



Ambedkar Times Weekly

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May Day Celebrations & Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar's Contributions for Laborers in India

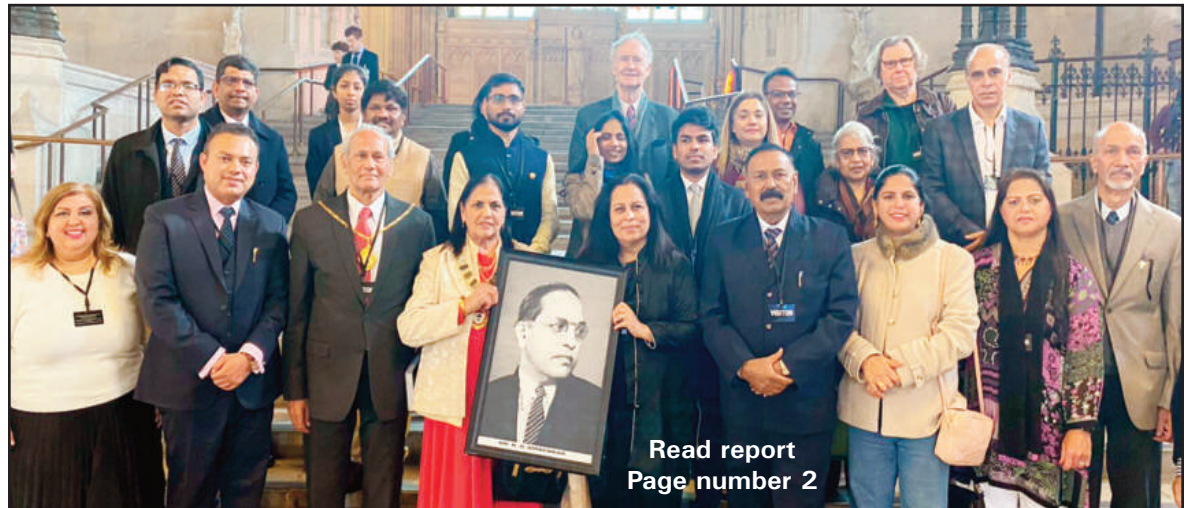
Prem K. Chumber

(Editor-in-Chief: Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba)

Bharat Ratan Bodhisattva Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ramji's contribution towards the emancipation and empowerment of the working class in India both during the freedom struggle as well as after India's independence is worth remembering on the historic May Day: celebrated worldwide as International Workers' Day, also known as Workers' Day and Labour Day. It was chosen to be International Workers' Day at the International's second congress in 1891 to commemorate the 1886 Haymarket affair in Chicago wherein on 1 May workers of various industrial units observed general strike for the eight-hour workday. On 4 May when the Chicago police tried to disperse a public assembly in support of the general strike an unidentified person threw a bomb, which led to police firing resulting in the death of seven police officers, at least four civilians and wounding of sixty police officers and unknown number of civilians. This was led to the arrest of hundreds of labour leaders and their sympathizers. Later on, four of the arrested ones were executed by hanging. It was coincidence that Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar was born in 1891 and came to acquire higher education in the United States of America in 1913. What he learnt during his three years (1913-16) stint at Columbia University in New York City in the class room sessions of his great professors - John Dewey, James Shotwell, Edwin Seligman and James Harvey Robinson - made him struggle for the emancipation and empowerment of the laborers on his return in his own country during the British as well as after India's independence. During his tenure as a Labour Minister and as the Labour Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council between 1942 and 1946, he worked hard for the reduction of working hours from 12 to 8 Hours a day. His contributions towards granting the rights of the laborers are manifold: establishment of Employment Exchange, Employees State Insurance (ESI), Indian Statistical Law, Compulsory Recognition for Trade of Union, Indian Factory act, Dearness Allowance (DA), Paid Holidays, Health Insurance, Extra pay for Overtime, Legal Strike Act, Provident Fund (PF), Labour Welfare Fund, Technical Training Scheme, Mines Maternity Benefit Act, Women Labour Welfare Fund, Women and Child-Labour Protection Act, Maternity Benefit for Women Labour, Equal Pay for Equal Work irrespective of the Sex, Restoration of Ban on Employment of Women on Underground Work in Coal Mines.

As far as the public domain of working class activism is concerned, Dr Ambedkar was always acted as front soldier for the rights of workers. His contribution in highlighting the plight of Dalit workers access in the highest paid textile mill weaving departments is well known. Dalits were not allowed to work in these textile mills for the fear of pollution caused by their saliva to wet the thread during the weaving process to tie the knot, each time the weft bobbin required a replacement. Dr Ambedkar brought this issue in the public during the famous 1928 Bombay Textile Strike. He threatened to dissuade Dalit workers from joining the strike if his demand for Dalits' access to all kind of jobs in the mills was accepted. His contributions towards the bill to abolish the Mahar Watan and Khoti abolition bill were among the several prominent labour welfare measures undertaken by him. Abolition of Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 was yet another legal relief to the non-agriculture classes, including Dalits, to overcome their exclusion from the land ownership rights. Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba Weekly newspapers congratulate all on the May Day Celebrations the world over and also fondly remember the rich contributions made by Bodhisattva Bharat Ratan Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar towards the emancipation and empowerment of workers in India!

Ambedkar and his Relevance in Modern Times Seminar at House of Lords, British Parliament



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Burnaby council votes unanimously to include caste as a protected category



Shilpashree Jagannathan Freelance Journalist

The caste system is a rigid South Asian social structuring system that has existed for thousands of years, and separates people into different social groups based on a hierarchy at birth.

Burnaby council has voted to add caste as a protected category in the city's code of conduct.

The motion, proposed by Councilor Sav Dhaliwal on Monday, was passed unanimously. This follows two other recent steps in Canada to specifically ban caste-based discrimination.

Last month, the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal penalized two people for using slurs against a person

belonging to a low caste. In March, the Toronto District School Board voted to add caste as a discriminatory category in its policies.

"I thought things are better in Canada. It was naive of me to believe so. I was made aware of people continuing to practice caste and was very disheartened to know," said Burnaby councillor Sav Dhaliwal.

"At Burnaby city council, we have included other categories of discrimination based on colour, last name, gender, faith and religion. Now caste will also be included."

"As a minority, I understand what it means to be discriminated, as I have experienced it myself. To learn that we are discriminatory is not ok, so we had to take some measures to include caste as a protected category," he added.

Dhaliwal said he has been tracking recent developments like Seattle banning

caste-based discrimination and the B.C. tribunal case.

