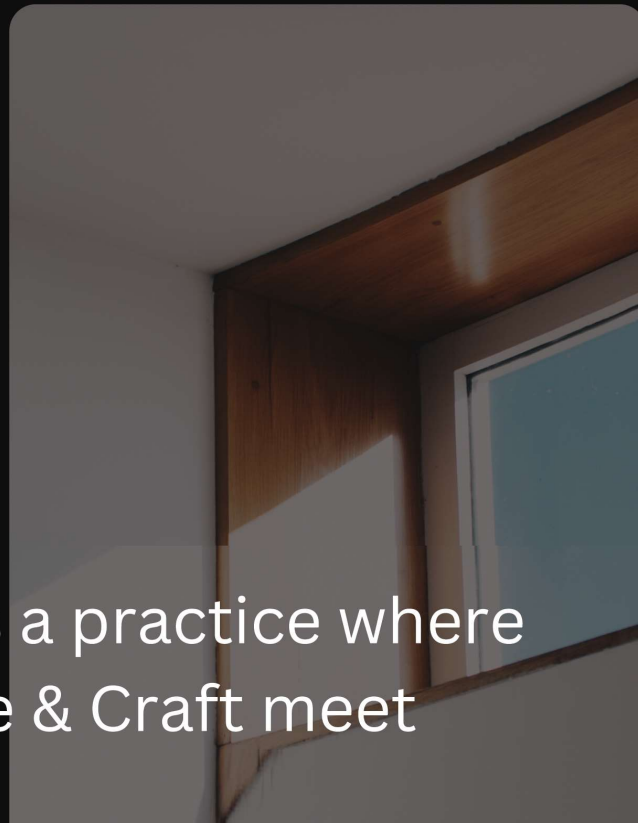
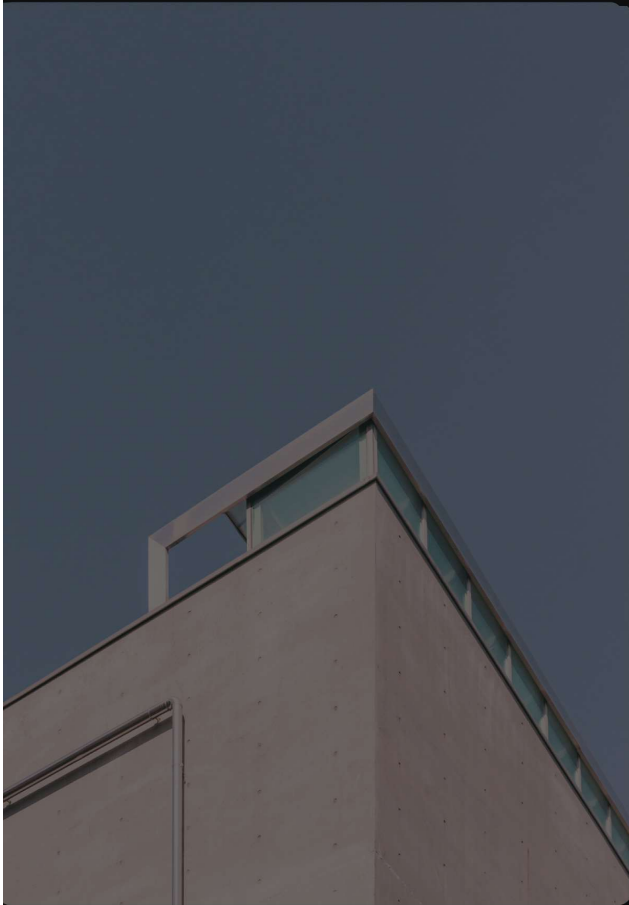


GMA NEWS

Vol-11

2024



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2024

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GUWAHATI MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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About GMA : Premier Management Association of North East

Guwahati Management Association (GMA), affiliated to the All India Management Association (AIMA), was established by a few visionary manager-citizens of the State way back in the year 1970. This premier, pioneer and voluntary management association of serving and former professional managers has completed its glorious existence of fifty years in 2020. In the past more than a half a century, GMA tided over many trials and tribulations but has always kept its flag afloat and high. It indeed is a unique achievement of GMA in the face of meager industrialization of the North Eastern Region and lack of awareness towards sound managerial practices and culture.

The sincere and noble vision of GMA is to usher in a modern management movement in the resourcefully rich but industrially and managerially poor region of the country so that the region can progress shoulder to shoulder with rest of the Indian States. This can be possible only with a relentless effort to develop an all encompassing sound management culture and temper for all round development of the region and the country. At GMA, we strongly believe that unless all parts of the country progress at par, India cannot aspire to become fully developed in the near future and claim its legitimate place in the comity of nations of the world.

GMA is happy to note that the intangible outcome of its untiring efforts have resulted in establishment of many a institutes of repute of management studies and a modern management culture is taking shape in the region.

To translate its noble vision into reality, GMA had been undertaking many relevant activities during the past fifty plus years in a mission mode. Like, the Shaping Young Minds Programme in collaboration with AIMA periodically, a good number of management students and budding entrepreneurs are trained and enthused to become successful managers and entrepreneurs. With a similar purpose, Management Conclaves, Annual Managers Competition, various seminars, symposia and workshops on relevant topics, Talk Shows and so on are regularly organized. Also we routinely bring our publications with articles and write ups by eminent personalities in the field of management and entrepreneurship. In the process, GMA won quite a few All India level awards and accolades. The GMA also organizes Management Quizes and Industrial Visits on a regular basis for the benefit of its members and students.

About AIMA

Voice of Leadership : AIMA stands as the Voice of India's Leaders and Managers, serving as the apex body for the management profession in the country. It's a non-profit, non-lobbying organization that collaborates with various sectors to advance the field of management.

Extensive Membership : With over 38,000 individual members and nearly 6,000 corporate/institutional members, AIMA has a robust network spread across 68 Local Management Associations.

Established Legacy : Since its inception in 1957, AIMA has significantly contributed to the enhancement of management capabilities within India, offering a range of services from testing and distance education to skill development and training.

Evolution and Innovation : Over six decades, AIMA has adapted to the changing times, providing industry-oriented programs and state-of-the-art business solutions. It has been a forerunner in distance education and digital offerings, including Internet-Based Remote Proctored Tests.

Global Collaborations : AIMA has forged international partnerships with esteemed bodies like UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, and The World Bank, promoting best management practices and techniques. It's also a member of the Asian Association of Management Organizations (AAMO).

Vision and Mission : AIMA's vision is to be a leader in the Management Development Movement, with a mission to help individuals and organizations realize their potential.

All India Management Association

Management House
14, Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003, India
Tel. : 011-24645100, 011-24617354, 011-43128100
Fax : 011- 24626689



Wings to GMA

Editor's Column

The Guwahati Management Association (GMA), a pioneer in the field of management in the entire Northeastern region, has undoubtedly established itself as a premier and reputed institution. As one among the oldest management associations in the country it has been consistently pursuing its vision, since its inception in 1970, to usher in a modernistic management culture and movement in this part of the country. While we can rightfully pat our backs and glorify our performance and achievements of the past more than five decades of GMA, it is imperative for any organisation including our Association to look within and review its track record in order to identify and take stock of its shortfalls and weaknesses so as to remain on track to achieve its avowed goal of building a management culture not just in Guwahati but in entire Assam and the rest of the region.

Born in 1970 following pioneering efforts of some visionaries in the field of management, the GMA has definitely covered some good distance in fulfilling their dreams and aspirations of a developed and prosperous Assam and North East. It is the vision of the GMA to usher in a modern management movement in the economically and managerially poor region. To achieve this lofty goal, the management culture need to be spread through the length and breadth of Assam and the region. This would require a well knit organisation of management associations and institutions to weave a movement of management culture which can help bring about changes for the all round development of this backward area.

The GMA needs to assume the leadership and play the mentor's role in promoting and helping organize management associations in key areas in Assam and the region. To begin with, the GMA can take the initiative to lay the foundation of an Assam Management Association which in due course can emerge as the apex body of management associations in the state. This will provide a big boost to GMA and give wings to its mission and vision.

Before closing, we would like to thank our writers, advertisers, the members of the Editorial Board of the GMA News, all GMA members and well-wishers, management and staff of Unique Printers and specially Shantanu Choudhury for their support, cooperation and guidance in bringing out this volume.

Bedabrata Lahkar



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

As we all know our lives have undergone rapid changes in recent times as we are facing new challenges due to various disruptions that are taking place all around us. One of the main concerns of the citizens is the rapid climate changes making all our lives difficult. Pollution, drought, excessive rainfall, floods and rapidly increasing temperature are resulting in difficult environment. Management practices therefore have to undergo rapid changes in tune with the challenges faced by us. The management practices which were followed say, 20/25 years ago may not be suitable under the present circumstances. On top of that, the world faced Covid-19 in the year 2020 which disrupted the lives of the citizens, businesses, health care system and so on. New methods and techniques of management practices must be evolved to face and neutralize these challenges. Specially in agriculture, new management practices will have to be followed to counter the drastic climatic changes resulting in drought at times, floods in the other times, and excessive heat in some other times. Moreover, as far as Assam is concerned the problem of erosion by river Brahmaputra is becoming an enormous problem. New management techniques have to be employed to find a solution to stop this erosion of land.

It has been a privilege and honour to be the president of this prestigious Guwahati Management Association (GMA) for the last three years which has reached its 54th year of existence. It has been our constant endeavor in GMA to introduce and propagate modern and improved management practices in the society and organizations in the sphere of businesses, both corporate and MSMEs, in administrations, in education, health care and so on. For the purpose of attaining these objectives GMA regularly holds seminars, workshops, management and health care conclaves, young mind shaping programs, quiz competitions among the youth and talks and seminars on cybercrime and drug control. It also organizes talks by eminent experts on important issues and topics affecting the society.

One of the hallmarks of a successful organization or company is the presence of good management practices, which involve managing people and to recognize their individual strengths and weaknesses and accordingly, responsibilities of work should be arranged in order to achieve the targeted goals and objectives of the organization.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize that there is no single management practice which fits all. For each organization, different regions, different businesses, the management approach has to be different.

Chiranjit Chaliha



GMA - A BEACON OF PROGRESS AND INSPIRATION

(General Secretary Speaks)

It is often said that the truest measure of a person is how he lifts others up. The Guwahati Management Association (GMA) has exemplified this principle since its inception. With a steadfast commitment to nurturing young entrepreneurs, managers and students of the Northeast, GMA has been at the forefront of providing a platform for growth and development.

Through a series of impactful seminars, symposiums, workshops, conclaves, quiz and industrial visits, GMA has consistently exposed its members and the region's youth to the latest trends, technologies, and best practices. From addressing critical economic challenges to fostering a deeper understanding of the tea industry, GMA has demonstrated a holistic approach to development. The Association's efforts in combating social issues like drug abuse underscore its commitment to the overall well-being of the community.

We are deeply saddened by the untimely demise of our former Working President, Late Bhabesh Hazarika. His unwavering dedication and leadership were an inspiration to all. His tragic death is an immense setback, but the GMA family is resolute in carrying forward his legacy.

We appeal to all members to unite and support GMA in overcoming the challenges that might be faced in the future.

I extend my sincere gratitude to President Mr Chiranjit Chaliha for his invaluable guidance and to Working President Mr Robin Kalita and the entire GMA team for their tireless efforts. With the collective wisdom and support of our members, I am confident that GMA will continue to be a catalyst for positive change in the region.

As we look to the future, GMA envisions a Northeast brimming with innovative entrepreneurs and skilled managers. We aspire to be a beacon of hope, inspiring young minds to reach for their full potential and contribute to the building of a strong and vibrant nation.

Long live GMA!

