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AD DHARM IN PUNJAB ELECTIONS

Prem K. Chumber

Editor-in-Chief: Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba

Ad Dharm movement of Punjab gained tremendous importance within a short period after its foundation in 1926. That it got recognition for a separate religion for the so called lowest of the low from the British Government speaks about its great strength. In 1931, about 500, 000 Scheduled Castes (SCs) got recorded Ad Dharm as their distinct religion. Thereafter, its record victory in the 1937 Punjab Provincial Assembly elections reinforced its popularity among the SCs. Its victory in the 1946 Punjab Provincial Assembly election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly assigned it an independent political identity. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, the founder of the Ad Dharm movement, was elected from Hoshiarpur constituency. It contested both the above-mentioned assembly elections in collaboration with the Unionist Party.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia also contested the Punjab Legislative Assembly Election of 1951, but as an Independent contestant from the Garhshankar Constituency.

He was offered a ticket by the Congress to contest the assembly elections as its nominee but Babu Mangu Ram Ji refused to contest the election on the Congress ticket and the same was given to Mr Kartar Singh of village Langeri of Hoshiarpur District.

ELECTORS: 110789
VOTERS: 124594
POLL PERCENTAGE: 112.46%
VALID VOTES: 124594

ABBREVIATIONS USED:
INC: INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
SAD: SHIROMANI AKALI DAL
LCP: LAL COMMUNITY PARTY
CPI: COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
SP: SOCIALIST PARTY
BJS: ALL INDIA BHARATIYA JAN SANGH
IND: INDEPENDENT
M: MEN

Reference: Statistical Report on General Election, 1951 to the Legislative Assembly of Punjab Election Commission of India, New Delhi

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF GHARSHANKAR CONSTITUENCY PUNJAB ELECTION 1951

Sl. No.	Name	Party	IND	Percentage
1.	HARBHAJAN SINGH	M	INC	23092 18.53%
3.	CHANAN RAM	M	IND	15834 12.71%
4.	KILWARN SINGH	M	SAD	13046 10.47%
5.	BHAG SINGH	M	LCP	11537 9.26%
6.	SADA RAM	M	CPI	6949 5.58%
7.	SEWADAS	M	IND	6528 5.24%
8.	DALJIT SINGH	M	IND	5771 4.63%
9.	DOGAR SINGH	M	SP	4053 3.25%
10.	NARINDER SINGH	M	SP	3408 2.74%
11.	MANGOO RAM	M	IND	2353 7.89%
12.	RAM LAL	M	BJS	2035 1.63%
13.	WATTAN CHAND	M	IND	1783 1.43%
14.	MULA SINGH	M	IND	1459 1.17%
15.	SURJIT SINGH	M	IND	1284 1.03%
16.	KALYAN SINGH	M	IND	1264 1.01%
17.	LAMBER SINGH	M	IND	1064 0.85%
18.	BHADAR SINGH	M	IND	1052 0.84%
19.	SOHAN SINGH	M	IND	801 0.64%
20.	BAKSHSHISH SINGH	M	IND	640 0.51%

Who is Manu – the Divine Law Giver

Manu Smriti containing Hindu laws and philosophy is attributed to a person named Manu, acclaimed as the Divine Law Giver. It is considered one of the holy scriptures of the Hindus, and mother of other Smritis. It has been and continues to be a controversial Code of law as a vast majority of people, particularly of the deprived, weaker and backward sections of the society and many a scholar condemn it as anti-people, anti-women, anti-nation and anti-humanity. Dr. Ambedkar finds that Manu's philosophy enshrined in the Smriti is the soul of the philosophy of Hinduism. It contains in all its wild and luxurious growth the doctrine of Caste which is the bane of society and the country. Inequality is the soul of Manu's philosophy and its morality is only social; it is immoral, inhuman and infamous. It is a denial not only of social and religious equality but also of the sacred character of human personality. Protesting against the anti-humanity and anti-nation Code of law, Dr. Ambedkar and his people set Manu Smriti ablaze on 25 December 1927 at Mahad (Maharashtra) 1 Condemning the Manu Smriti as anti-equality, anti-unity and divisive in a speech the other day, President of the Congress Party Mr. Mallikarjun Khadge challenged the Prime Minister Mr. Modi and Chief Minister of U.P. Mr. Yogi to burn it.

