

Indian Communities Experiences and Challenges in Zambia: Before and After Independence

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Abstract: The versatile Indian community from various parts of the sub-continent settled in Zambia before and after its independence. It constitutes about 0.1 per cent of Zambia's total population. Zambia, a landlocked country, harboured the Indian diaspora that comprised of Hindus and Muslims (initially from the state of Gujarat) who stepped onto this land as early as 1904. The indigenous population of the Indian migrated via Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa and other coastal counties seeking livelihoods as small scale traders, artisans and clerks. The exodus from India continued even after the independence of Zambia, due to numerous reasons. These 'aliens' occasionally faced hostility both from the European traders and indigenous Zambians because the former disliked the fierce competition that imparted on the trading game and the latter viewed them as plunderers, only next to the colonizers. The British rulers separated all communities by creating segregated communal zones. The implementation of such a system inadvertently left a deep void in the understanding of the Zambian social and cultural practices by the Indian settlers, thus further destroying any hope of their integration into the fabric of the Zambian society. The newly formed Zambian government implemented regulations such as prescribed business items specifically for the Indian traders to safe guard certain economic activities for the local people. This hindered the customary business of the Indians but they managed to divert their economic activities accordingly and proved to be successful by doing so. From the earliest historical records it can be inferred that the Indians actively participated in the political arena while expanding on their economic activities and thus, gradually began their closer interaction with local people. The paper **highlights** the history of the Indian migration into Zambia and **examines** the contributions, experiences and the challenges they faced in the political, social and economic realm in colonial and post-colonial Zambia. The article also **includes** the latest **statistics** on Indian men and women's involvement in epitomizing Zambia as a role model for other nations in sub-Saharan Africa.

Keynotes: colonial, post-colonial, regulations, artisans, and exodus

Preamble

This article provides a history of both men and women of Indian origin who contributed significantly in Zambian history right from their inception. The paper looks into the arrival of Indians in Zambia using different routes and various reasons that compelled them to leave their homeland. It assesses their initial struggle to create a space, especially in business arena, in a foreign land where the Europeans were already having strong footing and it also evaluates the reaction that was put forward by the native Africans towards these new comers who were ready to face difficult challenges and were quite accommodative even to harsh conditions. It analyses the role of Indian women who arrived Zambia after 1911 but played important role in the economic sectors. Though these women remain in veil (practically) but their contributions cannot be ignored. This paper contains a historiography of Indian women's active role in the economy of Zambia, especially by the second generation, who by this time had acquired enough education and adopted Zambia as their home. This part of the paper is an oral history, due to the lack of written record and this is a challenge for the academics to fulfil the gap.

According to N. Prithvish the first Indian arrived at fort Jameson (Now Chipata) in 1904 via Bulawayo along with Europeans, they settled in Livingstone in 1905.¹ Zambia is a landlocked country which is bordering with eight countries. Here, geographical proximity must be one of the largest factors which made impossible for them to make a trip to Zambia directly; as such they came via Bulawayo, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa and Mombasa. According to L.M. Singhvi initial settlers were Muslims but they were soon followed by Hindu traders² and B.J. Phiri refers that they all were from the province of Gujarati [Gujarat].³

Motive for Migration?

One can ask a question, why migration? According to World Savvy Monitor, human migration is often explained in terms of 'pushes' and 'pulls'. Pushes are the conditions in one's country of origin that provide the

motivation for leaving in the country of destination that lure a migrant to leave home, as for example; economic deprivation, unemployment, low wages, family reunification, harassment, discrimination⁴ and so on. Both pushes and pulls are related and are often hard to distinguish. Whereas pulls that attract migrants for jobs, higher wages, opportunities for advancement, welfare benefits, family reunification, communities ties, geographical and cultural proximity etc. Not only that the decision to migrate is a complex one: pushes and pulls can be economic, social, cultural, political and personal. Moreover, migrants' motives may change sometimes along the journey. There were various reasons for Indians to migrate to Africa.