Prabhat Konwar

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GMA PRESIDENTS & SECRETARIES

SL.	NAME OF PRESIDENTS	PERIOD	
		FROM	TO
1.	BP Himatsingka	1970-71	1971-72
2.	DC Barkataki	1972-73	1973-74
3.	VK Vishwanathan	1974-75	1975-76
4.	GS Harnal	1976-77	1979-80
5.	HL Agarwal	1980-81	1981-82
6.	PC Barua	1982-83	1987-88
7.	NN Mazumdar	1988-89	1989-90
8.	SK Mukherjee	1989-90	1990-91
9.	PC Barua	1991-92	1992-93
10.	Shantikam Hazarika	1993-94	1994-95
11.	Ramesh Ch. Gupta	1995-96	1997-98
12.	Col. TBB Lahkar	1998-99	2000-01
13.	Bolin Bordoloi	2001-02	2003-04
14.	Jyotirmoy Goswami	2004-05	2006-07
15.	DN Barua	2007-08	2018-19
16.	SB Sarmah	2019-20	2020-21
17.	Chiranjit Chaliha	2021-22	2024-25
SL.	NAME OF SECRETARIES	PERIOD	
		FROM	TO
1.	PK Bhattacharjee	1970-71	1971-72
2.	B Sengupta	1972-73	1973-74
3.	Sailen Das	1974-75	1975-76
4.	VK Pahwa	1976-77	1978-79
5.	Keteki Bordoloi	1979-80	1987-88
6.	Atul Sarma	1988-89	1989-90
7.	Girish Ch. Das	1990	1991
8.	Khanin Barkatoki	1991	1992
9.	Md. Isfaque	1992	1993
10.	Sanjeev Kakati	1993	1994
11.	Dr. SK Saikia	1994	1995
12.	PK Barthakur	1995-96	2000-01
13.	PK Mazumdar	2001-02	2003-04
14.	Raja Kakati	2004	2005
15.	RK Nandi Purkayastha	2005-06	2006-07
16.	Manoj Sethia	2007	2008
17.	Mukul Bora	2008	2009
18.	SB Sarmah	2009-10	2014-15
19.	D Gohain	2015-16	2018-19
20.	Bhabesh Hazarika	2019-20	2020-21
21.	Bibhuti Dutta	2021-22	2022-23
22.	Prabhat Konwar	2023-24	2024-25

OBITUARY

GMA deeply mourns the demise of the following members



Beni Madhab Doley
Former Director



Bhabesh Hazarika
Former Working President



Harendra Nath Das
Former Assam Chief Secretary



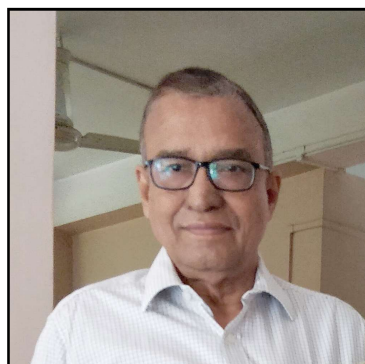
Kamruddin Ahmed
Former Director



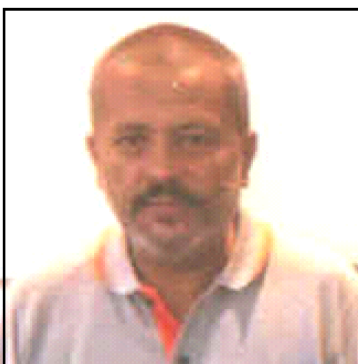
Jonali Chetia
Former Director



Jayabrata Banerjee
Former Director



Ajit Bujarbaruah



Ambar Barbora



Lanu Devi

LIST OF NEW MEMBERS

(SINCE JULY 2022)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Dr Arun Kumar Baruah | 26. Mr Nazrul Anwar |
| 2. Dr Bhaskar Bora | 27. Mr Pankaj Bhattacharyya |
| 3. Dr Manjura Mohan Kalita | 28. Mr Pradip Kakoti |
| 4. Dr Pradip Barua | 29. Mr Pranab Sarma |
| 5. Dr Rishi Chakravorty | 30. Mr Ranjan Kumar Bhatta |
| 6. Dr Sanjay Pratap Singh | 31. Mr Ranjit Sarma |
| 7. Mrs Angshumala Choudhury | 32. Mr Ratul Kumar Borah |
| 8. Mr Ashim Kumar Hazarika | 33. Mr Sujay Paul |
| 9. Mr Amit Agarwala | 34. Mr Sujit Kumar Baruah |
| 10. Mr Arup Sarma | 35. Mr Swaroop Kumar Baruah |
| 11. Mr Bhaben Barman | 36. Mr Umesh Kumar |
| 12. Mr Bhaskar Jyoti Gogoi | 37. Ms Alakananda Chakravorty |
| 13. Mr Bhaskarjyoti Baruah | 38. Ms Anamriya Baruah |
| 14. Mr Bijit Sarmah | 39. Ms Barsha Dutta |
| 15. Mr David Pratim Gogoi | 40. Ms Himadri Shekhar Dutta |
| 16. Mr Dibyajyoti Borah | 41. Ms Manorama Upadhyay Sah |
| 17. Mr Dinesh Kalita | 42. Ms Mehzabeen Banu |
| 18. Mr Himanga Dip Das | 43. Ms Varsati Barua |
| 19. Mr Jayanta Kumar Hazarika | 44. Ms Zinnia Brahma |
| 20. Mr Jeetendra Kumar Das | 45. Mr Rajib Barua |
| 21. Mr Madhurjya Mozumdar | 46. Mr Shantanoo Thakuria |
| 22. Mr Manjit Kumar Bhuyan | 47. Dr Akhtar Hussain Khan |
| 23. Mr Mukti Kumar Sharma | 48. Mr Achintya Kumar Baruah |
| 24. Mr Nabin Deka | 49. Mr Arup Jyoti Das |
| 25. Mr Narendra Sarawgi | 50. Mr Rajdeep Lekharu |



TEA TOURISM IN ASSAM

Dr Pradip Baruah

Assam is known in other parts of the country mainly for tea, one horned Rhino and oil. Tea is the highest consumed beverage in the world. It may well be said that tea and Assam are synonymous. Tea is the pride green gold of Assam giving it a unique identity nationally and internationally. The rich history, tradition and culture of the tea gardens of Assam and the people associated with it make tea tourism an unforgettable life time experience. Tea tourism has been identified as one niche tourism segment which has emerged with a novel concept of sustainable and nature based eco-friendly tourism.

Tea tourism gives opportunity of interaction of the visitors with local tea culture, unique tea processing techniques, and natural and historical surroundings. Tea tourism may be a full package of tea garden stay in heritage bungalows, visit to tea gardens, tea education -learning about tea production and processing practically, visit to historical sites associated with Assam tea, culture of the tea garden workers, tea drinking, tea garden clubs, tea tasting procedure, tea appreciation, tea stories, tea fair and expo, and ecological organic tea tourism, tea and gastronomic tourism, etc. It will help educate on uniqueness of Assam tea, promote and popularize Assam tea nationally and globally. Tea tourism is an emerging global tourism segment with huge potential.

For tea tourism, any time is good time to visit Assam to experience tea production and processing of tea, March to June and September to early December are ideal.

The major attractions of Assam tea tourism are:

Tea garden bungalows : The old tea garden bungalows still awe the people due to its grandeur and magnificence. The old British era tea garden bungalows are testimony of the Colonial life style, symbol of the lavish life the tea planters enjoyed. Many bungalows were full of collection of rare artifacts and antiques. Most of the old tea garden bungalows are still maintained well and have great heritage value with unique structure, antique objects and having a historical significance. Many of these old bungalows have already been converted to heritage resorts in different parts of the state particularly in Jorhat, Dibrugarh and Tezpur areas.

Discovery of tea Beesa Gam, the Singphos : Very important aspects of tea tourism are the sites associated historically with Assam tea. Beesa Gam, the Singpho tribal Chief of Margherita area, was the first person who informed Robert Bruce in Upper Assam about existence of wild tea in Assam in 1823 which was an epoch-making incident in the tea industry of Assam and has now reached 200 years of that date of discovery of tea in Assam. The Singpho people make tea in their traditional way

by stuffing tea leaves into bamboo shoot known as *phalap*. There is a lot of curiosity in the world of tea about who these Singphos are and about *phalap*.

Chabuwa where it all began : There are many heritage sites of tea still existing though they are not well preserved. Remnants of original tea plants of seeds brought from China in 1830s are still being preserved at Jaipur. 'Chabuwa' got its name from 'cha' meaning tea and 'buwa' means planting. Planting of tea saplings at Chabuwa in 1836 became successful being the beginning of tea industry of Assam.

Maniram Dewan, the first Indian commercial tea planter : Maniram Dutta Bar Bhandar Borua Dewan, popularly known as Maniram Dewan, an Assamese nobleman, was the first Indian tea entrepreneur and commercial tea planter, and was also a martyr in India's freedom struggle against the British rule. He was the first native Indian tea planter establishing his own tea estates competing with the mighty British rulers in tea cultivation and business. He planted two tea gardens in 1845 at Cinnamara, Jorhat and Senglung, near Suffry, Sonari. However, Senglung was lost and forgotten in course of time though Cinnamara is still a vibrant tea estate.

Tea Planters Clubs and horse race : The majestic tea clubs at different tea growing areas played an important part in the tea planters' life when they had to live in isolation. The need of recreation after hard day's works led to establishment of exclusive tea clubs in the tea garden areas of Assam. The Gymkhana Club of Jorhat is one the important ones of these tea planters' clubs and is most famous for its heritage horse race, popularly known as 'The Jorhat Races' since 1877. The Jorhat races is now held as a three-day annual event in February with participation of the ponies of the Mising tribal community people living by the side of the Brahmaputra river. A unique feature of the Jorhat Races now is that the riders are adept at riding bareback. Some other popular tea planters' clubs of Assam are Margherita Planters Club, Tingri Planters Club, Naharkatia Planters Club, Seleng Planters Club, Mariani Planters Club, Sonari Planters Club, Thakurbari Planters Club, Misa Planters Club, Dibrugarh Polo (Planters) Club, etc.

Guwahati Tea Auction Centre : The Centre established in 1970 is the second largest tea auction centre in the world after Mombasa and the largest one in India selling tea from all the producing states of North India. Visit to the auction centre while sale is in progress and observing the brokers tasting many types of teas for commercial evaluation is a mind blowing one. The mighty *Mahabahu* Brahmaputra River flowing gently by the side of Guwahati city, the gateway to North East India, adds to the attraction. There are provisions of river cruise on the Brahmaputra and enjoying fabulous food, local cuisine there. The capital of Assam, Guwahati, has many more tourist sites. Some of these are: famous Kamakhya temple, Assam State Museum, Assam State zoo, Umananda temple, Dipor bil, etc.

Culture of the tea garden workers : The tea garden workers constitute a very special kind of labour force with a Colonial past. The tea garden workers were brought originally from impoverished areas

of various states of India to establish tea gardens in Assam. Their present culture and language are amalgamation of these with that of local Assamese population, and over the years they have become part of the greater Assamese society. The cultural activities of the tea workers are very colourful and vibrant. The songs are touching and reflect their life style. The main dance of the tea tribes is known as 'jhumur, or 'jhumoir' with beating of drums and songs, with both males and females singing together.

Bio diversity, wild teas : Assam is geographically nestled in one of the most biodiversity rich regions of the world and holds immense promise for conservation and sustainable use of its rich biological resources. The climatic conditions and a wide variety in physical features witnessed in Assam has resulted in such diversity of ecological habitats such as grasslands, wetlands, forests and agro-ecosystems which harbour and sustain a wide range of flora and fauna. Assam is also the place of origin of one of the three cultivated types of tea, the Assam tea plant, *Camellia assamica* (Masters). Existence of wild tea plants in the forests of Assam has been a subject of much curiosity.

Cemeteries of pioneering tea planters : Many of the pioneers of Assam tea breathed their last here and so were some of their family members, who were laid to rest in Assam. The cemeteries of those pioneering tea planters and their families lying scattered in different places of Assam are reminders of the sacrifices they made for Assam tea and for supplying tea to the people of Great Britain. Of all these cemeteries, the cemetery of Jorehaut Tea Company at Cinnamara, cemetery of Assam Company at Nazira presently under occupation of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), cemetery at Golaghat are famous. There are also cemeteries at Tezpur and many tea gardens of Assam.

The first Assamese film 'Jyoti', Jyoti Prasad Agarwala : The first ever Assamese film, *Jyoti*, was made in 1935 by Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, who was a tea planter. The film was mostly shot in his tea estate. He established Chitran studio at his Bholaguri tea estate, situated about 10 km west of Gohpur town of Sonitpur district. Jyoti Prasad made the first film of Assam only four years after 'Alam Ara' (1931), the first Indian talking film.

Assamese tea ceremony : There have been attempts to give shape to an Assamese tea ceremony based on the traditional ways and offerings in socio religious functions, especially the custom of serving tea in religious functions to the *xatradhikars* and *bhakats* in a unique Assamese way. Such endeavor will certainly help in promotion of Assam tea and culture of Assam.

Tea and golf tourism : Tea and golf tourism can go together in Assam. In fact, several tea estates and most of the planters' clubs have golf courses. There are as many as 21 golf courses in clubs scattered all over Assam. Jorhat Gymkhana Club, established in 1876, has a well maintained 9-hole golf course. Some others are Misa Planters Club, Thakurbari Club, Tingri Golf Club, Dibrugarh Planters Club, Margherita Golf Club, etc. There are eight 9-hole golf courses in tea estates between Dibrugarh and Doom Dooma. In the oil city of Digboi, the 18-hole golf course is considered to be the best in entire Upper Assam area.

Tocklai Tea Research Institute : To the people with interest in science of tea, visit to Tocklai Tea Research Institute (earlier known as Tocklai Experimental Station) of Tea Research Association situated at Jorhat is educative. Established in 1911. The Institute is devoted to R&D of tea exclusively.

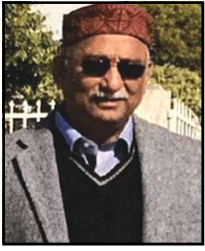
Tracing the origin of the pioneer tea planters : The family members of the pioneer tea planters of Assam tea who gave their life in establishing tea gardens in Assam, or left later after India's independence wish to see the place of their own or relatives' birth place and place of work more than a century ago. Many people from European countries come to Assam looking for old memories and to pay homage to their forefathers. Tea tourism can help them in providing necessary information and facilitating their visit for tracing their origin.

Additional package : The tea plantations in Assam provide excellent opportunities for recreational activities like golfing, trekking, swimming, sightseeing, leisure time spending, angling, adventure sports and exploring wild life. A visit to Assam will not be complete without visiting Kaziranga National Park to see the rare One Horned Rhino, the pride of Assam, Majuli, the cultural hub of Assam, remnants of the Kingdom of Ahoms who ruled Assam for six hundred years in Sivasagar, Ahom kings' burial ground at Charaideo, recently declared a world heritage site, and Dibru Saikhowa National Park.

Tea tourism packages and circuits : The target groups for Assam tea tourism are domestic tourists from all over India, foreign tourists interested in tea and culture and history of Assam, tea enthusiasts, stakeholders of tea including the buyers and sellers located in various parts of the country and the world, researchers and agriculturists, kin of Colonial era tea pioneers, people in private/corporate jobs in the metros and big cities, nature lovers, explorers, wild life and adventure sports lovers, bloggers, etc. There is great possibility of attracting tea tourists from all over the world with annual holding of tea fairs, expos, etc.

