

## **A Report of a USA Returnee** **Dr. Tarit K. Bose**

A person who had studied abroad and returned after passing an actual examination successfully is called a Foreign-returned or *Vilat-pherot*. If a person did not return after completing an examination successfully, he is called *Vilat-ghurot* or Foreign-Returnee. Since this time we are going to return from USA after spending almost four months there, we are, therefore, may be called as a *USA Returnee*.

We left India on April 8, and were scheduled to return to Kolkata again on Aug. 2. For our journey, we took Emirates Airlines from Kolkata with a stop-over in Dubai and after changing a plane flew direct to L.A. Kolkata-Dubai was with Airbus A320 and Dubai-L.A. was with Boeing 777. Boeing 777 is much smaller than the Jumbo jet, Boeing 747, which itself is much smaller than the World's largest Double-decker aircraft, Airbus A380, which we had seen earlier in Singapore parked on the Tarmac. From Dubai, we flew north above Caspian Sea and Aral Sea and near the City of Ektarienburg in Ural Mountains, where Czar Nicholas II and his family were murdered in 1918, because the reds feared an attempt to rescue them by White Army. It was, however, rumored that everybody did not die, and the youngest daughter, Anastasia, was injured and rescued - one Frau Anderson lived in Baden Baden area of Germany for some years, and was this Anastasia. There was a movie on this subject also.

We then went to the northern edge of Russia and, instead of going west, we went near the North Pole and traveled east and came down via Alaska. We saw the snow on mountains of Alaska, and could follow the route on the small screen in front of us. We found Sitka and Juneau, and later Vancouver of Canada, and further down along the west coast of USA direct to L.A. Looking back, when we return, we would avoid the occasional volcanic eruption in Iceland.

Here my stay was very fruitful. I collected all my notes and computer programs including my online graphics program which I wrote some years back and got all Linux and other necessary codes to be able to do my calculations. Also I got some of my books, which I had not taken back earlier; some are still left. I had collected earlier some interesting articles, like two articles of Hardy on Ramanujam, one article about life and work of von Neumann, Einstein's paper on Special relativity, etc. These were all in one my old Laptop, which stopped working. The contents in the hard disk could be completely recovered and could be put back to another

Laptop I had. What a surprise when I discovered the above articles about which I had completely forgotten. They would provide some interesting reading when we go back to Kolkata. I purchased a fairly powerful new Toshiba Laptop and put Linux operating system on it, to own a fully operational computing system with necessary graphics. I got some of my Latex edited manuscripts on it and loaded the Latex compiler. There were two manuscripts: Aerodynamic Noise and Airbreathing Propulsion. These I would have to complete.

I read several very interesting books by Thomas Friedman (The World is Flat), Nandan Nilekani (India Ideas), Bill Gates (The Road Ahead) and Jack Welch (Straight from the Gut). An interesting application of "Information Highway" I had when we visited our daughter in Albany/NY. There, to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Robi Thakur, they staged a drama, Rokto Karobi - but the rehearsal was conducted through Skype. The world has really become flat.

We visited Chicago and stayed with an Assamese Family, one block from the Obama home. Nearby a Shopping Center, called Michelle's, is coming up. The house we stayed was an old house - 160 years old, with beautiful old wooden floor, and a large number of big rooms and toilets in each of the three floors and basement. Because of such large number of rooms in each floor, I even lost my way. The family grows large number of Indian vegetables and greens, and also local seasonal flowers. In Chicago we drove along Lake Michigan, but did not get down from the car since it was cold and raining part of the time.

From Chicago, we went to Lexington/KY where I had spent three summers during 1986-89 on a National Science Foundation of USA supported collaborative research project with Professor Cremers of Mechanical Engineering. Prof. Cremers has passed away, but we visited his wife. We visited one Gujrati doctor couple in the University. They had a unique house built over a 9 acre sloping plot, where they have installed energy saving ground circulating water system to keep the water temperature throughout the year at 58 degrees Fahrenheit. The house has other features of using sun-light and is also built with thermal insulating sand stone. They have many plants and flowers, and also a bee farm, where the quality of bee honey depends on the kind of flower these bees collect. We received a gift of a bottle of light colored honey, apparently due to Russian flowers. We found a variety of exotic corns of different colors - gold, red and black. There is a fertilizer pit in the garden.

Just outside Lexington, we went to see at Breier some exquisite sample of artistic wares being displayed. Since we were in a horse country, we purchased some

beautiful book-marks with horse motif. We then went to Louisville and met some Assamese friends, who also grow a number of Assamese plants. One of them had 48 acres of land including a lake with fish and they could go over the entire plot only on a four wheeler.

Back to Albany via Chicago, we had Father's day lunch - an appropriate Fatherly buffet in a Chinese restaurant. We came back to L.A. on 22nd June. We visited Sacramento for the July 4th weekend holidays. The journey to Sacramento from L.A. by Interstate 5 was through very dry landscape, in comparison to highways in the East Coast, where it was always very green. From L.A. we first crossed the part of the Sierra Mountains over the 4200 ft Tejon Pass. About 100 miles from our home, at Grapevine, we had flat land. There was a canal going parallel to the free way bringing water to L.A. and also lot of small canals to supply the fields growing fruits and various vegetables. There are several lakes created by building dams.

Everything in California is different from the rest of the country. The gasoline price is about 50 cents higher than in the rest of the country, because of the most stringent emission standards. Because of very large economy, the effect of the economic downturn in California is darkest in the whole country. The number of unemployed people is largest in the whole country, as well as the budget deficit in a US state. On July 1st the budget did not get passed and the state legislature has gone for a one month vacation. As a result the state government employees would get a minimum of \$7.25 per hour till some decision is taken after the budget is passed probably after a month or two!

This is now party time in L.A. These parties are given by many friends. In fact, we have more parties than we have days to spare. On 31st July, - that is after about 10 days, we would take our journey back to India by Emirates and Inshallah, we would be in Kolkata on Aug. 2 avoiding the volcanic eruption in Iceland.