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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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REMEMBERING DALIT SAVIOURS

Prem K. Chumber Editor-In-Chief:

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Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, E.V. Ramasamy Naicker (Periyar), Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Narayan Swami Guru, Achutananda, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia are among the forerunners of Dalit saviors who devoted their entire lives for the emancipation and empowerment of the downtrodden. During their life-times they had to struggle very hard to articulate as well as build a 'counter public' for reclaiming the long lost Dalit space. Braving untold sufferings and persistent opposition from all the possible quarters, they remained steadfast in their mission to prepare a solid base for grooming the cause of the community. Despite the innumerable hardships, they succeeded in their bold endeavours to pave the way for Dalit liberation leading to 'equality, liberty, fraternity'. Of late their struggle as well as vision/philosophy started getting recognition even in the political circles of their opponents. Almost all of them now feel proud of owning/appropriating them as and when they deem so fit. The recent praises showered on Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar by almost all the mainstream political forces in India is a case in point. Year-long preparation by the ruling as well as opposition parties for the celebration of his 130th Birth anniversary are being reported in almost all the national newspapers.

During the 1920s, a large number of Adi movements took roots in different parts of India. Ad Dharm movement of Punjab is one of them. It born in the background of series of political developments in the region. It was founded and led by Great Gadarite Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, who wanted that his people should have their own separate identity and the where-withal to lead dignified life. He was convinced of the fact that the only way through which his people can live with dignity and self-respect was to form their own exclusive Dalit identity, political party and religion. He succeeded on all these crucial accounts. He got recognition from the British Government in 1931 for a separate religion for the lower castes of Punjab (Ad Dharm), contested provincial assembly elections and pleaded meticulously for the rights of his people at all the plat forums available during his struggle.

Now when all the major political parties in India are promising to follow and implement the thinking of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, it would be in fitness of things that the Punjab government should rename one of the coming up institutes of higher education in the state after the name of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia who was among the pioneers of the Dalit freedom fighters, founders of Dalit movement in Punjab, visionaries and educationists in the state on the occasion of 95th anniversary of first annual convention of the Ad Dharm movement held on June 11-12, 1926.

MOTHER NATURE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID -19

Prem K. Chumber

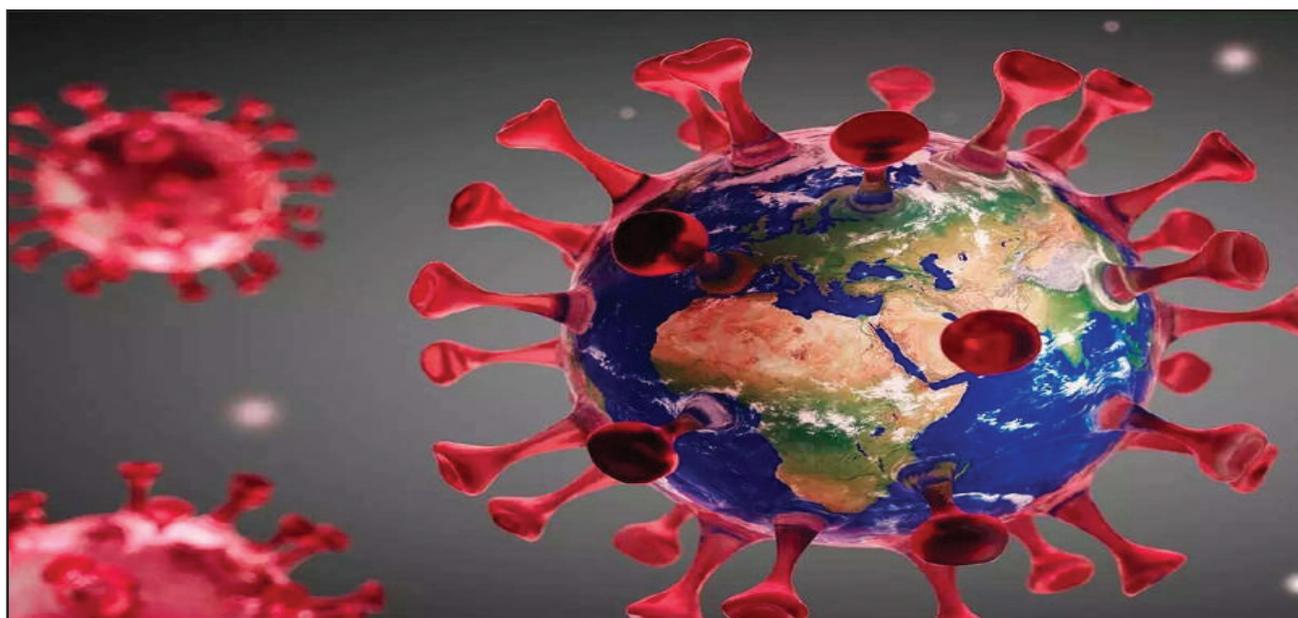
Editor-In-Chief:

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Nature behaves uniformly in its wider reach and does not tolerate any hindrance in its natural flow of well-coordinated universal operations. It has its own grammar and fundamental principles that govern life on Earth – so far the only known habitable planet. It expects that for human beings, to live a healthy and comfortable life, synchronization with the inherent laws of nature is must. Symbiosis is its mantra for happy and healthy living. Covid-19 threw an indomitable challenge before the whole human race to come together to bring equilibrium in its insatiable lust for fleeting comforts and to put an end to man-made caste boundaries of social exclusion. Nature is the mother of life on earth: the only so far known planet of habitation in our cosmos. Human beings occupy the top position among all living creatures on this rare planet of life. It has been equipped, in its own unique ways, with all that is required for the sus-

tenance of life on it. All living organisms on its surface and underneath are equally endowed with self-sustaining system to grow and expand in a well-balanced way without creating any dysfunctional relationship between themselves and their life generative earth planet and its life-supporting atmosphere. It is rightly said that Earth has enough for every ones' needs, but could not satisfy the greed of any one of its inmates! Happiness is imbedded in its very existence but with a strict rider of self-restraint. Self-restraint is also central to the recently put into practice 'new normal mantra' of self-reliant existence! Happiness emanates from disease free life, meaningful source of livelihood opportunities, job satisfaction, community living endorsed with liberty, equality and fraternity, and global brotherhood based on the principles of panchsheel and peaceful methods of conflict resolution.

