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1. Bhakti movement and Tamil

“The period between the Sangam Age and the Pallavas — the second to the sixth centuries CE — were trying times for Tamil literature and the Hindu religion. The Kalabhra kings seem to have been patrons of Jains and Buddhists, and Pali and Prakrit seem to have flourished,.

Influence of Bhakti Movement on Tamil Literature

The influence of [Bhakti Movement](#) on [Tamil Literature](#) was noticed in the period after the [Sangam age](#) and the period of [Ethical Tamil literature](#). The Bhakti movement initiated in ancient [Tamil Nadu](#) and later to spread to the northern India, during the late medieval ages. In the south India, Bhakti Movement centred on both [Lord Shiva](#) and [Lord Vishnu](#) in all his [incarnations](#).

Bhakti Movement

Bhakti movement was mainly a Hindu religious movement led by the [Shaivite](#) and Vaishnava saints. Apparently, the Hindu religious leaders were worried about the increasing reputation of the Buddhists and the Jains. This led to the immoderate language and the determined systematic techniques implemented by the leaders of the Bhakti movement.

The Bhakti movement in the Tamil country was initiated by the 63 Nayanmars (Shaivite devotees) and the 12 Alvars (Vaishnavite devotees), who overlooked the asceticism preached by [Buddhism](#) and [Jainism](#) and rather advocated personal devotion to [God](#) for salvation.





Bhakti Movement and Spreading of Tamil Literature

The **saints**, which even included women, spoke and wrote in vernacular **languages** such as **Tamil** and **Telugu**. The saints traversed through out the country to preach the message of devotion and love among people, irrespective of caste, colour and creed. Since the 7th century the Nayanmars and Alvars of the Shaiva and Vaishnava sects of **Hinduism** went to numerous temples and sang about the magnificence of the presiding deities with the objective to speak for their respective sects in the Tamil land.

The **Alvars** and the **Nayanmars** used the fine arts such as poetry, music, dance and drama to propagate the Bhakti movement in the nation. The saints believed that family life and the performance of a vocation were not a restriction for the realisation of enlightenment. But they definitely stressed that the mind should be instilled with the spirit of God. Due to this realistic view, the Bhakti movement helped the various temples to evolve as centres of fine arts. The metrical compositions of the Alvars and the Nayanmars in Tamil also supported the Bhakti movement in gaining popularity.

Role of Songs in Bhakti Movement

The poignant devotional songs were utilised to confine the excessive influence of Jainism and Buddhism in India. Tamil literature and music played a significant role in this movement. The various saints composed many verses and songs praising Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. Saint Cuntarar believed Lord Shiva was the embodiment of the 7 ragas and the soul of music. Saint Tirunanacampantar promulgated Tamil through music. Saint Tirunavukkaracar is another renowned leader of the Bhakti movement who disseminated Tamil and music.

For the Shaivites the musical compositions of Tirumular and **Karaikkal Ammaiyar** indicated the initiation. In case of the Vaishnavites the fore-runners of Bhakti movement were Peyalvar, Puttatalvar and Poikaiyalvar. Some of the other renowned poet saints of the Bhakti movement include Tirunavukkaracar, Nanacampantar, Campantar, Cuntarar and many others.



2. Cabinet approves the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018

The Bill broadly has the following features:-

1. Addresses the issue of trafficking from the point of view of prevention, rescue and rehabilitation.
2. Aggravated forms of trafficking, which includes trafficking for the purpose of forced labour, begging, trafficking by administering **chemical substance** or hormones on a person for the purpose of early sexual maturity, trafficking of a woman or child for the purpose of marriage or under the pretext of marriage or after marriage etc.
3. Punishment for promoting or facilitating trafficking of person which includes producing, printing, issuing or distributing unissued, tampered or fake certificates, registration or stickers as proof of compliance with Government requirements; or commits fraud for procuring or facilitating the acquisition of clearances and necessary documents from Government agencies.
4. The confidentiality of victims/ witnesses and complainants by not disclosing their identity. Further the confidentiality of the victims is maintained by recording their statement through **video conferencing** (this also helps in trans-border and inter-State crimes).
5. Time bound trial and repatriation of the victims – within a period of one year from taking into cognizance.
6. Immediate protection of rescued victims and their rehabilitation. The Victims are entitled to interim relief immediately within 30 days to address their physical, mental trauma etc. and further appropriate relief within 60 days from the date of filing of charge sheet.
7. Rehabilitation of the victim which is not contingent upon criminal proceedings being initiated against the accused or the outcome thereof.



