



Ambedkar Times *Weekly*

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FLORAL TRIBUTE TO HONORABLE MR. DEWAN CHAND AHIR SAHIB

(February 28, 1928 - July 12, 2012)

Prem K. Chumber

Editor-In-Chief:

Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba

Honorable Mr. Dewan Chand Ahir (lovingly called D.C. Ahir) dedicated his entire life for the spread of the mission of Bharat Ratan Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar for the betterment of the community. He was one of the few scholars whose views on Buddhism and the teachings of Babasaheb are valued



deeply among the intellectual circles across the world. He wrote many books on the history of Buddhism in South Asia and the philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He also wrote on the rise of Ad Dharm and Ambedkarite movement in Punjab (Dr. Ambedkar and Punjab, Delhi: B.R. Publications 1991). His seminal work on The Pioneers of Buddhist Revival in India published by Sri Satguru Publications, 1989 is one of the many widely read of his books. He also used to write poetry for Ujala paper edited by Sh. K.C. Sulekh, a well-known name in Ambedkarite circles. We fondly remember him and pay floral tribute to him on this day of leaving his mortal frame. We take pride in reproducing herewith one chapter from his seminal writings for the benefit of our esteemed readers!

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The Ad Dharm Movement and Dr. Ambedkar

When in 1915 Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was giving final touches to his Ph.D. thesis at Columbia University in New York, a Punjabi youth, who had gone to America a few years earlier, was involved in a dangerous mission of smuggling guns from California to the Punjab for inciting mutiny in India. This Punjabi youth later became famous as Babu Mangu

Ram, the founder of the Ad Dharm Movement. Mangu Ram was born in a small village Mugowal in district Hoshiarpur, Punjab on 14 January, 1886 in an untouchable family; his father was a leather merchant. As by then the doors of education had been opened to all by the British rulers, Mangu Ram was sent to the school in the nearby village, Mahilpur, but the treatment meted out to him by the Hindu teacher was far from human. Like Bhim Rao in Satara, Mangu Ram too was made to sit

tened back, never to go again to the school. And that was the end of his education.

With his education coming to an abrupt end, Mangu Ram became unemployed, and bit frustrated too. In 1909, he, along with some other

young men from the village, went to California, U.S.A. in order to earn some money by working

D. C. Ahir

in the Peach Orchards of Fresno and elsewhere in the San Joaquin valley of central California. Instead of earning money, he, however, became involved in the activities of the Ghadar Party, an international network of militant Punjabi nationalists led by Lala Hardayal. By his sheer devotion and sincerity to the cause of India's freedom, he came to be regarded as the most dependable and reliable member of the organization. In 1915, Mangu Ram volunteered to be one of the five Ghadarites accompanying a



outside the classroom. Not only that, even the teacher would not teach him directly; he was invariably given lesson through a Muslim student. Somehow, Mangu Ram passed his middle examination and joined high school at Bajwara, a nearby town. Here too. He was subjected to the same humiliation, and was made to sit outside the classroom. One day, it rained so heavily that in spite of taking shelter under a tree, Mangu Ram was completely drenched. And when the snow-balls, accompanied by high velocity winds, fell like missiles on him, he was unable to bear it any longer. So, he ran to take shelter inside the classroom. As soon as he had entered the room, the teacher saw him, and instead of showing any sympathy, he started beating him with a stick for having come inside. Weeping and crying, Mangu Ram went out, and somehow reached his home.

Unmindful of the insult and beating, Mangu Ram again went to the school next day. As soon as he reached there, he was surprised to see the teacher in the process of purifying the classroom by sprinkling water on the wooden table, chair and the mats on which the students used to sit. On seeing him, Brahmin teacher cried out, "Oh Chandal, you have come again".

Fearing another beating, Mangu Ram has-

shipload of guns and propaganda material headed for India. This ship was unfortunately intercepted by the British as Batavia, and was sealed. It remained sealed for nearly a year, with the five Ghadarites as prisoners inside. In the meanwhile, they were prosecuted in absentia, and sentenced to death for taking out the weapons illegally on the ship. On hearing the capital punishment, some patriot Indians in Germany decided to help the imprisoned Ghadarites.

Somehow, they managed to smuggle the prisoners out from the sealed ship, and sent them in different directions. Mangu Ram was put in a ship going to Manila. By mistake, however, the ship reached Singapore.

Unfortunately for Mangu Ram, here he was recognized by some traitor Indians who had earlier worked for the Ghadar Party. They informed the Police. By now, for running away from Batavia, death warrants had been issued by the British Government to be executed wherever any one of them was found. Accordingly, the Singapore Police began preparing for his execution. Then a miracle happened. Just half an hour before his execution, a gentleman named Barde, whom Mangu Ram had never seen or met, came, caught

(Contd. on next page)

(Original in English)

LETTER OF SUKHDEV TO MAHATMA GANDHI ON 20TH MARCH 1931

LETTER FROM SUKHDEV 1
MOST GRACIOUS MAHATMAJI,

Recent reports show that since the successful termination of your peace negotiations you have made several public appeals to the revolutionary workers to call off their movement at least for the present and to give you a last chance to try your non-violent cult. As a matter of fact, the calling off of any movement is neither an ideological nor a sentimental act. It is the consideration of the peculiar needs of different times that force the leaders to change their tactics. Let us presume that at the time of peace parley, you did not overlook the fact even for a single moment, and did not make a secret of it, that this was not going to be the final settlement. I think all intelligent people would have understood quite easily that after the introduction of all the reforms you acquire it would not be thought that the final stage was reached. The Congress is bound by its Lahore Resolution to carry on the Struggle relentlessly till the complete independence is achieved. In face of that Resolution, the peace and compromise is but a temporary truce which only means a little rest to organize better forces on a larger scale for the next struggle. The 1 possibility of compromise and a truce can be imagined and justified in the light of the above consideration alone. As regards the proper opportunity and the conditions on which any truce can be effected, it rests with the leaders of the movement to decide. In face of the Lahore Resolution you have thought it expedient to call off the active movement for the present, but nevertheless that Resolution stands. Similarly, as is evident from the very name—the Hindustan Socialist Republican Party the revolutionaries stand for the establishment of the Socialist Republic which is not a half-way house. They are bound to carry on the struggle till their goal is achieved and their ideal is consummated. But they would be quite apt to change

their tactics according to the changing circumstances and environments. Revolutionary struggle assumes different shapes at different times. It becomes sometimes open, sometimes hidden, sometimes purely agitational and sometimes a fierce life-and-death struggle. In the circumstances, there must be special factors, the consideration of which may prepare the revolutionaries to call off their movement. But no such definite idea has been advanced by you. Mere sentimental appeals do not and cannot count much in the revolutionary struggles.

Since your compromise you have called off your movement and consequently all of your prisoners have been released. But what about the revolutionary prisoners? Dozens of Ghadar party prisoners imprisoned since 1915 are still rotting in jails, in spite of having undergone the full terms of their imprisonments. Scores of martial law prisoners are still buried in these living tombs. And so are dozens of Babar Akali prisoners. Deogharh, Kakori, Machhua Bazaar and Lahore Conspiracy case prisoners are amongst those numerous still locked behind bars. More than half a dozen conspiracy trials are going on at Lahore, Delhi, Chittagong, Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere. Dozens of revolutionaries are absconding and amongst them are many females. More than half a dozen prisoners are actually waiting for their executions. What about all of these people? The three Lahore conspiracy case condemned prisoners, who have luckily come into prominence and who have acquired enormous public sympathy, do not form the bulk of the revolutionary party. Their fate is not the only consideration before the party. As a matter of fact their executions are expected to do greater good than the commutation of their sentences.

But in spite of all this, you are making public appeals asking them to call off their movement. Why should they do so? You have

not mentioned any very definite thing. In these circumstances your appeals mean you are joining hands with the bureaucracy to crush that movement, and your appeals amount to preaching treachery, desertion and betrayal amongst them. If that were not the case, then the best thing for you would have been to approach some of the prominent revolutionaries and to talk over the whole thing with them. You ought to have tried to convince them to call off their movement. I do not think you also share the general conservative notion that the revolutionaries are devoid of reason, rejoicing in destruction and devastation. Let us inform you that in reality the case is quite the contrary. They always consider the pros and cons of every step they take and they fully realize the responsibility which they thus incur and they attach greater importance to the constructive phase of the revolutionary programme than to any other, though in the present circumstances they cannot but occupy themselves with the destructive part of their programme.

