



## Making Sense of Poona Pact in Current Time

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Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba (Newspapers)

**Babasaheb** Dr. B. R. Ambedkar devoted his entire life for the emancipation and empowerment of the Scheduled Castes of India who for centuries were compelled to live degraded lives. He tried different ways for this noble cause before finally setting the goal of annihilation of caste. First, he tried to improve upon the situations through reforms within Hinduism. But soon realized that reforms within Hinduism will not work because caste lies at the centre of Hinduism and without caste the latter would come down like a house of cards, which would not be acceptable to its protagonists at all. Annihilation of caste at the first instance requires doing away with the Hindu Sastras (sacred scriptures/law books), which Hinduism would never agree to comply with. Thus the other way and rather the only way open to seek casteless social order was to say good bye to Hinduism and construct a new society under a different religion for the Ex-Untouchables. Dr. Ambedkar finally left Hinduism and established a new socio-religious order popularly known as Navayan-Buddhism (Buddha and His Dhamma) where no one is subjected to any social discrimination based on accretive and primordial notions of caste and creed. In between, Dr. Ambedkar battled many struggles for the betterment of living conditions of the Scheduled Castes. Poona Pact was one of such major struggles.

It was through this historic Pact that Dr. Ambedkar got voice for his people in the provincial legislative structures in the form of certain fixed number of seats. That was 1932. A lot has changed now in 2021. State in India is fast withdrawing from its responsibilities towards the people. It firmly believes that market can save them from all the hardships they face. In other words neo-liberalism is being projected as Messiah of the Scheduled Castes. In such a changed scenario downtrodden has to rethink rather critically about the nature of struggle that they have to wage for the acquisition and protection of their rights. Quite interestingly, there is also fast emerging a viewpoint from within the academic circles of the Scheduled Castes which says that neo-liberal market economy offers lots of opportunities to the former untouchables who no-longer face any social exclusion in the aftermath of 1991 Globalizing India. This view-point also talks about SCs billionaires and their own chambers of commerce. What it forgets is that in the free market economy only those are welcome who have the capital to invest. And the capital in India used to be the prerogative of the upper castes only. Lower castes were deliberately kept out of reach of the capital by all possible means under the garb of a discriminatory and hegemonic religious social order. What about the millions of lower castes who do not have requisite capital to enter into the so-called non-discriminatory market economy in India. Would they be not discriminated in this new economic order? Neo-liberalism is no more different from capitalism. We must not forget that the two main enemies of the lower castes are, as cautioned by Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Capitalism and Brahmanism. Both of them are once again busy in fashioning new permutations and calculations to keep their hold intact. Thus to face the realities of current situation in contemporary India, the teachings of Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar are of utmost value as they have been ever.

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## Bhagat Singh: A martyr who dreamt of egalitarian India

His essay Achoot Da Sawaal placed humanity way above religious identity

Enclosed within the 1929 edition of the Kirti Magazine issue was one of Bhagat Singh's iconic essay Achoot Da Sawaal or 'Question of Untouchability', penned by a 16-year-old him.

**I**t was a scathing critique on the age-old discrimination meted out to the oppressed and a vigorous exhortation to Dalits to arise! "So called untouchables, the real sustainers of life, awake and reflect over your past," he mentioned.

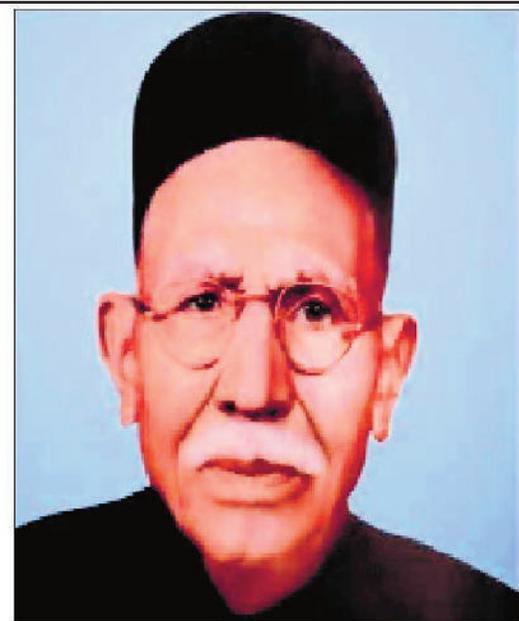
Bhagat Singh's call for Dalit consciousness and simultaneous exhortation against fundamentalism rings true even in the present times. Achoot Da Sawaal also bears an important reference to the Ad Dharam Movement of Punjab, led by Doaba-based ideologue and Dalit pioneer

### Expert speak

Prof Raunki Ram, Political Science professor at Panjab University and an expert on Dalits, said, "As far as equality and the social justice are concerned, Bhagat Singh was very clear that caste and religion were two categories which were responsible for the rift in the society. Bhagat Singh had his own unique understanding of the Dalit cause. He was very supportive of the Ad Dharam movement and believed that such movements were necessary because they fight against

**Aparna Banerji**

the caste oppression. The Ad Dharam Movement stressed that empowerment of the oppressed castes was only possible if they got due share in the local structures of power. It asked for shares in the agricultural land, in education, in government structures at par with others. Ad Dharam Movement and Bhagat Singh's thinking have both contributed



**"The upper castes should also realise that their own status in life cannot change for the better as long as they persist in considering these people as inferiors, calling them menials, and keeping them under their heels. It is argued, they are unclean. The harsh truth is that they are poor; remove their poverty and they shall be clean. Don't we find that the poor even among the upper castes are no less unclean?"**

— Bhagat Singh, Achoot Da Sawaal, Kirti magazine, 1929

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, born in Hoshiarpur. With the help of Seth Kishan Das (a wealthy merchant of Boota Mandi) the headquarters of the Ad Dharam Mandal were established at Jalandhar.

In 'Achoot Da Sawaal' Bhagat Singh wrote... "When they (untouchables) discovered that the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were raking profits due to them (untouchables), they gave a thought to reorganising on their own. No one is certain whether they are doing so as a result of official prompting or at their own but once this line of thinking takes roots, this trend will be fully backed up by official quarters. "Ad Dharam Mandal" and the like are the end result of this trend...The answer is quite obvious; above all, it needs to be settled for good, that all humans are equal without distinctions of birth or vocation."

Scholars today say Bhagat Singh's constant exhortations on Dalits along with the Ad Dharam Movement have had a major impact on the Dalit consciousness in the state, the references to these however, are only found in academic circles and scholarly works while no prominent reminders are found in the mainstream political discourse.

hugely to the Dalit and progressive consciousness in Punjab." He adds, "When the question of the real leader of the oppressed classes arose, Mangu Ram wrote many telegrams to London, proclaiming Dr BR Ambedkar as their leader. He said our leader was Ambedkar, not Gandhi."

Chiranji Lal Kangniwal, eminent historian and Independence movement scholar, said, "Babu Mangu Ram started the Ad Dharam Mandal in Punjab highlighting the demands of Dalits. The movement started two years before Bhagat Singh's Achoot Da Sawaal was penned. In 1927, Katherine Mayo has also just released her book 'Mother India' which was a strong critique on oppression against Dalits. All these factors shaped the times in which Bhagat Singh lived."