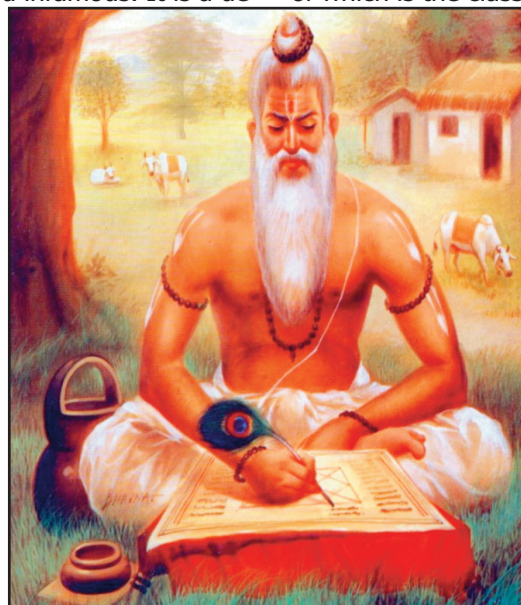
According to Dr .Ambedkar, Manu Smriti is responsible for the utter downfall and degradation of women in India as Manu does not allow freedom to them under any circumstances. He subjugates them to males from birth to death. He allows the husband the right to treat the wife as a slave and beat her with a rope or a split bamboo for an offense. Though destitute of virtue or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshiped as a God by a faithful wife, ordains Manu. The principle of graded inequality and degradation of women and the *Shudras* runs throughout the Manu Smriti. It is because of the colossal scale of degradation whereby 75% of her people including women were deprived of their right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness that India became a decaying if not dead nation. 2

Manu's philosophy is denial of liberty and fraternity. Equality being the very first condition for liberty is conspicuous by its absence in Manu's philosophy. The Smriti says four Varnas Brahmins, Kshatryas, Vaishyas and Shudras were born from the mouth, arms, thighs and feet respectively of Brahma with their ideal avocation preordained for them before their birth. Accordingly, the *Shudra* is born to serve the higher classes as his ideal. The Smriti constitutes the gospel of slavery for the *Shudras* and the women. They have no economic independence and security. The Social Order of Manu is a ladder of castes placed one above the other together representing an ascending scale of hatred and a descending scale of contempt. Caste devitalizes a man, and it is a process of sterilization. The guiding principle of the castes is 'be separate', 'do not intermarry', 'do not interdine' and 'do not touch'. There is no sharing of joys and sorrows involved in the vital facts of life among Hindus. 3

Manu is the only divine law giver who has denied the common man the right to knowledge. In his scheme of education only the Brahmins, Kshatryas and Vaishyas can study the Vedas and the Brahmins alone

have the right to teach. The Shudras and women have no right to study them. It is an offense for the Shudras to even hear the Vedas read. Reading and writing has become the right of the high class few and illiteracy and ignorance the destiny of the low class many under Manu's law. Far from encouraging spread of knowledge, Manu's philosophy is a gospel of darkness.4

The philosophy of Manu does not answer the test either of utility or justice. It is an ideal the center of which is the class of Supermen called Brahmins who



have reserved for them all the rights and no duties. Manu declares the Brahmin to be the lord of the whole earth (Bhudeva), all the Varnas and the whole creation. The Brahmin should always be worshiped by the king and all the Varnas even if he commits all condemnable acts. The philosophy of Manu is Brahmins' heaven and common man's damnation.5

Analysis of Manu's Philosophy from the point of view of justice i.e. equality, liberty and fraternity reveals in a glaring manner how it is inimical to equality, antagonistic to liberty and opposed to fraternity. Dr. Ambedkar says the basic and fundamental

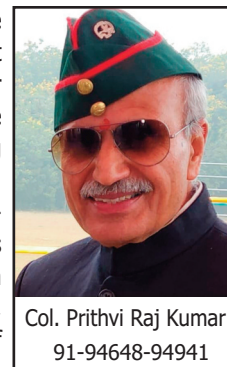
conceptions are equality and respect for human personality. Where equality is denied, everything else may be taken to be denied. 6

