



Ambedkar Times

Weekly

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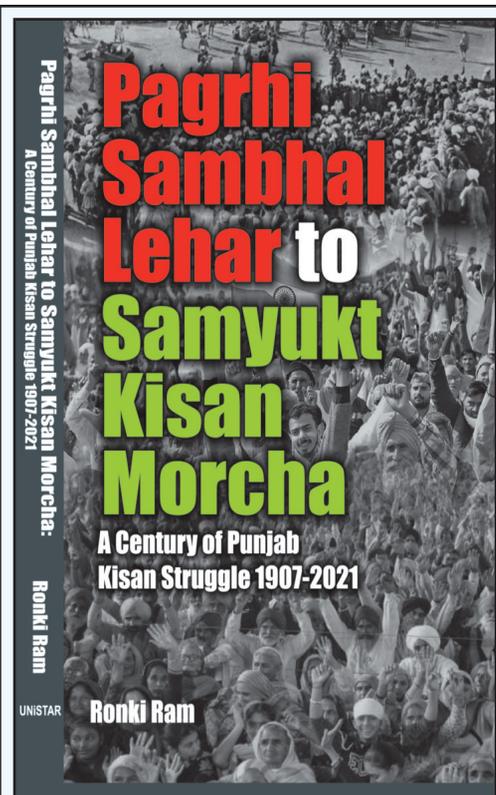
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Book Available

<http://www.unistarbooks.com/home/5512-pagrhi-sambhal-lehar-to-samyukt-kisan-morcha.html>

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Let us celebrate Professor Ronki Ram's incisive political critique, his extraordinary ability to situate historically the genesis of present inequalities and injustices of class, caste and creed, of present and past contradictions in political dispensations, of possible future horizons. Let us celebrate all this, and more, his courage and conviction.

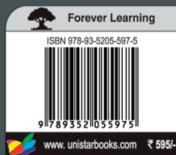
Harjeet Singh Gill
Professor Emeritus, JNU

Ronki Ram has given a brilliant account of the century-long history of the non-violent Kisan movement in the Punjab. It shows how history works through legend and vice versa.

Amarjit Chandan
Writer & Activist

In this brilliant and timely book, Professor Ronki Ram provides an incisive and meticulous account of one of the most significant and long running social movements of recent times - the Indian farmers protests of 2020-2021. With the roots of this protest in the state of East Punjab, Professor Ram crucially places this contemporary movement within both the historical context of agrarian change, struggle and protest in Punjab over the past century and the political economy of Punjab, India and capitalist globalisation. This unique and powerful analysis should be essential reading for academics, activists, policy-makers, journalists and anyone with an interest in Punjab, India, agrarian change and social protest globally.

Professor Steve Taylor
Centre for International Development
Northumbria University, UK



Cover Images:
1907 Farmer Protest, Jullundur

We congratulate Dr. Ronki Ram for conducting a detailed study of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha at the borders of Delhi and grounding it in the golden Pre and Post-Partition Farmers' Struggle in Punjab.

We also sincerely congratulate all Kisan and Mazdoor organizations for leading this longest, largest and the most invigorating as well as deeply peaceful struggle in the history of farmers' movement so far.

Prem K. Chumber
Editor-in-Chief: Ambedkar Times

Nanak Chand Rattu - His 100th Birthday falls on February 6, 2022

Prem Kumar Chumber
Editor-in-Chief Ambedkar Times

Though Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar did not born in Punjab, but in his mission, he got more support from the people of this state than any other state including Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh (Mhow, his birth place). The names of Sohan Lal Shastri, Bimal Prasad, Kartar Singh and Nanak Chand Rattu are the prominent among his followers from Punjab, who remained with him until his last breath. Among them Nanak Chand Rattu was the most prominent. Born on 6th February 6th, 1922, in village Sakruli of Hoshiarpur District of Punjab, Nanak Chand Rattu is best known as the most closely associated and loyal lifetime Private Secretary to Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar who served him dedicatedly for over 17 years. He was with him till late night on a day before and was the first one after Dr. Savita Ambedkar (2nd wife of Babasaheb) to notice his Mahaprinirvanon December 6th, 1956.



Nanak Chand Rattu came into the contact of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar after a year of his arrival in Delhi and remained in his service, first in person during his life, and after his Mahaprinirvan, in the form of writing his reminiscences and remembrances about him. Once he came into his Babasaheb's contact, he never missed a single day, including Sundays and official holidays, in his service be-

fore and after the government service duty hours. After the mortal journey of the messiah of downtrodden and the Chief architect of the Constitution of Independent India, Nanak

Chand Rattu wrote a large number of books about the life and teachings of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Some of the most widely read among them are: Last Few Years of Dr. Ambedkar; Little Known Facets of Dr. Ambedkar; Dr. Ambedkar: Important Messages, Sayings, Wit and Wisdom; Reminiscences and Remembrances of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar; Pioneers of Ambedkar Buddhist Movement in United Kingdom.

For his untiring service to the mission of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Nanak Chand Rattu was awarded Bheem Medal, Bheem Rattan Award, Ambedkar Centenary Award, Anand Award, Ambedkar Rattan Centenary Award, Vishvratna Dr. Ambedkar Bhushan Award and Letters of Appreciation by various national and international bodies within home and abroad. He also had embraced Buddhism with Baba Sahib. He was one of the few who accompanied the mortal remains of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to Mumbai. His writings about the life and teachings of Babasaheb are a rich treasure for

those who do research on Babasaheb and his mission of the annihilation of caste. His writings provided vivid description of events related with Dr. Ambedkar's life and mission. Ambedkar Times and Desh Doaba Weeklies remember him reverently on his 100th birth anniversary and pay him floral tribute.

REMEMBERING C.L. CHUMBER ON HIS 6TH ANNIVERSARY

We deeply remember Mr C.L. Chumber on his 6th anniversary. His valuable contribution towards highlighting the importance of the Ad Dharm Movement for developing Dalit consciousness in Punjab has generated a lot of interest not only in Punjab but in other parts of the country as well as among the diaspora. Mr. C. L. Chumber was one of the few Dalit activists who consistently worked for popularizing the legacy of Ad Dharm movement. He highlighted the contributions of Great Freedom Fighter Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia towards the formation of Ad Dharm and the legacy of this historic Dalit movement in North-Western India. He launched Punjabi Monthly journal "Kaumi Udarian" (National Flights) to keep the legacy of the movement alive.



