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budget, may be due to its 'Inter-State

body Corporate' character and also

on account of being situated in a

volatile Union Territory of Chandigarh

- a unique Capital of two States of

Punjab and Haryana. Probably that

could also be one of the major causes

behind its not becoming a Central

University. Popular perception in Pun-

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# Panjab University: Politics, Financial Crisis and Student Unrest

(PU) was lucky enough to escape from what could otherwise have turned out to be a bloody Vaisakhi. It was engulfed by a whirlpool of politicking, financial crunch and student unrest. Students were agitating over fee hike of various courses across the disciplines. Education, they argued, needs to be provided by the government free of cost. Education in PU, however, was never provided free of cost at any point of time in its long history. It was being run on the basis of tuition and examination fees collected from a large number of students enrolled in its various affiliated Schools, Colleges and in faculties on the campus. In addition, the deficit budget is being met by the financial support provided by the state and central governments.

When the matriculation examination was taken out of the fold of the PU in the second half of 1969, the internally generated finances from the tuition fee collected from a large number of school students were reduced leading to proportionate increase in its deficit budget. For the financial year of 1970-71 the annual tuition fee collected by the Punjab School Education Board was Rs. 82.45 Lacs. If the tuition fee collected by other two School Boards(Haryana State School Education Board and Himachal Pradesh School Education Board) was added in the same financial year the figure would be much more. The establish-

On April 11, 2017 Panjab University ment of Guru Nanak Dev University at Amritsar in 1969 hadfurther made a dent in the financial resources of PU by taking away a large number of its affiliated colleges that used to contribute significantly towards its indigenous finances. Once the colleges located in the jurisdiction of the State of Haryana were also taken away from the control of PU, the financial health of the

PU was further deterioratedseverely.

Moreover, since 1991, after the adoption of neoliberal policies by India, the financial support provided by the Central Punjab and Governments

further aot squeezed. Consequently neither the Central nor the Punjab Government felt the urgency to meet their given 60:40 share in the deficit budget of PU mutually arrived at after thereorganization of the Punjab in 1966. Neoliberalism reiterates that State is meant for maintaining law and order only. And the citizens need to fend for themselves in the free market economy. The PU cannot be an exception. It has to fall in line with the national economic policy.

Until recently PU was some-

jab often ties the case of Central University status for PU with the claims of the State of Punjab on Chandigarh. Bringing PU under the purview Central ernment legedly raises the weakening the

claim of Punjab over Chandigarh.

Nevertheless, if there is a definite political will to help PU overcome its financial crisis, its rich national heritage status of being the only pre-independence Indian University of teaching and examination can be evoked to make it a fully centrally funded University of national heritage. It will also save it from being pushed into political turmoil in the name of Central University status. The PU's right to become financially secure is as justifiable as of any other

how able to manage its deficit Central University. Moreover, PU deserves to be given much more for its sterling contribution in the North

Western

renaissance

movement

that played

a leading

of

al-

of

Gov-

fear



Ronki Ram Shaheed Bhagat Singh **Professor of Political** Science, Member of PU Senate & former PUTA resident

role in strengthening the Indian national freedom struggle.

In the absence of regular grants, funds have always been a problem with PU. Almost every year it has to struggle a lot to manage its deficit budget. However, despite the shortage of funds, the tuition fees of various academic courses remained at the lowest level for the last many years. It is pertinent to mention here that from 1967-68 to1995-96 there was no hike at all in the tuition fee of all the graduate and postgraduate courses. It remained saturated at Rs.15 per month and Rs.180 per annum for graduate courses and Rs.240 per annum for Postgraduate courses in Humanities and Rs.300 per annum for Science, Commerce and Education from 1967-68 to 1995-96. In 1995-96, it was doubled to Rs.30 per month and Rs.360 per (Continued on Page 2)

#### FABO UK organised A Musical Tribute to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar At Nehru Centre to commemorate his 126th birth anniversary



musical tribute to Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar on 24 April to mark his 126 birth anniversary at the Nehru Arun Kumar Centre. The

The Federation of

Ambedkarite and

Buddhist Organi-

zations UK (FABO

UK) organised a

musical

titled

General Secretary FABO UK portrayal

'Sarnang' by singer and lyricist Rajesh Dhabre and Dr Bhavana Dhabre on the life and works of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar depicted his lifelong contribution to modern India and the human right movement.

