



# Ambedkar Times

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## STOP CASTE DISCRIMINATION IN UK

DEMONSTRATION : 16 April 2013 • 12.00-15.00 • PARLIAMENT SQUARE, WESTMINSTER, LONDON



In 2010 after various Debates in both House of Parliament, all three major Parliamentary Parties agreed the inclusion of Section 9(5)a in the Equality Act 2010. This provision provides for Caste to be treated as an aspect of Race if independent evidence of Caste-based Discrimination comes to light. In 2010 a report by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (commissioned by Government) con-

firmed without a doubt that there is strong evidence of Caste-based Discrimination in the UK and in the areas covered by the Equality Act. Instead of providing legal protection for victims, Government announced on 1 March 2013 that it has commissioned Talk For A Change (TFAC) to come up with an educational approach to deal with the problem. It has given TFAC £20,000 to do this! This is a serious error

of judgement by the Government. On 4th March 2013, an Amendment Clause to the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (ERR) Bill making Caste an aspect of race in the Equality Act, was agreed in the Lords with a majority of 103 votes. This sent a strong and unequivocal message that discrimination on the grounds of Caste has no place in the UK.

We understand the Government will seek to

reverse this decision when the Amendments to the ERR Bill are discussed in the Commons on 16 April 2013. Join us outside Parliament on 16 April from 12pm to 3pm and show your support to make Caste-based Discrimination illegal in the UK. In unity we can show the Government that it has a moral duty to protect all its citizens in the UK against all forms of discrimination. There is no place for Caste-based

Discrimination in the UK. It can no longer be tolerated and must be outlawed.

Supported by:

- Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance
- Bhagwan Valmik Sabhas across UK
- Dalit Christian Organisations in UK
- Indian Workers Association - GB
- Indian Scheduled Caste Welfare Assoc.
- Guru Ravidass Sabhas in UK
- Dr Ambedkarite Organisations in UK
- Asian Rationalist Society
- Buddhist Organisations in UK
- No 2 Displacement Campaign

## INCLUDING SIKHISM IN WORLD RELIGIONS COURSES

Archer (1934) and Champion (1945) included Sikhism among the major world religions. Founded in Northwestern India over 500 years ago, it has spread globally and is 5th largest world religion (see table). Its inclusion in world religions courses will help students become aware of the basic Sikh values: Like belief in one Universal Creator; Liberty, Freedom and Equality for all human-beings, including

women; Earning livelihood through work, not by begging; Sharing with the needy; Remembering the Creator; Serving the community, country and the entire humanity; living a truthful life; Using peaceful non-violent means for solving problems, and willingness to make the supreme sacrifice for righteousness, as did the 9th Sikh Guru (Tegh Bahadur) when he pleaded to the Mughal Emperor to allow



Kashmiri Brahmins to practice Hinduism. Sikh awareness will reduce ignorance and misconceptions about the Sikhs, and reduce hatred, discrimination, profiling, bullying and other hate crimes against the Sikh

Reference: Archer, John C. 1934, Faiths Men Live By. Champion, Selwyn Gurney, 1945, Eleven Religions and their Proverbial Lore. \*osbindra@sbcglobal.net

"Ambedkar Times" & "Desh Doaba" congratulate to all their readers, writers, and contributors on **Dr. Ambedkar's Birth Anniversary**  
Our next issue will be on Dr. Ambedkar



### ADHERENTS OF MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS

RELIGIONS	MILLIONS	%	COUNTRIES
1. CHRISTIANITY	2,298.09	33	232
2. ISLAM	1,560.39	22.4	211
3. HINDUISM	959.94	13.8	127
4. BUDDHISM	467.55	6.7	120
5. SIKHISM	24.29	0.3	55
6. JUDAISM	14.88	0.2	140
7. TAOISM	8.49	0.1	6
8. CONFUCIANISM	6.47	0.1	16
9. JAINISM	5.38	0.1	19
10. SHINTO	2.76	0	8
11. ZOROASTRIANISM	<0.20	0	27
12. BAHAI'ISM	7.42	0.1	222

Source: The World Almanac 2013 & Time Almanac 2012.