Mangu Ram Muggowalia Souvenir" on the formation and achievements of the Ad Dharm movement and the sterling contribution of Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia in awakening of self-respect among the Moolnivasees of the region. The title 'Mugowalia' after Mangu Ram Mugowalia, in fact was appended by Mr. C.L. Chumber. His legacy is being kept alive in the pages of two weeklies (Ambedkar Times in English and Desh Doaba in Panjabi) published from Sacramento (California) USA. Ambedkar Times www.ambedkartimes.com and "Desh Doaba" www.deshdoaba.com weekly newspapers pay floral tribute to Mr. C.L. Chumber Sahib on his 6th Anniversary.

In 1985 he brought a well-documented "Babu

(Editor-In-Chief: Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba)

In Sweet Remembrance of Late Mr. C.L. Chumber

My dear Mr. Prem Chumber,

It is with a heavy heart to remember Mr. C.L. Chumber on the occasion of his 6th Anniversary falling on February 6th, 2022. Because of his undaunted courage and unforgettable contributions to espouse the noble cause of the neglected sections of society, Mr. Chumber has deeply carved a place of honor in the minds of all those who knew and admired him.

In fact he was among the pioneers and torch bearers to revive and revitalize the legacy of Ad-

Dharm movement launched by Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia in 1925-26. Mr. Chumber will always be remembered as a staunch follower of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and in the face of many political hurdles and challenges he had the courage to publish his monthly Journal "KAUMI UDARIAN" (National Flights) to keep his vision alive. It was he who brought out "Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Souvenir" in 1985 which symbolized his dynamic force in propelling the spirit of the movement.

We do physically miss your respected brother, Mr. C.L. Chumber a lot, but persons like him never die, they continue to live in the hearts and souls of those, he rendered his selfless services for. Our best homage for his contributions, as generated through his writings, is to keep them alive for posterity.

I express my personal respects to his thoughts and ideals.

O.P. Balley
Founder Member
Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha
Pittsburg (CA)

NANAK CHAND RATTU

A TRUE AND TRUSTWORTHY SOLDIER OF Dr. B.R AMBEDKAR



Humble Sewadar,
O.P. Balley (General Secretary)
Supreme Council
Sri Guru Ravidass Sabhas USA
1-925-252-6085

On the historic occasion of 100th Birth Anniversary of late Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu, Private Secretary of Bharat Rattan Babasaheb, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar from 1941 to 1956, I am driven by an internal urge to share some of my personal reminiscences of Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu which made him reckon as an iconic name associated with the life-long vision of Dr. B.R Ambedkar.

As regards his personal life Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu was born on February 6, 1922, in village Sakruli, in Hoshiarpur District of Punjab and after completing his High School education in 1938 he moved to Delhi in November 1939 in search of a job. After strenuous efforts and difficult times he got a job in Government of India in 1941. While in service he worked his way up and passed his B.A degree Examination. He had to abandon his studies for M.A in the middle in order to serve Dr. Ambedkar.

Because of his hard work, loyalty and personal sacrifices in the service of his mentor, Mr. Rattu was able to win a unique level of trust, confidence and respect from Babasaheb, which he cherished and upheld as a holy relic throughout the rest of his life after Babasaheb's Pr Nirvana on December, 6th, 1956.

My personal remembrances of Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu go back to the year 1955-1956 when I moved from Punjab to Delhi in search of a job and came in close contact with him in Dev Nagar, Karol Bagh, New Delhi where he was living with his family in a Government allotted accommodation. I even stayed at Mr. Rattu's home for some time in 1955 before I could settle down in a job.

Mr. Rattu being quite senior to most of us in age and social status was highly respected among the community. At that time he was fully devoted in his task as private secretary to Babasaheb who was residing at 26, Alipur Road, Delhi.

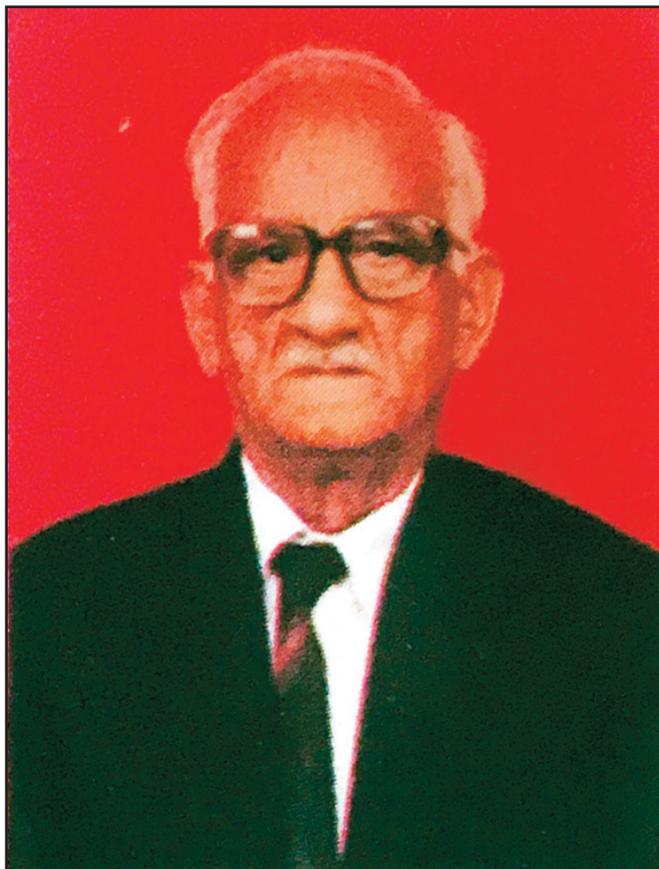
Almost every day Mr. Nanak Chand used to go on his Bike to Alipur Road and usually come back to his home in Karol Bagh late at night to get ready in the morning to go to his office in Central Secretariat area in New Delhi. Sometimes he had to stay overnight with Babasaheb depending on the volume of work he had to handle single handedly. It was a great personal sacrifice on the part of Mr. Rattu which was adversely impacting on his health as well as his professional career. But in spite of all this there was no lapse in his dedication towards Babasaheb. Like a shadow he remained in his sacred company till his last breath and was to Dr. Ambedkar what Ananda was to Lord Buddha.

During the course of my association with Mr. Rattu, I learnt a lot about the life-long struggle, sacrifices and accomplishments of Babasaheb

for equality and emancipation of the suppressed sections of society.

In 1956 Babasaheb was not keeping a stable health because of the heavy work load and mounting pressure on his mind to complete what he had undertaken to do. It was not possible to see him in person except through Mr. Rattu who had direct access to Babasaheb without any interference even from his wife. So it was Mr. Rattu gave me an opportunity to see Babasaheb in person many times at his residence on Alipur Road which was hardly a hundred yards away from my office in Old Secretariat area.

