



Ambedkar Times

Weekly

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Guru Nanak and his Vision of Egalitarian Social Order



Prem K. Chumber

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After Tathagath Lord Buddha, it was Baba Guru Nanak who raised a thundering voice against the oppressive social system of caste divisions and untouchability. His engaging approach and consistent efforts for the

establishment of egalitarian society both through teachings and practice distinguished him from his predecessors and contemporaries of the Prema-Bhakti path of famous North Indian Bhakti Movement (Great Revolutionary Movement started by Dhan Dhan Satguru Namdev Ji, Satguru Kabir Sahib Ji & Satguru Ravidass Ji Maharaj), which is known for its emphasis on equality of all persons irrespective of their caste, sex and creed before the almighty God. Baba Nanak was for social and gender equality in both the realms of spirituality (Parlok) and terrestrial world (lok). He stood with the lowest of the low. He reiterated that if one was desirous of the grace of God, he had to take care of the lowest of the low. In order to institute the principle of social equality in the sharply divided Hindu caste society, he founded the tradition of common community kitchen (langar) which needs to be financed out of the hard earned living by sharing its fruits. KiratKaro, Naam Japo, Vand Shakko was the trilogy for the success of his social revolution. However, this trilogy of spiritual path needs to be understood in conjunction with the another postulate of the egalitarian social structure of Sikhism meticulously nurtured by Guru Nanak. Sharing the fruits of one's hard earned labor was to be practiced across caste boundaries of the given Hindu society based as it was on the divisive Varna order. Baba Guru Nanak advocated decimation of all such oppressive caste based social boundaries. The inclusion of the Bani of different spiritual personalities cutting across caste lines vindicates the egalitarian intent of Sikhism. Had Baba Nanak been alive today, he would not have approved of the emergence of Gurdwaras on caste/community lines. Similarly, for the establishment of a true egalitarian society, Guru Nanak laid emphasis for the emancipation and empowerment of the women who were denied equal rights. While highlighting the various merits of women, Baba Nanak said why to condemn them who give birth to princess. He travelled far and wide to comprehend as well as enlighten the ignorant about their duties towards themselves, society and spiritual world. We need to sincerely adopt his teachings in our routine daily life and social dealings to give shape to the society which he envisioned and truly practiced in his earthly life time. Are we genuinely living the way he exhorted us to live? Let us do introspection within ourselves on the auspicious occasion of 551st Parkash Purab of Dhan Dhan Sahib Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and resolve to follow his teachings in word and spirit.

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Constitution Day Celebrations



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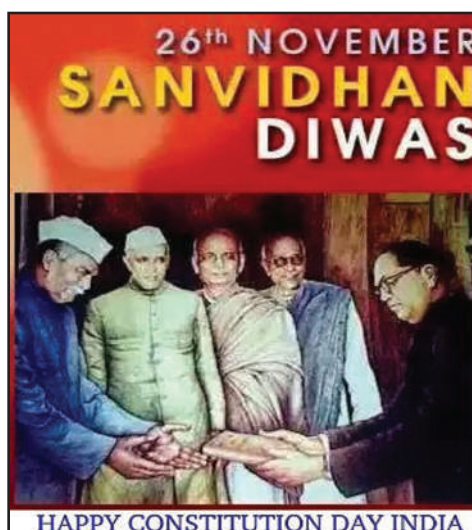
The Indian Constitution

"On 26th January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics, we will have equality and in social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of democracy which this Constituent Assembly has so laboriously built up."

"I feel that the constitution is workable, it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peacetime and in wartime. Indeed, if I may say so, if things go wrong under the new Constitution, the reason will not be that we had a bad Constitution. What we will have to say is that Man was vile."

Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar

Indian society needs to examine why caste discrimination still takes place: Desmond Tutu South African Nobel



Peace Prize laureate and anti-apartheid campaigner Archbishop Desmond Tutu told The Hindu that he had not heard of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He was pleasantly surprised when informed that Dr. Ambedkar chaired the drafting committee of the Constitution of India.

Asked why African leaders fighting apartheid had not

paid enough attention to him unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Archbishop Tutu said: "We were involved in our struggle against the racial injustices in South Africa, and you were looking for allies who would be able to help change your own set up. So obviously there was need to link up with those who had influence and power in their country."

He hinted that it would be natural for an alliance to develop between Africans who struggled against injustice under apartheid regime and Dalits who are struggling against caste prejudices. "More of us should be concerned about it [caste discrimination] and perhaps be interrogating the other part of Indian society as to why they are allowing this to continue if it is an egalitarian society. I mean your Constitution says so." The Archbishop stressed that Indian society should be challenged about the situation of Dalits because it affects one's humanity.

