

# UNHEARD VOICES

14 DECEMBER 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 9



## "PADMA" FOR DEPRIVED



**2nd December**  
Sant Dnyaneshwar  
Death Anniversary



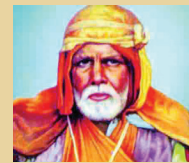
**6th December**  
Dr. Ambedkar  
Mahaparinirvan



**10th December**  
Human Rights Day



**17th December**  
Bhagat Narsi Mehta  
Birth Anniversary



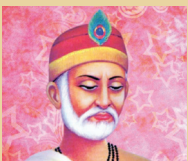
**20th December**  
Sant Gadge Maharaj  
Death Anniversary



**22nd December**  
Sarda Ma  
Death Anniversary



**25th December**  
Madan Mohan Malaviya  
Birth Anniversary



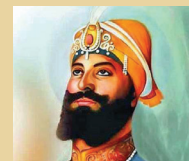
**2nd January**  
Sant Kabir  
Death Anniversary



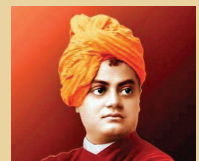
**2nd January**  
V. R. Shinde  
Death Anniversary



**3rd January**  
Savitribai Phule  
Birth Anniversary



**9th January**  
Guru Govind Singh  
Birth Anniversary



**12th January**  
Swami Vivekananda  
Birth Anniversary

## EDITORIAL

# No narrow considerations

Seven states in India will be going for Assembly elections next year. Five of them – Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur will witness election in March while Gujrat and Himachal Pradesh will have election by the end of next year. The year is all set to be dominated by political activities as 2022 Assembly elections are considered as rehearsal for 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Voting is the foundation of democratic set up. Citizens have several options to express their views, opinions and sentiments in democracy. But voting is their sacred right. Popularly elected government, thus, get legitimacy and sanctity because of the elections. Even if it is a political process, voting behavior is shaped not merely by political issues but by all the factors, which determine voters' lives. For the same reason, voting is crucial as it is seen as an expression of nation's voice.

But let's look beyond this. We ought to understand that voting is equally crucial for us as it does not merely decide the present but also determines the future. Indian democracy, undoubtedly, has survived and flourished through several tests. But it has some drawbacks, which are inherited for years. Does, Indian voter really drives on merit? Reality is that the Indian voter is influenced by several factors including caste, religion, language, personality cult and other local socio-political equations. Voters also get carried away because of election manifesto and eleventh-hour attractive slogans during the electioneering. Many a times, these political gimmicks shape the popular mood irrespective of the past experience or performance of the concerned political party or the leader.

It is also reality that voter is also largely influenced by individual interests and experiences. In such a situation, larger interests take back seat. This is not in the larger interests of the country as these factors do not last long. They may give individual a joy for a day or two but do not serve the long-term interests of the society or the nation. The voters from deprived class

may be the most vulnerable as they are lured by the politicians. India has experienced that such sections had denied to fall prey to such attempts on several occasions. But some of them get carried away because of their socio-economic conditions.

Of late, Indian socio-political business has been eclipsed by symbols. The symbols do play a vital role to attract, educate and awaken the masses. However, we should not allow ourselves to be caged by symbols. Many times, superficial and deceptive acts are done due to symbols. Genuine activity gets deviated if activists become captive of the symbols. We, therefore, have to emancipate ourselves from symbols, which are seen to be captured by the vested interests. People, particularly from the deprived class, have to be vigilant when they exercise franchise.

Voting is the most powerful tool but one needs to be educated how and why the tool is to be used. Otherwise, it would destruct exercise. Voters must rise above all the narrow considerations and stand up for the larger goals. Their small or minor demands could be achieved but need of the hour is to look beyond the narrow considerations.

In the election process, identities are ignited by the politicians. They are always kept burning by the politicians for their own interests. It is easy for politicians to fulfill small demands of the small sections. We must come out of this trap. Small identities, on several occasions, result into conflict, which is not good for healthy nation. Why can't we think of harmonious co-existence instead of mere self-centered existence? It may sound difficult to the newly awakening people of the society, who are deprived for generations. But we strongly believe that key lies in harmonious co-existence. Indian politics is caught between insistence on small identities and holistic development. We must think of interaction instead of confrontation and cooperation in place of agitation. Cooperation and interaction are basic essentials of democracy. We must think in this manner if we are true democrats.

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## Response

Unheard Voices actually covered not only unheard voices but also understood communities by major part of society and which is need of hour. India can become a super power only when grass route people of india allow to put their contribution in this growth & it is possible only when they will get some job/work to earn their bread & butter. When we talk about GDP growth 8.5% lets focus on small scale industry. Bangladesh has already proven it by microfinance policy. Bangladeshi social entrepreneur, banker, economist and civil society leader Dr. Mohamad Yunus Founder of Grammen Bank and pioneering the concepts of microcredit and microfinance. This type of revolutionary concept can be adopted, implemented strongly to create economic and social development from lower level. Peace and prosperity cannot be achieved unless large population groups find ways in which to break out of poverty. Development must be made by contributed by and shared by each and every part of the society irrespective of their caste, religion, tradition. Unheard Voices is great effort to make awareness of it.

**Mahendra Kamble,**  
Former chairman, BSNL SC ST Welfare Association.

## Appeal for financial assistance



Social Studies Foundation (SSF) is working with the prime objective of conducting social studies and research of the society in a multi-disciplinary fashion. SSF focus, however, is on those people, who have been facing discrimination and are deprived of benefits of the development and democratic process. SSF logo, thus says, "Knowledge for Empowerment".

"UNHEARD VOICES" is a small step in this direction. It provides a platform to all those people, who have to be listened to by the Indian citizens to make this country united and integral. We will raise the voice of these people fearlessly. Social Studies Foundation has currently a small set-up to carry out its objectives. We, however, need financial support from our well-wishers, who agree with our objectives. We appeal to the readers and well-wishers to donate generously to the foundation.

CIT EXEMPTION, PUNE/80G/2020-21/A/10158

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# RECOGNISED

For the first time, the government has chosen a considerable number of people from deprived classes to honor them with Padma awards. Padma awards, experience shows, normally, were awarded to those who are close to the ruling party. They were also mainly from the urban elite class. Few days back, President Ram Nath Kovind gave away Padma awards at a function when normal protocols and dress code were sidelined. It was a rare and pleasant experience to watch the awardees in their traditional attire instead of urban etiquettes. Many of the awardees are unknown to the nation. They are working in their respective fields even in remote places. Many of them are from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes and probably are not aware of their own contribution. Take the case of Manjamma. She is the first transgender of India, to be honored with Padma award. It was pleasant to see that even President Ram Nath Kovind did not hesitate to keep aside protocol while honoring her. This is changing India. More informal and more comfortable. This is a good step towards social cohesion. UNHEARD VOICES is bringing the awardees from SC and ST category to the light. They are probably unknown to India.

The entire nation was in disbelief when they watched Manjamma walking on red carpet towards President of India with head held high in the air. She was seen extremely confident. She blessed President Ram Nath Kovind in her unique and unusual manner. This did not fit in the so-called protocols of the ceremonies, which are attended by the person,

holding constitutional post. But nobody was awkward. In fact, all of them were seen comfortable. Body language of all of them was seen in extremely praise.

For Manjamma the moment was unbelievable as she would have never dreamt of Padma award. It was the same society, which had rejected her for a long time. It was the same society,

which honored her. Manjamma is the first Indian transgender, to be honored with Padma award.

Manjunatha Shetty was born in Karnataka's Bellari district in a deprived community. But he noticed himself to be uncomfortable with the girls in early childhood. He started wearing girls' attire when in seventh standard. He used to



change the dress in private and also hide them. After few days, his father realized that he is a transgender. His father noticed that his son's physical movements were different from other boys. Tradition goes that transgender is offered to God after performing a ritual - muttu kattodu. His udadaara— a thread the boys tie in Karnataka and in many parts of South India, traditionally wear around their waist — was cut. And here begins the journey of Manjamma Jogathi.

Today the boy is known as Manjamma Jogathi or Matha B Manjamma Jogathi, the transgender dancer who received Padma Shri for her contribution to culture. During the Padma awards ceremony, she walked on the red carpet of the Rashtrapati Bhavan wearing a red full-sleeve blouse and a violet saree with golden colour borders. Her head was adorned by jasmine garlands and her hands were decked with green bangles. She greeted President Ram Nath Kovind in her unique way and that went viral on social media instantly. .

Transgender people enjoyed a special status in the culture and tradition of India. Eunuchs played influential roles in the palaces of the erstwhile kings and emperors. In the battle of Mahabharata, Shikhandi was instrumental in the killing of Bhishma.

But trans persons in India live in fear and hostile conditions and Manjamma was not the exception. She worked as a street beggar. She was sexually abused. She tried to commit suicide for twice. First, she tried to end her life by consuming poison. For second time, she jumped under a train. Both the times, her attempt was not successful. She used to beg on the streets and later sold idlies.

Manjamma's life changed when she met Guru Kalavya Jogathi, who had come to her village for a performance. Guru Kalavya Jogathi suggested her to join his team. It was a turning point in Manjamma's life. In course of time, Manjamma is considered as an ambassador of Jogathi culture, which she popularized not only in Karnataka but beyond Indian shores. She is the first president of Karnataka Jaanapada Academy, a government body for performing dance.

Jogathies are married to Jamadagni, who is considered as the husband of Renuka, also known as Ellemma in Karnataka.

Manjamma feels that Indian society has changed a lot in its approach towards transgenders. She appeals the people to have empathetic view if any transgender child is born in the society.



