

NORTH EAST AS I SEE IT



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P.S.DATTA

ABOUT THE BOOK

Indian peripheries today are found to be sending a series of mind-boggling message to "We the people" of India. Probably there is a pattern in those messages though they are emanating from various corners of the Indian peripheries Punjab or Kashmir or India's North East. The present book, which is infact a collection of articles by an insider on north eastern tangle, tries capture the message from north east that may be found to be not so much different from the message that are being emanated from either Kashmir or Punjab. In the process the present collection touches upon issues like autonomy, colonialism, communalism, ethnicity, social versus political boundary, insurgency, and various facts of tribal life alongwith the issue of preservation or conservation of a tradition.

However, the underlying spirit in the present collection is clear and precise that tells in unambiguous terms that no people in India today, or for that matter no region, can aspire for growth and self-respect in isolation.

Rs. 90.00

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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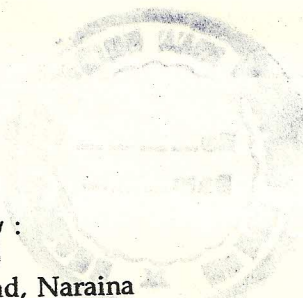
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For

Sutapa

*who is tolerating all the pains caused by my bohemian character
— as a token of my very sincere gratitude and appreciation*

PREFACE

National Emergency, imposed in 1975 (when I was just nearer my mid-twenties), provided me an opportunity to develop the technique to become lonely in a crowd and also the courage to enjoy that loneliness. Certain idiotic questions put to me by certain members of the team investigating into my political connections (for example : being a Bangalee by birth why I have opted for a research problem that involved extensive understanding of *Assamese* villages etc.) started penetrating into my thought — process and in the process in those early years of mine, full of youthful ambitions, I started developing a practice of soliloquy. Initially it was a fun but later it became a part of my nature that I continue to carry on as my very personal 'cross' till today.

Compulsions of life and realisation of self-limitations in the later decades took me much away from the active political scenario. My friends, who remained in the field of active politics, continued to have their own suffering in their own way, irrespective of the fact that many of them became leaders of our generation in state, regional and even national levels. I too, on my own humble way, continued to suffer in my self-chosen area of activity — research — which was neither so much rewarding nor glamorous — but equally painful and tortuous.

The bohemian character in me took me from one job to another but the hankering for an activist's role probably continued to burn inside even when I was apparently not conscious of that. As a result one day I discovered that I was not at all happy in producing foot-note-based articles for consumption of complacent and mutually-appreciating variety of academicians of my sort. I started thinking about the possible escape route and it occurred to me that probably communicating to the people through popular articles could be a way out and my training of soliloquy came in handy in the process. That was the origin of NORTH EAST AS I SEE IT. Initially I syndicated them through Eastern Press Service and

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