Noted Bhagat Singh scholar Professor Chaman Lal said, "Bhagat Singh's Achoot Da Sawaal has come again into focus in the past three decades. It has had a major impact in shaping Dalit consciousness. However, all radical thoughts are being diluted by the establishment. And in the present times, caste has become a major socio-political factor."

Courtesy: Tribune News Service, Jalandhar, September 27, 2021

# STUDENTS REMEMBER BHAGAT SINGH ON HIS 114TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Over 2,000 copies of Jeevni – Krantikari Bhagat Singh distributed free of cost

The youth in various schools, colleges and clubs across Doaba celebrated the birth anniversary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh on Tuesday. Numerous organisations paid homage to the martyr at his ancestral town.

Advocates from the region carried out a bike rally remembering the youth icon. A Jalandhar-based advocate, Yuvraj Singh, distributed copies of the book titled "Jeevni – Krantikari Bhagat Singh" penned by Prof Sukhdev Singh, HoD (History), Guru Nanak Dev University. He distributed over 2,000 copies of the book free of cost.

The post graduate department of history, Lyallpur Khalsa College, celebrated the birth anniversary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh with great enthusiasm. Principal Dr Gurbinder Singh Samra said it's time to adopt thinking and ideology of the martyr. He added that on this day the youth should take pledge

that they, like the patriots, would give the right direction to society by creating awareness regarding national integration and patriotism.

Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru. On Students delivered speeches contemplating Bhagat Singh's thinking. The NSS volunteers and NCC cadets

shown a documentary based on the life of the freedom fighter. Principal Dr Navjot said, "We need to inculcate the qualities of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, including patriotism and respect towards nation. Today is the need to make our country a nation he dreamt of. It is our foremost duty to transform this society into a conducive and congenial place". Towards the end, she appreciated the efforts of NSS officers Manita, Manjeet Kaur and Atma Singh.

The Shaheed-e-Bhagat Singh Youth Club, Kapurthala, celebrated the 114th birth anniversary of revolutionary Bhagat Singh. Rinku Kalia, Vishal

Rajput, Vishu Sharma, Amandeep Goldie of the club said Shaheed Bhagat Singh relentlessly fought against the Britishers.

Courtesy: Tribune News Service, Jalandhar, September 28, 2021



Members of the Sarb Bharat Naujawan Sabha and the All-India Students Federation celebrate birth anniversary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh in Jalandhar on Tuesday. Tribune Photo: Sarabjit Singh

Dr Suman Chopra, HoD (History), Lyallpur Khalsa College, congratulated students for their enthusiastic participation and encouraged them to follow the thinking of great patriots, including Shaheed

of the college vowed to adopt Bhagat Singh's principles.

The NSS department of Lyallpur Khalsa College for Women, Jalandhar, also paid tributes to Shaheed Bhagat Singh. Students were



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# DEBATE OVER IMAGE OF BHAGAT SINGH USED IN DELHI AND PUNJAB GOVT. ADS



Chaman Lal, honorary adviser to the Bhagat Singh Archives, says the painting has little physical resemblance to the freedom fighter, former minister M.S. Gill demurs  
The four known photographs of Bhagat Singh. Pictures courtesy: Chaman Lal

**A**rchivist Chaman Lal, honorary adviser to the Bhagat Singh Archives and Resource Centre here, has ruled the use of an “unreal painting” of the freedom fighter to mark his 114th birth anniversary on Tuesday.

However, former Union minister and chief election commissioner M.S. Gill insisted that the use of the turbaned image was ideal to celebrate Singh’s legacy as the more recognised photo of the freedom fighter wearing a hat was merely a disguise to evade arrest.

There are four known photographs of Singh, who was born in West Punjab’s Banga village in 1907 — him as an 11-year-old, as a 17-year-old in a turban at Lahore’s National College, in custody at Lahore railway police station in 1927 where he is seen with his hair tied in a bun, and in trimmed hair and wearing a hat. The last picture had been clicked at the studio of photographer Sham Lal in 1929 before Singh hurled a bomb at the Central Legislative Assembly.

However, the Punjab and Delhi state governments have in advertisements commemorating Singh’s birth anniversary used a painting of him wearing a yellow turban. Lal said the painting had little physical resemblance to Singh. Several other versions, including one in which Singh brandishes a revolver, are widely used. “Till the 70s, the photo with the hat was the most popular. With the rise of identity politics in the 70s, the yellow turbaned image was popularised as an assertion of his Jat Sikh identity — something which Bhagat Singh himself never stressed on,”

Lal said.

“In fact, being from a Congress family, he and his kin wore white turbans and khadi clothes, which was the trademark of those in the national movement at the time. I don’t know why the Congress betrays its own legacy with its leaders now wearing the yellow turban in his memory,” the archivist added.

The Bhagat Singh Archives and Resource Centre, which functions under the Delhi government, circulated a booklet among officials on Monday with three of the original photos. However, both the Punjab and the Delhi governments brought out ads on Tuesday with the portrait of Singh in a yellow turban.

Assembly elections are due in Punjab next year and Delhi’s ruling Aam Aadmi Party has been promoting the yellow turban worn in the style of the painting with its MP Bhagwant Mann always sporting it in Parliament. The AAP is a key player in Punjab, ruled by the Congress.

London-based Punjabi author Amarjit Chandan, also a scholar on Bhagat Singh iconography, said Congress chief minister Giani Zail Singh had unveiled a statue of the freedom fighter wearing the hat in Khatkar Kalan — Singh’s ancestral village — in 1973. A bronze turbaned statue now stands at the spot, a change Chandan attributed to Gill who was principal secretary to Akali chief minister Parkash Singh Badal from 1978 to 80.

Gill said he had no recollection of the 1973 statue or replacing it. He objected to Youth Congress banners on Tuesday with the hat photo.

“Bhagat Singh is a hat that fits all heads, from the Far Left to the Far Right. His ties to the Arya Samaj and work as a revolutionary are claimed by the Right wing, his Marxist writings by the Left, and his Sikh family heritage by the Sikh parties. An RSS man or a Khalistani may simply ignore Bhagat Singh’s Why I am an Atheist (written in Lahore Central Jail before his execution in 1931),” Chandan said.

He added: “The turban controversy is absurd. All males in the Punjab — Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs — wore turbans before Partition.” Gill, who later became a Congress MP, was instrumental in establishing a museum in Khatkar Kalan in 1981 and acquiring archival material on the freedom fighter for the Punjab government as an IAS officer.

He said he installed the first turbaned bronze statue of Singh at Ludhiana’s Bhandari Bridge in 1979.

