


# UNHEARD VOICES

14 APRIL 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 1



A tribute to the true hero - the **'Mooknayak'** who relentlessly fought for the rights and welfare of those, who's voices were not heard since times historic.



**21st April**  
Kalaram Mandir opens for everyone



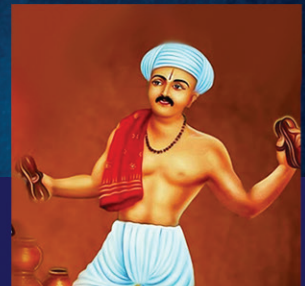
**25th April**  
Bhagwan Mahaveer Birth Anniversary



**30th April**  
Sant Tukadoji Maharaj Birth Anniversary



**6th May**  
Chatrapati Shahu Maharaj Death anniversary



**9th May**  
Sant Goroba Maharaj Birth Anniversary

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## EDITORIAL

# UNHEARD VOICES – The objective

Social Studies Foundation (SSF) is working with the prime objective of conducting social studies and research of the society in 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”.

Opinion making plays a crucial role in the democratic system. SSF strongly believes in building an opinion, which will help the country in creating harmonious and affectionate relationships among various social groups.

SSF began with publishing articles on the life and contribution of saints, social leaders and reformers who spent their lives for the betterment of deprived classes. Sant Tukaram, Savitribai Phule, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Phule, Shahu Maharaj, Shahir Annabhau Sathe are some such examples on whom the articles were published.

Later in the year 2020, SSF held a webinar and also a panel discussion on the subject ‘#Black Lives Matter: Indian Perspective’ which had a participation from across the globe. In SSF’s pursuit to make the voice of the deprived classes heard, a study containing articles and data on the issue of Migrant Labourers who faced an unprecedented hardship during the Covid lockdown phase was published. SSF also submitted a list of key recommendations derived from the study to the Central Government through Minister of State for Labour and Employment (Independent Charge), Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar in the month of December, 2020.

“UNHEARD VOICES”, is a sincere and an honest attempt in the direction of SSF objective.

“UNHEARD VOICES”, an e-periodical, will be released every month in the beginning. We

intend to publish it every fortnight in the near future.

While all of us are living with an explosion of information, the reality is that many few of us get the opportunity to express ourselves. The scenario is more serious about the deprived people. The voices of deprived people continue to be unheard even in the age of various platforms, provided by social media. “UNHEARD VOICES” will provide a platform to the deprived people to express themselves. “UNHEARD VOICES” will be a representative national forum for the purpose.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the Father of Indian Constitution, is the towering personality, who represented deprived people and struggled for their betterment throughout his life. Inspired by figures like Dr Ambedkar and others, SSF sincerely intends to contribute in making a harmonious society. SSF strongly believes that listening to UNHEARD VOICES is the first step in the direction as it will make the entire society more sensible for each other.

UNHEARD VOICES, will raise the voice of deprived people with positive narrative.

UNHEARD VOICES will contain articles, news, events, and success stories, struggle and all other information for all the men and women and youths and seniors across the country.

UNHEARD VOICES will publish information, which one may not read in established media.

UNHEARD VOICES is not a periodical. It is a tool to make the deprived people empowered through knowledge.

We are confident that we will be successful in our endeavour for the promotion of social harmony.

**Vijendra Sonawane**  
Editor

# Dr. Ambedkar : Architect of Modern India



Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was an architect of Modern India. Born in a downtrodden family Babasaheb became the first law minister of India. His vision, charismatic leadership lead millions of people on the path of wisdom! His work can be defined in his own words: 'be educated, be organized and be agitated.' The nation is celebrating his 130th birth anniversary.

**D**r. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a first-class academic, intellectual, and economist Politician. Dr. Ambedkar held a degree of Bachelor of Arts from Elphinstone College, Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy from Columbia University, Doctor of Science from London University, Bar at Law means Barrister Gray's Inn. His thesis in M.A was 'Administration and Finance of East India Company'. In this thesis, he focused on how East India Company looted India. His D.Sc. dissertation is based on Problem of Rupee, in which Babasaheb Ambedkar mentioned how the British looted India. There are only three persons who exposed British on how they economically exploited the nation. First was Dadabhai Naoroji (1825 -1917), who wrote 'Poverty in India' in 1876. The second was Romeshchandra Datta (1848-1909), who wrote 'The Economic History of India' in 1893. The third person was Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. However, Dadabhai Naoroji and Romeshchandra Datta were not economists. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was one of the rare categories of Politicians who was an economist also.

