



Ambedkar Times

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Dr. Ambedkar's 122nd Birthday celebrated in Pittsburg



Pittsburg:- Dr. Ambedkar's 122nd birthday was celebrated in Sri Guru Ravidass Temple, Pittsburg, California on June 30, 2013 by the committee members and Sangat. Shabad kirtan by our Head Granthi Bhai Harjinder Singh Rasia and his son Jasse Singh was just perfect for celebrating this occasion.

Founder member Mr. O.P. Balley, Dr. Harmesh and Mr. Vinod Chumber highlighted some of Baba Sahib's achievements and his struggle for civil rights for the "untouchable" caste, to which he belonged. Remember, he was the force behind the Women's Rights Bill. Today if most of us are living or traveling in foreign countries, it's all because of Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar was born on April 14, 1891 in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh. He was the fourteenth child of Ramji and Bhimabai Sakpal.

He passed away in 1956 in Delhi. We wish God had given him longer life to strengthen and uplift our community. He was a great writer, he wrote numerous books. Even today, his books have not been made a part of the text books taught in most of the schools and colleges in India. He authored over 50 books and countless articles. Buddha or Karl Marx is



one of amazing books by Baba Sahib. The comparison is brilliant.

"My final words of advice to you is - Educate, Agitate, Organize - have faith in yourself...." -Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. These



words pretty much summarize his message to the community.

My hope is that someday we can see more people living a better life, out of misery and poverty, without fear or shame. May be that is the kind of nation Sat Guru Ravidass ji were describing in his words "BEGAMPURA". I think it will a long time before we see a bigger change in the cast/class system. We just have to continue working towards making improve-

ment in our community and ourselves. Education is the primary key to the success of any culture or society. Education will provide better opportunities for getting ahead of our daily needs and start making our lives rich financially, socially and culturally.

Ramesh Suman (925-366-3618)

Who knows who wrote the history and who distorted that but we can definitely write a new chapter.

CNN-IBN news announced Bharat Rattan Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as the "Greatest Indian". Finally Baba Sahib got the overdue recognition. But, this is not enough; there is a need for more work in this regard. His achievement and sacrifices are not known to most of the people. His message needs to go to the masses. We need to help the poor people in India who don't have resources to go

to schools. Some of these people struggle for necessities of life. I know we can't help everyone but I am sure we can afford to help one person or one family at a time. Start with someone in your own family, extended family, neighborhood.

One educated person can help his whole family so one family will be uplifted and that, my friends, will be a one step towards building "BEGUMPURA".

Dr. Ambedkar was a firm believer in education. The list of his educational degrees is very long; B.A., M.A., M.Sc., D.Sc., Ph.D., L.L.D., D.Litt., Barrister-at-Law!!! B.A.(Bombay University) Bachelor of Arts, MA.(Columbia university) Master Of Arts, M.Sc.(London School of Economics) Master Of Science, Ph.D. (Columbia University) Doctor of philosophy, D.Sc.(London School of Economics) Doctor of Science , L.L.D.(Columbia University) Doctor of Laws , D.Litt.(Osmania University) Doctor of Literature, Barrister-at-Law (Gray's Inn, London) law qualification for a lawyer in royal court of England.

I am so thankful to Baba Sahib for giving us an opportunity to go to schools, colleges, different countries and better our lives. Let's fulfill Baba Sahib's dream.

UK Buddhists Condemn Bodh Gaya Bomb Attack

We are stunned to see the shocking media reports on the senseless attack on Bodh Gaya, India's holiest Buddhist shrine revered by the Buddhist all over the World. This is the place where the Buddha himself gained enlightenment.

The serial bomb blasts had done extensive damage to the Bodh Gaya complex. This act of violence was clearly targeted at this complex to destroy it and to kill and maim the innocent people. It is a cause of concern for the lives of pilgrims visiting Bodh Gaya. We condemn this act of terrorism in strongest terms.

From the media reports, it has emerged that there were numerous intelligence alerts on this attack. Despite the warnings, it appears that either no attention was given to these threats or not enough arrangements were made to avert

this situation. It is purely a security lapse on part of the state and the central government. It needs to be investigated and the responsible persons for ignoring this warning must be exposed and brought to books.

Buddhism is the most peace loving religion in the World based on loving kindness. This is the only religion which has been accepted by most of the Asian countries and also spreading rapidly in Europe, America and Australia and other parts of the World.

There are currently some 500 million followers of Buddhism World-wide. As Indians, it must be a matter of pride for all of us. The Bodh Gaya complex is one of the oldest Buddhist sites in India. It has attracted millions of people around the World. It was also listed as a World heritage site by the UNESCO in 2002. It is important

that this site is protected and preserved properly.

India is a democratic country where violence has no place. There are a few individuals who are bent to spoil the fabric of our democratic system. They want to create hatred between various religious groups and flare communal riots. We must not allow them to succeed in their motives.

Keeping in view the enormity of the situation, we demand:

1. A thorough investigation to find out the culprits must be done and a stern action against those attackers must be taken so that nobody in future dares to do this act of terrorism.
2. The injured must be given proper medical care until they are fully recovered.
3. Injured must be compensated

adequately so that they are able to lead their normal life.

4. Bodh Gaya complex must be renovated fully and brought to the original shape.

5. Government of India take responsibility to provide security and protection to this World heritage site and also give adequate protection to other important Buddhist sites as well.

6. Mahabodhi temple is one of the Buddhist holiest places and it should be managed by the Buddhist only not by others. Government must provide a complete management control to the Buddhist monks.

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ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20 -RELATIVE TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONS IN WORLD RELIGIONS: SIKHISM

Whereas, this measure would recognize the need for the inclusion of Sikhism in world religions, Eastern religions, Asian and South Asian religions courses at all post-secondary educational institutions and advise the concerned academic governing bodies, deans and department chairs to include Sikhism in their institution's world religions, Eastern religions, Asian and South Asian religions course, this article provides some relevant information.

