



Lord Buddha

The Greatest Son of India and World Peace Emblem

Buddhism is also known as Buddha Dhamma, which means 'teachings of the Awakened One' in Sanskrit and Pali: languages of ancient India. Buddhism began around the 5th century BCE in India with the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, who is also known as 'The Buddha' which means the one who is awakened. Siddhartha Gautama was his name before he left home in search of ultimate truth at the age of twenty eight and after seven years of continuous painful laborious search; he attained enlightenment and was called 'The Buddha' whom we also know today as 'The Lord Buddha'. He is also referred with other names as Bhagwan Buddha, Gautama Buddha, Tathagata and Sakyamuni Buddha etc. Buddha died at the age of eighty and preached Dhamma daily for forty five years. Buddha: Siddhartha Gautama, the historical founder of Buddhism, was born in Lumbini - a place situated in modern Nepal.

The historical Buddha lived around the sixth century BCE. Emperor 'Ashoka the Great', who converted to Buddhism and made it a popular religion in India and beyond. It could be said here that he was the first revivalist of Buddhism. Today, Buddhism is the fourth largest religion of the world.

Full moon day of May is the most important day for practicing Buddhists all around the world. Three important events are related to this day: Visakha: Lord Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away. Each year it is celebrated on full moon day of May and this year it's on May 19, 2008 in Canada. It is called 'Visakha' in Pali language (Buddha preached in Pali) which is also known as Vaisakha in Sanskrit and Vesak in Sinhalese (Sri Lankan) language.

After attaining enlightenment; Buddha preached daily for forty five years for the welfare of the humanity. Here is what Buddha realized and preached after attaining enlightenment.

Four Noble Truths

- There are sufferings in life (Though life itself is not a suffering)
- The cause of suffering is craving (Endless desires)
- By stopping the craving, suffering is stopped (End your desires to end suffering)
- The way to ending craving is to follow the Eightfold Path (This path will tell you how to end desires and craving)

The Eightfold Path

The Buddha created The Eightfold Path as a way to end the

suffering of humanity. These eight aspects help the seeker of truth to become aware about the reasons for these sufferings. As the seeker is becoming more and more aware about his consciousness it helps him to achieve the final goal of Nirvana (ultimate state of peace and happiness).

Eightfold Path:

- Right Viewpoint - Realizing the Four

- Right Concentration - A state of enlightenment where ego can disappear

Panchsheel

All religions of the world have fundamental teachings for their followers. Panchsheel in Buddhism is the basic teachings of The Buddha to help all to behave in the society such a way that no one harms anyone including themselves.



Noble Truths

- Right Values - Commitment to mental and ethical growth in moderation
- Right Speech - One speaks in a non-hurtful, truthful way
- Right Actions - Avoiding actions that can harm others
- Right Livelihood - One's job/work does not harm in any way: directly or indirectly
- Right Effort - One makes an effort to improve in all aspects of life
- Right Mindfulness - Mental ability to see things as they are with clear awareness

The Five Precepts:

- No killing : Respect for life
- No stealing : Respect for others' property
- No sexual misconduct : Respect for our pure nature
- No lying : Respect for honesty
- No intoxicants : Respect for a clear and normal mind

Tripitaka

Buddhism has religious scriptures like other religions of the world. It is formally called Tripitaka simply because it is divided into three categories. In the ancient days the writings of Tripitaka were memorized and

recited orally by Buddha's disciples. They are traditionally classified in three baskets (tri-pi-taka) in the following order:

- Vinaya Pitaka : Code of Ethics for Monks and Nuns

- Sutra Pitaka : Buddha's teachings (contains more than 10000 sutras)

- Abhidharma Pitaka : Contains Buddha's higher teachings with philosophical and psychological discussion
- Dhammapada (path of the Dhamma) is part of Sutra Pitaka which contains 423 verses in 26 categories spoken by Buddha on various occasions.

Buddha's India

India is proud of her great son 'Lord Buddha' and applauded by world community on international platform for Buddha's contributions to the humanity. India has embraced his teachings and remembered Lord Buddha by having him on most important symbols of the nation: National Emblem of India and Dhamma Chakra in Indian Flag.

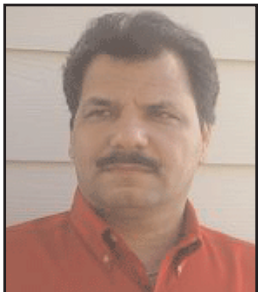
National Emblem of India

The national emblem of India is an adaptation of Buddhist Lion which is on Indian currency also. The original sandstone-sculpted Lion Capital of Ashoka preserved at Sarnath Museum which was originally erected around 250 BCE atop an Ashoka Pillar at Sarnath. The angle from which this picture has been taken, minus the inverted bell-shaped lotus flower, has been adopted as the National Emblem of India showing the Horse on the left and the Bull on the right of the Ashoka Chakra in the circular base on which the four Indian lions are standing back to back. On the far side there is an Elephant and a Lion instead. The wheel "Ashoka Chakra" from its base has been placed onto the centre of the National Flag of India . (www.wikipedia.org)

Dharma Chakra

This Dharma Chakra (Ashoka Chakra) depicted the "wheel of righteousness" in the Sarnath Lion Capital made by the 3rd-century BC Mauryan Emperor Ashoka (a Buddhist King). The 'Ashoka Chakra' in the centre of the white is the wheel of the law of dharma. Truth or dharma or virtue ought to be the controlling principle of those who work under this flag. Again, the wheel denotes motion.