The parallel to Manu's philosophy is Nietzsche - the German Philosopher whose philosophy had become identified with violence, denial of spiritual values, superman, sacrifice, will to power, servility and debasement of the common man. Nietzsche himself had openly declared that in his philosophy he was only following the scheme of Manu. The Nazis trace their ancestry from Nietzsche and regard him as their spiritual parent. Nietzsche's thought was Hitler in action and he was the foremost pioneer of the Nazi accession to power. 7

Coming to the subject, Manu himself says in the opening chapter of the Smriti that the Omnipotent Creator first of all created water and from water was created Brahma who produced four Varnas in the manner ibid. Thereafter he split himself into two halves of a male and a female. His male part produced a ginormous man (*Viratpurusha*) from his female part. Virat Purusha produced Manu as the creator of this world. Manu produced first of all ten great Prajapatis (lords of the people) named Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Prachetas, Vashishta, Bhrgu and Narada. They further produced seven other Manus, gods, great sages, all kinds of human beings, creatures, vegetation, clouds and stars etc. The Virat Purusha created Manu Smriti and taught it to Manu, who further taught it to the ten sages. Bhrgu thoroughly learnt this scripture and narrated it to the sages. 8

According to Vishnu Purana, the *Swayambhu* (self- created) Brahma created four Manas Putras (psyche or mind born sons) namely Sanaka, Sanatana, Sanandana and Sanata for expansion of the human world. But they preferred to

(Contd. on next page)



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Who is Manu – the Divine Law Giver

(Continue from page 1)

perform penance for enlightenment instead of producing children. Brahma then created seven more Manas Putras. Thereafter he split himself into two halves and created Manu from one half and a female named Shatrupa from the other half. Shatrupa and Manu married, and produced two sons named Priyavratta and Uttanpada, and two daughters named Prasuti and Akuti. Thus began human creation by cohabitation in the world.⁹

As per Agni Purana, Srihar Vishnu is the *Swayambhu* and cause of the universe. He created Brahma who in turn created Manas Putras named *ibid*. Thereafter Brahma split himself into male and female parts. He transformed himself into Manu from the male part and Shatrupa from the female part. They both married and produced by cohabitation two sons named *ibid* and a daughter named Devhuti. ¹⁰ But according to Shiv Purana, Shiva is the Lord of Lords whom Vishnu and Brahma pay their obeisance. Brahma, with the blessings of Lord Shiva and guidance of Lord Vishnu created the universe. Thereafter he divided himself into male and female two halves. The male part became Manu and the female Shatrupa. They cohabited and produced two sons and three daughters named *ibid* for further expansion of the world. ¹¹

According to Matsya Purana, Lord God Vishnu appeared himself first as Swayambhu. He created water and a variety of worlds. He implanted his seed in the water that germinated into a giant resplendent golden and silver egg after a thousand years. He himself entered the egg and resurfaced from it as Aditya or sun named four-faced Brahma. As Brahma, he split his body into male and female two halves. The female part was known as Saraswati as well as Shatrupa, Savitri, Gayatri and Brahmani. Bewitched by her beauty, Brahma married her and produced Manu. Manu begot a female named Ananti as his wife. Two sons named Uttanpada and Priyavratta were born to them. Shiva is said to have created four Varnas from his mouth, arms, thighs and feet.¹²

Garuda Purana says Lord Vishnu is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe. He is the creator of Brahma and Shiva. He assumed the form of four-faced Brahma for the purpose of creating the mortal world. He created first of all Manas Putras (Psyche sons) and four Vedas. He created the four Varnas from his mouth, arms, thighs and feet. Then he created Manas Putras including Manu. He created Daksha from his right thumb

