



# Ambedkar Times Weekly

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## THUS THE REAL SEQUENCE OF THE SLOGAN IS: EDUCATE, AGITATE AND ORGANIZE

Prem Kumar Chumber (Editor-In-Chief)

Ambedkar Times (English) & Desh Doaba (Punjabi)

**Educate, Organize and Agitate** is the most mis-quoted slogan of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar. Its true version is: Educate Agitate and Organize. Baba Sahib uttered these precious words at the end of his historic speech delivered at the All-India Depressed Classes Conference (July 18-19, 1942 at Nagpur), convened to create an All-India organization with distinct aims and purposes in co-operation with all the inter-provincial forces. It was at this very conference that a declaration was made about the formation of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation. Below are given the exact words of the concluding part of this historic speech of Baba Sahib, as cited in his 'fascinating biography' authored by Dhananjay Keer:

"My final words of advice to you are educate, agitate and organize; have faith in yourself. With justice on our side, I do not see how we can lose our battle. The battle to me is a matter of joy. The battle is in the fullest sense spiritual. There is nothing material or social in it. For ours is a battle, not for wealth or for power. It is a battle for freedom. It is a battle for the reclamation of human personality" (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 3rd ed. 1971, p: 351, emphasis added).

Babasaheb's struggle for the uplift of the socially excluded was precisely spiritual in the sense that it intends to restore their lost dignity and make them equal with all the other sections of the rest of the society. For that the method he chooses was democratic-constitutional. Being educated in the oldest democracies in the world, Dr. Ambedkar imbibed the true spirit of democracy and constitutionalism. He wanted his fellow-beings and his countrymen to follow democratic ways for the peaceful resolution of all one problems including the most fatal one – the Untouchability.

In his democratic scheme of conflict resolution, education figures at the very beginning of the social struggle. Hence "educate" comes first in his three stepped slogan of educate, agitate and organize. By education Babasaheb did not mean merely certificates and degrees. For him to educate means to become aware of one's real life conditions; to be conscious of ones surroundings; to raise objection to the inhuman existence in the society; and to ask for change for the better. "Tell the slaves he is a slave and he will revolt", that is the real meaning of education.

It is such education that will stir agitation within, leading to what Babasaheb called "agitate". To "agitate" does not mean to organize guerrilla warfare, to do murda bad – murdabab. On the contrary, it means to become aware about ones social conditions and to seek viable steps for the eradications of the causes of the problems. Babasaheb told us that only real and true education could only make us to "agitate".

And it is this agitation, which is within, that would ultimately help us to "organize". The true example of which is Babasaheb himself, who after obtaining critical and rational sense through his education felt toofan within and consequently organized three political parties (Independent Labor Party, Scheduled Caste Federation and Republican Party of India) to secure Dalit human rights.

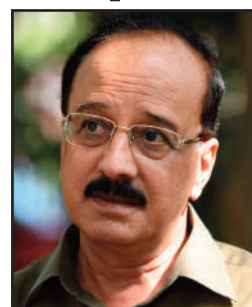
**Thus the real sequence of the slogan is:  
Educate Agitate and Organize**

## Wheat for Home: Prioritizing Domestic Requirements over Export

**A**t a time when the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres warns that 49 million people in 43 countries are just one step away from famine, India's conditional ban on wheat exports – and that too at a time when countries are scrambling to pile up as much grain as possible for their food reserves --- has drawn much criticism from the international community. While the G-7 countries have expressed their disappointment over trade restrictions imposed by India, the German Agriculture Minister Cem Ozdemir on the sidelines of the recent summit meeting of G-7 agricultural ministers said: "We call India to assume its responsibility as a G-20 member," adding that the issue will be discussed further at the forthcoming G-20 leaders meet in Germany, in June. As if this is not

porting wheat was only 10 million tonnes, to be stretched to 12 million tonnes at best. This would be a fraction of the food supplies required. But if the G-7 countries really care about the poor and hungry people, here is an opportunity for them to act like a statesman and demonstrate leadership

By just cutting down by 50 per cent the grain supplies that go into producing ethanol and also palm oil that goes into bio-diesel production, the rich countries can easily meet the en-



Devinder Sharma



ough, Kristalina Georgieva, the chief of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has now urged India to rethink its ban on wheat exports. Speaking to Indian media at the World Economic Forum at Davos she said: "I would beg India to reconsider as soon as possible because the more countries step into export restrictions, the more others would be tempted to do so and we would end up as a global community less equipped to deal with the crisis."

