



Ambedkar Times

Weekly

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Future of Parliamentary Democracy

This speech was delivered by Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar at D.A.V. College, Jalandhar on October 28th, 1951



I am indeed thankful to you for the great honour done to me of asking me to address the special session of your parliament. During my whole life I have been, so to say, a wanderer from subject to subject, from profession to profession. I began my career as a Professor of Political Economics in the Government Commerce College, Bombay after my return from England. But I soon felt that the Government Service was no good for a man who was bound by rules of discipline. He is hampered at every stage in his work of public service. I then went back to England and qualified for the Bar. After my return I rested for a short period and then accepted the post of the Principal of the Law College at Bombay. I came back to the profession of teaching. I worked as the Principal of the Law College for five years. Then the 1935 Government of India Act came into being which brought the popular legislatures into being for the first time. I then thought of taking a jump into politics and I left the service and took to politics. Since then I have alternatively been doing legal practice and serving the public. Legal practice and public service are thus the alternating currents in my life, and I do not know on which current my life will end, whether A.C. or D.C.

I am very fond of the teaching profession. I am also very fond of students. I have dealt with them. I have lectured them in my life. This is the first opportunity I have got to address students since my resignation from the Cabinet. I am very glad to talk to students. A great deal of the future of this country must necessarily depend on the students of this country. Students are an intelligent part of the community and they can shape public opinion. I, therefore, take special pleasure in addressing you the members of the Parliament and I am really thankful for the opportunity given me.

When your principal wrote to me requesting me to address you, he did not indicate any particular topic on which I shall speak to you this morning. But suddenly, as usually happens in my case, in the flash of a moment the subject became clear to me and I have decided to speak a few words to you on the subject of parliamentary government. The time at my disposal is very short and I will

therefore be able to give only a brief analysis of the subject.

During the discussion in the Constituent Assembly there was a variety of opinion as regards the nature of the Constitution that we should have. Some preferred the British system; some the American system. There were others who did not want either of these two types of government. But after a long discussion, a large majority of members came to a conclusion that the system of the Parliamentary Government as it is in Britain is best suited to our country.

There are some sections of people who do not like Parliamentary Government. Communists want the Russian type of government. The socialists are also against the present Constitution of India. They are agitating against it. They have declared that if they come to power, they will modify it. Personally speaking, I am very attached to the Parliamentary system of Government. We must understand what it means and we must preserve it in constitution. What is meant by Parliamentary Government? There is a book on the English Constitution written by Walter Baggot; it is indeed a classic treatise. It was later expanded by other authorities on constitutional government like Laski and others. He has put the conception of the Parliamentary Government in one sentence. He says Parliamentary Government means government by discussion and not by fisticuffs. You will always find in the British system of Government that they hardly ever resort to fisticuffs when taking any decision. The decision is always taken after discussion. Nobody introduces the element of disturbance in the British parliament. Look at French Politics. Decisions are arrived at more than often by knocking knockout blows. You will find that this system is hardly adequate to those not born in that system. It is an alien institution to them. We must learn, understand and make it a success.

Parliamentary democracy is unknown to us are present. But India, at one time, had Parliamentary institutions. India was far more advanced in ancient times. If you go throughout the Suktas of Mahaparinirvan, you will find ample evidence in support of my point. In these Suktas it is stated that while Bhagwan Buddha was dying at Kusinara (Kusinagara) a message to the effect was sent to the Mallas who were sitting in session at that time. They were decided that they should not close the session but would carry on with their work and would go to Kusinara after finishing the business of the Parliament. There are innumerable references in our literature to prove that the Parliamentary system of Government was not unknown to us. There are many rules about Parliamentary procedure. May's parliamentary practice is generally followed. One rule that is invariably followed everywhere is that there can be no discussion without a motion. That is why there is no discussion on a question. The rule was also practiced in our land in ancient times. The system of secret ballot now in vogue is also not new to us; it was followed in Buddhist Sanghas. They had the ballot papers which they called SalapatrakaGrahakas. Unfortunately, we have lost this entire past heritage that was good. Historians of India must tackle this question as to why these parliamentary institutions disappeared from our land. But I find that they cannot or do not want to find out the reasons for it. Ancient India was the

(Contd. on next page)

46th US Presidential Elections: Victory of Inclusive Democracy

Prem K. Chumber

Editor-In-Chief: Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba

America is famous for inclusive social nature of its democracy. It is also proudly known as a melting-pot nation of varied ethnicities. It is for its such a unique character that people from different regions in the world make frantic efforts to become its part and fulfill their dreams in this largest democratic nation in the world. The recently concluded 46th US Presidential Election has once again proved that American electorates would not tolerate any thought and praxis which will reduce its all-inclusive democratic character and egalitarian socio-cultural political domain. They elected Joe Biden in the fierce political battle between



