

দহ মিনিট

মণিৰত্ন ডেকা

দহ মিনিট হ'ব পাৰে অতি কম সময়
কিন্তু ব্যাকুলতাৰ হেঁপাহেৰে পূৰ।
সেই হেতুকে মই ভাৰি লও
শুকান মৰুভূমিৰ দহ টোপাল পানী
তেতিয়া মোৰ মন অজানিতে পুলকিত হয়
ঢাপলি মেলে তোমাৰ কাষলৈ
মন যায় তেতিয়া
তোমাৰ কাপলত আঁকি দিবলৈ
এটি উদ্ভূ চূমা।
সিদিনা দুপৰীয়া
তোমাৰ আৰু মোৰ দেহৰ পৰা
নিৰ্গত হোৱা প্ৰতি টোপাল ঘামেৰে
জীপাল কৰি তুলিম লেৰেলি যোৱা সপোনবোৰ।
স্নান পৰা নাই এতিয়াও
অতীতৰ
এতিয়াও আমনি কৰে বাৰে বাৰে
ৰোমাঞ্চিত কৰে মোৰ প্ৰতিটো পল-অনুপল।
যাৰ বোৱতি সোঁতত প্ৰবাহিত হয়,
তুমি তুমি লগা মোৰ একান্ত মুহূৰ্তবোৰ
কেতিয়াবা আৰ্তনাদ কৰে মোৰ বুকুৰ ভিতৰখন
তোমাৰ মুখৰ পৰা প্ৰকাশিত সেই মৰম সনা শব্দবোৰত
তুমি হয়তো নাজানিবা প্ৰণয়ৰ সোঁতত
চঞ্চল গাঠাবোৰৰ কথা,
সিদিনাই মোক ভালদৰে অধ্যয়ন কৰিবা,
যি পোৱা তুমি তাকে লৈ সুখী হবা।। ♦♦

আই

মঞ্জু প্ৰভা দেৱী

আই তুমি কুশলে আছানে?
বহুদিন হ'ল তোমাৰ মৌসনা মাতৃষাৰ নুগুনা
তোমাৰ স'তে বিছনাত নোশোৱা
দুপৰ নিশালৈ তোমাৰ স'তে কথা পাতা

তোমাৰ দৰে মোৰ মনটোৱেও
আকাশলৈ উৰা মাৰে
সপোনবোৰে আটোম টোকাৰিকৈ
ঘৰ সাজিছে ঠিক তোমাৰ দৰে
মই ভাগৰিও, ভাগৰা নাই

এতিয়া তোমাৰ আশাবোৰে
পোৱা নোপোৱাৰ হিচাপ কৰি
পাবলৈ থকাবোৰ বাকী ৰাখি
ঘৰমুৱা

আই অ' নামঘৰলৈ গৈছানে?
যাবা, সংগ পাবা ন'হলে
নিসংগ সময়বোৰ কেনেকৈ কটাৰা?
বিষৰ টেবলেট খাইছানে?
খাবা, ন'হলে ঘৰৰ কামবোৰ
অকলে কেনেকৈ কৰিবা?

আই মোৰ কি যে হ'ল
সময়বোৰ চোন নিমিলাই হ'ল
আই তুমি কুশলে থাকা
কেতিয়াবা আহিম
আকৌ একেলগে শুম
হাঁহিম, বুকুত গেঠেনা মৰা কথাবোৰ
আকৌ তোমাৰ সতেই পাতিম। ♦♦

এটি কবিতা আৰু তুমি

জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ হাজৰিকা

কবিতাৰো আছে এক বিশাল আয়োজন
যিদৰে মোৰ চৌপাশে বিস্তৃত
হৈ আছে তোমাৰ অৱস্থান।

কবিতাৰ প্ৰেমত পৰাৰ দৰেই
কবিতাৰ প্ৰেমত পৰাৰ আগতেই
প্ৰেমত পৰিছিলো তোমাৰ
তোমাৰ হাঁহিয়ে সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল
এটি আনন্দৰ,

তোমাৰ অভিমানে সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল
এটি মৰমৰ,

তোমাৰ বিশ্বাসেই সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল
এটি সাহসৰ,

তোমাৰ কান্দোনে সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল
এটি বেদনাৰ
আৰু তোমাৰ বিচ্ছেদে সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল
এটি কবিতাৰ
তুমি আতৰি গ'লা
কিন্তু আৱদ্ধ হৈ আছা
মোৰ এটি কবিতাৰ মাজত....
সেয়ে মই কওঁ
তুমি এটি কবিতা.....।◆◆

আৰ্তনাদ

ধৰিত্ৰী ডেকা

মুকলি আকাশৰ তলত
শিয়ালৰ ডাক
চাৰিওপিনে মৰা শ
আকাশত শব্দ
নবকংকালৰ মেলা
পৃথিৱীখন অন্ধকাৰ
এতিয়া
বস্ত্ৰান্ত দেহৰ
ধ্বংসলীলা
গুলি বাক্ৰদে
সজ্জালে ফুল শয্যা
কেবল মাতৃৰ উচূপনি
সন্ত্ৰাসৰ বিস্তীৰ্ণিকা
উন্মত্ত জনতা
চাৰিওফালে দেখো
লাওখোলা কেবল লাওখোলা
আৰ্তনাদ
মাথো
আৰ্তনাদ ◆◆

তৰা

ঋতু শইকীয়া

কোনো বলিয়া বাতিৰ বাঁহীৰ সুৰত
যি পৰা জোন
এতিয়া তৰা,
আপোনাৰ মোৰ

পলাতক তৰা
জীৱন বিহীন
আন্ধাৰেহে জানে জন্ম ক'ত মৃত্যু কি
আন্ধাৰেই গায় তৰাৰ বুকুত
মুকুতিৰ গায়ত্ৰী

স্বাস্থত ভোকত তৰা
চালৰ জঁকাত মৰে
ভাগৰুৱা শেষ নিশা

তৰাই হাঁহে
তৰাই গায়
আন্ধাৰৰ বাবে বাতক
হিয়া উবুৰিয়াই ভাল পায়

আকাশ সমুদ্ৰ
তৰা চকুপানী
নিচিনি নমনি
তৰা মাথো আন্ধাৰৰ সংগী

তৰা
সমাজ বহিস্কৃত।◆◆

অজ্ঞতা

গৌতম বিষয়া

ভবাতো নাছিলো এনে হ'ব বুলি
 দেখিছিলো মাথো এটা সৰু সপোন
 দীঘলকৈ ওৰনিৰ মাজত
 সপোনৰ বেঙনিবোৰে জালি পাতিছিল
 সকলোকে সুখী কৰাৰ শিৰত লৈ
 ভৰি দিলো এখন নতুন ঘৰত
 নতুন মানুহ নতুন ঘৰ সকলো নতুন
 সকলোবোৰ কৰি ললো এদিন আপোন
 এদিন ক'ৰপৰা জানো ক'লা মেঘবোৰে
 চানি ধৰিছিল মোৰ কপালৰ বেলিটোক
 নিমিষতে মচি নিলে সপোনৰ বংবোৰ
 হাহাকাৰ লাগিল মোৰ বুকুখনত
 মেঘে মাদল বজালে
 মোৰ সপোনৰ পঁজাত
 গাঁৱত বু-বা লাগিছে মই হেনো ডাইনী
 মোৰ ক'লা ধুনীয়া চকুজুৰিত হেনো
 বেমাৰৰ ঢল বয়
 মই চুলে হেনো সকলো জই পৰে
 মোৰ সপোন মোৰ আশাৰ ইয়াতেই অন্ত
 এতিয়া আৱদ্ধ মই মাথো অন্ধকাৰ কোঠাত
 কেৱল আৰ্তনাদ কৰিছোঁ মুক্তিৰ বাবে
 মই মৰিব নোখোজোঁ
 নহয় মই ডাইনী
 জীয়াই থাকিব বিচাৰো শান্তিৰে
 কিন্তু বাধা দিয়েহি মনে মনে আত্মবিশ্বাসে
 যদি সেয়ে হয়
 হে বন্ধুসকল নকৰিবা তুমি গৌৰৱ
 বিজ্ঞান যুগৰ বুলি। ♦♦

জালুকবাৰী

বিদ্যুৎ বিষয়া

জালুকবাৰী
 মোৰ প্ৰেমিকাৰ নীৰৱ ঠিকনা
 মাজ নিশাও তুমি সাৰে আছ।
 কৃষ্ণচূড়াৰ মাজে মাজে
 তোমাৰ বুকুৰে বগাই
 ভূপেন দাৰ শেষ ঠিকনাত
 এবাৰ জিৰাই চাম,
 কিমান নীৰৱ আজি
 তোমাৰ অশান্ত হিয়া
 মোৰ প্ৰেমিকা
 জালুকবাৰী
 তুমি সঁচাই অপকপা। ♦♦

