



Ambedkar Times

Weekly

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Invited Editorial on Mr. K. C. Sulekh Sahib's 95th Birthday Many Congratulations: K.C. Sulekh Birthday

Sh. K.C. Sulekh (born on 20 July 1927) has completed 94 years of his productive and dedicated life to the mission of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He is one of the few of his contemporaries who has been able to acquire education (BA) against all odds. Being a conscientious mind, he got associated with the social cause of his Samaj at the very young age during his school days. Those were the days, when the historic Ad Dharm movement led by Babu Mangu Ram Murgowalia, with the financial support of Seth Kishan Das of Boota Mandi of Jalandhar, was attracting large number of lower castes to rise against the wide spread evil of untouchability and impress upon British Government for the restoration of their long lost human rights including the right to own land, education, government service, contest election and to have their own religion. Sulekh Sahib, as a school going child, contributed in his own way to this noble cause of the Ad Dharm movement by organizing some of his like-minded fellow children into a small music group to sing hymns of Guru Ravidass and other radical Saints of the famous North Indian Bhakti movement. It was during one of such occasions that he came into the contact of Seth Kishan Das, with whom he had a long association as a dedicated Ambedkarite. It was also during his school days that Sulekh Sahib became aware of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for the first time from his class 8th teacher. His attraction towards Ambedkar mission got further strengthened during his college days at Jalandhar where he lived at the residence of Seth

Kishan Das, who was one of the pioneers of the Ambedkarite movement in Punjab. Seth Kishan Das participated along with some of his colleagues from Punjab in the Depressed Classes Conference in Nagpur in 1942 being organized by Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Sh K.C. Sulekh's close association with Seth Kishan Das brought him into mission of Babasaheb from its very beginning in Punjab. During his college education days, Sulekh Sahib became the founding editor of "Ujala", Urdu weekly paper first of its kind of the Ambedkar movement in Punjab. He has had also the honour of being the General Secretary of the Scheduled Castes Federation of Punjab and to be the Stage Secretary during the visit of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to Punjab (October 27-29, 1951). He got the opportunity to meet many a times Babasaheb at his residence and accompanied him during his three days historic visit to Punjab, travelling in the same personal vehicle of Seth Kishan Das. He was also present in the Parliament House to listen to the famous address of Babasaheb on November 25, 1949; and also at the Ambedkar Bhawan Delhi in 1951 where Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar delivered his address to the large gathering including Ambassadors of the many countries during the celebrations of Buddha Jayanti. Sulekh Sahib joined the Govt. Service in 1952 and retired as Excise & Taxation Officer in 1985. Since 1985, he has been continuously serving the mission of Babasaheb with utmost dedication through his regular columns in various missionary news-papers, magazines,

S o u - v e n i r s a n d b o o k s . S u l e k h S a h i b i s a l i v i n g l i b r a r y o f t h e i d e a s , t h o u g h t s a n d a n e c d o t e s r e l a t i n g t o t h e l i f e a n d t e a c h - i n g s o f B a b a s a h e b D r . B . R . A m b e d k a r ; a n d t h e A m b e d k a r i t e m o v e m e n t o f P u n j a b . H e i s a c t i v e m e m b e r o f t h e A m b e d k a r M i s s i o n S o c i e t y , P u n j a b a n d A m b e d k a r B h a w a n T r u s t , J a l a n d h a r . A m b e d k a r B h a w a n T r u s t w a s b u i l t i n 1 9 7 2 i n J a l a n d h a r a t t h e s a m e p l a c e w h e r e B a b a s a h e b D r . B . R . A m b e d k a r d e l i v e r e d h i s f a m o u s a d d r e s s o n t h e e v e n i n g o f O c t o b e r 2 7 , 1 9 5 1 . S h . S u l e k h S a h i b , w h o h a s p r o u d l y e n t e r e d i n t o h i s 9 4 t h y e a r o f a c t i v e a n d d e d i c a t e d l i f e , l i v e s i n C h a n d i g a r h a l o n g w i t h h i s w i f e , S m t . A j i t K a u r , 9 0 y e a r s , s o n V i j a y K u m a r , d a u g h t e r - i n - L a w s S m t . N e e l a m R a n i , g r a n d s o n s S u m e e t K u m a r a n d V i n e e t K u m a r . H i s t w o s o n s A s h o k K u m a r l i v e s i n N e w Z e a l a n d a n d S a n j e e v K u m a r i n U K . H e h a s t w o d a u g h t e r s S m t . P u s h p a R a n i a n d S m t . S a n g e e t a R a n i . A l l h i s s o n s , d a u g h t e r s - i n - L a w s , d a u g h t e r s a n d g r a n d s o n s / d a u g h t e r s a r e w e l l e d u c a t e d a n d w e l l s e t t l e d . A l l o f t h e m s u p p o r t h i m i n h i s m i s s i o n o f B a b a s a h e b D r . B . R . A m b e d k a r i n t h e i r o w n v a l u a b l e w a y s . I w i s h h i m m a n y m o r e f r u i t f u l y e a r s o f h e a l t h y a n d h a p p y l o n g l i f e .