Democrats and Republicans. The presidential election was fought amidst varied polarized issues: taxation, the rights of women and minorities, social programs, immigration procedures, red state versus blue state, rural poor versus urban elite etc. The President-elect, Joe Biden, the oldest President-elect is being expected to restore the forces of decency, fairness, egalitarianism, science and hope - "the most 'normal' words any democracy could hear from its leadership, but the US had veered to a very different path in the last four years" as articulated in the Editorial of the Times of India (November 9, 2020). The victory of the Democrats, reiterated Joe Biden, is the victory of all Americans. That is the true spirit of the US all-inclusive democracy.

Another scintillating highlight of the 46th American Presidential election is the victory of the first woman (Kamala Harris), the first person of colour and of Asian descent as 47th Vice President-elect. It proves that the US, in real sense of the term, is a land of fulfilling dreams of all irrespective of race, class, creed, gender and ethnicity. Her election was "celebrated wildly," as reported by Chidanand of Times of India, "across a country that now has more women voters than men, with the winner herself recognizing the turning point in redressing gender imbalance in history." On Kamala Harris victory, Atlanta's Mayor Keisha L Bottoms said, "This had been a long time coming -- a woman of Colour." Born of an Indian mother, Shyamala Gopalan, and Jamaican-American father, Donald Jasper Harris, Kamala Harris said on his victory that "While I may be the first woman in this office, I won't be the last ... because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities." And, yes, these possibilities are what that made US all of us proud.

Future of Parliamentary Democracy

(Continue from page 1)

master of the world. There was such intellectual freedom in ancient India as was nowhere else to be found. Then why was it that this ancient civilization went to the dogs? Why was India subject to autocratic monarchies? We were familiar with parliamentary institutions, we knew about votes, voting, committees and other things related to parliamentary institutions. Today the Parliamentary system of government is alien to us. If we go to a village, we will find that the villagers do not know what it is to vote, or what a party is. They find it something strange something alien. It is, therefore, a great problem as how to preserve this institution. We will have to educate the public; we will have to tell them the benefits of Parliamentary Democracy and of the Parliamentary system of Government. We know what Baggot means by Parliamentary government. But today his definition is of no use, it is utterly inadequate. There are three main things inherent in the Parliamentary system of Government. Parliamentary Government means negation of hereditary rule. No person can claim to be a hereditary ruler. Whoever wants to rule must be elected by the people from time to time. He must obtain the approval of the people. Hereditary rule has no sanction in the Parliamentary system of government.

Secondly, any law, any measure applicable to the public life of the people must be based on the advice of the people chosen by the people. No single individual can presume the authority that he knows everything, that he can make the laws and carry the government. The laws are to be made by representatives of the people in the Parliament. They are the people who can advise the men in whose name the law can be proclaimed. That is the difference between the monarchical system Government and the democratic system Government. In monarchy, the affairs of the people are carried on in the name of the monarch and under the authority of the monarch. In democracy the affairs of the public are carried on in the name of the head of state but the laws and the executive measures are the authority on which the government is carried on. The head of state is the titular head; he is merely a symbol. He is consecrated 'Murti'. He can be worshipped but he is not allowed to carry out the government of the country. The government of the country is carried out,

though in his name, by the elected representatives of the people.

Thirdly and lastly, the Parliamentary system of government means that at a stated period those who want to advise the head of state must have the confidence of the people in them renewed. In Britain, formerly, the Parliament were carried out every seven years. The Chartists agitated against this; they wanted annual elections. The motive behind this agitation was very praiseworthy indeed. It would have been best in the interests of the people if annual elections were held, had it been possible, of course. But Parliamentary elections are very costly affairs. So some sort of compromise was arrived at and a five year period was supposed to be the responsible period at which the legislators and the ministers were to go back to the people and obtain the fresh renewal of their confidence.

This is also not enough. The Parliamentary system of Government is much more than government by discussion. There are two pillars on which the Parliamentary system of Government rests. These are the fulcrums on which the mechanism works. Those two pillars are an opposition and free and fair elections. For the last 20 or 30 years we acclimated to one single political party. We have nearly forgotten the necessity and importance of opposition for the fair working of Parliamentary Democracy. We are continuously told that opposition is an evil. Here again we are forgetting what the past history has to tell us. You know that there were Nibandhnars to interpret the Vedas and Smritis. They used to begin their comments on Slokas and Sutras by stating firstly the ParvaPakshs, the one side of the question. They used to follow up by given the Uttar Paksha, the other side. By this they wanted to show us that the question raised was not an easy question, it is a question where there is dispute, discussion and doubt. Then they used to give what they termed as Adhikiran where they used to criticize both the Pakshas. Finally, they gave the Siddhant, their own decisions. From here we can find that all our ancient teachers believed in the two party system of Government.

