

# DALIT VOICE

[The Voice of the Persecuted Minorities]

Adviser : Dr. Mulk Raj Anand

Vol. 1

FEB. 1-15, 1982

No. 8

## A BLOODY NEW YEAR GIFT TO DALITS

*The New Year broke on India with a "bloody" news. Coming events cast their shadows. That 1982 began with a repeat performance of "hunting Harijans as rabbits" at Sadhupur in Indira Gandhi's own home State of UP even before the smell of Deoli evaporated confirm the fears expressed in our editorial (Dec. 1-15), "Dalit Life is the Cheapest in India". Officially 21% of UP population is Untouchables. We have no words to describe the heinous nature of the Sadhupur crime of Dec. 31 in which 10 (official figure but unofficially much higher) Jatav Untouchables, mostly women & children, were gunned down in a most well planned bid to silence & subdue the Untouchables. Such ghastly murders without any motive except caste prejudice can occur only in a society where the conscience has turned into stone & man becomes a brute. What else we can say about the Hindu hounds, described by the govt as "dacoits", who were neither interested in loot nor sex except the blood of the Untouchables even if they were women and babies? The UP Home Minister is reported to have said that no caste factor was involved in the Sadhupur murders. Nor did the RSS leader Vajpayee after a visit to Sadhupur find caste behind these murders. Being high caste Hindus, they have to say so to show to the outside world that Hindus are all milk & honey. If no caste prejudice was involved, why the "dacoits" wanted to find out where the Jatavs (Untouchables) lived and shot only Jatavs and none else? In the Deoli massacre also only Jatavs were the victims and then also the govt & the police said that there was no caste behind the murders. Does it not prove at least now that the motive behind these murders is only caste and nothing else? The IGP is reported to have said that the "dacoits" wanted to take revenge for the police action against them for the Deoli killings. But revenge against whom? If the Hindu "dacoits" wanted to take revenge on the police they should have killed the police and not the poor, unarmed Jatavs. What does this "revenge" of the "dacoits" show? The answer to this question has a very big lesson to the dalits of India. If the police on the instruction of the govt. were to unwillingly and half-heartedly take action and punish the Hindu "dacoits", the latter will become more furious on the Untouchables for complaining to the govt. One murder will be followed by more murders. And this is what happened at Sadhupur on Dec. 31. What is the implication? More dalit blood will be shed if the govt decides to protect the dalits. Because in the countryside it is the high caste Hindus that rule and not the govt. whose legislations do not apply to these Hindus. Can the govt. keep armed police, guards in each & every dalit busti? Even supposing it does under political pressure, where is the guarantee that the police with its caste complexion being what it is, will come to the defence of the dalits? In many cases police have proved to be the*

enemy no. 1 of the dalits. The UP CM might have once offered to resign on the Deoli massacre of dalits and may really quit on its repeat performance at Sadhupur. But can any CM go on resigning or can any IGP be dismissed for every mass murder of dalits in India? How can an individual be held responsible for a murder that results from caste prejudice which is bound to rise with the rising dalit militancy? The Hindus will never tolerate dalits asserting their rights to live as human beings. When that is the case, will they give equal share? That means, as we said (DV, Dec 1-15) the countryside, particularly the backward, stinking Hindi heartland of India, will soon turn into a bloody battlefield. It is just a question of time. As the dalit awareness is bound to rise, the Hindu resistance is bound to reply with bullets. Democracy & caste cannot coexist. The Hindu does not believe in compassion when it comes to the question of killing the low castes, particularly the dalits. Killing a dalit who challenges his authority is the dharma (duty) of a Hindu. Has the Hindu a conscience? So how can they expect the Hindu rulers of India to weep over dalit murders which are so normal? Has not Hinduism perfected an ideology that has replaced violence? What then is the way out of this all-pervading darkness in the dalit life? How to save the life, little property and the honour of its women? Our human rights organisations are unconcerned about dalits & minorities. Hence we would like to reiterate what we had stated earlier (DV-Dec 1-15): That the victims of such atrocities must quit their village and migrate to safer areas in cities. As the govt. will not be allowed to give them security even if it wants to, they have no other alternative but to migrate to safer areas. Therefore, we repeat our appeal for migration and systematic shifting of population. All those dalits who have gone over to cities have assured us that they have escaped the Hindu tyranny.