SIKH DRESS. In USA, all the white men (and women) wearing white clothes and white turbans, and also more than 99% of non-white men wearing turbans of different colors and South-Asian women wearing black turbans, are Sikhs. They are followers of a 500-years old monotheistic religion, named Sikhism, founded in Northwestern India by Guru Nanak (1469-1539), who was a contemporary of Martin Luther (1483-1546), the founder of the Lutheran Church. Sikhism is interfaith and universalist in nature, respecting people of all faiths, or none.

HEAD-COVERING. For the Sikhs, their turban is a religiously-mandated head-covering. Sikh children, many teenagers and a few grown-ups use a Patka (A small cloth head-covering). Owing to their turban/Patka, the Sikh-Americans are conspicuous and easy targets for misguided hate crimes perpetuated out of ignorance and misinformation. Thus, a 2010 survey by The Sikh Coalition revealed that 69% of Sikh students wearing a turban or Patka, in the San Francisco Bay-Area, had suffered bullying and harassment because of their religion.

9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS. As a result of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and on the Pentagon in Washington (D.C.), the Sikh-Americans suffered twice - first, during the attack itself, and second, in its aftermath. Sikh-Americans have been mistaken to be followers of Osama bin Laden, the Al Qa'ida leader, owing to their beard and turban. Many Sikh-Americans have been called Osama, Iraqi, Iranian, Libyan, Afghan etc. and mistaken for Al Qa'ida or Taliban terrorists, or their associates. Sikh Americans have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, profiling, verbal and physical abuse, bullying, brutal beating, murderous attacks and shootings to death. In the months following the 9/11 attacks, more than 300 incidents of hate crimes against Sikhs were reported to The Sikh Coalition.

HATE CRIMES AGAINST SIKH AMERICANS IN THE WAKE OF 9/11 ATTACKS. Since 9/11, the Sikh-Americans have suffered disproportionately high incidence of hate crimes. Balbir Singh Sodhi of Mesa (AZ), was shot dead on 9/15/2001 in a cold-blooded hate crime at his gas-

station. On Nov. 29, 2010, Harbhajan Singh, a Sikh American taxi-driver, was brutally beaten in West Sacramento (CA) by his passenger who mistook him for a Muslim and pleaded guilty of the hate crime. On March 6, 2011 two elderly Sikh men of Elk Grove (CA) were shot and killed in an unprovoked attack

when they were on a walk. On August 5, 2012, in a mass shooting, Wade Michael Page, an American white-supremacist and a U.S. Army veteran, fatally shot six peaceful Sikh-Americans and wounded four others at a Sikh Temple in Oak Creek (WI). A police officer, who responded to the 911 call, was also killed. On May 5, 2013, Piara Singh, an 81-years-old Sikh-American was beaten brutally with an iron rod, in front of a Sikh Temple in Fresno, where he was waiting for his ride home, after his 4-hour volunteer service at the temple. The suspected assailant is reported to have said that he hates all Sikhs.

HATE CRIMES AGAINST SIKH-AMERICANS ARE CONTINUING UNABATED. Hate crimes against the Sikh Americans, started in the wake of 9/11, are continuing unabated. An attack on innocent Americans owing to their appearance, beliefs, lifestyle, or dress, e.g. turban or Patka, is an attack on core American values and individual freedom. Attacks on turban-wearing people in America are misdirected, since turban-wearing men in America are Sikh Americans, who have never attacked any non-Sikh American. Unfortunately, a vast majority of Americans continue to be unaware of the Sikh identity. Therefore, we need to intensify the effort to educate the public about the Sikh Americans, their culture, history and religion.

TEACHING ABOUT SIKH AMERICANS IN SCHOOLS. The current Content Standards (CS), and Curriculum Framework (CF) for History-Social Science (H/SS) for K-12, include several religions, but not Sikhism. Consequently, few, if any SBE-adopted school textbooks include anything about Sikhs or their religion.

The draft 2010 H/SS Curriculum Framework and Evaluation Criteria, which mentions Sikhism, was approved for public comments on July 17, 2009, but further work for its adoption was suspended on July 28, 2009 for five years, and another two years later, as budget measures. SB 1540(Hancock, 2012) signed by Governor Jerry Brown on Sept. 8, 2012, authorized the state board to consider the adoption of a revised curriculum framework and evaluation criteria for instructional materials in history-social science. Further, this bill requires the State Department of Education to conduct

work necessary to revise the curriculum framework and evaluation criteria for instructional materials in history-social science after it has completed work related to the development of curriculum frameworks for the common core ac-

ademic contents standards.

TEACHING SIKHISM IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION.

California's Post-Secondary Education system includes 72 Community College Districts, 23 universities of the California State University System and 10 universities of the University of California System. They produce instructors for all levels of education. It is very important that Sikhism is included in their relevant courses. In passing ACR 20(Logue, Perea, 2013) unanimously, our State legislature has recognized the need for teaching about the Sikhs and advised the concerned academic governing bodies, deans, and department chairs to include Sikhism in their institution's World religions, Eastern religions, Asian, and South Asian religions courses.

SIKHISM IS A DISTINCT AND COMPLETE RELIGION. In America, The Religion of the Sikhs by Dorothy Field (1914) published 100 years ago, is an important historic work. It is apparently the first American book to recognize Sikhism as "distinct and complete in itself, and not in any way dependent on association with Hinduism."

SIKHISM, A GREAT LIVING FAITH. John C. Archer (1934) listed Sikhism among the "twelve great faiths still living" in his Faiths Men Live By. Further, Selwyn G. Champion (1944) included Sikhism in his The Eleven Religions and Their Proverbial Lore, a Comparative Study. Other early works to devote a full chapter to Sikhism were: 1) The Origins and History of Religions by John Murphy (1949), 2) Living Religions of the World by Frederic Spiegelberg (1956), and 3) World Religions: From Ancient History to the Present by Geoffrey Parrinder (1971). Since 1971, most of the college and university textbooks published on world religions have included a chapter on Sikhism.