One important thing in the Parliamentary Democracy is that people should know the other side, if there are two sides to a question. Hence a functional opposition is required. Opposition is the key to a free political life. No democracy can do

without it. Britain and Canada, the two exponents of the Parliamentary system of Government, recognize this important fact and in both countries the Leader of the Opposition is paid a salary by the Government.

They regard the opposition as an essential thing. People of these countries believe that the opposition should be as much alive as the Government. The Government may suppress the facts; the government may have only one-sided propaganda. The people have made provision against these eventualities in both these countries.

A free and fair election is the other pillar on which Parliamentary Democracy rests. Free and fair elections are necessary for the transfer of power from one section for the community to the other in a peaceful manner and without any bloodshed. In older times, if a king died, there was at least one murder in the palace. Revolution used to take place in the palace resulting in murders before the new king used to take the reign of his country into his authority. This has been the history of India. Elections must be completely free and fair. People must be left to themselves to choose those whom they want to send to the Legislatures.

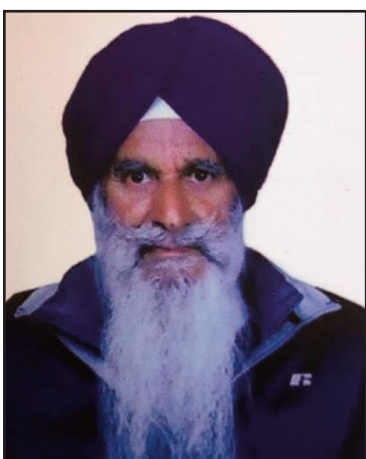
Now the question arises as to whether there is any desire on the part of the party in power to permit any opposition to be created. Congress does not want any opposition. Congress is attempting to gather people of sundry views under one canopy. I ask you whether this is a desirable trend in the Political life of this country. What about free and fair elections? We must not lose sight of the fact that Big Business is trying to play a great part in the political life of this country. The amount that is being contributed to Congress on behalf of Big Business is a very dangerous thing. If moneyed people try to influence the elections by contributing to the election fund of any political party, what will be the result? If the party which they have supported financially comes into power, they will try to extract concessions for themselves either by modifying the present legislation or by influencing the party in power to legislate in such a manner as would be beneficial to their interests. I ask you, gentlemen, whether under these circumstances there is any hope left for the Parliamentary system of Government to do any good to the country. I would like to refer to the Mahabharat. During

the battle between the Pandvas and the Kaurvas, Bhisma and Drona were on the side of the Kaurvas. The Pandvas were in the right and the Kaurvas were in the wrong. Bhisma admitted this. Whensomebody asked Bhisma as to why he was supporting the Kaurvas if he found the Pandvas to be in the right. Bhisma replied in the memorable sentence. I must be loyal to the salt if I eat the food of the Kaurvas. I must take their side even if they might be in the wrong.

Today the same thing is happening. Congress is accepting the financial help of the Banias, Marwaries and other multimillionaires. Congress is eating their food and it follows therefore naturally that Congress will have to take the side of these Big Businesses at all crucial times. We also find that the government servants are influencing the elections in favour of the party which is feeding them and their dependents. No less a personality than Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, at the inaugural session for the Bhartiya Jan Sangh at Delhi recently, openly charged government servants of helping the Congress and thereby nullifying the elections from being free and fair. Under these circumstances, do you, gentlemen, think that there is any hope for Parliamentary Democracy to succeed? If Parliamentary Democracy fails in this country, and is bound to fail for the reasons mentioned by me, the only result will be rebellion, anarchy and Communism.

If the people in power do not realize that people will not tolerate hereditary authority, then this country is doomed. Either Communism will come, Russia having sovereignty over our country, destroying individual liberty and our independence, or the section of the people who are disgruntled at the failure of the party in power will start a rebellion and anarchy will prevail.

Gentlemen, I want you to take note of these eventual certainties and if you wish that the Parliamentary system of Government and Parliamentary Democracy prevail in this country If you are satisfied that we cherish the inherent right of individual liberty, then it is your duty as students, as the intelligent community of our country, to strive your utmost to cherish this Parliamentary system of Government in its true spirit and work for it. Gentlemen, I have done. I thank you for having given me this opportunity to address this august gathering.