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Editorial

**BABASAHEB DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR : THEN AND NOW**

*THE current year (2013) is of immense significance from many perspectives. It is a year of Ghadar centenary. In this very year also falls the century of Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar's historic entry into one of the most prestigious universities in United States of America in 1913. Dr. Ambedkar received a scholarship from the Maharaja of Baroda to study at the Columbia University, New York. From this prestigious university of higher education in the United States of America, Dr. Ambedkar obtained his Masters degree in 1915 and then earned a DSc from the London School of Economics before being awarded his PhD by the Columbia university in 1927. The prestigious Columbia University also conferred on him an honorary doctorate in 1952 for his illustrious services as "a great social reformer and a valiant upholder of human rights."*

*At the Columbia University Dr. Ambedkar studied under reputed professors of his times who inspired many of his ideas about democracy, rationalism, dignity, equality and social justice. It was at this university that Dr. Ambedkar really felt the warmth of real freedom and social equality for the first time in the life of his formative years thousands miles away from his home. "The best friends I have had in my life," he told the New York Times in 1930, "were some of my classmates at Columbia and my great professors, John Dewey, James Shotwell, Edwin Seligman, and James Harvey Robinson." Who knew then that the lessons in democracy, equality, freedom and social justice that Dr. Ambedkar learnt at Columbia would become the castle of his life long struggle for the emancipation and empowerment of millions of his fellow beings back in home. The Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organizations of the United Kingdom donated a bronze bust of Dr. Ambedkar to Lehman Library in memory of his wonderful sojourn at Columbia.*

*The great Dalit movement that Dr Ambedkar was able to build during his life-time in colonial as well as Independent India had its roots in his inherited rational thinking and democratic ethos that he imbibed at the illustrious campus of Columbia university and in the democratic domain of the society of US. What could have happened to Dalit struggle in India had Dr. Ambedkar did not receive his higher education from the land of two largest and oldest democracies of the world? Would he had been able to analyses caste the way he theorized it in many of his classic texts on the subject had he not visited and learnt at Columbia?*

*India has yet to witness a similar level of scholarship from its fast expanding network of higher education. Over the last sixty six years since India's independence, the phenomenon of caste has assumed varied new and subtle dimensions hard to grapple with much less to theorize. We need another Dr. Ambedkar to unravel its deep complexities and wide spread implications.*

*Since 1991 (with the formal adoption of neo-liberal regime) India has entered into a new phase of economic life where market and not the state that reigns the most. There is a lot of enthusiasm and optimism all around that India will soon be becoming a "Great Power". But what is not often taken into consideration along with the unfolding of the free market forces in India is that the monster of caste has metamorphosed into a new multi-faceted avatar which would deter India's march towards its most cherished goal of becoming "Great Power" in near future. At this crucial juncture, India of the neo-liberal market fame needs, rather more vehemently, another Dr. Ambedkar who would facilitate in steering its ship towards its great power destination goal across the rampant boulders of caste and caste-based social exclusion which have resurfaced more fiercely along with the advent of free market in the country. Thus Dr. Ambedkar has become more relevant in contemporary India not only for millions of its downtrodden but for the realization of the most cherished goal of Indian democratic republic to shine in the world as a great power.*

**Prem K. Chumber**  
Editor-in-Chief

**INDIAN COMMUNITY RAISES \$10,000 FOR CONGRESSMAN ERIC SWALWELL**



Report & pictures by AP Ram & Kulwant S. Nijjar

**Milpitas (California):** On Saturday March 23, an event was organized to honor newly elected Congressman Eric Swalwell at the Swagat Indian Cuisine in Milpitas. The event was hosted by Jack and Paul Ram and Kulwant Singh Nijjar. Many Indo-Americans attended the event.

Congressman Eric Swalwell represents the 15th Congressional District which includes many densely populated cities with an Indo-American population: Hayward, Fremont, Union City, Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore. He defeated long time Congressman Pete Stark in a very strong victory.

Mr. Swalwell grew up in the district and worked his way through law school. He was elected to the Dublin City Council in 2010 while he worked for the Alameda County District Attorney's office.

In a private dinner last month the Congressman requested the community to help him show strong financial numbers for the first quarter fundraising deadline. The Ram family agreed to do an event for him and with the help of the community hit the goal of collecting \$10,000 at the dinner on March 23rd for the Congressman's 2014 re-election campaign.

