

Editorial...

It gives me immense joy to publish the second Newsletter DSN UK Vision.



The period from January-April 2025 covers a few very important days like the International Women's Day (IWD), and the Dalit History Month celebrating Dr BR Ambedkar's Birth Anniversary on 14th April. I am proud to include the guest article from the speech delivered by Dr Gowtham Sanna, titled, Understanding Dr BR Ambedkar in current contexts on 15th March 2025 at the Tamil Book Centre, East Ham where I was privileged to meet the Tamil community of thinkers, writers and publishers focussing on the caste issue and Dr BR Ambedkar. This issue focuses on the UN theme Accelerate Action for IWD 2025. The online [article](#) by Priyanka Samy, Transformational Solidarity: A Dalit feminist viewpoint is included to add to our focus on Accelerating Action. Priyanka's Mother Dr Ruth Manoramma, is a great Social Activist in India championing the cause of the marginalised especially the Dalit communities being in the forefront voicing out for Human Rights.

The Aid cuts on Official Development Assistance(ODA) announced by the UK is having its roller coaster effect around the world especially the marginalised groups such as the Dalits and the Tribal communities. The DSN UK rallied and sent a [letter](#) to the Prime Minister UK on ODA mainly through the Pro Legislation stakeholder group. The Equality Act 2010 is still exclusive. The pro legislation stakeholder group UK lobbies to include 'Caste' as one of the protective characteristics of discrimination under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy to promote fair treatment and prevent discrimination.

As we celebrate the Dalit History Month, may we continue to work tirelessly, to promote Dalit Rights so that we focus on building a world with Decent work and not Descent Work that will perpetuate Caste system.



CLICK ON IMAGE TO PLAY

Development overcoming Caste discriminations is the solution. Therefore we need to consciously focus on [Caste and Development](#).

DSN UK expresses its sincere thanks to its members, donors, trustees, members of AGM, patrons, and friends for all your support. We hope to hear more from you and invite you to engage with DSN UK work.

Dr Elizabeth Joy
Director, DSN UK

2nd April 2025

Understanding Dr Ambedkar in today's context



***Dr Elizabeth Joy, Director DSN UK meeting with
Dr Gowtham Sanna, a popular socio-political activist, his wife Dr Subashini Sanna and
the Tamil community of writers, thinkers and publishers
at the London Tamil Book Centre in East Ham on 15th March 2025.
Organisers : Prof Nithyanandam & Mr Fauzer Ahmad***

The following speech was delivered by Dr Gowtham Sanna

It is a pleasure to meet you all in this vibrant city of London. I extend my respects and warm wishes to Professor Nithyanandam, Mr. Fauzer Ahmad who is the organizer of this event, Dr. Subashini, who has joined me in this program, and everyone gathered here. Although this event was organized in a very short time, I personally feel it is a joy to engage in dialogue with enthusiastic scholars and connect with many friends online.

The purpose of my speech is to discuss the thoughts of a great man who has not been fully understood—both within India and outside - sometimes correctly, but often incorrectly. As Mr Fauzer mentioned, I will be speaking under the title "Understanding Dr Ambedkar in Today's Context." For this, I would like to provide a brief introduction.

We know Dr Ambedkar as a great genius who was born into an oppressed community, studied in Bombay, pursued higher education in America and England, entered Indian politics, and ultimately reshaped India's destiny.

The Greek philosopher Plato once said, "philosophers must govern the state," believing that rulers should be guided by wisdom and knowledge, not by self-interest or power." This was his belief and doctrine. However, it took a long time for this to materialize. In India's case, it was fulfilled through Dr. Ambedkar. He played a vital role as a "philosopher" in shaping India. It is no exaggeration to say that India's democracy is built upon his philosophy. Therefore, I wish to present a picture of how Dr. Ambedkar arrived at his principles, which will aid your understanding.

Many of you here may be well-versed in Marxism. In that context, you would know Karl Marx's discovery. Marx spent over 50 years expanding on the ideas he formulated at the age of 24 or before. He established his theory before his demise. Similarly, every philosophical leader is driven by a core idea or tool they discover in their early stages in life. Without this, their work might have remained incomplete. That guiding light continues to inspire their followers even after their demise.