There was a time in the life of human beings when they used to believe in supernatural powers of nature as and when they confronted any devastating natural phenomenon nay calamities. They socially constructed various myths to appease the angry nature that eventually became an interesting area of study in the domain of cultural anthropology to delve deep into the folk psyche of our forefathers to criti-



tenance of life on it. All living organisms on its surface and underneath are equally endowed with self-sustaining system to grow and expand in a well-balanced way without creating any dysfunctional relationship between themselves and their life generative earth planet and its life-supporting atmosphere. It is rightly said that Earth has enough for every ones' needs, but could not satisfy the greed of any one of its inmates! Happiness is imbedded in its very existence but with a strict rider of self-restraint. Self-restraint is also central to the recently put into practice 'new normal mantra' of self-reliant existence! Happiness emanates from disease free life, meaningful source of livelihood opportunities, job satisfaction, community living endorsed with liberty, equality and fraternity, and global brotherhood based on the principles of panchsheel and peaceful methods of conflict resolution.

It is a common knowledge that no living creature on this planet stores provisions of living necessities except human beings. It is also evident, that all other living creatures continue to live on whatever offered by this planet. It is only we, the human beings, who stung by the wasp of greed remained engrossed throughout our life-span in storing or looking after whatever we have accumulated to satiate our unending lust for having more and more provisions for our use/misuse. It seems, we invented technology

cally interpret our current lives. However, with the passage of time when Europe entered the age of enlightenment, a new beginning was made in the evolutionary phase of human society. It was for the first time that man thought and practiced to tame nature to his convenience. Thus the tug of war started between man and nature at that stage in the life of human beings. Covid 19 is one of various consequences of this ongoing belligerent interaction between the nature and us. It has heavily divested us of all, at the global level, of our most precious living property what called happiness. The oldest man-made institution of religious places of all nomenclatures showed their inability to help at this crucial stage of life. Nevertheless, the most valuable human feeling of having faith in the overall benefactive stance of Kudrat(nature) remains the only solace to get across this most pernicious malady afflicted us all irrespective of class, caste, race, creed, ethnicity and region. Along with its disastrous effect, it also reminds us that there is nothing as valuable as the feeling of being happy in this world. And for that we need to live moderately with a deep sense of regard for our mother nature, so that we could create a conducive environment on our living planet where such pandemics like Covid-19 are not only controlled effectively but also precluded in the future too.

Embracing Laura's Law

Many of you may have recalled me writing about Laura's Law in the past, as well as other measures in Sacramento County to address the growing concern around mental health. When I previously wrote about Laura's Law, it was from the perspective of an ambivalent public servant with an impending decision on whether or not to implement the law in Sacramento County. Now I want to write from the perspective of someone who decided to support Laura's Law and is excited to see what we can achieve with this new tool at our disposal. If you have not been following along, I will provide a refresher.

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

Successes for communities that have implemented Laura's Law have many looks. Success looks like health improvements with reductions in hospitalizations and homelessness. It also has a financial component. As I am sure you can imagine, the costs associated with treating the mentally ill in hospitals, in shelters, and even in jails, are substantial.

Counties that implement Laura's Law naturally see their expenses relating to hospitalizations and incarceration go down as the mentally ill take up fewer beds in either facility. In Nevada County, the origin of Laura's Law, those reductions were 46.7% for hospitalizations, and 65.1% for incarcerations. Most notably, Nevada County saw a 61.9% reduction homelessness, something I am sure we can all agree would benefit Sacramento County.

So why now has Sacramento County decided it was time for Laura's Law? In the past, the county had explicitly opted out of Laura's Law. It was before my time on the Board, but as I understand, there were originally concerns for the cost associated with providing AOT. Then, I am told that the County was confident it had provided adequate resources for those most in need of mental health resources. Following legislation passed last year, the

County was put in a position of either opting-out again, or automatically being opted-in. To opt out, the County would have had to submit a compelling reason for doing so. This required a thorough assessment of current service available in addition to community outreach. Ultimately, the decision came to the Board of Supervisors.

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

people by sitting back while they suffer.

AOT is a simple but effective tool that can save not only the lives of those afflicted with mental illness, but it can improve the lives of everyone around. Especially those closest to them.

I am confident that we have given a tool to law enforcement, local hospitals, and the countless number of people and organizations working to get our homeless population under control. I am glad that we have finally embraced Laura's Law and I look forward to seeing how it helps our community improve our health and well-being.

Thank you for reading – and as always, if you want to contact me, call me at 916-874-5491, or e-mail me at

SupervisorFrost@sacounty.net.

Sue Frost represents the 4th District, which includes all or part of the communities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, Orangevale, Antelope, Rio Linda, Elverta, Gold River, Rancho Murietta, North Highlands, Carmichael, Foothill Farms and Fair Oaks



Sue Frost

Sacramento County Supervisor



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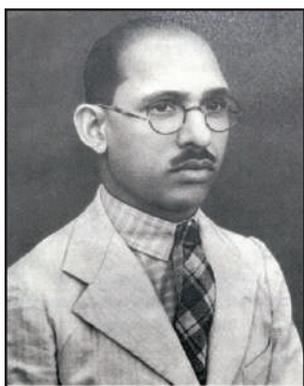
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Ishwar Das Pawar
District and Sessions Judge (retd.)

My Struggle in Life

My Village

We lived in village Dehlan with our maternal grandparents as our father was resident son-in-law. He originally belonged to the neighboring village of Sanehra. All of us, brothers and sisters, were born and brought up in this village. It is perhaps the biggest village in the region and is situated on the Una-Nangal road five miles from Una. It was a poor region with little prospects of employment and earnings. The untouchables, who constituted a sizeable section of the village population, were steeped in stark poverty. The village though noted for its bhayachara (brotherhood) system where landlord-tenant system did not exist, and everybody holding land was its full and exclusive owner. There was virtually no untouchable owning land worth the name. They lived on the services they rendered to the proprietary body of the village composed mainly of Jats (people of agricultural community in Northern India and Pakistan), who are by and large fairly considerate. The face of the ilaqa (area) has now considerably changed with the construction of Bhakra Dam where they found abundant chances of employment. Consequently, they are now comparatively much better off. With the construction of metalled (paved) roads, the means of communication and transport have undergone a transformation so to say. And added to this the advantages of electricity that has gone to the houses of the poorest of the poor. This has galvanized their life and raised their standard of living. Supply of drinking water used to be a major problem, but now there is no such difficulty. Men are getting an education, and several of them are holding fairly good jobs. A new life has come to this poverty-stricken area. Una was a small tehsil (county) headquarters of not much importance. Now it is the district headquarters with all the advantages and importance attached to the new status.

During the five-year period from 1922 to 1927, when I was a student of the DAV High School Una, I along with my brother lived in this village where we had our own house. Going to school by trekking a kachcha (unpaved) and a rugged road interspersed with sandy and stony khuds (seasonal ravines)—muddy, slushy, and slippery during rains—climbing up and climbing

down the sloppy terrain especially at the two ends of Rakkar that was quite thickly covered with prickly, sharp-edged grit was our daily routine round the year.