In those days, there were a few articles on Economics. 'Deshar Katha' by Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar, published in 1904. From

1915 to 1925, there were many theses on Economics presented by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. After that, Will Durant's 'A case for India' was published in 1930. Sundarlalji wrote 'Bharat me Angreji Raaj,' published in 1929 with two volumes. The brilliance of Dr. Ambedkar is phenomenal and rarest amongst those of that era.

In 1920, he started the weekly by the name 'Mooknayak' (Leader of the Silent). He also started 'Bahishkrit Bharat' in 1927 and weekly publication 'Janta' in the year 1930 whose name was later

## Vijendra Sonawane



changed to 'Prabuddha Bharat' in 1956. It is a coincidence that even Swami Vivekanand had started the weekly magazine whose name was 'Prabuddha Bharat' in the year 1896. Both the personalities were sailing in the same boat. Apart from Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, there were only two political leaders who ran weekly or daily publications to spread awareness - Mahatma Gandhi and Lokmanya Tilak.

He started 'Bahiskrit Hitkarni Sabha' in 1924, Samaj Samta Sangh in 1927 and also floated Independent Labour Party in

1937. Dr. Babasaheb played a vital role in the establishment of the Scheduled caste Federation in 1942. In 1956 he established the Republican Party of India. While starting these kinds of parties or institutes, he involved old and new people. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi were the leaders who built the institutes and made a strong foundation for the democratic structure of India.

Being a politician, Dr. Ambedkar was having a vision for education as well. In 1925, he started Hostel for Dalit students. He established the 'People's Education Society' (PES) in 1945, which is running almost 40 educational Institutes in the present times. The first college of PES was Siddharth College Mumbai, one of the colleges providing a Postgraduate degree in Social Science. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar comes from a very different background because he has a distinctive personality among the politicians of his time.

Before starting 'Mooknayak' in 1920, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar started his socio-political career through the Southberro Committee in 1919. He became a mass leader of Dalit within a period of 12 years. This is evidenced by the Pune pact which was made in **(Page 8)**

Things sanctified by the touch of a 'MAHAMANAV'



Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum has completed 25 years. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's followers get emotional on seeing this invaluable treasure. We consider ourselves blessed to have got this opportunity to take care of this historical wealth. This is a place of inspiration. It will continue to inspire scholars and Ambedkarite followers for many years in the future.

- Sanjeevani Mujumdar,  
Director,  
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum, Pune



# UPSC Exams : Deprived sections losing in translation

Prof. Niranjan  
Kumar



One hopes that the UPSC, an organization with the highest integrity and exemplary professionalism, will rectify these issues, sooner than later, so that deprived section candidates should not suffer unnecessarily and also because it's contrary to the spirit of the Constitution.

For vernacular medium examinees, mostly coming from the deprived sections of society, the civil services exams are a stricter game to win, thanks to misleading, incomprehensible, or incorrect translations in the question papers. The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), must pay attention to this issue as it ultimately impinges on their right to equal opportunity.

Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), a constitution body, conducts various examinations for recruitment to various positions including the prestigious 'Indian Civil Services', "The steel frame of India," and has been doing its job as the guardian of merit efficiently as well as impartially. It's worth noting that, barring a few exceptions, UPSC, unlike other constitutional bodies, has been free from controversies and has earned a good reputation. However, for the past few years, questions are being raised on UPSC's Civil Services Exam (CSE) by vernacular candidates. Even in the last year CSE preliminary exam, the vernacular version of the question papers was marred by controversy. It affects around 40% of the total candidates appearing for the preliminary exam (PE). It would be significant to understand the issue and its probable solution.

