



Ambedkar Times

Weekly

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

Vivekananda on Guru Gobind Singh

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

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

Swami Vivekananda's Works

Vol. VI P. 469, Conversations and Dialogues

GURU GOBIND SINGH CREATED KHALSA, A NEW MAN

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

Peasantry was the main force of the Sikh revolution.

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

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

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

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

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

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

peaceful means have been exhausted to fight against oppression.

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

Khalsa is a new man with a new identity.

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



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

Dr. Sawraj Singh

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

International Migration from India: Gains and Losses

According to a report released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) on January 15, 2021, 'International Migration 2020', India has the highest number of migrants in the world. In 2020, 18 million Indians were living abroad. India is followed by Mexico (11 million), Russia (11 million), China (10 million) and Syria (80 million). Between 2000-2010, 10 million Indians migrated internationally.

Human migration began with the beginning of human existence. At first humans migrated from one place to another in search of food for their livelihood. Humans began to raise livestock and grow crops to make their lives easier, and as a result, villages and towns gradually came into being. Humans migrated from village to village, from village to town, from city to city, and from city to village to earn their living. Due to the increase in population and the different levels of economic development of different countries, international migration came into being. There are many reasons for international migration, such as dreaming of a better life, living with family and avoiding the deadly effects of wars, conflicts or environmental degradation.

According to the latest UN report, the number of Indian international migrants is the highest amongst the different countries. There are two types of international migration from India: first, workers

who fall into the unskilled and semi-skilled categories and migrate mostly to the Gulf countries and second, semi-skilled workers, professionals and students who migrate to the advanced capitalist countries.

International migrants from India have gained and lost for themselves and their country at the same time. During the freedom struggle, international migrants not only provided financial support but also gave birth to the Gaddarmovement. In this way, international migrants made their valuable and commendable contribution to the country's independence. Most migrant workers in the Gulf send money to their families. Even some of the first generation migrants settled in the advanced capitalist countries send money to their families but the trend is now rapidly declining.

With remittances earned from abroad, the families of international migrants prospered, while they contributed to the development of their provinces and country. The knowledge gained by the international migrants from India about the economic progress made in different countries of the world, the socio-cultural and political values of those countries also benefited the country.

The list of what international migrants from India have lost and are losing more than what they have gained. Studies by Dr. Gurinder Kaur and colleagues, and other researchers have shown that most of the general category people in the country have migrated to the advanced capitalist countries and most of the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes have migrated to the Gulf countries. Due to the high cost of international migration and the lack of land and resources for most of the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes, the participation of these families in international migration is relatively low. To cover the cost of international migration, the families of the migrants had to take loans from institutional and non-institutional sources and sell land, plots, houses, vehicles, farm machinery, jewelry, livestock and many more. In addition, household

tries help those who have left the country, most NRI businessmen do not have the slightest mercy on their lives and behave with them like *Cuscuta Reflexa* (Amarbel vine).

Another downside of international migration from India that has come to light is the age of the migrants. The vast majority of international migrants are in the 15-45 age group. This is the age at which the energy to work is high. This age group is considered to be the Demographic Dividend of the country. If people of this age are to settle in foreign countries, where the progress of the country would be hampered due to lack of work efficiency of the rest of the people, there would be a decline in the participation of their families in various institutions. What is happening is clearly visible.

Among the various reasons for international migration from India,

gets about 16 per cent of the national income. Due to the government's agricultural policies, almost all marginal and small farmers, farm labourers and rural artisans are

dying due to the unbearable burden of debt and extreme poverty, or starvation, or even committing suicide when all hopes for their lives are dashed. Due to these reasons, a large number of children of farmers are migrating to foreign countries. The three laws passed by the Union Government related to agriculture will further increase the international migration of families dependent on the agricultural sector.

Employment opportunities in the industrial sector are steadily declining. Mechanization and increasing use of automated machinery are the major reasons behind the decline in employment opportunities in this sector. There are few employment opportunities in the services sector, but the quality of employment for most workers in this sector is very low.

Given the Brain Drain, Capital Drain, Loss of Demographic Dividend and other problems in relation to international migration from India, the need of the hour is to adopt the pro-people and pro-nature economic growth model in place of corporate economic model. In order to do so, it is necessary to raise taxes on the richest 1 per cent and ensure that their income is collected and used for the benefit of the people.

In order to adopt a pro-people economic development model, it is necessary to expand and develop the public sector and ensure monitoring and control over the functioning of the private sector. All forms of employment and its quality should be enhanced in the country and the best performing units in this regard should be encouraged in various ways. In order to raise the level of Demographic Dividend, major reforms in education and health services are needed. To do so, all citizens have to be provided free quality education and health services by the government. The government has to expand the scope of social security measures to ensure that every citizen of the country can live a happy and respectable life.



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savings had to be used for this purpose and help or advance money had to be taken from relatives and friends and employers.

There is a gap between migration expenditure incurred and remittances made by international migrants, which directly brings to light the flow of capital out of the country. This is likely to increase in the near future. As a result, many families of international migrants are in debt.

The number of educated people among the international migrants is high and this number is steadily increasing. These individuals include +2, Graduate, Post-Graduate, M.Phil., Ph.D. degree holders. The international migration of these educated people clearly highlights the problem of Brain Drain from the country. The immense power and resources of the society have been used for the upbringing and education of these people, but it is benefiting the foreign countries. Of these international immigrants who go on student visas, most have a low level of education abroad and a large number of them do physical work that they would never do in their home country. Although some religious institutions and philanthropists in foreign coun-

tries the most prominent is the lack of employment opportunities and the very low level of employment available. After the independence of the country, during the planning period (1951-80), public sector enterprises were established, expanded and developed, which resulted in good quality employment to many workers and reduced economic inequalities in the country. After 1980, planning was reversed and when the NDA government took over and established NITI Ayog in place of the Planning Commission. The 'New Economic Policies' of liberalization, privatization and globalization adopted in the country since 1991 have widened the economic disparities between the richest 1 per cent and the remaining 99 per cent, not only reducing employment opportunities for ordinary workers but also the quality of employment.