Such a migration & shifting of population can't be left to the govt. Nor will it be interested in such a proposal. Rather we expect all sorts of obstructions from the ruling class. Pending such a move, which will have to ultimately result in the carving out of our own Dalitastan, dalits must get fully armed for self-protection. There is no point in asking the govt. to supply arms to dalits. How can we expect the govt. to do this? The people of India are not ruled by the govt. but by the ruling class. Even if Indira Gandhi herself resigns on the Sadhupur carnage, the ruling class will not change its heart. It is only those who have the heart can have a change of heart. The Indian ruling class has no heart. Therefore, we cannot expect the Indian ruling class to permit supply of arms to dalits. Have we ever heard of killers supplying guns to victims before they come to shoot? Karpoori Thakur govt's efforts to supply arms was sabotaged by the ruling class only because of this reason. So it is foolish to ask govt. to supply arms even if Union Home Minister Zail Singh makes such a promise. They can no longer remain unarmed. Because in a society where guns are outlawed only outlaws have the guns. This is what is happening in India. Dalits can get no mercy from the ruling class. They have to fight & destroy it. But are they in a position? No. Dalits are the poorest & weakest in every respect, famished. Of the 4.6 million SCs in UP, 3 million live below the poverty line. The entire Hindu society is ranged against them. So fighting this enemy is no joke. The very thought of fighting it will result in the liquidation of the dalits. Lot of preparations are needed. We can clearly foresee the developing caste war. The countryside will soon turn into a battlefield. We see clear signs of it. Therefore, dalits will have to get set. Even if some among them say that they are not willing for the war or ready for it, war will be forced upon

[Cont. on page 11]

## NONE TO EQUAL AMBEDKAR IN INDIA : PERIYAR E.V.R.

Self-respect movement was born in India in 1925. It is not difficult to propagate against religion and other discriminations in this country, particularly in Tamil Nadu because such anti-religious feelings have been existing here for a long time. But that is not the case in the North. No one bothers about the discriminations and the low caste status in the North. People there used to think that 'Sudra' and 'Panchama' are titles like Diwan Bahadur and Rao Bahadur. It is very difficult to create the feeling of self-respect there. But even there and that too as far back as 1927-28, Ambedkar had propagated the ideas of self-respect. He had even burnt Ramayana at a conference in Nasik. I think the year is 1930 when Ambedkar declared that it was wrong on the part of Untouchables to remain in Hinduism since Hinduism has made them as Untouchables. And hence he demanded that they all must embrace Islam and he also would become a Muslim. People like Malaviya and Vijaragavachariar gave telegrams requesting Ambedkar to reconsider his decision. At that time I also gave a telegram to Ambedkar. In that, I had requested him that he must not go alone and he must take atleast a lakh of people along with him to the Islam religion. Then only Muslims will give respect. I told him: "if you go alone, no one will respect you and your people, SCs will continue to be oppressed. After becoming a Muslim, if you talk about the degrading aspects of Hinduism, some may try to drown your crusade by saying: 'How can a Muslim talk about Hinduism? Kindly go to Islam with at least a lakh of people and I promise to give you at least some 10 or 20 thousand people to follow you'. So said my telegram. Only after that the Congress people came forward to do something for the benefit of the Adi Dravida people and that too out of fear for Ambedkar's move. By threatening conversion, Com. Ambedkar had done immense good to the Adi Dravida people. I sincerely state that Hindus were caught in a tight corner by Com. Jinnah and Com. Ambedkar. They were able to free themselves from Com. Jinnah. But they could not free themselves from Com. Ambedkar.

He is giving repeated blows to the Hindus. Also I would like to cite an example to prove the boldness of Com. Ambedkar. In London, (Round Table Conference) Gandhi stated: "I have come as a representative of Indian people", to which Ambedkar said: You are not the representative of our community". Again Gandhi said: "I have come as a representative of Indian people. Immediately Ambedkar declared: "I am saying for the tenth time that you are not our representative. But unashamedly you are repeating that you are our representative, you are mis-using your 'Mahatma' title". Gandhi sat down without uttering a word. After that the Indian journals started attacking Ambedkar vigorously. But he did not mind it. I want to cite yet another example of Ambedkar's boldness. When he was a Minister he came to Madras once. In one of his meetings he declared that Geeta was a fool's blabbering. You all know about the popularity of Geeta in this country. Right from Gandhi and Rajaji, high court judges and the so called aristocrats have taken it as a duty to propagate the glory of Geeta. To explain Geeta and translate Geeta into English was supposed to earn high status and fame in this country. Ambedkar declared that 'Geeta' is a fool's blabbering. It is very bad if it is related to fools and still worse if it is a fool's blabbering. You all see who are the people affected by such an attack. For this the Brahmin journals had no suitable reply to offer and instead wrote: "How can a person occupying the post of a Minister talk like this?". Since they have no basis to refute his attack, they can only respond like this. In the

present day Dr. Ambedkar is saying that he will embrace Buddhism. In fact Buddhism is a good philosophy. It came into existence only to fight Brahminism and its culture. Buddhism condemns the caste division, Vedas, Puranas and Idhikas as it does not approve of these. Buddhism does not worry about anything like 'god'. In the same manner, it has refuted the existence of Atma. As usual, many people opposed Ambedkar embracing Buddhism. Conversion to Buddhism will not cause as much fear among Brahmins as conversion to Islam. Because the Brahmins succeeded in making Hinduism swallow Buddhism. (Extract from a speech at Madras on 13.5-1952.)