It used to be quite trying an ordeal. We lived alone in this village, the rest of the family being in village Naan-gran. Our parents used to send us atta and dal (flour and lentils) and even firewood, but we had to cook our own meals. Water in big earthen pitchers had to be brought from the village pond, passing through heavily stoned khud and, in scorching summer, from the village well also. Washing clothes, dusting and cleaning the house was in the bargain. Still studies had to be protected. Our heavy burden was, however, taken partially off our shoulders by the loving people of our brotherhood who affectionately addressed and treated us as their bhanje (sister's sons). They used to prepare chapatis and dal or sag (Indian flat bread and lentils or cooked mustard green dish) for us, keeping the same, ready to be available on our return from school.

This work was so ungrudgingly done that, for us, it is a matter of unforgettable kindly obligation although, for them, it was nothing more than labor of love. It was exceedingly nice of them! But for their warm help and cooperation, our long stay in the village would not have been so comfortable. In this context the families of Biru Ram and Partapa Ram deserved to be mentioned. Whenever I visit Dehlan, I regard it as a great privilege and nothing short of a pilgrimage. Quite in my dreams I walk about the streets of the village the dusky atmosphere with a thrilling heart. The impressions and memories of those days are so firmly embedded in my conscious and sub-conscious mind, and these frequently get enlivened. It makes me so sad when I am reminded that many of those good people have since gone to their last place of rest after lifelong hard labor and toil. If I remember aright, it was in 1923–24, when I was in the seventh class that I was down with a very severe attack of typhoid fever.

Adequate medical aid was not available in the village. Moreover, in those times, medical science was virtually in its formative stage; and people feared going to hospitals lest there should be some foul play. Since then there has been a revolutionary advancement in this field. I was under the treatment of village voids (Ayurveda

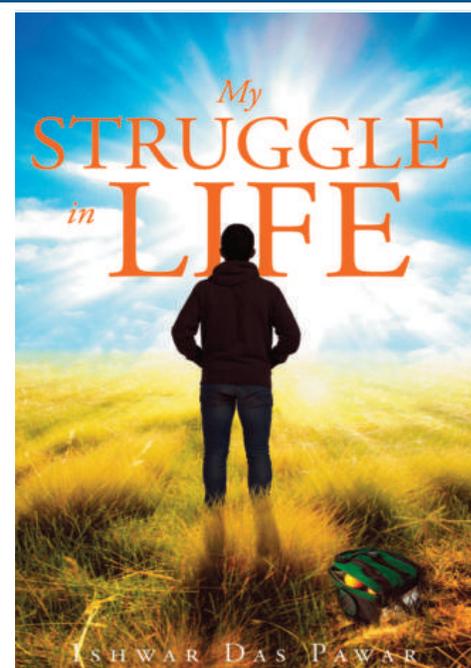
doctors) who were no better than quacks. But one thing that I clearly remember about one of them, namely Chunnhu Ram, our neighbor, is that after administering medicine to me, he would stand on one leg by the side of my charpoy (cot) and, with folded hands and eyes closed in a prayerful posture, fervently invoked the mercy of the Lord to spare my life and restore me to health. It had the effect of a real healing touch even more than the medicine could do. In my illness, a stage came when my condition became so precarious that everybody got apprehensive whether I would at all be able to survive the ailment. Under instructions of the voids, my diet consisted of only milk, which our good Jat neighbors gave voluntarily and gladly in sufficient quantity, by turns. In those golden days, selling of milk was regarded as sacrilegious.

My parents' worry, however, was that I was not taking solid food, and they attributed my fast growing weakness to this fact. One day, on their insistence, I agreed to take one phulka (flat wheat bread) with sabat masar ki dal (whole grain masar lentil). On hearing this, they felt very happy and prepared the food in no time. I consumed the food with gusto, and it gave them a great relief. To the delight of everybody, I recovered by and by after a period of more than a month and after a good deal of suspense.

Village life used to be a boon. Among the many good things, people shared good or difficult times in cooperation with each other. Being born and brought up in this village, my mother was held in the traditional affection and esteem and was treated as a daughter of the village.

In this context, I cannot miss to mention that the name of Dr. Harbhajan Singh, the then in-charge of the Una Hospital, his was a household word like that of Dr. Mathra Das of Moga fame. Both of them were renowned eye specialists, and they became legends in their own lifetimes.

One of the difficulties we faced in those days related to the question of drinking water on our way to and back from school. The only piao (free water station for general public) available between our school and our village was at village Jalgran (now also called Tabba). The attendant at the piao knew that we were untouchables. On the very first occasion we asked for water, he brought it in a rusty, unclean, rectangular container of color. We told him that



we should be given water by the brass, garvi (a small round shaped pitcher) meant for Hindus. The container was not only rusty and dirty but was also used by those people for washing themselves after answering the call of nature in the adjoining khud. He did not agree. Then we suggested that we should be given water by the aluminum garvi meant for Muslmans. He arrogantly and in an angry mood flung an answer at our face, saying, "You want to be equated with Muslmans?"

The other students who were also returning to the village along with us remonstrated with the attendant, but he would not budge an inch. He could not defile and pollute the brass and the aluminim garvis by using them for supplying us drinking water! It created a problem for us.

We could not think of a remedy. The problem was really acute during the scorching heat of May and June. After the close of the school at about 1:30 PM, we would immediately start back home as we had to take our meals on reaching back. Heat is at its peak at that time of the day. To travel all the difficult way back without drinking water was a trying ordeal. But it had to be undergone. Nobody could help us. We would get back with parched mouths and throats, faces flushed, red from the burning heat along the journey.

On rare occasions, however, when no attendant was present at the piao, our companion students would supply us drinking water by the brass garvi. But these occasions being too rare did not allay the rigor of our trial. This trial and ordeal lasting over as long a period as five years is even today as fresh and devastating as it was then in spite of the fact that since then I have travelled through the long years of my life. This incident has left behind bitter and indelibly heartbreaking and very unpleasant memories. The thread left here will be taken up later.

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Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD



Goodie Takhar, PhD

Milestones – India’s Soft Power Diplomacy

Even before independence of India from the British rule in August 1947, Indian intelligentsia remained engaged and active in spreading the message of oneness and solidarity based on the traditional wisdom “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”

of a nation. Soft power has also become an important and essential element in determining India’s foreign policy and strategic decisions.

In the recent years, it is a matter of great satisfaction that India, has and rightly so, demonstrated its worth as a ‘soft power’. Obviously, India’s foreign policy is fully geared to meet the challenges and demands of emerging international scenario. The first Education Minister of

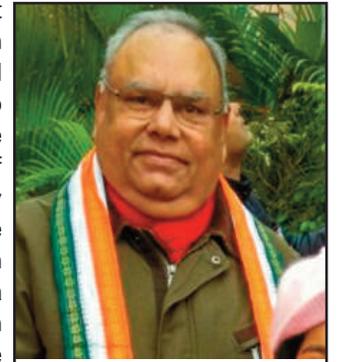
humanity and convinced the UNO to declare June 21 as International Day of Yoga in 2015.

