



Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on Annihilation of Caste

Prem K. Chumber (Editor-in-Chief)

Ambedkar Times (English) and Desh Doaba (Punjabi)

Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar devoted his entire life for the creation of egalitarian social order in India where there should be no place for social exclusion based on caste. Caste based social hierarchies create and promote discrimination in all walks of life. Babasaheb was of the firm view that without the complete annihilation of caste from the India society, a genuine freedom and transparent set-up of egalitarian administration would not be possible. Corruption free governance and socially responsible commitment towards the nation demand inclusive social order. In fact caste and nation building process are mutually incompatible. Nation building needs fraternity among the communities inhabiting a common territory. Caste stands in opposition to fraternity. Babasaheb termed his struggle against caste spiritual. For him it was not a struggle for economic or political gains. The sole goal his struggle was to restore dignity, confidence and fearlessness among his people. His sole objective was to restore the lost dignity and self-respect to the millions of downtrodden in the society and to prepare them to stand for equal rights on their own strength. He firmly believed that liberty, equality and fraternity should become the real strengths of India, which would lay the true foundations of India democracy. For him political democracy should be based on social democracy. Social democracy in turn is dependent on equal opportunity available to all in the society where there should be no hierarchies and hereditary claims and special rights.

He was a practical visionary who produced voluminous of well-documented literature to put across his viewpoint for the creation of an egalitarian social order. He tirelessly worked day and night throughout his life time for the purpose of establishing social democracy in India. He took more than twenty years to embrace Buddhism from the day he declared that 'I will not die as a Hindu'. His adoption of Buddhism had nothing to do with the Hindu conception of renouncing the world while becoming 'sanyasi'. He remained active in his mission of caste annihilation. In continuation of his earlier political activism during which he founded two political parties (Labor Party of India and Scheduled Castes Federation of India), he prepared a blueprint for the third (Republican Party of India) after embracing Buddhism. To give a practical shape to his social vision, Babasaheb tried all possible ways to bring social reforms within Hinduism in order to make it an all-inclusive religion where the Shudras and Ati-Shudras should not suffer on account of their so-called lower birth. He launched satyagrahas (non-violent struggles) for the entry of lower castes (then known as Depressed Classes) in to public places of utility and religious sites; organized common kitchen eating; and advocated inter-caste marriages. When such measures failed to bring fruit, he put forward the idea of changing religion. After giving it a deep thought (more than twenty years), he embraced Buddhism as a way to egalitarian social order in India.

His people for whom he struggled throughout his life eagerly wait for the true realization of his goal. Their enthusiasm can be seen from the way they celebrate his birth anniversary every year with great enthusiasm and respect. This shows his great legacy that his people carrying forward to make his dream come true.



The Sikh Gurus' Legacy: Building Bridges for a More Inclusive World

People from different religious backgrounds are hesitant to appreciate the religious rituals and beliefs of other religious communities in the present day world. Currently, there is a global trend of economically powerful, politically dominant, and numerically socio-religious and cultural majority groups to impose their religious beliefs and cultural norms on minority groups. The dominant religious and cultural groups aspire to maintain their religio-cultural hegemony and political domination over others due to societal preconceptions, racial arrogance, and religious fanaticism. Clash among various socio-cultural and religious groups are caused by mutual hostility, distrust, and disharmony between followers of different religions. Growing religious violence, fanaticism, and mutual antagonism have produced a tense atmosphere that will inevitably lead to clash among numerous religio-cultural groups. Religious terrorism, violent conflicts, and ethnic violence are caused by the tense and unfriendly relationships between individuals of different races, ethnicities, and creeds. It would be extremely difficult to hope for interfaith and intercultural dialogue in such a situation. Presently, conflicts between different religious and cultural groups are a major threat to the world's stability, security, prosperity, and peace.

To end the current societal unrest and bitterness, there is a great need to encourage interfaith and intercultural dialogue across various social and religio-cultural groups. The path to construct a bridge of understanding and deconstructing narrow-minded religious perspectives is through interfaith and intercultural dialogue. It enhances social behavior and the degree of shared understanding of religious teachings. Responding to religious fanaticism, interreligious, ethnic and cultural disputes also requires an interfaith dialogue movement. Its foundations include respect for diversity, religious plurality, peaceful co-existence, and reciprocal respect. It prohibits coercive proselytization and any attempt to meddle in an individual's religious matters. It duly affirms the freedom of religion, speech, and practice.