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Ambedkar Times and Desh Doaba congratulate Sh. K. C. Sulekh Sahib

Ambedkar Times and Desh Doaba congratulate Sh. Sulekh Sahib on his 95th Birthday. We wish him active healthy and charming life ahead. We are proud of him for his long dedicated efforts for the furtherance of the great mission of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar! Once again we wish on good health and happy long life on his birthday!!

Prem K. Chumber

Editor-In-Chief: Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba

Ambedkar Times congratulates Sh. K.C. Sulekh on his 95th auspicious birthday and takes liberty to reproduce felicitation write up published last time on the similar occasion of the celebrations of his birthday.

Prem Kumar Chumber

Editor-in-Chief: Ambedkar Times



Mr. KC Sulekh with his wife Smt Ajit Kaur



Mr. KC Sulekh With his Son Vjay Kumar, daughter-in-laws Neelam Rani, Grandson Vineet Kumar and great-granddaughter



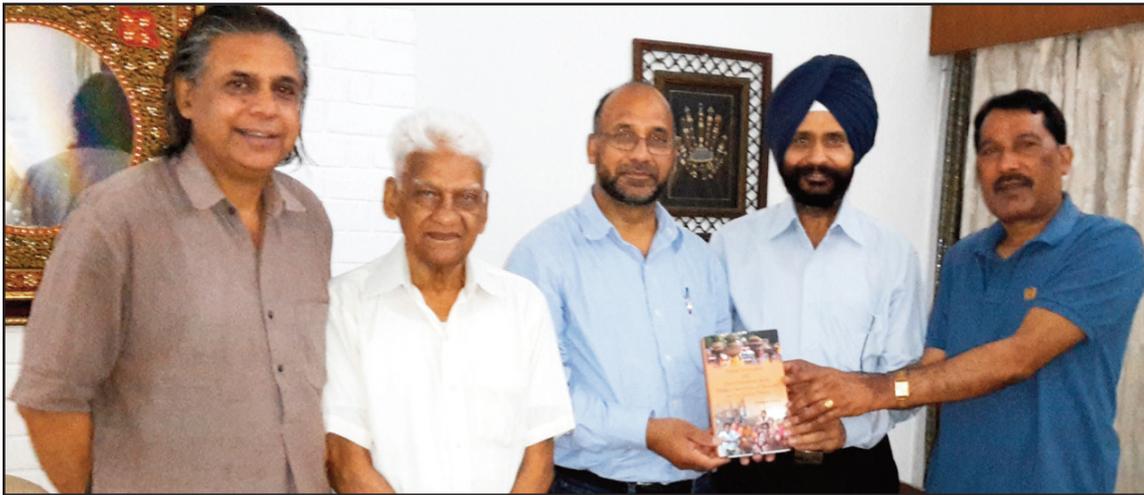
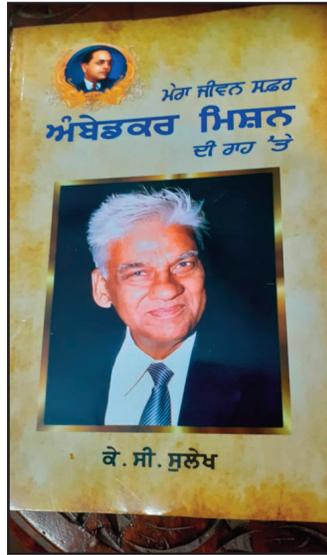
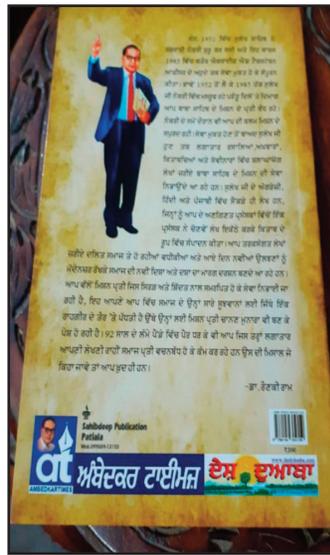
Mr. KC Sulekh with his Son Vijay Kumar, grandson Vineet and Granddaughter Timmy Sulekh

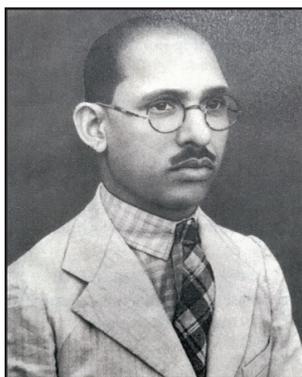


Mr. KC Sulekh with his wife Smt Ajit Kaur



Mr. K. C. Sulekh with prominent personalities





Ishwar Das Pawar
District and Sessions Judge (Retd.)

My Struggle in Life

The Unjust Laws and Customs

Chaudhri Chhotu Ram was not a leader of the Jats (people of agricultural community in Northern India and Pakistan) alone; he was a champion of the cause of the statutory agriculturist as defined in the Punjab Alienation of Land Act. The definition of an agriculturist did not include the untouchables even though some of them owned small areas of agricultural land. A large number of them were agriculturists by occupation, mostly as tenants at will, and still a large number of them depended on agriculture as landless laborers.

