

Curriculum vitae of Dr. Lenin Raghuvanshi

Dr. Lenin Raghuvanshi is the symbol of resistance to millions of Dalits fighting for dignity in India. Lenin is credited with changing the discourse on Dalit Politics in India and bringing into focus an innovative "people centric" approach to reclaim "human dignity" in a caste ridden Indian society. The gamut of Lenin's activities reflects his personal and ideological span and provides credibility and a sense of completeness to the work he does. His care for details, meticulous planning, diligent patience, and sincere advocacy of the issue of the marginalized, has made millions of his supporters optimistic about a dignified future.

Lenin's views on caste, conflict and social change took shape while he worked with bonded laborers. He was born into a high caste Hindu family which he describes as "feudal." He noticed that not a single child bonded in the sari or carpet industries came from an upper caste, even though some high-caste families were often just as poor as the lower castes. He realized that caste, not class, was at work. By the end of 1996, Lenin was championing the rights of lower-caste people. Early experiences taught him that confrontation was dangerous and not the most effective method. Increasingly, Lenin recognized caste in all kinds of social conflict and envisioned a movement that could break the closed, feudal hierarchies of conservative slums and villages by building up local institutions and supporting them with a high profile and active human rights network.

As a self taught Dalit ideologue, Lenin understood from the beginning that village in India is the cradle of exploitation. Instead of tampering with the symptoms, 'caste' needed to be tackled by both its horns. On the one hand he created a democratized structure for the 'voiceless' to enable them access to the constitutional guarantees of modern India and on the other, his innovative advocacy forced the 'state' to sensitize its mechanisms to deliver social justice in a manner where Justice is not only done but perceived to be done.

Lenin conceived of a folk school which not only enabled empowerment of the poor, but also endowed them with the ability to access information and justice through the constitutional mechanism of the state.

To translate policy into practice, Lenin has begun working on the latest part of his strategy, Jan Mitra Gaon, or the People-Friendly Village . These villages have durable local institutions that work to promote basic human rights in the face of continuous discrimination. Lenin has adopted three villages and one slum as pilot projects, which include reactivating defunct primary schools, eradicating bonded labor, making sure girls get education, and promoting non-formal education. The village committees comprise at least 50 percent Dalits, and seek to realize greater political representation of Dalits on village councils. The heads of the village committee and village council, a government representative, and a PVCHR employee will serve as a conflict resolution group and form the People-Friendly Committee. The approach of the organization is two-fold: to have a strong grassroots organization to work for democratic rights of those in marginalized communities and second, to create the structure and dynamics to receive the assistance of national and international institutions.

Lenin's work marks a shift in the Indian human rights movement, which has been reluctant to address injustices in the name of caste as a fundamental human rights issue. He is one of only a handful of activists to declare that such discrimination goes against democratic principles by promoting inequality. By working from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh—one of the most traditional, conservative, and segregated regions in India—Lenin demonstrates his resolve.

With meager resources, but rich with confidence and conviction, Lenin in a short period of time has managed to amplify the voice of the marginalized in national and international fora through "Peoples SAARC", rehabilitation and resettlement of weavers of Varanasi; Benaras Convention; UP Assembly Election Watch; prevention of torture; voice against hunger and many such activities. Recognition by the international community of Dr Lenin's work is indeed the recognition for the millions whose hopes and aspirations rest on his slender shoulders.

Born on 18 May 1970 at Varanasi

Mother's name: Shrimati Savitri Devi

Married to Shruti Nagvanshi on 22 February 1992; has a 11 year old son, **Kabir Karunik**

Completed his Bachelor degree in Ayurveda, Modern Medicine and Surgery from the State Ayurvedic Medical College, Gurukul Kangari, Haridwar in 1994.

1993: President, United Nations' Youth Organization (**UNYO**), UP Chapter.

1993: Founding member of Bachapan Bachao Andolan (**Save the Child hood Movement**) along with Mr. Kailash Satyarthi and others.

1996: Founded **People's Vigilance Committee on Human Rights (PVCHR)** along with Shruti, Dr.Mahendra Pratap(Historian),Vikash Maharaj (Musician),Gyanendra Pati (poet) to work on child labour free village.

1996: He was demonstrating for liberation of bonded child labour & their rehabilitation, CRPF - paramilitary force beat-up on 17th July, 1996. This case is taken by Amnesty International and NHRC.

1997: Dr. Lenin on child labour issue published in Time Magazine

<http://lenin-shruti.blogspot.com/2010/05/lenin-in-time-magzine.html>

1997: Novib published about the activities of Lenin

<http://lenin-shruti.blogspot.com/2010/05/lenin-in-dutch-magzine.html>

1998: Organized, coordinated, and participated as Core Marcher in Global March against Child Labour.

1998: Fair Play Campaign against use of child labour in Indian Sporting Goods Industry. The campaign forced FIFA, ICC (International Cricket Council), World Federation of Sporting Goods Industry and Reebok to prohibit use of child labour in producing their goods.

