



Ambedkar Times

Weekly

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Preserving the Legacy of Ad Dharm Movement

Prem Kumar Chumber
Editor-in-Chief:

Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba

Ad Dharm movement brought Dalit consciousness in the undivided vast province of Punjab at a time when varied political organisations (Singh Sabhas, Arya Samajis, Muslim League, Ahmadiyya's, Christian missionary societies) representing mainstream communities, in the regions were making concerted efforts to strengthen their numerical strength for gaining some political space in the promised devolution of political power in the form of limited electoral provisions. Though Scheduled Castes, then addressed as Depressed classes, constituted a significant part of the total population of the Punjab province, they did not have their own exclusive political organisation like that of the other mainstream communities in the province. It was for this reason that all other community based organisations were making best of their efforts to win maximum number of Scheduled Castes towards their fold. All of them were asserting their claim on Scheduled Castes them to include them in the religions of their respective communities. In fact, it was for the first time in 1920s that the leaders of different communities realised to consolidate the numerical strength of their respective communities as a potent factor for the acquisition of some share in the British system of governance. It was precisely during this very time that the historic Ad Dharm movement took roots in Punjab.

The Ad Dharm movement was founded by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia after his return from abroad in 1925. He along with the efforts of Vasant Rai, Thakur Chand and Swami Shudranand called a mega conference at his native village of Mugowal and laid the foundation of the Ad Dharm movement amidst various sub-communities of the Scheduled Castes. Within a short period of five years, Ad Dharm movement became a household organization of the majority of the lower castes in the province. It had its own Newspaper (Adi Danka), well-organized headquarter (Ad Dharm Mandal) at Jalandhar, separate religion (Ad Dharm) duly recognised by the British government, supported Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar during his tie with Mr. M.K. Gandhi on the issue of separate electoral communal award at the London Round Table Conferences, won seven out of eight reserved assembly seats in the Punjab Pradesh Provincial Assembly elections in 1937, and all seats in 1946 Punjab Assembly elections. In 1946, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia got elected from the reserved assembly seat of Hoshiarpur. The Ad Dharm movement, under the stewardship of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, made many petitions to the British government from time to time for the upliftment of the lower castes. Despite stiff opposition from the mainstream communities, the Ad Dharm movement was able to carve a niche for itself and acquired a significant political space for the hitherto neglected segment of the lower castes.

Though after India's independence, the Ad Dharm movement got confined to socio-spiritual domain of the lower castes, its legacy became a rich heritage of the Schedules Castes in the state. Mangu Ram Jaspal, namesake of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, Mark Juergensmeyer, C.L. Chumber, Ronki Ram, Balbir Madhopuri among others played a significant role in documenting the history of Ad Dharm movement and preserving its legacy. It is matter of great pride for us to put on records that Ambedkar Times (English) and Desh Doaba (Punjabi) Weeklies have been making earnest efforts since their inception in 2006 and 2012 respectively for the wider dissemination of the information about the rich heritage of this historic Scheduled Caste movement across the world.

www.ambedkartimes.com

Ambedkar Association of North America (AANA) donated Babasaheb Ambedkar Writing and Speeches to the Wayne State University

Ambedkar Association of North America (AANA) donated Babasaheb Ambedkar Writing and Speeches (BAWS) Volumes to the Wayne State University, Purdy/Kresge Library, located at 5265 Cass Ave, Detroit, MI 48202 on September 8th, 2023. A total

of 18 Volumes were donated to the University Library. Today was an excellent historical moment for AANA

Wayne State University is located in the heart of Detroit downtown, with 26,000+ students onboard. The Library will keep these books in circulation with indexed, cataloged for circulation to the entire State of Michigan so that any Michigan-based local libraries or

Michigan Universities can rent these books from anywhere in Michigan State. The librarian also extended her support for digitizing the books for the World Library record so that it can be made available worldwide.

AANA's local Michigan members have been in communication and following up with Wayne State University for the last one year for the book donations. AANA hopes that these books will inspire the Faculties, Scholars, researchers, and local students to serve as references on Indian History, politics, Religion, caste, and Socio economic issues during British-ruled India and after India's

Independence.

