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BABU MANGU RAM MUGOWALIA 99TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY SOUVENIR A HISTORIC DOCUMENT

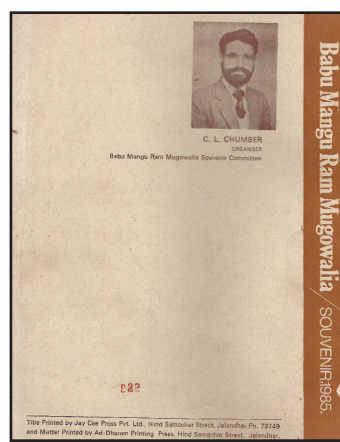
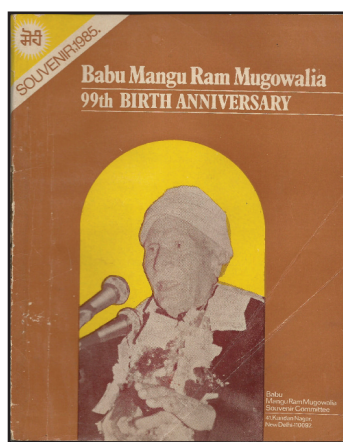
A copy of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia 99th Birth Anniversary Souvenir 1985 sent to me by Mr. C.L Chumber under his own signatures is very elegantly placed here before me. On reading its contents I am fully convinced to admit the truth and the efficacy of this historic document which awakened the Dalit (Socially Suppressed) people of Punjab to the birth of a revolutionary wave laying the true foundation of a social revolution on this land. Before sharing any further comments on this subject, I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. C. L. Chumber for his devoted efforts in rejuvenating this noble cause to its original heights. I also feel the responsibility of expressing my obligations and thanks to all those friends and comrades who have helped in elevating the life history of our savior (Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia) through their writings which have provided a new vigor of optimism to the modern crusades for social justice. I strongly feel and believe that this Souvenir (Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia 99th Birth Anniversary Souvenir 1985) will go a long way in helping the navigational push to the crusades and movements like BAMCEF and DS-4 guiding like a luminous star.

It is true that for a long time lot of people were unaware about what Ad-Dharm stood for, who was the founder of this great movement and what was the tenacity of their goal and purpose which made them join hands with Dr Ambedkar movement to march together in their endeavors to reach a common goal.

It gives me immense pleasure to know about the Modus Operandi of these issues after reading this Souvenir. The greatest achievement of this Souvenir, in itself, makes it a document of the Dalit history. It is our misfortune that we are deprived of our greatly enriched traditional heritage. During the Congress rule we were alienated from our original identity and we, influenced by mean and unworthy human behavior, started worshipping gods and goddesses and other imaginary incarnations supported by so called holy people and Manuwadi followers, like our own parents whereas we didn't know even the names of our social crusaders. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a wonderful and a gifted genius and even a person with just a rudimentary knowledge about him was able to assert and say that Ambedkar was our savior and benefactor raising a further question about where these aforesaid gods and goddesses were when Dr. Ambedkar was not around. And why they did not give us the rights we have now with the efforts of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia. Lots of Dalits don't even know his name. Great social leaders and dignitaries like Jyoti Rao Phule, Periyar

Ramaswamy, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia have been deliberately eclipsed in the dark pages of history by the supporters of Manuwadi beliefs. But now the enlightened sections of Dalit Samaj are heading their way in the right direction and Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Souvenir of 1985 is a significant milestone in that road ahead.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia was an unintimidated soldier of the Gadar movement. He was convicted



with death sentence and had to remain in exile and hiding but survived for the sake of his country. He founded Ad-Dharm Mandal and joined hands with Babasaheb and kept struggling for their just rights. He undertook fast unto death against Mahatma Gandhi's to safeguard his rights. He fought for reservation of seats and was able to win seven out of eight seats of Members of the Legislative Assembly, for untouchables. He also agitated for the rights of ownership of property. For safeguarding the right of admission to schools he helped in his efforts to establish Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar as a national leader of the untouchables against Mr. Gandhi. He also appeared before the Lothian Committee along-with thousands of his followers to assert the claims and the heritage of the untouchables. He did a great job in persuading the untouchables to register as Ad-Dharmi instead of Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians. He was able to make his followers understand the fact of being slaves of the slaves and helped them choose the right path of social revolution. He presented a charter of demands before the Royal Commission and the Governor of Punjab. He was also able to obtain exemption from the payment of school fees for children. He identified and exposed those cheap touts who were engaged in subversive activities against the interests of the untouch-

ables. He started the publication of Adi-Danka Newspaper and became a very close associate of Gadri Baba, Sohan Singh Bhakna. He also joined hands with Gadri Baba Gurdit Singh and supported the cause of Kama Gata Maru. He told his people that Guru Ravidass Ji, Maharishi Valmik Ji, Guru Namdev Ji and Satguru Kabir Ji were their spiritual Gurus. He emphatically told our people and the British rulers that we were the native inhabitants of this country, whereas the Manuwadi Aryans (Supporters of Manusmriti) came from foreign lands. Besides this he was also very instrumental in the removal of legal conditions of property ownership to be registered as a voter.

So it is also tells us about the history of those Dalit elements of Punjab who get attracted and remain busy to be known as members of the Congress party or Harijans

Some of the Touts in our society, who have no regard for the sanctity of their ancient heritage, betrayed 85 % of the Dalit community who can never forget this treacherous act.

Now the Dalit community which was once victimized and exploited is fully awake and is on the crossways. The descendants of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar and Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia are marching ahead towards their goal with a renewed vigor and optimism and that day is not far when we will be able to turn the tide in our fight for equality and restoration of human rights.

In the end I would again like to appeal to the entire Dalit fraternity to read the above mentioned Souvenir (**Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia 99th Birth Anniversary Souvenir 1985**) and march ahead with the inspiration of historic crusades of your fearless heroes. I also feel with confidence that, besides fulfilment of his social responsibility, the publication of a special edition of this Souvenir by Mr. C. L. Chumber on Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia under scores a significant message from Bahujan Samaj which has portrayed the heroic deeds and disintegrating history of a forgotten Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia hero of Dalit brotherhood. So it is imperative to know your past before you can contemplate to build any new history.

Bahujan Samaj deserves to be congratulated and admired for this sublime message.

Prof. Gurnam Singh Muktsar
originally published in Punjabi
"Bahujan Sandesh" Chandigarh 14th July, 1985
(Courtesy: "Desh Doaba" Weekly Newspaper
(California) USA

My observations on the above text

While translating the above response from Prof. Gurnam Singh Muktsar on the publication of "Historic Souvenir" (**Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia 99th Birth Anniversary Souvenir 1985**) published by late Mr. C. L Chumber in 1985 in commemoration of the crusades of Gadri Baba Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, I felt an inner urge to put my personal observations on record about the prominent role of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia as portrayed by Prof. Gurnam Singh Muktsar based on his heroic deeds depicted in the Souvenir.