1999: Founded Jan Mitra Nyas, a public charitable trust, for working on governance, and Human Rights in five adopted villages near Varanasi

2001: Awarded the Ashoka Fellowship for social entrepreneurship and change maker from Ashoka: innovators for Public based in Washington, DC

2001: Elected to the Executive Council of Voice of People (VOP, 25000 membership), a state wide people's alliance for bringing to the fore the politics of marginalized.

2002: Campaigned and mobilized at State and national level for prevention of torture.

2002: Appointed member of District Vigilance committee on Bonded Labour under Bonded Labour abolition Act 1976 by the Governor of UP.

2004: Created Model Village "people Friendly Village" to enable and amplify the voice of the marginalized.

2004: Organized Benaras Convention in order to assert the discourse of politics of marginalized in the national mainstream. The convention attended by thinkers and activists across the nation unanimously declared that the City of Varanasi was the symbol of Shraman Sanskriti (culture of the working class) as opposed to that of the Brahminical Sanskriti (Culture of the feudal class).

2004: Established Bunkar-Dastkar Adhikar Manch (Forum on rights of the weavers and artisans) to give voice to their plight in an organized manner. The forum has membership of 3000 people and has been able to make Planning Commission of India commit Rupees One Thousand crores for their re-habilitation. This body is led by indigenous leaders and is self supporting.

2004: Conceptualized and formed the Varanasi Weavers Trust along with eminent economist and Ashoka fellow from Srilanka, Dr. Darin Gunasekara. The trust envisages creation of a democratized mode of production with social control over capital for the weavers. The Planning Commission of India and Government of Uttar Pradesh have taken note of the objective of the trust and are in the process of giving shape to the idea respectively.

2004: Founded the Musahar-Nut Adhikar Manch (Forum on rights of Musahars and Nuts; Musahars and Nuts are the most marginalized untouchable caste) in the hunger infested districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh. Advocacy at national and international fora has succeeded in prioritizing hunger in Government expenditure policy. Active mobilization of the poor Dalit has forced political parties to include the improvement of Dalit in their electoral manifesto. The liberation from social inhibitions has resulted in creation of Martyrs' domes in village where hunger deaths occurred and has created a pool of indigenous hunger activists among the poor. The District administration of Varanasi has sought Rupees 6.75 crores to fight hunger situation of Musahars in the district. As a result of PVCHR's pressure the UP Panchayat Act was amended to include a clause which directed each local self Government of village to hold a fund of Rupees one thousand to mitigate emergency hunger situation.

2005: Conceived and convened People's SAARC at Varanasi. The objective was to bring together the issues of the people of SAARC countries to the forefront and establish a people to people relationship to fight caste, communal, ethnic, and fascist forces in the region. The most important

declaration read, "We cherish and uphold the Rule of Law, sovereignty of the people, a system of governance that ensures devolution of power, People' right to self rule and control over resources." Convention is resulted in South Asian People's Forum (SAPF) of which Dr. Lenin was elected the coordinator. The core committee comprised of PVCHR (India), INSEC (Nepal), People's Forum for Human Rights (Bhutan), Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, LOKOJ (Bangladesh) and Wiros Lokh Institute (Srilanka).This convention triggered off a series of similar convention across the SAARC countries. Two major outcomes of the convention were inclusion of Afghanistan in the SAARC, and in the Dhaka declaration in 2005 SAARC summit inclusion of civil society voice in the decision making process.

2006: Founded Rozagar Haq Abhiyan (Right to work campaign) along with AIM, Parmarth, GSS, Musahar Manch for monitoring implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in UP.

2006: PVCHR work on torture victims resulted in Dr. Lenin being appointed State Director of National Project on Prevention of Torture funded by European Union and FNSt.

2006: In the context of international advocacy along with AHRC, PVCHR achieved the rare distinction of being reported by the UN special rapporteur on Racism and Xenophobia. In the same year three out of four reported cases from India in the report of representative of Secretary General for Human Rights defenders were from PVCHR.

2007: Drafted along with Faisal Anurag the vision paper for NAFRE Peoples' Movement, an alliance of representative from 16 states of India . This paper presented a road map for civil society movement drawing from the traditional working class past of India from the perspective of caste.

2007: Established Folk School for Dalit in Belwa

2007: PVCHR and Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) along with 210 NGOs across the state conducted the UP Election watch (UPEW). The objective was to sensitize the electors about the governance processes. By providing background information of candidates UPEW facilitated informed choice of the citizens of UP. Dr. Lenin, coordinator of UPEW, successfully ran a media campaign and managed to bring the issue of criminalization of politics to the center stage.

2007: received 2007 Gwangju Human Rights Award from May 18 Foundation of South Korea along with Ms. Sharmila Irom of Manipur

2008: Developed Testimonial Model for India with Dr. Inger Agger PhD, International Development Consultant, Psychologist, Denmark

2008: Received ACHA Star Peace award from Association for Communal Harmony in Asia USA along with B. M. Kutty, Karachi, Karamat Ali, Karachi, Pakistan and Mubashir Mirza, Sadiqabad from Pakistan.