Late Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar and myself are not only great friends for a long time but had identical views on many matters. Not only we concurred on the abolition of castes but also on Hindu religion, Hindu Sastras, Hindu gods, and devas. Moreover he was having equally forceful and strong opinion on these matters like me. Dr. Ambedkar called 'Geeta' (adored greatly by Brahmins) as fool's blabberings. Like these, we had identical opinions on so many matters. Independently we have developed such identical opinions. When occasion arose, we used to exchange our opinions and ideas. We attended the World Buddhist Conference in Burma. Ambedkar said: "What Ramasamy, what can we achieve if we go on simply talking like this. Come, Let us both embrace Buddhism". I replied: "Alright, first you join. It may not be proper for me to join now. I am deeply engaged in the propaganda for abolishing caste in Tamil Nadu. I am breaking the idols of Hindu gods like Vinayaka and Rama, and burning their pictures. I am also explaining to the people the harmful aspect of Hinduism. I cannot do such an effective propaganda against Hinduism if I join Buddhism. Nobody can restrain me from doing these things as long as I con-

tinue to be in Hinduism. I will not have this advantage if I am in some other religion. Therefore I shall continue to propagate Buddhism from outside". I not only propagate the abolition of caste but also its very basis in religion. He also did like this. Dr. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism by taking oath that he would not worship gods like Rama and Krishna. I am also saying the same thing. At that time, millions of people in our country burnt the idols of Rama and Vinayaka and broke their idols. The contents of the oath were recognised by us long before and we had been propagating them for a long time. (Extracts from a speech at Delhi, Pahar Ganj, 15-2-1959)

We cannot cite a person equal to Ambedkar in India. I know him right from the year 1930. I am saying this for the past 30 years and not from today. He has preached those ideas which independently appeared in our journal 'Kudi Arasu' (people's state). I started praising him as a good friend of mine even without meeting him. The downtrodden people of Tamil Nadu came to know of him only after I started praising him in our 'Kudi Arasu'. In the beginning Dr. Ambedkar thought of reforming Hinduism. Later he came to the conclusion that it can not be reformed and hence must be demolished. (Extracts from a speech at Madras 29.5-1972) □

### C.P.M. TURNS PRO-USSR

New Delhi: Evidently, the central leadership of the CPM has diluted its independent stance in relation to the ideological positions of the two ruling Communist parties in Russia and China. The CPM leadership has now certainly tilted completely in favour of the Soviet Union against China. This is sharply reflected in the draft political resolution adopted by the CPI(M)'s Central Committee at its meeting in Delhi between October 26 and 31 this year for the 11th Party Congress to be held in Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh from January 26 to 31 next year. (Statesman, Dec. 2.) □

# HOUSING PROBLEM: A DALIT VIEWPOINT

(V. T. RAJSHEKAR)

-(Paper presented at a seminar of the Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore, on Sept. 11, 1981)