While the international pressure on India to lift the ban is understandable, they need to pass on the blame, but I find Indian economists as well as economic writers too speaking the language of the rich countries. For the past several years Indian economists, led by World Bank, were critical of India's food procurement system that led to over production of grain surplus year after year, but now in a complete turnaround want farmers to produce more for exports, so as find a permanent slot in international wheat trade – an opening that has been temporarily created by the ongoing conflict in the Russia-Ukraine region.

Before we examine why the need for a ban in wheat exports was necessary, let's first look at how superficial is the humanitarian responsibility that the rich developed countries are blaming India for. Even with the best of intentions, India's target of ex-

porting wheat was only 10 million tonnes, to be stretched to 12 million tonnes at best. This would be a fraction of the food supplies required. But if the G-7 countries really care about the poor and hungry people, here is an opportunity for them to act like a statesman and demonstrate leadership

By just cutting down by 50 per cent the grain supplies that go into producing ethanol and also palm oil that goes into bio-diesel production, the rich countries can easily meet the en-

Now let's come to India. In February, India was looking to a record wheat harvest, exceeding 111.32 million tonnes. But a sudden heat wave that struck the wheat growing belt in north India in early March, the production estimates fell to 106 million tonnes. In Punjab, for instance, crop cutting

(Contd. on next page)

# Consul General Dr. T.V. Nagendra Prasad inaugurates ceremony of UV International Inc



**Los Angeles (Bureau)** -Consul General Dr. T.V. Nagendra Prasad was the Chief of Guest on the inauguration ceremony of UV International Inc with 'Made in India'

equipment & materials - textile factory in Orange County. Consul General appreciated its CEO Mr. Gaurav Bhargava for his initiative to get the manufacturing equip-

ment from India. Few Indian business community leaders and Tie SoCal office bearers and Mr. Bob Berg of Magic Expo, Las Vegas were present. The Indian Textile

Manufacturing equipment is being used to manufacture decorative pillows on large scale. It generates employment in US and imports pillow cases from India.

## Wheat for Home: Prioritizing Domestic Requirements over Export

(Continue from page 1)

experiments has shown the drop in productivity to be around 5 quintals per acre causing an estimated loss of Rs 7,200-crore to farmers. The best way to compensate farmers would have been to let Food Corporation of India (FCI) announce a bonus, and procure as much as possible. This would have helped the loss-making FCI to cover up the losses. It could have been then directed to export keeping a tab on domestic requirements.

Given that farmers have incurred losses from a reduction in wheat yield, the best way to compensate them is to announce a bonus, say an increase of Rs 250 per quintal, over and above the MSP of Rs 2,015 per quintal. This would also take care of the increased cost of production that the farmers are faced with. Even China, realising the loss that farmers are undergoing from increased fer-

tiliser and input prices, has only a few days back announced a support of \$1.49 billion to its farmers.

Coming back to wheat exports, with Russian invasion of Ukraine also happening at the same time, private trade in India became hyper-active looking at the immense export opportunities. Initially, there prevailed a lot of excitement over the tremendous export opportunities that the ongoing war had created for Indian traders. With promises of India turning into a food provider for the world, and the need for WTO to ease its restrictive trade policies, the trade was euphoric, with some trading companies pointing at the possibility of exporting 21 million tonnes. The government itself was enthusiastic, even thinking of sending trade delegations to some countries. And subsequently, in a complete U-turn, India imposed a conditional ban on wheat exports a week

ago thereby inviting criticism.

The conditional ban, leaving enough room for exports on a government to government request, thereby has come at the right time. A country like India, with food inflation steadily rising and knowing well that it has over 800 million nutritionally poor whose food security is of paramount importance, the country has to be watchful for two reasons. First, several global climate studies say that extreme heat wave incidences will now become frequent, from an average of once in 100 years, to once in 3 years. Who know therefore how the weather will perform in the months to come, how the monsoons will behave, and so on. Secondly, there is still a remote possibility of pandemic showing its head again, which means India must be ready with enough grain surpluses in its kitty.

Even if the wheat availability is

comfortable now, we cannot repeat the wheat blunder of 2005-06 when the country allowed private trade to purchase wheat directly from farmers. They did, and left a huge gap in supplies for the food security needs. These companies also refused to divulge how much stock they carried, as a result of which India had to import 7.1 million tonnes in the next two years at prices that were more than double to what was paid to farmers. That is why the need to be doubly cautious.

It makes tremendous economic sense to be food secure rather than standing in queue next year with a begging bowl. I only hope India does not go for another u-turn under international pressure.