(Contd. on next page)



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As I Please – The Bits and Pieces

Career and Business Consultant

Ahsanul Haq

Last week, my old acquaintance with Ahsanul Haq Sahib was revived with a

and worthwhile for the younger generation, particularly the weaker sections of the society, with regard to the career options and opportunities as a gesture to pay back to the society. I humbly agreed to go with Haq Sahib. He quickly arranged our maiden activity in this regard – an online session on the theme “Career in the Indian Foreign Service” on September 18, 2021. I, as one of the IFS fraternity, would try my best to inform, motivate and guide the young aspirants to join the IFS, one of the elite career options. Let us see how it turns out to be.

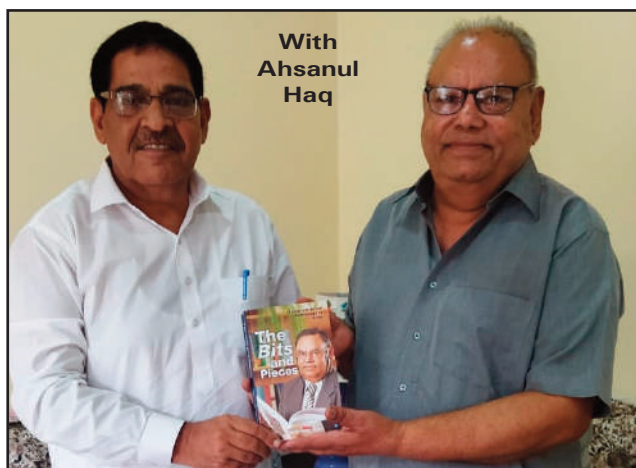
Print and TV Media Journalist

my interaction with Ashok Das over a frugal working luncheon and our extended sitting, I found Ashok Das a fully motivated and a through professional. He made a short report on my career in the IFS and my impressions and reflections on working and interacting with the ‘who’s who’ of the galaxy of our leadership like; President K.R. Narayanan, President Zail Singh, Vice President Hamid Ansari, PM Indira Gandhi, PM Morarji Desai, PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, PM Indar Gular, EAM Jaswant Singh, Minister Arun Jaitley, Minister Ananth Kumar and watching Babu Jagjivan Ram, Y.B. Chavan, Sardar Swaran Singh,

Secretary, Avinash Chander grandson of Seth Kishan Dass, an associate of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Sant Satwinder Hira of Khuralgarh Sahib and All India Ad-dharam Mission, Community activist and a protege of Manyawar Kanshi, Prem Shant, Principal Sarbjit Singh of the newly opened Babasaheb Ambedkar College in Bootan Mandi who kindly agreed to meet Ashok Das with a view to underline the historical and current perspective of the matters pertaining to the community.

Ashok Das interviewed Prem Shant and his wife Hardev Kaur and made a video of their residence and

friendly visit of Haq Sahib to my humble abode. Earlier we both were living at Silver Residency Apartments and will often bump into each other in our



morning routine. I knew a little bit about the academic and empowerment pursuits of Haq Sahib, an alumnus of Aligarh Muslim University and a highly qualified professional who was living in Punjab for the last three decades, our interaction provided me many more details of his immense contribution to the development of a healthy society not only in Jalandhar but also beyond in India and abroad. He introduces himself in his Web Portal as “Hello, I am Ahsanul Haq : Entrepreneur - Coach for Competitive Examinations – Soft Skill Trainer and states his philosophy as “Life is simple”. Ahsanul Haq Sahib, a widely travelled professional, is certainly an ‘Achiever’ by his own right. Like a good friend, Haq Sahib proposed to join hands to do something positive

Ashok Das – On my initiative, Journalist Ashok Das of Dalit Dastak TV and a monthly magazine by the same name came and met me at my residence on September 10 instant. These days, Ashok Das was visiting Punjab with regard to the forthcoming elections and role and status of dalit communities with more 35% share in demography of Punjab and had already interviewed and presented the Gaddinasheen Sant Niranjani Dass ji of Dera Sachkhand Ballan of Jalandhar, a staunch Ambedkarite and Editor of the Bheem Patrika, Lahori Ram Balley, Business tycoon Tilak Khinder among others in the process. Ashok Das came straight to me from Jalandhar railway station after a five hour journey from Delhi in the Amritsar Stabadi Express. During

Pranab Mukherjee, P.N. Haksar among others not from any position of authority and responsibility but as a small cog in the big wheel as a junior functionary who happened to had access to the corridors of power in the process of my work. On my suggestion,

Ashok Das made a small clip on the proposal to declare April 14, birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar as International Day of Equality under the aegis of the UN with a view to seek a wide spread support to the proposal which is resting with the Government of India since June, 2015. On interest and request of Ashok Das to meet more people who were engaged in the community matters, I requested Former MLA and Chief Parliamentary

the designated room where Kanshi Ram ji used to often stay as a family friend of Prem Shant. Later in the evening, Ashok Das left to catch up with his already fixed engagement with the Bodhisatav Ambedkar School at Phoolpur-Dhanal, a village in the vicinity of Jalandhar city. Let me conclude this piece by registering a wish and idea of Ashok Das. He would be happy to join hands with the community entrepreneurs and investors who might like to help the community by investing in the print and electronic media, the field yet to open and contribute to the empowerment of dalit communities as wished by Babasaheb Ambedkar and Manyawar Kanshi Ram. Let us hope Ashok Das gets a desired response, sooner than later.

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(Continue from page 1)

(CThere is death in stagnation. There is life in movement. India should no more resist change, it must move and go forward. The wheel represents the dynamism of a peaceful change. (www.wikipedia.org)

Teachings of Lord Buddha

Buddha preached and taught based on logic and rational. His Kalama Sutta is staunch evidence of this. The Kalama Sutta (Sanskrit: Kalama Sutra) is a Buddhist Sutta in the AnguttaraNikaya of the Tipitaka. Kalama Sutta is also called Buddha's charter of free inquiry. After observation and analysis, when it agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.