Governments and the corporate world in many parts of the world are promoting the market as a lifeline to alleviate economic woes. The Great Depression of the 1930's and the events that followed at various times prove that the unbridled market system is causing the most economic problems. About 50 per cent of India's population is dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, which

Evolution and its implications in political philosophy

The theory of evolution is a unifying theory in biology. It can be applied at any level of complexity in biology, starting from structures of biomolecules to human behavior. This theory can help in arranging the information about biological systems from a systematic perspective and also give very useful insights for further research. But being a simple theory, it can lead to misinterpretations if the pretext is distorted. Nowadays, evolutionary psychology is a very successful paradigm in cognitive sciences. There had been many attempts to extend evolutionary theory in political philosophy. Initially, Herbert Spencer used this theory to support the ideology of the free market and capitalism. He oversimplified Darwin's idea of 'Natural Selection' and articulated it as a slogan "Survival of the fittest". This slogan gives a competitive sports life impression of natural selection as if only the fittest will survive. Whereas in nature, we see that many other than the fittest also survive. In fact sometimes the unfit also survive although the probability of survival of most unfit is least. Most importantly, in this paradigm of neck to neck competition for survival, there seems no scope for altruism and humanism. But many times true altruism is seen around us. This emergence of altruism within the quest for survival was explained by Hamilton W. D. and George Price. Further developments in their work show how ideals of egalitarianism, humanism, and a sense of justice can emerge in the evolutionary paradigm. It also shows in what situations these ideals may fail, and the way forward.

First, in brief, the basics of the theory of evolution are described here. Darwin proposed this theory to explain the origin of new species. He proposed that the changes in hereditary biological characters are random. This was the major novelty of his theory, compared to other prevalent theories at that time. Such random changes in hereditary characters create genetic diversity in a population of species. The environmental conditions act as a filter on these diverse hereditary characters. Individuals with adaptive characters are more likely to survive and pass these characters onto the next generation. Generation by generation, adaptive hereditary changes will keep accumulating the population of a species. A population of a species may get fragmented into two subpopulations due to geographical barriers like a river, mountain, continental shift, etc. Such subpopulations may accumulate different adaptive characters over time. After a long time, these subpopulations can become very different from each other. The difference in some biological characters may prevent reproduction between individuals from these two different populations. In this way, two species may emerge from one. The selection of adaptive characters by environmental conditions is called 'Natural Selection'. Putting an oversimplistic perspective about environmental conditions may distort the

view about adaptive characters. It can lead to the conclusion such as the competition for survival is all about the capacity of violence and muscle strength. Indeed for some time, the competition amongst dinosaurs was mainly a race of muscle strength and capacity to kill. But the environment and consequently the adaptive characters can be a lot more diverse. For an individual, the other individuals are also part of the environment. Cooperation amongst individuals living beings can also make them more adapted to the en-

tionarily adaptive if it follows the Hamilton and Price equation $C < A*r$. Here C is the cost of altruist act for the individual, A is the survival advantage occurring to the kin, and r is the relatedness between the individual and kin. Here the advantage is scaled down by multiplication (*) with relatedness (r), which is always less than 1. Relatedness is generally less for the distant kins. An altruist act can benefit many kins and the total advantage for the kin's survival has to be more than the cost to the individual. Some altruist acts can be also explained by the concept of 'Group Selection' which goes beyond kinship. The possibility of an altruist act can further increase if it is beneficial to the whole group. Due to being members of the group, the benefits of altruistic acts come back to the individual and kins. Therefore an additional term for benefits as a member of the group (b) is also added in the above equation, $C < A*r + b$.

This altruistic behavior has been observed in almost all phyla of animals. In humans, it explains the origin of ethics, morality, and humanism. Compared to our other primate cousins, humans are least violent or most humane. These humane instincts are the cause of the development of human civilization to this extent. But the theory of evolution also shows the limits of these plain ethical ideals. These ideals work best among genetically related individuals. For ensuring justice among ethnically diverse groups, a balance of power is essential. This balance of power in governance can be ensured by the proper representation of ethnic groups in institutions and transparency in functioning. Individual moral values of even judges can not be relied upon for justice in all situations. Lack of proportionate representation and transparency can be the reason why the Indian judiciary often disappoints common people. The need for transparency in the recruitment process of the Indian judiciary has been felt many times. The judiciary is often perceived as lethargic. Representation of people from ethnic and cultural groups which

often need the protection of rule of law may expedite the processes of law.