and his wife from the left thumb. They, not Manu and Shatrupa, expanded the human world by cohabitation.¹³ Markandeya Purana supports the story which says Manu was created by Brahma and he married Shatrupa. Two sons and two daughters named in other texts *ibid* were born to them by cohabitation.¹⁴ The Padma Purana says Brahma created *Swayambhu* Manu from himself. Manu Married Shatrupa and procreated sons and daughters *ibid*. As a result of a tough penance for a thousand years, Manu obtained a boon from Lord Vishnu that he (Vishnu) would take birth as his son in the next three Yugas. Accordingly Manu took birth as Dashratha and Vishnu as his son Rama in the Treta Yuga, as Vasudeva in the Dwapar age and Lord Vishnu as his son Krishna in the Dwapar age. He will take birth as Harigupta Brahmin in Sambhal village (Orissa) after the expiry of one thousand divine years of Kaliyuga.¹⁵ According to the Brahmavaivaratt Purana it is God Krishna who is the creator of the universe, Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma who was born from the lotus that sprang from his (Krishana's) navel. He asked Brahma to further create and expand the universe. Accordingly, Brahma produced Manu and Shatrupa from his mouth. They both married and produced children as mentioned in other texts.¹⁶ As per Srimad Devi Bhagwat Purana, Devi or Goddess known by the names of Bhagwati, Jagdambika, Shakti, Shiva and by various other names is the universe itself, its creator, sustainer and destroyer. She created Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesha. She is their mother and wife as well in the form of Mahasaraswati, Mahalaxmi and Mahakali respectively. Brahma created Manu from his right part and Shatrupa from his left part for expanding the human world by cohabitation.¹⁷ Srimad Bhagavata Purana says God appeared himself as Virat Purusha named Narayana with thousands of heads, arms, and feet. He produced four Varnas in the manner mentioned in other texts. The four-faced Brahma was born out of a lotus that sprang from Narayana's navel. Brahma produced ten kinds of Srishti - worlds that included his Manas Putras and daughter Saraswati. Enamored by the bewitching beauty of his daughter, Brahma could not control his sexual desire. Condemned by his sons for the shameful act, he was reduced to the form of mist or dense fog. Thereafter he assumed another body form that got split into two parts producing Manu and Shatrupa who further produced children by cohabitation as mentioned in other texts.¹⁸ The Mahabharata, which is also

said to be the fifth Veda, says that Brahma's Manas Putra's son Marichi's son Kashyapa produced Vivasvan – Surya from his wife Aditi, one of Daksha's daughters. Manu and Yama, two sons, were born to Vivasvana and his wife (Sanjana or Sangya). Manu was the elder son who produced Brahmins and Kshatriyas etc. (Adi Parva).

This is how various texts explain the origin of Manu. The different versions of Manu's origin contained in the scriptures *ibid* are apparently mythical rather than real to the dispassionate mind. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the claim made in the Manu Smriti regarding its authorship is an utter fraud and the beliefs arising out of this false claim are quite untenable. The name Manu had a great prestige in the ancient history of India and it is with the object to invest the code with this ancient prestige that its authorship was attributed to Manu. That this was a fraud to deceive people is beyond question. The family name of the author of the Code is Bhrigu which is subscribed at the end of every chapter of the Code itself. The Text Composed by Bhrigu entitled "The Dharma Code of Manu" is the real title of the work. His personal name is not disclosed in the Book. The Author of Narada Smriti, writing in about the 4th Century A.D. revealed the secret that it was one Sumati Bhargava who composed the Code of Manu. Even Medhatithi, the great commentator on the Code of Manu held the view that this Manu was 'a certain individual'. Manu therefore is the assumed name of Sumati Bhargava who is the real author of Manu Smriti. ¹⁹

According to scholars whose authority cannot be questioned Sumati Bhargava must have composed the Code which he deliberately called Manu Smriti between 170 B.C. and 150 B.C. It may be recalled that Ashoka the Great had made Buddhism his state religion and prohibited all animal sacrifices which constituted the very essence of Brahmanic Religion. This of course was the greatest blow to Brahmanism. The Brahmins had not only lost state patronage but they lost their occupation which mainly consisted in performing sacrifices for a very substantial fee which constituted their chief source of living. Consequently they lived as the suppressed and Depressed Classes for nearly 140 years of the Mauryan Empire. It was the Samvedi Brahmin Army Commander of the last Mauryan Emperor Brihadrath who raised the banner of revolt and killed the Emperor in 185 B.C. to destroy Buddhism and re-inforce Brahmanism. After his accession as paramount sovereign,