Rajesh is the Commissioner of Customs and Excise and Director General, of Babasaheb Ambedkar Research and Training Institute (BARTI), Maharashtra. Rajesh has composed and produced four Albums since 2010 (Buddha Hi Buddha Hai,

Buddha Hi Buddha Hai Part II, Siddharth: The Lotus Blossoms, and Sarang (2016). These albums have featured well-known singers including Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Alka

person of Swayamdeep, Cultural & Educational Organisation, which promotes Buddhist and Ambedkarite cultural aspects by giving a platform to those denied a chance in performing



Yagnik, Shankar Mahadevan, Sonu Punkaj Udhas, Suresh Nigam, Wadekar and Sukhvinder Singh, besides Rajesh and Bhavana themselves. Rajesh has also written and directed the Plays: The Spirit of Humanity: Dr. Ambedkar, Chakravyu: The System, Prakshobh, Sanket, Swarg Me Mantri, and Dhanda.

Dr Bhavana Dhabre is a Chair-

arts and education because of poverty.

In her welcoming speech, Santosh Dass MBE President of FABO UK said that a lot of work had gone through behind the scenes to organise the event. She was pleased that the Nehru Centre had accepted her proposal to hold a concert dedicated solely to Dr Ambedkar. She added

"Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar is internationally renowned as the chief architect of India's Constitution, a jurist, a social reformer, a civil rights movement leader, a politician, an outstanding academic, an empowerer of women and a revivalist of Buddhism in India".

She thanked FABO members and volunteers for their help and especially the team India who came on our invitation. Vote of thanks was rendered by Joint Secretary of FABO UK, Gautam Chakravarty. The music albums on Lord Buddha and Dr Ambedkar were presented to Vibha Kapoor, Deputy Director of the Nehru Centre, Ven, Bhikkhu Sadanand Mahathero Sanghnayaka, President of All India Bhikkhu Sangha and the members of FABO UK. On behalf of BARTI, Rajesh also presented Dr Ambedkar literature to the Nehru Centre for their library. Mr A.S Rajan, Minister for Cordination at the High Commission of India also attended the event.

#### Ad Dharm, the pioneer Dalit movement led by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia

Ad Dharm, the pioneer Dalit movement led by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia during 1920s, played a major role in mobilising the Scheduled Castes of Punjab to stand for the long denied rights. Within a short span of time Dalits were able to have their separate religion recognised by the British rulers and successfully contested provincial assembly elections 1937 and 1946 and won almost all the reserved seats (8). The contribution of Ad Dharm could have remained unknown to the coming generations had Professor Mark Juergensmeyer not published his seminal book (Religious Rebels dalits of Punjab) on the organisation and role of this Dalit movement in Punjab. Inspired by the brilliant writings of Professor | was not Mark, Dr. Ronki Ram has been researching and publishing aware on Ad Dharm movement consistently for the last one and the half decade. His various articles published in reputed na- that tional and international journals has highlighted various di- had mensions of the movement and its role in the social mobility much larger and pronounced persona till I met of Dalits. During his April 2016 US visit, Dr Ronki Ram met him in Jalandhar on January 18, 2017 at the Professor Mark to pay his intellectual debt and honored him sprawling villa of my friend Manohar Lal Mahey. with a saropa at his home town in Santa Barbara.

Recently Professor Mark visited Punjab in connec- with others, inter alia, Lahori Ram Balley, Dr. tion of his current research on the region and paid a visit to Gian Kaul, Dr. Santokh Virdi, Tarsem Jaland-Dera Sach khand Ballan and Boota Mandi Jalandhar where hary (Tarsem Lal Chumber) editor of Ambedkar he did his ethnographic research in the 1970s.

A small write up prepared by Former Ambassador Ramesh Baldev Bhardwaj and Prof. Singh who was ac-Chander along with the group photo taken at Manohar Lal Mahay's villa is reproduced here for the readers of Ambedkar Times weekly newspaper.