The well-fed sections of the society have discovered a new pastime to spend their excess leisure, variously described as seminar, symposium, round-table and what not and they have started any number of platforms to have such a discussion: Rotary club, Lions Club, Tigers Club, Bisons Club, etc. which are also meant for such fruitless discussions. We are mostly concerned with the problems of the Untouchables, who are the poorest of the poor in India—the socially lowest and economically most deprived. In what way the well-fed sections are interested in the problems of the Wretched of the Earth? What we thought was that the discussion would be mostly about the problem of housing faced by the well-fed. A company executive takes up a job in Bangalore and even if he is prepared to pay Rs. 2,000 a month, he is not getting a house. At every elite gathering of women, you will find the discussion centering on housing problem and the "servant problem". We, therefore, made it plain to the organisers of today's discussion that we are not interested in such problem faced by the well-fed sections—creating problems where there is none. We are not denying the fact that the rich of this country are also facing problems. In fact, they face more problems than the poor. This is because those who create problems to others will have to face more problems themselves. We told the organisers that we would not be interested in participating in a talk that would be interested in solving artificially-created problems. The real problem of housing is faced not by the rich who invariably belong to the high-caste, but by the poorest of the poor, who are none other than the Untouchables and the tribals. The Wretched of the Earth always belong to the lowest caste in India. It is only when we were assured that the discussion would embrace the slum-dwellers also, we agreed to participate on behalf of the Karnataka Dalit Action Committee. We visited the house of a friend in a Bangalore fashionable locality. He took us to the balcony of his house and showed us two huts right beside his house and said that these dirty eyesore huts had sprung up only the previous week. "Look, how these dirty people are spoiling the beauty of this place? Why you newspapermen (I was then in the *Indian Express*) are not bothered about this problem? The Corporation and the police should not allow these people to create a slum in Palace Orchards." He said this with great sincerity and feeling. We can understand his indignation. We are sure that quite a number of you would have also felt the same thing when a shanty house comes next to your doorstep, spreading filth and noise all round. Such a feeling of indignation is natural. But did you ponder over the question—who creates slums? There is another aspect to this problem. Our friend felt that it was the duty of newspapers, corporation and the police to prevent the poor from encroaching upon the pleasures of the rich. He is right, because these agencies are meant to protect the rich. That is why he had taken their support for granted. Why the poor and, particularly the Untouchables, are migrating to the cities and creating new and newer slums? We don't want to enter into this subject as it is not part of our brief. In 1972, Bangalore had only 175 slums. In another ten years the number will cross 500. This will happen despite efforts of leaders like Antulay trying to drive out slum and pavement-dwellers. The migration of the poor and particularly the Untouchables will

speed up in days to come because of the increasing number of caste atrocities between the Hindus and the Untouchables. All these slums are inhabited by Untouchables (over 75 per cent) and Muslims. And these two sections constitute the poorest of the poor. And that is why they reside only in the slum. The number of the poor is growing and that is why the number of urban slums is also growing. Dharavi in Bombay, Asia's biggest slum, is mostly inhabited by Untouchables from TN. An urban slum is like a boil on your body. The boil comes because something is wrong with your blood. So there is no point in going on applying any amount of ointment to cure the boil. The medicine may temporarily cure the boil but it may come back. To get rid of the problem of the boil you will have to get your blood purified. The same analogy applies to slums as well. The Government has established Slum Improvement and Development Corporations. No progress has been made. On the other hand, new and newer slums are springing up daily. Why? Because the Govt. is only trying to cure the boil but no effort is made to purify the blood. It is like trying to cure the symptom leaving the disease as it is. Slums only prove that the health of the nation is very bad, critical. There is no point in slum improvement or development as long as the nation itself is sick. We are a sick nation with a bad blood running through our veins. That is why, slums spring up all over like the boil on the body. It is very simple. It does not need a social scientist or a housing expert to tell this.

China became independent two years after India. We had an occasion to tour that country as the leader of a goodwill delegation in 1980. We did not find a single slum even in Shanghai which is the world's highest populated city. Everybody is housed. There are no slums in China. Nor are there ten-bed room bungalows. To each according to his needs and from each accord-

ing to his ability. China is socialist. We are feudal. The politicians particularly those belonging to the ruling party like slums and want it to continue because in these slums reside their cheapest vote bank. Will anybody kill the goose that lays the golden egg? Another reason why the Untouchables and Muslims prefer slums, because they do not get houses outside. Hindus do not give houses to these two sections. The Karnataka Dalit Action Committee is daily getting complaints from Untouchables facing problem of eviction after their caste identify is discovered by the landlords. So the problem of the slums, which in turn is nothing but a part of the city's housing problem, is closely linked with the problem of untouchability which is part of the Hindu caste system. We cannot solve the problem of slums alone without solving the problem of untouchability and caste system. One is linked to the other. However, a beginning can be made if all the enlightened citizens take up the issue seriously. The best method of making a big break-through is by conferring ownership rights on those tenants who have been occupying a house continuously for six years. To enable such a measure which is on the lines of the "Land to the Tiller and House to the Dweller", the Government may be forced to bring an Ordinance staying all current eviction proceedings in the courts. We had an occasion to preside over such a conference of "House to the Dweller" in Bangalore three years back and the conference was a big success.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to note that some friends have not remitted their yearly subscription of Rs. 10. We are bringing out the journal with great difficulty. We need your help. Subscription may be sent to the DSA address given on page 12x

PUBLISHERS.

