ Paper submitted to the North East Indigenous People's Forum at their second Conference on 29th and 30th May at Dimapur Nagaland.

To pit this quite simply tea plantations and the felling of wood/ floating them down the river Brahmaputra with the help of imported labour and domesticated elephants changed the fabric of the region and necessitating a regime of command and control

Post British, the scenario was no different . the chicken neck corridor, the lifeline of the North East actually served as a conduit for import and export of commodities in and out of the region with the control in the hands of outsiders. Hydro Electric power, Oil and Natural Gas and other mineral wealth have resulted in displacement and low paid jobs for local communities while the wealth gets centralised in the stock exchange of Mumbai for instance.

Rediscovering the strength of Indigenous communities

This North East has politically given a fitting reply to the continued exploitation of the North East . However issues related to preservation of the identity, culture and heritage of the North East remain. It is our contention true dignity of the people of the North East cannot be preserved without recognition of the relevance of the traditional knowledge and wisdom of the people of the North East related to the preservation and management of the natural resources of the region for livelihoods and governance. The recently formed NEIP needs to have a concrete agenda related to the development and conservation of natural resources of this region. Distinct from the exploitative corridor module of development that is being posed as the harbinger of jobs etc.

Adivasi Bharat Mahasabha (UF) and Unity in Diversity

Formed in 2018., Adivasi Bharat Mahasabha recognises the question of consistent marginalisation of the Adivasis under whatever form and pretext. ABM (UF) emerges out of this process as a concrete way to give shape to questions related to unity in diversity. Assertion of community rights to local self governance, using existing provisions for dealing with issues related to livelihood with dignity and raising one's voice against demonisation and alienation of local communities the need of the hour.

The two studies by Tarun Kanti Bose deal with these questions in diverse locations across the country. He will fill in with more details.

Background

Having placed the question of women's empowerment upfront, this edition of *Especioza* trust seeks to place the environment/ ecological question by taking the example of North East as a classical example of nature's response to its surroundings. The data placed above indicates that topography has a lot to do with the population profile. That Assam and Tripura have population equivalent to the geographical area is no accident. They are mostly situated in the plains. The stark example of Arunachal Pradesh which has just 17 persons per square mile is indicative of the rough and hilly terrain of this region forming a natural barrier between India and China. Will not go into how humans find ways around these natural barriers just like water finds its own way. The Brahmaputra as its name suggests points to how man connects nature with the 'divine' a life giver with enough power to destroy as well. Hence Shiva had to use his lockets to let down the Ganga in another part of the Himalayas.

The statistics also have something very sharp to say about Rajasthan. http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Status-of-Bioresources-of-Rajasthan-Some-facts-IELA-with-HRLN_24th_25th_July_2021_Udaipur.pdf. This presentation made by Dr Sunil Dubey at the HRLN conference on 24th of July 2021 shows very sharply how the Aravalis not only defines the Desert, it defines the climate and human geography of India too. The presentation also highlights the relevance of animal husbandry in making hostile terrains like the desert habitable. This historical understanding of humankind garnered over centuries was rudely interrupted by the workings of capitalism which thinks it has within it the power to bring the mountain to Muhammad so to speak. The spectre of Global warming and climate change haunting the world is one of the many demons it has conjured out of the 'Nether World'

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Participatory-Action-Research-for-Ecologically-Sound-development-in-a-Tribal-Region-of-Gujarat.pdf>. This report prepared in 2017, was a culmination of ten year long journey post the understanding developing in SPWD about the need to look at different ecosystems in their totality to understand the logic of production based on the life support systems and ecological system services provided within. While being anthropocentric in nature, it stresses that nature has ways of speaking to us, if only we care to look deeply into the ecological interactions and their relation to the sociocultural and economic history that develops in its wake.

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/wildedible.pdf>. This presentation by the same author points to a different way of looking at food security than the rice wheat syndrome we have got so used due to the strategic importance given to these two species as commodities by the global imperialist powers brought out by the following presentation <http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/PE-in-AgriDSatSNU.pptx>.

The article <http://mainstreamweekly.net/article12156.html>. deals with questions related to the necessity for integrating struggles of farmer's , fishers and forest dwellers in connection with the issues and questions emerging from the recent farmer's struggle against the Farm Laws and its aftermath in terms of the results in the recent elections to five states of the country including Punjab and UP which were at the epicentre of the these struggles.

My response:

Yes, I endorse the basic propositions in your document, one I worked systematically towards as the former convenor of Community Control of Natural Resources of ICAN and later Forestry group as well. In an effort to bring about this integration I had examined the work of DMF in the Sunderbans. This was later picked by Tarun Kanti Bose in his study of the Sunderbans for AIFFRS and in his study of Local Self Governance for ABMKSS. His findings are very similar to yours and reflected in the title of his second report *Marginalised by not defeated*

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/MARGINALISED-BUT-NOT-DEFEATED-ebook.pdf>

Our thesis is that the essential character of Capitalist attack on the livelihoods of those depending on common property resources is understood by the concerned communities, who are forced to compromise with Capitalism for survival. This compromise leads them to take diverse stands on the ground very much linked to the ecosystems on which their survival depends and the nature of Capitalist interest in the resources of that ecosystem. Given this fact, our understanding is that the nature of struggle they undertake is diverse and impossible for a single central node to fully comprehend in terms of giving a unified shape to it. One that is reflected in the concept of Integration. It is for this reason that ABMKSS has been founded with the idea of fully allowing for expression of local groups and local struggles. In this connection ABMKSS was forced to protect the interests of those who had joined hands to form Adivasi Bharat Mahasabha with the idea of preserving their individual identities while simultaneously working for a common goal.