Sikhism started the interfaith and intercultural dialogue movement in India more than 550 years ago. Precursors of the interfaith and intercultural dialogue movement were the Sikh Gurus. Interfaith an intercultural dialogue in Sikhism refers to dialogue among various socio-cultural and religious. Sikhism provides a platform for resolving socio-cultural and religious disputes in a respectful, harmonious, and widely acceptable way, helping to build the groundwork for a world that is peaceful, stable, and has a bright future. To move away from religious fundamentalism, prejudices, and a parochial understanding of other people's religious concepts, Sikh Gurus emphasized the importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue. Sikh Gurus promoted interfaith harmony and social solidarity in an era

marked by racial arrogance, religious intolerance, and socio-cultural disputes.

Sikh Gurus strongly condemned the ruling classes for their policies of religious radicalism and intolerance. They made the supreme sacrifices in human history in their fight against religious fanaticism. They strongly emphasized the idea of Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Mankind and strongly rejected all kinds of sectarian divisions. They envisaged the egalitarian, fair, multicultural and plural social order. They persuaded people to let go of the distorted conception of religious dogmas while following the eternal and universal teachings of their religious traditions. They firmly encouraged interfaith dialogue between Semitic and Vedic religions in order to develop an atmosphere of religious tolerance and mutual respect.

They strongly advocated idea of mutual love, peace, harmony and cooperation among all people. Their fundamental principles for the interfaith and intercultural dialogue movement were tolerance for religious diversity, respect for socio-religious diversity, and acceptance of others' point of views. Rather than imposing their religious beliefs on others, they tried to mend the rift between Hindus and Muslims, and inspired them to follow the righteous path. Presently, Sikhism can serve as a model for maintaining world peace and harmony by uniting individuals belonging to numerous socio-cultural and religious groups.

The Sikh vision of intercultural and interfaith dialogue fosters religious tolerance, respect for one another's religious traditions, and mutual understanding between Sikhs and adherents of other faiths. Sikh Gurus made tremendous efforts towards creating constructive, positive and purposeful interfaith and intercultural dialogue, which contributed significantly to national integration by creating spaces for mutual understanding, building bridges across communities, preventing conflicts, and fostering a shared sense of identity and purpose. These dialogues promote a vision of a united and inclusive nation where individuals of various backgrounds can coexist harmoniously. The Sikh Gurus also firmly believed that the foundation for harmonious living can be laid by identifying shared values and realizing how narratives are interwoven. These actions can also encourage mutual interactions and compassion. This unity and harmony can act as a model for peaceful coexistence in many diverse societies. The Sikh Gurus have raised awareness of the fact that cordial relationships and shared

(Contd. on page 3)



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Supervisor Frost March Newsletter



Sue Frost

Homelessness In Sacramento: Challenges & Opportunities

We've just wrapped up the 2024 Point-In-Time Count in Sacramento, a vital snapshot of homelessness in our community. Conducted on a single night in January, this count provides a clear picture of both sheltered and unsheltered individuals facing homelessness, as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The latest findings underscore a troubling trend: Sacramento County is witnessing a dramatic rise in homelessness, with the 2022 count revealing nearly 9,278 people without homes in one night, a 67% surge from 2019 and the highest figure on record, translating to 59 out of every 10,000 residents.

The issue of homelessness is more visible and pressing than ever, with encampments and individuals in need becoming a common sight. Legal rulings, such as the Martin v. Boise decision by the 9th Circuit Court, have tied our hands in some respects, preventing us from taking punitive measures against homelessness when there aren't enough shelter options available. This limitation was felt even more acutely during the pandemic, constraining our ability to manage and maintain public spaces.

