



## Invited Editorial Article

# On the Foundation of the Ad Dharm Movement (June 11-12)

The Ad Dharm movement was founded on June 11-12, 1926 at village Mugowal of Hoshiarpur district in Doaba Punjab. The Ad Dharm movement was parallel but independent of various other similar Adi movements emerged almost at the same time in the South India. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia (January 14, 1886 – April 22, 1980) was the precursor of this historic movement of the Scheduled Castes (SCs). He himself belonged to a SC family of leather workers of village Mugowal indistrict Hoshiarpur. His father wanted him to educate so that he could assist him in his leather business by reading transactions written in English. Despite his relatively well off family background, Mangu Ram faced social exclusion, for his so-called low birth, at the school in a nearby village Bajwara. He was forced to leave the studies abruptly without completing his matriculation. Thereafter, in search of easy life, like the early emigrants from the Doaba, Mangu Ram too landed in America in 1909 and earned his livelihood while working in lumber industry and agriculture farms. That was the time when Punjabi emigrants in North America were planning to form a radical organisation for the liberation of colonial India. Eventually, Mangu Ram became an active member of the GhadarLehar (movement) founded in 1913. He was one of the five proud members of a Ghadrite group who were assigned the herculean task of ferrying weapons to India for an armed rebellion against the British rule. But *SS Maverick*, the ship that was bought to transport weapons was caught in route and destiny took Mangu Ram into the Philippines, where he spent the next twelve years of his prime life incognito. Finally, hereached his native village in 1925, to the surprise of all, as everyone already knew the news of his alleged hanging.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia is to the Punjab what Mahatma Jyotirao Phule is to Maharashtra, and just as the Maharashtra Dalit movement owes its origin to Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, the Punjab Dalit movement is similarly indebted to Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia. If Mahatma Jyotirao Phule was influenced by the writings of Thomas Paine, the famous English-born American political activist, theorist, philosopher and revolutionary of the nineteenth century, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia learnt his lessons of equality and freedom from the proclaimed democratic and liberal values of the United States of America wherein he came into contact, during his sojourn, with the revolutionary freedom fighters popularly known as

Ghadari Babas, of the historic Ghadar Lehar. This further cemented his resolve to fight for a dignified life for the masses by liberating India from the clutches of the British Empire, and to establish in its place democratic



Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia

and egalitarian home rule with equality and freedom for all irrespective of caste, class, creed, language, gender and regional differentiations.

On return to his native village, after spending 16 years abroad, Babu Mangu Ram did not find any change in the predominance of untouchability. In his own words: "While living

abroad I had forgotten about the hierarchy of high and low, and untouchability; and under this delusion returned home in December 1925. The same disease from which I had escaped started tormenting me again.

I wrote about all this to my leader Lala Hardyal Ji, saying that until and unless this disease is cured, Hindustan could not be liberated. Hence, in accordance with his orders, a programme was formulated in 1926 for the awakening and upliftment of the Achhut qaum (untouchable community) of India" (*Kaumi Udarian* 1986: 23-24). Consequently, he decided to dedicate rest of his life for the emancipation and empowerment of his fellow so-called low-caste people. He established an elementary school in his native village for the lower caste children of those self-same socially excluded sections of the society that later came to be designated Scheduled Castes (SCs) under the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) order, 1936, which contained a list (or schedule) of castes throughout the British-ad-

ministered provinces. Following into the footsteps of his revolutionary Ghadrite leadership in the United States of America, he aspired to both fight against the caste-based social evil of untouchability and to replace it with an all-encompassing social freedom, as well as to join the fight to free the subjugated India and return to it its political freedom. Like his predecessor in Maharashtra, he faced stiff opposition from the so-called upper castes in his fierce struggle against oppressive structures of domination including untouchability – the most egregious one among them.

The Ad Dharm movement, pioneered by Mangu Ram, soon became a household name among the Dalits of the Punjab like the Satyashodak Samaj movement of Phule in Maharashtra. Seth Kishan Das of Bootan Mandi – a well-known local leather merchant – helped build its headquarter named 'Ad Dharm Mandal' in Jalandhar. Mangu Ram with his untiring efforts literally took the movement to the doorsteps of all the untouchables in the region and soon emerged as a cult figure of the Dalits. Under the flag of Ad Dharm movement, he fought for the long denied land rights of the lower castes who were legally debarred along with other non-agriculture castes from owning agriculture land under the Land Alienation Act of 1900. Moreover, under the local customary law, popularly known as 'rayit-nammas', the lower castes were also deprived of ownership rights on the residential plot of their houses in these segregated neighbourhoods. They were not allowed to build pucca houses in these separate Dalit localities. They were only permitted to build mud/thatched houses and in return were supposed to perform some *begar* (forced labour without wages) in the agriculture farms of the legal owners of their residential plots.

Another important task towards the material empowerment of the lower castes that was undertaken by the Ad Dharm movement was special legal provision of education and government employment reservation



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## Congratulations on the Foundation Day of the Ad Dharm Movement (June 11-12, 1926)

"Ambedkar Times" & "Desh Doaba" Weeklies fondly remember the historic occasion (June 11-12, 1926) of the foundation of the Ad Dharm movement led by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji. The Ad Dharm movement laid the foundation of the social and political struggle for the restoration of long denied civil rights, social respect and dignity of the people belonging to Scheduled Castes communities. On 11th June Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji addressed a large gathering of his fellow community persons and exhorted them to come forward and join hands for a longer struggle to acquire their due share in the society. We feel pride, once again, in celebrating the occasion and remembering great efforts of all the leaders and activists of the movement spearheaded by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia.