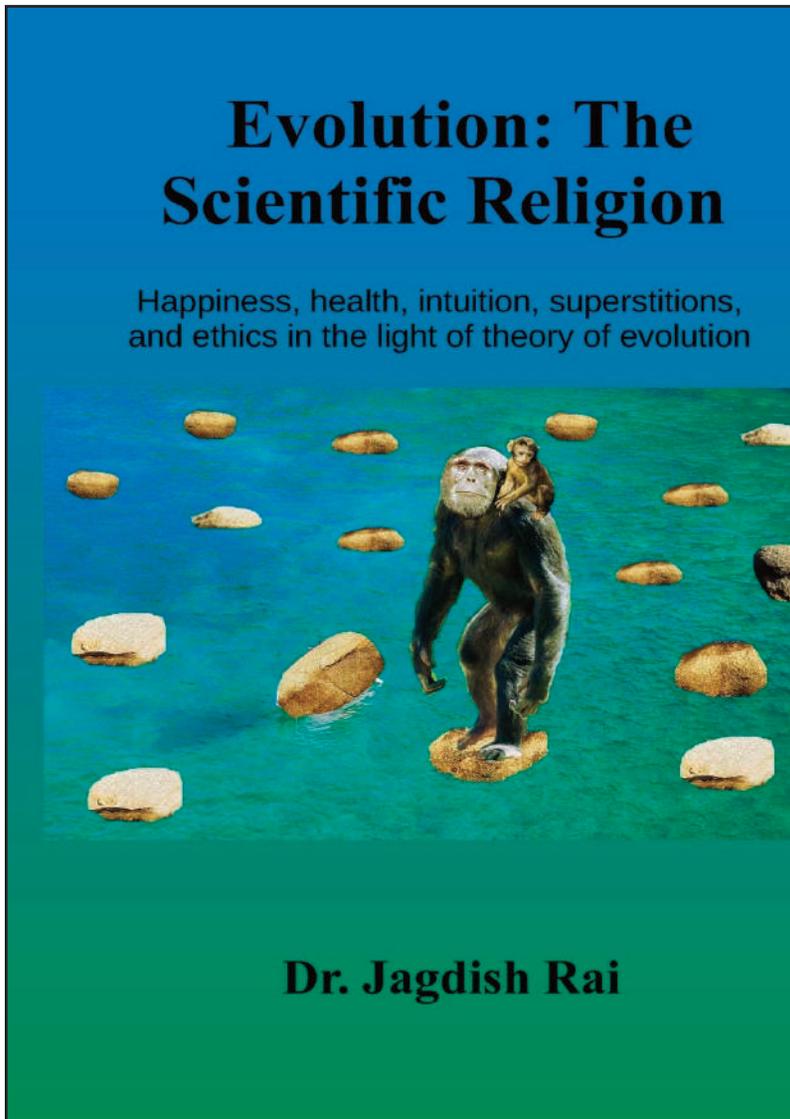
Countries like the USA devised transparent governance and ensured fairness among diverse ethnic groups. Various institutional mechanisms of democracy and rule of law give an advantage in 'Group selection' to a nation. Historically it has been observed that most of the great civilizations emerged from coming together of two or more ethnic groups. These ethnic groups not only shared better ideas with each other but the assimilation also increased the genetic diversity of the community. Any species survival depends on its genetic diversity. The change in environmental conditions may cause the extinction of a species if there is not enough genetic diversity to select upon. The adaptive characters for these unexpected conditions are more likely to be found in rich genetic diversity. The human species has survived so far due to its liberal tendency towards diversity. Historically the most conservative ethnic groups have been defeated by cooperation among liberal ones. But too liberal groups without any check and balance have also been exploited and exterminated. Political philosopher Thomas Hobbes has described the nature of man in the solitary condition as selfish, cruel, short, naked, insecure, and dangerous. A simplistic interpretation of 'Natural Selection' also shows how living beings evolve to be selfish. But accounting for the indirect and complex forms of natural selection such as 'Kinship Selection' and 'Group Selection', explains the humane side of humans. In this way, the theory of evolution not only explains the origin of selfishness but also the 'sense of justice'. It explains the origin of morality as well as its limits, and therefore the need for institutional checks and balances for ensuring justice. Even after all institutional measures, at times, justice will demand struggle and sacrifice, due to limitations in the morality of individuals. In this context, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar has aptly said "Learn, Unite, and Struggle".

This article is a re-articulation of a chapter in the Author's recently published book "Evolution: The Scientific Religion" available at www.amazon.com/dp/B08SJWFF3T

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Dr. Jagdish Rai

Australia vs India, 4th Test: Rishabh Pant, Cheteshwar Pujara, Shubman Gill Shine As India Win Brisbane Test, Series 2-1

India vs Australia, 4th Test: Rishabh Pant's unbeaten 89, Shubman Gill's 91 and Cheteshwar Pujara's 56 helped India overhaul a 328-run target to win the Brisbane Test and the Border-Gavaskar series 2-1.

An Indian cricket team saddled with broken bones and battered bodies showed a never-seen-before zeal to retain the coveted Border-Gavaskar trophy with a historic three-wicket win over Australia in the fourth and final Test in Brisbane, successfully chasing a 328-run target to seal the four-match series 2-1. A minefield of talent called Rishabh Pant (89 not out off 138 balls) channelled his inner 'Mad Max' to scare the daylights out of the Australians with his breathtaking strokeplay, ending the home team's 32-year-old unbeaten run at the 'Fortress Gabba'. The result has the potential to end Tim Paine's reign as Australia captain having lost back-to-back home series against India.

The highlights package of Pant's battle with Nathan Lyon can be enjoyed repeatedly in times to come as he demolished the 100-Test man in company of debutant Washington Sundar (22), who hooked the world's best fast bowler, Pat Cummins, for a six.

No one moved from their seats as Pant cut, drove, and paddle-swept to make a statement to his detractors while gifting India one of their finest overseas wins during the dying moments of the final session with an off-driven boundary.

While Shubman Gill (91 off 146 balls) announced his arrival on the global stage, Cheteshwar Pujara (56 off 211 balls) surpassed all the pain barriers en route his slowest Test fifty that held the game in balance for

Pant to launch a final assault.

The Australian team wouldn't feel too good about not being able to win a Test match with an opposition that was finding it difficult to field a fit first XI a day prior to the Test match.

The series will be remembered for ages and the impact that



Ajinkya Rahane's team had on the cricketing fraternity and the fans in general will be written in golden words when a fresh history of Test cricket after 2000 is written.