“All hell broke loose in Punjab after the statue was unveiled. The Arya Samaj-controlled press started screaming, ‘how can a bloody IAS officer play politics?’ Of course, I was playing politics.... ‘Ab Bhagat Singh kopagdibaandhdiya, jiskodumhaiutaarkedekho (I have draped Bhagat Singh in a turban, let anyone who dares remove it),’ is what I said,” Gill said. He added: “Arya Samajis projected him as a hat-wearing Bollywood-ishgunda. He was from a Jat Sikh Sandhu family that wore turbans. He is seen in photos with long hair and a turban. The hat was a disguise. Netaji (Subhas Chandra) Bose escaped to Kabul in the guise of a Pathan. Is he honoured as a Pathan?” Gill was also instrumental in

canvassing support and ensuring the installation of Singh’s statue in Parliament in 2008.

“It was mostly Sikhs who were sent to the Cellular Jail and mostly Sikhs who were hanged for the freedom struggle. I asked (then Lok Sabha Speaker) Somnath Chatterjee, how is it that no Sikh has a statue here?”

The freedom fighter’s family complained that the turbaned statue, created by master sculptor Ram V. Sutar, at Parliament resembled a middle-aged man whereas Singh was hanged when he was just 23.

Lal pointed out that contemporary images of other Punjabi freedom fighters Udham Singh and Kartar Singh Sarabha also don’t often resemble them as they are shown with beards. However, their photographs show them clean-shaven.

Singh’s nephew and academic Jagmohan Singh chairs the Shaheed Bhagat Singh Centenary Foundation in Khatkar Kalan which recently installed statues of Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar, who were executed for killing police officer John Saunders in 1928. “These statues celebrate the centenary year of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha, which was Bhagat Singh’s youth movement during which time he wore a turban. Those using either the hat image or the turbaned one must explain why they do so. Bhagat Singh was clear that his movement was to rise above divisions of caste and religion and bring about equality in society,” Jagmohan Singh said.

Courtesy: The Telegraph online  
Wednesday, 29 September 2021

# PREMDATTA VARMA

## REMEMBERING A FORGOTTEN FREEDOM FIGHTER OF LAHORE CONSPIRACY CASE ON 110TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

When I wrote *From Swaraj to Pooran Swaraj* in The Tribune in May 2011, I referred to Premdatta Varma, as not knowing his whereabouts after he left Panjab University Chandigarh and moving to USA. Reading The Tribune article, his son Pramod Varma wrote to me in August 2019, eight years after, informing the passing away of his father Premdatta Varma, four months prior to publication of that article, on 6th January 2011. He was eight months short of 100 years, as he was born on 19th September 1911 in Hisar. He was the youngest member of Bhagat Singh led revolutionary movement against British colonialism. The second youngest member was PanditKishori Lal, who was born in 1909. Premdatta Varma was not even 18 years, when he was arrested on 7th May 1929 and details of recoveries made

from his place and tortures he faced, are given in my earlier article. Premdatta Varma's father Ramdatta Varma was headmaster of a school and a scholarly person; an Arya Samajist and patriot. He had authored a book in Hindi-Vedic Sanskrit-Mother of all languages, which Premdatta Varma got reprinted after migrating to USA in 1970. Premdatta's mother died when he was only three-year-old, he passed his matriculation from Jammu, before moving to DAV College Lahore for graduation. Lala Lajpat Rai was their family friend and Premdatta Varma was standing next to Lala ji when he was brutally lathi charged by ACP Saunders on 30th October 1928. It was PanditKishori Lal, who drew him to revolutionary party and afterwards he became close to Sukhdev. Being a chemistry student in college, Premdatta was asked to help Bhagwati Charan Vohra in making bombs. At the time of arrest, he was taking bombshells on his bicycle as per account of his son. During the trial of Lahore conspiracy case, provoked by approver Jai Gopal, he threw a chapal on him during the court proceedings on 21st October 1929. Not only Premdatta Varma, all accused in the

case were subjected to tortures despite expressing regret for Premdatta's impulsive act. On 22nd October 1929, Bhagat Singh was made special target of attack by some sturdy policemen. Shiv Verma and Ajoy Ghosh became unconscious due to merciless beating of Policemen. Bhagat Singh warned the magistrate Pandit Sri Krishan that he would be responsible if anything happened to revolutionaries as it was under his watch the police brutality took place. Same thing happened again on 12th May 1930 in the newly set up three judge tribunal court. This time Premdatta, Kundan Lal and Ajoy Ghosh had fainted due to severe beating. Bhagat Singh addressed the tribunal judges as 'cowards and mercenaries. Justice Agha Haider one of tribunal judge disassociated from tribunal chairman Coldstream order to

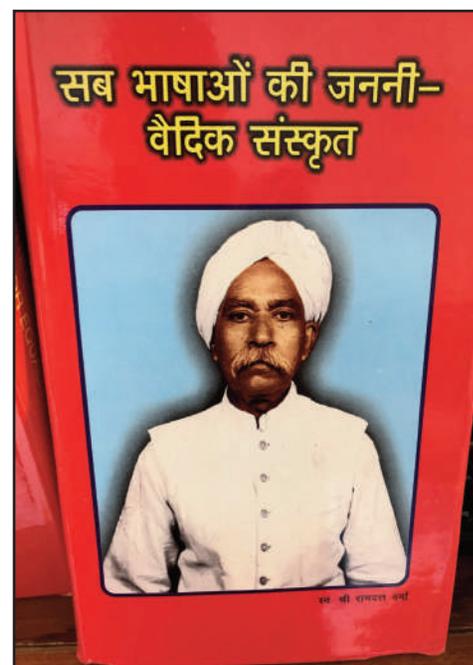
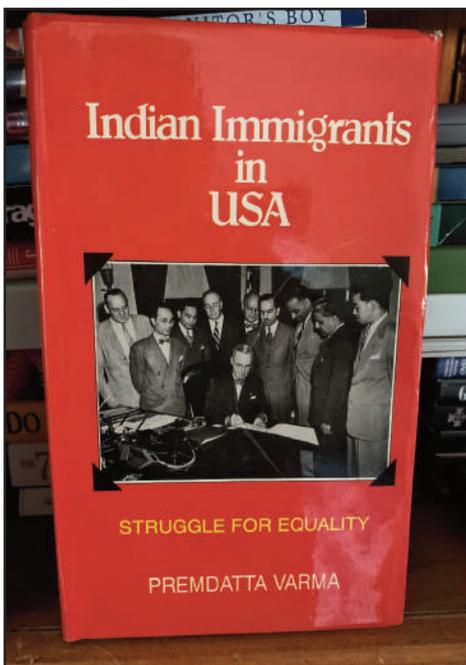
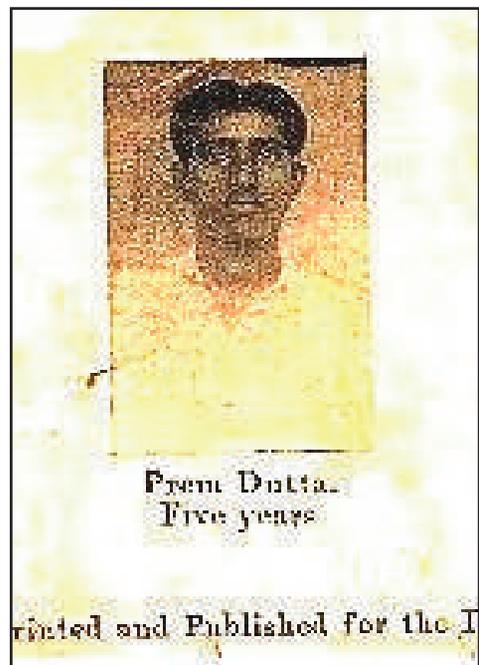
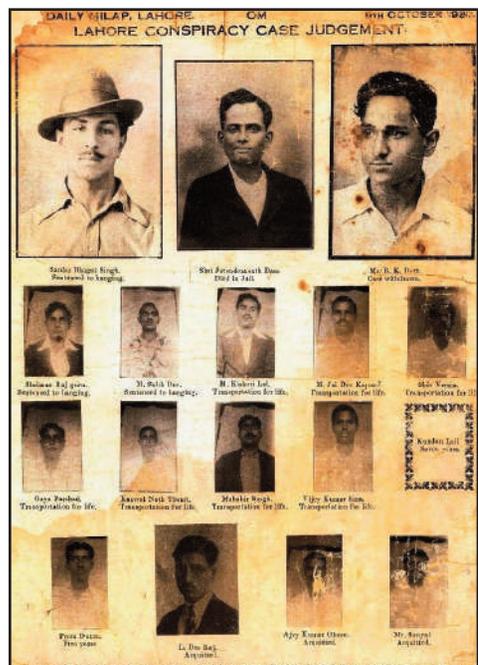
Verma at the age of 95 years, is living along with five other children 15 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren in Cincinnati city in USA. After partition, as per his son's account Premdatta participated in resisting the attack on Kashmir and in the process became close to BalrajMadhok, who later became Member Parliament from Jansangh party and also Professor in JNU, New Delhi. Premdatta Varma's first job as lecturer in history was at Govt. College Moga and then at Doaba College Jalandhar. In 1960, he joined history dept. of Panjab University Chandigarh and stayed there till 1970, when at the age of 59 years he moved to Cincinnati in USA from where he got his PhD degree at the age of 74 years. He was the oldest man to get his doctorate degree at that time from Cincinnati University. Later he pub-