SOME UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE SIKH FAITH. Like Judaism and Islam, Sikhism is a revealed faith and a monotheism. It was founded by Guru Nanak (1469-1539), who was followed by nine other Gurus (Prophets). It has its own Holy Book, called Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It is in Punjabi script and has words of 11

languages and dialects. It has 1430 pages and nearly 6000 verses. These are to be sung in Indian classical musical compositions. The first edition of the Sikh Holy Scriptures dates back to 1604. Its final edition was published in 1708 by the tenth Sikh prophet, Guru Gobind Singh. Its first authentic English translation, titled THE SIKH RELIGION: Its Gurus, sacred writings and authors, was published in 1909, in six volumes, by Max Arthur Macauliffe, an Englishman. Nearly 80% of the verses in the holy book are by the Sikh Gurus and the remaining by 30 spiritually advanced saints. These were Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus of all four castes, including untouchables. Their life-time covered over 500 years and they belonged to different geographic areas and spoke different languages.

Earning one's livelihood (Not begging), sharing with the needy, and meditation on the same One Creator of all are Sikhism's three pillars. It preaches equality of humanity (including women), and freedom and liberty for all. Sikhism rejects idol worship and caste system of Hindus; and superstitions, and attaches no value to fasting, pilgrimage, renunciation and rituals.

SIKHS IN CALIFORNIA. Sikhs have been in California since 1898. They have served in U.S. army since 1917. Dalip Singh Saund, a Sikh Californian, became the First Asian-American congressman in 1956. Last year, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Stockton Sikh Temple, the oldest in USA. Sikhs serve in all professions and contribute much to the life and economy of the State, especially through farming. Now, over 250,000 Sikh Americans, or 40% of all Sikh Americans, live in California.

NUMBER OF ADHERENTS. In choosing religions for inclusion in a course, we should also consider the number of adherents and relative distribution. With Sikh Temples in 65 countries, apparently Sikhism has wider distribution than either Confucianism or Taoism. Also, adherents of Sikhism (24,285,000) are far more numerous than those of either Confucianism (6,470,490) or Taoism (8,486,100), reported in 2013 World Almanac.

CONCLUSION. Chairs of Departments of Philosophy, Religious Studies and Humanities, their Faculty and concerned Deans at all post-secondary public educational institutions (Colleges and universities) are requested to consider the advice contained in the ACR 20 (see above) and include Sikhism in World Religions/Eastern Religions/Asian Religions/South Asian Religions courses. For questions and additional information, please contact osbindra@sbc-global.net, a retired professor and UN(FAO) pensioner.



Dr. Onkar S. Bindra

Dr. Ambedkar's Statement on Gandhi's Fast

(Statement on Mr. Gandhi's attitude at the Round Table Conference to the Untouchables and their demand for Constitutional safeguards, 19th September, 1932)

I need hardly say that I was astounded to read the correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi, Sir Samuel Hoare and the Prime Minister, which was published recently in the papers, in which he has expressed his determination to starve himself unto death till the British Government of its own accord or under pressure of public opinion revise their opinion and withdraw their scheme of communal representation for the Depressed Classes. The unenviable position, in which I have been placed by the Mahatma's vow of self-immolation, can easily be imagined.

It passes my comprehension why Mr. Gandhi should stake his life on an issue arising out of the communal question which he, at the Round Table Conference, said was one of a comparatively small importance. Indeed, to adopt the language of Mr. Gandhi's way of thinking, the question was only an appendix to the book of India's constitution and not the main chapter. It would have been justifiable, if Mr. Gandhi had resorted to this extreme step for obtaining independence for the country on which he was so insistent all through the R.T.C. debates. It is also a painful surprise for that Mr. Gandhi should single out special representation for the Depressed Classes in the Communal Award as an excuse for his self-immolation. Separate electorates are granted not only to the Depressed Classes, but to the Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, as well as to the Mahomedans and the Sikhs. Also separate electorates are granted to landlords, labourers and traders. Mr. Gandhi had declared his opposition to the special representation of every other class and creed except the Mahomedans and the Sikhs. All the same, Mr. Gandhi chooses to let everybody else except the Depressed Classes retain the special electorates given to them.

The fears expressed by Mr. Gandhi about the consequences of the arrangements for the representation of the Depressed Classes are, in my opinion, purely imaginary. If the nation is not going to be split up by separate electorates to the Mahomedans and the Sikhs, the Hindu society cannot be said to be split up if the Depressed Classes are given separate electorates. His conscience is not aroused if the nation is split by the arrangements of Special Electorates for classes and communities other than the Depressed Classes.

I am sure many have felt that if there was any class which deserved to be given special political rights in order to protect itself against the tyranny of the majority under Swaraj constitution it was the Depressed Classes. Here is a class which is undoubtedly not in a position to sustain itself in the struggle for existence. The religion, to which they are tied, instead of providing for

them an honourable place, brands them as lepers, not fit for ordinary intercourse. Economically, it is a class entirely dependent upon the high caste Hindus for earning its daily bread with no independent way of liv-

THE CHAMCHA AGE by Kanshi Ram

ing open to it. Nor all ways closed by reason of the social prejudices of the Hindus but there is definite attempt all throughout the Hindu Society to bolt every possible door so as not to allow the Depressed Classes any opportunity to rise in the scale of life, indeed it would not be an exaggeration to say that in every village the caste Hindus, however divided among themselves, are always in a standing conspiracy to put down in a merciless manner any attempt on the part of the Depressed Classes who form a small and scattered body of an ordinary Indian citizen.

In these circumstances, it would be granted by all fair minded persons that as the only path for a community so handicapped to succeed in the struggle for life against organized tyranny, some share of political power in order that it may protect itself is a paramount necessity.