"These recent developments, of course, spurred action on our part. We hope

more city councils in Canada will adopt similar action to ban caste," Dhaliwal said. The caste system is a rigid South Asian social structuring system that has existed for thousands of years, and separates people into different social groups based on a hierarchy at birth. A person's caste can be identified by their last name, family background, food habits, occupation, or racial profile.

People in "lower castes" have historically been relegated

to jobs that are deemed menial, and are afforded lower social status.

Burnaby council will create a policy framework to teach its employees, councillors, and managers about what caste is and how discrimination based on caste looks. Staff will be trained to make watch for caste bias in internal city policies, hiring, promotion, rewards and wages.

Caste-based policy changes have seen some opposition from some South Asian groups. Canadians for Hindu Harmony and Canadian Organization for Hindu Heritage Education said they oppose caste-discrimination being added to official policies because there is no data showing caste discrimination among South Asians in Canada. The groups believe current laws are adequate to address such bias and feared policies would paint South Asians as bigots.

Courtesy: www.vancouversun.com



Burnaby Councillor Sav Dhaliwal PHOTO BY FRANCIS GEORGIAN /PNG

Ambedkar and his Relevance in Modern Times Seminar at House of Lords, British Parliament

To commemorate the 132nd birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar, a seminar 'Ambedkar and his Relevance in Modern Times' was held in the House of Lords on 19 April, 2023. It was organised by the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations, UK (FABO UK) and Lord Richard Harries of Pentregarth, Chair, All Party Parliamentary Group for Dalits chaired this event.

A number of academic, political figures, social activists and the followers of Dr Ambedkar participated in the meeting. Councillor, Mrs Mohinder Midha, Mayor of Ealing especially graced the occasion.

In his welcoming address, Lord Harries said that the birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar has be-

come an annual event at the House of Lords and is always well attended. Updating on the Ambedkar related events in the UK, Ms Santosh-Dass MBE, President of FABO UK and Chair Anti-Caste Discrimination Alliance (ACDA) said, "To me, Dr Ambedkar represents the spirit of optimism and the hope for better times. Both as equality and human rights campaigner and a Dalit woman, I reflect ever more on Dr Ambedkar's determination to create a more equal and a just society." She further added, "Let's be more than Ambedkarites. Let's be Ambedkar-Like. And one way is to have Ambedkarite and Dalit voices in both houses of this wonderful parliament, not just as visitors, but as members."

Arun Kumar, General Secretary, FABO UK talked about the recently published (Hurst Publishers, London) book 'Ambedkar in London'. This book is co-edited and co-authored by FABO UK's President, Ms Santosh-Dass, along with Dr William Gould, Leeds University and Dr Christophe Jaffrelot, Kings College, London. The book explores lesser known facts about Dr Ambedkar's time in London during his studies at London School of Economics and Gray's Inn.

It also explores his legacy in

the UK in matters of anti-caste and Ambedkarite movement since 1950s. There is a detailed account of the mammoth task of lobbying in purchasing the property 10 King Henry's Road and converting into Ambedkar Museum. Arun said he was honoured to co-author with Santosh a chapter on 'The Ambedkarite movement in Britain'.

Arun Kumar and Santosh-Dass presented a signed copy of the book to Lord Harries with a thank you to him for all his support with raising the profile of Dr Ambedkar in the UK Parliament.

Ms Tanisha Bhalesain, an impressive 15 year old young Ambedkarite from a school in Milton Keynes spoke about how Dr Ambedkar

cuss free trade deals between India and UK, it is essential that labour rights are given priority and considered as a part of the negotiations."

Sacha Ismail also from ILS and a trade union activist suggested that it's crucial to get unions involved to take up the fight to combat caste discrimination in the work places.

Arvind Kumar, visiting Tutor at the Department of Law and Criminology; And Doctoral Scholar at the Department of Politics, Royal Holloway, University of London reminded the conference that Babasaheb always argued that social democracy is prerequisite for the success of political democracy. He further added that the religious fundamentalism is the biggest threat to democracy which

add an additional category for this was added to the in our forms of abuse on to their our bespoke database to capture these cases. Sahdaish added that caste apartheid is happening here today in the UK. It is alive and kicking in school playgrounds and places of work.

Mrs Sudhesh Rani, Clinic Coordinator, National Health Service, Labour Link Officer, Unison and



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achieved remarkable feats, from a young boy with a passion to learn, to a scholar contributing to national decisions. It was for this very reason; he is significant to her. She said, "He is ideal representation of the importance of education and passion for learning, and his journey through life is a sign that anyone from any background can achieve great things". She ended with a message to the youth today would be "to empower yourself with knowledge and to fight for what you are passionate about".

Mr Praveen Kolluguri, an Ambedkarite activist, Co-founder of the India Labour Solidarity (ILS) campaign, BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) officer for Kingston and Surbiton Labour Constituency stated, "Babasaheb recognised the inherent exploitation and oppression faced by workers, especially from marginalised communities, and advocated for their rights with unwavering commitment. Workers across the world are often subjected to precarious employment, unfair wages, unsafe working conditions, and denial of their fundamental rights.

This is particularly true for workers from marginalised communities who face intersecting forms of discrimination based on caste, class gender, religion and race. As we dis-

should be tackled at the grass root level.

Councillor Mrs Mohinder-Midha, Mayor of Ealing, stressed the need for education and gender equality. She asked all men to give respect to women and encouraged them to come in the public life. As a result of support from her family, in May 2022, Mrs Midha became the first ever Dalit woman mayor in the UK for in the London Borough of Ealing. She looked forward to seeing MPs and Members of the Lords from Dalit community.

Dr Hardeep Singh Bhatia, Advocate, High Court, Chandigarh said that with the recent government policy of privatisation, Dalits are adversely affected. Education has become expensive and job opportunities are being lost.

Mrs Sahdaish Pall, CEO at Sikh Women's Aid, Director of GEM - Healthy relationship educator - developer of Domestic Abuse prevention board games and workbooks, Prospective Labour Councillor for Great Bridge in the Sandwell, West Midlands also attended the meeting. She said that since launching Sikh Women's Aid nearly two years ago, she has had so many cases of caste based abuse in relationships reported to her organisation, that we had to

Labour candidate for Bedford Council talked about the caste discrimination prevalent in the UK. She said, "In India sometimes Dalits change their names to survive. But in the UK also people want to know about one's caste by asking various questions".

Dr Raj Chand, Practising GP and Deputy Chair, ACDA, shared information about the recent cases of caste-related hate speech in the UK. On 25 May, 2021, Gurbinder Singh Luthra from Hounslow got a 16 week prison sentenced (suspended for 5 years). In another case, on 4 April, 2023 Amrik Singh Bajwa from Slough was sent to prison for 18 weeks and fined £240. In both cases, all communities including Bhagwan Valmik, Guru Ravidass temples and Ambedkarite organisations got together and issued joint statements..