Am attaching the minutes of the second planning meeting for the conference at Adilabad on 2nd and 3rd May for your reference². Am also attaching a brief note on ABM (UF) for your reference³. A brief glance at these two notes will suffice to convince you that we indeed understand the concerns you talk about and are working systematically towards it. Am marking to some others in ICAN who were responsible for guiding my quest towards community control of natural resources in the true sense as a fitting reply to the agenda of Corporate control of the same. You will also be aware that my organisation IELA which was formed to take forward the agenda of Ecological governance (not possible in SPWD for structural reasons) is working on those elements that make it possible for communities to realise their own potential by evaluating their traditional knowledge in the light of the findings of modern science and technology. Am sure you understand as well as I do that Capitalism will not allow such initiatives to flourish and develop unhindered.

This much for now. Will keep you posted on developments.

² <http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ABM-UF-meeting-on-27th-March-2022.pdf>

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ABM-UF-meeting-on-27th-March-2022.pdf>

³ <http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ABM-UF-brief-document.pdf>

Dedication



Mina Swaminathan

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/mina-swaminathan-leaves-behind-a-legacy/articleshow/90211321.cms>

Mina Swaminathan passed away on 14th March 2022. She was a renowned Educator and Child Care expert, she chaired the committee that recommended what later came to be known as the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). As chair of the Central Board of Child Education (CABE) Committee on The Preschool child, she steered the report of The Preschool Child 1972 which led to the setting up of the ICDS one of the most comprehensive child care service in the developing world.

What I remember her for however was the trust building games she made us participate in, part of the course of communication which she taught us in our early days at Institute for Rural Development Anand (IRMA).

I have other connections to this illustrious family. Her daughter Nitya and son in law Sudhir studied with me at Irma, while her husband Dr M S Swaminathan was the founding chairman of Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development which I joined immediately on passing out of Irma in 1985 and stayed with for 30 years till 2015. The Evergreen Revolution propounded by Dr Swaminathan after seeing the limitations of the green one and his recommendations for farming in the Swaminathan Committee report are some of the aspects that stayed with me as we tried to make our break from the negative impacts of the exploitative Corporate farming practises which were a backlash of the green revolution, Minimum Support Price and Public Distribution System introduced by C Subramaium following the debilitating drought of the sixties and America throwing up its hands on continuing PL 480. In a similar vein our foray into ecological and natural farming have made us demand the introduction of local foods into the Mid Day Meal Scheme one of the major components of the ICDS programme.

Continuity and break our motto runs through this eulogy for my mentor Mina Swaminathan.



Dr Kamla Choudhry

My trip down memory lane is incomplete without remembering another doyen who had a hand to play in my early professional career. Dr Kamla Chowdhry the Founding Mother of IIMA who battled sexism with sheer grit <https://www.thebetterindia.com/245177/kamla-chowdhry-iim-ahmedabad-first-faculty-founding-mother-sexism-academia-vikram-sarabhai-chinmay-tumbe-india-history-nor41/>

At Irma she taught Understanding behaviour, which connected very well to what we had been taught in Transactional analysis at AICUF. Later she recruited me to Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development (SPWD) where she was the Director on her way to becoming the Chairperson of the National Wastelands Development Board. SPWD represented my first major continuity and break as it was born of the understanding that Wastelands were the last hope of the poor who depended on the commons for survival. From her to the next qualitative understanding, ecological governance for and by marginal communities was inevitable.

My major contradiction with Dr Kamla Choudhry arose when Ganesh Pangare and his wife Vadudha Lokur came to me in Udaipur to back up their hypothesis that women's nurseries a pet programme of Dr Kamla Chowdhry were in fact family nurseries. Dr Kamla Choudhry was furious at my intervention and later told me - Viren you might good at many things, but you do not know women. I agreed with her readily. Later as Executive Director, SPWD my formulation of women's empowerment being at the core of the empowerment process itself was to traverse this rocky road which stands to reason (NOW that I know better) that a man cannot master (being anathema to women's empowerment itself).

I had occasion to remember Dr Kamla Choudhry when she featured in the serial Rocket boys, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocket_Boys_\(web_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocket_Boys_(web_series)) dedicated to the work of Dr Homi Bhaba and Dr Vikram Sarabhai. I got a brief glimpse of many of the stories I heard about earlier which helped me piece together the rest as well. Will have occasion to revisit this later in the newsletter when we examine more closely the role of women in the making of modern India. One last parting shot right now. That relates to her demand that SPWD conduct a Public Hearing, which we did at Sandni in Pratapgarh. The resultant backlash was the precursor for the natural resource forums we have developed since then.



Hardeep and the Dialectics of Transformative politics

My first exposure to Hardeep was indirect
The hours he and Rajesh talked to each other
Dealing with philosophical questions that had long been answered.
That was the first time I realised the turmoil in my mind was not new
Many had been down that path
And found answers too.
Study class soon set up.
Hardeep's way of getting to the heart
One I admired
And then presentation on Das Kapital I made.
Hardeep was estatic
Could somebody explain it so simply
Gave me heart
Then Hardeep turned to Hegel

And Lenin on how communists had failed to understand him.