Mr. C. L. Chumber has been one of the prime exponents of the role of Ad-Dharm Mandal founded and pioneered by great Gadri Baba Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia in the first quarter of the 20th century. He gave a new identity to the untouchable communities under a new banner with Ad-Dharm as their new religion. They were the original people of India and the Aryans came from outside and enslaved us for centuries.

Prof. Gurnam Singh has also been very vocal in illustrating the exploitation of the untouchables at the hands of the Brahminical society who believed and prac-

ticed the teachings of Manusmriti.

He has also emphasized the fact that crusades of Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Baba Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia and the institutions like BAMCEF and DS4 and Bahujan Samaj Party founded by Manyavar Kanshi Ram had the same goal to reach.

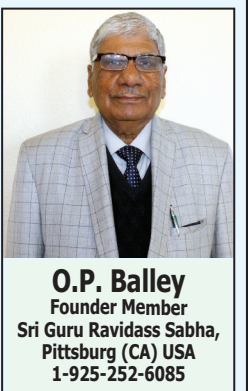
Prof. Mark Juergensmeyer Director of the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies and professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, in his Book " Religious Rebels in the Punjab-The Ad Dharm Challenge to Caste" has given a very elaborate definition of the movement led by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia for a social change in India in early 1920's. Professor Mark met Babu Mangu Ram personally as well as many other social and political activists with intimate knowledge about the movement. According to Professor Mark the movement had both political and religious implications at the time.

Professor Ronki Ram former Dean and Head of the Department of Political Science, Panjab University Chandigarh has also provided a vast treasure of knowl-

edge about Ad Dharm movement and its role as a social uprising. I appreciate both Professor Mark Juergensmeyer and Professor Ronki Ram for providing a reservoir of knowledge and information about Baba Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia and his contributions for social transformation in India.

As already mentioned by me in my previous writings I had a rare opportunity of meeting Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar and Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia face to face which has helped me a lot to have an intimate grasp of their unrelenting efforts for social liberation.

Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber Editor-in-Chief "Ambedkar Times" and "Desh Doaba" weeklies is also engaged in his laudable efforts to revive the legacy of a forgotten hero (Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia) in the emancipation of the down- trodden sections of society and I wish him a crowning success in his endeavors.



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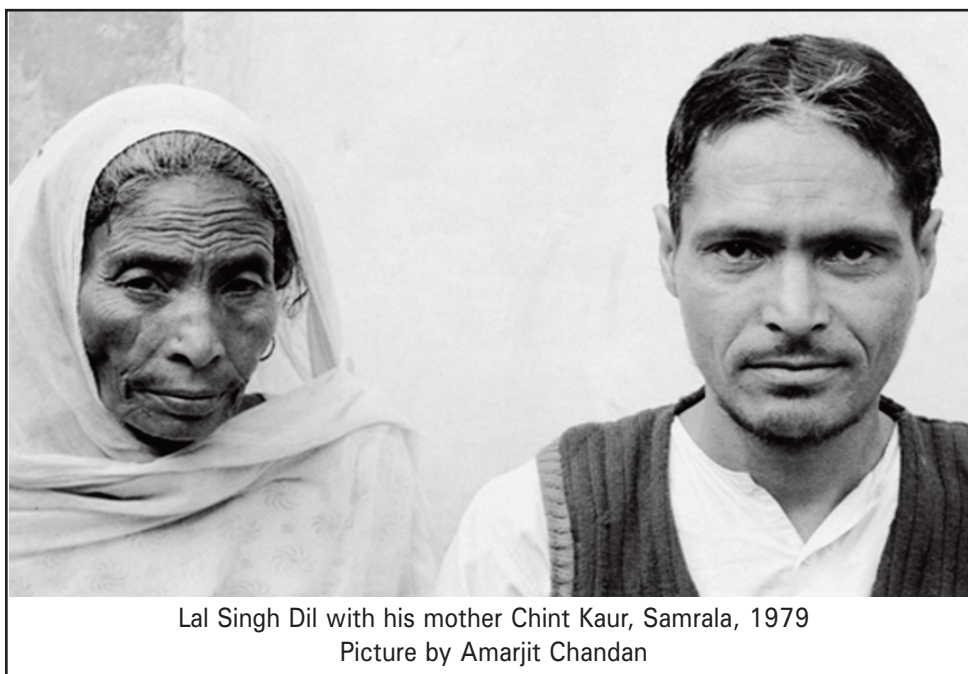
Lal Singh Dil: Poet of Masses

Lal Singh Dil (April 11, 1943 – August 14, 2007), revolutionary poet, left an indelible mark through his poetry on the struggle for equality, social justice and freedom that began in late 1960s in Punjab, popularly known as Naxalite lehar (movement). He was born at his maternal village, Ghungrali Sikhān, near Samrala, a small town in Punjab on the Chandigarh-Ludhiana highway. He belonged to a Dalit family, Ramdassia Chamār (an ex-untouchable community of tanners). Dalits were mostly deprived of agricultural land and other sources of livelihood. Like other community members, the mainstay of Dil's family was manual labour on the agricultural lands of their village farmers. During off-seasons, landless Dalits earn their livelihood through various forms of manual wage works, such as labouring at construction sites or other manual-intensive daily-wage work. His father Raunqi Ram worked as a daily wager throughout his life. During a conversation with Gayatri Rajwade, Dil recalled a time when his grandmother used to sit and grind wheat the whole day for a single paisa. And in Dil's own words, "[a]t the end of the day, we would dust our clothes, collect the wheat stuck on our clothes and mix that with water and drink it before sleeping" (based on forwarded (April 7, 2021) email from Nirupama Dutt to Amarjit Chandan dated August 13, 2007).

Despite extreme poverty at home, Dil's mother Chint Kaur sent him to school at Samrala. The atmosphere at the school was not very congenial to Dil. He wrote: "When I graduated to the higher classes, I started picking up some skills which thrilled me. I especially liked to trace out a picture and then shade it. I traced an image of Ravidas Bhagat, which showed him standing. Below the image was a pair of shoes and some cobbler's tools. The teacher in charge of the class was intrigued looking at the drawing and then laughed at it with disdain that was shared by the students. I brought the picture home in my satchel." (Simran Kaler available at: <https://poetlalsinghdil.wordpress.com/category/simran-kaler/> accessed on April 8, 2021). Against all odds, Dil became the first matric qualified member of his clan. His mother sold her ear-rings to enable him to reach college to become a schoolteacher. He studied for a year in A.S. College, Khanna, closeto his hometown. Thereafter, he got enrolled in Junior Teachers' Training course at SHG College in Behlolpur, again near his hometown, but had to leave after two years without completing the course. He also joined a Gyani, an honours course in Punjabi literature, but again had to quit without completing it. From his school days, Dil had to support his studies along with by working part-time as a manual wage labourer/herder as well as providing tuition; this was likely one of the main reasons behind the repeated

failures to complete several study courses which he had joined after successfully qualifying in the matriculation examination.