Addressing homelessness goes beyond just providing roofs over heads. The journey to permanent housing starts with temporary shelters and outreach programs designed to build connections and guide individuals to necessary services. The complexity deepens when considering those in our community struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues, who might lose their belongings, be unaware of their situation due to conditions like anosognosia, endure the difficulties of outdoor living, or become victims of crime.

Despite these challenges, there's a ray of hope with new legislative initiatives such as AB2417, introduced by Assembly members Hoover and Patterson. This bill advocates for a "Beyond Housing" approach, understanding the complex needs of the

homeless population and emphasizing the need for mental health and substance abuse treatment.

It aims to address the underlying issues of homelessness, not just the surface problems. This move is a response to the limitations of the "Housing First" model, which hasn't fully tackled the root causes of homelessness, leaving many without crucial services.

In the County, especially in the unincorporated areas in my district, we're taking proactive steps to address these issues. Our comprehensive strategy includes Navigator outreach, Park Rangers, Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Teams, and clean-up operations.

These programs are not only about engagement but also about assessing needs, ensuring safety, and facilitating access to crucial resources. Sheriff Cooper's approach to law enforcement, which calls for the consis-



tent enforcement of laws, mirrors our commitment to a compassionate yet effective response.

Taxpayers deserve better. Residents of Sacramento County and the City shouldn't have to deal with illegal encampments every day. More importantly, everyone deserves a chance at a stable and secure future.

Thank you for Reading – and

as always if you want to contact me, call me at 916-874-5491, or e-mail me at SupervisorFrost@sacounty.gov. Sacramento County Supervisor Sue Frost represents the 4th District, which includes the communities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, Orangevale, Antelope, North Highlands, Rio Linda, Elverta, and Rancho Murieta.

Community Achievement Recognition
I wanted to take this moment and recognize recipients for my community achievement initiative. I am thrilled to recognize the remarkable individuals who have made significant contributions to our community:

Janae Elizabeth Rose Williams has made her mark with several impressive feats. She finished her studies 1.5 years early, showing her smarts and hard work. Janae also stood out in aviation by flying solo, becoming one of the youngest pilots. Her top-notch

Her tireless efforts and significant contributions have been pivotal in advancing local projects and educational programs, greatly enhancing the quality of life within the Antelope community. This dedication to service and community betterment has rightfully garnered Jeri the prestigious Lion of the Year award!

2024 District 4 Community Survey

Did you know my community survey is live? I encourage you to join in and take my 2024 community survey. Your thoughts and concerns about the critical issue facing our community are important to me.

Upcoming District 4 Community Meetings

You're invited you to join me at my upcoming community meetings across the district. This is your chance to share your ideas, voice your concerns, as well as connecting with your neighbors and community members.

Here are the details of the upcoming meetings:

North Highlands
Thursday, March 7th
North Highlands Recreation & Parks District
6040 Watt Ave, North Highlands, CA
6:00pm

Folsom
Wednesday, March 13th
Georgia Murray Library
411 Stafford Street, Folsom, CA
6:00pm

Citrus Heights
Tuesday, March 19th
City Hall
6360 Fountain Square Drive, Citrus Heights, CA
6:00pm

grades keep her at the front of her class. Plus, she's shone in National Senior Bible Quizzing, memorizing over 400 scriptures!

Jeri Wartena, who has been a cornerstone of the Antelope Lions Club since its inception in 1992, is renowned for her exceptional leadership and profound commitment to community service.

Building Bridges for a More Inclusive World

(Continue from page 1)

experiences may bring individuals from various religious and cultural backgrounds together to build a more harmonious and cohesive global society. They firmly held the view that engaging in cross religious-cultural interactions offers a platform for the sharing of cultural traditions, promoting respect and mutual understanding amongst individuals. The equality of all people is emphasized by Sikhism, regardless of their nationality, gender, caste, or creed. Within the Sikh community, intercultural and interfaith dialogue promotes tolerance for diversity and the understanding that everyone possesses a divine essence. The Sikh vision of interfaith and intercultural dia-

logue can help us to understand Sikhism in a better way, to promote constructive dialogue and cooperation with other religions, and to achieve a more just and peaceful world.