K.K. Virmani argues that Cecil Rhodes who (after whose name, the Zambia was known as Northern Rhodesia) appointed Harry Johnston, an official company to give the land from a centre at Fort Jameson, and both believed that the land should be ruled by the whites, developed by Indians and worked by Africans⁵. On the other hand R.G.Gregory reported that founders of imperial British East India Company Sir William MacKinnon, Sir Donald Stewart and Sir John Kirk, helped to provide an outlet for India's surplus population⁶. Additional to this even F. Lugard, M. John Macdonald and General Portal argued chiefly that the railway would promote Indian immigration to East Africa and would provide release for the congested districts of India⁷. G. Delf also noted that Indian left for having a better life outside India and eluded that they (Indians) knew that life, for example, in Kenya held more hope of prosperities than it did in India⁸.

Not only that the colonial economic policy in India was not friendly where colonizers forced farmers to grow cash crops and due to heavy taxes the farmers even lost their land. Import of cheap manufactured cotton material from British almost shut down the cottage industries in Indian. And, H. Kupa highlighted that the village life in parts of India was harsh; the country was undeveloped, stricken periodically by famine and ravaged by disease. The hopes of industries had decayed with the imposition of British goods and cloths, whilst peasants were in need of land⁹.

Furthermore Indians were encouraged by the colonial master to get better paid jobs in Eastern Africa and their whereas motive (colonial western) was to develop those areas with their help for laying railway backs and even for growing sugar cane. Delf further argued that the Kenya Uganda railway was the foundation of East Africa development which could not have been built at least for many years without the Indian labour¹⁰. Especially in Zambia, according to F.Mufuzi, some white settlers and colonial officials were of the view that African businesses was not yet capable of catering for African goods and that the Asian retailed traders would boost white settlers wholesale business¹¹. Furthermore, Asia traders should service the hinterlands where European traders and the African Lake Cooperation (open by Scottish business men) were finding it difficult to supervise stores situated throughout the province¹².

After analysing the above comments and statements, made by different public figures, one can easily come to the conclusion that Indians due to both the colonial rulers initiatives and due to their own needs decided to migrate to Africa. This even justifies the 'push' and 'pull' theories discussed above. It would not be out of place to argue that greener pasture is not a new Phenomenon in mankind's history which contributes to movement of human being to look for better opportunities outside their own country.

The Initial Engagement for Survival

Since colonizers of India and most of the Eastern Africa including Zambia, were common, the British, it was easier for Indians to migrate. In Livingstone, the then capital of Northern Rhodesia (until when the capital was moved to Lusaka 1935), the trading sector was dominated by the Europeans. Prior to European's arrival Africans (Zambian) were trading their products on exchange basis, known as barter system, with traders within and even with the traders at Indian Ocean. When colonial rulers imported goods from their country, introduced capital trade, used money as the medium of exchange. They further introduced taxation and when land was alienated that forced Africans to provide their labour to the Europeans owned projects so as to earn money for the payment of taxes and for the meeting of other social obligations. M. McCulloch noted that when Indian looked for their means of survival, they initially involved themselves in the hawking of fruits and vegetables¹³. They were engaged in shoe mending, vegetable gardening and opened hair cutting businesses. By 1913 Indian opened their own shops and still they were trading the same commodities. Gradually the number of Indian shops was increased as the population of Indians grew.

E. Kristin reports that by 1938 there were 15 Asian traders in Livingstone¹⁴. By December 1938 there were 73 male Indians in Fort Jameson, which is the closed town to Malawi where many Indians had already settled and had started their own business. During above period 404 male Indians were in Zambia spreading in different towns,

Table 1 Asian Trader in Livingstone

DISTRICT	STORE OWNER	STORE ASSISTANTS	FARMERS	OTHER TRADE	TOTAL no.
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Livingstone	15	41	00	09	65
Kalomo	01	01	00	00	02
Choma	04	08	00	00	12
Mazabuka	05	27	00	00	32
Broken Hill	10	31	00	09	50
Ndola	19	26	00	07	52
Luanshya	09	25	00	04	38
Mpika	01	00	00	00	01
Fort Jameson	17	53	00	00	73
Mumbwa	03	02	00	00	05
Namwala	00	01	00	00	01
Serenje	00	01	00	00	01
Lusaka	26	34	02	06	68
Abercorn	02	01	01	00	04
Grand Total	112	251	03	38	404

(Source: National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) Sec. 3/53, Report on Immigration into Northern Rhodesia, 18 January 1939)

According to McCulloch, towards the end of Second World War, Asia had ousted European traders from the African trade¹⁵.