With thanks "The Hindu" Posted: www.ambedkartimes.com November 25, 2014

Constitution Day Celebrations

Constitution Day of India is observed on November 26, the day when the constitution of India was formally and finally passed by the Constituent Assembly of India on November 26, 1949. PM Narendra Modi's government officially instituted the Constitution Day in November, 2015 and ever since it is observed throughout India and beyond with all solemnity and dedication and rightly so. Governments are expected to do some more to educate the common people

promote their communal agenda, categorically set at rest these rumors many a times and reiterated that the government will do every best to educate the masses particularly the youth to educate them on the salient features of the constitution with a view to entrench and preserve the cardinal principles and values of the constitution. Speaking on the subject on November 26, 2020 in the Conference of Presiding Officers of Legislatures, PM Narendra Modi gave an

follow the "unconstitutional means" to register our demands and protests, I underlined the need to understand, implement and celebrate the constitution with all seriousness as India was India or Bharat because of the constitution alone. At the risk of offending my hosts, I decided to speak my mind and expressed displeasure on the fact that 99% of the audience, I could guess, comprised of people from dalit communities. Why should it be so? Does the constitution be-

budding Mountaineer and student of Post Graduate student Priya Ambedkar spoke with full confidence and dedication on the constitution and Babasaheb Ambedkar. Community Activist Paramjit Mahey was the lead speaker at the occasion. As always, he spoke with conviction and in his impressive brief speech cautioned that any attempt to undermine and change the fundamentals of the constitution may result in bloody reaction and added that, as true followers of



to know and respect the constitution with a view to strengthen the edifice of our democratic and secular setup enshrined in the constitution and further dedicate ourselves to the lofty ideals of Liberty, Equality, Justice and Fraternity to all the citizens of India. It is all the more important to heed to the cautions and warnings given by the Chief Architect of the Constitution, Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on November 25, 1949 in his last speech in the Constituent Assembly before he moved to pass the Constitution not only to transform our newly established political democracy into social and economic democracy but also to ward off the dangers of putting our newly attained independence into peril if we did not conduct ourselves to 'constitutional' means as stipulated in the constitution. It is a matter of satisfaction that PM Narendra Modi, in spite of the perceived perception being spread by some of the opposition parties that BJP and its mentors in the RSS intend to subvert and change the constitution to

analogy of KYC – Know Your Customer as KYC – Know Your Constitution - to spread the much needed awareness about the Constitution of India. It is time to take these things at their face value rather than expressing apprehensions. The constitution of India is an important and potent document capable of dealing with all untoward eventualities, if such a situation arises.

With background, I may report that I participated, as an apolitical person, in a function to observe Constitution Day arranged by the SC Morcha of BJP in Jalandhar as a lead speaker. It was a good gesture by the BJP leadership. I wish the other parties would have taken such decisions as the constitution belongs to the nation and not to any one party or two. The Constitution Day is to underline the principles and values of our polity and society and it should be a matter of national interest and concern. While emphasizing the need to avoid the "Grammar of Anarchy" as warned by Dr. Ambedkar if we continue to

long only to dalits? There is a need to change the mindset, if we really want to bring about "Samrasta" in the society as propounded by RSS and its affiliates. Others namely; Former Chairman of the Punjab SC Commission Rajesh Bagha, Former Mayor Surinder Mahey, Community Activist Jiwan Singh and Convener of Jalandhar SC Morcha of BJP Bhopinder Kumar among others spoke at length about the constitution and its Chief Architect Babasaheb Ambedkar. It was a well attended function.

In the evening, Shri Guru Ravidass Educational and Charitable Trust observed the Day at Shri Guru Ravidass Dham at Bootan Mandi with Ardas and prayers for the welfare of the community. It was a matter of gratification to note that the young girls of the community, for the first time, participated and presented themselves in a befitting manner. Kashish read the poetic Preamble of the Constitution with an appreciative flare. Kirtan Trainee Ashwina, Jyoti a district topper of 10th standard, a

Babasaheb, we should try our best to diminish such an eventuality. Poetic interventions were provided by acclaimed poets, Param Dass Heer and Rajinder Thapar. Finance Secretary of the Trust and Former GM of Coal India Amar Nath Ram gave the vote of thanks and spoke at length about the constitution. I, along with Swami Balram Rai, was invited to the podium to honour the poets and young girl participants with Saropas and copies of the Constitution of India which was a pleasure. I will not conclude this piece without appreciating and congratulating the management headed by Om Prakash Mahey, particularly Prof. Mahesh Chander, who thoughtfully chalked out and aptly conducted the programme, the Trust and the Dham for arranging this befitting event and involving the young girls of the community. I wish them all the best for further success.

The Constitution of India will remain and prevail to make India stand up to meet the challenges of 21st century.

Do not destroy the Natural Resources of Goa in the name of Economic Development

On the night of 1st November, 2020, about 5000 Goans gathered near the railway crossing in the Historic village of Chandor (which was the capital of Goa in the Medieval Period), one kilometer away from the environmentally sensitive area of Mollem National Park and Bhagwan Mahavir Sanctuary and protested against the Government of Goa for allowing three projects by playing drums and chanting slogans like 'Save Mollem' and 'Goa doesn't want Coal'. The protest was also supported by the Goa Congress leaders and some foreign environmental activists. Three sanctioned development projects in the region are – double tracking of railway line, four laning of 4-A National Highway and 400 km transmission line.

The Union Government minister Prakash Javadekar has approved 30 development projects during the lockdown which fall in environmentally sensitive areas in different parts of the country. Before approving these development projects, as per rules, the outline of the project has to be discussed with the environmental committee of the respective area, after which the environmental impact assessment of the area is done. In order to know the opinion about the project from the people living in the respective area where project has to be started, detailed information of the project is

given through print and electronic media. The project can be started only if people agree to start the project after knowing the pros and cons of the project, if the people have suggestions then the outline of the project is changed again by incorporating the suggestions given by the people and can be started thereafter. But the Union Government Minister have not consulted the Regional Environment Committee, neither did the government conducted an environmental impact assessment, nor has the government sought public opinion on the projects in defiance of the environmental regulations. The government took advantage of Covid-19 lockdown and passed all the projects. These passed projects include those projects which are being vehemently opposed by the people of Goa.