In terms of relevance, a series win without Virat Kohli, Mohammed Shami, Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin and Jasprit Bumrah not being available at various points, is zillion times more significant than the 2-1 win in 2018-19 when the opposition didn't have Steve Smith and David Warner in its ranks.

First time, people celebrated draws, became empathetic to players with limited abilities and believed in

their team. The stands were near-about empty at the Gabba thanks to the COVID-19 crowd restrictions but make no mistake that Test cricket seemed well and truly alive and kicking. With its beautiful ebbs and flows, the fifth day was witness to three separate schools of batsmanship, so very dissimilar to each other.

here to stay for the longest time. Pujara, on the other hand, saw the Australian try out the menacing short ball tactic.

He took a few on the helmet, a few more on the chest and other parts and a painful one on the knuckles but remained unfazed. Gill and Pujara showed that there are multiple ways to skin a cat.

If Pujara was ready to duck, sway and cop body blows off Josh Hazlewood and Cummins, showing the art of survival, Gill, on his first tour of Australia, was ready to be the intimidator by bringing the pull shot out of his repertoire.

The duo, during its 114-run stand, showed that very contrasting styles can co-exist without conflict even as fans of both genres argue who has the more appropriate approach for the format. Even Pant with his cavalier ways would have added his two cents to the debate on various styles.

While the final day performance is sure to hold a special place but the story of this match won't be complete without a more than honourable mention of what Shardul Thakur and Washington Sundar did on the third morning and afternoon.

Had that partnership not been there, it wouldn't have been as easy for India as it seemed in the end. Thakur and Washington gave hope of a fight, Pujara, Gill and Pant, with their performances, honoured that fight. Coach Ravi Shastri was once criticised for his "best travelling Indian team" comment but after January 19, very few would disagree that this is the "toughest Indian team on road".

Source Courtesy: NDTV Sports
January 19, 2021

Gill, who is now going to be the "Real Deal", was free-flowing in his stroke-making with his "beside the line of the ball" technique as he rode the bounce to hammer home the advantage and briefly make India favourites to win the battle.

The two sixes off Mitchell Starc -- a slash over backward point and a thump over deep mid-wicket -- will be the ones for the keeps. The disdain while thrashing the Australian bowlers would have made even Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli proud.

India have now got Kohli's heir apparent and the 21-year-old is

Unlocking New Meanings with the Key of Evolution

Evolution: The Scientific Religion, year of publication: 2021, name of Publisher: Amazon KDP, place of publication USA, INDIA, Jagdish Rai, no. of pages: 88, Price: Kindle eBook \$2.99, Paperback \$5.38 .

Once the theory of evolution was put forth by Darwin and Wallace in the 1850s, it became a much written/ discussed/ explained/ illustrated theme in the last 170 years. It further spawned literature, movies, pop art and a whole culture with phrases like 'Survival of the fittest' 'Adapt or Perish'. Common people whether they have training in Biology or not, do have an idea about the theory of evolution. However, most of the times, these are cliched, misquoted or unclear had-me-downs. This book brings to the common reader a lucid explanation of the theory with an added angle of using the inferences to deal with our daily life conundrums. That should in fact, be the ideal way of studying Science- using its cognitive base to build up our affective domain in a way which in-



forms our everyday life. In that context the book serves the purpose.

In nine chapters and further subsections, the author takes up the aspects of happiness, health, intuitions, religion, superstitions and ethics – some of the most significant parameters of human civilization- to present his case. Beginning with a simple explanation of the underlying scientific facts he deftly weaves in the social question, finally leading to the insight gained by application of the theory. The author keeps on reminding that one does not need to memorize the concepts in order to follow the arguments in the book, thus reassuring and hand holding the non-technical reader, urging him or her to grasp the idea instead. Through this strategy, the reader is gradually convinced regarding the alternative ra-

tionale regarding such non-science topics as fate/ justice/ happiness/ history/politics etc based on scientific principles. In this sense, the title of the book is justified.

The author Jagdish Rai has a background of Genetics and has a flare for presenting convoluted and complex ideas into coherent and comprehensible format.

We need more such books, reaching more and more readers to tap the immense potential of Science to improve the quality of human life not only through technology only but also through improving the templates of thoughts and ideas of each one of us. The book is thus recommended for all those people who wish to enlighten their mundane lives with the sparkling brilliance of reason and Science which clears the fog and dispels the dark.

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Consistently Inconsistent: Sacramento Region Returns to Purple Tier



Supervisor Sue Frost

Like me, I am sure many of you are eagerly awaiting the day that I have something to write about other than the COVID-19 pandemic. Something happened just the other day that makes me feel the need to highlight the inconsistency in practices and what we should keep in mind should we ever find ourselves back in a pandemic situation. We all know the story so far.

In March of last year, we went into a full stay-at-home order. Then, counties were placed on watch lists, and then the blueprint for a safer economy determined which tier of reopening we could enter. Then, in response to concerns that ICU capacities were dwindling, the state grouped counties and regions and declared that any region with less than 15% ICU capacity would go into a full shutdown for a minimum of three weeks.

The Greater Sacramento Region, consisting of 13 different counties, was ordered into the regional stay-at-home order on December 9th. We were anticipating remaining in the shutdown far beyond the minimum three-week requirement. On the morning of January 12th, our Public

Health officials were briefing the Board of Supervisors on the status of the County's response to the pandemic. That briefing included that the regional ICU capacity remained at 9.4%, far below what was needed to reopen.

Then, miraculously, our Public Health officials received a call from the state that the Sacramento region would be exiting the stay-at-home order and returning to the purple tier of reopening, effective immediately.