I should have thought that a well-wisher of the Depressed Classes would have fought tooth and nail for securing to them as much political power as might be possible in the new Constitution. But the Mahatma's ways of thinking are strange and are certainly beyond my comprehension. He not only does not endeavour to

augment the scanty political power which the Depressed Classes have got under the Communal Award, but on the contrary he has staked his very life in order to deprive them if little they have got. This is not the first attempt on the part of the Mahatma to completely dish the Depressed Classes out of political existence. Long before, there was the Minorities Pact. The Mahatma tried to enter into an agreement with the Muslims and the Congress. He offered to the Muslims all the fourteen claims which they had put forth on their behalf, and in return asked them to join with him in resisting the claims for social representation made by me on behalf of the Depressed Classes.

It must be said to the credit of the Muslim delegates that they refused to be a party to such a black act, saved the Depressed Classes from what might as well have developed into a calamity for them as a result of the combined opposition of the Mohammedans and Mr. Gandhi.

I am unable to understand the ground of hostility of Mr. Gandhi to the Communal Award. He says that the Communal Award has separated the Depressed Classes from the Hindu community. On the other hand, Dr. Moonje, a much stronger protagon-

ist of the Hindu case and a militant advocate of its interests, takes a totally different view of the matter. In the speeches which he has been delivering since his arrival from London, Dr. Moonje has been insisting that the

Communal Award does not create any separation between the Depressed Classes and the Hindus. Indeed, he has been boasting that he has defeated me in my attempt to politically separate the Depressed Classes from the Hindus. I am sure that Dr. Moonje is right in his interpretation of the Communal Award although, I am not sure that the credit of it can legitimately go to Dr. Moonje. It is therefore surprising that Mahatma Gandhi who is a nationalist and not known to be a communalist should read the Communal Award, in so far as it relates to the Depressed Classes, in a manner quite contrary to that of a communalist like Dr. Moonje. If Dr. Moonje does not sense any separation of the Depressed Classes from the Hindus in the Communal Award the Mahatma ought to feel quite satisfied on that score.

In my opinion, that Communal Award should not only satisfy the Hindus, but also satisfy those individuals among the Depressed Classes such as Rao Bahadur Rajah. Mr. Baloo or Mr. Gawai who are in favour of Joint Electorate. Mr. Rajah's formulations in the Assembly have amused me considerably. An intense supporter of Separate Electorates and the bitterest and the most vehement critic of caste Hindu tyranny now professes faith in the Joint Electorates and love for the Hindu. How much of that is due to his natural desire to resuscitate himself from the oblivion in which he was cast by his being kept out of the Round Table Conference and how much of it is to his honest change of faith, I do not propose to discuss.

The points on which Mr. Rajah is harping by way of criticism on the Communal Award are two: one is that the Depressed Classes have gained lesser number of seats than they are entitled to on the population basis and the other is that the Depressed Classes have been separated from the Hindu fold.

I agree in his first grievance, but when Mr. Rao Bahadur begins to accuse those who represented the Depressed Classes at the R.T.C. for having sold their rights, I am bound to point out what Mr. Rajah did as a member of the Indian Central Committee. In that Committee's report, the Depressed Classes were given in Madras 10 seats out of 150, in Bombay 8 seats out of 14, in Bengal 8 seats out of 200, in U.P. 8 seats out of 182, in the Punjab 6 seats out of 150, in Bihar and Orissa 6 out of 150; in C.P. 8 out of 125 and in

Assam 9 seats for the Depressed Classes and the indigenous and primitive races out of 75. I do not wish to overburden this statement by pointing out how this distribution compares with the population ratio. But there can be no doubt that this meant a terrible under-representation of the Depressed Classes. To this distribution of seats Mr. Rajah was a party. Surely, Mr. Rajah, before he criticizes the Communal Award accepted as Member of the Indian Central Committee on behalf of the Depressed Classes without any protest. If the population ratio of representation was to him a natural right of Depressed Classes and its full realization was a necessity for their protection,

why did Mr. Rajah insist upon it in the Central Committee when he had an opportunity to do so?

As to this contention that in the Communal Award, the Depressed Classes have been separated from the caste Hindus, it is a view to which I cannot subscribe. If Mr. Rajah has any conscientious objection to separate electorates, there is no compulsion on him to stand as candidate in the Separate Electorate. The opportunity to stand as candidate in the general electorate as well as the right to vote in it are there, and Mr. Rajah is free to avail himself of the state. Mr. Rajah is crying at the top of his voice to assure to the Depressed Classes that there is a complete change of heart on the part of the Caste Hindu to prove that fact to the satisfaction of the Depressed Classes, who are not prepared to take his word by getting himself elected in the general constituency. The Hindus, who profess love and sympathy for the Depressed Classes, will have also an opportunity to prove their bonafides by electing Mr. Rajah to the legislature.

The Communal Award, therefore, in my opinion, satisfied both those who want separate electorates and those who want joint electorates. In this sense, it is already a compromise and should be accepted as it is. As to the Mahatma, I do not know what he wants. It is assumed that although Mahatma Gandhi is opposed to the system of joint electorates and Reserved Seats. That is a gross error. Whatever his views are today, while in London he was totally opposed to any system of special representation for the Depressed Classes whether by Joint Electorates or by Separate Electorates. Beyond the right to vote in a general electorate based upon Adult Suffrage, he was not prepared to concede anything to the Depressed Classes by way of securing their representation in the legislatures. This was the position he had taken at first. Towards the end of the R. T. C. he suggested to me a scheme, which he said, he was prepared to consider. The scheme, was

(Cont.. on Page no 6)

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Dr. Ambedkar's Statement on Gandhi's Fast

purely conventional without any constitutional sanction behind it and without any single seat being reserved for the Depressed Classes in the electoral law.

The scheme was as follows:

Depressed Class candidates might stand in the general electorate as against other high caste Hindu candidates. If any Depressed Class Candidate was defeated in the election, he should file an election petition and obtain the verdict that he was defeated because he was an Untouchable. If such a decision was obtained members to resign and this create a vacancy.