ACDA along along with other organisations was one of the key witnesses in these cases. Raj asked everyone to report such cases to the police or to the organisations campaigning against caste discrimination. That way the government wouldn't be able to say that there is no caste discrimination and that would help to persuade to the government to implement the caste legislation.

Vote of thanks was proposed by Lord Harries of Pentregarth.

BABU MANGU RAM MUGOWALIA ARCHITECT OF AD-DHARM MOVEMENT

Ad-Dharam Movement founded by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia on June 11th-12th, 1926, was established with a missionary zeal to live a dignified life as a separate entity for the neglected segments of society who were the original and the real inhabitants of ancient India. Before paying our tributes to this noble mission envisioned by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia it becomes imperative for us to have a few glimpses of the trials and tribulations which he had to confront during this arduous struggle.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia was born in a small village, (Muggowal) in Hoshiarpur District of East Punjab in Doaba Area in an untouchable family on January, 14th, 1886. His father, Mr. Harnam Dass and mother Mrs. Attri had a flourishing business in leather hides because of increasing demand from British Army. Realizing the lack of adequate education as an hinderance in the growth and marketing of his business, his father wanted his son to be well educated to help him in his growing business.

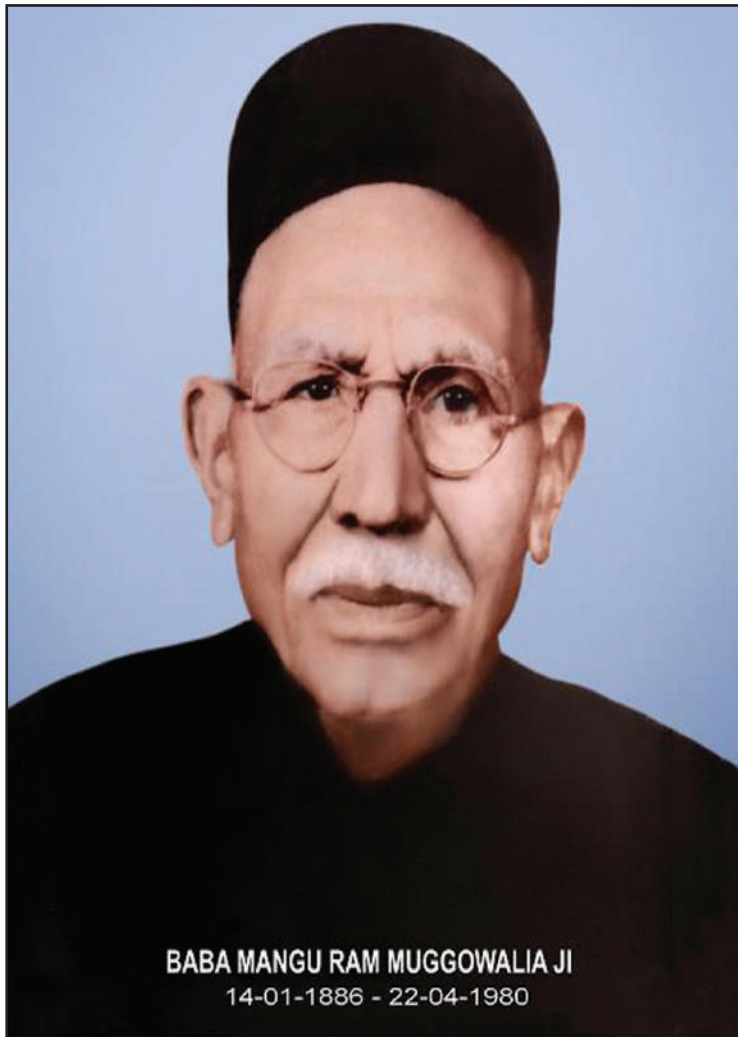
CASTE DISCRIMINATIONS AND SOCIAL PREJUDICES: - The stigma of caste system codified by Manusmriti for thousands of years was the greatest hinderance for untouchables to seek higher education. Among all the social limitations and carping humiliations Mangu Ram Mugowalia was able to complete his high school education as a good student in three different schools.

MIGRATION TO USA: - In 1909 his father who, being financially stable in his business managed to send his son to USA to better his prospects in life. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, who had an impassioned fervor of patriotism, joined the Ghadar movement in California, fighting for freedom from the British rule, pioneered by prominent leaders like Lala Hardyal and Sohan Singh Bhakna. While in USA Babu Mangu Ram experienced a spirit of relief and social equality which he aspired to see back in his home country too.

JOURNEY BACK TO INDIA: - After a few years of his active participation in the activities of Ghadar party in USA he was chosen with four other members of the party to smuggle a shipment of weapons to India for use by Ghadarites in India. On being captured by British agents on his way back to India, he was lucky and cleverly escaped with the help of some German supporters and remained in hiding for many years including Manila in Philippines during the First World War period.

BACK IN INDIA: - While travelling back to his home in India he passed through many towns in South India where he was shocked and dismayed to see social discriminations worse than slavery which agitated his conscience to start his crusade for social emancipation. On reaching back his home village he felt a new spark to work against social degeneration, so rampant in the entire spectrum of social order. He wrote back to Lala Hardyal and Sohan Singh Bhakna, the pioneers of the Ghadar Movement apprising them of the social deterioration who agreed with him to work for the freedom of his brethren from the shackles of the higher caste tyrannies.

AD-DHARAM MOVEMENT FOUNDED: - On June 11th and 12th, 1926 Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia convened a large conference of his supporters in the primary school where he was a teacher too, from every nook and corner of Northern India and announced the foundation of Ad-Dharam Mandal of which he was chosen as president, the position he retained during the entire journey of his struggle.



BABA MANGU RAM MUGGOWALIA JI
14-01-1886 - 22-04-1980

Since this article is specifically dedicated to commemorate the foundation of Ad-Dharam Movement, some of the salient and structural features of his mission which became a legacy for future generations, are as under:

The most important and significant contribution of his movement was the establishment of a Separate and a Distinct Society of Ad-Dharmi community, completely separate from Hindu hierarchy, claiming to be the Original and Native inhabitants of India long before the invasion of ARYANS from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Ad-Dharam Mandal soon became a household name with awakened conscience for Dalit mobilization and empowerment, throughout the entire Northern India with its headquarters at Jalandhar-Punjab.

Greeting salutations of Jai Gurudev and Dhan Gurudev as the symbols of unity and fraternity were the products of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia's innovative mind.

