



Ambedkar Times

Weekly

Editor-in-Chief: Prem Kumar Chumber

Contact: 001-916-947-8920

Fax: 916-238-1393

E-mail: chumbermedia@yahoo.com, editor@ambedkartimes.com

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Ambedkar Times (English) & Desh Doaba (Panjabi) congratulate all its contributors, readers, and well-wishers on this auspicious occasion on the Parkash Utsav of Sahib-E-Kamal Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

Vivekananda on Guru Gobind Singh

Speaking of the great powers that used to be infused in those days into the initiates of Guru Gobind Singh, Swamiji recited a popular doha (couplet) on Khalsa. Sava Lakh Se Ek Ladaun Tabi Gobind Singh Nam Kahaun.

The meaning is - When Guru Gobind Singh gives the Name i.e., initiates, a single man becomes strong enough to triumph over a lakh and a quarter of his foes. Each disciple, deriving from his soul filled with such wonderful heroism. While holding forth thus on the glories of this religion. Swamiji's eyes dilated with enthusiasm seemed to be emitting fire, and his hearers dumb-stricken and looking at his face kept watching, the wonderful sight. After a while the disciples said: "Sir, it was very remarkable that Guru Gobind Singh could unite both Hindus and Mussalmans with the fold of his religion and lead them both towards the same end. In Indian history, no other example of this can be found. Swamiji: "Men Can never be united unless there is a bond of common interest. You can never unite people merely by getting up meetings, societies and lectures, if their interests be not one and the same. Guru Gobind Singh made it understood everywhere that the men of his age, be they Hindus or Mussalmans, were living under a regime of profound injustice and oppression. He did not create any common interest. He only pointed out to the masses. And so both Hindus and Mussalmans followed him. Yes, in Indian history, such an example is indeed very rare.

Swami Vivekananda's Works

Vol. VI P. 469, Conversations and Dialogues

GURU GOBIND SINGH CREATED KHALSA, A NEW MAN

Sikhism is a unique, continuous and complete revolution. The ultimate goal of any revolution is to create a new man. Only the Sikh revolution has succeeded in creating a new man. Guru Gobind Singh created Khalsa, a new man on Vaisakhi in 1699. Vaisakhi is a harvesting festival.

Peasantry was the main force of the Sikh revolution.

Punjab is mainly an agricultural state. Therefore, Guru Gobind Singh chose Vaisakhi to create Khalsa. The word Khalsa was used by Bhakat Kabir in Guru Granth Sahib. The general impression is that the word Khalsa means pure.

Therefore, Khalsa is spiritually pure, who has attained the spiritual enlightenment and has cleaned oneself from all impurity of Ego. When someone completely frees himself from Ego then he merges with God, all doubt and duality end and there is complete unification with the ultimate reality. The Persian word Khalsa means sovereign.

It means the land which is not in the revenue record and is directly under the king, in other words it is a Sovereign land.

Therefore, Khalsa means the Sovereign army of God which is not under control of any human being. Khalsa is a saint soldier. He has attained the highest spiritual level by subduing the five messengers of wickedness, Kam (lust) Krodh (anger), lobh (greed), moh (attachment) and ahankar (arrogance). He has conquered these internal enemies by bhakti (devotion) and him as the sovereign army of God, is ready to fight injustice, inequality, exploitation, discrimination and oppression in society. To fight these wars he needs Shakti (power). Khalsa is a confluence of Bhakti and Shakti. Khalsa is a perfect man. Most of the philosophies in the world believe that man is imperfect and can never be perfect. The Sikh ideology believes that man is perfect because he is created by "the perfect" and there is no difference between the creator and the creation, only a curtain of ignorance separates the

creation from the creator. If we are perfectly enlightened and the curtain of ignorance is lifted then we realize that we are part of the ultimate reality, the eternal truth.

Guru Gobind Singh did not give only a theoretical concept of a perfect human being but actually set an example of a perfect man's life. Nowhere in history have we found an example of a perfect man except the worldly life of Guru Gobind Singh. He showed us what we can achieve in our life. He was a religious leader, a philosopher, a

peaceful means have been exhausted to fight against oppression.

Guru Gobind Singh's concept of Khalsa was a concept of transformation of a man into a new man who has dissolved and transcended his old identity based on caste and creed.

Khalsa is a new man with a new identity.

He is the image of the timeless creator. This creation of a new man is the most unique and the highest achievement of the Sikh religion. Guru Gobind



poet, a saint, a soldier, a historian and he was a king and holy man (Badshah Dervish) at the same time. It is generally believed that you can only write poetry in one language but Guru Gobind Singh wrote poetry in many languages, including Punjabi, Persian, Brij Bhasha and Sanskrit.

Dr. Sawraj Singh

Again, it is thought that literature can be only created in peaceful times but Guru Gobind Singh created literature while fighting battles.

Guru Gobind Singh promoted the concept of constant struggle against oppression. There was no question of surrender. Khalsa engages constantly in both battles, the internal battle against the live messengers of wickedness and the external battle against all discrimination, injustice, inequality, exploitation and oppression. Guru Gobind Singh not only set an example for the perfect life but also glorified death which occurs when one is engaged in these internal and external battles. Guru Gobind Singh justified use of weapons when all

Singh used the force of history and the myths understood by the people, to help with the transformation of man. He gave new meanings to the myths. While using the history and the myths, Guru Gobind Singh made absolutely clear that he and his Khalsa only believe in one, the

eternal truth, the timeless creator (Akal Purkh). Therefore, Guru Gobind

Singh's philosophy is completely compatible with Guru Nanak's philosophy.

Guru Gobind Singh gave a practical shape to Guru Nanak's philosophy.

Khalsa is a concept of a perfect man but at the same time Khalsa Panth is also a concept of universal brotherhood. This brotherhood is based upon the principles of complete equality and is without discrimination of any kind. It is a community of the spiritually enlightened people who have transcended all prejudices, differences and inequalities and have transformed themselves into a harmonious community dedicated to eradicate evil and promote good in the world.

Punjab Assembly Elections: Ignoring Economic Issues

Assembly elections in five states of the country including Punjab can be announced at any time. The Election Commission has ruled out holding the polls due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The atmosphere regarding assembly elections in Punjab is getting more and more dramatic day by day. As in many previous assembly elections, promises, claims, and new promises are being made and repeated by various political parties to win the elections. In fact, most of the claims are hollow and the promises do not go beyond raising hopes. The rewari (sweet made with jaggery) eaten after the winter meal helps the mouth to taste and digest the bread. Like many previous assembly elections, the political rewari being distributed in this year's assembly elections seems to be plastic instead of sugar / jaggery which will spoil the digestion of the people instead of improving it. Often different political parties are promising small concessions to different groups of

to militancy in the state and preferential subsidies given by the Union Government to the hill states for industrial development, Punjab's industrial units have shifted to other states. At present the Punjab Government has a debt of around Rs. 3 lakh crore. This debt of Punjab is creating many unbearable problems for the people living here. During the forthcoming assembly elections, some political parties have been cursing the debt and talking of repaying it, but there is growing frustration over when and how it will be done.

The hard work of Punjab's farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans and the over-utilization of its natural resources has kept the central pool of foodgrains intact, but due to the economic and agricultural policies of the Central Government these three categories are trapped in a debt-trap. Various research studies conducted in Punjab by the author and under his supervision have brought to light the fact that almost

tural labourers, as well as inhumane activities such as child labour.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and per capita GDP is considered an indicator of the economic performance of a country or state. In 1981, Punjab was at the top position in terms of per capita GDP which slipped sharply to 19th position in 2021 and 16th position in terms of GDP. The per capita GDP in Punjab being less than 18 states of the country reflects the deteriorating economic condition of Punjab and most of the people living here. With the exception of a few affluent people in the agricultural, industrial and service sectors of the Punjab economy, the economic condition of most of the people is miserable. Due to very low incomes of marginal, small, semi-medium and medium farmers, agricultural labourers, and rural artisans in the agricultural sector, most of them are stuck in a debt-trap and abject poverty. The economic and agricultural policies of the government have