The present policy of the Government towards them is to deprive them of the sympathy and support of the masses which they have won in their movement, and then crush them. In isolation they can be easily hunted down. In face of that fact any sentimental appeal to cause demoralization amongst their ranks would be utterly unwise and counter-revolutionary. It would be rendering direct assistance to the Government to crush them.

Therefore we request you either to talk to some revolutionary leaders—they are so many in jails—and come to terms with them or to stop these appeals. Please for goodness sake pursue one of these two alternative courses and pursue it whole-heartedly. If you cannot help them, then please have mercy on them. Let them alone.

They can better take care of them-



selves. They know that the hegemony of the revolutionary party in the future political struggle is assured. Masses are rallying round them and the day is not far off when they will be leading the masses under their banner towards their noble and lofty ideal—the Socialist Republic. Or if you seriously mean to help them, then have a talk with them to understand their point of view, and discuss the problem in detail.

Hope you will kindly consider the above request and let your view be known publicly.

Yours,

ONE OF THE MANY

Young India 23-4-1931

VOL. 51: 6 JANUARY, 1931 - 28 APRIL

1931 pages 477-478

Courtesy: Legacy of Bhagat Singh booklet
written by Prof. Jagmohan Singh

Forwarded by- Sita Ram Bansal

The Ad Dharm Movement and Dr. Ambedkar

(Continue from page 1)

him by the arm, took him out of the Thana, and putting him on the same ship in which Mangu Ram had come, he asked the Captain of the ship to sail for Manila. By the time the Police swung into action, the ship had crossed the Singapore Port Limits. Having failed to intercept the ship, the police caught hold of some drunkard; executed him to cover up their lapse, and announced that Mangu Ram had been executed. This news was later published in the Indian Newspapers.

For the next 7-8 years, Mangu Ram hid in the Philippines, and during this period he had no contact with his family as no letters could be written for fear of being intercepted. Taking him, therefore, as dead, his wife married Mangu Ram's elder brother, who was a widower.

The validity of the death warrant issued by the British Government lapsed in 1924. Then Mangu Ram thought of returning to India. Accordingly, he came back to Punjab in 1925. Soon thereafter, Mangu Ram became involved in another kind of freedom struggle, the liberation of the untouchables, the people among whom he was born, and the people who were meekly suffering the atrocities of the Hindus. Babu Mangu Ram's association with the Ghadar Party had broadened his outlook, and sharpened his skills as an organizer. Soon he found a band of like-minded young men involved in the social

work, and began organizing them in order to liberate the downtrodden from the clutches of the Hindu social slavery.

Encouraged by the response to his ideas, Babu Mangu Ram convened a Conference at his village Mughowal in district Hoshiarpur on 11-12 June, 1926. Addressing the largely attended Conference, Babu Mangu Ram proclaimed that the Untouchables constituted a separate Qaum, a religious community like the Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus, and those they were the original inhabitants of this country. Hence, the movement was named as Ad Dharm; and its leaders devised distinctive costume, bright red turbans and shashes; coined a new sacred mantra or symbol, "Sohang" and exhorted the people to call themselves as Ad Dharmis.

The primary object of the Ad Dharm was to give the untouchables an alternative religion. Its another object was to reform the society from within. As social movement, the Ad Dharm exhorted the people to abstain from immoral practices; to lead a life of purity and piety; to discard the use of alcohol, drugs, give education to boys and girls, and to treat all men and women equal in the society. On the whole, the movement was aimed at giving the untouchables a sense of pride and dignity as members of the Ad Dharm.

The headquarters of Ad Dharm Mandal were established in Jalandhar city from where the move-

ment was organized in a systematic manner, and the devoted missionaries spread the message far and wide in the Punjab, and even beyond. Since the Mandal had accepted Sahib Shri Guru Ravidass Ji as its spiritual leader, the movement became primarily popular amongst the Chamars, and they readily adopted the nomenclature of Ad Dharmi.

At the time, Babu Mangu Ram was organizing the untouchables of the Punjab under the banner of Ad Dharm; Dr. Ambedkar was fighting a similar battle in another part of the country. Though they were thousands of miles apart, yet their ideas and methods of struggle were almost identical. Both believed that the present day Scheduled Castes are not Hindus, and that their salvation lies only in being independent of the Hindu religion.

Both believed in self-help and advocated peaceful means to achieve their goal. Both laid the greatest emphasis on 'education'. Babasaheb considered "education" the key to all progress, and Mangu Ram says that only "education can lead us to Sachkhand (the realm of truth)." Again, Babasaheb exhorted the people to follow the Three Commandments of 'Education, Agitation and Organization' to gain power. According to Mangu Ram, the poor have three kinds of power: "Qaumiat (collective solidarity), Mazhab (spirituality) and Majlis (organization)".

Within a year of its founding,

the Ad Dharm movement created quite a stir in the Punjab by constant rallies and conferences, if forced the Government of the day to take notice of the problems of the untouchables. One of the reasons of the poverty and exploitation of the untouchables was the pernicious system of beggar, the system under which they were forced to live at the beck and call of others and were obliged to do a great deal of work without any remuneration whatsoever.

The Ad Dharm Mandal agitated against the system of beggar, and demanded its abolition. The Mandal also agitated for repealing the Punjab Land Alienation Act which prohibited the untouchables from buying even a small piece of land. The Ad Dharm movement reached its peak at the time of 1931 Census. As a result of their sustained propaganda, more than half a million untouchables declared themselves as Ad Dharmis.

This showed the organizational skill of its leaders. "The massive support", as says Mark Jueregensmeyer, "created political capital, and Mangu Ram used that capital in political ways. Ad Dharmi candidates stood for public offices and an alliance was created with the Unionist Party. In both instances, scheduled caste leaders supported by the Ad Dharm organization achieved public positions".

by D. C. Ahir

Courtesy: Dr. Ambedkar and Punjab



Ishwar Das Pawar
District and Sessions Judge (Retd.)

My Struggle in Life

More Instances of Insulting Discrimination

Besides the instances of humiliation already mentioned, a few more need to be added. These events will bring into focus the then prevailing distinctions between Hindus and the Achhuts (untouchables).

While in my village of Naangran during vacation, as a daily routine, I used to go to a seasonal pond about half a mile distant to take my bath early in the morning irrespective of inclement weather, rain or storm. The pond lay in the middle of the road and, till the water dried up, the path took a circuitous course along the bank of the pond till it joined the cutoff end of the road. Obviously it was the state property, and it did not include any part of any private land.

One fine morning as I was taking my bath in the pond, a Hindu of the close-by village, who resembled a ghost in appearance, happened to pass by. He knew me. On seeing me taking my bath in the pond, he flew into a rage, eyes red and face flushed. He angrily shouted at me, saying that dire consequences would follow if he saw me taking my bath there again. I felt deeply insulted and went back home with consuming bitterness in my mind. My father, however, counseled me patience, observing that Hindus had always behaved like that. It may be mentioned that the pond was used only for watering the domestic animals including dogs. There was nothing sacred about it. The incident hurt me grievously.

Once in hot season, I was on my way to Lahore, and I had to board a train at Garhshankar. I was travelling on foot to cover a distance of about fifteen miles as no conveyance was available. The footpath ran through deep, stony, and sandy khuds (seasonal ravines) interspersed with high and deep climbs

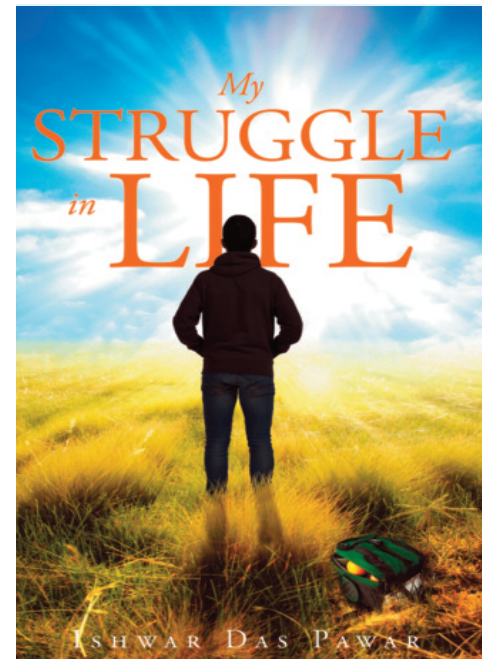
till it joined the kachcha (unpaved) road on the outskirts of village Binewal. From there up to village Kot Maira, the walk was not so bad. But beyond that, the road and footpath that lay after a descending slope led through stony and sandy terrain. Just before the sharp slope started, there was a piao (free water station for general public). After covering a distance of about ten miles in the summer heat, I was feeling awfully thirsty and therefore wanted to drink water at the piao. I asked the village man on duty there to serve me water. He came with a garvi (a small round shaped pitcher) full of water, but before he could pour water on my cupped hands, he enquired of me who I was. This question has always been a must with the Hindus. On learning that I was not a Hindu but an achhut (untouchable), he motioned me to a semi-cylindrical, carved-out piece of wood mounted on a thick piece of wood on which he would drop water and I was to catch at it with my cupped hands on the other end to quench my thirst. That pinched my conscience. I asked him to serve me water from the brass-garvi, but he declined on the ground that it was meant for Hindus only.