Master Gurbachan Singh passed away

Master Gurbachan Singh Ji passed away at his home in Pittsburg (California) on October 6, 2020. He has done Gurbani Path Sewa in the Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg (CA) for years. We will always remember his Gurbani Sewa and dedication. He is survived by his wife Surjit Kaur, 2 sons Kanwaljit Singh and Sarbjit Singh, daughter Neelam Sutti and 6 grand kids. Our heartfelt condolences to his family. May Waheguru bless his soul and give solace & strength to the grieving family to bear this loss.

- Ramesh Suman

‘ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੁਆਬਾ’ ‘ਅੰਬੇਦਕਰ ਟਾਈਮਜ਼’

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Delhi's Air Pollution and its Solution

To deal with rising air pollution in Delhi and the National Capital Region, the Central Government issued an ordinance on 29th October 2020, signed by the President. Violators of this ordinance are liable to either imprisonment for five years or a fine of one crore rupees or both. Under the ordinance released by the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) has been dissolved and a 20-member committee has been set up in its place. Now the Commission has the power to take legal action against the violators of the new ordinance. This ordinance has been implemented immediately in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

Central Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters that the new ordinance will significantly reduce the air pollution in Delhi and the National Capital Region. However, the farmers termed the ordinance as an act of vengeance of the Central Government as the Central Government had implemented such an ordinance at a time when farmers are harvesting paddy and evacuating the field by setting fire to the paddy residue to enable sowing wheat.

On the other hand, they are struggling to repeal the three agricultural laws passed the Central Government. Burning of paddy and wheat residues in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh have been blamed for rising air pollution in Delhi and the National Capital Region for nearly a decade. In view of the declining groundwater level in the state of Punjab, the Central Government had decided to ban planting of paddy before June 10. As a result, the harvesting of crop also started in October instead of September. With the onset of winter in October, temperature in these states begin to dip. So, low temperature, presence of moisture, dust and smoke particles in the air, local and geographical conditions become responsible to create a worse form of air pollution known as 'Smog' in these states. Earlier when harvesting was taking place in September, due to high temperature and high speed of wind at the time of harvesting, the pollutants which were released into the air by the burning of paddy straw did not cause air pollution problem either even in these states or Delhi.

Delhi this year also engulfed in smog as every year with the onset of winters. The Delhi Government immediately started blaming the adjoining states for air pollution instead of slashing its own bed. The Central Government was already not in the line with farmers' interest, took an

opportunity to issue a new ordinance stating that the farmers are responsible for smog of Delhi.

We have to go a little further back to find out who is really responsible for this pollution. The air in Delhi was heavily polluted even in 1990-2000 decade but at that time the intention of Central government was impartial, so they found the real reason to save Delhi's air from being polluted by diesel-driven busses and auto-rickshaws and suggesting them to use CNG in place of diesel. The Central Government had controlled the air pollution of Delhi because at

smoke and dust particles which pollute the air. The city also has continuous activities and thermal plants which are responsible for air pollution. Neither the Centre nor the State Government refute that these internal activities of Delhi are responsible for pollution in Delhi because the skies had cleared up during the COVID-19 lockdown, meanwhile farmers of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh were harvesting wheat crops and burning wheat straws.

According to a recent research study of P.A.U., Ludhiana smoke from burning paddy straw re-

direction of air is flowing North-West otherwise Delhi itself is solely responsible for its air pollution. So both the Delhi and Central Governments should take initiatives like they did in 2000 to mitigate the grave problem of air pollution but not punish the poor farmers.

The Central Government should not deny any national and international reports of air pollution or find a scapegoat to blame it on. Rather the Government should have a solid strategy to mitigate the existing issues and tackle future risks related to air pollution. Air pollution is on a rise not only in Delhi and the National Capital Region but also in the other states of the country. According to a report of Greenpeace Organization, India, released on 21st January 2020, 80 percent cities have polluted air according to national air quality standard. Only Lungli (Misoram) is the only city in the entire country which is having clean air according to the international air quality standard. Recently, a report called State of Global Air 2020, 16.7 lakh people died in India out of which 1 lakh 16 thousand are babies who died in their first month of their life due to polluted air.

The Central Government rather than making partisan discriminatory ordinances or laws against farmers should working on making public transportation convenient and efficient which might lead to decrease in use of private vehicles for transportation and leaning on public transportation options.

Pedestrians and bike riders should be accounted for by the Government. Industrial plants should have air purifiers, generating electricity should have an alternate from thermal power plants. These new energy alternates should be safe. Construction work should have safety measures. New scientific techniques should be used to dispose of garbage. The Government should provide farmers access to affordable machinery to collect paddy stubble and wheat straw. The Central Government instead of punishing farmers should co-operate with them, understanding their problems, provide helpful solutions and hand in hand save the nation's air from getting polluted. It would become possible by increasing the share of national income being given to the agricultural sector. This share must be enough to satisfy the basic needs of the farming community.



