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International Journal of Allied Practice, Research and Review
Website: www.ijaprr.com (ISSN 2350-1294)

DALIT MOVEMENTS IN INDIA: ROLE OF SOCIAL REFORMERS AND ITS EFFECTS

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Abstract - The human rights violation in India country is one of the major problems since centuries. The socio-economic milieu of Indian society is inherently hostile towards protection of human rights of Dalits. It is the caste and Varna system of social stratification which promotes the societal violation of Dalit human rights. The rule laid down by the Hindu law giver, Manu, is that there are only four Varna's of Hindus and there is not to be fifth Varna. The four Varna's are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Gandhiji and others in their campaign against un-touchability contended that untouchables and scheduled Tribes fall under the fourth Varna namely Sudras on the basis of Manu's law of stratification. Dr.Ambedkar has pointed out that this theory is not acceptable because Manu speakers of untouchables as varn-baya which means those outside the Varna system. The four clsses of Hindus are called Savarnas while those outside the four classes like the untouchables are called Avarnas. Manu has stated in his smiriti that the develling's of the Chandals shall be outside the village, that they must be made 'apapatras' and their wealth shall be dogs and donkeys, their dress shall be the garments of the dead, they shall eat their food in broken dishes and black iron shall be their ornaments, they must wander from place to place and they shall not sleep in villages and towns at nights. It is well known that in villages the untouchables live in separate localities, while other castes live in the main village. It cannot, thus be denied that untouchables are not part of Hindu society and they must remain separate and segregated.

I. INTRODUCTION

The human rights violation in this country is one of the major problems. The socio-economic milieu of Indian society is inherently hostile towards protection of human rights of Dalits. It is the cast and Varna system of social stratification which promotes the societal violation of Dalit human rights.The rule laid down by the Hindu law giver, Manu, is that there are only four Varna's of Hindus and there is not to be fifth Varna. The four Varna's are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras.Gandhiji and others in their compaign against un-touchability contended that untouchables and scheduled Tribes fall under the fourth Varna namely Sudras on the basis of Manu's law of stratification.[1]Dr.Ambedkar has pointed out that this theory is not acceptable because Manu speakes of untouchables as varn-baya which means those outside the Varna system.[2] The four clsses of Hindus are called Savarnas while those outside the four classes like the untouchables are called Avarnas.Manu has stated in his smiriti that the develling's of the Chandals shall be outside the village,

[1]. Human Rights Violations and Atrocities on Dalits- Restoration of Human Rights and dignity to Dalits, p-77.
[2] ibid

that they must be made 'apapatras' and their wealth shall be dogs and donkeys, their dress shall be the garments of the dead, they shall eat their food in broken dishes and black iron shall be their ornaments, they must wander from place to place and they shall not sleep in villages and towns at nights.[3]It is well known that in villages the untouchables live in separate localities, while other castes live in the main village. It cannot, thus be denied that untouchables are not part of Hindu society and they must remain separate and segregated.

II. WHO IS A DALIT?

Dalit (oppressed or broken) is not a new word. Apparently it was used in 1930's as a Hindi and Marathi translation of 'Depressed Classes', the term the British used for what are now called the scheduled castes.[4]Dr.Ambedkarchoose the term 'Broken man' as English translation f Dalits in his paper- "The Untouchables" in 1948.The Dalit Panthers revived the term 'Dalit' and include in it the scheduled tribes in 1973 in their manifesto.[5]Buta Singh (ex- Chairman National Commission for Scheduled Castes) said the word Dalit is an unconstitutional.

III. FACTORS THAT LED TO DALIT MOVEMENTS

Since immemorial the Hindu society is based on 4-Varnas. Later on innumerable castes and sub-castes came into existence, obviously because of violation of caste rules and various other reasons. The so called untouchables who were originally outside the cats system came to be known as outcaste and formed the lower caste whose touch, even sight was treated as despicable to the caste Hindus. They were the worst exploited and oppressed people in India. However, 'Broken men' (Dalits) who were deliberately degraded as untouchables by the Brahamanic forces had never accepted their position. They had begun protesting againt it from the beginning itself. At the first, their response to un-touchability came to the fore in the shape of Bhakti Cult. Off all the saints, Ramanujacharya, Madhavacharya, Ramananda, Vallabacharya, Kabir, Tukaram, Meerabai and Chaitanya were promonent. The untouchable saints like Ravidas, chokhamela, Nandana and several others were attracted towards Bhakti Cult.[6]

IV. DALIT MOVEMENTS IN MODERN INDIA

The modern Dalit Movements finds its origin in 19th century when Dalit began to change their lives and Dalit aspirations began to be taken seriously. Most of the sources materials for the background of the movements were written not by the Dalits themselves but by those foreigners who became interested in them.

V. CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL REFORMERS

Some of the social reformers who had contributed for the upliftment of Dalits are as follows:-

JyotiraoGovindraoPhule (1827-1890):-First leader of Dalits. He occupies a unique position among the social reformers of Maharashtra in 19th century. He concentrated his energies against the unjust cast system under which millions of people had suffered for many centuries. He founded organisation (movement) called *SatyaSodhakSamaj* (society of seekers of truth) with himself as its president and treasurer. The main objective of the organisation was to work of liberation of Sudrasand to prevent their exploitation by the Brahmins. All the members of the samaj were supposed to treat all human beings as children of God and worship the creator without the help of any mediator. In his book *sarvajaniksatya Dharma Pustak,* published in 1881, his views on religious and social social issues are

[3] ibid
[4]Gail Omvedt (1995-)
[5]. Who is a Dalit; dalits in modern India- vision and Values, p-68
[6]. Sharma, Sanjay Prakash, "Dalit Movements History and Background; Dalit Society and Upliftment", 2004, Mohit Publications, p-43.

given I the shape of dialogue. In his opinion both men and women enjoy equal rights and it was sinful to discriminate between human beings on the basis of sex. In his another book called '*Satsara*' (the essence of truth) published in June 1885, he criticised the BrahmoSamaj and PrathanaSamaj. Addressing their leaders he declared "we don't need the help of your organisations. Don't worry about us[7]"

RajrshiChhatraPatiShahujiMaharaj:-He was the founder of reservations. He was the first person who made provisions for reservations for Dalits in government Jobs. He was keen to give respect to Dalits. He helped much in the study of Dr.Ambedkar by sending him abroad.

Narayan Guru:-Born in Kerla in Ezhava caste (untouchable caste) established the SNDP (*Shree Narayan Dharma ParipalanaYogam*) in Kerla and outside also. He was born in 1854. He openly criticised the congress and Mahatma Gandhi for their lipsampathy towards the lower castes. He criticised Gandhi ji for his faith in Chaturvarna, which he maintained is parent of the caste system and untouchability. He pointed out that the difference in castes is only superficial. He gave a new slogan "one religion, one caste and one God for mankind". He also built temples which are open for all castes.[8]

RamaswamiNaiker:-Naiker was a crusade for social equality and fought against the untouchability. He was the leader of the Justice Party- Dravidian Movement. He denounced Hinduism as an instrument of Brahmanical control, laws of Manu as inhuman, the Puranas as farely tales.[9]

Jagjivan Ram:-Born on April 1909 in an untouchable family. His father belonged to the community (chamar) who were ordained to remove dead animals, slay their hides and make shoes and other leather goods for the caste Hindus.[10] In 1937 Jagjivan ram organised agricultural labourers at GopalGunj in Bihar to fought for their right to move from one place to other for higher wages. BabuJagjivan Ram was the founder president of the *Dalit VargaSanga,* one of the biggest organisations of Dalits in India. His philosophy behind forming Dalit VargaSanga was to bring together all the downtrodden people and to form small segments of this organisation in villages.When BabuJagjivan Ram was the labour minister in the central government, Labour Act was passed according to which the minimum wages got fixed for labourers.He founded all '*India Backward Classes Federation',* one of thebiggest organisations of the downtrodden people. It works for the interest of backward classes.