I was elated to hear the news. It is no secret that I have been a strong advocate for safely reopening our economy. I have advocated for the zip code based system so that Sacramento County does not see all of its customers flock to businesses in Roseville and El Dorado Hills when they open first.

I have consistently asked for contact tracing data that justifies the closing of various businesses without success. Much of my frustration and the frustration I hear from local business owners comes from the perspective that the state just seems to be making up the rules as they go along. This recent move to reopen the Greater Sacramento region, while a

positive move, shows just how subjective the rules continue to be. The reason the Greater Sacramento region was able to return to the purple tier was based on a four-week projection that our ICU capacity would reach approximately 19%. As far as I know, reopening based on a projection of ICU capacity was never a metric we were told could be used to reopen.

Again, I am thrilled that we are taking positive steps in the direction of reopening our businesses. Our case rate appears to be hitting a plateau, and, obviously, our ICUs are starting to free up more space. The data around COVID-19 cases and deaths is essential, and it should be used to guide how we react to the pandemic.

I can also accept that we continue to learn more about the virus and our own capacities to control it every day. That is why I am so opposed to knee-jerk reactions of the state every time they realize their plans aren't working. For more than a month, businesses that had been acting in good faith to comply with public health guidance invested their time and money and brought back the employees they care about were told to

shut down completely, again. The time for the state to flex emergency powers to appear in control is over. We now need to focus on keeping businesses safely open and getting the vaccine to as many people as are willing to take it.

The sooner we get back to normal, the sooner we can get back to fixing the 99 other problems we already had on our plate before the pandemic hit.

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 Murieta, North Highlands, Carmichael, Foothill Farms and Fair Oaks

Punjab orders full reopening of colleges, universities from Jan 21

The Higher Education Department, Punjab, issued a detailed letter to all the universities and colleges in this regard.

The Punjab government Monday ordered full reopening of all government, aided and non-aided colleges and all government and private universities from January 21. All the higher educational institutes have to follow the guidelines issued by the Punjab government regarding Covid-19 from time to time.

The Higher Education Department, Punjab, issued a detailed letter to all the universities and colleges in

this regard.

The official spokesperson said that as per the guidelines issued by the government, in the interest of the students, the educational institutions should conduct classes through both offline and online medium and conduct the semester / annual examinations through offline medium only. At the same time, students would be allowed to take classes as per their choice and no institute should compel students to attend the classes physically. The spokesperson said that hostels should be opened in the universities and colleges following the

instructions of Covid-19. Hostel rooms should be allotted per student or according to the size of the room keeping in view the required distance / safety of the students and priority should be given to final year students at the time of allotment. He said that the mess / canteens in the educational institutions should be opened as per the instructions of the health department taking all necessary safety measures.

The spokesperson said that it is mandatory for all the universities and colleges to ensure compliance with all the guidelines/instructions is-

sued by the Punjab government, Centre and the Higher Education Department regarding Covid-19 from time to time in view of the safety of the students.

Earlier, the government had allowed phased reopening of universities and colleges from November 16. In the first phase, only departments with hands-on training such as sciences and medicines were allowed to open and only final year students were called for physical classes with 50% attendance.

Source Courtesy: The Indian Express, January 19, 2021

Protest Dharna enters into 19th day as Punjab Government orders Colleges/Universities to grant admission and provide degree/certificates to SC students – NSCA

Our day and night struggle here managed to open the eyes of this blind government – Kainth

Capt. Amarinder Singh should take personal responsibility to make sure the issue is resolved – NSCA

Chandigarh – The National Scheduled Castes Alliance and other fraternal organizations today entered into the 19th day of their continual symbolic hunger strike and protest dharna at Sector 25, Rally Ground, Chandigarh as the Punjab Government today announced that within 3 days, Admissions of Scheduled Castes Students be granted, which had been denied due to misappropriation of Post Matric Scholarship Scheme Funds. Degrees/Certificates of students which

had been withheld should be given to the students.

Paramjit Singh Kainth, Presi-

performance of their government which has been selling dreams and providing absolutely nothing for the

pritis, Sadhu Singh Dharamsot should resign for his inefficiency in managing the welfare department and also due to his role in the Rs 63 crore scam of the funds." Added Kainth.

The protest started on 28th December 2020 and the day and night struggle led the government to take action on this issue. Speaking further, Kainth said, "It is unfortunate that we had to sit in this cold winter to fight for our rights which this government champions to protect. I would like to ask Capt. Amarinder Singh to take personal notice of this issue and assure that what his government has decided today, it will bring to its fruition or else our protest will continue until the demands are met."



dent, National Scheduled Castes Alliance leading the protest said, "This is a step in the right direction by the government and we expect that their Press Conference today would result in an actual outcome and unlike the

Scheduled Castes in Punjab."

"Our protest dharna shall continue until each and every student of our community is granted admission and is given their degree/certificates. We also demand that the major cul-

From Mochi's Theeha to IGNOU – Book Review (MOCHI – Ek Mochi Ka Adbi Zindginama)