In this Sutta, Gautama Buddha passes through the village of Kesaputta (in ancient Kurukshetra state

and presently known as Haryana state in India) and is greeted by the people who live there: the Kalamas. The Kalamas greet the Buddha and ask for advice.

According to the Kalamas, many wandering holy men and ascetics pass through the village, expounding their teachings and criticizing others'. The Kalamas ask the Buddha whose teachings they should follow. In response, he delivered a Sutta that serves as an entry-point to Buddhist beliefs to those unconvinced by revelatory experiences.

The Buddha instructs the Kalama People on which basis one should decide which religious teaching to accept as true. The Buddha tells the Kalamas to not just believe religious teachings because they are claimed to be true by various sources

or through the application of various methods and techniques. He urges that direct knowledge from one's own experience should be called upon. He notably does not; however, say (contrary to popular misconception) that his own teachings should not be accepted or not accorded trust: rather, he counsels that the words of the wise should be heeded and taken into account when deciding upon the value of a teaching.

Do not believe in traditions merely because they have been handed down for many generations and in many places; do not believe in anything because it is rumored and spoken of by many; do not believe because the written statements of some old sage is produced; do not believe in what you have fancied, thinking that because it is extraordinary, it must have been implanted by

a deva or a wonderful being.

Kalamas, when you yourselves know: "These things are good; these things are not blamable; these things are praised by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit and happiness," enter on and abide in them.' (www.wikipedia.org)

Buddhists are reminded to live in harmony with people of other faiths and to respect the beliefs of other people as the Buddha had taught. May all living beings be happy! These were the very last words Buddha spoke: "Behold, O monks, this is my last advice to you. All component things in the world are changeable. They are not lasting. Work hard to gain your own salvation. Do your best. "

Read more:

<http://www.ambedkartimes.com/rajkumar.htm>

Minimum Support Price of Wheat: The need for major changes in agricultural policies

On September 8, 2021, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, announced the minimum support price (MSP) for some of the 2021-22 rabi commodities for the 2022-23 marketing season. The MSP of one major commodity of rabi i.e. wheat has been increased from Rs. 1975 to Rs. 2015 per quintal. Welcoming the announcement, the Union Agriculture Minister Narinder Singh Tomar said that those who were spreading rumors that the MSP for agricultural commodities would be abolished need to learn from the government's decision. He also mentioned how many times the Prime Minister has assured that the minimum support prices of agricultural commodities were in the past, are in the present and will continue in the future.

A look at the MSP for wheat shows that the price increase for the 2022-23 marketing season is only Rs 40 per quintal, which is 2.03 per cent higher than the previous marketing season. In the past, a lower percentage increase was made for the marketing season of 2009-10 which was 1.85. After that the increase was more than the increase made for 2022-23. The rate of increase in MSP of wheat has been steadily reduced since 2017-18. An increase of 6.8 per cent was in 2017-18, 6.1 per cent in 2018-19, 4.6 per cent in 2019-20, 2.6 per cent in 2020-21 and only 2.03 per cent for 2021-22. The Union government is claiming that the increase is 100 per cent more than the cost of production, which is by no means correct. If this 2.03 per cent increase is seen in conjunction with inflation, then this increase is negative and when this increase is seen in relation to the cost of production, the negative rate of this increase is even higher as the cost of production has been steadily rising due to the uncontrolled handing over of pricing of agricultural inputs such as diesel, chemicals, seeds, machinery etc. to the unregulated market.

While the Samyukta Kisan Morcha and some political leaders have rejected the hike in the MSP of wheat stating it as unreasonable, the Bhartiya Kisan Morcha affiliated to the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh has not only rejected the hike but also has staged protests at more than 500 district headquarters across the country, including Jantar Mantar in Delhi on September 8 to ensure remunerative market prices of all agricultural commodities as well as to control inflation. This action of the Bhartiya Kisan Morcha has shaken the NDA government. K.C. Tyagi, a leader of Janta Dal (U) party, a partner party of the NDA government also disagreed with the government and called for major changes in agricultural policies.

For more than nine months now, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) has been protesting at various inter-state borders of Delhi and

across the country for the repeal of three agricultural laws enacted by the Union government and for providing legal guarantee for the continuation of MSP of agricultural commodities. Various experts have made it clear that allowing private markets for the purchase of agricultural commodities and contract farming laws would result in the forced exit of farmers, agricultural labourers, and rural artisans and will hamper rural development. Changes in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 would be a major blow to consumers. Although the Supreme Court has barred the implementation of these laws, the sharp rise in prices of essential commodities has put consumers at a disadvantage in keeping the stove burning for a living.

All the demands of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha are justified. Adherence to these demands will surely bring some relief to farmers, agricultural labourers, rural artisans, and consumers. In line with the larger



interests of the country, these demands need to be met and the Union and State governments need to make major changes in their agricultural policies.

During 1950-51, India's 82 per cent population was engaged in agriculture and getting 55 per cent of the national income. Although the country's population dependence has dropped to around 50 per cent at present, this half of the population received only about 16 per cent of the national income before the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. These facts make it clear that in such conditions people dependent on agriculture are forced to live a very low level of living. Surveys conducted in different parts of the country have revealed the fact that almost all marginal and small farmers, agricultural labourers, and rural artisans are born in debt and poverty, have a hard time in debt and poverty and leaving a mountain of debt and abject poverty for the next generation, they either die a death of starvation, or when all their hopes are dashed by governments and society, they have started committing suicide. Some teachers from Punjabi University, Patiala; Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; and

Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana have conducted surveys for the Punjab government to analyse the various aspects of suicides committed by farmers and agricultural labourers in rural Punjab. The surveys have revealed that 40 per cent of the suicides are committed by agricultural labourers and 76 per cent of farmer suicides are committed by marginal and small farmers. The main cause of these suicides is ever increasing burden of debt and abject poverty amongst farmers and agricultural labourers. The plight of the suicide-victim families remains pitiable as government assistance to these families is negligible.