Lal got seven years imprisonment and Premdatta five years. Jatinder NathSanyal was later convicted for writing Bhagat Singh's biography, which was proscribed immediately in 1931 and he was sentenced to two years imprisonment. Mahabir Singh died by hunger strike in 1933 in Andamans. Most of others joined left movement after release, while Bejoy Kumar Sinha and Kamalnath Tiwari had joined Congress party; Tiwari became



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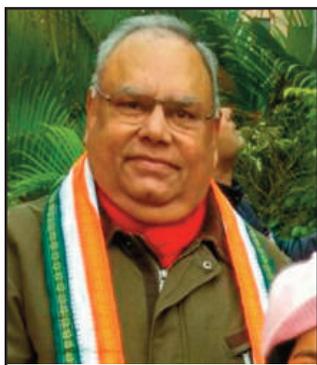
beat the accused and covered his face with newspaper as not to watch the beating. Premdatta Varma was sentenced to five years imprisonment in Lahore conspiracy case and was kept at Montgomery jail. In jail he continued his study and passed his F.A. examination. He was released after four years, but was not allowed to stay in city and was forced to move to Doda district in Jammu area. He was allowed to go to Lahore after sometime and from DAV College Lahore he graduated and also passed MA Hons in History as per his son's account. In DAV College he was secretary of college council and organized a debate between Nehru and Jinnah Premdatta Varma married Swarn in 1946. They had six children, three daughters and three sons. Their eldest daughter passed away in his life time in 1991. Mrs. Swarn

lished his thesis-Indian Immigration in USA-Struggle for Equality. During his stay in Punjab educational institutions, he had authored and translated many books in history discipline. He also translated parts of Guru Granth Sahib in English and Hindi. As per his son, the whole family became admirer of Sikh faith due to his father. In Panjab University Chandigarh, he was editing University bulletin, which also carried his tribute to martyr Jatin Das in 19th September 1964 issue. However, Premdatta, though lived a fulsome life, did not write his memoirs of revolutionary movement. Out of all the accused in Lahore conspiracy case Ajoy Ghosh, Des Raj, Agya Ram and Jatindernath-Sanyal were acquitted. Shiv Verma, Jaidev Kapoor, Bejoy Kumar Sinha, Kamal Nath Tiwari, Gaya Prasad Katiyar, Mahabir Singh and PanditKishori Lal were transported for life. Kundan

Member of Parliament too. Premdatta Varma as per his son's account had become close to Jansangh party, a precursor of today's BJP. Perhaps due to which, he was subjected to prejudice too. But even Bhagat Singh younger brother Kulbir Singh became MLA in Punjab on JanSangh ticket. Kultar Singh, younger to Kulbir Singh joined Congress party, was elected MLA from Saharanpur and remained minister in ND Tiwari cabinet in UP. Though both Kulbir Singh and Kultar Singh while in jail were kept in Deoli camp, as part of left group in that camp during 1940's. During my four-year term (2016-20) as Senator of Panjab University Chandigarh, many times I raised the issue of honoring Premdatta Varma's role as freedom fighter by installing a plaque in history dept., where he taught for ten years, but none bothered. Perhaps during Azadi KaAmritMahotsav year, it is the right time to do that. \* Chaman Lal, is a former Senator and Dean, faculty of Languages, Panjab University Chandigarh. He retired as Professor from JNU, New Delhi and is honorary advisor to Bhagat Singh Archives and Resource Centre, New Delhi.



# CM Charanjit Singh Channi – Some candid observations of a novice



**Ramesh Chander**  
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It is a matter of gratification that Sardar Charanjit Singh Channi has become the Chief Minister of Punjab – Der Ayat Darost Ayet. On the day of the swear-

ing in, September 20, of Sardar Charanjit Channi as the CM of Punjab, I wrote on the timeline of my Facebook: 'Kuffar Toota Khuda Karke' and congratulated the new CM. It may be of interest to know that I could see the coming scenario much ahead than many and sent a message to Channi Sahib in the early morning of September 19 when nobody knew exactly as to what was going to happen and quote from that message, " Good morning Sir. The political scenario is changing fast and for the better. I see a big role for you in the emerging situation. I wish you become the CM or at least the Deputy CM. I am one of your well wishers from your community, a retired Ambassador of the IFS now living in Jalandhar. .... With regards. Ambassador Ramesh Chander."

settles down for serious work and meet the challenges ahead after the obvious and visible but short lived euphoria.

1. We all, both the so called upper castes or king makers and those on the receiving end or so called dalits, must understand that in politics or run up to power, nobody can or would make anybody the CM/PM. One has to be one's own with one's own strength and capability. Our democratic credentials are slowly maturing and new realities are emerging. No charities are expected as CM Charanjit Singh Channi asserted in his speech at Dera Sachkhand Ballan in Jalandhar that we were no more interested in 'atta dal' but would yearn to educate ourselves, our children and settle for due 'share in power' as equal partners and rightly so. It would just be futile

Jalandhar, Minar-e-Begampura at Khuralgarh and many more projects elsewhere in Punjab. Your dalit brethren would understand the limitations and would expect you to be simple and sincere.