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# On the Foundation of the Ad Dharm Movement (June 11-12)

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for the lower castes under the state affirmative action. Like the *Satyashodak Samaj* movement in Maharashtra, the Ad Dharm movement soon became a household name among the Dalits of Punjab. It was for the first time in the forgotten history of the lower castes in the state that a golden opportunity knocked at their doors to get them united on a common and distinct platform under the leadership of their fellow-travellers to fight for the most sought after goal of dignified life and to collectively press their long-pending claim for a share in the local structures of power.

In the wake of the limited democratic political process in 1919 sprung from the British Government for the institutionalization of the electoral system, every community was busy in organizing its respective members into well-organized socio-political forces (political parties/organizations); and as a young man freshly-returned from the US, and meticulously chiselled in the superb companionship of the proud Ghardarite Babas, Babu Mangu Ram able bring together many of his fellow community members to build a separate social and political organization at par with that of the upper caste communities like the Hindu Mahasabha of the Hindus, Muslim League of the Muslims and Singh Sabhas of the Sikhs. This limited election-based legislature-forming-process also led to the formation of similar Adi-movements in other parts of the country like Adi-Andhras, Adi-Dravidas, Adi-Karnataka in the South India, and Adi-Hindus in the Uttar Pradesh province of the North India. Though these different Adi-movements emerged almost at the same time in different regions of the country, there is no evidence to prove that they were instrumental in the rise of one and another. Each Adi-movement was influenced by the then prevailing situations in its own specific context in the given state.

In the posterannouncing the first annual meeting of the Ad Dharm movement, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, along with Swami Shudranand and Babu Thakur Chand, devoted the entire space to the hardships faced by the Moolnivasis at the hands of the caste Hindus. He also made an appeal to the Moolnivasis to come together to chalk out a programme for their liberation and upliftment. Addressing them as brothers, he said:

*We are the real inhabitants of this country and our religion is Ad Dharm. Hindu Qaum came from outside to deprive us of our country and enslave*

*us. At one time we reigned over 'Hind'. We are the progeny of kings, Hindus came down from Iran to Hind and destroyed our Qaum. They deprived us of our property and rendered us nomadic. They razed our forts and houses, and destroyed our history. We are seven crores in numbers and are registered as Hindus in this country. Liberate the Adi race by separating these seven crores. ... Our seven crore number enjoy no share at all. We reposed faith in Hindus and thus suffered a lot. Hindus turned out to be callous. Centuries ago, Hindus suppressed us; sever all ties with them. What justice can we expect from those who are the butchers of the Adi race. The time has come; be cautious, now the Government listens to appeals. With the support of a sympathetic Government, come together to save the race. Send members to the Councils so that our Qaum is strengthened again. British rule should remain forever. Make prayer before God. Except for this Government, no one is sympathetic towards us. Never consider ourselves as Hindus at all; remember that our religion is Ad Dharm (Kaumi Udarian: 1986: 21-22).*

Keen readers of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia have observed that he was conflicted on the issue of the British Raj – on the one hand he feared even greater oppression under Hindu majoritarian rule than under the British – whom he also viewed as possible partners in facilitating a more equal Indian society – but on the other hand he aspired for the dignity of national independence, which necessitated the removal of the British. This remained a recurring paradox in his political approach till the achievement of Indian independence in 1947. In the meantime, he along with other leaders of Ad Dharm movement chose to restore the lost dignity and freedom of the untouchables by detaching them completely from Hinduism and re-consolidating them into their own ancient religion (Ad Dharm). The long domination by the Aryans, they alleged, made them oblivious of their native religion.

Thus, what made the Ad Dharm movement the most politically noticeable and popular of its time was the farsightedness of its visionary leaders in setting the goal of bringing divergent lower caste communities under a single flag and to transform them into a distinct single community at par with other separate communities of Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians etc and to become an appropriate part of the Punjabi qaum. This was the most crucial political move on the part of Babu Mangu Ram, the master strategist,

who intervened at a vital moment when limited direct elections were scheduled to be held in the state. He pressed for a separate religion for the lower castes of Punjab to be recorded in the 1931 Census, who in his opinion were neither Hindus, Sikhs, Muhammadans nor Christians. The lower castes, reiterated Babu Mangu Ram, were the original inhabitants – *Moolnivasis* (aboriginal people) of this nation. The alien Aryan invaders, he continued further, deprived them of their kingdom, looted them, and finally enslaved them. In his brilliant article entitled *Achhut da Swaal* (The Question of Untouchability) published in the *Kirtimonthly* of the *KirtiKisan* party in 1929, penned under the pseudonym of Vidrohi, Shaheed Bhagat Singh supported the Ad Dharm leadership in its tirade against the caste system and for a separate religion, but at the same time also cautioned them to keep their distance from the British.

The Ad Dharm movement, under the leadership of Babu Mangu Ram, aimed at restoring the lost dignity and freedom of the untouchables by detaching them completely from Hinduism and re-consolidating into their own ancient religion (Ad Dharm). However, the task of reviving their ancient religion, in fact, was not an easy one. To revive Ad Dharm was tantamount to developing a new religion for the native people. *Moolnivasis*, the natives of this region, had forgotten their Gurus and other religious symbols during their long period of persecution under the rule of the outsiders. They had been condemned as impure and declared unfit to have their own theology. In order to establish their hegemony and legitimacy over the enslaved *Moolnivasis* of Bharat, the Aryan invaders successfully metamorphosed themselves into upper castes of the first three Varnas (Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas) – the fourfold Hindu social order based on *Chatur-Varnavyavastha*. The natives of the conquered land were allegedly pushed into the fourth Varna of Shudras – consisting of artisan castes and still other further reduced into lowest of the low castes, contemptuously dubbed as Untouchable peoples.