There is no doubt that the prices of agricultural commodities should be profitable. Most of the farmers' organizations and some political parties put emphasis on implementation of Swaminathan's suggestion of fixing MSP's for agricultural commodities. Undoubtedly,

accepting this suggestion will turn the current loss-making agriculture into a profitable one. By accepting this suggestion, the farmers will get 50 per cent profit on their cost of production. In this regard one aspect is very important, that is to know whether this will enable all sections dependent on agriculture to meet their basic needs in a respectful manner. Out of the total farmers of the country, 68 per cent are those who have less than 2.5 acres of land and 18 per cent are those who have between 2.5 acres and less than 5 acres of land. Assuming that the average annual cost of production of such farmers is Rs. 1 lakh, their profit / per family income will be Rs. 50,000 per annum, Rs. 4167 per month, and Rs. 137 per day. Think about how a family can survive on such a low income. The two rungs at the bottom of the agricultural economy ladder are agricultural labourers, and rural artisans who are more prone to abrasion, more prone to breakage, and more prone to stumbling. The use of machinery and herbicides in the package of 'New Agricultural Strategy' adopted to meet the food needs of the country have severely hampered the employ-

ment of these sections in the agricultural sector. Both these sections have no other means of production except to hire out their labour. Therefore, to ensure a minimum income level for marginal and small farmers, agricultural labourers, and rural artisans, MGNREGA and other such employment schemes will have to be implemented.

Some political leaders, NITI Aayog experts and pro-capitalist /corporate people continue to provide advice/direction to farmers on crop diversification. Before adopting the 'New Agricultural Strategy', remarkable crop diversification was found in many parts of our country. Crop diversification is essential for maintaining groundwater levels and soil health, and protecting the environment from pollution. To do this, the government should identify the agro-climatic zones and ensure the sowing / planting of suitable crops in those areas and procurement of agricultural commodities at remunerative prices. Employment opportunities can be increased by processing agricultural commodities and doing so can have the benefit of value-addition. The government should help in setting up cooperative owned agricultural processing industrial units of farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans instead of capitalists/ corporate industrial units.

The successful experience of cooperative farming of the Zamin Prapti Sangharsh Committee in Punjab and landless women in Kerala has shown that the government should provide Panchayati land to agricultural labourers and rural artisans for cooperative farming without charging any rent. Religious institutions should also come forward in this regard. According to Sikhism, "the mouth of the poor, the sphere of the Guru." Religious institutions should provide their lands to agricultural labourers and rural artisans without charging any rent. The benefits of co-operation can be taken up in agricultural production, management of finances, purchase of inputs required for agricultural production, sale of agricultural commodities, processing of agricultural commodities and the like.

It is the duty of the Union and State governments to provide interest free credit facilities to the agricultural dependent sections and to provide the required subsidies / grants and to rationalise these subsidies/grants in favour of the marginalised sections of the farming community.



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My Struggle in Life

The Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes Welfare Department

On my transfer from Delhi, I went to Simla alone, leaving the family behind. My middle son was down with typhoid fever and was unable to bear the strain of the journey and also because I had not yet been allotted any house at the new station. For about a month therefore, I stayed with Chaudhry Sunder Singh till a house, the Pine Lodge, was allotted to me. Then I brought my family. It was almost a daily affair that scheduled caste people, mostly government employees, used to gather at Chaudhri Sahib's residence in the evening and discuss various problems of our people. These meetings proved very useful as all of us were being kept abreast of various aspects of the problem. I had been in the company of Chaudhri Sahib since 1928, and knew as everybody else did, that he was imbued with a missionary spirit and always thought of the welfare of the ignored and oppressed people. I had in mind my own plan to further the interests of these people. According to my idea, there should be a regular department exclusively meant for looking after the interests of the scheduled castes and backward classes. The proposal was a new one, and Chaudhri Sahib liked the idea very much when I disclosed it to him. He advised me to discuss it with Chaudhri Lehri Singh also, who was minister for irrigation and power. He was known for having a soft corner in his heart for the scheduled castes.

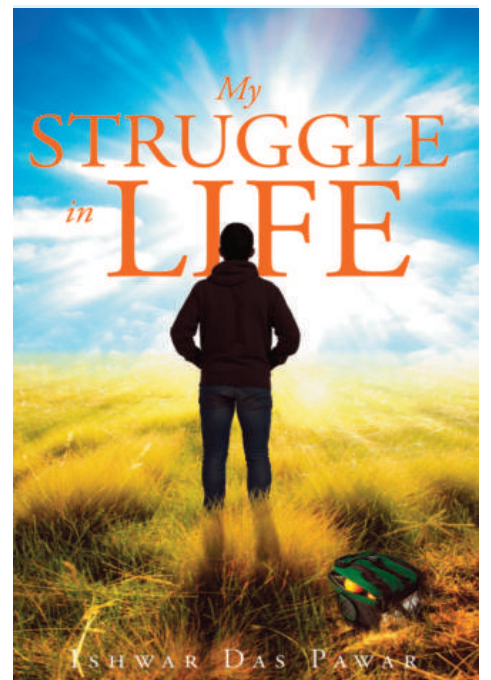
His bungalow was situated in close proximity to Chaudhri Sunder Singh's residence. My own residence was also just close-by. Every evening, Chaudhri Sunder Singh and Chaudhri

