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## Causes of Political Awakening in Sirsa District

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### ABSTRACT

*In the last decade of the preceding century, as elsewhere, the wind of changes began to blow here also with the spread of western education, urbanization, and techno-economic change, the people especially the town-dwelling middle class were influenced. Institutions building efforts were also made by the people; the attempts of Arya Samajis were most significant in his direction. The main credit for this goes to Lala Lajpat Rai and Dr. Ramji Lal who propagated the ideals of the Arya Samaj among the people. As a result, the first Arya Samaj was established at Sirsa in 1892, Sarv Hitkarini Sabha, The Sanatan Dharma Sabha, Sri Yuvak Samiti, Shri Bal Amar Samiti, Arya School, Govt. Higher Secondary School and R.S.D. High School played important role in political and social awakening*

**Keywords:** Arya Samajis Sarv Hitkarini Sabha, The Sanatan Dharma Sabha, Sri Yuvak Samiti, Shri Bal Amar Samiti, Arya School, Govt. Higher Secondary School, R.S.D. High School, Political, Social Awakening.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the last decade of the preceding century, as elsewhere, the wind of changes began to blow here also with the spread of western education, urbanization, and techno-economic change, the people especially the town-dwelling middle class were influenced. Institutions building efforts were also made by the people; the attempts of Arya Samajis were most significant in his direction. The main credit for this goes to Lala Lajpat Rai and Dr. Ramji Lal who propagated the ideals of the Arya Samaj among the people. As a result, the first Arya Samaj was established at Sirsa in 1892.

The Arya Samajists brought political awakening to the people of the districts as a result, they started taking interest in public life. Some people also joined the Indian national congress. It may, however, be pointed out here that the Congress activities here were restricted to a limited number of people belonging to the urban middle classes only. To the village, the new wind was yet to go.<sup>1</sup>

In 1893, Arya Samaj split into two in the Punjab one section was led by Lala Hansraj and Lala Lajpat Rai. They retained control over D.A.V. College, Lahore. While the radical section was under the leadership of Pandit Lekh Ram and Lala Musi Ram, the latter came to be known as Swami Sharshanand. The formed, Punjab Arya Samaj and led Arya pratinidhi Sabha. Lala Lajpat Rai played a very important part in popularizing Arya Samaj in a rural area of Haryana. Arya Samaj played a great role in removing backwardness among the farming community of Haryana specially jats.<sup>2</sup>

Arya Samaj exerted a strong morally and culturally uplifting effect over the Jats. They were asked to abstain from consuming alcohol and meat. Restrict their expenditure on the wedding and other ceremonies, and refrain from singing a cheap song and watching vulgar picture during fairs.<sup>3</sup>

In 1920, it spread to almost every town and the big village of Haryana. The numbers of the members also increased manifold. Since its inception, Arya Samaj has been preaching strongly against superstitions, omens useless rites, ceremonies and custom. It exercised deep influence over the jats, a unique feature of which is that the Jat womenfolk are usually left free to adopt any religious ceremony. It stressed on the establishment of an educational institution and the removal of the evil of untouchability. The movement created a new social consciousness and spread gradually to the urban area of Haryana. It also attracted public attention to its anti-cow slaughter programme.<sup>4</sup>

### Sarv Hitkarini Sabha

The first and the oldest social and cultural institution, Sarv Hitkarini Sabha was founded in 1918 to arouse the social and political consciousness among the people of the town. In the beginning, a Mahajani School having facilities of teaching English and Sanskrit languages, a free charitable dispensary and a library were set up. The interest of the people of Sirsa was growing day by

day and therefore, a theatre was established by the Sabha to enact the dramas and the plays. The Ram Natak was played annually the sabha managed the land of pratabgarh and a Khara (place of wrestling) also. The Apahij Asram (Lodge for the disable person) under the spices of the Sarv Hitkarini Sabha was founded in 1930 to shelter the disabled orphan person of the town. <sup>5</sup> This was the unique example of social services and this ashram is still serving the cause while the other institutions like a school, library and dispensary have ceased to work. During the outbreak of the famine, the famine relief work was also commissioned and the cows were kept to supply milk. Rameshwar Dass, advocate Bajrang Dass, Advocate, Hukum Chand advocate, Badri Prasad Kandoi, Nand Lal Saraf, Sri Ram Bagla, Pt. Sri Ram Sharma and others were the persons who did their utmost to get the objectives of the sabha fulfilled. <sup>6</sup>

**Shri Mahavir Dal:** - Shri Mahavir Dal established in 1918, Uttam Chand Mohunta was the founder of the Dal and Gaja Nand Gupta and Prayag Chand Rathi also played a key role in making the institution prestigious one.

A dramatic club was set up by the Dal to enact the dramas. The plays relating to the National Movement were also staged and aroused the social and national consciousness in the town. Bharat Dudash' written by Bhartendu Harish Chander and 'Durgesh Nandini were notable plays enacted by the Dal during the period 1930-32. Arjun Monga always played a leading role in the dramas. The Dal managed the affairs of Gaushala also Chanan Mal Katiwala who joined the Dal as a secretary in 1970 dedicated himself in its development and provided to it its present status. <sup>7</sup>

### **The Sanatan Dharma Sabha**

Sanatan Dharma Sabha, which was founded by Pandit Din Dayalu Sharma at Jhajjar on 22 August 1886 its main objective were the reformation and preaching of Sanatan Dharma the eradication of social evils, the opening of the educational institutions, encouraging Sanskrit and Hindi languages and inculcating an urge for social service. The fundamental objective of the Sabha was to imbibe the feeling for the respect of gods and goddesses and faith in the theory of incarnation. To fulfill its aims and objectives, a number of its branches were established at prominent towns and cities of Haryana in 1891, Pandit Din Dayalu Sharma established Sanatan Dharma Sabha at Sirsa and Rai Sahib Ram Sukh Dass was all in all of the Sabha.

