

Excessive Maritime Claims over India by the United States in the Indian Ocean

By Dr Prabhakaran Paleri

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Abstract

India faces challenges from the United States (US) frequently either exclusively or combined with other countries. It is natural that a country will face challenges from another in the geostrategic context. This paper is on, as a US report states, excessive maritime claims (EMC) by India in its exclusive maritime zone in the Indian Ocean. This is announced by the US in its annual sua sponte EMC reports. The report is inclusive of India. Such reports from the US on various excesses are regular and outwardly credible, though sans international authority. They are universal complaints from a concerned country. The challenged, in this case India, has the right to offset it especially when the intentions are aimed at stability and universal good order. India needs to clarify the intentions. This paper examines the case and peripherals. The validity of the American term “excessive maritime claims” against the intentions of India in the geostrategic context needs examination. It has reference to maritime public law and international law associated with it. The term EMC is in vogue from the US standpoint in expressive geostrategic communications. The EMC, for this paper, is projecting authority by a party which it doesn’t overtly have under the precinct of accepted laws, denying certain opportunities of interest to the other party, who thereby perceives and challenges such authority in the form of its projection as a representative of the parties affected including itself. It lacks clarity of content demanding discussions between parties. The US report on EMC assumes the authority projected by India to inform military movements through its exclusive economic zone is a claim over a space or domain of a terrain which in this case is the ocean, and hence extralegal. The desired clarity is absent on both sides; hence needs to be explained under international law, which is mired by the question, “is international law law” posed by some who defy good order and conduct of collective well-being worldwide. EMC, that can be contested by both the parties, the challenging and the challenged, is the effort of a party to enforce restriction to a specific activity in a particular area in the ocean that though belongs to its rightful authority for exploitation of resources under law doesn’t provide the right to object another in exercising its freedom and associated authority without violation of the authorities and rights that the first party holds. The major part of the world ocean is the global commons.

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INTEGRATED LOGISTICS COMMAND

By Lt Gen N B Singh , PVSM, AVSM, VSM, ADC

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India is set to begin a formal roll-out of its long-awaited theaterisation plan to best utilise its military's resources amidst expanding security threats, with the Air Defence Command and the Maritime Theatre Command set to be launched by May. An Integrated Logistic Command (ILC) is to follow. The nomenclature ILC reflects the logistics predominant mindset of the Army; IAF and Navy would rather prefer an integrated maintenance command which focuses on platform readiness. While Airforce and Naval operations are platform centric, the Army still banks on boots on ground. The vast array of weapons and equipment of any military represent a combat capability and retaining these in a state of readiness is a formidable task. It is through a well established maintenance and refit capability that battle endurance can be maximized i.e. enable a missile to complete its flight without a malfunction; a helicopter to complete a mission without breaking down; a tank to assault an enemy position without experiencing a mission abort failure.

Logistics is procurement and mass based while engineering is centered around technology, reliability and speed. With the conventional focus on supplies, clothing, housing, ILC may end up as an additional layer of control; Services already have adequate integration in areas like quartering, rations, stores, medicare, etc. Setting up of ILC with an engineering orientation can assist theatre commands in retaining a long term capability edge; keeping the armed forces future ready. A cue can be taken from IAF's Maintenance Command and US Army Material Command, both contribute to Strategic Readiness by leading sustainment efforts at tactical, operational and strategic level. In the eighties there were some discussions on setting up an Army Material Command, however with the focus shifting away from conventional operations to counter insurgency, this initiative failed to take off.

Suddenly, the Chinese rekindled the threat of conventional war in HAA forcing the military to react and deploy additional forces to match force ratios. In the ongoing modernization of the Peoples Liberation Army, it is reported that the thrust for land forces has been on acquiring equipment comparable to other militaries. The substantial build up of forces; visible systems like guns, light tanks, rocket systems, wheeled combat vehicles in the immediate vicinity of LAC as well as certain invisible capabilities spanning multiple domains such as time, mission, space, cyber, electro magnetic spectrum(EMS), NBC is reflective of this change. Electronic systems, precision weapons, and communication capabilities will change the employment of forces. War fighting up North therefore may not be hand to hand, Galwan notwithstanding. Army thus has to shift focus to system readiness and disruptive technologies. How we employ and support new systems will have a great bearing on the readiness of the future military.