Along with extreme poverty, Dil also experienced social exclusion and caste-based oppression during different intervals in his life. He recalled various instances of such bitter experiences in his autobiography *Dastan* (The Story). How as a small boy of five or six, he was whip-lashed and driven out of a landowner's fields in his village for daring to bathe at his well was just one such instance which expressed the gruesome scale of the prevalence of caste-based oppression in a society that otherwise boast of its casteless social



Lal Singh Dil with his mother Chint Kaur, Samrala, 1979
Picture by Amarjit Chandan

order. He also narrated how a comrade, a senior dominant caste writer, took away a jug of water when he tried to reach it at a party meeting, and how he felt deeply humiliated to learn that the mother of his female classmate, whom he was very fond of, had 'purified' the tumbler in which he had given tea, by casting it in the fire of the household hearth. Amarjit Chandan, a close comrade of Dil, writes in his "A Complete Story of an Incomplete Journey", an introduction to the *Dastan*, how Dil had suffered and exposed graphically the prevalence of the arrogance of caste superiority in his locality, at his school, and in the Naxalite organizations and even in police custody.

Though Dil was forced to withdraw from his studies, he continued to reflect critically on his surroundings. He continued to capture subtle nuances of the exploitative system around him till his last moment. The medium that he chose to give expression to his experiences and observations during his struggleful life was the subtlety of poetry. He was one of the most popular poets of the Naxalite movement in East Punjab, with a gravitas to match. As narrated in his autobiography, Lal Singh Dil was subjected to many inhuman tortures during police custody, and remained in jail for a long period of time. It was during his imprisonment that his first collection of radical poetry entitled *Satluj di Hava* (The

Satluj Breeze) was published in 1971. His poetry immediately became an icon of the revolutionary struggle in Punjab as well as of the sorrows and sufferings of the poor and Dalits in the state.

After his release from the jail, Dil went underground where he spent about 15 years of his active life. He did all sorts of labour to keep himself and his struggle going on. He did not ask any help from any quarter. During free time from his hard manual labour, he continued to write and penned two more books: *Bahut Sāre Suraj* (So Many Suns), 1982; *Satthar* (A Sheaf), 1997; and an autobiography *Dastān*. His entire poetry is available in a collection entitled *Naglok* (The World of the Nagas) published in 1998 and 2008.

Nagas were the sons of the soil. It is commonly believed that Nagas were snake worshippers and the sovereign rulers of their land before the alleged arrival of the alien Aryans. He talked about them nostalgically in some of his poems. Two of them – *Sham da Rung* (The Shades of Evening) and *Lamma Larra* (The Long Caravan) are reproduced below. A narrated long poem called *Billa Aj Phir Aaya* (Billa Visited Again Today) was published posthumously in 2009.

Dil had started writing poetry at his early age, while he was still studying at school. That some of his poems were published in reputed vernacular magazines like *Preetlari*, *Nagmani* and *Lakeer*, even before the publication of *Satluj di Hava* (The *Satluj Breeze*) in 1971, his maiden collection of poetry, proved his hold over intricacies of poetry writing. His life and poetry, writes Nirupama Dutt, a writer and journalist: "... became grist to the mill of revolutionary politics, which worked happily for Dil, as he envisioned a new order free of caste and creed" (Scroll.in, 23 June 2019. Available at: <https://scroll.in/article/927571/i-saw-how-he-sought-to-break-the-chains-of-caste-nirupama-dutt-on-translating-lal-singh-dil> accessed on April 7, 2021). Though familiar with Dil's poetry earlier, Nirupama came to know about the man himself only in the 1990s, when Dil returned to Samrala after spending many years out of Punjab (Scroll.in, 23 June 2019). By that time the spring thunder was almost over and many of the activists had resumed their normal course of life. Some of them had settled into respectable positions in the higher eche-

lons of government, media, academic and even business. A few of them settled abroad. However, for Comrade Dil, the only refuge was his mud house in his caste ghetto at Samrala, and the citadel of his thoughts and philosophy;

he was quintessentially a gyan yogi. He was a lonely fellow, Gulzar Mohammad Gorla, one of the closest associates of Dil in Samrala, told me during an informal conversation a few days after his passing away. He also mentioned that with the financial support from some of his comrades abroad, Dil opened a small tea-stall near the bus terminal close to his home in Samrala. It was also during this time that Dil used to spend long periods in solitude in the cremation grounds of his hometown for reasons best known to him. Nirupama met him at this stage, and since then she has been writing intermittently about Dil in newspapers and journals.

After Dil's death in 2007, Nirupama translated his autobiography and selected poetry that introduced him widely beyond his Punjabi speaking region. In 2017, Trilok Chand Ghai, an academic of Delhi University, translated 100 poems of Dil, entitled *Lal Singh Dil: Selected Poems – exclusion, deprivation and nothingness / translated from Punjabi* (Delhi: LG Publishers). Five of these poems were published in the reputed translation magazine MPT (Modern Poetry in Translation), 3 (18) – *Transitions*, Oxford UK, 2012, and two of them were reproduced in MPT's golden jubilee anniversary publication *Centres of Cataclysm*, Blood Axe Books in 2016. Writing about Ghai's translation David Constantine, poet editor, MPT observed 'And Trilok Chand Ghai's English serves that cause. Translators carry fraternity across the frontiers of space and time. Again and again, in these translations, there is a tone, an accent, a phrase as in music, that will touch readers of English as the poet himself does through his mother tongue.' Harbhajan Singh, Punjabi poet and critic expressing his opinion about Dil's poetry writes: 'These poems don't give us joy; they shame us. The poems that give us pleasure work to stabilize the already established values. The shaming poems uproot a person from his fixed position and challenge him to renew himself.' On the same back cover flap of the book, Amarjit Chandan wrote: 'Contemplating the word images of the people portrayed by Lal one is reminded of Amrita Sher-Gil's paintings'. His poetry is full of images of hard life, poverty, isolation, struggle, grief for the hapless, and faith in the victory of the toiling people. He wrote extensively on the *Ghandilasand Tapprivasi* (ever roaming vagrants



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Lal Singh Dil: Poet of Masses

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(itinerants) and fuel-gatherer nomad girls. Below are reproduced two of his poems Sham da Rung (*The Shades of Evening*) and Lamma Larra (*The Long Caravan*) that crisply depict the life of the *Ghandilasand Tapprivasi*:

The Shades of Evening

*The shades of evening like many before
The paths are heading for settlements
The lake turns back from offices
thrown out of work
The lake is drinking its thirst
Some city has set off on the road to
the village
Throwing off all wages someone is
leaving*