Then I suggested that the other aluminum garvi might be used. "But it is meant for Muslims" came a prompt reply. At that stage, a grasscutter villager came there and dropped down the bundle of grass he was carrying on his head. He was profusely perspiring under the impact of the heat and the burden. As he wiped the perspiration from his forehead and face with his soiled hands, he enquired as to what the matter was. On learning that an untouchable wanted water to be served from a garvi, his eyes flashed, and he said to me in an angry tone, "You want to be equated with Hindus and Muslims? If you want to drink from the wooden apparatus, well and good, otherwise buzz off." So I had to buzz off

without water. My mind was tormented. Righteous indignation gripped me. The rest of the journey became a hell due to overpowering thirst coupled with the burning heat.

Another instance: It was probably in 1942. After spending September vacation, we left our village on our journey back to Alipur, district of Muzaffargarh (now in Pakistan) where I was posted. From the village to Una, we had to travel by horses as, due to the rains, the roads had become unworthy for plying of buses. After we had travelled about three miles beyond Santokhgarh, we reached down the outskirts of the village of Nangarraan where we came by a roadside well. We were feeling thirsty, and the children were actually crying for water. Two Hindus of the village were seated on the parapet of the well, enjoying puffs of huqqa (hubble bubble, smoking pipe). We asked them for water. On coming to know that we were not Hindus but untouchables, one of them refused to give us water directly from the iron-pot fitted to the lift. We declined to accept water from the rusty and dirty rectangular tin by which he offered us water. His other companion was, however, a bit reasonable. He said to him, "Look at the good-looking children, so well-dressed; they are thirsty.

Give them water as they desire." But the Hindu in the other man prevailed, and he did not listen to his prudent advice. So we walked on with our thirsty children crying for water. After we had covered about a mile, there we came by an unmanned roadside well fitted with a wooden device dhingli, (stone weighed lever fitted with a rope strung pail to retrieve water from the well). We stopped there, drew water from the well, and all of us drank water to our satiation. Lastly, I had not yet entered service though I had done my BA. One day, Mohan Lal of the Servants of the People Society and also in charge



of the Achhutodhar Mandal located in the Lajpat Rai Bhavan, Professor Surya Kanta of the DAV College, and myself were going on the Mohan Lal Road. Mohan Lal was a well-known social worker and was considered an authority on the problems of the untouchables. Even Gandhi Ji used to consult him on this subject occasionally. Professor Surya Kanta was a noted Hindi scholar. Needless to say, both of them were so-called high-caste Hindus. As we came by a lassi shop, they proposed to have a glassful of lassi (buttermilk) each as it was very hot. They asked the shopkeeper to supply us three glassfuls of lassi. After a little, while two glassfuls were brought and when asked about the third one, he refused to serve me lassi in his glass because he happened to know me. Mohan Lal and Professor Surya Kanta were completely taken by surprise. They never thought such a thing would happen in the cosmopolitan city of Lahore. They were visibly upset and told the shopkeeper in an angry tone that if he so liked, he could also have the price of the glass itself, but to behave that way was an unpardonable affront to all of us. On hearing the exchange of arguments, quite a number of persons gathered there. The shopkeeper stood firm in protecting and safeguarding the Hindu dharma, which would have been stigmatized and polluted if he had served lassi to me in his glass. I felt extremely insulted and slighted. It was a biting experience never to be forgotten.



Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD

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Goodie Takhar, PhD

Dwindling Dalit Leadership

Dalits are increasingly facing the challenge of dwindling leadership both in terms of quantity and quality. It is a matter of real concern and worry for the masses belonging to the weaker sections of the society. My immediate provocation for writing this piece is the recently reshuffled Council of Ministers of PM Narendra Modi.

There are 12 Scheduled Caste Ministers – 1 of Cabinet rank and 11 Ministers of State. It is a glaring imbalance, only one cabinet rank minister for about 20% of the population, which may be noticed easily. But my intension is not to underline, though an important point, this issue. I would confine myself on the vac-

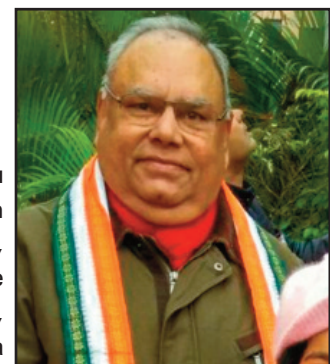
dalits divided and continue to rule over them. This process is directly responsible for the situation where it is difficult to find a leader of pan-India status and image among dalits. Babasaheb Ambedkar realized this undesirable anomaly but it was too late and he quit the scene in December, 1956 in his death. Babu Kanshi Ram understood the problem and termed the current lot of dalit politicians as 'Chamchas' (Stooges). The situation is becoming acute with every passing year after year. There is no line of hierarchy among the dalit politicians who can really claim their presence and recognition throughout the length and breadth of India. None

of them have been Ministers for many years. But still the predicament remains; no one enjoys the status of a leader by his own right.

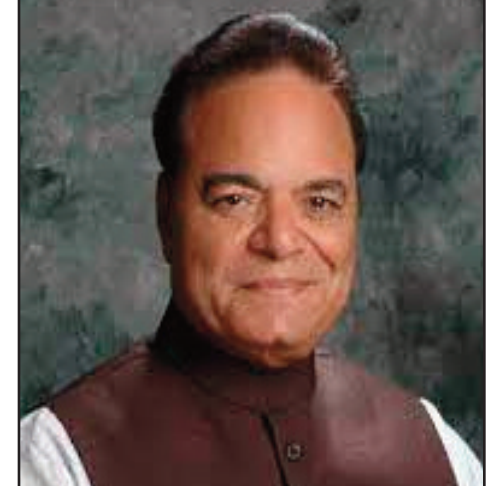
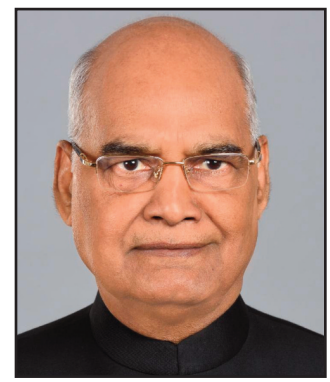
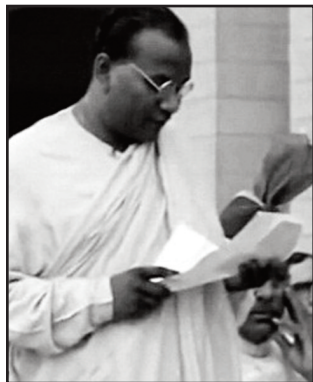
I will not go deep into history and start from contemporary times with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who proved his mettle to be leader by his own right and contributed a great deal in handling the issues of the community besides his immense contribution in the national affairs. He tried his best to bring along many of his associates viz. Dadasaheb B.K. Gaikwad, N. Shivam, Joginder Nath Mandal, Seth Kishan Dass among others, with a view to generate a second line of leadership but succeeded only par-

tially. Babu Manguram Mugowalia, a Gadarite Babu, played a sterling role in motivating dalit youth under the flag of Ad-dharam Mandal. Babasaheb Ambedkar was not oblivious of the requisite needs of developing a trained cadre of leaders.