বাস্তৱ

পৰমা হাজৰিকা

কল্পনাৰ বাহিৰত এখন জগত
 য'ত অসহ্য হৈ পৰে বাস্তৱ
 নভৱাকৈ ভাঙোনৰ সৃষ্টি হয়
 কিছুমান কান্দোনৰ।
 কষ্ট হৈ পৰে
 তাক সহ্য কৰাতো
 যন্ত্ৰণাত ছটফটাই মন
 দুচকুত অজস্ৰ প্ৰশ্নৰ বান
 অপেক্ষাত অস্থিৰ হৃদয়
 তথাপিহে নাই কোনো উত্তৰ।
 মই বাধ্য....
 ভাঙিবলৈ কষ্ট হয় মোৰ
 বেদনাৰ প্ৰতিটোপাল চকুলো
 শুকাই যেন সৃষ্টি হৈছে
 এখন শুকান মৰুভূমিৰ
 কৰিব নোৱাৰো মই বোম্বুছন
 অতীতক
 স্মৃতিৰ বস্তু সম্পূৰ্ণ নুমাই
 বাট বিচাৰিবলৈ মই চেষ্টা কৰো
 অন্ধকাৰত।♦♦

তোমাৰ বাবে

কাকলি কাথাৰ

নিশাবোৰ কেতিয়াবা
গভীৰ হয়
তেতিয়া মোৰ বুকুত
আবেগবোৰ থিতাপি
লয় নীৰৱে।

মই নজনাকৈয়ে তুমি আহা
হৃদয়ৰ স্পন্দন হৈ,
স্পৰ্শ কৰিব খোজা
মোৰ মনত মৌন ভাষাক।

মোৰ অভিমানবোৰ
তোমাৰ বুকুত থিতাপি লয়
তুমি নজনাকৈয়ে
আমাৰ ভেঁটিবোৰ বাঢ়ে
বলীয়া বানৰ দৰে

তোমাৰ প্ৰসংশাত
মোৰ হৃদয় ভৰি পৰে
মাধুৰ্যতাৰ মৌ-সনা
তোমাৰ অমিয়া মাতত
ভাগৰুৱা আত্মা প্ৰাচুৰ্যতাৰে ভৰি পৰে।

তোমাৰ উদ্বিগ্ন হৃদয়ৰ
সমস্ত সপোন
বুটলি আনি সুগন্ধি সুৰাসেৰে
অতীতক বোকোচাত লৈ
মই স্মৃতিৰ মণিকোঠালৈ
আঁজুৰি আনিম
মাথো তোমাৰ বাবে।◆◆

তোমাৰ প্ৰেমে মোক মতলীয়া কৰিলে

মঃ আবুল ফজল

তোমাৰ প্ৰেমে মোক মতলীয়া কৰিলে
পোন প্ৰথম যিদিনা তোমাক ভাল পালো
সেইদিনাই সলনি হ'ল মোৰ জীৱনৰ গতিধাৰা।

ভাল লাগিছিল তোমাৰ ধুনীয়া চাৱনি
চিকুন ধুনীয়া তোমাৰ মুখখনি
চাই চাই মোৰ ভাগৰ নালাগিছিল,
তোমাক ভাল পাবলৈ শিকিয়েই
খোৱা-বোৱা, শোৱা পাহৰি গলো সকলো
নাখালেও যেন খাইছিলো
নুশুলেও যেন শুইছিলো
সপোনে দিঠকে চাই আছিলো
তোমাৰ গোলপীয়া ওঁঠৰ হাঁহিটি।
মনত পৰেনে কেতিয়াবা
নিৰলে বহি দিনে-ৰাতি ম'বাইলত পতা বহু কথা,
উন্মনা বতাহ জাকে যে
গালে মুখে সানিছিল বহুবাৰ চুমা।
বাস্তাৰ দুকাষৰ গছবোৰে
আমাৰ ভালপোৱাৰ দিছিল বতৰা।
তোমালৈ চাই চাই আমনিও লগা নাছিল
তোমাৰ প্ৰেমে মোক মতলীয়া কৰিছিল।◆◆

দেউতাৰ স্মৃতি

দীপিকা দেবী সোণোৱাল

কিয়নো তুমি আঁতৰি গ'লা
 অ' মোৰ চেনেহৰ দেউতা তুমি,
 আমাক নিঠৰুৱা কৰি গ'লা যে
 অজান দেশলৈ বুলি।
 তোমাৰ বিনে আমি দেখো অন্ধকাৰ
 পদ প্ৰদৰ্শক আছিলো তুমি,
 মায়ঙৰ ৰাইজক উন্নতিৰ জখলাত তুলি,
 কিয়নো তুমি গ'লা আঁতৰি
 অজান দেশলৈ বুলি।
 তোমাৰ তুলনা পাবলৈ যে নাই,
 সগৰত থাকিও তুমি লভিবা সমাদৰ
 অ' মোৰ চেনেহৰ দেউতা তুমি।
 'মায়ং নহয় যাদুৰ দেশ
 এইখন প্ৰাকৃতিক সম্পদৰ দেশ,
 বিশ্বৰ পৰ্য্যটন স্থলী।'
 দিলা চিনাকি বিশ্ব দৰবাৰত।
 তোমাৰ জীৱন-জোৰা সেৱা কৰ্মৰ বাবে
 মায়ংবাসীয়ে দিলে তোমাক
 'মায়ং খনিকৰ' বুলি।
 তুমি ধন্য, হে পৰম পূজনীয় দেউতা
 তোমাৰ স্মৃতি চিৰযুগমীয়া হওক।
 যুগে যুগে যেন নতুন প্ৰজন্মই
 তোমাৰ আদৰ্শৰে অনুপ্ৰাণিত হৈ
 দহৰ বাবে, দেশৰ বাবে, জাতিৰ বাবে
 কৰ্মত নিয়োজিত হৈ
 জীৱন কৰে মহান।◆◆

আজি আচিনাকি

ডঃ এ আহমেদ

তোলৈ মনত পৰে সঘনাই
 কেতিয়াবা সুখৰ আত্মপ্ৰকাশ হ'লে,
 বিষাদত বিষাক্ত হৈ আত্মহাৰা হওঁ
 দুচকুত তোৰেই সপোন,
 সুখৰ সান্নিধ্য বিচাৰি;
 উদ্দাম নৃত্যৰ তালেৰে প্ৰায়েই
 খেদি ফুৰিছে মোৰ আৱয়েবে
 মৰুৰ বুকুত মৰিচিকা খেদাদি;
 বিফলতাখিনি মানি ল'বলৈ
 বৰ কষ্ট হয় তই অবিহনে
 উন্মাদ হৈ পৰো পুনঃ
 তোৰ পাণি গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ,
 নিষ্ঠুৰ হেঁপাহে আগ্ৰহকৰে।
 বিষাদ হেঁপাহেও সান্নিধ্য
 বিচাৰে, হাঁহাকাৰ কৰে গুপতে কথাৰে?
 মোৰ বিপদ সীমা জলমগ্ন হ'লে
 জলবায়ু সংকীৰ্ণ হৈ পৰিলে
 তোৰ নিষ্ঠুৰতাই আমনি কৰে।
 বুকুখন বৰকৈ ধক ধক কৰে।
 তোৰ শূন্যতাই দুৰ্বল কৰিছে সঁচা,
 বিফলতাৰে হাতবোৰ শুকাইছে,
 তোৰ জানো প্ৰাসঙ্গিক আজিও?
 তথাপিও তোৰ সান্নিধ্যৰ
 আকাঙ্ক্ষা
 জীৱনে জীয়াই শেষ উশাহলৈ
 মোৰ আধৰুৱা প্ৰেমৰ বহুল শপত? ◆◆

SUBJECT

ENGLISH SECTION

1. Introduction

'Archaeology is the Matrix of Civilization'. Archaeology means the science of ascertaining the history of mankind by the study of ancient remains. Mayong, a small area in the District of Morigaon, Assam, is very rich in archaeological remains belonging to the ancient and medieval periods of history. Mayong is itself a big museum so far as the archaeological remains are concerned. Mayong is full of all types of archaeological remains, some of them are found intact and some others are in ruins. Nearly all the artistic remains of Mayong are of a religious nature, or were at least made for religious purposes. Secular arts have also been found in the form of forts, ramparts, caves, different types of arms and ammunitions etc. As the Brahmanism, the Shaktism, the Shaivism and the Vaishnavism – all the great branches of Hinduism have been prevailing since immemorial times, hence countless shrines relating to these faiths have been found in and around Mayong.