Lehri Singh used to go out for a walk together. We also used to accompany them. Various matters would come up for discussion during the walk. I was to broach the subject to Chaudhri Lehri Singh during one of the walks. One evening, finding a suitable opportunity, I started with my point. Both of them heard me intently, and Chaudhri Lehri Singh seemed to have taken a fancy to my proposal. He therefore asked me to give the proposal to him in writing. He was to proceed on a tour in the afternoon the next day. I promised to do the needful by about noon time before he proceeded on tour. Coming back home hopeful, I started drafting the document, and it was completed before I went to bed quite late. On reaching the office next morning, the first thing I did was to get the draft typed. I then took it to the minister in his office by the promised time. He went through it in my presence and expressed his appreciation of the document in so many words. This was heartening for me. I felt confident I was not talking in the air. Then we sent copies of the draft to all ministers, scheduled caste MLAs, the chief secretary, and other concerned officers. The ball had been set rolling. The main features of the proposal were that there was to be a separate department called the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes Department, and it was to be manned entirely by scheduled castes and backward classes personnel; there was to be a district welfare officer for each district with a monthly salary of Rs 250 and having a gazetted status. Similarly, each tehsil (county) would have a tehsil welfare officer. The annual budget was estimated at one lakh rupees. According to the proposal, the district welfare officers needed gazetted status as they were to contact district authorities and discuss matters with

them, and therefore, they needed an official position which should inspire confidence. The budget was kept purposely at a moderate figure lest it should invite unnecessary objections.

One evening, when we were returning from the Simla Scandal Point after the evening walk, a scheduled caste official who posed himself to be my fast friend, advised me in confidence that I should not proceed further with the proposal and better withdraw it as it was ultimately doomed to fail even if accepted by the government, and that being the case, it would bring a bad name to me. It was difficult for me to understand the logic of his argument. But I knew why he was giving that sort of unsolicited advice. I told him that there was no question of any bad name for me, and that I was of the opinion that the proposal would have served its purpose even if it succeeded to the extent of 10 percent. Even if it failed totally, which was a very remote possibility, we would have done our duty. I could understand but did not say anything about what was in his mind. The office opposed the proposal tooth and nail. It was stated among other things that the acceptance of the proposal would mean "creating a state within a state." It was rather difficult to understand the precise meaning of the bombastic criticism. It seemed that the officials concerned got unnecessarily horrified at the idea of a separate department for the scheduled castes. This showed that they did not look beyond their noses. The need of the problem was beyond their comprehension.

We had sounded several ministers: Pratap Singh Kairon, Gurbachan Singh Bajwa, Sri Ram, and even Chief Minister Bhim Sen Sachar. Sunder Singh and Lehri Singh were, of course, there. The case went to the cabinet meeting



for consideration with that sort of official hostility. We were also following it up. After considering the proposal once or twice, the cabinet accorded their approval to it but with a few changes and alterations. They did not agree to the conferring of gazetted status to the district welfare officers nor did they accept the point that the department should be manned entirely by scheduled castes and backward classes personnel. We regarded these changes and alterations as of no fundamental importance. The creation of the department itself was a clear basic gain as the principle underlying the proposal had been accepted. The changes effected were of a minor nature.

Thus was born a new department meant entirely for looking after the affairs of the scheduled castes and backward classes. The theory of a state within a state, meaningless as it was, was rejected. This department was thus my baby, and I feel proud of it. After the unavoidable troubles of the teething period, the baby has been growing and has attained a full-fledged stature. It is doing useful work though there is always scope for improvement. And no other department has reached perfection either.

EcoSikh Summer Camp in Washington



Three days of EcoSikh camp transformed these youngsters and trained them for leadership on climate work.

Children and youth took part in EcoSikh camp recently in Washington, USA. Three day camp instilled leadership and urge in them to do something about the climate crisis. Thanks to the volunteers, counselors and teachers and many Montgomery County officials who helped them understand this complex issue and how they can feel empowered.

The campers were exposed to various nature related activities They visited local farms where they learned about organic pesticide free farming, helpful tips to grow vegetables in their backyards, what compost is made of, how water can be conserved and the importance of local farmers.

We also had several speakers

from the Montgomery county Department of environmental protection talk to kids about various renewable and non renewable sources of energy and benefits of recycling. There was wellness training and several hands on projects. Not only did the kids have loads of fun, they went home better educated and aware of perils of climate change and what each one of

them can do to help preserve Mata Dharat.

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CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS

Evidence of 3,200 Year Old Tamil Nadu Civilization Counters Nationalism Myths



**Rohitha
Naraharisetty**

A pot of rice and soil from the banks of the Thamirabarani River could change narratives of Indian history as we know it. Carbon dating of the sample has put its origins at about 3,200 years ago — suggesting that a Tamil Nadu civilization existed alongside the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC). The findings challenge the notion that Indian city civilizations first began with the IVC and developed along the Gangetic plains. Such notions have fed nationalism narratives, which could now be refuted.

This is not the first evidence of an advanced ancient southern Indian civilization. A dig in the quiet village of Keezhadi, near Madurai, unearthed evidence of civilization around the same time period as Gangetic civilizations. Historians classify ancient history into “phases” of urbanization. The IVC is the “first urbanization phase,” and evidence of town life near the Gangetic basin constitutes the second. The consensus was that Tamil civilization began during about the third or fourth phases.

The Keezhadi excavation and now, the Thamirabarani river artifact, push the date significantly back. The implications are significant; the culture wars over the story of India’s origins could see a paradigm shift. “Evidence indicated similarities between graffiti found in Keezhadi and symbols associated with the IVC. It bolstered the arguments of dissidents from the dominant North Indian imagination, who have argued for years that their ancestors existed contemporaneously

with the IVC,” writes Sowmiya Ashok, for Fifty Two. While the Keezhadi excavation coincides with the “second urbanization phase,” the rice and soil pot suggests that a civilization existed in the first, alongside the IVC. Indeed, an earlier study provided evidence that ancient Dravidian languages were spoken by people in the IVC.