Letters to Editor

**Dr. S. S. Maran**, Periyar Hospital, Rajapalayam, TN : DV has inspired us. Articles are excellent & gives a real approach to the problem of caste. Kindly get more involved in the Dravida Kazhagam movement. We dalits are happy that DV articles & your speeches are being published in DK papers. I see a future for the poor dalits through DV. Please go ahead. We are with you.

**Mohinder Paul**, Patiala : We sincerely appreciate your efforts to rouse the revolutionary zeal of dalits through DV, the voice of the persecuted minorities yearning for revolution. We eagerly wait for every issue of DV.

**Dr S.M. Qadri**, Hyderabad : We appreciate the straight-forwardness & the boldness with which you champion the cause of the dalits & persecuted minorities, & pray for the circulation of DV, throughout the length & breadth of India.

**Alec Walker**, Whitefield, Bangalore : The sub-title of DV states that it is the "Voice of the persecuted minorities" & I sympathise with those who are persecuted whoever they may be. Wishing the "Voice" to be heard, so that discriminations will gradually disappear

**Fr. Peter Lewis**, Shrine of the Infant Jesus, Nasik : I congratulate you for your boldness in speaking out the truth

**Bhabani Shankar Chandel**, Rourkela : The DV writings are revolutionary. It will encourage our intellectual and academic pursuit. Keep it up

**Z. Jilani**, advocate, Lucknow : I was really moved on the boldness that you have shown in your editorial, "Dalit Life is the cheapest in India". (DV no. 4). Our felicitations.

**Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu**, Retd. Head of dept. of Hindi, Madras University, Madras: DV deserves to be read by all right-thinking people. It is so timely & touching.

**S. Mohan Das**, Ambedkar People's Ma-

ndram, Nagercoil, TN : We are happy that DV is coming up very well. We will try our best to spread its message here.

**M. C. Ashamella**, Bombay : We dalits here like DV & the books published by the Dalit Sahitya Akademy. They give us a clear picture of the Indian society. I like the policy of the DV and the theory it propogates.

**Ganesh Prasad**, SC/ST Ry. Emp. Assn. Jhansi, UP : So happy to know that DV, DSA & the Dalit Action Committee is doing a lot for awakening the dalits.

**P. S. Mase**, Ambarnath, Maharashtra : Dalit organisations in UK, US, Canada & other countries can do a lot for us. One reason for the plight of dalits here is their total dependence on other Hindu communities. We have lost everything because we are denied education. We are oppressed in every field. Unless we stand on our own, dalits will not get self-respect. The education system here though open to all on paper, is a well-organised conspiracy. Christians have educated dalits only to increase the number of Christians. Hence to educate dalits, they need their own methods based on the teachings of Ambedkar. Though I am M.Com. & employed I am worried that I am not able to elevate my people. Therefore, dalits living abroad can help us a lot by selecting right type of dalits for higher education or good jobs for 4-5 years only, train them well on the revolutionary teachings of Ambedkar & send them back to fulfill their duties towards their less fortunate brothers. We expect encouraging response from our foreign-based dalit organisations.

**M. C. Das**, New Delhi : What are your views on conversions to Islam in TN which made the Hindu acharyas & leaders run there to woo the converts back to Hindu fold (to be re-christined as Untouchables of course) and recent reconversions from

Christianity in Karnataka. & whether you have any solution to this problem. ?

**M. Kumaran, Nagpur:** Your theory of caste war is being studied by us seriously. A discussion is arranged with some local CPI-CPM comrades to understand if there is any demarcation between caste and class struggle. Important items appearing in DV should be translated and leafleted by dalits in different parts of India & sold at 10 paise a copy.

**Amarjit Singh, London:** Our ideas are in full agreement. We in UK can help popularise dalit struggle. I believe that only the dalits are capable of igniting the flame of Indian Inquilab. Marx in the context of India can only be developed by people who need him most i.e.: dalits.

**P. A. Augustine, Khagul, Bihar:** Recently I toured TN & found dalits can never get justice at the hands of the police. This is proved from an incident at Tomaipuram village in north-east Ramnad dt. Dalits there were assaulted by Hindus because they refused to do menial job. Repeated assaults followed. Despite complaint to the police & other authorities dalits did not get any justice.

**P. P. Ambikapathy, Bangalore:** I have seen real journalism only in DV. Congratulations to your editorial on the OBCs (DV, No. 5) which has demolished the pride of the OBCs.

**R. Raju, Pallikonda TN:** Congratulations for your efforts at uniting dalits & OBCs. It was Periyar EVR who fought throughout his life for this. DK general secretary Veeramani is following the very same path. It is only in TN that dalits & OBCs are joining hands.