Rooted in this perspective, Dr Ambedkar passed away

Understanding Dr Ambedkar in today's context...contd.

over 68 years ago, yet the number of people following his path grows daily. This phenomenon is rare—even leaders like Gandhi did not see such enduring influence. Globally, such examples are scarce. Yet nearly 30 crore people in India continue to follow Dr Ambedkar. This has also transformed Indian politics. As *The Outlook* magazine wrote: "*Everyone wants a piece of Ambedkar.*"

People from all parties, some castes, and organizations now seek to associate with Dr Ambedkar. Why has such a situation arisen in India today? What established him to this extent? Even his followers may not fully grasp the reason—it remains somewhat mysterious, even those who study his works struggle to comprehend his inner light.

Having studied Marxism earlier, I found it easier to approach Dr Ambedkar's thoughts. Over the last three years, I revisited and reworked his works entirely, reconstructing his ideas for better understanding. Despite publishing many books during his lifetime, his works faced challenges posthumously due to family disputes. It took 39 years (from 1989) to compile and publish his 21 volumes - an inexcusable delay.

In contrast, Gandhi's complete works were published in 100 volumes shortly after his death, and Periyar E.V.Ramasamy's works followed a similar line. However, Ambedkar's works faced obstacles from both the Congress and RSS governments. Despite this, his 21 volumes were eventually published, though incomplete.

When compiling, available works were assembled randomly—like picking the first book on a shelf for Volume 1 and so on. This raised a question: Were these works arranged according to Dr. Ambedkar's intellectual framework ideologically and in proper sequence? This led me to reconstruct them. Over three years, dedicating 18 hours daily, I compiled 50 volumes in Tamil (24,000 pages), now ready for publication.

One of his unfinished works, ***People at Bay***, has been compiled and will be published in English and Tamil. Through this, I sought to understand the essence of Dr Ambedkar's thought. What drove him to study, think, write, and struggle so intensely that he could alter India's destiny? Where did his inner strength come

from? For this exploration, my Marxism training aided me.

Karl Marx was guided by the central question: Why do humans become alienated? Why do societies fragment? Why do individuals alienate even from them? This inquiry led him to discover surplus value in capitalist society or social system, forming the basis of his ideology. Similarly, Dr Ambedkar must have had a guiding question.

What I've realized is this - Dr Ambedkar discovered that, in India, humans do not truly exist. How? They have limbs and heads, and they appear human. But are they holistically a human? Indeed, they are not. Indians exist merely as castes, governed by caste rather than humanity. Thus, they are alienated among themselves, with caste as the root cause.

This is why Dr Ambedkar defined the individual in India as an "accident." In India people are not born declaring their parents—they are born into a caste-determined structure. Marriage, social roles—all are dictated by caste, fixed over centuries. Parents are mere knots in this caste web. No one can escape from it.

This realization shocked Dr Ambedkar. Though not directly oppressed by caste, he suffered its byproduct - untouchability. Untouchability is caste's external manifestation. Caste is inherent; untouchability is its exclusionary practice. Thus, Dr Ambedkar, as an avarna by Hindu system, was affected and excluded from Hindu Caste's fold.

Those within the caste system enforce untouchability—but are they free? No. They merely follow imposed norms, devoid of humanity. Even those outside, the untouchables, are dehumanized. They are trapped beings, like a lion confined to the forest—it may be king but cannot escape its designated circle.

Dr Ambedkar wanted to liberate Indians from their caste clutches. His life's mission was to dismantle caste and restore human dignity. He prioritized this in his work. His blueprint was formed early, during his studies in America. Like Marx, who said, "By 24, a man's path is set," Dr Ambedkar solidified his vision in his 20s (born in 1891).

Understanding Dr Ambedkar in today's context...contd.

His first major work, *Castes in India*, was a speech at Columbia University's anthropology department. Here, he outlined his philosophical roadmap. Soon after, he prioritizes the oppressed — untouchables, unseeable, tribals, criminal tribes, backward classes, women, and minorities.