Chaudhri Chhotu Ram was a principled and incorruptible politician, a liberal Arya Samaji (person belonging to Arya Samaj “noble society,” a Hindu reform movement founded by Swami Dayananda in 1875), and a staunch and untiring fighter for the cause of the statutory agriculturists. He was a good writer, an impressive speaker, and an able administrator. He was avowedly against the Bania—the business and trader community—as they had been fleecing the poor and ignorant Jats of Punjab in various ways and treating them as Sudras (untouchables). The plight of Jats was really bad. Chaudhri Chhotu Ram had a soft corner in his heart for the untouchables also.

Chaudhri Sunder Singh (now a member of parliament) and I had been meeting him on several occasions and discussing with him the problems of our people. Generally speaking, he was sympathetic toward the downtrodden and oppressed people, but when it came to specific issues, he stood firm like a rock. Many a time we discussed with him, among other matters, two important points: we would plead for the inclusion of the untouchables in the definition of agriculturists as given in the Alienation of Land Act and for the enactment of legislation for the purpose of conferring on them ownership rights over the small sites underneath their residential huts—those could hardly be described as houses. It needs to be reiterated that our people living in villages since generations did not own even their residential sites, which generally measured between one marla (one marlas is equal to 272.25 sqft of land) and ten marlas. These sites belonged to the proprietary bodies of the villages, and these poor people were entitled to reside there only at the pleasure of the proprietors. In lieu of the occupation and enjoyment of these sites, they were required to give to the proprietors their heaps of collected manure and to work without any wages for them on numerous occasions. If by any chance they incurred the displeasure and wrath of their masters, they were liable to be thrown out of their houses not

through any process of law but simply by the force of their fiat. Such was the recurring and perpetual price they had been paying for their mere residence. This was clearly an opposition to all canons of human considerations and social justice, but the proprietors exercised those rights under the time-honored customs and usages incorporated in the volumes compiled by revenue officials at the time of settlements known as riwajiam and wajib-ul-arz (village administration documents in reference to the land ownership). This was nothing short of legalized robbery and not only an unfair but an inhuman practice also.

Besides all this, there was the custom of begar (forced labor), which obliged these people to carry from place to place the luggage and other articles of the touring officers and their entourage, to supply green grass for their horses, keep a chowkidarawatch (visual supervision) of their campus, and also to carry human dead bodies—sometimes those were in an extremely decomposed state and emitting a repelling stench—to the long, way-off mortuaries without any wages. They were virtual slaves, and all this as a price for their bare residence without any right.

As regards the first point, Chaudhri Chhotu Ram told us very clearly that untouchables could not be included in the list of statutory agriculturists as it would adversely affect the protection given to the zamindar (land owner) agriculturists under the act. He, however, offered to consider the request of any individual for the purchase of a small plot—even up to one kanal (one kanal is equal to 500 sq yards of land)—needed by him for residential purposes. This practically meant nothing. So on this point, we drew a blank.

The reply of Chaudhri Sahib to the second point regarding the conferring of ownership rights of the residential sites was very clear and unambiguous. It goes to his credit that he was not in the habit of mincing words. He would warm up and say most categorically and emphatically, “How is it possible to snatch away the land from the proprietors and give it to you?” This would clinch the point. All rights to the village proprietors and no right whatsoever to the jhuggi (hut or shanty) dwellers! This was considered to be even-handed social justice. There was no scope for further argument.

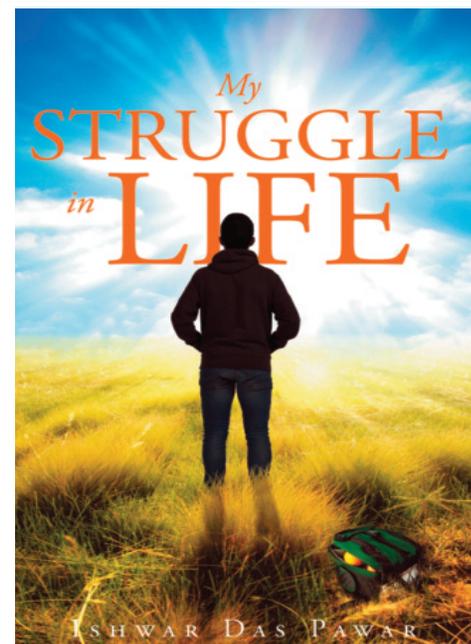
So the matter stood there till after the country attained independence. In the midforties, Chaudhri Chhotu Ram died suddenly of heart attack, only a couple of years before the country won freedom. Once we proposed to wait on Chaudhri Chhotu Ram in a deputation in connection with a few other demands over which our minds were exercised. Accordingly, all the eight MLAs together with Chaudhri Sunder Singh, his brother Bihari Lal, and I went to see him at his residence in the canal area

of Model Town, Lahore. One or two other persons were also with us. We were ushered into the drawing room. Shortly after our arrival, Chaudhri Sahib also came there. He was a man with a courteous nature and was jovial too. A straightforward man not accustomed to brandishing authority. He was a teetotaler. He was so important a figure that he was regarded as the strongest pillar of Sikandar Hayat Khan ministry. After the exchange of pleasantries and a little of humor, he enquired from us about the purpose of our visit. We placed before him the following demands: (a) there should be one assistant sub-inspector of police from amongst the untouchables, (b) there should be one *naib tehsildar*, (c) there should be one magistrate, and (d) there should be one sub-judge.