Soft Power is about winning the hearts and minds of people. It has come a long way and has the wherewithal of offering more to the world as a soft-power – the largest functional and vibrant democracy, one of the fast moving economies of the world. India can boast of having one of the best constitutions to govern the unique conditions of ‘unity in diversity’ under the lofty tenets of equality and equitable order not only for India but for the world at large.

In this regard, when we would be celebrating and observing the International Day of Yoga on June

to support the Indian idea and proposal to flag the issue of equality through the UNO. In turn, India will gain in its stature as a ‘Soft Power’.

It will only be befitting and appropriate to take an early decision and urge the world body to declare April 14 as International Day of Equality. It is all the more appropriate and relevant when, as said by the Tribune in its Editorial on June 18, 2021, “It is (BJP), in some ways, India’s biggest Dalit party, with highest number of Dalit parliamentarians in both 2014 and 2019 and a strong vote base among Dalit sub-castes. Union Minister Ramdas Athawale has termed PM Narendra Modi a “real Ambedkarite” and predicted his return to power in 2024. PM Modi would stand to gain much in strengthening his position and stature



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



Ambassador Ramesh Chander and Smt. Vidya Chander at International Day of Nonviolence in Minsk (Belaru)

Soft power essentially refers to a country’s ability to attract other nations through its culture, foreign policy and political values, rather than the use of military might. Home to one of the world’s oldest surviving civilizations and religions – Hinduism and Buddhism, its biggest ideological export, India’s spiritual, artistic, and cultural impact make it a soft power.

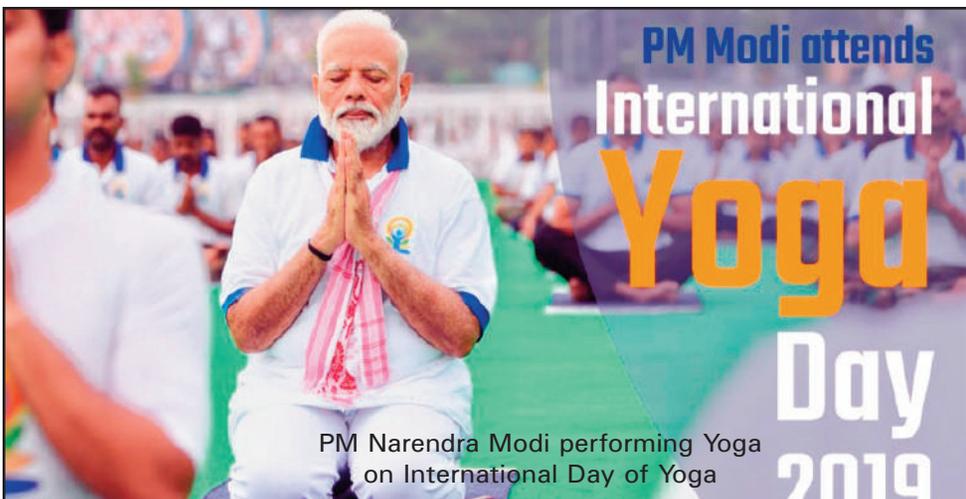
The soft power of India has scattered her extensive social and civilizational heritage over millennia – Swami Vivekananda’s message of love and fraternity, Rabindranath Tagore’s international humanism. The Gandhian concept of non-violence, Nehru’s five postulates of Panchsheel (Peaceful Coexistence), Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan’s teachings of Indian

India, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad founded the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) in April, 1950 immediately after India becoming a Republic in January, 1950 on adopting and embracing the new constitution of India. ICCR, under the Ministry of External Affairs, has been doing a good job in establishing, promoting and nurturing cultural and educational relations with India’s counterparts internationally. India, in 2007, initiated



CGI Ramesh Chander and Smt Vidya Chander with Swami Ramdev at Glasgow (Scotland) inaugurating a Yoga Camp.

21 and International Day of Non-violence on October 2, I would like to remind and awaken the Government of India of the proposal on April 14, birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar as International Day of Equality resting with Ministry of External Affairs since June 2015. Taking cue from this proposal and efforts of Indian Diaspora, particularly the followers of the greatest son of India, Babasaheb Ambedkar, the City of Burnaby in April 2020 and the State of British Columbia of Canada in April 2021 proclaimed April 14 as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Day of Equality. The Government of PM Narendra Modi is yet to take a decision in this regard and make a demarche to the UN to add yet another milestone in the journey of India as a ‘Soft power’ and demonstrate strength of its diplomacy to support the “Millennium Goals” of the UN with regard to the equitable world order on one hand and to honour one of the greatest sons of India and messiah of dalits and weaker sections of the society and the world at large, Babasaheb Ambedkar. India has been a proponent of freedom and equality throughout and stood against the scourge like Apartheid in Africa. Most of the countries in the under developed or least developed world are yearning for equality, social, economic and political. They would tend



PM Narendra Modi performing Yoga on International Day of Yoga

philosophy, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s untiring efforts to establish a domain of equality and eradication of caste based discrimination and instill the values of ‘liberty, equality, justice and fraternity made India an important player in the comity of nations with considerable clout as a soft power globally. The religious leader of the Tibetans, His Holiness Dalai Lama explained, “India’s great tradition of religious tolerance can be a role model for the entire world”. The soft power has now been graced as the essential factor of the overall power

the idea of promoting Non-violence - a ‘lofty Gandhian philosophy’ by declaring October 2, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, as International Day of Non-violence under the aegis of the UNO. It was much appreciated in those days of ‘strife and tension’ resulting in increasing violent behavior throughout the world. With a view to ward off dangers to our mental and physical wellness, India took another appreciable initiative in promoting the Indian traditional and time tested system – Yoga for the benefit and advantage of



by taking an early and positive decision with regard to International Day of Equality and promote and strengthen India as a “Soft Power” to reckon with.

Someone has rightly said, as accessed from the internet, “India should figure out its strengths if it wants to resurrect its national image. Its ancient wisdom and spirituality should encourage other nations to acknowledge that India can have a great leadership role in the world. India definitely has the potential and holds immense opportunities to elevate its position further as a ‘rising global soft power’ that can further pave way for the country to become a ‘soft power-superpower’ of the 21st century.”

Greetings on the International Day of Yoga, June 21.

Facts About Ad-Dharmis

The following information/statistics are reproduced from the source "Facts About India" by Dr. Ishwara Topa, D.Phil., Osmania University (1944) and highlights Ad-Dharm as a Religion.

The information is retrieved from Chapter-III - The Punjab Province, Page No.63-103:

Page No.67-68:

Urban population by Religion

We give below two tables showing (1) the number per mille of the total population of each religion who live in towns and (2) the number per 10,000 of urban population in the Punjab and by natural divisions.