5. The opposition parties and the vested interests in the Congress Party itself would tend to exploit the situation and tarnish the image of CM and his government as it is obvious that it will not be an easy task to deliver with regard to these grand dreams. It is better to be slow but productive and pragmatic. There is no point in fooling the people as "Yeh Public Hai Sab Janti Hai.

6. CM Channi Sahib should stand on his own with confidence and sincerely try to give corruption free governance in a transparent manner. People are fed up of corruption and high handedness of the official

ment the schemes. The young generation of beneficiary students will appreciate and stand with the CM.

11. One last very simple suggestion and advice is – the CMO and senior aides of the CM should see to it all communications to Hon'ble CM and his Principal Secretaries from the public should be acknowledged and responded to. It would send a positive signal to the people that CM Channi Sahib's government is a 'Government of the people, for the people and by the people' as per the dictates of a functional democracy.

These suggestions, though unsolicited, are, of course, simple and entail no high sounding political or administrative mantras. But I am sure, if the government under the stewardship of CM Channi Sahib succeeds to make a good and impressive beginning, in spite of all odds and leg pulling, the new CM would not be a 'stop gap arrangement' and would be all set to comeback after the electoral mandate of early next year. Nobody knows as of now as to which party would come to power. But one thing is almost certain. If CM Charanjit Channi could leave a trail of a 'capable and competent'



to harp on the caste identities – dalits or non dalits. Sardar Charanjit Channi is a fully qualified and capable to hold the reins of power in Chandigarh. Any patronizing behavior should not be tolerated by the leadership and the community at large.

2. There is no need to be in a hurry to announce undue concessions and freebies. People are more interested in transparent and functional arrangements with good civic services.

3. There is no need to announce new projects as the time at hand of the new government is short in view of the forthcoming elections early next year. Rather than new projects, the new government should try to finish and handover the ongoing projects to the satisfaction and benefit of the community and the society at large.

4. It is all the more true with regard to the projects pertaining to the so called dalits, CM Channi Sahib being one from them. Frankly to my mind, there is no need to announce projects in undue haste as has been done in announcing Guru Ravidass Chair at Dera Sachkhand Ballan and a huge project spread over 101 acres of land, Ambedkar Museum at Kapurthala, Ambedkar Management Institute among others. My suggestion to the Hon'ble CM Channi Sahib would be - kindly pay due and much needed attention to the already announced and unfinished projects like Ambedkar College at Bootan Mandi

machinery. Any success on this front, may be partially, would go a long way in establishing the credentials of the CM and his administration. I am happy to note that he has already taken the initiative in this regard and spoke to end corruption while speaking at Kapurthala the other day.

7. There should be no witch-hunting or vendetta politics. These are unproductive and long drawn exercises which would tend to derail the programmes and policies of the government. Kindly avoid unnecessary rejigging of the administration as the time at hand is short in the run up to elections in 4-5 months. Complete the formation of Council of Minister at the earliest possible so that the Ministers start working in right earnest.

8. The contentious and emotive issues like 'Beadbi' or sacrilege etc. should not be allowed to impede the welfare schemes and other positive schemes for the benefit of the people of the state.

9. Senior officers like DCs, SDMs, Police Commissioners and SPS should be accessible to the public and responsive to their needs and complaints.

10. So far the governments have been paying 'lip service' to the problems of SC communities particularly with regard to educational facilities like Post Matric Scholarships to SC students. This problem should be discussed with the stake holders and a clear mechanism provided to imple-

leader, all parties would not be able to ignore the claims and due share in the pie of power to the weaker sections of the society - the so called dalits, as visualized by the icons like Babasaheb Ambedkar, Babu Kanshi Ram. My humble request to the people of Punjab particularly the weaker sections of the society, is to kindly extend all due support and strengthen the hands of CM Sardar Charan Singh Channi, a worthy son of the soil. It took more than 70 years to get the coveted job. Let us make all the more difficult or impossible that nobody dares to snatch it on the basis of socio-economic discrimination and considerations.

The political aspect may be dealt with democratically at the hustings. CM Channi Sahib should assert his position with due humility but with authority. He is there because of no one's charity or magnanimity but for the socio-political imperatives created by the relentless struggle of our political and spiritual Gurus like Babasaheb Ambedkar, Guru Ravidass and the Sikh Gurus as enshrined in the constitution of India and the holy Shri Guru Granth Sahib.

I take this opportunity to wish all the best and further success to CM Sardar Charanjit Singh Channi in the days to come. Here I conclude with a couplet:  
Tu Pehle Baat; Phir Baat Ka Andaz Paida Kar,  
Phir Duniya Mein Tujhe Koi; Nazar Andaz Kar Nahin Sakta

# 14 April-International Day of Equality

Letter to the Honorable Prime Minister of India for consideration the proposal to declare

14 April birth anniversary of Bharat Rattan Babasaheb Dr. Bhim Rao Ramji Ambedkar as International Day of Equality

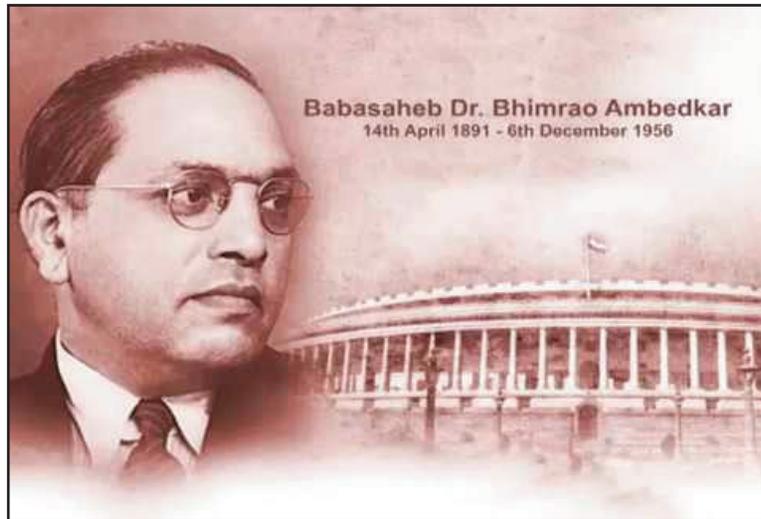
Shri Narendra Modi  
Prime Minister of India  
22 September, 2021

Dear Honourable Prime Minister,

Dr Ambedkar- 14 April International Day of Equality

We are writing humbly to request that you consider including in your address on 25 September to the United Nations General Assembly that 14 April be recognised as the International Day of Equality.