To make them human, they must first know their rights. Without this awareness, humanity remains obscure. Just as one wears warm clothes only upon feeling cold, basic rights must be recognized. Caste society alienates people so deeply that they don't even perceive their oppression. Thus, teaching ones' rights was his first step, beginning with the oppressed and expanding nationwide.

He secured rights for untouchables and women. Did you know Indian women first voted in 1937? This was Dr Ambedkar's revolution however unacknowledged by feminist movements today. At the Round Table Conference in England, he demanded universal suffrage, enabling women's voting rights.

In England, women gained voting rights in 1928 after a long struggle. Within a decade, Ambedkar achieved this in India—a monumental feat, especially for a population unaware of voting rights. The 1935 Act granted this privilege, and women voted in the 1937 elections. Similarly, Dalits and tribals received reserved electoral rights - a constitutional provision shaped by Dr Ambedkar as in article 332 in the Indian Penal Code.

He also addressed the Criminal Tribes Act. These communities (like the Kallars in Tamil Nadu) were branded hereditary criminals. Dr Ambedkar argued that poverty, not nature, drove their actions. Economic rehabilitation, not punishment, was the solution. Though the British ignored this, independent India abolished the Act—thanks to Ambedkar.

Now, the core question:

Who constructed this dehumanized India?

2,500 years ago, Buddha diagnosed people mindset bounded by conditions and liberating people from Brahminical oppression. Tragically, Brahminism resurged, re-enslaving minds.

In Buddha's era, Brahminism was a religion—thus powerful. As a culture, it institutionalized and emphasized hierarchy. Hence, Dr Ambedkar defined Indian history as *"the struggle between Brahminism and Buddhism."* Theoretically, it's the clash between *humanity (Buddhism) and hierarchy (Brahminism)*. The defeated became untouchables.

Why have social scientists ignored untouchability's origins? Why were certain groups disliked? When did this start? Dr Ambedkar tackled these questions in "Who Were the Shudras?" and "The Untouchables." His works consistently uphold human dignity.

In Brahminical India, "upper" castes exist only by subjugating "lower" castes. This is Brahminism's design. Dr Ambedkar fought to replace it with a humanist order.

He applied his philosophy across various disciplines—politics, history, economics, sociology etc.—but realized implementation required political power. Without authority, ideas remain theoretical. Thus, he engaged with British administration which is the ruling power structures in early 1940s.

Over the time history teaches us lessons. Samrat Ashoka, after the Kalinga war field massacre, embraced Buddhism. Religion became a tool for governance with peace and harmony. Similarly, Ambedkar sought political power for the oppressed for the reason that only authority could challenge oppression.

In British India, he became Labour Minister, enacting visionary policies. Modern India's grid electric distribution system and the Reserve Bank's framework are among his pioneering contributions. As Labour Minister, he institutionalized the 8-hour workday, a milestone that has been overshadowed by leftist rhetoric about Chicago protests. Those days, women in mining field worked even on childbirth days. Dr Ambedkar mandated paid maternity leave, which is among countless reforms.

In independent India's Constituent Assembly, he clarified his vision in his maiden speech. Recognizing this, Nehru's government appointed him, even though he was an opposition leader, to draft the Independent

Understanding Dr Ambedkar in today's context...contd.

India's Constitution. He infused it with lifelong principles, anchoring India's democracy for human rights, inspired by the UN Declaration. This global linkage safeguards these rights permanently.

Dr Ambedkar's constitutional democracy, penetrated into human dignity, remains a thorn for today's rulers. Breaking its framework will result in breaking India. Several attempts to amend it have failed and all those reports gathering dust.

In summary, Dr Ambedkar succeeded in discovering and constructing the free liberated human being. His dream was a caste-free, liberated individual which is the thread running throughout his works. Unlike other contemporary leaders who remained theorists, he bridged his thoughts and ideology with action.

He used his understanding of British governance (from his education in England) to navigate Indian politics. After exhausting his role in the Congress cabinet, he resigned, returning to social work. In his 65-year life, he spent 45 years working on actualizing his vision. Undoubtedly this is placing him alongside Lenin and Mao.

