THE INDIANS – THE VICTIMS OF RACISM AT HOME AND ABROAD

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The Indians - The Victims Of Racism At Home And Abroad

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Abstract
Racism is one of the burning global ethno-cultural issues. The worst sufferers of this pernicious phenomenon are immigrants and expatriates. In India, populations from north eastern states face the problems of racism. Clashes between Bihari and Non-Bihari, Marathi and North Indians frequently occur. Indians are also the victims of racist attacks abroad especially in Australia at present. Racist attacks result from various economic and socio-cultural reasons. This paper focuses on the anti-racist movements and policies with an emphasis on sustainable human resource management for a better world.

Key words: Racism; apartheid; Ghetto; cultural chauvinism; immigrants; biological and physical traits; scientific racism and cultural racism; Bihari; North-eastern Indians; Marathi; Australia.

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Introduction
Racism is one of the burning problems of international significance in cultural studies. Racism is an ideology of difference whereby social significance is attributed to culturally constructed categories of race. Racism is an ideology which ascribes negatively evaluated characteristics in a deterministic manner to a group which is additionally identified as being in some way biologically distinct. Such ideological distinctions invariably lead to racial discrimination and racialized inequality. Racism can take various forms, from the scientific racism of 19th century to cultural racism of today where the emphasis is on supposedly inherent cultural differences rather than innate biological difference (Johnston, 2005). Racism existed in the past and still it continues in the various forms viz. discrimination against black in the US, apartheid in South Africa, slavery in Medieval Europe, killing of Jews under Nazi Germany, Israeli Ghetto in Europe in mid 20th century, cultural chauvinism, preferences of in-migration in Europe for the White over the Black or Coloured.

Objectives
This article tries to focus upon the following objectives.
1) To find out the pattern of racist attacks on Indians at home and abroad,
2) To interpret the underlying causes behind such racist attacks,
3) To explain India’s stance on racism,
4) To review Global Meets and Declaration against Racism, and
5) To provide some suggestions to mitigate this heinous phenomenon.

Database and Methodology
Data in connection with this study have been collected mainly from secondary sources like:
1) Australian Education International (AEI), 2009, International Student Data,
Azarul Islam

2) Civil Services Chronicle, Vol. XX, and No. 1.
3) The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 June 2009

The collected data both qualitative and quantitative have been processed and tabulated with the help of MS EXCEL 2003 and write-up has been prepared with the help of MS WORD 2003.

Results and Discussion

A) The Indians –The victims of Racism at Home

The Indians are the victims of racism at home and abroad. India is a multi-racial nation. The major races are Indo-Aryan, Mongoloid, Indo-Afghan, Negrito, Pre-Dravidian, Dravadians, Southern Brachy-cephals, and Western Brachy-Cephal (Haddon, 1931). One group faces racial discrimination to another. The Mongoloid of North East India faces this pernicious problem in various parts of India. According to a study conducted by the NESC&H, 86% of northerners have been victims of racial discrimination in the national capital. Many northerners are called "chinky" by people in New Delhi, in reference to the appearance of their eyes. Madhu Chandra, a spokesman for the NESC&H, says that abuse and harassment of northerners is very common. "It's sad that students from northeast India who go to study in various parts of India have to undergo racial prejudice". Marathi chauvinism backed by racism adds fuel to the fire of racial discrimination in India. On 19 October 2008, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and Shiv Sena activists attacked North Indian candidates appearing for the all-India Railway Recruitment Board entrance exam for the Western region in Mumbai, India. Pawan Mahto, a resident of Bara-Khurd village in Nalanda district, Bihar died after being assaulted by MNS activists. The 2008 attacks on North Indians in Maharashtra began on 3 February 2008 after violent clashes between workers of two political parties— Maharastra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and Samajwadi Party (SP)—at Dadar in Mumbai, capital of the Indian state of Maharashtra.

There is an Anti-Bihari sentiment among different non-Bihari groups. Bihar has had slower economic growth than the rest of India in the 1990s, and as a consequence many Biharis have migrated to other parts of India in search of work. Bihari migrant workers have been subject to a growing degree of xenophobia racial discrimination, prejudice and violence. Biharis are often looked down upon and their accent ridiculed. In 2000 and 2003, anti-Bihari violence led to the deaths of up to 200 people and created 10,000 internal refugees.

B) The Indians –The victims of Racism Abroad

What is the most hatred and concerned issue is that of recent racial attacks on Indian in Australia. Indians have an overwhelming presence in Australia. There are about 96,800 Indian students in Australia. There are about 2 lakh Australian citizens of Indian origin (Chronicle, August, 2009). The racial attacks on Indian students are tabulated below.
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**Table 1: Details of some of the crimes against Indian students published in Australian media in May/June 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4-May-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>assault, &quot;beaten unconscious&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1-May-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>unstated</td>
<td>assault, &quot;assaulted, robbed, verbally abused&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1-May-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>assault, &quot;stabbed in the head&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>24-May-09</td>
<td>Syd</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>unstated</td>
<td>“house petrol bombed, suffered burns”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24-May-09</td>
<td>Syd</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>assault, &quot;stabbed in abdomen&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25-May-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>unstated</td>
<td>assault, &quot;beaten by group of fifteen&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>30-May-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>assault, &quot;slashed across chest&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2-Jun-09</td>
<td>Syd</td>
<td>unstated</td>
<td>unstated</td>
<td>assault, &quot;attacked by Lebanese men&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8-Jun-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>assault, &quot;beaten unconscious&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8-Jun-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>unstated</td>
<td>unstated</td>
<td>car burnt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11-Jun-09</td>
<td>Adl</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>assault, turban struck, fight ensued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>13-Jun-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>assault, &quot;attacked by three people&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>15-Jun-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>assault, assaulted, verbally abused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>29-Jun-09</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>assault, attempt to forcibly remove turban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Where, Mel – Melbourne, Syd – Sydney, Adl – Adelaide*