8. **Rehabilitation Fund** created for the first time. To be used for the physical, psychological and social well-being of the victim including education, skill development, health care/psychological support, legal aid, safe accommodation, etc.
9. Designated courts in each district for the speedy trial of the cases.
10. The Bill creates dedicated institutional mechanisms at District, State and Central Level. These will be responsible for prevention, protection, investigation and rehabilitation work related to trafficking. **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** will perform the tasks of **Anti-Trafficking Bureau** at the national level present under the MHA.
11. Punishment ranges from rigorous minimum 10 years to life and fine not less than Rs. 1 lakh.
12. In order to break the organized nexus, both at the national and international level, the Bill provides for the attachment & forfeiture of property and also the proceeds for **crime**.
13. The Bill comprehensively addresses the transnational nature of the **crime**. The National **Anti-Trafficking Bureau** will perform the functions of international coordination with authorities in foreign countries and international organizations; international assistance in investigation; facilitate inter-State and trans-border transfer of evidence and materials, witnesses and others for expediting prosecution; facilitate inter-state and international **video conferencing** in judicial proceedings etc.

Background:

Trafficking in human beings is the third largest organized **crime** violating basic human rights. There **is no specific law** so far to deal with this **crime**. Accordingly, the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 has been prepared. The Bill addresses one of the most pervasive yet invisible crimes affecting the most vulnerable persons especially women and children.

The new law will make **India** a leader among South Asian countries to combat trafficking. Trafficking is a global concern also affecting a number of South Asian nations. Amongst them, **India** is now a pioneer in formulating a comprehensive legislation. UNODC and SAARC nations are looking forward to **India** to take lead by enacting this law.



The Bill has been prepared in consultation with line Ministries, Departments, State Governments, NGOs and domain experts. A large number of suggestions received by the [Ministry of WCD](#) in hundreds of petitions have been incorporated in the Bill. The Draft Bill discussed in regional consultations held in Delhi, Kolkata, [Chennai](#) and [Bombay](#) with various stakeholders including over 60 NGOs. The Bill was examined and discussed by Group of Ministers also.

3. India, Jordan firm up security cooperation

Both the countries arrive at a joint strategy to counter common threats.

India and Jordan established diplomatic relations in 1950 after India became a Republic, although the first bilateral agreement on cooperation and friendly relations was entered into soon after Indian independence in 1947.

The first ever visit by an Indian Head of State to Jordan took place in 2015. This provided a huge impetus to bilateral engagement in a wide range of areas.

Political Ties

Both India and Jordan face the common threat of terrorism and extremism. It has been reported that Prime Minister Modi and King Abdullah II will address an event themed on measures against radicalisation of youth.

Both countries share the view that nations must coordinate their positions to fight against the misuse of religion by groups and countries for inciting hatred and justifying terrorism.

According to informed sources, one of the most significant Agreements to be signed between the two countries during King Abdullah's visit will be in the area of security and defence. In addition to joint exercises, training and intelligence sharing, the Pact is also likely to include capacity building, cyber security, supply and maintenance of defence equipment and hardware.



Economic Relations

India is Jordan's fourth largest trade partner after Iraq, Saudi Arabia and China. Bilateral trade totalled USD 2.2 billion in 2014-15. Since 2012-13, the balance of trade has been in India's favour.

As of January 2016, Indians owned around 25 textile mills in Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) in Jordan at a total investment of USD 300 million. These mills employ over 10,000 people. ICT, renewable energy, financial/banking services, leather, automobile, higher education, tourism, Bollywood, pharmaceuticals and construction sectors present good potential for increased trade and investment.

Conclusion

Political, security and economic developments in West Asia over the last few years are helping the two countries re-discover each other. The rapidly transforming political and security dynamics in the Middle East with US President Donald Trump cozying up to Saudi Arabia and coming out openly in support of Israel while making threatening pronouncements about jettisoning the nuclear deal with Iran have introduced major uncertainties in the region.

The Shia-Sunni divide between Iran and some Sunni states led by Saudi Arabia and the Israel-Iran rift have forced countries to look around for reliable and trustworthy partners. Under these circumstances, India, which is one of the few countries that maintains strong and vibrant ties with Washington DC, Riyadh and Tel Aviv as well as with Tehran, Abu Dhabi and Moscow, has emerged as a partner of choice for several countries in the region.

Jordan is one of the few countries in West Asia that maintains diplomatic relations with Israel and has cordial relations with the West as well as its neighbours. India and Jordan can be termed as natural allies as both countries are peaceful, stable and are witnessing rapid economic growth and have similar positions on regional and global affairs.



4. Reducing the carbon footprint

To join the war on climate change, India must establish an emissions trading scheme.