Like Gandhi ji, Jagjivan Ram attached much importance in his life to true religion, while fighting for uprooting social evils and injustice. He always and throughout opposed pollution in the religion. He vehementlyopposed evils of casteism and orthodoxy in Hindu society, but never hammered on the very root of Hinduism as a whole.He said at an International Labour Organisation (ILO) conference- "conferences and committees cannot by themselves achieve anything more than lay down ideals and objectives…… The ILO would therefore, be well advised to follow up decisions by prompt actions……"

Gandhi ji:-The idea of social discrimination was experienced by Gandhiji in South Africa when he engaged himself against the discriminatory attitude of South African Government against Indian. The problem was similar to that of untouchability as the migrants were treated as inferior to the local population which enjoyed numerous basic rights legally not available to Indians.For Gandhiji construction of the life of the Nation was of utmost important. This could be achieved by alleviating the social status of the untouchables. He always constructed untouchability as a cruel and inhuman institution.During his discussions with Harijan's at Ahmedabad, he observed, "this is a movement for the purification of Hinduism……..."According to Gandhiji, "If we are the children of the same God

[7]. Chandra, Prof. Ramesh, "Phases of Dalit Revolt", p-50.
[8]. Grover, B.L., "A New Look at Modern Indian History", p-412.
[9]. ibid
[10]. Chandra, Prof. Ramesh, "Phases of Dalit Movement", p-52.

how can be any rank among us."[11]Through his speeches in public and writings in Young India and Harijan, he stressed the problem of untouchability and its removal from its roots. The Mahatma had the feeling that in Hinduism there was no sanction for treating any single human being as untouchable. The Bhagavad-Gita has never taught that a chandala was in any way inferior to Brahmana.

To boost up the work for the upliftment of Harijans, Gandhiji laid the foundation of the *HarijaSevak Sang* in 1932 when he was in jail. This organisation is not a part of congress. It was the outcome of the fast Gandhiji undertook in 1932 in jail.[12]

Swami Vivekananda:- Swami Vivekananda used to say that untouchables were not depressed; they were supressed by the Hindus who in turn, had supressed themselves by supressing themselves.[13]

Dr.BhimraoRamjiAmbedkar:- Ambedkar was born on 14 April 1891 of Mahar (Hindu Untouchable) parents, RamjiMalojiSankpal (father) and Bhimbai (mother). His father was a military subedar and was a kabirpanthi devotee.In 1923 (at the age of 32 years) he was the most qualified man in India having acquired the degrees of M.A, Ph. D, M. Sc, D. Sc and Barrister at law from the university of America and England.[14]He started legal practice at Bombay High Court in June 1924 and from that time started his active public career as a social worker, a politician, a writer, and educationist. From December 1920 he had brought out a Marathi fortnightly, 'the MookNayak' (leader of the Dumb). In January 1919 he had also given evidence before the South Borough Reforms (Franchise) Committee, claiming political rights for the depressed classes of India. In July 1924 he started an organisation in Bombay named the 'BahiskritHitkaniSabha' for the moral and material progress of the untouchable students. For propagating the same cause and improving the conditions of untouchables he started a Marathi fortnightly, the '***Bahiskrit Bharat'***, in April 1927 and a weekly, the '***Janta***' in November 1930. In September 1927 he started the '***SamajSamta Sang'*** for preaching social equality among the untouchables and the caste Hindus. Inter-cast dinner and inter-cast marriage formed important parts of the programme of the organisation. As the organ of this body he started another paper, the 'Samata' in March 1929.In December 1927 he led a Satyagrahto establish the civic rights of the untouchableto draw water from a public tank, '***chavadarTalen'***, at mahad district Kolaba. Hindu claimed the tank as a private property and a prolonged litigation followed. Ambedkar won the case in the Bombay high Court in March 1937.

He led another Satyagrah in March 1930 to establish the rights of the untouchables to enter the famous temple of Kalaram at Nasik. The Satyagrah was withdrawn in1934.In 1928 he was appointed a professor in the Government Law College, Bombay, and subsequently the principle of the College. In 1935 he was made (Perry) Professor of Jurisprudence, a coveted distinction.

In politics he early established his position as leader of the depressed cases. He was nominated member of the Bombay Legislative Assembly from 1926 to 1934. During this period he introduced several Bills for the welfare of the peasants, workers and untouchables. They were, however, not passed because of opposition of the orthodox sections. In recognition of his claim as a leader of depressed classes Ambedkar was nominated a delegate to the three round table Conferences in London (1930-1933) and served on some of the Committees till 1934. His demand for separate Electorate for untouchables was opposed by Gandhiji at the meeting of the Minorities committee of the Second Round table Conference (November 1931), as Gandhi felt that it would permanently divide the Hindu society. Gandhi declared that he would resist such a move with his life. The ***communal award*** was announced on 17 August 1932, conceded separate Electorate for untouchables. Gandhi went on fast unto death on 20 September 1932 and finally ***Poona Pact*** was made in was made in Yervada Jail which provided for reservation of seats for the untouchables in the general constituencies.