Keezhadi artifacts further showed that extensive literacy possibly existed in Tamil Nadu 2,600 years ago — a marker of an advanced civilization.

Related on the Swaddle. In India, People Who Speak

Further, the story of the IVC evolved in national discourse to be hailed as the origins of everything essentially “Indian”: Sanskrit, early Vedic Hinduism, and other signifiers of nationalism today.

When the Keezhadi dig picked up steam, therefore, the Union government intervened to replace Ramakrishna as the overseeing archeologist, and ultimately declared that nothing of note was found at the site.

“The material found in Keezhadi provides undeniable evidence of secular culture in South India. This is completely at odds with the BJP government’s Hindutva

ment’s task to scientifically prove that the history of the Indian subcontinent should begin from the Tamil landscape,” he said, in a statement.

Perhaps because of the political moment, the finding has quickly turned into the centerpiece for countering not only Hindu nationalist narratives but also the much older Northern hegemony over Indian identity. It, therefore, has the potential to turn into an instrument for Tamil nationalism in the subcontinent. The good news, however, is that it has prompted research in Egypt, Oman, Thailand, and other countries with which Tamil societies have been speculated to have traded and communicated.

The new flurry of research centered around the Thoothukudi pot thus represents an important shift away from dominant conceptions of history and Indian identity. By expanding the scope of previous archeological research, the pot could pave the way in discovering several more connections between the IVC and the subcontinent.



“With this, we could probably establish a cross-link between the Indus Valley and Tamil civilization, and probably prove that the Tamil people lived in both places and had extensive trade links in both places,” NadikaNadja, a history enthusiast, told The News Minute.

If anything, the discovery of interconnectedness has a lot more to say about the cultural syncretism, rather than factionalism that characterizes the history and spirit of India.

**WRITTEN BY
ROHITHA NARAHARISETTY**

Rohitha Naraharisetty is an Associate Editor at The Swaddle. Previously, she was a freelance writer and independent researcher working in the intersection of gender, social movements, and international relations. She can be found on Instagram at @rohitha_97 or on Twitter at @romimacaronii

Courtesy: <https://theswaddle.com>

the Same Language Have Similar DNA: Study

That the evidence showed up so recently is a consequence of political investments in historical narratives. “In the north, when the Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro sites fell within Pakistan’s borders, a void was felt in India about losing a precious heritage. This was the reason for a spurt in in-depth archaeological research linked to river valleys such as Sindhu and Ghaghara and of the civilization that thrived along the banks of the Yamuna, the Ganga, and Narmada plains,” K Amarnath Ramakrishna, the archeologist involved in the Keezhadi dig, told Sowmiya Ashok.

agenda and they will take every measure to ensure further research is not done in these sites,” V Arasu, former HOD of Tamil Literature at the University of Madras, told The News Minute.

Because of what such findings represent, the newly elected Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has been quick to declare a 3,200-year-old discovery as a Tamil Nadu civilization. On Thursday, he announced the establishment of a Porunai Museum in Tirunelveli, where the artifact was discovered. “The finding has established that the Porunai river [Thamirabarani] civilization dates back to 3,200 years. It is the govern-

What is first, Economic progress or conversion?

What is first, Economic progress or conversion? I will prefer conversion to economic reform. Untouchability is a permanent obstacle in your path of progress. And unless you remove it, your path cannot be smooth and without conversion, this hurdle cannot be removed.

If you sincerely desire that your qualifications should be valued, your education should be of some use to you, you must throw away the shackles of untouchability.

A religion which allows a touch of animals but prohibits the touch of human beings is not a religion but a mockery. A religion that compels the illiterate to remain illiterate, and the poor to remain poor, is not a religion but a punishment. If the decision is taken in favor of

conversion, and the people start embracing any religion they like individually, I will not intervene in your conversion. If you decide today to be liberated, your future generations will definitely be liberated. If you decide to remain slaves, your future generations will also be slaves.

I tell you specifically that man is not for religion, religion is for man.

To become human, convert yourselves. To get organized, convert yourselves. To achieve strength, convert yourselves. To secure equality, convert yourselves. To get liberty, convert yourselves. To make your domestic life happy, convert yourselves.

Read more”

<http://www.ambedkartimes.com/rajkumar.htm>



ENGINEER BY PROFESSION AND BORN ARTIST: ER. RAKESH RANCHAN

Art has great importance in ones life. The affinity towards art starts from childhood days. Children draw lines and figures on walls of house whatever comes in their hand.

Sometimes the artist in child gets dominated by factors like studies, sports and financial position of family. Some children try to excel their art as a hobby and find time for their passion for art in life. Shri-RakeshRanchan is one of those children who excelled in field of Art. He retired as S.D.O. PWD (B&R) Patiala on 28-02-2021. Now, he is spending his time for his love for Painting/Photography and Tourism. He was born

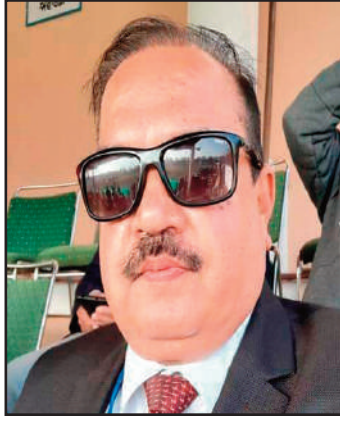
student and Adjudged Best All Rounder student of year 1984 by panel of Head of Departments of Thapar Polytechnic Patiala. He got many Prizes in Painting/Photography and extra circular activities. He passed his Dipoma in Civil Engineering with Honours and got first Govt Job as J.E (civil) in year 1985 at N.I.S Patiala. He joined as J.E (Civil) in PWD (B&R) Punjab on 31-07-1986. During his service he served at

