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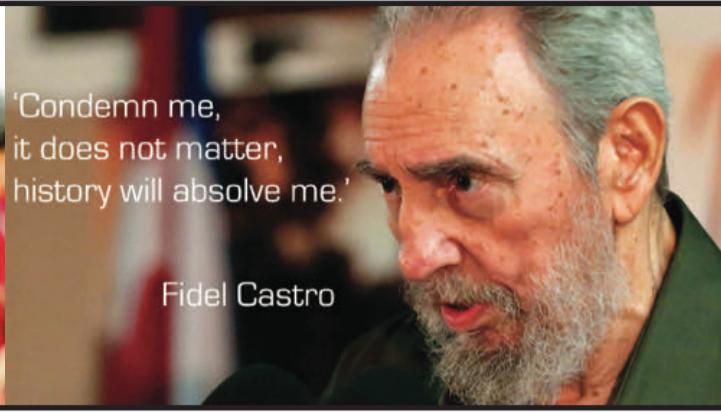
ਸਮਾਜਵਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ

ਕਿਊਬਾ ਇਕ ਛੋਟਾ ਜਿਹਾ ਟਾਪੂ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਿ ਅਮਰੀਕਨ ਟੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਰਫ 90 ਮੀਲ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ। ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦਾ ਖੇਤਰਫਲ ਇਕ ਲੱਖ 10 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਸੁਕੋਏਰ ਕਿਲੋਮੀਟਰ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਮੁਚੀਂ ਤੱਟ ਤਕਰੀਬਨ 5800 ਮੀਲ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦੀ ਆਬਾਦੀ ਲਗਭਗ 12 ਮਿਲੀਅਨ ਹੈ। ਸੰਨ 1492 ਵਿਚ ਜਦ ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਇੰਡੀਆ ਲੱਭਣ ਤੁਰਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦੇ ਟੱਟ ਤੇ ਪਹੁੰਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਸਪੇਨ ਦੀ ਰਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸੋਨੇ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਕਲਿਆ ਸੀ। ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦੇ ਟਾਪੂ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਿਰਫ ਆਦੀਵਾਸੀ ਨੇਟਿਵ ਇੰਡੀਆਨ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਾਸ ਸੀ। ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਨੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇਟਿਵ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੋਨਾ ਭਾਲਣ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਲਾਵਿਆ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੋਨਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਭਣਾ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਯਾਦ ਰਹੇ ਇਹ ਨੇਟਿਵ ਲੋਕ ਸਨ, ਜੋ ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਦੇ ਸੰਮੁਚੀਂ ਜਹਾਜ਼ ਤੱਕ ਤੌਰਦੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਫਲ ਭੇਟ ਕੀਤੇ ਸਨ। ਗਠੀਲੀਆਂ ਨੇਟਿਵ ਅੰਹਰਤਾਂ ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਦ ਆਈਆਂ। ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸੋਨਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਭ ਸਕਦੇ ਸਨ ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਤਾਜ਼ਾ ਘਾਟ ਤੇ ਲੈ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ਉਥੇ ਲਿਜਾ ਕੇ ਬੰਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਤਲ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਨੇਟਿਵ ਅੰਹਰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਪੇਨ ਭੇਜ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ, ਅਮੀਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰੇ ਲਈ ਜਾਂ ਸੈਕਸ ਦੀ

ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦਾ ਸਫਰ-ਲੁਟੋ ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀ ਕਾਸਟਰੋ ਤੱਕ

ਮੰਡੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੇਚਣ ਲਈ। ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਤੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਘੱਟ ਨੇਟਿਵ ਲੋਕ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਦਾ ਅਗਲਾ ਪੜਾਅ ਮੈਕਸੀਕੋ ਸੀ। ਮੈਕਸੀਕੋ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਿ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਡਿੱਵੈਲਪਮੈਂਟ ਵੀ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਕੋਲੰਬਸ ਨੇ ਤਹਿਸ ਨਹਿਸ ਕੀਤਾ। ਮੈਕਸੀਕੋ ਤੋਂ ਸੋਨਾ ਲਿਆਉਂਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਵਿਚ ਪੜਾਅ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਇਸੇ ਸਹੂਲਤ ਲਈ 1519 ਵਿਚ ਹਵਾਨਾ ਦੀ ਬੰਦਰਗਹ ਦੇ ਆਲੇ ਦੁਆਲੇ ਕਲੋਨੀਆਂ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ। ਸਪੇਨ ਤੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਗਰੀਬ ਲੋਕ ਲਿਆਲਿਆ ਕੇ, ਇਗਲੈਂਡ ਤੋਂ ਗਰੀਬ ਲੋਕ ਲਿਆਲਿਆ ਕੇ, ਇਥੇ ਵਸਾਏ ਗਏ। ਕਿਊਬਾ ਵਿਚ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਅਫ਼ਰੀਕਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕਾਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਫੜ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਕੇ ਇਥੇ ਪਸੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੇਚਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਲੇ ਅਤੇ ਸਪੈਨਿਸ਼ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਗਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਸਪੇਨ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਕਲੋਨੀ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ। ਸਪੇਨ ਵਲੋਂ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦੀ ਲੁਟ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜਾਗੀ ਰਹੀ। ਉਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਵਿਚ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਦੇ ਲੈਵਲ ਤੇ ਆਪਦਾ ਸਿਰ ਕੱਢ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਚੁੰਦਾ ਕਿ ਲਾਤਿਨੀ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਲੋਨੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਯਹਾਂਪੀਅਨ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦੀ ਆਬਾਦੀ ਦੀ ਜੱਦੋ-ਜਹਿਦ ਨੂੰ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸਪੋਰਟ ਕੀਤਾ। ਸਪੇਨ ਨਾਲ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ ਖੁੱਧ ਨੇ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਦੀ ਆਰਥਿਕਤਾ ਬੁਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਮਜ਼ੂਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਆਖਰਕਾਰ ਸੰਨ 1902 ਵਿਚ ਕਿਊਬਾ ਇਕ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਰਿਪਬਲਿਕ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ। ਹੁਣ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗਰੀਬਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੁਟ ਲਈ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਗਿਆ। ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੰਪਨੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਹੌਲੀ ਹੌਲੀ 75% ਖੇਤੀਬਾੜੀ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਦੇ ਰੱਖ ਹੋਣ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ। ਤੀਹ ਤੋਂ ਚਾਲੀ ਪ੍ਰਸੈਟ ਤੱਕ ਅਮਰੀਕੀ ਕੰਪਨੀਆਂ ਫੈਕਟਰੀਆਂ



ਹੋਟਲਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਖਾਣਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮਾਲਕਣਾਂ ਬਣ ਗਈਆਂ। ਹਵਾਨਾ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਐਸ਼ਗਾਹ ਵਿਚ ਤਬਦੀਲ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਹਵਾਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਕੈਬਰੇ, ਕਸੀਨੋ ਅਤੇ ਵੇਸ਼ਵਾ ਦੇ ਅੱਡੇ ਬਣ ਗਏ। ਕਿਊਬਾ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ