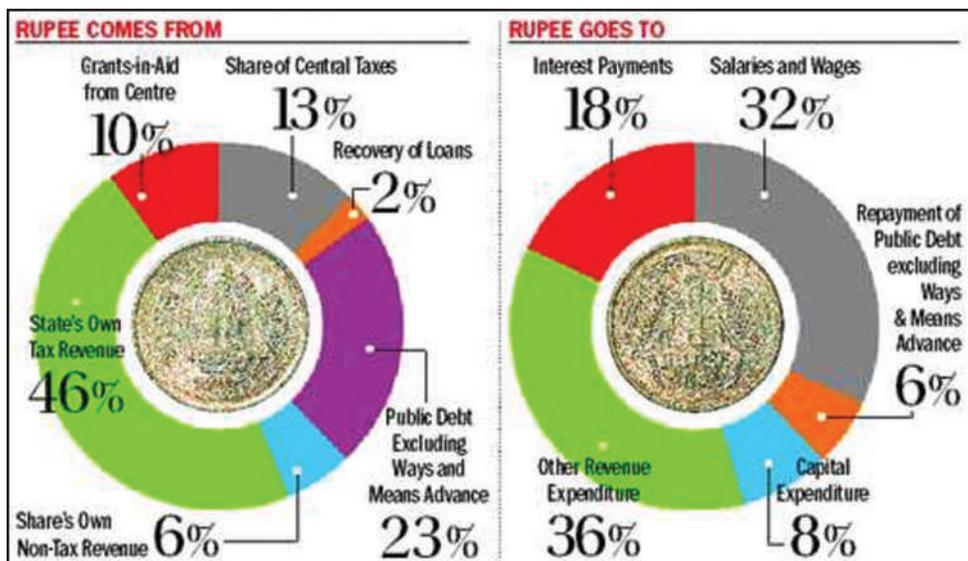
of education. The society has a great contribution in the education of these children, but it is benefiting the foreign countries. Almost all the young children who are migrating abroad are enrolled in foreign colleges / universities. These children migrate later, but their fees and some other expenses have to be remitted to foreign countries beforehand and after the migration there is more capital drain to meet the needs of these children. One example in this regard is the properties / lands in Punjab on



Dr. Gian Singh

Former Professor, Department of Economics,
Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab.

+1 (424) 422-7025



people but are not giving any roadmap / framework to mobilize the necessary resources to fulfill them. Many promises seem misleading. The worst aspect in this regard is the neglect of important economic issues of Punjab.

The people of Punjab have made the greatest sacrifices in the struggle for the independence of the country and have made significant contributions to the wars with Pakistan. During the 1960's, when the Union Government was facing a dilemma of importing foodgrains from foreign countries, under PL 480, the country had to pay a huge price for importing foodgrains from the United States of America. Punjab is a geographically very small (1.54 per cent) state but with the hard work of brave farmers, agricultural labourers, rural artisans and excessive use of natural resources has saved the country from these problems.

Prior to the 1980s, the financial position of the Punjab Government was quite good. The expenses of paramilitary forces deployed by the Union Government in Punjab to maintain law and order during the period of militancy was borne by Punjab, while the expense of paramilitary forces deployed in other states of the country during such times was borne by the Central Government itself. Due

all marginal and small farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans are born in debt and poverty, they live their hard life in debt and poverty, leaving behind a mountain of debt and abject poverty for future generations, they either die of starvation or commit suicide when all their hope are dashed by the governments and society. A study conducted by the Punjab Government under the supervision of professors from Punjabi University, Patiala; Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; and Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana has revealed that 16606 farmers and agricultural labourers committed suicide in Punjab during 2000-2016. The main reason for these suicides is the debt incurred by these sections. About 40 per cent of these suicides were committed by agricultural labourers. About three-quarters of the suicides committed by farmers are of marginal and small farmers. Debt-ridden unsustainable indebtedness among these agricultural segments is creating many insurmountable problems for these segments. The level of living of these sections is declining. The education of the children of these sections is left in the middle. These sections are forced to live like bonded labourers due to debt. Debt has led to physical abuse of women in these categories, especially agricul-

made agriculture a loss-making business, and the use of machinery and herbicides for agricultural production has reduced employment opportunities. Due to militancy and the preferential policies of the Central Government towards the hill states, the relocation of industrial units from Punjab to outlying states and some other reasons have led to a sharp decline in employment opportunities in the industrial sector. Employment opportunities in the services sector have increased for some workers who have a level of knowledge of English language and computers. The quality of employment in this sector is also steadily declining.

Due to low employment opportunities and low quality of employment opportunities in Punjab, young children from the state are migrating to foreign countries. In 2020, Dr. Gurinder Kaur, Dr. Gian Singh, Dr. Dharmapal, Dr. Rashmi, and Dr. Jyoti have conducted a study of international migration from Patiala district. The study reveals that the international migration of young children from Punjab is emerging as one of the major disadvantages resulting in terms of brain drain, capital drain, and loss of demographic dividend. Most of the young children who are migrating abroad have senior secondary education (12th grade) or higher levels

sale. The high percentage of young children in any country or state is called demographic dividend because these children have to participate in economic activities for a long time. The demographic dividend deficit is clearly visible today and will be even worse in the years to come.

To meet the food needs of the country, the ground water in Punjab has gone down to dangerous levels. The shift from irrigation of wells / canals to irrigation of diesel engines, monoblock motors, and now submersible motors and their number which was only 7445 in 1960-61 is close to 15 lakh in Punjab is one of major causes of debt of farmers. This phenomenon is rapidly weakening Punjab's economy.

The number of educational and healthcare institutions in Punjab is increasing rapidly, but this growth is manifested in the expansion of the private sector at the cost of the public sector which ignores the working class. This is also the state of transport in the state.

The time has come for the contesting political parties in Punjab to focus on the economic issues of the state and come up with a blueprint / roadmap for fulfilling their promises instead of distributing plastic rewaris to the people so that Punjab becomes a prosperous state.

Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha Pittsburg (CA) celebrates Happy New Year 2022

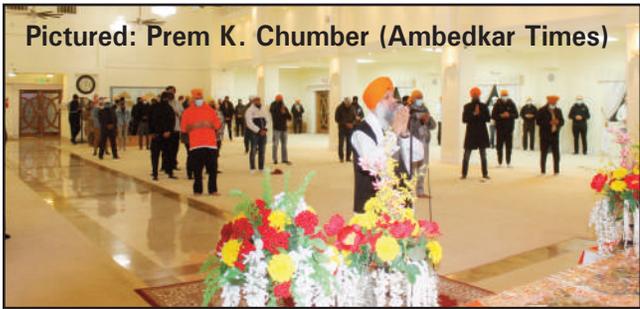
New Year's Eve was celebrated by the Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha Pittsburg (CA) and the Sangat at the Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg (CA) to welcome New Year 2022. We were blessed to have a good gathering at the Gurughar

in spite of extremely cold weather. There was some rain in the morning but it cleared out by the afternoon. After Sukhmani Sahib Path, incredible Jatha of Bhai Bhupinder Singh from San Jose, Giani Gurnam Singh/Ompal

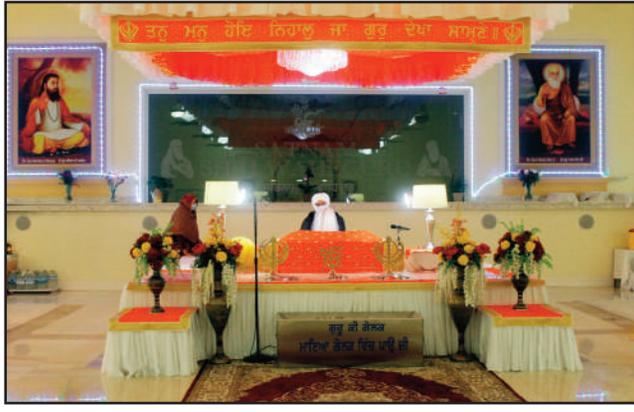
Singh Jatha and Bibi Kamljeet Bhatia did the Shabad Kirtan till midnight. There was a live video broadcast on the internet by Prem K. Chumber Editor-in-Chief:www.ambedkartimes.com. If you missed this year's Rain Sabai, I

suggest that you come to the next Rain Sabai to experience the devotion and spirituality. May Waheguru Ji bless the Sangat in New Year with good health, happiness and prosperity.