**R. Elumalai, convener, SC/ST Emp. Coordination Council, Madras:** The editorial of the 6th issue of DV, "Can Untouchability Be Removed?" was excellent. Every editorial is certainly different from the other but this one on untouchability is timely. Because many of the readers, particularly, those who have a different notion, would clearly understand the concept of unbearable pains of this disease. The conclusions are wonderful. □

## UNESCO HONOUR FOR BRAHMINISM BOOK

(Yoichi Mitsuhashi, Tokyo.)

A great news comes to us from France. The dalit movement got a good friend there. Congratulations! Ms. Yumi Tsuji, a lady member in our group, had sent the photocopies of the Dalit Sahitya Academy publication, *Brahminism*, and *Class-Caste Struggle* to some French leftists. Leon Poliakov wrote her that he was much impressed with *Brahminism*. We are going to send other DSA publications shortly. According to Ms. Yumi Tsuji, he calls the author a brilliant Marxist and regards "*Brahminism*" as a splendid work. He is writing a book (in French) by the demand of UNESCO and he is going to cite the "*Brahminism*" in the conclusion of the book. We enclose Yumi's letter throwing more light on the subject. Poliakov finds a good friend in the author in the war against racism. We are happy to learn that the dalits are winning a victory in France. We are proud to have introduced the DSA publication to him.

Yumi Tsuji writes: I have the pleasure of writing you for the first time. I have read with great interest, the DSA books and the *Dalit Voice* too. I have sent the photocopy of the *Brahminism* (the Curse of India) to Leon Poliakov, a French historian and great theoretician of anti-racism, who lives in Paris (born 1910). He is very impressed by your work. He occupies himself with the problems of racism (in particular anti-semitism and Nazism). His principal works are "le Mythe Aryen" (translated in English under the title of "The Aryan Myth") and *The History of anti-Semitism*. Even today, anti-semitism is one of the biggest problems in Europe (in Soviet Union, too). Do you know recently some Jewish quarters in Paris were attacked by fascists and 2-300,000 people demonstrated against this? Poliakov says in his letter that he is going to cite a part of your work in the book he is writing now by the demand of the UNESCO. I hope your movement will be known more widely. (*Brahminism*, by V. I. Rajshekar, Published by the Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1981—Rs. 3). □

## CALCUTTA DALITS HAIL

### DALIT VOICE

(N. B. Sikdar, Vice-Chairman, All-India SC/ST, Backward Classes Emp. Coordination Council, Calcutta)

Calcutta : We are very much impressed with the *Dalit Voice*. Practically we wait for the next issue of your journal after going through the current one as the articles in it encourage us in our day-to-day work and writings. Being inspired by DV we have also started publishing a journal from our organisation and it has been named after our founder-chairman, late Santosh Kumar Mallick. *Santosh* is a monthly journal published on 1st of each month in English, Bengali and expected in Hindi also. Our Council chairman M. N. Mistri is also very much encouraged to go through the articles of *Dalit Voice*. It gives us lot of information and immense joy. We want to have a detailed article on the philosophy of DK and DMK, a glimpse of which we have already acquired from the articles of Karunanidhi in *Sunday*. We want further detailed information regarding the philosophy of the DK. Further, we like to have exchange of views and news between South and North particularly among the Dalits through the *Dalit Voice* as well as our *SANTOSH*. Please permit us to re-write, translate any articles or portions from your journal to be translated into Bengali in our journal. This will perhaps exchange our thoughts between North and South. Ambedkar philosophy as well as dalit philosophy is a vast subject and it requires to be published elaborately amongst our people in India to establish the rights of the dalits on the Indian soil. We want that the views of *Dalit Voice* as well as that of *Santosh* be spread all over India. We shall be very glad to exchange our views sitting face to face. We are proud of DV popularity among dalits and minorities. □

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR DALIT VOICE

Annual : Rs. 10

India : Single copy : 0-50 Paise

Europe & N. and S. America : 12\$

Asia : 10\$

Bangla Desh : Rs. 15

Pakistan and Sri Lanka : Rs. 70

Subscription may be paid through MO. Outstation cheques must include bank commission.

### NEWS - STAND SALE

Arrangements are being made for sale of *Voice* in State capitals and other centres. News-agents may write for particulars of commission, etc.

Phone : 33854

Dalit Sahitya Akademy,  
109/7th cross, P.L. Orchards,  
Bangalore-560 003, India

Subscribe to

**SANTOSH**

Monthly journal in Bengali of the  
All-India SC/ST BC Employees  
Coordination Council  
309 B. B. Ganguly St.  
Calcutta-700 012.