Although, population of Indians in Zambia was much smaller than the Europeans but their numbers continued to increase until 1950s; in 1930 the ratio of Europeans to Indians was 300:1 but by 1951 the proportion had shifted to just 10:1¹⁶. It is noticeable that whatever the ratio prevailed at that time Indians indeed gave Europeans tough competition in economic sectors.

Constrains and Struggles

Now, it is necessary to highlight that the Indian migration to North Eastern Rhodesia was not welcomed by the Europeans and was heavily opposed for various reasons. Europeans in the territory were opposed to the introduction of Indians in the region in general and Indian trading side by side with Europeans, felt threatened by the introduction of Indians in the region. They argued that the introduction of Indian traders would be harmful to European business¹⁷. No doubt, Indians occasionally faced resistance both from the European and from the local Africans. F.Dotson and L.Dotson argue that Indian competed with the pioneer whites and therefore involved hostility from them¹⁸. On the other hand Africans disagree to the imposition of Federal Government(Controlling all important-economic sectors) and boycotted Asian and European shops¹⁹.

Apart from economic rivalry, the conflict between Indians and Africans were deep rooted. It will not be out of place to argue that the comments from the European rulers on Indians involvement in Africa, to a larger extent, contributed negatively and provoked the African sentiments. Sir Johnston described East Africa as the possible America of the Hindu and complemented the growth of Entebbe as the future of Calcutta, a new capital on the main plateau as Shimla, Mombasa as the Bombay and the fort Portal as Darjeeling of the new East Africa Empire²⁰. This kind of statement was a short of threat for countries in Africa fearing for losing their territories for outsiders. Another important aspect was missing among three groups (Europeans, Indians and Africans) was the lack of racial integration. Y.Ghai and D.Ghai correctly observed that members of the three different races were forced to go to different –schools and lived in different locality, unable to share social and culture amenities and it is not surprising that they remained ignorant of one another customs, needs and aspiration²¹. By this time, especially African felt neglected as they realised that they have two superior communities.i.e.the Europeans and theIndians, whereas earlier they had only Europeans as superior to them.

It also became important to analyze the causes behind the success of Indians in business entrepreneur who initially had come almost with no capital. In this context it is admirable to read a comment from a former British consul of the Asia of the Time: His (Indians) manner of life domestic in the extreme is nevertheless so thrifty, so frugal and his wants, bounded by a little curry and rice, are so inexpensive, that few there are who cannot remit a rupee to India at the end of the year, to add to the store²².

Along with it, most Asia informants have observed that business trading partnership worked very well for the Asia traders. This was because, partnership formed were usually between members who were either-relatives or very close friends. Due to such togetherness and with combined financial force, the Europeans traders practically failed to compete the Asia traders. Not only that, for Indians jobs in the civil service were closed as such they had single opening for survival, was to indulge themselves in business. This job bar for

them was proved a sort of blessings in disguise. D.P.Ghai reported that above all the Indians showed themselves the most persistent and more resilient²³.

Apart from business Indians gradually got involved in political sector. By 1940s Indians in Fort Johnson were already involved in politics at the local governed level. Earlier they were accused by the Africans nationalists being collaborators. Though, Indians generally kept a low profile in nationalist politics. However, there is much evidence that suggest that Indians were not politically inactive as suggested by early nationalist historiography of the independence struggle²⁴.

It is interesting to note that initially Indians political involvement was motivated by the economic gain. Hence it is not unexpected that during the Africa nationalist struggle against the impending Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland number of Indians supported the federal cause against Africans will an economic grounds. They expected that federation would provide major economic opportunities and would also stipulate an expanded market. Gradually, when they realized that in near future the federation will be demolished and that African nationalists would take over the country they switched sides and began to support nationalists. Both the African National Congress (ANC) and the United National Independent Party (UNIP) received financial support from Indian traders²⁵. By 1950s Indians formed two organizations whose objectives were to help Africans in their struggle for political independence²⁶.

There is evidence that several Indians became associated members of ANC in the 1950s and gave both financial and moral support to the nationalist struggle. General Secretary of the associated Chamber of Commerce, Chunibhai Chitabhai Patel was also associate member of ANC. It was notices that the number of Indians who were associate in ANC grew to thirty five by 1950 and by this time ANC constitution granted associate membership to the Indians²⁷.