Mark Juergensmeyer-Orfalea Centre for Global and International Studies

Mark Juergensmeyer, Professor of Sociology and Global Studies and Director of Orfalea Centre at University of California, is a renowned scholar and researcher of social and religious issues concerning a cross section of societies throughout the world. I had heard of him and also read about his pioneering works about the

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social and religious move ments of in Punjab. But of fact Mark а



It was a pleasure to meet Mark along Times & Desh Doaba weekly newspaper, companying Mark from Delhi to facilitate his Punjab visit.Like a good scholar, Mark Juergensmeyer speaks less and listens more. I was - Prem Kumar Chumber impressed by his personality and demeanor.

I had heard about Mark's visit to my native place Bootan Mandi and other spots in and around Jalandhar in the early 1970s inpursuit of his pioneering research work - Religious Rebels of the Punjab: The Ad-dharam Challenge to Caste and its later edition The Social Vision of Untouchability. These books are not

> readily available now. would like read to them at leisure as and when happen to source them.

Anyway, it was nice to sit and talk with Mark Juergensmeyer. With a view to introduce Mark and his Indian connection, let me quote from a write up which I read recently, "He lived in India from 1966 to 1967 where he taught political science at the Panjab University in Chandigarh and worked in famine relief in the Indian state of Bihar. He joined the Gandhian Sarvodaya Movement, working directly with its leader, Jayaprakash Narayan"

I wish Mark all the best in the years to come. Ramesh Chander Ambassador ((Rtd., IFS)

#### Panjab University: Politics, Financial Crisis and Student Unrest

(Continued from page 1) annum for the graduate and Rs.360 per annum for the MA (Humanities), Rs.480 per annum for MSc (Hons) and MEd and Rs600 per annum for MCom for the next five years. In 2001-02 the fees of the BA/BCom Evening Studies was raised to Rs.63 per month and Rs.756 per annum. The tuition fee for the various Postgraduate courses was also raised accordingly-Rs.840 per annum for MA (Humanities) and MSc (Hons) and Rs.1248 for MCom and MEd courses. The same kept on increasing gradually until it reached Rs.90 per month and Rs.1080 per annum for BA/BCom, Rs.1200 for BSc (Hons), Rs.1320 for MA and MSc (Hons), and Rs.2040 for MCom and MEd in 2006-07. It was at this time that PU had to open many self-financed courses to manage its deficit budget. The comparatively high tuition fee charged in such courses, of course, facilitated PU to reduce its deficit budget for some time. However, periodic absence of tuition fee hikes in these self-financed courses ever since they were established defeated the purpose for which they were created.

The Senate, the highest governing body of the PU, determines the tuition fee. It is partially elected and partially a nominated body. The Chancellor of PU who is also Vice-President of India makes the nominations. PU Senate has a large number of graduate constituencies spread over its vast catchment area. The electoral arithmetic within the Senate keeps the tuition fee at its lowest level in comparison to other Universities in the region and beyond. No doubt tuition fees are higher at PU in comparison to various Central Universities like JNU, AMU and BHU. But

PU is not a Central University. Comparison needs to be made among the comparable. When asked for liberal funding, Central Government raises a concern that why PU needs more funds than any other State University. The successive governments of the State of Punjab often put the same argument forward.

While allocating grants, if PU cannot be compared with any Central University in the country then why to compare it with any other State University either. The PU, in the typical sense of the term, is not a State University. Its Chancellor, unlike any other State University, is the Vice-President of the Union of India. The laws chiseled in the Parliament of India regulate its governing structure. The provision to provide finances to meet deficit budget in the ratio of 60:40 by the Central and the Puniab Government respectively has differentiated PU from the other State Universities.