*Dogs are dear to young men
fancying loving faces in palaces
is not for them*

*These starving ones have left behind
yet another's land*

The long caravan moves on

His poetry valiantly confronted the deeply entrenched caste-based social exclusion and other variants of oppressive dominant social structures. Dil sarcastically touched the subtle nerve of caste that followed its victims even after death in his often quoted poem *Zāt* (Caste) reproduced below:

Caste

*You love me, do you?
Even though you belong to another*

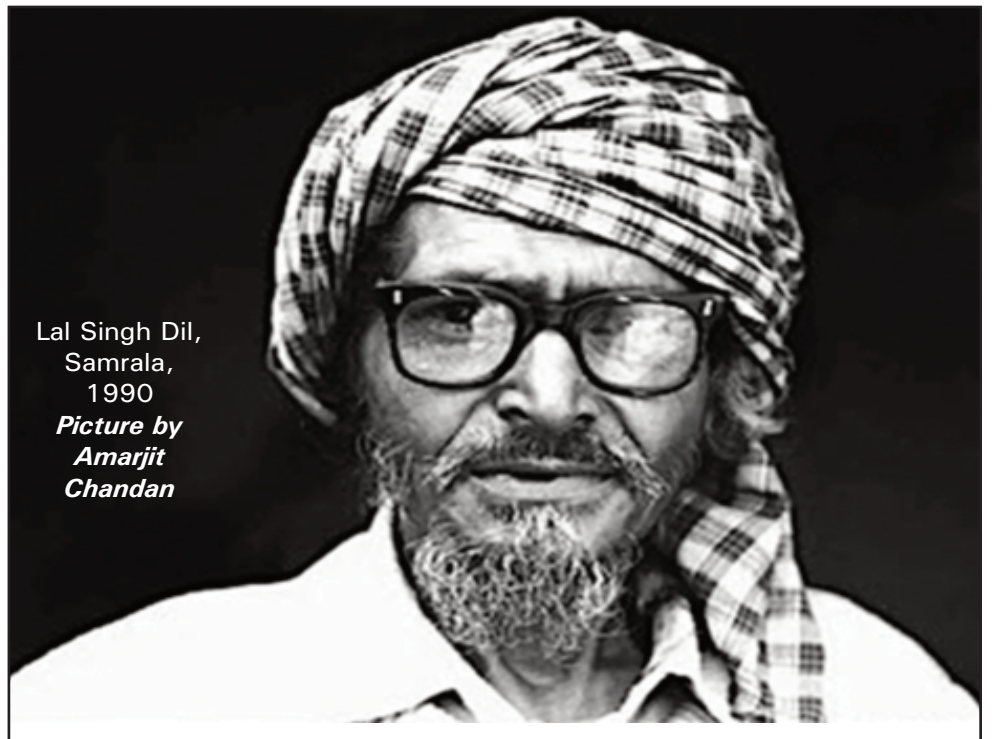
Dil was a humble and visionary poet never hankered after fame, and was happy to work incognito. He was often present in progressive programmes in different parts of the state, but never made efforts to make his presence felt. I vividly remember him once standing so unassumingly on a side of the entrance to the seminar hall of Amardeep Singh Shergill memorial College, Mukandpur (SBS Nagar, Punjab). Neither did he made any gesture nor did any of the visiting dignitaries take notice of him. One of the participants whom I was accompanying, conveyed this to me about him. Dil used to

Available at <https://scroll.in/article/927571/i-saw-how-he-sought-to-break-the-chains-of-caste-nirupama-dutt-on-translating-lal-singh-dil> accessed on April 7, 2021).

What distinguished Lal Singh Dil from his contemporary revolutionary poets was his sole concern not only for the lowest of the low, but also for those who were severely marginalised and thrown out of the society in toto, and forced to live vigrant life. He deeply sympathised with the landless manual workers, daily wagers, nomadic men and women, especially the black cloth-donning girls who gathered fuel to keep



From left: Lal Singh Dil, Amarjit Chandan and Prem Parkash, Samrala.



Lal Singh Dil,
Samrala,
1990
Picture by
Amarjit
Chandan

*Someone comes wiping on his dhoti
the blood of weak animals on his goad
The shades of evening like many before*

The Long Caravan

*Leaving behind another's land
Loaded with the humiliation of rebukes
the long caravan moves on
along with the lengthening
shadows of evening
Children on donkeys' backs,
fathers cradling dogs in their arms
Mothers carrying cauldrons
on their backs
their children sleeping in those caul-
drons
The long caravan moves on
carrying on their shoulders
the bamboo of their huts
Who are these
starving Aryans
which India's land
are they headed to occupy*

*caste. But do you know
Our elders do not even cremate their
dead at the same place*

His poetry also boldly communicated the vivid expression of his verbal revolt against the oppressive dominant social structures. Dil audaciously underlined the presence of rebellion beneath the repression in another widely lauded poem *Shabad* (Words):

Words

*Words have been uttered long before
us,
And for long after us,
Chop off every tongue if you can,
But the words have still been uttered*

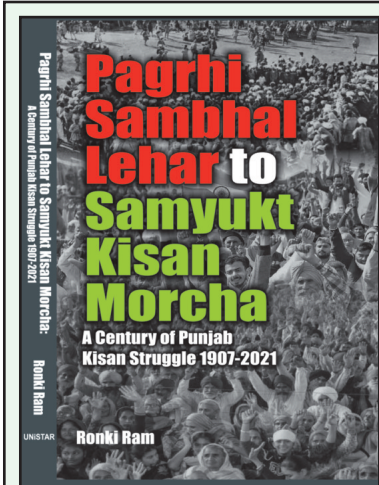
(Translated from the Punjabi by Nirupama Dutt. Available at: <https://parchanve.wordpress.com/category/authors/lal-singh-dil/accessed-on-April-8,-2021>).

keep himself busy in his own unique way and was never heard indulging in self-propagation as well as complaining about his personal concerns.

He was reticent to the core, but at the same time there existed a volcano of revolutionary thoughts and ideals within his frail physical frame. He wanted to see radical political transformation during his lifetime, and was impatient to put an end to the sufferings of those considered the lowest of the low. Nirupama said that 'Dil was looking for the revolution that would break all shackles. In his poetry he became the sensitive spurned child and engaged with god, empowered as he was by hopes of thundering spring.' How sweet are these words dedicated to god. I wish my last words would be, 'I have complete faith in you!' I want to steal this line and dedicate it to the Revolution' (Scroll.in, 23 June 2019.

the fire burning in the hearths outside their thatched huts under the open blue sky.