DR. RAJINDERAPRASAD'S VIEWS ON AD DHARM: - A very authentic book written by Dr. Rajinder Prasad, first president of free India, more than seventy five years ago contains a very vivid illustration of Ad-Dharam as a separate religion for the first time like Jains, Parsies, Jews and Christians based on the report of Census Commissioner in 1931. This completely negates and invalidates the assertion that untouchables and other lower castes are parts of Hinduism. It also reduces their numerical strength which they always claimed with untouchables as part of Hinduism.

POPULARITY OF AD-DHARAM MANDAL: - Ad-Dharam Mandal became so strong and popular as a separate entity that in 1937 Babu Mangu Ram's party won seven out of eight seats in the provincial legislature of

pre-partition Punjab. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia believed that the real way of breaking the centuries-old caste system was to destroy the religious notion upon which the system is based and thrives.

REVELATIONS BY PROFESSOR MARK JUERGENSMEYER: - A renowned professor and an eminent scholar of international fame, now accredited with the University of Santa Barbara, met Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia personally more than fifty years ago and made an extensive research on Ad-Dharam Movement as illustrated in his book "RELIGIOUS REBELS IN THE PUNJAB THE Ad-Dharam challenge to caste".

STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF BABASAHEB FOR SEPARATE ELECTORATES: - Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia and Babasaheb were contemporaries and he supported Babasaheb strongly like a rock in his efforts for Award of separate electorates for the backward classes in the Round Table conferences in London by sending telegrams, reiterating that Babasaheb was their national leader and the sole representative of the depressed classes, thus rebuffing the claims of Mr. Gandhi that untouchables were the part of the Hindu community. He even started his counter fast against Mr. Gandhi's ending in the signing of Poona-pact in 1932.

PERSONAL MEETING WITH BABU MANGU RAM MUGGOWALIA: - In the year 1963 I happened to meet Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia in person in a wedding ceremony. He narrated to me the entire history of his life struggle. As I learnt from him, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia saw no possibility ever of untouchability going away from the social structure of India. Hence the movement launched by him almost a century ago, carried a very meaningful message but its luster which seems to be fading for lack of leadership and other reasons, needs to be reinvigorated to live a life of dignity and honor.

THE AD-DHARAM POPULARITY IN FIJI ISLANDS: - The Ad-Dharam movement was so popular and impacting on the minds of our ancestors in 1930's and 1940's that first Sri Guru Ravidass Gurughar outside India was built in SUVA FIJI Islands by Punjabi migrants and registered under the name of Ad-Dharam. This fact was personally ratified by late Mr. Devraj Singh Sandhu a long-time resident of FIJI Islands before his migration to USA, in an interview held with him by Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber himself at our Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg on September 1, 2018. (Which can be also verified at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/281660605268327/videos/1794754177307074>)

I also appreciate Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber, Chief Editor "Desh Doaba" (Punjabi) and "Ambedkar Times" (English) (Both Weekly Newspapers) for inspiring me to write this article for the esteemed columns of his publication.



O.P. Balley
Founder Member

Shri Guru Ravidass
Sabha Pittsburg
(California)

NRIs seek commission for diaspora in Himachal

Shimla, April 25- Demanding to set up an NRI commission for the diaspora, a delegation of Himachali Pravasi Global Association (HPGA), led by its director Bhagya Chandra, called on Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu here and apprised him about the demands of the association that has members in 17 countries.

The Chief Minister commended the efforts of HPGA to promote the rich culture of the state

outside the country. He said the government was working on several schemes for people of Himachal living abroad. He urged them to encourage investment in tourism and other sectors and to contribute to its development journey.

Sukhu said the government would provide all possible logistic support to them for setting up their units in the state and assured that their demands would be considered sympathetically. Chandra said the

HPGA is working to propagate the state's rich cultural heritage. "Himachalis living in 17 countries are associated with the association," he said. In the recently organised "Shining Himachal" programme in Toronto in Canada, there was an overwhelming response of foreigners towards Himachali products and culture.

He praised the government's efforts to create a favourable environment for non-resi-

dent Himachalis living abroad and demanded to set up an NRI commission in Himachal and NRI cell in the state secretariat here. Advocate General Anup Rattan, former MLA Bambar Thakur, Secretary Himalayan Education Society Govind Ghosh and HPGA member Rupit Kaur were also present on the occasion. The delegation also met Industries Minister Harshwardhan Chauhan and Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Minister Anirudh Singh. **Source: IANS**

Cabinet Minister Aman Arora ensures availability of medical officer for emergency services at Community Health Center Longowal

Sunam Udham Singh Wala, (Daljeet Kaur)- Under the leadership of the Chief Minister Punjab Bhagwant Mann, the state government has regularly been taking major initiatives in the direction of fulfilling the set goal of providing the best health facilities in the state. Under the same commitment, the shortage of doctors for emergency services at Community Health Center Longowal under Sunam Assembly Constituency has been resolved.

While thanking Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Health Minister Dr. Balbir Singh, Punjab Cabinet Minister Aman Arora said that he raised the issue of lack of medical officers, gynecologists and medicine specialists in the emergency department of Community Health Center Longowal with the government as a large num-

ber of patients were facing problems due to shortage of qualified doctors.

Cabinet Minister Aman Arora said that with the funds released by the Punjab government from time to time in the last one year, the all-round development projects of Sunam constituency was under progress and their government was also committed to provide quality health facilities to the residents. The Cabinet Minister said that now, the Health Department has appointed



5 medical officers to provide 24X7 emergency services in Community Health Center Longowal and the doctors were Dr. Manpreet Kaur, Dr. Charu Goyal, Dr. Malkit Singh, Dr. Kapil Goyal and Dr. Amandeep Kaur who will provide services at the Emergency Department as well as OPD as per the

prescribed time table so that the patients get proper treatment facilities on time.

Cabinet Minister Aman Arora said that apart from this, 4 female

medical officers have also been appointed in the gynaecology branch in the Longowal community health center who were Dr. Prabhjot, Dr. Rachita, Dr. Astha and Dr. Princi.

He added that four medicine experts, Dr. Akhilesh Grover, Dr. Rahul Gupta, Dr. Kanwarpreet Kaur and Dr. Himanshu Garg, will also provide services to patients every Tuesday as per their duty schedule..

Giving more information in this regard, Civil Surgeon Sangrur Dr. Parminder Kaur said that the child specialist Dr. Sakshi and dental doctor Manyata have already been performing duties at at Longowal Community Health Center. She said that soon an X-ray machine will be installed in this health center along with which a radiologist will also be posted.