The assertion by Babu Mangu Ram that Dalits were the real inhabitants of this land made an enormous psychological impact on them. It provided a theological podium to them to sustain and reinforce the new Dalit identity. The British Government granted them, as demanded, distinct status of a separate religion – Ad Dharm. The Ad Dharm was based on the teachings and inspiration from

the saints of the North India Bhakti movement, particularly Guru Ravidass, Bhagwan Valmik, Sant Kabir and Sant Namdev. In fact, the leaders of the Ad Dharm movement placed the spiritual figure of Guru Ravidass in the centre of their discourse around which the entire socio-political and spiritual paraphernalia of the movement and the separate Dalit religion was woven. In this way, Babu Mangu Ram played a dominant role in chiseling the distinct markers of separate Dalit identity and restoring the natives their lost heroes, Gurus, and rich cultural heritage. He imbued them with the yearning to become rulers themselves.

During the Census of 1931, around half a million Scheduled Castes in Punjab returned themselves as followers of their newly recognized religion – Ad Dharm. Thenceforth, the followers of Ad Dharm took pride in being addressed as Ad Dharmis. Another equally great achievement of the Ad Dharm movement was that it swept the reserved Provincial assembly elections in Punjab in 1937 & 1946, which made it an important stake-holder in the Punjab legislature, perhaps for the first time in the history of the lower castes in the colonial India. Moreover, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia and the Ad Dharm movement provided a fertile ground for sowing the seeds of the mission of Babasaheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar in Punjab. During Dr. Ambedkar's struggle for the separate electoral status for the Depressed Classes at the London Round Table conferences, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia supported him by sending many telegrams in his favour in a tie with Mahatma Gandhi over the question of the leadership of the Depressed Classes in India. An eminent American social scientist, Mark Juergensmeyer, documented in his classic 'Religious Rebels in the Punjab: *The Ad Dharm Challenge to Caste*,' the incredible contribution made by Ad Dharm movement in generating social and political consciousness among the lowest of the low to help them rise against the centuries old discriminatory caste system and to establish an egalitarian socio-political order in the image of 'Beghampura' of Guru Ravidass.

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D. C. Ahir

# The Ad Dharm Movement and Dr. Ambedkar

**W**hen in 1915 Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was giving final touches to his Ph.D. thesis at Columbia University in New York, a

Punjabi youth, who had gone to America a few years earlier, was involved in a dangerous mission of smuggling guns from California to the Punjab for inciting mutiny in India. This Punjabi youth later became famous as Babu Mangu Ram, the founder of the Ad Dharm Movement. Mangu Ram was born in a small village Mugowal in district Hoshiarpur, Punjab on 14 January, 1886 in an untouchable family; his father was a leather merchant. As by then the doors of education had been opened to all by the British rulers, Mangu Ram was sent to the school in the nearby village, Mahilpur, but the treatment meted out to him by the Hindu teacher was far from human. Like Bhim Rao in Satara, Mangu Ram too was made to sit outside the classroom. Not only that, even the teacher would not teach him directly; he was invariably given lesson through a Muslim student. Somehow, Mangu Ram passed his middle examination and joined high school at Bajwara, a nearby town. Here too. He was subjected to the same humiliation, and was made to sit outside the classroom. One day, it rained so heavily that in spite of taking shelter under a tree, Mangu Ram was completely drenched. And when the snow-balls, accompanied by high velocity winds, fell like missiles on him, he was unable to bear it any longer. So, he ran to take shelter inside the classroom. As soon as he had entered the room, the teacher saw him, and instead of showing any sympathy, he started beating him with a stick for having come inside. Weeping and crying, Mangoo Ram went out, and somehow reached his home.

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

Fearing another beating, Mangoo Ram hastened back, never to go again to the school. And that was the end of his education.

With his education coming to an abrupt end, Mangu Ram became unemployed, and bit frustrated too. In 1909, he, along with some other young men from the village, went to California, U.S.A. in order to earn some money by working in the Peach Orchards of Fresno and elsewhere in the San Joaquin valley of central California. Instead of earning money, he,

however, became involved in the activities of the Ghadar Party, an international network of militant Punjabi nationalists led by Lala Hardayal. By his sheer devotion and sincerity to the cause of India's freedom, he came to be regarded as the most dependable and reliable member of the organization. In 1915, Mangu Ram volunteered to be one of the five Ghadarites accompanying a shipload of guns and propaganda material headed for India. This ship was unfortunately intercepted by the British at Batavia, and was sealed. It remained sealed for nearly a year, with the five Ghadarites as prisoners inside. In the meanwhile, they were prosecuted in absentia, and sentenced to death for



taking out the weapons illegally on the ship. On hearing the capital punishment, some patriot Indians in Germany decided to help the imprisoned Ghadarites. Somehow, they managed to smuggle the prisoners out from the sealed ship, and sent them in different directions. Mangu Ram was put in a ship going to Manila. By mistake, however, the ship reached Singapore. Unfortunately for Mangu Ram, here he was recognized by some traitor Indians who had earlier worked for the Ghadar Party. They informed the Police. By now, for running away from Batavia, death warrants had been issued by the British Government to be executed wherever any one of them was found. Accordingly, the Singapore Police began preparing for his execution. Then a miracle happened. Just half an hour before his execution, a gentleman named Barde, whom Mangu Ram had never seen or met, came, caught him by the arm, took him out of the Thana, and putting him on the same ship in which Mangu Ram had come, he asked the Captain of the ship to sail for Manila. By the time the Police swung into action, the ship had crossed the Singapore Port Limits. Having failed to intercept the ship, the police caught hold of some drunkard; executed him to cover up their lapse, and announced that Mangu Ram had been executed. This news was later published in the Indian Newspapers.