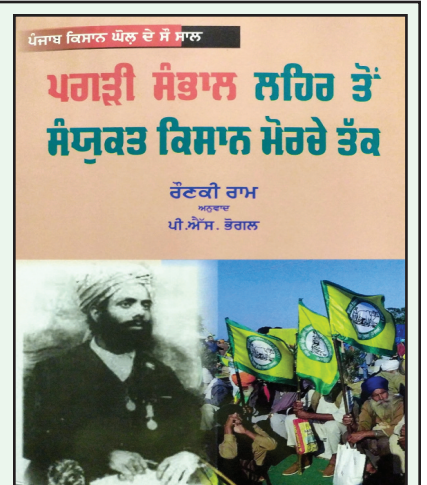
Though he was not able to continue his study and reach higher education, his deep association with the existential harsh situations at the grassroots level taught him precious lessons about the varied dimensions of life – his bitter experiences at school and college, in the Naxalite movement, police custody, and day-to-day social interaction across religions, imbued and enriched his poetry with subtle nuances, anecdotes, signs and symbols, which enabled readers to see beyond the immediate and catch a glimpse, however fleeting, of life as seen through very different eyes, the eyes of the oppressed and the wretched of this earth. Dil's poetry, in fact, is the voice of the voiceless and the cradle of struggle for an egalitarian social order.



Books Available

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

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Post-Pulwama Indo-Pak Trade embargo: impact on Punjab Economy

Ranjit Singh Ghuman 1,
Haqiqat Singh 2

Abstract: Indo-Pak trade came to a complete halt as a result of India's imposition of 200 percent custom-duty on imports from Pakistan in February 2019 due to Pulwama tragedy and Pakistan's imposition of complete trade-embargo in August 2019 as a reaction to the abrogation of Article 370. This article examines the impact of post-Pulwama trade-curbs on Punjab economy as its trade with Pakistan through Wagah-border also stopped.

Both the then newly carved out countries in August 1947 had huge stake in each other's trade on the eve of Partition and continued to be so for quite some years. However, their post-independence trade relations have always been subject to a face-off between economic rationality and politico-security 'rationality' and the latter had always been the deciding factor. The 9-year long trade embargo, driven by three weeks of

are also coming in the way of realising their mutual trade potentialities (Gill and Madaan, 2015).

This is despite the various confidence building measures (CBMs) which have always been the victim of 'snake and ladder' game (at '99', a 'poisonous' snake stings and the entire efforts fall back to zero i.e. back to the square) being played by these two neighbouring countries. Significantly, India had granted most favoured nation (MFN) status in 1996 to Pakistan for trade purpose under WTO. Unfortunately, Pakistan so far has not granted MFN status to India even though it has granted MFN status to all other countries trading under the WTO trade regime. In view of the Pulwama-incident and Imposition of trade-embargo by Pakistan, India also withdrew the MFN status to Pakistan.

Nonetheless, the relevance and importance of Indo-Pak trade needs to be understood in its strate-

have hardly been governed by economic rationality. Significantly, Indo-China trade did not witness such curbs even though there are serious ongoing differences on the issue of borders.

Despite a huge trade potential of bilateral trade, their formal bilateral trade increased from US \$ 250 million in 2003 to US\$ 2.4 billion in 2013. The actual trade between them during the recent years, however, has been oscillating between US\$ 2.2 billion and US\$ 2.6 billion; far below the potential trade. The data shows that India's exports to Pakistan are much larger than its imports from Pakistan. Hence, the balance of trade has been heavily in favour of India (Table 1). India's exports to Pakistan varied between Rs. 11, 35,211 lakhs (2014-15) and Rs. 14, 42,651 lakhs (2018-19). Its imports from Pakistan varied between Rs. 2, 88,450 lakhs (2015-16) and Rs. 3, 47,648 lakhs (2018-19). The total trade varied between Rs. 14, 39,278 lakhs (2014-15) and Rs. 17, 90,299 lakhs in 2018-19. The balance of trade varied between Rs. 3, 24,680 lakhs (2017-18) and Rs. 11, 40,203 lakhs (2015-16).

a significant place and is of strategic importance for Punjab and its neighbouring states.

Though there are a number of import items through ICP Attari, yet, dry dates, cement, gypsum, aluminium ore, soda, aluminium ore and lime stone are the major Indian imports from Pakistan which account for nearly 79 per cent of the total imports. India's major exports to Pakistan through ICP Attari include cotton yarn, vegetables, straw-reapers and high density poly ethylene (HDPE).

Impact of trade curbs on Punjab Economy

To estimate the impact of post-Pulwama Indo-Pak trade-embargo, we conducted a field survey during August 2019 and July 2020 (peak period of Covid19) but the estimates pertain to 16 months from March 2019-June 2020. The data revealed that the trade-embargo hit hard the importers and exporters in terms of income and employment and has adversely impacted the Punjab economy. Various stakeholders (exporters, importers, manufacturers, truck-operators, porters, road-side eateries, oil-filling stations, weighing-bridges, motorcycle agencies, retailers & wholesalers, private-schools, health clinics, repair-shops, auto-dealers and liquor shops, tea & beverages, etc.) have suffered huge losses in terms of



Ranjit Singh Ghuman

Table 1: India's Total Trade with Pakistan (Rs. Lakh)

year	Exports	Imports	Total Trade	Balance of Trade
2014-15	1,135,211	304,067	1,439,278	831,144
2015-16	1,428,653	288,450	1,717,103	1,140,203
2016-17	1,222,235	304,877	1,527,112	917,358
2017-18	1,239,711	315,030	1,554,741	924,681
2018-19	1,442,651	347,648	1,790,299	1095,003

Source: DGCI&S, Government of India, Ministry of commerce, Department of Commerce
<https://commerce-app.gov.in/eid/s/iecmt.asp>

war in 1965, created space for their new trade partners. In the process, they lost opportunity to reap benefits of their huge trade potentials. Post-Pulwama (16 February 2019) imposition of 200 per cent custom duty by India on imports from Pakistan and Pakistan's imposition of trade-embargo (9 August 2019) is also the manifestation of their 75 years' hostile-legacy. Unfortunately, even after 75 years of their independence (for which they struggled together and now celebrating the 75th anniversary of their independence) from the British Empire, their economic and trade relations continue to be the victim of their historical legacy and political-irrationality.