Aam Admi Clinics in Sangrur district witness footfall of over one lakh patients within 8 months: Deputy Commissioner

Sangrur (Daljeet Kaur)- Deputy Commissioner Jitendra Jorwal said that within 8 months of starting functioning of Aam Aadmi Clinics in Sangrur district, over one lakh patients have taken benefit of quality health facilities from these clinics. Deputy Commissioner informed that in the first phase four Aam Aadmi Clin-

the scope of quality and timely health services and reduce burden on gov-

medical staff.

Deputy Commissioner Jiten-

their diseases and many don't even have to waste their precious time.

The Deputy Commissioner said that in view of the convenience of the people, other related departments including the health department were working in the direction of providing more such upgraded clinics to the people soon.



ics were started from August 15, 2022 and 14 others were started from 27 January this year in Sangrur by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann led Punjab government become more than one lakh. Deputy Commissioner said that with the aim of increasing

ernment hospitals, besides saving the valuable time of patients, the Punjab government has established Aam Aadmi Clinics in rural and urban areas. He added that now Urban and rural health centres have been equipped by experienced

dra Jorwal said that there were often queues of patients in the OPDs of government hospitals but now they were getting better health in the Aam Aadmi clinics without any hassles. He added that with the best services, the needy are getting better treatment for

information in this regard, Civil Surgeon Dr. Parminder Kaur said that till April 29, 2023 in district Sangrur, 1 lakh 11 thousand 23 patients have got medical treatment as well as free medicines and tests etc. from Aam Aadmi clinics.

CM MOURNS PASSING AWAY OF VETERAN BOXER KAUR SINGH

Sangrur (Daljeet Kaur)- Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thurs-

and a daughter.

In a condolence message, the

world of Boxing and won Gold Medal in Asian Games. Bhagwant Mann said

Sharing his heart-felt sympathies with the members of the be-



day expressed profound grief and sorrow over the sad demise of former Olympian and veteran Boxer Kaur Singh who breathed his last in a private hospital at Kurukshetra this morning. He is survived by two sons

Chief Minister said Kaur Singh made India proud by earning name and fame in the national as well as international arena of Boxing. He said that from village Khanaal Khurd in Sangrur, Kaur Singh shined like in star in

that the veteran Boxer also represented the country in Olympic games adding that life and contribution of Kaur Singh will ever inspire the budding players to work hard and excel in the field of sports.

reaved family, the Chief Minister prayed to the Almighty to give courage to them to bear this irreparable loss and grant peace to the departed soul.



Sue Frost

Sacramento County Supervisor. District 4



Sue Frost

**You Are Free to Live
However You Want.
You Aren't Free to Impose
Your Choices on Others.**

Last week I was the lone no vote on a Sacramento County Board Resolution recognizing "Transgender Visibility Week." The resolution describes how the transgender community has suffered disproportionately with rejection and discrimination. It acknowledges the transgender, gender nonconforming and gender diverse residents' contributions to society and the importance of them living authentically and visibly.

I unequivocally oppose discrimination and I fully recognize and appreciate the human and societal value of those who identify as transgender. But I opposed the resolution because it contributes to a political movement that is forcing gender politics on the rest of society, advocates separating children from their families, and encourages experimental medical procedures on children who are suffering from psychological problems.

I have some experience with transgender and gender dysphoria during my work as a Registered Nurse. Gender Identity Disorder (GID) is a psychiatric disorder where a person experiences distress related to their gender and/or sex characteristics at birth. The diagnosis was created to help people with gender dysphoria gain access to necessary health care and effective treatment. This diagnosis is included in the American Psychiatric Association's published Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) and it focuses on Gender Dysphoria discomfort as the problem, rather than identity.

The American College of Physicians describes Gender Dysphoria as a psychological concept and sociological term, not a biological one. Their website states, "GD resolves in the vast majority of patients by late adolescence." Studies show that many children express some level of gender-dysphoria, but 80% grow out of it before they are 25. Subjecting these children to permanent changes due to adolescent confusion isn't supporting adolescents suffering from depression or other psychological disorders - it's pushing an agenda that actually harms children.

In September 2022, SB107 made California a sanctuary state for children seeking gender transition

therapies. This violates the parent's fundamental rights to direct their child's mental and physical health care. It mandates that Doctors conceal a child's medical information from parents if it is related to "gender identity" drugs and procedures, even if that information is sought under a court-issued subpoena. This bill removed parents from their child's healthcare conversation while they are still responsible for the costs and care of the child.

On April 10, 2023, AB665 passed the Assembly (and will go to Senate) in California. This law would allow a minor 12 years or older to obtain "gender-affirming" interventions without parental knowledge or con-

sent. And, since California is already a "gender-affirming sanctuary state," if a child runs away from home to obtain gender-affirming care, parents will not be notified and could be barred from taking custody of their own children.

Puberty is a difficult time when children experience social and hormonal changes, grapple with self-identity, and struggle with peer acceptance. Rather than encouraging supportive families and guiding children through this struggle, activists are taking advantage of children to promote their political agenda.

We have seen a wave of lawsuits from families and from children who felt pressured by school and public officials into gender transition, leading to permanent, life-altering decisions including radical surgery, often without even notifying parents.

For example, 18-year-old Chloe Cole filed a lawsuit against Kaiser Permanente for a transgender surgery performed on her when she was just 13. Similarly, Layla Jane is suing Kaiser for pressuring her to transition when she was barely a teenager. Both girls were treated chemically with puberty blockers and endured complete mastectomies while still in puberty. Both girls are now trying to de-transition and state that they felt pressured to undergo transition while their contributing mental health problems were ignored. Even more alarming, we're

now seeing activists, school employees, and counselors encouraging pre-teens, who aren't even in puberty yet, to undergo similar radical and often irreversible gender-changing procedures.

In Salinas, CA two middle school teachers who ran the school's Equality Club were caught pressuring students to secretly transition while hiding their problems from their families. In a leaked recording the teachers were quoted discussing how they kept meetings private and "stalked" students online for recruits. One of the teachers confirmed to the San Francisco Chronicle that the quotes were accurate but claimed the stalking comment was a joke.

Two examples came to light recently. In the first, a school district employee secretly counseled an 11-year-old child through a gender transition, prompting the mother to file a lawsuit. In another district, a family has filed a lawsuit against school officials who were actively transitioning their 11-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son.

All people have a right to medical freedom and access to care,



including children who are struggling with depression or gender dysphoria, however, It is dangerous to politicize a psychological condition and encourage children to undergo irreversible medical procedures.

It's even more dangerous to tear down parental rights and the family unit that has proven to be the most significant source of support for struggling children and young adults. Long after the activists have moved on, the family is there to help pick up the pieces.