Dr. Gurinder Kaur
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that time only auto-rickshaws and busses were using diesel. Since then, Delhiites have been enjoying pollution-free air for many years.

Again, from the last decade the air pollution has been causing havoc in Delhi and the National Capital Region and the Delhi Government is turning its back on the adjoining states to shoulder its responsibilities. The real reason of increasing air pollution in Delhi is the unplanned development. In the recent years, due to the economic development, the number of cars have increased from only 24 lakh in 2000 to 1 crore and 12 lakh in 2018, which are releasing large amount of Carbon dioxide (CO₂), Carbon monoxide (CO), Sulphur dioxide, Ozone and other gases daily which pollute Delhi's environment. According to a study conducted by the Meteorological Department of India and the Center for Science and Environment 70 percent of air pollution in Delhi is caused by vehicles only. A research conducted by I.I.T. Kanpur highlighted that different sources are releasing 312 tons of Sulphur Dioxide, 142 tons of Nitrogen oxide, 59 tons of P.M. 2.5 and 143 tons of P.M. 10 every day in Delhi's environment. Out of that 98 percent of Nitrogen oxide, 60 percent of Sulphur Dioxide, 14 percent of P.M. 10 and 10 percent of P.M. 2.5 are released only by industrial units.

Apart from these Delhi has numerous high mounds of garbage which burn all year round, emitting large amount of dangerous gases,

mains trapped in Punjab because smoke only disperses into farther directions when speed of winds is high but when air is still, smoke leads to buildup of smog in its proximity. The above study also shows that in 2017, 2108 and 2019, speed of wind was below 5km per hour which couldn't have drifted this localized smog from Punjab all the way to Delhi and the National Capital Region.

Besides Punjab, if we analyze the other states, in Rajasthan total area under wheat crop is very low. Paddy plantation is not possible in Rajasthan due to scarcity of water. Moving on, Uttar Pradesh can receive polluted air from Delhi if high winds are blowing else if the air blows from South-East then it could drift Delhi smoke to pollute Haryana and Punjab's air because air knows no boundaries and doesn't seek anyone's permission to travel. Surrounding states are less responsible in polluting Delhi's air, but Delhi has been a key player in polluting air of its neighboring states.

Everyone who is staying in Delhi and the National Capital Region if disobeys the ordinance must be fined and punished by law. The difference is Delhiites are polluting the air for profit, personal comforts and pleasure whereas farmers in helplessness pollute the air while producing different crops for the entire country due to lack of resources and being poor. The burning of paddy stubble and wheat straw generates 6 percent pollution for 15-20 days, only if the



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Guru- Piari Sadh Sangat Ji,

November 14, 2020

Diwali 2020

Diwali will be celebrated on Saturday, November 14, 2020. Committee decided to keep the Gurughar open in the evening until 8:00 PM for devotees to come and pray. Due to CDC and County restrictions, there will be no large gathering inside the Darbar Hall.

November 15, 2020

Sehaj Path sewa by :

Kashmiri Bhatia and Kamaljeet Kaur Bhatia

Kashmiri Bhatia, Kamaljeet Bhatia and family will be hosting Sukhmani Sahib Path and Sehaj Path Bhog at 1:00 PM. Raagi Jatha of Giani Ompal Singh and Giani Gurnam Singh ji will adorn the occasion.

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



Sue Frost

Sacramento County Supervisor. District 4

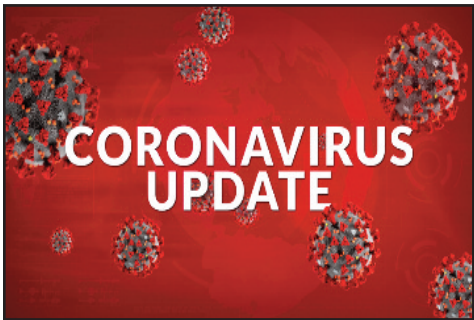


Sue Frost

website

Need For More Targeted Approach to COVID

As everyone is painfully aware, the State of California remains in lockdown as we wait for the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since mid-March, schools and businesses have been forced to remain fully or partially closed. We are now on our second or third version of a reopening model, but unfortunately, it still does not make a whole lot of sense. The latest model is a tiered system, placing



counties into a different colored tier based on daily new cases and positive test rates. The "Blueprint for a Safer Economy," as this model is called, still ignores the deficiencies of a county-based system. I am proud to say that I have joined my fellow elected leaders in writing the Governor and the State Secretary of Health and Human Services, urging them to employ a system that makes more sense.

