



Ambedkar Times Weekly

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VOL- 16 ISSUE- 51 February 26, 2025 California (USA) www.ambedkartimes.com www.deshdoaba.com

CONGRATULATIONS ON 648th THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SAHIB SHRI SATGURU RAVIDASS JI MAHARAJ

Prem K. Chumber Editor-in-Chief:
Desh Doaba & Ambedkar Times



Guru Ravidass Ji Maharaj, whose 648th birth anniversary is being celebrated throughout the world, was a great saint/Guru of medieval **Bhakti** movement of North India. He belonged to the

lowest of the low castes in India whose touch used to be considered polluting to the **Savarnas**. He opened a frontal attack against the system of Untouchability. He rejected the tradition of Brahmin mediator to reach the Supreme Being. He also said that one need not to hide his caste or leave his low profession to reach God. He became a model for his fellow beings to overcome the hierarchical barriers of Brahminical Social Order and to establish **Begumpura** - a state without fear and sorrows. Guru Ravidass elevated the status of the labour by emphasizing on the fact that honest labour is empowering. He completely rejected the concept of living on charity or miraculous wealth obtained by **Paras**.

By defeating the famous Kashi Pundits in a formally organized Shastrartha, Guru Ravidass proved that merit is not the fiefdom of so called upper castes alone. Every body is capable of worshipping Him. The fourfold division of Hindu society is a big lie and a trick to make and keep a large section of the Indian society under the cruelty and control of the few in the name of purity-pollution principle made by the so-called Brahmins. It is against this very system of religiously sanctified social differentiation that Guru Ravidass envisioned establishing a state where there would be no place for untouchability and social oppression.

For the social transformation of the society, Guru Ravidass laid emphasis on labour, compassion, virtue, prohibition of alcohol and all bad deeds. He also reiterated on the urgent need of remembering the formless God whom he addressed by varied names. Some scholars are of the view that Guru Ravidass did not form an organization nor he launched any consistent and systematic agitation against the system of untouchability. This is true. But to raise a loud voice at his times was no less than a clarion call to dismantle the unjust system of Brahminical social order. It is also true that the path told by him has become the beacon light for the Dalit movement in the country and abroad.

SRI GURU RAVIDASS SABHA CA, PITTSBURG CELEBRATED THE 648TH PARKASH UTSAV OF SATGURU RAVIDASS JI



Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha CA, Pittsburg celebrated the 648th Parkash Utsav of SATGURU RAVIDASS JI with great devotion and enthusiasm on last Sunday, February 16, 2025 at Sri GURU RAVIDASS TEMPLE Pittsburg. Guru Ji Ki Sangat and devotees started Akhand Path on February 14, 2025 (FRIDAY) 9:30 AM which concluded on February 16, 2025 (SUNDAY) 9:30 AM. Devine Kirtan DIWAN was enhanced by Kirtani Jatha of Bhai Onkar Singh Ji- Una Wale and Bhai Balwinder Singh Ji along with Katha by Sant Krishan Nath Ji - Chaheru Wale. The Nishan Sahib CholaSewa was performed on Saturday Feb. 15. The devotee family of Balbir Bagha performed the Nishan Sahib Chola Sewa and langar on this occasion. Bhai Balwinder Singh Ji, Bhai Harjinder Singh Ji Rasia and Bibi Kamaljeet Kaur did the Shabad Kirtan on Saturday evening.

Devotees came from all over California. Gurughar Parking lots and other 3 parking lots were full. Even the street parking was hard to find. Gurughar committee provided shuttle from various parking locations to Gurughar throughout the day. The Management Committee is thankful to Sangat for their donations/ contributions and all the volunteers who served Langar, decorated Gurughar, directed traffic/parking, cooked food, cleaned the kitchen, Jorha Sewa and helped organizing the function during Gurburab Celebrations. Numerous vendors came to showcase and sell their products. A special booth was set up for Dastar Bandi where hundreds of devotees were taught to tie the turbans and were provided with free Turbans. Thanks to the Management

committee and the volunteers for doing this Sewa.