ਸਨ ਜਾਂ ਭੁੱਖ ਨਾਲ ਮਰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਸੰਚਾਰ ਦੇ ਸਾਧਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬੁਰਾ ਹਾਲ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਲੋਕ ਸੜਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਬੱਸ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਫਰ ਦੇ ਸਾਧਰ ਦੀ ਉਡੀਕ ਕਰਦੇ (ਕਿਊਬਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਹਸਪਤਾਲ ਜਾਣਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ) ਕਰਦੇ ਹੀ ਮਰ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਸੇ ਸੜਕ ਦੇ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਹੀ ਦਫ਼ਨਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਸੜਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਇਹ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਦੇਖੀਆਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਨ ਦਿਹਾੜੇ ਕਤਲ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ, ਮਰੋ ਹੋਏ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਾਜ਼ਮਾਂ ਵੀ ਰੁਲਦੀਆਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਸਨ, ਕੋਈ ਗਵਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਬਣਦਾ, ਕੋਈ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਹੈ ਇਸ ਸਭ ਕਾਸੇ ਤੋਂ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਲੋਕ, ਵਕੀਲ, ਡਾਕਟਰ, ਮੱਧ ਵਰਗੀ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਣੀ ਵੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਦੁਖੀ ਸੀ।

ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀ ਯੁੱਧ-ਬਾਟਸਟਾ ਦੇ ਕੁਰੱਪਟ

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ਸੰਪਾਦਕੀ ਮੰਡਲ ਦਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਨਾਲ ਸਹਿਮਤ ਹੋਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਮੈਟਰ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਧਾ-ਘਾਟਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਅਦਾਰਾ 'ਸਰੋਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼' ਨੂੰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਪੇਪਰ ਵਿਚ ਛਫੀ ਹਰ ਲਿਖਤ ਜਾਂ ਇਸਤਿਹਾਰ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਲੇਖ ਅਤੇ ਇਸਤਿਹਾਰਦਾਤਾ ਹੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ।

ਕੈਲਗਰੀ ਹਾਕਸ ਅਕਾਦਮੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਸਰਦ ਰੁੱਤ ਫੀਲਡ ਹਾਕੀ ਕੈਪ ਦਾ ਅਯੋਜਨ

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੈਂਥਰਜ਼ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਤੀ ਰਾਕਸ ਪ੍ਰਮੀਅਰ ਲੀਨਾ



ਕੈਲਗਰੀ : ਹਾਕਸ ਫੀਲਡ ਹਾਕੀ ਅਕਾਦਮੀ ਕੈਲਗਰੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਦਸੰਬਰ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੇ ਆਖਰੀ ਹਫ਼ਤੇ ਜੈਨਸਿਸ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਫੀਲਡ ਹਾਕੀ ਕੈਪ ਲਗਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਫੀਲਡ ਹਾਕੀ ਦੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਗੁਰ ਸਿੱਖੇ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਸੀਨੀਅਰ ਵਰਗ ਦੀ ਹਾਕਸ ਪ੍ਰਮੀਅਰ ਲੀਨਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੈਂਥਰਜ਼ ਦੀ ਟੀਮ ਨੇ ਬਾਜ਼ੀ ਮਾਰ ਲਈ।

ਜੂਨੀਅਰ ਕੈਪ ਲਈ 24 ਦਸੰਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਜੈਨਸਿਸ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੈਪ ਦੀ ਰਜਿਸਟਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ। ਦਸੰਬਰ ਦਾ ਆਖਰੀ ਹਫ਼ਤਾ ਕੈਲਗਰੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਠੰਡਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਪਰ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਕੈਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੱਧ-ਚੜ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਕੋਚਿੰਗ ਪੈਨਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਿਲਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ, ਮਨਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਝੱਲੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਗਰੁੱਪ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਗੀਨੀ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਵਗਜ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਵਾਈ। ਕੋਚਾਂ ਨੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਅਜਕੇ ਯੁੱਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੰਦਰੂਸਤ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਵੱਡੀ ਚੁੱਣੌਤੀ ਹੈ। ਸੰਤੁਲਿਤ ਖੁਕਾਕ ਦੇ ਮਹੱਤਵ ਨੂੰ ਦੱਸਣ ਲਈ ਡਾਈਟੀਸ਼ਨ ਨੇ ਇੱਕ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਕਲਾਸ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਗਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ। ਕੋਚਾਂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਕਲੱਬ ਪੱਕੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਜੁੜਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਜਨਵਰੀ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਮੈਂਬਰਸ਼ਿਪ ਲੈ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਕੋਚ ਦਿਲਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਾਲ 2016 ਦੌਰਾਨ ਅਲਬਰਟਾ ਸੂਬੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਾਕਸ ਅਕਾਦਮੀ ਦਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਵੱਡਾ ਯੋਗਦਾਨ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਕੈਪ ਦੀ ਸਮਾਪਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ

ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਨਵਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਬੋਤਲ ਡਰਾਈਵ ਜੈਨਸਿਸ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਰਵਾਈ ਗਈ। ਕਲੱਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਕੈਲਗਰੀ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਗੀਸਾਈਕਲ ਬੋਤਲਾਂ ਇਸ ਡਰਾਈਵ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਿਤੀਆਂ।

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੈਂਥਰਜ਼ ਜੇਤੂ
ਸੀਨੀਅਰ ਵਰਗ ਦੀ ਹਾਕਸ

ਪ੍ਰਮੀਅਰ ਲੀਨਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਰ ਟੀਮਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੈਂਥਰਜ਼, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਈਗਲਜ਼, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਲਾਈਨਜ਼ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਟਾਈਗਰਜ਼ ਨੇ ਭਾਗ ਲਿਆ ਜੈਨਸਿਸ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਦੇ ਇਨਡੋਰ ਹਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਲੀਨਾ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਚੱਲੀ ਫਾਈਨਲ ਮੈਚ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੈਂਥਰਜ਼ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਲਾਈਨਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਹਰਾ ਕੇ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸਥਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਈਗਲਜ਼ ਨੇ ਤੀਜਾ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਟਾਈਗਰਜ਼ ਨੇ ਚੌਥਾ ਸਥਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਬਲਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਢੁੱਡੀਕੇ ਨੇ ਜੇਤੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨਾਮ ਵੰਡੇ। ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਰਜਿਸਟਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਲਈ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ ਕੋਚ ਦਿਲਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ (403-681-0749), ਮਨਦੀਪ ਝੱਲੀ(403-973-1012) ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

