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**“CONCEPTUALIZING TAGORE'S IDEA OF EDUCATION:
PRAKITIR PATSHALA—IDEA, RELEVANCE
AND PROSPECT”**

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Abstract:

Endless experimentation which is education. This present paper will be an endeavour to map Tagore's idea of ideal educational method and his dream of Prakritir Patshala. This essay will also focus on the issue of desired educational institution, where the giver of the lesson and their pupils will drink pleasure equally for learning the new, knowing the unknown. In that case, both will keep open the thresholds of their hearts. May digitalization and globalization strangle the breath of the century; Tagore will function equally as balm in curing the maladies of the century.

KEY WORDS:

Tagore, Prakritir Patshala, Relevance, Prospect

INTRODUCTION

This world has fathered and the century has seen very few men who are as gifted as Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). Even after his 150th birth ceremony, Tagore is equally relevant --- be it art, literature, language or ideas on education or the means of teaching. The psycho-biographical records show that Tagore heartily detested the labour-producing educational policy of the British Raj. Abandoning his formal education he broadly meditated on the fruitful means of all-embracing educational system. Tagore did have a different spectacle to view the visibility about the ideal means of hugging education as the sheer means of pleasure. Keeping this holy mission in mind, Tagore started experimenting the probable and adjustable way of taking education. This present education system in Santiniketan and Sriniketan is the perfect reflection of the lasting experiment. He rightly elated at this: “Where the world makes its home in a single nest.”

TAGORE'S CONCEPT OF EDUCATION:

Tagore did have a fair idea of Education. The whole corpus of Tagore's literary output invisibly frames a soothing backbone about the idea of Education. Education, to Tagore, was a sheer means of enlightenment of the self and the surroundings. This realization of the self and the surroundings is a kind elation, which is purely aesthetic. Tagore's idea of education was largely about 'power of acceptance', 'capacity to hold' and 'calm brooding over it'. These are the essential criteria which should be developed and adapted mostly from childhood. He aptly declared in his essay “Sikshar Herpher”: If the child is to be nurtured, it should be caught young enough. Otherwise, the child would never turn to proper manhood.

TAGORE'S IDEA OF PRAKITIR PATSHALA:

Tagore's idea of educational institution deserves our serious attention. His reflection on the existing system is fairly despairing. School was a labour –producing tool and the role played by the teacher was almost like the part of this tool. Machine is good, but Tagore was agitated with such mechanization of educational system. He did not only describe such maladies but a fair number of remedies were philosophically proposed by him. According to him, this ideal educational institution should be far from the madding crowd. There teachers will remain involved in philosophical accumulation of knowledge and the exerting of it in front of their pupils. This will jointly create an ideal atmosphere both for the teachers and for their pupils. Both will swallow their cherished knowledge in the lap of Nature. Nature, to Tagore, is almost like teacher in the Wordsworthian manner: “One impulse/ From a vernal wood/ May teach you more of man, / Of moral evil and of good/ Than all the sages can.” This education in the bosom of Nature generates an ideal and cosmic atmosphere of 'Prakitir Patshala.'

MOTTO AND THE MEANS OF PRAKITIR PATSHALA:

Tagore was equally conscious of the probable way of embracing this education in such cosmic periphery. His observation goes analogously both about the giver of the lessons and the taker of the lessons. Pupils will be the sensible observer; their heart will remain open blamelessly: “Where the mind without fear and head hailed high...”. Gathering of knowledge will please pupils harmoniously like the teacher. Tagore was deeply concerned about the invention and evolution of knowledge. His anger runs high with the production of knowledge and the commodification of it. Patience was counted as the most formative and qualitative criteria of an ideal teacher. A good teacher should never wear the wolfing anger and Swiftian satire. The hearty lesson-giving will be a in maternal bosom for the pupils, which is Nature itself. Our physical body is Corpus domini nostri ('our body is everlasting and there resides the Lord'), and thereby it should never be punished.

TAGORE'S TIMELESS PRESENCE:

Tagore and his idea of education are synonymously relevant in the 21st century. Digitalization, commercialization and globalization have jointly conducting the world towards a new dimension with newer technological possibilities. Educational institutions and the concept of teaching are largely influenced by such electronic media-based culture. Golden deer now runs wildly in the LCD projector screen. Dew drops are more life-like on the giant screen. Mathematical data analysis is easier than ever. Now a student of biology does not practice the dissection of frog. The competition of writing poetry and painting picture are replaced by hyperreal video game. For a moment Tagore may sound globally left backdated. But good is very often timeless. Tagore is uncategorized goodness. His idea of giving lesson is timelessly unique. Such goodness diminishes all such hyperrealities. The “Green Men Movement” in Europe is the latest human endeavour to retain the greenness and goodness. In a word, European politicians are now going back to greenness, meaning the lap of Nature, the most uncategorized “Prakitir Patshala.” One green morning can double the pleasure of taking lesson from Nature, where LCD screen and digital map will seem awfully unknown. The poisonous vapour of technology strangles the neck of human civilization; Tagore's ideal concept of contribution of knowledge will appear life-saving oxygen.

Such demolition of ideal theories of distributing knowledge did not remain absent long from the observation of some conscious minds. “The Green Men Movement” of Europe deserves our serious attention. The inauguration of Rabindra-sangeet in traffic signal is sensible effort by the Government of Bengal to bring Rabindra-culture back. Even in railway platform the soothing and harmonizing syllables of Tagore's heavenly wine still smells. Such nectarine will stop sneezing the coughing century.

CONCLUSION:

Critics will pen so many bibles of agitation and anger, as if it is a battle between the nectarine of Tagore's goodness and the poisonous vomiting of contemporary digitalized and globalized century. Good battle never ends. Tagore's goodness and his idea will never cease, neither will it shout a cacophony. Even after his 150th birth anniversary Tagore will shine ceaselessly diminishing the darkness of civilization where rapacious men are voraciously exploiting the benign mother. The old grandmother does no longer come by the side of the pond, Tagore will go on the counting the unorthodox as unconventionally as ever. This pause less counting will keep the world going where Tagore will be our torch bearer.

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