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Marking 125th birth anniversary of India's social reformer Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

Remembering the fearless fighter against inequality

"If the son of a woman who washed utensils in people's homes is today the prime minister, then the credit for this should go to Dr. Ambedkar", said Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy, world's second most populous country and world's third largest economy (measured in purchasing power parity) referring to himself.

Prime Minister Modi addressed a gathering on the occasion of 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1890-1956), social reformer, jurist, economist, polyglot orator, scholar of comparative religions and thinker, also internationally known as the author of India's Constitution.

In India, Babasaheb, as he was fondly called by friends, admirers and followers, is revered as the one who braved the walls of prejudice and caste discrimination in early 20th century India, to emerge as an exemplar and an unflinching crusader against the inequities of caste system and socio-economic deprivation that afflicted millions of Indians

Born as the 14th child into the family of Hindu Mahar caste, which was scorned as "untouchable" by the upper class of the time, his struggle for social inequities began very early, back in elementary school, where, among many humiliations, he was not allowed to even drink water from the common vessel that other children used.

Babasaheb was the first "untouchable" student to obtain a degree at the prestigious Elphinstone College, University of Bombay. He also studied in Germany at the University of Bonn, earned a law degree from Lincoln's Inn and doctorates from Columbia University in the US and the London School of Economics.

An acclaimed scholar, Ambedkar was highly respected for his research in law, economics and political science. His career saw him donning many hats: economist, professor, and lawyer. As a national leader, he had a pan-India vision of modernity underpinned by the ideals of social justice and equality. He strove tirelessly for political rights and social freedom for Dalits ("untouchables") and the marginalized groups.

Upon India's independence, Dr. Ambedkar, as the nation's first law minister, was entrusted with a monumental responsibility: he was appointed Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee on August 29, 1947. In that position, he fashioned a pluralistic and inclusive Constitution that guides and animates India to this day, guaranteeing equal opportunity and freedom of expression and faith for all citizens in a secular democracy.

The Constitution abolished untouchability, and outlawed all forms of discrimination. An ardent proponent of the rights of women, minorities and the socially underprivileged, Ambedkar argued eloquently and won the Constituent Assembly's support for introducing a system of reservations of jobs in the civil services, schools and colleges for members of Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and other backward classes.

India's Constitution came into effect on 26 January 1950, and this date is celebrated in India as the Republic Day. At the time of commencement, the Constitution of India had 395 articles in 22 parts and 8 schedules. Meanwhile, the number of articles in India's Constitution has increased to 448.

According to Indian experts, the country's Constitution is a comprehensive document which makes the government system work in a country unique for its social, cultural and religious diversity. The Constitution lists 1,108 castes and 744 tribes in India. The national language is Hindi, selected from

114 officially recognized languages and 216 mother tongues (according to the 1991 census), though it is spoken by less than one-third of the population. The four religions originating from India are: Hinduism, [Buddhism](#), Jainism and [Sikhism](#),. Also with an ancient history in India is Zoroastrianism (Parsi), Judaism, Christianity and Islam, all mutually very diverse.

The Constitution of India is considered as being vital to India's self-image as an independent and united. India is a democracy with civil and group liberties, with an active Supreme Court and a largely independent press, which are achievements that make India stand out among newly liberated states. Economic liberalization, during the 1990's in particular, has created a large urban middle class (of over 250 million people, according to different criteria), and transformed India into one of the world's fastest growing economies, also increasing its geopolitical clout.

Freedom from poverty and backwardness also remain as Ambedkar's goals that need to be realized. According to the 2011 census, there are 25% of Dalits in India, although their percentage fell from 60% in 1981. According to the World Bank international poverty line, India is home to the largest concentration of people who live with less than \$1.25 per day. The largest number of the poor in India live in rural areas, over 60% of the entire population.

Global Icon

United Nations has for the first time joined the celebrations marking B.R. Ambedkar's birth anniversary. Describing Ambedkar, UNDP Administrator Helen Clark said on 13 April in New York that he was a "global icon" and a social reformer devoted to marginalized people. "We are committed to continuing our very close partnership with India to help realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda and ensure that Ambedkar's vision becomes reality for the poor and marginalized around the world," said Clark, formerly the prime minister of New Zealand, now a candidate for the post of the next UN secretary general.

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Povodom 125. godina rođenja indijskog Sećanje na neustrašivog

„Zasluga da neko poput mene, čija je majka prala posude po tuđim kućama, postane premijer Indije, pripada doktoru Ambedkaru,“ izjavio je Narendra Modi, predsjednik vlade najbrojnije demokracije na svetu, njene druge najmnogoljudnije zemlje i treće ekonomije (mereno paritetom kupovne moći). Premijer Modi je govorio na početku desetodnevog perioda kojim se u drugoj polovini aprila u Indiji obeležava 125. godina rođenja dr Bimrao Ramdi Ambdekara (1890-1956), društvenog reformatora, pravnika, ekonomiste, govornika poliglote, učenjaka komparativnih religija i mislioca, u međunarodnoj zajednici poznatog i kao tvorca Ustava Indije, u svetu najobimnijeg osnovnog zakona.

U Indiji ističu kako je Babasahib, kako su Ambedkara od milošte zvali prijatelji, pošao uči i sledbenici, srušio zidove predrasuda i kastinske dominacije u toj zemlji na početku 20. veka. Postao je primer neustrašivog borca protiv nejednakosti podeljenog sistema i socijalno-ekonomskog razaranja koje je pogadalo stotine miliona stanovnika Indije.