### Bhuri Bai (ST)



The Padma Shri award winners were honoured by President Ramnath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan. There is a name in it which is being discussed everywhere. This name is Bhuri Bai. Bhuri Bai has been awarded the Padma Shri for her

outstanding work in the field of art. Bhuri Bai (ST), from a tribal community, hails from Pitoli village in the Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh. Bhuri Bai was fond of painting since childhood. She started using canvas to paint the life of the tribals, and as soon as she saw it, she became known all over the country. Bhuri Bai's paintings made a name for themselves not only in the country but also abroad. Her paintings were placed in a workshop in the United States. She later organized workshops on Pithora art in different districts of the country.

After receiving the Padma Shri, Bhuri Bai said,

"I got this award for painting Adivasi Bhil. I started painting from clay. I am very happy."

However, it was not easy for Bhuri Bai to reach here. Her childhood was spent in extreme poverty. Bhuri Bai is the first tribal woman to start Pithora painting on the walls of a house in the village. After this, Bhuri Bai came to Bhopal and started working as a daily wage worker. At that time, she used to make paintings in Bhopal. The cultural department later gave her the job of painting. After this, she started painting in Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal. She was awarded Shikhar Samman, the highest award of the Government of Madhya Pradesh, in 1986-87. Apart from this, in 1998, the Madhya Pradesh government had also awarded her the Ahilya Samman.

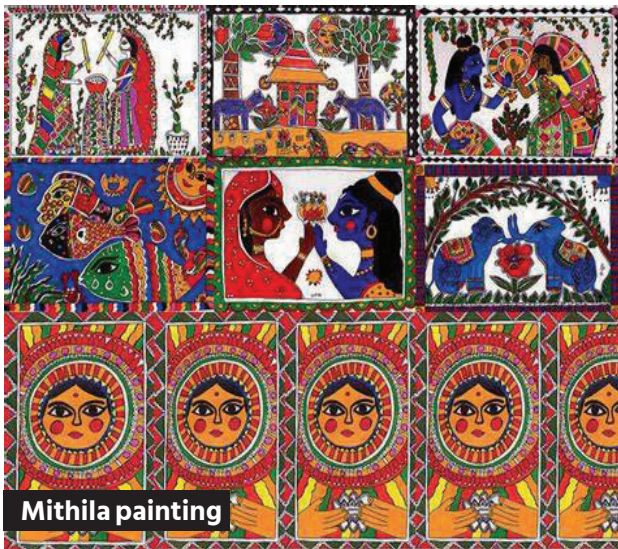
### DULARI DEVI (SC)



Dulari Devi was born in 1968 in a SC Dalit family, lives in the village of Ranti, in Bihar. Dulari Devi is an Indian artist and illustrator, working in the Mithila art. In 2021, she received the Padma Shri, a civilian honor granted by the Government of India, for her contributions to art.

A picture, they say, speaks a thousand words. Dulari Devi's paintings are more vocal as she has opted for topics like domination, discrimination, and oppression, a woman faces due to poverty, gender, and caste.

The now-celebrated Dulari Devi began her life in extreme poverty, born into the marginalized Mallah community. Her first brush with Mithila painting came while working as a domestic help at an upper caste painter's house, and she never looked back. But instead of copying the themes and motifs of



upper castes, Dulari Devi through her paintings tries to search the interrelations between caste and gender. One of the first paintings, she sold was of villagers fishing indicating traditional profession of her caste - Mallahs, were traditionally boatmen by occupation.

### Purnamasi Jani (ST)



Purnamasi Jani (ST), a Kui poet from Odisha, was honored with India's fourth- highest civilian honor Padma Shri. She is among the five Odias who have been recognized for their services. Her name in the Padma Awards list has surprised as little is known about the 85

years old Jani. She joins the clan of talented but little-known artists of Odisha like Halder Nag (Padma Shri 2016) and Jitendra Haripal (Padma Shri 2017), whom the Centre has recognized for their contributions for keeping the art forms and local dialects alive. She was born in 1936, now residing in Charipada village under Khajuriapada in the Kandhamal district.

She has never been to school nor does she know how to read and write, she can only recite poems in the Kui dialect. Locals see her as a healer whose songs are balm to the soul. While little is known about her, some efforts were made in the past decades to compile her poems.

### Prakasarao Asavadi (SC)



Asavadi Prakasarao was born in 1944 in a SC family. He is an Indian poet, critic, translator, and scholar known for his poetry and prose works. He is recognized for his significant contribution to Telugu and Sanskrit literature. In January 2021, he received India's fourth-

highest civilian award, the Padma Shri in the Arts and Literature category. As Ashtavadhani, he has given 170 performances and has written and published 50 books across various genres. His most notable literary contribution is his performance of Avadhanam- a literary performance. He has received an honorary D.Litt from Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University and a Distinguished Teacher award from the Department of Higher Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Asavadi Prakasarao was born in 1944 in Korivipalli, Anantpur district of Andhra Pradesh. His teacher



Nanduri Ramakrishnamacharya changed his name to the optimist Prakash Rao. Born into a Dalit family, he spent his childhood in the villages of Beluguppa and Sirpi. He did his primary education in the social welfare schools in those villages. He has completed his studies at Potti Sriramulu Municipal Boys School and Rajendra Municipal High School in Anantapuram during 1953-1959. He studied PUC in 1960-61 and B. A in 1962-65 from Government Arts College, Anantapur.

He later worked for a few days in Eluru as a Lower Divisional Clerk after passing the APPSC Group-four. He left the job as it became an obstacle for his progress and worked as a Telugu scholar in Venkatadripalle, Y. Rampuram, Kanekal, Kurli Zilla Parishad schools between 1965-68. He did M.A Telugu Linguistics from Anantapur PG Center (affiliated with Sri Venkateshwara University, Tirupati) between 1968 and 70. Since 1970 he has worked as an Andhra lecturer in Government Junior College, Rayadurgam, Government Degree Colleges in Anantapur, Guntakallu, Nagari, Punganur, and Penukonda. He served as the Principal of Penukonda Government Degree College and retired in 2002.

He made his first Avadhanam in 1963 at the age of 19. Since then, he has been stamped as the only Dalit Avadhāni in Andhra literature. He has mesmerized the listeners with his extraordinary perceptiveness and indescribable majestic energy. He performed 171 Avadhanams, a double octave, in Andhra Pradesh and other parts of India such as Taruttani, Arakkonam, Pallipattu, Hosur Bengaluru, Bellary, Donimalai, Delhi, etc. He also broadcasted his observations on television and radio. He also gave some Impromptu performances.

### Ramchandra Manjhi (SC)



Ramchandra Manjhi is a 95 years old Naach folk dancer from Bihar. He has been carrying the legacy of Grameen natak for the last eight decades. In 2021 Ramchandra Manjhi received Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian award.

He had also been awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2017. The artist, even after turning 95, still dances and acts fiercely on the stage. His journey started at the age of ten when he had set foot on the stage with Guru Bhikhari Thakur. After this, he continued to perform under the shadow of Bhikhari Thakur till 1971.

Ramchandra Manjhi was born in Tajpur in the Saran district of Bihar in 1925. His parents were happy with the name and fame that he brought to the family. But unfortunately, this naach was not perceived with much respect by the ordinary

people. He received backlashes but continued to chase his dream. He knew that his efforts might bring a change in society. And eventually, it did! He is presently associated with the Bhikhari Thakur Repertory Training and Research Centre, a troupe run by Dr. Jainendra Dost, a JNU scholar in Performing Arts.

Launda Naach is little unknown to other parts of India. Contrary to popular belief, Naach (meaning 'dance') is not a traditional folk dance of Bihar. It is the equivalent of Jaatra, Tamasha, or Nautanki. A troupe performs on ancient folklores and current social conditions to preserve their heritage while entertainingly educating people. In Naach, males are portrayed as female characters by cross-dresses as women.

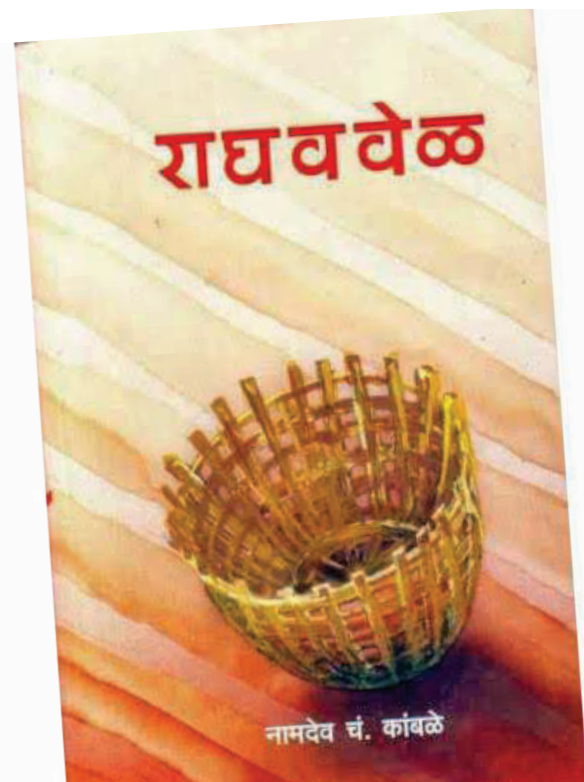
### Namdev Kamble (SC)



Namdev Kamble is a Marathi Writer, Journalist, and Teacher from Vidarbha. Published over 15 novels and story collections, and has received the fourth highest civilian award of Padma Shri for furthering unity and convergence. Veteran author and teacher

Namdeo Kamble is the only one from Vidarbha to get this honor.

