

# Ambedkar King Study Circle



## 6th General Body Report

Sat. Oct 12, 2024 - San Jose, California

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# Introduction

The Ambedkar King Study Circle's General Body convened annually from 2017 to 2020. Unfortunately, the General Body could not be held in 2021 and 2022 due to the COVID-19. We resumed in 2023 with our 5th GB held on the backdrop of the struggle for SB403. The current GB stands as our 6th GB.

The year 2023-24 has seen significant local and global events. In the USA, SB 403 was vetoed despite passing the legislature with overwhelming support, while globally, Israel's genocidal attack on Gaza shocked the world. Despite the veto, the governor's message that existing laws should be broadly interpreted to cover any form of discrimination strengthens the historic Caste discrimination case. This setback has not dampened our enthusiasm. Oppressed caste communities have lived and fought for thousands of years without legal protection, and those working tirelessly across castes for social justice are more determined than ever to continue the fight. The attack on Gaza has also unified various organizations toward a broader struggle.

We stood in solidarity with undocumented people on their civil and human rights issues, participating in their seminars and conferences. This involvement helped deepen our understanding within our membership base.

Our 6th GB meeting will focus on strategizing our activities, executing our plans, and expanding the scope of our work.

## AKSC 2024 Conference

We organized the 5th AKSC conference on September 7, 2024, in Cupertino with the theme "South Asians' Impact: Shaping America's Democracy." The conference focused on the rise of Multi-Racial Right (MRR) and the unique moment it has created, where Hindu supremacists, white nationalists, and Zionists are aligning on a shared agenda. The progressive and democratic forces must develop a strategy to isolate these groups from positions of influence, although MRR holds significant sway within both the Democratic and Republican parties.

Amid this backdrop, the 5th AKSC conference brought together anti-caste and racially oppressed communities to strategize and unite in removing Hindu supremacists from political and community spaces. This year's keynote speakers included seasoned grassroots organizers Biju Matthews, Sharat Lin, Woods Ervin,

and journalist Manoj Mitta. The conference was attended by 80 dedicated activists and organizers.

## Campaigns

### Anti War Campaign Against Israel

AKSC actively participated in and supported demonstrations and protests in solidarity with Gaza, including the Stanford encampment. During these events, we highlighted how Hindu supremacists, once inspired by Nazi ideologies and anti-Jewish sentiments in the 1930s, have now shifted to a pro-Zionist stance. Their alignment is never with the oppressed but always driven by their ideology of supremacy.

Our involvement fostered mutual learning about shared struggles and common oppressors, emphasizing the need for united movements. One of the student leaders from the Stanford encampment also shared their experiences and the political lessons learned at the AKSC conference.

### Cisco Caste Discrimination - Cont.

The historic Cisco caste discrimination case remains active, having achieved significant legal victories. These include the rejection of the defendants' appeal for arbitration and a federal court ruling dismissing the Hindu supremacists' claim that the Civil Rights Department's complaint against Cisco violated religious freedom. This ruling, in favor of the victim, moves the case closer to justice.

However, after failing in court, Hindu supremacists are now attempting to dismiss the case through public propaganda and city council resolutions on "Hinduphobia." They falsely portray legal protections against caste-based discrimination as an attack on religious freedom. We must firmly counter this misinformation and educate the public about the harmful agenda of Hindu supremacists.

## Programs Organized

Sl.No	Program Name	Date	Remarks
1	145th Birth Anniversary of Periyar - Talk on Shrinking space for scientific Temper in India by Activist Thozhar Makizhnan and Thozhar Sasikanth Senthil	Sep 17, 2023	In-Person
2	Part 1 - Legal journey of Vachathi case by Com. P Shanmugham	Oct 13, 2023	Online
3	Part 2 - Legal journey of Vachathi case by Com. G Chamki Raj	Oct 26, 2023	Online
4	Caste Pride: Book discussion with author Manoj Mitta	Nov 11, 2023	Online
5	Discussion on SC/ST Subplan for inclusive development by Dr. R. Christodas Gandhi	Dec 14, 2023	Online
6	The Role of Tamil Nadu Untouchability Eradication Front by K. Samuel Raj	Feb 15, 2024	Online
7	Presentation to SJSU Sociology students on the Caste struggle in California	April 17, 2024	In-Person
8	Concealing Caste: Book discussion with the editors K.Satyanarayana & Joel Lee	May 16,2024	Online
9	Conversation with Living Smile Vidya to understand Trans people's struggles for dignity	Jun 22, 2024	Online
10	Discussion with Translator Kamala Krishnamoorthy on book Incidents In the Life of a Slave girl	June 29, 2024	In-Person
11	The Aesthetics of Caste by musician T. M. Krishna	Aug 3, 2024	Online
12	Redefining Classification : Sub classification of SC/ST's & Ambedkars vision	Aug 8, 2024	Online

## Programs Co-Sponsored

Sl.No	Program Name	Date	Remarks
1	95th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr	Jan 13, 2024	In-Person
2	133rd Birth Anniversary of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar	April 14, 2024	In-Person
3	African Liberation Day Panelist discussion	May 25, 2024	In-Person
4	Roundtable on Immigration (Book Launch by Bill O Hing)	June 15, 2024	In-Person

## Workshop Organized

The organizational workshop held last spring received very good feedback. It focused on conjectural analysis and its application in the current political landscape to unite progressive and democratic forces. Though AKSC is a small organization, adopting the right strategies and priorities will amplify our impact.

For the coming year, we propose adding a workshop on writing, while continuing the existing workshops on organization and leadership.

## Book Discussions

1. Last Heroes - P Sainath
2. Savera report 1 - The Global VHP Trail of Violence
3. Palestine Reading List
4. Savera report 2 - HSS and its links with White Supremacy
5. The Caste Pride

## Conclusion

We continue to gain valuable experience by actively participating in struggles and movements. We remain firmly committed to our core ideology of continuous mobilization, regardless of external factors. This commitment has been validated through our involvement in the Cisco case. Starting as a small group in 2016 during the second round of the California textbook battle, we were able to leverage our efforts when the Cisco case unfolded in the summer of 2020. It not only affirmed the reality of caste discrimination in the USA but also underscored the need for an organized effort to challenge those who support casteism under the guise of religious rights. We cannot wait for crises to act—we must be constantly prepared through disciplined organizational activities to seize opportunities and advance our cause.

In the coming year, we must empower the oppressed to unleash their full potential, expanding their human capabilities without fear of Hindu supremacists. Through strong organizational support, we must give them the confidence to stand up against supremacist forces when the situation demands.

Our scope must also expand beyond caste. While we have supported racially oppressed groups in specific instances, we lack sustained partnerships with organizations fighting for racial justice. Similarly, our involvement with undocumented communities has been limited to attending meetings and seminars, without developing deeper working relationships.

Finally, AKSC must prioritize gender representation, working seriously to build leadership and membership among women and the LGBTQ+ community. This is essential for a more inclusive and effective movement.