In this context, it may be mentioned here that then it was the greater Punjab comprising our present Punjab, West Punjab (now in Pakistan), Haryana, and the vast mountainous areas, notably Simla, Kandaghat and Kangra, which also included Lahaul and Spiti and Hamirpur plus Una subdivision. These demands were made on behalf of the untouchables of Punjab. These demands may look ridiculous today, but it was thought that it would satisfy us if the same were conceded.

Chaudhri Chhotu Ram gave us a patient hearing and made the following observations in regard to each demand:

1. The present conditions, either political or social, neither warrant nor permit the appointment of a police official especially of the rank of an ASI (Assistant Sub Inspector). As you know, nobody, other than untouchables, will allow him in the villages even to sit on a cot so as to accord him an equal status with them. They will not tolerate him dealing with them as a police officer in the discharge of his official duties. So we have to wait for a proper and congenial social and political climate. At present, it is not practicable and prudent.
2. The posts of naib tehsildar are meant for those whose families have rendered services to the government particularly in the defense forces. The untouchables have no such services to their credit. This demand too cannot be considered by the government.
3. The post of magistrate is too big a one, and candidates belonging to high families, mostly titleholders, and those who have rendered meritorious services to the government are given these posts; and there is a great scramble for them. Furthermore, only one or two posts go by nomination, and the remaining ones are filled through competitive examination. So in this case, also the government cannot help you.
4. There is no nomination for the posts of sub-judge. These are filled by a competitive examination conducted by the Punjab Public Service Commis-



sion. Moreover, only law graduates are eligible to apply. And then only those candidates who qualify in the examination are considered for appointment against these posts.

Chaudhri Chhotu Ram thought that he had very satisfactorily explained away all our demands. He was rather taken aback when he was told that there was a law graduate boy who had already taken the examination. It was made clear that he should be considered if he not only qualified to take the examination but had also acquitted himself very well. Thereupon, he promised to consider the case sympathetically if the facts were like that. He was not in the habit of making tall but false promises. Therefore, his assurance in regard to the demand for the post of sub-judge raised hope for fulfilment of this demand, and he kept his promise; and as I did very well in the examination, I was selected as sub-judge.

Unlike in these days, at that time, it was a great and rather sensational achievement for an untouchable to be a sub-judge, a gazetted post and the selection for the first time in the whole of the greater Punjab. But in spite of all this, the government felt diffident about the ability of a Harijan (person from low caste) to hold such a post.

This showed the deep-rooted bias against the Harijans. Sardar Gopal Singh Khalsa, a Harijan MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) and private Parliamentary Secretary, came to me at my residence to convey to me the news of my selection. But he also brought the uncalled for message from Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan that now it was for me to justify the selection. Unfortunately, he died suddenly of a heart attack shortly after the marriage of his daughter and, therefore, could not see how I justified my selection and appointment. My service record bears ample testimony.

Before passing on to the point of services, we may have a bird's-eye view of another notorious law, namely, the Punjab Criminal Tribes Act. Under this law, a number of castes and subcastes, including Sansi, Bhangali, Barar, Bauria, Nat, and Kuch-bandh, were declared criminal tribes. This was a shameful and disgraceful law.

Can the society and the law-making government condemning men and women, young and old, little girls
(Contd. on next page)

My Struggle in Life

(Continue from page 3)

and boys and infants, the diseased and disabled as criminals as a whole simply on the basis of their caste have the audacity to claim themselves to be civilized and cultured? The act placed restrictions on the free movement of these people and, thus, deprived them of the initiative and the capacity to enlarge the scope of activities in their life so they can develop themselves and better their lot. The ordinary law should have been sufficient in dealing with any individual indulging in unlawful activities as in the case of others. Nobody is born a criminal. Only circumstances and environments shape the character and direction of life of a person. Here was the law that told the child as soon as he was born that he was a criminal.

It is a matter of great shame that in spite of the government's plans, professions, and efforts, nothing concrete and tangible has been done so far for these deprived people. The only thing done so far is that the pernicious law has been repealed, and now they are termed as vimukt jatis (the liberated castes). However, as of late, some measures have been initiated by the government for their welfare regarding their education, residential houses, and land. Let us hope for good results. But they are still crying for social justice, for a place of equality, honor, and dignity in society. Many of them roam about helplessly with their animals—snakes, mongooses, monkeys and bears to name only a few—to eke out their livelihood through shows of playful antics and animal pranks. Jugglers are another category of performers. They produce to the amazement of the onlookers gathering glittering rupee coins in their sleeves, bring out small birds like pigeons and animals such as bijjus (badgers) from under the baskets. These tricks are quite enjoyable. And even these shows and performances have lost much of whatever popularity they had in the past. This is only one example of the grandeur of the many-faceted, hoary culture and civilization about which there is so much to brag about.

The redeeming feature is that they have started organizing themselves and putting forth their demands including reservation in services. Their demands are on its

face genuine, and if the government is sincere about their welfare, there should be no hesitation in accepting them. Only this way can they be brought into the mainstream of the nation. This will be not only in their interest, it will be more so in the interest of society and the nation.