*Source: Australian Education International (AEI), 2009, International Student Data*

Taken the perspective from Indian students in Australia, it can be said that most of the tabulated crimes are taking place due to racism. No female Indian students were reported in this summary, and that absence is worthy of note. The first possibility is that there were female victims but they chose not to report their assaults. The second possibility is that women were not victimized because they were not in high risk locations at high risk times. With reference to these possibilities, Adam West of the Victorian Police Media Unit indicated that these crimes were usually late at night in public places such as near rail lines and stations and typical of assault locations and times. The evidence of racist behaviour was sufficient for the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Mr. Tom Calma, to comment that: “we need to recognize that racism does exist in Australia. It doesn’t mean the whole society is racist but it does exist with individual’s actions and small group actions,” and “it’s important that we all accept that, understand and start to develop the frameworks to address it into the future and not be reactive but be proactive.” (The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 June 2009). It is hence crystal clear that some Australians are racists who attack on the Indians for various economic and socio-cultural reasons. Racial discrimination is just an outward manifestation of their deep frustration and their inability to compete fairly with resurgent Asians and Indians (Priya, 2009). Actually racism is a mind-forged concept initiated by the Europeans to make them superior in every walk of life.
They have a feeling of ‘White men’s burden’ i.e. a superiority led ideology that every white man is burdened with this duty to make other races like that. When the Indian behavioural pattern mismatches with that of them, there arises crimes and victimizations. What happened in Australia is not a one-off incident. Expatriates Indians even in the countries like the US and Britain have complained about racial slurs and assaults. Once Silpa Shetty, a bollywood actress was assaulted by Jade Goodie, a model turned actress of Britain. There are such numerous examples to show the racial discrimination against Indian abroad. The subaltern studies led by post-colonial studies recently unveil the perspectives form the exploited and not from the exploiter in the hegemonic power structure.

C) Major causes of racist attacks on Indians: The Major causes of racist attacks on Indians are as follows:

a) Biological: The prevalence of the concept of the racial superiority on the basis of biological differences i.e. skin colour, cephalic index, physical stature, blood group, eye configuration create the concept of superiority and inferiority e.g. between Aryan and Negrito in India.

b) Socio-cultural: The cultural superiority of groups is at the root of racism. At the fear of loss of cultural identity, the some members of the receiving society commit racism toward an immigrant groups whose members are increasing day by day. This is the case for recent attacks on Indians students in Australia.

c) Economic: For economic well being a group of similar people of a region strongly opposes the entry of other people into their homeland. Consequently the invaders are victims of racial attacks e.g. between Bihari and Non-bihari.

d) Institutional: Though Indian Republic is firmly against racism, ‘some corporations, dogmatic religious groups, or educational institutions or other large organizations with the power to influence the lives of many individuals’ (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2011), triggering racism at home and abroad.

D) India’s Stance on Racism: Right since independence, India has taken a very firm and principled stand against racism. As a state policy India unambiguously rejects any form of racial discrimination. In the pre-independence period the national leaders like Gandhi and Nehru opposed racism. Mahatma Gandhi moved for the Blacks in South Africa during the period of Apartheid. But what is the most frustrated thing is that one Indian is assaulted by another Indian because of racial discrimination.


a) International Convention on the suppression and punishment of the crimes of Apartheid, 1976

b) United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, 1984 which postulates equality among all human beings.

c) World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and related Intolerance - held in Durban (South Africa) in 2001.

d) World conference against Racism, 2009
Major Observations and Suggestions

In spite of having a number of national and global policies to reduce the mind-forged heinous phenomenon, racism still continues and even increases in some cases like in Australia. It is to be pointed out that on the one side the globalization removes the national boundaries and promotes intermixing of culture, on the other hand, internal and international migration intensifies the problems of racism. Racism leads to the loss of human resource. Hence racism should be denounced in every form in every nation for proper human resource management. The author suggests some measures to reduce this hatred phenomenon.

Firstly, the migration of students should be encouraged for inter-culture mixing as in case of J.N. Vidyalaya.

Secondly, more emphasis should be given to the comparative cultural studies and it should be stressed that no culture is superior or inferior to other culture as pronounced in post modernism.

Thirdly, each and every individual or group should pay respect to other culture and each culture should be tolerant to another.

Fourthly, elevation of backward communities in various socio-economic aspects should be prioritized.

Fifthly, the mind-forged concepts like the binary between the ‘self’ and ‘other’ or ‘Orientalism’ and ‘Occidentalism’ should be demolished.

Sixthly, as all of us originate from a common descent so this truth is to be firmly pronounced that there is only one race i.e. HUMAM RACE.

Finally, enforcement of the law and order system should be properly done by every nation to secure expatriates and immigrant group from racial attacks. Along with govern organizations, different N.G.Os and local community should act combindly to promote sustainable human resource management.

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The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 June 2009

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