Kamble, known for his Sahitya Akademi Award-





winning fiction "Raghav Vel" is a veteran in fiction and poetry and the field of critical and philosophical writing. His two recent publications- 'Mahatma Gandhi ani Dr. Ambedkar' (Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar) and 'Gandhi Udyasathi' (Gandhi for tomorrow)- are considered thought-provoking analyses of the two great personalities. Kamble, a teacher, journalist, orator, and social worker, is also a sensitive poet and a critic of Marathi literature. Kamble was born on 1 January 1948 and brought up in Shirpur village of Malegaon tehsil in Washim district.

Kamble's Novel "Raghav Vel" has become the Identity of his six decades-long literacy journey. Not only the Marathi Novel, but its Bangla translation also has won the Sahitya Akademi award in 2009.

**Ram Vilas Paswan (SC)**



Former Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan was awarded the Padma Bhushan posthumously at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Award was received by his son Chirag Paswan.

Ram Vilas Paswan was the founder of Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) and served as Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution under the NDA. The veteran politician from the scheduled caste (SC) community from Hajipur in Bihar was a legislator for more than five-decade. The first time in 1969, he became Legislative assembly member of Bihar. An eight-time Member of Parliament in Lok Sabha, Paswan, went to jail during Indira Gandhi's tenure when emergency was imposed in the country. Hailing from Shaharbanji Village in Khagaria District of Bihar, Paswan began his political career in 1969 as a member of the Samyukta Socialist Party and became a member of Bihar Legislative Assembly.

He was elected to Lok Sabha for the first time in 1977 as a Janata Party member and re- elected five consecutive times from the Hajipur constituency in Bihar. Paswan formed the LJP in 2000 and joined Congress-led United Progressive Alliance in 2004. He served as a union minister under five prime ministers, and his party has been a member of all national coalitions. In 2019, Paswan relinquished the post of LJP president--which he held for nearly two decades--to his son Chirag Paswan. Ram Vilas Paswan passed away in October 2020.

**Kanaka Raju (ST)**

Kanaka Raju, 80 years old is a master of Gusadi, a tribal dance form. He is from Asifabad- he preserved the dying tribal art form by providing training to Adivasi youth for decades. Kanaka



Raju teaches this dance to the people in one month. The students called him Master Kanaka Raju. Gusadi Dance is performed during the festival "Dandari" which is celebrated for twenty days. It's celebrated before ten days of

Deepawali and ten days after Deepawali. This community considers Gusadi as a sacred ritual. For these twenty days, they neither take a bath nor wash their face.

Kanaka Raju's dedication and love towards the art received the Padma award in 2021. He gave a new identity to the Gusadi dance. Kanaka Raju is truly an inspiration for millions of people. This honour has been given for his contribution to preserving the tradition of Gusadi, a tribal dance form.

**Satyaram Reang (ST)**



Veteran hojagiri dancer and folk artist Satyaram Reang received the fourth highest civilian award Padma Shri in 2021 for his contributions to Folk Art. He has been performing in traditional festivals of his community since his childhood. He is also

considered as one of the most accomplished performers of the Hojagiri dance and Kokborok songs.

His dedicated work in preserving and promoting the traditional Hojagiri dance of the Reang community has been recognized by the region and various institutions in north-eastern India. He has also performed in Russia and is also the recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to the folk dance and music of Tripura. Satyaram Reang belongs to the indigenous community of Tripura, bagged this prestigious award.



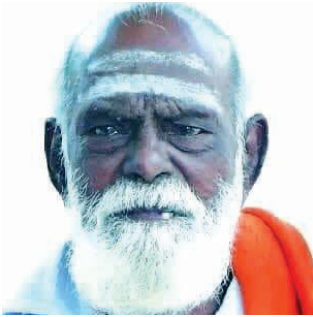
**Guru Maa Kamali Soren (ST)**

Kamali Soren is the founder of Bhartiya Sanatan Santhal Kalyan Ashram, which works restlessly for the oppressed community of Santhal people in West Bengal. She is



working for three decades for the betterment of tribals. Kamali Soren, also known as Guru Maa in and around the Gazole of Malda, has got the award for her “social work.” She goes around tribal and Dalit-dominated villages, interacts with the marginalized people.

### M.K Kunjol (SC)



It was a proud moment for social worker Acharya M.K. Kunjol, who had dedicated his life for upliftment of the most backward classes in Kerala. He was honored with . It ois Padma Shri for social work in 2020. It is an acknowledgment for his crusade against

inequality for Dalits and police atrocities on them. “Until there is a reasonable achievement for Dalits in the areas of education and jobs, the social development index does not make any sense,” says Kunjol. He joined MBBS after graduating in science from Maharaja’s College but could not complete the course for various reasons. Currently, Kunjol is associated with Kerala State Harijan Samajam that he had co-founded, Federation of SC and ST and the Hindu Aikya Vedi. He was instrumental in founding the Harijan Samajam Sri Budha Charitable Trust. Kunjol is not satisfied with land reforms in Kerala and underlined for more effective steps. His wife still works as a daily wage worker.

### Damayanti Beshra (ST)



Damayanti Beshra is an Adivasi researcher. She is vividly respected by the people for her calm, confident and humble attitude. In 2020 she was honored by Padmashri for her remarkable contribution to Santhali literature. She got the privilege of becoming

the first convener in the Santhali language when the Sahitya Akademi recognized it. She was honored by the Sahitya Akademi award for her extraordinary anthology Sai Saonhed in 2009. She has been publishing Santali women’s magazine since 2011. Damayanti Beshra was born on February 18, 1962 at Boberjoda in the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. She got married to Gangadhar, who is also a writer and literature lover. Damyanti has written many poems, essays, criticisms, grammer, history of Santhali literature, Santhali History, etc. Damayanti is not only an exceptional writer but

also a prodigious speaker. As a lecturer, she has presented many papers on national, international meets and UGC sponsored seminars.

### Usha Chaumar (SC)



Usha Chaumar is the President of Sulabh International Social Service Organization, the non-profit arm of Sulabh International. In 2020, she received the Padma Shri award for her contribution to social work, particularly in raising awareness against

manual scavenging. Nai Disha, an NGO by Sulabh International, allowed her to carry on her activities and she never stopped then. Nai Disha helped her to learn different activities like stitching, food processing, henna designing and much more. She is also a powerful public speaker and raised her voice against the horrific practice of manual scavenging. Usha inspired hundreds of other women like her. She has traveled across the world as a part of her mission.

### Krishnammal Jagannathan (SC)



Krishnammal and Sankaralingam Jagannathan are activists for social justice and sustainable human development. They work for socially marginalized people. She received the third highest civilian award of Padma Bhushan from Government of India in

2020 for for her relentless efforts for social work and uplifting the downtrodden.

The Jagannathans have demonstrated a life-long commitment to protest against social injustice and advancing the rights of the most deprived people. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, the Jagannathans have advocated for land redistribution of land among the landless laborers in rural areas. They feel that redistribution of agricultural land is an essential element for equal society and sustainable development. In addition to land redistribution, the couple is also credited for their tireless efforts for protection of the coastal ecosystem in Tamilnadu. She carries out her multi-dimensional activities through seven organizations. She has been honored with several awards.

Compiled by : Team Unheard Voices  
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# All India Judicial services : Need of the hour



A systemic restructuring and overhaul of creating a centralized cadre for appointment of judges at subordinate level implies the transfer of appointment powers from the High Courts and respective state governments to a centralized body akin to the Union Public Service Commission. It will enable greater representation of all sections of the society and strengthen rule of law.

**Retd. Justice S. R. Singh**

Judiciary is one of the most crucial pillars of our democracy. It is because of the faith that the citizenry repose in our judges and the institution that the rule of law has survived in the most difficult times (during the Emergency) and will continue to thrive. However, rule of law, as an integral part of the basic structure doctrine, also encompasses seamless and time-bound dispensation of justice, which can be ensured, if there are sufficient number of judges, appointed through a proper mechanism, which not only ensures merit but also proper representation of women and the marginalized sections of the society.

The only plausible solution to the aforesaid issue is the creation of All India Judicial Services (AIJS). AIJS aims at establishing a mechanism for the recruitment of candidates proficient in law by formulating a one-step selection procedure of judges at the subordinate judiciary through a single exam, held centrally.

A systemic restructuring and overhaul of creating a centralized cadre for appointment of judges at subordinate level implies the transfer of appointment powers from the High Courts and respective state governments to a centralized body akin to the Union Public Service Commission. It will enable greater representation of all sections of the society and strengthen rule of law.

## **Historical Antecedent**

The Law Commission and Chief Justices' Conference propagated the idea in the fifties for the first time. However, the first proposal for AIJS was made in the 14th Report of the Law Commission of India in

1958. Following this proposal, another important development regarding AIJS ensued in 1976, when the forty second Amendment Act, 1976 was passed, which amended Article 312 of the Constitution of India to include the provision for AIJS. In the nineties, the chief proponents were distinguished judges of the hon. Supreme Court and the Shetty Commission Report. The Apex Court in All India Judges' Association versus Union of India held, "We are of the view that the Law Commission's recommendation should not have been dropped lightly. There is a considerable force and merit in the view expressed by the Law Commission. An All India Judicial Services essentially for manning the higher services in the subordinate judiciary is very much necessary. The reasons advanced by the Law Commission for recommending the setting up of an All India Judicial Services appeal to us."

However, with the new era knocking at the doorstep, the Parliamentary Standing Committee advocated for the creation of AIJS through various reports to bring to the selection procedure for the subordinate judiciary. Recently, the Union government led by Mr. Narendra Modi resuscitated the idea of setting up on AIJS to put the long-standing criticism surrounding the lack of sufficient number of judges at the subordinate level, to rest.