Despite the resumption of trade in 1975, the Wagah-Attari land route for Indo-Pakistan trade was opened only in 2005. The truck movement on this route was resumed on 1st October 2007 (Gill and Madaan, 2015). The integrated check post (ICP) at Attari (at Wagah border) was inaugurated on 13th April 2012 with provisions to extend facilities to do fast and cost-effective land-route trade. The ICP introduced efficiency to the movement of goods between the two countries. However, Pakistan's imports via Wagah border were limited only to 138 items (w.e.f. 28 January 2014) on the positive list approach which is a drag on the potential trade. The non-tariff barriers

gic geo-politico-economic context rather than simply viewing its volume and value. According to a World Bank report ((Kathuria, 2018), the bilateral annual trade potential between India and Pakistan is to the tune of US\$ 37 billion. At the time of inauguration of Integrated

Check-Post (ICP) Attari in 2012, the two countries set a goal of US\$ 6 billion trade between them. In the Delhi meeting (18 January 2014), two countries saw the trade potential of US\$ 10 billion and the Trade Ministers of both the countries agreed that their closer trade ties would help lay the ground for lowering political tensions between them. Ghuman (1986) estimated that their bilateral trade could have been around 7 billion US\$ in 1995. Clearly, there is huge under-realisation of bilateral trade-potentialities between the two neighbouring countries and thereby the resultant mutual trade-benefits. The realization of latent trade potential and the benefits thereof would depend on their mutual faith and friendly ties, which

trade with Pakistan through Wagah-Attari border accounted for 28.41 per

cent of total trade with Pakistan during 2016-17, 24.36 per cent during 2017-18 and 19.13 per cent during 2018-19. On an average it comes out to be 24 percent of India's total trade with Pakistan. During three years (2016-17 and 2018-19) nearly 66 percent of the total Indo-Pak trade through Wagah border was through road and the 34 percent through rail. However, rail is preferred mode for exports as 60 percent of total exports have been sent though rail-route, may be because the positive list of Pakistan is not applicable to rail-route. Contrary to it, 95 percent of the imports have come through road during the same period. Nonetheless, India's land-borne trade, through Wagah-Attari border, with Pakistan occupies

Table-2 reveals that India's total trade with Pakistan through Wagah-Attari border accounted for 28.41 per

Table 2: Share of India's trade through Wagah-Attari Border in India's Total Trade with Pakistan (Rs. Lakh)

Year	Exports			Imports			(2+5) as % of (1+2)
	Total	Wagah-Attari Border	2 as % of 1	Total	Wagah-Attari Border	5 as % of 4	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2016-17	1222235	251672	20.59	304877	182269	59.78	28.41
2017-18	1239711	198215	15.98	315030	180512	57.30	24.36
2018-19 (11 months)	1442651	177555	12.30	347648	164865	47.42	19.13

Source: Ghuman RS and Haqiqat Singh (2020), Economic Implications of trade-curbs between India and Pakistan through Wagah-Border

cent of total trade with Pakistan during 2016-17, 24.36 per cent during 2017-18 and 19.13 per cent during 2018-19. On an average it comes out to be 24 percent of India's total trade with Pakistan. During three years (2016-17 and 2018-19) nearly 66 percent of the total Indo-Pak trade through Wagah border was through road and the 34 percent through rail. However, rail is preferred mode for exports as 60 percent of total exports have been sent though rail-route, may be because the positive list of Pakistan is not applicable to rail-route. Contrary to it, 95 percent of the imports have come through road during the same period. Nonetheless, India's land-borne trade, through Wagah-Attari border, with Pakistan occupies

income and employment due to Indo-Pak trade-embargo and the consequent closure of ICP-Attari for trade with Pakistan. The entrepreneurs, truck-owners and traders were unable to repay the instalments of loans. A large number of truck owners had to incur the financial loss due to distress-sale of their trucks at a much discounted price to repay the loan-instalments and many trucks are lying idle and getting depreciated. The parents had to withdraw children from private schools, the seriously-ill people are suffering for want of treatment, and many are facing mild to serious depression.

As per our moderate estimates, the trade curbs have
(Contd.. on next page)

Post-Pulwama Indo-Pak Trade embargo: impact on Punjab Economy

(Continue from page 4)

caused a direct income loss of Rs. 7520 lakh to the importers, exporters and manufacturers-cum-exporters of only 6 major items (dry dates, gypsum, rock salt, straw reapers and cotton yarn). Significantly, all these firms are located in Punjab. The annual average trade of these 6 items (first 4 import items and later 2 export items) during 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 was Rs. 50130 lakh. This comes out to be 12.77 per cent of India's total trade (annual average of above three years, Rs. 392670 lakh) with Pakistan through ICP-Attari. Applying the thumb rule of 15 per cent margin on Rs. 392670 lakh total trade, the annual average income loss to Punjab for not having trade through ICP-Attari is Rs. 58900 lakh; for 16 months' period under study (March 2019-June 2020) it comes out to be Rs. 78533 lakh. Applying the same rule to India's total trade with Pakistan, the annual average income loss to India (for not having trade with Pakistan) comes out to be Rs. 243610 (calculated on the annual average trade of the last 3 years) lakh. It is presumed that Pakistan, too, would have suffered the same loss. Thus, together these two neighbouring countries are incurring an annual income loss of about Rs. 487220 lakh. During the last 42 months the total loss comes out to be Rs. 1705270 lakh.

Besides, the transporters (Rs. 930 lakh), the shopkeepers (Rs. 1200 lakh), Porters (Rs. 6000 lakh) Drivers and Cleaners (Rs. 1200 lakh), Auto spare-part and repair shops (Rs. 510 lakh), mechanics (Rs. 150 lakh), Dhabas (Rs. 30 lakh), Filling stations (Rs. 22 lakh), Weigh-bridges (Rs. 5 lakh), liquor shops (Rs. 6 lakh), other workers (Rs. 72 lakh) have lost their business and work. This adds up to Rs. 10125 lakh per annum; Rs. 13460 lakh during the first 16 months of trade curbs. This, along with the income loss (Rs. 78533 lakh) incurred by the importers and exporters of Punjab during the last 16 months, comes out to be Rs. 91993 lakh. This is mainly the income loss to the Punjab economy. Significantly, the above figures do not capture the entire income loss as there may be many other shops and service providers who might be providing goods and services to these stakeholders. Besides, about 12000 workers of Punjab have lost their jobs because of trade curbs. This does not include indirect employment loss which may also be of the same magnitude. Needless to say, that the Covid-19 driven lockdown must have pushed them into more vulnerable situation.

The total annual average income loss to all the stakeholders (government agencies, traders and other private stakeholders) for not having trade through ICP-Attari due to trade curbs comes out to be Rs. 120641 lakh. For the 16 months of trade curbs this income loss comes out to be Rs. 160855 lakh. Since March 2019 these estimates (42 months trade-embargo since 16 February 2019 which still continues), come out to be Rs. 422244.38 lakh. The monthly average income loss comes out to be Rs. 10053.44 lakh. This, however, does not include the financial loss to the manufacturers-cum-exporters and truck-owners whose investment has been rendered idle, besides maintenance cost. Leaving aside the government revenue, most of the income loss is to the stakeholders in Punjab. Some small scale manufacturers of agricultural implements in the Malwa region (especially Saron Mechanical works of Jagatjit Group) have suffered a loss of Rs 60 crore per annum, with a huge potential in future as the product is in high demand) because of trade embargo.

The exporters of cotton (Nahar Spinning Mills and Vardhman Group located at Ludhiana) are also suffering from an unused capacity of specially designed spindles of particular counts suiting to the requirements of Pakistan importers. The consequent operation of inverse-multiplier is further aggravating the financial losses.