The Sikh Gurus' teachings indeed encouraged a respectful dialogue and the study of teachings of various religions in order to understand different religious perspectives on various issues. Furthermore, it is indisputable that Sikhs actively engage in interfaith and intercultural dialogue, live in harmony with one another, and peacefully coexist with followers of other religions and cultural groups because of the inclusive vision of Sikh Gurus. The Sikh vision of dialogue across diverse cultures and

religions fosters empathy, understanding, and cooperation. In a diverse society, the Sikh perspective on interfaith and intercultural dialogue is crucial and can support the idea of peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding. In fact a more equitable, peaceful, and harmonious world can be promoted by fostering intercultural and interfaith dialogue, which is made possible by the eternal message of Sikh Gurus. Building bridges of mutual understanding, promoting peaceful coexistence, and fostering a more just and harmonious world are all made possible by the Sikh vision of intercultural and interfaith dialogue, which integrates core Sikh religious doctrines and universal message of the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

Assemblyman Hoover's Representative Report

Update on Homeless Spending Audit

Earlier this week, Dan Walters published an article about the billions



California is spending on homelessness, while the problem only worsens. In the article, he points out that he is eagerly looking forward to looking at the results of the statewide homelessness spending audit that I got approved last year.

The audit has faced some delays but is due back in "early spring" according to the auditor's office. It's time for real accountability, I look forward to sharing the report with you as soon as it is released.

Solar Energy Day at the Capitol

I enjoyed meeting with a number of constituents last week who came to the State Capitol with the Cal-



ifornia Solar and Storage Association (CALSSA), a groups that represents over 700 businesses and serves more than 4.2 million California consumers. It was great to learn about their policy priorities for 2024, which include protecting the future of clean energy and making solar accessible for more Californians.

Regional Recycling Tour

I recently had the privilege of joining a regional tour organized by the California Foundation on the Environment and



the Economy (CFEE) and the Resource Recovery Coalition of California. This tour of several sites in our state showcased the importance of recycling in our communities.

Our first stop was Cal-Waste Recovery System in Galt, where we saw their state-of-the-art materials recovery facility (MRF) in action. This facility plays a crucial role in processing municipal solid waste into recyclable materials, contributing to waste reduction and resource reuse.

Next, we visited Halo Glass Recycling in Modesto, a cutting-edge facility that converts recycled glass into cullet for reuse by the glass container industry. By closing the loop on glass recycling, Halo Glass is reducing environmental impact and supporting a sustainable supply chain.

Our tour concluded at Gallo Glass, the largest single-site user of recycled glass in the United States. This facility highlights the importance of incorporating recycled materials into manufacturing processes and setting examples for sustainability.

New Podcast Episode

On my podcast this week I



was joined by Assemblymember Juan Alanis, where we discussed more bad news on the state budget, the latest "Californians and their Government" survey, organic waste recycling, re-

mote work, rising energy costs, how to combat deepfake technology, another gas price increase, a proposed mandate on pets in rental properties, and a new effort to stop the use of police canines.

100th Birthday of WWII US Army Veteran

My staff joined Oakmont of Folsom as they celebrated the 100th Birthday of WWII US Army Veteran



Shigeru "Shig" Ochi on February 26. Shig was honored with presentations from the City of Folsom Vice Mayor Sarah Aquino, City Manager Elaine Andersen, and Council Member Anna Rohrbough, which included being pre-

because of his Japanese ancestry. After he was released, he began his Army career and was deployed to Hiroshima to assist in the post-war effort.



Assemblyman Hoover

Tiny Home Project Tour

Earlier this week Team Hoover along with Assemblyman Joe Patterson visited the Tiny Home Roseville Road Campus which is being operated by First Steps Communities. The Roseville Road Campus consists of pallet homes (prefabricated tiny homes) and travel trailer shelters in partnership with the City of Sacramento.

At this location, individuals who are looking to get off the street and into permanent housing are provided with wrap-around services, which includes a case manager who assesses each individual's needs and helps them create a housing plan. Medical services along with mental health services are provided to every individual who is in need of them. Lastly, clients at the campus have daily access to vital amenities including meals, showers, and restrooms.