Report: Ramesh Suman



Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha Pittsburg (CA) celebrates Happy New Year 2022



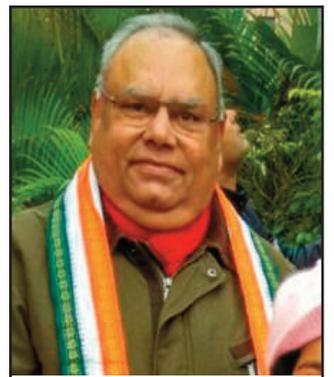
Pleasant Moments - Interaction with the Punjab Police Brass

My new acquaintance with IGP - PAP, Dr. S.K. Kalia, IPS pleasantly turned into a close friendship as proverbial love at first sight. I met Dr. Kalia on December 4 at a social event, Kewal Vig Awards hosted by our common link, Journalist Jatinder Mohan Vig in the memory of his father, at Desh Bhagat Yadgaar Hall and developed instant mutual liking. Kalia Sahib, later, invited me to his office, along with my friend and colleague from the IFS fraternity, Rajinder Bhagat, his

came to know that Kalia was retiring by the end of the month. Kalia Sahib was kind to invite me and my wife, Vidya, to carry forward our association, to his official farewell dinner hosted by his office and colleagues at J.F Ribeiro Officers Mess at PAP Complex on December 28. I was extremely happy on this thoughtful gesture and participated in the sumptuous dinner over a couple of 'Chotta Pegs' of assorted drinks. I was reminded of my own memories

and his regime in 1989, I went to Bucharest, as an official representative of the MEA, soon after the change, with a plane load of medicines in AN 32 - transport carrier of the Indian Air Force, for the suffering people of Romania as a friendly gesture by India. Ambassador J.F. Ribeiro received us at the airport and made all the necessary arrangements for the delivery of humanitarian aid to the concerned authorities of Romania. It was a pleasure to enjoy his gracious

I liked his good gesture to bring along his young IPS colleagues for their social and cultural expose in their promising ca-



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
91-99885-10940



old friend, to a friendly chat on matters of mutual interest. Then only, I

of association and interaction with J.F. Ribeiro way back in 1989-91 when he was seconded to the Ministry of External Affairs as Ambassador of India to Romania of Nicolae Ceausescu, at that time considered to be one of the safe heavens, in view of security threats to him on his role and action as one of the strong and effective DGPs of Punjab. I was the Under Secretary of East Europe Division in the MEA and Ribeiro Sahib was attached to our Division before taking up his diplomatic assignment in Bucharest. I, as a junior officer responsible for Romania, found Roberio Sahib as one of finest officers in the top IPS hierarchy and an excellent human being, without any pretensions. Later, subsequent to Revolution and demise of Ceausescu

hospitality at India House, Ambassador's official residence. Kalia Sahib further humbled me by inviting me to his retirement luncheon on January 1 at Jalandhar Golf Club at the PAP campus itself.

It was a fine sunny afternoon to usher ourselves to the New Year, 2022 with good piping hot food and lovely drinks. Both these occasions provided me much sought after opportunity to meet the top brass of IPS fraternity, both retired and serving, living in and around Jalandhar. It was satisfying to note that the seniors and colleagues of Dr. S.K. Kalia spoke very high of him formally and otherwise.

I could feel that Kalia Sahib must be an officer of total dedication and unimpeachable integrity. DGP IPS Sahota, one of finest IPS officers and through gentleman and his gracious wife, I must write without any reservation, impressed me very much with their easy and friendly demeanor like the legendary J.F. Ribeiro. Jalandhar Police Commissioner, Naunihal Singh, with an impressive personality, was, as always, in his spirits at the luncheon.

reers ahead. Retired seniors like DGP M.S. Bhullar, DGP Ranjan Gupta among others also showed up to register their appreciation of Kalia Sahib. It was advantageous for me to meet and interact with some big-wigs in and around to enrich my social reach namely; Deputy Commissioner of Jalandhar, Ghanshyam Thori, Commissioner Jalandhar Municipal Corporation, Karnesh Sharma, DIG PAP, Babu Lal Meena, Retired IPS Shammi Kumar, Principal of Police DAV School, Dr. Rashmi Vij and her husband, Chief Executive of Hotel Radison among others. It was a good and pleasant beginning of the New Year, 2022.

Thanks Kalia Sahib for making it possible for me to enter the New Year in the company of good people around.

I take this opportunity to wish you, your gracious wife and two well educated and groomed sons all the best in the years to come. We will continue, Inshalla.

Postscript:-

"Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value." - Albert Einstein

Change of Name

I, Sukhdev Singh Sidhu
s/o Naib Singh

Currently Resident of:
3411 Loggerhead Way
Sacramento, CA-95834, U.S.A.

Now I have changed my name

From: Sukhdev Singh Sidhu
To: Sukhdev Singh

All concerned Kindly note it.



Sue Frost

Sacramento County Supervisor. District 4



Sue Frost

Get Masks Out of Classrooms

On the heels of a new statewide mask mandate and the continued declaration of a COVID-19 state of emergency, it feels necessary to once again advocate for a population left seemingly voiceless throughout this saga. After a year of being forced out of the classroom, California children have returned only under the condition that they wear masks. Regardless of your perspective on the pandemic and experiences thus far, I



think we all need to take a step back and thoroughly evaluate the benefits versus impacts of masking an entire generation during their developmental years. Rather than continue to hinder the ability to verbally and non-verbally communicate, it is long past due that we allow children to remove their masks and provide them with alternatives to protect against the airborne spreading of viruses.

If we heard it once, we have heard it a million times: follow the science. However, science tells us that the vast majority of children who get COVID have mild symptoms, or no symptoms. So, the masking of children cannot be about the children at all; instead, it is about preventing them from spreading the virus to adults. By now school staff who fall in an at risk category have been advised to vaccinate or test regularly. In fact, teachers were given priority in the line to get vaccines. Getting teachers back in the classroom was just as crucial as getting kids back, but taking kids from virtual learning to masked learning is not much of an improvement. Children often report symptoms of shortness of breath, headache, nausea, vomiting, syncope, fear, anxiety and depression as a result of masking up. Some children who have extenuating circumstances such as autistic disorder, cerebral palsy, lung disease or hearing disorders, suffer a great trauma from masking. If we genuinely wish to unburden students from the social, mental and physical impacts of the pandemic, we need to let them remove their masks.

I am sure we have all had conversations where someone or both people had to pull their masks away from their faces so the other

person could understand what was being said. Imagine doing that through an entire school day. Masks make it difficult to hear or understand what someone is saying, but they also cover facial expressions. Children need to see a smile, a frown, or a silly face as part of their social development. They also need to show their expressions to feel seen and understood. The hindering of their social development has potentially severe long-term consequences. As things like depression and anxiety are already becoming more prevalent in our society, stunting the emotional growth of an entire generation seems like a dangerous decision to make. As we approach two years of this crisis, we need to think about how we may be creating new, potentially worse, problems.

If masks are intended to prevent the spread of the virus, there are alternatives to masking children such as classrooms getting better ventilation and being provided with air filters. The health and safety of children should remain a priority, but that means every aspect of their health. When a child walks into their classroom, they should be entering an environment where they can learn, feel safe, and express themselves meaningfully.

Let adults shoulder the burden of government mandates and states of emergency and leave the children out of it. I sincerely hope that our Governor, our teachers, and all school officials would agree that the well-being of children should be a priority and that we can take on a little extra risk for ourselves to protect them.

For a complete list of all my past newsletters, which each contain a commentary like this one, click here.

Recycle Your Holiday Tree January 8-9

Give your 2021 holiday tree the proper send-off and a new, beneficial life as mulch or biofuel to generate electricity! Residents can drop off



their live holiday tree for recycling in January.

To be recycled, trees must be

free of tinsel, lights, decorations, nails and stands. Flocked trees will be accepted, but cannot be recycled and will go to the landfill. Please observe COVID-19 health and safety requirements (e.g. social distancing and wearing a face covering) at participating locations.

Hours and locations of participating drop off locations are:
SMUD Corporation Yard, 6100 Folsom Blvd., Sacramento, CA
January 8, 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Free with a five tree limit per vehicle
Learn more: SMUD Dec. 2021 Connections Newsletter

Kiefer Landfill, 12701 Kiefer Boulevard, Sloughouse, CA
January 8 - 9, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
*Facility fees will apply for loads of six or more trees.

North Area Recovery Station, 4450 Roseville Road, North Highlands, CA
January 8 - 9, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
*Facility fees will apply for loads of six or more trees.

Elder Creek Recovery and Transfer, 8642 Elder Creek Road, Sacramento, CA
January 8, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
*Check with location for any restrictions/fees

Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station, 8491 Fruitridge Road, Sacramento, CA
Monday – Saturday, December 27 – January 8, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Check with location for any restrictions/fees

Dan Russell Rodeo Arena, Rodeo Park, end of Stafford Street, Folsom, CA
January 8, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
*Check with location for any restrictions/fees

Sacramento County Cold Weather Response Update

In advance of the coming low overnight temperatures, Sacramento County is opening two warming center locations over the weekend. See below for operating days and times for each location. Protective facial coverings will be required and provided to all visitors. Pets are welcome, but must be on a leash or contained in an animal carrier at all times. Blankets, snacks and water will be provided.