Amarinder Singh and once by PWD/Educational Minister ShriVijendraSingla for his meritorious services in field of Construction Works. He was married in year 1988 with Smt. Neelam Sharma(M.A Hindi). She is very well Behaving sober nature housewife. She worked tirelessly towards uplifting her family. With her sincere efforts, their children are in good position. Their son Ankit Sharma has done B.Tech (Civil

Gate, Portrait of his mother, Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji, SadhuruJiMaharaj, Sir VishveshnarianJi on whos birthday Engineer Day is celebrated every year. He has made beautiful Paintings/Sceneries in Oil Color, Water Color, Acrylic color, Soft Pastels, Ink Sketching and Urban sketching. He has big collection of beautiful paintings and sketch work.



Major Singh Nabha
91-94635-53962



on 22 february 1963 at village Gaje-wasDistt Patiala where his father Late ShriPremSagar was Head Teacher in a Govt School. He was a dedicated, Hardworking and honest teacher. He retired as B.P.E.O.

RakeshRanchan studied at Govt.Sr. Model School Civil lines Patiala upto Matric. He studied at Govt-Mohindra College &Modi Collegeupto Pre Engineering. He then took admission in three years diploma in Civil Engineering inThapar Polytechnic Patiala and got diploma.He has also done AMIE(Degree in Civil Engineering) from I.E.I (India) Calcutta. His mother SmtAgya Rani told that he is very Hardworking and intelligent from his childhood. He has technical/Artistic mind. He used to dismantle Bicycle/Radio/Fan/toys etc and refixes them when he was only 10 years old. He was very naughty. He wasbrilliant

many places like Rampuraphul, Nabha, Patran, Moga and Patiala. He worked very hard with honesty. He also worked on deputation with SPIN-FED and Punjab Health System Corporation and completed Prestigious Projects. He was promoted as Assistant Engineer in year 2003 and Promoted as Sub Divisional Engineer in year 2008. During his stay at Patiala, he worked on important projects like upgradation of Rajindra Lake Patiala, Air Strip of Civil Aviation Club, Construction of Bridge on Jacob Drain, Upgradation and beautification of major roads of Patiala city, Construction of Rehri Market at SanouriAdda, Upgradation and Renovation of various Govt buildings and schools of Patiala city. He was honoured three times by Punjab Govt. on Republic Day & Independence Day, two times by Chief Minister Punjab Capt.

Engg.) from India and Masters in Civil Engg.from University of Ottawa Canada, now settled at Surrey (B.C.) with Permanent Resident Status. Their daughter Aakriti Sharma (M.Com) is working as Inspector Audit in Punjab Govt. at Patiala. He has two brothersShriPardeepkumar and Shri Ashok Kumar who are doing good business at Patiala. His elder sister Smt.UshaKiran and JijajiShri-Varinder K. Rattan are retired from PSPCL.

Besides, an Engineer he is fond of Painting/Photography and tourism. His family travelled countries like Canada, Dubai, Thailand, Nepal and many places in India. He has painted beautiful paintings of Heritage Building of Patiala City like Kila Mubarak, Sheesh Mahal, MotiMahal, Central Library, Baradari Garden, Maharani Club, SheraWala Gate, Sunami

Now Retired after serving 35 years he spent most of his time in Painting/Sketching.

He can draw Portrait of anybody upto 90 percent accuracy in features and skin tones from a photograph of person. He paints Portrait of Friends/Relatives without any greed. His work in Exhibition have appreciated by people and Print Media.

With the Grace of Goddess Shri Kali Mata, he got appointed by Deputy commissioner Patiala as Technical Advisor of Development/Managing Committee of Shri Kali Mata Mandir Patiala. Now, he is dedicatedly working for the development of Shri Kali Mata Mandir without any Pay/Salary. He is residing in Majithia Enclave Patiala with his familywith happy life. God bless him good health and long life.

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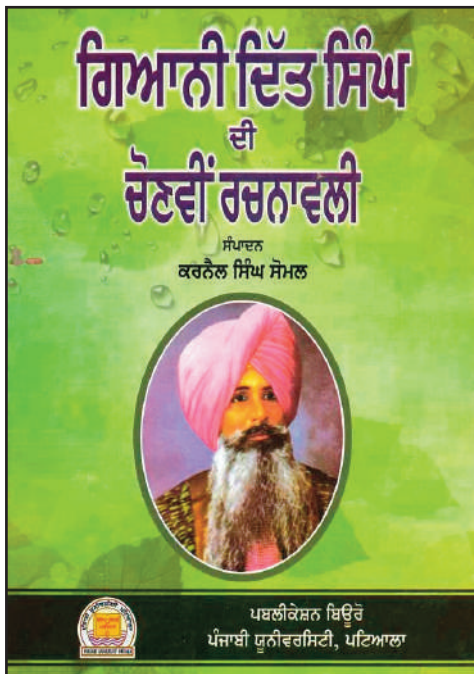
Goodie Takhar, PhD

A SOCIAL REFORMER AND A SCHOLAR

Giani Ditt Singh, a doyen of Punjabi letters in the second half of the 19th century, was born at Kalaurh, a village near Fatehgarh Sahib, in a weaver's family around 1850. He died at Lahore on September 6, 1901. At the age of nine he was sent to Tiwar village near Kharar to study at a Gulabdasia Dera where he learnt Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and Sanskrit. Later on he learnt English as well. The followers of Gulabdasia sect believe in epicurean way of life and they do not believe in any ritualism.