For the next 7-8 years, Mangu Ram hid in the Philippines, and during this period he had no contact with his

family as no letters could be written for fear of being intercepted. Taking him, therefore, as dead, his wife married Mangu Ram's elder brother, who was a widower.

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



sharpened his skills as an organizer. Soon he found a band of like-minded young men involved in the social work, and began organizing them in order to liberate the downtrodden from the clutches of the Hindu social slavery.

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

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

The headquarters of Ad

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Courtesy: Dr. Ambedkar and Punjab by D. C. Ahir*

# BABU MANGU RAM MUGGOWALIA

## ARCHITECT OF AD-DHARM MOVEMENT

**Ad-Dharam Movement** founded by Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia on June 11th-12th, 1926, was established with a missionary zeal to live a dignified life as a separate entity for the neglected segments of society who were the original and the real inhabitants of ancient India. Before paying our tributes to this noble mission envisioned by Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia it becomes imperative for us to have a few glimpses of the trials and tribulations which he had to confront during this arduous struggle.

Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia was born in a small village, (Muggowal) in Hoshiarpur District of East Punjab in Doaba Area in an untouchable family on January, 14th, 1886. His father, Mr. Harnam Dass and mother Mrs. Attri had a flourishing business in leather hides because of increasing demand from British Army. Realizing the lack of adequate education as a hinderance in the growth and marketing of his business, his father wanted his son to be well educated to help him in his growing business.

**CASTE DISCRIMINATIONS AND SOCIAL PREJUDICES:** -The stigma of caste system codified by Manusmriti for thousands of years was the greatest hinderance for untouchables to seek higher education. Among all the social limitations and carping humiliations Mangu Ram Muggowalia was able to complete his high school education as a good student in three different schools.

**MIGRATION TO USA:** - In 1909 his father who, being financially stable in his business managed to send his son to USA to better his prospects in life.

Babu Mangu Ram, who had an impassioned fervor of patriotism, joined the Ghadar movement in California, fighting for freedom from the British rule, pioneered by prominent leaders like Lala Hardyal and Sohan Singh Bhakna. While in USA Babu Mangu Ram experienced a spirit of relief and social equality which he aspired to see back in his home country too.

**JOURNEY BACK TO INDIA:** - After a few years of his active participation in the activities of Ghadar party in USA he was chosen with four other members of the party to smuggle a shipment of weapons to India for use by Ghadarites in India. On being captured by British agents on his way back to India, he was lucky and cleverly escaped with the help of some German supporters and remained in hiding for many years including Manila in Philippines during the First World War period.

**BACK IN INDIA:** - While travelling back to his home in India he passed through many towns in South India where he was shocked and dismayed to see social discriminations worse than slavery which agitated his conscience to start his crusade for social emancipation. On reaching back his home village he felt a new spark to work against social degeneration, so rampant in the entire spectrum of social order. He wrote back to Lala Hardyal and Sohan Singh Bhakna, the pioneers of the Ghadar Movement apprising them of the social deterioration who agreed with him to work for the freedom of his



brethren from the shackles of the higher caste tyrannies.

**AD-DHARAM MOVEMENT FOUNDED:** - On June 11th and 12th, 1926 Babu Mangu Ram convened a large conference of his supporters in the primary school where he was a teacher too, from every nook and corner of Northern India and announced the foundation of Ad-Dharam Mandal of which he was chosen as president, the position he retained during the entire journey of his struggle.

Since this article is specifically dedicated to commemorate the foundation of Ad-Dharam Movement, some of the salient and structural features of his mission which became a legacy for future generations, are as under:

The most important and significant contribution of his movement was the establishment of a Separate and a Distinct Society of Ad-Dharmi

community, completely separate from Hindu hierarchy, claiming to be the Original and Native inhabitants of India long before the invasion of ARYANS from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Ad-Dharam Mandal soon became a household name with awakened conscience for Dalit mobilization and empowerment, throughout the entire Northern India with its headquarters at Jalandhar-Punjab.

Greeting salutations of Jai Gurudev and Dhan Gurudev as the symbols of unity and fraternity were the products of Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia's innovative mind.

**DR. RAJINDER PRASAD'S VIEWS ON AD DHARM:** -A very authentic book written by Dr. Rajinder Prasad, first president of free India, more than seventy five years ago contains a very vivid illustration of Ad-Dharam as a separate religion for the first time like Jains, Parsies, Jews and Christians based on the report of Census Commissioner in 1931. This completely negates and invalidates the assertion that untouchables and other lower castes are parts of Hinduism. It also reduces their numerical strength which they always claimed with untouchables as part of Hinduism.

**POPULARITY OF AD-DHARAM**

**MANDAL:** -Ad-Dharam Mandal became so strong and popular as a separate entity that in 1937 Babu Mangu Ram's party won seven out of eight seats in the provincial legislature of pre-partition Punjab. Babu Mangu Ram believed that the real way of breaking the centuries-old caste system was to destroy the religious notion upon which the system is based and thrives.