December 31 - January 2: DHA Annex (1725 28th St) 7:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.

January 1 - 2: Creekside Adult School (2641 Kent Dr) 8:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m.

In partnership with Sacramento County, Regional Transit (RT) will provide buses to transport guests to both warming locations on their respective operating nights.

Passenger pick-up locations will be at the following RT bus stops:
Stockton Boulevard and Fruitridge Road

Watt Avenue at Poplar Boulevard
Ahern Street at North C Street (Near Loaves & Fishes)

Natomas Park Drive (near Garden Highway across from Discovery Park)

There will also be transportation back to these locations each morning from the warming centers. Pick-ups will begin at 7 p.m. Friday, December 31 and be available starting at 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday night as well.

In addition to the County-run warming centers, there are additional locations in the County:

December 31 and January 1
Sacramento City Hall: 915 I Street, Sacramento (8:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m.)
Hagginwood Community Center: 3217 Marysville Blvd, Sacramento (8:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m.)



Capitol City Seventh Day Adventist, 6701 Lemon Hill Ave., Sacramento (8:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m.)

December 31 – January 2
Good Shepard Catholic Church: 9539 Racquet Court Elk Grove (6:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m.)
18 and older, no pets permitted

Nightly under further notice:
Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon Street, Sacramento (10:00 p.m. – 5:00 a.m.)

In addition to the warming location, DHA extended its weather respite motel vouchering program through Tuesday morning. The response is currently sheltering more than 120 people and navigators are adding people as capacity allows.

People can call 2-1-1 to get
(Contd. on next page)

URGENT CARE CLINIC



Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD

DR. TAKHAR'S FAMILY MEDICINE & URGENT CARE CLINIC

8191 Timberlake Way, Suite # 400, Sacramento, CA 95823

Phone: 916-688-8888 Fax: 916-688-8837

Clinic Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM & Sunday closed

We speak your language: Panjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Farsi, Arabic and Spanish



Goodie Takhar, PhD

(Continue from page 6)
the latest information on warming center locations, dates and times.

Board Approves Budget Priorities Based on Survey

The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, at its Dec. 8 meeting, approved the recommended budget priorities to be used in the development of the FY 2022-23 budget.

The budget priorities were a result of the County's Community Engagement Plan to develop priorities for the budget based on public input and the results of a survey of adult residents of Sacramento County.

The recommended priorities for the use of General Fund discretionary funds in the FY 2022-23 budget are:

Complying with the County's legal, financial, regulatory and policy obligations, including providing mandated services, ensuring collection of rev-

enues, and complying with the General Reserves policy.

Maintaining existing service levels budgeted for County programs,



improving effectiveness and efficiency where possible and limiting the extent to which reductions in categorical revenue are backfilled with discretionary resources.

Funding new or enhanced programs that focus on the most crit-

ical and urgent needs, with the following priority focus areas identified in a survey of County residents:

A Countywide focus area of addressing homelessness and its impacts, including housing, mental health and substance use

An unincorporated focus area of improving the condition of streets and roads

Resident Priorities for County Budget: Low levels of homelessness and crime, child abuse prevention and reliable water are seen as key to quality of life. Residents also strongly value affordable housing and disaster preparation.

Residents were broadly satisfied with waste disposal, clean water, parks and libraries. A majority of residents were dissatisfied with mainte-

nance of County streets and roads.

Fully four in five residents are dissatisfied with the County's efforts to prevent homelessness, and a number of key items that are more important to quality of life also have lower satisfaction ratings, including affordable housing, mental health services, child abuse prevention, job creation, planning for growth and drug use treatment.

Allocating the County Budget: Residents were asked to imagine they are in charge of the Sacramento County budget, and were asked how they would prioritize County spending in six broad areas.

On average, residents allocated more funding to public safety and homelessness than other areas. Residents in Districts 3, 4 and 5 assigned more of their funding to public safety, and white and Latino residents assigned greater shares to public safety as well.



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How should India deal with the problem of melting glaciers?

According to a study released by the University of Leeds (England) on December 20, 2021, the Himalayan glaciers have been melting at least ten times faster than the average in the last few decades. The study has revealed that the area under the Himalayan glaciers has shrunk by 40 per cent in recent decades. Himalayan glaciers are melting faster than any other part of the world. According to a joint study by the Himachal Council for Science, Technology and Environment (Himcoste) and the Space Applications Center, Ahmedabad, the Himalayan glaciers have shrunk from 23,542 sq km in 2019-20 to 19,183 sq km in 2020-2021. The glaciers have declined by 18.52 per cent in one year. The declining and rapidly melting glaciers of the Himalayas could pose serious problems for India. The study by Leeds University also revealed that glaciers in the eastern part of the Himalayas are melting faster than glaciers in the western region. According to a study by Himcoste and the Space Application Center, Ahmedabad, the icy areas supplying water to the Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej rivers recorded a decrease of 8.92, 23.49, 18.54 and 23.16 per cent respectively in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20.

The rapid melting of Himalayan glaciers is believed to be the result of natural disasters due to global warming and consequent climate change, but our country's economic development model is also responsible for the rise in temperature and natural disasters. In the name of economic development, the Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Jammu and Kashmir have indiscriminately cut down forests and mountains for road construction, hydropower generation, and horticulture to augment the tourism department in the Leh-Ladakh region. In the name of this so-called economic development, the State governments and the Union government in these areas are ignoring the environmental regulations leading to the absence of trees which causes huge losses in the event of natural calamities due to rising local temperature.

When the state of Uttarakhand came into being in 2000, the length of roads here was only 8000 km. The state of Uttarakhand has been given a network of roads till 2013 by uplifting its mountains with explosives and deforestation to boost the state as a resort and for economic gain. The length of roads has been increased to 24000 kms by connecting the four Hindu shrines Kedarnath, Badrinath, Yamunotri, and Gangtori via roads. For the construction of the roads local people and geologists were not consulted, hence their viewpoint was ignored and it also did not follow the environmental norms. These problems arising from construction have been continuing for several years. At that time, the State

and Union governments were promising that the roads in the state would be widened in the near future after consulting the locals and geologists.

Even after the catastrophic glacier collapse at Chamoli on February 7, 2021 and the catastrophic floods in October 2021, the Union government, in the guise of protecting the country, has obtained the Supreme Court's permission to build the 900 km section of Char Dham Road which is an environmentally sensitive area. It is also important to note that this is not the first time the Union government has taken such a decision. On March 15, 2021, just one month after the Chamoli incident on February 7, the Union government had approved the continuation of seven hydropower projects in an environmentally sensitive area.

In 2021 alone, the Supreme Court allowed the Himachal Pradesh



government to continue 465 projects in defiance of the provisions of the Forest Conservation Act 1980 and the Forest Rights Act of 2006. These projects include 53 hydropower and 334 road projects. One kilometer of road in mountainous areas requires 30,000 to 40,000 cubic meters of soil and stones to be removed which leaves the mountains losing their balance. In case of heavy rains and snowfall, the mountains begin to slide down, causing heavy loss of life and property. According to data released by the Disaster Management Departments of Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, Uttarakhand has received an average of 5 per cent less rainfall by August 2021, but landslides have increased by 32 per cent. In 2021, there were 1,200 incidents of landslides in Uttarakhand in which 135 people were killed. Himachal Pradesh received 44 per cent less rainfall till August, but the incidence of landslides increased by 60 per cent, killing 150 people.

Similar development projects in Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh are blindly destroying natural resources like forests, and mountains. Deforestation increases the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which in turn increases the local temperature. When mountains are blown up with explosives to build roads and hydroelectric projects, the explosives also contribute to raising the local temperature. Rising local temperature

accelerates natural disasters, such as cloudburst, thunderstorms, lightning, and landslides.

Rising global temperature is bound to increase the likelihood of all kinds of natural disasters, such as short-term rainfall and snowfall, floods and droughts, cloudbursts, and lightning strikes. Melting glaciers in the Himalayas are also a part of these natural disasters. It is also important to consider the possible damage that the melting of Himalayan glaciers could do to India. All rivers in northern India originate from the Himalayan glaciers. If these glaciers melt rapidly, flooding in the plains will multiply due to overflow of rivers and people will become homeless, crops will be destroyed causing a huge loss of life and property. Would the destruction of crops not lead to food shortages and a food crisis in India, which has a population of over 135

Taylor Coleridge said, "Water everywhere but not a drop to drink". The plains will be hit by floods causing loss of life and property as well as food shortages due to crop failure. According to the Leeds University

study, melting of glaciers around the world has caused sea levels to rise from 0.98 mm to 1.38 mm. India is surrounded by the sea on three sides, with some areas of the 10 states and 4 union territories being submerged due to rising sea level and most of them will be submerged in the sea in the near future. Rising sea levels will also increase the number of maritime disasters.