Jack Ram introduced the Congressman as a great friend of the family who understands the needs of the Indian community. He said that Mr. Swalwell's youth, determination, and energy are qualities we need in Washington DC for a productive and effective government.

Kulwant Singh Nijjar, a member of the Bay Area Cultural and Sports Association and Guru Teg Bahadur Sports Club of CA, gave a special invita-

tion to the Congressman to attend the Vaisakhi Mela in San Jose on April 27, 2013.

Congressman Eric Swalwell spoke about his life as a child and student. He told the audience that he had to work odd jobs while he attended school. He used to intern in Washington DC and he used to dream about one day becoming a Congressman. He spoke about immigration reform and hate crimes. He thanked the community for all the support they have shown him and said that his office has an open door policy. He will listen to and help any member of his District.

Paul Ram thanked the Congressman for spending the evening with the community. He also thanked the group for their generous donations and congratulated everyone for hitting the event target of \$10,000 for the Congressman's campaign.

**MATRIMONIAL**

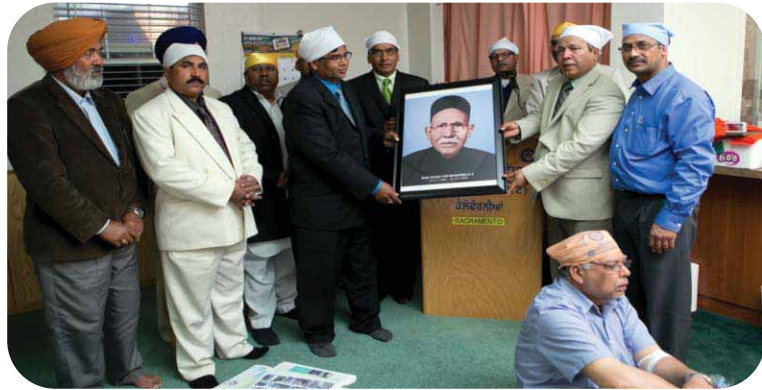
**Ad-Dharmi** family seeks a suitable match for their daughter, 24 yrs old. 5'-8" tall, 5 yrs. degree in Homeopathy (Doctor) currently working as a Doctor in New Delhi. The girl's father is class 1 officer in New Delhi. Uncle is well settled in USA. The boy should be well educated, family oriented from educated family, American/Canadian immigrant or citizen. Please send biodata & recent picture to email: rohitralh@gmail.com, dilralh@gmail.com or call 530-933-3938

**Ad-Dharmi** family seeks a suitable match for their son, 24 yrs old. 6'-1" tall, clean shaven, in India, Bachelors degree in electronics & communication (Engineering), M.B.A. in Business Management, currently working as Associate Consultant in India. Boy's father is class 1 officer in Chandigarh. Uncle is well settled in USA. The girl should be well educated, family oriented from educated family, American/Canadian immigrant or citizen. Please send biodata & recent picture to email: rohitralh@gmail.com, dilralh@gmail.com or call 530-933-3938

**Ad-Dharmi** family seeks a suitable match for their daughter, 22 yrs old. 5'-8" tall, B.D.S. (Dentist) currently works as a dentist in Chandigarh. The girl's father is class 1 officer in Chandigarh. Uncle is well settled in USA. The boy should be well educated, clean shaven, family oriented & from educated family, American/Canadian immigrant or citizen. Please send biodata & recent picture to email: rohitralh@gmail.com, dilralh@gmail.com or call 530-933-3938



# SHRI GURU RAVIDASS JI'S 636TH PARKASH UTSAV AND 13TH GRAND NAGAR KIRTAN CELEBRATED AT SHRI GURU RAVIDASS TEMPLE, RIO LINDA (CALIFORNIA) ON MARCH 10, 2013