**REVELATIONS BY PROFESSOR MARK JUERGENSMEYER:** - A renowned professor and an eminent scholar of international fame, now accredited with the University of Santa Barbara, met Babu Mangu Ram personally more than fifty years ago and made an extensive research on Ad-Dharam Movement as illustrated in his book "RELIGIOUS REBELS IN THE PUNJAB THE Ad-Dharam challenge to caste".

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**BABASAHEB FOR SEPARATE ELECTORATES:** - Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia and Babasaheb were contemporaries and he supported Babasaheb strongly like a rock in his efforts for Award of separate electorates for the backward classes in the Round Table conferences in London by sending telegrams, reiterating that Babasaheb was their national leader and the sole representative of the depressed classes, thus rebuffing the claims of Mr. Gandhi that untouchables were the part of the Hindu community. He even started his counter fast against Mr. Gandhi's ending in the signing of Poona-pact in 1932.

**PERSONAL MEETING WITH BABU MANGU RAM MUGGOWALIA:** - In the year 1963 I happened to meet Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia in person in a wedding ceremony. He narrated to me the entire history of his life struggle. As I learnt from him, Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia saw no possibility ever of untouchability going away from the social structure of India. Hence the movement launched by him almost a century ago, carried a very meaningful message but its luster which seems to be fading for lack of leadership and other reasons, needs to be reinvigorated to live a life of dignity and honor.

**THE AD-DHARAM POPULARITY IN FIJI ISLANDS:** -The Ad-Dharam movement was so popular and impacting on the minds of our ancestors in 1930's and 1940's that first Guru Ravidass Gurughar outside India was built in SUVA FIJI Islands by Punjabi migrants and registered under the name of Ad-Dharam.

This fact was personally ratified by late Mr. Devraj Singh Sandhu a long-time resident of FIJI Islands before his migration to USA, in an interview held with him by Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber himself at our Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg on September 1, 2018. (Which can be also verified at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/281660605268327/videos/1794754177307074>)

I also appreciate Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber, Chief Editor "Desh Doaba" (Punjabi) and "Ambedkar Times" (English) (Both Weekly Newspapers) for inspiring me to write this article for the esteemed columns of his publication.

With best wishes and congratulations on the occasion of 96th Anniversary of Ad-Dharam Movement

# Honouring and Recognition of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia

With regard to the forthcoming anniversary of the founding of Ad-Dharam Mandal on June 11-12, I wrote an Open Letter to the CM of Punjab on June 8, 2022 and requested him to kindly consider and take decision to honour and recognise Gadari Baba Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia by naming roads, schools, colleges after the name of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, a son of the soil of Punjab. I also suggested that the building in Kishanpura Jalandhar, which hosted the first office of Ad-Dharam Mandal and where Babuji started living too, may be declared a historical and heritage site. The building is now used as a school in the name of great Guru Ravidass ji. It may continue as its present character as far as the school is concerned.

passed away on June 11, the foundation day of Ad-dharam Mandal. I take this opportunity to pay my humble tributes to Sant Sarwan Dass ji and Chaudhary Ishwar dass Pawar Sahib along with the legendary Gadari Baba Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia.

**Text of my letter to CM of Punjab:  
June 8, 2022  
An Open Letter to  
Chief Minister of Punjab  
(Honouring Babu Mangu Ram,  
Founder of Ad-dharam Movement)**

**Respected CM  
Bhagwant Mann Sahib,  
Hon'ble CM of Punjab,  
Chandigarh**  
It is a matter of gratification

of the under-privileged sections of the society in his life time. With his efforts, dalit masses of Punjab, the land of great Sikh Gurus who visualized establishing an egalitarian and casteless society, got political consciousness and learnt to stand and demand their due share and space in the society at large. Later as an associate of Babasaheb Ambedkar and other likeminded leaders, Babu Mangu Ram played a sterling role in the freedom movement while struggling to find a rightful space and say for the underdog both in the polity and the society.

All India Ad-Dharam Mandal under the stewardship of Sant Satwinder Hira of Khuralgarh Sahib in Gargshankar in District Hoshiarpur, known as Charan Cho Ganga, is the

part of the Government of Punjab under your leadership will go a long way in strengthening our resolve to do our every best for the recognition of our icons and will to bring about empowerment as an affirmative agenda of the government and the people. It may not be out of place to



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



I would be happy if the concerned and interested individuals and organisations take due note of my submissions to the Hon'ble CM of Punjab and support my suggestions by writing to the CM and passing resolutions and forwarding it to the Government and Hon'ble Governor of Punjab.

Babu Mangu Ram ji along with his associates launched Ad-Dharam Mandal on June 11-12, 1926 at his village Mugowal in Garhshankar Tehsil of Hoshiarpur district of Punjab. It is a matter of co-incident that two the important supporters of Babu ji in his struggle to get rights to the marginalized segments of the society; Sant Sarwan Dass of Dera Sachkhand Ballan and Chaudhary Ishwar Dass Pawar passed, icons of the community by their own right,

to say that after a long time Punjab has a Government which claims, and rightly so, that it belongs to the people (Aam Aadmi) standing at the grass roots of the society. That is what, I think, our founding fathers visualized at the dawn of independence in 1947.