During interaction with Ms. Veronica, a Senior Librarian at Wayne State University, mentioned that she read about Dr. Ambedkar briefly however she would read in-depth now. She appreciated the

effort of AANA to carry Dr Ambedkar's legacy forward. She was surprised to know that Dr Ambedkar wrote a Book on "Buddha and His Dhamma" for which she expressed her happiness because she is learning about Buddhism.

AANA has been instrumental in donating books on Buddhism, Dr. Ambedkar, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, Periyar Ramasamy, and Indian social reformers' books to local libraries in

the United States of America. There are many books written by Dr. Ambedkar that are in the circulation across USA. Ambedkar Association of North America was formed in 2008 on the guided principle of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's life long work and vision to uplift the downtrodden through education. Education provides the suppressed an opportunity to escape the poverty, experience a better quality of life, and have a voice in their communities. AANA also makes it its mission to spread Buddha's message of peace and loving-kindness to humanity through cultural, educational, social, and economic activities among the South Asian Diaspora in North America.



Ram Lal Dass Flag-bearer of Pay Back to Society

I thought of writing with a sense of appreciation and gratitude about one of my close friends and a fellow BootanMandian, Ram Lal Dass, a retired senior banker. We both are alumnus of Jalandhar DAV College and spent our formative years in the college and back home at Bootan Mandi till we parted company in the pursuit of our respective careers to earn our bread and butter. After retirement and return back to our roots, we picked up the threads and started meeting off and on for "Gapp Chapp" and exchange of views on matters of concern and interest to the community and the society at large. Unlike me; a free-

Kanta, welcoming the guests and thanking Ram Lal Dass and his gracious wife Chindo Rani for their praiseworthy gesture of donating the books, made a thought provoking short speech motivating the students to learn from our forefathers and icons. She noted with satisfaction that the newly opened college in the name of one of the greatest sons of India was doing well with more than 700 students, not a small achievement in only a couple of years. Apart from the Guests of Honour, the speakers were carefully and thoughtfully picked – Social activist, Harmesh Jassal spoke on the importance and value of books

students in awe of him on the Indian political thought with reference to Ambedkar and view point of so called dalits on many socio-cultural issues. He also added that the concept of 'paying back to the society' should be recognized and accepted to establish a harmonious society and informed as to how he and his family were doing their bit to help and support the needy students and their parents in their native village Ballan of Dera Sachkhand of Sant Sarwan Dass. In my brief remarks referring to the thought provoking and educative inputs of the speakers and well planned and conducted interaction, I humbly registered my love and

brass bust of Babasaheb Ambedkar and an enlarged photo of the Members of the Constituent Assembly specially issued by the GOI in connection with the 125th birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambed-



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
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lancer, Ram Lal is a dedicated social activist, an ardent Ambedkarite and a devoted Buddhist with deep study and knowledge of socio-political issues concerning the weaker sections of the society – a flag-bearer of the lofty ideal of 'Paying back to society'.

The immediate reference point is – Ram Lal

donated more than 100 books with almirah and Rs. 10000/- to APJ Abdul Kalam Library of Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar Government Co-education College of Bootan Mandi in Jalandhar at a solemn function on November 2, 2023. Most of the books pertain to Babasaheb Ambedkar including several volumes of Speeches and Writings and Debates of the Constituent Assembly published by the Government of India and subjects relating to weaker sections of the society. Ram Lal was kind enough to invite me to the function as a Guest of Honour along with our common friend IPS Malkit Singh. The function happened to be a rewarding event, as the college under the stewardship of Principal Dr. Chander Kanta and her deputy, Dr Harblas Heer very thoughtfully, made it a session to discuss and ponder upon the lofty ideal of 'Paying back to society' in appreciation of Ram Lal's gesture of 'Kitabon Ka Langar' as instantly termed by Malkit Singh in a lighter vein. Keeping with Babasaheb's and also that of Ram Lal's spiritual affiliation to Buddhism, the function was started with the invocation of 'Tri-sharan – Buddham Sharnam Gachshami' and rightly so. Principal Chander



quoting the world renowned intellectuals and narrated a couple of anecdotes from the life of Babasaheb Ambedkar with regard to his love of books; Teacher Asha Kler, belonging to the iconic family of Seth Kishan Dass of Bootan Mandi, motivated the students to take advantage of the library and the books donated by Ram Lal and thoughtfully recited a poem of the worthy son of Bootan Mandi, Pritam Ramdasspuri :

ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਹੈ ਐ ਭੀਮ ਤੇਰੀ ਹਰ ਕਿਤਾਬ,
ਲਿਖਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਬੇਮਿਸਾਲ ਹੈ ਤਰਕ ਤੇਰੇ ਲਾਜਬਾਬ

Prof Dinesh Arora of the Political Science Department of DAV College was really in his elements as an erudite motivational speaker. I could sense that attentive audience of young students was fully engaged and listening to Dr. Arora's excellent presentation. Prof. Inderjit Kumar of St. Solider Group of Colleges underlined the role of Babasaheb Ambedkar in making the constitution of India and enlightened the audience of the current socio-political scenario in the country; Guest of Honour, IPS Malkit Singh nostalgically recalled their student days and narrated anecdotes as to how Ram Lal was keeping the teachers and fellow

affection for Ram Lal as a good old friend and recalled his several benevolent activities to pay back to the society as a true follower of Babasaheb Ambedkar. Appreciating the progress of the host College in a short span of time, I wished that one day Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar College would be an acclaimed 'Centre of Excellence' in the area in consonance with the motto of the College "Never Stop Learning". Ram Lal did his best with regard to the theme of the function - Free coaching classes for young aspirants of jobs, publication and distribution of literature under the aegis of Ambedkar Study Circle of which he was one of the founding members, donation of books and almirah to Jalandhar DAV College and Samta Sainik Dal at Chicholi in Nagpur, adoption of schools for much help to students among some more initiatives. I happened to be a witness to the handing over ceremony at DAV College for the Ambedkar Study Corner in the Lajpat Rai Library. My blog on the subject may be accessed at: <https://diplomaticitbits.blogspot.com/search?q=ambedkar+study+corner>

Ram Lal was thoughtful in presenting to Principal Chander Kanta a



kar in 2015-16, both befitting mementos on the occasion. Ram Lal was invited to speak and he reluctantly came to the podium as by now his batteries were fully charged. While thanking the hosts led by Principal Chander Kanta for arranging the books handing over ceremony which eventually turned out to be full pledged session on Ambedkar and the lofty ideal of paying

back to the society, he said that it was his small bit to pay back the debt of gratitude to our savior and benefactor, Babasaheb Ambedkar. His utterly educative explanation of Babasaheb's famous dictum: Educate – Agitate – Organise was very good and useful to the young minds in the audience. This narration will not be complete if I don't mention about yet another highlight of the function – release of the College magazine – The Samlok. The Chief Editor of the Magazine, Prof. Sukhpal Singh Thind informed that it was the second number of the publication which they could manage in spite of many difficulties in these days of financial crunch. He aptly quoted Surjit Patter to keep the flag flying as it was difficult even for the old and established colleges to publish or continue publishing their annual magazines. It was a matter of satisfaction that they could do it. Congratulations to the Chief Editor of the Samlok and his team and also to the young and budding writers and contributors. Vice Principal, Dr. Harblas Heera conducted and steered the function with aplomb and insight of a scholar of standing. Thanks a lot.

Assemblyman Hoover's Representative Report

"Greenhouse Cafe" Named Small Business of the Month

It is my pleasure to announce that Greenhouse Cafe, a Citrus Heights restaurant serving craft coffee, beer, wine, and quality food, has been named as our Small Business of the Month for October. It is located at 8493 Auburn Blvd. and was opened in 2021 by Peter Mazur and his late sister Susanna.

2023 Legislative Recap: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The 2023 legislative session officially came to an end this month as the Governor's deadline to sign or veto bills passed on October 14, 2023. In total, this legislative year saw 1,046 bills land on Governor Newsom's desk and he signed 890 of them into law. I wrote a summary of some of the good, bad, and ugly legislative outcomes in

winning the "SAGE World Cup" as the top student-run non profit in the world.