The way ahead : Tea tourism in Assam has enormous unique and inherent potential that needs to be realized. Undoubtedly, it has the potential to give a major boost to the state's economy and put the tourism sector of Assam as a prime attraction not only in India but in the map of global tourism if properly marketed, supported and invested. Agro-forestry based eco-tourism is getting popular in the world and tea tourism in Assam has much to offer. Home stay tourism is a very popular form of tourism these days, and nothing could be better than a tea grower's home stay, better still if it is an organic tea grower, which could be exclusive for the small tea growers of the state. Certainly, good days are ahead for tea tourism in Assam.

The writer is a Tea expert and ex-Chief Scientist and Chief Advisory Officer of Tocklai Tea Research Institute, Jorhat.



MANAGING CHANGE IN A SMALL FIRM

Swapnanil Barua

Managing change in a small firm amid technological advancements and evolving business landscapes is critical for survival and growth. This process involves understanding the impact of change, fostering a culture of adaptability, implementing effective strategies, and leveraging available resources.

Understanding Change : Change in technology and business environments is inevitable. Technological advancements, market shifts, and consumer preferences constantly evolve, influencing how businesses operate. For small firms, these changes can present both challenges and opportunities. Understanding the need for change is the first step. This requires continuous monitoring of industry trends, competitor activities, and customer feedback to identify areas for improvement and innovation.

Fostering Adaptability : Creating a culture of adaptability is essential for navigating change. Small firms should encourage open communication, creativity, and flexibility among employees. Leaders play a crucial role in promoting a growth mindset and embracing change as a catalyst for improvement. This may involve providing training and development opportunities to enhance employees' skills and knowledge, empowering them to embrace new technologies and methodologies.

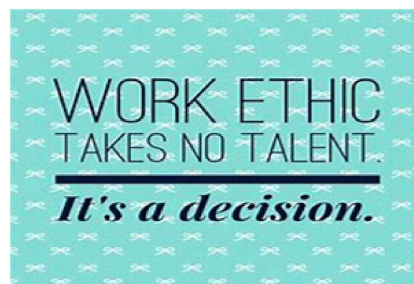
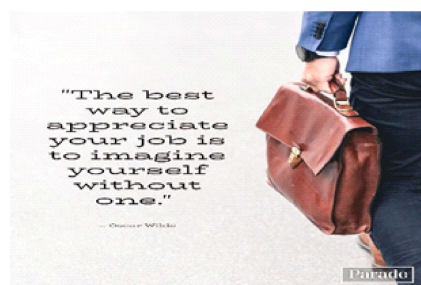
Implementing Effective Strategies : "Successful change management requires a well-defined strategy tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the small firm. Key elements of effective change management include :

1. **Vision and Goals :** Establish a clear vision for the future of the firm and set achievable goals aligned with technological advancements and market trends. Communicate this vision and goals to employees to create a sense of purpose and direction.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement :** Involve employees, customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders in the change process. Solicit feedback, address concerns, and encourage collaboration to ensure buy-in and support throughout the organization.
3. **Risk Management :** Anticipate potential risks and challenges associated with change and develop contingency plans to mitigate them. This may include financial risks, operational disruptions, and resistance from employees or customers.
4. **Resource Allocation :** Allocate resources effectively to support the implementation of change initiatives. This may involve investing in new technologies, training programs, or strategic partnerships to enhance competitiveness and adaptability.

5. **Monitoring and Evaluation** : Continuously monitor progress towards achieving change goals and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented strategies. Make adjustments as needed based on feedback and performance metrics to ensure the successful execution of change initiatives.
6. **Leveraging Available Resources** : Small firms may have limited resources compared to larger organizations, but they can leverage their agility and creativity to adapt to change more quickly. This may involve :
 - a. **Utilizing Technology** : Embrace technology as a tool for innovation and efficiency. Small firms can leverage cloud computing, digital marketing, data analytics, and automation to streamline operations, improve customer experiences, and stay competitive in the market.
 - b. **Building Strategic Partnerships** : Collaborate with other firms, industry associations, research institutions, and government agencies to access expertise, resources, and funding opportunities. Strategic partnerships can help small firms navigate complex technological and regulatory landscapes more effectively.
 - c. **Empowering Employees** : Invest in developing the skills and capabilities of employees to enable them to contribute effectively to the firm's success. Encourage a culture of continuous learning and experimentation to foster innovation and adaptation to change.
 - d. **Customer-Centric Approach** : Focus on understanding and meeting the evolving needs and preferences of customers. Solicit feedback, conduct market research, and adapt products, services, and business processes accordingly to maintain relevance and competitiveness in the market.

Conclusion : Managing change in a small firm requires proactive leadership, strategic planning, and effective utilization of resources. By understanding the impact of change, fostering adaptability, implementing effective strategies, and leveraging available resources, small firms can navigate technological advancements and evolving business environments successfully. Embracing change as an opportunity for growth and innovation is key to sustaining competitiveness and achieving long-term success in today's dynamic marketplace.

The author is a former IAS officer, noted Columnist and writer





HOW MANAGEMENT HELPED AMERICA WIN THE WORLD WAR II

Shantikam Hazarika

The Second World War started in September 1939 when Hitler invaded Poland and France, forcing Britain to declare war against Germany. In the initial stage of the War, the United States maintained a neutral profile. It was only after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941, that America declared war on Japan and actively sided with the Allies. By that time France and a large part of Europe had fallen to the Germans. Yet, within four years of Pearl Harbour, the Axis Power of Germany, Japan and Italy was decisively defeated.

How did this happen?

- When the War started in 1939, the US Army consisted of 1,90,000 soldiers. Yet, during the war, the strength of the US Army rose to over 8.2 million personnel deployed across theaters in Europe, the Pacific, South Asia, North Africa, and the Mediterranean.
- In 1941, the U.S. Navy had approximately 3,50,000 personnel. When the war ended, the US Navy had 34,00,000, operating a vast fleet of warships, and becoming the largest and most powerful Naval force in the world.
- The US Air Force, which in those days served under the Army, had 2,20,000 personnel with a mix of obsolete and modern aircrafts when the war started. When the War ended in 1945, the Air Force had over 2.4 million personnel and thousands of aircrafts, which played a critical role in winning the war.

How could America, with limited preparedness at the beginning of the War, mobilize itself in such an extensive scale in such a short period of time? The answer lies in Management; it was principally due to application of Management Principles and engagement of Management personnel in the war efforts. In fact, Harvard Business School played a significant role in America winning the WWII through its contributions to military leadership and strategic planning. HBS conducted specialized training programs for military officers and others connected with war efforts, especially in logistics, finance, and strategy, which were crucial for effectively mobilizing and coordinating the wartime economy and military operations. Many HBS MBAs served in key leadership roles in government agencies, military branches, and industrial corporations devoted to war efforts. HBS Faculty members conducted research and consultancy projects that helped in wartime decision-making and development of innovative strategies.

In addition, many management stalwarts from Industries like Alfred Sloan, Chairman of General Motors, Henry Ford of Ford Motor Company, Donald Nelson of Sears Roebuck, William Knudsen of General Motors (who was given the rank of a General), Bernard Baruch, a Wall Street stalwart, Frederick

Crawford of Thompson Group were roped in to head and direct various Boards and Committees formed to assist American war efforts.

Then there were the “Whiz kids”, a group of young MBAs from Harvard, assembled by Tex Thornton that included Robert McNamara, Arjay Miller, Edward Lundy and a host of others, all below the age of thirty. They manned crucial posts in the War Department and immensely contributed in the preparations, mobilizations and even conduct of the War.

Management practices were used to mobilize the massive industrial base of US for wartime production. Companies like Ford Motors and General Motors were transformed to produce tanks and armoured vehicles. Techniques such as Operational Research, Scenario Planning and Decision Analysis were used by Military leaders and policy makers to develop and assess strategic options. Management frameworks, including the concept of total war and the use of economic and industrial resources to achieve military objectives, guided Allied strategies as the fighting progressed.

Management techniques such as Inventory Management, Warehousing, Transportation Optimization, and Supply Forecasting were used by Military logisticians to ensure that troops received the necessary equipment, ammunition, food, and medical supplies. Building a huge Human Resource Base in an extremely small time-frame to fight the war required sound HR Practices. Only through sound Human Resource Management practices could such a gigantic task be achieved. Similarly, the country had to adopt sound financial management to not only fund the war effort but also to manage government expenditures. Budgeting, Cost Management and Control, Financial Reporting were employed to monitor expenses and ensure fiscal responsibility. Overall, it was the adoption of sound Management practices that helped maximize resources, optimize efficiency, and contribute to the eventual Allies’ victory.

Running a Government in normal times is different from running a war. Yet, we are seeing almost on a regular basis that the bureaucratic system of Government is found wanting in most cases where providing service to people are concerned. There is a feeling that there is a systemic deterioration in the process of governance by the State. The gaps between the genuine needs of people and their fulfillment have become alarming. *And the deficiencies require to be tackled almost on war-footing.*

Governing a State may differ in many ways from traditional Management. Still, there are valuable lessons that politicians and bureaucrats can learn from management principles, especially when the Governing system appears to be having gaps between expectations and achievements. Governments need to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in serving the needs of their citizens by applying Strategic Planning, Performance Management, Effective Communication, Resource Allocation, Ethical Leadership, Stakeholder Engagement and Continuous Improvement, which good management practices provide. By embracing appropriate management principles, politicians and bureaucrats can contribute to better governance and improved quality of life for all.

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MANAGEMENT OF WATER TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Robin Kalita

Transport Infrastructure is the cornerstone of a nation's development, serving as the arteries through which economic growth flows. In a diverse and densely populated country like India, effective infrastructure management is not just a necessity but a strategic imperative. Among the myriad facets of infrastructure-railways, roadways, aviation and waterways stand as lynchpins, playing pivotal roles in fostering connectivity, driving commerce, and propelling India towards its aspirations of inclusive and sustainable development.

Waterways: Charting New Horizons

India's extensive network of rivers and canals offers a compelling alternative for freight transportation through inland waterways. With over 14,500 kilometres of navigable waterways, harnessing this potential can revolutionize logistics, reduce transportation costs, and alleviate pressure on congested road networks.

Infrastructure Revitalization:

Revitalizing inland water transport infrastructure necessitates concerted efforts in dredging, constructing terminals, and modernizing docks and barrages. Public-private partnerships can play a pivotal role in accelerating the development of waterway infrastructure while ensuring sustainability and economic viability.

Intermodal Integration:

Seamless integration with other modes of transport such as railways, roadways, and coastal shipping is imperative for optimizing the efficiency and competitiveness of waterway transportation. Developing multimodal logistics hubs and enhancing intermodal connectivity can enhance the resilience and reliability of the transportation network.

Environmental Sustainability:

Inland water transport offers significant environmental benefits, emitting fewer greenhouse gases and reducing carbon footprints compared to road and rail transport. Embracing cleaner propulsion technologies, promoting eco-friendly practices, and adhering to stringent environmental standards can further enhance the sustainability credentials of waterway transportation.

Development of River Transport in Assam

Rivers have served as an effective mode of transportation through the ages, carrying people and goods over long distances. Even today, many countries depend heavily on inland water transport, especially for large and bulky cargo, as it is cheaper, more reliable and less polluting than transporting goods by road or rail.

The Brahmaputra, between Sadiya and Dhubri (891 km) is the most important waterway in the northeastern region of India and was declared as National Waterway 2 in 1988. Together with its tributaries, the river carries one-third of India's surface water. Earlier, this river was a busy mode of transport, but with the development of the railways and roadways, waterway was relegated to the backstage. About 1687 km stretch of tributaries of Brahmaputra and Barak Rivers have been identified as feeder routes with potential for development of navigation. The Government of India is now trying to revive these two rivers – to ferry passengers and cargo and thereby provide a cheap yet dependable mode of transport for Assam. Brahmaputra has a major port in Pandu and some others in Guwahati, Neamati, Dhubri, Jogighopa, Tezpur, Sadiya, Dibrugarh, etc. Similarly, Silchar, Karimganj and Badarpur are small ports on river Barak. Tributaries of Brahmaputra like Subansiri, Dhansiri and Lohit are also navigable and have tremendous potential for development of riverine transport for both passenger and cargo movement.

In addition to providing a waterway within the state of Assam, the rivers Brahmaputra and Barak provide the facility of international transportation with Bangladesh. An Inland Water Transit and Trade protocol exists between India and Bangladesh under which inland vessels of one country can transit through the specified routes of the other. The existing protocol routes are :

- Kolkata-Pandu-Kolkata,
- Rajshahi-Dhulian-Rajshahi and
- Kolkata-Karimganj-Kolkata,
- Pandu-Karimganj-Pandu.

For inter-country trade, four ports of call have been designated in each country namely, Haldia, Kolkata, Pandu and Karimganj in India and Narayanganj, Khulna, Mongla and Sirajganj in Bangladesh. The distance from Dhubri to Kolkata on the protocol route through south west Bangladesh is about 1310 km.

Freight transportation by waterways is highly under-utilized in India compared to other large and developed countries & geographic areas. Goods are carried by congested road and rail networks, which increases the cost of trade. So much so that logistics cost in India is estimated at 18 percent of the country's GDP. With the exception of a few states like Kerala, West Bengal and Goa and to a negligible extent Assam, freight transportation through waterways is virtually non-existent in India. The total cargo moved by inland waterways is 0.1 percent of the total inland traffic in India, compared to 21 percent in USA.