And when I thought I did

The 11 Theses of Feurbach came to haunt me for a while

Not long though as it settled that consciousness related to experience and actions undertaken by individuals

So Hardeep changed my life forever.

A thing I do not regret

Could not lock myself up in a room for hours like he did

As learning from people and relating to books my way.

Farewell Hardeep

Your advice to be like the white ant

Making Capitalism hollow will stay with me

This unfinished task is now ours to complete

As exploitation we will defeat. 🌻🕶️🌻

From Dr Chaitanya Dev Sharma

He was one of my closest friends, residing in the deepest recesses of my heart.

Probably the only person with whom I talked for more than an hour nearly once every 2-3 weeks for the last many decades.

For lengthier discourses they used to come to Gohana so that my patients don't suffer. No less often I visited his home in Delhi on Sundays for whetting my theoretical appetite.

He came to enlighten our study circle members at the first call and instance without any reservation.

Probably , besides Prof. Bhaseen, he was the only person in my life with whom I could have very minute, in depth and rigorous discussion on every subject ranging from Political Economy to Sociology to Philosophy.

A man simpler than myself. He had minimal needs. He had to be asked twice for a cup of tea even.

He will remain one with me till.....

May he Live Long!!

Part I

XINRM

(A Communication with Sr Olive Olivera of SADDAC)



SADDAC

Social Action for the Development of Displaced and Abandoned Children

In an attempt to colour the lives of the abandoned!

WE NEED YOUR HELP

To kindle the DREAMS and transform the LIVES of street CHILDREN and distressed WOMEN!

We provide
a home to the street and platform children,
an aid centre for the vendor children on the train,
a centre for the education of underprivileged children,
a counseling center for the distressed women and
a support hub for the displaced families

We have been working
to reach out to the needy during the PANDEMIC

Now we NEED YOUR support
to continue our service of love
to give them a secure present and a hopeful future

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

SADDAC, Vishwadeep
Pansare Vasti, Behind Tel Exch, Daund,
Pune, INDIA. Pin- 413801
M: +91 9960765955. Email: saddac@gmail.com

*We can't help everyone,
but everyone can help someone!*

SEND A DONATION

Account No.: 11238343403
Account Name: SADDAC
IFSC Code: SBIN000365
Bank Branch: SBI, DAUND



SADDAC flier appealing for funds

Dear Sr Olive,

It was really inspiring to finally have the long due meeting on 28th March at Daund. Will briefly spell out the outline of the collaboration we are trying to develop with SADDAC

a. As mentioned to you, this is to take forward the issues which were discussed at the Provincial Apostolic Planning meeting of Pune Province Jesuits for which both IELA and SADDAC agreed to be partners. The collaboration is however on the principle of relative independence of each organisation, an issue for which I have shared my inputs and concerns with Fr Siju and Fr Stan who are responsible on behalf of the Pune Jesuits to take the Social and Ecology Ministry forward. Since this is an entirely new way of functioning there is no ready made road map. We have to play by ear and feel our way forward.

b. The design of the collaboration is based on two major documents

- The encyclical *Laudato si*, issued by Pope Francis just prior to the Paris Convention on Climate Change in Paris in 2016.

- The Brundtland Committee report - *Our Common Future* brought out in 1987. I had presented the essential features to the students of XINRM and by that virtue with Santosh Tope as well. Am attaching the slide presentation for your reference here. Of importance is the question of the appropriate institutional structure to deal with these issues pointed out in slide 5 and reproduced here.

- i. The objective of sustainable development and the integrated nature of the global environment/development challenges pose problems for institutions, national and international, that were established on the basis of narrow preoccupations and compartmentalized concerns.

- ii Most of the institutions facing those challenges tend to be independent, fragmented, working to relatively narrow mandates with closed decision processes. Those responsible for managing natural resources and protecting the environment are institutionally separated from those responsible for managing the economy.

- iii. Most of the institutions facing those challenges tend to be independent, fragmented, working to relatively narrow mandates with closed decision processes. Those responsible for managing natural resources and protecting the environment are institutionally separated from those responsible for managing the economy.

c. Having pointed these larger concerns out, I would like to mention that the specific areas of collaboration with SADDAC relate to working with women, children and youth groups with which SADDAC is associated. How these link up to other concerns will be organically evolved once the basics of this collaboration are in place.

d. As a start, operationalising an integrated approach to the first six SDGs will be an integral part of the participatory training and capacity building programme we have in mind.

e. In relation to this the need to give shape to the following as concrete activities on the ground.