**Blog: Ground Reality**

<http://devinder-sharma.blogspot.com/>

**YouTube: Devinder Sharma's Channel**

<http://www.youtube.com/user/DrDevinderSharma>



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Goodie Takhar, PhD

# Shri V. Muraleedharan Minister visits Los Angeles



**Los Angeles (Bureau)** -Consul General Dr. T.V. Nagendra Prasad received Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs Shri V. Muraleedharan on an official visit to Los Angeles. The visit started with a lively interaction with students from India at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles on the campus.

Some community leaders and Dean were also present on the occasion. Students appreciated 'Vande Bharat' Mission. Minister shared the vision of New India, initiatives like (New) National Education Policy, Productivity Linked Incentive Scheme and discussed how students abroad can contribute and be part of India's

growth story.

A rousing welcome was accorded to Hon'ble Minister by the Indian Diaspora in Los Angeles Southern California at a Community reception hosted in his honour by Consul General of India, San Francisco. He said in his address that he is positive that the Diaspora will continue to play its sig-

nificant role in India's development journey. He also mentioned that Prime Minister often refers to Diaspora as 'live bridge' to India's relations with countries abroad. He also took some questions from the community and responded. Later, the Jain Temple comity took Minister for a brief tour of beautiful campus.

# Geetanjali Shree is first Indian winner of International Booker Prize

By Zoya Mateen

Geetanjali Shree has become the first Indian writer to win the International Booker Prize.

Her novel Tomb of Sand, a family saga set in the shadow of the partition of India, follows an 80-year-old woman after the death of her husband.

It was the first Hindi-language book to be shortlisted for the £50,000 prize.

"I never dreamt of the Booker, I never thought I could," Ms Shree said. "What a huge recognition. I'm amazed, delighted, honoured and humbled."

In her acceptance speech, quoted by the Press Trust of India, she said being the first book in Hindi to win the prize felt good.

"Behind me and this book lies a rich and flourishing literary tradition in Hindi, and in other South Asian languages. World literature will be the richer for knowing some of the finest writers in these languages," she said.

• Geetanjali Shree and Daisy Rockwell speak to the BBC World Service

Frank Wynne, the chair of judges, said the panel were "captivated by the power, the poignancy and the playfulness" of her novel.

"This is a luminous novel of

India and partition, but one whose spellbinding brio and fierce compassion weaves youth and age, male and female, family and nation into a kaleidoscopic whole," he said.

He added that he had not read anything like it before, and its "exuberance" and "passion" make it



a book "the world could do with right now."

The prize money will be split between Shree and the book's translator, US-based Daisy Rockwell.

The International Booker Prize is awarded every year for a book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.

This is different from the Man Booker Prize which is for English novels and has been won by Indians in the past, including Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga.

Shree's 725-page novel competed against five other shortlisted titles, by Mieko Kawakami, Bora

Chung, Jon Fosse, Claudia Pineiro and former winner Olga Tokarczuk.

Born in the city of Mainpuri in Uttar Pradesh state, Shree, 64, is the author of three novels and several story collections. Tomb of Sand is the first of her books to be published in the UK. Published in Hindi in 2018



with the title Ret Samadhi, it traces the transformative journey of Ma, who becomes depressed after the death of her husband. She then decides to travel to Pakistan, confronting trauma that has remained unresolved since she was a teenager who survived the partition.

"Once you've got women and a border, a story can write itself. Even women on their own are enough. Women are stories in themselves, full of stirrings and whisperings that float on the wind, that bend with each blade of grass," Shree writes in the opening pages of the novel.

• How an Indian writer 're-

turned from the dead'

In a BBC interview, Shree said the novel tells human stories that are universal irrespective of their cultural backdrop.

"There are many stories that came together in the book... but it's also the story of an old woman who gradually rose up from her deathbed to reinvent her life," she said.

Tomb of Sand has received rave reviews in Shree's home country. "The novel is a stunningly powerful story about stories that never end," The Hindu newspaper said.

"All of human history, literature, art, thought, politics have been at the service of this tale that's telling itself - and while it may often appear that Ms Shree is playing with words for the sake of word play, and that her digressions are asides, in the end nothing turns out to be self-indulgent or extraneous."

Rockwell said Tomb of Sand was one of the most difficult works she had ever translated because of the "experimental nature" of Shree's writing and "her unique use of language". But she added that the experience was also "great fun" and "liberating".