It is to be remembered that in any serious crisis, India will be on its own. There is therefore, a need to think beyond the algorithm to sustain all round operational capabilities that are distinctive in character, content and capacity. A unified engineering support will revolutionize the impact of equipment capability on mission outcomes, as was achieved by Israel in 1973, where initial surprise and adversary's quantitative advantages were offset by superior technical capability. The ILC needs to be rechristened as Integrated Readiness and Engineering Command (IREC) to set its gunsights towards its True North i.e., sustaining readiness of weapons and platforms. A military force can plan missions only if it is aware how far it can jump or how long it can run. From a military operational context; creation of IREC is highly desirable. The Services often point to inadequacy of funding for modernization. What is not conveyed is that due to budgetary squeeze, operational capability is gravitating towards hollowness; rebuild and upgrades are delayed, there are critical shortages of spare parts, minimum readiness levels are sustained through hanger queens and deviations.

Technicians leaving a store with 4 out of 10 parts i.e. 40% fill rate is a common phenomenon. The Army is the most affected as its manpower costs take away a large chunk of the pie. IREC can become a center of excellence in systems engineering of weapons from cradle to grave, ushering the concept of Through Life Capability Readiness. TLCR is an approach to acquisition and in service management of an acquired capability to ensure that it remains mission capable through life.

Close and Deep Support

Today, each service has its integral maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) infrastructure that comprises close support (CS) and deep support (DS) outfits. CS comprises Organizational (O) and Intermediate (I) whereas DS comprise Depot (D) level support. While CS is located close to weapons deployed, DS is spread throughout the country as base repair depots (BRD), army base workshops (ABW) and naval dockyards. These are specialist enterprises that carry base refit activities and are the last port of call. There is duplication of engineering infrastructure across three services and optimization is certainly called for e.g. ABW executing DS of armaments can effectively support naval guns and air force cannons. Missile repair centres of Navy can provide all round support. BRDs can service UAVs and aviation assets and similar integration can be extended to radars, communications, electro optical systems, etc. As more **indigenous systems** are rolled out, an integrated engineering support will be more economical and effective like medical support.

Iceberg Effect

Operation and support costs are paid once an acquisition has been made. Post introduction the weapon has to be maintained as per OEM protocols to remain mission capable. Few years after procurement, the OEM generally notifies that the system will soon become obsolescent and buoys up prices of sub systems and spares. IREC could find an enduring solution to this problem. It is common knowledge that any main battle tank or fighter aircraft requires 3 to 5 times the acquisition cost to be sustained over the lifecycle. Called the Iceberg Effect (Fig 1), it is a response customized by OEMs to India's poor acquisition management. It is time to graduate to value centric procurement and system readiness.