Pushyamitra launched a violent and virulent campaign of persecution against Buddhists and Buddhism. He issued the proclamation setting the price of 100 (hundred) gold pieces on the head of every Buddhist monk. Dr. Ambedkar says if one bears this in mind there remains no doubt that the code known as Manu Smriti which forms the book of the philosophy of Brahmanism was promulgated by Pushyamitra as embodying the principles of Brahmanic Revolution against the Buddhist state of the Mauryas. Indeed it is quite possible that the Manu Smriti was composed at the command of Pushyamitra himself. ²⁰

The question is as to why the authorship of the all important Hindu Code of law has been camouflaged under the veil of mythology? Why have the real author or authors gone incognito? Why have the rules of social conduct been given a divine color? It is time the truth is unveiled and the anti-people, anti-women and anti-nation Code given the treatment it deserves in the lasting interest of the people and the country.

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VT Rajshekar passed away

Sh. V.T. Rajshekar, the fearless and well-known journalist, missionary thinker and founder-editor of the reputed subaltern magazine "Dalit Voice", passed away on Wednesday November 20, 2024, morning after a long illness at a private hospital in Mangaluru. He was 93. He wrote boldly for the empowerment of Scheduled Castes. He was a frequent visitor to Punjab and had also visited Dera Sachkhand Ballan (Jalandhar) and

wrote about its multifaceted contribution towards the empowerment of so-called lowest castes. "Ambedkar Times" and "Desh Doaba" Weeklies pay floral tributes to the departed soul and deeply remember his sterling contributions towards the mission of Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

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

Debt Shadows: Punjab's 'Democracy before Development' Paradox

Inspired by the insights of economists like Böhm-Bawerk and von Mises on capital's role at the intersection of economics and finance, a compelling framework for understanding fiscal challenges takes shape. This approach encourages synergies in economic decision-making and accounting practices, while also treating money as a social institution. When applied to Punjab's fiscal crisis (a whopping Rs 3 lakh crore state debt), this understanding of public finance is timely and essential. The crisis is a largely undeclared emergency, signalling difficult times ahead for the state's political and executive leaders as they struggle to devise effective solutions.

Much of this turmoil stems from a pattern of misjudged economic costs and a disregard for the opportunity cost theorem. Over time, state agencies have missed opportunities to maximise economic returns and have failed to justify their subjective estimates and idiosyncratic evaluations. This trend has gradually sidelined the crucial role of capital valuation in principal-agent relationships, which remains overlooked in decision-making processes.

The Government of Punjab must recognize that, within its constitutional mandate, it holds the authority to shape and enforce the economic framework within its borders. This role requires more than superficial engagement with the risks it faces, especially when opting for pareto-efficient outcomes—those where no one can be made better off without making someone else worse off. Such precision is especially crucial in areas of social welfare, where success is judged by improvements in welfare after interventions. In terms of capital investments, which disrupt the economy's natural trajectory had they not occurred, a distinct approach is needed. Here, Punjab should pay closer attention to the social rate of time discount alongside cost-benefit analysis, ensuring that total impacts are closely connected to their immediate effects. Moreover, the public must realise that inefficiency in public finance often points to underinvestment in systems that enhance and monitor the quality of government spending. Without quality-driven expenditure, less value is achieved per rupee spent, ultimately diminishing the well-being

of citizens.

Turning to data from 2018 to 2024 reveals persistent revenue-expenditure imbalances and a reliance on borrowing. The revenue deficit, which peaked at 3.66% of GSDP in 2021, has dropped to 2.77% in 2024. Revenue receipts grew 5.94% in 2024, while revenue expenditure rose by 3.10%, narrowing the gap yet keeping the reliance on borrowings high. Committed expenditures—76% of revenue

2018-19 to 2022-23, these liabilities now reach 44.12% of GSDP, making debt stabilisation seem distant. The situation worsened in October this year, with Punjab borrowing another Rs 2,300 Cr from the market, with repayments due between 2044-49. This must be considered alongside the Rs 19,000 Cr in State Development Loans (SDL) in the secondary market, underlining that Punjab can no longer rely on growth alone to meet its debt obliga-

lector rates and finally revocation of power subsidies.