Rapid melting of glaciers is also a danger message for hydroelectric projects on the rivers, as the rapid depletion of glaciers will result in depletion of rivers, renewable energy sources and millions of people will become unemployed.

Although the problem of rapid melting of glaciers is related to rising temperature and climate change, the Union government of our country should refrain from taking any action to increase them. Before starting economic development projects in the hilly areas, the geological conditions should be

examined by the geologists. The government should regularly monitor glaciers and river sources and minimize tampering in mountainous areas. Roads in mountainous areas need to be widened to the extent that they do not harm the environment. In the area of Uttarakhand where the Supreme Court has approved the construction of a 10-meter road, there have been a number of landslides this year. The Supreme Court has mentioned in its judgment that landslides are not a valid reason to stop development plans, but it is important to note that if landslides disrupt roads and disrupt traffic, then how does widening the roads strengthen the country's security? Such economic development and national security plans should be replaced by strong, sustainable and environmentally friendly roads and other plans. Necessary measures should be taken to avoid possible future disasters due to melting of glaciers. The forest cover in hilly areas should be increased. There should be a complete ban on economic development projects in environmentally sensitive areas, with local people and geologists actively involved to voice their concerns for any future proposals for developments in these areas or their vicinity. There is an urgent need for systematic measures to prevent floods in the plains. Time to act is now, because tomorrow might be too late.

According to the records of Indian Meteorological Department during 2015 and 2021, Uttarakhand experienced 7750 incidents of excess rainfall during the short period yet no increase has been recorded in the forest cover in the state. The number of waterfalls and springs in the states of Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand has been steadily declining. On one hand, the hill states are suffering from heavy rains attributed to climate change while on the other hand, people are suffering from shortage of drinking water due to depletion of waterfalls and springs. Like Samuel



Dr. Gurinder Kaur

Former Professor, Department of Geography, Punjabi University, Patiala.
001-408-493-9776

Making of the Indian Constitution – Role of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

The land known as India, that is, Bharat today became an independent Indian Republic under Constitution that came into force on 26 January 1950. Drafted by a seven member Committee headed by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, one of the most educated and erudite scholars (M.A. economics with history, politics, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and elementary French and German as ancillary subjects, and PhD. (Economics) from Columbia University New York, M.Sc. (Economics) and D.Sc. (Economics) from London School of Economics and Bar-at-Law, London), and approved by the Constituent Assembly of nearly three hundred members, is the largest Constitution in the world. Notwithstanding the seven members Drafting Committee, the monumental document is known to have been drafted almost single handed by Dr. Ambedkar, who is revered as 'Father of the Constitution'. He was decorated posthumously with the highest Civil award 'Bharat Ratna' in 1990.

A controversy on drafting of the Constitution has been raised in some quarters claiming that the initial as well as the final Draft was prepared by Sir B. N. Rau (Benegal Narsing Rau). The disputatious persons are of the view that Dr. Ambedkar's role in the Constitution making was insignificant, and he has been given undue credit. But it is widely known, firmly believed and settled in the country and abroad that Bharat Ratna Dr. Ambedkar is not only the Chief Architect but the father of the Indian Constitution, a great social reformer and valiant upholder of human rights. On the other hand most of the countrymen are not acquainted with Sir B. N. Rau and his contribution in the Constitution making. They have not even perhaps heard his name. Therefore, it calls for an in-depth study in historical perspective to set the controversy at rest.

Sir B. N. Rau was born in a well educated rich Saraswat Brahmin family of Mangalore (Karnataka). A graduate of the universities of Madras and Cambridge, he passed the Indian civil service examination in 1909. He served in Bengal as a bureaucrat, and held multiple important executive and judicial assignments including that of a judge of Calcutta High Court. He worked with the Reforms Office of the Government of British India, and was associated with some of the major constitutional developments in the Indian sub continent to which he made an important contribution. As an assiduous professional, he acquired the stature of an efficient bureaucrat, a reputed jurist and constitutional expert. He was bestowed upon the honour of 'Companion of the Order of Indian Empire (CIE)' and a Knighthood. After retirement in 1944, he served briefly as the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. Thereafter he served in a temporary capacity in the Reforms Office of the Government of India, and was subsequently appointed as a Secretary working on constitutional reforms in the Governor General's of-

office. Consequent upon formation of the Constituent Assembly in 1946, he was appointed Constitutional Advisor in the office of the Constituent Assembly. He extended his expertise and advice to the Committees of the Constituent Assembly. The office of the Assembly prepared a rough Draft Constitution under his guidance for consideration of the Assembly. Though not a member of the Constituent Assembly, he rendered necessary advice to the Constitution Drafting Committee from time to time. Later on, he served as India's representative to the UN from 1950 to 1952, and finally served as a judge in the International Court of Justice till his demise in 1953.

The Constitution making has a long history behind it which one



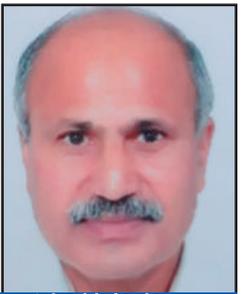
needs to know to appreciate the constitutional developments and role of Dr. Ambedkar culminating in formulation of the Constitution of India. The seed of representative institutions in India was sown in the British Government Act of 1861, which grew in the form of Indian Council's Act 1909. The August Declaration of 1917 (Montagu Declaration) considered to be the Magna Carta of India, was a big step towards development of self-governing institutions for the progressive realization of Responsible Government in India. The role of Dr. Ambedkar in the process of constitution making begins with his appearance as a witness before the Southborough Franchise Committee in 1919. He submitted a memorandum and gave a written statement to the Committee expressing his views and recommendations on various constitutional matters such as Franchise and electoral issues. He strongly pleaded the case for communal representation of the Depressed Classes as recommended for other Minorities in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. The Committee recommended scheme of Territorial Constituencies and provision for Communal Representation to the Minorities. The Government of India Act 1919 was the next step in the constitutional development. The Act contained provision for decennial review of the progress made towards the establishment of self-governing institutions in India. The first opportunity to

formulate the Indian Constitution came in 1927, when Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, challenged the Indians to produce a Constitution so as to consider granting of independence at the earliest. Taking up the challenge, a Draft Constitution was prepared in 1928 by a Committee headed by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru. But it was out-rightly rejected by the all Parties Conference. The Simon Commission (1928) set up for decennial review of the progress under Government of India Act 1919 was another vital step in the direction of Constitution making. Though the Congress party boycotted the Commission, the Provincial Legislative Councils were asked by the Government to constitute Provincial Committees to give recommendations for the

great industry and conquering intellect created tremendous impression upon the delegates and the British statesmen. The speech made a great impact on the international Press and Dr. Ambedkar became the centre of attraction in the foreign land. He was nominated to all the nine Expert Sub-Committees of the Conference set up to deliberate minutely on all the aspects of the Constitution. He made invaluable contribution in finalizing the recommendations of the Committees. His patriotism, love for democracy and concern for the welfare of common man won him national and international accolades. His other notable contribution to the Indian political thought was the emergence of the Depressed Classes in the political picture of India, and more important was the brilliant and moving exposition of their insufferable conditions before the bar of world opinion. The world came to know for the first time that the fate of the Untouchables in India was worse than that of the Negroes in America.

The Congress Party participated in the second Round Table Conference (1931) with Mahatma Gandhi leading the Congress delegation. He opposed tooth and nail Dr. Ambedkar's demand of Separate Electorates for the Depressed Classes on the ground that Hindu Society would crumble down if that happened. As the Separate Electorates were already granted to the Muslims, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians and the Europeans, other delegates supported Dr. Ambedkar's demand. Gandhi tried to win over the Muslim delegates by offering to accept their fourteen-point formula already rejected by him and the Congress Party. He wanted them to swear by the Quran to oppose Dr. Ambedkar's demand. But the Muslims out rightly rejected his offer. Failing to arrive at a consensus on the communal issue, Gandhi as well as other delegates gave written undertaking to accept the verdict of the British Government in this regard. Dr. Ambedkar, however, declined to sign the undertaking as he had made his position very clear in the separate Memorandum given to the Minority Committee of the Conference. The British Government awarded Separate Electorate to the Depressed Classes. But Mahatma Gandhi refused to accept the verdict ignoring his written undertaking given to the British Government. He went on historical fast unto death on this issue coercing Dr. Ambedkar to forego Separate Electorate and sign Poona Pact to the disastrous consequences for and misfortune of the Depressed Classes.