I take the liberty of writing this on an obscure subject of public important, particularly to the weaker sections of the society. You may not know, Sir, Ad-dharam Mandal, an outfit of dalits of the society, was founded on June 11-12, 1926 by Gadri Baba Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia (January, 1886 - April, 1980) and his associates at a congregation held village Mugowal in the district of Hoshiarpur of our beautiful Punjab. Babu Mangu Ram was a great social reformer and became a voice

flag bearer of Babu Mangu Ram's mission and legacy is fully engaged in the empowerment and upliftment of the weaker sections of the society. The purpose of this letter, CM Sahib, is to propose and request you to kindly consider and name a Road, School, and College in Garhshankar (Hoshiarpur) or in Jalandhar after the great leader, Babu Mangu Ram. It may be added that the first Headquarter of Ad-dharm Mandal was located in Mohalla Kishanpura (near Railway Station) and Babu ji started residing there which is school now named after the great Guru Ravidass. The School Building may be declared a historical and heritage monument in recognition of Babu Mangu Ram and his contribution in the much needed social and political awakening among the poor masses. This gesture on the

mention here that the Province of British Columbia of Canada has declared the month of April as the 'Dalit Month of History' in honour of Babasaheb Ambedkar, Jyotirao Phule, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia and Sant Ram Udasi.

Punjab should not lag behind in honouring and recognizing our heroes. You have already started on a right note by picking up the threads by recognising Shahed Bhagat Singh and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

I am confident, Sir, that my submissions will find a fair consideration and a favorable decision as a

With the assurances of my befitting tribute to Babu Mangu Ram, a son of the soil of Punjab.highest consideration,

**Yours truly,  
(Ramesh Chander)**

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**Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD**



**Goodie Takhar, PhD**



# An Open Letter to Chief Minister of Punjab (Honouring Babu Mangu Ram, Founder of Ad-Dharam Movement)

Respected CM  
Bhagwant Mann Sahib,

It is a matter of gratification to say that after a long time Punjab has a

gation held at village Mugowal in the district of Hoshiarpur of our beautiful Punjab. Babu Mangu Ram was a great social reformer and became a voice of

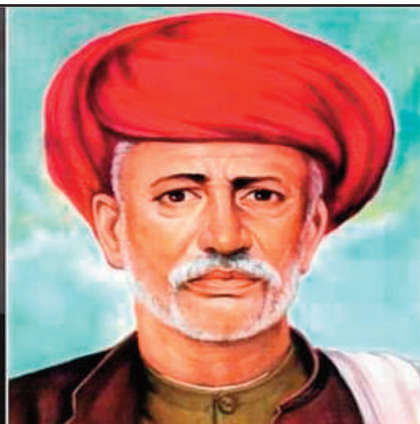
the under-privileged sections of the society in his life time. With his efforts, dalit masses of Punjab, the land of great Sikh Gurus who visualized establishing an egalitarian and casteless society, got political consciousness and learnt to stand and demand their due share and space in the society at large. Later as an associate of Babasaheb Ambedkar and other likeminded leaders, Babu Mangu Ram played a sterling role in the freedom movement while struggling to find a rightful space and say for the

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Babasaheb Ambedkar, Jyotirao Phule, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia and Sant Ram Udasi. Punjab should not lag behind in honouring and recognizing our heroes. You have already started on a right note by picking up the threads by recognising Shahed

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All India Ad-dharam Mandal under the stewardship of Sant Satwinder Hira of Khuralgarh Sahib in Gargshankar in District Hoshiarpur, known as Charan Cho Ganga, is the flag bearer of Babu Mangu Ram's mission and legacy is fully engaged in the empowerment and upliftment of

cal awakening among the poor masses. This gesture on the part of the Government of Punjab under your leadership will go a long way in strengthening our resolve to do our every best for the recognition of our icons and will to bring about empowerment as an affirmative agenda of the government and the people.

It may not be out of place to

Bhagat Singh and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

I am confident, Sir, that my submissions will find a fair consideration and a favorable decision as a befitting tribute to Babu Mangu Ram, a son of the soil of Punjab.

With the assurances of my highest consideration,

Yours truly,  
(Ramesh Chander)

## Loss of representation

Historically  
losing representation  
how fundamentally we were mislaid  
since ancient time medieval times

paid huge price  
by not fighting for representation  
failure to secure representation  
inability to vision consequences  
not finding it worthwhile to preserve honor

That is why

Original owners but today downtrodden  
dispossessed of  
earth  
air  
water  
livelihood  
earnings  
economy  
ground  
respect  
most importantly dignity

were pushed out way beyond outskirts  
were mauled and humiliated

What we inherited...  
left over meals  
menial jobs  
servility  
picking up and skinning of dead animals  
On our heads burdensome products of defecation

They built Forts and mansions  
we were swept deep into slums  
down stream muddied water  
we drank  
cooked  
washed (unwashed)  
no clothes to wear  
no combs for hair  
no schools to attend  
no books to read  
nothing to script on

Losing representation equates to

losing everything  
What would remain  
dirt  
listless bodies and  
abandoned souls  
and savage minds  
genes truncated  
equates to brainless  
earthworms

Yet again  
29 elected stooges  
blinded and mute  
we lost representa-  
tion

Seven representatives selected  
No one from 38%  
It is not a laughing matter

It is the beginning of the end  
I am writing today  
Tomorrow I may not have permission to hold pen



Dr. Harjinder Kumar

# BABU MANGU RAM MUGOWALIA - A PROFILE

Prof. G.S. BALL M.A., M.Phil.  
President,

Ambedkar Mission Society, Punjab (Regd.)

**B**abu Mangu Ram Mugowalia combined in his personage the qualities of a fierce revolutionary, a staunch patriot, a devoted crusader against social evils and above all a true humanitarian through. Born among the lowliest of the low, he crossed all social barriers dauntlessly and suffered all sorts of indignities of life and made his way to reach the pinnacle of greatness.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia represents a rare example among the revolutionaries Ghadarite philosophy. In those dark days, it was rare for an untouchable to understand the essence of revolution against imperialism. But he rose to the occasion and proved his mettle. He joined the Ghadar Party when he went to California (U.S.A.) in 1909 A.D. as its active member. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, it appears desired an establishment of society which must be based on Equality. And he saw one being fought for by the Ghadarites as they had abolished all social distinctions among themselves first which, perhaps, is not the practice with the modern community or who profess change of the sort. As Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia spoke of the Ghadar Party, "It was a new society, we were all treated as equals".