Ironically, despite the trade embargo, informal trade between India and Pakistan has always been there via third countries such as Dubai. However, Punjab being the border and landlocked state, has always been the worst sufferer of hostile Indo-Pak relations as trade originating from Punjab and neighbouring states becomes economically unviable (mainly due to high transport and transshipment costs) as compared to states having proximity to the sea-ports. Exports originating from Punjab can reach Pakistan through Wagah border (ICP-Attari) in a much lesser time and at a much lower transport and transshipment costs as compared to via sea-ports and via third country. Besides Punjab, the other states of north-west India also benefit from this trade route because of lower transport and transshipment costs.

Way-ahead

Though international trade relations are in the jurisdiction of Union Governments yet the provincial governments (whose development is being adversely impacted by trade embargo) in both the countries must persuade their respective

union governments to acknowledge the economic rationality of trade so that both the countries could benefit from their mutual trade. The strengthening of trade has huge potential of growth and employment not only for Punjab but also for whole of north-west India. It is equally true for the Pakistan Punjab. Thus, notwithstanding their political animosity, both the neighbouring countries should act and behave in a rational manner and should resume to normal trade ties.

It needs to be understood, that monetary gains from their mutual trade may not be very large but there can be huge potential gains beyond trade. Both the countries can save a lot on their defence expenditure which they are incurring to match each other in military power (Ghuman, 1986; 2006, 2007; Masood, 2005). But this is possible only if they move from enmity to friendship. Unfortunately, ever since 1947, enmity has been over-shadowing normal diplomatic and political relations and peace has always been at the receiving end. Such an attitude has locked-up a lot of their scarce resources (mainly for unproductive purposes) which otherwise could have been used for productive purposes such as education, health and alleviation of poverty (Ghuman, 2005; Gill et al 2010). The politico-economic rationality demands that both the neighbouring countries must shed mistrust, hatred and fear-psychosis and translate traditional enmity into friendship.

This would be possible if we give peace a chance, as peace is pre-requisite to development (Singh, 2005). However, "the challenge is to reconcile the military aspirations of India and Pakistan with the peace process so that they could focus on fighting poverty and improving the quality of life of their people" (Masood, 2005). Eventually, it has the potentialities to provide trade-access to the Central Asia and Middle-East besides paving the way for developing friendly relations with neighbours. Instead of raising fences, India and Pakistan should work for politico-economic inter-dependence, which is a time-tested recipe of peace. The strengthening of economic and trade ties would also pave the way for solving their chronic, vexed and complex problems. In the 76th year of Independence let us have a new dawn on our bilateral relations and give peace a chance so that we may focus more on our pressing socio-economic issues and move forward.

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1 This article is based on our study 'Economic implications of trade curbs between India and Pakistan through Wagah border', commissioned by the Centre for Research in Rural & Industrial Development, Chandigarh.

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Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD



Goodie Takhar, PhD

Halla Bol on Castiest Mindset

Today's (August 17) Halla Bol TV debate show on Aaj Tak prompted me to pick up a current issue and write. The debate run and presented by a said to be a prominent TV journalist and Anchor, Anjana Om Kashyap, an iconic figure in the so called 'free and fair' media, now a days popularly called 'Godi Media', rightly or otherwise. Anyway, I have no intention to divert my focus from the issue which was the theme of the debate – Beating and killing of a 8 year old dalit boy by his own high caste teacher for touching the pitcher of his drinking water in Jalore in Ra-

the society and the authorities on the gruesome murder of the dalit boy by the castiest mindset and Manuwadi thinking. The cat was out of the bag and Anjana Om Kashyap was caught red handed doing glaring injustice to the dalits of India, a slur on the face of the so called free and fair press, said to be the fourth pillar of democracy.

Let us Halla Bol on the so called 'free and fair' media run by the likes of Anjana and her tribe. I raised this issue in my blog of August 15 with reference to PM Narendra Modi's address from the ramparts of Red Fort and wrote, "PM Narendra Modi termed India as 'the mother of democracy' in his long speech in the morning of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotav. But, on ground, our political

case of atrocities is registered. Most of the cases remain pending for a long time as the disposal and conviction rate is dismal.

The Halla Bol TV show was flagging this data repeatedly but without a word to condemn the 'castiest mindset' of the society except trying to get brownie points in corning the State Government for political mileage. Caste system has failed us. It is a total negation of our constitutional stipulations and moral high-ground which we tend to boast of as 'Hindu Culture'. Babasaheb faced the same inhuman treatment in his school days and also Babu Jagjivan Ram as underlined by her daughter Meira Kumar, "100 years ago my father Babu Jagjivan Ram was prohibited from drinking water in school

Vidyalaya in Rajasthan's Jalore. The N C S C might also do so. Nothing has changed on ground and, it seems,

nothing will change, unfortunately. The society, particularly the Hindu society has to stand up and accept the challenge rather than defending the indefensible. Dalits are up in arms against the inhuman and illegal treatment to the dalit boy as only the bearer knows where the shoe is pinching. But they are hapless and powerless people – Nakar Khane Mein Tuti Ki Awaz. Where those who shout from the roof are tops against the reservation for dalits and other affirmative actions?

Why the outfits like RSS, SGPC and others are blissfully silent who profess 'Samrasta' as per the Hindu code of conduct and 'Casteless' society as professed and propagated by the great Gurus. The visualized 'Developed India' is a far cry in the so called democratic polity and a compassionate society, if we go by the ground realities. Babasaheb Ambedkar rightly said that democracy had no meaning without establishing a casteless society – Jine Naaz Hai Hind Pe Woh Kahan Hain? This poetic assertion of Sahir Ludhianvi is as valid today as it was before. The society must rise to the occasion and Hall Bol on the Manuwadi Mindset and reform the society, if we want to see India a civilized and progressive country in the next 25 years. Governments and the Society will ignore this fact at their own peril.

How long may we play 'Goody-Goody'? I am sorry, to conclude, by quoting Allama Iqbal which may not be stomached by the mainstream of the society; let it be:
आह! शूद्र के लिये हकीमोसूतां गम-खाणा है
दर्द-ए-इंसानी से इस बस्ती का दलित बेगाना है।



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
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ਹੋਇਆ ਨਾਂ ਅਜਾਦ ਅਜੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਿਆ ਘੜਿਆ