2. Burhamayong

Burhamayong is a village situated at the foothill of the Mayong Hill. During the medieval period, it was inhabited by the Karbi people. It was the earliest capital of the Kingdom of Mayong. Soinatva Singha (1538-1549 A.D.), the first of the Dimasa-Kachari kings of Mayong, transferred the capital from Burhamayong to Rajamayong.¹ Burhamayong is very rich in archaeological remains, such as— (a) The ruins of the first capital has been found on the Mayong Hill where almost 50 bighas of land is lying

barren which is known as Bangthe Bheti. A few seats made of stone have been found a few feet downwards the Bangthe Bheti. Probably the kings and his ministers assembled there occasionally to discuss the state affairs. (b) Kechai Khaiti Than of Burhamayong is situated on the ever flowing stream Barghat. In this shrine one rock-cut image of Devi Kali has been found there. There are twelve seats made of stone on either sides of the Kechai Khaiti. These are for the twelve Karbi deities. Earlier, human sacrifice was practiced

A Study of the Archaeological Remains in Mayong

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during the Puja. Cocks, ducks, pigeons, he-goats etc. were also sacrificed. Seven swords made of iron and one shield made of animal skin, have also been preserved in this shrine. The names of these seven swords are—Narabali, Ranthali, Dowar-dowari, Rajphuri, Saharphuri, Shel Konwar, Bih Konwar and Phul Konwar.²

(c) The shrine of Hara-Gauri is situated near the Kechai Khaiti shrine. The rock-cut images of Hara and Gauri, embracing each other, are naked.

Hara (Shiva) has four arms. One hand of Hara is being placed at the chin of Gauri, the second hand is being kept on the breast of Gauri, the third hand is at his Trishula, and the fourth one is at his Dambaru. Four rock-cut dancing male figures have been found around this Hara-Gauri Jugal Murti, and a Yaksha at the top of the Jugal Murti. There are a lion and an ox on both sides of the Jugal Murti. The image of Gauri wears ear-rings, bracelets and a girdle. Shiva's linga is vivid in this rock-cut image. The glance of Hara and Gauri is so charming that visitor's eye remains a back for a moment. The inhabitants of Burhamayong village offer Puja before this Jugal-Murti every day.

(d) Another rock-cut image of Hara-Gauri Jugal-Murti has been found on the Bahani Shil to the north of the Hara-Gauri Than.

(e) A Yonipeeth has been found to the north of the Hara-Gauri Than on the bank of the Barghat Stream. This Yonipeeth is near the Kali Pukhuri. People offer Puja in this Yonipeeth occasionally.

(f) A rock-cut image of Lord Ganesha has been found near the Kechai Khaiti Than of Burhamayong. The people of the surrounding villages offer puja to Lord Ganesha on the Ganesha Chaturthi. Two other rock-cut images of Ganesha have been found to the north of the Kechai Khaiti Than. These Ganesha images are regarded by the villagers as the Cow-boys. There is a popular belief among the people that whenever a villager loses his cattle and if he offers puja before these Ganesha images, he finds his lost cattle immediately.

(g) A stone inscription (3.85 metres long), known as the Burhamayong Stone Inscription, has been found at Burhamayong village. This inscription has not been deciphered so far. It bears the sign of olden form of Assamese scripts.

3. Chanaka

Chanaka, a hilly place, stands on the south

মায়া আঞ্চলিক মহাবিদ্যালয় "কপালী জয়ন্তী বর্ষ" ১৯৯৯

bank of the Brahmaputra. It is abounding in archaeological remains of the past, such as— (a) A Shrine of Hara-Gauri is there where there the rock-cut images of Hara-Gauri, embracing each other, have been found in the shrine. (b) A few rock-cut images of Lord Ganesha have been found near the Hara-Gauri Than. (c) A few terracotta dancing female figurines and a pair of plough (made of iron) have also been found there.³ These are preserved in the 'Mayong Gramya Sangrahalaya and Research Centre, Mayong'. (d) Besides all these, 16 signs of square size Yantra (rock-cut) have been found at Chanaka. These indicate that the archaeological remains of Chanaka are older than any other sites of Mayong. The people of the locality offer Puja before the Hara-Gauri and Lord Ganesha almost daily.

4. Kajali Chaki

Kajali Chaki is situated in the meeting point of the rivers Kolong-Kapili and the Brahmputra. Kajali Chaki is famous for a Vishnu temple and numerous sculptural remains. It is also famous for its fort constructed by the Ahom King Swargadeo Pratap Singha in 1617 A.D. This fort played an important role in the medieval period especially against the Mughals.

In the first part of the year 2010, hundreds of cannon-balls were discovered at a place descending the Kajali Chaki Vishnu Temple. Probably these cannon-balls had been stored there by the Ahom soldiers to fight against the Mughals in 1771. If further excavation work is done, there is possibility of recovering more cannon-balls and other arms and ammunitions at Kajali Chaki.

Hati Baghara is a village near Kajali Chaki, located on the bank of the Brahmaputra. It is famous for a rampart and a fort constructed by the Ahom King Pratap Singha in 1627 A.D. and a natural rock-cut cave.

5. Hiloi Khunda

'Hiloi Khunda' is a small village in the

northern end of the Mayong Hill and on the bank of the Brahmaputra. It is famous for the Shrines of Lord Shiva and Burhi-Ai. During Sarascha Chandra Singha's reign, Kahidhar and Mahidhar (two blacksmiths) were appointed to produce different war weapons like— Gun, Gun powder, Cartridges. They also made swords, shields, Lankoi, Dao, Dakhar, bow and arrows, Baracha etc.

6. Ganesha Temple of Hatimuria

There is a Ganesha temple situated in the north end of the Hatimuria village on the bank of the Brahmaputra. A big rock-cut image of Lord Ganesha (5.5 feet tall) at the foot of a hillock is really a wonderful piece of sculpture. During the Burmese invasion of Assam, the Burmese soldiers cut this image at the stomach. This Ganesha Image has four hands. The upper right hand bears a 'parasu' (battle axe). The handle of this axe is a Trisul. The upper left hand bears most probably a Padma. The lower right hand is placed on the right knee and the lower left hand is placed under the trunk of the God. The image has two big ears. The image does not have any eye or they are not visible. Left tooth is protruding slightly. The God sits with the left leg tucked along the seat and the right leg raised up. There are two flying 'Apsaras' on either side of the head of the God. The rat, the vehicle of Ganesha is missing here. The Mayong Rajvamsavali states that King Sarascha Chandra Singha (1599-1624A.D), the 10th king of the Kingdom of Mayong, constructed this image and appointed Deori (Pujari) to offer worship daily in the Ganesha Shrine. But from its artistic viewpoint, it seems that this is much older than it is stated in the Rajvamsavali. The people of the locality offer puja almost daily in this Mandir. The Hatimuria Sri Sri Ganesha Mandir Managing Committee looks after this Shrine and has appointed a permanent priest to offer puja daily in the Temple. Annual Sri Sri Ganesha Puja is celebrated here on the day of Ganesha Chaturthi

every year. Now the Temple premise is well protected with a brick boundary wall. Numerous other sculptures are also found around the temple premise.

7. Kachashila

'Kachashila' is purely a Saivite pilgrim centre located in the outskirts of Mayong on a solitary hill by the bank of the Brahmaputra. It is one of the most important heritage sites from the archaeological point of view. (i) A stone inscription has been found in the north-west corner of the hillock. This inscription has not been deciphered so far. (ii) A terracotta figurine wearing a maduli in her neck has also been found there. (iii) The Mayong Rajvamsavali says that rock-cut Hara-Parvati and Nandi-Vringi images were carved during the reign of King Sarascha Chandra Singha.⁴ (iv) A Sivalingam, a Yonipeeth, a Yonikunda, sign of a Padma Chakra and a Surya Chakra have been found on the Kachashila Hill. (v) Ruins of a temple like structure made of baked bricks have been found on this hill. Numerous other stone sculptures, terracottas, potteries and baked bricks have been found around this temple, which are now preserved in the 'Mayong Gramya Sangrahalaya and Research Centre, Mayong'. (vi) The hillock 'Kacha Shila' got its present name because of a gigantic carved stone tortoise (Kachyap) which lies on the northern side of the hill. From the archaeological point of view, it seems that a skilled sculptor cut this tortoise image on a flat and round shaped boulder. Its origin goes back to pre-Neo-Vaishnavite age.