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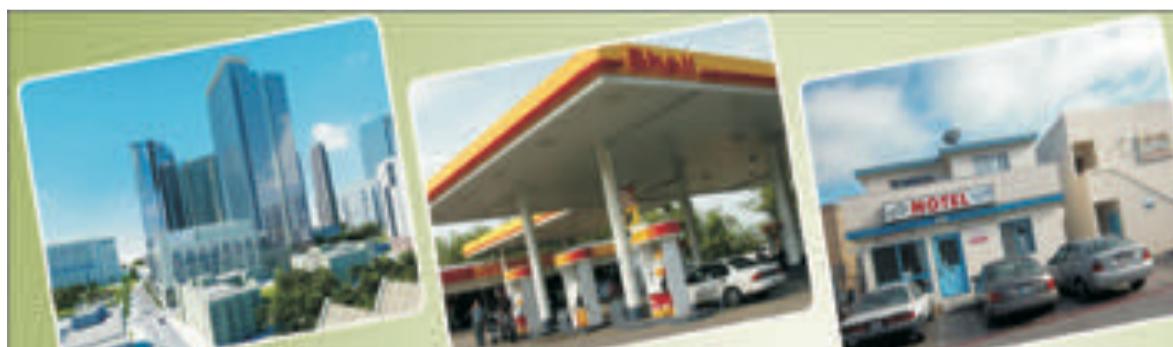
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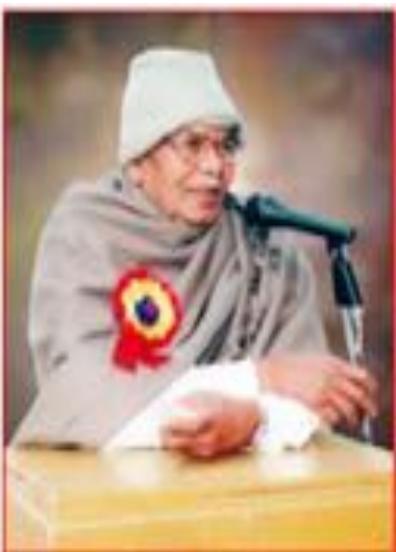
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Meghraj - A Gentle Voice of the Spring Thunder

of retirement in RampuraPhul holding tuitions for students. He took his time off only from his job, but he was always busy with his thoughts and writings, and travelingto meet the necessities of the people's movement.

After All India League for Revolutionary Culture (AILRC) was founded in 1983 in Delhi, we came into contact with Revolutionary Cultural Front of Punjab. Gurusharan Singh, the noted Punjabi dramatist, actor, and director inaugurated the first conference of AILRC. He was already known as a doyen of theatre performer who caused shock waves in the cultural domain in Punjab. Hundreds of litterateurs and artistes from Punjab attended this conference and this was how we could establish our relations with the Punjab's cultural fronts. Tankasala Ashok and C V Subbarao, who began to live in Delhi after the Emergency, facilitated the process. At that time we had an effective unit of Revolutionary Writers Association (RWA) in Delhi.

Baru Satwargal always represented the Punjab's Revolutionary Cultural Front from the beginning in AILRC, while others who accompanied him would change from time to time. They used to communicate only in Punjabi and even they would find it hard to converse fluently in Hindi. We first met Prof. Meghraj in 1990, when we visited Punjab to study state violence as part of a fact-finding team. He was known as an intellectual. Soon,we came to understand that he was well versed in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and English languages and literatures, and he could write in these four languages. Then onwards, he became the main representative in the Executive Committee of the AILRC. His representation in the league did good to both AILRC and the Revolutionary Cultural Front of Punjab.

After KVR and Anuradha Gandhi, it was Prof. Meghraj who contributed informed Marxist discourse in AILRC. He would participate in its Executive meetings with intellectual rigour, augustness and thought provoking deliberations, but always with a smiling face. Prof. Meghraj joined the editorial team of Aamukhafter it became the organ of AILRC, a literary and cultural magazine established byKanchan Kumar from Delhi in

1966. Meghraj had good and extensive relations with Punjabi, Urdu and Hindi writers from Punjab and Haryana for he had a long Communist life and practice with a clear perspective on united front that is the lifeline for the praxis of a revolutionary Communist party. Having such an understanding, he always strived to establish wide-ranging social relations.

Meghraj was born into a poor family on 13 April 1938 (the day of Jallianwala Bagh massacre we remember) and blossomed into a brilliant intellectual at a tender young age. He passed Junior Basic Training Examination with distinction at the state level and joined as a teacher when he just turned seventeen. Later he left the job to study M.A. in English literature at Punjab University, Chandigarh in 1961. As he was attracted to Communist politics since his college days, now he was elected as a state committee member Punjab Students' Union. In 1964, Ernest Hemingway's Old Man and the Sea influenced him, while he was intensely pursuing progressive literature as a student. During the entire period when he was pursuing his studies, he had gone through absolute penury, but only survived due to his insatiable thirst for knowledge.

Naturally in 1966, Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution of China swayed him as much as Naxalbari Revolution in 1967 and the French Student Movement in 1968 and soon he leaped intoNaxalbari politics. During this time he joined as a lecturer in TPD College in RampuraPhul, however, the college management removed him from service for his revolutionary politics. The student and teacher organizations took up the issue and started a struggle demanding his reinstatement, but he decided not to join back his job and give his full time to the revolutionary movement.

He joined the underground movement during 1969-71. On one hand, that was the period when Naxalites were being killed in fake encounters in Bengal, Punjab, Andhra, Kerala, and other regions, and on the other, a crisis had set in the movement with the splits in M-L party after the martyrdom of CharuMazumdar on 28 July 1972. During this time he was working in an M-L party under the leadership of

HarbhajanSohi. Because of his sincere commitment for the revolutionary movement, the leaders and cadre of other M-L parties had shown great respect for him. When he was underground, he organized rural agricultural workers and prepared them for struggles. He also started a magazine, MuktiMorch and ran it as its editor.

As soon as Emergency was declared on 26 June 1975, Meghraj was arrested and taken to an investigation centre in Amritsar, where he was tortured for a long period as a result of which he suffered loss of hearing. The party under the leadership of Sohi in Punjab was part of an M-L party led by Nagireddy at all India level. This party had gone through a split in 1982 on the questions of International line. In 1974, with the initiative of KondapallySitaramaiah (K.S.)AppalaSuri, SunitiGhosh and others formed CPI (M-L) COC with a view to bring all those who were earlier in the Central Committee together. From Punjab Sharmaji joined this Committee and Prof. Meghraj worked with him in the later period. But this COC couldn't last longer. AppalaSuri, Sharma and others joined CPI (M-L) Party Unity, which expanded soon to Bengal, Bihar, Delhi and Punjab.

At about the same time CPI (M-L) (People's War) under the leadership of K. S. working in the South made efforts to achieve unity with CPI (M-L) Party Unity and MCC in the North. After the leadership of K.S. came to an end, CPI (M-L) (People's War) realized unity with Party Unity in 1999 and, later further unity with MCC in 2004. That made it possible for the formation of CPI (Maoist).

Against this backdrop, Prof. Meghraj made his efforts to unite revolutionary cultural movement at all India level. His role in AILRC since 1990 came as handy for him to achieve this unity in the revolutionary cultural movement. Writers, intellectuals and performing artistes who have had close allegiance with these streams of revolutionary movements in the milieu worked in AILRC from the beginning and thus this cultural forum became instrumental in mutual exchange of ideological debates paving the way for unity. As a person who could discern the theoretical perceptions of all those who listened to him and

gave him respect, Professor Meghraj strived to develop their understanding even as he himself enhanced his own during this period. It was the time when he penned several political writings keeping in view the requirements of the movement of the exploited and oppressed people. He translated several books including Shining Red Star by Li Xintian, and endeavored to see Confessions of an Economic Hit Man by John Perkins came out in Punjabi. He wrote reviews of several literary books, novels, poetry and stories. He was the President of Punjabi Revolutionary Cultural Front till the time he breathed his last. He rendered immense services to the revolutionary cultural movement in Punjab.

The worsttimes of state violence in Andhra Pradesh during 2000-2004, particularly at time when Purushottam and Azam Ali, leaders of Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee were murdered, I spent most of my time in Punjab, as it was impossible to survive in my own state. It was Satnam and Meghraj who accommodated me in their houses and extended their helping hands. As Prof. Meghraj was responsible comrade for AILRC in Punjab, it was possible for us to conduct our activities from there. This coordination of AILRC from Punjab continued till Mumbai Resistance 2004, a conclave of more than 400 revolutionary, dalit, minorities, adivasi and other democratic organizations that held an alternative to the World Social Forum in Mumbai.