- Development of the baseline information on the various initiatives taken by SADDAC so far using existing reports where possible.
- Facilitating terrace garden cultivation through the provision of a kit of saplings having nutritional and medicinal plants. SADDAC already has a package for this, IELA will give suggestions on other appropriate plants that could be a part of the kit.
- Facilitating the development of Children's parliaments with Children of each mohalla and a Federation of Children's parliament in the six mohallas where SADDAC is working.
- Exploring the potential for development of appropriate technology with the help of the youth as a part of a value addition agenda for livelihood support and income generation. As mentioned this programme will first focus on self consumption and improvement in the quality of life so as to provide a stable base for technology development and marketing of surplus produce.

f. Documentation, policy advocacy, networking and critical engagement with the government machinery at various levels based on progressive capacity enhancement of the community.

g. Engaging with the Education system as an important component of relating theory to practise and vice versa. The framework outlined in my earlier letter below provides a road map as to how we will jointly be going about this. As of now, due to the uncertainty of IELA collaboration with XINRM, Social Centre and the Province, I am not placing those elements which are not in the direct control of either SADDAC or IELA.

This much for now. The approach for operationalising each of these components has been discussed in detail with you during the visit. Since the collaboration is participatory am only spelling out the outline and processes leaving the details to emerge in a flexible participatory manner.

regards

Viren

.....

Dear Sr Olive,

Thanks for the discussion today. As suggested by you, I will meet you at Sanjeevan at 4pm on 26th March. I am enclosing the assignment done by Santosh Tope for your reference. Would like to mention that the presentation he made on the 8th of January based on feedback given to him was much more detailed and thorough . However this does give a broad idea of what he has investigated so far.

I am outlining my plan as to how we can take this forward based on my discussions with Santosh. As there is some fluidity in XINRM we will have to wait some time to see how this can be linked to the dissertation study he will have to do later. For now the points which we can deliberate on when we meet on 26th

a. The study has potential to be further developed at various levels in action research mode

- Hamlets of Daund worst affected by pollution of the river and where SADDAC has a presence
- Larger perspective on the water use of Daund City and the different stake-holders, including industry, household consumers of water , identification of the sources and quantum of pollution of the water.
- Rural Daund tehsil, critical engagement with farmers to understand issues related to water use and impact of pollution on farming if any.
- A larger study of the rural/ urban issues on Bheema river related to water balance studies for which SOPPECOM in Pune has developed a module.

To develop this further, we need to the following

- a. Development of a data-base for Daund City and Daund Tehsil with the help of SADDAC.
- b. Link to eco-clubs mobilised by SADDAC through sharing of the report and research findings and development of an action plan related to conservation, livelihoods and environment . Clean healthy environment. Potential for kitchen/nutrition gardens and value addition based on renewable energy potential and individual/ mohalla/group level.
- c. On the basis of the report and research findings, Networking with other organisations in Daund with SADDAC acting as the Secretariat.
- d. Link to SOPPECOM in Pune to understand the larger relevance of this action research work on river Bheema .

Dr Sunil Dubey and myself will take responsibility for the overall coordination of this study and development of the linkages in collaboration with SADDAC.

Action required

- a. Meeting with the core team of SADDAC to understand its relevance to SADDAC and how it can fit in organically to other work being done by SADDAC.
- b. One hamlet meeting and one meeting with potential network partners in Daund.

We (IELA) can spend time on a quarterly basis to develop this preliminary design in action research mode.

It would be useful if the preliminary visit can be fixed at a time when Santosh can visit and make the presentation of the findings of the report. I will take responsibility to facilitate the discussions. If there is difficulty in Santosh coming, I will do the needful based on the slide presentation made by him on 8th of January.

On 26th, I will be happy to clear any queries you have on the basis of which we can fix the time and agenda for my preliminary visit to Daund.

regards

Viren

Funding: Right now, no clear cut funding source for this. so we are not in a hurry. Right now we are more concerned about understanding the organic linkages which can help us develop a proposal if required at a later date.

Part II

Adivasi Bharat Mahasabha (UF)

Some snippets from Adivasi the inhouse quarterly of ABM(UF)



Konalika Bari Junior World Archery Champion 2019

Status of Community Forest Rights Recognition

- Estimated potential area for CFR in the country (Total FRA - area within customary boundaries based on 2011 data) as per FRA P&P report - 34.6 million Ha (excluding N-E States) / 32.4 m ha (SPWD estimation based on 1991 data)
- FRA (IFR + CFR) recognised at national level till 2016 (P&P decadal report) - 1.125 m.ha (3.25% of 2011 total potential)
- FRA (IFR + CFR) recognised at national level till September 2021 (M0TA report) - 6.42 m.ha (18.55% of 2011 total potential)
- FRA (IFR + CFR) recognised in Chhatisgarh till September 2021 - 2.25m ha.
- FRA (CFR) recognised at national level till September 2021 (M0TA report) - 4.70 m.ha. (13.58% of 2011 total potential)
- **FRA (CFR) recognised in Chhatisgarh till September 2021 - 1,91 m ha.**
- Total Area recognised during lockdown (i.e. between March 2020 to Sept 2021) - 1.174 m.ha.
- Total CFR Area recognised during lockdown (i.e. between March 2020 to Sept 2021) - 1.1 m.ha.
- **Total Area recognised during lockdown in Chhatisgarh (i.e. between March 2020 to Sept 2021) - 1.12 m ha**
- **Total CFR Area recognised during lockdown in Chhatisgarh (i.e. between March 2020 to September 2021) - 1.09 m ha**

Considering that 44% of the land area of Chhatisgarh is Forest and 31.8 % of the population is tribal, the strategy of Chhatisgarh to grant large number of CFR titles with about half being granted during lockdown period can be understood. Despite this, forest land reserved for mining and other development use has not been touched, also as indicated by ground reports rights granted to tribals under CFR is limited. Next to Chhatisgarh, Maharashtra has granted a total of 1.25 m ha with 0.93 m ha granted as CFR, Madhya Pradesh 0.91m ha with 0.58 m ha under CFR and Gujarat 0.52 m ha with 0.45 m ha under CFR. However as can be seen other States have granted very little additional land during lockdown period.