Reverting to the question of services! Till after the thirties, the untouchables were totally unrepresented in the state services. Not many could get an education either. At this point I am reminded of what the late master Gurbanta Singh often used to say.

My relations with him and his family date back to the second half of the twenties. He had been in the public life for over half a century. A man of understanding and integrity and devoted to the cause of the untouchables, he had held very high positions in public life. He was respected by all irrespective of caste and creed and party affiliations.

He was also an eminent educationist. Shri Guru Ravidas High School at Jalandhar, the girls' training centre attached to this school, the high school at Lambra on the Jalandhar-Nakodar road, and the Janata Girls College at Kartarpur bear ample testimony to his contribution to the cause of education. He used to tell me that whenever he was to meet any government officer at the headquarters or in the mofussils (the provincial or rural districts of India and Pakistan) in connection with the problems of the untouchables, he had to search for a link who could arrange the meeting with the sahib (sir) as direct contact was, as a rule, very difficult. This intermediary could be a chowkidar (watchman), a peon, or a sweeper, but mostly the last one because he himself was an untouchable. There was no official, even a clerk, to be found in any office because the untouchables had no right to the state services nor were there many educated aspirants for state jobs. That was the position in those days.

Here I may strike a personal note. Probably I was the first graduate from the untouchables in the province of vast dimensions. After graduating from the DAV College, Lahore, in 1931, and finding no avenue of employment, I wrote to the Deputy Commissioner of my district,

Hoshiarpur, that I might be enrolled as a candidate for the post of naib tehsildar. After a few days, I received a reply from the DC's office on a post card informing that names for the posts of naib tehsildar were not enrolled in advance. I was, however, advised to apply whenever rolls for these posts were called. The matter rested there. Then I thought of another source to tackle. Duni Chand Ambalvi, an eminent advocate of Ambala who was a well-known figure in political circles and also had personal equation even with the highest dignitaries of the All India National Congress, was the next to be approached. In a letter, I requested him to help me in getting a suitable job. I wrote to him that I was the first graduate from among the untouchables and that I had to struggle hard to get education.

I received a very warm and sympathetic reply. He wrote to say that my letter to him "afforded a very interesting reading," but he left it to me to suggest where and in what way he could help me. I left the matter there, but I felt very grateful to him for his courtesy and sympathy. I might revert to this context later. With this background, let us proceed further. It was in the times of the unionist government whose strongest pillars were Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Chaudhri Chhotu Ram that a beginning in the matter of services for us untouchables can be said to have been made. It was during their regime that the untouchables got one gazetted post of PCS (Public Service Commission [judicial]) in the year 1938. Again it was during the time of the same unionist government that the untouchables got representation, meagre though it was, in the panchayat department.

One panchayat officer and three assistant panchayat officers were appointed. These officers were designated as depressed classes panchayat officers. The panchayat officer was meant for the whole province while assistant panchayat officers were for their respective areas. As the name itself shows, the strange thing about these appointments was that the sphere of the duties and functions of these officers was limited to the untouchables only. They were not officers in general, and therefore, they could not deal with

the matters relating to non-untouchables. Obviously, untouchable officers were not considered fit for exercising their functions and authority in regard to non-Harijans. A strange precedent was created. It also goes to the credit of the unionist-Congress coalition government that two untouchable young men were appointed as naib tehsildars. Then followed two more important appointments: one young Hari Krishan boy was appointed as excise and taxation officer and another, Milkhi Ram Bhagat, in PCS (executive), by the first Congress ministry headed by Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava. A few Harijan welfare officers were later appointed by the same Congress ministry.

Toward the end of March 1948, during the assembly session held at Simla and in reply to the criticism by the Harijan MLAs about the unsatisfactory policy of the government in regard to the untouchables, the minister for labor and excise, himself a Harijan, while enumerating and lauding the achievements of the government in respect of these people, announced that the government had decided to appoint one Harijan officer as under secretary. It was something quite important in those days. Our people felt happy over this announcement, but they had their reservations whether or not actual appointment would be made. Their apprehensions came true as no such appointment was made, probably for the reason that the departmental rules did not permit such an appointment. The proposal was therefore shelved. But the successor congress ministry headed by Bhim Sen Sachar, and in which Chaudhri Sunder Singh was a cabinet minister, appointed me as under secretary in spite of the fact that rules stood in the way of such an appointment.

This takes us to the stage when reservation in services was made in the year 1949, and a Subordinate Services Selection Board was set up by the Sachar ministry in September 1953 for making recruitment to the state subordinate services, the higher posts being within the purview of the Punjab Public Service Commission. From the post of under secretary, I was shifted to the Subordinate Services Selection Board as a member. I held the post for full eight years till September 1961.



Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD

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Goodie Takhar, PhD

Remembering : Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj on 119th year of 50 % Reservation for the Dalits and Backward Classes

Prem K. Chumber

Editor-In-Chief: www.ambedkartimes.com



Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj was one of the earliest pioneer-saviours of the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes who, for the first time in the history

of the country, implemented 50 percent of reservation for the Dalits and Backward Classes in government jobs and education institutions. He also facilitated the entry of the lower castes in the temples. He was of the firm view that a handful of the upper-castes of his state had monopolized all the offices of profit. All the shrines in the temples within his state, as elsewhere in rest of the country, were also monopolized by Brahmin priests. He saw to it that at least fifty percent of the shrines were to be looked after by the priests belonging to lower castes. He wanted that the lower castes should get best of the education, so that they could compete with their counterparts from the upper castes effectively. To make this a reality, he made the primary education compulsory for the lower castes in his Kingdom of the Kolhapur state.