It is well known that the appointment of various premier posts of the Indian Civil Services, like IAS, IPS, Central Group "A" Services, and group "B" services, is done by UPSC through CSE. It was alleged that, in more than 40 questions, last year, the questions translated to Hindi were misleading, incomprehensible, or simply just wrong. The reason behind this

faulty translation, it is assumed, is the machine or computerized translation, colloquially called 'Google translation'. The English text is typed on a computer and is translated to Hindi. However, the words and sentences don't convey the correct meaning many times in this 'google translation'. For example, in English, the order of words in a sentence is usually 'subject+verb+object' (e.g., Ram goes home), while in Hindi and many Indian languages, syntactically, the order goes 'Subject+object+verb' (e.g. Ram Ghar jata hai). With simple and short sentences, the machine generally translates correctly, but for complex and long English sentences, the Hindi or vernacular meaning is often compromised. Consequently, vernacular candidates adversely pay for this.

Using technology in translation has one more disturbing dimension. It seems that translators, hired by the UPSC or other agencies conducting competitive exams, take recourse to various popular online dictionaries like shabdtkosh.com, instead of standard dictionaries such as the 'e-Mahashabdkosh' an online dictionary website hosted and maintained by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs which pervert the meaning. To give an example from a question asked in the CSE, PE last year, English word 'Delivery' was translated as 'Paridaan' in Hindi. As per e-Mahashabdkosh, meaning of word 'delivery', given the context in which it was used, should have been 'Vitaran' or 'supurdagi'. It must be noted that the phrase paridaan is not only in infrequent use in Hindi, but it's also a bit misleading in its meaning. **(Page 7)**

# REKHABEN to DR. MADAM

From Rekhaben to Dr. Madam, this is an incredible journey of Dr. Rekhaben Kalubhai Parmar, who broke all the stereotypes. In today's world where maximum Indians are taking interest in foreign languages and flaunting about being master of the same, Rekhaben focused on the ancient most language in India, Sanskrit.

Rekhaben was born in Chuda town, Sundarnagar, Gujrat in Parmar family. A third child after a brother and a sister. A few years after the birth, she moved to Ahmedabad with her parents and a younger sister where she completed her schooling up to 10th std. After 10th std when her family moved to Lambha village, she took a break of one year, as the better colleges were not available near the village. When she insisted on studying further unlike other girls of her community, her parents supported her and took admission in the junior college away from the village. Rekhaben being a brilliant student, scored 71% in 12th std, and easily got the admission in St. Xavier's college, Gujrat for BA under her brother's guidance.

She started studying Sanskrit



Dr. Rekhaben  
Kalubhai Parmar

during the graduation years as it is considered as a scoring subject but as the professors who taught her were amazing, she developed interest in the language and completed her graduation in Sanskrit. Further she went to Gujrat University, where she pursued M.A, MPhil and B.Ed in Sanskrit.

This was not enough for Rekhaben. Being ambitious and extremely interested in the subject, she decided to take admission for PhD. in Sanskrit. Her parents supported her throughout.

Initially she started her PhD with

a subject, Swapnavasavadatta, but couldn't develop enough interest. While trying to figure out about it, she met her guide Dr. Atul Kumar Unagar, who asked her to pursue her PhD. in the topic "Sanskrit Vangmay Bal-charit Varnanam Ekam Adhyayanam". Soon Rekhaben developed interest in the life stories of these young personalities from Ved, Upanishada and Purana and completed her PhD in the same.

Currently she is teaching in Gujrat University, and also preparing for the GPSE exam.

When asked about her future plans, she said "I want kids of India to know about these interesting stories from Sanskrit Vangmay". To do so, she is planning to make small videos, which will be available on platforms like YouTube for free.

Coming from a simple family background, pursuing a career in entirely different field, Rekhaben is a true inspiration to everyone.

Narrated by  
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## Deprived sections losing in translation

**(From Page 6)** The UPSC must understand that for good translation it is necessary that machine translation is minimized, and the translators, having a sound command over both the source as well as the target languages along with a reasonable understanding of the subject matter, be employed. Thus, the assistance of qualified scholars should be enlisted for this purpose, as one of the committees of the UPSC itself recommended in past. The UPSC also needs to understand that familiar and comprehensible words should be used in question papers so that candidates do not have to grapple

with the language unnecessarily.

One hopes that the UPSC, an organization with the highest integrity and exemplary professionalism, will rectify these issues, sooner than later, so that deprived section candidates should not suffer unnecessarily and also because it's contrary to the spirit of the Constitution.