There would be then another election in which the defeated Depressed Class candidate or any other Depressed Class candidate might again try his luck as against the Hindu candidates. Should he be defeated because he was an Untouchable and so on ad infinitum, I am disclosing these facts as some people are even now under the impression that the Joint Electorates and Reserved Seats would satisfy the conscience of the Mahatma. This will show why I insist that there is no use discussing the question until the actual proposals of the Mahatma is put forth.

I must, however, point out that I cannot accept the assurances of the Mahatma that he and his Congress will do the needful. I cannot leave so important a question as the protection of my people to conventions and understandings.

The Mahatma is not an immortal person and the Congress, assuming it is not a malevolent force, is not to have an abiding existence. There have been many Mahatmas in India whose sole object was to remove Untouchability and to elevate and absorb the Depressed Classes, but every one of them has failed in his mission. Mahatmas have come and Mahatmas have gone. But the Untouchables have remained as Untouchables.

I have enough experiences of the pace of Reform and the faith of Hindu reformers in the conflicts that have taken place at Mahad and Nasik, to say that no well-wisher of the Depressed Classes will ever consent to allow the uplift of Reformers who in moments of crisis prefer to sacrifice their principles rather than hurt the feelings of their kindred can be of no use to the Depressed Classes.

I am, therefore, bound to insist upon a statutory guarantee for the protection of my people. If Mr. Gandhi wishes to have the Communal Award altered, it is for him to put forth his proposal and to prove that they give a better guarantee than has been given to us under the Award.

I hope that the Mahatma will desist from carrying out the extreme step contemplated by him. We mean no harm to the Hindu society when we demand separate electorates. If we choose separate electorates, we do so in order to avoid the total dependence on the sweet

will of the Caste Hindus in matters affecting our destiny, like the Mahatma we also claim out right to err and expect him not deprive us of that right. His determination to fast himself up to death is worthy of a far better cause. I could have understood the propriety of the Mahatma contemplating such extreme step for stopping riots between Hindus and Mohammedans or between the Depressed Classes and the Hindus or any other national cause. It certainly cannot improve the lot of the Depressed Classes. Whether he knows it or not, the Mahatma's act will result in nothing but terrorism by his followers against the Depressed Classes all over the country.

Coercion of this sort will not win the Depressed Classes to the Hindu fold if they are determined to go out.

And if Mahatma ask the Depressed Classes to make a choice between Hindu faith and possession of political power, I am quite sure that the Depressed Classes will choose political power and save the Mahatma from self-immolation.

If Mr. Gandhi coolly reflects on the consequences of his act, I very much doubt whether he will find this victory worth having. It is still more important to note that the Mahatma is releasing reactionary and uncontrollable forces, and is fostering the spirit of hatred between the Hindu Community and the Depressed Classes by resorting to this method and

thereby widening the existing gulf between the two. When I opposed Mr. Gandhi at the R.T.C., there was a hue and cry against me in the country and there was conspiracy in the so called nationalist press to represent me as a traitor to the nationalist cause, to suppress correspondence

coming from my side and to boost the propaganda against my party by publishing exaggerated reports of meetings and conferences, many of which were never held. 'Silver bullets' were freely used for creating division in the ranks of Depressed Classes. There have been also a few clashes ending in violence. If the Mahatma does not want all this to be repeated on a large scale, let him, for God's sake, reconsider his decision and avert the disastrous consequences. I believe the Mahatma does not want this.

But if he does not desist, in spite of his wishes there consequences are sure to follow as night follows the day. Before concluding this statement, I desire to assure the public that although I am entitled to say that I regard the matter as closed, I am prepared to consider the proposal of the Mahatma. I, however, trust the Mahatma will not drive me to the necessity of making a choice between his life and the rights of my people. For I can never consent to deliver my people bound hand and foot to the Caste Hindus for generations to come.

DENUNCIATION OF THE POONA PACT

The Untouchables were forced to sign the Poona Pact under the impact of the coercive fast of Gandhiji. Dr. Ambedkar de-nounced it the very next day expressing his views, "the Untouchables were sad. They had every reason to be." He kept denouncing it till the end of his life in 1956. He denounced it in private discussions, public meetings, revelent writings, in fact on all the occasions that demand denunciation.

As an illustration of the denunciation by Baba Saheb Dr. Ambedkar, some quotations from his two books (1) What congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables, published in 1945 & (2) States and Minorities, published in 1947, are given below:-

1. "There was nothing noble in the fast. It was a foul and filthy atc. The fast was not for the benefit of the Untouchables. It was against them and was the worst form of coercion against helpless people to give up the constitutional safegaruds of which they had become possessed under the Prime Minister's Award and agree to love on the mercy of the Hindus.

It was a vile and wicked act. How can the Untouchables regard such a man as honest and sincere?"

2. The communal Award gave the Untouchables two benefits:-

- (i) A fixed quota of seats to be elected by separate electorate of Untouchables and to be filled by persons belonging to the Untouchables.
- (ii) Double vote, one to be used through separate electorates and the

other to be used in the general electorates.

Now if the Poona Pact increased the quota of seats for the Untouchables it took away the right to the double vote given to them by the Communal Award. This increase in seats can never be deemed to be a compensation for the loss of the double vote. The second vote given by the communal Award was priceless privilege. Its value as a political weapon was beyond reckoning.

3. Today the Untouchables have a few more seats than were given to them by the communal Award. But this is all that they have. Every other member is indifferent, if not hostile. If the Communal Award with its system of double voting had remained, the Untouchables would have had a few seats less but every other member would have been a member for the Untouchables. The increase in the number of seats for the Untouchables is no increase at all and no recompense for the loss of separate electorate and the double vote.

4. Clause (5) of the Poona Pact has limited the system of primary election to ten years which means that any election taking place after 1947 will be by a system of joint electorates and reserved seats pure and simple.

5. Things will be much worse under the system of joint electorates and reserved seats which will hereafter become operative under the terms of the Poona Pact. This is no mere speculation the last election has

conclusively proved that the scheduled Castes can be completely disfranchised in a joint electorate.