The seminal contribution made by Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj was not limited to education and government jobs. He made concerted efforts to liberate the lower castes from the all pervasive hegemony of the Brahminical priestly class structures of socio-economic dominations by empowering them to stand on their own sources of livelihood so that they need not to depend on the evil and oppressive systems of Balutdari and Vatandari.

He paved the way for the inclusion of reservation in the constitution of Independent India drafted under the Chairmanship of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to whom Shahu Ji Maharaj encouraged and supported to come forward to cut the shackles of the centuries old slavery of the lower castes. "Desh Doaba" & "Ambedkar Times" weekly newspapers fondly remember and pay its deepest regards to Revered Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj on his great cause to the Dalits and Backward Classes.

Big loss to the Malhi and Sahota Families

The Malhi, Sahota and Dhama Family have lost a prestige member of their family, Nirmal Singh Malhi. Beloved husband, father, grandfather and brother passed away peacefully at his home in Tracy on July 23 at the age of 78. He was born August 21, 1942 in Punjab.

He is survived by his wife Jinder Kaur, son Vickram Singh, daughter Satvir Kaur, son-in-law Pirthipal Singh, his 3 brothers, his sister and his 6 grandchildren. His 78 years on this earth were beautiful and full. He touched each and every one that met him. His heart and his generosity knew no bounds. He always had a positive outlook in life and always thrived to live life as best he could with purpose and with love and joy.

Prayer services will start at Fry Memorial Chapel, 550 S Central Ave, Tracy, CA 95376, at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday July 31, 2021, followed by final prayer and cremation.

Additional prayer services will follow at Gurdwara Sahib Tracy, 11770 West Colver Rd Tracy, CA.

**For more information:
Contact (209) 221-0249.**



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Kisan Andolan – Confrontation is not the way out

The subject of Kisan Andolan (Farmers Agitation) has been touched upon a couple of times in my blogs in the recent past. The standoff between the agitating farmers and the central government on the controversial agricultural laws is still going on in its 8th month on the borders of Delhi. Ever since much water has flown in the Yamuna but no solution is in sight. On the other hand, both the sides have decided to stick to their respective stands – farmers want complete withdrawal of the three laws and the government is ready to discuss these laws and make necessary amendments. Many rounds of formal and informal talks among the stake holders to untie the knots could not result into any way out to solve the problem. It is a matter of regret and concern, even judicial interventions by the courts including the Supreme Court could not help. The impasse has resulted in huge losses to the economy and undue sufferings not only to the agitating farmers but the ordinary citizens too. The agitation sites at the border entries of Delhi with huge settlements in about 15 km stretch sends a wrong message to international communities and tells poorly on our democratic

polity. It is a clear ‘Grammar of Anarchy’ to put in the terminology of no one else but the chief architect of the constitution, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. We must solve this problem and end the standoff immediately, the sooner the better. We will ignore this warning at our own peril.

As usual, I am no expert on the subject but thought of writing about the issue as a lay man but a concerned and rather perturbed citizen of India. My immediate provocation is the Kisan March and Protest (Kisan Sansad) at the Parliament starting from July 23. Both the Houses of Parliament are fully seized of the matter and the opposition parties are up in arms to corner the government in every possible way. It is a matter of great dissatisfaction that both the government and the opposition are not fully engaged with each other to address this national crisis and, on the other hand, seem to be worried about the brownie points to serve their narrow political agendas. It is the very negation of democratic principles and norms. The warning of Babasaheb Ambedkar on the issue comes to my mind. I share what Dr. Ambedkar said in the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949 in his last speech before the constitution was finally passed. He said, referring to historical events such as the invasion of Sind by Mohammed-Bin-

Kasim, the invasion by Mohammad Ghauri to fight against Prithviraj Chauhan, as well as disunity among Indians in the fight against the British colonial rule in 1857, Babasaheb Ambedkar noted “...not only India has once before lost her independence, but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of some of her own people.” In this context, he went on to remark, “Will history repeat itself? It is this thought which fills me with anxiety. This anxiety is deepened by the realization of the fact that in addition to our old enemies in the form of castes and creeds we are going to have many political parties with diverse and opposing political creeds. Will Indians

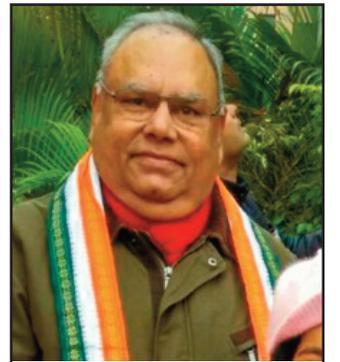


place the country above their creed or will they place creed above country? I do not know. But this much is certain that if the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost forever. This eventually we must all resolutely guard against. We must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood.”