The SAGE competition seeks to identify student-run businesses that successfully address unmet needs of local and global communities. Kids Helping Kids Sacramento earned top honors due to their innovative and sustainable business practices. Kids Helping Kids triumphed over exceptional student-run businesses from South

Granite Construction Tour

This past week I had the pleasure of touring the local Granite Construction



Assemblyman Hoover



In addition to their amazing coffee, food, and desserts, Greenhouse Cafe also features a beautiful living indoor plant wall and can cater large events. Congratulations Greenhouse Cafe!

If you know of a small business that you think is deserving of being recognized, you can nominate them by clicking on this link.

2023 that will go into law in January, you can read the full write up by clicking here.

Honoring the Top Student-run Non Profit in the World

It was my great honor to invite "Kids Helping Kids", an entirely student-run non-profit organization made up of juniors and seniors from Del Campo High School, to the Capitol to honor them



Korea and Vietnam who placed second and third respectively.

Kids Helping Kids is most recognized for their efforts in providing financial aid to families whose children are fighting cancer. This is evidenced by their "Rock Out Pediatric Cancer" gala which raised over \$116,000 last year. I know this is just the beginning of each of their contributions to our community.

sites to better understand the work their company does in Assembly District 7.

They operate as both a materials company and a full-suite provider in transportation and water infrastructure, and in fact were ranked #1 in the nation this past year in the Highways market in the 2023 Top Contractors Sourcebook by Engineering News-Record Magazine.



Rajmata Scindia Bharat Gaurav Award. Guest of Honour Ambassador (Rtd.) Sh. V.B.Soni. Chief guest Sh G.V.L.Narasimha Rao, M.P. New Delhi. Nov. 5. 2023



Madirakshi on extreme left and VIHAANA on extreme right at Bal Kala dance festival. Nov. 2. 2023. Ambassador Shri V. B. Soni's granddaughters!

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Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD



Goodie Takhar, PhD

CM reiterates commitment to ensure holistic development of youth

Describes youth festivals as apt platform for grooming them for a successful person

Sunam (Sangrur), (Daljeet Kaur) Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann



on Sunday said that the state government is committed for holistic development of youth in the state.

Addressing the gathering after presiding over a youth festival here today, the Chief Minister said that the state government is leaving no stone unturned for the well being of the youth. He said that on one hand unprecedented steps have been taken to provide jobs to the youth and on the other several endeavours have been made to channelise their unbounded energy in the state. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that these initiatives will be continued in the coming days too for which the state government has already prepared a blueprint.

The Chief Minister said that as runways at the airports facilitate an Airplane for its smooth take off in the same manner the state government is helping the youth to realize their dreams. He asserted that every effort is being made to give wings to the ideas of youth and no stone is being left unturned for this noble cause. Bhagwant Singh Mann made a fervent appeal to youth to make all out efforts for carving an identity of their own to make a place in society adding that sky's the limit for them. The Chief Minister urged the youth not to feel proud of their victory but to stay humble and work hard for more success. He said that confidence and a positive approach should be basic traits of everyone's personality but there should be no pride in it. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that this is the key to success for scripting the success in every field adding that this should be implemented in right earnest.

The Chief Minister, while recalling his days college days, said that the youth festivals act as a platform for grooming the overall personality of the youth. He said that these youth festivals have helped him to excel in life as an artist and now as a politician. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the youth must use these platforms for their comprehensive growth and devel-

opment. Remincing his college days, the Chief Minister said that he performed in various youth fest and won trophies for college. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that winning was his only passion and he always had a positive

mindset of winning. He exhorted the youth to stay grounded and believe in hard work as it is the sole key to success. The Chief Minister said that this college gives him a platform to become successful and a fine human being. Responding the demands being made by the college authorities, he said that there is no dearth of funds as



government's agenda is to promote education. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that all the four demands including Digital library, eight rooms, indoor stadium and others will be fulfilled soon.



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