All these archaeological remains indicate that Kachashila was once the centre of both Saivism and Shaktism.

8. Burha-Burhi

The shrine of Burha-Burhi is located on the Burha-Burhi Hillock. Burha means Shiva and Burhi means Parvati. Footprints of Shiva-Parvati have been found on the rock of the hillock. Size

of each foot-print is about 14 inches in length and 6 inches in width. One rock-cut image of Lord Ganesha has been found in the eastern part of the Burhaburhi hillock. The image is about 2.5 ft. tall and 2 ft wide, cut on a big boulder. It seems that some infidels tried to destroy this image and in their endeavour, they were successful in breaking the parts of its body. Now, this image can be recognized from its two big ears and the sign of its trunks. It has two hands. It seems that the image wears two pieces of cloths, one piece hanging from his shoulders and another piece tied at his waist. Local people offer puja occasionally in front of this Ganesha image. Ganesha Puja is celebrated in this shrine annually on the day of Basanti Astomi Tithi. This shrine is a neglected one. No shed is there over this image. No government fund has so far been received by the local committee for the protection and development of this holy shrine.

9. Shildubi Satra

The Shildubi Satra, situated in the midst of Shildubi village, 4 Kms. east of Mayong Bazaar is famous for its Vaisnavite monastery established by Shiromoni Dev in the later part of the 16th century A.D. There are two boulders in the Satra premise, namely, 'Chakra Shila' and 'Padma Shila'. A wheel is engraved on the 'Chakra Shila' and a lotus is on the 'Padma Shila'. 'King Shiva Singha (The Ahom King) had done this. The Burmese broke these two boulders into pieces and the Kirtan Ghar.⁵ These broken boulders are lying there in the Satra premise till today.

10. Mayong Shildubi Satra, Chatabori

The Mayong Shildubi Satra, Chatabori has 1.5 bigha of miyadi land in its name. The Satra has a congregational prayer hall (Naamghar) and a Garvbhagriha (Monikut) made of bricks. The boundary is well protected by brick wall. A few images of deitis made of brass are being kept in the Monikut. These are— (i) Basudeva, (ii)

Krishna, (iii) Bongshi Gopal, (iv) Laxmi, (v) Saraswati, and (vi) a Salgram (Janardan). The Chakrashila and the Padmashila representing a wheel and a lotus respectively are also being kept in the Monikut. All the above mentioned articles were brought from 'Shildubi Satra' in 1925 A.D. Besides, five rock-cut images of Gosains (unknown) on one boulder have been found in the Satra.

11. Jhargaon

It is a Saiva pilgrim centre. 'Sivalingam', 'Yonipeeth' and many other sculptures belonging to pre-historic age have been found there.

12. Rock-cut Ganesha Image of Ghoramara Janpar

There is a Ganesha Image carved on a big boulder in Ghoramara Janpar village at the foothill of the Gobardhan Hill. This image is 2.5 feet tall and 2 feet wide. It is known from Sri Govinda Sarma, the Pujari (priest) of the Ganesha temple, that when his grandfather late Gurudayal Sarma came to this village in 1942, he found a thatched roof over this image and a few devotees had been offering puja daily in the temple. Gurudayal Sarma's family has been offering puja in this shrine since 1942. Now a new temple has been built with bricks and it looks very beautiful. The temple has about 40 bighas of land in its name and the revenue collected from this land is used for the development of the temple. The rock-cut image of Lord Ganesha has four hands having 'Padma' in his upper right hand and 'Chakra' in his upper left hand. The emblems of other two hands are not recognizable. This is a seated image of Ganesha. The God sits with his left leg tucked along seat and his right leg is missing. The God wears a 'jatamukuta'. The image has two big ears. No tooth is visible. A rat, the vehicle of Ganesha, is there on the ground just below the right foot of the image. From the artistic view point, it seems that this Ganesha image is older than that of

Govali Ganesha image. The body of the image is not so much smooth as the Govali Ganesha. It seems that the carver of this image was a tribal, because, the face of the image resembles with the face of a tribal, either he might be a Mikir or a Kachari. The eyes of the image are so small and its trunk is so flat that its face cannot be recognized. 'Ganesha Chaturthi' is celebrated here every year on the Maghi Sukla Chaturthi.

This Ganesha Shrine may be a good spot for pilgrim tourism as well as eco tourism. The surrounding area is naturally very beautiful. This may also be a matter of attraction for archaeological tourism. Tourists may visit this shrine by bus or by any other motor vehicle. It is situated only 1.4 kilometres south to the Chandrapur-Mayong Road.

13. Rock-cut Ganesha Image of Govali

A rock-cut image of Lord Ganesha is found at Govali. This image was discovered in 2004 by one Nibaran Das. The image was found about three ft. below the earth's surface. It seems that the image got buried under the earth's surface due to the landslides in the hill many centuries ago. This is a seated Ganesha image. This Ganesha image has four hands. The upper right hand holds a 'Sankha' and the upper left hand holds a 'parasu' (battle axe). The lower right hand is kept on the right knee and the lower left hand is placed under the trunk of the image. This Ganesha image wears a 'jatamukuta' (diadem) on his head. The eyes are not visible. The face is oval. Its trunk is long enough. Its left tooth is slightly protruding. It has two big ears. It has a holy mark pointed on its forehead. The image wears a light round necklace. The God sits with the left leg tucked along and the right leg raised up. The rat, the vehicle of Ganesha is missing here. 'Ganesha Chaturthi' is celebrated here every year on the Maghi Sukla Chaturthi. The Temple Managing Committee looks after the temple. There is a temporary corrugated galvanized iron sheet over the image.

The temple is now under construction.

14. Rock-cut Ganesha Image of Baha:

It is a pilgrim centre of the Hindus on the north bank of the Kolong. It is famous for a rock-cut 'Sri Ganesha image' carved on a big boulder. A huge stone image, 10.5 feet length cut in a big boulder, a few feet uphill the Baha Pahar on the very bank of the Kolong River is being worshipped with devotion on the Basanti Astomi Tithi. Thousands of devotees offer Puja in this Ganesha Temple on the occasion of 'Astomi Snan' every year. Artistically, the characteristics of this Sri Ganesha image are different from other Sri Ganesha images of entire Mayong area. The image wears a 'jatamukuta'; it has two small eyes almost unrecognizable. This Ganesha has two big ears and wears ear-rings. The God has two teeth; the right tooth is broken and has four hands. The upper right hand is in 'abhaya mudra' (blessing mood) and the upper left hand holds a 'parasu' (battle axe) which cannot be recognized clearly. The lower right hand holds a rosary for counting prayer and is placed on the right knee. The lower left hand holds two pieces of sweets. The long trunk of the God is taking these sweets from the God's left hand. Each hand wears one pair of armband, one at his arm and the other at his wrist. The God sits with his left leg tucked along seat and the right leg raised up. The sole of the left foot is clear but the right foot is not clearly seen. The God wears a sacred thread called 'Na-goon' which runs on his left shoulder and under his right arm via his distended belly. There is a rat (the vehicle of Ganesha) on the ground, just below the right foot of the image. The temple is now under construction. It will be an RCC building with a dome. 'Baha Sri Sri Ganesha Mandir Managing Committee' looks after this shrine.

15. Secular Archaeological Remains

1. King Soniram Singha (1591-1599) constructed a number of roads for the better

communications of the people. He constructed a road from Deka Mayong or Rajamayong to Burhamayong.⁶ This road was called Bar Ali. This road met the double purpose of the kingdom. On the one hand, the road provided a better road communication between Rajamayong and Burhamayong, on the other hand, it served as an agricultural bandh and protected the Sali crops of the people from the flood water of the Brahmaputra.

2. King Soniram Singha dug a big water tank for drinking water at a place north of the Burhamayong village at the foothill of the Mayong Hill. This tank is known as the Kali Pukhuri, because this tank was dug just after sun set.⁷ The village people after their days' work dug this tank daily. King Soniram Singha dug another tank for drinking water at Barhampur village.

3. King Sarascha Chandra Singha reconstructed the Ganesha Mandir in the northern end of the Hatimuria and the Kachashila Siva Mandir.⁸ These two temples had been suffering from lack of pure drinking water. So, the king constructed a big water tank called Bar Pukhuri at a place between Ganesha Temple and Kachashila Siva Temple. The water of this tank was only used for offering Pujas and Yajnas in these two temples and as drinking water. No one was allowed to take bath in this tank; no one was allowed to wash cloths in this tank.

4. The Crown Prince Prem Singha constructed another water tank west of the Bar Pukhuri. This water tank was called Saru Pukhuri. The water of this tank could be used by the people for household use, people could take bath in this tank and cattle were allowed to drink water in this tank.