Both the Central and State Governments are trying to convince the people of Goa that these projects are for the development and betterment of the people of Goa, but if they are for the development of the people and the state then why are the people of Goa opposing them. The Goa residents say that these three projects are related to the ecological sensitive area as well as all of these projects pass through National Mollem Park and Bhagwan Mahavir Sactuary those have a unique status

for their rich flora and fauna biodiversity. Along with this the area is located in the Western Ghats which is known for its ecological fragility. The natural beauty of this area is vert captivating, Goa's famous Dudhsagar and Tamdi Falls, Tamdi Temple and Devil Canyon are also in this region and these places are good tourist destination. The region is densely forested which contributes immensely to the balance of Goa's environment and groundwater level. The three projects will upset environmental balance of the region. For these projects, at least 50,000 trees would be cut down from the dense forests, which would drastically increase the amount of carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, increase the local temperature and have negative impact on

Goa already has two railway lines which are enough to cater to the needs of the people of Goa. It is important to mention here that 400 KW transmission line is also there to meet to the growing power demands of the industries.

The double track railway line, the four-lane National Highway 4-A and the transmission line will not promote the economic development of Goa, rather they would destroy and pollute the natural resources such as forest, air and water resources while passing through the environmentally sensitive zones. During the transportation of high amount of coal, the smell and large particles of coal would scatter in the coastal areas of Arabian Sea and on the both sides of railway line, scattering in the water

fish or other aquatic organisms, thousands of fishermen whose livelihood depends on the sea will become helpless to meet their basic needs.

These so-called development projects will do a great damage to the natural beauty, biodiversity, and economic and social development of Goa. The bottom line is that these projects have no prospects for the development of Goa that is why the residents of Goan are opposing them. Furthermore, they say that they will fight up



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to death to save Goa's environment, wildlife sanctuaries, economy, people's employment and health from the Central Government and industrialists like Advani, Sterlite, Vandana and Jindal (whose iron and steel industries are located in Karnataka).

The Goa Government is now supporting these projects under the pressure of the Central Government, it should have approved only those projects which are in favour of the state's natural environment and economic development. It is difficult to understand why the Central Govern-



ment at the different international platforms and in the Paris Climate Agreement has promised to increase forest cover and generate energy from renewable sources to reduce carbon emission, but at national level under the pressure of industrialists is encouraging coal-fired industries by removing the dense forest cover endangering the natural environment and livelihood of the people as well as their health. Not only this, the Central Government has brought the draft of Environmental Impact Assessment, 2006 during the lockdown period. If it is passed, then a large number of country's natural resources will also be sacrificed for the corporate world.

It is incumbent upon the Central Government to abandon the narrow political interests and corporate-friendly model for economic development of the country and adopt a people and nature-friendly model.

and air, polluting the environment, endangering the lives of the people, sea creatures and wildlife. With these projects, the dense forest of Mollem National Park and Bhagwan Mahavir Sanctuary will be fragmented into small pieces, which will destroy the habitat of the animals and put them at greater risks as their number will start declining at a fast rate. Human population will face dire consequences if they enter into the forests as animal diseases will also start spreading among them.

All over the world Goa is known for its natural beauty, if double track railway line is constructed that will not only destroy the forest of Mollem Nation Park and Bhagwan Mahavir Sanctuary but also pollute the beautiful beaches of Goa. The increase in transportation of coal will reduce the influx of tourists which will adversely affect the livelihood of the people of Goa. As a result, tourism industry will be badly affected by these projects which is the only economic resource of the state. Along with the beaches, the sea water will be polluted with coal particles which will cause the sea plants to die from being unable to make their food due to lack of sunlight. Due to absence of food sea creatures (fish, crabs, etc.) will either die or migrate to other places. With the scarcity of

the ground water level of the area. The people of this region will be forced to face water scarcity like the people of Cotigao area. In the Cotigao area, it is not an uncommon sight to see women of the five villages lining up in front of the government water tankers for drinking water every year during the summer months. What is the use of development where people crave for even basic needs like water?

The Goa residents say that none of these projects are for the development of Goa. All of these projects are designed for the corporate world and entrepreneurs. The main reason for double-tracking the railway line and making National Highway 4-A four lane is to supply more coal and iron from Marma Goa port to industries in Karnataka. So far, only 12 million tonnes of coal is being transported annually but with this railway line and 4-A National Highway, the target is to increase the volume to 51 million tonnes per annum by 2036.

The Central Government had planned to double the railway track in 2016 and now taking advantage of the lockdown and putting pressure on the state government, it has passed it in defiance of the environmental regulations. Former Goa Chief Minister Pratap Singh Rane has said that

the Central Government does not change its planning strategy of the economic development, then all people of our country will face more natural calamities due to rising temperature in the forthcoming days and at the same time excessive use of renewable energy resources will also be a disgrace to the country to emit more carbon into the atmosphere.

Peasant struggle: Time for workers to wake up

The ongoing peasant struggle in 18 states of the country, which started from Punjab, has brought some very important issues before the society and the government. At first glance, the struggle seems to be limited to the repeal of three newly enacted laws on agriculture by the Central Government, but in reality, it is a struggle to save the country's federal structure. Adoption of a people-friendly and nature-friendly economic development model and a path of struggle instead of escapism will solve problems and warm social relations.