Undoubtedly Indian positive contribution to Zambia's political history has been, conspicuously, kept out of the main stream of academic discussion. Phiri alludes differently and stressed that Indians generally lead to a private and close life who generally does not want to combine their economic and political affairs together²⁸. As much they are uncomfortable to discuss their political affiliation openly. In addition, the colonial office record do not produce much evidence regarding Indian's participation in politics during the colonial period.

Initially who were benefiting from the federation were been blamed to be collaborating with the colonial rules aiding it in suppressing and delaying African independence²⁹. Due to this reason their shops from the mid-1950s and early 1960s were targeted in politically motivated boycotts. During such a boycott in Livingstone, which started on 1st June 1956, having been declared by the African National Congress, Asia shops owners on Queensway lost between GBP 2,000 and 3,000 in sale during first four days of the boycott. There were between 25 and 30 Asia shops on Queensway at the time³⁰.

As time passed Indians joined either ANC or UNIP but their participation in African nationalist's politics had little effect on Asia businesses as a whole. This was because in the main, their participation was not done openly. Asians contributed to the nationalist cause through moral, and most importantly through financial support which was done quietly. Consequently their contribution remained unnoticed by the colonial authorities and was misguided as they saw most members of the Asia community as sympathiser of the colonial ruler. Hence, they were left alone to transact their business unimpeded.

From Northern Rhodesia to Zambia

Northern Rhodesia was granted independence on 24th October 1964 was branded as Zambia and it is composed of seventy three tribes. The first president Kenneth Kaunda called it as 'One Zambia One Nation' to unify the 73 tribes and also promised to protect the interest of the minorities (both Europeans and Asians) in the constitution of the country. There can be no doubt to state that new country Zambia became a more tolerant country than was Northern Rhodesia. The various forms of colour bar and segregation which had deformed this country under colonial rule was gradually broken down in the last few years, before the independence³¹. The country did not even encourage, the white racialism been replacing by black racialism. Almost at the same time few primitive whites from South Africa and Rhodesia, whose racial feeling, easily inflamed and declared Unilateral Declaration of Independence, UDI, in Rhodesia but the Zambian leaders preserved their commitments to non-racialism policies in Zambia. Observers even commented that Zambian leaders supported their policies both on moral and economic grounds because Indians and whites were still essential to the Zambian economy³².

After Zambia achieved independence, the government started looking to India for material and moral support and since then the Indian community both from within and outside has played a meaningful role in the Zambian economy. Due to Zambian Government's Economic Reforms by 1970, Indians faced a set-back when both retail and wholesale trade was reserved to Zambians and many Indians were forced out of the business along with some whites and non-Zambian Africans but gradually things changed. Since independence Zambian citizenship was open to all races and no doubt, that most non-African who adopted, have benefited. At

the time of taking the office as the first president, Kenneth Kaunda assured the people of Zambia that Zambia would become an exemplary country where people of all races beliefs and opinion would be able to live happily³³, which became a reality. By the end of Kaunda era, many Indians who were born in Zambia, joint political parties and were elected as Member of Parliament, for example, Deepak Patel, Suresh Desai, Yusuf Badat, Naeem Gai, Hamid Hammer etc. Yusuf Badat, served as Deputy Minister of Health until 2001 and then Minister of Commerce and Trade under president Chiluba. Suresh Desai another Indian origin man, held ministry for Agriculture under Chiluba's Government. Deepak Patel was elected MP in 1991 and during this time he was also a member of the MMD's National Executive committee. He was appointed Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry from 1991 to 1992 then held a succession of cabinet Minister position in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (1992) then the ministry of youth, Sports and child Development (1992-93) and then again Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industries (1993-1996). In the 1996 election, he ran without any party affiliation and was returned to his seat representing Lusaka central. Though he was almost arrested in 2001 due to his comment on late Mwanawasa (the then President) but later he appoint Patel to the position of Cabinet Minister of Trade, Commerce and Industry in February 2003. During Late Mwanawasa's term Patel saved as Chair-co-coordinator for the Least Developed Countries' with World Trade Organization negotiations in 2005³⁴. Mr. Hamir was elected as MP in 2006 before being appointed as deputy Land Minister by Mwanawasa in 2007. He was later reappointed by President Banda in 2008 to serve in the position. Mr. Hamour passed away in May 2009 while saving in the same position. Mr. Ziad Gai and Mr. Nasin-ul-Gary Hamour and few more are upcoming political leaders from the Indian diaspora community.