Queen Elizabeth was invited as the chief guest for Golden Jubilee Celebrations of independence by Indian government in 1997. Revolutionary parties and cultural organisations decided to hold India-wide protest demonstrations against her visit. I was the secretary of AILRC at that time. In the second week of October 1997, AILRC organized a cultural workshop (a schooling in performances of people's art forms). Artistes and writers from Jana Natya Mandali and Revolutionary Writers Association (RWA) under Gaddar's leadership participated in that workshop. From all over Indian, artistes from 24 cultural organisations including from Punjab took part in the workshop for one week after which a

cultural resistance demonstration, a public meeting were held in Jalandhar and Amritsar with a slogan demanding Queen Elizabeth go back. Street plays scripted by J N (Janardhan Reddy) of Warangal unit of RWA were performed in Hindi in both the protests. Many don't know that the President of Revolutionary Cultural Front of Punjab, Prof. Meghraj made all these activities possible.

A Committee of twelve members belonging to various people's organisations from Punjab was formed and held a commemorative meeting paying homage and aptly honouring Comrade Meghraj on 16 October 2016 in Rampura Phul for his services to the people's democratic revolution. Among hundreds of people who attended and paid their homage to Meghraj were members of Meghraj's family, his associates and co-travellers of revolutionary cultural fronts from Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, his students, Dr. Darshanpal who is working among the peasants of Punjab, Baru Satwarg of Landless Dalit Agricultural Workers and several members of Revolutionary Democratic Front (RDF). Prof. G N Saibaba participated in the meeting and spoke as chief guest paying his respects and salutations to Prof. Meghraj. He presented Prof. Meghraj's invaluable services to the oppressed masses and said that without a revolutionary coordinator like Prof. Meghraj there exists now an unbridgeable gap and a great loss for people's movement particularly in the wake of unprecedented fascist attacks on the people of Kashmir, Bastar, dalits, Muslims and other minorities and oppressed people by imperialist forces at world level and brahmanical Hindutva forces in Indian sub-continent.

The Committee brought out a four-page commemorative souvenir presenting his life and his services to the people. This souvenir was distributed in the villages as well, apart from in the cities. Sixteen people including his life partner and his two daughters and sons-in-law spoke in the meeting. Among those who spoke in the meeting also include Balwant Makhu, President, RDF, Punjab, representatives from CPI(M-L) New Democracy, CPI(M-L) Liberation and others. Surinder Singh, Meghraj's student and a close associate for lifetime illustrated sketches of his mentor and the Committee

presented them to the daughters of Meghraj in the meeting. A photo collage representing five important events of Prof. Meghraj's life was displayed in the meeting, which was presented to his life partner, Kaushalya Devi. A number of his students worked for this commemorative meeting including contributing economic resources. His students wherever they lived now, sent messages explaining their relationship with Prof. Meghraj and contributed funds from across continents. All these details were displayed in the meeting.

A gentle voice of people's revolution that propagated and spread the ideology of revolutionary democracy for decades is being muted at a time when the imperialist and Hindutva fascist forces increased several folds their onslaught on people in the last twenty years, particularly now in the form of Trump-Modi imperialist and state terrorist form of danger enveloping everywhere like an octopus.

Dripping under that spring thunder's drizzling brought by that cloud - Megh - let there be sprouting and taking of new foliage of revolutionary thoughts and imbibing of that spirit. That is the real homage that can really honour him. I pay humbly my revolutionary homage to this comrade, who is my long-standing fellow-fighter and my true well-wisher.

As said by Aseem, one of Meghraj's students, it is not a sorrowful farewell that is to be bid to him now. We need to celebrate the fruitful success of his life. We need to say the last words only in the case of those who couldn't tell all that is needed to be said.

- Varvara Rao

ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਦਿਆ ਸੂਰਜਾ / -ਹਰਜੀਤ ਬੰਦੀ

ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਨਿੱਕੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ, ਸੂਰਜਾ ਸੂਰਜਾ ਫੱਟੀ ਸੁਕਾ।
ਨਵੇਂ ਗੁਜਾਰਾਸ਼ ਸੂਰਜ ਅੱਗੇ, ਅੱਜ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ ਪਾ।
ਹੁਣ ਫੱਟੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੁਕਾਉਣੀ, ਕੁੱਝ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਨਵਾਂ ਦਿਖਾ।
ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਦਿਆ ਸੂਰਜਾ, ਜੱਗ ਤੋਂ ਜੱਗ ਦੇ ਬੱਦਲ ਹਟਾ।
ਸਾਮਰਾਜੀਅਂ ਫਿਰਕਾਪ੍ਰਸਤਾਂ, ਪਾ ਲਈ ਗੁੜੀ ਯਾਰੀ।
ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੁੱਟਣ ਖਾਤਰ, ਕਰ ਲਈ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ।
ਜੰਗੇ-ਮੈਦਾਨ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਹੈ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀ।
ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਚੁੰਗਲ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ, ਨਿਕਲਣ ਦਾ ਰਾਹ ਦਿਖਾ।
ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਦਿਆ ਸੂਰਜਾ, ਜੱਗ ਤੋਂ ਜੱਗ ਦੇ ਬੱਦਲ ਹਟਾ।
ਪਰਤ-ਖਜਨੇ ਲੁੱਟਣ ਖਾਤਰ, ਚੋਜ ਨਵੇਂ ਨਿੱਤ ਕਰਦੇ।
ਨਾਲ ਗੁਆਂਢੀ ਦੇ ਲੜਾ ਕੇ, ਝੋਲੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਰਦੇ।
ਨਹੀਂ ਗੁਆਂਢੀ ਸਾਡੇ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਨ, ਸੌਚ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਰਦੇ।
ਮੁਨਾਫੇ ਖਾਤਰ ਹਥਿਆਰਾਂ ਦਾ, ਹੁੰਦਾ ਵਪਾਰ ਹਟਾ।
ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਦਿਆ ਸੂਰਜਾ, ਜੱਗ ਤੋਂ ਜੱਗ ਦੇ ਬੱਦਲ ਹਟਾ।
ਬਰਾਬਰੀ ਤੇ ਇਨਸਾਫ਼ ਵਾਸਤੇ, ਜੱਗ ਨਵੀਂ ਛਿੜ ਜਾਵੇ।
ਬੰਦਿਆਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਜੀਵਣ ਹੋਵੇ, ਸਭ ਦਾ ਚਿਹਨ ਖਿੜ ਜਾਵੇ।
ਠੰਡੇ ਮਿੱਠੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਾਲਾ, ਖੂੰਜ ਸਾਂਝਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਗਿੜ ਜਾਵੇ।
ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਦਿਆ ਸੂਰਜਾ, ਜੱਗ ਤੋਂ ਜੱਗ ਦੇ ਬੱਦਲ ਹਟਾ।



Kashmir Concerned Citizens' Collective Srinagar

Dr Navsharn d/o Gursharn
SRINAGAR :

The Concerned Citizens' Collective team that visited Kashmir from 12 to 16 December 2016, expressed deep dismay to observe that the people of the Kashmir valley have been entirely abandoned by their central and state governments, in this time of their great suffering. The only face of government that the people of the Valley encounter is of a repressive security establishment, they declared.