6. In the light of these considerations, it can not but appear that the Poona Pact was only the first blow inflicted upon the Untouchables and that the Hindus who disliked it were bent on inflicting on it other blows as and when circumstances gave them an occasion to do so."

7. After having accepted the Poona Pact, why did not Mr. Gandhi keep faith with the Untouchables by telling the congress not to despoil the politics of the Untouchables by contesting the seats reserved for the Untouchables by getting such Untouchables elected as were prepared to become the tools of the Hindus?

8. After having accepted the Poona Pact why did not Mr. Gandhi keep up the gentleman's agreement and instruct the Congress High Command to include representatives of the Untouchables in the Congress Cabinets?

9. This shows that Mr. Gandhi not with standing his being a party to the Poona Pact is determined not to allow the Scheduled Castes being given the status of a separate element and that he is prepared to adopt any argument however desperate to justify his attitude of opposition."

10. In short Mr. Gandhi is still on the war path so far as the Untouchables are concerned. He may start the trouble over again. The time to trust him has not arrived. The Un-

touchables must still hold that the best way to safeguard themselves is to say 'Beware of Mr. Gandhi.'

11. The second misdeed of the Congress was to subject the Untouchable Congressmen to the rigours of party discipline. They were completely under the control of the Congress Party Executive. They could not ask a question which it did not like. They could not move a resolution which it did not permit. They vote as they wished and could not speak what they felt. They were there as dumb driven cattle. One of the objects of obtaining representation in the Legislature for the Untouchables is to enable them to ventilate their grievances and to obtain redress for their wrongs. The Congress successfully and effectively prevented this from happening.

12. To end this long and sad story the congress sucked the juice out of the Poona Pact and threw the rind in the face of the Untouchables.

13. The Poona Pact has completely disfranchised the Scheduled Castes in as much as candidates whom they rejected in the Primary election-which is a true index of their will-have been returned in the Final election by the votes of the Castes Hindus.

14. The Poona Pact is thus fraught with mischief. It was accepted because of the coercive fast of Mr. Gandhi and because of assurance given at the time that the Hindus will not interfere in the election of Scheduled Caste.

Obama Puts an End To The Flat Earth Society and Makes Historic Speech on Protecting the Environment!

President Barack Obama gave an incredibly powerful address on drastically reducing our very heavy carbon footprint through a series of very serious policies and laws. Al Gore commented that it is the "best presidential address on climate change ever." Sikhism has a very deeply rooted history in environmental issues, and many of the Sikh Gurus, starting with Baba Nanak were not only revolutionaries in their own right, but also environmentalists, calling for respecting the environment, in addition to societal change. It is not easy to force people to change the way they live, in a world that normalizes things like our dependence on products with a devastating impact on the environment. As a horticulturist and landscape architect by trade, it is something that I have felt deeply saddened by during my long career, spanning several countries, continents, and decades. In my home State of Punjab, the government and its policies on the environment or their lack of it have actively destroyed the indigenous trees such as tahli, kihar, bohr and pipal etc. in the name of development and modernization and has allowed the industry to pollute rivers and rivulets resulting in the pollution of the aquifer beneath that would require a miracle to put it right. They continue to destroy these centuries old road corridors under road widening schemes without properly thought ought replanting plans.

Returning to Obama's speech it comes just a few months before a decision will be made on the controversial Keystone pipeline, which Obama has said will only be approved if it doesn't significantly exacerbate problems of carbon pollution. And not too long ago, James Hansen, a climate scientist, who used to work as a researcher for NASA told the New York Times that if it is approved, it would be "game over for the climate."

As a poet, I have written poems on these issues to make people think about the damage that is being inflicted, such as "Sun UMBER shehzadie" about the damage human beings are inflicting on Earth, and rather than trying to fix anything, we are off seeking other planets, so we can do the same thing there. The poem is on a video slide show set to my own voice and is available as a free download at my website at: www.pashaurasinghdhillon.com

So it was immensely gratifying to hear Obama's speech yesterday in a place I have very fond memories of: Georgetown University's auditorium. The only time I sat amongst the audience who were all there listening to Obama was in 1999 when my daughter graduated from Georgetown University's School of Medicine. I could imagine the feeling of hope and excitement of a bright future these students must have felt. In the same hall that welcomed the U.S. Presidents since George Washington, the world watched President Obama addressing the university students delivering an historic speech on the environment. In no unclear terms, he took the most decisive action on climate change any president has ever taken and laid out a plan to drastically limit the damage being inflicted on the environment. But rather than only focusing on what we as individuals should do, he also took corporations to task, and outlined a plan to do the unthinkable: hold corporations accountable and make green technology affordable and a for-profit enterprise. Rarely do political leaders take such bold decisions committing their nations in this 'profits before people' era, to political causes which are vital in the long run but are not that popular at home and serve a bigger cause for the welfare of all mankind where everyone wins. Pro-

tecting the environment is one such issue which has vehemently been opposed by the vested interests and big donors in every country and has always faced immense opposition, which I am sure Obama has encountered, and will continue to encounter, but it is a good fight and one that at over 70 years old, I am very hopeful about the outcome.

It happened yesterday in that speech with a definite plan which will go a long way in paving the road not only to protect the environment and help save our planet Earth for the future, but will also create more jobs in America and will put this nation back on track as a progressive one, and one whose ideas and examples other nations should emulate as they always do or dream to follow when for example the leaders in Punjab proudly say they will convert Punjab in to California.

With such a determination, detailed plan and a commitment he has challenged the nation to lead by example. By doing so he appears to have put a stop to the debate going on since the 1800s, when great thinkers, scientists, and philosophers first found that the green house gasses are accelerating warming the planet Earth and others refused to believe it was anything to do with science. The controversy between the science and the orthodoxy in fact did not diminish with the house arrest of Galileo in 1633, when he was convicted of grave suspicion of heresy for "following the position of Copernicus," in what was seen as being in direct opposition to Biblical Scripture for defending heliocentrism – that the sun does not rise and set in the exact same position all over the world, with the earth at the center of the universe.