After highlighting the political and economic activities of men of Indian origin, the article now takes a stride towards the women of Indian origin who were gradually seen in the economic sectors in Zambia. It is important to inform the readers that till today no women of Indian origins have been seen in the political arena in Zambia. Apart from this, they are quite active in economic sectors and are managing their businesses single handily. Unlike, Indians migration into South Africa no Indian women accompanied their husband but followed after men got settled in Zambia. It was as a coincident that both Indian women's arrival and amalgamation of North Western and North Eastern Rhodesia happened together in 1911.

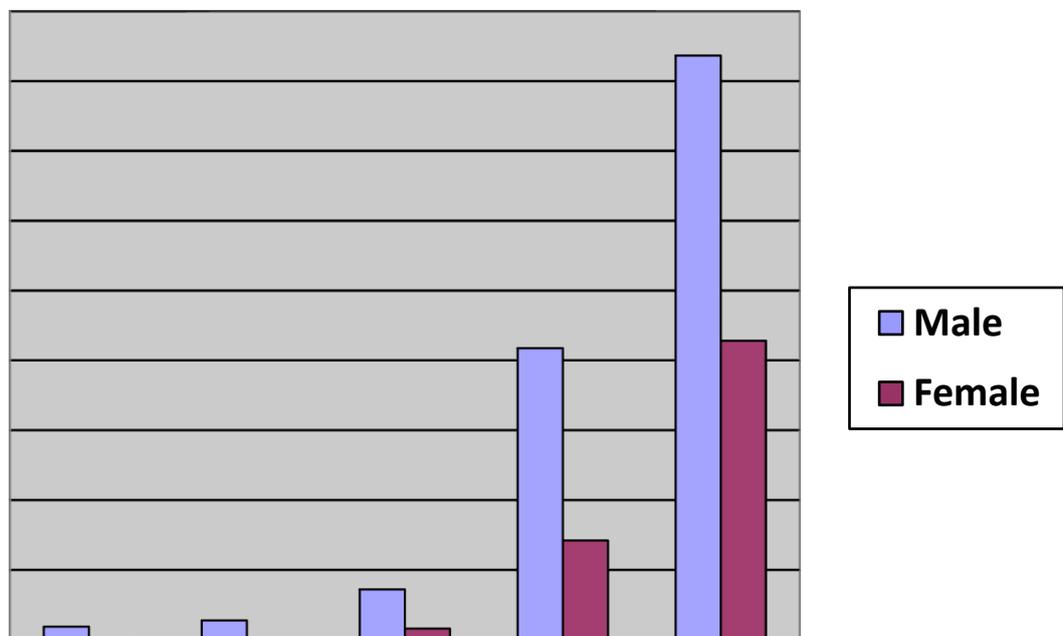
Indian Women in Zambia

The history of Indian Women's participation in Zambia, from their inception, has received no attention from scholars. It is important to note that the researchers and historians who wrote on the Indian diaspora in Africa either neglected or overlooked an important part of the diaspora history. Women who gradually joined, their menfolk contributed in economic sectors first indirectly and then directly. Due to the absence of written record the author had to interview some families who came to Zambia before 1960s.

As it has already been discussed that women of Indian origin did not take part in politics in their new homeland Zambia reason could be that Indian men themselves took late participation in Zambian politics, directly, unless until this country was granted independence in 1964. It is also possible that since colonial authorities were not as harsh with Indian in Zambia as they were in South Africa, Indian women needed not to participate in politics. Men alone were able to handle the situation.

This subsequent section of article examines the arrival of Indian Women on Zambian soil and their gradual involvement in economic sectors. According to national census record there is no evidence of Indian Women in Zambia until 1909. Arrival of women was noticed after 1911.