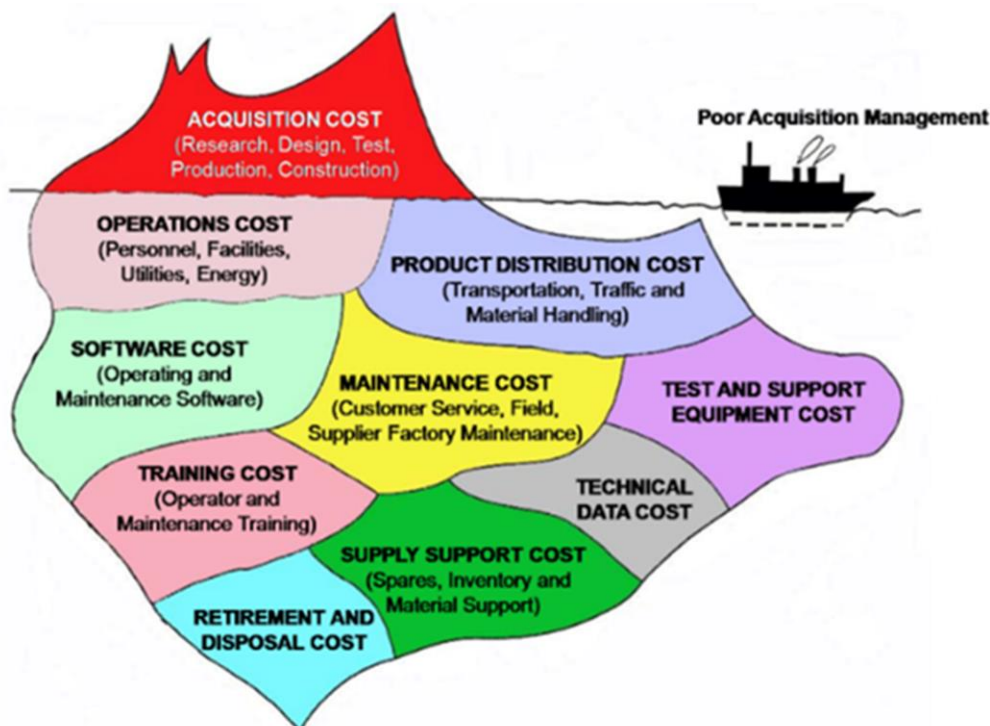


Fig 1 : Iceberg Effect : Invisible Life Cycle Costs

Israel – Palestine Clash: A Ballooning Fireball Which May Engulf The World

By Prof Anant Amdekar

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The current outbreak between Israel – Palestine seems to be a beyond border conflict and even mere terrorism but more likely to be ‘Ethnic’ pre-planned activities from particular ‘Sect’ of the society which has generated/arranged across geographies support on multiple fronts including social/communal riots, orchestrated media campaign. As Armenia – Azerbaijan War also invoked widespread support e.g. Turkey, which suggests, these instances are no more boundary conflicts but masterminded organised warfare. Here in this instance, the issue is not limited to the protection of human/civilian rights of Israelis – Palestinian, but changing the demographic equation based on sectarian/religious lines.

Jorden, Syria, Turkey, Iran, **Pakistan** coming out with direct or indirect support to Palestine and the US showing passive support to Israel till date. **India** was not sure of her stand initially supporting her friend Israel but later supporting Palestine at UNSC. The present scenario suits China best as the Pandemic has already weakened many economies plus such war-like conflicts keep most of these nations at bay and keep the US-occupied mentally, physically, resources-wise and more important politically. ‘Abraham Accord on Peace & Diplomacy’ will test its intent, purpose and relevance.

Though India at present is not in the direct line of fire, its stand will go a long way in deciding her role as an emerging power in West Asia, Indo-Pacific and as a formidable member of QUAD. By remote possibility also, India can not consider herself immune to the present situation as a communal wildfire can easily spread across Indian borders leading to chaos. Till now India has some stated foreign policy on ‘Look East’ and then ‘Act East’ but it is high time that India must have defined ‘West Asia Policy’ as with players actively involved in the current skirmish, India’s diplomatic relations are hanging in the balance.

	USA	Israel	Iran	UAE	Pakistan	
India	X	X	X	X	X	Friendly
India	X	X	X	X	X	Strategic
India	X	X	X	X	X	Assets/Investments
India	X	X	X	X	X	Trade & Commerce
India	X	X	X	X	X	Hostility

Relationship matrix

Red Colour – Hostile

Green Colour – High priority

Orange Colour – Average

Blue Colour – Low

The above table clearly suggests that India's Foreign Policy stand has to be multi-dimensional and clearly inclined to US & Israel throughout (more green ticks) and selective on Iran (combination of green & orange ticks) in the short and medium-term.

With available facts to date, Israel is focussing on the media assets of Palestine, which strengthens the hypothesis that it is a media, propagated communal issue with far and across parts of the world's select population carrying out demonstrations and trying to muster support.

Therefore, all the more reasons, balancing and bandwagoning in Indo-Pacific with astute foreign policy for 'West Asia' is the need of the hour, which could become an important channel for diplomacy amongst QUAD Members.

Spike in Drug Trafficking Reflecting in Increased Destabilisation Activities

By Dr. Shreekumar Menon

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In recent times narcotics drug seizures are exponentially increasing across the country. Most enforcement agencies are reporting more detection of clandestine movement of drugs than in the past. Simultaneously, organized internal disturbances, are happening with increased vigor and long spells of duration.