While reading Dwarka Bharti's recently released book - MOCHI – Ek Mochi Ka Adbi Zindginama, I was reminded of a famous phrase – From Log House to the White House - attributed to President Abraham Lincoln of the USA and thought of giving the title - From Mochi's Theeha (shed) to IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) for the book review in hand. The book Mochi was released some days ago at the Budh Vihar at Sidharath Nagar (Bootan Mandi), Jalandhar, my native place, at a simple ceremony by invoking the Trisharan – Buddhist invocation by Harmesh Jassal, and launched by a renowned writer and rational thinker, Dr. Surinder Ajnat in the presence of ardent Buddhists and staunch Ambedkarites, Lahori Ram Balley and Ramesh Sidhu both intellectual friends of the author, Dwarka Bharti. It has been published by Navchetna Publications of Varinder Kumar. I could guess that Dwarka Bharti was also a Buddhist, an enlightened person in the literary sense of the word. Dwarka Bharti himself wrote in Chapter 8 of the book – The Baghi Mochi - that the vagaries of life and literature had changed the course of my life. I was not simply a cobbler now who nailed in the sole of shoes but a rebel (Baghi) who will nail and stand against the people who had been nailing the society for long. The entire narrative in the book dwells on this theme of transformation from a low caste Hindu and a follower of Radha Soami of Beas to the equitable order of Gautama Buddha. In the process, it is evident that Dwarka Bharti has really come a long way from a marginalized Mochi to a recognized Intellectual with his sheer mental and spiritual faculties in spite of the fact that he did not get opportunity to get formal educational degrees. He participates in prestigious literary meets and seminars, writes in acclaimed literary magazines and papers, worked on the coveted position of a member of the syllabus committee of IGNOU as a proud literary personality. Dwarka Bharti is also one of past

Presidents of Ambedkar Mission Society of Jalandhar like Surinder Ajnat. The book makes a good reading. The life of the author could hold as a good motivational story. The book has been rightly dedicated to "Andheron Ko Bedhne Mein Sanlagn Tamaam Kalmon Ke Naam" (to the pens engaged in removal of darkness).

The introduction of the book has been written by the author's long time friend and guide and himself a literary personality of standing Dr. Surinder Ajnat who also launched the book. Justifying the title of this review – From Mochi KA Theeha (shed) to IGNOU – let me endorse Dr. Ajnat's comment on Dwarka Bharti's poem which forms the part of post graduate course in IGNOU – Aaj Ka Eklavya – "Bharti ji Ki Bhasha Bahut Sashakt, Chust aur Vishyanukul Hai. Us Mein Vyangaarth Ka Udaharan Dun To Yeh Hoga: Ki Ab Angutha 'Katvaiya' Nahin Jayega, Sirf 'Dikhaya' Jayega" (now the thumb will not be allowed to be cut instead it will be used as a symbol of revolt).

In the prologue – EK Nazar Idhar, the author himself says that the book was not an expression of self-pity – "Prastut Zindginama Ek Mochi Ki Rudankatha Nahin Hai Balki Chamde Ko Mathne Ke Saath Saath Ek Aise Sahityik Mochi Ke Jiwan Ki Katha Ke Mukhya Ansh Hain." The book has been divided into 9 chapters starting with Mochi Ka Theeha (Shed of a cobbler) and concludes with his poem "Aaj Ka Eklavya" which is prescribed in the syllabus of

MA classes of IGNOU – From Mochi Ka Theeha to IGNOU. Dwarka Bharti has no inferiority complex that he is a Mochi and rightly so. He narrates interesting stories of his school days where even the teachers like Vidya Sagar among others treated him shabbily because of his low place in

the social hierarchy. The caste divide and discriminatory treatment even at Radha Soami Dera aptly explain the deplorable practices at our centers of spiritual and social outfits. The author tells a curious incident when his own father-in-law Mani Ram scolds him, with disdain, that he (Dwarka Bharti) was nothing but a Mochi

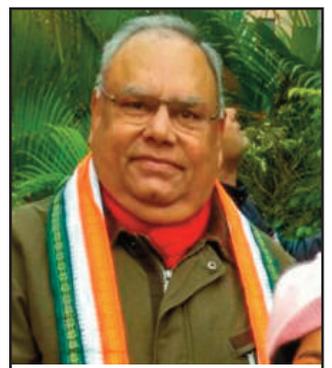
and should remain in his lowly limits. This incident touched the author's sensitivities and pushed him further to rebel against the social order based on inequalities. The author's sojourns to Jordan and Iraq for earning his bread and butter helped in opening his vision further which helped him in carrying forward his interest in literature. As regards his contact and interaction in the literary circles particularly the so called "Dalit Sahitya", while reading the narration one virtually finds a directory of Who's Who in the academic and intellectual sphere. This easily explains that Dwarka Bharti enjoys a status of wide recognition in literary circles of India. Yet another interesting feature of the book, at least for me, remained that some well known names whom I happen to know personally do appear in the book as associates and co-players of the author namely; La-

hori Ram Balle y, Surinder Ajnat, Gian Singh Bal, Mohan Lal Philloria, Balbir Madhopuri, Desh Raj

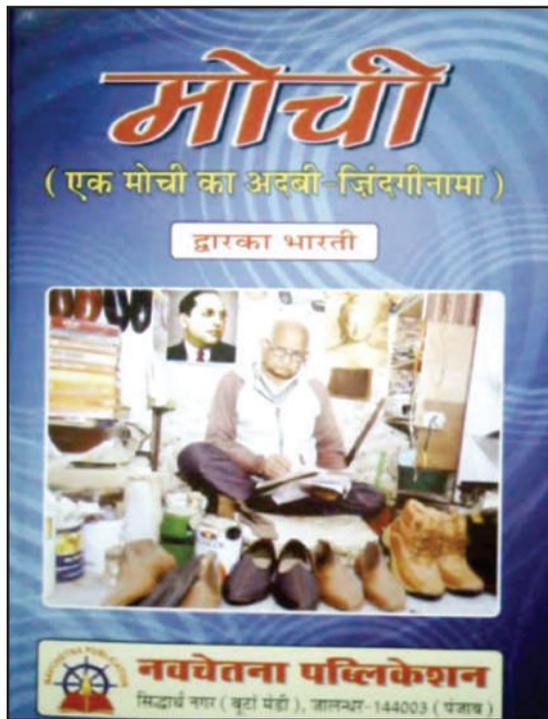
Kali among others. It was a matter of gratification for me to learn further about the life and mission of Gian Singh Bal from the book. The Chapter – Ek Baghi Mochi says all about the transformed status and state of mind of the author who termed himself as "Nir-ishwarwadi" who stands against social ills generated and perpetuated by "Ishwarwad" of various religious orders. There are many more like Dwarka Bharti and I have nothing to comment on his candid view point. But sometimes, as a layman, I surmise as to why liberated or transformed minds should be dogmatic about certain things? Dwarka Bharti is a practicing cobbler or Mochi but he consciously chooses not to hang a picture of Guru Ravidass, the lone icon of all Mochis, at his Theeha (shed). I could see the picture of Babasaheb Ambedkar at the author's work place. Frankly, I find a tinge of some sort of complex, perhaps sub-consciously, in the mind of the author. I don't think even Lord Buddha professed this kind of rigidity or dogmatism. The answer may lie in the fact that we are still to go a long way in the journey to liberate ourselves from narrow considerations. Nevertheless, I fully know we are all human.