NEERAJ PAUL
+91-99683-69972
Email: neerajpaul@hotmail.com

Natural Division	Population	Hindu	Ad-Dharmi	Sikh	Jain	Buddhist	Zoroastrian	Muslim	Christian	Jew
Punjab	124	154	47	63	590	5	928	122	159	846
Indo-Gangetic Plain, West	166	280	75	60	536	826	975	213	169	800
Himalayan	33	26	..	179	165	..	667	145	668	1,000
Sub-Himalayan	106	153	16	67	834	818	974	95	180	857
North-West Dry Area	87	264	34	70	915	667	830	60	89	..

Natural Division	Hindu	Ad-Dharmi	Sikh	Jain	Muslim	Christian	Zoroastrian
Punjab	3,764	55	726	72	5,191	190	1
Indo-Gangetic Plain, West	3,797	70	791	87	5,097	157	1
Himalayan	7,451	..	226	8	1,987	287	..
Sub-Himalayan	3,224	27	734	89	5,578	347	1
North-West Dry Area	3,891	42	541	11	5,391	121	2

Page No.70:

Rural population by Religion

The number per 10000 of rural population by religion is tabled thus:

Natural Division	Hindu	Ad-Dharmi	Sikh	Jain	Muslim	Christian	Zoroastrian	Buddhist
Punjab	2,913	160	1,528	7	5,247	141	..	3
Indo-Gangetic Plain, West	3,445	172	2,467	15	3,747	153	..	..
Himalayan	9,388	121	41	1	399	5	..	43
Sub-Himalayan	2,117	204	1,216	2	6,273	188	..	..
North-West Dry Area	1,032	112	686	..	8,053	117	..	..

Page No.81:

Percentage for the British territory and the Punjab States are given below:

Religion	British Territory Per cent	Punjab States Per cent
Muslim	56.54	32.53
Hindu	26.83	46.26
Sikh	12.99	20.56
Christian	1.74	0.09
Ad-Dharmi	1.69	0.16
Jain	0.15	0.16

Page No.96:

LITERACY BY AGE BOTH SEXES AND RELIGION

Number per mille* who are literate (both sexes)

*The proportion is calculated on the population of the age-period and not on the total population

Religion	All ages Total	5 and over	5-10	10-15	15-20	20 and over
Punjab all religions	59	110	35	79	157	128
Hindu	90	168	52	113	221	198
Ad-Dharmi	16	31	11	22	45	36
Sikh	82	152	50	110	209	196
Jain	302	572	197	390	719	677
Buddhist	65	134	18	25	117	177
Zoroastrian	529	1,039	565	812	827	1,167
Muslim	34	63	23	51	99	69
Christian	102	198	70	123	870	240
Christian (European)	626	1,143	668	914	1,227	1,179
Christian (Indian)	66	132	54	104	187	152
Jew	250	543	1,000	500

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Literacy by vernaculars, namely, Urdu, Hindi and Gurmukhi is also recorded and it is tabled thus:

I - PUNJAB				
Religion	All vernaculars	Urdu	Hindi	Gurmukhi
All religions	1,272,301	908,521	216,296	198,484
Hindu	582,126	362,142	198,464	51,861
Ad-Dharmi	5,540	2,073	338	3,228
Sikh	246,375	112,696	11,533	141,171
Muslim	411,925	409,048	2,084	1,778
Christian	17,343	16,804	369	334

II - BRITISH TERRITORY				
Religion	All vernaculars	Urdu	Hindi	Gurmukhi
All religions	1,133,022	839,252	173,193	167,112
Hindu	503,694	326,550	159,060	40,974
Ad-Dharmi	5,413	2,060	335	3,121
Sikh	212,617	104,556	9,363	114,536
Muslim	386,468	384,494	1,241	1,071
Christian	17,062	16,452	353	322

III - PUNJAB STATES				
Religion	All vernaculars	Urdu	Hindi	Gurmukhi
All religions	139,279	69,269	43,103	38,372
Hindu	78,432	35,592	39,404	10,887
Ad-Dharmi	127	13	3	107
Sikh	33,704	8,140	2,170	26,635
Muslim	25,457	24,554	843	707
Christian	372	352	16	12

Source Courtesy: The Indian Social Reformer, Vol. XLVIII

Bombay, Saturday October 16, 1937
Editors: K.Natarajan, S.Natarajan

The following paragraphs which has reference to the Ad-Dharmis, are from the above-mentioned source:

Depressed Classes in the Punjab

The deep concern of the Punjab Government to ameliorate the condition of "Ad-Dharmis" (untouchables) in the Province was voiced by the Hon'ble Mian Abdul Haye, Education Minister, addressing a conference of Harijans at the village of Pilanwali, near Hoshiarpur on Sunday (October 3) afternoon. The Conference was held in a mango grove under a large shamiana, where more than 1000 Harijans of the Jullundur, Hoshiarpur and adjoining districts had collected.

The Minister, speaking in Hin-

dustani, announced that he had come to the Conference on behalf of the Premier and the Punjab Government, who considered "Ad-Dharmis" as good as members of any other community and addressed the audience as his brethren. He emphasized that he would give them the same status as a Brahmin or a Sayyad would receive from him.

He felt pain at addressing them as "Acchut" and found no difference between them and himself in the eyes of God. He added that the Punjabi nation was constituted of various communities and the "Ad-Dharmis" were a part and parcel of that nation. The Hon'ble Minister compared "Ad-Dharmis" with the bricks laid in the foundation of a house on which the whole structure was standing, while the bricks near

the roof i.e. members of Cabinet and Government could only keep their position if the foundation was there, otherwise the whole building would come down.

He assured them that the Punjab Government and its officers would very gladly help them in their troubles and the extra help rendered would mean nothing but doing justice to a down-trodden community.

As regards the Punjab Government's anxiety for the "Ad-Dharmis" he said that there was altogether free primary education for their children in the province, half fee concession in middle and high classes and special scholarships were being awarded in colleges. He mentioned that out of 16 Parliamentary and Private Secretaries of the Cabinet, two

had gone to "Ad-Dharmis", that they had been nearly about 2 annas in the rupee instead of about a pice or so, to which they were otherwise entitled.

The District Board of Jullundur had even made education free for their children up to high classes.

As regards the question of opening special schools for Harijans, the Minister said that he considered all the institutions were meant for "Ad-Dharmis" and if he came across any refusal from any institution whether Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Government or of a local body he would see that serious notice was taken and if needed he would not mind the closing down of that institution.

NEERAJ PAUL

Mobile No. +91-99683-69972

Email: neerajpaul@hotmail.com

Source Courtesy: The Indian Quarterly Register Being a Quarterly Journal of Indian Public Affairs

In matters Political, Social and Economic, etc.