This proposal was first submitted to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in June 2015 by Ambassador Ramesh Chander IFS (Rtd). Since then, he and a number of organisations including the Federation of Ambedkarite & Buddhist Organisations, UK have made several requests to you and the MEA to consider and support this proposal and make a recommendation to the United Nations. We again humbly request you to include this proposal in your address on 25 September 2021. This will send a right and positive message to the millions of people that India remains far ahead of any country in the matters of equality and social justice. Dr Ambedkar's contribution to equality is inspiring and is widely acknowledged. He is considered as par with Dr Martin Luther King Jr



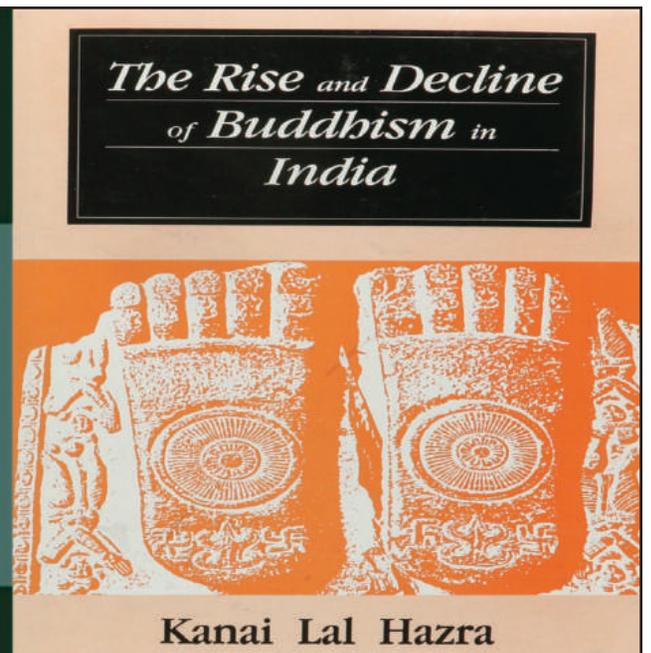
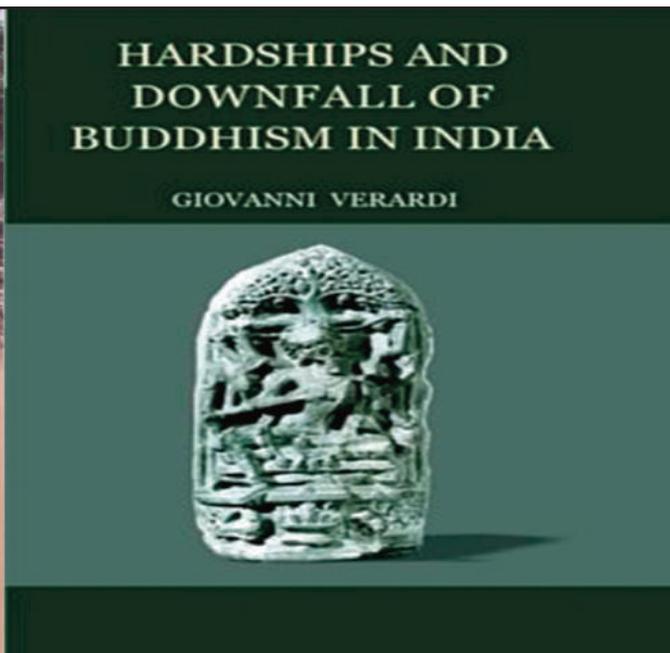
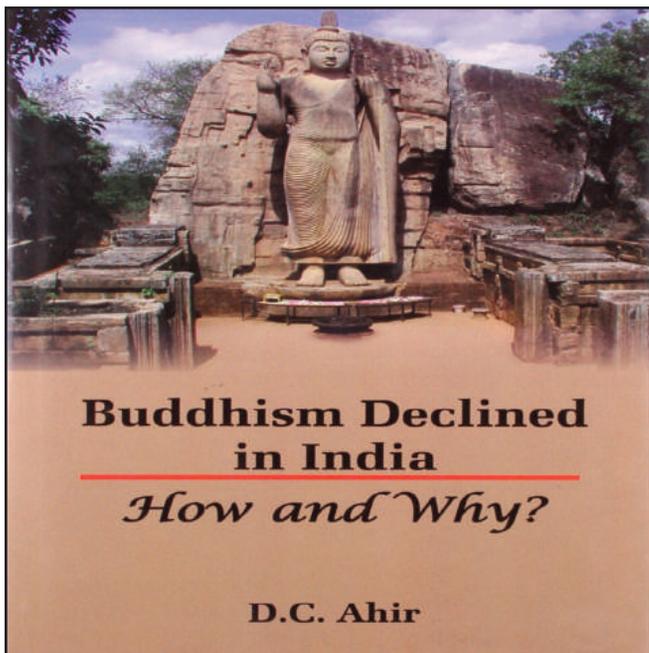
and Nelson Mandela. You have been successful in developing pilgrimage sites related to Babasaheb as Panchatirth. You have also promoted Dr Ambedkar's role not just as an architect of India's constitution and parliamentary democracy but also in the empowerment of the marginalised people. In your speech in the British Parliament on 12 November, 2015, you have rightly said about Babasaheb, "He also stood for the upliftment of the week, the oppressed and the excluded. And, he lifted us to a higher cause in the service of humanity; to build a future of justice, equality, opportunity and dignity for all humans; and peace among people." It is time that Babasaheb's values are accepted by the international community. We have a great hope that

India will be able to impress upon the UNGA to declare 14 April, birthday of Dr Ambedkar as an International Day of Equality. We believe that the momentum and passion for equitable and inclusive world will be further strengthened. We look forward to a positive outcome.

Yours sincerely

Arun Kumar General Secretary

## Buddhism favoured by Dr. Ambedkar



Dr. Ambedkar, Law Minister, has appealed to the people of India to embrace Buddhism.

"The present Hinduism", he said, "about a thousand years ago was nothing but Buddhism, but due to the Muslim invasion and other causes it lost its purity and was mixed with dross."

Dr. Ambedkar, who was speaking at the Buddha temple at Worli last night, deprecated the idea that political independence would end all the ills of the country. So long as man creates barriers between man and man, India can never be prosperous.

"To end these troubles India must embrace Buddhism which is the only religion based upon ethical principles and teaches how to work for the good and well-being of the common man."

Dr. Ambedkar declared that he would devote the rest of his life to the revival and spread of Buddhism in India. - PTI., Bombay, Sept., 30.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar advocates adop-

tion of Buddhism by Hindus.

We are glad to note that all the articles in the Vaisakha Number of the Maha Bodhi have been much appreciated in the cultural and literary circles of Asia and Europe. It is surprising to find, however, that Dr. Ambedkar's article, "Buddha and the future of his religion", published in the said issue, although it has been highly appreciated, should have evoked adverse criticism and that his innocent advice offered to the Hindu community to accept Buddhism as a cardinal principle in its religious life should have been misconstrued in some Vedantic quarters in India. It must be admitted by all students of Hinduism that the word Hindu itself is a word of foreign origin and is nowhere used in the old scriptures. It is also known that the Muslim invaders from outside India used this word for the first time to signify all religious sects across the Indus, namely, the Shaktas, the Vaisnavas, the Tantrikas, the Bauddhas, the Jains, etc. Thus from the standpoint of the origin of the word itself, a Brahminical Hindu alone cannot

claim to be a Hindu, and deny the term to other religious sects in India. It is further to be seen that the religious scriptures in India, whatever might be their sectarian denominations, claim for themselves the common label, "Arya Dharma" or "Arya Marga", i.e., Aryan path as opposed to the Non-Aryan paths. Nobody, not even a Brahmanical Hindu, can have objection, if one changes one form of Arya Dharma for another.