Towards the end of his demise in December, 1956, he endeavored to establish 'School of Politics'



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
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uum in the hierarchy of dalit leadership which is widening over the years since independence. Unfortunately, it is evident that a joint electorate as against separate electorate envisaged by PM Ramsey MacDonald in 1932 has resulted in this undesirable situation. Mahatma Gandhi and other Hindu leaders tricked and blackmailed Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and made him sign the Poona Pact, 1932. The new constitution stipulated enabling provisions for affirmative action for the empowerment of dalits in form of reservations including political reservations for reserved seats in parliament and legislative assemblies. These provisions for political reservation were initially made for ten years. But it is interesting to note that no political party wants to undo this in the name of so-called 'merit' and 'equality before law' even after more than 70 years. It suits them to keep



of the Ministers in the current central government has the stature and status to claim to be a leader beyond their electoral constituencies or may be their own states. Not that these Ministers are not able or capable, if one simply goes by their educational qualifications, experience, professional and political success - at least two of them are retired IAS bureaucrats, two or three are qualified doctors, one or two are academic doctors and more than two

and did so but later in the absence of Babasaheb, it could not take off. Later on, after the launching of Republican Party, these leaders showed some
(Contd. on next page)

“Freedom of mind is the real freedom.

A person, whose mind is not free though he may not be in chains, is a slave, not a free man.

One whose mind is not free, though he may not be in prison, is a prisoner and not a free man.

One whose mind is not free though alive, is no better than dead.

Freedom of mind is the proof of one's existence.”

— Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar,

Writings And Speeches: A Ready Reference Manual

Dwindling Dalit Leadership

(Continue from page 4)

promise and further developed yet another breed of leaders like B.R. Khabragade in Maharashtra, B.P. Maurya in UP, Lahori Ram Balley in Punjab who could garner support and recognition beyond their respective regional domains but could not make a pan-India dent. On the other hand, just to counter Ambedkar, Congress Party propped up leaders like Babu Jagjivan Ram, D. Sanjivaya, Prithvi Singh Azad among others. Jagjivan Ram showed his political acumen and took the risk in 1977 to grab the coveted position of PM but the caste-machinations did not allow it to happen. Jagjivan Ram missed the chance to be one of the best PMs of India. In subsequent years, leaders like President K.R. Narayanan, Buta Singh, Chand Ram, Ram Vilas Paswan, Sushil Shinde, Meira Kumar, Kumari Shelja, P.L. Punia, Udit Raj, Charanjit Singh Atwal, inter alia, under various dispensations came on stage but could not go far. Babu Kanshi Ram, a visionary leader after Babasaheb Ambedkar developed a trained and motivated cadre in the name of BAMCEF and propped up leaders like Mayawati. Kanshi Ram could not hold on because of his paralytic sickness and Mayawati got confined to UP and finally bogged down under her own baggage of said to be 'greed for

money'. She did not allow a second line of leadership to come up, unfortunately. Under various political formations currently in the non-BJP outfits, leaders like Ramdas Athawale, Prakash Ambedkar, Raj Rattan Ambedkar in Maharashtra, Jeevan Malla in the South, Chardrashekhar Azad (Ravan) in UP, Jeevan Mavani in Gujrat, Chirag Paswan in Bihar, Santokh Singh Chaudhary, Harinder Khalsa, Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal, Avinash Chander, Sushil Rinku, Jarnail Nangal, Sukhwinder Kotli in Punjab are engaged in representing dalit communities but none of them has the promise and wherewithal to do so effectively and come up to face the challenges of the future. Dalits, it seems, are boarding a rudderless ship. Political structures and rules of the game, willfully and cunningly created by the vested interests to keep dalits on the margins, tend to divide dalit votes and party whips restrict them to raise important issues and vote with a sense of freedom. The problem is acute. The MPs and MLAs elected from the reserved seats work for their respective parties and not for dalits as ordained in the constitution. It may be observed, before I conclude, that all the 12 Ministers in the BJP government are almost dummies. Some dalit leaders in BJP are roped in by the crumbs. It is projected that

BJP/RSS are taking due care of the hitherto neglected sections of the society both politically and socially. One may count and list these names as Gautam Dushyant, Vijay Sampla, Som Parkash, Hans Raj Hans, Sunita Duggal, Rajesh Bagha, Rattan Lal Kataria, one or two Governors and to cap it all Mahamahim Rashtrapati Ram Nath Kovind. Nothing is changing on ground. The dictum of 'one vote - one value' has been negated willfully. I am sorry to add. Though it is a fact that BJP by now is the largest party having dalit MPs and MLAs in India yet the fact remains that BJP could get this distinction not by winning over dalits or doing something concrete for them but by sheer mathematics of dividing the votes on one hand and exploiting the poverty and under-development inflicted on these hapless masses.

What is the solution? It requires an in-depth study and analysis of the issue. It seems it would take another century to change the Manuwadi mindset to do away the social maladies like caste system in spite of all the constitutional provisions. I think drastic steps are required to be taken. The beginning should be made by the dalit leadership itself. Start with abolishing and withdrawal of political reservations. It has outlived its utility. I think, after

that, no dalit would be able to make it to the Parliament and Assemblies. First the major parties like BJP, Congress Party and other Hinduwadi outfits would not risk to field SC candidates. Second, even if they field some as a face saving exercise, SC candidates would not win because of caste prejudices, lack of money and muscle power. On the other hand parties like BSP, Azad Samaj Party, Republican Party, Dravid Bahujan Party, and others should contest on the basis of the slogan given by Babu Kanshi Ram - 'Jis ki jitni sankhiya bhari; utni us ki hissedari'. Most of the SC candidates are unlikely to make it and get elected still. That would tend to trigger a real revolution both in the society and the polity. That is what we need to realize the dreams of Babasaheb Ambedkar and Kanshi Ram. The 'Chamcha Age' would end and dalits would have leadership which would have to perform to remain in the reckoning. It would tend to result in real peaceful revolution under the constitutional arrangement which Ambedkar made himself so laboriously. Faiz Ahmed Faiz may give some encouragement and hope to the teeming millions: -
Eh Khaak Nashinon Uth Baitho;
Woh Waqt Mukaabil aa pahuncha.
Jab Takht Giraye Jayenge;
Aur Taj Uchale Jayenge.



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Sue Frost

Sacramento County Supervisor. District 4



Sue Frost

Embracing Laura's Law

Many of you may have recalled me writing about Laura's Law in the past, as well as other measures in Sacramento County to address the growing concern around mental health. When I previously wrote about Laura's Law, it was from the perspective of an ambivalent public servant with an im-

pending decision on whether or not to implement the law in Sacramento County. Now I want to write from the perspective of someone who decided to support Laura's Law and is excited to see what we can achieve with this new tool at our disposal. If you have not been following along, I will provide a refresher.



Laura's Law was signed into law in 2002 following the tragic death of a young woman in Nevada County by a man with severe, untreated mental illness. Laura's Law established the ability for counties to provide for assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) of individuals who pose a threat to themselves and those around them. For those sentenced to AOT, it means they will be connected with mental health treatment they otherwise may have resisted or simply not had access to. Since its creation, a majority of large counties in California have adopted Laura's Law and those that have, have seen significant improvements in their communities.

Successes for communities that have implemented Laura's Law have many looks. Success looks like health improvements with reductions in hospitalizations and homelessness. It also has a financial component. As I am sure you can imagine, the costs associated with treating the mentally ill in hospitals, in shelters, and even in jails, are substantial. Counties that implement Laura's Law naturally see their expenses relating to hospitalizations and incarceration go down as the mentally ill take up fewer beds in either facility. In Nevada County, the origin of Laura's Law, those reductions were 46.7% for hospitalizations, and 65.1% for incarcerations. Most notably, Nevada County saw a 61.9% reduction homelessness, something I am sure we can all agree would benefit Sacramento County.

So why now has Sacramento County decided it was time for Laura's Law? In the past, the county

had explicitly opted out of Laura's Law. It was before my time on the Board, but as I understand, there were originally concerns for the cost associated with providing AOT. Then, I am told that the County was confident it had provided adequate resources for those most in need of mental health resources. Following legislation passed last year, the County was put in a position of either opting-out again, or automatically being opted-in. To opt out, the County would have had to submit a compelling reason for doing so. This required a thorough assessment of current service available in addition to community outreach. Ultimately, the decision came to the Board of Supervisors.

Even with the information available to me, I initially did not support Laura's Law. I had personal liberty concerns with forcing people to receive treatment. Still, I maintained an open mind, and as I often do, I asked my constituents for their views on the issue. One stood out more than others as a constituent approached me at a community meeting and shared with me the story of her son and gave me a book that discussed the realities of serious mental illness. I found the story compelling and it truly helped me understand the need for Laura's Law. It helped me understand more about Anosognosia, also called "lack of insight." It is a symptom of severe mental illness experienced by some that impairs a person's ability to understand and perceive their illness. It is the single largest reason why people with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder refuse medications or do not seek treatment, and we are not helping these people by sitting back while they suffer.