## **One Solution to all problems: AIJS**

The necessity of establishment of AIJS was felt pursuant to the changing social, economic and cultural landscape, especially in the era of globalization because complex cases required a wholesome set of skills for adjudicating such matters and the judge must be able to draw a fine balance between rights and duties. However, with the concentration of cases



on Courts, coupled with the lack of judges and several lockdowns, pursuant to COVID-19, a huge vacancy of approximately 5000 judges has been reported across the country for district judges alone. The number of vacancies in case of Magistrates is not even known and if contemplated, would be approximately fifteen times more than the District Judges since every district has a District and Sessions Court assigned but there may be various Magistrates' Courts as every police station is attached to a Magistrate's Court.

The absence of an institution like AIJS only makes it burdensome. At the moment, we have approximately 13,000 judges as against the requirement of 75,000 at the subordinate judiciary, excluding District Courts. The figures are extremely alarming and the problem can only be fixed by implementing AIJS.

According to the present mechanism, an interested candidate has to apply separately for each state's judicial service entrance examination and every form bears a separate fee, which goes up to Rs. 1000. There are 12 Hindi speaking states and UTs in India and supposing an interested candidate wants to write an exam for 12 states, he would practically not be able to do so due to some reasons.

Firstly, the cumulative fee would be exorbitant and burdensome to bear, more so on a candidate who belongs to the not-so-well-off sections of the society or the weaker and marginalized sections. Secondly, it is not possible to travel to each state to write exams since, not only this adds to the expenses of a candidate but generally, there is a clash of dates between two or more states. Thirdly, even if we presume that the aforesaid problems do not exist in hindsight, the course structures and pattern of conducting examinations are different in all states, which add to the candidate's disadvantage and diminish his chances of securing a seat.

Fourthly, the procedure is extremely time consuming and takes approximately a year, since candidates go through a three-tier scrutiny. Fifthly and mainly, states do not regularly conduct examinations on a yearly basis, which leads to utter disappointment. The only solution to each and every problem is AIJS. Not only would it be pocket friendly but also bear a fixed pattern and proper ascertainment of seats on a regular basis.

#### **Transparency**

There have been several instances of involvement of malpractices while conducting the examinations for states. For example, in Rajasthan in the year 2014, various officials of Rajasthan Public Service Commission were found to be involved in malpractices and as a result, the Rajasthan High Court decided to regulate the conduct of examinations. On the other hand, there has been no such incident reported in case of All India Service Exam by the UPSC. Also, the primary function of the Courts is to dispense justice and being already burdened by a backlog of cases, the Courts should no more be troubled on the administrative side with the responsibility of conducting examinations.

Another bothering incident is from the state of Haryana, where in 2017, the paper for pre stage was reportedly leaked and as a result, the whole process was vitiated and re-conducted in 2018, where only nine candidates were selected after which the Punjab and Haryana High Court directed to grant a grace of marks and finally, 24 more candidates were selected. This not only thwarted the hopes of various credible candidates causing mental agony but also came as a huge disadvantage as many crossed the upper-limit for desired age and left them unemployed.

#### **Representation for marginalized and women**

The influx of a greater number of successful candidates will ensure accurate representation from the marginalized sections of the society by the way of direct participation into the justice delivery system, which is not the case currently. The aforesaid statement can be justified by the fact that our country has only had two Chief Justices of India belonging to the marginalized section of the society, since independence. Thus, to ensure proper representations at the higher judiciary, it is incumbent to primarily ensure the same at the ground level. It will inspire enormous confidence and motivate the stakeholders to participate and strengthen their social positions further. Also, it shall bolster a larger representation from the women community and invite many women to pursue law and sit for the AIJS exam. This would result in an over-all strengthening of the status of women in the society.

#### **Conclusion**

The judges of the Supreme Court are elevated from the respective High Courts. Barring few judges, they are elevated directly from the bar and in this process only the most efficient persons shall preside over the benches of superior Courts, thereby diminishing any such alleged possibility for prejudice, arbitrariness and irregularities in selections. Simultaneously, the quality of justice delivered will greatly improve. Since, the selections would be cadre based and transfers would not remain restricted to the respective states, it would ensure a wholesome socio-ethnic experience for the judges leading to a wholesome development. All in all, it is the need of the hour to uphold the Rule of law.

The former Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had made a statement in Parliament for creation of the All India Judicial Service. This is continued by present law minister Kiran Rijju. It goes without saying that in case All India Judicial Service is created, deserving candidates belonging to OBC, SC, ST will get an opportunity to become a member, of All India Judicial Service like other All India Services such as IAS, IFS, IPS etc. Thus this would provide a ladder for their elevation to the High Courts and Supreme Court of India. It is high time for the replacement of the "Collegiums System" by the National Judicial Appointment Commission.

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# National Human Rights Commission : Time to think out of box

December 10 is observed as Human Rights Day. On this occasion, Adv Ritvik informs the readers about formation of National Human Rights Commission, which is considered as the watchdog of the country. Of late, NHRC is acting tough in several cases, which is a good sign. However, NHRC is empowered to conduct various programs to awaken and educate the people on human rights. Experts feel that NHRC should explore possibilities on this front. Unheard Voices informs the readers about NHRC powers and the major cases, involving SC and ST, in which it has intervened.

**Adv. Ritvik**



## ABOUT NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The National Human Rights Commission is an independent statutory body constituted by the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993. It is the watchdog of human rights in the country. The rights related to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual are guaranteed by the Indian Constitution or embodied in the international covenants and enforceable by courts in India. The NHRC primary function is to protect the common person's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Section 13 of The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, empowers the NHRC to deal with following :

While inquiring into complaints under the Act, the NHRC shall have all the powers of a civil court trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 and in particular the following namely;

a) Summoning and enforcing the attendance of witnesses and



examining them on oath;

b) discovery and production of any document;

c) receiving evidence on affidavits;

d) requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;

e) issuing NHRCs for the examination of witnesses or documents;

f) any other matter which may be prescribed.

Section 12 of The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 lays down the functions of the NHRC. Beyond the traditional role of any commission i.e. of grievance forum, the NHRC under sub-

clause f, h, i, j is empowered with function to educate the citizens on human rights, promote social harmony, literacy and awareness functions on human rights, promote Non Governmental Organizations working in similar sector.

It is recommended that the NHRC, functioning as a remedial and grievance forum, should proactively promote human rights and focus comprehensively on preventing human rights violations.

The NHRC has taken cognizance of incidents relating to gross violations of human rights by the government or public servants. Though the power and authority of NHRC are limited to inquiry, summons, production of documents, and issuing notices and has no punitive power, the NHRC is playing a vital role of watchdog to protect the human rights of citizens. The NHRC can exercise its authority to conduct activities, programs, functions, camps etc. to promote social harmony, spread human rights literacy among various sections of society and promote awareness of the safeguards available.



## Major Cases dealt by NHRC

### RAJASTHAN INCIDENT

Few Dalit organizations had called a bandh in Rajasthan in April 2018, protesting against a decision of the Supreme Court pertaining to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. At the protest the protestors including women & children were subject to police brutalities. This incident was reported in newspapers and the NHRC took suo moto cognizance of the case and issued notices to Chief Secretary and D.G.P. Police, Rajasthan. The NHRC, in its statement, cited incidents where women and children were dragged and made subject to illegal detention and police torture.

### MUTHANGA INCIDENT

Location: Muthanga Incident, Wayanad, Kerala  
Year: 2003

Traditionally, the Tribals from Muthanga Forest, Wayanad, Kerala used to cultivate large parts of forest land. In the seventies, the Tribals experienced the non-tribals owning and cultivating these forest lands. Further, the state Government of Kerala had promised to give the land for farming and agricultural purposes. The State Government did not fulfill the said promise, and the Tribals started protesting and agitating regarding the same.

On February 19, 2003, the Kerala police officials, forest officials, and Kerala Armed forces fired 18 rounds on families protesting at Muthanga forest resulting in two fatalities and severe injuries to hundreds of protestors.

The NHRC had received complaints from activists against brutal and unprecedented force used by the State Government against the protesting and agitating tribal families.

The NHRC, on February 24, 2003, issued notice to the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, Government of Kerala, and sought a report within two weeks in respect of an incident that occurred on February 19, 2003, in which the police had allegedly opened fire on a gathering of tribal families.

The Chief Secretary of the Kerala government and Director General of Police defended the firing on the protestors and explained that the firing took place out of necessity.

The NHRC, considering the reports of the Chief Secretary and D.G.P, directed the Chief Secretary, Kerala to furnish documents relating to the delivery of land to the tribals ousted from the forest and the plan, if any, for their rehabilitation. Further, the NHRC recommended that the State Govt. investigate police firing at Muthanga and the related incidents, including allegations of torture in the Muthanga

forest region 19/2/2003, to an independent agency, preferably the C.B.I.

### NANDIGRAM VIOLENCE IN WEST BENGAL

NHRC took serious note of the clashes in Nandigram in West Bengal, which took place on November 6, 2007. Violence was witnessed in Nandigram when state government, led by Communists, tried to acquire land in Nandigram for special economic zone (SEZ). The agitation began when the government of West Bengal decided that a chemical hub would be established in Nandigram SEZ by the Salim Group of Indonesia. SEZ policy required the expropriation of 10,000 acres (4,000 ha) of land owned by farmers in the region. The farmers later started a spontaneous agitation when the police landed there. Violence between demonstrators and police left at least 14 villagers killed and 70 injured.

The violence in Nandigram also drew the attention of the NHRC. It sent a team of officials for ground report.