ਹਾਲੇ ਵੀ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਡਾਹਦੇ ਵਖਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਫੜਿਆ
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ਬਿੰਕੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਯੁਗ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ
ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਘਨਾਉਣਾਂ ਰੂਪ ਦਿਸੇ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਦਾ
ਜਿੱਥੇ ਜਾਤੀਵਾਦ ਦਾ ਬੁਖਾਰ ਰਹੇ ਚੜਿਆ
ਹੋਇਆ ਨਾਂ ਅਜਾਦ ਅਜੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਿਆ ਘੜਿਆ
ਕਦੇ ਤੱਕ ਦੱਸ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਰਹੇਗਾ ਤੂੰ ਬਲੀਆਂ
ਫੁਲ ਮਰਝਾਏ ਨੇ ਉਦਾਸ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਕਲੀਆਂ
ਨਰਰਤ ਵਾਲਾ ਬਣ ਨਾਗ-ਸੀਨੇ ਲੜਿਆ
ਹੋਇਆ ਨਾਂ ਅਜਾਦ ਅਜੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਿਆ ਘੜਿਆ
ਕਿੱਥੇ ਹੈ ਅਜਾਦੀ ਤੇ ਅਜਾਦ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਕਹਿ ਦਿਆਂ
ਉਜੜੇ ਹਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੇ ਅਬਾਦ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਕਹਿ ਦਿਆਂ
ਕੀੜਾ ਭੇਦ ਭਾਵ ਦਾ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਵੜਿਆ
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ਰੱਤੁ ਰੰਧਾਵੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਨਿਤ ਸੋਚਦਾ
ਚੱਲਿਆ ਸੀ ਦੇਸ਼ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਆਕੇ ਖੜਿਆ
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jasthan. The mainstream media, particularly the electronic media, generally is not interested in such said to be 'trivial' issues, as usual, as it pertains to hapless dalits, the condemned lot even after 75 years of independence and abolition of untouchability legally and constitutionally. It was surprising as to how come Anjana Om Kashyap has shown magnanimity and professional honesty to Halla Bol on the condemnable and heinous crime when all others are blissfully silent and feigning to be ignorant of the fact that 'castiest mindset' was still as strong as it was before.

But, as expected, it was a fake and shameless attempt to encash the vested agenda by shooting from the shoulder of dalits and their misery. The Anchor was lop-sided with her motivated agenda to embarrass the Ashok Gehlot's Congress government to the benefit of BJP rather than condemning, questioning

democracy is yet to be transformed into social and economic democracy as visualized by Babasaheb Ambedkar. The speech was full of hope to make India a 'Developed country' in the next 25 years; a long way to go. At the same time, the speech tended to create further confusion with the assertions like 'Gulami Ka Ansh Mitana Hai' – eradicate the mindset of servitude. It would have been better and in order, if he had mentioned about the beating and killing of a dalit boy of 9 years by his school teacher in Jalore, the other day, just because he touched the water supposed to belong to some high caste in the school. Caste system, about which the society and the government, is blissfully silent, is the biggest negation of the very edifice of our constitution which professes; Equality, Liberty, Justice and Fraternity. The Hindi heartland, the states of UP, MP, Bihar, Rajasthan, are the states where atrocities on dalits are committed at a large scale. Every 10 minutes, a

from the pitcher meant for Savarna Hindus. It was a miracle his life was saved," and added, "Today, a nine-year-old #Dalit boy has been killed for the same reason. 75 long years after Independence, caste system remains our greatest enemy," Prof. A Ramaiah of TISS, a visiting fellow of London School of Economics has analyzed the issue and said, "Despite this legislation and the establishment of special commissions to monitor its working, caste discrimination and caste-based crimes persist throughout India. It is well documented that the police are reluctant to register complaints about caste-based discrimination and violence so national statistics on caste crimes against SCs are grossly underestimated figures. However, even this limited data is enough to understand the gravity of the problem."

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has taken suo motu cognizance of the death of the third standard student of Sarasvati



Dr. Onkar Singh Bindra passed away

Dr. Onkar Singh Bindra, PhD, a well known personality in the Sikh community and an esteemed Columnist of Ambedkar Times, passed away on Sunday August 21, 2022. He was 89 years old. The funeral is scheduled on Sunday 28 August from 11am-1pm at North Sacramento Funeral Home located at 725 El Camino Avenue, Sacramento. Following that, religious service will be held at the Sikh Temple located at 2301 Evergreen Avenue in West Sacramento from 2-4 PM.

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Halla Bol on Caste – Don't close eyes from the real situation

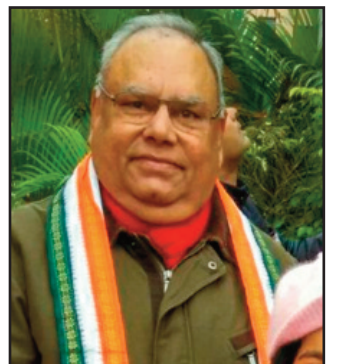
I wrote in my blog – Halla Bol on Castiest Mindset which I posted today, August 19, in the morning. By the evening, I got more perturbed. While getting supportive messages on the social media from many of my readers, I came across today itself at least three cases which sent shivers to my not so strong spine. Where are we heading? God save my Bharat. I

fully, the likes of Anjana Om Kashyap may come up with a TV debate on the Bahraich incident too as she did on the Jalore case in Rajasthan. But it seems unlikely as UP is UP. No further elaboration is needed.

2. A story in the Hindustan Times of today, August 19 further perturbed me. This time, the holy and sacrosanct judiciary is at work. A

the sexual harassment case commented that the offence of sexual harassment wasn't made out if the woman was wearing 'sexually proactive' clothes. Less said the better. Demands of reservation in the judiciary are not without basis, I think. The likes of Anmol Rattan Sidhu, the former Advocate General of Punjab who opposed reservation of dalits as Legal

Officers should read and understand. 3. By the evening yet



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
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hours to kill the monster of Caste and Social discrimination. There is no political will and social motivation to eradicate caste system. Instead of hitting the nail in the head, we are interested in defending the indefensible, the Manuwad. It is not a matter of water, food, clothes, house; it is a matter of respect and dignity.

share here the three cases:
1. In the Tribune (E-paper of August 19), I read a story around mid-day that a dalit boy was beaten by the school teacher in Bahraich district of UP for not paying on time the school fee of Rs.250 and later succumbed to the injuries and died. Now by the evening, when I made my mind to write about it, I could not find that story in the esteemed Tribune. It seems it has been removed. Obviously, it seems, the so called 'free and fair' media is at work. Hope-

lower judge in Kazhikode in Kerala, S. Krishna Kumar, adjudicated in a case of sexual harassment of a dalit woman and granted bail to the accused. Hon'ble Judge said that charges under SC and ST Prevention of Atrocities Act wouldn't, prima facie, didn't stand against Chandran (accused) because it "is highly unbelievable that he will touch the body of the victim fully knowing that she is a member of Scheduled Caste." It was also reported in the story that the same Judge in another judgment on

another gem appeared in a story in the Tribune - Piped water to all rural houses will end discrimination: PM after Jalore incident –The media story further stated, "Noting that top global institutions had predicted water scarcity as a major challenge of the 21st century, the PM said lack of water could become a major hurdle in the way of developed India too" and further added, "To tide over this crisis, we need to work 24 hours with the spirit

O ethereal bird!
It is better to starve to death,
Than to live on a prey that clogs thy wings in flight.



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