Block Diagram based on Table 2 (given below) Shows number of Indian Women in



YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1911	37	2	39
1921	55	1	56
1931	144	32	176
1946	835	284	1,119
1951	1673	856	2,529

(Source: Northern Rhodesia Report of the Director of Centers, 1911, 1931, 1931, 1946 and 1951, University of Zambia (UNZA) Library Special Collection)
Meeting with Indian Families

The author had an opportunity to meet several Indian families who migrated to Zambia about half a century ago. As highlighted earlier, they did not necessarily come directly to Zambia, instead they came via neighbouring countries in the vicinity, such as Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and South Africa.

Nita Paresh Patel

Nita Paresh Patel, the Director of Paresh Fashion Centre in Kamwala was born in Choma and is married to Paresh Patel who was born in Zambia as well (Kabwe)³⁵. Nita and Paresh’s family came to Zambia in the 1950s via South Africa and Kenya respectively. Nita’s grandfather Kushalabhai Hirabhai Patel had migrated to South Africa in 1910, and notably, had participated in the famous Durban demonstration with Mahatama Gandhi. This led to his deportation to India. However, his sister in Nairobi sponsored him to join her, and from there he eventually came to Livingstone in Zambia. Nita’s father Rameshbhai Kushalabhai Patel ran a clothing business and, with his wife Jasuben Rameshbhai Patel, was settled in Choma. Due to the “prescribed item business” her father had to engage himself in the wood business. Her mother (an English medium educated from Bombay) helped her husband indirectly by managing the paper work for her husband. Jasuben was born in Mozambique in the late 1930s, whose father had a guest house there.

Nita’s-in-laws (Paresh’s parents) came to Zambia via Kenya. Father Vallabbhai Hirabhai Patel and mother Bhikiben Patel opened a small shop in Kabwe first, and then moved to Lusaka. Vallabbhai Patel was an accountant by profession worked as an agent (details of his profession are somewhat lost). Bhikiben was managing a small shop, gradually gained confidence and skill, and eventually opened the ‘Standard Groceries’ on Freedom way, in Lusaka. She was popularly addressed as *Ammaji* (meaning mother in Hindi) by her customers.

The following generation, Nita, graduated in Applied Chemistry from the U.K. and is now actively and almost independently managing her business. Paresh is mostly engaged in his construction business. Their son Akhil studies in the US, majoring in Psychology with Human Recourses, intends to implement here (in Zambia) or in any developing country. The daughter Anjali has completed studying in the UK (Economics with Politics) and doing internship, here with the ILO and the last born daughters is still studying in the U.K.

Rita Ishverlal Patel

The owner of the BP Service Station on Cairo road, Rita Ishverlal Patel³⁶, was born in Choma and has studied in the Harrow school in the U.K., later pursuing a Diploma in Radiography at the Evelyn Hone College in Lusaka. Her father Ishverlal R. Patel, who came into Zambia via Mombasa and Harare and reached Livingstone in 1953, had to write an entrance examination in reading and writing to get a residence permit in Zambia. He got married to Rukhiben D. Patel in Choma in 1963. Ishverlal began his career as a shop assistant and later opened his own shop in Choma. They moved to Lusaka in 1972 and established a sweet making factory. He was assisted by his wife who took the responsibility as the shop manager and sales lady. She even assisted him in the day-to-day running of the factory, supervising the production and Human Resources. Rita initially had opened a shop in Kabwata, then a Travel agency, and finally a Service Station. She got married to Deepak Desai in 1983, a Lusaka born and bred as well. She has two children; son, Milan, is a student in the school of Law at the University of Zambia and a daughter is in 'A level'. Most of her relatives in India are not around anymore, however, she has visited some of the distant relatives on occasional family gatherings.

Nadia Bhana

A Travel Consultant in the corporate department, Nadia Bhana³⁷ was born in Lusaka and after completing her A-levels she passed the IATA examinations. Her father, Ebrahim Bhana, had come to Zambia with his parents in 1959 via Dar –es–Salam at the age of 11. Ebrahim Bhana's father was in a business, he himself is a mechanical engineer, and was married to Mariam Bhana who remained as a housewife. Nadia visited India once and has some relatives there. She is married to Faisale Ahmad, a computer engineer from Bangladesh, settled in Zambia.

Fatima Mandhu

Fatima³⁸ a lecturer in the School of Law, was born in Luanshya, Zambia, completed her studies from the University of Zambia and University of Pretoria. Her parents owned a shop in Luyanshya, but gradually shifted to Lusaka. Fatima has lost contact with family in India but has visited Mumbai as tourist and wishes to visit India as many times as she can.