The NHRC sent the special team three months after the violent incidents. Team members talked to the affected people and made twelve recommendations. NHRC did not merely directed the state government to announce compensation to the affected people, whose houses were damaged in the incidents from March to November 2007. NHRC even laid down specific procedure to carry out the execution of the compensation package. NHRC even drew

categories of the damage to the properties in Nandigram violence and specifically recommended compensation to the said category. The police were also instructed to take immediate legal action in the complaints, which were related to the violence. The NHRC also asked the government to provide legal aid to the people, who were arrested at the time of agitation. Significantly, NHRC had appointed a special team to assess damage to the properties as it felt that compensation announced by the state government was not adequate.



*The people who want to approach NHRC to register their complaints can do this by visiting its website. This can be done online.  
National Human Rights Commission India  
[www.nhrc.nic.in](http://www.nhrc.nic.in)*

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# "Inter-caste marriages would uproot caste system"

"I am a strong supporter of inter-caste marriages. I strongly believe that inter-caste marriages would uproot the caste system, which has badly affected our society for centuries by all the means. I seriously believe that the educated people should come forward for inter-caste marriages, which would help to do away with the caste."

**Ankita**



I first saw her at the south gate entrance of University of Hyderabad. I still remember the date. It was August 6, 2018. She had come to join M.A Telugu course. I was doing second-year Ph.D. in Telugu Department. I was helping newcomers sitting students' help desk, my PG classmate Mahender introduced me to her. That's how it began.

I belong to OBC community while she is SC Buddhist. I was reluctant to speak about our love to my parents, with the fear that they may reject our marriage in view of the conservative background. I had seen such marriages are not approved at all. We are from a rural conservative society. And I have seen love marriages are not at all acceptable in my family circle.

As expected, my family strongly opposed the marriage. But Manasa's parents were supportive and understandable from the initial days. My mother was stubborn to accept the reality that I might be marrying outside the caste. I had to take a lot of efforts to convince my mother that our love was above all the narrow human considerations. It was series of rounds of convincing. My mother had another objection too. According to her, the girl stays 360 km away from our house. Eventually my mother realized the depth of our love and agreed for the marriage.

My younger and elder siblings were supportive to me from the day one. They were supporting me despite knowing the fact that mother does not approve it and their position was bound to hurt her. In addition, all my friends, who were mainly associated



with students organizations, stood with me. They did not merely extend me moral support but actively helped me.

Our marriage was inter-caste or it was inter-religious for others. The actual marriage ceremony was performed as per Hindu and Buddhist ritual, which indicated we respect both the religions. The marriage was held on November 26, 2020 at Manasa's hometown Sirpur Kagaznagar in Komaram Bheem District bordering on Maharashtra and Telangana state. We are now blessed with a baby girl.

Post-marriage days were not easy and smooth. There used to be lot of misunderstandings between my wife and other family members. This was mainly the gap, which used to be there because of different backgrounds. It was difficult to communicate with each other. COVID pandemic reduced our income as our business of weaving handloom clothes was affected badly. My fellowship was the only source of income, on which our family survived.

I am a strong supporter of inter-caste marriages. I strongly believe that inter-caste marriages would uproot the caste system, which has badly affected our society for centuries by all the means. I seriously believe that the educated people should come forward for inter-caste marriages, which would help to do away with caste in the future generations. The children born to the couple who has inter-caste marriage, would have altogether different perspective about the life and society. I have deep faith that inter-caste marriages would lead the country to social cohesiveness, which is absolutely needed for healthy society and strong country.

*By Nagender as told to Ankita  
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# Latur to London : An inspirational journey

Journey of Aishwarya Chikate is surprising and motivating to the youth generation. Hailing from Latur in the backward Marathwada region of Maharashtra, Aishwarya had to struggle to complete her graduation. She has now joined London School of Economics, where Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar was a student once upon a time. Her father was working as a daily wage worker. He had even worked in a hotel. Aishwarya fulfilled dreams of her parents, bringing glory to her family.

## Prajvalant



**A**ishwarya Chikate from Latur in Maharashtra, who recently went to London School of Economics to do M.Sc in economics and history, is probably the first scheduled caste girl to join the prestigious institute. It is the same school where Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar went for his studies.

**Q : Tell us something about your background related to your family, parents, schooling and college.**

**A :** I come from a very humble background. My mother and father worked really hard. He worked as a daily wage worker and even in a hotel. He wanted to study but could not due to the situations but both of them ensured that we would get proper and best education. I have a brother and a sister. They are younger to me. Brother is pursuing B. Com, while sister is in tenth standard.





**Q : What about schooling?**

I was studying in a normal semi-English medium school, though I had science and math's in English but all the other subjects were in Marathi. I do not believe that CBSE or ICSE students are superior as is the perception. Efforts are more important than background. I completed my B.A in Economics from Modern College in Pune but I was in Latur till 12th standard. Most of the parents want their kids to be engineers or doctors or UPSC and MPSC. But they need to think whether they are wasting their energies. I was more interested in Humanity but I did not realize my interest at that point of time. So, I prepared for the NEET exam but I could not get a sufficient score. I had few chances to go for MBBS and become a doctor but I denied that as I had no interest with it. I was more interested in social sciences. I also used to be haunted with the reality that if Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar could do it 100years back, why could not I? One does not have to undergo hardships like him nowadays. Babasaheb used to motivate me all the time. I was fascinated while joining LSE but everything is normal now.

**Q : Tell us about your journey from Latur to London.**

A : It was a very stressful journey. Latur pattern is famous in Maharashtra but it is restricted only to NEET and JEE. What about other streams? People had serious doubts about my academic credentials when I was pursuing Economics and finished my graduation in 2020.

**Q : Did You try for any scholarship for LSE?**

A : Yes, I received a grant of Maharashtra Government scholarship. This scholarship is not only for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe but also for OBC and open category. Very few people know about this. Government, in fact, receives very few applications from open and OBC category students. This scholarship is Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj scholarship for Foreign Education.

**Q : How are you managing finances there?**

A: I receive grant of Maharashtra government but the process takes some time so I am managing my finances from my family

**Q: What is your experience there?**

A: Analytical thinking is important here. It is important here how one evaluates or analyzes your learning. Teachers are easily accessible here, which do not happen in India. It is really challenging to study abroad.

**Q : What is your future plan?**

A : I want to pursue my further education and my Ph.D. also and maybe, if possible, I will study post doc. Again, I have to make my profile strong for that. I will have to gain some experience because I did my B.A



and straight came for a Master's Degree so I don't have any professional experience. I want to work for humanitarian crisis, discrimination in all sphere's caste, race, gender, poverty, unemployment. I allow myself to flow with life.

**Q : Back in India, what was the response when you get admission at LSE.**

A : My parents were felicitated by many entities. I felt honored when my parents were felicitated. Unfortunately, one is appreciated or recognized only if you become a doctor or an engineer. No newspaper will publish it but we have to bring a positive narrative before the people.

**Q : What is your message to the students?**

A : Please try to find the passion for your study. The things you are really interested in. Though it will be really challenging, I don't know how to put it. I suffered a lot. I shifted from Science to B.A, B.A to here. Because there are many challenges you have to face but be firm on your decisions. Do not get attracted by commercialization of education.

**Q : You mean to say Suno Sabki Karo Man Ki?**

A: Yes. You are the only one who can change your life. So, nobody can help you and nobody can stop you if you decide and if you work towards that goal.

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## ‘मानस की जात सबे एके पहचानबो’

जैसे मीराबाई ने उच्च घराने की होकर भी संत रविदास महाराज जी को अपना गुरु बनाया और हमारे समाज में जात-पात की भेदभावना कभी रही नहीं है, अगर रही है तो उसको दूर करने का काम माननीय संत करते आए हैं, हमको यह सारे भेदभाव भूलकर एक साथ रहने का प्रयत्न करना चाहिए, यही संत हमें सिखाते रहे हैं।

### राकेश बौबी

सभी जात-बिरादरीयां एवं समाज के वर्ग एक मंच पर एकत्रित होकर एक मजबूत भारत का निर्माण करें, इस हेतु से ‘सांझीवालता यात्रा’ चल पड़ी। सांझीवालता नाम की यह यात्रा जिसका नाम था ‘मीरा चली सतगुरु के धाम’, राजस्थान के मेड़ता नगर से शुरू होकर फगवाड़ा, चक्र हकीम, पंजाब में समाप्त हुई थी। इस यात्रा के बारे में संत पुरुषोत्तम दास महाराज जी डेरा श्री गुरु रविदास मंदिर, चक्र हकीम, फगवाड़ा के साथ विचार-विमर्श किया गया। महंत जी के अनुसार डेरा चक्र हकीम वो स्थान है, जहां सतिगुरु रविदास महाराज जी और सतिगुरु कबीर जी महाराज की तपस्या स्थली है। यहां श्री गुरु रविदास जी और सतिगुरु कबीर महाराज जी ने सत्तर दिन रहकर तपस्या की थी और उस समय के दौरान पानी की समस्या का हल करने के लिए दोनों महापुरुषों ने एक पानी का कुआँ भी खुदवाया। इस तपस्या स्थली पर भगत धन्ना जाट जी भी उन्हें मिलने के लिए आए थे।

आयोजकों ने तय किया कि यात्रा दस दिन के लिए निकाली जाएगी। विचार हुआ कि पंजाब में जहां-जहां सांझीवालता यात्रा जाएगी, वहां स्थानीय संत समाज के साथ प्रवचन किए जाएंगे और सारे पंजाब में एक सुखद वातावरण बनाने के प्रयास किए