COVID-19 impact on unemployment rate in India 2020-2021

Published by [Statista Research Department](#), Mar 16, 2022

As of December 2021, the unemployment rate in India was recorded at nearly 8 percent, an increase from the previous month. While the unemployment rate had significantly declined over the course of 2021 since having peaked in April 2020, the breakout of new coronavirus

variants coupled with recurring lockdowns resulted in a fluctuating trend of unemployment gripping the nation.

The trickle-down effect

Between February and April 2020, the share of households that experienced a fall in income shot up to nearly 46 percent. Inflation rates on goods and services including food products and fuel were expected to rise later this year. Social distancing resulted in job losses, specifically those within Indian society's lower economic strata. Several households terminated domestic help services – essentially an unorganized monthly-paying job. Most Indians spent a large amount of time engaging in household chores themselves, making it the most widely practiced lockdown activity.

Aid from the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana

The most devastating impact of the virus and the lockdown had been on the economically backward classes, with limited access to proper healthcare and other resources. As a result the government launched various programs and campaigns to help sustain such households. Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 312 billion Indian rupees were accrued and provided to around 331 million beneficiaries that included women, construction workers, farmers, and senior citizens. More aid was announced in mid-May, to mainly support small businesses through the crisis.

Development and Urbanisation - Who benefits ?



Visakhapatnam District is going to split into three. . Alluri Sitharama Raju the largest district coves an area of 12,251 square km. It will constitute of Paderu, Araku, and Rampachodavaram. The new district of Visakhapatnam will be the smallest, covering an area of only 928 sq km. Bheemili, Anandapuram, Padmanabham, Visakhapatnam Rural, Maharaniipeta, Gajuwaka, Pedagantyada, Gopalapatnam, Mulugada, and Seethammadhara areas will come under the new Visakhapatnam District. Anakapalle District will now cover

an area of 4,412 sq km. It will remain the largest in terms of population (according to the 2011 census Anakapalle has a population of 18.73 lakhs). Areas such as Madugula, Devarapalle, Kasimkota, Rambilli, Munagapaka, Atchutapuram, Chodavaram, Pendurthi, Paravada, Sabbavaram, Narisipatnam will come under the new Anakapalle District. The newly formed districts will have two new revenue divisions each. This division will impact the tribals in these districts due to land acquisition process.

Formation of a Tribal State - In whose interest ?

Netrahat Firing Range in Jharkhand

The struggle against the range has been ongoing for the last 28 years since the 1990s, when the Centre had earmarked about 1,471 sq km in Netarhat Hills in Gumla and Latehar for field firing practice by the army, prior to the creation of what is now known as Jharkhand. Owing to enormous resistance in 1994, practice in the range and the displacement of over 2 lakh tribals across 245 villages was stopped, however, as the deadline for the renewal of the notification nears in 2022, the adivasi community on the ground is revamping their struggle.



Demand to return unused land to tribals

Demand to return unused land under Section 24 (2) of the Land Acquisition Act 1984. Issue assuming importance due to the status of third generation tribals who have been displaced as a result of various development programmes and have issues related to education and employment. This issues grips the entire belt of Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhatisgarh.

CNTA, SPTA and FRA

While earlier protests related to dilutions of Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act and Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act, there is a movement towards ensuring the implementation of the

Forest Rights Act in general and Community Forest Rights in particular as a way of coordinating the efforts related to assertion of tribal identity around long standing issues related to displacement, livelihood, education and employment.

Chhattisgarh the Rice Bowl of India

In 2020-21, the state ranked second across India in terms of overall paddy procurement — with 92 lakh metric tonnes (LMT), only behind Punjab's 202.82 LMT — and is fourth among contributors to the central pool of rice through the Food Corporation of India (FCI), sending 39.76 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of the grain, behind only Punjab's 135 LMT, Uttar Pradesh's 44.78

To start off over 20,000 variety of rice is produced in Chhattisgarh. In 2014 rice produced by Chhattisgarh is approx 75 lakh tons with a productivity of approximately 1600 kg/hect. And in 2015 Chhattisgarh produced approx 77 lakh tons rice with productivity of 1700 kg/hect. Chhattisgarh has won Krishi Karman award for achieving high rice production during the crop year 2012-13. Chhattisgarh is currently one of the main exporter states for rice in India and is considered one of the most productive states for rice in India. Little wonder its called the "Rice Bowl".

Water

The main sources of water in Chhattisgarh are Tanks, rivers and ground waters. Chhattisgarh has major rivers providing the sustenance to the socio - economic improvement of the state, such as **Sheonath, Mahanadi, Indravati, Hasdeo, Arpa, Kelo, Rehar, Son, Kanhar** etc.

The geographical area of Chhattisgarh can be divided into 5 major river basins:

1. Mahanadi Basin (75,546 Sq.Km.)
2. Godavari Basin (39,577 Sq.Km.)
3. Ganga Basin (18,808 Sq.Km.)
4. Narmada Basin (2,113 Sq.Km.)
5. Brahmani Basin (1,316 Sq.Km.)