AOT is a simple but effective tool that can save not only the lives of those afflicted with mental illness, but it can improve the lives of everyone around. Especially those closest to them. I am confident that we have given a tool to law enforcement, local hospitals, and the countless number of people and organizations working to get our homeless population under control. I am glad that we have finally embraced Laura's Law and I look forward to seeing how it helps our community improve our health and well-being.

County Budget Passed

In June, Sacramento County approved our 2021-2022 budget. While

the details of this are complicated as the budget itself is several hundred pages long, I want to take this opportunity to explain some of the highlights in an easy to digest way.

First, let's cover the good news. The county was able to increase services this year in a number of categories. While the list is far too long to go over in this format, here are a few you may find important.



In the midst of a call to defund Sheriff's Departments both nationwide and locally, Sacramento County's Sheriff Department actually grew their budget and increased several positions, such as 911 call dispatchers, jail security officers, and records officers.

The number of Park Rangers have increased, with a goal to patrol and increase safety along the American River Parkway.

Put in \$22.5 million in extra general fund dollars for road maintenance needs. Investing \$20 million now could save as much as \$15-25 million in the future.

Created a new system that will be used to send mental health specialists to non-violent mental health emergencies. This does not replace our Mobile Crisis Support Teams (Law enforcement + mental health unit), it adds to it.

Added money to our Home-

less Initiative designed to get homeless people off the streets. Implements the final phase of getting body cameras for all Sheriff's Deputies, Probation Officers, and Regional Parks Rangers.

Added money to the Regional Parks capital needs to more seriously cut into the \$72 million backlog in Regional Parks construction needs.

We still have \$300 million from the federal government in the form of American Rescue Plan Act funding that has not yet been distrib-

uted. This money will begin to be discussed at the Board of Supervisors Tuesday (6/15), with allocations to begin within the next three months. More information to follow.

Next, let's go over the bad news.

This budget is balanced, but it is balanced with approximately \$120 million in one-time state resources. So while we were able to increase services this year, this isn't sustainable in the long-run.

While we added \$11 million to our County Reserves, we are still woefully lacking in reserves and still have far to go until we get to an adequate level that will protect us from reducing services if we see a downturn in revenue.

Summer Heat Risk for Medication Users

As the weather heats back up it's important for everyone to have a plan for staying cool and hydrated. It is especially important for those who may



be extra susceptible to heat and dehydration due to certain medications.

Some medications can impair the body's ability to regulate temperature. During hot and humid weather, individuals taking medications can be at increased risk of developing excessive body temperature, or hyperthermia.

Individuals taking certain medications, including those used to treat mental illness, need to take extra precautions to ensure they have a

(Contd. on next page)



Surinder Kaur and Param Jit Suman celebrated the arrival of their newly wedded son Ajay Kumar and his bride Navdeep Kaur from India. They thanked Dhan Dhan Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at the Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg (CA) for His blessings on last Sunday, July 11, 2021 with Sukhmani Sahib Path and Langar Sewa. Bhai Bhupinder Singh's Jatha did the Shabad Kirtan in addition to Bhai Gurnam Singh and Bhai Ompal Singh. Ajay Kumar is Faqira Mehmi's nephew. Mr. O.P. Balley and Abhishek Pal congratulated the family. My Waheguru bless the newlyweds with a happy and long married life.



Change of Name

I, Baljit s/o Pritam Dass
Residing at: 1273 Old West Dr
Sacramento, California, USA-95834

From: Baljit

To: Baljit Heer

Now I have changed my name

All concerned Kindly note it.

(Continue from page 6)
plan for staying cool and hydrated," says Dr. Ryan Quist, Sacramento County Behavioral Health Director.

Those with chronic medical conditions are especially vulnerable, e.g. heart and pulmonary disease, diabetes and alcoholism, etc. Heat exhaustion is the most common heat-related condition, which is most likely to occur in people who are involved in physical activity outdoors during heat waves.

Keep as cool and hydrated as possible: drink plenty of water, avoid spending time outside, especially during the hottest part of the day, and limit outside activities as much as possible. Cooling down a few hours a day will allow the body to recover and tolerate the heat better for the rest of the day.

"It is important for individuals to continue taking their medications as prescribed," says Quist. "Those with questions or concerns regarding medications and heat should contact their prescribing clinician."

Don't get caught unprepared as temperatures again climb into the triple digits. Have a plan to stay cool, stay hydrated and be aware of the signs and symptoms of heat-related

illness.

FAA Awards \$48.6M to SacCounty Airports

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will award \$8 billion in grants



to U.S. airports to keep workers employed, enable construction projects to proceed, and help U.S. airports continue to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding for the grants comes from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021.

The Sacramento County Department of Airports will receive

\$48.6 million in total, with more than \$43.1 million going to airport recovery efforts, and \$5.5 million for eligible in-terminal concessionaires.

"This Airport Rescue Plan Act grant will help keep our workers employed and will facilitate the continued recovery of our airlines and tenants as more of our customers begin traveling again," said Cindy Nichol, Director of Airports for Sacramento County.

Passenger traffic at Sacramento International Airport has been recovering from the nadir in April 2020 when passenger traffic was down 95 percent. However, the recovery is far from complete, as May 2021 was down 23 percent versus May 2019, and the Airport is projected to finish the fiscal year 2020-2021 down 49.8 percent versus FY2018-2019.

The ARPA funding provides economic relief to eligible commercial

service, reliever and general aviation airports. The money will help keep people safe and employed by reimbursing operational expenses, debt service payments and costs related to combating the spread of pathogens at the airports. Airport operators can also use the money to provide rent relief to in-terminal retail and concession companies. Among other provisions, the legislation requires that airport operators continue to employ at least 90 percent of their pre-pandemic employees.

Additional program information and the amount of funding each airport is eligible for can be found at the FAA's website.

The Sacramento County Department of Airport is responsible for planning, developing, operating and maintaining the county's four airports: Sacramento International Airport, Executive Airport, Mather Airport and Franklin Field. Sacramento International Airport offers more than 155 daily nonstop flights on 12 domestic and international carriers to 36 destinations. The regional economic impact of the Sacramento County airport system is more than \$4 billion annually. For more information, visit sacramento.aero.

UNPUBLISHED PREFACE THE BUDDHA AND HIS DHAMMA

Source Courtesy: Columbia University
www.columbia.edu

April 6, 1956

[Text provided by Eleanor Zelliot,
as prepared by Vasant Moon]

A question is always asked to me: how I happen[ed] to take such [a] high degree of education. Another question is being asked: why I am inclined towards Buddhism. These questions are asked because I was born in a community known in India as the "Untouchables." This preface is not the place for answering the first question. But this preface may be the place for answering the second question.

The direct answer to this question is that I regard the Buddha's Dhamma to be the best. No religion can be compared to it. If a modern man who knows science must have a religion, the only religion he can have is the Religion of the Buddha. This conviction has grown in me after thirty-five years of close study of all religions.

How I was led to study Buddhism is another story. It may be interesting for the reader to know. This is how it happened.

My father was a military officer, but at the same time a very religious person. He brought me up under a strict discipline. From my early age I found certain contradictions in my father's religious way of life. He was a Kabirpanthi, though his father was Ramandi. As such, he did not believe in Murti Puja (Idol Worship), and yet he performed Ganapati Puja--of course for our sake, but I did not like it. He read the books of his Panth. At the same time, he compelled me and my elder brother to read every day before going to bed a portion of [the] Mahabharata and Ramayana to my sisters and other persons who assembled at my father's house to hear the Katha. This went on for a long number of years.

The year I passed the English Fourth Standard Examination, my community people wanted to celebrate the occasion by holding a public meeting to congratulate me. Compared to the state of education in other communities, this was hardly an occasion for celebration. But it was felt by the organisers that I was the first boy in my community to reach this stage; they thought that I had reached a great height. They went to my father to ask for his permission. My father flatly refused, saying that such a thing would inflate the boy's head; after all, he has only passed an examination and done nothing more. Those who wanted to celebrate the event were greatly disappointed. They, however, did not give way. They went to Dada Keluskar, a personal friend of my father, and asked him to intervene. He agreed. After a little argumentation, my father yielded, and the meeting was held. Dada Keluskar presided. He was a literary person of his time. At the end of his address he gave me as a gift a copy of his book on the life of the Buddha, which he had written for the Baroda Sayajirao Oriental Series. I read the book with great interest, and was greatly impressed and moved by it.