In conclusion, Dr Ambedkar he himself lived as a complete, free and liberated human being. He experienced freedom within himself, illuminated Indians with his visions and knowledge for the formation of modern India.

Thank you.



About the speaker:
Deputy General Secretary of Viduthalai Chiruthiagal katch (DPI)
Secretary, Jaibhim Foundation
Chief Coordinator, TamilNadu Buddhist Sanga Council
Compiler of Ambedkarism 50 Volumes in Tamil

Business and Human Rights – Forced Labour in the UK Supply Chains

Sarah Champion, Member of Parliament for Rotherham has written to Lord Alton of Liverpool the chair and the members of the Joint Human Rights Committee pointing out to her correspondence with four major UK supermarkets – Asda, Tesco, Morrisons and Waitrose. This was her follow up work on BBC World Service investigation, 'Blood on the Shelves'. It is shocking to find out that tomato products, sold in UK are sourced from a state-imposed forced labour in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). It also states that in some cases the sources were wrongly acknowledged and advertised as 'Italian'. For further reading, follow the [LINK](#):

The intersection of Caste, gender, and forced & bonded labour is an issue that keeps surfacing every



(Click image for source)

now and then in relation to Business and Human Rights in our times. IDSN has addressed this way back in [2015](#).

Vice Chair
Prof Corinne Lennox
*Interviewed by Mr Heman Das,
where he discusses aspects of
the global movement for
Dalit human rights.*

CLICK ON IMAGE
TO PLAY



IN CONVERSATION WITH
Dr. Corinne Lennox on Caste
Oppression: Global
Perspectives and Local
Struggles

Speaker

5 March 2025 | Wednesday
9 AM GMT - 2:00 PM PKT

Dr. Corinne Lennox
Vice Chair, Dalit Solidarity
Network UK, Steering Group,
Minority Rights Solidarity Network

*Dr Corinne Lennox is Vice Chair, DSN UK, is a Reader in Human Rights,
Co-Director, Human Rights Consortium, Institute of Commonwealth Studies,
School of Advanced Study, University of London.*

*Mr Heman Das is a Senior Research Associate,
SARIM (South Asia Research Institute for Minorities), Pakistan.*

*[DSN UK is very grateful to Mr Heman Das for interviewing
Dr Corinne Lennox, Vice Chair, DSN UK.]*

APPG for Dalits and Adivasis Constituted

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Dalits and Adivasis (Tribals)
was constituted on 19th March 2025.

The highlight is including Adivasis – the Tribal communities which are majority marginalised communities
also along with the Dalits.

The purpose of APPG is to draw attention to the discrimination against Dalits (formerly known as
untouchables) and Adivasis (tribals) wherever it occurs and support attempts to eliminate it.

WE welcome the following office bearers:

Chair & Registered Contact is Jeremy Corbyn from the Independent Party
Co-Chair is Lord Harries of Pentregarth from the Crossbench
Vice Chair Ms Diane Abbott is from the Labour Party
Vice Chair Lord Deben is from the Conservative Party.

Our heartfelt Congratulations to the above people
and Mrs Meena Varma who has worked tirelessly to arrive at this point in history again.

Time to outlaw caste discrimination : Wolverhampton MP

(BBC News)

***Click
here
to read***

DSN UK in solidarity with Warinder Singh Juss, MP of Wolverhampton



The DSN-UK is happy and proud to join with the MP to amplify the call for justice. The DSN-UK stands in solidarity, support and deep appreciation with Warinder Singh Juss, MP of Wolverhampton West said Dr Elizabeth Joy, the Director of DSN UK on 7th March 2025, for highlighting the importance of liberation from Caste discrimination. As we share this BBC news, we would like to highlight the fact that this issue has been spoken of as important and laws passed to abolish caste discrimination more than a decade ago, tells us three things:

(Image source: [BBC News](#))

- 1. That the issue was considered urgent enough to introduce a law*
- 2. That caste discrimination persists in insidious ways, and it requires more than a law to abolish caste*
- 3. How many generations have to change before change is effected in society to dream of a caste free society? Caste discrimination is a human right violation. Human Dignity is affirmed as an unconditional universal human right – for all, regardless. Until everyone is liberated, no one is liberated.*

Accelerate Action

Few thoughts for International Women's Day 2025



[Image source : Click [HERE](#)]

On behalf of DSN UK, I wish all of you, young women present here online a very Happy International Women's Day 2025!