In keeping with my oath, I'll continue to try to protect and uphold the rights of all people in my service to the community.

Thank you for reading – and as always, if you want to contact me, call me at 916-874-5491, or e-mail me at SupervisorFrost@saccounty.net. Sacramento County Supervisor Sue Frost represents the 4th District, which includes the communities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, Orangevale, Antelope, North High-

lands, Rio Linda, Elverta, and Rancho Murieta.

For a complete list of all my past newsletters, which each contain a commentary like this one, click here.

**Capital Region Small Business Week
May 1 - 6, 2023**

Sacramento County's Economic Development is partnering with the City of Sacramento's Office of Innovation and Economic Development to host "BizX, The Art of Innovation" on Tuesday, May 2 at The Urban Hive. The Urban Hive is a partial event sponsor and the event will feature a lineup of engaging speakers followed by a networking reception.

BizX is just one of several events during Capital Region Small Business Week, May 1 – 6, 2023. This weeklong series of events is designed to connect the region's small businesses with local resources and celebrate the important role that small businesses play in the region. This regional event coincides with National Small Business Week.

Entrepreneurs, small businesses and industry professionals are invited to join and register for the events below:

**Monday,
May 1, 2023**
IN-PERSON | Register here
Business Resource Expo & Kickoff Event
2 p.m. – 5 p.m. | Meet 30+ organizations from across the Capital Region that provide assistance and resources

to small businesses and startups.

Tuesday, May 2, 2023
IN-PERSON | Boyd Hall in Yuba City, CA
Yuba County Business Resource Fair
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. | Business owners and staff are invited to connect and network with resources that could help their businesses grow and prosper. No registration required.

Tuesday, May 2, 2023
IN-PERSON | Register here
BizX: The Art of Innovation
3 p.m. – 6 p.m. | Biz-X Event is to bring together a community of thought leaders, entrepreneurs, and creative minds.

Wednesday, May 3, 2023
IN-PERSON | Register here
1 Million Cups
8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m. | Join us for our once-a-month in-person meetup where entrepreneurs share
(Contd. on next page)

(Continue from page 5)

their early-stage businesses for advice and feedback.

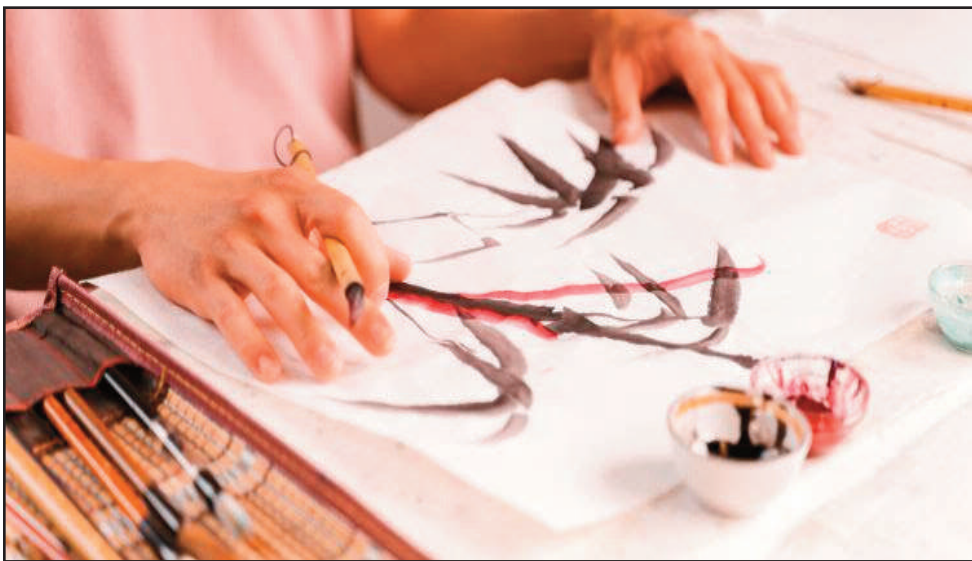
Wednesday, May 3, 2023

IN-PERSON | Register here
Mentor Sacramento Sprint
11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | The goal of Mentor Sprint is to further connect startup founders and mentors, prove the value of mentorship, and establish connections to grow our regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

IN-PERSON | Registration coming soon
Exporting & Importing for Small Businesses
1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | Details
Wednesday, May 3, 2023
IN-PERSON | Registration coming soon
Access & Insights Panel Discussion
6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. | Details

Thursday, May 4, 2023



IN-PERSON | Register here
Transportation Summit
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. | Hosted by Sacramento Valley SBDC as a part of Capitol Region Small Business Week to explore procurement opportunities with transit agencies from San Joaquin and Sacramento counties.

Thursday, May 4, 2023

IN-PERSON | Details coming soon
SBA Small Business Awards Luncheon
10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Details

Thursday, May 4, 2023

IN-PERSON | Details coming soon
Business Startup Panel & Small Business Marketplace
3 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. | Details

Friday, May 5, 2023

IN-PERSON | Details coming soon
California Black Chamber of Commerce Networking Meet-Up
5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. | Details

For more information about Capital Region Small Business week, visit capitalregionssmallbusinessweek.org.

Art Group Helps Heal at Turning Point

A program through one of Sacramento County's Community Outreach Recovery Empowerment (CORE) centers is helping people heal through art. There is a mental health art group helping clients process their

issues through art.

The CORE program provides specialty mental health services and supports eligible adults in Sacramento County. CORE offers both on-site and field-based services. The art program is one of the services offered on-site.

"It is meant to help clients self-soothe and use art as a form of coping while also getting social interaction with other clients," said Turning Point CORE Program Director Eric Llorente.

The mental health art group started about four years ago. Clients meet on Thursdays to socialize with each other while expressing themselves through paintings and drawings.

"I have witnessed the positive impact art has on our clients. It is one of our most requested groups as it allows clients time to process utilizing something they love," added Llorente.

The mental health art group is just one of the many ways Turning Point helps patients in Sacramento

County. All CORE sites provide a 24/7 on-call crisis response system with immediate support. The CORE Community Wellness Centers serve as a walk-in entry point for individuals contemplating mental health services and ongoing support for individuals transitioning from the Mental Health Plan. The Wellness Center serves as a hub for individuals seeking meaningful activities. Turning Point also provides an opportunity for those who reach their recovery goals to volunteer or seek employment with the centers. There are several CORE centers throughout Sacramento County. You can read more about who is eligible and the services provided by CORE here.