When he first ran for office in 2008 and I heard him speak during

the primaries, I was impressed at what I thought was a breath of fresh air in the stale state of politics. I wrote and sang a poem set to my voice, Ohi hai Eh Sitara, meaning It is that same Star: which is also available as a free download at the youtube under my name Pashaura Singh Dhillon.

During his speech, he talked about facts that go against the view that climate change is simply a natural occurrence that cannot be changed. The 12 hottest years on record have all come in the last 15 years, and 2012 was the hottest one that was ever recorded. Based on the scenario unfolding before our eyes that due to this global warming apparently caused by manmade activities 2/3 of the sea is determined to swallow the remaining 1/3 of the land mass through Sea Tsunamis, Hill Tsunamis and everything in between. Now that the address is over, let's talk about his two major points:

1. Enforcing the Clean Air Act rules. A central part of his plan is to enforce rules already in place that are largely ignored by corporations, so there will be strict emission rules and a plan to cut pollution from existing and new power plants, boost clean energy, and revamp transportation sector for the 21st century.

2. Business Model. Obama isn't satisfied with catchphrases and empty words, but with a real plan of action, and that means he wants this to be a financial decision so corporations can fight on the good side. The percentage of electricity coming from wind and sun has already doubled in his first four years and he is hoping to double that again.

This means careers, jobs, and a huge boost to the economy. Just the fact we are talking about it, is a historic occasion, no less as momentous as the Christmas Eve that Apollo Eight Mission landed a man on the Moon.

If you ask lady to carry 1 kg bag to home she will say it's too heavy but give her 5 kg gold to wear she will walks miles with pride..



5 Kg. GOLD BRIDE only in India....

It is not an Indian movie, it is real. The wedding of Kerala based Muthoot Finance Corp. CEO's Daughter, India's largest gold financing company known for providing personal and business loans by gold, took place at a glittering ceremony recently.

What would be the heights of celebration if a gold financing company owner's daughter is getting married. The specially designed gold ornaments worn by the bride has caught the attention of everyone. They were highly ap-

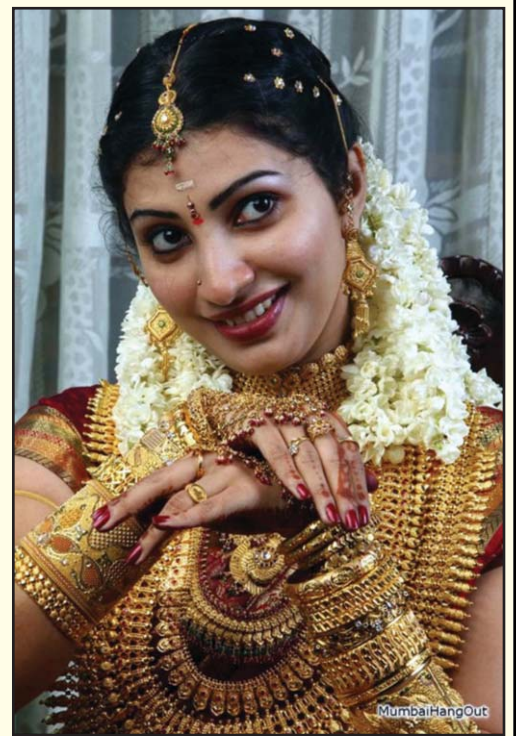
preciated by one and all for their fine finish, exquisite designs and royal look.

These pictures were making rounds all over the web. Now, it's the turn of all the gold lovers to feel jealous looking at the astonishing jewellery! The marriage held in the family of Muthoot Finance Corp.

A bride with 5 Kg. Gold
Today's Price of Gold
1 kg = US\$ 51,341.53 so 5kg = US\$ 256,707.65

A cool quarter of Million Dollars!!!!

Forwarded by Ramesh Suman



Dr. Ambedkar's 122nd Birthday celebration

Friends,

We are having a get-together/inauguration/house warming/celebration (whatever you call it) at our AIC facility in Washington DC area on 21 July 2013 from 2:30-6:30 PM. Attached is a flier for the event.

All are cordially invited to participate in the event and be prepared to share your idea(s) to develop the center. We are also planning to have a brain-storming session, if time allows.

You may wish to contribute or give any suggestion. Please let me know if you are planning to attend as soon as possible.

Let us make it a great success, get excited, get inspired and act to make a global network through Dr. Ambedkar International Center (AIC) in Washington DC area. Please share/forward it to friends and family members who might be interested in joining us at the event.

Jai Bhim!
Mohan

Did you know?

Did you know Jesus Christ never had more than 12 followers in his life time and he never traveled outside Palestine.

Today - his followers are in the entire world and are over 2 billion. Why I am telling you this? Only because, "Truth never dies and True Believers never GIVE UP"

Regards
Randhir Suman
a tiny creature of this universe



Dalit writers find a global audience- thanks to translations

ManoranjanByapari looks at the large burn mark on his stomach. "I wish it would happen again," he says, smiling. "I got some time off work to write." Byapari, a cook in a hostel in Kolkata, is also a well-known Bangla writer. "I was a small-time goonda," says Byapari, who also worked as a rickshaw-wallah. He learnt to write in prison tracing the alphabet on the dusty floor of the prison yard. Being a Dalit, however, has over showed his succeed as an author "if you work at Bata shoe factory, you are a high caste," he says. "But if you do the same work on the road side, then you are an outcaste".

Byapri has written four books including his autobiography. He began writing after getting chance meeting social activist and writer MahaswetaDevi, who travelled in his rickshaw. "When I Started writing short stories, I changed my name and sent out my work", says Byapari. "I didn't want anyone to publish simply because of my association with Mahasweta Devi. All my stories were bought"

His tiny room is crammed with books. He spends most of his days cooking for 200 peoples, He manages to dedicate a little time to writing, each day, but longs for a year off to concentrate on it. "When I go to an upper caste's house, I am a lower caste," he says. "For people of my caste, who have made up the economic ladder, I am a still a rickshaw-wallah. For rickshaw-wallah, I am someone. I am writer".