The reports of all the nine Sub-Committees were compiled in the Third Conference (1932) and a



Col. Prithvi Raj Kumar
91-94648-94941
Chief Postmaster General (Additional Secretary, Govt. of India) (Retd.)

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Making of the Indian Constitution – Role of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

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White Paper based thereon was issued in 1933 for further discussions by a Joint Committee comprising of 56 members including Dr. Ambedkar. He examined 52 witnesses to bring home his point of view on various aspects of the Constitution. The report of the Joint Committee culminated in the passing of Government of India Act 1935, the virtual Constitution of India till 26th January 1950. Dr. Ambedkar made conspicuously remarkable contribution at every stage in the making of this working Constitution.

The elections to the Provincial Assemblies were held in 1937 in terms of this Constitution to form Provincial Governments. The Congress Party formed Government in majority of the Provinces. Dr. Ambedkar's Independent Labor Party won fifteen out of seventeen contested seats in the Bombay Province. He won his seat with a thumping majority despite all out opposition by the Congress. In the meantime World War II started in 1939 and the British Government declared India a belligerent State. This caused considerable resentment in India and provoked the resignation en masse of elected Congress Provincial Governments, giving rise to the prospect of public revolt and political disorder. The British Government sent Cripps Mission to India in March 1942 to resolve the Indian question of a new constitution and selfgovernment. Dr. Ambedkar put forward his scheme stating that the British Government should promise to raise India to Dominion status within three years from the date of peace. The Cripps' proposals were rejected by the Congress, Muslim League and Dr. Ambedkar being not favorable to their interests. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the Cripps scheme was a great betrayal of the Depressed Classes as it bound them hand and foot to the Hindu rule and they feared that it would lead them to the black days of their ancient past. Dr. Ambedkar was appointed on the Defense Advisory Committee of the Viceroy's Executive Council in July 1941 and was inducted as a Member (Minister) in 1942. He held the portfolio of 'Labor, CPWD, Irrigation and Power' for four years. He championed the cause of liberation, rights, uplift and welfare of women, labor and Depressed Classes, and caused various enactment of laws for their social and economic uplift, and political awakening. There is a long list of measures that he took such as equal status and equal rights; equal pay for equal work; maternity leave with pay and other maternity benefits; opening primary schools; scholarships for the women from the weaker sections for higher studies; social security; general and health insurance scheme; holidays with pay; Minimum wages Act; reduction in work hours from 14 to 8 hours; setting up Employment Exchanges and so on. He laid the foundation of green and Industrial revolution and poverty alleviation by launching various water supply, irriga-

tion, navigation and power generation projects such as Damodar, Sone, Mahanadi valley multipurpose projects, Hira Kund and Bhakra Dam projects and power grid system et al. He submitted a Memorandum to the Viceroy containing proposals for the social, economic and political empowerment of the Depressed Classes. He continued his efforts for making a Constitution based on real democratic and egalitarian principles.

As a sequel to the Cripps proposals, Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India was entrusted the job of reaching at a settlement with the main elements of India's national life. He made it clear that the British Governments' offer of unqualified freedom was dependent on the framing of a Constitution agreeable to the main elements of India's national life. Dr. Ambedkar proposed the Parliamentary form of Government with the Executive members at the Centre and in the States drawn from general and minority communities in a proportion to be specified in the Constitution. He suggested that the Prime Minister and Ministers drawn from the general community should be elected by the whole house. The Ministers representing the minority communities should be selected by the members representing the respective communities. The Scheduled Castes should be recognized as a separate element in the national life, and their election should be on the basis of Separate Electorate. The Wavell Plan (1945) failed in its objective due to multiple reasons.

A third attempt to make the Constitution by the Indians was made in 1945. A draft Constitution was prepared by a Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. The draft was rejected by the Indians themselves being inadequate. The issue of granting independence to India kept hanging fire mainly due to the Communal deadlock and inability of the Indians to prepare a Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar presented a blue print of the form of the future Constitution and solution of the Communal deadlock published as "Communal deadlock and a way to solve it" in 1945.

The British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, acknowledged on March 15, 1946 India's right to attain full independence. The 'Cabinet Mission' comprising of three Cabinet Ministers was sent to India for discussions with the Indian leaders. Dr. Ambedkar submitted a Memorandum to the Mission on 5th April 1946 containing views on the final Constitution. He conveyed his constitutional ideas and proposals during interview with the Commission, and through letters as well to the British leaders and all those who mattered. The Cabinet Mission proposed in its report to utilize the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as elective bodies for the election of the members of the proposed Constituent Assembly to formulate the new Constitution. Mohammed Ali Jinnah and his Muslim League decided to

withdraw from the Cabinet Plan and boycott the Constituent Assembly. The League gave a call for 'Direct Action' to demonstrate its show of strength. The situation turned into communal violence in Calcutta resulting in butchering of 5000 people, maiming of thousands and raping of women on both the sides.

A caretaker Government was announced on June 29, 1946 and elections for the members of the Constituent Assembly were completed in August 1946. Dr. Ambedkar could not find place in the Constituent Assembly as his Party lost the Provincial elections due mainly to the determined strong opposition of the Congress Party against his entry in the Assembly. Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal, a companion of Dr. Ambedkar, who was nominated to the Constituent Assembly from Jessore and Khulna (Bengal), vacated his general seat for Dr. Ambedkar. With the support of Mr. Mandal, Muslim League and some Scheduled Castes members of the Congress, Dr. Ambedkar won the election with thumping success. In all 296 members were elected to the Constituent Assembly with the Congress winning 208 seats. First meeting of the Constituent Assembly of India took place on 9th December 1946. The Resolution regarding aims and objects of the Assembly moved by the Prime Minister on 13 December 1946 was sought to be adjourned by the Congress member Dr. M.R. Jayakar till the Muslim League and Indian States representatives came into the Constituent Assembly. He was heckled by the Congress as an obstructionist. Amid this unpleasant situation Dr. Ambedkar, the avowed enemy of the Congress, who had lashed at its ideology and scoffed at its leaders, particularly Mahatma Gandhi privately and publicly, was invited unexpectedly out of turn on 17th December 1946 by the President Dr. Rajendra Prasad to express his views on the amendment moved by Dr. Jayakar. The majority of the Congress members were ready to pin him down. Supporting the amendment, Dr. Ambedkar said in his speech: "...Our difficulty is how to make the heterogeneous mass that we have today take a decision in common and march on the way which leads us to unity. In order to make us willing friends, in order to induce every party, every section in this country to take on to road it would be an act of greatest statesmanship for the majority party even to make a concession to the prejudices of the people who are not prepared to march together... Let us even make concession to the prejudices of our opponents, bring them in, so that they may willingly join with us on marching upon that road which if we walk long enough, must necessarily lead us to unity...When deciding the destinies of nations, dignities of people, dignities of leaders and dignities of parties ought to count for nothing. The destiny of the country ought to count for everything...There is no other way that can

lead us to unity". So forceful and logical was the passionate and convincing views and appeal of Dr. Ambedkar that he was frequently and loudly cheered and thunderously applauded by his avowed foes. Dr. Jayakar's speech containing the same appeal aroused resentment while Ambedkar's fine oration evoked a sense of co-operation in their minds, and the hands that were itching to smash him rang with approbation! The consideration of the Prime Minister's Resolution was postponed to another session.

The Constituent Assembly appointed more than a dozen of Committees to facilitate its work. Dr. Ambedkar was appointed the member of Advisory Committee, Fundamental Rights, Minorities, Constitution and Flag Sub-Committees. He submitted a Memorandum dated 15-3-47 drafted in the form of Articles of the Constitution, to the Fundamental Rights Committee. It contained his social, economic, political and constitutional philosophy. It was published for wider circulation under the title 'States and Minorities, what are their rights and how to secure them in the Constitution of free India.' Its text was in fact a draft of the Constitution titled 'Constitution of the United States of India'. He maintained that it should be obligatory on the part of the State to plan the economic life of the people on the lines which would lead to the highest point of productivity without closing avenues to private enterprise, and also provide for the equitable distribution of wealth. A strong votary of the State Socialism, he proposed that it should be practiced through Parliamentary Democracy. To him, the soul of Democracy is the doctrine of one man, one value. If Democracy was to live up to this principle then it was equally essential to prescribe the shape and form of the economic structure of society by law of the Constitution. He proposed that agriculture should be the State Industry and the land should be divided into farms of standard size and let out for cultivation to residents of the village without distinction of caste and creed as a collective farm in such a manner that there will be no landlord, no tenant and no landless laborer. The aim of human society, according to him, must be to enable every person to lead a life of culture and happiness which means the cultivation of mind as distinguished from the satisfaction of mere physical want.