On the fateful day of December 6th, 1956 while, as usual, I was



going to my office on my bike when the heart breaking news of Babasaheb's mysterious death in his sleep was unleashed on All India Radio. It was a nerve wrecking news spreading like a wild fire all over the Globe. Skipping my day from work I went straight to 26, Alipur Road which was just at a stone's throw from my office. Only a handful of persons including Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu, Mr. Sohan Lal Shastri and Mr. M.R Bhardwaj, close confidants of Babasaheb, were there ahead of me. Since Babasaheb's dead body was still in his bed-room on the ground floor I joined Mr. Rattu and four other persons present there to co-ordinate and help physically in moving the body to the spacious Drawing Room close by to facilitate the viewing by a stream of mourners rolling in from different parts of the adjoining states. I was an eye witness to a crowd of people crying and screaming and pressing for post-mortem and unbiased investigation in the mystery of Babasaheb's sudden passing away. Many people were loudly blaming Babasaheb's

wife for her role in the mysterious death. It was only Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu who was profusely crying but was persuaded by Mr. Sohan Lal Shastri to appease the surging rage of the uncontrollable crowd.

Prime Minister Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru also visited Babasaheb's residence to pay his tributes and enquired from Mr. Rattu, Sohan Lal Shastri and Mrs. Savita Ambedkar about the circumstances of the death. I was a young man of almost 21 years of age at the time and am also visible in the picture now getting viral on the internet, standing in the crowd next to Pt. Nehru, Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu and Sohan Lal Shastri near Babasaheb's dead body. The entire cabinet of the Prime Minister also visited the residence to offer their condolences.

In an attempt to avoid the surging wrath of the crowds of followers of Babasaheb, Mrs. Savita Ambedkar insisted to transport the dead body to Sarnath (Place of Buddhist shrines) but was vehemently opposed by Nanak Chand Rattu and other close supporters because more than five lakhs of Babasaheb's followers were waiting in Bombay to participate in the funeral procession. As stated by Mr. Rattu and Sohan Lal Shastri no financial help was available from Government of India including the Prime Minister to

air-lift the mortal remains of Babasaheb to Bombay for final ceremonies and cremation. Even Mrs. Savita Ambedkar declined to help. It was only Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu who offered to shoulder this big and moral responsibility and managed to collect some money at the spur of the moment from some close and staunch followers of Babasaheb to pay for transporting the body to Bombay by a chartered plane. Since the collection fell short of the required payment, Babu Jagjivan Ram, the then Communication Minister came to rescue and authorized the chartered flight leaving the balance to be settled later. 3-mile long procession was taken out from 26 Alipur Road to Safdarjung airport for flying the mortal remains of Babasaheb to Bombay for cremation. Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu, Mr. Sohan Lal Shastri, Mr. M.R Bhardwaj, Mr. Shankranand Shastri, Mr. Puran Chand Madhar and Mrs. Savita Ambedkar accompanied the body to Bombay.

AWARDS:-In recognition of his laudable and unique services to

glorify the contributions of Dr. Ambedkar, many eminent writers and research scholars

who wrote the biography of Dr. Ambedkar, highly appreciated and gratefully acknowledged Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu for providing the information and readily available material about the glorious history of Babasaheb's battle in the liberation of the voiceless people.

Mr. Rattu was also the recipient of Bheem Medal, Bheem Rattan Award, Ambedkar centenary Award, Vishvrattan Dr. Ambedkar Bhushan Award and many letters of appreciation from Dr. Ambedkar organizations in India.

With restless endeavors of Mr. Rattu, Ambedkar Museum, set up by him in Nagpur has become a historical monument and a famous Buddhist pilgrimage center.

Retired as Under Secretary from Government of India on February 29, 1980 Mr. Rattu continued to remain actively involved and associated with the spread of Dhamma and the noble mission of Babasaheb till his last breath. Though I am permanently settled with my family in USA, I always met Mr. Rattu in Delhi while visiting India.

CONCLUSION:- Much more can be said about Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu's selfless services especially during the last few years of Babasaheb's life at the cost of his personal sacrifices, but I must not refrain from saying that even after Babasaheb's departure Mr. Rattu personally visited all the places connected with the mission of Babasaheb and left no stone unturned in keeping the flame alive and the caravan moving in the direction, his master wanted.

Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu's name will remain with its glow and luster in the galaxy of unrelenting efforts of Babasaheb's vision for breaking the shackles of social barriers. He will remain as an inspiration for future generations.

I also appreciate the services of Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber, Chief Editor, Desh Doaba and Ambedkar Times, the two weekly Newspapers, who always inspires and encourages me to write occasionally on historical as well as day-to-day issues of public interest for publication in the esteemed columns of his Newspapers. Let me again express my hearty congratulations for celebrating the forthcoming 100th Birth Anniversary of Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu on February 6th, 2022 who guarded as a true soldier in carrying out the mission of Babasaheb for social emancipation. Jai Bhim

Nanak Chand Rattu- An Unsung Warrior of the community

February 6 is the 100th birth anniversary of an unsung warrior of the community, Nanak Chand Rattu (February 6, 1922- September 15, 2002), a dedicated and close

came into contact of Babasaheb Ambedkar. Leader of the oppressed and suppressed segments of the society, and offered his services with total dedication and devotion in 1941

Recently, I learnt from a TV interview of Shashi Sidharath, Rattu Sahib's daughter-in-law (wife of his son Sidharath) that her mother-in-law that is the wife of Rattu Sahib was such a nice and homely lady that every evening on her husband's late return from Babasaheb's residence, she used give him fresh and hot food and fully supported her husband without any murmur. I vow my head in Naman to her also on this important day.

Nanak Chand Rattu remained with Babasaheb for almost 17 years till his Parinirvan on December 6, 1956. Rattu Sahib was almost a part of the family and he was the first person who was called to Babasaheb's bed side by Mai Saheb Savita Ambedkar, wife of the icon, on the fateful morning of December 6, 1956. I was told that Rattu Sahib himself informed the high-ups in the government about the sad demise of Babasaheb including the residence of PM Jawaharlal Nehru. Mai Saheb even took along Rattu Sahib to Bombay (Mumbai) for the last journey and rites of the departed leader. Physical connect between Babasaheb Ambedkar and Nanak Chand Rattu ended but spiritual and emotional bonds between the two remained till Rattu Sahib passed away in September, 2002 in Delhi.

Earlier Rattu Sahib retired from his government job as Under Secretary in February 1980, a dignified position in the bureaucratic hierarchy in the corridors of power. Nanak Chand Rattu was a reservoir of infor-

mation and knowledge about Babasaheb with first hand touch and experience. Some of the details are duly registered in his 5 books which he wrote about Babasaheb Ambedkar and his mission. Two of these immensely informative and educative books, Reminiscences and Remembrances of Dr. Ambedkar and Last Few Years of Dr. Ambedkar, were reviewed by me and are available on the links given below.