5. King Govinda Singha (1655-1666 A.D.) constructed the biggest water tank of Mayong at Hatimuria village. Even the Brahmans helped to construct this tank with manual labour. That is

why; this water tank became known as Bamuni Pukhuri.⁹

6. King Bhem Singha (1679-1690 A.D) constructed a big water tank for drinking water in the eastern part of Rajamayong village. Unfortunately, two cows were drowned in this tank. As a result, the people did not drink the water of this tank for a long long time. This tank was called Garumara Pukhuri.¹⁰ This water tank still exists. A few years back the young boys of Rajamayong renamed this tank as 'Lakhi Pukhuri' and now-a-days; it is used by them as a fishery.

7. As the Kingdom of Mayong lay beside the Jayantia hills, so the elephants from these neighboring hills very often crossed the river Kolong and made frequent raids in the villages of Mayong. So King Kirti Singha (1690-1700 A.D.) constructed a 'garh' (rampart) on the south-west bank of the Amaramur beel (Lake) in order to catch elephants. This rampart is still today known as Hatigarh.¹¹ This rampart served the purpose of the king as the elephants, in fear of being caught, did not try to cross it.

16. Decadence of the Archaeological Remains of Mayong

All the archaeological remains of Mayong are on the way of degradation. There are many causes for this unwelcome happening, such as:-

(i) All non-living things are prey to natural decay. Most of the archaeological remains are lying scattered here and there having no shed over them. Rains and sun-rays are causing much damage to them.

(ii) Due to the ignorance of the local people, these invaluable wealth of history are being mishandling. They pick up these remains for household use without knowing their value.

(iii) Many brick-kilns have grown around the Mayong Hill. The air pollution created by these brick-kilns is much harmful to the archaeological

remains of Mayong.

(iv) Soil-erosion by the Brahmaputra has become havoc to the archaeological sites like— Chanaka, Hilloi Khunda, Kachashila and Hatimuria Ganesh Temple etc.

17. Remedial Measure

A few of the archaeological remains, such as, sculptures, terracottas etc. found in the different archaeological sites cited above have been preserved in the Mayong Rural Museum but others are lying scattered here and there. The Government should take appropriate step to preserve them in scientific way. The Government should remove the brick-kilns from the vicinity of the Mayong Hill.

18. Conclusion

The study on Archaeology of Mayong, will, I believe, definitely add a new chapter in the

history of not only Assam but also India. No genuine attempt has so far been made by any scholar to study the history of archaeology of the Kingdom of Mayong of medieval age. Every piece of stone scattered here and there in Mayong tells something about the antiquity of the land. The study shows that the land of Mayong is the owner of highly developed civilization since ancient times. The study also shows that Mayong deserves a respectable position in the history not only of Assam but also of India, because, very few regions in India have such a great antiquity, has such a rich culture. This study has explored new areas of research besides creating an interest in the pure enjoyment and appreciation of history. The study shows that Tantrikism, Shaivism and Shaktism have been prevailing in Mayong since the time immemorial. Brahmanism and Vaisnavism entered Mayong quite late. ♦ ♦

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Scenario of Skill Creation and Development in India

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Introduction

India is one of the youngest nations in the world with more than 54% of the total population below 25 years of age. India's workforce is the second largest in the world after China. While China's demographic dividend is expected to start tapering off by 2015, but India will continue to enjoy it till 2040. However, India's formally skilled workforce is approximately 2%, which is dismally low compared to China (47%), Japan (80%) or South Korea (96%). To leverage our demographic dividend more substantially and meaningfully, central Government launched the 'Skill India' campaign along with 'Make in India'.

Need for Skill Development

The livelihood opportunity of human being is affected by the supply and demand side issues. On the supply side, India failed to create enough job opportunity and on the other hand in the demand side, professionals expected to enter in the job market are lacking in appropriate skills. This practically raised unemployment rate along with low employability. With regard to the need for skill development in India three of the important prevailing scenarios are explained under the following headings.

- **Job Creation:** Between 1999-2000 and 2004-05, the number of job opportunity has in-

creased by 59.9 million persons (assessment by usual status) against an increase in labour force of 62 million. Deficit is found in the continuous job provisions. Currently (2014-15) about 26 million people enter the working age group every year with about 65% of them looking for jobs. Lack of self employment opportunity may worsen the situation. Skilling appropriately helps in self employment.

- **Youth Skilling:** As per the India Skills report 2015, only 37.22% of surveyed people were found employable, 34.26% among the male and 37.88% among the female. NSSO (2010) showed that only 10.1% of the labour force had received vocational training, with only 25.6% among them received a formal vocational training. India ranked last among 60 countries on labour productivity (World Competitiveness Year book, 2012). It is the duty of the State to provide training to its labour to enhance the skill and make them employable.

- **Demand for Skilled Workforce:** The National Skill Development Policy (2009) had set a target of skilling 500 million people by 2022 in India. More recently, study reports commissioned and released by Ministry of Skill Development assessed an incremental human resource requirement across 24 sectors as 109.73 million by 2022. Therefore, to cope up with the demand force supply of skilled people is very urgent.

Government Policies on Skill Development

The Government has recognized the need for Skill Development in the 11th Five Year Plan. The first National Skill Development Policy was framed in 2009 and subsequently a National Skill Development Mission was launched in India in 2010. The Policy was to

be reviewed every five years to evaluate the progress and revised appropriately. The 12th Five Year Plan observes that Skill development programmes in the past have been run mainly by the government, with insufficient connection with market demand. It has called for an enabling framework that would attract private investment in Vocational Training through Public Private Partnership (PPP). Accordingly, the present NDA Government has created a Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship to address the Skill Development needs in India.

- Draft National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015

The objective of the Policy is to meet the challenge of skilling at scale with speed, standard (quality) and sustainability. It aims to provide an umbrella framework to all skilling activities being carried out within the country, to align them to common standards and link skilling with demand centres. The Policy lists out ten major directions for the Skill Development Framework, including increasing the capacity, synergy among existing schemes, global partnerships and inclusivity. It seeks to address the lacunae in Entrepreneurship by steps like streamlining entrepreneurship in education system, inventing business through mentorship, fostering social entrepreneurship, promoting inclusivity, improving the ease of doing business and providing access to finance. It also mentions the possibility of the launch of the National Mission for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in next six months. The policy encourages companies to spend at least 25% of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds on skill development, seeks to introduce fee paying model along with Skill Vouchers, and set up a Credit Guarantee fund for Skill Development. A

'Project Implementation Unit' (PIU) is also proposed to be set up to review the implementation and progress of the various initiatives under this policy.

■ Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

Department of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship was created in India under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in July, 2014 and was subsequently upgraded to full-fledged ministry in November 2014. The role of the Ministry is to coordinate and evolve skill development frameworks, mapping existing skill and certification and creation of industry-institute linkages among others. Human Resource and Skill Requirement reports across 24 sectors were prepared which serve as a baseline for all skill development initiatives. The Ministry works primarily through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), National Skill Development Agency (NSDA), and the Directorate of Training (DT).

Of the 500 million targeted to be skilled under the National Skill Development Policy 2009, the NSDC was mandated to skill 150 million, while the Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGET), under the Ministry of Labour and Employment was to skill 100 million. Currently, over 70 skill development schemes across various sectors are being implemented by over 20 Central Ministries or Departments.

■ National Skill Development Mission

The National Skill Development Mission aims to provide a strong institutional framework at the Centre and States for the implementation of skilling activities in the country. The Mission will have a three-tiered, high powered decision making structure. At its apex, the Mission's Governing Council,

chaired by the Prime Minister, will provide overall guidance and policy direction. The Steering Committee, chaired by Minister in Charge of Skill Development, will review the Mission's activities in line with the direction set by the Governing Council. The Mission Directorate, with Secretary, Skill Development, will ensure implementation, coordination and convergence of skilling activities across Central Ministries or Departments and State Governments. The Mission will also run select sub-missions in high priority areas. The NSDA, the NSDC and the DT will function under the overall guidance of the Mission. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) provides a natural home for the Mission, organically linking all three decisions making levels. According to government estimates, more than 1.04 Crore youth have been trained under the Skill India Mission in the year 2015-16 which is 36.8% higher than the previous year's recorded data.