With a view to providing impetus for development of inland water transport, the Government of India have approved an Inland Water Transport Policy, which includes fiscal concessions, and policy guidelines for rapid development of the mode and encouragement of private sector participation in development of infrastructure and ownership & operation of inland vessels. The Assam Inland Water Transport Development Project funded by World Bank envisages transformation of the quality of river transportation services, integration of passenger & vehicle ferry services in Assam through a long-term strategic plan for institution & capacity development. It aims at Integrated terminal development, improvement of last mile connectivity, procurement of new vessels, upgradation of existing fleet and installation of round the clock navigation aids.

The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has also undertaken various projects for provision of infrastructure facilities so that the river Brahmaputra is fully operational in the entire stretch in Assam. Accordingly, it has carried out Bandalling and Channel marking, Dredging for maintaining the Fairway, constructed a fixed RCC jetty at Pandu with warehouses and railway siding, provided floating terminals at Dhubri, Jogighopa, Neamati and Tezpur, developed day navigational facilities between Pandu and Dibrugarh and night navigational facilities for the Bangladesh border – Pandu stretch, provided Pilotage for vessels, among other activities.

As a result of these co-ordinated efforts of IWT and IWAI, several benefits are expected to accrue, some that will fructify in the near future and others in the long run. While ferry passengers will have better access and speedier movement between banks, which will prove to be a huge relief to daily commuters, the river will provide an alternative mode of transport for safe and smooth operation of cargo movement. Apart from providing the economic advantages transportation of cargo through the river route will help in easing the congestion on rail and road networks in the state, as well as be more environment-friendly. Cargo transportation from and to Assam through the Protocol Routes will be facilitated, giving thereby a boost to trade and commerce in the region. The Sunderbans – Bangladesh – Brahmaputra waterway and the Sunderbans – Meghna – Barak waterway systems are shorter than the existing road and rail networks and certainly cheaper & more environment friendly. It will be more convenient to transport bulk commodities and over-dimensional consignments (ODC) from ports like Kolkata and Haldia to the Northeast through the river route. During the flood season, when the road and rail networks get disrupted, the river route remains the only alternative link to the rest of the country especially for movement of foodgrains and other essential commodities into the region during crisis.

Tourism is expected to get a big boost since most of the important destinations like Kaziranga, Sibsagar, Majuli, Tezpur, Jorhat and Dibrugarh are located on the banks of the river. There are immense possibilities for developing religious tourism circuits by river routes. It is also expected to generate additional employment for the youth, which will further accelerate economic activities. In effect there will be a tangible improvement in the quality of life due to enhanced communication facilities and plethora of new opportunities for livelihood.

Conclusion:

In the journey towards realizing India's economic aspirations, effective transport infrastructure management emerges as a cornerstone for sustainable and inclusive growth. By prioritizing investments in waterways, India can enhance connectivity, unlock economic potential, and navigate the challenges posed by urbanization and climate change. A collaborative effort involving policymakers, stakeholders, and the private sector is essential in charting a course towards a more resilient, prosperous, and interconnected future.

The author is the working President of GMA and a former IRS Officer



MANAGING PLASTIC WASTE

Dr Rafiqua Ahmed

Waste management is an acute problem in most of the cities in India. Population growth, poverty, lack of civic sense and a stubborn attitude to the environment have led to such a situation in the cities. Waste amount increases proportionately to population growth. In addition, urbanization added significantly to the waste dump. Modern families generate a variety of wastes. These include kitchen waste, plastic packaging and multi-layer packaging of food items, plastic bottles of toiletries, diapers, napkins, etc. When municipal workers collect the mix waste of all these, it is not possible to segregate the waste. Ultimately it reaches the dumping site. At the dumping or landfill sites, such mix waste has no value. When kitchen waste is kept separately, it can be used to make compost, bio gas. Separate collection of plastic, glass items generated daily in modern families can be recycled to give new products. It is essential to segregate the waste generated at each family before handing over to municipal workers. If segregated waste is handed over by each of us, then only we can get a clean environment and the waste dumped in landfill sites can be converted to useful products. We, at Green Chapter Foundation have been imparting lessons on waste segregation to school students, so that they can disseminate the lessons to their siblings, friends and parents. Starting in November, 2023, we have covered 35 schools and colleges.

Plastic waste has added a huge problem to waste management. Most of the people are not aware that a material that is embedded in our daily life can have significant impacts on the climate and on human health, endanger life and drive many species to extinction. According to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), about 430 million tons of plastics are produced annually all over the world. Two thirds of this is single use plastics (SUP) which gives rise to mountains of wastes. Plastics, mainly the single use ones create many environmental problems. A major problem of packaging materials, particularly multi layered packaging take hundreds of years to decompose. Toxic chemicals added during the manufacture of plastics, get transferred to animal tissue and eventually enter the food chain. It clogs the sewers and waterways and ultimately finds its way to the oceans to choke innumerable water species. Discarded or burnt SUP harms human health, biodiversity and pollutes the ecosystem from top of the mountains to bottom of the oceans. Government, while imposing a ban on SUP, increases the thickness of plastic carry bags. However, despite the ban, heaps of waste daily generated show the huge daily disposal of plastics. Every bit of plastic ever made still exist in our environment, polluting water bodies, damaging soil and causing serious health effects.

Pollution is not the only problem of plastic; it also contributes to Climate Change. The production of plastic is one of the most energy-intensive manufacturing process. The material is made from fossil fuels such as crude oil, which are transformed via heat and other additives into a polymer. The packaging sector is the largest generator of single use plastic waste in the world. Approximately 36% of all plastics produced are used in packaging. This includes food and beverage containers, milk pouches etc. Most items in kitchen and wash rooms come in multi-layer plastic packaging, posing acute problems to waste management. Farming is another area, where plastics are used abundantly. Similarly, fishing, fashion industries are major consumer of plastic products. Health care and sanitation are mostly dependent on plastic, 80% of which are single use plastics.

Micro plastics, the particle size of which is less than 5mm in diameter are now found in water, food and air. It is estimated that a considerable amount of such micro-plastics is consumed by everyone on the planet. The indiscriminate dumping of plastic waste is exerting wide spectrum of detrimental impacts on environment. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 amended in 2018 and 2021 specifies the ways to treat the plastic waste, but the implementation and enforcement of the same has become a challenge for the municipal authorities. The Indian market of plastic products has now grown to become one of the leading sectors in the country's economy, consisting of over 30,000 processing units and employing millions of people. The level of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production, use and disposal of conventional fossil fuel-based plastics is forecast to grow by 19% of the global carbon budget by 2040.

In January, this year, India released new guidelines under its extended producer responsibility (EPR) norms that introduced the concept of plastic credits for the industry. Under this, companies have a liability to collect plastic waste equivalent to the amount they generate in a year. Many countries in the world, including India, have successfully resorted to circular economy, and able to reuse some proportion of plastic waste for new products. Various talks at the international levels have focused on measures considering the entire life cycle of plastics, from production to waste management, enabling opportunities to create a part of a thriving circular economy. To effectively tackle the plastic pollution crisis, systemic change is needed by moving away from the current linear plastic economy, which centers on producing, using and discarding the material, to a circular plastic economy, where the plastic waste is reduced by utilizing it in making new products.

In India, SUP being a polymer is converted to other polymers like PET (soft drinks bottles), PVC (flexible hoses), Polystyrene (food containers). Plastic is added to road construction mix that allows a lower working temperature, thus reducing the emission of Volatile Organic Carbon (VOC), Carbon Monoxide (CO). Another use of plastic is in the making of door, window frames, furniture. Plastic to fuel is recovered successfully in many MSMEs. Reliance industry has recycled PET bottles to make Polyester Staple Fibre (PSF), a great step towards plastic circular economy. While the plastic pollution crisis needs systemic reform, behavioral changes required at individual levels such as to avoid single-use plastic products whenever possible. If plastic products are unavoidable, these should be reused or repurposed until they can no longer be used and then should be recycled or disposed

of properly.

GCF's market survey of SUP in the state of Assam, shows that the prohibition order on SUP is able to halt sale of SUP for only a limited period, but after a gap of about 2-3 months of the ban, SUP resurfaced in the markets. EPR and Circular Economy can solve the problem of plastic menace to some extent. To attain the maximum result, intensive mass awareness programme is necessary for segregation of wastes and the municipal authorities may collect only segregated wastes and to impose penalty for non-segregated wastes. Segregated plastics can be transferred to recyclers, thus avoiding plastics entering our river systems and seas.

The author is Secretary, Green Chapter Foundation and former Chief Environment Scientist,
Pollution Control Board, Assam

QUOTES

"I choose a lazy person to do a hard job, because a lazy person will find an easy way to do it."
- Bill Gates

"Most of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to get their work done."
- Peter Drucker

"If you think your boss is stupid, remember: you wouldn't have a job if he was any smarter."
- John Gotti

"It is better to have one person working with you than three people working for you."
- Dwight D. Eisenhower

"The best way to appreciate your job is to imagine yourself without one."
- Oscar Wilde

People who never do any more than they get paid for, never get paid for any more than they do."
- Elbert Hubbard

"Being a boss takes guts and tenacity. Being a boss takes hustle and strength. Getting to the level of boss takes hard work."
- Rachel Hollis



PUTTING MIND OVER MATTER

Dr Bhaskar Bora

In the lush verdancy of Assam, where tea leaves whisper ancient secrets and the Brahmaputra flows with a calm determination, quite often the mental health of the class categorized as managers and entrepreneurs remains an understated priority. As Assam burgeons as a hub for diverse industries, from tea production and petroleum to silk weaving, this mental health of the working lot—more so in the commanding positions—becomes important. No doubt, the changing dynamics at work and pressures in modern business can really press down hard; for that reason alone, mental health support is not just beneficial but crucial to the underpinning of continued success.

Stresses of Leadership: Being Unique

Leadership stress is stress accompanied by the varied responsibilities that a leader has to undertake. The problems that the Assam entrepreneurs face span from the vagaries of the monsoons, pivotal for agriculture and other allied businesses, to how to break into the world market with regional products such as Assam silk and handicrafts. Although this kind of challenge is an integral part of the whole entrepreneurial journey, the problem is that they quite often have a burdening impact on mental health. At the same time, the managers of new sectors are under high pressure of expectations and the necessity for constant flexibility towards rapidly changing global business environments.

Impact of Workplace Culture on Mental Health

Healthy workplace cultures are of the essence when it comes to underpinning mental health. In a typical Assamese community, businesses are often organized as family businesses with deep family values for community and collective welfare. This can be a double-edged sword; while, on one hand, it breeds a closely tied work environment, it can also blur personal and professional boundaries, thereby bringing forth heightened stress and potential burnout.

Building a culture of mental well-being at the workplace includes appreciating such unique pressures and then providing a support system to mitigate the same. It is much more than profit and productivity; it is about nesting mental health into the ethos of an organization.

How Managers Can Support Mental Health in the Workplace: An Overview

The managers and leaders of Assam can adopt various measures to care for the mental health:

1. **Open Communication Channels:** Allow for the flow of free discussions without attaching any stigma to mental health issues. Managers can start this by sharing their experiences and challenges; this can be a way of making these conversations normal.
2. **Flexible Work Schedule:** Considering the geographical challenges and the diverse nature of businesses in Assam, flexible work schedules should help reduce stress and strike a balance between work and life.
3. **Employee Assistance Programs:** An Employee Assistance Program inclusive of counselling services, stress management workshops, and wellness activities for the cultural context of the locality.

4. **Leadership Training:** Allow managers to understand the precursors of mental stress and to provide basic support or refer to professional help. Make them realize the importance of cultural sensitivity in a pluralistic state like Assam.

Implementing Strategies for Dealing With Mental Health in HR Practices

Human Resources departments play a crucial role in weaving mental health strategies into the very fabric of an organization. Here's how:

1. **Mental Health Embedded in HR Policies:** Develop clear human resource policies on issues relating to mental health, such as time off for mental wellness and anti-bullying policies and procedures for an accommodating return to work after issues related to mental health.
2. **Regular Mental Health Audits:** Just like regular safety audits, regular mental health assessments should become the norm. That will probably pick up on subtle issues before they escalate and encourage a proactive stance on mental well-being.
3. **Training and Development:** Regular training in awareness of mental health, the mechanism of coping, and the management of stress will equip employees with the right tools to manage their mental health and that of their colleagues.

Case Study: Industry Initiatives

Some of the Corporations have also introduced yoga and meditation classes in their work routines; such corporate organisations are beginning to realize the physical and mental demands their workers have to face daily and the impact of stress on their productivity. Such initiatives have shown better satisfaction of employees in general and lower levels of absenteeism—an expression of the fruits that focusing on mental health bears.

Mental Health in the Workplace of Tomorrow

This is where mental health is expected to be integrated into the business for days to come. A global movement toward holistic wellness and sustainable practices sees the Assamese business perfectly poised at the forefront of this trend. A unique mixture of traditional values interspersed with modern business practices offers the right kind of ingredient for brewing innovative strategies in mental health while respecting cultural nuances and embracing global best practices.

Conclusion

The mental well-being of Assam—such an affluent state with its history and tradition yet moving with a huge pace in modern industries—becomes a take-off not only for its leaders but also for business success. Assam, as it continues to change in pace, the strategy for its integration of mental health not only benefits the people but also helps in the capacity building of its industries. A sound mind, on the other hand, is not only a personal asset but a collective resource that gives fuel to the engines of innovation and growth in the heart of Assam. It is incumbent on esteemed organisations like the Guwahati Management Association to take pioneering steps in this field.

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based in London



MANAGING IDENTITY CRISIS

Ar Rana Mahanta

Human identity is inherited on the birth itself but its basic instinct is always 'to survive and expand'. While we try to secure survival criteria, we also strive to expand in multiple directions and the journey continues as 'life'. Most ideally, it should have been a journey from 'Born' human to 'Being' human for keeping the identity intact. Unfortunately, the very essence of the journey seems to get blurred and destination gets overcast with clouds of confusion.