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[11]. Chandra, Prof. Ramesh, "Phases of Dalit Revolt", p-120
[12] Ibid, p-125
[13] Ibid, p-117
[14]Gajrani, Shiv, "Dr. B. R. Ambedkar", p-75

Ambedkar could not reconcile himself to this political compromise which did not eliminate the social stigma attached to the Harijans. On October , 13, 1935 he made an announcement in public meeting at Yeola, District Nasik that untouchables should leave the Hindu fold altogether and accept some other religion, as he felt that within the Hindu fold they would never get recognition of social equality. He first turned to Shikhism during 1938-40, but his effects proved fruitless. Finally he embraced Budhism and advised his followers to accept new faith. He himself gave 'Deeksha' to lakhs of followers in Nagpur. It must be noted that this sudden mass conversion was only superficial. It did not alter the real condition of Harijans and many of them reverted to their earlier faith in course of time.

He founded 'Independent Labour Party' in India in October 1936[15] which captured all the seats in the legislature in the Bombay Presidency reserved for scheduled castes. In April 1942 to 1946 he cast his net wider and formed the '***Scheduled Castes Federation'*** as an all India political party.
From 1942 to 1946 he was a member of the Governor General's Executive Council and took advantage of this opportunity to promote the interest of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. He secured funds from the central Government for their education and reservation in posts in the central and provincial services for them.

He joined Nehru's cabinet as Law Minister. He was the chairman of the drafting committee to frame the Constitution of India. He also drafted the Hindu Code Bill so well that he was called the Modern Manu. However, orthodoxy prevailed and the Bill was opposed by some of the cabinet Ministers. His health also deteriorated and he resigned from the cabinet in September 1951. He last his election to the parliament in February 1952, but was nominated by the Bombay Legislature to the council of states in May 1952.

Dr.Ambedkar's Struggle for Land Reforms

Ambedkar propagated the idea that the urgent problem of landless labourers could be solved only by taking over the uncultivated lands for cultivation and giving it to landless labourers.[16] He emphasised that consolidation of holdings and the tenancy legislations cannot help untouchables who are landless labourers. He advocated collective forms, as they could help them to some extent. He wanted the key and the basic industries to be owned and run by the state.According to Ambedkar, it shall be considered as the key industry and it should be organised on collective basis.[17]

Jat-Pat-TodakMandal and Views

In 1935 (DEcember), Dr.Ambedkar was invited by the Jat-Pat-Mandal, a caste Hindu organisation working for the abolition of caste to preside over their annual conference to be held at Lahore in the month of April 1936. Dr.Ambedkar accepted the invitation and took pains to prepare his presidential address in which, as was expected, he not only condemned the caste system and Hindu religion in the harshest language as he considered that caste has ruined the Hindu, in particular untouchables. He also added that he has decided to discard Hinduism. The organisers asked Dr.Ambedkar to delete those words and some other objectionable portions from the address on the plea that the viewsexpressed by him would be unbearable to the conference. As however, he refused to do so, the reception committee cancelled the conference. The circumstances under which his planned visit to Punjab had to be cancelled were explained by Ambedkar himself in the Prologue to the first edition of 'Annihilation of Caste'- the undelivered speech which was published by him in June 1936.

[15]Gajrani, Shiv, "Dr. B. R. Ambedkar", p-4
[16] Ibid, p-107
[17] ibid

Views on Constitution and Ambedkar's participation

On June 5, 1950, Colombia University conferred L.L.D. degree on Dr. B.R.Ambedkar for his outstanding performance in framing the Constitution of India. This is the highest tribute from international world.The university hailed Dr.Ambedkar as "one of India's leading citizens-a great social reformer and a valiant upholder of human rights" in awarding him honorary degree at its 198th commencement exercise. Dr.Ambedkar received the honorary doctorate at law and letters before a large crowed assembled to watch 6,848 graduates of Colombia's school and colleges.
Nehru ji, while paying a tribute to Dr.Ambedkar in the LokSabha said that "Dr.Ambedkar had played a most important art in the framing of India's Constitution".