## Subscribe to Monthly Journal of the BAMCEF

### THE OPPRESSED INDIAN

Spokesman of the oppressed & the exploited

### Subscription Rates

Single Copy	Re. 1
Half Yearly	Rs. 6
Yearly	Rs. 12

## MASS PROMOTIONS : THE GUJARAT HORROR STORY

*(R. S. Salil, Ahmedabad)*

Perhaps one of the most hackneyed topics in India today would be the ills of our education system. Hardly a day passes without newspaper headlines screaming about student unrest and violence on campus. The inherent weakness of the education system repeatedly manifests itself in different forms accompanied by the proverbial lamentation about the "falling academic standards". In the light of this, the mass promotions issue of Gujarat would be seen as just another student aberration. A closer analysis, however, would reveal the deeper implications of the controversy that continues to plague the State. The roots of the mass promotion issue can be directly traced back to the anti-reservation stir that rocked Gujarat in early 1981. What began as a tiny spark at the B. J. Medical College on Dec. 29, 1980 graduated into a mighty inferno questioning the validity of the constitutional reservations to SCs. The entire State was paralysed and all activities disrupted. Normal life was crippled as the city of Ahmedabad came to a grinding halt. The Gujarat University was not spared. The anti-reservation agitation was intensified after Jan. 7, 1981 and carried on for 3 months. In the normal course, the curricular requirements would be completed by mid-February, in time for the preliminary examinations at the end of Feb. The anti-reservation agitation upset the entire schedule of the Gujarat University. Moreover, the tense atmosphere and the inability to conduct classes put a big question mark on whether the final examinations could be held at all. Towards the end of March, as the anti-reservation stir began to lose its tempo and life in the city was limping back to normalcy, the question of conducting the annual exams in schools and colleges of the State arose. The anti-reservation stir was withdrawn on April 13, 1981. But demands for postponement of exams and even for mass promotion gradually gathered

momentum. At this point the University seemed very firm about conducting exams. M. N. Desai, the acting Vice-Chancellor, braved severe pressures from the students. M. S. University, Baroda, and the Bhavnagar University had already granted mass promotions. June 12, 1981 saw the VC finally crumbling under the pressure and declaring mass promotions. Ironically the protagonists of mass promotions were the very same people who had earlier vehemently opposed reservations. The custodians of "merit" had suddenly done an abrupt volte face. This raises several doubts about the nature and composition of the mass promotionists. This would require a peep into the corridors of the Guj Univ. which has been a hotbed of politics since its inception in 1949. There were two diametrically opposing factions vying for control at the Univ—the govt. or the Cong. (I)-backed Guj. Univ. Area Teachers Assn. (GUATA) on the one hand, and the RSS-backed GUTA and Adhvapak Sangh on the other. The students unions were totally controlled by the ABVP (RSS). After the anti-reservation agitation seemed to peter out the upper castes desperately needed another stick to beat the Government. The mass promotion issue came as a handy weapon. Bitter memories of the 1974 Navnirman agitation spearheaded by the students which unseated the powerful Chimanbhai Ministry continued to haunt the present Government. M. N. Desai with known RSS connections along with the ABVP

played a diabolical role. While condemning mass promotions in the open, they worked surreptitiously for the same. This was followed by the challenging of the VC's order in the High Court by four post-graduate students. And the subsequent quashing of the mass promotions by directing the Univ. to hold mass promotions. In the meanwhile, the new VC, Prof. Shastri, the ex-president of the GUATA, took over. Shastri's appeal to the Supreme Court adds a new dimension to the whole problem. And the entire matter now once again hangs in the balance, putting the fate of 62,000 students in suspense. Looking back on the entire episode one wonders whether the problem had anything to do with academics at all. The manner in which students are manipulated like puppets in the hands of politicians leaves much to be desired. The attitude of the upper castes fighting for mass promotions makes a mockery of their demand for scrapping of reservations in the name of "merit". Above all, what stands exposed at the end of the story is the pathetic examination-oriented education system. The unconcealed enthusiasm with which the student community opted for mass promotions is a sad commentary on the increasing irrelevance of our education system. □

### O.B.C MEET AT MADRAS

Madras: All-India Backward Classes Employees Conference will be held here on February, 13-14. The working committee of the TN unit of the Backward Classes Federation met here recently. Dr G. Venkatachalam, chairman, reception committee, presiding. Suba Seetharaman, secretary, All-India Federation, welcomed. Siva Ilango, president. TN. Govt. Officials Union, explained the importance of the conference. Those interested may contact: No. 4 Neeli Veeraswamy St. Madras-600005. □