**Anjuman-I-Islamia:** Anjuman-I-Islamia founded at first in 1888 at Ambala. It was more progressive in the view and activities than other Muslim institutions of the time. Its main objective was to preach and expand western education and to create an atmosphere for forming an organization to fulfill the political aspiration. The branches of Anjuman-I-Islamia have established also at Jhajjar, Sonna, and Hissar in addition to Ambala in 1888 later on, its branches were founded at Sirsa. Khan Sahab Yaqin-ud-Din Khan had been its president. Anjuman-I-Islamia propagated western education among the Muslims, but it did not have any vast impact. In comparison to the Arya Samaj and the Sanatan Dharma Sabha, the Anjuman-I-Islamia could not succeed in arousing the political consciousness among the Muslims. <sup>8</sup>

## **2. LIBRARIES**

### **Sri Yuvak Samiti**

Seven students of class IX & X Bhim Sain Biyani, Vaidya Shiv Kumar Sharma, Bhagwan Dass Gupta, Mansa Ram Bhopal, Trilok Chand Jindgar, Balbhadra Das Saraf and Prem Sukh Dass Mohunta established Sri Yuvak Samiti with Trilok Chand Jindgar its president on September 1, 1927. It started its function in one room of the stable of Ram Narain Biyani and later on, it was shifted to the present premises in the Chandni Chowk. Its aim and objective were popularization of Hindi literature, Khadi and protest of foreign cloth during the freedom movement so many eminent personalities visited libraries Vishnu Prabhakar, Viyogi Hari, Gopal Prasad Vyash, Madan Mohan Malviya, Sardar Patel, Chakravarti Rajgopala Charya, Vinoba Bhave, Jaiprakash Narayan after the independence Sri Yuvak Samiti also contributed in the field of popularization of Hindi literature. <sup>9</sup>

### **Shri Bal Amar Samiti**

The youths emboldened with the success of Shri Vivek Samiti and at the instance of Swami Keshwa Nand founded Sri Bal Amar Samiti on the Tilak. 1 August 1932 to cultivate the reading habit among the children. The notable among the founders were Radha Krishan Chamaria, Har Narain Gupta, and Chanan Mal Laatiwala. It initially functioned in the shop of Kalu Ram Ratusaria, Ram Partap Kasera and Dr. Mathur Das in succession and ultimately was housed in its own present premises in 1937. <sup>10</sup>

Besides the founder of Shri Bal Amar Samiti, other energetic workers of the town viz; Ram Parkash Saraf, Ram Kumar Bagla, Krishan Kumar Rathi, Vishwanath Bagla, Jagdish Rai Chamaria, Kishori Lal Sukhani, Panna Lal Ladha, Nand Lal Ganeriwala, Bachan Lal Kanoliwalam Sampat Ram, Durga Dutt Sharma, Ass Ram Sethi, Nathu Ram Rathi, Mahabir Prasad Ratusaria, Madan Goyal, Naurang Rai Chachan Om Prakash, Suresh Kumar Saraf, Prakash Chandra, Ram Bhagat Chamaria etc. rendered their services in managing its affairs. Like Sri Yuvak Samiti, Shri Bal Amar Samiti had also its contribution during the course of the freedom movement. The dynamic workers of the Samiti participated vigorously in the movement and hoisted the tri-colored flag adopted by the Congress party on the top of its building. Besides it, the Samiti organized several seminars, cultural activities and the entertainment programme time to time. Many eminent personalities like Swami Keshwa Nand, Desh Bandhu Gupta, C. Raj Gopalachari, Gopi Chand Bhargava, Kaka Kalekar, Jai Prakash Narain, Dada Ganeshi Lal, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Bhim Sain Bachchan, Sushma Swaraj, Balwant Rai Tayal etc. have visited the samiti. <sup>11</sup>

### **Arya School**

Arya School was established in April 1947 by Sh. Puran Chand. He was the patriotic, social servant and intellectual person. He was also established many institutions in Rama Mandi, Patiala, Bathinda, the eminent personality of Sirsa Sh. Ram Dutt was inspired by Sh. Puran Chand and donate some land near Partapgarh Udaygarh land and 5000 rupees and Khajanchi family also donate near Hisaria Adda own Dharamshala at the initial stage teaching-learning work started in this Dharamshala near about two-

year classes were run in Dharamshala some days classes were also run in near Railways road in the building of Islami primary School. After some time near Patriarch in Udaygarh. The new building was ready for teaching and classes were shifted in new building Udaygarh. In 1958 Arya High School promoted in higher secondary. <sup>12</sup>

### **R.S.D. High School**

With the inspiration of Shri Ganesa Nand Rai Sahab Ram Sukh Das (Khajanchi family) started a school in the building of Sanatan Dharam Sabha Dharamshala some year it was running near Electricity House namely Mills place. <sup>13</sup>

### **Govt. Higher Secondary School**

Before the second world was only one Primary School in Sirsa it was run by Municipal Committee Seth Bhoj Raj Maunta donate 17,000 rupees and some rooms for school and it was promoted High School in 1954-55 Govt. take over and in 1958 Govt. promoted it Higher Secondary.

In 1958 higher secondary courses started before independence it was the only school in Sirsa. <sup>14</sup>

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