My team was able to see their dedicated staff in action as they worked around the clock to offer continuous support to those living in the community.



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Dr. Paramjit S Takhar, MD



Goodie Takhar, PhD

Dalits, Durban and a Lost Chance



Sh. Kuldip Nayar (Late)

The news is that New Delhi has been successful in keeping out caste by descent from the final U.N. resolution at Durban on racism. I do not think it is a matter for celebrations, which the unthinking Ministry of External Affairs is doing.

The Government's stand on caste is political. Otherwise, it is not understandable why it should have been a party to block the discussion on Zionism at Durban. People in India support Jews but not the thesis that Israel can go on expanding its frontiers. What has New Delhi proved? Does it mean that India knows of no discrimination by birth, or does it mean that the non-recognition of such ills will make them disappear? True, caste is not racism. But the difference is technical. How does it matter when the end product of caste and racism is the same, discrimination and degradation? Even the National Human

Rights Commission, otherwise tilting towards the Government, has said that the nomenclature is of little importance when caste-ism and racism do not treat men and women as human beings. The series of legislative steps against the Dalits are impressive on paper. But the reality is that they continue to live in separate habitations, draw water from separate wells and get the worst chastisement if they ever dare to raise their head. They are hanged if they marry out of caste. They are murdered if they dare to be equal to the upper caste. Official figures show that one Dalit woman is raped every six hours and one Dalit killed every three days.

Wounded People

No democratic system should be ashamed of discussing at any forum its practices, which disable its own people. A free society owes its existence to the tenets of freedom. The Dalits have never had a breath of freedom in the suffocating Hindu society. They are wounded people, battered and broken. India is strong enough democratically to admit that it has failed somewhere, despite all the guarantees in the Constitution, to pro-

vide the same glow of freedom, which the upper castes enjoy.

In fact, India has lost at Durban yet another opportunity to explain to the international community the country's shame. The Government could have admitted before the world that despite its legal efforts it had failed to remove untouchability and that it wanted the international community to discuss the case and suggest remedies. It would have been New Delhi's moral success.

It was at Durban that Mahatma Gandhi embarked on his agitation against racism and intolerance. It is at Durban that the Government of the country for whose freedom he fought has shut out from discussion caste, which was one of the targets of his agitation. New Delhi, happy over its victory, feels elated that even the U.N. Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, refused to include caste on the agenda when NGOs from India accosted him. But it is Pyrrhic victory. The world expects something better from the land of the Mahatma.

The blame is not that of the upper caste alone. The politics of votes has become ingrained in the

Dalits. Their leaders, belonging mostly to the creamy layer, have come to enjoy the spoils of office, without articulating the cause of the lowest in real terms.

While piloting the Constitution, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the tallest among the Dalits, was able to incorporate in it the numerous safeguards for the untouchables. Untouchability is also banned. But this has made Hindu society no better in its treatment towards untouchable. The upper caste has not changed, neither in its attitude of hide-bound superiority, nor in its refusal to admit the Dalits in the social structure. Caste is denounced but not the cast system.

But what annoys me is the patience and stamina of the Dalits who have stayed part of the Hindu society in spite of the cruelties they have undergone for untold years. Dr. Ambedkar aptly described the situation by borrowing a phrase from Shakespeare: "It may be your interest to be our masters but how can it be ours, to be your slaves?"

Courtesy: Durban 2001
CASTE AND WORLD CONFERENCE
AGAINST RACISM

"Ambedkar Times" & "Desh Doaba" fondly remember Mr C. L. Chumber on his 67th Birthday

Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba weekly newspapers fondly remember Mr C. L. Chumber on his 66th Birthday. His contribution towards the legacy of the Ad Dharm movement in the form of his well-documented writings is praise worthy. He published a souvenir on the Ad Dharm and the role of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji in the awakening of Dalit consciousness in pre-

partition Punjab. The right tribute to Mr C. L. Chumber Sahib will be to reproduce his writings in a series of columns in Ambedkar Times and Desh Doaba weekly newspapers. So on his 67th Birthday, we are going to reproduce from this week in "Desh Doaba" weekly newspaper. -

Prem K. Chumber



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