Courtesy: BBC News, Delhi  
26 May 2022,

Updated 27 May 2022

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-61561452>.amp



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# Dr Ambedkar's 131st birth celebrated at the House of Lords

On 11 May 2022 the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations UK (FABO UK) organised the 131st birth celebration of Babasheb Dr Ambedkar at the House of Lords. This was the sixth Dr Ambedkar Jayanti organised by Ms Santosh Dass MBE, Arun Kumar and C Gautam of FABO UK at the House of Lords. As in previous years, the celebrations to mark Dr Bhimrao R Ambedkar's 131st birth anniversary was chaired by Lord Harries of Pentregarth, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Dalits.

The theme of the 2022 meeting was Dr Ambedkar and Equality with a focus on equality, social justice and social reform. Most of the speakers focused on Dr Ambedkar, how he has inspired, and continues to inspire people, and wider equality issues in this country including the campaign to outlaw caste-based discrimination in Britain.

As in previous years, along-

and those interested in racial discrimination.

Dr Annapurna Waughray, an Ambedkarite, academic, lawyer, and writer, shared her prepared speaking notes with the meeting. Annapurna gives illuminating examples from her own experience of the mainstreaming of Ambedkar's understanding of equality at local, national and international levels. This includes her vital input in the campaign to outlaw caste-based discrimination (CBD) in the UK and the legal support she is giving in respect of CBD in the America. Annapurna's book *Capturing Caste in Law: The Legal Regulation of Caste Discrimination* (Routledge) was published on 12 May 2022.

Lord Richard Harries of Pentregarth opened the meeting. He extended a warm welcome to the speakers and attendees – some of whom are students from Indian on their first visit to the UK Parliament. He also welcomed his colleagues in

was pleased to see so many old friends here, particularly from the campaign to outlaw caste discrimination in Britain. Baroness Thornton - now the Labour Party's Shadow Spokesperson for Equalities and Women's issues - said, as a Government Minister in 2010, she had agreed a clause that gave Government ministers a 'power' to add caste as an aspect of Race in the Equality Act 2010. In opposition, in 2013, she helped make that 'power' a 'duty' on Government to make caste discrimination unlawful. Outlawing caste discrimination was unfinished business because people were still suffering from this form of discrimination. She said there were many friends in the Parliament who supported the calls for the law. She looked forward to hearing the latest from the report by the Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance.

Lord David Alton of Liverpool began his talk recalling attending in

2021, adopted this opinion that Stan Swamy's death in custody will forever remain a stain on India's human rights record."

Santosh Dass MBE, President of FABO UK and

Chair Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance gave a brief introduction to Dr Ambedkar and summarised key developments, and activities related to Dr Ambedkar since 2019 including getting 14 April recognised as Equality Day. She also gave a brief update lat-



**Ms Santosh Dass**  
MBE, President, FABO, UK



side members of the House of Commons and House of Lords, FABO UK invited Ambedkarite organisations in the UK and other organisations including representatives from the Ravidasia and Valmik community, and academics, and students who have an interest in Dr Ambedkar and Dalit issues.

The guest speakers included Santosh Dass MBE, Baroness Glenys Thornton, Lord Alton of Liverpool, Steven Gasztowicz QC, Nigel Planer, Dr Raj Chand, and Sushant Singh. A short Question and Answer session followed after the speeches. The meeting concluded with a Buddhist blessing from the Venerable Bodhidatta Bhante.

On the day of the meeting, apologies were received from two of speakers on the agenda - Anthony Bryan and Dr Annapurna Waughray. Both had been taken ill.

Anthony Bryan was to share his experience of the recent 'Windrush' scandal. After living and working in Britain for over fifty years, Anthony, a Jamaican-born man, had found himself wrongly detained and threatened with deportation by the British Home Office. His experience has been documented in the 2020 BBC film drama *Sitting in Limbo* and is a lesson for all law and rule makers,

the House of Lords including the Earl of Sandwich, Baroness Thornton, and Lord David Alton of Liverpool. Lord Harries said he was delighted to Chair these well-attended and interesting meetings for the 6th time as Chair of the APPG for Dalits. Sadly Covid restrictions had prevented this annual get together in Parliament during 2020 and 2021. Lord Harries said in Parliament, this annual meeting organised by Santosh Dass of the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations UK to mark Dr Ambedkar's birth anniversary are one of (if not the best) attended meetings of this nature. Dr Ambedkar's life and works continue to impact on and improve the lives of millions of people in India and around the world. There are very many meetings and celebrations around the UK including at the Ambedkar Museum London, to mark Dr Ambedkar's birth anniversary. He was keen to hear all the speeches and receive an update on the campaign to outlaw caste discrimination in the UK. Lord Harries invited Baroness Thornton, who had to rush off to a Committee meeting, to say a few words.