There is no proportionality of state response as stone pelting is met by bullets and pellet guns. The high proportion of injuries on the face and above the waist demonstrate that there was official intention to shower hundreds of pellets on the agitated population, not to disperse but to kill or permanently disable.

This attitude of governments, both state and central, the members maintained, is even more regrettable because the large majority of the victims of the bullets and pellet guns are children, many of them so young that they could not have been part of any agitation. Even for those boys who were pelting stones, the response of a democratic state cannot be to disable them for life, or to kill them. There is also no display of public compassion by the state government, which has failed to reach out to the children who are blinded and disabled, and their

suffering families, many of whom are too frightened to seek medical treatment for fear of being criminalised. At the same time, the Committee greatly appreciated the doctors and public medical community, including in psychiatry and ophthalmology, who extended extraordinarily compassionate, even heroic, service and care to the victims of pellet and gun injuries.

The Committee was distressed to learn that many children are presently incarcerated in adult prisons. Others are detained in juvenile homes but without the protections of a comprehensive juvenile justice system which has not been established in J&K. Equally distressing is the finding that both children and adults are being detained under the draconian anti-democratic Public Security Act.

The Concerned Citizens' Collective team, comprising Tapan Bose, Harsh Mander, Pamela Philipose, Dinesh Mohan and Navsharan Kaur met a wide range of the Kashmiri population over their four-day stay in Kashmir. They interacted with over 150 persons, ranging from children disabled by pellets and bullets and their caregivers, youth, women, older people, working people, farmers, doctors, human rights and civil society activists, journalists, traders, business leaders, writers, and villagers in Kulgam, Pulwama and Anantnag. This wide swathe of public opinion was nearly unanimous in expressing their anguish and alienation from the state. It was clear to the Committee this was no longer a movement of militants supported by Pakistan as is portrayed in the national media, but a broad-based movement of almost all sections of Kashmiri society.

A number of people who met the team members asked that if the Kashmiri people were indeed equal citizens of India, then why does the government and its security establishment use forms and levels of state violence in the Kashmir valley that they do not deploy in other parts of the country? Even more violent agitations in recent months, such as the Patel and Jat agitations and the protests

against the sharing of Cauvery river waters have not been met with such lethal state response as in Kashmir. The Committee said it was opposed to the use of such force against the country's people anywhere, and that it was deeply dismayed that this highly excessive use of force against Kashmiris reflects an attempt to crush their spirit and treat them as an enemy population. A large majority of people who met them also deplored the role of significant sections of the national media for purveying false and partisan information about the Kashmiri situation over the past months, contributing further to their sense of alienation.

The Concerned Citizens' Committee expressed deep anguish at the suffering of those who they described as 'our Kashmiri children, sisters and brothers at the hand of governments that are majoritarian, repressive and merciless'. The members observed that there is a sense of fear among minorities, liberals and the poor in other parts of India as well because of the same approach of the central government to its working people and to dissent.

They therefore stand in solidarity with all these people, and demand that pellet guns are banned forthwith. The Committee also demands that the leadership of both the central and state governments publicly express regret for their use on children and civilians; that peaceful dissent and stone pelting is met in future with democratic, proportionate and restrained response by the police and security personnel; that security personnel responsible for these excesses and violence are punished; that the state administration releases forthwith all children and youth and political prisoners; that it reaches out humanely with all support for treatment, rehabilitation, education and livelihoods of persons disabled because of bullets and pellets and their caregivers; and that a peaceful, just and humane atmosphere is created in the state to initiate political engagement and meaningful dialogue to address the widely held grievances of the people.

A Growing Movement in Jhaloor Illustrates How Dalit Villagers in Punjab Are Reclaiming Their Right to Panchayat Land

On 28 November 2016 Gurdev kaur died, Gurdev Kaur, a 72-year-old Dalit woman from Jhaloor, a village in south Punjab, was cremated. She died as a result of injuries sustained during an attack on 5 October. Against the backdrop of a long-standing dispute over agricultural land in the village, the Jutt Sikhs of Jhaloor had mounted a brutal assault on Dalit villagers. They had beaten up members of the community, and vandalised the latter's homes—breaking windows, household appliances, and water pipes—and even injured cattle and pets. The Jutts had groped, molested, and beaten up Dalit women. Over 40 Dalits were severely wounded: nine had suffered head injuries; one villager's arm was broken, while another's jaw was dislocated. During the onslaught, Gurdev's leg was broken and nearly hacked off, and multiple bones were crushed. She succumbed to her injuries on 11 November. Since the attack, Jhaloor has become the epicentre of a burgeoning mass movement. At her funeral, Gurdev's body was wrapped in a red flag—an allusion to communist ideals—and flags bearing the insignias of the Zameen Prapti Sangarsh Committee (ZPSC) and the Bhartiya Kisan Unions—informal, left-oriented coalitions of landless labourers and marginalised farmers in Punjab. Thousands attended her cremation, and swore to continue the movement in her name.

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Once we reached the courtyard, the men told me that their community was being subjected to an informal social boycott: the Jutts had refused to buy milk from the Dalits, leaving the latter unable to procure fodder for their cattle. The Jutts also forbade doctors from treating those who had been wounded in the attack. The Dalit villagers said that their milk and food supplies were fast depleting. Fearing another attack, several families belonging to the community had locked their homes and fled Jhaloor, while many others had sent their young daughters away to relatives in other villages. A few farmers with small land holdings, who had supported the Dalits in their clash against the Jutts, had left as well.

Over the next hour, the men told me what had transpired on the day of the attack. Meanwhile, Lakshmi went into another house. There, she met several women from the gathering, one after another. Later, she told me, "Each woman took me indoors and stripped to show me big marks on their bodies—purple and blue blood-clots under their breasts, on their backs, buttocks, and inner thighs." The women told Lakshmi that their husbands were in jail, they did not have medicine to treat themselves, or buy milk for their children. They had not spoken about their wounds, one of the women added to Lakshmi, because they were ashamed.

The attack in Jhaloor is one in a long and fast-growing list of caste-based clashes in rural Punjab, which has sustained a feudal system for decades. In most villages, Jutt Sikhs, historically a land-owning caste, maintain an oppressive stronghold over a majority of the farm land, often through fraudulent practices and violence. This leaves the Scheduled Caste communities in the state—which form nearly 32 percent of the population—with little avenues for employment. In a predominantly agrarian society, land is a necessity, not only for producing crops, but also as a source of fodder for cattle, for creating manure, for dry wood and straws to light chulhas, and in many cases, for ablutions in the absence of toilets in houses. Many Dalits who either work on Jutt-owned land or collect fodder



from it, are subjected to abuse. Women from lower-caste communities often face verbal, physical and sexual abuse at the hands of the landowners—an ordeal, many of them said, they would be less likely to face if they could own or work on their own land.

In 1961, through the Punjab Village Common Lands Regulation Act, the Punjab government decreed that a third of every village's panchayat land—government-owned land that is managed by the panchayat and allocated to villagers via public auctions—would be reserved for members of Scheduled Caste communities. Today, this comes up to nearly 51,000 acres of Punjab's 1.4 lakh hectare panchayat land. But despite the reservation guaranteed by law, those from dominant castes continue to keep lower-caste communities away from the land set aside for them. This is done through various methods. For instance, since only members of Scheduled Caste communities are allowed to bid during the auctions of the panchayat land reserved for them, Jutt farmers regularly hire Dalit villagers to act as dummy candidates, often in collusion with revenue officials and the panchayat, whose responsibility it is to oversee the process. Given that most Dalits are unable to afford the high land rates, these candidates win the auctions on behalf of the farmers from the dominant caste. Once the candidate has won the land, the Jutts take it over, often employing Dalit villagers to work as serfs.