As a Ghadarite, he took part in the organizational activities at first but in 1915 A.D. an occasion came when he volunteered to be one of the five Ghadarites in a dangerous mission involving smuggled weapons shipped from California to the Punjab. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia was chosen by the leader of the Ghadar Party at that time. Mr. Sohan Singh Bhakna, the Secretary of Ghadar Party, whom Babu M.R. Mugowalia remembered as "Godha" sent the five to Los Angeles, where they boarded an intermediary boat, after depositing all of their personal identifications with "Godha", for the rest of the journey's saga. Mangu Ram would be known by a pseudonym, "Nizamuddin".

Putting his life into danger and travelling through Seccorro Islands and halting at Mexico, Caladonia Islands, Manila, Singapore and again to Manila where he stayed for sometime and finally to India where he reached in 1925 A.D.

It is after 1925, that his career as a crusader against untouchability and casteism began. As he travelled from Ceylon to Punjab through Madurai, Madras, Bombay, Poona, Sitara, Nagpur and Delhi, he observed the condition of the untouchables on route and was dismayed to see these people being treated so badly. In Madurai, when Babu Mangu Ram visited the Meenakshi Temple, he was told to be careful not to touch Achhut (Untouchables) since they assumed by his dress that he was of a decent caste. By the time Babu M.R. Mugowalia had reached the Punjab, he was convinced that there was need

for social change.

Babu M.R. Mugowalia wrote to the Ghadar Party headquarters in San Francisco about the difficult conditions of the Untouchables in India. He wrote them that their freedom was more important to him than Indian freedom. According to Babu Mugowalia, leaders of the Ghadar Party then disengaged him to work with Scheduled Castes (Untouchables), and wrote him that they would support him in his tasks. Thus, in a new context, the old revolutionary from Fresno continued the Ghadar spirit. This clearly shows that even Ghadarites had realized the need to awaken these slaves of Indian Society - the then Untouchables.

When he started his task of social reform i.e. establishing schools for untouchables poors, he began to look for an alternative which may provide a lever for the unity of the untouchable poors and then to demonstrate through that alternative the political presence of the untouchables in the politics of Punjab of those days. It must be remembered that Punjab was already witnessing political uphaul and each class was trying to reap at political harvesting. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, along with other conscious men from his class, then founded on June 11-12, 1926 A.D. at his village Mugowal Ad-Dharma as the alternative.

Ad-Dharma's main aim was to create a feeling of identity among the untouchable class which numbered at that time about one fourth of the entire population of India. Babu M.R. Mugowalia and the early leaders of the Ad-Dharma perceived their first task to be the creation of a new religion. In their initial meetings, even before they developed an organisational structure, they labored over a basic ideological theme upon which they could build a system of religious ideas and symbols. Its central motive was novel: the idea that untouchables constitute a quaum, a distinct religions community similar to those of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, and that the quaum had existed from time immemorial. It was a myth of power addressed to the people without power. It was intended to communicate the sense of strength that Babu M.R. Mugowalia felt belonged to his caste fellows by right. As he explained, "The

untouchables have their powers: communal pride (qaumiat), religion (mazhab), and organisation (mazlis)". The hope was that these powers could be fostered and splintered through force of ideology.

Ad-Dharma was almost Babu M.R. Mugowalia's show. It inspired the lowliest of the low to fight for equality, economic, social and political in a converted way. The Ad-Dharma, under the dynamic leadership of a true revolutionary like Babu Mugowalia, was an aggressive and autonomous movement or compared to similar movements that took birth in other parts of the country. Within a short span of time, it jolted



the 'haves-not' through its rallies, publications, deputations and demonstrations to demand new government policies or to protest upper caste discriminations. The most influential political action of the movement that can be listed as one of its great achievements, was to get Scheduled

Castes registered as a followers of new religion. In 1931 A.D. census, almost half a million of them registered as "Ad-Dharmi" rather than Hindus or Muslim or Sikh. Mr. Mark Juergensmeyer writes as, "Later in the 1930, their political influence turned towards electoral politics, in alliance first with the predominantly Muslim Unionist Party and then with the Congress. It was the logical consequence of the political awakening created among them by Ad-Dharma Movement in Punjab, whose undisputable leader was Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia.

Thus through several means, then, the Ad-Dharmis presented to its followers a vision of a world which both confirmed and transformed the rude experience of untouchables. And in doing so it implied that a different sort of world was coming into being, for the separate identity so defined signaled hope for a society in which social groups carried no inherent mark of judgment and in which the benefits of progress could be shared by all. Cultural and humanistic aspects of the personality of Babu M.R. Mugowalia were even more glaring. As a humanist his vision of the world was near to rationalist view of the universe (we can even say materialistic as well though in rudimentary form), he believed in the inherent