He told two facts-

1. Dr.Ambedkar has played a very important constructive role in making of the Constitution even before his election to the drafting Committee.
2. No one took greater trouble and care over the Constitution making than Dr.Ambedkar.

Dr.Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly while paying tribute to Dr.Ambedkar explained, "Sitting in the chair and watching the proceedings from day to day, I have realised, as nobody else could have, with what zeal and devotion the members of the Drafting Committee and especially its chairmanDr.Ambedkar, in spite of his indifferent health have worked……."

About his illness during the work of Drafting Committee: In January 1948, Dr.Ambedkar complained that the pain in the leg started at four in the evening and went on the whole day. He writes that his health had suddenly gone down. He passed four nights without wink of sleep with most excruciating pain in both legs and his servant had to awake and had to nurse him the whole night. "Two most eminent doctors say that if my condition does not improve immediately the trouble in the legs may become chronic and incurable."[18]

While paying tribute to Dr.Ambedkar, Shri Frank Anthony said about the voluminous work; "I would like very briefly to pay a particular tribute to my friend, Dr.Ambedkar. I do not believe that any one of us can really gauge the volume of work and the intensity of concentration that must have been put in the production of the voluminous and by no means easy document…."[19]

Social System and Ambedkar

Dr.Ambedkar was alleged to spoil the Hindi religion but he does not hesitate to say that there is no religion in the name of Hindu. He said, "If you want to save Hindu religion, the Brahmanism will have to be abolished."[20]He was the first man with whom Gandhiji agreed on the point of abolishing caste system even after the opposite views with each other. According to Dr.Ambedkar caste system was a type of slavery. He wanted to end the feelings of untouchability as well as the caste system. "The root cause of caste system is attached with class and Ashram and the root of Varna ashram in Brahmanism and the root of the Brahmanism is authoritarianism and political power", he said.[21]Dr.Ambedkar believed much in the abolition of customs for the development and improvement of any society.

Dr.Ambedkar's movement became weaker after his death and proper evaluation of his personality could not be done properly either by dominant or by depressed classes even before and after his death. In fact he was influenced by Dr.Phoole in his movement of social reform and Mahatma Gandhi also agreed with the thoughts of Ambedkar about the abolition of caste system in

[18] Ibid, p-283
[19] Ibid, p-326
[20] Ibid, p-327
[21] ibid

the last moment of his life. He got success in this direction and now no one can ignore his importance as a hero in the call of abolition of the caste system.
If we evaluate the Indian caste system and philosophy of Dr, Ambedkar, it becomes clear that

Dr.Ambedkar was certainly a leader and reformer of caste system. There was a great impact of his movements and efforts. As a result we are greatly affected individually by the revolution of reform brought by him while gathering together on religious places and social institutions. The feelings of casteism in our country which is present even today in its bad form. For its reform religious and political leaders living apart of yheir ruling politics should evaluate the society and only this will be a true homage to Dr.Ambedkar.

Though before Dr.Ambedkar ,JyotiraoPhoole, DyanandSaraswati, VirSavarkar, Mahatma Gandhi, etc. worked for downtrodden but from amongst the downtrodden Dr.Ambedkar's work done in different direction of safeguarding the rights of the downtrodden and self-dependence might not be forgotten.

The lectures and meetings of Dr.Ambedkar left an everlasting effect on the depressed classes and they got ready to rise against their slavery and they were moved a lot.[22]

VI. IMPORTANT EVENTS OF AMBEDKAR'S LIFE

1. Birth- 14 April 1891
2. Witness in South Borrow Commission, 1917
3. Untouchables Conference, Nagpur, 1918
4. BahishkritHitkarniSabha formed, 20th July 1924
5. Nominated as MLC, Bombay Province, 1926
6. MahadSatyagrah, December, 1927
7. Witness in Simon Commission, May 1928
8. Nasik Kala Ram temple Satyagrah, 2nd March 1930
9. Representative at Round Table Conferences, 1930-32
10. British Communal Award, 20th August 1932
11. Poona Pact, 20th September 1932
12. Yewale District, Nasik Conference, 23rd October 1935
13. Independent Labour Party formed, August 1936
14. Elected MLA, Bombay Province, January 1937
15. All India SC Federation formed at Nagpur, April 1942
16. Appointed as Labour Minister in the Viceroy's Executive Council, July 1942
17. Peoples Education Society formed, July 1945
18. Elected to Constituent Assembly from Bengal, November 1946
19. Law Minister in Independent India, 15 August 1947
20. Appointed as chairman of Drafting Committee of the constitution of India, 29th August 1947
21. Resigned from Union cabinet, September 1951
22. Elected to RajyaSabha, March 1952
23. Buddhist Society of India formed, May 1955
24. Embrace Buddhism, 14th October 1956
25. Parinirvana (Death), 6th December 1956