*(The writer is a professor in the Central department of Hindi, University of Delhi. He has taught in various universities in the United States. He can be reached @NiranjankIndia. The views expressed are personal.)*



# CISCO Case : Does caste discrimination exist outside India?

**B**haratratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar fought for annihilation of discrimination and casteism through out his life. After all-out efforts, finally he decided to change the faith and declared 'I will take my brethren out of the purview of the name 'Hindu' but

discrimination at the company's Silicon Valley headquarters because he is a 'Dalit' Indian. The State of California alleges that a major tech-industry employer violated civil rights laws by discriminating against a worker of Indian-origin as he was

admitted as an Amicus Curiae in a case that involves caste discrimination in the workplace. The term Amicus curiae, means "friend of the court" a person or organization who is not party to the litigation, but is allowed to advise the court on a point of law or fact directly concerning the lawsuit.

California regulators last year sued Cisco Systems, saying an engineer faced discrimination at the company's Silicon Valley headquarters as he is a Dalit Indian.

The testimony of one courageous Dalit engineer has opened the floodgates with many more now willing to speak openly about their so-called experiences of caste discrimination.

The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) vs Cisco Systems Inc, Sundar Iyer and Ramana Kompella case of so-called caste discrimination in the workplace was scheduled for next hearing and decision is awaited.

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they will still remain with Bharat. And he accepted Buddha Dharma along with his followers at Diksha Bhoomi, Nagpur.

However, after so many years it is alleged that an engineer faced

born into a lower caste, which is unbelievable.

The Ambedkar International Center (AIC), a US based organization approached the California Supreme Court; to be

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## Dr. Ambedkar : Architect of Modern India

**(From Page 4)** 1932 between Gandhiji and 8 Dalit leaders. The pact is well known as Gandhi-Ambedkar Pact.

It is strange but confirmed that the politicians who opposed Mahatma Gandhi have vanished from Indian politics. Dr. Subhash Chandra Bose was having different opinions on various subjects than those of Mahatma Gandhi. He contested Congress's presidential election against the wish of Mahatma Gandhi. However, he had to resign from the post.

Jawaharlal Nehru accepted the leadership of Gandhiji. But Dr. Ambedkar was the only politician with good political understanding and vision who opposed Mahatma Gandhi during the period from 1920 to 1947 and still remained in Indian politics. He became powerful, famous and left his tremendous impression on Indian Politics.

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# 'Zhadu Chhodo, Kalam uthao' -Baban Rawat

Baban Rawat, the newly appointed Deputy Chairman of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) is a man committed to the mission of improving the lives of scavengers and conservancy staff. A staunch believer in the slogan he raises, 'Zhadu Chhodo, kalam uthao' (Leave Broom, Hold Pen) he feels the key to better lives of scavengers and conservancy staff lies in doing away with contract employment of all persons working on cleaning duties with every organisation and ensuring job security and better working conditions for them by making them permanent employees and providing them good quality affordable houses on ownership basis. An interview...

**You have been struggling for better lives for scavengers and conservancy staff for over two decades now. Please tell us about your journey.**

**Mr Rawat :** I founded the Mahadalit Vikas Manch, a social organisation in Bihar to work for the scavengers and conservancy staff in 1995. Mahadalit means the communities which are more suppressed even among the Dalits. A large part of Dalit population doing works associated with cleanliness and hygiene has remained backward due to discrimination. We feel Dalit castes which have attained some educational, social, political progress should give up reservations themselves for weaker sections. Unfortunately, it does not happen and some Dalits are forced to act as manual scavengers. Mahadalit Vikas Manch feels that these people cannot align with main stream till separate reservation is provided for them. Responding to our campaign, the then NDA government in Bihar founded the First Mahadalit Commission of the Country in September 2007.

The NDA Government also

launched several schemes for development of Mahadalits. Recently, Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has passed an order directing the Central and State governments to take steps to tackle backwardness of a major part of Dalit population which has yet not received benefits of reservation. Thus, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India too has upheld the concept that I have been propagating.

We are conducting a national survey of Mahadalits to find out causes of their backwardness. In 2015, we founded Mahadalit Parishad in Lucknow and I was elected National Chairman of Mahadalit Parishad, which is active in 25 States across the country. Recently, the Government of India has appointed me as the Deputy Chairman of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK). Mahadalits would remain my priority even while working as the Deputy Chairman of NCSK. At NCSK, we are committed to social, educational, economic development of Mahadalits. We would be preparing a detailed report in this relation and submit it to the Government of India.