However, the provision of 60:40 ratio, to meet the annual deficit budget, does not completely liberate PU from its financial constraints. The 60:40 provisionhas not been followed in letter and spirit. The Panjab Government has frozen its share to Rs.20 Crores annually. The Central Government too never releases its share as per 60 percent of the total PU deficit budget annually. The Central Government wants PU to reduce its deficit. It also asks for a cap on the deficit. The argument goes like this that in the absence of increase in the internalresources of PU, the financial burden of its deficit budget on the Central and State Governments would keep on increasing every year. At the same time, if the Central and the Punjab governments do not Honour the mandate of owning the responsibility of the annual deficit budget of the PU, the gap between its internally generated resources and its expenses will keep on expanding. It is in this crucial context that PU governing bodies and the Central and Punjab Governments need to look into the current crisis at its sprawling lush green Campus both with a passion and reason. Simply emphasizing on putting pressure on the Centre and the State to meet the entire annual deficit budget of PU, on the one hand, and insisting on total roll back of the fee hike, on the other, would not be good for restoring academic environment in the Campus. The Central Government often ask the PU officials what are they doing to bridle its ever increasing deficit. They want PU to increase its own internal resources. Whenever an attempt was made to make some hike in the tuition fee, students resorted to agitation.

Consequently, PU has not increased its tuition fee over the last many years. Whereas in its own affiliated colleges in Chandigarh and in Punjab, the fees for the same courses is much higher. For instance, the annual postgraduate tuition fee for the Arts and Humanities disciplines in PU is Rs.2440 in 2016-17 whereas for the same subjects in its affiliated colleges in Chandigarh, it was Rs.9000. Moreover, there is a vast variation within the fee structure for various courses taught on the campus. For an instance a student pursuing an electrical engineering course has to pay Rs.72000/- tuition fee annually whereas for a similar course in the department of Chemical Engineering and Technology he has to pay much less i.e.Rs.9000/- only. When confronted by the MHRD and the UGC to enhance its internal resources, PU

brought the level of its traditional courses' tuition fee at par with the tuition fees charged at its affiliated colleges and leveled the fee structure for its MBA and Chemical engineering courses. It is the leveling in these two courses that is articulated as 1100 percent increase in the tuition fee. But the reality is that except for these two courses in no other traditional course the tuition fee is hiked to that extent.Nevertheless, the hike is there too in the traditional courses. But that is not more than the students have been paying for the same courses in the affiliated colleges of PU. Even after the hike, the students at PU campus are still paying less than their counterparts in other affiliated colleges of PU.

The critical issue at present is to save the PU from being pushed into a situation from where there would be not retreat! It should not be allowed to become an akhara of politics. Any move to change its basic structure would be detrimental to the interests of a vast number of students, teachers and supporting staff. What we need is to find a solution in its given administrative framework while persuading the Central and Punjab State governments to Honour their financial obligations as agreed upon in the post re-organisation phase with the required increase in the annual grants at par with the Central Universities. As far as internal resources are concerned, the governing bodies of PU and students need also to think pragmatically that if we want this North-Western National Heritage Institution of Higher Education to survive and march towards further academic heights, the necessary steps expected at our end ought to be given due concern passionately.

## Bharat Rattan Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar's 126 birthday Celebration

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I do not want that our loyalty as Indians should be in the slightest way affected by any competitive loyalty whether that loyalty arises out of our religion, out of our culture or out of our language. I want all people to be Indians first, Indian last and nothing else but Indians." — B.R. Ambedkar,

Hayward (California):- 126th Birthday of "Bharat Ratna" Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was celebrated on Sunday April 30, 2017 at Golden Peacock Banquets, in Hayward, California by Dr. Ambedkar Educational Aid Society and Ambedkar International Center, USA. Over 300 people enjoyed the celebrations. Function started with national anthems of USA and India, sung by Margaret Hurtado and Alka Bhatnagar.