Total 137,360 Sq.Km.

Forest

Less than half of the geographical vicinity of Chhattisgarh is enclosed by forests. They are affluent in biodiversity. Timber adds about 40 % of the total forest proceeds. Rest comes from Non Wood Forest Products. Chhattisgarh has 3 major national parks, **Sarguja, Kanger Valley National Park in Bastar, Indrawati National park in Dantewara and Guru Ghasidas National Park in Koriya**. There are eleven wildlife sanctuaries. Practically 10,000

industrial units rely on forests for their raw material support. Chhattisgarh is prosperous in Non Wood Forest Products like **Harra, Tendu Leaves, Sal Seed, Mahua, Gum, Amla, Lac, Achar, Chironji** and numerous medicinal plants. Chhattisgarh has prospective to swarm a number of Medicinal, Herbal, Aromatic plant based units. The Recorded forest area in Chhattisgarh is 59,772 km² which is 44.21% of its geographical area. Reserved, unclassified and protected forests constitute 43.13%, 16.65% and 40.21% of the total forest area respectively.

Minerals

Chhattisgarh congregates an extensive diversity of minerals found allied with sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rock configuration. A small number of them form hefty economic dumps whereas a number of other minerals are stated as occurrences. Hefty deposits of **Iron ore, Coal, Limestone, Bauxite and Dolomite** is found in various parts of Chhattisgarh. Diamondiferous Kimberlites acknowledged in Raipur region are also expected to acquiesce sizeable amount of diamonds. Tin bearing Pegmatites including judicious deposits are also acknowledged. Average to small deposits of gold base metals, **soapstone/steatite, quartzite, fluorite, graphite, corundum, lepidolite, amblygonite** of feasible size are also recognized that may score in the kind of hefty deposits after searching. Episodes of **garnet, beryl, amethyst, andalucite, sillimanite, kyanite** and rare expensive mineral alexandrite are also accounted from diverse parts of the State.

Medicinal plants of Chhattisgarh

The Herbal state of Chhattisgarh is situated in Deccan bio-geographical area, houses an important part of the rich and unique biological diversity. What is more conspicuous is that the state is significantly rich in endemism with respect to many plants having medicinal importance. The forests of the state fall under two major forest types, i.e., Tropical Moist Deciduous forest and the Tropical Dry Deciduous forest. The state of Chhattisgarh is endowed with about 22 varied forest sub-types existing in the state.

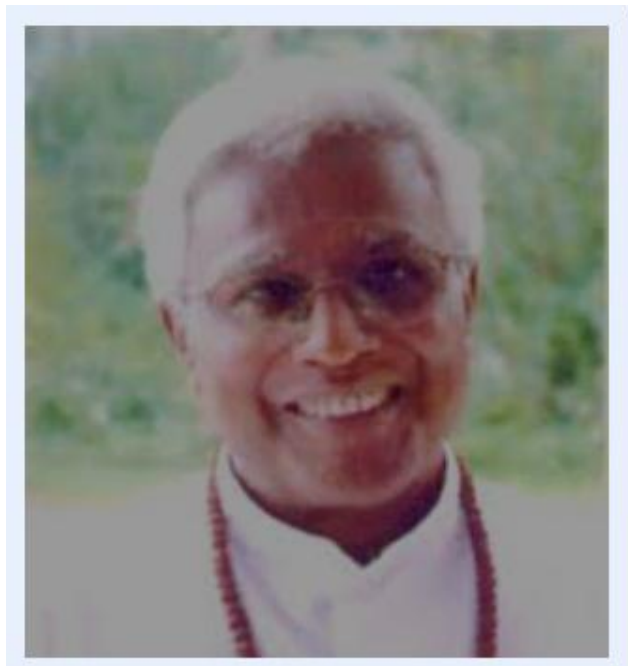
In view of extremely rich bio-cultural diversity in the state and dependence of forest dwellers for their health requirements on medicinal plants the Government has declared Chhattisgarh as an 'HERBAL STATE' in July 2001.

Accordingly the Chhattisgarh Forest Policy has specially provided for evolving a feasible mechanism for in situ / ex situ conservation, domestication, propagation and non-destructive harvest of medicinal plants with the active help and support from local people including traditional healers and vaidyas.

Part III

Spiritual/Ecological Connections & Our Common Home

The death of Bishop Joseph Pethalil its first Bishop



Bishop Joseph Pethalil who passed away in Holy Week

Given below is the text of the very inspiring letter Bishop Pathalil's wrote to his priests.

My dear Fathers,

This is not a voice from the other world but I am putting down a few things before I am actually gone.

I take leave of you with joy, happiness and gratitude. The Lord chose me to be his instrument in building up his kingdom in this part of his vineyard. I answered that call and gave my energy and time towards fulfilling it. I always tried to listen to his guiding Word that in the various ways.

He usually communicates His will through His word in the Bible, through my own conscience, through the voice of others and in the signs of the times. I cannot say that it was always correct or the best thing for God's kingdom. But I do know I acted according to my conscience and according to what I thought was God's will. Sometimes it had been a struggle. But I never made such decisions except before the Lord in Prayer.