Volume-II, July-Dec. 1928, Numbers III & IV

The Indian Statutory Commission
The Depressed Classes' Deputation
Page No. 126

Before the Conference met, a contingent of 500 members of the depressed classes' men from various parts of the Punjab, had arrived – all red-turbaned and dressed in white – and wished to meet Sir John Simon. Sir John's time being fully occupied, he was unable to witness the demonstration but received a small deputation of six of them led by Mr. Rajah.

Sir John Simon received the deputation's address and assured them that though he could not hear them publicly, he was giving his best consideration to their case and that Mr. Rajah was there giving all the

facts and figures and devotedly representing the cause of the depressed classes.

The depressed classes deputation, said in the course of their memorial that they belonged to an ancient race which ruled India about 5000 years ago, prior to the invasion of India by the Aryans. The Aryans, whose present descendants were called high class Hindus, had all along been treating them with the most inhuman brutality, so that their unlucky community, numerically large as it was, is now little more than a mere name. In spite of the fact that there were some highly-educated and capable men in their community, they were not given any honourable status in society nor the right of ownership or anything. They had not even the right to safeguard their individual lives.

This deplorable condition of the mute millions of the depressed community was due to the horrible treatment meted out to them by high-class Hindus in consequence of the pronouncements of the ancient Aryans, which were embodied in the Manu Smriti and a lot of other Hindu scriptures of that ilk.

The deputationists next stated that they did not wish to be called Hindus but 'Addharmis' and in the next census they should describe themselves as 'Addharmis'. They did not want Swaraj in India under present conditions, as it would mean practically a monopoly by caste Hindus.

They enumerated their demands as follows:

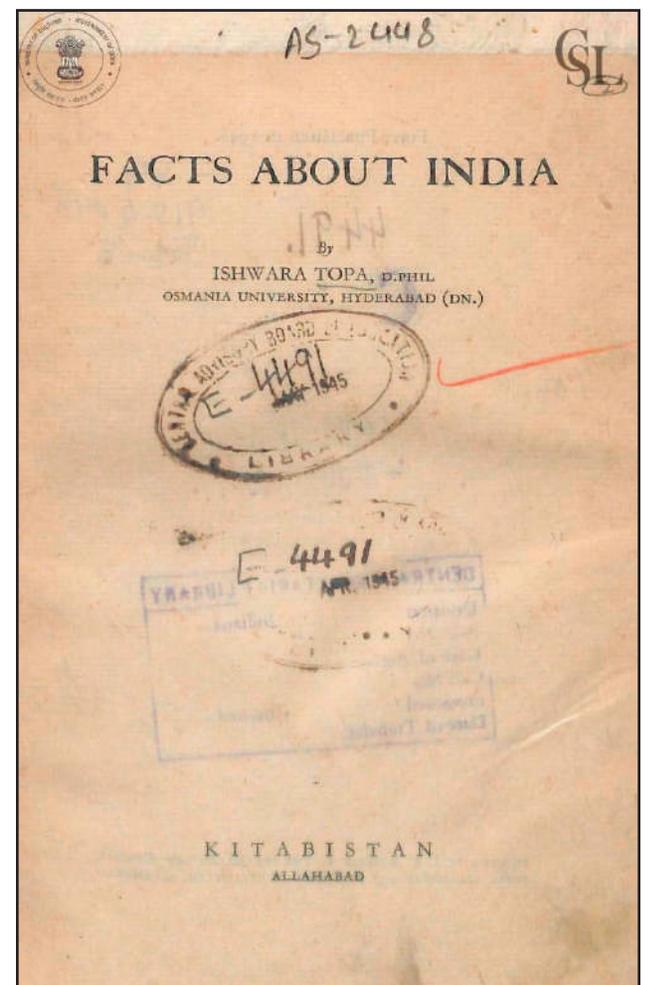
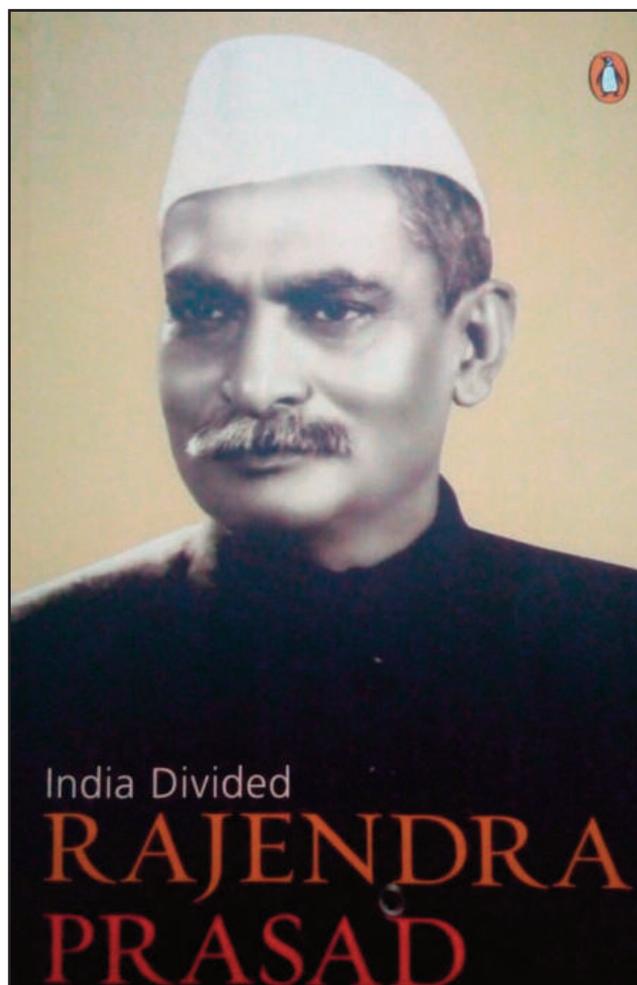
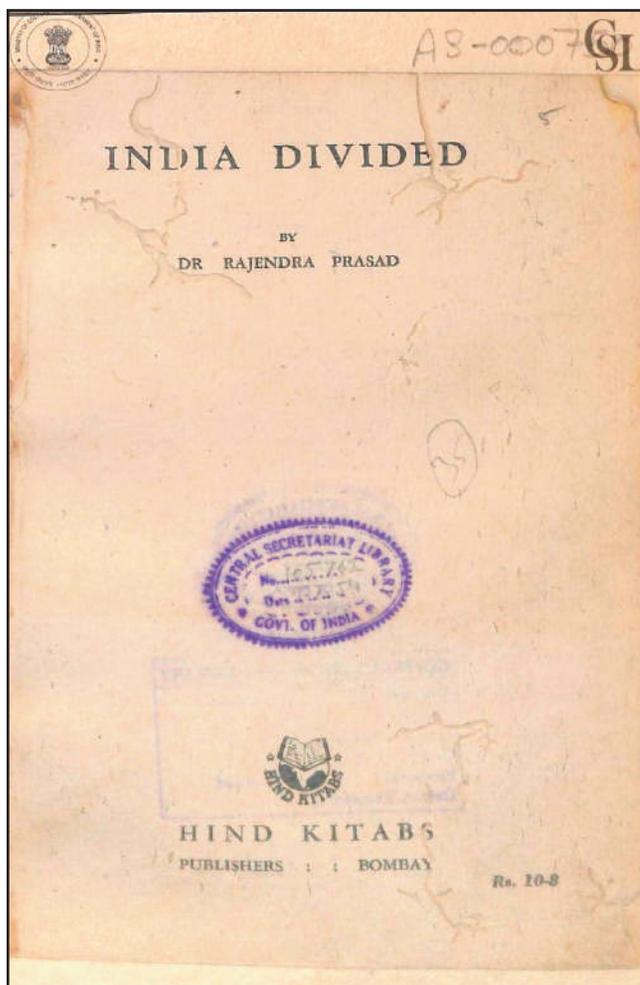
Necessary arrangements for the better education of Addharmis (untouchable) boys and girls; sepa-