**Baban Rawat**  
Deputy Chairman of  
National Commission for  
Safai Karamcharis

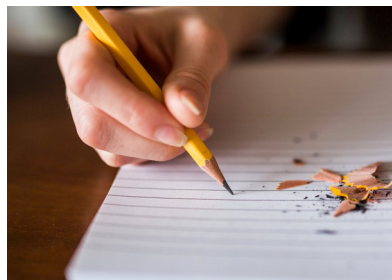
**Manual scavengers across the India are facing acute problems relating to their housing. They are not given houses because of casteism and even where the houses are available, they cannot afford the prices. What plans the NCSK and the Mahadalit Parishad have to address this issue?**

**Mr Rawat :** Not only manual scavengers but even those working as conservancy staff with municipal bodies, corporate companies, hotels, markets or even at houses of wealthy people are treated as untouchables. When the process of urbanisation began, they were brought to cities from villages and asked to shoulder the responsibilities of keeping cities and towns clean. They were employed by Municipal bodies' at large scale. They were accommodated in military cantonments. However, their permanent services with not only municipal bodies but even in other sectors such as the railways, airports, all other Central and State government undertakings were ended in the name of privatisation. Municipal bodies used to provide pukka houses to them across the country. Gradually permanent workers are retiring and new permanent employees are not being recruited. All conservancy jobs are being outsourced on contract basis. Resultant, retiring staff is being evicted from staff quarters for municipal employees. They are not being given private houses on rent. Therefore, they are forced to live in slums. In fact, they are SAFAI SAINIKS, who often sacrifice their lives to protect cities from filth and health hazards. Therefore, municipal bodies and government must take care of their accommodations. We have been demanding that they should be allotted houses on priority basis under PM AWAS YOJANA. This would be incorporated in the report of NCSK too.

**Scavengers and conservancy staff faces health hazards**

**because they are not provided safety equipments. Legal provisions in this regard are grossly underutilised. Manual scavenging is also prohibited but it still continues. What does the NCSK plan to do in this regard?**

**Mr Rawat :** Indeed there are many legal provisions against manual scavenging. Unfortunately, State Governments are not accepting that manual scavenging takes place. Manual scavengers have not been rehabilitated yet. These aspects are being handled under the Swach Bharat Mission and crores of rupees have been spent but conditions of manual scavengers have not changed. Municipal bodies are responsible for safety of



staff which cleans sewages. They outsource this work on contract basis and contractors force the conservancy staff work without safety equipment. There have been deaths of many due to poisonous gases. Neither contractor, nor municipal body accepts the responsibility of such incidents. Contract system is mother of all ills for conservancy staff. Since they are paid inadequate salaries, they cannot educate their children too. Ninety to ninety five percent of conservancy staff and scavengers are illiterate and lack awareness. We demand that the civic bodies appoint the conservancy staff on permanent basis and accept full responsibility of their safety. They must also be provided life insurance cover.

**Addiction is also a major**

**problem faced by conservancy staff and scavengers. What needs to be done to deal with it?**

We have been trying to inculcate awareness among scavengers and conservancy staff about social evils like alcoholism, gambling, other addictions, child marriages which plague them since 1995. Mahadalit Parishad has given its slogan, 'Shiksha ko Hathiyar Banao, Zhadu Chhodo, Kalam Uthao.' (Make education your weapon. Leave Broom, Pick up Pen.) This slogan has been popular. I often say, 'Sharabon Me Jo Doobe, Fir Na Ubhare Jindagani Me.' (One who drowns himself with alcoholism, never achieves anything in life.) We have also been using music as a tool to spread public awareness. Education would play a major role in curbing these ills. Gradually these people are getting aware. Now they have started sending their children to schools. The Central and State government needs to give a special package to encourage them to study. The government should adopt children of these communities. Top priority should be given to these classes in skill development schemes of Central Government.

**What are plans to make NCSK more effective?**

We think the work at hand is huge and we have little time to complete it. We need to reach out the scavengers and conservancy staff across the nation, study their problems and solve them. We would be touring across the country camping in every city for three to four days, holding meetings with scavengers and conservancy staff. Then we would be discussing these problems with the officers concerned. Besides, we would be holding awareness camps for scavengers and conservancy staff in various cities.

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(Compiled by Prasanna Keskar)