Although at present around 500 farmers' organizations of the country are supporting and contributing to this struggle, it is very important to reach a consensus among the 31 farmers' organizations of Punjab to resolve the issues of the farmers. This is because the left and right wing farmers' organizations in the state had earlier not only turned their backs on each other but also hurled insults at the fleeing opposition groups. The struggle of these groups is going on in a democratic and peaceful manner and these groups are making every effort to take their struggles to the 18 states of the country through collective decisions, to awaken the political parties of the country and to make their struggle a people's struggle. Out of these 31 farmers' organizations, the leadership of only one organization has bent on sacrificing the interests of the farmers out of self-interest, but it has lost face as the members of that organization have largely opposed this leadership.

There was a clear message from the Central Government to set up private markets for marketing of agricultural commodities and to abolish the APMC markets and to run away from procuring at minimum support prices (MSPs) for agricultural commodities through contract farming. It was soon understood that the propaganda by the government to double the income of the farmers through these laws and the words used in the language of these laws are misleading. The third law on agriculture was meant to protect the interests of farmers and consumers. There is no mention of how this law will protect the interests of the farmers, but as far as the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 is amended, the limit on storage of farm commodities for companies / traders has already been abolished by it. The rise in prices of onions and potatoes has also begun to erode the two-times dry bread for the average consumer.

The Agricultural Prices Commission was set up by the Central Government in 1965. Since its inception, the Commission has been making recommendations to the Central Government on MSPs for certain agricultural commodities and the Central Government has generally complied with those recommendations. During the first five years, when the country was facing severe shortage of food-grains, the recommendations of the

Commission for MSP of some agricultural commodities were in favor of the farmers. From 1970 onwards these recommendations were made against the farmers which was opposed and criticized by the farmers' organizations and some political parties. To avoid this opposition and criticism, the Central Government tried to give the impression that the Commission was renamed as 'Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices' on February 23, 1987, as if it were relying on agricultural production costs in making its recommendations. It was a completely confusing phenomenon. The Central Government currently sets MSPs for 23 agricultural commodities, but generally procures only wheat and paddy from a few states at those prices. This time the market prices of maize and cotton are bringing to light the reality of the MSP fixed by the Central Government.

One of the major issues in the



farmers' struggle has been the fixing of MSPs of agricultural commodities and their procurement by the Central Government. The Central Government, from the UPA government to the present NDA government, has been running away from fixing the MSP of agricultural commodities as recommended by the Swaminathan Commission. Even if the Central Government accepts the recommendation of the Swaminathan Commission, which is not visible, will all the problems of the farmers be solved? The answer to this question is no, as 68 per cent of the country's farmers own less than 2.5 acres and 86 per cent less than 5 acres. For example, if all the farmers are given 50 per cent profit on the cost of production of their commodities and the average annual income of these farmers would be Rs 1 lakh it will be less than Rs 28 per person per day. Will farmers be able to support themselves in this income? Therefore, the issue is being considered in the farmers' organizations that the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) should be replaced by the Remunerative Support Prices (RSPs) of agricultural commodities, but at the same time the agricultural policies of the government should be farmer-friendly. The government must maintain a minimum level of income so that farmers can meet their basic needs of food, clothing, housing, education, healthcare, clean environ-

ment and social security in a respectful manner. In order to protect the soil health and environment in the country from degradation, the Central Government has to identify the various agro-climatic zones and ensure proper cultivation in these zones and procurement of their commodities at remunerative prices. In this regard, special care needs to be taken of the two rungs at the bottom of the agricultural economy ladder, farm labourers and rural artisans, as they are more prone to wear and tear in the process of agricultural production and are also being kicked by the farmers. Both these sections have no means of production other than selling their labour and the increasing use of machinery and herbicides since the adoption of New Agricultural Technology has greatly reduced their employment opportunities.

With the enactment of three laws related to agriculture by the

large number of young people are going abroad, which has led to Brain Drain, Capital Drain and loss of Demographic Dividend. The peasant struggle has succeeded in bringing to light the fact that the share of 50 per cent of the population, who depend on agriculture for their livelihood, should be increased from 16 per cent to at least that level which would enable the farmers, farm labourers, rural small artisans and other labourers who depend on agriculture to meet their basic needs easily.

The peasant struggle is moving towards becoming a people's struggle, but for its success it is necessary that the peasant organizations understand the problems of the farm labourers, rural artisans and other workers and contribute without any slogan for their solution. The farmers' unions should facilitate the required increase in wage rates for farm labourers, rural artisans and other labourers as well as strictly avoid caste discrimination. Instead of denying the legal rights of the Dalits in village Panchayati lands, they should come forward to make them happy.

The Governments should sincerely carry out land reforms in favour of the poor and underprivileged workers of the agricultural sector which will increase productivity, production and income of the workers. The adoption of the 'New Agricultural Technology' in the country and the success of the 'Green Revolution' and the pro-capitalist/corporate world economic development model adopted in the country since 1991 have resulted in individualism among the people belonging to the agricultural sector. The co-operative movement needs to be accelerated to rectify the deterioration in social relations caused by materialist tendencies and to increase the income of these sections. The Dalit working class families of Punjab through their struggles have taken 1/3rd Panchayati land legally on contract and cooperative farming on it has shown a good way to all the agricultural labourers by providing them with their grains, vegetables, green and dry fodder. Farmers with small holdings, landless farmers, farm labourers and rural artisans can use all their resources to make their lives happier and more meaningful by learning from the Jews of Israel to help each other and moving towards cooperative agriculture. Cooperation in meeting the machinery and financial needs can yield remarkable results. By adopting agro-based

(Contd. on page 6)



Dr. Gian Singh

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Sue Frost

Sacramento County Supervisor. District 4



Sue Frost

County Returns to the Purple Tier
In the midst of rising COVID cases statewide, on November 13th Sacramento County was officially demoted to "purple tier" status, the State's most restrictive level. These restrictions include, among other things, the closure of indoor operations for gyms, fitness centers, and restaurants. This move by the State will have a devastating impact on local businesses already shutting down at a



heartbreaking rate. It ignores what science is telling us.