Pictures taken by P. K. Chumber



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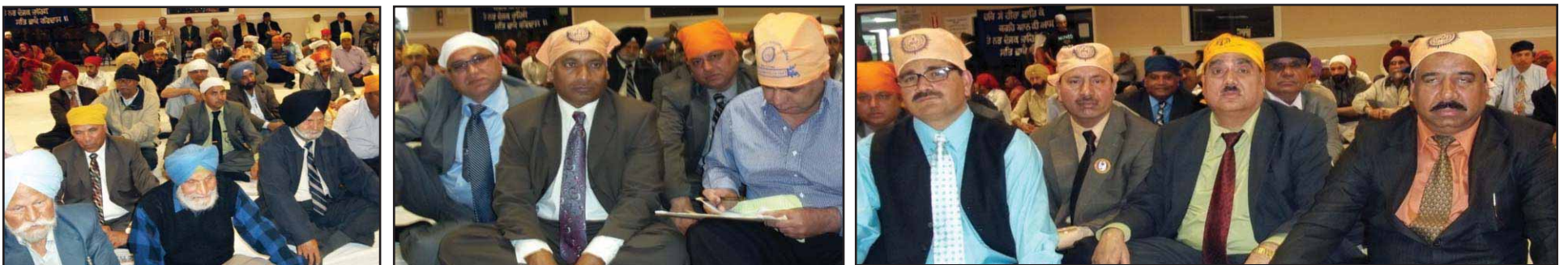




# Shri Guru Ravidass Ji's 636th Parkash Utsav celebrated by Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha Bay Area (California) at Newark Pavilion 6430, Thornton Avenue, Newark (California) on March 24, 2013



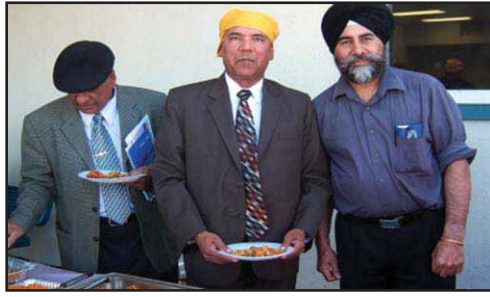
Pictures taken by P. K. Chumber



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# Shri Guru Ravidass Ji's 636th Parkash Utsav celebration pictures (continued from last page)





# Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Economic Reforms & Social Democracy in India

Social democracy occupies centre stage in the philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, chief architect of the constitution of Independent India, scholar par-excellence and a messiah of millions of downtrodden. It constitutes the core of his struggle against the historic social malady of graded inequality in India. And this is what distinguished Dr. Ambedkar from the rest of the mainstream Indian freedom thinkers and fighters who were struggling primarily for the liberation of the country (political freedom) from the yoke of British Empire. Dr. Ambedkar expanded the meaning of political freedom by incorporating in its fold the less talked about issue of freedom from the oppressive structures of caste and caste based social exclusion. He assigned special importance to the principles of social democracy by championing the cause of social mobility of the socially excluded sections of the Indian society. He wanted to strengthen the emerging sphere of political democracy in India by grounding it in the institution of social democracy. For Dr. Ambedkar social democracy implies "a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. These principles ... are not to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy". On the completion of the Draft Constitution (25 November 1949), Dr. Ambedkar sounded a grave warning in his famous address in the Constituent assembly:

On the 26th January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the prin-



ciple of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so labouriously built up.

Keeping in view the prophetic warning of Dr. Ambedkar, independent India opted for a mixed economy model of development and introduced the system of reservation for the downtrodden in government jobs, education institutions and legislature. The preamble of the constitution clearly spells out the objectives of securing "to all its citizens Justice, social, economic and political" as well as "Equality of status and of opportunity". The social Democratic vision of Dr. Ambedkar got further reflected in the Resolution of the Government of India for the



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creation of the Planning Commission in March 1950. The Resolution clearly defined the scope of the work of the Planning Commission in the following terms:

The Constitution of India has guaranteed certain Fundamental Rights to the citizens of India and enunciated certain Directive Principles of State Policy, in particular, that the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life, and shall direct its policy towards securing, among other things -

(a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood;

(b) that the ownership and

control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; and

(c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment (The First Five Year Plan: 1).