जाएंगे। इस यात्रा से समाज के सभी वर्गों को धार्मिक प्रवचन सुनने का अवसर प्राप्त होगा। यात्रा संत रविदास महाराज की परम शिष्या मीराबाई की जन्मस्थली मेड़ता से निकाली जाए तो वह बहुत प्रभावी होगी। महंत जी को दो आश्चर्यजनक बातें पता चलीं। पहली यह कि वहां पर सतगुरु रविदास महाराज जी ने जो मूर्ति अपनी शिष्या मीराबाई को दी थी वह मूर्ति उस मंदिर में अभी भी स्थापित है। वह भगवान कृष्ण जी की मूर्ति है, लेकिन यह भगवान कृष्ण जी की अष्टभुजा मूर्ति है। शायद ऐसी मूर्ति भारत में और कहीं नहीं है। दूसरी बात उन्हें यह पता चली कि इस मंदिर में पहला भोग जो भगवान श्री कृष्ण जी को लगाया जाता है वह संत रविदास समाज में से ही कोई व्यक्ति लगा सकता है।

सामाजिक समरसता का इससे बड़ा उदाहरण भारत में और कहीं नहीं है। भगवान को भोग लगाने वाला व्यक्ति रविदासिया बिरादरी से होता है। भगवान के लिए तो वह सबसे बड़े हो गए तो समाज के लिए छोटे कैसे हुए? ऐसा सवाल मन में आया। यात्रा आयोजकों ने सोचा कि यह जो मूर्ति है इसे साथ ले जाना चाहिए। तो उन्होंने ट्रस्ट वालों से निवेदन किया कि हम दस दिन के लिए ले यह मूर्ति ले जाना चाहते हैं। ट्रस्ट वाले कहने लगे कि यह मूर्ति हम नहीं दे सकते, यह तो यहां पर वर्षों से स्थापित है, रोज इस मूर्ति की यहां पूजा होती है। हम इतना कर सकते हैं कि इस मूर्ति की प्रतिमूर्ति बनाकर पूजित करके आपको दे सकते हैं। आयोजकों को इसपर भी संतोष हुआ। यह मूर्ति और





मीराबाई तथा संत रविदास महाराज की कुछ निशानियां लेकर हम वहां से चल पड़े। मेड़ता से नागौर, बीकानेर, लूणकर्णसर, नोखा, सूरतगढ़, गंगानगर होते हुए, इस यात्रा ने पंजाब में प्रवेश किया।

पंजाब के सभी जिलों में हम यात्रा लेकर गए, उसके अलावा सभी संप्रदायों के जो बड़े तीर्थ स्थान हैं, वहां पर भी जाने से यात्रा का लक्ष्य पूरा हुआ। सिख समाज के जो पांच तख्त साहिब हैं, उनमें से पंजाब में तीन तख्त साहिब हैं। तख्त श्री दमदमा साहिब तलवंडी साबो में, तख्त श्री केशगढ़ साहिब आनंदपुर साहिब में, श्री अकाल तख्त साहिब अमृतसर में स्थापित हैं। इस यात्रा का आयोजन इस प्रकार किया गया कि तीनों तख्तों पर यात्रा गई। ऐसे ही भगवान वाल्मीकि जी का बहुत बड़ा तीर्थ स्थान अमृतसर में है - श्री राम तीर्थ- वहां पर भी यात्रा जाकर आई। ऐसे ही सतगुरु रविदास महाराज के जो बड़े स्थान पंजाब में स्थापित हैं, जैसे खुरालगड़ साहिब, बाबा जौड़े जो रसूलपुर में है और बल्लों वाला डेरा वहां पर भी यात्रा गई थी। सभी पंथ-संप्रदायों को मिलाकर यह यात्रा पूर्ण हुई।

मंच पर केवल साधु समाज को ही बैठने का अवसर प्राप्त हुआ। किन्तु कुछ लोग जो समाज सेवा में निरंतर लगे हुए हैं, ऐसे लोगों को भी सम्मानित करके मंच पर बिठाया गया। इस यात्रा में जब तीनों तख्तों पर हमारा जाना हुआ सभी तख्तों के जत्थेदारों



ने हमारे संतों का पूर्ण मान-सम्मान किया। श्री गुरु अर्जुन देव जी महाराज द्वारा बसाए शहर तरणतारण में जब हम पहुंचे तो वहां के जत्थेदार साहिब श्री त्रिलोचन सिंह जी और प्रबंधक वह दोनों ही इस यात्रा में उपस्थित रहे और मंच पर आकर उन्होंने संगत को संबोधित भी किया। कुल मिलाकर सारा समाज एक ही स्वरूप में दिख रहा था, संदेश यह था कि 'मानस की जात सबे एके पहचानबो'। इस बात का संदेश देने के लिए यात्रा चली थी। अपना संदेश पूरा करते हुए यात्रा आगे बढ़ती रही। ज्यादातर स्थानों पर जो पत्रकार हमसे पूछते थे कि इस यात्रा का उद्देश्य क्या है? हम एक ही बात वहां बोलते थे, जैसे मीराबाई ने उच्च घराने की होकर भी संत रविदास महाराज जी को अपना गुरु बनाया और हमारे समाज में जात-पात की भेदभावना कभी रही नहीं है, अगर रही है तो उसको दूर करने का काम माननीय संत करते आए हैं, हमको यह सारे भेदभाव भूलकर एक साथ रहने का प्रयत्न करना चाहिए, यही संत हमें सिखाते रहे हैं। महंत पुरुषोत्तम दास जी महाराज गुरुवाणी का बहुत अर्थपूर्ण वाक्य बोलते थे, जो श्री गुरु रविदास महाराज जी ने उच्चारण किया है, 'साध संगत मिल रहीये माधो जैसे मधुपमखीरा', जैसे मधुमक्खियों का छत्ता जो है वह सभी मक्खियां उसमें मिलकर के रहती हैं, भले ही छत्ते में रहने वाली मधुमक्खियों का काम अलग-अलग होता है, रानी मक्खी का काम अंडे देना है, नर मक्खियों रानी की सुरक्षा के लिए उसके इर्द-गिर्द होती हैं, उनका और कोई काम नहीं होता। कोई मक्खियां मुंह में से मोम निकाल कर छत्ते का निर्माण करने का काम करती हैं, कोई मधुमक्खी फूलों से शहद इकट्ठा करके ले आती हैं, कुछ मक्खियों का काम छत्ते की सुरक्षा का रहता है। अलग-अलग प्रकार की यह मधुमक्खियां संगठित रह सकती हैं, तो हमारा समाज इकट्ठा क्यों नहीं रह सकता है? यह यात्रा ग्यारह दिन में २३५० किमी का सफर तय करके श्री गुरु रविदास मंदिर, डेरा चक्र हकीम, फगवाड़ा (पंजाब) में समाप्त हुई।

लेखक जालंधर स्थित पत्रकार है।  
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# मीरा चली सतगुरु के धाम

श्री गुरु रविदास स्थान चक़ हकीम में सतगुरु रविदास महाराज ने संत कबीर जी के साथ १४८५ ई. में सत्तर दिन तक निवास किया था और अपने हाथों एक बाउली साहिब का निर्माण भी किया था। इसी लिए सांझीवालता यात्रा का नाम मीरा चली सतगुरु के धाम रखा गया है। ऐतिहासिक सांझीवालता यात्रा मेड़ता श्री मीराबाई के जन्मस्थल से सुरु होकर बीकानेर, गंगानगर, सूरजगढ़ से होते हुए फगवाड़ा पंजाब जहा श्री गुरु रविदास महाराज जी ने सत्तर दिन तक संत कबीर दास जी महाराज के साथ निवास किया था, वहा समाप्त हुई। इस यात्रा में संत शिरोमणि श्री रविदासजी महाराज और संत मीराबाई जी के पावन निशानियों को एक रथ में सुशोभित कर सभी लोगों के दर्शन हेतु रखा गया था। यह यात्रा १९ नवम्बर से लेकर २९ नवम्बर २०२१ तक चली। यात्रा निकालने का एक हेतु था कि संसार में सद्भावना और भाईचारा बढे। संत शिरोमणि रविदास जी महाराज ने संत मीराबाई जी को अपना शिष्य बनाया था। संत मीराबाई ने अपना पूरा जीवन भक्ति में लगा दिया था। पुरे समाज में एकता का भाव पैदा हो इस उद्देश्य से ही सांझीवालता का सन्देश लेकर साधु संत इस यात्रा में समावेशित थे। हमने इस यात्रा के आयोजक डेरा संत रविदास महाराज के प्रमुख श्री. पुरुषोत्तम दास महाराज जी से इस यात्रा के बारे में जो वार्तालाभ किया उसे हम आपके सामने प्रस्तुत कर रहे हैं। यात्रा का शीर्षक था “मीरा चली सतगुरु के धाम।”

**प्रश्न :** आपने यह यात्रा क्यों निकाली थी, उसका हेतु क्या था ?

**स्वामीजी :** यात्रा निकालने का एक हेतु था कि संसार में सद्भावना बने, भाई चारा बने। हमारे गुरु जी ने हमें आदेश दिया, मानस की जात एक सबकी पहचान एक, पिता एक – हम एक बालक, कहने का भाव है। रविदास महाराज जी ने संसार को एक लड़ी में पीरोने के लिए आदेश किया है। हम अलग अलग नहीं हैं। इस यात्रा के माध्यम से देश में जो नफरत फैलाने वाले लोग हैं, जो अपने निजी स्वार्थों के लिए इंसानों की बलि देते हैं, उन लोगों से सावधान होने की जरूरत है। कोई भी धर्म नफरत नहीं फैलाता। कोई भी धर्म, कोई भी संस्था, कोई भी परमात्मा से जुड़ा हुआ इंसान, नुकसान में कभी नहीं जाएगा; फायदे में जाएगा।

**प्रश्न :** यह यात्रा जो मेवाड़ से निकलकर मेड़ता गई, यह

किसलिए ?