As the theme for this year Accelerate Action is so very appropriate and meaningful in today's context where the gap in inequalities is surging high. In the context of wars, famines, floods, draughts, many more women and children are pushed into poverty and as refugees.

Some Statistics

1. Climate Change and Women:

Climate change could push up to 158 million more women and girls into poverty by 2050, and food insecurity is projected to affect as many as 236 million more women and girls than today.

34% of senior management positions are now held by women globally, an increase of just 1.1 percentage points (pp) since 2023. Just 22% of UK mid-market businesses have a female chief executive officer (CEO) or managing director (MD), down from 30% in 2023.

Gender Pay Gap:

The estimated global gender pay gap was 22% in 2018, with women earning around 78% of what men are paid.

Workforce Representation:

Women account for 42% of the global workforce and 31.7% of senior leaders, but their representation remains below men's across nearly every industry and economy.

History of IWD

1908

Great unrest and critical debate was occurring among women. Women's oppression and inequality were spurring women to become more vocal and active in campaigning for change. Then in 1908, 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter hours, better pay and voting rights.

1913-1914.

On the eve of World War I, campaigning for peace, Russian women observed their first International Women's Day on February 23, the last Sunday in February. Following discussions, International Women's Day was agreed to be marked annually on March 8 that translated in the widely adopted Gregorian calendar from February 23 - and this day has remained the global date for International Women's Day ever since. In 1914, further women across Europe held rallies to campaign against the war and to express women's solidarity.

In the history of the IWD, one of the most important landmarks that stand out for me is the call given by the teenager Clara Lemlich saying, "I am a working girl and one of those who are on strike against intolerable conditions. I am tired of listening to your speeches... I offer a resolution that a general strike be declared." (Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle, Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996. pp 248-252)

Clara Lemlich Shavelson led the Uprising of 20,000, the massive strike of shirtwaist workers in New York's garment industry in 1909, where she spoke in Yiddish and called for action.

Accelerate Action is our theme for IWD 2025. Even to this day, women around the world specifically in the Textile and Garment factories face a lot of discrimination based on their caste, class, colour, age and nature of work.

DSN UK networks with Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and is glad to share the success story of the Garment Factory in [Bangladesh](#) that raised its voice against the Government to increase the wages for the workers. It was not easy but if many can come together to raise voice for Human Rights, those who are denied justice will be able to experience the freedom when they get justice. The amount of pain women experience through bonded and forced labour are still a reality. The intersectionality of Climate Change, Migration and Human Trafficking lead to Modern Slavery.



This Photo by Unknown
Author is licensed under
[CC BY-NC-ND](#)

It is amid all these painful realities that the call for 'Accelerate Action' beckons us as individuals and groups to act and change the lives of women that will result in the transformation of our families, churches, societies and nations to experience humanity and live in peace with justice.

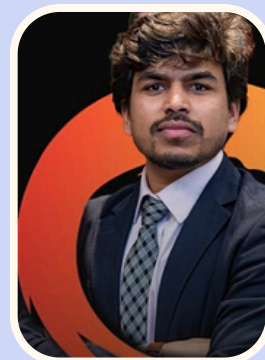
8th March 2025

Dr Elizabeth Joy
Director - DSN UK

*(Part of the Presentation made to the Women's Fellowship,
St Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church, Waterford, Ireland, Women's Day Virtual Meet)*

Adv Sushant Singh our Trustee
delivers Keynote address at
SADE Symposium, London

DSN UK is very proud that Adv. Sushant Singh, Trustee of DSNUK and noted Dalit Human Rights Lawyer, was invited as the Keynote Speaker at the South Asian Dance Equity (SADE) Symposium held at The Place, London on 1st April 2025.