The United Nations has a long time back deciphered the relationship between political instability and organized crime, particularly drug trafficking. In 2004, the high-level panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change argued – 'One of the core activities of organized criminal groups, drug trafficking has major security implications. In some regions, the huge profits generated through this activity even rival gross domestic product of some countries, thus threatening State authority, economic development and the rule of law.' This report when read along with the Secretary-General's report *In Larger Freedom*, concludes "Organized crime contributes to State weakness, impedes economic growth, fuels many civil wars, regularly undermines United Nations peacebuilding efforts and provides financing mechanisms to terrorist groups, missions' assessment, and planning and peacebuilding support." We are able to see the internal disturbances happening in our country in a new light.

Two major destabilizing agitations that have occurred in recent times are the Anti-CAA and Farmers Agitation. Both these agitations caught the government by surprise, as the arrangements, facilities, and mobilization surpassed all previous agitations in organizational capacity, the skill of execution, mobilization of human resources, zero financial constraints, and massive international publicity. The agitators managed to acquire an institutional identity of their own by enforcing a prolonged blockade on arterial roads, and unimpeded territorial control. What was more baffling was the uninterrupted supply of high-quality food and beverages for consumption by the so-called agitators. Money was never in short supply at any point of time to fund the agitations and keep it ongoing indefinitely. The aim of the agitators was to shake public confidence in the government, so as to be penalized at the polls. The agitations had an ulterior design, a serious attempt to cause a downward spiral in governance that could be extremely challenging to reverse. However, there was no immediate threat to topple the state, but the agitators wanted to provoke a violent reaction that could engulf the entire nation into a revolt-like situation.

Another successor agitation, the so-called Farmers Agitation, has been taken to the next level in terms of exceptional organizing ability, skill, logistics, and show of impunity. The idea was to project a facade of popular discontent against the ruling political party, which was dutifully picked up by a biased national and international media, which led to a sustained campaign in favor of the agitators. The threat of renewed agitations and violence remains, as presently, the COVID pandemic, has put a spoke in their wheels. The funding of these agitations has given rise to much speculation in various quarters, as the financial resources needed to influence the media and for the overall conduct of the agitations should have been exorbitant. But where did these funds come from?

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A Failed Putsch- How the PRC'S Makeover Blitz is Dysfunctional

By Dr. Arnab Chakrabarty

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While leading nations of the world, blessed with an abundance of resources seek to achieve supremacy gradually. The PRC on the other hand eager to emerge as a superpower has a history of expediting within an unrealistic time frame starting with the disastrous **Great Leap Forward** (1958-1962) that witnessed the death of around **30-50 million people**. Mao's grand strategy for industrialisation and outstripping the leading nations including the former U.S.S.R. not only failed but also witnessed the complete destruction of human lives, infrastructure, and the gruesome murders of dissidents including **Peng Dehuai** the then Minister of Defence and a personal friend of Mao who was shamed as a 'rightist'.

Fast forward to 2021, the unrestricted biological warfare unleashed by Xi Jinping is reminiscent of his predecessor's eagerness to turn the PRC into an overnight superpower sensation. Realising that the PRC could not compete with the rest of the world despite its incessant cheque-book diplomacy and periodic threats a non-conventional pathogen could aid its dreams. However just as Mao failed to deliver and ended up committing dozens of errors, Xi Jinping too errs on more than one occasion.

Pathogens don't make superpowers

While states in their quest for power do experiment with non-conventional armaments for the purpose of credible deterrence, they exercise extreme caution. Biological weapons on the other hand are extremely volatile, can spread rapidly, and cannot be contained easily. In their quest for power, the PRC involved itself in a spree of experiments ranging from isolating the dreaded Wuhan virus from the genus and awarding it with dangerous levels of potency. Reports first emerged that from an abandoned mine in the PRC in 2012 some miners were infected from bats however if the pathogen was indeed originally that destructive the pandemic should have occurred in 2012 itself. The sheer havoc wreaked by a single pathogen from Wuhan explains why this could be the **PRC's biological weapon**.

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Israel and Palestine Conflict – A Longing for Peace amidst Bloody Strip

By Gayatri Rajpurohit

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Israel Palestine conflict has once again captured global media attention with deadly and gory scenes of rocket bombings and shattering buildings becoming prime time news scenes. The latest military offensive, fourth since 2008 by Israel targeting Hamas leadership and infrastructure in Gaza is a new chapter in the long standing flashpoint between Israel and Palestine.