I began to ask why my father did not introduce us to the Buddhist lit-

erature. After this, I was determined to ask my father this question. One day I did. I asked my father why he insisted upon our reading the Mahabharata and Ramayana, which recounted the greatness of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas and repeated the stories of the degradation of the Shudras and the Untouchables. My father did not like the question. He merely said, "You must not ask such silly questions. You are only boys; you must do as you are told." My father was a Roman Patri-



arch, and exercised most extensive Patria Pretestas over his children. I alone could take a little liberty with him, and that was because my mother had died in my childhood, leaving me to the care of my auntie.

So after some time, I asked again the same question. This time my father had evidently prepared himself for a reply. He said, "The reason why I ask you to read the Mahabharata and Ramayana is this: we belong to the Untouchables, and you are likely to develop an inferiority complex, which is natural. The value of [the] Mahabharata and Ramayana lies in removing this inferiority complex. See Drona and Karna--they were small men, but to what heights they rose! Look at Valmiki--he was a Koli, but he became the author of [the] Ramayana. It is for removing this inferiority complex that I

ask you to read the Mahabharata and Ramayana."

I could see that there was some force in my father's argument. But I was not satisfied. I told my father that I did not like any of the figures in [the] Mahabharata. I said, "I do not like Bhishma and Drona, nor Krishna. Bhishma and Drona were hypocrites. They said one thing and did quite the opposite. Krishna believed in fraud. His life is nothing but a series of frauds. Equal dislike I have for Rama. Examine

was the only religion which a society awakened by science could accept, and without which it would perish. I also pointed out that for the modern world Buddhism was the only religion which it must have to save itself. That Buddhism makes [a] slow advance is due to the fact that its literature is so vast that no one can read the whole of it. That it has no such thing as a bible, as the Christians have, is its greatest handicap. On the publication of this article, I received many calls, written and oral, to write such a book. It is in response to these calls that I have undertaken the task.

To disarm all criticism I would like to make it clear that I claim no originality for the book. It is a compilation and assembly plant. The material has been gathered from various books. I would particularly like to mention Ashvaghosha's Buddhavita [= Buddhacharita], whose poetry no one can excel. In the narrative of certain events I have even borrowed his language.

The only originality that I can claim in [=is] the order of presentation of the topics, in which I have tried to introduce simplicity and clarity. There are certain matters which give headache[s] to the student of Buddhism. I have dealt with them in the Introduction.

It remains for me to express my gratitude to those who have been helpful to me. I am very grateful to Mr. Nanak Chand Rattua of Village Sakrulli and Mr. Parkash Chand of Village Nangal Khurd in the district of Hoshiarpur (Punjab) for the burden they have taken upon themselves to type out the manuscript. They have done it several times. Shri Nanak Chand Rattu took special pains and put in very hard labour in accomplishing this great task. He did the whole work of typing etc. very willingly and without caring for his health and [=or] any sort of remuneration. Both Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu and Mr. Parkash Chand did their job as a token of their greatest love and affection towards me. Their labours can hardly be repaid. I am very much grateful to them.

When I took up the task of composing the book I was ill, and [I] am still ill. During these five years there were many ups and downs in my health. At some stages my condition had become so critical that doctors talked of me as a dying flame. The successful rekindling of this dying flame is due to the medical skill of my wife and Dr. Malvankar.

They alone have helped me to complete the work. I am also thankful to Mr. M. B. Chitnis, who took [a] special interest in correcting [the] proof and to go [=in going] through the whole book.

I may mention that this is one of the three books which will form a set for the proper understanding of Buddhism. The other books are: (i) Buddha and Karl Marx; and (ii) Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ancient India. They are written out in parts. I hope to publish them soon.

B. R. Ambedkar
26 Alipur Road, Delhi
6-4-56

his conduct in the Sarupnakha [= Shurpanakha] episode [and] in the Vali Sugriva episode, and his beastly behaviour towards Sita." My father was silent, and made no reply. He knew that there was a revolt.

This is how I turned to the Buddha, with the help of the book given to me by Dada Keluskar. It was not with an empty mind that I went to the Buddha at that early age.

I had a background, and in reading the Buddhist Lore I could always compare and contrast. This is the origin of my interest in the Buddha and His Dhamma.

The urge to write this book has a different origin. In 1951 the Editor of the Mahabodhi Society's Journal of Calcutta asked me to write an article for the Vaishak Number. In that article I argued that the Buddha's Religion

Mr. D. C. Ahir's Writings

1. India's Debt to Buddhism, 1964, 1996
 2. Buddhism and Ambedkar, 1968, 1990
 3. Buddhism in the Capital of India, 1969
 4. Buddhism in the Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, 1971
 5. Buddhism in Modern India, 1972
 6. Buddhist Contribution to the World Culture and Civilization, Co-Edited with Ananda W.P. Guruge, 1977
 7. How and Why Buddhism Declined in India, 1978, 1996
 8. Buddhist Shrines in India, 1986, 2000
 9. Maharashtra: The Land of Buddhism, 1988
 10. Heritage of Buddhism, 1989
 11. Buddhism in North India, 1989
 12. The Pioneers of Buddhist Revival in India, 1989
 13. Buddhism in Modern India, Revised Edition, 1991
 14. Buddhism in South India, 1992
 15. Himalayan Buddhism: Past and Present, 1993
 16. Gautama Buddha, 1994
 17. Buddha Gaya through the Ages, 1994
 18. Asoka the Great, 1995
 19. A Panorama of Indian Buddhism, 1995
 20. The Status of the Laity in Buddhism, 1996
 21. Essays on Buddhism: Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan, Edited, 1997
 22. Buddhism: India: 50 Years of Independence: 1947-1997; Status, Growth and Development, Vol. 6, 1998
 23. Buddhism in North India and Pakistan, 1998
 24. Vipassana: A Universal Buddhist Meditation Technique, 1999
 25. Glimpses of Sri Lankan Buddhism, 2000
 26. The Influence of the Jatakas on Art and Literature, 2000
 27. Buddhist Customs and Manners, 2000
 28. Buddhist Cave Temples in India, 2000
 29. Buddhism in South-East Asia: A Cultural Survey, 2001
 30. Bamiyan Buddhas: Senseless Destruction by Taliban, 2001
 31. Buddhism in India after Dr. Ambedkar (1956-2002), 2003
 32. Buddhist Sites and Shrines in India: History, Art and Architecture, 2003
 33. Buddhist Art, History and Culture: Essay by Prof. L.M. Joshi, Edited, 2004
 34. Worship and Devotion in Buddhism, 2004
 35. Buddhism and Ambedkar, Revised Edition, 2004
 36. Buddhism Declined in India: How and Why, 2005
 37. The Holy Buddha, 2007
 38. Sravasti: Where the Buddha Spent 25 Retreats, 2008
 39. Buddhism and Modern Hindus, 2009
 40. Dhammapada: Meaning and Message, 2009
 41. Buddhism in the Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, Revised Edition, 2009
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 43. Buddhism in India: Re-Discovery, Revival and Development, 2010
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 45. Buddhism and Hinduism Ambedkarism
 46. Babasaheb's Message, 1962
 47. Gandhi and Ambedkar, 1969
 48. Dr. Ambedkar and Indian Constitution, 1973
 49. Dr. Ambedkar on Buddhism, 1982
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 52. Dr. Ambedkar and Punjab, 1992
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 54. Gandhi and Ambedkar: A Comparative Study, Revised Edition, 1995, 1999
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 56. Selected Speeches of Dr. Ambedkar (1927-1956), 1997 2000
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 58. Dr. Ambedkar's Vision of Dhamma: An Assessment, 1998
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 61. Dr. Ambedkar on Islam, 1996
 62. Dr. Ambedkar on Christianity in India, 1996
 63. Dr. Ambedkar on the British Raj, 1997
 64. Dr. Ambedkar on Indian History, 1997
 65. Dr. Ambedkar on Jews and Negroes, 1998
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 68. The Bhagavadgita and the Dhammapada by Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan, 1978, 1998
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- Conferences/Seminars**
1. International Seminar-cum-Vipassana Course at Dhammagiri, Igatpuri, Maharashtra, 20 December 1986-1st January 1987.
 2. National Seminar on Dr. Ambedkar and Buddhism, Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 15 December 1987.
 3. All India Seminar on Buddhism and National Unity, Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 16-18 March, 1988.
 4. Seminar on India-Sri Lanka Cultural Interaction organised by Asoka Mission, New Delhi, 31 July-2 August 1990.
 5. International Buddhist Conference, Japanese Temple, Bodhgaya, 5-10 December, 1990.
 6. Seminar on Dr. Ambedkar, Politics and Religion, organised by Bodhisattva Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Maha Sabha, Lucknow, 9 February 1991.
 7. National Seminar on Dr. Ambedkar, Science and Society, National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi, 8 March 1991.
 8. International Workshop on Dr. Ambedkar, Buddhism and Social Change, organised by the Bhikkhu Jagdish Kashyap. Institute of Buddhist and Asian Studies, Samath, 29-31 March, 1991.
 9. National Seminar on Dr. Ambedkar organised by the Government of India, Ministry of Welfare, New Delhi, 15 April, 1991.
 10. National Seminar on Dr. Ambedkar organised by SahityaAkademi, New Delhi, 18-20 August 1991.
 11. Seminar on Contribution of Buddhism to Modern India – Services rendered by AnagarikaDharmapala and Dr. Ambedkar, Maha Bodhi Society of India, Sarnath, 18-20 November 1991.
 12. National Convention on World Peace and Humanity through Buddhism, Maha Bodhi Society of India, New Delhi, 14 December 1991.
 13. Seminar on Buddhist Revival Movement in India organised by the Maha Bodhi Society of India, Lucknow, 8 March 1992.
 14. Seminar on the place of Buddhism in Dr. Ambedkar's Thought, Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 12 April, 1992.
 15. National Seminar on Moho Pandit Rahul Sankrityayan, organised by the Head of the Department of Pali &Prakrit, Nagpur University, Nagpur, 19-20 March, 1994.
 16. National Seminar on Future Priorities, Programmes and Role of Babasaheb Ambedkar National Institute of Social Sciences relevant to thoughts and philosophy of Dr. Ambedkar and Contemporary issues of Socio-Economic Development of Weaker Sections of Society, organised by Dr. Babasahed Ambedkar National Institute of Social Sciences, Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, 12-14 April 1994.
 17. International Seminar on Vipassana – Its Relevance to the Present World, organised by Vipassana Research Institute, Igatpuri and hosted by VipassanaSadhanaSansthan, New Delhi, along-with Yoga Club, I.I.T., New Delhi 15-17 April, 1994.
 18. Symposium on Hindu and Buddhist Traditions: Distinction without Difference?, organised by Max Muller Bhavan with and at India International Centre, 29 February 1996.
 19. National Consultation on Meeting of Religions and Cultures, organised by Commission for Education and Cultures, CBCI Centre, I, Ashok Place, New Delhi, Catholic Bishops Conference of India, 24-28 February, 1997.
 20. Seminar on 50 Years of Independence – Contribution of Buddhism, organised by the Maha Bodhi Society of India, Sarnath, 15 August 1997
 21. Seminar on Buddha Dhamma and its Relevance to the Contemporary Society, organised by Buddha Dhamma Sangha, (Buddhist Students Union), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 5 March 1999.
 22. World Conference on Religious Freedom, Religious Freedom: A Fundamental Right in the 21st Century organised by International Religious Liberty Association, Maryland, USA, and 1RLA India, Hosur, Tamil Nadu, at New Delhi, 16-18 November, 1999.