If something doesn't change in the immediate future, these businesses are going to be going into the winter months being forced to only be open outdoors. It will be incredibly difficult for businesses to convince customers to eat dinner outside in the cold when they could eat indoors a few miles away in Roseville or El Dorado Hills.

Our public health department already knows what is causing our increase in COVID cases: private gatherings and outbreaks in some long-term care facilities. It is not a major problem at the businesses that are being forced to close operations and where safety measures, such as social distancing, have been successfully implemented. Shutting them down when they are not significantly contributing to the problem is unnecessarily harmful.

Our public health department also already knows that well over half of the COVID cases are coming from the City of Sacramento, even though they represent only about one third of the County population. The Unincorporated Area of the County has more people than the City of Sacramento, yet has less than 20% of cases. Many of these areas share much more in common with communities like Roseville or El Dorado Hills than it does with Sacramento City. Our State policies should allow us to take things like this into consideration. Yet, California remains ignorantly adhered to flawed policies that hurt our community, even when given a clear pathway to do things more efficiently and safely.

You may have seen it in the news, but in early October, I signed onto a letter along with several other local and State leaders, that was written to Governor Newsom and Human Services Secretary Mark Ghaly. In

this letter, we requested that the State allow Counties like Sacramento to reopen communities by zip code where COVID metrics meet the State's requirements for progressing to the next color-coded tier. As of writing this article, that letter has not even been responded to, let alone considered.

A balanced zip-code approach isn't some bogus theory that lacks a scientific basis. A zip-code based approach is precisely what is being utilized in America's most populous city, New York. They use a targeted approach to address clusters of COVID cases by targeting the most affected zip-code hot spots. Doing so allows them to allocate important medical resources to the targeted communities that are most in need. This approach also ensures that communities not experiencing an increase in positivity are not negatively impacted by restrictions that are not necessary.

I am going to keep fighting to put pressure on the State to allow us to consider more sensible policies locally in Sacramento County, and I won't stop until this pandemic is over.

Grants for Local Non-Profits

I am thrilled to announce that Sacramento County began accepting applications for this year's TOT grants on



November 6th! TOT grants go to non-profit organizations that provide services/programs in Sacramento County. No less than \$100,000 will go to non-profits in District 4, so I hope you will all help me spread the word! This grant program has gone to support some really great organizations throughout the County.

If you are interested or have questions, visit this link for more details. The deadline is December 7th.

Holiday Blues, Coping During COVID-19

The holiday season is traditionally a time to share food and time with our friends and family. For most of us, this was unlikely to be the case this year. With travel restrictions and Public Health Orders in place, we will need to adjust, but this could have a major impact on our mental health.

The holidays are traditionally when everyone can take time off from work and connect with people they care about, break their routine

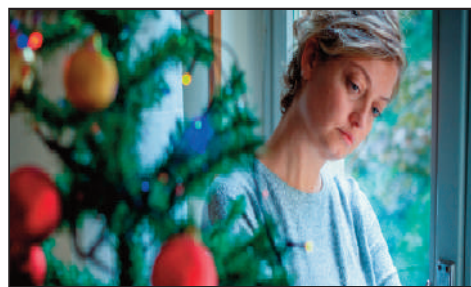
and travel. With COVID-19 surging across much of the country, these activities aren't safe at this time. Looking after our mental health in a proactive way is more important than ever as we enter the holiday season.

This year, we need to find small, creative ways to feel joy and comfort and when you need it, don't be afraid to ask for help. For the holidays to maintain that vital human connection, that might mean having a video chat with a loved one in a nursing home, committing to calling someone you love every day or setting up a computer in the dining room so family and friends from afar can virtually join in the holiday meal.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 64 percent of people with mental illness report holidays make their conditions worse. In addition, many holiday events include and even focus on alcohol consumption, which can be a particularly challenging time for sobriety for people in recovery.

In Sacramento County alone, it is estimated that nearly 300,000 residents are living with a mental illness, which means we all need to bring understanding and kindness to each other and ourselves as we greet this holiday season. Mental Health Tips during the Holidays:

1. Keep Active. Physical activity can boost your mood both in the short and long term. Go for a 10-15 minute walk or dance around in your kitchen to increase your mood and calmness.
2. Address Loneliness. Many people have been isolated in 2020, to combat this, make an effort to call or video chat someone who is important to you. Remember to check in with others through email, text and social media. Staying occupied is also help-



ful, find a new podcast, listen to music, start drawing, an occupied and engaged mind is less likely to dwell on loneliness.

3. Eat and Drink Well. What we eat impacts our mood – with this in mind, make sure to eat well leading up and following the holidays to keep a steady mind. Also remember, that while alcohol might lift your mood and reduce anxiety at the time, in the long term alcohol increases the risk of developing mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.
4. Keep your expectations re-

alistic. Not everyone is on the same page when it comes to COVID-19, some might want to have a Zoom-based meal while others want to have a small in-person meal. These differences have the potential to cause disappointment and additional stress. Have a clear and frank discussion with family on what to expect this year. The best option is to celebrate virtually this year.