**स्वामीजी :** मेड़ता में मीरा जी का जन्म स्थान है और मीरा जी राजघराने में पैदा हुईं। उस समय सती प्रथा थी और स्त्री को घर से बाहर निकलने की आजादी नहीं थी। लेकिन मीरा जी ऐसी क्रांतिकारी संत हुईं, जिन्होंने पूरे भारतवर्ष में जाकर परमात्मा का गुणगान किया और लोगों को उस परमात्मा से जुड़ने के लिए प्रेरणा दी। ऐसी महात्मा की पावन स्थान से यह यात्रा प्रारंभ हुई। यह यात्रा मेड़ता से शुरू होकर बीकानेर, गंगानगर, सूरजगढ़ से होते हुए पंजाब में आई।

**प्रश्न :** और यात्रा खत्म कहां हुई ?

**स्वामीजी :** यात्रा डेरा श्री गुरु रविदास मंदिर जाकर खत्म हुई।

**प्रश्न :** मतलब श्री गुरु रविदास महाराज जी का मंदिर ?

**स्वामीजी :** हां, गुरु रविदास जी का जो पावन स्थान है,





जहां श्री गुरु रविदास महाराज जी ने सत्तर दिन तक संत कबीर दास जी महाराज के साथ निवास किया था।

**प्रश्न : इसका कुछ कारण बता सकेंगे आप? पंजाब, राजस्थान के बाहर बहुत लोगों को मालूम नहीं है की संत रविदास महाराज और मीराबाई जो गुरु शिष्य थे। उनके बारे में आप कुछ बता सकते हैं?**

**स्वामीजी :** सतगुरु रविदास महाराज यह मीरा जी के गुरु थे, यह उनके वाणी में प्रमाणित है। मीराबाई ने सतगुरु रविदास महाराज जी का नाम बड़े आदर से लिया है। मीरा जी का जीवन ही भगवान की आराधना में गुजरा है। मीरा जी का ऐसा व्यक्तित्व था, जो संसार में छोटे-बड़े भेदभाव को खत्म करने, समानता और सामाजिक समरसता लाने के लिए था। यह यात्रा 'मीरा चली सदगुरु के धाम' इस नाम से चली। ट्रक का नाम भी यही था कि मीरा अपने सदगुरु को मिलने पंजाब आई है।

मीराजी के नाम पर ही इस यात्रा का आरंभ हुआ। गुरु नानक देव महाराज जी के प्रकट दिवस पर इस यात्रा का आरंभ हुआ। उनकी मानवता सांझीवालता का संदेश देने वाले महाराज जी, जिन्होंने संसार को जोड़ा, उनके पावन जन्म उत्सव पर इस यात्रा का आरंभ हुआ।

**प्रश्न : आपका अनुभव कैसा था? जब आप लोगों के पास पहुंचे तो आपका अनुभव कैसा रहा?**

**स्वामीजी :** मैं आपको शब्दों में वह कैसे बयान करूं? हमारे साथ सभी मतों के महात्मा थे। जब यह यात्रा का आरंभ हुआ सभी हैरान थे की यह यात्रा किन की? क्योंकि यात्रा में भगवान राम जी का सिमरन करने वाले, भगवान कृष्ण जी का सिमरन करने वाले, वाहेगुरु जी का नाम लेने वाले, उदासीन मठ के

अलग-अलग मतों के महात्मा इस यात्रा में थे। इस यात्रा का अनुभव शब्दों में बयान नहीं कर सकता। जो भी महात्मा इस यात्रा में शामिल थे, उन्होंने लोगों को परमात्मा से जुड़ने की प्रेरणा दी। धर्मों में कोई झगड़ा नहीं, ना किसी ग्रंथों में, वेदों में झगड़ा हैं। झगड़ा तो इंसानों के मन में डाला गया है क्यों कि जो मन है उसे ही मनाना कठिन होता है।

अगर मन बीमार हो जाए, तो उसका इलाज नहीं है। शरीर में कोई दिक्कत आ जाए रोग आ जाए तो, उसकी मेडिसिन है, डॉक्टर के पास जाकर आप इसका इलाज करा सकते हैं। अगर आपका मन बीमार हो जाए तो कौन सा डॉक्टर लाएंगे? वह डॉक्टर जो है, वह आध्यात्मिक है, ज्ञान है, जिससे मन के रोग को दूर किया जा सकता है, यह यात्रा का माध्यम था। लोगों की मनो की भावनाओं को जानना और उसमें मानवता का प्रेम और स्नेह देने की कोशिश की गई।

**प्रश्न : आपने कहा इतने मतों के साधु संतों को इकट्ठा लाना यह एक बहुत बड़ी बात थी। यह उपलब्धि आपने किस तरह हासिल की ?**

**स्वामीजी :** देखिए काम तो कठिन होता है। सभी साधु संतों के विचारों को लेकर चलना, सभी महात्माओं के विचारों को, भावनाओं को स्टेज पर लेकर जाना और लोगों के सामने रखना। कभी-कभी ऐसा हो जाता था तो हम कहते थे एक ने कही, दूसरे ने मानी, तो दोनों परम ज्ञानी भाई।

आप अपना विचार दो, क्योंकि हम तो संसार को एक संदेश देना चाहते थे। सभी महात्माओं ने बड़ा अच्छा काम किया। वेदों से, ग्रंथों से, महात्माओं ने अपने विचारों को लोगों के सामने रखा। सभी स्थानों में यह यात्रा गई। पंजाब में तीन तख्त है अकाल



तख्त, दमदमा साहब तख्त, केशगढ़ साहब। इसी तरह मंदिरों में यात्रा गई, गुरुद्वारों में गई, सतगुरु रविदास महाराज जी के स्थानों पर गई, सतगुरु कबीर महाराज जी के स्थानों पर गई, भगवान वाल्मीकि महाराज के स्थानों पर गई। यह यात्रा सांझीवालता का संदेश लेकर सभी घर पर गई।

**प्रश्न : आपको जो लगता है, आपके मन में जो विचार था, कि समाज में जो एकता का भाव उत्पन्न होना चाहिए, क्या उसकी तरफ हम अग्रसर हुए ?**

**स्वामीजी :** देखिए विचार तो हमारे गुरु लोगों का है। हमने तो सिर्फ यह काम किया है जो हमारी ड्यूटी है। क्योंकि गुरु लोगों ने हमें पहले से संदेश दिया है कि हम एक ही परमात्मा के अंश हैं। तो वही बातें दुबारा लोगों में जाकर हमें बतानी थी। हमारे महापुरुषों के विचारों को दोबारा प्रकट किया गया।

**प्रश्न : क्या आपको लगता है कि जो न्यू जनरेशन है, उनके सामने जितनी प्रभावी रूप से यह बातें आनी चाहिए, वह नहीं आ रही है ? शायद उनको अपने पुरखों के बारे में, अपने पूर्वजों के बारे में ठीक से सिखाया नहीं गया है, उसका कुछ परिणाम हमें भुगतना पड़ रहा है, ऐसा कुछ लगता है आपको ?**

**स्वामीजी :** देखिए ऐसा है कि हम अपने आने वाले पीढ़ियों को इन महापुरुषों के विचारों की जानकारी देंगे, हमारा इतिहास बहुत अमीर है, हम सनातन से धर्म पर खड़े हैं। हमारे जो बच्चे हैं, उन्होंने आगे चलकर हमारे इस समाज को आगे ले जाना है, वह धर्म के बारे में इतनी जानकारी नहीं रखते, इसलिए हमारे बच्चे कई जगह पर जाकर किंतु कर देते हैं। अगर हम चाहते हैं हमारी आने वाली पीढ़ीया धर्म से जुड़ी रहे, तो कॉलेजों में, यूनिवर्सिटी में, स्कूलों में हफ्ते में एक बार बुद्धिजीवी लोगों को बुलाकर उनके साथ विचारों का आदान प्रदान करना चाहिए, उससे वह समाज से जुड़े रहेंगे, धर्म से जुड़े रहेंगे और भारतवर्ष में जो गुरु महापुरुषों के संदेश है वह जीवित रहेंगे। जब तक उसको मानने वाले जीवित है, तब तक उसके विचार जीवित है।

**प्रश्न : हमने एक और बात सुनी है, जिसमें उसका जिक्र था धर्मांतर के बारे में और कुछ लोग ऐसे है जो समाज को तोड़ना चाहते है, क्या उसके बारे में आप कुछ बताना चाहेंगे ?**

**स्वामीजी :** देखिए, ऐसा है कि पूरी दुनिया में ऐसे लोग हैं, जो समाज को तोड़कर, नफरत फैलाकर अपना मनोरथ सिद्ध करते हैं। ऐसे लोगों से सावधान रहना चाहिए। अगर हमारा समाज टूट गया तो भारतवर्ष का नक्शा आप सोच भी नहीं सकते। तो ऐसे लोगों से हमें सावधान रहना चाहिए, जो धर्म के नाम पर लोगों को जुदा कर रहे हैं। हमारे महापुरुषों ने समाज को जोड़ कर रखा है। गुरु तेग बहादुर महाराज जी का इतिहास है, उन्होंने धर्म के लिए अपना शीश बलिदान किया। गुरु गोविंद सिंह महाराज, दसवे पातशाह, माताजी और स्वयं धर्म की रक्षा के लिए अपना बलिदान दिया और समाज को एक रखने के लिए पांच लोगों को एक बाटी में अमृत पिलाया। वह अलग अलग जाति से थे। हम एक पिता की संतान हैं, हमारा पिता एक है, कोई छोटा नहीं कोई बड़ा नहीं, सबको सांझीवालता का आदेश दिया। हमारे तो गुरुजनों ने, पूर्वजों ने, समाज को जोड़ने के लिए पूरा अपना जीवन लगा दिया। आज जो विदेशी ताकतें इस तरह का काम