<https://diplomaticitbits.blogspot.com/search?q=nanak+chand+rattu>
<https://diplomaticitbits.blogspot.com/2014/12/last-few-years-of-dr.html>

Some of the personal belongings of Ambedkar Saheb which were available with Rattu Sahib were thoughtfully donated by him to various museums and memorials of the leader for the benefit of the generations to come.

Naman to Nanak Chand Rattu, an unsung warrior of the community, was a man of sterling worth by all standards on his centenary year, February 6, 2022.

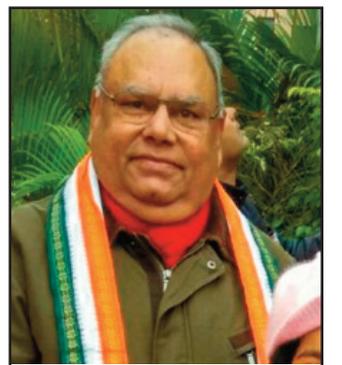


Dr. Ambedkar during the conversion ceremony at Nagpur 14.10.1956 with Mrs. Savitha Ambedkar, Mr. Nanakchand Rattu (his personal assistant) and Samta Sainik Dal volunteers.

Aide of Babasaheb B. R. Ambedkar. Rattu Sahib was born in a remote village Sakruli of Hoshiarpur District of Punjab. After Matriculation, he went to Delhi in search of a job in 1938. Initially, to sustain himself, he did whatever came his way and succeeded in getting a job in the central government in 1941. Rattu, a laborious young man, did his B.A. in part-time and joined higher studies of M.A. In the process, as a son of the soil and an awakened person, he

as an all-purpose Aide not only in secretarial assistance but also in the day to day personal and household chorus at the residence of Babasaheb. Rattu Sahib soon won the trust of his benevolent boss with sheer dedication.

He will reach the residence of Babasaheb early in the morning on his bi-cycle before going to his own office and again in the evening after office and will remain at the disposal of Babasaheb till late in the evening.



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
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Punjab Assembly Elections: Ignoring the Groundwater Depletion Problem

The election commission has announced the dates for assembly election in five states of the country including Punjab. The atmosphere regarding the assembly elections is getting more and more dramatic everyday. As in many previous assembly elections, promises, claims and new promises are being made and repeated by the various political parties to win the elections.

In fact, most of the claims are hollow and the new promises being made do not go beyond raising false hopes. Often the different political parties participating in the assembly elections are promising petty concessions to different groups of people but none of them is giving any roadmap to mobilize the necessary resources to fulfill even these petty promises. The worst aspect in this regard is the neglect of many important issues of Punjab including the groundwater depletion problem.

The groundwater depletion in Punjab has been a growing concern. The groundwater level in most parts of the state has fallen to dangerous levels. Some people blame this on farmers' self-indulgence for monetary gains. While paddy plantation in the state is the fundamental cause of this problem, farmers are the victims of the problem, not the offenders.

The use of groundwater for irrigation in agriculture is one of the most important factors responsible for groundwater depletion. A research study in (2003) by Dr. Gian Singh, Dr. Surender Singh, and Harvinder Singh 'Groundwater Development in Punjab' revealed that the groundwater used for growing crops in Punjab exceeds its available quantity each year and there is a strong correlation between crop combinations and groundwater balance. Two cereal crops- wheat and paddy account for over three-quarters of total sown area in Punjab, and are mainly responsible for the groundwater depletion problem in more than 75 per cent of the development blocks.

The area under paddy is mainly responsible for the groundwater depletion problem in Punjab. High yielding varieties of paddy have a

higher irrigation requirement than the other kharif competing crops such as cotton, maize, and many others. The pond irrigation requirement for paddy planting is the major reason for increasing irrigation frequency.

Some people, and institutions blame the Punjabi farmers as solely responsible for the rapidly declining groundwater level. The author disagrees with this claim. In the Second Five Year Plan, the Union government shifted the focus from agriculture to the industrial sector, leading to a severe shortage of foodgrains in the country, and the country had to resort to import foodgrains from the

adoption of 'The New Agricultural Technology' in Punjab increased the productivity and production of wheat to such an extent that the Union government no longer needed to import foodgrains. The Union government, keeping in view Punjab's remarkable track record and the needs of the Central Pool of Foodgrains, imposed the paddy crop on the Punjabi farmers since 1973 through a relatively high Minimum Support Price, and guaranteed procurement of paddy by the government agencies. These government decisions resulted in an increasing area of paddy planting.

Prior to the adoption of 'The

one of the reasons for their increasing debt. Nowadays, due to insufficient supply of electricity, farmers have to use their own or rented tractors to run the s u b -



Dr. Gian Singh

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mersible motors and very high prices of diesel have become one of the reasons agriculture is being made into a loss making occupation.

People putting the sole blame on the Punjabi farmers seem completely unaware of agricultural practices, and are blindly urging them to stop planting paddy. In order to prevent the groundwater level from falling continuously, it is important that the Union government must fix remunerative prices of cotton, maize, and other kharif crops so that these crops can be sown according to the state's agro-climatic conditions. Apart from this, the canal irrigation system should be streamlined

and water in the rivers of Punjab distributed in accordance with 'The Riparian Principle'.

Wastage and misuse of groundwater in the industrial units and residential areas in cities and villages must be stopped immediately. At the same time, farmers and all other people need to realize that a single drop of wasted and misused water is a huge and unforgivable sin. If every person has this realization and acts to save water, it might seem like a drop in the ocean, but if we save enough drops they would be enough to make an ocean.

Time to act is now, tomorrow will be too late. The voters in Punjab have every right to ask the political parties contesting the elections about the roadmap to solve the groundwater depletion and other economic problems.

U.S.A. under P.L. 480. The country paid a huge price for importing foodgrains to resolve the foodgrains shortage. The Union government decided to adopt 'The New Agricultural Technology'. This technology was a package of high yielding variety seeds, assured irrigation, chemical fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, and other chemicals, machinery and modern agricultural practices. The essence of this technology is commercial in nature, that is production for profit.

After taking the decisions to adopt this technology, the Union government decided to introduce it in Punjab on priority. The onus to execute this decision of the Union government came upon the hardworking and courageous farmers, agricultural labourers, and rural artisans, and the rich natural resources of Punjab. The

New Agricultural Technology' in Punjab, irrigation was done with canals, and wells and there was no serious problem with groundwater level. In 1961 the number of tubewells in Punjab was only 7,445 which has risen to around 1.5 million in 2021 mainly due to the adoption of this technology.