■ Schemes for Skill Creation

Besides the other ministries, MSDE has also launched a number of skill development schemes in India to make the people of the country employable across different departments within and outside the territory. Some of the important schemes of the ministry are briefly explained bellow-

1. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is the flagship outcome-based skill training scheme of the MSDE. Objective of this skill certification and reward scheme is to enable and mobilize a large number of Indian youth to take up skill training and become employable and earn their livelihood. Monetary reward would be provided to trainees who are successfully trained, assessed and

certified in skill courses run by affiliated training providers. It includes a mechanism to revive the traditional Guru-Shishya approach to train youth with the help of local craftsmen and trade practitioners. Members of Parliament will also be roped in to mobilize youth for training, monitor the scheme in their constituencies and post-training placement of trainees. For youths from the Kashmir Valley, the Leh region, the north-eastern States and Left-wing extremism-affected districts, residential programmes will be promoted. Under PMKVY, the entire training and assessment fees are paid by the Government. Under this scheme, skill training would be done based on industry led standards aligned to the National Skill Qualification Framework. Besides catering to domestic skill needs, the scheme will also focus on skill training aligned to international standards for overseas employment in European and Gulf countries etc.

2. National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme

Main objective of National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) is to promote apprenticeship training and to increase the engagement of apprentices from present 2.3 lakh to 50 lakh cumulatively by 2020. NAPS is implemented by DGET under the aegis of Union MSDE. Under the scheme, the MSDE will share 25% of the total stipend payable to an apprentice with employers. The government will also fund 50% of the total expenditure incurred by the employer in providing basic training to apprentices. All transactions including registration by employers, apprentices, registration of contract and payment to employers will be made in online mode. This scheme will cover all categories of apprentices except the Graduate, Technician and Technician (Vocational) apprentices which are

covered by the scheme administered by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The National Policy of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 focuses on apprenticeship as one of the key components for creating skilled manpower in India.

3. Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana

The MSDE has launched Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana to scale up an ecosystem of entrepreneurship for youngsters. The scheme spans over five years (2016-17 to 2020-21) with a project cost of Rs 499.94 crore. It will provide entrepreneurship education and training to over 7 lakh students in 5 years through 3050 institutes. It will also include easy access to information and mentor network, credit, incubator and accelerator and advocacy to create a pathway for the youth. The institutes under the PM's Yuva Yojana include 2200 institutes of higher learning (colleges, universities, and premier institutes), 300 schools, 500 ITIs and 50 entrepreneurship development centres through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

4. Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana

The present Prime Minister of India, on the sidelines of the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention, has announced a scheme to skill Indian youth seeking jobs abroad-Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY). The programme is also aimed at boosting the confidence of the Indian youth so that they don't feel like strangers when they land in a country of their choice for vocation. PKVY will train and certify Indians, who are keen on overseas employment in select sectors, in line with international standards. It will be implemented by the NSDC through its training partners and in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Skill Development

Ministry.

5. UDAAN

The programme aims to provide skills training and enhance the employability of un-employed youth of J&K. The key stakeholders are Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), State Government (Jammu & Kashmir) and NSDC.

• Indian Institute of Skills

As a part of skill creation and development, India government has also taken initiative to establish a few all India level skill development institutions in the country. Aimed at making India the Skill Capital of the World, Prime Minister (N. D. Modi) laid foundation stone of the country's first Indian Institute of Skills (IIS) at Kanpur. The IIS was conceptualized by the PM during his visit to Singapore's Institute of Technical Education. The institute is being opened by the Skill Development Ministry in partnership with the Institute of Technical Education, Singapore. Government has decided to have six such institutes in the country.

Conclusion

Creation and development of skill in India is full of opportunities and challenges. Opportunities are based on the coordination among different stakeholders. But the challenge of skill development is multifold. Large proportion of the existing workforce needs skill training as well as support of varying levels. It is estimated that at least 1.70 crore population will enter the workforce every year

for the next 7 years. The current annual skilling capacity is inadequate to match this demand, with many initiatives un-aligned and suffering from a lack of coordination. The situation is further complicated by different states having different demographic situations, hence different skilling needs and challenges. 'Vocational Training' falls under the Concurrent list, which means state governments have a key role and responsibility in realizing the objective of 'Skill India'. The MSDE however, will have a crucial role in coordination between a range of stakeholders- including skill training providers, governments at all levels, and the end beneficiaries. ♦♦

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Charles Darwin wrote about evolution of life forms- "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change."

The world of higher education is seeing a sea change, thanks to new technologies which have enormous potential to bring about changes. The changes are myriad. Life skills are essentially those abilities that promote mental wellbeing and competence in young people as they face the realities of life and adopt themselves to the changing scenario of knowledge and application.

Life Skills

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The term 'Life Skill' refers to the skills we need to make the most out of life. Life skills are usually associated with managing and living a better quality of life. They help us to accomplish our ambitions and live to our full potential.

Life skills have been defined as "the

abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life." 'Adaptive' means that a person is flexible in approach and is able to adjust in different circumstances. 'Positive behaviour' implies that a person is forward looking and even in different situations can find a ray of hope and opportunities to find solutions. The International Bureau of Education (IBE) has derived the four pillars of learning- learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together- and defines life skills as personal management and social skills which are necessary for adequate functioning on an independent basis.

The ten core Life Skills are laid down by WHO are :-

1) **Critical thinking** :- Critical thinking skill is an ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. The skill is very important in terms of higher education; it will lead and increase the ability of the student to think critically and analytically in their day to day learning.

2) **Creative thinking** :- Creative thinking will help in decision making, innovation and problem solving in day to day life. The skills need to be developed at higher education level as the students will face the global world which will be full of challenges.

3) **Self-Awareness (Self-Esteem)** :- Self Awareness includes recognition of 'Self', our character, our strengths and weakness, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help us to recognize when we are stressed or feel under pressure. Its components are :- Objectivity, Introspection ability, Ability to accept strengths and weakness, Reflectivity.

4) **Motivation and Self-Actualization** :- Motivation is linked with energizing and directing one's efforts towards a meaningful goal. Self actualization means realizing one's inner potential and maximizing the strengths and minimizing one's weaknesses.

5) **Empathy** :- To have a successful

relationship with our loved ones and society at large, we need to understand and care about other peoples' needs, desires and feelings. Empathy is the skill of ability to imagine what life is like for another person. Without empathy, our communication with others will be like one-way traffic.

6) **Effective communication** :- Effective communication skill will help in building team work, strengthening strong communication process and these are an important factors in terms of qualitative production and service at work place. Its components are : Expressive skills, Non-verbal skills, Posture and gesture, Presentation, Patient listening, Analytic and Synthetic abilities, Quickness to react.

7) **Problem-Solving** :- Problem solving skill helps us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. It also helps in maintaining interpersonal relations, maintaining stress and in maintaining emotions. The components are : Self-knowledge, Divergent thinking, Rationality, Intelligence, Emotional ability.

8) **Assertiveness** :- Assertiveness is an adaptive behaviour which enables an individual to stand up for one's own rights and options without infringing upon the rights of others.

9) **Goal setting** :- Goal setting is a powerful process for thinking about one's ideal future and for motivating oneself to turn his/her vision of his future into reality.

10) **Coping with Emotions** :- Coping with emotions means involving recognizing emotions within us and others, being aware of how emotions influence behaviour. Intense emotions like anger or sadness can have negative effects on our health if we do not respond appropriately.

According to the National Association of School Psychologist, "Good social skills or life skills are crucial to success in life, as they help us know what to say, how to make good decisions and how to behave in various situations. Today's life and work environments require for more than thinking skills and content knowledge. The ability to navigate the complex life and work environments in the globally competitive information age requires students to pay rigorous attention to develop adequate life and career skills, such as : Flexibility and Adaptability, Initiative and Self-Direction, Leadership and Responsibility, Productivity and Accountability.

Now-a-days, or in near future the mere academic success will not to be considered to gain employment. The key thing would be definitely the skill development among the aspiring candidates in various aspects. According to research by the confederation of British Industry in 2011, the employers were looking not just for academic success but key employability skills including :-

* the ability to self-manage, solve problems and understand the business environment.

* working well as part of a team.

* time and people management.

* ability and adaptability to different roles and flexible working environments and

* the potential to lead by influence. ♦♦

(Source materials :- University News)

Introduction : Writing is one of the four basic language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is a mode of human written communication through which a writer engages himself/herself in conversation with his/her readers. So far as the history of writing in English is concerned, it has undergone radical changes over the ages. Styles of writing in one period differ from that of another. The writing styles in English used in the colonial period of India are quite different from those in the present post-colonial India. With the widening of the horizon of human knowledge, backed by the emergence of new ICT, it has been imperative to employ evolving and new styles in writing, in order to present one's ideas in the increasingly diverse and global society.