Honorable Consul General Venkatesan Ashok ji was the Guest of

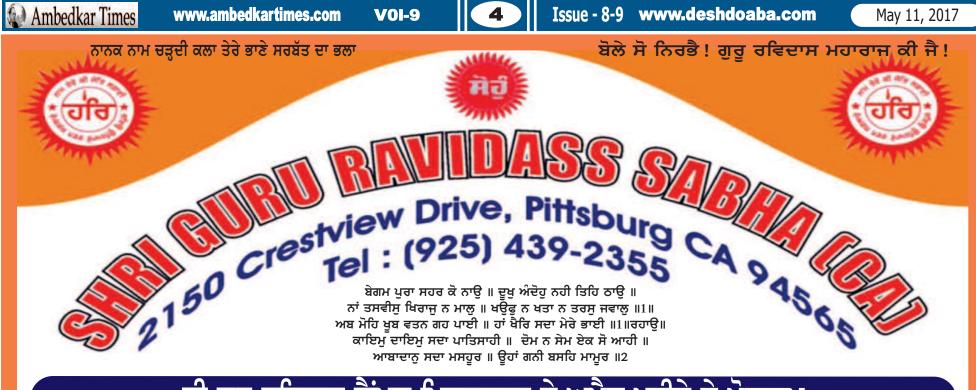
Honor and Mr. Jai Pal Virdi from Canada was the Keynote speaker at this event. Consul Venkata Ramana, Mr. O.P. Balley and other speakers shared their views about Baba Sahib's life and achievements.

Alka Bhatnagar, U.P. "RATNA AWARDEE" and her young students sang 2 patriotic songs. Jaya Sharma and her students' dance performance was particularly excellent.

The services of organizers: Ram Saroay, Amrik Chand, Shashi Paul, Ramesh Suman, Ram Kumar Tavinder Kazla, Vinod Chumber, Rama Krishna Bhopathi, Takshak Kumar and Karanthi Kumar, were acknowledged. Mr. Amrik Chand CPA in his concluding speech thanked all the participants and the promoters for their help and support: Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba weekly Newspaper, S. Ashok Bhaura, Faqira Mehmi, Banga Constructions, Majestic Homes Real Estate Services, Kewal Bolina, Hans Raj Kajla, Om Parkash Balley, RAM Brothers, Kashmiri Bhatia, Shinder Paul Narabat, Dr. Harmesh Kumar, Som Nath Bhatia, Major & Gina Bhatia, Dr. Gagan Deep Mall, Ram Nath Chamber, Harmesh Bangar, Narinder Chahal, Balbir Thind, Ram Labhaya; Balbir Thind. It was promised to have a larger event next year with the help and cooperation of the groups that believe in Baba Sahib's mission and vision.

Dr. Ambedkar Educational Aid Society Ambedkar International Center, USA Report by- Ramesh Suman





### ਗੁਰੂ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਟੈਂਪਲ ਪਿਟਸਬਰਗ ਦੇ ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ

May 19-20-21, 2017 Akhand Path Sahib and Langar Sewa by Bhai Jaswant Singh Malhan

Bhai Jaswant Singh Malhan (from Dallas) and whole family in

the loving memories of their father Late Gurdev Singh Malhan

and Brother late Nirmal Singh Malhan. Akhand Path will begin

on May 19, 2017 and conclude on Sunday May 21, 2017. Fam-

Akhand Path and Langar Sewa will be hosted by

Guru Piari Sadh Sangat Ji,

May 14, 2017 Sukhmani Sahib Path by Bhai Naranjan Singh and Bibi Santosh Kumari Sukhmani Sahib Path and Langar Sewa will be hosted by Bhai Naranjan Singh, Bibi Santosh Kumari and family for Sukh Shanti and Chardi Kala of their family. Family is requesting everyone to come and join them. May Waheguru keep family in Chardi Kala.

Chairman **Shinder Pal Narabat** (925) 683-0178

ily is requesting everyone to come and join them in the Ardaas. May Waheguru keep Malhan family in Chardi Kala. President

Kashmiri Bhatia

(408)460-0262

**General Secretary Gina Bhatia** (925) 483-1629

May 28, 2017 Barsi of Late Shri Yograj Singh Rattu Ji

Sukhmani Sahib Path and Langar Sewa will be hosted by Bhai Surinder Rattu and Bibi Meena Rattu with the help and cooperation of entire family on the event of first Barsi of their father Late Yograj Singh Rattu ji. Family is requesting everyone to come and join them in the Ardaas. May Waheguru keep family in Chardi Kala.

> Treasurer **Jasvir Chahal** (209)627-7944





500 N. Palora Ave. Yuba City, CA 95991 Baksho Kaur Bisla Hardev Singh Bisla