- Shiv Shankar Das

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Remembering Babu Jagjivan Ram Ji

Babu Jagjivan Ram was a prominent freedom fighter, social reformer and a champion of human rights. He worked tirelessly throughout his life to promote equality in society. During his student years, he successfully organized a number of Guru Ravidas Sammelans and had started celebrating Guru Ravidas Jayanti in the different districts of Calcutta. He was among the Founding members of the All India Depressed Classes League which worked for attaining equality for untouchables.

In 1946, he became the youngest minister in the interim government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru. He became the Labour Minister in the first ever Cabinet of independent India. He laid out several policies and reforms that dealt directly with the welfare of the labourers. He also represented the country in the International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organization that was held in Geneva in 1947. He was also instrumental for the successful implementation of the Green Revolution during his tenure as the Union Minister for Food and Agriculture. He was the Defence Minister of India during the Indo-Pak war of 1971. He was the Deputy Prime Minister of India between 1977 and 1979.

The official positions held by Babu Jagjivan Ram in his political tenure are:

- * Member of the Central Legislature for over thirty years consecutively.
- * He holds the record for being the longest-serving cabinet minister in India.
- * Union Minister of Labour, from the year 1946 to the year 1952.
- * Union Minister for Communications from the year 1952 to the year 1956.
- * Union Minister for Transport and Railways from the year 1956 to the year 1962.
- * Union Minister for Transport and Communications, from the year

1962 to the year 1963.

* Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation, from the year 1966 to the year 1967.

* Union Minister for Food and Agriculture from the year 1967 to the year 1970.

* Union Minister of Defence for the following terms: 1970-1974, 1977-1979.

* Union Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, from the year 1974 to the year 1977.

* Deputy Prime Minister of India, from the 24th of March, 1977 to the 28th of July, 1979.

pendent Bangladesh:

"I have an announcement to make. The West Pakistani forces have unconditionally surrendered in Bangladesh... Dacca (now called Dhaka) is now the free capital of a free country."

The then Chief of General Staff in Eastern Command Lt. Gen. (Retd.) JFR Jacob described him as "perhaps the best Defence minister we (India) have had":

"He had an excellent grasp of military strategy. Being an able administrator, it was Jagjivan Ram who made sure that the requirements of

Reception centres were set up all across East Pakistan; people who possessed the will to take on the challenge of fighting for the Liberation of Bangladesh were screened by the Indian

Armed forces and the civilian administration. This task too was overseen by the indomitable Babu Jagjivan Ram"

The London's Sunday Times had then reported:

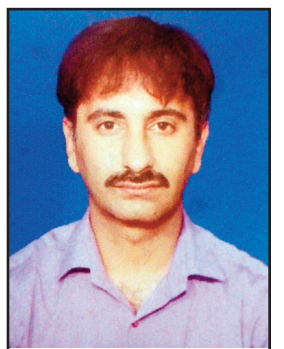
"It took only 12 days for the Indian Army to smash its way to Dacca, an achievement reminiscent of the German blitzkrieg across France in 1940. The strategy was the same speed, ferocity and flexibility."

In his work on the liberation war of Bangladesh, The Blood Telegram, Gary Bass has called Babu Jagjivan Ram the most "hawkish" Defence Minister, owing to his role in the victory of India in the war of 1971.

India observes Babu Jagjivan Ram's birth anniversary as 'Equality Day' or the 'Samata Diwas' to commemorate his continuous battle

against caste discrimination and various forms of social oppression and his endeavour to promote a society of welfare and equality. Babu Jagjivan Ram National Foundation is established in the memory of Babu Jagjivan Ram and to propagate his ideology, philosophy of his life and mission and services rendered for the sake of the underprivileged and the country.

In the near future, detailed information about Babu Jagjivan Ram Ji would be shared, and as and when new sources of information would be discovered/researched, these would be made known.



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The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, being briefed by Lt. Gen. J.S. Aurora, GOC-in-C Eastern Command, on the latest situation in the Eastern sector at Fort William

* President of the Bharat Scouts and Guides from September 1976 to April 1983.

Babu Jagjivan Ram was posthumously awarded with the Friends of Liberation War Honour by the Government of Bangladesh for his contribution in the 1971 War. He was honoured as 1971 war hero. He was India's Defence Minister during the 1971 war, and was instrumental in the creation of the 'Joint Command' of Bangladesh and Indian Forces for the final assault which led to victory.

In his historic parliamentary statement on December 16, 1971 he announced the emergence of Inde-

the three Services, in terms of manpower, weaponry, equipment and infrastructural facilities were provided, as far as possible".

Lt. Col. (Retd.) Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir, Bir Protik and Swadhinata Padak Awardee, Historian and Author in Bangladesh, exclaimed:

"Babu Jagjivan Ram's role was fascinating. He used to visit training camps set up for Mukti Bahini fighters in Northeast India. He was solely responsible for co-ordinating between the then Prime Minister's Office, Home Minister and the Defence Forces."

He added:



DR. BIRBAL DAS

On National Doctors Day on July 1st, the social media Facebook Page of Jagjivan Ram Foundation had shared information about the inspirational life of Babu Jagjivan Ram's father-in-law, Dr. Birbal Das. He was a brilliant student and he got admission in Prince of Wales Medical College, Patna in 1874. After receiving his doctor's degree, he joined the Indian Medical Services in the British Army. He was

awarded the Victoria Medal for distinguished services in the Burmese and Chin Lushai Wars. In 1912, he co-founded the Kanpur Branch of the Indian Medical Association. He was a social reformer and was passionate about education. He worked for the upliftment of Dalits and also participated in the freedom movement.