Currently, he is one of five editors working on an anthology of Dalit literature from the northeast to be published by Oxford University Press (OUP) next year. He is hoping that his work will soon be translated into English.

It has been 20years since Dalit literature translated into English. Poisoned bread:translations from modern Marathi Dalit literature, edited by Arjun Dangle, was published in 1992. The same year, an anthology of Dalit literature by Mulk Raj Anand and Eleanor Zelliot, was published, making an indelible impression on the Indianliterarilyscene. "It was mind blowing," says Priya Adarkar who was instrumental in getting the anthology published. "Each time a piece came along, whether it was poetry or prose, we wondered where it was hidden. It is like someone discovered America. It was there. We just didn't know these writers out there."

Intense, raw, angry, passionate and always political subversive Dalit literature has found its way into university syllabi. At Delhi University (DU), NamdeoDhasal's poems are part of the M.A. English Literature Programme. An outcaste, the first Dalit autobiography published in 1951, is part of the M. Phil programme. So is Tamil writer Bama's work. Next year, OUP is publishing a text book on Dalit literature for high school students.

"Identity politics has caught on," says TapanBasu, associate professor at DU, who teaches a paper on Dalit literature. "But we must see the students do not take it because it is fashionable. We have to inculcate awareness and create a window of experience. Most students who come to DU are upper caste. We want to provide them a window into a world that is beyond their experience". Publishing Dalit works, however, is becoming fashionable. Penguin recently published an anthology of Dalit writing from the south titled No Alphabet in Sight.

Niche publishers like Navayana who focus exclusively on the caste issue are making an impression at events like the Jaipur Literary Festival.

"English makes our struggle an international issue," says writer Sheoraj Singh Bechain. "We can't fight unless we make this an international issue. Till then, it won't even get attention at the national level."

He has a point. Tamil writer Bama sells more copies in English than she does in any regional language. English, however, is not the only medium to be heard internationally. NarendraJadhav's memoir was a bestseller in French. "Writing itself is political," says Bama. And translation has its own share of politics. Who should translate? Will upper caste translators have a bias? These issued have been debated across the community.

Translation, however, is not the main issue. "Dalit don't want to tell their stories," says Bechain. "They don't want us to talk our lives and expose our weaknesses. But if we don't talk, how will we ever find a cure to disease?"

Sold at a brick kiln by his step-father, Bechain spent his childhood

working in fields, selling lime on the street and laying bricks for a school building. His autobiography Bachpan Mere Kandhon Par is a story of grift, determination, a constant battle against hunger, prejudice and poverty. It is the story of countless Dalits across India. It will be translated into English by OUP next year.

Despite Dalits being politically well represented in the north, the irony of the lack of translated Dalit literature is hard to miss. "There needs to be a cultural movement in the north," says Basu. "Dalits may be politically successful in the north, but the lacks foregrounding in culture and tradition." OmprakashValmiki'sJhootan, published in English in 2003, in one of the odd Dalit works for the Hindi heartland to be translated.

So far, writers from Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have dominated the Dalit literature scene in English. Names like NamdeoDhasal, Bama, DevanoorNahadeba, SharankunarLimbale, S.Joseoh, Ravikumar and K.A. Gunasekatan have managed to go beyond the Dalit writing and carve a space for themselves in mainstream literature.

"These writers have changed the landscape of the languages they write in," says K. Satyanarayana, editor of the Penguin anthology. "DevanoorMahadeva is not a Dalit Writer. NamdeoDhasal changed Marathi literature in term of technique and language and another writers were forced to write like him." In January, OUP published anthology of Dalit literature in Tamil and Malayalam literature were forced to rethink their content. "They found that they couldn't leave out Dalit literature," says Mini Krishnan, editor of translations at OUP.

Krishnan wants to make Dalit literature more accessible in English. And BalbirMadhopuri is a voice she has helped bring to the fore. A Dalit writer in Punjabi, Madhopuri believes he writes mainstream literature. "Ours echoes the fight for equality," he says. "It is for all, not only Dalits. His sentiment is echoed

The bhajii[priest] used to throe Prasad to us because he didn't want to touch our hands. We would stand outside with bowls. Sometimes, the prasad fell to the ground and was eaten by the dogs.

- **Balbir Madhopuri**
Writer



in his poem A Poet's Aspiration: 'I don't want/my poems/ to be like monsoon streams/ running and merging with a river/ and losing their identity.'

Madhopuri's autobiography, ChangiyaRukh[Against the Night], is the first Punjabi work by a Dalit to be translated into English. The author was not allowed to enter gurudwaras as a child. "The bhajii[priest] used to throw prasad to us because he didn't want to touch our hands," says Madhopuri. "We wpuld stand outside with bowls. Sometimes, the prasadfell to the ground and was eaten by the dogs."

In school, too, there was discrimination. "We would walk for three kilometers to wash and feed the animals of our upper caste teacher," says Madhopuri. "Wewere never allowed to drink from his tap, even in terribly hot weather. His wife used to pour water from a height and we scooped it up in our hands." The English translation of his book has been on the shelf for over a year and he is feeling its impact. "I have made many more friends," says Madhopuri. "There are women who call me and weep. We have internationalized our problems."

He feels, however, that Dalits in the north are still unwilling to embrace their identity. "When people phone to ask me about my writing, my children often tell me to go out and speak," says Madhopuri. "They don't like the word Dalit. It is precisely this need to hide their identity that makes the north different. Writers in Maharashtra and the south have established themselves, forms a community, and now have a presence."

Awareness, however, doesn't necessarily translate into acceptance. "The more we stand up and revolt, the more we are oppressed," says Bama. "It isn't like the olden days, though. Even though people don't accept us and want to strangle our voices, at least we raise our voices."

Courtesy: THE WEEK • JULY 1, 2012

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TapanBasu,
Associate professor, DU