“Though the number of marchers and protesters have been restricted to a mere 200 yet there is every possibility that things go out of hand knowingly or otherwise. The events of January 26, the Republic Day are still fresh which resulted in avoidable confrontation and violence. You would observe that I am not taking shelter under the guise of fact, figures, statistics, quotes, economic formulations and political viewpoints which the government Ministers and experts have been putting forth to argue their respective takes on the subject. This long drawn exercise has not resulted into any acceptable position towards the solution. What is the way out to break the logjam? The answer, to my mind, is – not Confrontation but Cooperation. There cannot be two opinions that agricultural reforms are needed to upgrade and upscale the farming sector in the country not only as the backbone of internal economy but also to integrate

with the world economy in the changing scenario of international co-operation. Where have we gone wrong in this regard? First, I think, there is growing perception that the government has not consulted and discussed the issue with the farmers, other stake holders and the opposition before bringing and passing the legislation in the parliament hurriedly in a hushed way. It is too late to do anything now but to accept the fact that the laws are in place on the statute book. The extreme positions – complete repeal of the laws on the part of agitating farmers and revisit and necessary amendments on the part of the government – have become unrecognizable

amendments to these laws should be the reference material and may be considered as drafts to begin with. Government should provide help and assistance to this Committee.



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- Government should consider the report and the draft bills formulated by the said Committee and present it to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture within two weeks to discuss and clean the draft bills.

- Government should make these bills as laws through ordinances within two weeks of the submissions of the Parliamentary Committee as per the parliamentary procedures.

- These ordinances or bills as the case may be should be brought to a Joint Session of the Parliament, at the first opportunity, and get these passed with due procedure including discussion and amendments, if any.

It should be done in a time bound and transparent manner with a view to heal pent up and ruffled feelings of the agitating farmers and adversely affected common citizens. Egos of the government and agitators would not be hurt. Government and the opposition would have their say and position registered in the Joint Session of the Parliament as per the parliamentary practices and procedures in a democratic way. All the parties and stakeholders should accept this and honour the laws passed, with due procedure, by the duly elected and mandated government. Still, there may remain some issues or reservations.

It is natural and not uncalled for. We the people of India are free to settle these matters in a democratic way by re-voting to power or unseating the current dispensation as we like by assessing and judging their delivery. Democratic and civilized societies behave this way to ward off the country from the ‘Grammar of Anarchy’. This ‘out of the box’ approach will give to the barring opinions, a win-win feeling and the country will come to rails again. With all the best wishes of a novice who is concerned about our country India that is Bharat.



“I am not a BANDID QUEEN” FEMALE ROBIN HOOD PHOOLAN DEVI TELLS THE WORLD

“I was not born a bandit. There are no bandits in my family,” says Phoolan Devi.

“It was not born a bandit. There are not bandits in my family,” says Phoolan Devi.

“It was society that turned me into one. Because I was born in a poor family and from a low caste, I was subjected to degradation and dishonor. She told the World Dalit Convention.

“In my backward village in Uttar Pradesh, caste discrimination was practiced to the maximum-between the pure and impure, the touchables and the untouchables.

“We were only allowed to take water from the well later in the day after people from the upper caste had their turn and we were not allowed to bathe upstream,” Phoolan related her terrible and harrowing experience as a member of the Mallah caste, a Shudra sub-caste of boatmen, at the First Dalit World Convention held in Kuala Lumpur, on 10th and 11th October 1998.

The theme of the convention was “A New Vision Towards a Casteless Society.”

In advocating the fight against discrimination towards Indians of the lower caste, Phoolan cited her life story-one in which she suffered unspeakable acts of degradation and humiliation because “it was my destiny.... I was born to serve others.” She told the delegates. I was forced to marry at 11 to a much older man who raped and beat me. I ran away only to find that a woman without a husband “was fit only for abuse.” Even at such a tender age, I knew instinctively

that “a battle was just beginning, and it would be daily, cruel and terrible.”

I survived beatings, verbal abuses, gangrapes and ostracism but ostracism but determined not to take my own life but to go on living.

I did not join a bandit gang, but was kidnapped into one. After her bandit husband Vickram was killed, she survived to lead her own gang and claimed retribution for the wrongs done to her. Phoolan and



her gang of bandits raided villages and robbed the rich to give to the poor. “People of my caste heard all about it. If a mother wanted to protect their daughter, or a father his wife or his sister, they knew all they had to do was say to the rapist that Phoolan Devi would punish them.

“People of my caste heard all about it. If a mother wanted to protect their daughter, or a father his wife or his sister, they knew all they had to do was say to the rapist that Phoolan Devi would punish them.

“That’s why, whenever I heard it, I crushed the serpent that used to torture women. I dismembered them. It was my vengeance,

and the vengeance of all ‘women,’ she recalled.

After her surrender to the police in 1983 - so that her family could live in peace - Phoolan was imprisoned without trial for 11 years. In J 994, the charges against her were withdrawn, and she was freed on parole.

Her freedom is provisional, and Phoolan is still waiting for the supreme Court’s final decision for the charges against her to be dropped.



In defending the poor and down-trodden, Phoolan has become a heroine in their eyes. In 1996, amid both popular support and controversy, she was elected to the Indian Parliament. She lost her seat six months ago, but Phoolan claimed that the election was rigged.