Yes, prayer was my strength. Long ago I had made a resolution to spend at least one hour daily in personal prayer, apart from the prayer of the Church and the Eucharist and so on. And by and-large I have been faithful.

This alone, I am convinced has been my strength and my shield. Whatever I did it was not only for his glory but with him, surrendering my faculties and allowing myself to be used for his purpose. I was blessed by God to live continuously in his presence, and he gave me extraordinary strength and courage to accept trials and difficulties but small in comparison, all the same, to so many I know have gone through very generously and with resignation.

In spite of all this, I have not been half as good/holy as I should have been, with so many blessings God gave me.

In fact I consider myself most sincerely the lowliest among you. My sins have been many and due to some of my ways, many of you have also suffered much. God forgive me and I beg your generous forgiveness too. I have nothing to bank on except the inscrutable love of God. In spite of all my sins and shortcomings he is simply in love with me and will not hold my sins against me.

Hence I take leave of you joyously, thanking you all for the love and co-operation you gave me in the years. I was privileged first to be a co-member with you and later as your shepherd and leader. He had entrusted me with some responsibilities, which I tried to carry out with your cooperation. To many it may appear unfinished. I have not such feeling.

The Lord gave me a job to be done up to a point and when he felt it was enough, he called me. I have always said it was not the work that we do that matters, but what we are. The fruits of your apostolate is not so much on the amount of work we put in but on the love and sacrifice we put in.

It is not our work that we are doing, but His. He intends to work through us. We have only to surrender our faculties to him in complete surrender. So we need not look for external results. They may come or not come. We are always successful as Jesus was where he hanged on the cross, abandoned even by his closest disciples, except John and a few women. What external reward do we want then. The disciple is not greater than the Master, certainly as Master.

So, my dear brother priests, I leave with a feeling of satisfaction and joy. I have tried to be sincere and honest before him. Human weakness may have caused some mistakes. The Lord will pardon me. I am sure you too will be indulgent and generous towards your elder brother in the presbyterium.

This unity of our presbyterium has been one of my primary concerns. The diocese has been my home. On the day of Episcopal ordination especially espoused to you all. Given before that I had accepted our people as my own and I sincerely loved my people. These were indeed, my brothers and sisters. Episcopal ordination strengthened that bond in me I know I loved each one of you and tried to help and encourage you in your priesthood.

And it must have seemed at times to some that I was too hard on you. But I can assure you I always acted with the best of intentions, for your own good and for the church. For me all my priests my dearest brothers and I never harbored any feeling of difference, and I wish that be the feeling of every member of our presbyterium.

On financial matters, I have tried to be absolutely honest and used every pie for our Church. Even my personal money has been poured into the common. There are one or two air-conditioners in my personal name all of which I have entered in my will to be transferred to diocesan (account).

I have had no financial dealings with my relatives, and no one has any claim on anything. My only home is the diocese which has every right over me and my so-called belongings. I go, a free man, in the freedom of my Father.

In this respect, afraid as I am to do so even though I am sincere, I may be allowed at this juncture to tell my brother priests, I beg of you, if you wish to have strength in the priesthood and be able be a fit instrument of His Kingdom be men of prayer, and be sincere and honest in all matters.

Thanking you and asking your prayers to be worthy of God's mercy for my own follies and sins, I take your leave. God bless you.

Bishop Joseph Pthalil

Part IV

Different Aspects of Man/Nature Connect



Forest Fires - Bane or Boon ?



Vedic geometry

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Q1KbaQHHVw&feature=emb_rel_pause

The Pythagoras theorem is predated by the Baudhayan Sutra:

Baudhayana, (800 BCE) was an ancient Indian mathematician. He is noted as the author of Sulba Sutra (vedic rules for construction of altars - called the Baudhayana sulbasutra). This book contains several important mathematical results.

Baudhayan used a rope as an example in his shloka which can be translated as - 'A rope stretched along the length of the diagonal produces an area which the vertical and horizontal sides make together'.

Climate change and support from an unexpected quarter

https://www.icsf.net/newss/in-the-fight-against-climate-change-seaweed-could-be-a-surprising-but-vital-weapon/?utm_source=mailpoet&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=SAMUDRA+News+Alert

Fisherman's victory

https://www.icsf.net/newss/usd-11-mn-awarded-to-atlantic-herring-fisheries-in-response-to-2019-fisheries-disaster/?utm_source=mailpoet&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=SAMUDRA+News+Alert

The Heartbreaking story of Promodini Raul and her quest for justice

We had occasion to meet an engage with her during her stint at Sheroes and helped her in her quest for justice to the extent we could.