But in the past few years, various Dalit farmers'

collectives in Punjab have rallied together to demand ownership of the land they are entitled to. In 2008, young Dalit men from Benra—a village in Punjab's Sangrur district—mobilised the village's 250 Dalit families. They pooled in money to enter a bid—for an auction that was due later that year—for a nine-acre tract of land. The families came together under the banner of a farmers' collective called the Kranti Pendu Mazdoor Union. During the summer and monsoon months, through day and night vigils, the members of the community guarded the land so that no Jutts could occupy it. In late 2008, when the auction was held, even though the authorities in Benra did not extend any help to the Dalit collective, it managed to secure the bid for the land. A 65-year-old woman who led the vigils told a reporter from India Today that they "forced, and even carried away" proxy candidates from the auction. The collective also succeeded in forcing the administration to grant it a cut in land rates. Since then, the families that formed the collective have been farming on the land together, growing wheat and paddy along with fodder for their cattle.

In 2014, Dalits from the village Seekha in Barnala district, wrested control of the seven acres of land that was reserved for them, from the upper-caste farmers who had been occupying it. In this effort, they were helped by members belonging to the Punjab Students' Union, a collective of student activists. The activists and the farmers picketed the office of the block development officer and held protests until the administration agreed to hand

the land over to them. That same year, through a struggle that spanned several months, 143 Dalit families from Balad Kalan village succeeding in claiming their right to the 121 acres of panchayat land that was reserved for them in the village, even though revenue officials and the police attempted to intimidate them. In June 2014, Dalit villagers from Balad Kalan came together to ensure that an ongoing auction of the reserved land would not be subverted by upper-caste villagers or the revenue officials. The villagers were met by nearly 500 riot policemen, who lathi-charged them and beat them up severely. The police charged 41 men belonging to the Dalit community under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including an attempt to murder. The men were incarcerated without bail for 59 days. Protests broke out throughout the state, and continued until the state administration and panchayat agreed to surrender control of the land, in late August. Sukhwinder Pappi, a member of the ZPSC who participated in the struggle at Balad Kalan, said that the post-harvest calculations conducted by the organisation showed that a Dalit family in the village earned close to Rs 10,000 from the land each season. "Now that isn't a sum for which Dalits and activists have faced the state violence, been in jails and hospitals," Pappi told me. The greater reward, he said, was one that could not be quantified: dignity. Meanwhile, news of the protests in Benra and Balad Kalan has spread through many districts, and inspired other landless Dalits to rise in protest.

Janhastakshep, an activist coalition that includes professors from Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University, conducted a fact-finding mission on the caste conflicts in villages in Punjab. In June 2016, Ish Mishra, a member of Janhastakshep and a professor at Hindu College in DU, published their findings on his blog. Mishra stated that in about 65 villages in the Malwa region in Punjab, Dalit residents have been agitating for their right to panchayat land, and that they had succeeded in as many as 16 villages in Sangrur alone. In April 2015, the ZPSC organised a Mahapanchayat to discuss how such collectives across Punjab could be strengthened. A report published on the website of the Communist Party of India Marxist-Leninist, noted that in 2016, Dalits in 44 villages launched protests to obtain their share of panchayat land. In nearly 40 villages, the report stated, the agitators secured the land, but in at least three villages, the movements were unsuccessful.

Jhaloor is one such village. Although 250 of the 600 families residing in Jhaloor belong to the Dalit community, they do not own any of the 2,300 acres of land in it. Most Dalits in Jhaloor eke out a living by tending to cattle and selling products such as milk, working for Jutt farmers, or through other petty trades. The panchayat land in Jhaloor is nearly 50 acres. The 16.5 acres of land reserved for Scheduled Caste community is split into three parts, of which only one part—about six acres large—is cultivable. The other two plots, of 6 and 4.5 acres each, are located at quite a distance from the village and are not cultivable. Relying on the villagers I met, as well as a report that was released by the Association for Democratic Rights (AFDR), a Punjab-based human-rights watchdog organisation whose members visited Jhaloor on 10 October, I was able to piece together an

account of the events that led to the violent attack the Jutts launched on 5 October 2016.

On 10 May 2016, after the revenue officials and administration at Jhaloor failed in three of their attempts to conduct auctions because of protests led by the ZPSC, they decided to hold a forced auction of the six acres of cultivable land reserved for those belonging to the Scheduled Caste community. The auction was conducted in the presence of police officials. Jugraj Singh, a Dalit, won the six acres for Rs 2.62 lakh. Jugraj later told the AFDR team that Harvinder Mangu—a Jutt landlord—had lent him the money to buy the land. He also said that he had no prior farming experience. According to the account he gave the AFDR team, Jugraj did not own a tractor or any agricultural implements either—he was planning to borrow all of these from Gurdeep Babban, another landlord. Effectively, the AFDR found, Jugraj had stood in the auction as a dummy candidate for Babban.

According to the report, when the administration gave Jugraj the land, many Dalit residents of the village, aware that Babban would control it, camped on it for a month in protest. In the second week of June, the police forcibly evicted them. Subsequently, Jugraj, with help from the landlords, planted paddy on the land. A few weeks later, the Dalit villagers uprooted the paddy seedling as a mark of protest. In the meantime, the AFDR report states, six members of the Jhaloor panchayat wrote to the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) of development, asking for a revocation in the decision to allot the land to Jugraj since he was a dummy candidate. They received no response. (The AFDR report, released on 25 October, also notes that the ADC later denied receiving any such letter.) Members of the ZPSC

told the AFDR team that they submitted multiple memorandums to the block-development and panchayat officers as well as the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), requesting that the false bid be cancelled. Several Dalit villagers recounted, they protested in front of the office of the block-development officer on 10 and 11 August. The AFDR report noted that the members of the community repeatedly demanded the cancellation of the bid. By early August, Jugraj had planted paddy on the land again.

By 29 September, the outcome of the bid remained unchanged. That day, the Dalits uprooted the unripe paddy in protest once again. For this, the AFDR report noted, the police booked several members of the community under Section 452 of the IPC—trespassing with the intent to harm. On 2 October, a group of Jutts attacked the ZPSC leader Gurdas Singh's family in Jhaloor and injured the son of Prakash Singh, a Dalit member of the village panchayat. They also beat up two other members of the community and vandalised their homes. The victims were hospitalised, but the police did not register a complaint against the Jutts.

On 5 October, Sukhwinder Pappi of the ZPSC and the men I spoke to in Jhaloor told me, the ZPSC organised a rally outside the office of the SDM in Lehra, a town nearly ten kilometres away from Jhaloor, to demand that the land be handed over to the Dalits in the village. Members from the community in Jhaloor and neighbouring villages attended the demonstration. According to Nirbhay, a Dalit man in his thirties who had stayed back in Jhaloor that day, at about 2 pm, while the protest was ongoing, the village gurdwara's loudspeaker crackled. Nirbhay said the announcement said: "All Jutts should gather with arms and reach Lehra SDM

office." about 50 Jutts—drunk and armed—arrived at the venue of the protest. Afraid that the Jutts would attack them, the Dalit villagers said that they expressed their apprehension to the police. The police officials told the AFDR that they asked the group of Jutts to go back to Jhaloor. The tehsildar assured the villagers that the police would protect them, and arranged for a few policemen to escort the protestors back to the village. Four policemen—three constables and a Station House Officer (SHO)—escorted the seven vehicles that were ferrying the villagers back. The AFDR report states that the SHO did not continue beyond Moonak, a village located just before Jhaloor. Several villagers I spoke to told me that the constables did not enter the village either.