The focus in language teaching

has now shifted from 'product' to 'process'. 'Product' refers to learning outcomes such as grammatical accuracy, mechanics of writing, proper format, good organisation, etc. 'Process', on the other hand, refers to a writer's certain procedures which lead to successful pieces of written work. To talk about the process of writing of good authors, Hedge (1988) believes that they start off with an overall plan in their heads. They think about what they want to say and who they are writing for. They then draft out sections of the writing, and as they work on them, they are constantly reviewing, revising, and editing their work (Hedge, 1988, p.9). It is, therefore, considered useful to enable learners of English to engage in this 'process' rather than worry about the 'product'. If the process is proper, the product will take care of itself.

Learning to Write: An Approach to Academic Writing

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Defining Academic Writing : Defining what academic writing is and deciding on the methods to teach and learn it are hard tasks to accomplish in a few words. Experienced writing instructors have long recognised that writing well means entering into conversation with others. Academic writing in particular calls upon writers not to simply express their own ideas, but to do so as a response to what others have said. Rhetorical theorists like Kenneth Burke, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Wayne Booth as well as recent composition scholars like David Bartholomae, John Bean, Joseph Harris, and others argue that writing well means engaging the voices of others and letting them in return engage us. Academic writing is argumentative writing. It begins not with an act of assertion but an act of listening, of putting ourselves in the shoes of those who think differently from us (Graff and Birkenstein, 2010). When writing responds to something that has been said, or might be said, it thereby performs the

meaningful task of supporting, correcting, or complicating that other view. Hence, while engaging in academic writing, one has to accommodate the voices of others into one's text, summarizing their views in a way that they will recognise, and responding with one's own ideas in kind.

However, to master the art of academic writing, a learner of English needs to study different writers with a conscious look at the structures and moves through which a writer communicates his/her ideas in a logical way. As Spack (1988) aptly remarks, to become a better writer, one needs to become a better reader. In the same vein, Graff and Birkenstein (2010) put that, what makes writers masters of their trade is not only their ability to express interesting thoughts, but their mastery of an inventory of basic moves that they probably picked up by reading a wide range of other accomplished writers.

The present article is motivated to study what academic writing is and how it is practised. One of the motives of the article is to identify the basic moves that one can use right away to structure and even generate one's own academic writing. This article also makes a humble attempt not only in focussing on principles of writing, but also in offering model templates and patterns that might help young writers put those principles directly into practice.

Features of Academic Writing

There is often a misconception that academic writing needs to be complex, involving long sentences and complicated vocabulary. In fact, academic writing needs to be clear and concise in order to aid the reader's understanding. Each subject discipline will have certain writing conventions, vocabulary and types of discourse. There are, however, some general characteristics of academic writing that are relevant across all disciplines.

Impersonality: Academic writing normally tends to be impersonal in order to be objective by limiting the use of first person pronouns (*I* and *we*). This makes it sound formal. Academic writing does

not require so much of one's personal opinion. If someone has to offer his/her personal opinion on something, that must be expressed objectively. Let us consider the following examples: *This study aims to...*, or *The aim of this study is to...*, rather than *In this study I aim to...*

Formality: The tone used in academic writing is usually formal. In such writing, one is expected to use formal language as opposed to colloquial or informal language. E.g. instead of saying something like *This backs up...*, it is better to say *This supports...*

Precision: In academic writing, precise facts are presented where there is no room for inaccuracy. Writers need to check the quality of sources they are using. Instead of Wikipedia, it is better to look at the more reliable references or further reading lists that often feature at the foot of the page.

Structure: Academic writing requires precise and clear structure so that the reader can follow the argument as clearly as possible. It is written in a well-ordered and coherent way such as introduction, body in paragraphs and a conclusion. In an academic writing, related points and materials are brought together to give an organic unity.

Hedging: A writer has to make decisions about his/her stance on a particular subject, or the strength of the claims he/she is making. It needs to be careful not to make strong claims such as *This proves that.....* Instead, the phrases such as *It could be suggested that.....* could be used.

Responsibility: Writers have to take responsibility for what they say, and provide evidence for any claims they make. This means justifying why they do or do not agree with what an author has said as well as referencing correctly.

Passive Forms: Academic writers preferably tend to use passive sentence forms. Such forms are often used as they focus attention on the verb, not on the person. The following examples serve as templates:

(a) A study was carried out to see.....

(b) It can be argued that.....

Usage of nouns: To maintain the quality of academic writing, good writers often use nouns as subjects of active verbs e.g. *The results show that...; The data indicate that...*, etc.

Citing and referencing: A writer, who practises academic writing, cites and references the sources of information, used in his/her work. It is important (morally & legally) to acknowledge someone else's ideas or words a writer has used.

Avoidance of contracted forms: Academic writers tend to avoid contracted forms in their work such as *can't, don't, isn't*, etc. Instead, they write *cannot, do not, is not*, etc. as they sound formal. In the same way, abbreviations such as *ad* for *advertisement*, *varsity* for *university* are usually avoided.

Towards Academic Writing: Language and Styles

The previous section has dealt with the salient feature of academic writing. These features work as guiding principles for the writers, who want to practise academic writing. However, the present section makes an effort to translate the above principles into practice, by way of presenting model templates and patterns of academic writing.

Writing concisely

In a formal academic writing, a writer presents his/her necessary ideas without using unnecessary words. This helps his/her readers to understand the points he/she is making. In order to achieve the effect of academic writing, the following tips may be useful.

- One idea per sentence
- Keeping sentences to a reasonable length (preferably not more than 25 words). Long sentences may be difficult to follow and this may distract from the point.
- Avoidance of repetition
- Avoidance of redundant words

Let us see the following examples how the redundancies are evaded:

Redundant words used

Redundant words avoided

He could not attend the meeting *due to the fact that* he was ill.

He could not attend the meeting *because of* his illness.

He *employed the use of* questionnaires to collect his required data.

He *used* questionnaires to collect his required data.

He sent the message *in as few words as possible*.

He sent the message *concisely*.

The Sex Discrimination Act has not *completely* eliminated discrimination in employment.

The Sex Discrimination Act has not eliminated discrimination in employment.

Answer any one of the *alternative questions*.
Answer any one of the *alternatives*.

This apart, reading of one's work aloud may help one to identify any repetition or redundant words.

Using formal language

In academic writing, a writer usually uses formal language, as opposed to colloquial or informal language. Colloquialisms or slang terms such as *sort of* or *basically* are avoided. Instead, *somewhat* or *fundamentally* are better to be used. In the same way, the use of clichés such as *at the end of the day*, or *in the nick of time* is not appropriate in academic writing. Instead of such clichés, one might use *finally* or *at the critical moment*.

Writing research findings

While practising academic writing, a writer needs to be careful of using words such as 'definitely' or 'proves'. While presenting research findings, the following hedging words and phrases can be useful:

- This suggests that.....
- It is possible that.....
- A possible explanation.....

- Usually.....
-

Sometimes.....

Let us consider the following two sentences:

1. Research proves that drinking a large volume of fizzy drinks containing sugar leads to the development of type II diabetes.

2. Research suggests that high consumption of fizzy drinks containing sugar may contribute to the development of type II diabetes.

In sentence 1, the statement is presented as proven fact; that a high volume of sugary fizzy drinks will definitely lead to type II diabetes. This leaves no room for doubt or criticism or the fact that some people may drink large volumes of fizzy drinks and never develop type II diabetes.

In sentence 2, the writer has used hedging language – *suggests that* and *may contribute* to show that while there is evidence to link sugary drinks and type II diabetes, this may not be true for every person and may be proven to be incorrect in the future.

Using active and passive forms (Voice)

A mixture of passive and active forms is usually used in academic writing. Nevertheless, the passive voice is often used in academic writing as it is seen as more impersonal and therefore more objective. Let's see the following examples:

(i) A Minor Research Project was carried out by her.....

(ii) It can be argued that.....

However, while interpreting a data from a graph, the active form (voice) tends to be used. Examples:

(i) The data from the table indicate that.....

(ii) The figures show that.....

(iii) The graph represents that.....

In the same way, in analysing data from a table, the active form (voice) is usually used. As for example:

• A majority of the respondents agree that.....

Nonetheless, in drawing conclusions, or in giving recommendations of a report, the passive forms (voice) are preferably used. Examples:

(i) The following conclusions can be drawn from the data.

(ii) It is recommended that.....

Ways of responding

Everyone has his/her own ways of response. While responding/opposing to other's argument or views, one should follow politeness principles by accommodating other's certain views. As argumentative writing is driven by disagreement, it does not follow that agreement is ruled out. Although argumentation is often associated with conflict and opposition, it is normally based on two ends- agreeing and disagreeing, thus avoiding a simple yes or no response. The following template may work wonder while responding to an argument:

He claims that, and I have mixed feelings about it. On the one hand, I agree that..... On the other hand, I still insist that.....