On April 29, 1947, The Constituent Assembly declared the abolition of Untouchability in any form, and imposition of any disability on that account to be an offence. Besides other factors, it was the motive-power of Dr. Ambedkar that had driven the nation to perform the historic deed. As a member of the Flag Committee, he played an important role in finalizing the design and adoption of National Flag. The 'Ashoka Chakra' instead of Gandhian 'Charkha' (spinning wheel) in the flag

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Making of the Indian Constitution – Role of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

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was his personal contribution. Consequent upon partition of Bengal in 1947, the Constituency of Jessore and Khulna represented by Dr. Ambedkar was transferred to East Bengal (Pakistan). He resigned his seat and resultantly ceased to be the member of the Indian Constituent Assembly. But the Congress bosses were so impressed with his contribution and quality of work in the Constituent Assembly and its various Committees that they found his services to be indispensable for framing of the Constitution. Therefore, the Congress Party decided to re-induct him in the Constituent Assembly from the Bombay Provincial Assembly. Dr. Rajindra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly, wrote on 30th June 1947 to Mr. B.G. Kher, the then Prime Minister of Bombay: "... Apart from any other consideration we have found Dr. Ambedkar's work both in the Constituent Assembly and the various Committees to which he was appointed to be of such an order as to require that we should not be deprived of his services. As you know, he was elected from Bengal and after the division of the Province he has ceased to be a member of the Constituent Assembly. I am anxious that he should attend the next session of the Constituent Assembly commencing from the 14th July and it is therefore necessary that he should be elected immediately". Besides, Sardar Patel also wrote to Mavlankar on 3rd April 1947 saying: "Speedy action is solicited regarding Dr. Ambedkar's election...He is a most suitable person for the Constituent Assembly". Accordingly, he was re-elected to the Constituent Assembly in July 1947 by the Congress Party which had earlier closed the doors and windows of the Constituent Assembly for him. The thunderous applause and loud cheers with which he was greeted by the full House on his entry in the Assembly is the speaking testimony of his indispensability and popularity in the Constituent Assembly.

The British Parliament passed the Act of Indian Independence on July 15, 1947. Accordingly Pakistan became independent of 14th August and India on 15th August 1947. Now the Constituent Assembly with 299 members became a sovereign body for a mutilated India. Dr. Ambedkar was inducted in the Nehru Cabinet of independent India as the first Law Minister. This followed a development which led him to the pinnacle of eminence. On 29th August, 1947, the seven member Constitution Drafting Committee comprising of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, N. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar, K.M. Munshi, Syed Muhammad Sa'adulla, Sir B.L. Mittar and D.P. Khaitan (died and was replaced by T.T. Krishnamchari) was appointed. Dr. Ambedkar was unanimously elected its Chairman. The Committee was tasked to scrutinize and to suggest necessary amendment to the rough Draft prepared in the Office of

the Constituent Assembly. The final task in effect was to frame the Constitution of free India. The rough draft containing 243 Articles and 13 Schedules was prepared taking into account the reports of over a dozen of Committees of the Assembly. Thus, apart from the task of framing the Constitution, Dr. Ambedkar was saddled with the responsibilities of the Law Minister as well. The Drafting Committee set out on its epoch making task of writing the Supreme Law defining the will, aim and vision of free India from the word go. The Committee sat for 141 days from August 30, 1947 to February 13, 1948 discussing and revising the rough draft making it a new monumental document. Dr. Ambedkar himself conducted all the business in the Committee. He worked almost singly and furiously till late nights, focusing his hand, heart and head on the task of supreme national interest despite his deteriorating health. The fresh Draft containing 315 Articles and 8 Schedules was submitted by Dr. Ambedkar to the Constituent Assembly on February 21, 1948. It was circulated among the Provincial/ State Assemblies and the public for perusal and suggestions. It was received back after eight months and presented to the Assembly on 4th November 1948 for consideration. Presenting the new Draft, Dr. Ambedkar brought out in his monumental speech that the Drafting Committee was in effect charged with the duty of preparing a Constitution in accordance with the decisions of the Assembly on the reports made by various Committees. It was also directed that in certain matters the provisions contained in the Government of India Act 1935 should be followed. He explained the philosophy, salient and special features of the Constitution in a grand, lucid, and brilliant speech. The whole Assembly listened to him as one man. Brushing aside all criticism of the Draft as based on misconception and inadequate understanding of the Articles, he said: "...No Constitution is perfect...I feel that it is workable, it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peace time and in war time...If things go wrong under the new Constitution, the reason will not be that we had a bad Constitution. What we will have to say is that man was vile".

The fact that the task of drafting the Constitution fell entirely on Dr. Ambedkar's shoulders was endorsed by Mr. T.T. Krishnamchari, one of the members of the Drafting Committee. He said in his speech given in the Constituent Assembly: "I am one of those in the House who have listened to Dr. Ambedkar very carefully. I am aware of the amount of work and enthusiasm that he has brought to bear on the work of drafting this Constitution. The House is perhaps aware that out of the seven members nominated by you, one had resigned from the House and was replaced. One died and was not replaced. One was away in America and his place was not filled up and

another person was engaged in State Affairs and there was a void to that extent. One or two people were far away from Delhi and perhaps reasons of health did not permit them to attend. So it happened ultimately that the burden of drafting this Constitution fell on Dr. Ambedkar and I have no doubt that we are grateful to him for having achieved this task in a manner which is undoubtedly commendable..." Repudiating the charges made by some Congressmen later on that he had played a very insignificant role in drafting the Constitution, Dr. Ambedkar said in a speech delivered at Bombay on 22nd November 1951 that there could be no greater lie than this. There was plethora of documentary evidence to prove as to how his colleagues had showed little interest in drafting of the Constitution, and how the entire burden of framing the Constitution had fallen on him and the Secretary of the Committee.

The Draft was widely acclaimed and thunderously applauded by the members of all shades in the Constituent Assembly. The whole Constituent Assembly was illuminated by the grand commentary given by Dr. Ambedkar on the Draft. Speaker after speaker paid glowing tributes to him for the lucid, symmetrical and brilliant exposition of the Constitution. Of course, there were critics too, but the shower of accolades and the ground reality bear loud testimony to the fact of his immortal gigantic contribution in drafting the Constitution.

The second reading of the Constitution commenced on 15th November 1948 and concluded on 17 October 1949. The Draft Constitution was meticulously debated clause by clause for almost one year in the Assembly. Total 7635 amendments to the Draft were tabled, out of which 2473 were actually moved. Dr. Ambedkar, as Chairman of the Drafting Committee had to explain many knotty points and niceties of law in response to the amendments proposed and clarifications sought by about 300 members on various constitutional aspects and even the grammar of the Articles. He explained elaborately the letter and spirit of the Articles, and logic for accepting or rejecting the amendments. He wielded such an authority and wizardry on Constitutional matters that his view on the amendments and points of clarification commanded respect of the House as a last word. The Vice President chairing the proceeding of the Constituent Assembly on 15 November 1948 gave the ruling: "...I want to make one thing clear.

After the reply has been given by Dr. Ambedkar, I shall not permit any further discussion..." The amendments adopted by the House were those which Dr. Ambedkar had accepted. Third Reading was confined to the concluding remarks on the Constitution, and mostly to the tributes paid to Dr. Ambedkar and his team for accomplishing the mammoth feat of Constitution making with a great finesse. The exuberant,

exultant and highly elated members came forward one after the other to express their views and compliments eulogizing the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar and his colleagues. Here is a small glimpse of the tributes paid to him: "...What a steam-roller intellect he brought to bear upon this magnificent and tremendous task: irresistible, indomitable, unconquerable, leveling down tall palms and short poppies: whatever he felt to be right, he stood by, regardless of the consequences..." (Pattabhi Sitaramayya); "...Words fail to convey the gratitude that all of us feel for the legal acumen, the untiring industry, the consummate skill and the firmness tempered with moderation, with which the Chairman of the Drafting Committee has piloted this Constitution through this House and has solved all the knotty questions arising in connection with it..." (Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava); "...Dr. Ambedkar has proved by his efficiency and the able way in which he has drafted and piloted this Constitution that if opportunities are given the Scheduled Classes will prove better than anybody else. The stigma of inefficiency attached to them will be washed away and will not be attached hereafter..." (S. Nagappa); "...The achievement of codification of India's independence would go to the credit of the great architect of our great Constitution, Dr. Ambedkar, who deserves the gratitude not only of this Assembly but of the nation... He will be remembered not only by us but by the posterity with gratitude" (Shyamanandan Sahay); "...Dr. Ambedkar has performed a very great work. I would not say Herculean because that is a very small word. He has performed a task worthy of the great Pandva Bhim and worthy of his name Bhim Rao..." (R.V. Dhulekar). The interested may like to refer to the Constituent Assembly Debates for the complete picture.