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR AND HIS WRITINGS

1. The national dividend of India, 1916
2. Small holdings in India and their Remedies, 1917
3. Weekly 'MookNayak', started in 31st January 1920
4. Provincial Decentralisation of imperial France in British India, June 1921
5. The problem of rupee-Its origin and its solution, march 1923

[22] Jatav, D.R; Dr.AmbedkarVyaktitvaAwankritiva, p-113

6. The evolution of provincial finance in British India, 1925
7. Weekly 'Bahiskrit Bharat' started in 13th April 1932
8. Weekly 'Janata' December 1935
9. 'Annihilation of Caste', December 1935
10. Federation versus freedom, January 1939
11. Thoughts on Pakistan, December 1940/41
12. Mr. Gandhi and the emancipation of untouchables, December 1942
13. Ranaday, Gandhi and Jinnah, January 1943
14. What congress and Gandhi have done to untouchables, June 1945
15. Who were the Sudras?, October 1946
16. States and Minorities, March 1947
17. The Untouchables, October 1948
18. Maharashtra as Linguistic State, October 1948
19. Thoughts on Linguistic state, December 1955
20. Buddha and his Dhamma, published in 1957 after his death[23]

Kanshi Ram's Movement:-

Kanshi Ram was a dynamic leader who has gained all India significance by the establishment of the BahujanSamaj Party.
He belongs to a middle class family and to earn his livelihood, he joined the Defence Department in a Junior Position. He experienced discrimination since his childhood I accordance with four Varna's, he felt very unhappy and dissatisfied with it. He began to mobilize the people with his sincere and consistent efforts.

After becoming a public leader he found an ally in Mayawati's dynamism and energy which could prove useful to propagate ideology of BSP.

Both Kanshi ram and Mayawati delivered speechesheared by lakhs of people in UP, MP, Rajasthan, Punjab, Maharastra, Bihar and elsewhere. They were fully apprised of their socio-economic, political, cultural and educational rights and the way and means through which they could achieve their goals.

Due to the efforts of Kanshi Ram mayawati become the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. He guided and advised the chief minister (Mayawati) on numerous issues facing the State.
Kanshi Ram very often rated as a man of the masses in north-west India. He has won the hearts of common man as well as the economically weaker sections of our society. He is of firm view that such weaker sections should be given all the privileges so that they could raise their economic standard.To bring Dalits at par with other Hindu communities is the main function of this dyanamic leader (Kanshi Ram).

He wishes to enhance the status of women. Kanshi Ram also laid emphasis on small scale industry mostly to be located in the rural areas.

He was the great leader of the downtrodden after independence. He was the great patriot of Dr.Ambedkar. He died while working for the people of his community.

It needs to be mention here that in 1971, Kanshi Ram and his colleagues established the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, other backward classes and minorities Employees Welfare Association.[24]

[23] Uttar Pradesh Sandesh, monthly magazine, April 1991, p-76
[24] Chandra, Ramesh, "Dalit leaders", p-175

In 1973, Kanshi Ram and his colleagues established the All India Backward and Minority Employees Federation (BAMCEF)[25]

In 1981, Kanshi Ram founded a larger body of Dalits that was Dalit SoshitSamajSangarshSamiti (DS4).[26]

In 1984, Kanshi Ram founded BahujanSamaj Party (BSP).[27]

Mayawati:- She was born on 15th January 1956 in a Jatav (untouchable family) in Delhi. She studied B.A, B.Ed., and LLB.

Kanshi Ram, a dynamic leader stepped into her career. She entered politics with the thought that she would be able to do the substantial work for the socio-economic upliftment of the weaker sections of the society.