The Honorable Dr. K. Srikar Reddy - Consul General of India, Mr. Jelani Killings - Mayor of Pittsburg, Mr. Ron Bernal -Mayor of Antioch and Ms. Shanelle Scales - Preston - Contra Costa County Supervisor came to pay respects to Guru Sahib and congratulate Sangat on the occasion of 648th birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Guru Ravidass ji. Mr. Rakesh Adlakha – Deputy Consul General and Mr. Jaswant Singh - Consul (Head of Chancery) participated in the celebrations with their families. The entire Sangat is thankful to Dr. Amarjit Singh Dosanjh, Dr. Nirmal Singh and UC Berkeley BPSHI group for helping and making the Health Awareness and Medical Camp very successful. The media partners Jasbir Kumar, Upinder Pal (Pal Films) and Prem Kumar Chumber (Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba) did a commendable job for covering this event and live telecasting it all over the world. The Management Committee also thanked all the Sewadars for hosting Langar Stalls - Sarbjit Kaur Saag and Makki Di Roti, Pakora and tea; Piyush Sharma - Ice cream; Rashpal Singh /Sargam Restaurant, Santokh Madhar, Narinder and Balwinder Kumar- Kadhi Chawal and Aloo Tikki; Rajindra Catering - Milk, Tikki, Chhole Bhature, Dessert; caterer Surinder Koka and Jarnail Kala – Jalebee; Karnayal Singh- Mango Lassi; Flamingo banquet – Snacks and Jalebee; Kulwinder Sandhi; Fresh Sugar cane juice, Narinder Chahal & Des Raj - Mix fruits,Veg Spring Rolls, Coffee, Cheese Quesadilla; Baljinder Singh (Bindi)- Soda, Juice, Milk Badaam, Fruity drinks and water; Deepu – Soda, Juice and water etc.

SRI GURU RAVIDASS SABHA CA, PITTSBURG CELEBRATED THE 648TH PARKASH UTSAV OF SATGURU RAVIDASS JI



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In Solidarity: Demand Buddhist Control Over the Mahabodhi Temple



Dear Friends, Namō Buddhāy

We, the undersigned, stand in unwavering solidarity with the Buddhist monks and followers protesting in Bodh Gaya to demand the rightful transfer of the Mahabodhi Mahavihara Temple's administration to the Buddhist community. This sacred site, where Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment, deserves to be managed by those who uphold its spiritual and historical significance.

Under the Bodhgaya Temple Act of 1949, the temple's governing body (BTMC) unfairly places non-Buddhists in the majority, including the chairman's role. This discriminatory structure denies Buddhists the fundamental right to manage their holiest pilgrimage site—an autonomy granted to every other religious community in India. The current administration's actions have led to repeated attempts to distort Buddhist history and diminish the temple's sacred identity. Today, Buddhist monks and leaders have entered the tenth day of a hunger strike to bring attention to this injustice. Their demands are clear and just:

1. Full transfer of Mahabodhi Temple management to Buddhists.
2. Repeal of the Bodhgaya Temple Act of 1949.
3. An end to state interference in Buddhist religious affairs.
4. Justice to the hunger strike monks-Bhante

Despite international support from Buddhist communities in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Laos, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Cambodia, Korea, Vietnam, Japan, China, Nepal, Mongolia, Bhutan, Taiwan, Singapore, USA, Canada, and Mongolia, the Indian government remains silent. The Bihar administration has not only ignored

peaceful protests but has also resorted to intimidation and suppression.

We call on you to stand with us to demand justice and the rightful return of the Mahabodhi Temple to the Indian Buddhist community.

Together, let's preserve the enduring legacy of Buddha and Emperor Ashoka, and ensure that Bodh Gaya remains a sanctuary of pure Buddhist worship and pilgrimage for all faith.

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 In solidarity, <https://chng.it/QWMMcPWZnp>

Below undersigned Organization's Name

- Buddhist Council of America
- All India Buddhist Forum
- Metta Parami monastery
- Bodhimaggo Mahavihara
- Dhamma Waves
- Buddhist seminary
- Hinayana buddhism trust
- Sanghakaya foundation

- Vipassana Educational & Social Trust
- Indian Buddhist center (IBC)
- Great Lakes Buddhist Vihara
- Midwest Buddhist Center
- Watpaknam Buddhist Vihara
- Ambedkarite Buddhist Community of Canada (ABCC)
- Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations UK
- Dr Ambedkar Buddhist organisation Birmingham UK
- Ambedkar Mission Society, Bedford UK
- Ambedkar Buddhist Association of Texas-ABAT
- Chetna Association of Canada
- Ambedkarite International Co-Ordination Society-AICS
- Ambedkarites International Mission Society-Canada (AIMS)
- International Bahujan Organization-IBO
- International Boddhisattva Guru Ravidass Organization Inc-IBGRO
- Indian Association of Minority Of New Zealand-IAMN
- Friends For Education International-FFEI
- Global Bahujan Group-GBG
- Global NRIs Forum-GNF
- South Asian Dalit Adivasi Network, Canada-SADAN
- Ambedkar Times
- Desh Doaba
- Ad Dharm Brotherhood USA
- Bhim International Foundation USA
- Women Empowerment Sangha
- Dr Ambedkar Society Germany Europe
- Ambedkar International Mission, Europe
- Ambedkar King Study Circle -AKSC
- Samata Sainik Dal-SSD

Punjabi Likhari Sabha Jalandhar – Poetic Naman to Guru Ravidass

Punjabi Likhari Sabha Jalandhar is an apex body of poets and literary personalities of in and around Jalandhar engaged in nurturing the poetic urges of the concerned while promoting and serving their mother tongue, Punjabi. The Sabha is headed by a prominent literary man, Harbhajan Singh Nahal and ably steered by Param Dass Heer as its General Secretary and supported by Beant Singh Sarhadi, a known figure in the socio-cultural and spiritual life of Jalandhar and beyond.