Thus an all inclusive vision of development and an egalitarian social order underlined the basic spirit of the constitution as well as the ambitious Five Year Planning projects of the Planning Commission of India. To translate the ideals of the founding fathers, a number of special provisions were incorporated in the constitution and the Resolution for the creation of the Planning Commission. State affirmative action is the most prominent among them. It aimed at overcoming historic caste-based social exclusion and

oppression. Along with reservations in education, employment and legislature, rural development programme, public distribution system, public health programmes, cooperatives, the Right to Education Act, mid-day meals programme, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the Food Security Act, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana are a few more significant state initiatives taken over the last six decades since independence to help emerge social democracy in India. Yet another important measure towards the formation of social democracy has been a series of attempts, under the Directive Principles of state policy, to democratize and decentralize governance and the devolution of authority from the centre to the grass-roots (panchayati raj institutions). Thus the constitution of India, as aptly argued by Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, is "a unique social charter - the boldest statement ever of social democracy". Whether these varied measures have been able to facilitate the growth of social democracy in India or not, is a matter of contention. Nevertheless, the incorporation of such measures in the constitution is a vindication enough that the founding fathers of Independent India wanted to deepen the roots of liberal democracy while placing it on firm foundation of social democracy.

Dr. Ambedkar's vision of social democracy assumes added importance in the wake of neo-liberal reforms in India, particularly since 1991. The neo-liberal market-economy with singular focus on economic growth and profit, suffocates the delicate nurturing milieu of social democracy in India. Given its exclusive agenda of economic growth and profit, and insensitivities towards the rabid discriminatory social structures, will it be feasible for economic liberalization to plough through the arid land of

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caste hierarchies and rampant social exclusion - the main enemies of social democracy? Or would the neo-liberal free-market economy further deepen inequalities, caste hierarchies and social exclusion by tightening caste-rope around the neck of the incipient institutions of social democracy? And would it not delay, if not preclude, the often talked about trickle-down impact of the economic liberalization on the lives of the multitudes of the Indian poor with majority of them historically relegated to the periphery?

There is a general impression that the adoption of the neo-liberal market-economy model by India in 1991 diluted the social welfare concerns of the Indian state. It is in this context that the institution of social democracy has come under dark clouds of the free market economy model. Neo-liberal market-economy is primarily based on de-licensing, removal of import quotas, cutting down tariff levels, liberalization of the inflow of foreign capital, capital goods, imported inputs, capital markets, industrial liberalization, opening of yet newer areas hitherto reserved for the public sector, tax concessions, voluntary retirement scheme, hidden closing of non-viable units, widespread use of contracted/casual labour, sub-contacting work to the small scale sector, taming labour etc.

The neo-liberal market-economy accords no space whatsoever to the institution of social democracy. The only value, it considered worth of honouring is the value of unrestrained and free flow of capital. It seems to be quite comfortable with the ubiquitous presence of pre-modern institution of caste in India. Caste and market nurture close relationship. They reinforce each other. Market thrives on capital and profit. Since capital has traditionally been accumulated by the upper castes that have been able to establish its monopoly over the economy of the country, the free market economy, based as it is on the unrestrained flow of capital, tends to promote the interests of the upper castes rather more confidently. It welcomes

them with enormous opportunities and hefty profits. And at the same time, it ignores the ex-untouchables who lack the requisite capital.

Another factor that distinguishes poverty stricken Dalits from the poor of the upper castes in the country is their social exclusion. In the rural areas, most of Dalits earn their livelihood as landless agricultural labourers and in towns as labourers and menial workers. In both the rural and urban sectors, Dalits live in segregated colonies and slums respectively. The relationship between caste and poverty seems to be of symbiotic nature. They reinforce each other and often club together in posing a serious challenge to the nascent institution of social democracy in India. The inextricably intertwined phenomena of caste and poverty is so well entrenched that it has failed to recede back even after the adoption of economic reform measures in India in 1991. On the contrary, the latter has further been strengthening the anti-democracy nexus between caste and poverty in the country.