“People still know me as a dacoit, a bandit, but that part of my life is over. Which is bad? The crimes done to me or mine against the men that wronged me? She asked the crowd. “Sometimes, you need violence to fight cruelty, but it is a limited way. That is enough. . My personal vengeance is over, said Phoolan solemnly. My mission now is to make sure that the

degradation I suffered does not happen to others.

“I am not educated in the typical sense, but the lessons I have learnt can never be told in words.

“I visit the villages and speak to the people. I tell them that they must not follow traditions blindly.

“Traditions say that young girls must be married by 11 or 12. I tell them not to marry off their daughters so young. Look at what happened to me,” she



said addressing the convention in Hindi. “Upper-caste men come to the villages and pick young girls from low-caste poor families, and take them to be used as they like,” she continued, stressing the need for change in her community’s mindset.

It is not only women’s fight, she stressed. Men from the lower-caste community too, must unite to fight the oppression they have endured for centuries, and defend their daughters and wives against exploitation.

Phoolan emphasised the importance of education, stressing that each village should have a school and that poor people must not be intimidated away from

being educated “by words or by sticks.”

“Because was uneducated, my knowledge of the world was limited. I thought that the world ended where the fields ended and the sun drowned each night in the river.

“If I had been educated, I would have gone to the courts to fight for the land that was rightfully ours. I would not have gone into the jungle,” said Phoolan.

She believes that her efforts in advocating changes have not been in vain. “In some of the villages I visited, I know that I have convinced them not to fight among themselves, and have learnt to settle their disputes amicably.

“I also tell them not to drink, and warn them against indentured labour. I advise them to ask for daily wages. Don’t work for monthly wages because at the end of the month, the zaminders (landlords) may not pay you. Remain free.”

Phoolan had only visited her village once since she was released from prison because “the Thakurs (from a higher caste than her) refused to allow me in.” Her family has moved to New Delhi where she now lives with her husband. Her weapons are different now, but Phoolan continues to fight against the injustices and tyranny suffered by the poor and downtrodden. Phoolan told the delegates that she was disgusted to see the majority being ruled by the minority. Is it not our own weakness that the minority rules us? She asked.

It is because the Dalits have become puppets to others, she added. Our educated people should go to the villages to explain to them the true situation. We must do something for the downtrodden and the women so that our people are united.

I will continue to fight against caste and injustices she declared. (her speech in Hindi was interpreted by Dr. Deepanker).

Our Social Reformers



BHIMRAO RAMJI AMBEDKAR
14 April 1891 - 6 December 1956

BABU KANSHI RAM
March 15, 1934 - October 9, 2006

BABU MANGRU RAM MUDGOWALIA
Jan. 14, 1886 - April 22, 1980

Our Social Reformers

Bahujan Dravida Party's Motor Rally

The Vertical Social Structure maintained by the Manuvadi has been for the last 5000 years. This vertical social structure has a foundation resting on denial of dignity and denial of democratic rights to the underprivileged people of India.

The time has now come to shake the foundation of this Vertical Social Structure so that it collapses and takes a position which is Horizontal thus bringing all castes, communities & Creed's on the same level.

Bahujan Dravida Party has been active nationwide with its socio-political movement BDP has been spreading the messages of two great leaders of the North and South of India. BDP today has taken the responsibility of carrying forward the legacy of Kanshiram & Periyar on a national level. The combination of

both the legacies not only promises Social Transformation, Economical Emancipation & Dignity to the Bahujan Dravid Masses of India but also demolishes the vertical social structure to a horizontal structure of Equality. Well trained and politically motivated Kanshiramists in millions are today working across the country to enlighten the Bahujan Dravid masses. As a result, Bahujan Dravid Party very confidently announces its entry in the Political Arena of UP to contest in all 403 State Assembly Seats in forthcoming elections of 2022. The writing on the wall is loud and clear that count down to the end of Corporate Manuvadi Regime in all the states of the country has begun.

"Periyar - Kanshiram's Political Gospel Yatra" A Highway Motor Rally shall be organised by Bahujan

Dravida Party to begin from Saranath at Varanasi where Lord Buddha gave his first Sermon, also Birth place of Guru Ravidass & Guru Kabir Das and enlightenment place of Thanthai Periyar who all of them time to time Challenged the Authority of the Vedas to start the rational movement to crush superstition and female slavery in Indian Culture.

The Motor Rally shall be on a long drive of Awareness Campaign among the SC/ST and OBC Caste's that only Committed Representatives should be sent to the Assembly and Parliament in upcoming elections of UP and The Centre.

The enemy within are the Deaf, Dumb and Blind Chamcha MLA's & MP's who have been elected to represent us. The Motor Rally will be a wakeup call for all the

suffering indigenous masses of the soil that constitute 95% of the Population of India. Awareness that ends to their suffering lies in their own hands through ONE NOTE - ONE VOTE will be the main message to the BAHUJAN DRAVIDA MASSES.

This Motor Rally will terminate on 8th Day of October 2021 to mark the 15th Death Anniversary of Manyawar Kanshiram at Bunga Sahib also his place of Birth.

On this day a Historical Convention will also be organised by BAHUJAN DRAVIDA PARTY to announce the Chief Minister Candidates of both UP and Punjab Assembly Election.

Jeevan Kumar Malla
National President,
Bahujan Dravida Party, New Delhi