I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank Dwarka Bharti and Navchetna publishers for giving us much needed food for thought in their book - Mochi to face and address the societal maladies. I recommend the book to my friends and discerning public. With this, I conclude with a Shabad of Guru Ravidass which says much:

ਨੀਚੇ ਉਚ ਕਰੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ;
ਕਹੁ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਡਰੇ !



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



ਦੇਹ ਸਿਵਾ ਬਰੁ ਮੋਹਿ ਇਹੈ

DEH SHIVA BAR MOH EHAI

Grant me this boon O God, from The Greatness

ਸੁਭ ਕਰਮਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਟਰੋ ॥

SUBH KARMAN TE KABHUN NA TRON

May I never refrain From righteous acts;

ਨ ਡਰੋ ਅਰਿ ਸੋ ਜਬ ਜਾਇ ਲਰੋ

NA DARON AR SO JAB JAE LARON

May i fight without fear All foes in in life's battle,

ਨਿਸਚੈ ਕਰਿ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਜੀਤ ਕਰੋ ॥

NISCHE KAR APNI JEET KARON

With confident courage Claiming the victory;

ਅਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਹੋ ਆਪਨੇ ਹੀ ਮਨ ਕੋ

AR SIKH HAU AAPNE HI MAN KAU

May my highest ambition be Singing Thy praises,

ਇਹ ਲਾਲਚ ਹਉ ਗੁਨ ਤਉ ਉਚਰੋ ॥

EH LALCH HAUN GUN TAON UCHRON

And may The Glory be Granined in my mind

ਜਬ ਆਵ ਕੀ ਅਉਧ ਨਿਦਾਨ ਬਨੈ

JAB AAV KEE AUDH NIDHAN BNAI

When this mortal life Reaches its limits,

ਅਤਿ ਹੀ ਰਨ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਜੂਝ ਮਰੋ ॥੨੩੧॥

AT HEE RAN MAIN TAB JOOZH MARON

May I die fighting With limitless courage.

RABINDERA NATH TAGORE

Memorial for soldier who saved Tawang

The foundation stone will be laid on February 14, the day Maj. Khathing is believed to have hoisted the Tricolour in Tawang for the first time in 1951

The Arunachal Pradesh government will build a memorial to acknowledge the contributions of Major Bob Khathing, a Tangkhul Naga from Manipur, for formally bringing Tawang under India's administrative control in 1951 when the threat from neighbouring China loomed large over the frontier state.

Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Pema Khandu said during an official function in Tawang on Friday that the memorial will be constructed by his government and it will also house a museum showcasing Monpa traditions and a cafeteria. Monpa is a leading tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. The foundation stone of the memorial will be laid on February 14, the day Maj. Khathing is believed to have hoisted the Tricolour in Tawang for the first time in 1951.

Born in Manipur's Ukhrul district in 1912, Ralengnao Khathing, popularly known as Bob Khathing, is a relatively unknown figure for most of Arunachal and even India. But the people of Tawang still remember him with respect for being the sole Indian official to come as their saviour amid growing threat from China, which claims Arunachal Pradesh as a part of South Tibet. China occupied Tibet in 1950.

Khandu said: "Not many of us are aware of Maj. Khathing and his contribution to Arunachal Pradesh. Once the memorial is constructed, visitors will come to know about Maj.

Khathing and his contributions while also getting a glimpse of the Monpa life."

The chief minister's office said Maj. Khathing served in the British Army and fought World War II. During WWII, he served in the famous V Force and was awarded the



Military Cross for his gallantry. He also received the award of Member of the British Empire (MBE). He was also awarded the Padma Shri in 1957.

He was inducted as an assistant political officer (APO) in November 1950 under the Tirap division and was posted at Pasighat and then to Kameng division with its headquarters at Charduar.

Maj. Khathing is believed to have started on an arduous journey from Charduar with a team of soldiers

from 5 Assam Rifles on January 17, 1951. This was the first expedition to negotiate extremely inhospitable terrain in sub-zero temperatures. Maj. Khathing reached Tawang with his team on February 6, 1951. The frontier region was sparsely populated and the road network was practically

non-existent.

To establish Indian presence up to the extent of the McMahon Line, which was demarcated as the border between India and Tibet in 1914, under the terms of the Simla Convention, required covering the area by foot over very difficult terrain. This was successfully accomplished by Maj. Khathing and his troop of 5 Assam Rifles. He then met and interacted with a number of gaonburhas (village headmen) and quickly and ef-

fectively established India's administrative control over Tawang, a remote part of the country.

Maj. Khathing had an eventful career but most believe that he is yet to get his due recognition for his military, diplomatic skills and nation-building efforts.