5. Get enough sleep. It might be a small thing, but getting the sleep you need every night can keep you a little healthier and happier. Sleep deprivation can heighten emotions and cause unnecessary, added stress.

It's also important to remember that for people in recovery, the holidays can be a particularly challenging time for their sobriety. You can help those in recovery during the holiday season by demonstrating understanding and support.

For those in recovery, below are important strategies for sobriety and enjoy holidays:

Before heading to holiday festivities virtually or in person, have a plan to stay sober. Choose activities and your company to reduce triggers.

Spend time with those who are supportive and keep away from drama.

Have a response ready for those repeatedly offering alcohol (I'm driving; I'm the designate driver; or I don't drink alcohol).

Bring your own non-alcoholic beverages and fun mock-tails to parties.

Start your own traditions to celebrate in a way that works for you. Avoid putting too much pressure on yourself – it's okay to say no to invitations, and know you are entitled to walk away from uncomfortable situations.

Volunteer with a local charity. Plan your own virtual sober holiday event for your friends and family and celebrate your sobriety.

Ask for help. When faced with cravings reach out and talk about your cravings and remember your motivations to stay clean and sober.

Remember to take care of yourself, and keep in mind that the holidays may be a stressful time for many of your family members and friends too. Reach out to loved ones who might be struggling with the pressure of the holidays, take the time you need for yourself and enjoy this holiday season!

A Range of Behavioral Health Services Offered

Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services strives to create an effective (Contd. on next page)

(Continue from page 5)

tive, high-quality integrated system to meet the needs of Sacramento County residents. We work together with those individuals living with mental health conditions and substance use/abuse to provide hope, wellness and recovery.

It's now more important than ever to address the Behavioral Health needs in our communities. The stress of COVID-19 and sheltering at home have increased anxiety and depression. People are struggling with the threat of wildfires and power outages for themselves, family and friends. Civil unrest and systemic racial discrimination add to the distress of our culturally diverse populations.

We all need to be monitoring our own behavioral health and the behavioral health of our friends and family. It's normal to feel stressed right now. However, if you experience behavioral health challenges for more than two weeks, reach out for help. If you have insurance, contact your insurance for a referral. If you have Medi-Cal, call the County for an assessment (916-875-1055). Behavioral Health services are essential services and are available by telephone or video telehealth.

Every year, more than 40,000 people are served in the County's Mental Health and Substance Use Prevention Treatment programs and more than 170,000 are served by the County's Prevention and Early Intervention programs. Programs continue to deliver services during the COVID pandemic.

An array of opportunities are available through our Medi-Cal programs and services for children, adolescents, young adults, adults and older adults of Sacramento County. These supports include assessments, case management, crisis intervention, medication support, peer support and other rehabilitative services.

Services are provided in multiple settings including residential facilities, clinics, schools, hospitals, juvenile halls and camps, mental health courts, board and care homes, in the field and in people's homes. Special emphasis is placed on addressing co-occurring mental health disorders and other health conditions such as substance use and addiction. There are programs for outpatient treatment, medication-assisted treatment, withdrawal management (detoxification), residential treatment, perinatal services and sober living en-

vironments/recovery residences.

If you or someone you know is in need of help, below is an array of Medi-Cal programs and services available. Sacramento County Behavioral Health urges everyone to take their health seriously and is here to guide you through a culturally competent system of care that promotes holistic recovery, optimum health, and resiliency. Interpreters will be provided at no cost to the consumer.

Mental Health Services

ACCESS Team

– 916-875-1055 or 888-881-4881: This referral service provides over-

the-phone assessment before referring patients to appropriate mental health care providers. The service is available Monday through Friday.

The Source – 916-SUPPORT (787-7678): 24-hour call/chat/text for individuals up to age 25 years old.

Consumer-Operated Warm Line - 916-366-4668: This service is offered by survivors of mental illnesses and those in recovery. They share their experiences and offer support to mental health patients.

The Community Support Team - 916-874-6015: The Sacramento Community Support Team provides field-based assessments and help individuals navigate mental health services.

Crisis Text Line - Text "Home" to 741741 and trained crisis counselors with active listening and collaborative problem-solving skills will help you.

Mental Health Crisis Triage Services - Provides support during a crisis through several community-based programs via phone, in person, and secured website. Interventions may include: in the moment support, mediation, follow-up support, information and referrals, and linkage to outpatient mental health services.

Mental Health Urgent Care Clinics

Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic at 2130 Stockton Boulevard, Building 300, Sacramento, CA 95817 provides services on a walk-in basis (call ahead) to individuals of all ages who are experiencing a mental health and/or co-occurring substance abuse crisis. (916) 520-2460

Turning Point in Rio Linda is a crisis residential program, created by Sacramento County to alleviate a



decade-long shortage in mental health services. It offers people who are coming down from suicide attempts, panic attacks and other serious mental health episodes a safe place to stay for 30 days.

Mental Health Court - Aims to reduce re-offense and increase the quality of life among those diagnosed with mental illnesses and those who have co-occurring substance abuse conditions that cause significant impairment. Participants must have low-level crimes and not considered public safety risks.

Sacramento County Mobile Crisis Support

Team – A collaboration between Behavioral Health and Law Enforcement to respond together to emergency calls for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

Stop Stigma Sacramento - Learn about culturally responsive mental health and local resources; read personal stories from community members living with mental illness; and, to find out how you can help reduce stigma and discrimination in your community and get involved with the project. Community specific content is also available in several languages.