On October 5th, Assemblyman Kiley, Senator Dahle, Folsom Mayor Aquino, and I signed a joint letter asking for a reopening system that focuses on zip codes, not counties. We did so because cities like Folsom are meeting the levels of testing and positivity rates to advance tiers faster than the County. Meanwhile, Folsom shares a border with El Dorado Hills, which is advancing tiers significantly faster than Sacramento County, allowing for the reopening of schools and businesses ahead of Folsom. To the surprise of no one, El Dorado Hills having more businesses open has caused Folsom residents to cross the county border to shop, dine, and enjoy a somewhat normal lifestyle. Because the State insists on sticking with a County-based approach, Folsom businesses are left to suffer without the ability to open fully.

When asked whether the State would consider a zip-code based system during a hearing, the acting State Public Health Officer insisted that they had to continue to let the data at the County level determine reopening. Then, in a contradictory move, the State announced that data from disadvantaged communities would be added as a factor in a County's reopening ability. While it is essential to ensure that COVID-19 does not disproportionately impact disadvantaged communities, this also

proves that the data we use to reopen is arbitrary. California could benefit from looking to New York, where the Governor has decided to focus resources based on, you guessed it, zip codes.

Folsom and El Dorado Hills are not the only California cities that are separated by nothing more than a line on the map. Shifting the approach of the State to one focused on zip codes enables us to simultaneously focus COVID-19 resources in the most heavily impacted communities while allowing businesses in less impacted areas to reopen safely. More so, school districts that cross county lines can focus on putting kids back in classrooms and not navigating conflicting jurisdictional restrictions. To me, helping the communities struggling the most while helping everybody by allowing businesses to open seems like a clear win-win scenario.

It is irresponsible to carry on with a system based on the assumption that county lines stop the spread of COVID-19. For more than half a year, businesses have been forced to stay closed or operate at a reduced capacity. Businesses and families are suffering, and not just from COVID-19, but an inability to pay bills and put food on the table. We are beyond the point of doubling down on a flawed system to make it seem like there is some level of control. I sincerely hope that the Governor and state leaders will take the words of my colleagues and I seriously and re-think the "Blueprint to a Safer Economy."

Election Season is in Full Swing

We are 19 days away (E-19) from the November 3 General Elec-



tion -- ballots are in hand and hopefully, already filled out and on their way back to the Election's Office, either by mail or Drop Box. But never fear, if you haven't yet returned your voted ballot, you still have plenty of time! Ballots must either be dropped off in a Drop Box by 8 p.m. November 3, or postmarked November 3 to count.

For those voters or soon-to-be voters that need to register or update their registration file, Monday, October 19 is the last day to make those changes or register online. After the

19th, you can still visit the Election's Office in-person, or visit one of the Vote Centers that open starting October 24.

Vote: Pick a Way, ANY Way

Choose how, when and where you want to vote.

By Mail: All registered voters received a ballot in the mail. Place the voted ballot inside the envelope provided, sign the envelope and return – your postage is paid! Must be postmarked on or before election day.

Vote Center: With the passage of the California Voter's Choice Act, traditional polling places were replaced with Vote Centers that are open for up to 11 days, including Election Day. This means voters can choose when, where and how they want to vote – at ANY Vote Center in the County. Avoid the lines, vote early!

At the Vote Center you can drop off your completed ballot OR vote in person. There is even weekend voting!

18 Vote Centers open for 11 days beginning October 24, 2020

An additional 66 Vote Centers open for four days beginning October 31, 2020

Eligible residents can also register to vote, update their registration and cast their ballot at a Vote Center, even on the day of the election.

Drop Boxes: Voted/signed ballots may be placed in any of the 71 secure Drop Box locations throughout Sacramento County beginning October 5, 2020

A complete list of Vote Center and Drop Box locations can be found online.

COVID-19 Precautions

Sacramento County Voter Registration and Elections is committed to the safety and accessibility of voting to all voters. That includes ensuring that the Vote Centers are taking all necessary COVID-19 safety precautions.

All Vote Center employees will be equipped with PPE

Vote Centers will be arranged to maintain strict social distancing

Each location will have a maximum capacity allowed to maintain distancing indoors

Frequent sanitation practices will be employed

Signage will be posted reminding voters to wear a mask and maintain social distancing at all times Read the full Election Administration Plan on COVID Preparedness.

For more election and voter information, visit the Sacramento County Voter Registration and Elections website.