The huge increase in the number of tubewells to meet the irrigation requirement of paddy has led to the continuous fall in the groundwater level in most of the development blocks of the state, as well as many other problems.

Initially, after the adoption of the 'New Agricultural Technology' irrigation was done with diesel engines, and monoblock motors, but due to a continuous fall in groundwater level, the farmers were forced to bring in submersible motors, which is

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Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD



Goodie Takhar, PhD

Punjab Assembly Elections: Ignoring the River Pollution

The date of Assembly elections in Punjab has been announced. The election campaign of all the political parties is in full swing. All parties are coming forward with promises and claims to woo voters. Mr. Sukhbir Badal, President Shiromani Akali Dal promises to provide free electricity to all households up to 400 units per month, and Minimum Support Prices of vegetables, fruits, and milk. AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal promises free education in government schools for every child born in Punjab, free treatment in government hospitals, free electricity to every household up to 300 units, Rs.1000 per month for women, Rs. and one crore financial assistance for the families of soldiers and police personnel killed while on duty. The Congress party president Navjot Sidhu promises Rs.5000 for further education to girls passing 5th, Rs.15000 for 10th pass, Rs.20000 and two wheelers for 12th pass, Rs.2000 per month for each woman, and an interest free loan up to Rs. 200000 for running business. The issue of conservation of natural resources and environment is missing from the promises and claims of all the political parties, while clean water, air, and land are essential for the life of human beings and all other kinds of organisms (animals, birds, and plants). A clean environment is one of the basic necessities of human life.

Punjab's major natural resources (air, water, land) have been severely polluted. According to a 2019 report by World Air Quality, six cities in Punjab were among the 50 most polluted cities in the world. Even after heavy rains in the month of January this year (2022), the air quality index of Punjab on 24th January is 172 which falls in the category of unhealthy which adversely affects the health of people from all walks of life.

As far as water is concerned, groundwater in more than half of the districts of Punjab is contaminated with metals like uranium, arsenic, cadmium and lead. A report by The Central Groundwater Board and the State Water Resources and Environment Directorate, Groundwater Re-

sources of Punjab, has revealed that the groundwater level in Punjab is falling by 0.37 meters per year. Punjab once had an abundance of water and five rivers flowed through it, hence it was called the land of five waters. Since the partition of India and Pakistan, only two and a half rivers are flowing through it. These include Sutlej, Beas, and some part of Ravi. This water source is also going



through a very critical situation due to pollution. Political parties contesting elections in Punjab are not paying any attention to the growing pollution in river water.

The Ravi river flows through a small part of Punjab and the Beas river is almost in good condition. In 2018, a large number of fish died in the Beas river due to discharge of molasses from Kiri Afghana Sugar Mill. The worst case scenario is with the Sutlej river.

The Sutlej river is one of the fastest flowing rivers in the world. It originates from Lake Rakshastal, near Lake Mansarovar in Tibet. This river is 1550 km long passing through the Himalayan mountains. The Sutlej enters the town of Nangal in Ropar district in Punjab and it then flows through Ropar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Kapurthala and Ferozepur districts covering a distance of 440 km and enters Pakistan. After entering Punjab, Bhakra Dam is built on this river near Nangal. Much of the river's water is stored in the Gobind Sagar Lake for hydroelectricity. The lake water is later released to villages in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan for irrigation and drinking purposes. The remaining water is released into the river. Therefore, in some places, the

water level in it is so low that it looks like a sewer or tributary instead of the Sutlej river.

In fact, the tragedy of the Sutlej begins only after the Bhakra Dam because it flows with very little water after the dam. According to a 2009 report by the Punjab Pollution Control Board, the water of the Sutlej River was 'A' grade (clean) at the time of its entry into Punjab but ac-

justhan have no other source of potable water than its canal water. So they have to drink the polluted water of the Satluj river which is endangering the lives of millions of people.



Dr. Gurinder Kaur
Former Professor, Department of
Geography, Punjabi University, Patiala.
001-408-493-9776

Pollution of rivers is not uncommon. Many other rivers in the country, including Ganga, and Yumna, are also facing pollution problems. The famous River Thames in England was badly polluted in the 1850s and 1950s, but with the continuous efforts of the British government, the river Thames has been restored to its natural form by controlling the pollution.

Political will is needed to decontaminate the Sutlej river and its tributaries, but our political parties are completely silent on this issue. Therefore, it is now the duty of the common man to make this issue an issue of Assembly elections and to warn the various parties that they will get votes only if they pay attention to environmental issues.

The general public has not paid attention to this issue so far and the ruling political parties in Punjab have never taken this issue seriously. Under pressure from industrialists and corporations, they are disregarding environmental laws, polluting rivers and destroying their very existence, as well as endangering people's lives. The general public must put aside petty and false promises, claims, and propaganda made by the political leaders and demand that the environment be made clean and pollution free. If the common man comes together on this issue and asks every political party to come up with its own plan to clean the environment, they will be compelled to obey the people. The common man always wins on common issues of which the recent farmer movement is a prime example. Environmental cleanliness and pollution-free water, air, and land are the basic human needs that the government has a duty to meet.

THE AD DHARM

Prem K. Chumber
Editor-In-Chief:

Ambedkar Times / Desh Doaba

The Ad Dharm movement, the glorious Dalit movement that not only envisaged an egalitarian social set-up but also struggled hard for the same, was founded formerly on June 11-12, 1926 in village Muggowal near Mahilpur (Hoshiarpur) under the dynamic leadership of Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia, a famous Gadhrite. Sarva-shriBasant Rai, Thakur Dass and Shudranand were the equally powerful other lieutenants of the Ad Dharm movement. However, when it comes to the brass stack, it was

Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia who emerged as the leading star of the movement.

Ad Dharm is a name of the indigenous religion of the Dalits of the region who are the natives of this land (India). The invading Aryans subjugated them and established their rule over the natives. They see to it that the culture and religion of the natives had to be wiped out fully so that they could not stage a revolt. Mangu Ram Muggowalia thought it appropriate to relocate the lost native religion in order to re-establish sovereign Dalit Raj once again. He named his movement deliberately after the name of the religion of the natives: Ad Dharm.

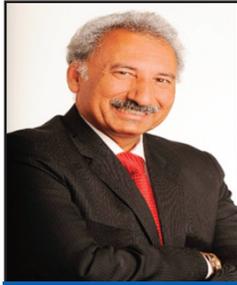
Thus Ad Dharm is both 'Religion' as well as 'Movement'.

Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia made concerted efforts in the direction of laying solid ground for the revival of Ad Dharm in Punjab. He was of the opinion that if the ex-untouchables have to live a dignified life they had to revive their gurus, religious scriptures, festivals and religious places as well. He approached Sant Sarwan Dass Ji Maharaj at Dera Sachkhand Ballan for concretizing the Bani of Sahib Shri Guru Ravidass Ji Maharaj and the proliferation of his mission. The Ad Prakash, a holy Granth containing the Bani of Sahib Shri Guru Ravidass and other Dalit Gurus was

prepared. Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia expressed his will among close circle that his last rites should be performed amidst the chanting of the holy Bani of Ad Parkash.

In the Ad Dharm Mandal approach, it is clearly mentioned that every Ad Dharmi should live his/her life according to the tenets of Ad Dharm and should not believe in any other religion. He said our Gurus are Guru Nam Dev Ji, Guru Ravidass Ji, Guru Kabir Ji, Guru Valmiki Ji and all other Dalits saints. Thus Ad Dharm movement has very early shown the vision for the establishment of a separate Dalit identity based on distinct Dalit native religion: Ad Dharm.

A Meaning and Significance of Republic Day Celebration in India and Abroad



Dr. Harmesh Kumar
President, Therapeutic Residential
Care Services Inc.
www.therapeutichomes.com

Date: January 26, 2022

Newark, Ca - Indo-American Community members gathered to celebrate Republic Day of India under the banner of "Bheem International" USA. The Chairman of the Indian Overseas

Congress, Dr. Harmesh Kumar was a special guest on the occasion. It is true when Mahatma Gandhi rightly said that "A nation's culture resides

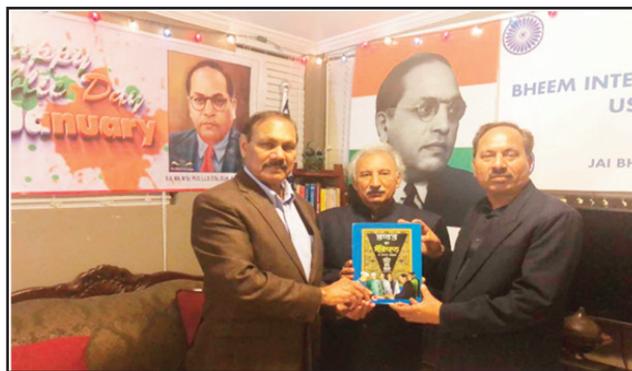
Oversees Congress emphasized the respect, equality, concept of fairness, social justice, and one person one vote without any regard to one's social status, caste, language, or region one belongs to. Dr. Harmesh Kumar gave a message to all Indians in his speech that "Every Indian must be educated to raise the social and economic status of our native brothers and sisters and help in creating the conditions for future generations where everyone gets access to quality education, good nutritional food, quality health services, and affordable housing. He reflected that while we all live in the richest country on the face of the earth, we still struggle to

job. He has demonstrated with his skills, hard work, and humane style of functioning during the short span of three months that it is not our caste but the deeds that make us great. Dr. Kumar requested all members to talk to their family members and relatives in Punjab to vote for Congress Party to bring social stability, quality education, fair and equal opportunities for every Punjabi to pursue economic paths to make them compete at the global stage.

Mr. Vinod Kumar Chumber, President of Bheem International, USA explained the significance of Dr. Bheem Rao Ambedkar's contributions as he is considered the father of the

years, the oldest democracy has not been able to achieve so far in America. Many of the oppressed individuals like us can become successful businessmen, doctors, scientists, engineers, attorneys, judges in the USA because of the candle he lighted for us and his enlightenment guided us all to attain higher positions all over the globe.

He also hoped and wished that the Indian National Congress does not play with the feelings of the community to use Mr. Channi as a tool only to win the election in Punjab. He reported that if the Indian National Congress will not make him the Chief Minister after winning the elec-



in the hearts and the soul of its people". It was visible in the spirits of those who participated and spoke on the occasion.

It is important to know that Republic Day is known as a national day in India, honoring and celebrating this day on which the Indian constitution took effect on January 26, 1950, substituting the government of India Act (1935) as the country's governing constitution and changing the country into a newly formed Republic. In the City of Newark, California, this special day was celebrated on January 26, 2022.

All the prominent community leaders were present at that time including many businessmen like Ram Lubhaya, Rajinder Krishna, Roop Lal, Karmjit Singh Mahi, Sucha Ram Bharta, Balwinder Kumar Mehmi, and Chander Mohan. Most of these distinguished personalities shared their views on the importance of Republic Day and the origin and significance of the Indian Constitution. Dr. Harmesh Kumar, Chairman of California Indian

provide affordable housing and health care in the USA, but we are making sincere efforts to bring these amenities to all citizens no matter which race, language, caste, region or nationality they come from. He mentioned that there are Indo-American Leaders in the US Congress who are fighting for ordinary citizens like Honorable Pramila Jayapal from Seattle and Honorable Congressman, Ro Khanna from the San Francisco Bay Area. He was also honored by Bheem International, in the USA with a copy of the Indian Constitution in Punjabi, called "Bharat Da Savidhan (The Indian Constitution)". He said that it was more relevant today because we have the first Chief Minister of Punjab, Honorable Charanjit Singh Channi, from schedule caste who was appointed by the high command of the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, Mr. Rahul Gandhi, and Ms. Priyanka Gandhi. He was selected as the first consensus candidate from the bottom of the oppressed classes of Pun-

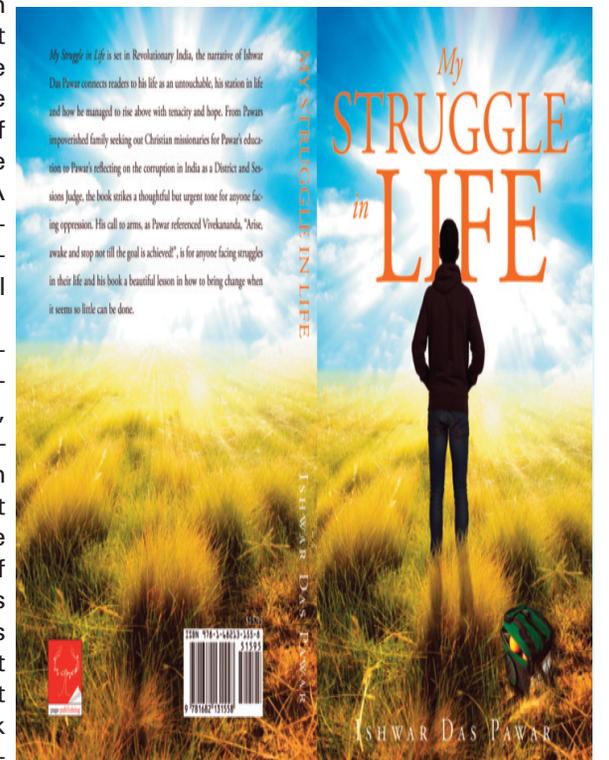
experienced the true taste of freedom, and he inhaled the breath of fresh in the USA which shaped him as an Indian Jurist, economist, politician, activist, and social reformer.