As in the successive years, the Likhari Sabha celebrated the Gurburab of Guru Ravidass on February 15 by dedicating their monthly Mushiyara to the great Guru. They were kind enough to invite me the Mushiyara as the Chief Guest in spite of the fact that I am not a poet of any sort. More than 15 poets read and recited their compositions on Guru Ravidass's Bani and Legacy and also the larger message to the humanity. It clearly came out that Guru Ravidass stood for "Haq Te Sach Di Awaz" as termed by one of poets and

rightly so. The Mushiyara was so engaging that there was hardly any time left to listen to the renowned literary and aca-

dass. Prof. Navtej Gardhiwal, a scholar and researcher on Guru Ravidass's life and philosophy wanted to say and share

Dekh Latti Hai, Jamane Ki Tabiat Ka Taqaza Dekh Latti Hai.

I kept myself very brief and said that Guru Ravidass's Bani is as potent and relevant today as it was 6 centuries ago. And added that the present political or administrative dictum of 'Democratic Socialism' was given and propounded by the great Guru in his Bani as "Begumpur Shaher Ka Naon" and 'Aisa Chaun Raj Mein; Yahan Mile Saban Ko Ann, Chot Bade Sab Sam Vashen; Ravidass Rahe Parsan.

If India that is Bharat is to realize its aspiration to become "Vikshit Bharat" in the years to come, 'We the People of India' must strive to understand and follow the teachings of Guru Ravidass on brotherhood, fraternity, samrasta and equitable world order as the great Guru said - Keh Ravidass Khalas Chamara, Jo Hm Shehari Who Meet Hamara Tasty bites of snacks with hot Kesar Milk were served courtesy; the down to earth but humble owner of Sasta Iron, Surjit Singh, an accomplished poet himself.



demic invites sitting at the High-table. President Harbhajan Singh Nahal had to struggle to find and give time to each one of us to conclude the event.

Prof. Baldev Singh Balli spoke with conviction and shared his latest poem on the theme of Guru Ravidass's concept of "Begumpura, a State without 'Sorrow'". Prof. Baldev Singh Badhan also spoke briefly but with full insight of the thought and philosophy of Guru Ravi-

much on the occasion but time constraints came in. Both Prof. Badhan and Prof. Navtej Gardhiwal presented their books of poetry and prose to me as 'Food for Thought'. By the time my turn came as the last speaker, it was already too late and sensing the mood of the audience as a career diplomat, I took recourse to the poetic assertion of Allma Iqbal – Pardon Mein Jo Pinha Hai: Chasme Bina

The Ad Dharm in Dr. Ambedkar's writing!

STATEMENT "E" [f1] NOTE BY Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR TO THE INDIAN FRANCHISE COMMITTEE (LOTHIAN COMMITTEE) ON THE DEPRESSED CLASSES SUBMITTED ON MAY 1st, 1932

Depressed Classes in the Punjab

In connection with the population figure for the depressed classes given in the census of 1931 I wish to draw attention to two facts:

(1) The population of those who caused pollution by touch was according to the census of 1911, 2-8 Millions while in the census of 1931 the population of untouchables is given as amounting to 1.3 million.

(2) The census of 1911 gives a list of 23 castes which are deemed to cause pollution by touch. The census of 1931 mentions only castes as forming the untouchable population in the Punjab. 12. Why the total

population of the untouchables and the list of castes included in that category should have shrunk so much between 1911 and 1931 I am not able to ascertain. It is however necessary to state that among the untouchables of Punjab there has been going on for some years past a strong movement called the Ad-Dharm Movement the object of which is to separate from the Hindu fold and form themselves into a distinct community under the new name of "Ad-Dharmis". Such has been the strength of the movement that the untouchables decided to return them-

selves as "Ad-Dharmis" instead of Hindus in the census of 1931, and the Government gave recognition to this feeling and allowed the Census Superintendent of Punjab to open a new category of Ad-Dharmis. This led in some parts of the Punjab to riots between the Hindus and the untouchables. As a result the untouchables in some parts returned themselves simply as "Ad-Dharmis" without mentioning their respective castes, and in other parts where they were prevented from doing so returned themselves as Hindus under their caste names. I am mentioning these facts

to show that the difficulties created in the enumeration of the untouchables and which are admitted by the Government of Punjab may be responsible for this shrinkage in the number and list of untouchables in the Punjab. The matter therefore requires to be carefully looked into.

Courtesy: C. L. Chumber

Editor-in-Chief: Kaumi Udarian
Monthly Journal (Punjabi/Hindi/English)
Jalandhar City (Punjab) India.



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