Baroness Glenys Thornton extended her congratulations to everyone on the 131st birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar's birth. She said she



June 2021 Gray's Inn and the unveiling of Dr. Ambedkar's portrait and the Ambedkar room. There he met Dr Ambedkar's great grandson, Sujat Ambedkar who he said "like his illustrious forebear is studying in London - reminding us of the centrality of education in addressing caste. Dr. Ambedkar was right to say we must organise, agitate and educate". He added "Dr. Ambedkar understood that the great nation of India would never achieve its potential if it remained disfigured and divided by caste". "Love of India and its amazing people mustn't blind us to the suffering of India's marginalised indigenous peoples - like too many Dalits and Adivasis who have been grievously exploited. Nor should we be blind to the intolerable incarceration of so many defenders of human rights, imprisoned for championing the downtrodden". Lord Alton had taken part in the House of Lords debate 'India's Human Rights' on 22 July 2021. He added India "needs to promote pluralism and the dignity of difference - not be blind to blatant discrimination and persecution and to wrongful arrests and the distortion of justice- as in the case of Stan Swamy". "The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, at its ninety-second session, November 15-19

est on the Ambedkar House London, and Gray's Inn, and the campaign to outlaw caste discrimination in Britain her colleague from the ACDA, Dr Raj Chand, would provide later. She thanked Lord Harries for initiating the debate on India's Human Rights in July 2021 and the other members of the Lords who participated in the debate. She also raised again the plight of those incarcerated without bail in what is known as the Bhima Koregaon case. She said, "Almost all of the academics, human rights activists and lawyers incarcerated in the Bhima Koregaon incident still remain behind bars without bail. Father Stan Swamy died in jail. This is murder. We still have Dr Anand Teltumbde, the husband of Dr Ambedkar's granddaughter Rama, still in jail and currently pleading for bail. He is a 71 years old".

Steven Gasztowicz QC of Cornerstone Barristers, Gray's Inn was the barrister who represented the Government of Maharashtra's successful Appeal against Camden Council's rejection of museum status of 10 King Henry's Road at a Public Inquiry in 2019. Steven said when he was asked to take on the case, he didn't know who Dr Ambedkar was. He was surprised that was the case considering how much Dr Ambedkar

(Contd. on next page)

# Dr Ambedkar's 131st birth celebrated at the House of Lords

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was able to achieve. He stressed "I only wish I had known of him before, when I was, from a modest background, going through the trials and tribulations of my early years at the Bar – which would have seemed as nothing whatever compared with what Ambedkar struggled through and what he was able, despite his very modest background, to go on to achieve – in an age when prejudice was much more prevalent and difficult to deal with than now". Steven added "My experience in learning about Ambedkar in a very much later stage in my life has reminded me that we learn only the history that is placed before us, that is selected for us at an early stage in our lives. But there is so much more of value – and what is selected should definitely include people like Ambedkar". Steven's speaking notes are at Annex C.

Nigel Planer is a renowned British actor, comedian, musician, novelist and playwright. In March 2016, the BBC's History Magazine published Nigel's excellent interview with York Member 'My History Hero: Bhimrao Ambedkar (1891-1956)'. At the meeting Nigel described in a very entertaining speech how as a nineteen year old he travelled overland to India on his own without telling his parents. He recalled "I first encountered a statue of Dr Ambedkar at a roundabout named after him – Ambedkar Chowk. It was painted in bright colours, like many statues in India; blue suit, white shirt, red tie - and glasses. It was the glasses that drew my attention, and were unusual on a statue – monkey and elephant heads, fiery demons, Krishna's blue skin, yes, but glasses and a suit? Was he the God of Civil Servants?" Nigel added Dr Ambedkar had been "somewhat 'airbrushed' from history". He concluded "thinking of that statue of the man in suit and tie and glasses, that made such an impression on me – Mahatma Gandhi, from one of the privileged castes, had worked in South Africa for 20 years

wearing a lawyer's suit, but, in an astute political move, abandoned his western clothes so that he could dress like one of the 'poorest of the poor'. Dr Ambedkar, on the other hand, one of the actual poorest of the poor, disobeyed the caste laws forbidding him to wear western clothes – or any clothes above the waist - and in an act of defiance wore his suit and tie."