He consistently campaigned against the social discrimination towards women, workers, and most notably towards the untouchable in India. Mr. Chumber said that whatever, or wherever we are today, it is really because of Dr. Bheem Rao Ambedkar's contributions. He enabled us to get our Right to vote, right to education, and right to get equal pay for the equal work we do and freedom from social discrimination and our ability to own land. He is also instrumental in getting equal rights for women in India. It was because of Dr. Ambedkar that our country could be ruled by a woman for many

Indian Constitution. He also appreciated and thanked the people of America and its constitution for giving us the opportunities to chase our American Dreams and pursuit of happiness. He reported that Dr. Ambedkar was strongly influenced by his experiences as a student at Columbia University, New York, the USA in 1913. It was here that he

tion, then the future of the Indian National Congress Party would be very bleak and then the oppressed classes would lose faith in the Congress leadership as it has happened in the past decades or so.

A well-known community leader, Mr. Sucha Ram Bhalta explicated in his speech that education and sports are the way to success. He said that parents and teachers are the bridge between efforts to success. He congratulated Dr. Kumar for being appointed as the Chairman of California of the Indian Overseas Congress. He appealed to all community members to unite to fight the common enemies of ignorance, poverty, hunger, and homelessness in India and USA.



My Struggle in Life:
Das Pawar, Ishwar: 9781682131558:
Amazon.com: Book
<https://www.amazon.com/Struggle-Life-Ishwar-Das-Pawar/dp/1682131556>



Sue Frost

Sacramento County Supervisor. District 4



Sue Frost

Sac County Cannot Afford Another Lockdown

With the rise in COVID cases across the world as a result of the omicron variant, local jurisdictions are struggling with how to properly react.



Some areas like Sonoma County have now issued "shelter in place" orders, which means residents can only go to places for essential reasons, such as the grocery store or doctor's office. I strongly believe Sacramento County should not go down this path, and should do everything possible to avoid further shutdowns like the previous failed attempts.

The current rise of COVID is somewhat misleading, as the only thing the media wants to currently report on is the number of COVID cases. And while the omicron variant is extremely contagious, studies have shown that symptoms are less severe than other variants. The whole reason that the shutdowns happened originally were because deaths were on the rise and hospitals were being overrun, and in Sacramento County neither of these two things are happening. Thankfully, COVID related deaths have remained low, and our hospitals have not exceeded capacity.

Shutdowns do not come free, and should be avoided due to the devastating impacts they have on society. The Wellbeing Trust, a non profit working to de-stigmatize mental health issues, released a study that found 75,000 deaths during the recent national shutdowns were "deaths of despair" - which includes suicides and overdoses. And in California, nearly one in three restaurants permanently closed as a result of the most recent shutdown.

Nowhere are these negative shutdown impacts more evident than how they have impacted children. The United Nations Children's Fund released a report that showed the current generation of students will lose \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings as a result of the learning losses suffered during the global shutdowns. The United States Department of Education also released a report that showed the pandemic has negatively affected academic growth, has deepened the impact of disparities in access and opportunity, and heightened

the risk of sexual harassment, abuse, and violence.

Politicians, the media, and government agents have stoked fears to the highest level, and we cannot blame the public for being afraid. But we must fight to keep our businesses, communities and schools open - while also needing to recognize the importance of respectful debate and compassion.

For a complete list of all my past newsletters, which each contain a commentary like this one, click here.

Flavored Tobacco Ban

In January, Sacramento County voted to ban all flavored tobacco in Sacramento County, including flavored tobacco vapor products and flavored hookah. The push for this came from advocates against teen smoking, who claim that this will get tobacco out of teens hands.

I was the sole "no" vote



against this proposal. While I am not a smoker and completely agree that teens should not be smoking, selling tobacco to minors is already illegal, and I fear that this will simply impact adults who choose to use these products for their own personal reasons.

Teens will still be able to get these products, as they will continue to be sold online and in neighboring cities and counties. I advocated that a better approach would be to heavily increase a "secret shopper" program, and couple it with a zero tolerance approach that revoked tobacco licenses from retailers who were selling to minors. I believe that would do a better job at reducing teen smoking, while still allowing adults to purchase what they want.

We also received heavy opposition from hookah sellers, who said that hookah is a recreation for a wide variety of cultures, and has been around for many hundreds of years. They also cited that a very small number of teens smoke hookah, in part because it is impossible to conceal due to how large it is and how long it takes to setup. Unfortunately, hookah is now also banned which will effectively shut down small business hookah shops/cafes and put their

livelihoods at risk.

A statewide ban on flavored tobacco (with the exception of hookah) will be on the ballot later in 2022.

Board Approves Initial ARPA-Funded Programs

The Board of Supervisors approved the initial project recommendations for Phase One Funding Allocations for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). The funds come from the total of first allocation \$150 million, which the County received in May 2021.

Project proposals had to fit in one of the three Board-approved strategic investments for priority issue areas: Housing and Homelessness, Health, or Economic Response.

Housing and Homelessness

Landlord Engagement and Re-Housing Supports: \$10 million

This program will improve rehousing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness with an array of supportive services, landlord engagement strategies and incentives, and flexible rental subsidies.

Sacramento County Social Health Connect: \$5 million*

A Social Health Information Exchange (SHIE) is a county-wide data infrastructure that links medical, behavioral health, social service and housing data from multiple sources.

Community Nursing Encampment Unit Pilot: \$700,000

This public health nursing team will provide outreach, client advocacy and professional case management to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Community Nursing Children and Families Unit: \$1.5 million

This Public Health Nursing team will provide nursing assessments and interventions, care coordination, linkages to health resources, and health education to pregnant and parenting families experiencing, or who are at risk of, homelessness.

Encampment Management Information Database: \$160,000

This project will allow for the development of a web-based Encampment Management Information Tracking (EMIT) database to help County staff and contractors track and manage response to homeless encampments.

River District Outreach Navigation: \$160,000

The County will dedicate two contracted outreach/housing naviga-

tors to specifically work in the River District as a one-year pilot program.

Staff are continuing to develop and scope projects with a focus on housing development projects, funding to support development of new low-barrier, housing-focused sheltering programs, and improving access to the homeless system of care, including shelter and housing.