Anjana Mistry

Meeting the Mistrys, owners of the Phoenix Studios in Manda Hill and on Cairo road, for the first time made me realize of the hardships faced by the Indians in establishing themselves in new settlements. Balubhai Mistry arrived in Zambia in 1950 via Mombasa (in Kenya), setting up his photographic studio in the same year. He married Bhikiben Balubhai Mistry, now a widow and 79 years of age, who was born in Johannesburg, South Africa. Bhikiben's parents were in the business of manufacturing European hats for men and women. She has plenty sweet and sour memories of South Africa under the apartheid rule, though the bitter experiences tend to outweigh the sweet ones. Balubhai had to pass a test for English language and one for photographic proficiency. He was the first, non-white, photographer in Zambia. Their children settled in Lusaka and one of her sons, Arvindbhai Mistry (now Late) married Anjaina Mistry³⁹ (or Anju), who was born in Dar –es–Salam (Tanzania). Anjana's father, Keshaobhai Dayabhai Mistry, was working for the East African Railways there. Anju, a graduate from Aston University in the U.K., is the Director of the Phoenix Studio. She is an eager mind who is keen on expanding her business ventures. Bhikiben is quite fluent in English always guided her family with her business skills which she had adopted from her parents. While recollecting her memories of South Africa, she suddenly remarked saying "when my husband would go to photograph the Europeans, he was not allowed to drink inside their house, and had to go outside instead". Anjana has two children (a son and a daughter) who are studying in Australia.

Rekha Parmar

The Managing Director of Fortune Food Ltd, Rekha Parmar⁴⁰ was born in Mauritius⁴¹ and after getting married to Ketan Parmar, the Regional Director of FEDEX, she settled in Lusaka. She is the fifth generation of Indian migrants, who had migrated from Bihar (one of province in India) to Mauritius. Her father Vijay Mohur runs a business in Mauritius. After completing her degree in Marketing from the U.K., she opened her business in Zambia. Her father-in-law, Probbudas Parmar, was in Mozambique in the late 1950s, and was married to

Kanchan Parmar, who was born in Livingstone. They owned a shop in Livingstone, and had later moved to Lusaka and are now enjoying their retired life. Rekha has two little kids (one son and one daughter) and maintains a balance between managing her business (mostly located in Manda Hill Shopping Complex and along Cairo Road) and her family. She has lost track of her father's family in India but has a desire to locate them.

Zaheda Mandhu

It was quite interesting to interview Zaheda Mandhu⁴² who is running a catering business from home. She was born in Chinoy (in Zimbabwe). Her father Ibrahim Abdul Latif shifted to Zimbabwe in the early 1950s and opened a shop in Chinoy. Zaheda was working as an accountant in one of the bank there after doing a Secretarial course. She moved to Lusaka after she got married to Imtiaz Mandhu who has a construction business. Imtiaz's father, Kasamtalab Mandhu, served in the Burma front during the Second World War and her mother Zulekha migrated to Zambia in 1947. They gradually settled in Luanshya and opened a shop called "Durbar Commercials and Sons" where Zulekha was actively supporting her husband. Now by next generation their daughter Fatima Mandhu is a lecturer in the School of Law at the University of Zambia and daughter-in-law Zaheda runs her catering business independently. Last year Zaheda had a chance to visit India for the first time.

Indiraben Ramesh bhai Patel

A family, Rameshbhai Patel and his wife Indiraben Rameshbhai Patel⁴³ are running a medicine whole sale shop in Lusaka. Rameshbhai's mother must be one of the first women who came to Zambia. Ramesh bhai Patel's parents arrived in Zambia, via Kenya and then Mozambique, between 1908 and 1920. His father, Chaganbhai J. Patel was invited by his brother Thakarabhai Patel who had a shop in Livingstone. Chagan bhai came with his wife Kashiben R. Patel who opened their own shop in Livingstone with the help of his brother and even started helping the new comers from India. His Mother Kashiben was deeply involved in raising children and was active in supporting husband's business indirectly. After some time family moved to Lusaka and Ramesh bhai was born in Lusaka in mid 1940s. He married to Indiraben in 1973 in India and opened Pharmaceutical Shop in Kabelenga Road. Indiraben is the Director of ITR pharmaceutical and actively involved in the medical whole sale business. Their three children (two daughters and one son) are in the USA.