Speaking on the theme "Caste, Culture, and Choreographies: Reimagining South Asian Dance and Social Equity," Adv. Singh critically examined how caste hierarchies have historically shaped cultural narratives—especially in dance. He unpacked the exclusion of Dalit, Bahujan, and Adivasi traditions from mainstream platforms, highlighting how these communities have been historically marginalized in the world of classical dance. Adv. Singh also questioned who gets to define what is 'classical' and who remains invisible in institutional spaces, particularly in the arts.

Adv. Singh pointed out how dominant caste communities have not only shaped cultural narratives but have also systematically imposed their version of "high culture" onto others, forcing marginalized communities into rigid boundaries. These boundaries, defined by caste hierarchies, have relegated Dalit, Bahujan, and Adivasi traditions to the periphery, labeling them as "uncultured" or "primitive," while elevating dominant caste practices as the gold standard of culture. In this way, the powerful cultural institutions and spaces have consistently upheld the dominance of a select few, while disregarding the richness and authenticity of marginalized cultural expressions.

Referencing Dr. Ambedkar's timeless words, "Wherever Hindus go, they will carry their caste with them"—Adv. Singh reminded the audience that caste-based exclusion is not confined to South Asia but is replicated across diasporic communities in the UK, USA, and beyond. The imposition of dominant caste culture is not just a South Asian phenomenon but continues to perpetuate caste-based oppression in the global arts landscape.

His keynote urgently called for cultural reform—one that acknowledges, restores, and celebrates the voices from the margins. Adv. Singh emphasized the need to reclaim space for oppressed communities in the global arts landscape and to dismantle the cultural boundaries that have been imposed by the dominant caste. By redefining what constitutes 'high culture or classical,' we can create a more inclusive cultural environment, where all traditions are recognized and valued for their unique contributions to the arts.

This address continues to serve as a call to action for artists, cultural institutions, and activists to actively challenge the boundaries of caste-based cultural exclusion and work towards a more equitable, inclusive, and transformative arts world.



*Mr Shelvin Kuriakose,
the part-time Administrator, DSN UK, handing over
as he moves on to take up a new position
after serving DSN UK from 24th September 2024- 31st
March 2025.*

*We are grateful for his voluntary services in the future.
We wish him well in all his endeavours.*

Addressing Caste Discrimination in India's Supply Chains: Insights from Ethical Trade Norway's Seminar



In January 2025, Ethical Trade Norway convened a seminar titled “Responsible Trade with India – What Must You Know?” to explore the complexities of engaging with India’s vast and diverse market. The event underscored the critical importance of understanding caste-based discrimination, particularly against Dalits and Adivasis, within global supply chains. The Dalit Solidarity Network Norway also played an active role in the Seminar.

Despite constitutional prohibitions, caste-based

discrimination remains deeply entrenched in India. Dalits and Adivasis often face systemic exclusion, relegating them to the most hazardous and low-paying jobs. This marginalisation not only perpetuates poverty but also makes these communities vulnerable to forced labour and human trafficking. The Ethical Trading Initiative’s guidance highlights that caste discrimination fuels modern slavery and child labour in South Asia, affecting sectors such as textiles, leather, agriculture and construction.

With over 70 of Ethical Trade Norway’s 215 members engaged in trade with India—a number poised to grow following the recent free trade agreement—Norwegian businesses must prioritise due diligence to mitigate human rights violations in their supply chains. Heidi Furustøl, Executive Director of Ethical Trade Norway, emphasised the necessity for companies to conduct thorough risk assessments and implement measures to prevent and address human rights abuses, including caste-based discrimination.

Strategies for Responsible Engagement

To foster ethical trade practices, businesses are encouraged to:

Develop Explicit Policies: Incorporate addressing caste discrimination directly within corporate policies and supplier agreements.

Collaborate with Local Entities: Engage with local NGOs and trade unions to gain insights into caste dynamics and support affected workers.

Implement Training Programs: Provide caste awareness and inclusion training for leaders, managers and supervisors to ensure equitable treatment across all levels.

Establish Grievance Mechanisms: Create accessible and anonymous channels for workers to report discrimination without fear of retaliation.

By adopting these strategies, companies can contribute to the eradication of caste-based discrimination, ensuring that their operations promote human rights and social equity.