The term **carbon footprint** is defined as the amount of carbon (usually in tonnes) being emitted by an organization, event, product or individual directly or indirectly. Everyone's carbon footprint is different depending on their location, habits and personal choice. Each of us contributes to the greenhouse gas emissions either by the way we travel, the food we eat, the amount of electricity we consume and many more.

Difference between emission trading and offset trading?

Emission trading/ cap and trade: each country/company is assigned fixed amount of carbon emissions which is a cap/limit, measured in carbon credits. When a company emits less than permitted emissions, it can sell the rest to companies which are unable to reduce their emissions. The carbon credits of a company are rights for emission. Each unit gives right to emit one metric tonne of CO₂.

Offset trading/baseline and credit: carbon credits are earned when some emissions are reduced by implementing carbon projects, which reduce the emissions below baseline. Projects like wind energy plant, solar plant etc. These credits can be sold in the market.

5. The government's role in contract farming

The bureaucratic hurdles instituted in the form of a new regulator to oversee contract enforcement will be counterproductive.

What is contract farming

Contract farming can be defined as agricultural production carried out according to an agreement between a buyer and farmers, which establishes conditions for the production and marketing of a farm product or products. Typically, the farmer agrees to provide agreed quantities of a specific agricultural product. These should meet the quality standards of the purchaser and be supplied at the time determined by the



purchaser. In turn, the buyer commits to purchase the product and, in some cases, to support production through, for example, the supply of farm inputs, land preparation and the provision of technical advice.

Advantages

Contract farming is looking towards the benefits both for the farm-producers as well as to the agro-processing firms. **Producer/farmer**

- Makes small scale farming competitive – small farmers can access technology, credit, marketing channels and information while lowering transaction costs
- Assured market for their produce at their doorsteps, reducing marketing and transaction costs
- It reduces the risk of production, price and marketing costs.
- Contract farming can open up new markets which would otherwise be unavailable to small farmers.
- It also ensures higher production of better quality, financial support in cash and /or kind and technical guidance to the farmers.
- In case of agri-processing level, it ensures consistent supply of agricultural produce with quality, at right time and lesser cost.

Agri-based firms

- Optimally utilize their installed capacity, infrastructure and manpower, and respond to food safety and quality concerns of the consumers.
- Make direct private investment in agricultural activities.
- The price fixation is done by the negotiation between the producers and firms.
- The farmers enter into contract production with an assured price under term and conditions.

Challenges

- Contract farming arrangements are often criticized for being biased in favor of firms or large farmers, while exploiting the poor bargaining power of small farmers.
- Problems faced by growers like undue quality cut on produce by firms, delayed deliveries at the factory, delayed payments, low price and pest attack on the contract crop which raised the cost of production.



- Contracting agreements are often verbal or informal in nature, and even written contracts often do not provide the legal protection in India that may be observed in other countries . Lack of enforceability of contractual provisions can result in breach of contracts by either party.
- Single Buyer – Multiple Sellers (Monopsony) .
- Adverse gender effects – Women have less access to contract farming than men.

Policy support

Agricultural marketing is regulated by the States' Agricultural Produce Marketing Regulation (APMR) Acts. In order to regulate and develop practice of contract farming, Government has been actively advocating to the States/ Union Territories (UTs) to reform their agri marketing laws to provide a system of registration of contract farming sponsors, recording of their agreements and proper dispute settlement mechanism for orderly promotion of contract farming in the country.

So far, 21 States (Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab (separate Act), Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura and Uttarakhand) have amended their Agricultural Produce Marketing Regulation (APMR) Acts to provide for contract farming and of them, only 13 States (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Telangana) have notified the rules to implement the provision.

NABARD's Initiatives in contract farming

NABARD developed a special refinance package for contract farming arrangements (within and outside AEZs) aimed at promoting increased production of commercial crops and creation of marketing avenues for the farmers. The various initiatives undertaken by NABARD in this direction are:

- Financial Interventions
- Special Refinance package for financing farmers for contract farming in AEZs
- 100% refinance to disbursements made by CBs, SCBs, RRBs and select SCARDBs (having net NPA less than 5%)
- Term facility for repayments (3 years)



- Fixation of higher scale of finance for crops under contract farming.
- Extension of refinance scheme for financing farmers for contract farming in AEZs to contract farming outside AEZs besides coverage of medicinal and aromatic plants.
- Extension of Refinance scheme for contract farming under Automatic Refinance Facility.

Agricultural produce suitable for CF

The various agricultural produce are suitable for practices under contract farming like tomato pulp, organic dyes, poultry, pulpwood, mushrooms, dairy processing, edible oils, exotic vegetables, baby corn cultivation, basmati rice, medicinal plants, potato for making chips and wafers, onions, mandarin oranges, durum wheat, flowers and orchids, etc.

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