2008: Director for the Association for Communal Harmony in Asia USA

2008: Participated as co-presenter along with Dr.Inger Agger and Dr.Peter Polatin on testimonial therapy: experience of India in An evidence –based International Conference: rehabilitating torture Survivors on December 3-5, 2008 at Copenhagen,Denmark

2009: formation of “**National Alliance on Testimonial Therapy**” (NATT) in the national consultation “**Testimony to improve psychosocial wellbeing and promote advocacy for survivors of torture and organized violence**” It was formed by the Panelists for the further use of testimonial therapy in India.

2009: Secretary cum Director for the Association for Communal Harmony in Asia USA.

2009:Co-author of **Testimonial Therapy: A Pilot Project to improve Psychological Wellbeing among Survivors of Torture in India** published in Volume 19, No. 3, 2009 of Journal ‘Torture’ published by IRCT.Link:
http://www.irct.org/Admin/Public/DWSDownload.aspx?File=/Files/Files/TortureJournal/19_03_2009/Testimonial%20therapy%20p204-217.pdf

2009: He is of the view that the glorification of encounter specialists by the media and the establishment has to stop if extrajudicial killings and torture are to end. Activists such as Raghuvanshi and organisations such as the PVCHR and the NHRC have raised their voices on these lines for long, but they are yet to get a positive response from the political establishment.
<http://www.frontline.in/stories/20091009262002700.htm>

2009:Received threat on his work www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/1446

2009: Participated Asian Folk School at Gwangju,South Korea organized by May 18 Foundation

2010: President for the Association for Communal Harmony in Asia USA

2010: India Today, Hindi edition profiled him as one of five most influence person in province of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand

<http://pvchr.blogspot.com/2010/03/india-today-magazine-says-guide-of.html>
indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/.../Mobilise+and+empower.html?...1

- Profile in dignity magazine:

<http://www.dignityfoundation.com/pdf/DD-Oct-08/Dr%20Lenin%20Raghuvanshi.pdf>

2010: Participated in 2010 Gwangju Asia Forum from May 17-23, 2010 at Gwangju, South Korea

2010: Received Usmania Award from Madarsa Usmania, Bazardiha, Varanasi in India for the development and welfare of education.

2010: City council of Weimar in Germany selected for 2010 International Human Rights Award.

2010: Participated in the National Seminar on Human Rights and Human Development and presented paper (along with Ms. Shirin Shabana Khan) on “Impact of testimonial therapy and folk school on the survivors of torture and organized violence” organized by social work Unit, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mahatama Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya

Vishwavidyalaya, Chitrkoot, Satana,MP and sponsored by University Grants Commission (UGC) from 22-24 January 2011 at Chitrakoot.

2010: Book on Lenin Raghuvanshi. Please see link:

<http://www.flipkart.com/books/6137433234?l=62QML3ctwUGP0YokbSpgmg--&r=p8vd8nKXTFGjoAspsTQoqw-->

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/6137433234/ref=pd_lpo_k2_dp_sr_1?pf_rd_p=486539851&pf_rd_s=lpo-top-stripe-1&pf_rd_t=201&pf_rd_i=9381043043&pf_rd_m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&pf_rd_r=0HJ35VHMXE17T4M70NN6

2011:

Lenin Raghuvanshi's book on Dalits in Independent India published by Frontpage publication. Please see for details:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Justice-Liberty-Equality-Independent-Frontpage/dp/9381043043>

<http://www.flipkart.com/books/9381043042>

<http://loklekha.blogspot.com/2011/10/dalits-in-independent-india-by-lenin.html>

<http://bargad.org/tag/lenin-raghuvanshi/>

Lenin Raghuvanshis' profile at Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lenin_Raghuvanshi

http://www.digparty.com/wiki/Lenin_Raghuvanshi

<http://www.evri.com/person/lenin-raghuvanshi-0x5b6e15>

http://www.mashpedia.com/Lenin_Raghuvanshi

http://www.mshtawy.com/en-wiki.php?title=Lenin_Raghuvanshi

Link related to death threat, intimidation and false criminal cases against Lenin:

<http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/1446>

<http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/2105>

<http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2006/2693/>

<http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2008/2718/>

<http://pvchr.blogspot.com/2009/07/india-human-rights-defender-once-again.html>

<http://vodpod.com/watch/3006985-dr-lenin-on-death-threat-and-intimidation-hindi>

http://www.mynews.in/News/Terror_strategy_of_SIB_against_Dr_Lenin_N30037.html

http://www.thesouthasian.org/archives/2007/threat_to_life_of_advocate_for_1.html

<http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2005/1221/>

http://www.alrc.net/doc/mainfile.php/alrc_st2008/469/function.mysql-connect

<http://pvchr.blogspot.com/2009/10/india-drug-mafias-don-assaults-dr-lenin.html>

<http://pvchr.blogspot.com/2009/10/india-drug-mafias-don-assaults-dr-lenin.html>

<http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2005/1203/>

<http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2008/2718/>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4dqH_L7KHg