As he grew up, Giani Ditt Singh (Ram Dittawas his original name) became a social reformer of sorts exhorting people to give up all kinds of superstitions. He moved from one centre of learning to another in search of knowledge and ultimately reached Lahore where he passed the Giani examination and acquired other qualifications before being appointed a professor of Punjabi at Oriental College, Lahore. Giani Ditt Singh came in contact with many scholars of the day at Lahore and acquired a good debating skill in their company.

He remained under the influence of Arya Samaj for some time. But after learning about Swami Dayanand-Saraswati's disparaging comments about Guru Nanak, he engaged the great Swami in debates on spiritualism and other philosophical matters. Three such debates took place in Lahore after Swami's arrival there in 1877. By 1888 when the 11th anniversary of Lahore



Arya Samaj was being celebrated, Gianiji snapped all ties with the Samaj. Henceforth, he became a staunch supporter of the Singh Sabha Movement and played a very important role in the Organisation of its Lahore unit. Being an excellent speaker, he became a roving savant delivering lectures on Sikh doctrine at various Gurdwaras, schools and other centres of learning. At some places he was even subjected to humiliation because of his Dalit background. Giani Ditt Singh is the first modern prose writer and journalist of Punjabi. He remained the editor of the Khalsa Akhbar Lahore

for many years in the last quarter of the 19th century.

The publication bureau of Punjabi University, Patiala, has published a mammoth volume of his selected writings titled Giani Ditt Singh Di ChonviRachnavali edited by Karnail Singh Somal as a tribute to the great 19th century Sikh scholar who hailed from Somal's own village. This imposing collection has been divided into four sections. The first carries those writings which Gianiji penned before joining the Singh Sabha Movement. These are Qissa of SirinFarhad, AblaNindParbhodh and Man Sambodan Granth. The second section has three parts, the first comprises biography of six Sikh G

urus — Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Hari Rai, Guru Teg Bahadur and the Jiwan Charat of Guru Gobind Singh (part one). The second part of this section carries the detail of martyrdom of brave Sikh women for their faith. The third part comprises interpretations and exegeses of the holy verses of Guru Nanak and Guru Arjun Dev. The third section consists of writings pertaining to social reforms, ethical matters and the debates with the people of other faiths, including those with Swami DayanandSaraswati. The fourth section includes Giani Ditt Singh's selected essays and articles from the Khalsa Akhbar Lahore.

Whatever he wrote was targeted towards the common man, though he en-

Jaspal Singh

gaged the well-known contemporary scholars and preachers in dialogical debates to emphasise the logical pre-eminence of the Sikh doctrine and praxis as enunciated by the great gurus. He was able to express his ideas in a simple language with appropriate figures of speech and illustrations.

No doubt the leaders of the Singh Sabha Movement remained on the right side of the state power, yet their craving for freedom was strikingly conspicuous in their writings and speeches. In fact, the people of Punjab at that time were mentally reorganising their perceptions in that existential situation when not only Punjab but the entire country had been subdued by the English and made an integral part of the sprawling British Empire. National consciousness was at the nascent stage and the ultimate objective was not clear even to the national leaders.

This collection does not carry everything that Giani Ditt Singh wrote. A lot is yet to be published. Karnail Singh Somal has done a stupendous service to the cause of Punjabi studies by collecting and editing this rare material for Punjabi University, Patiala. With 10 collections of very readable literary essays and 37 books of children literature to his credit, Somal is held in high esteem in the Punjabi literary circles.

Courtesy: The Tribune (Chandigarh)



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Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg (CA) Gurughar's coming programs

September 19, 2021

Health Camp at the Gurughar

There will be a health camp at Gurdwara Sahib on this Sunday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Doctors and nurses will be volunteering their time to answer any health related questions.

September 26, 2021

Birthday celebration of Jasmine Chonkria

Bhai Puran Chand Chonkria and family will be celebrating 2nd birthday of his granddaughter Jasmine Chonkria, daughter of Lajpat Rai Chonkria and Gurwinder Kaur, on Sunday September 26, 2021. Sukhmani Sahib Path will be followed by Guru Ka Langar. Family is requesting you to come and give your blessings to Jasmine.

October 3, 2021

Sukhmani Sahib Path by the New Committee

10-03-2021 Sukhmani Sahib Path by the New Committee (Newly formed committee) will be hosting Sukhmani Sahib Path and Lager Sewa to thank Guru Maharaj for granting them this Sewa.

October 10, 2021

Barsi of Hazoor Shri Nabh Kanwal Raja Sahib

Dedicated families are conducting the three days service of Akhand Path Sahib and Langar Sewa in the loving memories of Brahm Giani Bhagwan Dass "Raja Sahib" on the occasion of his 81st Barsi. Akhand path will begin on 10-08-2021, Friday at 10:00 AM, and conclude on Sunday 10-10-2021. RaggiJathas will be coming to delight Sangat with Shabad Kirtan. May Akal Purakh bless HIS devotees.

October 17, 2021

Barsi of Master Gurbachan Singh Ji

Bhai Kanwaljit Singh and family will be hosting Sukhmani Sahib path and Langar Sewa on the occasion of their fathers first Barsi. Family is asking Sangat to join them in the Ardass.

November 4, 2021 Diwali Celebration

Diwali will be celebrated in the Gurughar at 6:00 pm on November 4, 2021. Sukhmani Sahib Path and Langar Sewa will be hosted by Ramesh Suman, Gyan Suman and family. Please come and enjoy festivities after Gurbani Kirtan and Ardass for the entire Sangat.

2021-2022 Committee of Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha Pittsburg (CA)



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