On conclusion of the debate, Dr. Ambedkar rose amidst loud applause to give reply to the debate on 25th November 1949. He explained in his grand historical speech the philosophy and vision contained in the Constitution in lucid terms, and cautioned those responsible to work it against likely pitfalls and vulnerable areas in their path. Spelling out the mammoth efforts involved in formulation of the Constitution, he said: "Looking back on the work of the Constituent Assembly it will now be two years, eleven months and seventeen days since it first met on the 9th of December 1946. During this period the Assembly has held altogether eleven sessions consuming 165 days... The Drafting Committee sat for 141 days engaged in the preparation of the Draft Constitution...The first Draft as presented by the Drafting Committee to the Assembly contained 315 Articles and 8 Schedules. At the end of the consideration stage, the number of Articles went to 386. In its final form, the Draft Constitution contains 395 Articles and 8

(Contd. on next page)

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji and the Birth of Dalit Movement in Punjab

Prem K. Chumber

Editor-in-Chief: Ambedkartimes.com

Punjab has the distinction of being the only state in India where caste based social exclusion was diluted because of the long spell of Muslim rule on the one hand and the most appealing egalitarian philosophy of Sikh faith and its grassroots impact on transformation of the life of downtrodden, on the other. However, caste and its resultant social negativities never ceased to torment the major section of the society. Caste discriminations in Punjab were/are more material in nature than social as in other parts of India. Prejudice takes precedence over pollution in Punjab. However, absence of pollution does not mean that Brahminism Social Order (BSO) is alien to it. On the contrary, it thrives under new structures of social subordination entrenched in material deprivation of Dalits in the state. Material deprivation of the downtrodden in the state was reinforced by the customary laws of Razat-Namaas and the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900. Along with many other non-

agricultural castes, Scheduled Castes people were historically deprived the right to own land. This restriction made them absolutely landless. It was because of this legal restriction that when Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji after his return to Punjab from the United States of America (USA) asked his father to buy some land to evade social oppressions at the hands of landlords that he came to know that social subordination of the Scheduled Castes people was also rooted in the law of the land.

This has led him to organize his fellow beings to form a movement for the emancipation and empowerment of downtrodden what eventually termed as Ad Dharm Movement. This movement was the first of its kind that became suddenly popular because of its grassroots appeals. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji devoted his entire life



for the cause of total transformation of his country and the socio-economic and political uplift of his people who were relegated to the periphery since centuries. He exhorted his people to come over a common platform to challenge the forces that subjugated the Dalits. He waged a long battle and finally able to unite many communities among the Scheduled Castes to work for their upward social mobility. Scheduled Castes of Punjab, particularly of the Doaba region, consider him the pioneer of Dalit

movement in the state that played a leading role in strengthening the mission of Dr B. R. Ambedkar not only in Punjab but in the whole of the country. www.ambedkartimes.com congratulates all its contributors, readers, and well-wishers on this auspicious occasion on the birth anniversary of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji.

Making of the Indian Constitution – Role of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

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Schedules...” Replying to the critics of the Constitution, he said, “...I feel, however good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it happen to be a bad lot.

However bad a Constitution may be, it may turn out to be good if those who are called to work it happen to be a good lot...” Expressing his fears and anxiety regarding the future of the country and its hard earned independence, he said: “... My anxiety is deepened by the realization of the fact that in addition to our old enemies in the form of castes and creeds we are going to have many political parties with diverse and opposing political creeds...If the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost forever...We must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood”.

Cautioning against hero-worship and other likely danger to the democracy, he said: “...There is danger of democracy giving place to dictatorship. It is quite possible for this new born democracy to retain its form but give place to dictatorship in fact. If there is a landslide, the danger of the second possibility becoming actuality is much greater...What we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives... As has been well said by the Irish Patriot Daniel O’Connell, ‘no man can be grateful at the cost of his honor, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty.’ This caution is far more necessary in the case of India than in the case of any other country, for in India, Bhakti or what may be called the path of devotion or hero-worship plays a part in its politics unequalled in magnitude by the part it plays in the politics of any other country in the world. Bhakti in religion may be a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics,

Bhakti or hero-worship is a

sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship”. Emphasizing the need and importance of social democracy, he said: “...Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. Social democracy means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life... On the 26th of 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 principle of one man one value...We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up...The other thing we are wanting in is recognition of the principle of fraternity. Fraternity means a sense of common brotherhood of all Indians - of Indians being one people...I am of opinion that in believing that we are a nation, we are cherishing a great delusion. How can people divided into several thousands of castes be a nation? The castes are anti-national in the first place, because they bring about separation in social life.

They are antinational also because they generate jealousy and antipathy between caste and caste. But we must overcome all these difficulties if we wish to become a nation in reality. For fraternity can be a fact only when there is a nation. Without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint”.

Cautioning against the continued deprivation and marginalization of a large section of society, he said: “Political power in this country has too long been the monopoly of a few and the many are not only beasts of burden, but also beasts of prey. This monopoly has not merely deprived them of their chance of betterment;

it has sapped them of what may be called the significance of life. These down-trodden classes are tired of being governed; they are impatient to govern themselves. This urge for self-realization in these classes must not be allowed to develop into a class struggle or class war. It would lead to a division of the House. That would indeed be a day of disaster...Therefore the sooner room is made for the realization of their aspirations, the better for the few, the better for the country, the better for the maintenance of its independence and the better for the continuance of its democratic structure. This can only be done by the establishment of equality and fraternity in all spheres of life”.

Expressing gratitude for the overwhelming compliments showered on him for making the Supreme Law of the independent Republic of India, the modest, generous and magnanimous Dr. Ambedkar shared the honors with everyone who made contribution in facilitating formulation of the historic document. He gave credit even to the rebels and critics saying: “...But for them, I would not have had the opportunity which I got for expounding the principles underlying the Constitution which was more important than the mere mechanical work of passing the Constitution.”

Concluding the speech, he reminded the House of the responsibility entrusted to them by the independence, saying: “Independence is no doubt a matter of joy. But let us not forget that this Independence has thrown on us great responsibilities...If we wish to preserve the Constitution in which we have sought to enshrine the principle of Government of the people, for the people and by the people, let us resolve not to be tardy in the recognition of the evils that lie across our path and which induce people to prefer Government for the people to Government by the people, nor to be weak in our initiative to remove them. That is the only way to serve the country. I know of no better”.

After the conclusion of Dr. Ambedkar’s speech to the all round jubilation and a long thunderous applause from all the members of the Constituent Assembly, the House was adjourned till the next day - 26th November 1949. Dr. Ambedkar moved the motion to pass the Constitution on that day. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly put the motion to vote with the words: “...Sitting in the chair and watching the proceeding from day to day, I have realized as nobody else could have, with rare what zeal and devotion the members of the Drafting committee and especially its Chairman, Dr. Ambedkar, in spite of his indifferent health, have worked. (Cheers). We could never make a decision which was or could be ever so right as when we put him on the Drafting Committee and made him its Chairman. He has not only justified his selection but has added luster to the work which he has done...” The motion was adopted with Prolonged Cheers in a chorus from all corners of the Constituent Assembly.

The President then authenticated the Constitution. Thunderously approved by the Constituent Assembly, each Article of the Constitution bears indelible stamp of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who worked day and night at the cost of his health to frame the Constitution for the development and growth of the country as democratic and egalitarian ‘One Nation One People’.

(Source: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Writings and Speeches, Vol. 1, Vol.2, Vol. 4, Vol. 8, Vol. 9, Vol. 10, Vol. 13, Vol. 17, Pt.1, 2 and 3; Dhananjay Keer, ‘Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Life and Mission’; Nanak Chand Rattu, ‘Last Few Years of Dr. Ambedkar’; Dr. Savita Bhim Bhimrao, ‘Dr. Ambedkar ke sampark mein’; Dr. M.L. Sahare and Dr. Nalini Anil, ‘Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Struggle and Message’; history of Modern India authored by established historians and Constituent Assembly Debates)