Sacramento Countywide Bullying Prevention Project - Supports Sacramento County districts and their school sites as they implement bullying prevention programs and strategies.

Hope Cooperative's Peer Navigators - Navigators transform and empower lives by supporting independence and preventing homelessness. This team also provides interim and permanent supportive housing and a variety of case management programs for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, many of whom have a severe and persistent mental illness.

A list of all Sacramento County Mental Health Plan Medi-Cal Providers and Prevention and Early Intervention & Mental Health Respite Services Providers is available online.

Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services

Adult System of Care for Substance Use Treatment (Adults 18 years of age and older) – 916-874-9754. To qualify for services, adult clients must

participate in a preliminary assessment conducted by our Adult System of Care for Substance Use Treatment staff. Assessments are conducted on a drop-in basis.

Youth System of Care for Substance Use Treatment (Youth under the age of 18 years) - 916-875-0185

Collaborative Courts and Programs - Also known as problem-solving courts, combine judicial supervision with rehabilitation services that are rigorously monitored and focused on recovery to reduce recidivism and improve offender outcomes. These courts reduce trauma on victims and provide offenders with services, such as alcohol and/or drug treatment, rather than jail time.

Outpatient Treatment - Intake and assessment for a substance use disorder, treatment planning, individual counseling, group counseling, family therapy, collateral services, member education, medication services, crisis intervention services, and discharge planning.

Residential Treatment - A non-institutional, 24-hour non-medical, short-term living support and structure with available trained personnel who provide rehabilitation services to individuals, with a substance use disorder diagnosis, when determined as medically necessary and in accordance with an individualized treatment plan.

Withdrawal Management/ Detox - Intake and assessment, observation and monitoring to evaluate health status of individuals during the detoxification process, medication services, and discharge planning.

Medication-Assisted Treatment - Includes the same components as Outpatient Services with the inclusion of medical psychotherapy. Medication-Assisted Treatment includes ordering, prescribing, administering, and monitoring of all medications for substance use disorders.

Recovery Residences/Sober Living – Includes individual and group counseling; recovery monitoring/substance abuse assistance (recovery coaching, relapse prevention, and peer-to-peer services); and case management (linkages to educational, vocational, family supports, community-based supports, housing, transportation, and other services based on need).

Peasant struggle: Time for workers to wake up

(Continue from page 4)

industrial units in the cooperative sector ownership structure, employment opportunities can be increased as well as the benefit of value-addition can be reaped.

Consumers' rights can be protected while increasing their income by selling vegetables, milk and milk products and other agricultural commodities at special locations in cities by setting up cooperatives. This will easily dispel the misconceptions created about agricultural dependent workers.

For the peasant struggle to

succeed in the long run, the peasant organizations must also overcome political and intellectual pollution. Since 1947, various political parties have been making "promises" and new promises to win elections and establish their own government. Apart from political parties, groups of farmers, farm labourers and rural artisans have been suffering under the guise of one man.

To avoid such political contamination, it is very important to read, write, think together, take your problems to the society and the government through the media. In addition

to political pollution, there is an urgent need to avoid intellectual pollution that eats away at those who come in contact with it like an ambergris vine.

These so-called eight-striped intellectuals come to the forefront of the struggle, get information from them about their struggle, give advice on how to turn the struggle upside down and put their full emphasis on suggesting to the rulers the methods of crushing the struggle.

Therefore, in order to carry out the struggle in a democratic and peaceful manner, there is an urgent

need to beware of the immortal vine of political and intellectual pollution. In this regard, workers in agriculture and other sectors should move away from the politics of religions, castes, tribes, families, territories, etc. and also focus on political initiatives with collective leadership.

The peasant struggle will be a people's struggle in the true sense only if all the working classes come together and fight for a long time in a democratic and peaceful manner. Gram Sabhas, Mohalla Sabhas in cities and pro-people caravans can contribute a lot in this regard.

New appointments by elect President Joe Biden his Cabinet and White House staff

The announcements come as Biden continues to build his Cabinet and White House staff, led by Chief of Staff Ron Klain while President Donald Trump refuses to concede the election that Biden won.

"Communicating directly and truthfully to the American people is one of the most important duties of a President, and this team will be entrusted with the tremendous responsibility of connecting the American people to the White House," Biden said in a statement. "I am proud to announce today the first senior White House communications team comprised entirely of women. These qualified, experienced communicators bring diverse perspectives to their work and a shared commitment to building this country back better."

More:Ron Klain named Biden's chief of staff, first White House official picked for administration As press secretary, Psaki will become the public face of the Biden administration, a role that Kayleigh McEnany holds in Trump's administration. "I grew up through the hard

retary for Obama's first campaign, communications director for former Rep. Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., and Midwest and Northwest regional press secretary for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Bedingfield, the new White House communications director, said she is "unspeakably proud to have the opportunity to serve as White House communications director."

"Working for him as VP and on this campaign gave me insight into what kind of capable, compassionate, clear-eyed president he will be," she said in tweet. Sanders, who will serve as the chief spokesperson for Harris, said



tor of response in the Obama-Biden White House. Before joining the Biden White House, Bedingfield served as communications director to

tions director, State Department spokesperson under then-Secretary of State John Kerry, Deputy White House communications director and



fought battles of winning back the House, winning presidential campaigns and fighting for the Obama-Biden agenda with @KBeds and looking forward to the journey ahead," Psaki said Sunday in a tweet.