Probably, human is the most sophisticated 'gadget', the creator & created on this planet. Like in a computer, hardware and software are two integral parts where the best of functioning takes place in harmony and synchronisation with each other. Similarly, human body (hardware) and Mind (software) need to have its absolute compatibility for a meaningful functioning. 'Body' does just about what 'mind' tells it to do. In other words, the physical action takes place as regulated by the mind. Mind is the governing force behind human manifestation. Although a person is externally identified by his/her physical appearance, the true identity is always the quality and product of mental thought process.

An electro-mechanical gadget comes with an 'Operation Manual' with the help of which we try to start operating step by step. From the manual, we learn how to handle, operate and maintain the gadget effectively. Whereas, we do not usually bother to refer to any such manual while we handle and manage the most sophisticated gadget of God – the human life. 'Yoga' and 'Bhagavat Geeta' are one of the best manuals that we are fortunate to possess. Yoga helps to maintain the physicality, keeping the mind conducive. Bhagabat Geeta offers the 'Art of living' with clear guidance for achieving true goal of life. Often the purpose of life is misunderstood and we concentrate on chasing mirage. Thriving for happiness is most essential but happiness cannot be the ultimate goal. Happiness helps in creating a suitable mental atmosphere but 'peace of mind' is the factor which enables us to perform properly with best of our potential. Therefore, 'peace of mind' must be the weather around for all kinds of aspiration. In short, maintaining peace of mind is a basic requisite.

The instinct to expand in various directions is natural in human. We are not contented with mere survival or basic identity as simple human being. We want to 'include into us' a lot more. Over and above the physical aspects of life, we want to highlight 'name & fame' to prove our existence larger. We want to 'love' a relation to include others' emotions into ours. We want to possess more & more to derive pleasure of possession. It's an inner drive to explore and experience the unseen in quest of knowledge or in the pursuit of happiness. The list goes on and on. These expansions or

inclusions are absolutely fine but some of them may turn out dubious & dicey. Therefore, a conscious introspection is very much needed for being able to scrutinise and filter out the essential ones and to realize 'how much is too much'.

Complication arises only when expansions & inclusions in quest of an elevated identity become a never ending process because that's where we keep sinking and suffering in quick sand.

When we say, life is a journey, it is essential to make it pleasant and fruitful. Carrying along unwanted extra baggage, makes it miserable and painful. Hence it demands dispersing dirt on daily basis and march ahead with the slogan – 'travel light, enjoy the ride'.

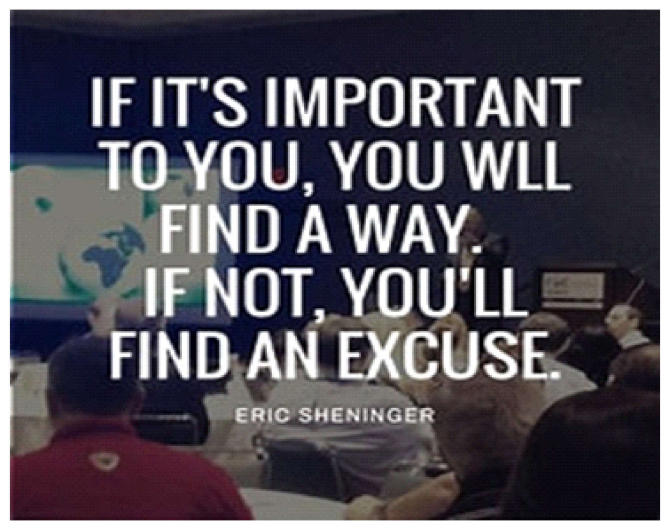
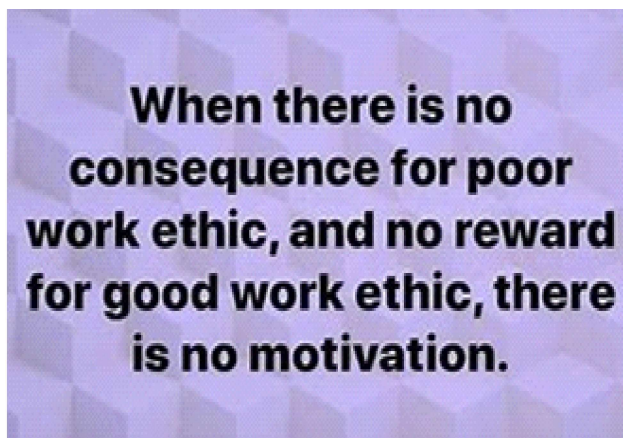
As every life is a mixture of happy and sad events, it is important to learn how to manage both. Despite our efforts, when issues do not get resolved, frustration compels to compare situations with others. Such comparison results in more confusion and devastation. Often in disastrous moments of life, we scream – 'Oh God, why me'? If the satisfaction is only at yelling, then the answers to such questions are unsolicited. But to a sincere seeker the answer is available which can turn such moments of pain quite manageable.

As life grows, our responsibility and obligation also multiply many folds. This is inevitable. Being in such circumstance of life, yet being able to maintain 'peace of mind' is one of the biggest challenges. Since 'peace of mind' is a basic requisite of life, we need to carefully sort out in our mind as to where lies our own happiness which can lead us to a state of 'peace'. To be able to remove hazardous complexities of mind is to become 'simple'. Being simple is not the key to happiness but it certainly helps one to be humble. Humbleness is an attitude and is a product of deep thought process and deeper understanding. Such attitude develops when we value our own values and others'. To be able to be humble is being able to remove complexities.

Let's look at it this way,- we feel happy when we get what we want. Problem starts when life does not move our way. Unable to achieve what we expect, causes disappointment and leads to unhappy state of mind. The other most dangerous reason of being unhappy is the game of competition. We usually compare our achievements with that of others and try to move a step ahead. This keeps relocating our own targets and eventually puts us in a mad race. Life is not a race, it's a journey and is unique for each individual. Frustration is the gap between expectation and achievements. Our expectations stand as our targets in life and whenever we can't hit it, we are disturbed, tensed and finally unhappy. Now the important question we must ask is - who puts these targets in front of us? A conscious introspection will point the finger to us alone. This calls for building up an attitude to move forward in life without keeping bench marks but with best of ability & effort, under prevailing circumstance. Such attitude will help explore every bit of our journey and in absence of any pre-set expectations, small or big, whatever goodies we can collect, will make us happy.

Human intelligence can reach out to any extent but basic flow of life is best understood as 'performing on the physical platform of humanity and thriving to reach divinity'. This clearly indicates that there are two parallel streams through which the human life flows or should flow. The profound stream is the one where a person needs to carry out duties & responsibilities of physical life and its surroundings, with an aspiration to fulfill & achieve goals & desires of life. There is a silent urge or at times a conscious desire to find a larger meaning of life itself. In other words, we thrive to acquire an expression of soul. This is an inner drive within a person. Usually such desire occurs at a matured state of life and the ideal way of leading such a life is to perform duties of the physical world and fulfill human aspiration in a manner which is approved by the principles of humanity, law of the land and other socio-cultural norms. At the same time when the urge to reach true goal of life becomes profound, an attitude towards life may be developed as 'being detached-be attached' to all materialistic instincts of life.

The writer is an Architect Consultant





MANAGING STRESS

Dr Sunil Kumar Saikia

'Stress' is a word which has in the present century been able to create such popularity in the world of management literature that it is regarded as almost a common name among individuals- whether he/she is working in an organization or engaged in ones' own business or profession. Anyone who is associated with or is involved in the high pressure lifestyle of today of the excessive job load, at one time or the other, experienced it. The effect of stress is so powerful that it might cost quite heavy to an individual in various ways, resulting in loss of productivity, efficiency, frustration, tension, anxiety, disease and even early death.

Stress as defined by the management science which *means* any external pressure or force that leads to excessive work load of an individual may not respond adequately in the situation. In such cases stress becomes unbearable and the person develops certain mental or physical problems which tend to make more errors and develop certain diseases. Some of the stress-related diseases may be cited as follows :

Stress-related symptoms are:

Sticking to unlinked situation, Feeling deprived, loss of self-esteem, unrealistic fears, feeling threatened by bodily harm, constipation, ulcers/skin rash, muscular pain, loose motion/insomnia and hypertension.

There may be variation in the causes which result in stress from person to person and from one job to another. However researchers have found certain common causes of stress which mainly arises from (1) On the job causes and (2) off the job causes.

Job related stress or on the job stress generally arises due to insecurity of the job, fear of flying or travelling, change in responsibilities at work, change to a different line of job, hazardous working conditions or unusual working hours, trouble with the Boss or colleagues or subordinates, business readjustment, excessive competition, etc.

While in the other hand, off the job causes of stress arises due to family problems like death of spouse, divorce, sexual difficulties, problem with children, loss of self esteem, financial problems, change in residence and major injury or illness. Besides, there are also certain other factors like excessive use of alcohol, drugs, smoking etc.

Overcome Stress : There are numerous ways and techniques developed by different management scientists which do help in overcoming the problems of stress. The following simple methods might

help a person in managing stress.

- (i) The best way to cope with stress is to simply avoid it or if possible prevent it before it arises. However, if avoidance does not work, then the best way is to try to evade the situation. If that is also not quite possible, then one should try to distract attention from the situation to some other activity, which is more pleasurable.
- (ii) When avoidance, evasion or diversion is not possible, one should learn to live with stress-both mentally and physically. In that situation it is necessary to face the situation boldly and then take effective and constructive action. One should always try to attack the causes, not the symptoms : Whenever possible one should try to see the bright side of things to convert anger into joy.
- (iii) When something worries a person, the good way to reduce stress is to confide the problem with someone, who can be trusted, like friends, colleagues or seek professional help from a psychologist or a psychiatrist, or a lawyer.
- (iv) To overcome the physical side of stress, doing simple physical exercises with proper nutrient is a must.
- (v) When difficult problems are encountered, one must learn to slow down the pace and set priorities restricting the energy to the most important task only.
- (vi) One should not loose temper as well patience even in a critical situation, both in office or at the home front. To keep the temper cool, one can temporarily divert the activity into some other activities like playing a game or reading a book or a long walk.
- (vii) Meditation is an excellent means to sort out all the problems cited above. It also helps to relieve anxiety and to develop the will power for fulfilling the personal goal.

A simple way to start meditation is to sit in a comfortable position and close the eyes. Feel totally relaxed and free from all tensions. During that time, one should breath in and out normally. Then try to concentrate into one object (problem), repeating it over and over again and get the answer for future strategy.

Many individuals who are affected by stress, come down with specific symptoms and diseases. Biofeedback is a technique that uses various procedures and instruments to teach people on how to control certain stress related diseases like blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, skin resistance levels, etc. Although biofeedback is an expensive and time consuming technique, yet it is helpful to those persons who cannot get release or concentrate with meditation.

Optimum utilization of time is also a major killer of stress. To get rid of unnecessary strain arising out of time pressure, emergencies, etc, one should learn the techniques of effective use of time, like using activity chart, proper delegation of work, proper filing etc.

While at home, one should create atmosphere in such a way that he/she is totally relaxed. To create the situation, one should not bring official work as far as possible to home and should enjoy the leisure time by playing indoor games enjoying TV/Radio with wife and children.

To reduce the monotony of life and to feel fresh, one should go for an outing on holidays and also take a regular vacation for touring places of interest.

Periodical medical check-up is also a must for all high pressure executives or businessman along with reducing excessive smoking and drinking habits.

The various methods cited above will no doubt help in managing the stress. But it is a bitter fact that stress will always be with us. We should therefore to find ways to ease the pain of stress, keep proper faith on yourself and maintain a proper balance for effective performance.

(The writer is a former Director, IIE & presently working as Director, GCMS (MBA,GCC)





PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

Dilip Borah

The role of vigilance in promoting good governance has been aptly described by Thomas Jefferson in his immortal words, 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'. It is sixty six years since we attained our independence. During this period we have more than trebled our population, from about 345 millions in 1947 to 1121 millions in 2011. India's GDP grew from a mere 85 billion rupees in 1950 to more than 10,000 billion rupees in 2012-13. We find that absolute GDP growth has maintained a healthy trend over these sixty five years in spite of the huge population. India's GDP per capita in 2012 was estimated at 1106.8 USD against per capita income of 1219 USD. While India is the fourth largest economy in the world, by per capita income it is placed in 142nd rank. This means that though both GDP and per capita income have risen over the years, we are well below in the human development index being placed at 136th among 186 countries. This clearly shows we have much catching up to do and somewhere something has gone wrong. Most of the studies find that bad governance and corruption are the two major factors which have held us back from achieving better human development index. Here comes the importance of preventive vigilance in promoting good governance.

Let us see what this term good governance means and how it has become a core element of development strategy. This concept is comparatively new. As defined in 1992 report of the World Bank, 'Governance and Development', good governance is the manner in which power is exercised in management of a country's economic and social resources for development. While democracy tends to define legitimacy of government, good governance refers to its effectiveness. Democracy and good governance is sustainable only when both these elements are present in the system. India being the largest democracy fulfills the first criteria by following a universal franchise based democratic polity. But has it been able to provide good governance? This brings us to the factors which determines good governance and brings in focus the crucial role played by preventive vigilance.

The more than thirty crores of people who live in abject poverty and squalor without water, sanitation, two square meals a day, shelter and clothes prove beyond doubt that in spite of being a functioning democracy we have failed to ensure good governance which in turn points to the failure of the preventive vigilance mechanism that we have adopted in our governance and public life. It is therefore but a truism that effective preventive vigilance is the most important tool in promoting good governance.