Dr Raj Chand updated the meeting on the campaign to outlaw Caste-based Discrimination (CBD) in Britain on behalf of the Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance. He recounted how in April 2010, the Labour Government agreed a power in the Equality Act 2010 (EA2010), section 9(5)a, to make caste an aspect of race. A key impetus for this he said was ACDA's timely and critical report, A Hidden Apartheid – Voice of the Community in 2009. This confirmed CBD in the UK in the areas covered by the EA2010 (employment, education and provision of services). On 25 April 2013, the UK Government's ERR Bill (Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill) received Royal Assent, and the 'Duty' to outlaw CBD came into force on 25 June 2013. The Government announced in July 2018, based on a flawed consultation, its decision to repeal the caste 'duty' in law and issue instead guidance on CBD and the Equality Act. The Equality and Human Rights Commission objected to the Government decision. Over the past three years, the ACDA have continued to support victims of CBD, and has been involved in number of CBD legal cases. Two settled out of court and signed non-disclosure agreements, and agreed financial and other remedies. These cases will never count as case law. In 2019, the case of Agarwal and Meshram vs Tata and Krishnaswami lasted 17 days and concluded that there were unlawful acts of harassment, discrimination and victimisation. Unfortunately, the burden of proof in relation to CBD fell on the Claimant who had no funds to secure legal representation. In 2019, ACDA successfully challenged Frim-

ley Health NHS Trust about some casteist guidance 'Caring for a Hindu Patient' published on its website. In 2021, the ACDA working with the Ravidassia community, saw the successful prosecution of a man who posted an offensive and casteist video on TikTok. ACDA continue to call for implementation of the law.

Sushant Singh is currently herefrom India studying at London's SOAS. He is the President of the Students Union (welfare and campaigns) at SOAS. He is an Ambedkarite and Advocate LLM (candidate). Sushant said "Dr. Ambedkar's ideals of equality present themselves in two different forms. Firstly, as enshrined in the Constitution of India. Secondly, as found in his prolific and voluminous scholarly writings. We also get a closer look at his personal trials and tribulations in some of his more informal writings. I will draw on the last two sources to describe why he has been my biggest inspiration." Sushant added, "Today, millions from underprivileged backgrounds like mine can afford an education and dream of studying abroad, thanks to his efforts in the constituent assembly. In 1956, he [Dr Ambedkar] finally embraced Buddhism in the most revolutionary act of his life, thereby making a final bid for complete emancipation and equality." Sushant concluded by saying "So, what are the takeaways for us here today – The fight for equality and against discrimination in all forms continues. We are aeons away from realizing Dr. Ambedkar's vision of an equal and equitable society. Inequality anywhere is a threat to equality everywhere."

The short discussion that followed the speeches focused on the caste law campaign and discussed cases ACDA had supported; and the Ambedkar Museum. One CBD case that had settled out of court was in the NHS in Scotland. Another one was in England and involved a woman being discriminated by a Sikh male colleague. The second case involved ACDA supporting, almost on a

daily basis, the lady involved for over several months until the case was settled out of court. Both received five-figure sum settlements. One of a constructive redundancy went to an Employment Tribunal in 2019 and the ET found in the victims favour. There is another legal case CBD in the workplace, is due to go to ET later on this year. On the Ambedkar Museum, it was clarified that the campaign to get the Government of Maharashtra (GOM) to buy the house took over a year. This followed FABO UK's initial proposal that sought grant funding of nearly £4million for FABO UK in September 2015 from the Congress-led GOM followed by a State Election, and finally a BJP led GOM getting the keys to 10KHR. There were so many delays that cast a doubt on whether GOM actually wanted to spend the money on the house that they had publically agreed to buy. Within months of the house being bought, Prime Minister Modi visited it in November 2015 as part of his pre-planned official visit to the UK for which a few rooms on the ground floor were readied. PM Modi declared 10KHR the Ambedkar Memorial resulting in huge public interest in the house. A Dr Ambedkar Memorial London Advisory Committee was set up in February 2017 with India's High Commissioner to London as chair. This Committee, with the help of a building contractor organised by the India High Commission, repaired and refurbished the house and applied for retrospective planning permission to call it a museum. The trials and tribulations of setting up the Ambedkar Museum will be covered in the book 'Ambedkar in London', Hurst Publishing, co-edited by William Gould, Santosh Dass and Christophe Jaffrelot. The book, due to come out in October 2022, also includes a chapter on the campaign to outlaw CBD in Britain. The meeting closed with a blessing from the Venerable Bodhidatta Bhante followed by a group photo in the Jubilee Hall.