After graduating from Cotton College in Guwahati, he joined the British Army. He was later elected to the first Manipur Assembly in 1948. In 1953, he joined the Indian Frontier Administrative Service and in due course went on to become the chief secretary of Nagaland in 1967. He had also contributed to the formation of the Sashstra Seema Bal following the 1962 Indo-China war. He also served as India's ambassador to Burma in 1972. He died at his Imphal residence on January 12, 1990.

In a tribute to Maj. Khathing in 2018, the Assam Rifles released a video, "A true legend of the North-east — Major Bob Khathing Ralengnao (1912-1990)". On its Facebook page, the paramilitary force also said: "Maj. Bob Khathing Ralengnao, a proud Tangkhul Naga from Manipur, a God fearing man of honours & principles, a multi-dimensional personality, he was the first tribal from NE India to be the Ambassador of India (to Burma). Well-known for his humanitarian services to the Nation, he led a team of Assam Rifles soldiers & took peaceful possession of Tawang, establishing Indian administrative control in the region." "This memorial will be our tribute to Maj. Bob Khathing," said Khandu.

Source Courtesy: The Telegraph, Umanand Jaiswal, 18 January 2021

Civil Society: Religion, Caste and Language in India

T. K. Oommen

It is not my intention to suggest that India's civil society, manifested through religious movements and caste associations, was always vibrant. In fact, in several contexts it remained frozen and inactive even when state measures eroded their identity. I shall invoke five such instances to illustrate the imperviousness of religious and caste associations.

First, the process of official induction of tribal communities into the Hindu fold. Between 1871 and 1931, the British Indian census had a religious category, variously labelled as 'primitive', 'animist', and 'tribal', which counted around 2.5 to 3 percent of the population. Free India's first census in 1951 abolished these labels, and counted this category as Hindus. It is pertinent to remember here that even a section of social scientists view the tribes merely as 'backward Hindus' (see Ghurye 1943). While the tribes themselves do not accept this appellation and would prefer to be known as Adivasis - the first settlers - with their distinct religion, there was no organised protest against this state measure.

Second, the process of reformatory incorporation of the Scheduled Castes into the Hindu fold. The caste Hindus who had dominated the Constituent Assembly were keen to confer Hindu identity on the outcastes. The first Minority Rights Report of K.M. Munshi

explicitly referred to the need to recognise the Scheduled Castes as a 'section of the Hindu community'. Furthermore, the Indian Constitution provided for 'the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus', thereby incorporating the Scheduled Castes into the Hindu fold. Social scientists have facilitated this process by referring to it as sanskritisation (see Srinivas 1962), which is characterised as a natural aspiration of this category to improve their social status. The possibility of Scheduled Castes asserting a distinct religious identity was muted in this process; an important item on the agenda of civil society was thus numbed. Third, the process of ambiguous inclusion of minority religions of Indic origin - Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism - into the Hindu fold. Article 25 of the Indian Constitution and the Hindu Code Bill explicitly recognise the above religious minorities as 'Hindus'. And yet, when the policy of reservation was introduced in 1950 it was applicable only to the Scheduled Castes with a Hindu background. While it was extended to the Sikh SCs in 1954, the Buddhist SCs were brought under the purview of the policy only in the 1990s. Thus, there is an ambivalence between the inclusionary thrust of the Constitution and the Hindu Code Bill, and the exclusionary orientation of the Indian Census and the reservation policy in regard to religious minorities of Indic origin. Yet, there was hardly any mobilisation

challenging these contradictory steps initiated by the state.

Fourth, the process of legal recognition extended to the ritually clean Shudras, largely constituted by the OBCs, the biggest social bloc in India today. The impact of land reforms and the Green Revolution as well as the introduction of the universal adult franchise brought about considerable social mobility among the OBCs: While the first brought about economic prosperity, the second invested political clout on them. However, they did not gain much upward mobility in the bureaucracy and the professions. This status incongruence created a deep sense of deprivation which was/is frequently articulated, but no large-scale mobilisation occurred. The appointment of the two commissions to examine this matter resulted finally in the institution of the Backward Classes Commission in 1993.

While the Kalelkar Commission (1953-55) had reservations about extending the policy of reservation to the OBCs, the Mandal Commission (1978-80) did strongly recommend it. However, the Mandal recommendations remained on paper for a decade. When they were sought to be implemented in 1990, there was a country-wide opposition led by the upper castes resulting in the fall of the Central government. What is pertinent for the present discussion is the incapacity of the OBCs, despite being the largest social bloc in India, to accelerate the process of implementing the Mandal rec-

ommendations.

Fifth, the process of entitlement exclusion of religious minorities who follow faiths of non-Indic origin from the policy of reservation. It is necessary to recognise two subgroups of this category - the small migrant religious communities of Jews, Zoroastrians and Baha'is who made India their home but did not attempt any conversion. These communities peacefully coexist with others, and the issue of exclusion is not relevant to them as they do not have individuals and groups who experience caste disabilities. The other subcategory consists of Muslims and Christians, counting about 120 million and 25 million respectively now, that is, around 12 percent and 2.5 percent each of the Indian population. While it is true that small sections of these communities were immigrants who settled down in India, the overwhelming majority of Indian Muslims and Christians are converts from local tribes and lower castes. In spite of this, they were not brought under the purview of the policy of reservation as applicable to Scheduled Castes, on the ground that Islam and Christianity do not recognise the caste system. But this argument is equally applicable to Indic minority religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, which are all products of revolt against the hierarchical caste system. That is, in spite of the evident contradiction in state policy, there is hardly any organised mobilisation against it.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia's 135th Birth Anniversary celebrations (Banga) pictures January 14, 2021