Historical Background

The origins of the tensions can be traced back to post World War I era of 1918 when the victors of the war tried to arbitrarily divide the territories of Middle East after the defeat of Ottoman Turk Empire. During the WWI Britain made conflicting agreements to gain support from various groups in the Middle East. At one hand Britain supported the Arab independence (Arab Revolt 1916-18) from the Ottoman Turks and on the other hand Balfour Declaration (1917) showed British commitment towards homeland for Jewish people. Further, after WWI the Middle East territories were divided according to Sykes Picot Agreement (1916) between the British and the French. The famous British Mandate resulted in Britain keeping hold of administration of the Palestinian territory from 1920 to 1948. The mandate had approval from the league of the Nations. Under the mandate system Britain tried to support both Arab and Jews population in terms of Social and Political aspiration of the people.

Palestinian Demography

The Zionist movement was aimed at huge influx of Jewish population into the Middle East and purchasing large tracts of lands from the Arabs. There was a clarion call for the return to holy land of Jerusalem. There had been conflicts between the Arabs and the immigrating Jews but the situation worsened during WWII due to heavy influx of Jews into the Middle East from all over Europe who were escaping the tyranny of the Nazi Germany.

With no interest in entangling itself into the tensions between the Arabs and Jews, Britain's Mandate system expired in 1948. The United Nations established in 1945 chalked out a plan known as UN Partition Plan (Resolution 181) in 1947. As per the plan the entire Palestinian territory was to be divided between the Palestinians (45%) and Jews (55%) with Jerusalem remaining under International Control. The Palestinians rejected the plan and the Jews wholeheartedly accepted it.

Recognition of Israel and further Annexation

With the failing of UN Partition Plan (Resolution 181) war erupted between Arab world and the nascent Jewish nation which led to formation of Jewish nation of Israel in 1948. Further, Israel captured vast amount of Palestinian territories. The Palestinians were forced to accommodate in pocket of areas known as East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Jewish population increased from 6% in 1918 to 33% in 1947. A pre-emptive military offensive by Israel in 1967 led to Israel further annexing all historical Palestinian territories, Golan Heights near Syrian border and the Sinai Peninsula. The territorial control of Israel increased to 78% in 1947 and further to all of historical Palestinian sites after 1967.

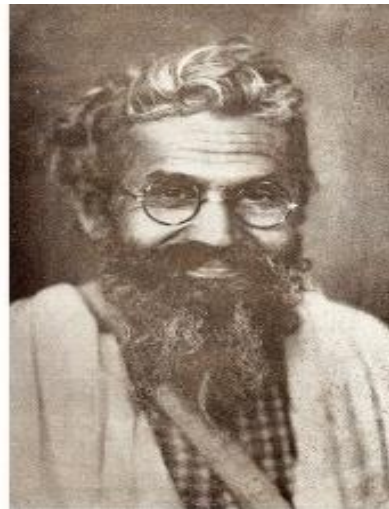
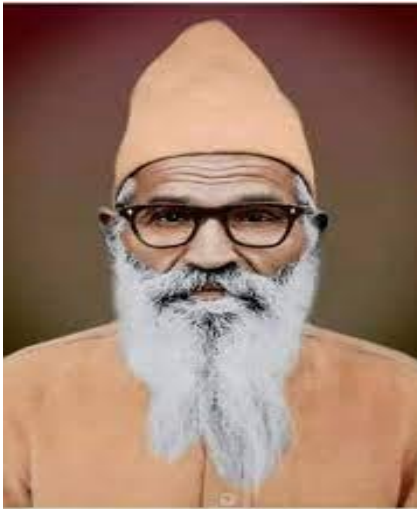
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Nation is Indebted to:

Swami Keshwanand

1943 – 13 Sep 1972



He was born in village Magloona in Sikar district of present-day Rajasthan in 1883, Swamiji, whose actual name was Birama, was the son of Thakarsi, a penurious camel-driver, and his wife Saran. When Birama was five, his family left Magluna for the nearby town of Ratangarh. Thakarsi, who used to escort prosperous Seths (Businessman) from Ratangarh to Delhi on his camel, died in 1890 when Birama was seven. This put an end to Birama's already slim chances of gaining an education. For a prolonged period, his mother had perforce to move from place to place in search of shelter and fodder for her animals. Mother and son finally settled at village Kelania in present-day Sri Ganganagar district in 1897. However, this was not the end of their misfortunes: Rajasthan was then headed for one of its periodic famines. By one account: "There was no vegetation left on the ground. There was no drop of water. All the animals died for want of fodder. People survived on grasses and the bark of "Khejri" trees. Even that also became scarce. There was nothing like governance. The ruling Samants were least bothered for the poor people..... It was in these circumstances that Birama's mother Saran died in 1899 at village Kelania.