कर रहे हैं तोड़ने का, उन लोगों से सचेत होना चाहिए। हमारे महापुरुषों ने बलिदान देकर इसको बचाया है।

**प्रश्न : क्या अभी पंजाब, राजस्थान में कोई समस्या चल रही है और धर्मांतरण के पीछे विदेशी ताकत का कोई हाथ है ?**

**स्वामीजी :** बड़े प्रमाण पर धर्म परिवर्तन हो रहा है और धर्म परिवर्तन के साथ-साथ समाज के ताने-बाने को तोड़ा जा रहा है। इस पर तो हम सभी को एकजुट होना चाहिए। अगर समाज टूट गया तो धर्म का क्या करेंगे हम? धर्म का काम तो जोड़ना था ना? यात्रा आरंभ क्यों हुई? इसीलिए कि जो हमें बांटना चाहते हैं उनको बताएं कि हम एक हैं, हम बटने वाले नहीं हैं। हम एक हैं, हमारे गुरु एक है, हमारे गुरु का आदेश एक है, हम तो उनको मानने वाले हैं।

**प्रश्न : आपका जो अनुभव है, आप कहते हैं कि आप उसको शब्दों में बयां नहीं कर सकते और इस यात्रा का यह पहला वर्ष था। आपको क्या लगता है कि आगे चलकर आप इस प्रकार का कार्यक्रम अगले साल भी करोगे ? दूसरा सवाल ऐसा है कि इसको और बड़ा स्वरूप देने के लिए और भी कोई एक्टिविटी आप शुरू करना चाहते हो ?**

**स्वामीजी :** ऐसा है कि मैं आपके माध्यम से बताना चाहता हूँ, जब तक समाज में एकता नहीं आ जाती, सभी समाज इकट्ठा नहीं होता, तब तक यह यात्रा हर साल निकलेगी, इससे सामाजिक भावना बनती है। भावनाओं का आदान-प्रदान होता है। यह यात्रा तो हर प्रदेश में होनी चाहिए ऐसा ही नहीं कि पंजाब में, हर प्रदेश में। दूसरा आप ने सवाल किया मेरे और विचार क्या है? मैं चाहता हूँ जो भी काम समाज को जोड़ने के लिए हो मैं उसमें जुड़ना चाहूँगा। क्योंकि हम अपना जीवन ही इस पर लगाना चाहते हैं। हमारे गुरु ने खून देकर समाज को संजो कर रखा है। हम उसको टूटने नहीं देंगे।

**प्रश्न : क्या आपको ऐसे लगता है कि यह यात्रा पंजाब और राजस्थान दो राज्यों के लिए थी? भारत में ऐसे कई राज्य है कि जहां पर संत महात्माओं की बड़ी परंपरा है। तो इससे प्रेरणा लेकर पूरे भारत में सामाजिक एकता बढ़ाने के लिए और बाकी के जो संकट है उनका सामना करने के लिए, सभी राज्यों में भी क्या यह करनी चाहिए ?**

**स्वामीजी :** इस यात्रा में से सीखने के लिए बहुत कुछ मिला। पहले कि समाज में कोई भी ऊंच नीच नहीं है। सभी ने इस यात्रा का स्वागत किया। अगर सभी प्रदेशों में इस तरह की यात्रा हो तो भाईचारा बढ़ेगा और दूसरा, राष्ट्र में एकता की भावना पैदा होगी। तो ऐसी यात्राएँ सभी महापुरुषों की निकलनी चाहिए, सभी मतों के महात्माओं को लेकर। कोई किसी के मत पर जाकर ना कहे कि इस प्रकार के महात्मा इसमें नहीं है। अगर हम एक पिता के अंश हैं, परमात्मा एक है, अगर हम सभी एक मंच पर बैठे होंगे, तो सभी में समानता का भाव पैदा होना चाहिए।

**प्रश्न : उस दिशा में आप कुछ प्रयास करेंगे ?**

**स्वामीजी :** हम जरूर प्रयत्न करेंगे। हम जरूर मंथन करेंगे और कोशिश करेंगे। इस यात्रा का जो संदेश है वह जन जन तक पहुंचे इसके लिए और भी क्या किया जा सकता है इस पर हम विचार करेंगे।



**प्रश्न : क्या समाज में जो विषमता है, उसे निकाल कर समाज को एकता की तरफ लाने का आपका लक्ष्य है ?**

**स्वामीजी :** हां हमारा यही लक्ष्य है । क्यों कि जब तक हम अपने महापुरुषों की बातों से, जैसे संत रविदास महाराज की बातों से, समाज को अवगत कराना चाहिए, इसी तरह भगवान राम जी के बारे में बताना चाहिए कि उन्होंने सांझीवालता की है। उन्होंने जंगलों में जाकर महात्माओं से वार्तालाप किया उनको इकट्ठा किया। इसी तरह भीलनी की कथा आती है, निषादराज की कथा आती है, इसी तरह भगवान वाल्मीकि महाराज का संवाद आता है, अनेकों संवाद आते हैं जो सद्भावना प्रकट करते हैं। किसी जाति के प्रति नहीं। इसीलिए अगर हम इन बातों को जन-जन तक पहुंचाएंगे तो लोगों में वह भावना प्रकट होगी समानता और सांझीवालता की। उसकी तरफ हम अग्रसर होंगे। अगर हम अपने विचार प्रकट करेंगे, किसी के मन में भावना होगी तो उसका हल होगा। किसी को सवाल होगा तो उसको जवाब मिलेगा। हमारे गुरु ने भी यात्राएं निकाली, सतगुरु रविदास महाराज ने भी यात्राएं की, गुरु नानक देव महाराज ने भी यात्राएं की। उन यात्राओं का मकसद यहीं था की समाज में सद्भावना हो, सभी इकट्ठा रहे।

**प्रश्न : अच्छा, तो आपको लगता है कि यह यात्रा निकालकर जो आप चाहते हैं उसे आप हासिल कर सकेंगे? या उसके अलावा भी और कुछ प्रयास करने पड़ेंगे ?**

**स्वामीजी :** सबसे पहला माध्यम यात्रा है। अगर समाज पढ़ा-लिखा होगा तो उसे कोई गुमराह नहीं कर सकता। अगर हम पढ़े लिखे हैं तो हमें कोई गुमराह नहीं कर सकता। हमें ज्ञान है, तो इसीलिए हमें शिक्षा पर ज्यादा से ज्यादा जोर देना चाहिए। क्यों कि जो कम पढ़ा होगा उसे कोई भी आदमी गुमराह कर सकता है। इसलिए शिक्षित होना बहुत जरूरी है।

**प्रश्न : तो आपका कहने का मतलब है लोगों को शिक्षित करने के लिए कोई प्रयास होना चाहिए ?**

**स्वामीजी :** हां, प्रयास होना चाहिए। अगर पढ़ा लिखा समाज होगा तो अपराध कम होगा। पढ़ा लिखा समाज हो तो जो नशा करते हैं, बुरी आदतें हैं, वह छूटेगी। अगर समाज में कोई गिरावट

आती है तो क्यों आती है? क्यों कि समाज पढ़ा-लिखा नहीं होता है। जो समाज पढ़ा-लिखा होता है वह राष्ट्र को बढ़ाने में, उसकी प्रगति में काम करता है।

**प्रश्न : आपने कहा राजस्थान पंजाब के बाहर बहुत सारे लोगों को यह पता नहीं कि गुरु रविदास, संत मीराबाई के गुरु थे। ऐसी बहुत सारी चीजें अपने इतिहास में हो सकती है, जिसके बारे में लोगों को अवगत किया गया नहीं है। उसके बारे में आपका क्या कहना है ?**

**स्वामीजी :** संत गुरु रविदास जी के बारे में मीराबाई ने अपने पदों में बड़े आदर सत्कार के साथ कहा है कि मुझे पूरे गुरु मिल गए हैं। मैं राम रतन धन पायो। गुरु जी की कृपा से मुझे वह धन मिला है जो चोरी नहीं हो सकता, वह धन है जो छीना नहीं जा सकता, क्यों कि वह हृदय को प्रकाशित करता है। इसी प्रकार सतगुरु रविदास जी महाराज ने मीरा जी को दीक्षा दी, तो मीरा जी के इतिहास में उसके बारे में बहुत कुछ आता है। मीरा जी ने विष भी पिया। उनका मन साफ था। मीरा जी ऐसे क्रांतिकारी संत थी जिन्होंने छोटे बड़े फर्क से ऊपर उठकर काम किया समाज के लिए। समाज को जोड़ने का काम किया। इसी तरह सद्गुरु कबीर महाराज जिनके बारे में कहा जाता है कि उनके पिता जुलाहा थे। कहते हैं कि उनके पिता गायों को मारकर पीरों को मनाते थे। सतगुरु कबीर महाराज गायों की सेवा करने वाले थे। क्यों परिवर्तन आता है? जब आदमी पढ़ लिख जाता है, तब उन्हें पता चलता है कि यह बुरा है कि अच्छा है। अगर हमें समाज में रहना है तो समाज को आगे लेकर चलना है। जो बुराइयां हैं उसका तभी हम नाश कर सकते हैं, जब हम पढ़ लिखेंगे। जो दीपक है ज्ञान का, वह सभी मन में जो मत होते हैं, उसको खत्म कर देता है और उसको एक मत कर देता है। तो ज्ञान ऐसा दीपक है।

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