The capital intensive and profit driven model of neo-liberal market-economy has, in fact, not only flared up the dormant caste contradictions in India, but has also brought into light some fresh ones between Dalits and various 'Backward and Other Backward Classes' that have mushroomed in the post-Mandal era. Though the neo-liberal market-economy has been promised to provide an ample space to the socially excluded sections of the society by opening new and unre-

strained opportunities for them in the fast emerging domain of free market economy in India, but the reality is the other way round. The neo-liberal market-economy has failed to ward off the contagious effect of the hoary and exclusionary institution of caste in India. Untouchability and democracy are antithetical. Democracy is totally negated in the scheme of Untouchability. Democracy is premised on the liberal principles of freedom, equality and fraternity. On the contrary, Untouchability thrives amidst inequality and denial of human rights. It promotes social segregation and denies freedom to the socially excluded sections of the society. It rests on asymmetrical social structures of difference and domination that preclude democracy to emerge in its natural stance. It is at this crucial juncture of vendetta between democracy and Untouchability, the institution of free market economy enters into the whirlpool of caste contradictions in the social set up of the country.

In the tug-of-war between democracy and constitutionally rendered illegal institution of Untouchability, the forces of the free market economy sided with the latter. They strengthen the hands of the capital rich upper castes by making it almost impossible for the capital starved ex-untouchables to participate in the glamorous domain of finance capital. Since capital lies mostly with the upper castes, it is only they who matter the most in the multiplexes/malls of the new market economy. It is only they to whom the market has been pushing into billionaires. There

is hardly anyone from the ex-untouchables communities in India who have joined the elite club of the billionaires. Thus market does not only favour the upper castes, it also accentuates the gulf between the rich and the poor. Since poor and lower castes are co-terminus, market further marginalizes the lower castes by preventing them from entering into business operations. Free market discriminates against the poor. Majority of the India's Poor belong to lower castes. Thus, the free markets discriminate against the Dalits.

If Untouchability debarred the ex-untouchables from the public sphere, the free market economy discourages them from entering into the domain of business. If the former had squeezed the 'public' or the 'social' into 'public' or the 'social' of the privileged few (the savarnas/dvijias [upper castes]) only; the later seems to have mortgaged the entire economic domain of the country to the upper castes only. Market elevated a few upper castes and degraded many socially excluded lower castes. Quite interestingly, Untouchability and free market economy join together in favouring the upper castes with immense wealth/privileges as against the lower castes who in spite of working hard have to live a life of abject poverty and severe deprivations. This in turn deprives them (lower castes) substantially of the periodic opportunities to compete for power berth in the electoral bogies of the political democracy in the country. Elections over the years, in fact, have become very costly affairs. They are

beyond the reach of the poor and socially excluded sections of the society. Thus social exclusion and poverty deprive the lower castes of the opportunity to compete on equal footings with their rich and upper castes rivals in the limited electoral arena of the political democracy in India.

Thus it is in the above discussed context that Untouchability used to preclude deepening of democracy in India by supporting the oppressive social structures of power in the country. It is in this very context that free market economy and social democracy become incompatible. Thus the neo-liberal free market economy model by virtue of its being anti poor and anti lower caste has ultimately led to squeezing the already skimpy space hard earned by the nascent institution of social democracy in India. Since social equality and freedom are inseparable, political democracy without social democracy is farce. In the words of Dr. Ambedkar, "Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy". Social democracy, in fact, is the 'cornerstone' of the edifice of political democracy in India. Saheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, one of most prominent of the few forerunners of the institution of social democracy in India, also expressed the similar views, of course much earlier, in his less quoted article published in the June issue of Kirti 1929. He was of the firm opinion that Political freedom gained from the British colonialism could not last long if failed to be accompanied by a massive social and economic reforms measures for the transformation of the rotten undertaken in the internal social set up of the country. Though the constitution of independent India has provided ample space to the inherited institution of democracy, it has yet to overcome the subtle legacies of centuries old caste structures in the country. In the absence of social democracy, the socially excluded sections of the society would find it difficult to participate effectively in the process of the political democracy.

## CONGRATULATIONS ON FOUR SUCCESSFUL YEARS

*Dear Mr. Chumber,*

We would like to commend your efforts and hard work on completing four years for "Ambedkar Times" news publication. Your newspaper is the first publication in North American that gives our community a voice in the news media. It is a great place to read and learn about news that directly affects our people throughout the world.

We wish you the most success in the fifth year and the future. We know that you have went through many obstacles and face many hurdles everyday but do not let these minor details hinder your dedication and courage. Please keep up this great professional journalism. If we can ever be of any help, do not hesitate to call upon your brothers.



**Jack and Paul Ram**  
*Attorneys at Law*