### Bloody New year Gift (Editorial)

[Contd. from Page 2]

them willy-nilly. They will be bludgeoned to death. In the name of law & order, non-violence, unity of India, saving Hinduism & Dharma, dalits will be shot down. The govt & the police will be simply helpless when the caste war begins. We have the precedents of Marathwada, Gujarat and the Bihar caste wars. So the dalits will have to get ready. Even if some among them assure the Enemy that they will be their most obedient slaves, "good Hindus," they will not be spared. Remember this: war will be forced upon them. Because the ruling class is turning more & more aggressive, fascist. It has to turn fascist. That is the only way to save its property & caste privileges by establishing a class-caste dictatorship in India. Therefore, dalits will have to get themselves armed for self-protection. Not to harm others but to save their life, little property & the honour of their women. Better live in honour for a day than linger as worms & cockroaches for 100 years. But dalits being in a minority in all villages, they have to first identify their natural allies and seek their friendship. Their natural allies are none other than the other persecuted minorities whose Enemy is also the same. OBCs need to be educated. All those who are fighting this common Enemy must join hands. Remember, we are facing no ordinary Enemy. It is this Enemy from whose ideology the philosophers of Fascism have perfected their thoughts. Therefore, our Enemy is indeed the Father of Fascism. It is not only our Enemy but the Enemy of the entire humanity. We have to impress this to our friends outside the world & seek their help as well. International organisations, Marxists, Blacks will have to be approached. It is, therefore, has to be a global war on the Indian fascists not only to save its dalits and the persecuted minorities but the world as a whole. Towards, this, as Dr. Ambedkar said, let us Educate, Organise and Agitate. And get ready for the war, fully armed for self-protection. □

## HOW GANDHI HARMED O.B.C.s ?

(K. Dhanasekharan, Bangalore)

We are certain that the recommendations of the Mandal Commission in favour of reservations for the backward classes in the Union Government's services will go the way of the Kaka Kalelkar report. It is said that Gandhi fought for an undivided India and had tried to avert partition. But when Gandhi and Jinnah had held parleys in order to avert partition, Jinnah had put up a reasonable demand for reservation of posts in govt. services for the Muslims consistent with their populations. He wanted minimum qualifications to be fixed for the posts. And if posts could not be filled up even then, such posts could be transferred to the general pool. Gandhi who was under the spell of the upper castes, rejected this demand and harped on the discredited merit theory. Chief Minister M.G.R. of TN also harps upon the merit theory being under the spell of the upper castes. But strangely he claims to be the child of the Dravidian movement which

was a pioneer in caste-based reservations. It is really a pity that some of the leading luminaries of the self respect movement are still backing his party which should be rightfully renamed as - 'Akila Bharathiya Acharyavals' Arya Munnetra Sabha'. The real reason for Gandhi's turning down Jinnah's plea was that if this reservation concept was accepted then it would have had to be extended to OBCs. The upper castes had realised the danger involved in conceding such a demand. This ultimately resulted in partition. It is, therefore, not correct to say that Gandhi wanted to avert partition at any cost. If only the demand for the reservation for Muslims in services had been conceded, partition could have been averted.

### AMBEDKAR STATUE BEHEADED

The statue of Dr. Ambedkar installed in the Shikarpur town, 20 km from Bulandshahar, was found beheaded by some unidentified miscreants last week and reports received on Jan. 5 said. The people of the town later took out a silent procession to register their protest against the incident. (*Indian Express Jan. 6*)

### OFFICER EMBRACES ISLAM

NAGPUR: A 52-year-old top-ranking Harijan official of the Maharashtra Govt. has been converted to Islam. Vittalrao Wankhede, Superintending Engineer of the Irrigation Department, became Vazir

Wankhede on the birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammed on Jan. 9. He was initiated into Islam by Mufti Abdul Kadir at a ceremony at the Arabia Islamia's Institute here. (*Deccan Herald, Jan. 11*)

### CASTE CLASHES IN KERALA

TRIVANDRUM: Six houses were set on fire and crackers were thrown into two other houses at Poonkulam on the wake of clashes between members of two communities. All the houses belonged to Harijans. Police said that about 60 people belonging to another backward community came in groups and set fire to the houses. Two persons have been arrested. (*Deccan Herald Jan. 5*)

EDITOR : V T. Rajshekar

Published by the Dalit Sahitya Akademy

109/7th Cross, Palace Lower Orchards,

Bangalore 560 003, India. Phone: 33854.

Annual subscription Rs. 10-

Printed at : SVP / PLO / B-3,

To

PRINTED MATTER