Board Approves 1.7 Million to Keep Homeless Housing

The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved at its March 28 meeting \$1,000,000 in General Fund dollars to preserve housing supports for individuals currently sheltered in the County's Scattered-Site Shelter Program. The Board also approved a redirect up to an additional \$700,000 to preserve housing for households currently housed in the Flexible Housing Pool (FHP) Program, for a total of \$1,700,000.

These two programs have been funded by the County, but operated by Sacramento Self-Help Housing (SSHH). SSHH is a local, community-based nonprofit that

serves people experiencing homelessness through outreach services, shelter, supportive services, and permanent housing. As one of their main services, SSHH leases or facilitates direct leases with landlords of properties on the open market to provide 'scattered site' housing and sheltering for people experiencing homelessness.

The Problem

County staff were made aware of significant financial issues at SSHH that led to landlords not being paid in full for rent, in both the housing and sheltering programs, which puts program participants at risk of losing their housing or shelter. County staff have been working in coordination with SSHH staff to improve their processes, invoicing, landlord relations and audited their financial practices. In spite of this work, rents went unpaid and SSHH invoiced the County for funds they have not paid landlords and for costs they have yet to incur.

The County's number one priority is keeping folks housed or sheltered, despite the significant issues the unpaid rents caused with the landlords.

Flexible Housing Pool Program

SSHH was a provider of Property Related Tenant Services (PRTS) as part of the Flexible Housing Pool

(CSHC) took over the 38 clients and units in the PRTS program and has been working with both tenants and landlords for nearly three months.

Scattered Site Shelter Program

Sacramento Self-Help Housing has also been experiencing financial issues with its County-funded scattered-site shelter program. This shelter model, which master-leases single-family homes, provides a 24/7 on-site house monitor and can shelter up to five unhoused individuals at one time, has historically been successful in transitioning people off the streets and into more stable housing situations. The intent of this model is a short stay in the shelter home and a more seamless move into traditional or supportive housing.

This program has been funded for a capacity up to 160 beds at any given time, but County staff learned that there were unpaid rental balances to landlords and that the program had not been working at capacity for some time. There are currently 80-90 clients in this shelter program.

The Solution/Next Steps

In addition to the Board's action to preserve housing, the County has conducted a thorough audit of SSHH's financial management and cash flow issues and the results of



(FHP) program.

In the spring of 2022, SSHH reported funding shortfalls in their PRTS contracts under the FHP program to County staff, which was scheduled to end June 30, 2022. County staff worked with SSHH to improve their invoicing processes such that rental payments to landlords would not be delayed. However, SSHH continued to fall behind in payments to landlords, and in August of 2022, the Department of Human Assistance (DHA) augmented SSHH's budget by \$370,000 and extended their contract through the end of 2022 to stabilize the clients in rental units.

However, the back rent owed and damage assessments required up to an additional \$700,000 to cover, which was approved by the Board yesterday.

The extended contract for PRTS with SSHH expired on December 31, 2022 and the County hired a new provider, through the competitive bid process, for both PRTS and the Intensive Case Management Services. Consumer Self-Help Center

that audit will be made public in the coming weeks. The County is also aware that SSHH holds contracts for similar services with other jurisdictions and organizations that are experiencing similar issues with SSHH and are also dealing with funding shortfalls. The County is working in partnership with those jurisdictions and organizations to help find a resolution that will protect their clients and units.

Due to the overwhelming and ongoing issues with SSHH's management of both these programs, the County has opted to let their contracts expire and move forward with alternative providers. CSHC has already begun its work and the County is in final talks with another provider that will take over the scattered-site sheltering program. Once that provider is under contract, the County will release more information and work directly with both the new provider and SSHH to transition all units and clients over.

For more information about what the County is doing to address homelessness, visit our website.

Jalandhar Parliamentary Bye-Election May, 2023

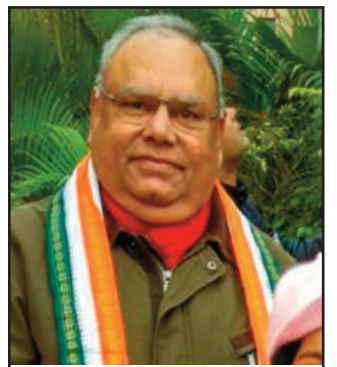
I wrote about the Jalandhar Parliamentary Constituency in my blog earlier which may be seen at: <http://diplomaticitbits.blogspot.com/2023/02/jalandhar-parliamentary-constituency.html>

I don't know how much water has flown in the increasingly drying up, the Sutlej River? The candidates and the political parties are fully engaged in election campaign for the

ents as spoilers and comic interludes in this festival of democracy. I happen to know personally three out of the major four aspirants except Sukhwinder Sukhi whom I have not personally met so far. There are 9 assembly segments in the parliamentary constituency representing more than 1.6 million (about 16 lakh) voters comprising of both rural and urban areas. Out of the nine assembly

prominent Ad-dharmi face and their sitting MLA Sukhwinder Sukhi. Though these sectarian details are not important yet the ground reality in elections is still caste-based thinking and conduct of the society at large. Coming to the relative strengths and weaknesses of respective candidates, let us analysis the scene a bit further. Karamjit Kaur of Congress was not active as a politi-

rise above the caste considerations and accept an outsider who till yesterday was vehemently opposed to



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
91-99885-10940



election to be held on May 10. The results will be announced on May 13 for the seat in the parliament for less than a year. But the stakes are too high for all the political parties as the outcome of the May 10 contest would be taken as a 'curtain raiser' for the April/May, 2024 General Elections for the Lok Sabha.

I am a bonafide resident of Jalandhar and after my retirement from a long diplomatic career has come back to my roots. I, as apolitical observer, keep myself busy in socio-cultural, educational and political matters of concern and interest as my pastime. Since the election process is on; with high pitched electioneering by all the political parties and player, generally it should be advisable to watch and wait the popular verdict. But as a student to learn in the process, I thought of making my own assessment and share with the public with a view to strengthen the democratic process. I would tend to be fair but candid in my approach as a humble student of politics and an Ambedkarite. Kindly do bear with me. About 19 candidates remained in the fray as on April 24, the last date of withdrawal of nominations. It is going to be a four cornered contest with major political formations – Karamjit Kaur of Congress Party supported by the CPI, Sushil Rinku of AAP, Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal of BJP and Sukhwinder Kumar Sukhi of SAD and BSP alliance. There are some fledgling outfits like SAD (Amritsar), Bahujan Dravid Party etc. and some independ-