Health

Substance Use Respite and Engagement Center: \$2.6 million

Funding to support the Substance Use Respite and Engagement (SURE) Center program operated by WellSpace Health, which provides short-term (4-12 hours) recovery, detoxification, recuperation from the effects of acute alcohol or drug intoxication.

Project Roomkey Medical Services: \$1 million

Provides medical services for individuals in Project RoomKey, including health education and care coordination, harm reduction, wellness and supportive care, COVID-19 testing and vaccination.

Emergency Medical Services Equipment: \$107,000

Funding will provide equipment and supplies in order to more safely and rapidly deploy temporary facilities in the event of a COVID-19 resurgence or Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation.

Primary Health Clinic Staffing: \$2.5 million

Funding will support additional temporary staff to increase service capacity at the clinic.

Pandemic Technology Needs: \$350,000

Will fund increased con-



tracted IT Services and staffing support to support and deploy new public health systems and adjustments to current systems to track data and provide care for the community.

Juvenile Medical Services Staffing: \$191,500

Funding will support an additional registered nurse at the Youth Detention Facility.

Employee COVID Vaccination and Testing Program: \$300,000

(Contd. on next page)

FIRST M.L.As. OF AD-DHARMA MANDAL in First Legislative Assembly of Punjab—1937 A.D.



Picture courtesy Souvenir 1985
Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia
99th Birth Anniversary by C. L. Chamber

(From Left to Right)
1st Row Sitting : (Last Three)— Mr. Gopal Singh Khalsa, Seth Kishan Dass, Ch. Jugal Kishore.
6th Row Standing : Mr. Mula Singh (8th), Mr. Bhagat Hans Raj (9th), Master Harnam Dass (Last).
P. Mr. Matu Ram & Mr. Faquir Chand M.L.As. are not seen in this picture. (Courtesy : Seth Kishan Dass)

(Continue from page 7)

Add temporary help to support one current Department of Personnel Services (DPS) staff member in the administration of the County Employee COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Program.

Academic Support and School Readiness: \$1.2 million

This project addresses the negative impact of academic disruption and remote learning due to the pandemic on foster children, families and caretakers.

Building Strong Families: \$3.9 million

Funding will go toward Family Support Navigators to connect families to critical services in geographic locations that were hardest hit by COVID-19.

Sacramento County Social Health Connect: \$5 million*

A Social Health Information Exchange (SHIE) is a countywide data infrastructure that links medical, behavioral health, social service and housing data from multiple sources.

* Total project is \$10 million, funded with \$5 million from both Housing and Homelessness and Health allocations.

Staff continue to develop and scope projects with a focus on opportunities to maximize the quality and delivery of public health services, and increasing medical care and reduce disease transmission in the Homeless community.

Economic Response

Retail Food Permit Fee Waiver: \$6.8 million

Waive the annual operating permit fees from the Environmental Management Department for approximately 7,161 retail food businesses in Sacramento County.

Chamber of Commerce Grants: \$325,000

Direct grants of \$25,000 to Chambers of Commerce located in unincorporated Sacramento County for operations dedicated to small business supportive programs related to equitable economic recovery ef-

forts.

Property and Business Improvement District Grants: \$250,000

Direct grants of \$50,000 to Property and Business Improvement Districts (PBIDs) located in unincorporated Sacramento County for operations dedicated to small business supportive programs related to equitable economic recovery efforts.

Arts and Non-Profit Cultural Grants**

Direct grants in the range of \$5,000-\$100,000 to up to 300 arts and non-profit cultural organizations throughout the County that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19. This project will be in partnership with the City of Sacramento, who will provide a match to the project.

Small Business and Non-Profit Grants: \$7.5 million**

Direct grants of \$5,000 to 1,500 Small Business and Non-Profit organizations in unincorporated Sacramento County that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Business Support Services: \$660,000

Fund the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce for operations dedicated to providing assistance, counseling, County program outreach and other services to businesses that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

Sacramento Inclusive Economic Development Collaboration, Business Support Services: \$1.8 million

Fund the Sacramento Inclusive Economic Development Collaboration (Sac IEDC) for operations dedicated to providing assistance, counseling, in-language support, County program outreach and other services to businesses that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

Business Environmental Resources Center, Business Support Services: \$200,000

Fund the Business Environmental Resource Center (BERC) for operations dedicated to providing assistance, counseling, County program outreach and other services to businesses that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

** Grant application opportunities will be announced at a later date. View the full list of project summaries

In addition to approving the recommended projects, the Board asked County staff to bring back funding recommendations for chambers of commerce and property and business improvement districts outside of the unincorporated County who do not receive ARPA grants from incorporated cities, as well as projects that address food insecurity.

The County will receive the second installment of \$150 million in ARPA funds in May 2022.

American Rescue Plan Act funds provide local fiscal aid to support COVID-19 response efforts, cover increased expenditures, replenish lost revenue and mitigate economic harm from the COVID pandemic. For more information, visit the County's American Rescue Plan Act webpage

County Motel Weather Respite Model is Promising

In response to growing concern about unsheltered community members being exposed to severe weather events, Sacramento County created a weather specific response program that has weather-related triggers for activations. The response first activated in January 2021 and has since activated several times over the last year in both severe cold and extreme heat conditions.

This approach offers several advantages to pop-up weather respite centers (Which the County also uses):

It relies on outreach partners to identify unsheltered people who would not otherwise be reached.

It offers several days of continuous stay – at a minimum of three days (compared to a short 6-12 hour stay at a weather respite center).

It allows people to shelter with pets and partners and in privacy, which is critical during COVID-19.

It coordinates transportation for unsheltered people to the motels. **The following criteria will trigger a weather-related response:**

Cold weather response:

Nighttime lows of 37 degrees or lower for two or more days within a five-day span; or

Rain for two or more consecutive days (forecast 60% or more); or One day or night of rain combined with nighttime lows of 32 degrees or lower.

Warm weather response:

The National Weather Service escalates the heat risk to "high" for two or more consecutive days.

The program has capacity for about 100 motel rooms on any given night of the weather activation. In the most recent activation (December 9 – January 4), the program served more than 400 people and nearly 270 households.

In addition to the motel vouchering weather respite program, the County has also used pop-up warming/cooling locations to increase capacity for any given weather event. While these pop-up centers have their own challenges, such as staffing and security, the County was able to secure an ongoing partnership with Regional Transit to help get people from where they camp to the weather respite centers when needed.

The County continues to work in conjunction with our incorporated cities, advocates and non-profit partners to assess how to maximize limited resources to create the most effective programs for our unhoused community members.

Thank you for reading Friends