Parul Bharat kumar Nayee

The couple, Liladhar Nayee and Personben L Nayee, invited by his Liladhar's brother, arrived in Livingstone in the 1940s. Prior to this they lived in Mozambique and then spent some time in Zimbabwe. Liladhar opened a shop in Kalomo which was a departmental shop selling items needed for daily life use. Their children were born in Livingstone and moved to Lusaka in their adulthood. Liladhar's brother, R. V. Nayee who had invited him to Zambia, became the first Indian (Non-European) mayor of Livingstone in 1964. One of Liladhar's sons, Bharat kumar L. Nayee, studied Chemical Engineering from the U.K. and married Parul B. Nayee⁴⁴ from India. After living as joint family, and running a joint family business, his mother advised him to start his own business venture in Lusaka. This brought about the establishment of 'Book World' in 1991, in Lusaka first, which has spread over the entire main town in Zambia. Although she was never directly participated running the business, Parul's mother-in-law's indirect vital contribution received a lot of respect within the family. Parul is the Director of Book World, and her busy schedule in running the business, never goes unnoticed by her customers. Her relatives in India are of distant relations and her visit to India is mostly for religious purposes. Parul and Bharat kumar's two daughters and one son study in the U.K.

Interpretation of Above Meetings

As author assimilated her thoughts and notes after conducting the interviews, author felt from each of the subjects, a sense of an emotional partnership with this country, one where the two helped each other to build themselves. Nita, Rita, Fatima and Nadia were born in Zambia; as such their attachment to this country is natural. However, women like Parul and Indiraben, who migrated in their adulthood after marriage, bare similar attachment, whilst Zaheda, Anjana and Rekha, who were born in Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Mauritius respectively, share the same sentiments. Most of these women have lost their close relatives in India; their rare visits to the Indian subcontinent are more for religious, and understandably, some for social, purposes than emotional attachment. Rekha, Zaheda and Anjana do not even have distant relatives in India to visit, however they do enjoy the occasional trip.

All of these women have a profound feeling of belonging to this country – a country, once a foreign land to their ancestors, but now a place that they call with pride and honour, as their only home.

Concluding Remarks

The paper highlighted the arrival of Indians in Zambia from India as being indirect via Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa. The reason for this can be largely attributed to the landlocked geography of Zambia, whilst the prevalent mode of transport used by the migrants in those times was the sea. It also points out that many of the migrants settled in Livingstone first (its being the capital of Northern Rhodesia till 1935) and then gradually moved to Lusaka.

The interviews with women of Indian origin made clear that women who migrated by 1950, did not take part in business openly; however women in their following generations have been seen to be quite actively involved in different public sectors. The reasons behind their absence from the economic activities in Zambia, by 1950s, are attached to their cultural bindings and economic systems which prevailed in their motherland India. The British ruled India almost for 190 years and prior to that it was ruled by the Mughals for about 500 years, where restrictions in women's involvement in activities outside their households were practiced. However, if we look into India's history before the inception of above two rulers, women's position was much better and they enjoyed higher status in society⁴⁵. Women had access to education as well as played an important role in the industrial and mercantile sectors in India. Even ancient epics reveal their professions as teachers, rulers and even as traders. Krishna highlights that during the British rule in India, the status of women degraded and their advancement was not a particular concern to the rulers⁴⁶. During the above periods (under the Mughal and British), we find that at the elementary education of girls ended at a tender age of eight or nine. According to Edwardes, the British government did very little to improve this in India⁴⁷.

As such, it is quite evident that the colonial world was a man's world. Naturally when women who left India during this period lacked education and their cultural aspects kept them behind the curtain as well. It has already been mentioned earlier that they were always supportive in their husband's businesses and worked as advisors as well. It is interesting to note that they did not lack the skill of business which, it is presumed, they must have acquired from their families, who were actively involved in trade.

The article establishes that how the Indian men and women, initially, faced a lot of challenges and hardship in Zambia but were able to handle them effectively. All most all of them are now the proud citizen of Zambia and consider themselves more Zambian than Indian.

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