Dr. Ambedkar has given some cogent reasons why a Brahmanical Hindu may sometimes like to adopt Buddhism and offer it to his co-religionists. The Indian constitution itself clearly lays down that "the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jain, or Buddhist religion". It is also well known that the Brahmanical Hindus look upon Lord Buddha as the ninth Avatara (Incarnation) of God Sri Vishnu and the present age as the age of the Lord Buddha to be followed by the age of Sri Kalki, the last Avatara who would come only at the end of the Kali age. From all

these considerations, it is surprising why a Brahmanical Hindu should object to one taking refuge in the Buddha, His Dharma and His Sangha, during this age of the Buddha. In by-gone days, brothers belonging to the same family in India could often be found professing different religious creeds - one being a Shaiva, another being a Vaisnava and the third being a Buddhist, and there had never been any domestic unhappiness on that account.

If that was possible in by-gone days, why should not the same thing be possible now in free India when the constitution itself wants to obliterate all superficial differences amongst the Brahmanical Hindus, the Buddhists, the Sikhs, and the Jains? Further, when Hindu India is proud of her cultural links with the Buddhist lands like Japan, China, Burma, Thailand, Indo-China, Ceylon, etc., it would be unwise for any Indian to minimise the intrinsic merit of the path of the Buddha.

Source Courtesy: The Maha Bodhi, Vol.58 (1950)



**Ishwar Das Pawar**  
District and Sessions Judge (Retd.)

# My Struggle in Life

## At Ambala

I took over at Ambala as Additional District and Sessions Judge about the first week of October 1961. I had been away from my parent department, the judiciary, for full nine years. This is a sufficiently long period to forget many things of the job. This is more so in the case of law, which undergoes changes sometimes rapidly for various reasons, e.g., enactment of new laws, amendments of the law, itself and then the interpretations by the High Courts and the Supreme Court known as case law.

The local bar of Ambala felt very unhappy over my posting. They would say, "Here is an officer who has been out of the judicial line for nine long years, thereby, forgetting everything; and to cap this, he has never done criminal work. He has not worked even as senior sub-judge. He will simply slaughter justice. He is a Harijan (person from low caste), and you can imagine how efficient he can be." My arrival at Ambala was awaited with these feelings and misgivings. They were not altogether in the wrong. I had been out of the judicial job for full nine years and had never done criminal work. I was to do not only the original work but was to hear and decide appeals against the judgments of experienced magistrates and subjudges, some of whom were officers of long standing. How could I perform that duty unless I possessed more knowledge and a mature mind? The virtually taunting reference that I was a Harijan was obviously based on a deep-rooted bias against our people.

I started my work and found it a very difficult job. Sometimes I felt baffled. But I continued with determination, laboring and learning from any quarter I could get. Confidence started coming back. The first impressions gathered by the lawyers and also conveyed to the High Court authorities were expectedly unfavorable. But with the diligence and the amount of labor I was putting in, it did not take much time for me to get quite familiar with the work. By and by, the members of the bar started having second thoughts on

their previous assessment. And the views that trickled down to the High Court authorities also turned favorable. After about a couple of months,

I met a friend of mine who was in the High Court. He told me that the latest reports reaching the High Court indicated that I had acquired a strong hold on both the civil and the criminal work. My difficulties were over. One day, two local magistrates came to see me at my residence. They told me that, according to the lawyers, I could even anticipate their arguments. They also inquired from me as to how I could decide cases so quickly: for example, even difficult cases where on the same day the arguments were heard. I had carved out my position. The bar was happy for another reason also. I would try to accommodate them to the maximum, possible extent. They too cooperated with me fully. My way lay smooth. I feel happy to recall how the bar showed respect and affection toward me. Our cordial relations were sustained throughout my stay at Ambala. I have also a happy story to tell. One afternoon when I was sitting in the retiring room after the day's work, a young man came to me and said that he had been sent by Shri Duni Chand Ambalvi to inquire when and where he could see me. Ambalvi belonged to the Gandhian era and was one of the important figures during the days of struggle for independence. He was also a leading advocate. He was in his nineties and was respected by all—judges and the members of the bar and the public alike. He had long ceased to practice but would appear, on rare occasions, in cases on humanitarian grounds. Twice or thrice, he appeared before me also in a case which was really bad.

He spoke with warmth and passion, and his inspired voice reminded one of his youthful days. Whenever he came to the courts, he was not to wait for his turn. I inquired from the young man as to where Shri Duni Chand Ambalvi was. On his telling me that he was present, outside in the court premises, I asked him to bring him in. As he entered the retiring room supported by the young man,

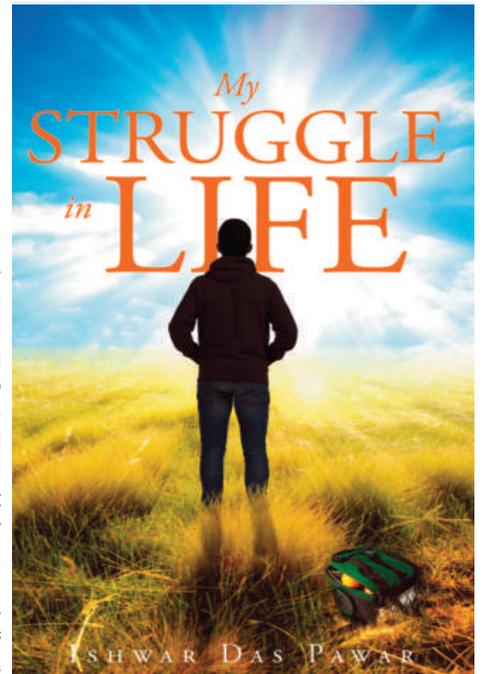
I received him warmly with the respect due to his age and eminence. After the exchange of pleas-

antries, I enquired of him whether he had anything special to say. The grand old man started, "I have not come for any work as I have none. You remain aloof from the social circles while we move about and know and hear the people. I have come to you to convey my personal feelings as also what others think about you. In my life as an advocate and as a citizen, I have known a number of District and Sessions Judge. By your honesty and devotion to duty, you have brought a good name not only to yourself and to your community but to us all. I thought I should not miss conveying you our sentiments."

I thanked him for his very kind and encouraging words, telling him in all humility that I was just doing my duty. Coming as it did from a person of the stature and eminence of Shri Duni Chand Ambalvi, the appreciation was of great value to me. It was true and sincere without the least tinge of puff up. While officiating as District and Sessions Judge at Ambala, I also used to visit Simla.

I had also worked at Chandigarh, Karnal, Patiala, Hissar, and Mohindergarh at Narnaul for brief periods. A few months before my retirement, I was posted at Sangrur from where I retired as District and Sessions Judge on the 5 May 1966.