Nirbhay told me that the protestors, including those from other villages, arrived in Jhaloor at about 4.30 pm. "The announcement being made on the gurdwara's speakers changed," he said. It now said: "The Dalits have killed Gurdeep Babban. A thousand Dalits are coming to the village," and, "We must teach them a lesson." Upon reaching, the villagers saw around 250 drunken Jutt men, young and old, had climbed the rooftops of the houses around the Ravidas Dharamshala. Nirbhay told me the men were armed with stones, bricks, scythes and rods. As the 200-odd Dalit women and men entered the village, the Jutts launched an attack on them. They pelted stones on the unarmed villagers climbing down from the vehicles and broke seven chota haathis—a name used to describe a vehicle similar to a tempo, but which can carry more people. The Jutts showed no signs of relenting—they broke open doors and windows, entered the houses, and beat up whomever they could lay their hands on: women, children, cattle and domestic pets. They broke

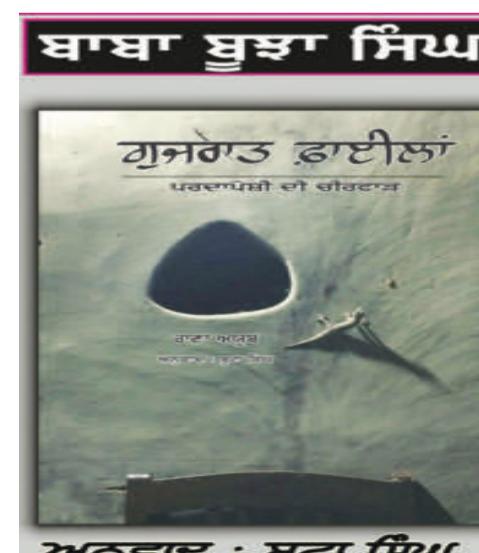
household objects and electric meters, cut open water tanks, and plucked out taps and pipes. Pappi told me that members of the ZPSC called the police, but officials took more than an hour-and-a-half to reach from Lehra—a journey that usually takes about 15 minutes on a motorbike. Even after the policemen reached, several Dalit villagers told me, they waited outside the village while the attack continued.

The AFDR report observes that the house of the ZPSC leader Balwinder Singh—Gurdev Kaur's son—was specifically targeted. A group of Jutts entered through the roof of the house, and beat up the members of his family. Gurdev, who was of frail health, was lying on a cot in her courtyard and was unable to move. The Jutts attacked her with axes, almost severing her leg. She went into shock and was later admitted to a hospital in Chandigarh. Manjit Kaur, a Dalit woman, told the AFDR team that the Jutts "were looking for Balwinder Singh's brother, Balbir Singh, of the Punjab Farmers' Union. They ransacked my trucks and stole Rs 30,000, which I had kept for my new-born girl."

The Dalit women told Lakshmi the Jutts uttered obscenities to women and stripped naked in front of them. They harassed, groped, molested and beat them up. According to the AFDR report, the Dalits said that the Jutts asked them, "Will you join the protest against us?" They then attacked the homes of those who said yes. Jaspreet Kaur, who works as a sweeper in the village school, said that while the Jutts beat them, they repeatedly said that they wanted to put the Dalits "in their place." She added that, when the attack was ongoing, several Jutt women helped Jutt men identify the houses that belonged to Dalits.

The report also notes that, according to the ZPSC, over 100 Dalit villagers were trapped

“ਉਸਾਰੁ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਅਤੇ ਉਚ-ਕੋਟੀ ਦਾ ਬਾਣ ਸੰਪਾਦਨ”
ਹੁਣ ਪੱਖੇਵਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ
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ਗੁਜਰਾਤ ਫਾਈਲਾਂ

- ਤਰਕਭਾਰਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਬਰਨਾਲਾ
 - ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇਸ਼ਭਗਤ ਯਾਦਗਾਰ ਹਾਲ ਜਲੰਧਰ
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- ਸੰਪਰਕ ਫੋਨ 94634-74342

in Jhaloor. Upon the SDM's assurance, the report says, the men and women came out that night in groups of five and seven. The police took them to the hospital, but arrested several Dalits the next morning. Although close to 40 people were injured and in need of medical attention, many did not go to the hospital for fear of being arrested. Some among those who were receiving medical care left the hospital without the doctor's consent.

According to a police officer that the AFDR spoke to, 86 cases were registered after the attack. Of these, only 18 were against the Jatts. On 6 October, the report says, the police took 50–60 Dalit men into custody and illegally detained them until the next day. It also noted that 17 men from the community, who were named in the cases registered after the protestors uprooted the paddy and after the attack on 5 October, were arrested.

Not unlike the Dalit Asmita Yatra that culminated in Una, Gujarat in August and the Chalo Udupi march that was carried out

in Karnataka in October, the Dalits in south Punjab, under the aegis of the Jhaloor Kand Jabar Virodh Action Committee, organised a massive rally on 21 October at Lehra Gaga, a set of twin towns near Jhaloor. Close to 5,000 people attended the demonstration. Members of the ZPSC; the Bhartiya Kisan Union in Ugrahan; the Punjab Khet Mazdur Union, which mobilises landless workers; among others, attended the protest to express their solidarity with the Dalits' cause.

Yet, neither the protests, nor the issue of caste-based discriminations and landlessness have found any mention in the manifestos of the political parties that are currently campaigning for the upcoming elections in 2017. The silence from the political machinery in Punjab is simultaneously astounding and unsurprising, especially when one considers the relevance of Sangrur, the constituency in which Jhaloor falls. Various union leaders, and villagers—both Jutt and Dalit—told me that Gurdeep Babban is "Dhindsa's man"—referring to

Parminder Singh Dhindsa, the minister for finance and planning in the current state government, led by the Shiromani Akali Dal. Babban's proximity to a prominent minister would explain the inadequate measures taken by the police to ensure the safety of the Dalits. Rajinder Kaur Bhattal, a former chief minister of Punjab and a member of the Congress, belongs to a village called Changali Wala—less than 15 kilometers from Jhaloor. Several people told me, Bhattal visited Jhaloor on 3 October, and expressed solidarity with the Jatts. She left without even meeting the Dalit villagers. Bhagwant Mann, a member of parliament who belongs to the Aam Aadmi Party, was elected to the Lok Sabha from Sangrur, in 2015. Mann, too, has remained silent on the issue of panchayat land.

On 7 October, Rajesh Bagga, the chairman of the Punjab Commission for Scheduled Castes, ordered an inquiry into the violence by constituting a committee comprising the Lehragaga SDM, superintendent of police and the

deputy superintendent of the police. The ZPSC rejected the formation of the committee, alleging that Bagga had only met the Jutts who had instigated the attack, and that he only went to meet those who were injured and being treated at the civil hospital, even though it had not admitted the Dalits. Till date, the commission has not met any of those who were attacked.

When Gurdev died, on 11 November, the police was forced to register her death as an instance of murder. A family member told me that the family had decided they would not allow a post-mortem until the perpetrators of the crime were arrested. Since 12 November, Dalit villagers, along with the ZPSC, have held daily protests outside either the district collector's office, on Barnala road, or outside Dhindsa's residence. Several union leaders and journalists present at these protests noted that, unlike other rallies in rural Punjab, these protests have seen as many women in attendance as men.