Researchers have identified six main dimensions of good governance. They are:

i. Voice and accountability which includes civil liberties and political stability. ii. Government effectiveness which includes the quality of policy making and public service delivery. iii. The lack of regulatory burden. iv. The rule of law which includes protection of property rights. v. Independence of judiciary and vi. Control of corruption.

Along with these we may also look into the eight characteristics that the UNO has identified to define good governance. They are:

(i) Consensus oriented (ii) Participatory (iii) Following the rule of law (iv) Effective and efficient (v) Transparent (vi) Responsive (vii) Equitable and inclusive.

India, by adopting the parliamentary system of governance, has opted for consensus oriented participatory government since independence. However, to be consensus oriented in practice, effective opposition presence in both the houses of the parliament is a pre-condition. The advent of coalition system of government since the days of the first Janata Party rule beginning 1977 has considerably contributed towards consensus creation. The stumbling block here is the power of promulgating ordinances which on the other day almost negated a well thought out step taken by the Hon'ble Supreme court towards establishing the supremacy of law while disqualifying connected politician from holding on to their parliamentary privileges. Such power is a hindrance to good governance and can only be defeated by eternal vigilance of the civil society and democratic forces including judiciary. Preventive vigilance here takes political and judicial colour in contrast to the technocratic and a political character of good governance that has been propagated by the World Bank and the UNO.

Good governance is also dependent upon its participatory nature. It is the responsibility of the party in power to encourage all the stakeholders to participate in decision making as well as implementation of policies. India has taken the right step to achieve this objective by devolution of legislative, executive and vigilance functions to the grassroot level. The Panchayati Raj institutions have made it possible for the last man in the village to have his say in all matters affecting his life. However, though in paper this is so, in practice, due to the rise of family centric politics and spread of unconstitutional and extra constitutional power centers backed by political masters, participatory character of these institutions have been adversely affected. These aberrations are obstacles to good governance. Vigilance by civil society organisation, civil society and all the stake holders only can arrest this trend.

Following the rule of law and being accountable for all actions by the power that be in the country and the management in corporate bodies will go a long way to ensure good governance. Here the judiciary is playing a major role by bringing into sharp focus the manipulations indulged in by those who are saddled with the duty to uphold the rule of law. There are numerous instances where both the legislative and the executive have been taken to task by the Hon'ble courts on these counts. The role played by the vigilance organisations in bringing to public notice and courts the various scandals in the country are good example of the important role played by these organisations towards promoting good governance.

Transparency and responsiveness in governance is what setting India back in achieving the goal of good governance. Till the enactment of the RTI act, people had hardly any access to the

process of decision making. Under the Colonial acts like the Official Secrets Act and many others, people were denied access into the reasons behind seemingly non people friendly policies and decisions taken by the successive governments. The prevalence of a number of anti democratic legislations, some of which are still in operation, clouded the transparency and responsiveness in governance adversely affecting efforts to ensure accountability in administration. Even now, a number of important government departments, semi-government and private service providers, industries and corporates are kept out of the purview of the RTI act. Hence transparency is yet to be achieved in a very large segment of our public service as well as corporate commercial activities.

The last but not the least important aspect of good governance is equitability and inclusiveness of our public policies. Even after being the 4th largest economy of the world India has failed to ensure equitable distribution of resources. To address this problem, adoption of the policy of affirmative action is a must. By empowering the weaker sections through reservation in jobs and higher education, compulsory primary education, employment guarantees scheme and food security, affirmative action for promoting good governance has been ushered in. However, while the intention is good, implementation of these schemes has left much to be desired. The silver lining here is the pro-active role played by the judiciary since the early seventies, the growth of civil society groups, enactment of acts like RTI, Rights to Service, etc. bringing more transparency into the system which will contribute handsomely to good governance in the days to come.

However, failure of vigilance and vested interests eating into the system thereby bringing the whole country to the verge of disintegration as could be seen in the events leading to the Emergency of 1975-77 and again in the total bankruptcy of 1990-91. This has forced liberalization of the economy to promote growth by reducing regulatory interferences and ensuring a level playing field by bringing in transparency and by strengthening the preventive vigilance mechanism. This has resulted in faster and higher growth of the economy in the last twenty odd years. However, the new economic policy could not include vast majority of people including marginal farmers, landless labourers, unorganized industrial and business sectors and economically and socially weaker sections of the society. Fortunately, the growth of a vast middle class during this period gave rise to civil society movement and they started playing the role of the watch dog. This has forced the Government to bring in more transparency into policy making as well as execution. The vast majority that could not take advantage of the tremendous growth is now being compensated through various social sector schemes like MNREGA and Food Security Act. Special schemes were taken up for empowering the women, the backward classes and the religious minority. These are examples of inclusive and responsive public policy that has been possible due to increased vigilance by the civil society groups, media, judiciary and the vigilance organs in government as well as corporate bodies contributing towards promotion of good governance of the country.

Finally, let us look into the most important factor that has hindered good governance in the country. The scourge of corruption has pervaded all echelons of our public and corporate life. At macro level, legislations like RTI Act, Right to Service Act, Prevention of Corruption Act, etc. are already

in place, but their enforcement is still tardy. Preventive vigilance in all public and corporate dealings can go a long way in correcting the course. However, merely having vigilance agencies in every government and corporate offices will not serve the purpose in absence of transparency, rule of law, participatory management and inclusive policies. The watch dog agencies like the Central and State Vigilance Commissions are trying their best to do their role as envisaged in the constitution. However, by resorting to various loopholes and by acts of administrative manipulations, these have been rendered toothless. In such an atmosphere preventive vigilance cannot be expected to take deep roots in promoting good governance. To ensure the preventive vigilance becomes effective following steps need to be taken in deep earnest:

- (i) Standardisation to ensure clear cut conditions and procedures, reduction/elimination of discretion.
- (ii) Automation to reduce interface between officials & public and to avoid delay in delivery of service.
- (iii) Transparency promotes public awareness about their rights and responsibilities and leads to performance of official function in public view.
- (iv) Accountability to make every person being responsible for his action/inactions. For aberrations penalty should be swift and decisive.
- (v) Control & supervision must be effective.
- (vi) Conducive work environment must be ensured.

If these conditions are fulfilled in right earnest good governance will follow automatically. However, the million dollar question remains, are we ready for good governance at all? Does our political atmosphere permit it? Are our policies geared to that end? The answers to these questions are to be answered by all of us.

The author is a former Director General of Police and Civil Defence and a noted writer



**GOOD LEADERS DO NOT
TAKE ON ALL THE WORK
THEMSELVES; NEITHER
DO THEY TAKE ALL THE
CREDIT.**



CULTIVATING HAPPINESS QUOTIENT

Dr Basanti Baroova

A Holistic Approach to Self-Development

In the pursuit of self-development, one often seeks to enhance their Happiness Quotient (HQ) – a measure of overall contentment and fulfillment in life. While traditional success metrics focus on tangible achievements, a high HQ encompasses a broader spectrum, integrating physical, emotional, temporal, stress, lifestyle, spiritual, and habit formation factors. Understanding and nurturing each aspect contributes significantly to personal growth and lasting happiness.

Physical Well-being :

Physical health lays the foundation for a fulfilling life. Regular exercise, balanced nutrition, proper hydration and sufficient sleep are some essential components. Engaging in physical activities releases endorphins, the body's natural mood elevators, promoting a sense of well-being. Additionally, maintaining a healthy lifestyle reduces the risk of chronic illnesses, fostering a longer, more fulfilling life.

Emotional Wellbeing :

Emotional well-being is the ability to understand, manage, and express emotions effectively. Cultivating empathy, practicing gratitude, and fostering positive relationships are pivotal. Emotional resilience enables individuals to navigate life's challenges with grace and optimism, enhancing overall happiness and satisfaction.

Time Management :

Time is a finite resource, and how we utilize it profoundly impacts our happiness. Effective time management involves prioritizing tasks, setting realistic goals, and finding balance between work, leisure, and personal pursuits. By aligning activities with personal values and goals, individuals can experience a greater sense of purpose and fulfillment in their daily lives.

Stress Management :

Stress is an inevitable aspect of life, but how we respond to it determines its impact on our happiness. Adopting stress-relief techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, and deep breathing exercises can mitigate its adverse effects. Learning to optimise a mindset of resilience and adaptability enables individuals to thrive in the face of adversity, fostering a greater sense of well-being.

Lifestyle Choices :

Lifestyle choices significantly influence our overall happiness quotient. Simplifying life, decluttering physical and mental spaces, and embracing minimalism can lead to greater clarity and contentment. Engaging in hobbies, pursuing passions, and fostering creativity provide avenues for self-expression and personal fulfillment.

Spiritual Growth :

Spirituality offers a deeper connection to oneself, others, and the universe at large. Engaging in practices such as meditation, prayer, or mindfulness cultivates inner peace and harmony. Exploring existential questions and seeking meaning beyond material pursuits can lead to profound insights and a heightened sense of fulfillment.

Habit Formation and Adherence :

Habits shape our daily routines and, ultimately, our lives. Cultivating positive habits, such as eating diversified foods, mindful eating (preferably with fingers and at regular time) adequate hydration, gratitude journaling, regular exercise, and acts of kindness, fosters a more optimistic outlook and enhances overall well-being. By consciously replacing detrimental habits with constructive ones, individuals can create lasting positive change and elevate their happiness quotient. Adhering to habits, once formed, is also key.

In conclusion, cultivating a high Happiness Quotient is a multifaceted journey that requires a holistic approach to self-development. By nurturing physical, emotional, temporal, stress, lifestyle, spiritual, and habit formation factors, individuals can unlock their full potential and experience greater joy, fulfillment, and meaning in life. Embracing this comprehensive approach to personal growth empowers individuals to lead more purposeful, balanced, and harmonious lives.

Let's remember—Knowledge is Power when applied to make a situation better. Otherwise, it's a mere piece of information.

The author is a leading Nutritionist and former Head of the Department of Nutrition, AAU





EARLY DAYS OF PETROLEUM INDUSTRY

Anup Kumar Baruah

The roots of the Petroleum Industry in Assam date back to the early 19th century. Immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826, the presence of oil seepages in certain areas of Upper Assam were observed by the East India Company official Lieutenant Wilcox as well as by CA Bruce who was the pioneer of Tea Plantations in Assam. Subsequently, Captain F Jenkins after assuming the charge of Agent to the Governor General for the North East Frontier in 1834, suggested a systematic survey. A few Geologists from the Geological Survey of India and Major A White carried out a survey in 1837 and confirmed oil seepages noticed in some river banks in extreme Upper Assam. Captain P S Hannay also confirmed oil seepages in Namchik area in the present day Tinsukia District and Arunachal Pradesh in 1847.

The first lease of the oil bearing stratas was given to a Tea Planter of the then Lakhimpur District, Mr Wagentriber who was entrusted with certain rights of the springs at Makum and Bapapung locations of the present day Digboi area. One Mr Craig, a would be Tea Planter wrote to the Commissioner of Assam in 1837 about noticing oil seepage in the Bapapung area which was the first instance of observance of oil seepage in an area other than river banks. However, Mr Wagentriber was not successful in taking any effective step towards development of the said Grant. After expiry of this lease, Mr Goodenough of Mckillop, Stewart and Company was granted the lease of a substantial area of about 700 sq. miles between Buri and Noa Dihing for oil exploration in 1866. As many as eight holes were dug by Goodenough at Naharpung and Makum and in the eighth hole oil was struck on 26th March, 1867 at a depth of 118 ft.

Unfortunately, Mr Goodenough died soon thereafter and the prospecting had to be discontinued. It may be mentioned here that Mr Goodenough was successful in bringing drilling machinery (Steam boring M/C from Mather and Platt) in December, 1866 and the eighth hole in which oil was successfully struck was the first mechanically drilled well in India. After the exploratory works of Mr Goodenough which were not successful in establishing a Petroleum Industry in Upper Assam, the person who took a keen interest in this sphere was none other than Dr John Berry White who came to the District in about 1858 as Asstt. Surgeon, 42 Regiment, Assam Native Infantry in Civil Medical Charge.

Towards the late 1870s, Dr White formed a Partnership Concern along with Mr JC Batchelor (of East India Railways), Mr A Lawrie, Mr Hudson, Mr J Simpson and a solicitor Mr Francis Barrow under the name and style of 'Assam Mineral Oil Company' with the express intention of prospecting

for Petroleum in the Upper Assam areas. The firm through their agents M/s Balmer Lawrie, Calcutta moved the Commissioner of Assam for the right of raising, manufacturing, selling all Petroleum and other Solid and Liquid Hydrocarbons of the Joypur area of the District and also for limiting the concessions to Bapapung and Naharpung and Borhat near the Desang river, in case the first option was not found feasible.

However, before initiation of significant steps by M/s Assam Mineral Oil Company towards exploration and exploitation of Petroleum resources of Assam, an epoch making development took place. This was the formation of the “Assam Railways and Trading Company Limited” with Dr Berry White as one of the prime movers. M/s Assam Railways and Trading Co. Limited (ART Limited) in London. The Company was incorporated on 30th July, 1881, although a lot of steps towards formation of the company were taken in 1880 itself. In fact, an India based entity, Shaw Finlayson and Co, which later on worked as Agents of M/s Assam Railways and Trading Co Limited entered into an MOU in December, 1880 with Dr White, who was the PRO and the Trustee of the Petroleum lease of the “Assam Mineral Oil Company” as per which the Doctor was to obtain the lease of Mineral Oil Lands.