Srušio zidove predrasuda i kastinske dominacije:
Dr Bimrao Ramdi Ambdekar

Bio je četrnaesto i poslednje dete u porodici hindu maherkaste, koju su više klase tog vremena smatrale „nedodirljivom“, pa je njegova bitka za društvenu jednakost počela rano, još u osnovnoj školi, u kojoj je, među ostalim poniženjima, sedeo sam na zemlji u jednom kutku i nije smeo da pije vodu sa zajedničke česme. Babasahib je, međutim, uspeo da bude prvi „nedodirljiv“ koji je stekao diplomu uglednog

Elfinston koledža pri univerzitetu u Bombaju, studirao je i na Univerzitetu u Bonu u Nemačkoj, stekao doktorate na Univerzitetu Kolumbija u SAD i Londonskoj školi ekonomije, ušao u Linkoln In, jednu od četiri londonske advokatske komore. Ambedkar je bio cenjen naučnik u oblasti pravosudnih, ekonomskih i političkih nauka.

društvenog reformatora dr Bimrao Ramdi Ambdekara borca protiv nejednakosti

Oprobao se u mnogim oblastima - ekonomiji, profesuri i advokaturi. Kao nacionalni lider imao je viziju ujedinjene Indije modernosti, poduprte idealima o društvenoj pravdi i jednakosti. Neumorno se borio za politička prava i socijalnu slobodu Dalita („nedodirljivih“) i marginalizovanih grupa.

Po sticanju nezavisnosti Indije, dr Ambedkaru je kao prvom ministru pravde poverena 27. avgusta 1947. ogromna odgovornost predavajućeg Komiteta za izradu nacrtu Ustava zemlje sa oko 350 miliona stanovnika na 3,3 miliona kvadratnih kilometara. Sa tog položaja je oblikovao pluralistički i inkluzivni Ustav koji vodi i pokreće Indiju do da-

nas, propisujući podjednaku šansu i slobodu izražavanja za sve građane u sekularnoj demokratiji.

Ustav je ukinuo nedodirljivost i stavio van zakona sve oblike diskriminacije. Ambedkar, strastveni zagovornik prava žena, manjina i društveno diskriminisanih, argumentovano je izlagao svoje stavove i pridobio podršku Ustavotvorne skupštine za uvođenje sistema radnih mesta u javnim službama i kolektivima za članove Kasti sa popisa (SC), Plemena sa popisa (ST) i Drugih zapostavljenih klasa.

Kada je stupio na snagu 26. januara 1950, datum koji se u Indiji slavi kao Dan republike, ustav je imao 395 članova u 22 pogla-

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vlja i osam dodatka. U međuvremenu je zbog amandmana porastao na 448 članova.

Indijski stručnjaci smatraju da je u pitanju sveobuhvatan dokument za rukovođenje zemljom, jedinstvenom po društvenoj, kulturnoj i religioznoj raznolikosti. Tako Ustav navodi 1.108 kasta i 744 plemena. Nacionalni jezik, hindi je izabran među 114 zvanično priznatih jezika i 216 (prema popisu iz 1991) materijnih jezika, ali ga koristi manje od trećine stanovnika. Iz Indije potiču četiri religije, hinduizam, budizam, džainizam i sikizizam, dok su u nju, na početku novog doba, došli i zoroastrijanizam (pars), judizam, hrišćanstvo i islam, sve međusobno veoma različite.

Smatra se da je Ustav Indije doprineo njenj predstavi kao nezavisne i ujedinjene države. Indija je demokratija s građanskim i grupnim pravima, aktivnim Vr-

hovnim sudom i velikom nezavisnim medijima, dostignućima koja je izdvajaju među novooslobođenim državama. Ekonomske reforme, naročito od 1990-ih, stvorile su veliku gradsku srednju klasu (prema različitim kriterijumima preko 250 miliona ljudi), preobrazile Indiju u jednu od velikih privreda koje se najbrže razvijaju u svetu i povećale njen geopolitički uticaj.

No, sloboda od nemaštine i zaposlenosti ostaju i Ambedkarovi ciljevi koje treba ostvariti. Dalita i ostalih „potlačenih“ ima prema popisu iz 2011, oko 25 odsto, mada je njihov procenat pao sa 60 odsto u 1981. U Indiji je najveća koncentracija ljudi koji, prema međunarodnom nivou siromaštva Svetske banke, žive sa manje od 1,25 dolara dnevno. Najveći broj siromašnih je na selu u kome i dalje živi preko 60 odsto svih Indusa.

Borislav Korkodelović

Globalna ikona

Ujedinjene nacije su se, prvi put, pridružile obeležavanju sećanja na godišnjicu rođenja B.R. Ambedkara. U pitanju je „globalna ikona“, društvenog reformatora posvećenog marginalizovanim narodima, izjavila je 13. aprila u Njujorku Helen Clark, čelnica Programa za razvoj svetske organizacije (UNDP). „Privrženi smo nastavku tesne saradnje sa Indijom koja treba da pomogne ostvarenju Agende novog plana razvoja čovečanstva do 2030, kako bi osigurali da Ambedkarova vizija postane stvarnost za siromašne i zapostavljene širom sveta“, kazala je Clark, nekadašnja dugogodišnja veoma uspešna premijerka Novog Zelanda i jedna od kandidata za mesto sledećeg Generalnog sekretara UN.