On 15 November, the

administration bent slightly, and released the 17 Dalits who had been imprisoned on 6 October. Students in Chandigarh and Patiala, writers and intellectuals, and ordinary citizens have joined cause by raising their voices and protesting as well. But none of the perpetrators have been formally arrested, nor have any politicians addressed the issue.

On 26 November, the agitators held a meeting at Moga. They decided to accept Gurdev Kaur's body and cremate her with full honours. News of the funeral has spread widely on social media, and hundreds of people have vowed to continue the struggle as a mark of respect to Gurdev Kaur. Like the struggles in Benra and Balad Kalan earlier, the outcome of Jhaloor's resistance, which has now found a face, will likely shape the struggle for justice taking root in other villages in the state. The landless Dalits in Punjab are no longer willing to hide their wounds.

Amandeep Sandhu
is working on a non-fiction book on Punjab.

Government Misleading Nation on Demonetization: AFDR

Association for Democratic Rights Bathinda Unit organized a convention for examining demonetization, its causes, impacts and explanations provided by Government. Convention was addressed by Dr. Sukhpal Singh Head of Economics and Sociology Department PAU Ludhiana and Prominent intellectual Sh. Jagmohan Singh. The gathering took out a procession in the city afterwards.

The main speaker at Convention Dr. Sukhpal Singh dismissed official narrative on demonetization and said Government has presented four main reasons behind the move of demonetization – curbing black money, corruption, fake currency and terrorism, none of which will be impacted significantly as per available studies, data and experience. Dr. Sukhpal Singh told that the major part of black money remains in circulation in form of real estate, share market etc. and only a little chunk remains hoarded in currency notes. Only five to six percent of the black money is available in currency notes. Similarly the reasoning of eradicating corruption by curbing supply of currency notes is also misleading. In

India the cash forms only 12% of GDP however we stand at 76th place in list of corruption free nations. While cash forms 21 % of GDP however Japan stands on 15th rank in this list. Similarly the ratio of cash to GDP is almost same in Nigeria and Sweden, however Nigeria is counted among most corrupt countries whereas Sweden comes in the least corrupt countries. Whereas the matter of fake currency is concerned, only about 27 paisa per 1000 rupees of fake currency remains in circulation which does not affect our economy significantly. Even its negative impact cannot be ruled out entirely but with arrival of rupees 2000 currency note the flow of fake currency has become easier as it takes just one fake currency note of rupees 2000 in place of four 500 rupees currency notes to make same value. As per various news reports fake currency notes of 2000 rupees has already begun to pour in our economy.

Dr. Sukhpal Singh added that the real motive of demonetization is to make cuts on the pockets of poor and working people in favor of the corporate interests. Demonetization has been primarily initiated for reducing



the burden of Non Performing Assets (NPA), generated by big corporates, from banks at the cost of common people. The banks have already begun to write off loans of Corporates sharks. On the other side small traders, farmers and common people have been impacted adversely by demonetization. As per one estimate there has been a fall of 40% in business in service sector and 4 lakhs of people have been deprived of employment. People have been forced for cashless transactions and big corporations active in business of cashless transactions are witnessing a steep rise in their

profits. The phenomenon of cashless transactions has shifted the market preferences of people from local traders to big shopping malls and branded goods. Dr. Sukhpal concluded that demonetization is a political stunt of government meant to divert the attention of people from its failure on all fronts.

Prof. Jagmohan Singh said in his address that Governments use to give tax relaxations of worth lakhs of crores to corporate sector every year and ensure their super profits. However when corporate sector faces any crisis, people and general public

is made to bear their burden by steps like demonetization. He also condemned Modi government for its dictatorial and saffronization policies.

Advocate Narinder Kumar Jeet gave inaugural address and the parting lecture was given by Bagga Singh. Various mass organization participated in the convention. Impressive discussion followed the lectures of Dr. Sukhpal Singh and Prof. Jagmohan Singh. AFDR has distributed thousands of pamphlets on the issue of demonetization in the city and has decided to continue the campaign in coming days

ਕੈਲਗਰੀ ਫੂਮੈਨ ਕਲਚਰਲ ਐਸੋਸੀਏਸ਼ਨ ਵਲੋਂ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਦਾ ਈਵੈਂਟ



“ਸੁਖੀ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਘਰ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿੰਗਾਰ, ਘਰੇਲੂ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਦਾ ਅਸਰ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਤੱਕ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿੱਥੇ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਨਮਾਨ, ਉਹ ਘਰ ਹੈ ਸਵਰਗ ਸਮਾਨ” ਵਰਗੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਈ ਪੇਸਟਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਜੇ ਐਕਸ ਸਰਵਿਸਮੈਨ ਇਮੀਗ੍ਰੇਟ ਫੂਮੈਨ ਐਸੋਸੀਏਸ਼ਨ (ਸੀਵਾ) ਵਿਖੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਦਸ ਸਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਫੈਮਲੀ ਕਾਊਂਸਲਰ ਵਜੋਂ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਬੇਲਾ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਨੇ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਤੋਂ ਪੀੜ੍ਹਤਾਂ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਕਾਊਂਸਲਿੰਗ ਦੀ ਮਹੱਤਤਾ ਬਰੇ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਲੋੜ ਪੈਣ ਤੇ ਕਾਊਂਸਲਿੰਗ ਲੈਣ ਤੋਂ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰੇਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਕਿ ਕਿਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਨਾ ਲਗ ਜਾਵੇ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਹਰ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਗੁਪਤ ਰਖਣ ਲਈ ਵਚਨਬੱਧ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਾਡੀ ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਘਰ ਦੇ ਜੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖਰੀ ਕਾਊਂਸਲਿੰਗ ਕਰਕੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਕਮੁੱਨ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਟ੍ਰੈਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੈਫੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਤਜਰਬਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਪਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਭਾਵਪੂਰਤ ਢੰਗ ਨਾਲ ਸਮੁੱਚੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਾਝੀ ਕੀਤੀ। ਨੌਜ਼ਾਨ ਵਰਗ ਦੀ ਨੁਮਾਇਦਗੀ ਕਰਦੀ ਕਮਲ ਪੰਧੇਰ ਨੇ ਫਿਜ਼ੀਕਲ, ਇਮੋਸ਼ਨਲ ਅਤੇ ਸੈਕਿਊਰਲ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਬਰੇ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਸੱਤਰ ਤੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਸ਼ਤ ਕੁੜੀਆਂ/ਐਰਤਾਂ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਜਿੱਥੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਾਪਿਆਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਧੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਸੀਮਾਵਾਂ ਨਿਯਤ ਕੀਤੀਆ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਉੱਥੇ ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮੁੰਡਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਵੀ ਹੱਦਾਂ ਨਿਯਤ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਚੇਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਕੁੜੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਵਹਾਰ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਵਰਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਕੋਮਲ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨ ਤੇ ਜੇਕਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਵੀ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਭਰੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਣ ਲਗ ਪਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਬਦਲਦਿਆਂ ਦੇਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਗੇਗੀ। ਇਸ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਦੇ ਅਗਲੇ ਬੁਲਾਰੇ ਲਿਲਿਤਾ

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