M/s. ART Limited acquired Petroleum rights in 1882 over an area of 30 square miles in the south bank of the river Dehing which was previously in favour of “Assam Mineral Oil Company”. ART’s oil operations started in 1884 on a site on the bank of Buri Dehing. However, the initial results were not encouraging. The Company had also received a concession at the Digboi area for exploration rights for four sq. miles. Drilling activities began in the area in 1887-88.

Oil was struck at Digboi at a depth of 178 ft. in October, 1889. Another significant strike was also made nearby in January, 1892. The company built a small Refinery at Margherita in 1893 for refining Oil produced in Digboi fields. It may be mentioned that there were six Oil producing wells in the Digboi area in 1893. Mention may be made here of another partnership Firm in the name and style of “Assam Oil Syndicate” floated by Mr TR Mccellan, Mr James Nicholson Stewart, Mr B J Townsend and Mr GNF Buckland, which also showed interest in Oil exploration in the Upper Assam areas. The syndicate applied for and was granted a concession of an Oil grant of 2559 Acres by the Chief Commissioner, Assam on 23rd January, 1889. However, It transferred all its rights to ART limited through an agreement in January, 1898.

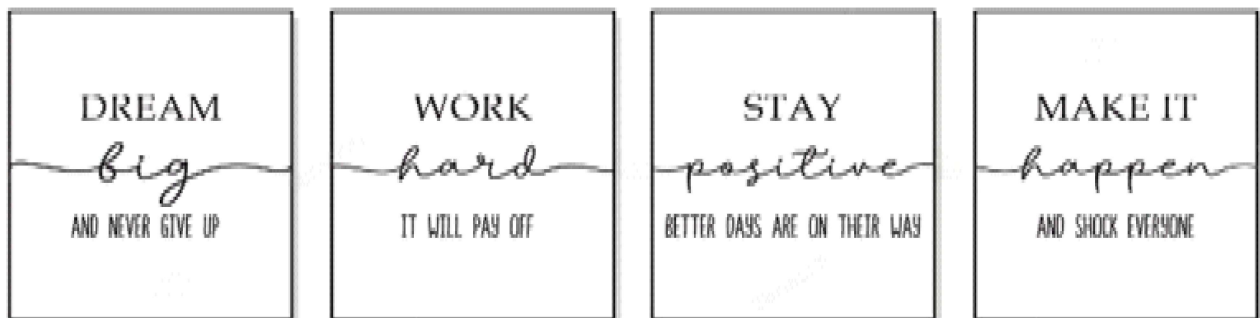
The ART limited mooted the idea of promoting a separate Company which would be independent of the parent company for taking care of the Oil Operations during late 1890s and the Chief Commissioner, Assam approved the idea in early 1898. The Assm Oil Company Limited was incorporated in London in 1899 with a paid up capital of 3,10,000 pounds. The Company set up its Head Office at Digboi and it took over all the Oil concessions and leases of the ART Limited as well as of Assam Oil Syndicate the rights of which had already passed on to the former Company. As a result, Assam Oil company became the owner of the Drilling Equipments, Oil Wells and the Refinery at Margherita as well. The Assam Oil Company started the construction of Digboi Refinery in 1900 CE

which was commissioned in 1901. The Chairman of the ART Limited Lord Ribblesdale became the Chairman of the new Company too and it was obvious that the two Companies maintained close relations in spite of their independent identities. However, things changed when Burmah Oil Company took over all the shares of ART Limited in AOC in 1921 and it essentially became a BOC concern.

Acknowledgements

1. Gazetteer of Lakhimpur District — B C Allen
2. The Saga of Assam Oil — P C Barua
3. The Story of The Assam Railways and Trading Company Limited (1881-1951)

The writer is a former Joint Director of Industries and Commerce Department, Assam





MERRY MISCOMMUNICATIONS

Rashmi Narzary

Standing behind me in the school assembly prayers, for five happy years Merenungla Ao piously started her prayers, *'Aafadi in a van, holeh bhi tai naam Dai King...'*

The day she realized she was saying *'Our father in Heaven, holy be thy name, thy king....dom come'* all messed up, we rolled on the grassy playground, laughing our little heads off, till tears ran down our cheeks. Years later I realized, it isn't just her. Or just this prayer. It happens with many, especially with songs, rhymes and phrases. And there is actually a term to it too. It is called **MONDEGREENS**, a hearing miscommunication!

Then long ago, someone once misheard acorns and said **EGGCORNS**. The term stuck, to create a fun new hearing miscommunication. Here though, the erred, new term, makes sense. Thus, upmost is heard *utmost*, topsy is heard *topseed*, Historical Society is made into *hysterical society* or, the popular phrase *Much ado about nothing* stemmed from 'much to do about nothing'.

And my dear friend Abeli can't remain unmentioned! She could never say 'Baskin Robbins', always ending up blurting *Robinson Basket*! She gives us a good laugh but her slips are not exclusive. Because someone else in my family could never pronounce the name of the government fishery near Nagaon town, Jongal Bolohu. Instead, he always blurted *Bongal Jolohu*. And the dear husband would unfailingly say that he *'picked his fork with his pork'*. We almost fainted thinking it was a disease, till we found that there were others too whose tongues played truant by belching out phrases like *Farty was pun*, when what they wished to say was *Party was fun*!

Then there was this History teacher who once charged a student, *Why did you hiss my mystery lecture?* The stunned student took a while to decode it as *Why did you miss my History lecture?* And when the student gave vague reasons for being absent, the teacher yelled at him, *Now that's a lack of pies!!* The poor student looked down at his sneakers, confused. Suddenly he realized, his respected teacher must have meant *...a pack of lies!* But ofcourse! ...he thought, the joy of deciphering his teacher's reprimand triumphing over the embarrassment it caused him.

On yet another occasion, at a dinner, a friend's brother excitedly introduced his newly married, Chinese wife to us, saying, 'Meet my gorgeous half!' and he raised a toast and announced jubilantly, 'Lame Pee!' The noisy dinner hall suddenly fell pin drop silent. The pretty wife, Pamela Lee, whom the husband lovingly called Pam, blushed and grinned sheepishly in the hall's silence. Then as abruptly, a thunderous, merry applause rocked the room, filling it with confetti, handshakes, hugs

and congratulations!

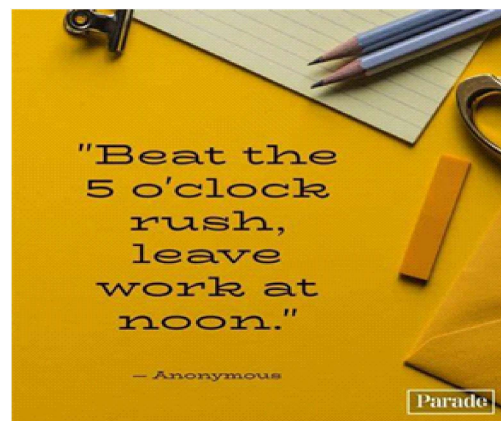
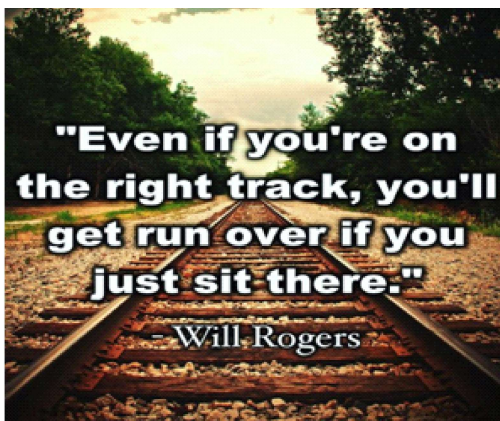
SPOONERISM is the name for such slips and swapping of letters or syllables in words or phrases. I used to wonder why, for the symptoms of spoonerism have nothing to do either with a spoon or with feeding. Till I read about William Archibald Spooner, who was the Wean and Darden...oops!.. Dean and Warden, of New College in *Oxland, Engford*. And yes, he was the one whose mystery lecture the unfortunate student had hissed! It was from Spooner that the term Spoonerism arrived.

Now as I sit back and reflect, I remember my friend Birina's mother who answered the phone when I once called Birina. Her mother told me, '*Your friend's shaking a tower*'. So I left a message with aunty for Birina, to convey when she was done taking a shower, that we planned to visit a new shopping mall in town. Aunty it seems told Birina, '*Well, it's about going to see a mopping shawl*'! Later, aunty laughed heartily as she justified her slips saying, 'So what? Like me, there was also this brave Captain who ordered his men to open fire upon the enemy. *Glow your buns*! He roared. Some soldiers started groping into their knapsacks looking for buns in their food rolls. The rest instinctively unzipped and blissfully started scratching their itchy behinds to give them a glow! Meanwhile, the enemy reached up to them and before the Captain could re-command, *Blow your guns*, he was shot dead.'

Miscommunication often leads to much humor and entertainment. There is also another category where people slip off alphabets while writing. Just so, someone I know once lovingly purchased a shirt for her fiancé for Christmas, wrapped it beautifully with ribbons and mistletoe, and pasted on it a note with a kiss that read, 'Merry Christmas, sweetheart, hope you'll like the shirt'. Only, she dropped off the 'r' from shirt!

However, in these times of stress and ailments, a little laughter goes a long, healthy way. Hence, in a harmless manner, may we all laugh our way through Merry Miscommunications!

The author is a Novelist and Sahitya Akademi Awardee
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HOW SAFE IS OUR CUP OF TEA

Uddhab Chandra Sarmah

Tea cup that cheers everyone has become an integral beverage in our daily routine of life .Over the two centuries of time, tea drinking has turned out to be an addiction for almost 80-85% people of our country and if we happen to work out the quantities of cup of teas that people around the world consume, it comes to over 3.16 billion of cups of tea per day. In India also it has been estimated that over 1.5 crores of normal cup of tea are drunk per day on an average. Therefore, it justifies the fact that next to water, tea drinking is taken as the most sought-after drinks among all the people in the world for all walks of life. Undoubtedly Tea has the superpower of bonding relations, friendships, solutions of decision making and at the same time invigorating oneself with buildup of strong immunities to fight against any kind of invincible diseases. Therefore, tea is called the “ELIXIR” of life. Scientifically also it has been amply proved that 'tea' contains most of the Phyto chemical components that a human body needs for the desired longevity of a healthy life.

In reference to our country with special mention of Assam in particular, there has been an upsurge of growth of the populations in last 10 years of time and at the same time, tea productions also showed a remarkable increase. If we check the records of tea productions in the last 10 years, it was noticed to be within 700 to 900 million of kgs which however showed a steady increase to over 1200 to 1300 million kgs, the latest figure shows over 1380 million kgs in 2022. The gradual increase of total tea productions has happened because of the huge contributions coming out from the segment of the Small Tea Growers who are becoming the backbone of the Tea Industry at present. Everyone will be surprised that more than 48% of the total productions of teas of Assam come from the small tea growers' buckets .Out of 690 million kgs of tea produced in Assam in 2022 , 300 million kgs (approx. 1500 million kgs of green leaves) had been contributed by this segment of Small Tea Growers and it is expected that in near future share of STGs towards total productions of Assam will exceed more than 50 to 55% since already the share of STGs' productions had increased over 52% of the total productions of India. It is really amazing to find that in the last 4 decades of time(1978-80) when a handful of Small Tea Growers started tea cultivation in a small scale in Assam as an initiative to green revolution for establishing themselves for livelihood and sustainable living ,now that strength has crossed over 1.5 lakh growers covering over 117,000 acres(47,370 hectares) of land under tea areas producing over 300 million kgs of tea (approx.1500million kgs of green leaves) !This will remain as the Best success story in the history of Tea Industry in Assam.

Although Production wise the country has achieved a very comfortable growth as compared to other tea growing countries of the world , it has been observed that the name and fame ,the brand equity that we had been able to establish both in domestic and international markets of our teas specially with reference to teas from Assam , Darjeeling and Nilgiris in the last decades of time ,has been slowly eroding in matters of adherence to the desired qualities and food safety measures as per the expectations of the consumers . The export markets have not shown any growth as compared to

the other competitive countries, rather there has been much of objection and rejections on the matters of MRL (Maximum residue limit of used chemicals) which have compelled to think seriously about the consumers' awareness of food safety measures by other developed countries in comparison to our own people at home!!

Analyzing the gravity of the above matters two things come in mind and both these areas need sincere attention for all the tea producers of big and small: -

1. Production of quality teas has not received the desired attention as much as it is required. The average prices of teas at the close of the season in the auction markets of both Kolkata and Guwahati speak very clearly about the 'Quality' our producers have produced over the years. Over 52% of total productions come from the production of teas made from STGs. Almost 90% of these bulk of productions coming from BLF are in the brackets of common Medium Assam. Quantity wise the BLFs make millions of kgs but for qualities their teas find difficulties to compare with teas of Estate factories. Since 99% of the BLF owners are simply not connected to the sources of leaf supply, there has been a total lack of ownership or belongingness which make them unaware of the growers at the supply sources whether they are complying with GAPs or applications of chemicals or fertilizers as per the norms of safety measures which are "MUST" for the health of the consumers.

2. There has been a big setback of the tea industry due to the unprecedented change of Climate and the sustaining affects in the field practices of tea cultivations. The ill effects of climate change have caused extensive damages to tea crops due to attack of various pest and diseases which have created a big concern for the industry for sustainable productions. Uses of various chemicals to control the sucking pests and diseases conforming to the norms of MRL has been found to be one of the biggest challenges for the producers in compliances. Chemicals which have been approved for applications as per Plant Protection Code (PPC) show the PHI (Plucking hour interval) and to produce quality teas, plucking of fine leaf having high %of two and buds are necessary and this can be achieved only when 6-7 days old leaves are regularly plucked . So many a time the gap between the plucking and chemical applications cannot be maintained which ultimately results residue level of applied chemicals remain intact with the products of tea and consumers drink teas without being aware of these happenings. Teas with intact of pesticide residue level may not show direct effect on health but in course of time it can bounce back to serious problems related to many diseases.