Punjab's government must adopt a decisive, strategic approach to public finance management. The focus

must shift to effective budgeting and implementation, particularly as numerous sectors have seen utilisation fall short by over 50% over the years. One effective strategy would be categorising budget expenditures according to key objectives (Subhash Garg, 2022): the provision of public goods and services, redistribution, growth stimulation, and maintenance. Additionally, the government should establish indicators across departments to ensure a higher quality of expenditure. Punjab governments Building Fiscal and Institutional Resilience for Growth (BFAIR Project) is a good step in this direction.

Any reform must consider the interplay between reforms and their preconditions. By identifying complementarities, Punjab can avoid the risk of partial reforms in one period foreclosing beneficial options in the future.

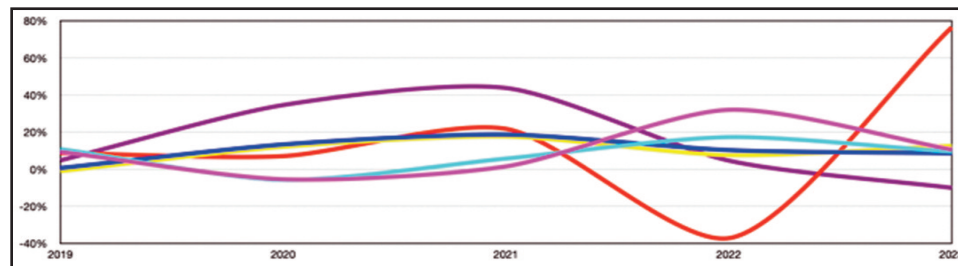
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Anmol Rattan Singh,
 Co-founder PANJ Foundation



Calculated Growth Rates of Budget variables over the years
 Source: Punjab State Budgets 2018 to 2024

Year	Total Expenditure	GSDP	Revenue Expenditure	Revenue Receipts	Effective Revenue Deficit	Fiscal Deficit
2019	9.36%	10.82%	0.61%	-1.11%	8.72%	4.77%
2020	-5.45%	-5.76%	13.33%	12.04%	7.06%	34.58%
2021	1.51%	5.73%	18.65%	17.57%	21.73%	43.76%
2022	32.01%	17.29%	10.29%	7.55%	-37.19%	4.63%
2023	10.57%	9.39%	8.62%	12.58%	76.39%	-10.06%

receipts—continue to dominate limiting development spending flexibility. The 33% decrease in central grants for 2024-25, paired with the end of GST compensation, further restricts fiscal manoeuvrability, despite a 15% increase in own tax revenue.

The fiscal deficit remains a key concern: although it is set to decrease from 4.10% of GSDP in 2023 to 3.79% in 2024, past peaks (5.65% in 2021) indicate structural issues. Capital outlay has been erratic, with a 38% shortfall against the 2023-24 budget, reflecting underinvestment in infrastructure despite a planned 16% increase for 2024-25. With Rs 20,200 crore allocated to the power subsidy—19% of revenue receipts—significant fiscal space is consumed with limited infrastructure returns.

Adding to these concerns, the CAG's 2024 report unveils even deeper financial issues. For example, off-budget borrowing of Rs 3,243 Cr through parastatals and public sector enterprises bypassed the Consolidated Fund of the State. When included in debt calculations, which already grew at an average of 9.25% annually from

tions. The report also brings attention to broader issues in public finance management, including non-compliance with Indian government accounting standards, underutilised funds within the Single Nodal Agency System (where 51% of funds went unspent in FY 2022-23), and an unaccounted Rs 736 Cr collected through various cess/levies. Furthermore, Rs 60.73 Cr was tied up in 16 inactive State Public Sector Enterprises, alongside the notorious DISCOM debt, raising the questions about accountability and efficient resource utilisation.

One is compelled to wonder: What lies ahead for Punjab? The state is caught in a "Democracy before Development" paradox, where successive governments continue to attribute financial woes to the asymmetric decentralisation within India's federal structure. Whether this structure is the root cause or not, the people of Punjab ultimately bear the burden through higher taxes on petrol, diesel, motor vehicles, and loans, as well as increased service charges at Suvridha Kendras, rising bus fares, elevated col-

"A Relevance of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Spiritual teachings: For Mental Clarity and World Peace"

Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus, was not only a great humanitarian and spiritual leader of his time but also an extraordinary thinker whose teachings resonate deeply with modern psychological principles. Though his contributions are primarily associated with religion and spirituality, his understanding of human behavior, emotions, and the mind reflects profound psychological insights. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's emphasis on self-awareness, compassion, mindfulness, and ethical living makes him an exemplary thinker, psychologist/philosopher and visionary, even centuries ahead of his time as I try to understand human behavior being a psychologist in United States.