For comprehensive guidance, businesses were advised to consult resources such as the Ethical Trading Initiative's "Base Code Guidance: Caste in Global Supply Chains".

Courtesy: News, IDSN, March 10th, 2025| [Addressing Caste Discrimination in India's Supply Chains: Insights from Ethical Trade Norway's Seminar - International Dalit Solidarity Network](#)

DSN UK as a member of BOND an International Body of NGOs.
has been participating in signing the letter to the PM UK and the conversations on this with BOND.
Four ways the government can manage the planned UK aid cuts to limit their damage.



Dr Ann Anka is the Associate Professor in Social Work in the University of East Anglia (UEA), UK.

On 28th January 2025, DSN UK had the online webinar, *Equipping University Students: Voicing out for Equality and Justice for Dalits*. Adv Sushanth Singh was the resource person, and Dr Ann Anka joined the discussion on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI): Including Caste in the EDI charter of the Universities in the UK.

She had her success story to share how after hearing the presentation of Sushanth a few years ago she implemented it in UEA. She also focused on how important it is that students are aware of the caste issue.

We will pursue this in more universities this year. DSN UK is very grateful to Dr Ann Anka.

Pro legislation Stakeholder Group Meeting

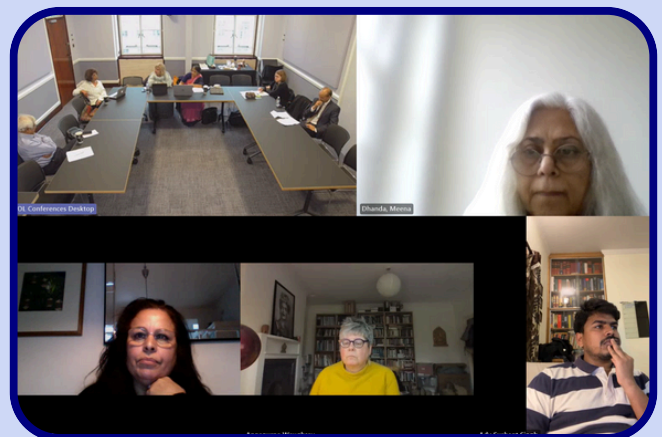
Pro Legislation Stakeholder Group hybrid meeting was held on Wednesday, 12th February 2025

At Room 261, Senate House - South Block 2nd Floor Malet Street, London and Virtual via Zoom from 2:00-4:00pm. Present in person were Mr Bala Gnanapragasam (Chair DSN UK), Miss Megan Manson (Head of Campaigns at NSS), Mr Satpal Muman (Chair, Caste watch UK), Ms Meena Varma (Executive Director, IDSN, & Coordinator for APPG on Dalits), Ms Sahdaish Pall, BEM (CEO, Sikh Women's Aid), Mr Shelvin Kuriakose (Admin DSN UK), and Dr Elizabeth Joy (Director DSN UK), those present online included Ms Santosh Dass MBE (Chair - ACDA), Dr Murali Shanmugavelan (Senior Fellow, Cultures and Practices of Democracy in the Indian Diaspora at SOAS, and Research Affiliate in Dayton Society in NY city), Adv Prof Annapurna Waughray (Prof Manchester Metropolitan University), Dr Meena Dhanda (Professor of Philosophy and Cultural Politics at the University of Wolverhampton), Adv Sushanth Singh (Trustee DSN UK and practising at the Supreme Court, Delhi, India). Dr Corinne Lennox (Senior Lecturer in Human Rights at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, SOAS, UoL), and Dr David Mosse (Professor of Social Anthropology at SOAS) sent their apologies. Elizabeth Joy welcomed the Pro Legislation Stakeholder Group members present with a very special welcome to Meena Varma the Executive Director – IDSN who nurtured this group and hosted the last meeting too. Sahdaish shared her interests and the Sikh Women's Aid Group's work for which she was a co-founder. Sahdaish was warmly received into the group.