Entering a conversation with what others are saying

While entering a conversation or constructing an argument, whether orally or in writing, it is better to start with "what others are saying", and then to introduce one's own ideas as a response. In other words, as Graft and Birkenstein (2010) suggest, a writer should summarise what others say as soon as he/she can as his/her text unfolds. Let us consider, for example, how George Orwell starts his famous essay "Politics and the English Language" with what others are saying.

Most people who both with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it. Our civilization is decadent and our language – so the argument runs – must inevitably share in the general collapse.....

(But) the process is reversible. Modern English....is full of bad habits...which can be avoided if one is willing to take the necessary trouble.

GEORGE ORWELL, "Politics and the English Language"

Orwell is basically saying, "Most people assume that we cannot do anything about the bad state of the English language. But I say we can."

Introducing what others say

There are lots of conventional ways to introduce what others are saying. The following standard templates are useful in introducing other's views.

- A number of sociologists have recently suggested that X' work has several fundamental problems.
- It has become common today to dismiss.....
- In their recent work, Y and Z have offered harsh critique offor.....

Introducing common views

People introduce commonly accepted views in variety of ways. The following templates might be used to express such views.

- Americans have believed that individual effort can triumph over circumstances.
- Conventional wisdom has it that
- Common sense seems to dictate that
- It is often said that.....
- Many people assume that.....

These templates are popular because they provide a quick and efficient way to perform one of the most common moves writers make.

Introducing an ongoing debate

While opening by summarising a debate that presents two or more views, it requires a writer's awareness that there are conflicting ways to look at his/her subject. Opening with a summary of a debate can help the writer explore the issue he/she is writing about before declaring his/her own view. The following are the basic templates for opening a debate:

In discussion of X, one controversial issue h a s

been.....
 On the one hand,.....argues.....
 On the other hand,.....
 contends..... . Others even maintain that.....
 However, my own view is.....

Using signal verbs that fit the action

Vivid and precise signal verbs hit the meaning a writer intends to convey. As Graff and Birkenstein (2010) suggest, in introducing summaries, bland formulas like "she says," or "they believe" should be avoided, because such language often fails to reflect accurately what has been said. Academic writers seldom simply "say" or "discuss" things; they "argue," "emphasise," and "complain about" them. David Zinczenko, for example, does not just *say* that fast-food companies contribute to obesity; he rather *complains* or *protests* that fast-food companies contribute to obesity. The following signal verbs are used for the concerned purposes.

Verbs for making a claim: argue, insist, assert, believe, emphasise, observe, suggest, etc.

Verbs for expressing agreement: acknowledge, admire, appreciate, reaffirm, corroborate, celebrate the fact that, etc.

Verbs for questioning or disagreeing: complain, renounce, contradict, question, repudiate, refute, reject, etc.

Verbs for making recommendations: advocate, implore, call for, encourage, urge, recommend, demand, etc.

Introducing quotations

To quote the words of other writers, the following templates can be used:

- As the prominent philosopher X puts it, "....."
- X himself writes, "....."
- In her book,..... X maintains that "....."
- In X's view, "....."

- X disagrees when she writes, “.....”

Explaining quotations

Contrary to introducing quotations, in explaining quotations a writer is required to use his/her language that accurately reflects the spirit of the quoted passage. The following templates are noticeable:

- Basically, X is warning that the proposed solution will only make the problem worse.
- In making this comment, X urges us to.....
- X is corroborating the age-old adage that.....
- X’s point is that.....
- The essence of X’s argument is that.....

Disagreeing with reasons

In course of conversations, we occasionally tend to disagree with someone on something. We need to avoid simple contradicting views we disagree with. But that disagreement does not occur without any reason. The following templates can be used while disagreeing with others.

- I disagree with X’s view that.....because, as recent research has shown that.....
- X’s claim that..... rests upon the questionable assumption that.....

Agreeing with a difference

Like disagreeing, we need to do more than simply echo views we agree with. Even as we are agreeing, it is important to bring something new and fresh to the table, adding something that makes us valuable participants in the conversation. The following templates can be used while agreeing with others.

- I agree that diversity in the student body is educationally valuable because my experience at Central University confirms it.

- X is surely right about.....because, as she may not be aware, recent studies have shown that.....

Agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously

This is one of the ways we respond. One thing we particularly like about agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously is that it helps us get beyond the kind of “is too” / “is not” exchanges. Let us consider the patterns:

- Although I agree up to a point, I still insist.....
- Yes, but.....

Through such ways of responding, we can make our argument complicated and nuanced while maintaining a clear, reader-friendly framework. These apart, if we want to stress the disagreement end of the spectrum, we should use a template like the one below.

- Although I agree with X up to a point, I cannot accept his overriding assumption that religion is no longer a major force today.

Conversely, if we want to stress our agreement more than our disagreement, we should use the pattern as given below.

- Although I disagree with much that X says, I fully endorse his final conclusion that.....

Another classic way to agree and disagree at the same time is to make what it is called an “I’m of two minds” or a “mixed feelings” move. Let us see the following examples.

- I am of two minds about X’s claim that..... . On the one hand, I agree that..... . On the other hand, I am not sure if.....
- My feelings on the issue are mixed. I support X’s position that....., but I find Y’s argument about.....and Z’s research on..... to be equally persuasive.

Achieving cohesion and coherence

To write a coherent and well-structured text, cohesive devices such as *however, whatsoever,*

nevertheless, in addition, on the other hand, also, this apart, to sum up play significant roles. It is important to start each paragraph with such a word and a phrase so as to enable the reader what to expect. To write an essay,

it is better to organise it in paragraphs as: (i) introduction, (ii) arguments for the subject, (iii) arguments against the subject, and (iv) conclusion. Let us observe the following essay, in outlines, as an example:

Reality TV Shows are Good Entertainment

Reality shows are a very popular form of entertainment on TV nowadays. There are dozens of different types of programmes such as singing contests, cooking competitions or going to live in jungle.

Firstly, I think that there is a lot of variety in reality TV. In addition, reality TV programmes are a great opportunity to discover talented singers, dancers and chefs.

On the other hand, some people think that reality TV is an easy way for them to become famous. However, most successful singers, dancers and chefs have become successful due to their hard works.

. Another disadvantage is that some programmes always follow the same format and this can be boring to watch.

To sum up, I think that reality TV is good entertainment. There is lots of variety which means there is something for everyone and there are interesting to watch.

Citing and referencing

A writer, who practises academic writing, should cite and refer to the sources of information, used in his/her work. It is morally and legally important to acknowledge someone else's ideas or words a writer has used. If a writer uses someone else's words or work and fails to acknowledge them, he/she may be accused of

plagiarism and infringing copyright. Referencing correctly enables the marker or reader of his/her works to locate the source of the information. Proper citation and referencing in a writer's work gives not only credibility to his/her study, but also underlines its relevance in the concerned field. There are many different referencing styles (over 100). It is essential to follow the style specified in one's assignments and not to mix styles. Consistency of style is important. Let's notice the following examples, where the words or information of a writer are cited in another text, followed by their mention in the reference list. However, the referencing style is here maintained as per the APA style sheet (6th ed.). Please visit <http://www.apastyle.org> for details.

- Whitney and Rolfes (2011) state the body requires many nutrients to function but highlight that water is of greater importance than any other nutrient.

- "Self-directed learning is also a term with which you will become familiar as you study in Australia or New Zealand. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and organise their own study" (Hally, 2009, p. 7).

Reference list entry:

Whitney, E., & Rolfes, S. (2011). *Understanding nutrition* (12th ed.). Australia: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

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Zealand. Sydney, Australia: Elsevier.

Conclusion

To sum up, it could be said that writing is like all other activities, such as cooking, playing the piano, even something as basic as driving a car that needs observation and sincere practice. Even public orators from ancient Greece and Rome through the European Renaissance studied rhetorical *topoi* or "commonplaces," model

passages and formulas that represented the different strategies available to public speakers. As Graff and Birkenstein (2010) believe, after learning any of the activities particularly well, if someone reflects on his/her activity, he/she will realise that he/she no longer has to give much conscious thought to the various moves that go into doing it that may seem mysterious or difficult to those who have not yet learnt them. The same applies to writing, too. To achieve perfection in writing, one needs to read a wide range of other accomplished writers, noticing the basic moves and structures that are crucial for communicating sophisticated ideas. Less experienced writers, by contrast, are often unfamiliar with these basic moves and unsure how to make them in their own writing. ♦♦

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