seats, Congress has five and AAP has four in their respective kitties. The demographic divide is overwhelmingly outweighed in favour of dalit communities with 38% (22% Ad-dharmi/Ravidassia and 16% Valmiki/ Majhabi) and rightly so as reserved seat for SCs. The political stakes are too heavy – Congress Party is to hold the fort to save and fortify their traditional hold – AAP, the ruling elite in Punjab, is to save their face after the dismal show in Sangrur – SAD and BSP Alliance is to re-emerge and re-register themselves after their clear defeat in assembly elections in March/April, 2022 and BJP is to show their presence and intent to approach the big show in 2024 General Elections for the Lok Sabha without their traditional partners, the Akalis. All political outfits have shown due consideration to caste while selecting their nominees – Congress obviously, while encashing the 'sympathy factor' of the sudden demise of Chaudhary Santokh Singh resulting in the bye-election, has reiterated their preference for the elite dalit family of Master Gurbanta Singh, an Ad-dharmi (I understand Karamjit Kaur is herself a Kabir Panthi - tbc), though AAP is not much inclined to prefer, it seems, an Ad-dharmi/Ravidassia over other denominations yet has gone for another Ravidassia, Sushil Rinku, BJP has ignored their known Ad-dharmi front runners like Vijay Sampla and Rajesh Bagha and has picked, Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal, a Majhabi Sikh, SAD-BJP alliance has picked their

cian even after her retirement from her coveted academic career. Congress preferred to bet on her for 'sympathy vote' for the sudden demise and too in harness in the Bharat Jodo Yatra of Rahul Gandhi and the political legacy of Master Gurbanta Singh family. Obviously, these are important factors to weigh in her favour. Five sitting Congress MLAs in the constituency, of course, is a plus point for the Congress candidate. Karamjit Kaur herself is an educated and cultured person but the flip side of the case equally cannot be ignored – the family is divided with Surinder Singh's behavior in point, Sushil Rinku who was a Congress face hitherto deserted the party and joined AAP, there is hardly any prominent dalit face in the Congress campaign expect Former CM Charanjit Singh Channi who, it seems, has already lost steam, MLA Vikram Singh, son of Karamjit Kaur though a young and educated man, it seems, yet he lacks the much needed traits of good PR which is very important for public life in democracy. As regards the AAP candidate, Sushil Rinku, his bête noire, MLA Sheetal Angural and his family may not be able to come along whole heartedly to support Rinku. Sushil Rinku though is a known face in the urban areas of Jalandhar yet lacks recognition in the rural areas. His act of switching sides all of a sudden may not go down well with the masses. Though AAP has four sitting MLAs in the constituency yet it is not certain whether they would be able to

AAP and its leadership. AAP's own volunteers are not very happy to accommodate a parachute candidate. BJP, with a view to rope in a Sikh face, side-lined its own cadres like Rajesh Bagha or anyone from the clan of Vijay Sampla and Som Parkash and picked up a dark horse, Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal an old SAD faithful. Atwal is considered an outsider by the majority (22%) of Ad-dharmi/Ravidassia voters. He may also not enjoy whole-hearted support of SC leadership of BJP in Punjab. The fourth contestant is Sukhwinder Sukhi, a sitting SAD MLA from Banga, representing SAD and BSP combine. Though Sukhi is considered a capable and clean politician from the Kanshi Ram flock yet would have the tag of an outsider. The hard-core BSP carders' dislike the likes of Sukhi and Pawan Tinu as they feel that they ditched Kanshi Ram and Mayawati and also the BSP and went for the greener pastures. The hard-core SAD cadets 'may vote for a Sikh face, Inder Atwal, who till yesterday was with them.

All said and done, it will be a tough fight. As of today, April 25, if one goes by the media including the social media and visibility of campaign, Karamjit Kaur of Congress appears to have an edge. I wrote in my blog earlier about the selection of candidates. Congress Party did not have much choice and perhaps Karamjit Kaur fitted the bill to hold the fort over ridding Sushil Rinku and

(Contd. on next page)

Jalandhar Parliamentary Bye-Election May, 2023

(Continue from page 7)

Mohinder Singh Kaypee and even Charanjit Singh Channi. AAP leadership in Delhi, to my mind, had their own vested considerations in picking their candidate. CM Bhagwant Mann is made to go for a big 'test' to save his position. It should have gone for an experienced and mature businessman or an intellectual or a professional including some retired bureaucrat to bring in fresh air to placate the SC intelligentsia. For BJP, I had suggested roping in fresh talent without baggage of the past from intellectual and bureaucratic circles but it decided to give preference to its 'backroom' boys in other political outfits. SAD and BSP combine was in real dilemma to pick up their nominee – they were to make up their mind as to whether SAD or BSP would con-

test, BSP was reluctant to support the SAD faces like Pawan Tinu, Baldev Khaira or even Sukhwinder Sukhi considering their erstwhile affiliation with BSP. It would have been better for SAD-BSP alliance to zero on a fresh face from socio-political background. Let us see whether the alliance partners are able to transfer their vote kitty to Sukhwinder Sukhi who is a 'gentleman' politician otherwise. The results on May 13 would tell us the outcome of the 'litmus test' for all the major political formations. With the on-going campaign, some new trends and indicators are emerging – dalit leadership in all parties is fast dwindling which should be a matter of concern and worry to the dalit intelligentsia in state with the highest dalit population, new alliances are to emerge before the

2024 Lok Sabha elections – BJP and Akalis are likely to join hands again as Akalis and BSP could not put up a joint front, dalits of Punjab would be needed to think and break their head to 'unite' under one umbrella. It seems, BSP has lost its way and has gone with the wind.

Before I close this off the cuff analysis, let me touch the role of Deras; particularly the dalit Deras which are being visited and wooed by all the candidates and their respective parties, whether they have any meaningful role to play at all. My answer is 'NO'. The dalit deras don't have any agenda and wherewithal to deal with political matters as the other big players like Dera Satsang Beas, Niranjaris, Sacha Sauda among others. The Dalit Deras, it seems, are contented with photos opportunities with

VVIPs and siren fitted police escorts and gun wielding police guards. I fully agree with Des Raj Kali as reported in the Tribune, "Dalit writer, Des Raj Kali has also been terming the dera factor purely an illusion and claims that no dera enjoys a sway with the people." I take this opportunity to wish all the best to all my friends in the fray. As I said in the beginning that my take on the subject is 'apolitical' one, I might have said certain things which may not be fully digestible by some of the political players. I have no intension to ruffle the feathers of anyone but to say my mind as an alive and alert common citizen.

The life goes on –

**Pardon Mein Jo Pinha Hai;
Chasme Bina Dekh Laiti Hai,
Zamane Ki Tabiat Ka
Taqaqa Dekh Laiti Hai**

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