Understanding the Human Mind

Guru Nanak Dev Ji understood the complexity of the human mind and the struggles it faces based on his travels to far flung areas of the world. He believed that the mind is the root of all human actions and that the quality of one's life depends on the state of the mind. In his teachings, he often emphasized that the mind must be cleansed of negative thoughts, desires, and attachments to worldly possessions to achieve peace and spiritual fulfillment.

In the opening composition of the Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak Dev Ji highlights the importance of controlling the mind to overcome suffering. He also adopts other saints (like St. Kabir and St. Ravidass Ji's) philosophies like, "Man Jee-tay Jag Jeet" ("By conquering your mind, you conquer the world"). This line reflects the psychological principle that a disciplined and mindful approach to life can lead to greater resilience, self-mastery, and success. Being clever would not get you anywhere as he says (Sahaj Seanpa Lakh Hoye Te Ek Na Challe Naal)

Self-Awareness and Inner Transformation

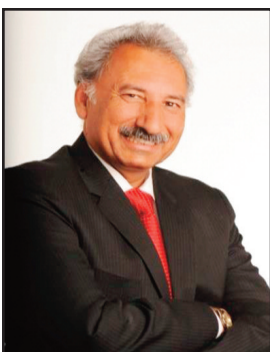
Self-awareness is a cornerstone of modern psychology, and Guru Nanak Dev Ji advocated for it centuries ago. He urged individuals to engage in introspection and self-reflection to understand their thoughts and actions. That is why there is pause after every Salok in the Gurbani (Holy Book of Sikhism). He believed that true transformation begins from within and that one must recognize one's own weaknesses, biases, and flaws to grow spiritually and emotionally.

Guru Nanak's emphasis on

inner transformation aligns with the principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), which focuses on identifying and modifying negative thought patterns. His teachings remind us that by developing self-awareness, we can break free from destructive behaviors and embrace a more positive and fulfilling life.

The Role of Ego in Human Suffering

Guru Nanak Dev Ji identified ego (Haumai) as the primary cause of human suffering. He explained that ego creates a false sense of self, leading to selfishness, jealousy, anger, and greed. These emotions disrupt mental peace and create conflicts in relationships. In his hymns, Guru Nanak consistently warned against the pitfalls of ego and encouraged humility as a means to overcome it.



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From a psychological perspective, ego-driven behavior often leads to unhealthy relationships and dissatisfaction. We see the result of this unhealthy ego of international leaders leading to war and destruction of human life and property as we see in Ukraine and Gaza. Modern psychologists stress the importance of humility, empathy, and selflessness in fostering emotional well-being and harmony. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings provide timeless wisdom on how to address ego and cultivate a more balanced and fulfilling life.

Mindfulness and Meditation

Meditation is a widely recognized practice in psychology for reducing stress, improving focus, and enhancing emotional regulation. Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasized the practice of Naam Simran (repetition and remembrance of God's name) as a way to achieve mindfulness and connect with the divine. This practice aligns with contemporary mindfulness techniques, which involve focusing on the present moment and cultivating awareness of one's thoughts and feelings.

By practicing Naam Simran, individuals can achieve a state of inner calm and clarity, which helps in managing stress and anxiety. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings remind us that meditation is not just a spiritual exercise but also a powerful tool for mental well-being.

Compassion and Empathy

Guru Nanak Dev Ji placed great emphasis on compassion and empathy, core principles of psychological well-being. He taught that all humans are interconnected, and that serving others is a way to serve the divine. His famous message, Vand Chhako (share with others), encour-

ages generosity and selflessness, which are essential for building meaningful relationships and communities.

Research in psychology shows that acts of kindness and compassion not only benefit the recipient but also improve the mental health of the giver. Guru Nanak's teachings inspire us to adopt an empathetic approach to life, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual respect in society.