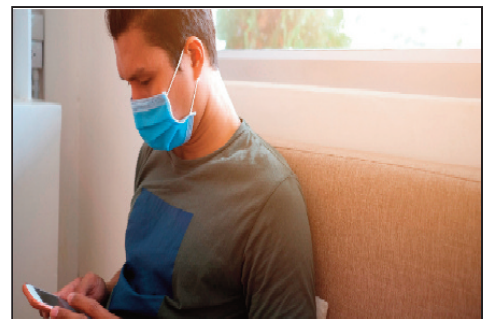
To register to vote visit the California Online Voter Registration

SacCounty Streamlines COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Sacramento County Public Health is making the COVID-19 case investigation process more efficient by launching a new solution to streamline its COVID-19 contact tracing. The new program powered by Qualtrics allows the department to contact individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and anonymously notify those they have been in contact with about exposure to the virus.

Those who have tested positive for COVID-19 can confidentially share information about individuals they have had contact with and locations they have visited through the new and easy to use platform.

Data collected is then used to automate the process to notify impacted individuals by email or text that they may have been exposed and the next steps to take to maintain safety while also maintaining individual confidentiality. All data from the



health assessment and contact tracing process are compliant with Federal, State and local privacy laws. The solution does not employ automatic location tracking technology.

Sacramento County Health Officer Dr. Olivia Kasirye said, "We are excited to start implementing this new platform, the quicker confirmed cases can begin isolating, the better we will be at preventing outbreaks in Sacramento County."

Personal health information from positive cases will not be shared with contacts at any time, and the tracing portion of the online program is opt-in, however, those who do not respond will still receive a phone call from a contact tracing investigator.

Below is an example of the contact tracing email Sacramento County Public Health will send:

Please answer this health assessment from the Sacramento County Health Department. You are receiving this assessment because you may have either tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus) or may have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. This assessment should only take 5-10 minutes to complete. The information you provide the

(Contd. on next page)

Did you know?

Dr. Ambedkar was the First Indian to receive Doctorate in Economics from The University of Columbia.



Ancient Indian Commerce

@PRIYANKA ROHAN
@RAINBOWCREATIONSPAGE



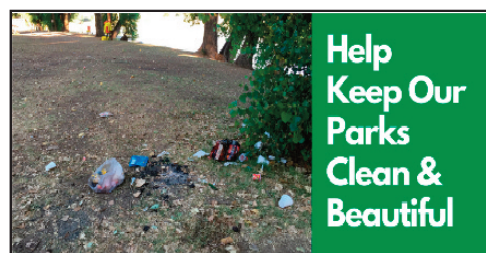
- Enrolled in the Columbia University in New York City to study Economics.
- Completed Master's degree in June 1915 after successfully completing his thesis titled 'Ancient Indian Commerce'.
- On 8 June, 1927, he was awarded a Doctorate by the University of Columbia.

(Continue from page 5)
County Health Department in this assessment will help to flatten the curve and stop the spread of COVID-19. All information that you provide is confidential and will be protected to keep your personal information private.
If you have any questions about providing this information or wish to confirm the validity of this e-mail, please contact our team at COVID19@saccounty.net or visit the Sacramento County COVID-19 webpage.
The questionnaire will be sent as an email or text and the COVID-19 case investigators and contact tracers will have the option to contact individuals directly when appropriate, such as cases involving congregate facilities or for specific follow-up to certain responses provided in the automated questionnaire.

The custom-built solution and three years of support services will cost \$1.6 M and is anticipated to save money over time with the reduction in the number of investigators/tracers positions that would be needed. Sacramento County is also exploring possible additions of creating a portal for schools and businesses to submit contacts into the system and an automated system for referring some respondents to wrap-around services.
Find more about the County's response to COVID-19, by visiting Sacramento County's COVID-19 webpage.
Help Us Keep Our Parks Clean
Our local parks and open spaces are an important part of our community and while the Sacramento County Regional Parks maintenance crews

work hard to keep them clean and maintained, we can use a little bit of help from our park visitors!
"The Department of Regional Parks maintains and operates more than 15,000 acres of parks throughout the County," said Liz Bellas, Director of Regional Parks. "That's a lot of ground to cover and while our maintenance crews do a great job, they can't be everywhere."
We don't ask that you clean up after others – if you would like to do that, we thank you – we are just asking that you leave the park the

way you found it and clean up after yourself.
Helping out is easy! Some easy ways you can help keep our parks clean and beautiful include:
Please do not litter.
Minimizing your own trash. Reduce the amount of waste you bring into our parks by using re-usable containers that you can bring home afterward.
Use the garbage cans located throughout our parks.
Practice pack it in, pack it out. If you bring something with you, take it with you when you leave. That includes food scraps and cigarette butts!
By working together, we can ensure that our parks and open spaces remain clean, safe and beautiful for residents and visitors to enjoy for years to come. Thank you for doing your part!