Both Kanshi Ram and Mayawati decided to float the BSP which soon received an appreciable attention from millions of people. The manifesto of the party would always devise ways and means which would develop the socio-economic structure of the economically weaker sections.

Mayawati was the first ever Dalit woman to head the government of a State of the Country.

She has created history bby assuming the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister's office four times.

1. 3rd June 1995 to 18 October 1995[28]
2. 21st March 1997 to 20th September 1997[29]
3. 3 May 2002 to 26 August 2003[30]
4. 13 May 2007 to 7 March 2012

Mayawati, the first chief minister to complete 5 years in U.P.,[31]On assuming his power in Uttar Pradesh on May 2007, she said that each policy of her government would be based on 'SarvajanHitay, SarvajanSukhay', meaning there by happiness and welfare of all.
Under the leadership if Mayawati, the government has taken the following decisions (from mar 2007 to May 2008) in the interest of weaker sections;-

1. Special derive for filling backlog of reservations.
2. Provision of reservation to sc/st in private sector
3. Computerisation for transparency in the distribution of sc/st scholarships
4. Mahamaya housing scheme
5. ShriKanshi Ram ShahriHharibAwasyojna for providing housing facility to urban poor
6. Construction of community halls for Dalits
7. JananiSurakshaYojna under which the eligible pregnant woman are provided a sum of Rs. 1400/-

[25] Ibid, p-176
[26] Ibid,p-177
[27] ibid
[28] http://www.searchindia.com/search/indian-politicians-mayawati.html
[29] ibid
[30] ibid
[31] The Hindu, March 7, 2012, lucknow edition.

8. Construction of various sites for respect to saints, gurus and great men, etc

VII. OTHER DALIT LEADERS

Ram Vilas Paswan:- He is a dynamic leader representing the welfare of Dalits in Bihar and elsewhere in India. He has got charismatic personality and is easily approachable to common man. He got the record number of votes and set a record in the parliamentary elections. He shows much interest and keenness to solve the socio-economic problems of his people.
He was Railway minister, telecommunication minister and fertiliser minister in NDA government.
He formed a party known as LOK JAN SHAKTI of which he has been elected as president. Through this party he wants to solve several socio-economic problems of scheduled castes. He is against several evils like dowry system, early marriage system, ill-treatment and lack of education.

K.R. Narayanan:-Born on February 4, 1921 in a middle class family in Kerla. He showed the signs of brilliance during his school days.
Shri Narayanan had a brief stint in the times of India and soon after, Pt. JawaharLal Nehru; the first Prime Minister of India selected him for the Indian Foreign services. He is known as the "scholar Rastarpati of India". He is very fond of reading and writing. He always kept himself engaged in the academic pursuits.

Milestones of his life-

1. Started his career as lecturer in the University of Travancore
2. Joined the Editorial Department, the Hindu, Madras in 1944.
3. Joined Indian Foreign services in 1944 and held several diplomatic assignments in Yangon, Tokyo, Bangkok, Ankara and Beijing
4. Ambassador in USA (1980-84)
5. Member LokSabha (1984, 1989 & 1991)
6. Minister of state for planning (1985)
7. Minister of state for external affairs (1985-86)
8. Minister of science and technology (1986)
9. Vice president of India (1992-1997)
10. President of India (1997-2002)
11.

B.P MAURYA: - Born on September 12, 1928 in U.P. At one point of time he had been regarded as the successor of Jagjivan Ram. He worked for the upliftment of SC's and ST's and held several positions in all India Scheduled Castes Federation.
He was member LokSabha (1962-67), minister of state for agricultural and industry (1974-77) and member RajyaSabha (1978-83)

Ramdhan:-He was a prominent leader of the economically weaker sections of the Indian society. Time and again, he talked about the problems of labour and peasantry. He was very much worried about the landless labour who could hardly make their both ends meet. He was a stanch follower of BabuJagjivan Ram.

Ram Raj:-Born in ordinary family, he had the vision for his younger days to do something of note for the economically and socially weaker sections of his community (Dalits). He realised that their progress in any field to human temperament was in jeopardy. They are being treated as sub humans and there appears to be no future for them. Through his speeches and writings Ram Raj gave vent to his feelings in a systematic way, which should touch upon the mind and heart of the people of his community. Presently he is an MP in LokSabha elected on BJP Ticket.