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2157536311279291&id=100010688291976&s_fnsn=wiwspwa

Capitalism's underbelly

https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/may/15/buffalo-shooting-supermarket-new-york-joe-biden?CMP=oth_b-aplnews_d-1

Nature emulating man or the other way around

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/road-to-atlantis-scientists-spot-strange-yellow-brick-road-in-pacific-ocean-2963243>

Nature's mysteries

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/pacific-island-that-keeps-disappearing-on-google-maps-baffles-scientists-2951302>

The market superimposition on man/nature relationships

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/2022/may/13/ignorant-tribals-force-sell-mahua-blame-poor-market-linkage-by-govt-2453061.html>



The Conocarpus effect

Press Note on Conocarpus

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Press-Note-on-Conocarpus.pdf>

Nature responds to climatic conditions

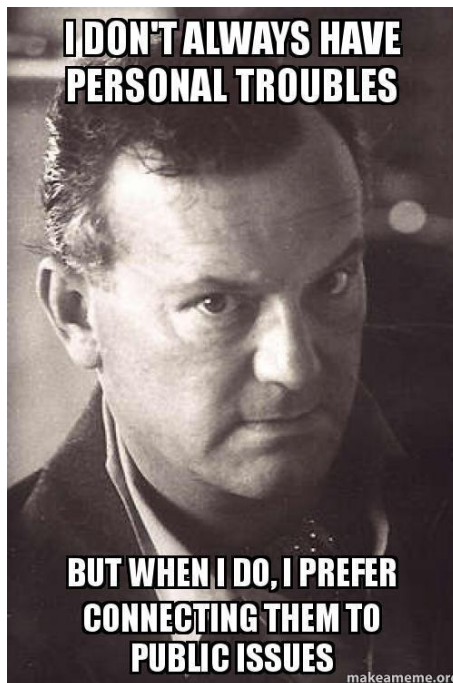
<https://theconversation.com/young-indian-farmers-are-turning-to-an-ancient-crop-to-fight-water-stress-and-climate-change-179248>

Two sides of Schindler and Mimi Reinhard who typed up Schindler's list

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/world/europe/mimi-reinhard-dead.html>

Part V

Health, Happiness and the Hope Gene



Externalising problems

Social Inequality: Reasons for Despair, reasons for hope

<https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/3156inequality/>

Social inequalities hide in funny places

"I don't mind making jokes, but I don't want to look like one." — Marilyn Monroe

Health and Overall well being during COVID : Harvard T.H. Chan

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/india-center/health-and-well-being-during-covid-19/>

Mental Health: WHO

<https://www.who.int/india/health-topics/mental-health>

WHO estimates that the burden of mental health problems in India is 2443 disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) per 100 000 population; the age-adjusted suicide rate per 100 000 population is 21.1. The economic loss due to mental health conditions, between 2012-2030, is estimated at USD 1.03 trillion.

22 Reasons to Hope: IKEA Foundation

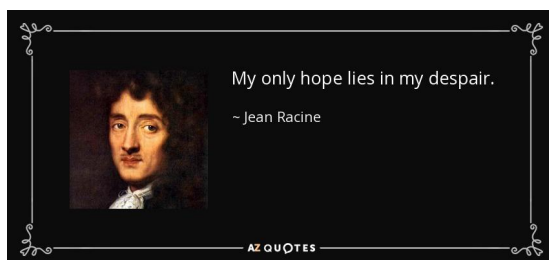
<https://ikeafoundation.org/story/22-reasons-for-hope-in-2022/>

These include an end to coal, diversity in the food system, low carbon health care, gathering evidence for the green economy,

World Vision : 12 reasons to have hope

<https://www.worldvision.org/christian-faith-news-stories/12-reasons-hope-2022>

For years, the number of children who died daily from poor water, sanitation, and hygiene was nearly 1,000. Now, it's dropped to over 800 a day. And the number of people lacking access to clean water worldwide decreased from 1.1 billion in 2000 to 771 million in 2020. While these numbers are still heartbreakingly high, their decrease represents such important progress in the fight against the global water crisis.



About the editor:



Viren Lobo who was influenced by liberation theology during his college days did an MBA from Institute of Rural Management Anand. He has been working the development sector since he passed out from there in 1985. Employer, employee and other contradictions observed by him during his thirty year stint at Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development (SPWD) forced him to examine the relevance of Marxism as a way of looking at reality in relation to change he sought to bring. During the course of his work covering more than twenty States, he noticed a link between the livelihoods and ecology which he pursued strongly as Executive Director SPWD. The limitations of existing organisations to deal with the complex questions society posed motivated him to set up Institute of Ecology and Livelihood Action as the transition needed to address issues he was looking into at that time. The contradictions arising out of the a series of Bills that were passed during the last five years encouraged him to use the enforced sedentary life imposed on him to use his creativity to write plays. These were the first of a series which have helped serve the purpose of putting on paper the complex dilemma and diverse social opinions he came across.

About Especioza Trust:



Especioza Trust is named after my great, great grandmother who widowed at an early age brought up her only son Aogustinho (seated in centre). Shortly after a family reunion in December 2013, we got news that the family home at 84 Porvorim had been illegally sold to a builder. My aunt Marie stepped in and after getting the required mandate from the family not only got the family home back but the previous ancestral home of 85 Porvorim as well. Since then it became her project in memory of her widowed great grandmother till her death on her mother Amy Lobo's 117th birthday (25th July 2019). Since the informal trust set up by her could not achieve fruition I decided to keep the struggle and memories alive by carrying on her mission to bring unity within the family and dedicate the work of the Trust to all widows and single women of the world. My Aunt/Cousin Hazel Cardozo the daughter of Liban Pinto one of the two brothers born on my birthday (6th September) has helped me to give this project shape. The other brother Lucian in whose name the house was, also happened to be born on my birthday as well. The spiritual connection and the necessity for me to step in also come from a lot of other quarters which need not be documented here.

Viren Lobo