Future of Dalits and Minorities in the Indian Democracy

Jaagda Punjab, a socio-political NGO steered by Prof. Manjit Singh and Dr. Sukhdev Singh Sirsa and others organized a seminar at the prestigious venue in Jalandhar – Desh Bhagat Yadgar Hall on November 7 on the topical subject "Future of Dalits and Minorities in the Indian Democracy. On information and an open invitation from my friend Lakhvinder Johal of Punjab Press Club on Facebook, I ventured to get out in these days of self-restraint in the wake of Corona virus to listen to the well placed main speakers – Prof. Apoorva Nand of Delhi University and MLA Pargat Singh. I was not disappointed as the seminar was a well conducted event with well-meaning contents, relevant and of interest in context of the ongoing situation in the country.

Prof. Manjit Singh set the ball in motion with his introductory remarks and informed that Jaagta Punjab was a newly formed outfit to provide a platform to create much needed awareness in Punjab about the prevailing situation in the country and put the things in perspective. Principal Navjot Kaur of Layalpur Khalsa College spoke spiritedly from the Left point of view and lamented that Indian democracy was not in its best of health to communal and sectarian forces gaining strength. She was of the view that the term 'dalit' should not be confined to caste/birth based criteria but to economic and political marginalization. The other speakers did not agree with her and

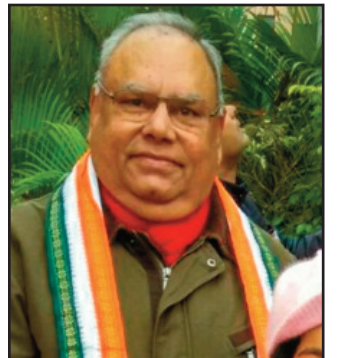
said that as long as caste remains a factor all so called low castes would remain dalits. Member of the Punjab SC Commission, Gian Chand spoke and gave a good and clear presentation on the subject. He said that it was a matter of great regret that the lofty vision of our forefathers was willfully being distorted for narrow political agenda. MLA Pargat Singh, a sober and dedicated politician who was rightly introduced as an 'honest politician' chose not to speak much on the theme of the seminar but asserted himself on the dismal and worrisome situation in Punjab and the country at large, created by the wrong policies and self centered fellow politicians. He spoke with conviction but in the process touched a much maligned subject of 'Reservations to Dalits' which was taken as an anti reservation stand by some sitting in the audience during the later interaction. The main speaker Prof. Apoorva Nand in his speech referred to MLA Pargat Singh's views and set the position in its right perspective by saying that Reservations would remain as enabling provisions till the social inequalities remain. Prof Apoorva Nand, as the lead speaker, spoke with clarity and authority on the subject of the

seminar as a scholar and a good communicator. He gave all relevant details and said that it was unfortunate that dalit and minority rights were much threatened particularly since 2014 when the Hindu Right Wingers came to power at the Centre and in many States of India. He referred to the recent happenings in France, Austria and other places in Europe in which Muslim minority was involved and appreciated the correct stand taken by the restive governments in those countries in dealing with the minority. Prof. Apoorva Nand was candid in his views that it was a matter of concern that dalits and

minorities were not treated fairly in India and our secular and democratic credentials were under strain due to communal polarization which was intentionally created by the ruling outfits. He gave the examples of the terms like 'love jihad' in currency these days, recent legislation on citizenship, Bhima-Koregaon and Hathras incident, inter alia to support and justify his observations. I was surprised and much appreciative of the one assertion he made in the course of his well argued presentation. It pertained to the Sikh Riots of 1984 – 'Katlogarat' in his words. He candidly said that all along we have been trying to

step-aside the truth consciously that more than 4000 Sikhs were butchered during the 'Katlogarat' and added that it could not have happened or committed by a handful of politicians. It was an act of the communally oriented majority community, he hinted obliquely. It was a bold statement which the worthy speaker made with a sense of intellectual honesty. Later during my brief interjection I took the opportunity to compliment Apoorva Nand's guts and ability to say what he felt. Dr. Sukhdev Singh Sirsa ably answered some of the queries and observations raised by the discerning members of the audience.

Later at the working luncheon/langar, I briefly interacted with the organizers and Prof. Apoorva Nand and his gracious wife. Both of them partook their food with us standing at the fag end of the queue unlike most of the Chief Guests/VIPs in such functions. I was impressed by their simplicity and down to earth demeanor.



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

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