rate representation in all public bodies and the Legislature; a share in all public services, including the police, civil and military; a Minister in every province; equal rights of using all District Board public wells with other communities; equal rights of ownership of any property – dwelling houses and common fields – with other communities and proscription of the Manu Smriti and all such Hindu scriptures in which contemptuous references are made to the race and community. References to the community by the term of Shudra, the memorial urges, should be strictly forbidden. Land in the new colonies should be distributed just as it is done in the case of other communities.

NEERAJ PAUL

Mobile No. +91-99683-69972

Email: neerajpaul@hotmail.com

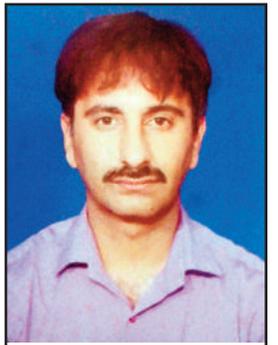


THE GREAT CENSUS 1931 THE AD-DHARM RELIGION

Source Courtesy: Census of India, 1931, Volume XVII, Punjab

By Khan Ahmad Hasan Khan
Superintendent of Census Operations
Punjab & Delhi

Printed by: Civil & Military Gazette Press, Lahore (1933)



NEERAJ PAUL
+ 91-99683-69972
Email: neerajpaul@hotmail.com

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A "New" Religion

The most notable feature of the present census from the standpoint of return of religion has been the adoption of the term "Ad-Dharmi" by numerous Chamar and Chuhras and other untouchables. At previous censuses Chuhras, unless they returned some recognized religion, were always included among Hindus. In this respect the instructions for the return of religion at the present census were the same as in 1921, viz. "All Chuhras, who are not Muslims or Christians, and who do not return any other religion, should be returned as Hindus. The same rule applies to members of other depressed classes who have no tribal religion." Thus under the instructions if a Chuhra refused to be recorded as a Hindu he was to be so recorded in case he failed to return any other religion. An addition was, however, made to the instructions by the insertion of the clause: "Persons returning themselves as Ad-Dharmis should be recorded as such." The Punjab Ad-Dharm Mandal had petitioned the Punjab Government before the census operations started in 1930, representing that the depressed classes should be permitted to return Ad-Dharm as their religion at the time of the census as they were the aborig-

Page No.291:

Proportion of Numerical Strength by Religion:

Religion	British Territory	Punjab States
Muslim	56.54	32.53
Hindu	26.83	46.26
Sikh	12.99	20.56
Christian	1.74	.09
Ad-Dharmi	1.69	.4
Jain	.15	.16

Page No.311:

Figures since 1881 for some of the most numerous depressed classes, who have been returned as belonging to more than one religion:

Caste and Religion	1931	1921	1911	1901	1891	1881
Bawaria	Hindu	16,045	25,517	26,847	27,633	24,401
	Sikh	15,858	9,005	6,002	1,275	1,635
	Ad-Dharmi	56	..	..	..	..
Chamar	Hindu	684,963	968,298	909,499	1,089,003	1,029,335
	Sikh	155,717	161,862	164,110	75,753	106,328
	Ad-Dharmi	256,349	..	..	..	..
Chuhra	Hindu	368,224	693,393	777,821	934,553	859,571
	Sikh	157,341	40,345	49,937	21,673	90,321
	Ad-Dharmi	86,548	..	..	..	..
Ramdasi	Hindu	12,235	..	..	..	..
	Sikh	67,080	..	..	..	..
	Ad-Dharmi	47,169	..	..	..	..
Sansi	Hindu	26,665	17,090	22,022	23,658	18,246
	Sikh	1,238	77	..	..	..
	Ad-Dharmi	384	..	..	..	..

Chapter XII

Race, Tribe and Caste

Page No.333:

The distribution of Chamars and Mochis between the Hindu and Sikh religions in 1921 and among Hindus, Sikhs, Ad-Dharmis in 1931 is given in the margin:

Locality	1921		1931		
	Hindu (1)	Sikh (2)	Hindu (3)	Sikh (4)	Ad-Dharmi (5)
Punjab	980,293	163,290	705,189	225,833	256,349
British Territory	766,424	85,020	479,162	126,410	248,431
Punjab States	213,869	78,270	226,027	99,423	7,918

ines of India and while the Hindus kept them at a respectable distance they did not believe in the Hindu religion. The President of the Punjab Ad-Dharm Mandal was informed that a clause was being provided in the Census Code requiring that persons returning their religion as Ad-Dharm would be recorded as such. Ad-Dharm literally means original or ancient religion.

Page No.294

Revolt of Untouchables

There has been in the last few years a movement among the untouchable classes to organize themselves as a separate community in order to consolidate their position, and many of them have returned themselves, particularly in the central districts, Jullundur and Hoshiarpur, as Ad-Dharmi or the followers of Ad-Dharm, meaning the ancient or original religion of Hindustan. The figures of Ad-Dharmis are given in the margin for the districts returning more than 100 of them.

The following tabular statistical information are from Chapter XI - Religion and XII - Race, Tribe and Caste from the above-mentioned source, which highlights the Ad-Dharm Religion in Census 1931:

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Page No.334 Proportion of literacy among Chamars under different religious denominations, is illustrated by the marginal table, which also gives the figures for Chuhras.