Annapurna Waughray made a presentation on 'Legal input on the doctrinal interpretations and our strategic move to achieve our goal' and Meena Varma led the discussions. Santosh brought in very important points and participants raised many pertinent questions on how we should press our agenda forward to include caste as a protective characteristic for discrimination against the Dalits in the Equality Act 2010 in UK. Meena Dhanda informed about her conference in Wolverhampton this summer and the group offered their support. Sat Pal talked about the theses available with him, those that he had supervised and otherwise for the group to take forward. Megan mentioned that NSS could make available some resources toward this project – research work and publications. Murali insisted that we look at the US model as to how they could include caste into the US Law and put pressure on the UK government too. Finally, the members agreed and thanked Santosh for offering herself and ACDA to be the repository for information, documents, details of activities, Employment Tribunals. etc.

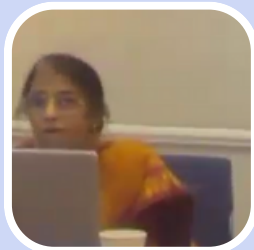
The members decided that the stakeholder group will meet as and when necessary and thanked Elizabeth and DSN UK for taking the lead in organising this meeting. They did not want to elect a new core group as they felt that the interim group did very well and could continue as the core group.

In late February and early March many from this group extended solidarity to sign the letter to the PM UK regarding ODA Aid Cuts. Very special thanks for Sushanth, Sahdaish, Murali who helped to draft the letter and immense thanks to Santosh for pitching in to edit and help in sending the [letter](#) to the PM UK.



AGM

- The DSN UK AGM for 2023-2024 was held on 21st January 2025.
- We are happy that our Patron Rob Marris Patron, DSN UK, and the DSN UK AGM member Rev David Haslam MBE were also among those present.
- Mr Bala Gnanapragasam the Chair of DSN UK gave the opening address and presented the annual report.
- Mr Dabir Ahmed Treasurer presented the Financial Report and Statement.
- Dr Elizabeth Joy the Director presented her report - Review of the Year April – Dec 2024, key Activities from Jan-March 2025 and Strategic Plan (draft 2).
- Dr Corinne Lennox, the Vice-Chair was re-elected as a Trustee.



The DSN UK warmly welcomes Ms Lavanya Pallapi who was appointed as the New Trustee and looks forward to a fruitful year ahead April 2025-March 2026.



Lavanya Pallapi is from Hyderabad, India. She has significant experience providing advocacy and casework support to victims of domestic abuse, and particularly to those that do not have recourse to public funds. She is currently working as a Commissioner of Services in the public sector. She also manages high risk case management forums.

Her expertise includes service design, strategic oversight and programme management for charities. She is an accredited IDVA and has efficiently led cross functional teams to reduce health, care and support inequalities in London.



Myanmar in the World

TR. ROSE
TR. APRIL

Date 26.04.2025 - 19.07.2025
Time SATURDAYS, 09:00 CEST (13:30 MMT)
ECTS 3

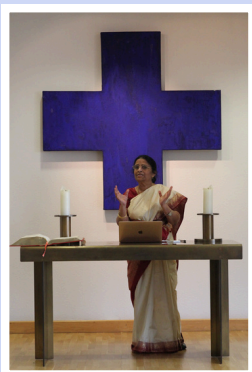
Please click on the images for further details

Caste on Screen

Hindi Cinema and the Making of Contemporary India

REYAZUL HAQUE
NADJA-CHRISTINA SCHNEIDER

Date 24.04.2025 - 17.07.2025
Time THURSDAYS, 14:00 CEST
ECTS 3+4



Dr Elizabeth Joy,
Director, DSN UK,
presented a keynote
address
on 27th March 2025
titled,

**“The Role of the Diaspora for Oriental Orthodox Churches:
The third say, the third way and the third day”**



She emphasised the importance of ‘Marginality as priority ‘ (Map) that will guide us
in our Vision and Mission.

She also explained that the Caste system in India, Asia and the world means that the worldwide Church
needs to address this issue on a priority basis, which can be championed by the diaspora.

Elizabeth Joy is very grateful to Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) for inviting her as key-note
speaker to the above ecumenical conference, **The importance of the diaspora for the worldwide
Church** in Berlin, Germany, on 26th and 27th March 2025.

(Pictures: Courtesy – Rev Dr Wolfram Langpape & Rev Fr Rohith Skariah Georgy)



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