Ref:

<https://www.facebook.com/Jagjivanramfoundation/>



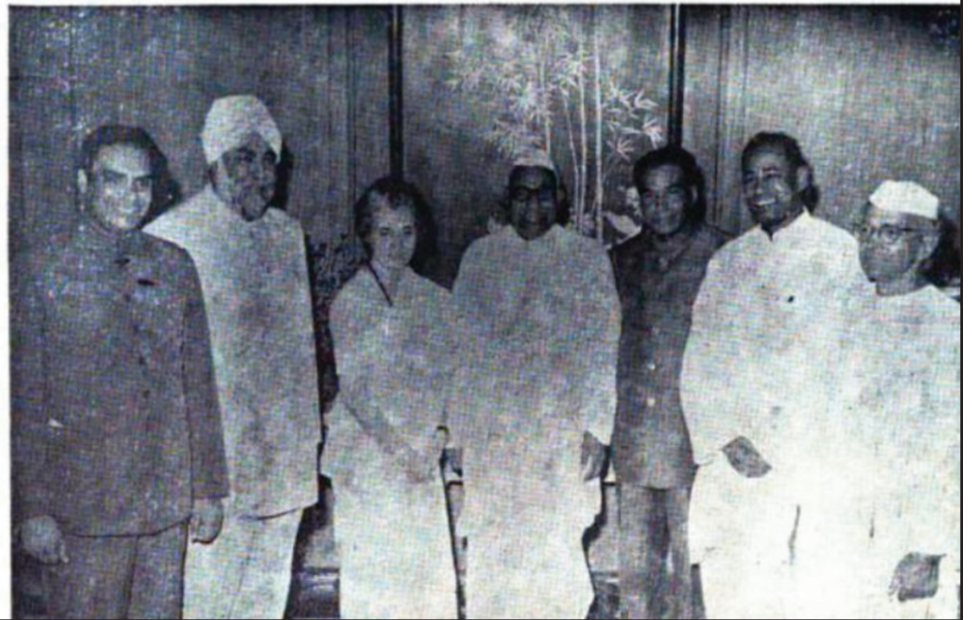


The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, talking to Vice-Admiral N. Krishnan, FOC-in-C Western Naval Command, on the Captain's bridge of INS Vikrant

NEW MINISTERS

The President, Mr. V. V. Giri, administered the oath of office to five new Central Ministers at a ceremony held in Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi on June 30. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Union Ministers and other distinguished persons were present on the occasion.

Photo shows (left to right) Mr. Om Mehta, Mr. R.S. Panjhzari, Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Union Minister for Defence, Mr. A.K. Kisku, Mr. P. Parthasarathy and Mr. Biswanath Roy



The Defence Minister, addressing officers and sailors on board the aircraft carrier INS Vikrant in Bombay. Also seen in the picture are the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral S.M. Nanda (extreme left) and the FOC-in-C, Western Naval Command, Vice-Admiral N. Krishnan (second from right)



The Defence Minister inspecting a Guard of Honor on board the aircraft carrier INS Vikrant



Doctors of the three Services being introduced to the Defence Minister at INHS Asvini



The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, inquisitively asking a point in the Ordnance Cable factory



A party of 20 Ladakhis from Jammu and Kashmir, on a tour of the country, called on the Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram in New Delhi on October 19

The Defence Ministry gave a farewell on June 29 to Sardar Swaran Singh, Mr. L.N. Misra and Mr. M.R. Krishna. It also welcomed the new Minister of Defence, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, the Ministers of State in the Defence Ministry, Mr. P.C. Sethi and Mr. N.S. Mahida. Photograph shows the new Ministers with the outgoing Ministers together with the Chiefs of Staff of the Army, Navy and Air Force. (Left to right) Air Chief Marshal P.C. Lal, Mr. L.N. Misra, Mr. P.C. Sethi, Sardar Swaran Singh, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, General S.H.F.J. Manekshaw, Admiral S.M. Nanda and Mr. M.R. Krishna



Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Defence Minister, inaugurating the Air Force Commanders' Conference



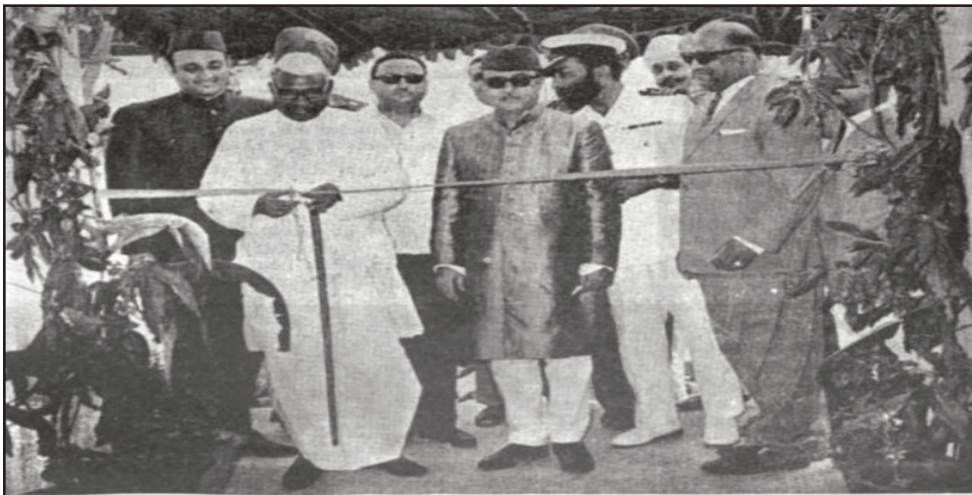
The Defence Minister meeting officers at Headquarters Eastern Command



Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Defence Minister, addressing the gathering at Sainik School at Nagrota



The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, talking to Jawans of the Sikh Light Infantry during his visit to Army Units stationed in Ranchi recently



The Defence Minister opens the Sainik School. On his right is seen Dr. Karan Singh, Union Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, and on his left is seen Mr. G.M. Sadiq, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir



The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, addressing the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Defence at Bangalore



The Defence Minister addressing the cadets of National Defence Academy



With Officers of INS HAMSA



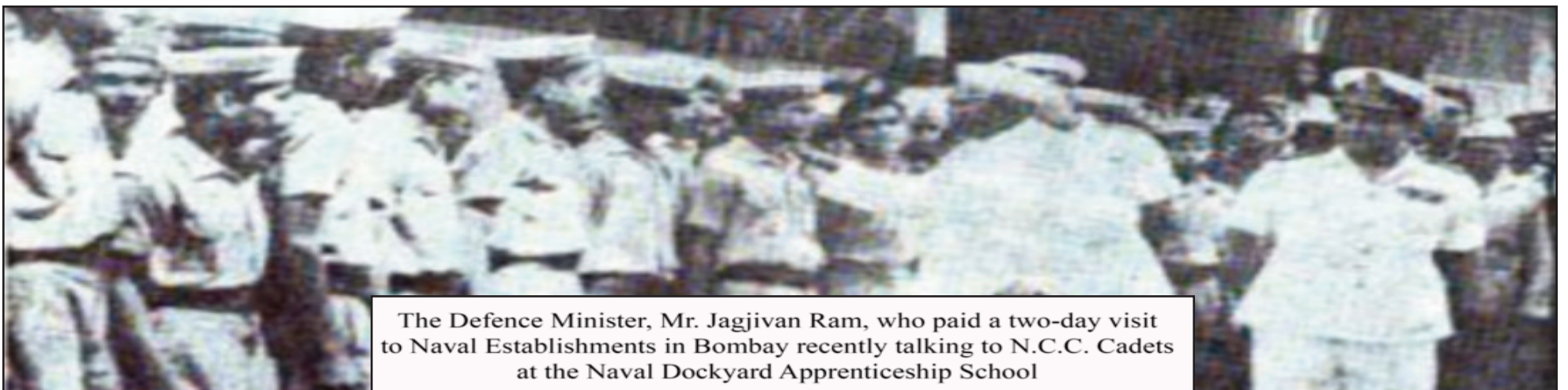
The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, shaking hands with General F. Djam, Chief of the Supreme Commander's Staff of the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces, when the latter called on him.



Talking to students of the Armed Forces Medical College, Poona



Addressing workers after visits to the Defence establishments



The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, who paid a two-day visit to Naval Establishments in Bombay recently talking to N.C.C. Cadets at the Naval Dockyard Apprenticeship School