CASTE AND RELIGION		Total Population	Literates per mille aged 7 and over
Chamar	Hindu	684,963	5
	Ad-Dharmi	256,349	13
	Sikh	158,753	14
Chuhra	Hindu	368,224	8
	Ad-Dharmi	86,548	5
	Sikh	169,247	9

Page No.334:

The figures for the last two censuses are given in the margin with detail by religion. Hindu Chuhras have decreased by 47 per cent, while Chuhras among other religions show a varying degree of increase. The Ad-Dharm religion has been returned for the first time...

CHUHRA	Hindu	Sikh	Ad-Dharmi	Muslim (including Mussalli)	Christian
Strength in 1921	693,425	42,476	..	374,884	..
Strength in 1931	368,224	169,247	86,548	434,644	34,996
Actual Variation	-325,201	+126,771	..	+59,760	..
Percentage Variation	-46.9	+298.5	..	+15.9	..

THE AD-DHARMIS

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE AD-DHARM RELIGION

The Ad-Dharm Mandal was a Society which was formed by the Depressed Classes (Untouchables) and its first meeting was held on June 11-12, 1926 in the village of Muggowal in Tehsil Garhshankar, Hoshiarpur, Punjab. This meeting took place under the chairmanship of Mangoo Ram, and was attended by all the Untouchables of Punjab. The Untouchables collectively took the decision that their religion is Ad-Dharm, as they were the indigenous inhabitants (Moolniwasis) of the Indian Subcontinent. Ad-Dharm literally means "Original Religion/Ancient Religion".

In the Resolutions which were passed at Muggowal, the Untouchables declared that the Founders of the Ad-Dharm Religion are Bhagwan Valmiki, Guru Ravidas, Guru Kabir, and Guru Namdev. They unanimously chose the sacred word Soham for themselves as their insignia. Their salutation is Jai Gurudev (Victory to the Divine Guru) to which the response is Dhan Gurudev (Blessed be the Divine Guru).*

Among the many resolutions which were passed at the meeting, high priority and importance was given to education, employment, business and property ownership:

(1). All girls and boys of the Untouchable brotherhood should have compulsory primary education,

(2). The Minister of Education of the Punjab Government, should give special scholarships and education for the Untouchable children. Because of our poverty we cannot bear this expense,

(3). Our children should be taken care of by the government, since the private schools do not help us or encourage the admission of our children. We should get the same grants that others get, and special schools should be set up for the Untouchables,

(4). We are agriculturalists, we know our work well. But we are not paid enough in agricultural wages. We

cannot take care of our families properly. Vacant lands should be given to the Untouchable community,

(5). Untouchables should be able to own the houses where they live. The term rayit-namma and similar terms should be eliminated. The Land Transfer Act should not apply to Untouchables.

(6). To learn and seek knowledge, and to learn and seek progress is compulsory for every man and woman,

(7). Receive education for ourselves and others in the brotherhood,

(8). Ad-Dharmis should open shops and businesses in every village. 1

Towards Census 1931:

The Ad-Dharm Mandal approached the Government on October 10, 1929 to have Ad-Dharm listed as a separate religion in the Census. This was readily accepted and a total of 418,789 of our community members recorded themselves as Ad-Dharmis. This was almost equal to the Christian population (419,353) in Punjab and much higher than the combined Jain and Buddhist population in Punjab. Addition had been made to the Instructions for Census 1931 that: "Persons returning themselves as Ad-Dharmis should be recorded as such." The Punjab Government had informed the Punjab Ad-Dharm Mandal that a clause was being provided in the Census Code and that the persons returning their religion as Ad-Dharm would be recorded as such. 2

Support from Census Commissioner for Census 1941:

After the acceptance of the demands of the Ad-Dharm Mandal for the Census 1931 in which Ad-Dharm was recognized as a distinct religion separate from the rest, and the Untouchables successfully recording themselves as Ad-Dharmis, support was again given to the community for Census 1941. There had been a decrease in the number of Hindu population in Punjab, and after reviewing the causes, certain "external" sources "inquired of Khan Bahadur Sheikh

Fazal-i-Ilahi, Superintendent of the Census Operations in the Punjab, whether in the next Census also the Ad-Dharmis would be counted as non-Hindu." The reply received by the "external" source in a letter dated 13th August 1940 from the Superintendent, Census Operations, was:

"I have the honour to say that Ad-Dharmis will be treated as non-Hindus and will not be included in the general total of Hindus at the ensuing Census as in 1931." 3

This again then resulted in a positive development for the Untouchable Castes to have themselves recognized as Ad-Dharmis in the Census 1941. According to Census 1941 Vol.VI, "a separate column has been provided, as at the last census, for Ad-Dharmis who though included in the scheduled castes, do not claim to be Hindus." 4

The book "India Divided" by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, first published in 1946, has a passage with reference to the status of Ad-Dharmis and further confirms to the fact that the Ad-Dharmis were listed separately from the Hindus and confirmed its status as an independent religious identity in both Census 1931 and 1941. Dr. Rajendra Prasad accepted and acknowledged in his own words:

"Before analysing the figures given in the above table it is worth noting that under 'others' are included Adidharmis, Jains, Parsis, Jews and those who returned no specified religion or community. Of these the most numerous are the Adidharmis, who according to the Census Commissioner though included in scheduled castes do not claim to be Hindus and are hence recorded separately not only from the Hindus but also from the scheduled castes. They number 3,43,685 or 1.21 per cent of the total population of the Punjab. They are concentrated very largely in the Jullundur Division where their number is 2,50,267 or 4.60 per cent of the population of

that Division. Their next largest concentrations are in the Multan Division and Lahore Division where they number 68,641 or 20,488 respectively. Their number is negligible in the Ambala and Rawalpindi Divisions being only 2,795 and 1,534 respectively. As has been pointed out in the Census Report of 1931: 'The most notable feature of the present (1931) census from the stand-point of returns of religion has been the adoption of the term Adi Dharmi by numerous Chamars and Chuhras and other Untouchables. At previous censuses Chuhras unless they returned some recognized religion were always included among Hindus. The 1941 Census Report also notes that all those who are recorded as Adi dharmis belong to the scheduled castes but have not claimed to be Hindus. The last two census days have thus succeeded in reducing the number of Hindus in the Province by excluding the Adidharmis from amongst them.' 5

To Be Continued

*[Note: The salutation Jai Gurudev (Victory to the Divine Guru) and Dhan Gurudev (Blessed be the Divine Guru) was and is and will continue to be forever originally belonging to and is the creation of the Ad-Dharm Religion chosen by the Untouchable Castes for themselves.]

References:

1. Religious Rebels in the Punjab: The Ad-Dharm Challenge to Caste – Mark Juergensmeyer
2. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XVII Punjab, Part-1 Report
3. The Modern Review, Vol.LXVIII, July to December 1940
4. Census of India 1941, Vol.VI – Punjab
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NEERAJ PAUL

Mobile No. + 91 99683-69972

Email: neerajpaul@hotmail.com