The aforesaid problems can be ascertained as the main reasons for losing our export markets and many a time our producers must face the onslaught of exporting teas which get rejected and had to be destroyed there itself for the issues of MRL of chemicals. This creates a bad image of our country and the teas eventually.

Generally, it has been noticed that we are more concerned for our teas to be exported since we are very sure that people of other countries are very health conscious. So, all possible steps of food safety measures are complied with by the concerned producers following certifications like Rain For-est Alliance, Fair Trade, ETP etc. However, for the 148 crores of people of India at present, we need to ask ourselves how much we are concerned about the health safety measures of our own people? Tea being every household beverage, we need to be sure whether the actual benefits of tea drinking have

been marred towards slow poisoning!! The domestic sustainable tea code 'Trustea' has been followed but it has not been made mandatory code like FSSI and appears to have been useful for the Giant Buyers for their own brand of packeting to qualify themselves for both domestic and international consumers in limited quantities.

This article is meant for awakening ourselves and to alert both the small and big growers of our land that we all have our social responsibilities to think at large for this most preferred beverage of our country since right from the very poor to millionaires, everyone looks for the 'Cup of tea 'to start the day for refreshing and invigorating purposes. Secondly the indiscriminate use of hard/banned chemicals for the sake of controlling pests to achieve the targeted productions from their own land of cultivations can cause tremendous impact on environment and Bio diversities and it has already shown up in our beautiful Assam which used to be known for its existing bio diversities and Greeneries. You will scarcely find earlier beautiful birds enjoying and chirping right from the dawn to evening, most of the species have gone extinct, rarely you will happen to find 'Honeybees',' Wasps' which used to be noticed few decades back!! The existing soil has slowly been dying dead for use of fertilizers and herbicides. On the top of it, the mindset of short-term gaining from the field of operation of all cultivable crops has converted people to resort to inorganic culture which has badly affected the environment and nature.

Tea being recognised as the national drink and found to have possessed most of the requisite benefits as a healthy beverage, we must keep the slogan of 'Better Leaf makes Better Teas and then Better Prices " and seriously think of gradually shifting to organic culture with the concept of 'Regenerative Agriculture". Only then we can maintain the health saving qualities of tea which we call "Elixir of Life" .

The author is a retired Executive Director of Warren Tea Ltd.

It's a shame that the only thing a man can do for eight hours a day is work. He can't eat for eight hours; he can't drink for eight hours; he can't make love for eight hours. The only thing a man can do for eight hours is work."

- William Faulkner

"I had to hustle to get what I wanted, but I had that hunger for more. I didn't always make the right choices, but I learned from my mistakes."

- Curtis Jackson

"Everyone is where they are at because they worked hard for it. Don't ever hate on someone's hustle. Just figure out how you can get there."

-Jo Koy



WAY TO ATTAINING CATRUVARGA

BK Duari

In the twenty-seventh chapter of Kirttana-Ghosha, Assam's greatest spiritual and cultural Guru Srimanta Sankaradeva, briefly described the essence of Srimadbhagavata called "Bhagavata Tatparyya" stating : "Krishna Suryya Bhailanta Udit. Nama Dharma Karila Bidita.' Lord Krishna, that is the Sun didst appear and didst make nama-dharma open to all. The chapter consists of two parts. In the first part, Sankaradeva speaks of the hidden source of nama (name of God) and its superlative effects as mentioned below:

At the beginning of Satya Yuga, all the demigods (Brahma and other gods) concealed the Harinama. Gracious Hari revealed the Harinama putting an end to Kali's all sins. By uttering Harinama, even the lowest race becomes purest. Being afraid of Kali all other religious qualities took resort to Harinama. In this terrible influence of Iron-age (Kali-yuga), there is no end of sins. Thinking the wellbeing of people and to give relief to all, the Supreme Lord began to spread His holy Nama all over. Uttering the name of Hari, people attain Caturvarga i.e., Dharma (virtue), Artha (wealth), Kama (desires) and Mokshya (salvation), bypassing all the evil effects of Kali. There are lots of means to get the end such as, charms, sacrifices, penances, pilgrimages, etc, but to all these Harinama is much superior. What a luck it is! Such Harinama is achieved by people in their own mouths. A person that chants nama ever, Krishna is pleased soon, gets salvation in great ease. He then becomes the world-preceptor and secures the release of the generations of his clan. Sins are dry leaves, harinama is fire, that burns all sins into ashes. Hari is highly gracious, He by spreading such harinama rescues all sinners. As Hari is Lord of all demigods (devatas), by making all efforts one should take refuge in Him alone. One that seeks emancipation, need not go to far off places, as Hari is in heart of every one.

In the second part, Sankaradeva gave conclusive remark, quoting the advice of Suka (the enlightened seer) to Parikshita. Suka says, 'O mighty king, listen to the essence of twelve-skandha Bhagavata contain. Except, Krishna (Srihari), there is no other deva, knowing it, to him you should ever bow.'

Kinkara (slave) of Lord Krishna, the Sankaradeva bountifully says, harinama destroys all sins. Hari-nama is above everything. When a person recalls nama all sins do disappear and emancipation becomes easier. To secure the entire world, Lord Garudaketu (Supreme Lord) hadst this time revealed Harinama to all. Life is passing uselessly, death catches suddenly, therefore, chant Rama-nama (Hari-nama) by all and for good getting freed from the worldly pains and enjoy celestial bliss, peace and pleasure.

The writer is a former Vice President of GMA & former Director (HRA), ASEB

ACTIVITIES OF GMA

July 28, 2022 : Release of GMA News : The 10th edition of GMA News, an annual publication of GMA, was ceremonially released at Guwahati Press Club, by Mr Kuladhar Saikia, former DGP, Assam and President Axom Sahitya Sabha along with Prof (Dr) Amarjyoti Choudhury, former Vice- Chancellor Gauhati University.

July 30, 2022 : Monthly Meeting : A lecture session on the topic titled “Managing oneself and increasing productivity” by Dr Bhaskar Bora based in London (UK) and by profession a doctor turned entrepreneur was very interesting. This was followed by Q & A session.

August 26, 2022 : DN Baruah Memorial Managers’ Competition : The annual Managers’ Competition, a flagship event of GMA, has been re-christened as DN Baruah Memorial Managers’ Competition in memory of late DN Baruah, past President of GMA and consider as a doyen of the management movement in the region. The event was held at Green Wood Resort, Guwahati where 27 junior & middle level managers participated.

August 27, 2022 : Monthly Meeting : A lecture cum Q & A session on GST was held in hybrid mode at the GMA office. Mr Debasish Banerjee, former official of Central Excise & GST Commissionerate, Guwahati spoke on the salient features of GST.

September 04, 2022 : Award giving ceremony of Managers’ Competition:
The award presentation ceremony of the DN Baruah Memorial Managers’ Competition was held at Green Wood Resort, Guwahati. The Award ceremony was presided over by Mr Chiranjit Chaliha, President, GMA. Vice-Chancellor, Royal Global University Prof (Dr) SP Singh and Ms Madhuchanda Adhikary, of NRL graced the function.

September 24, 2022 : Monthly meeting: Mr Ashutosh Pandey spoke on the topic “Data Privacy and Social Media Management”. This was followed by a Question-and-Answer session.

October 29, 2022 : Monthly Meeting : Speaker of the month Mr Amit Agarwal a leading Psychotherapist, gave a talk on “Psychological Intervention at Work-place”.

January 23, 2023 : GMA Picnic : A picnic of GMA members with spouses was organised at Ethnic Village, Near Digaru on the outskirts of Guwahati City.

March 11, 2023 : North East Healthcare Management Conclave : GMA organized the North East Health Care Management Conclave in the KBR Auditorium, Cotton University, Guwahati with a day long programme. Dr Siddharth Singh, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt of Assam, Dept. of Medical Education & Research was the Chief Guest at the event. A souvenir was formally released by Dr Vijay Agarwal, Chairman, Consortium of Accredited Healthcare (CAHO). There were altogether six brain storming technical sessions covering a wide range of areas like human resource management, health care quality, medical tourism in India, Innovations in hospital designs and health care & environment.

GMA ACTIVITIES



Award ceremony of DN Baruah Memorial Managers' Competition. (04.09.2022)



A view of AGM 2023 on 09-04-2023



Tri-monthly meeting on 09-12-2023



Quiz Master Robin Kalita in action during a Quiz Contest on 25-02-2024



Quiz Master Robin Kalita in action during the Bhabesh Hazarika Memorial Quiz Competition on 25-02-2024



Tri-monthly meeting on 31-03-2024

April 7, 2023: Annual General Meeting :Annual General Meeting of GMA was held at Guwahati Green, Amingaon. The new Office Bearers & Board of Directors for the session 2023-24 to 2024-25 were elected in the meeting.

May 31, 2023 : Monthly Meeting : A panel discussion on the topic” Impediments in the growth of Assam’s Economy and it’s possible remedies” was held at Gymkhana Club, Guwahati.

June 24, 2023 : Monthly Meeting : A Pannel discussion on “Social Responsibilities towards curbing the Rise of Drugs Menace” followed by Question-and-Answer session was held at Hotel Courtyard, Guwahati.

August 20, 2023 : 54th Annual Foundation Day : Prof (Dr) Ramanjeet Singh, Dean and Professor, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Assam down town University was the guest speaker at the celebration at Hotel Courtyard, Guwahati. Former President and Advisor Mr Shantikam Hazarika spoke on the glorious history of GMA.

September 29, 2023 : DN Baruah Memorial Managers’ Competition : The second successful hosting of the competition was held with participants hailing from diverse sectors.

September 30, 2023 : Award ceremony of DN Barua Memorial Managers’ Competition : The: Award Ceremony of the Competition was held at Hotel Vishwaratna, Guwahati.

December 09, 2023 : Tri-monthly Meeting : Dr Pradip Barua, Chief Advisory Officer and Chief Scientist, Tocklai Tea Research Institute, Jorhat spoke on “Tea Industry in Assam and India in pre and post-Independence eras - an in-depth observation on various factors leading to its ups and downs and future prospects of Tea Industry and Tea Tourism in Assam and India”.

February 24, 2024 : Training Program : GMA organized the first training program on the topic “Managing Workplace Conflict” at the Hotel Palacio, Khanapara, Guwahati. Mr Diganta Sarma conducted the training on behalf of GMA.

February 25, 2024 : Bhabesh Hazarika Memorial Inter-Institutional Management Quiz Competition : The Quiz Competition was held at the seminar hall of Gauhati Commerce College and was conducted by the Quiz Master Mr Robin Kalita.

March 31, 2024 : Tri-monthly Meeting : Mrs Rashmi Narzary, a prominent writer and Sahitya Akademi Awardee, spoke on “Impact of Communication on Management Strategy”.

MAY 24, 2024 : Training Programe : GMA organized the 2nd one day off line training Programe on the topic "Transformational Leadership". The programe was conducted by Mr Diganta Sarma on behalf of GMA.

MAY 24, 2024 : Annual General Meeting : The AGM for the year 2024-25 was held under the presidentship of Mr Chiranjit Chaliha at Hotel Viswaratna, Guwahati. The General Secretary & Treasurer submitted the detailed report of the various events held during the year & financial health of the Association respectively.

July 13, 2024 : Tri-monthly Meeting : Former Chief Secretary of Assam Kumar Sanjay Krishna delivered a talk on the power sector of India and issues in Assam. The talk was followed by a very lively question and answer session.

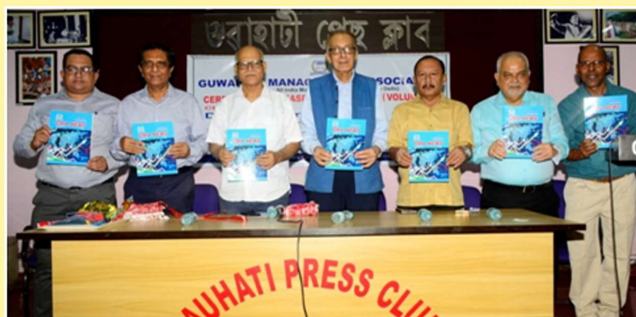
PHOTO GALLERY



26-08-2022 : DN Barua Memorial Managers' Competition



09-04-2023 : Annual General Meeting



28.07.2022 : Release of GMA News Vol-10



31-05-2023 : GMA Monthly Meeting



20-08-2023 : GMA Foundation Day



28-09-2023 : DN Barua Memorial Managers' Competition



09-12-2023 : Monthly Meeting

PHOTO GALLERY



24-02-2024 : Training programme on "Managing Workplace Conflict"



25-02-2024 : Quiz Competition



29-09- 2023 : Award Ceremony of DN Barua Memorial Managers' Competition



31-03-2024 : GMA monthly meeting



25-05-2024 : GMA AGM 2024



13-07-2024 : GMA Monthly Meeting



02-08-2024 : GMA delegation at the Viksit Bharat Seminar



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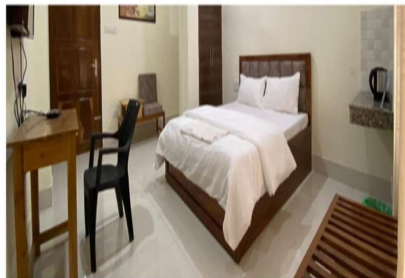
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