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## AMBEDKAR TIMES (www.ambedkartimes.com)

This site has been dedicated to Bharat Ratan Baba Sahib Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar in the memory of Babu Mangu Ram Mughowalia, Gadharite and founder of Ad Dharm Movement in Punjab. The sole aim of this site is to highlight the plight of the Mulnivasis (Inhabitants) of India who have not only been deprived of their due share in the wealth of their own country, but had also been subjected to untold miseries over centuries. Atrocities against them are still rampant in almost all the parts of the country. Hardly a day passes when there is no news about the social boycott or physical repression of all sorts on them. www.ambedkartimes.com is duty bound to highlight all such incidents as well as to seek and articulate some solid perspective for the amelioration of this age-old

problem old social exclusion and blatant violation of the basic human rights of the Dalit brethren.

I once again thanks for your kind support and also expect the same in future too so that this modest attempt would continue in the service of our community. www.ambedkartimes.com deeply welcomes your suggestions for its better functioning. This is your web site and it is you who have to make it successful. Kindly send your valuable articles, news reports, and opinions regularly, we would be pleased to carry them gratefully.

**Prem Kumar Chumber**  
Editor-in-Chief:  
www.ambedkartimes.com

# Gail Omvedt – First Ambedkarite Women Writer – Who preferred India as Her Home – a book by Mohandass Namishray

**O**n one fine morning a month ago, I got a telephone call from Mohandass Namishray and he informed me about his recent book - Gail Omvedt – First Ambedkarite Women Writer – Who preferred India as Her Home, done and suggested that it would be good if I could read and write about the book. As I did

death in August, 2021 at the age of 80. It also includes some interviews of her which tend to provide the flavor of her actual take on many of the issues concerning the Indian society; particularly the marginalized sections, and the humanity at large. In his note, the publisher has rightly said, "The book is an attempt to highlight the Gail Omvedt's historical efforts from Jyotirao Phule, Manguram, Periyar Ramaswami, Dr. Ambedkar, Kanshi Ram and other political and social

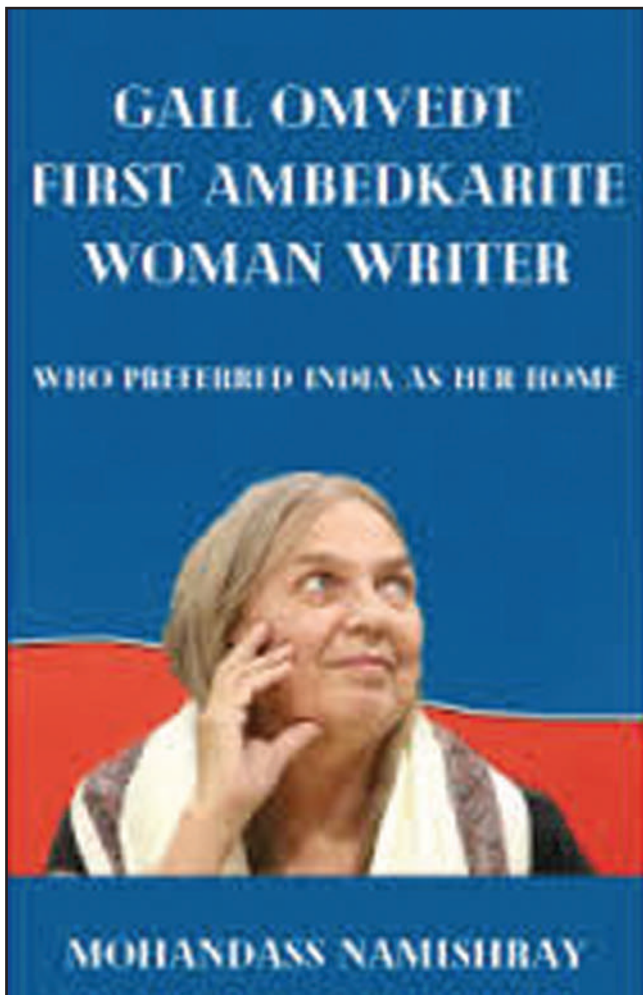
the Indian society namely; Caste from Buddha to Ambedkar and Beyond, Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society, The Non-Brahmin Movement in Western India. Savitaribai Phule and Jyotirao Phule, the iconic couple social reformers, were the subject matter of her research for Ph.D. Her study and the book - Seeking Begumpura, was a treatise to highlight the role and contribution of Kabir, Ravidas, Tukaram, Namdev, Chokhamela, all pioneers of the lofty ideals of equality and brotherhood, to the Bhakti Movement of 15th cen-

but now on marrying a Hindu, she had become a Hindu tells very poorly on the social and spiritual norms of the Indian society even after 75 years of independence. Gail was dead against caste and graded inequality in the society and rightly so.