The **famine** of 1899 forced the 16-year-old Birama to leave the **desert** region and move to **Punjab** in search of livelihood. Circumstances had induced in him an ineffable spiritual quest. He approached Mahant Kushaldas of the Udasin sect, to whom he expressed the desire to learn **Sanskrit**, to be able to study the higher **Hindu** scriptures from primary sources. Mahant Kushaldas advised him to become a sannyasi or renunciate and join Udasin sect. Accordingly, Birama became a sannyasi in 1904, was inducted into the Udasin sect, and commenced his education at the Sadhu Ashram Fazilka, a Hindu seminary located in **Punjab**. He learned the **Hindi** and **Sanskrit** languages and the **Devanagari** and **Gurmukhi** scripts at the Ashram. At the Kumbha Mela held at **Prayag** in 1905, Mahatma Hiranandji Avadhut conferred on Birama the new name "Swami Keshwanand".

Swami Keshwanand lived a life of many facets—as **freedom fighter**, educator and social **reformer**.

The **Jalianwalla Bagh Massacre** of 1919, which caused a profound impact on the collective psyche of the Punjab, left Swami Keshwanand profoundly moved. He started attending the meetings of the **Indian National Congress** and joined the **Indian Independence Movement**, and participated in the non-co-operation movement, for which was imprisoned for two years (1921–1922) at **Ferozepur**.

Swami Keshwanand, an orphan, illiterate, nomadic man who never received formal education, was the founder of more than 300 schools, 50 hostels and innumerable libraries, social service centres and museums. In 1911, within a few years of his initiation into the Udasin **Dasnami** sect as a sanyasi, swami Keshwanand started the "Vedant Pushp Vatika" library within the precincts of the Sadhu Ashram **Fazilka**. The following year, he started a **Sanskrit** school at the same place. In 1932, swami Keshwanand was made director of the Jat School, **Sangaria**, which was at the verge of closure for want of funds. He went from village to village to collect funds, and was successful in averting the closure of the school, which was renamed Gramothan Vidyapith, Sangaria in 1948. Within the precincts of this school, Swami Keshwanand developed a museum with a valuable collection of rare documents, paintings and antiques, thus initiating the idea of conservation in a profoundly backward area. The students of the school, aided by the local community, undertook a large-scale, successful project to green the precincts of the school, which is located in one of the most arid regions of **India**. Gramothan Vidyapith, Sangaria has become an inspiration for educators far and wide. Today, this Vidyalaya is one of the most famous educations set up in Hanumangarh, Rajstahan.

Swami ji always used to say, "I have got one life and I have to do a lot for poor, underprivileged people before I go" and he was true to his words.

Swami Keshwanand's deep understanding of the rural society of the desert region can be gleaned from his book "Maru Bhumi Seva Karya". In this book, he has explained the peculiarities of the Desert region, identified the problems and suggested solutions. It was Swami Keshwanand's lifelong endeavour to eradicate social evils like untouchability, illiteracy, child marriage, indebtedness, poverty, backwardness, alcohol abuse, moral dissipation, etc.

Interestingly, Swami Keshwanand, born in a Jat **Hindu** family of **Dhaka** clan, and a renunciate belonging to the Udasi sect which was propagated by Srichandji, son of **Guru Nanakdevji**, the founder of the Sikh faith, was a unique example of social harmony. He organised celebrations in honour of **Sikh, Bishnoi, Namdhari and Jain** gurus.

Swami Keshwanand was presented the "Abhinandan Granth" by the then chief minister of Rajasthan on 9 March 1958. He was a member of the **Rajya Sabha** for two consecutive terms, 1952–58 and 1958–64. He died on 13 September 1972 in **Delhi**. The department of Posts, **Government of India**, issued a commemorative postage stamp in his honour on 15 August 1999. In 2009, **Rajasthan Agricultural University in Bikaner** was named after him, which is now known as Swami Keshwanand Rajsthan Agriculture University.

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