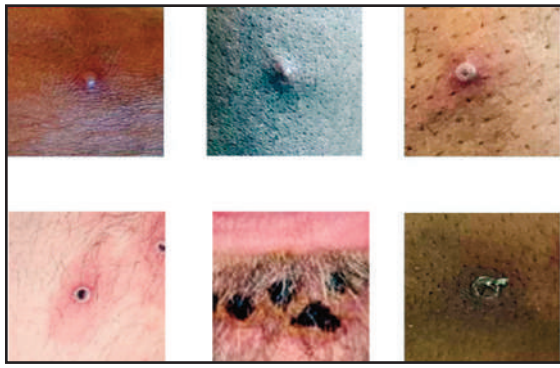
equality of all human-beings; he was against all sorts of exploitations of man against man; and he earnestly devoted his bodily energy and financial resources in founding a new society based upon the gospel of equality. His ideas about the universe and equality of all men are echoed in the Ad-Dharma Mandal (1926-1931) report in the preparation of which Babu Mugowalia had played a big role. It reads as follows:

"Nature (Qudrat Ka Mela) created human beings from original source (Adi) at the time that it created all beings in the earth. The knowledge of moral behaviour (karm-dharm) was also given to them at that time by Nature. Nature made humans superior to animals, but among humans all were equal.

In the beginning, when Nature created human beings, there was no discrimination. There were no differences and no quarrels. In particular, there were no such concepts as high or low caste. God (Ishwar) was meditating; all was in harmony. Everyone believed in one dharma which Nature had given then through intellect and knowledge". Babu M.R. Mugowalia did not mean by the word 'God' as something supernatural beings who is said to have created the world and since then regulating it as is believed in theology. Mark Juergensmeyer makes it quite clear in his work, Religion As Social Vision, thus: "Occasionally there is mention of God in a more formal sense". "God (Ishwar) was meditating; all was in harmony". And Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia made a practice of using the name Adi-Purkh for the divine - literally "the originator", or the "Original Being". All these designations, although they are theistic terms, are impersonal in intent.

He, all his life, stood like a rock against social evils such as untouchability, caste-system, women slavery, exploitation etc. His life in cultural side symbolized with the creation of new social virtues such as women's rights, the value of education, abstinence from alcohol and drugs - which were 'nothing less than a new concept of moral order'. Thus Babu M.R. Mugowalia, a Ghadarite revolutionary, social crusader, political activist and strategist and as a humanitarian fought for the establishment of an ideal society till he breathed last. The noble way of commemorating celebrating the 99th Birth Anniversary (for that matter every birth anniversary) of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia - who desired his movement to coincide with Ambedkarite Movement to give the movement of depressed classes a country-wide stature, is to emulate him. Therefore, let us resolve to emulate the great Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia - patriot, social revolutionary, a successful strategist and, above all, a humanist.

Source Courtesy: Souvenir, 1985  
Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia  
99th Birth Anniversary,  
By Mr. C. L. Chumber



A number of cases of Monkeypox disease have been found in different countries due to which it is feared that it might spread like covid disease in the world. Monkeypox is a viral illness just like Covid virus but not as rapidly spreading as covid. Another difference is Covid is primarily a respiratory infection which can have life-threatening effect on the lungs, while monkeypox is a skin infection. So far, 550 cases of the disease have been reported in more than two countries, and the number is growing. More detailed information about this disease is given below.

**What is monkeypox:**

Monkeypox is an orthopox virus from the family smallpox but not as deadly as smallpox. This disease is contagious. And it is self-limited in healthy people however in people suffering from other diseases it can cause serious illness. Case fatality rate varies from 1% to 10% Monkeypox is endemic in African countries and is limited to African countries, but with the emergence of cases of the disease in other countries outside of Africa, the disease has attracted the attention of all. Frightened by Covid global spread, health scientists are also looking at the monkeypox in this light even though It is unlikely to become wide-

# Monkeypox

spread in the world. All countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) are showing vigilance against this disease.

The disease was first identified in monkeys in 1958.

In 1970, first case in humans was detected. Symptoms - Mild fever, body aches, a rash lymph nodes may develop in the axillary region or in the groin area, A rash which is flat appeared around mouth and on face. The rash spread to other areas and rash becomes papular which then get enlarged in size to become pustules. This is the period from onset of the fever to the appearance of pustules, an individual becomes contagious. When the pustules crust over, the patient is no longer thought to be infectious. The process can take a while. It has an incubation period of 7-14 days. Typically, 21 days is what's been

described, and the whole process of illness can take 2-4 weeks How it spread: typically monkeypox outbreaks are self limited It requires prolonged, close physical proximity to transmit it from one person to another. Historically, a lot of the human-to-human transmission for monkeypox is in prison or a hospital, where people are at very close contact for long periods of time.

**Risk is low**

This can be spread by direct skin-to-skin contact with somebody who has those vesicles or pustules on them. This also can be spread by fomites very efficiently. You are at risk if someone is infected and you're

sleeping in bedding that somebody else has used, if you're sharing a towel, if you're in contact with clothing that somebody who's been infected has been wearing,

if you're in contact with a surface that potentially has virus all over it. That's another route of transmission Diagnosis: Typically, it's a two-stage process. the PCR of fluid from a pustule would be the way this is first diagnosed. first step is to confirm that it's in the orthopox family and then, secondarily, that it's actually monkeypox.

**Isolation:** People who are infected - and in some cases their close

Jynneos is approved in the USA for those over the age of 18 who are at high risk of contracting the disease. Treatment: Cidofovir injections for 2 weeks Brincidofovir pills or liquids, 200 mg once weekly for 2 weeks. References:

1. Center for Disease Control USA
2. Medscape
3. Epocrates
4. WHO - Multi-country



Harjinder Kumar MD FACP



contacts - are advised to isolate for 21 days Prevention: hand washing Face mask Not to use same clothing, towel Surfaces Vaccine

**Vaccine:** A vaccine names

monkeypox outbreak in nonendemic countries: Update



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