Psaki served as communications director for Obama during his final two years in office. She was earlier a spokeswoman for the State Department, handling daily briefings with the international press.

More:President-elect Biden seeks a diverse Cabinet. Here's who will join his administration and who might be top contenders. As communications director from 2015 to 2017, Psaki reorganized the White House approach to media with more attention for non-traditional and online outlets. She previously had served as senior communications adviser and traveling press secretary for Obama during his reelection campaign.

From 2013 to 2015, Psaki served as the primary spokeswoman for the State Department, traveling 600,000 miles to more than 50 countries with Secretary John Kerry.

She earlier served as deputy White House communications director during Obama's first term, coordinating and implementing the public response of the government to the financial crisis. She worked with Larry Summers, director of the National Economic Council, Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner and key senior cabinet officials throughout the administration.

She has also worked on many national and state political campaigns. She was traveling press sec-

she is "ready to serve."

"Also AN ALL LADY SQUAD?!" Sanders said in a tweet, singling out her colleagues. "We each take our service seriously and are elated to get to work for the people and build back better! Lets go ladies!"

Etienne, the new communications director for the vice president, previously served as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's communications director. Pelosi said Harris has "chosen a seasoned communicator" in a statement.

"Her experience working on both sides of Pennsylvania Avenue and the immense respect she commands among both members and staff will make her a powerful force in the Biden-Harris Administration, Pelosi said.

Elizabeth Alexander

Communications director for the first lady Alexander served as a senior adviser on the Biden-Harris Campaign. She spent the first years of the Obama-Biden administration as the Press Secretary to Vice President Biden after serving as then-Sen. Biden's Communications Director on Capitol Hill.

Kate Bedingfield

White House communications director Bedingfield served as deputy campaign manager and communications director for the Biden-Harris Campaign. She served as communications director for Biden when he was vice president and as associate communications director, deputy director of media affairs, and the direc-

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., on her successful 2008 Senate campaign along with other roles on Democratic campaigns.

Ashley Etienne

Communications director for the vice president Etienne served as a senior adviser on the Biden-Harris campaign. Previously, Etienne served as communications director and senior adviser to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. She was the first woman and person of color to hold the position. Etienne was special assistant to the president and director of communications for the Cabinet in the Obama-Biden administration and also led communications on President Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative.

Karine Jean-Pierre

Principal deputy press secretary Jean-Pierre served as a senior adviser to Biden and chief of staff to Harris on the Biden-Harris Campaign. She previously served as a chief public affairs officer for MoveOn.org and was a political analyst for NBC and MSNBC Political Analyst. Jean-Pierre served as regional political director for the White House Office of Political Affairs during the Obama-Biden administration and as deputy battleground states director for Obama's 2012 reelection campaign.

Jen Psaki

White House press secretary Psaki is overseeing confirmation for the Biden-Harris transition team. During the Obama-Biden administration, Psaki held several senior roles, including White House communica-

deputy White House Press Secretary during the financial crisis.

Symone Sanders

Senior adviser and chief spokesperson for the vice president Sanders served as a senior adviser on the Biden-Harris Campaign. Four years ago, she worked for Sen. Bernie Sanders's presidential campaign as press secretary, the youngest person ever in that role for a presidential campaign. Before joining the Biden-Harris Campaign, Sanders was a CNN political commentator and served as principal of the 360 Group LLC, where she provided strategic communications guidance. Sanders is the former chair of the Coalition of Juvenile Justice Emerging Leaders Committee and former member of the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice.

Pili Tobar

Deputy White House communications director Tobar served as communications director for coalitions on the Biden-Harris Campaign. Previously, she served as the deputy director for America's Voice, where she advocated on behalf of immigrants. She has also served as the Hispanic media director for Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, national director of Hispanic Media and Western Regional Press Secretary for the Democratic National Committee, communications director for U.S. Rep. Ruben Gallego, and communications director for the Latino Victory Project. Reach Joey Garrison on Twitter @Joeygarrison.

Hussan Laroya Banga



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Guru- Piari Sadh Sangat Ji,

December 6, 2020

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 551st Parkash Utsav Celebrations

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 551st Parkash Utsav will be celebrated on Sunday, December 6, 2020. Akhand Path will start on Friday, December 4, 2020, at 10:00 AM and will conclude with Bhog ceremony at 1:00 PM on Sunday, December 6, 2020.

Giani Ompal Singh and Giani Gurnam Singh Ji will adorn the occasion with Shabad Kirtan along with other Kirtankars. Guru Nanak Dev Ji is the first Sikh Guru and the founder of Sikhism. He was born in 1469 at Rai-Bhoi-di Talwandi in, now known as Nankana Sahib. His spiritual teachings are enshrined in the holy pages of SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB*

Nishan Sahib Hoisting Ceremony will be held on December 5, 2020 (Saturday) at 11:00 AM

For peace and harmony in the world today, we really need to adopt His teachings of **Universal brotherhood, Equality and Love of Mankind**. Vainder Sudhir and his family will be hosting this Sewa. Entire Sangat is requested to participate in this "Gurupurb".

"NANAK NAM CHARDI KALA TERE BHANE SARBAT DA BHALA"

Chairman
Jagtar Bhatia

President
Shinder Paul Narabut

Sangat
De Sewadar

General Secretary
Dharam Pal Chonkria

Treasurer
Vinod Kumar