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Gail Omvedt (August 2, 1941 – August 25, 2021) fell in love with India and married one of her academic and intellectual associates, Bharat Patankar of Kasegaon in Sangli district of Maharashtra and later became a naturalized citizen of India which explains the title "who preferred India as her home". As I said that I did not know much about Gail but now I feel that it was nice of Mohandass ji to introduce to me a contemporary legend, Gail Omvedt. The author of the book has rightly assessed and commented (page 9), "If Gail had been willing to compromise and kowtow a little to Gandhi's thought, and she would have been the darling of academics, enjoying the fruits of her labours in terms of fame and acceptance. It is a testimony to her intellectual honesty that she chose to stay true to her convictions and kept her allegiance the marginalized – dalits, adivasis and the rural poor working classes till the end." Let



leaders of Bahujan Samaj." The book is a befitting tribute to the lady of sterling worth

not know Mohandass ji and nor I had seen or read the book, I enquired as to how come he knew that I was engaged in this kind of intellectual pursuits. Mohandass ji informed that he did so on a reference from Dawarka Bharti, his friend in the literary fraternity, whose books I ventured to review in my blogs. I felt pampered but quickly realizing my humble entity in the realm of literature and academia, said that I was no scholar or academic of any sort and added that I would be happy to get and read the book on Gail Omvedt, a scholar and intellectual and also a social activist of international repute. On a kind advice from the author, Apollo Publishers and Distributors sent me the book in hand.

Frankly, I did not know or read much about Gail Omvedt in spite of the fact that she was an institution herself particularly with regard to the issues of caste, equality, gender etc. which are dear to me as an ordinary citizen of India as a humble Ambedkarite. Thanks Mohandass ji for cajoling me to educate myself about the work, thought and mission of one of the renowned scholar of Buddha, Ambedkar and Phule school of thought, Gail Omvedt. The book is a bouquet of essays and tributes paid to the great scholar, Gail Omvedt, by erudite scholars and her associates, one may say, as obituaries, after her

which the author has rightly dedicated "Devoted to the memory of Gail Omvedt". Mohan Dass Namishray, a contemporary and associate of Gail Omvedt, is himself a scholar, journalist, writer, translator and social activist of his own standing in the literary and academic circles of India. Besides biographical notes and interviews, the compiler and editor of the book, Mohandass ji, has thoughtfully accommodated thought provoking articles of Gail Omvedt herself for the benefit of the readers viz: The Role of Women (Page 38), The Hindutva Bomb (Page 55), Views of Gail about Devdassis (page 80) and Gail Omvedt: Dalit Vision, inter alia. The title of the book "Gail Omvedt – First Ambedkarite Woman Writer" has been fully justified by Dr. Denzil Fernandes SJ, Executive Director of Indian Social Institute in the Foreword in which he wrote, "Omvedt was deeply influenced by the life and works of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, India's greatest social reformer, scholar and the father of India's post-independence constitution." Gail Omvedt was a scholar and visionary of her own standing who tended to transform or evolve herself from Marxism to Ambedkarism. She not only researched and wrote extensively on various social issues pertaining to the socially depressed and oppressed segments of

tury. Commenting on 'Seeking Begumpura' Ashok Kumar in his essay (page 128) has noted, "It was a study of the socio-economic perspective of the leading anti-caste intellectuals over the five centuries." Gail Omvedt adorned a number of academic Chairs on Babasaheb Ambed-



kar namely; Dr. Ambedkar Chair of Social Change and Development of IGNOU in Delhi, Dr. Ambedkar Chair at National Institute of Social Work at Bhubneswar among others. The anecdote narrated (page 139-40) in the book, when Gail as denied entry to Puri Jagannath Temple, in spite of the fact that she explained to the temple authorities that she was a Christian

me conclude this piece, which may be seen as an untraditional review, with a poetic expression of Allama Iqbal on the rare personalities who made a difference:

**Hazon Saal Nargis  
Apni Be-Nuri Pe Roti Hai  
Badi Mushkil Se Hota Hai  
Chaman Men Dida-Var Paida**

*In loving memory of*



*Texas  
Robb Elementary School*

Saturday June 4th

We are holding a Candlelight Vigil in the memories of the beautiful souls that were taken away from there loved ones.

6pm Sukhmani Sahib Path

7pm Kirtan/Ardass

Langar will be served by Gurughar Sangat.

LOCATION

**Sri Guru Ravidass Temple  
2150 Crestview Dr. Pittsburg (CA)**