Equality and Inclusion

One of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's most revolutionary ideas was the concept of equality. As India was divided into various castes and the lower castes individuals were being treated less than humans by higher castes individuals and rulers. He rejected all forms of discrimination based on caste, gender, religion, or social status, asserting that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God. This principle of equality reflects modern psychological values, which emphasize the importance of inclusivity and acceptance in promoting mental health and social harmony.

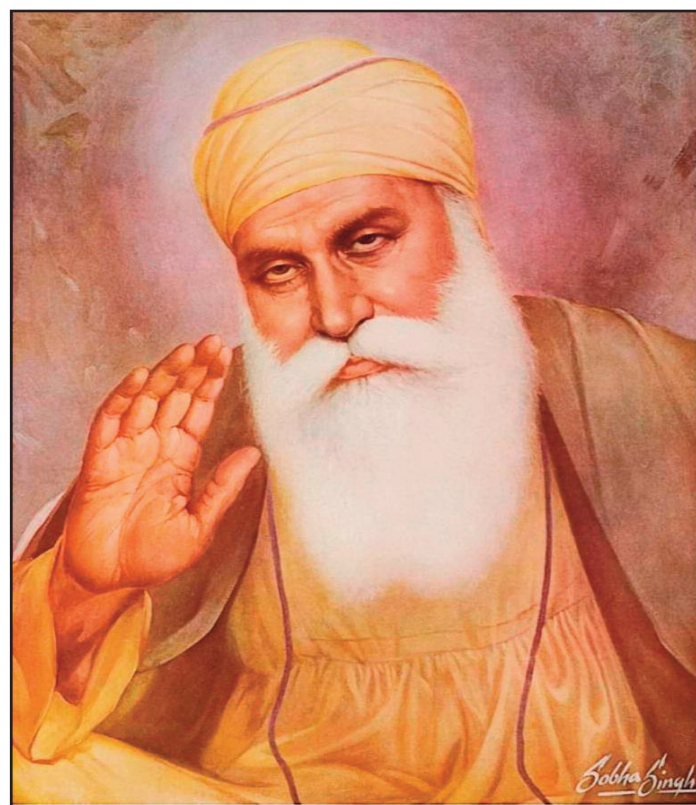
His establishment of the Langar (community kitchen) is a practical example of his commitment to equality. By bringing people of all backgrounds together to share meals, he fostered a sense of unity and dismantled social hierarchies. This act of inclusivity is a powerful reminder of the role community and support systems play in enhancing mental well-being.

Resilience in Adversity

Guru Nanak Dev Ji's life and teachings emphasize resilience in the face of adversity. He encouraged individuals to remain steadfast and maintain their faith even during challenging times. His message of hope and perseverance resonates with the psychological concept of resilience, which is the ability to bounce back from setbacks and maintain mental strength.

Through his hymns, Guru Nanak Dev Ji conveyed that hardships are an inevitable part of life but can be overcome through a strong connection with the divine, self-discipline, and a positive outlook. His teachings inspire us to view challenges as opportunities for growth and to remain grounded in our values during difficult times.

The Importance of Ethical Living



Guru Nanak Dev Ji advocated for an ethical and honest way of life. He emphasized the importance of earning a livelihood through honest means (Kirat Kaaro) living in alignment with moral values. His teachings highlight the psychological benefits of integrity and accountability, which are essential for building self-esteem and maintaining trust in relationships in the community.

Living an ethical life reduces inner conflicts and guilt, leading to greater peace of mind. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's emphasis on truthfulness and fairness serves as a guide for cultivating a healthy and balanced life.

Conclusion

Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings encompass profound psychological insights that are as relevant today as they were centuries ago. His emphasis on self-awareness, mindfulness, compassion, equality, and ethical living provides a holistic approach to mental well-being. Being a psychologist, I believe that Guru Nanak Dev Ji understood the intricacies of human behavior and offered practical solutions for overcoming mental and emotional challenges.

In a world often plagued by stress, division, and materialism, Guru Nanak's timeless wisdom serves as a beacon of hope and guidance. By embracing his teachings, we can cultivate inner peace, build stronger relationships, and create a more harmonious and inclusive society.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji's legacy reminds us that the path to true happiness and fulfillment lies within ourselves, in our thoughts, actions, and connection to the divine.



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