Note, the actual date of my birth is 9 May 1908. Thus ended the phase of my regular official career. I consider it a privilege and honor to have been able to work in various capacities in the service of the poor, the neglected, and the forlorn—a task which is at once humane and sacred.



### "Congratulations Day"

Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha Pittsburg (CA) will celebrate "Congratulations Day" on the elevation of S. Charanjit Singh Channi as the New Punjab Chief Minister of Punjab on Sunday, October 3, 2021



BPSHI group from UC Berkeley organized a health camp last Sunday at Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg (CA) from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. We are thankful to all the volunteers, especially Jaspreet Sharma and Jasleen Kaur Director of UC Berkeley's BPSHI, for this great community service. BPSHI has set up health clinics for Sangat in this gurughar in the past also.

We look forward to their next health camp in near future. May Waheguru bless them.

-Ramesh Suman

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Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD



Goodie Takhar, PhD

# Manyawar Jeevan Kumar Malla introduced a Fraternity Campaign among the Bahujan Dravida Samaj on "A Fistful of Rice cum One Vote".

**A** Fistful of Rice to Revive Dravida Sangha Culture & A Vote for Revival of Samrat Ahoka's Regime

Bahujan Dravida Party commenced a Periyar - Kanshiram Political Sandesh Yatra on the 143rd Birth Anniversary of Thanthai Periyar from Kashi the birthplace of Guru Ravi Das and Guru Kabir Das popularly known as Varanasi in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

On the second day of the Yatra National President & Leader of Bahujan Dravida Party Mr. Jeevan Kumar Malla introduced a fraternity campaign calling it "A Fistful of Rice cum A Vote" in the Laurpur Tajan, Ambedkar Nagar village, having a Bahujan Dravida majority.

Mr Jeevan Kumar Malla said that the campaign "A Fistful of Rice cum A Vote" was an attempt to create strong fraternal ties among the Bahujan Dravidian people inciting them to not only bond as a Bahujan Dravida community, but also become politically

accepted universally as complete in itself. A philosophy which leaves no scope for argument. An only philosophy working in favour of mankind flawlessly. An ideology of 3 words BAHUJAN HITAYA BAHUJAN SUKHAYA enough to dismantle and defeat any ideology which denies humanity at any level.

From Ancient days of Lord Buddha to Modern times of Manyawar Kanshiram a trail of treasures has been left behind by Guru Ravidas, Guru Kabir Das, Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh.

Bahujan Dravida Party committed to follow and spread the ideology of all the Bahujan Gurus and Leaders is working across the country to move forward and realise the dreams for which Great Bahujan Gurus and Leaders gave their lives. The dream of Political Power totally in the hands of Bahujan Dravida Samaj.

Policy against humanity on this soil of India is very very deep rooted through nonsensical religious beliefs. It is a Po-

in denial of equality, justice and freedom has to be understood by one and all.

Cultivating a sense of brotherhood, will guarantee Bahujan Dravida people their domination in democratic politics. Partners in Politics assures the Bahujan Dravida to build a force which will uproot Brahminism once and for all, never daring to show itself on the soil of Earth ever again.

In a nutshell it is an ideology based on Fraternity, brotherhood, love and compassion which COUNTERS Brahminism ideology which is in absolute denial of Justice, Equality, Freedom, Brotherhood, Love & Compassion.

A simple gesture of "A Fistful of Rice cum A Vote" begins cultivating Fraternity, Brotherhood, Love and Compassion. This gesture emerges as a winner from the socio-political conditions of the Bahujan Dravidian people of India.

Bahujan Dravida Party believes

These Political Players are the people who will ensure brotherhood among our Bahujan Dravida Community,

These Political Players by being participants are encouraging participation of Bahujan Dravida people. The outcome of large scale participation shall overcome unemployment in India and make possible Inter caste, Inter religion and Inter language marriages.

These Political Players are true



**Ashok Kumar Saket**  
National Spokesperson  
Bahujan Dravida Party,  
New Delhi  
9717366805



active. It is an attempt to ingrain in the minds of Bahujan Dravida people the importance of Political Power through Fraternity. With Fraternity will come a common thought process leading to adoption of a Common Ideology. Inevitably an ideology Bahujan Hitaya Bahujan Sukhaya to swing the majority of votes assuring of Political Power in States and Centre alike.

Mr. Jeevan Kumar Malla asserted that Every human being in our country has an inherent dignity and no one has the right to violate it.

The Bahujan Dravida Party is not just a Political Party but is a movement worthy of praise and protection by the Bahujan Dravida People of India.

Only when human dignity is upheld and protected there would be equality, brotherhood and individual freedom. It is on the foundation of this ideology that the Bahujan Dravida Party is building the trust and loyalty of the Bahujan Dravida People towards each other.

The Buddha established his school of thoughts for mankind ac-

cepted universally as complete in itself. A philosophy which leaves no scope for argument. An only philosophy working in favour of mankind flawlessly. An ideology of 3 words BAHUJAN HITAYA BAHUJAN SUKHAYA enough to dismantle and defeat any ideology which denies humanity at any level.

Brahminism through its ideology has managed to divide Bahujan Dravida people into castes and sub castes to create a hierarchy which deprives us of Fraternity and respect of dignity towards each other

The Bahujan Dravida Party is working across the country to unite scattered Bahujan Dravida people with the sense of brotherhood.

Solution for Bahujan Dravida people to develop Brotherhood Bonding within the community lea in developing a strong Political Relationship through only the common ideology of BAHUJAN HITAYA BAHUJAN SUKHAYA

Absence of brotherhood and fraternity within communities' results

in making the Bahujan Dravida people to understand the importance of democracy and how it is supposed to work for them as beneficiaries. It is crucial that Bahujan Dravida People consider it their moral duty to Participate in a Democracy to keep it alive. To make the Bahujan Dravida people understand to be aware of prevailing Political Games so that they are the ones who will then dominate in Democratic Politics.

Bahujan Dravida Party Goal is to mobilise the Bahujan Dravida People to participate in Democratic Politics which will inevitably lead to them becoming Rulers of their Own Soil.

Various political ideologies of the world exist to create fraternal bond among their own people. In India unfortunately the socio-cultural cum political ideology of Brahminism like a disease fragmenting Bahujan Dravida People This Bahujan Dravida Party Shall Counter by introducing "A Fistful of Rice cum One Vote".

Through this rally we will identify the "Kanshiram - Periyar Political Players",

patriots, sons of the soil who will develop the country in a scientific way.

These Political Players will nurture talents of Individuals and groups with dignity and honour to develop a Nation's in its true sense.

These Political Players will ensure freedom to entrepreneurs for freely pursuing a career with dignity and self-respect.

These Political Players know who to play against. Kanshiram Periyar Politicians will pave the path for Political Power taking charge of the Master Key." Yes the master key which opens all the doors of progress.

With a handful of rationalists, I would capture the state, With a handful of unselfish castes and like-minded visionaries would easily capture the parliament. We have started a campaign to spread culture of sharing among the Bahujan Dravida Community across the country "A Fistful of Rice to revive the Bahujan Dravida Sangha Culture cum A Vote to bring back the golden Era of Samrat Ashoka Regime In Kanshiram Mission...