SardarButa Singh:-He hails from lower middle class Dalit family from Punjab. Born on 21st March 1934 at Mastpur in Jallundar district.

Being a good organiser, he become a popular leader among the youth of Punjab.
He took up the issue for the welfare of farmers, students, economically weaker sections, women, irrigation and other developmental schemes.

He holds the following positions-

1. General secretary AICC
2. Member LokSabha (1962-77 & 1980-84)
3. Minister of Parliamentary affairs, sports, works and housing (1983-84)
4. Minister for home affairs (1986-94)
5. Member RajyaSabha
6. Chairman National Commission for Schedule Castes.

SurajBhan:-Born on October 2, 1928 (Haryana). He was keen to devise different ways and means for the smooth educational development of the people of his community.

Positions held by him are as fallows-

1. Member LokSabha (1967-70, 1977-79 & 1980-84)
2. President Haryana BJP, Haryana (1987)
3. Minister for Revenue, Haryana (1987-89)
4. Minister for Agriculture, Government of India (1996)
5. Deputy speaker LokSabha (1996-98)
6. Governor UP (1998-2003)

Veer Manni:-He is a well-known Dalit leader of South India who played a significant role for numerous socio-economic, cultural and educational activities of his community. He often talks about labour problem and peasantry.
The landless labour and the factory labour are his main concern. He does not wish that they should lag behind in one way or the other. They should be given their due share at any caste. Time and again he launched non-violent agitation in order to seek economic concessions for the people of his community.

U T Raj Shekar:-He is a prominent journalist not only in his own region but also in other regions of India as well. As the name signifies 'Dali Voice' (his paper), it has deep bearing on numerous problems of his community. It is indeed a popular newspaper and its circulation is fairly well the

Southern region of India. It generates a new awakening among the people as the emphasis of all the themes is on Dalit.

VIII. EFFECTS OF DALIT MOVEMENTS

Due to the efforts made by the social reformers of before mentioned Dalit movements. Various provisions were laid down in the constitution of India and various other legislations for the upliftment of Dalits so they can live with dignity and security of their persons.

Constitution of India
Constitution of India was adopted on 26th November 1949. In about 65 years the government of India and Judiciary have done lot for the upliftment of Dalit. Various provisions of the constitutions which are specifically related to Dalits are as follows-

Part III- Fundamental Rights

Article 15- Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, *caste*, sex or place of birth.

Article 15 (4)- (Added by the constitution first amendment Act, 1951) provides for making special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Article 15 (5)- (Added by the constitution 93rd amendment Act, 2005), provides for making any specific provisions for advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in so for as such special provisions related to their admission to educational institutions, whether added or unaided by the state, other than minority educational institutions referred to in Article 30 (1).

Article 16 (4-A)- authorises government for making any special provisions for reservation in favour of SC's/ST's. This article was added by the constitution 77th amendment Act, 1995.
Article 16 (4-B)- authorises the state to fill up backlog Vacancies. This Article was added by the constitution 81st amendment Act, 2000.

Article 17- provides for abolition of un-touchability.

Article 19 (5)-authorises state to impose reasonable restrictions on sub clause (d & e) of Article 19 to protect the interest of scheduled tribes.

Article 29 (2)- provide that no citizen shall be deprived admission into any educational institutions only on the grounds of race, religion, *caste*, language or any of them.

Part IV- directive Principles of State Policy
Article 46- provides that state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the people and in particular SC/ST and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Part V- The State
Proviso to article 164 (1) provide that the state of Chhattisgarh, Jarkhand,Madya Pradesh and Orissa, there shall be a minister in charge of tribal welfare who may in addition be in charge of the welfare of scheduled castes and backward classes or any other work.

Part IX- The Panchayats
Part IX was added by constitution 73rd amendment Act, 1992.
Article 243-D- provides for reservation of seats for SC's/ST's in Panchayats.

Part XVI- Special Provisions Relating to Certain Classes
Article 330- provides for reservation of seats for SC's and ST's in the House of People.
Article 332- provides for reservation of seats in state assemblies for SC's and ST's
Proviso to Article 335- provides for making any provision in favour of SC/ST for relaxation in qualifying marks in any examination or lowering the standards of evaluation, for reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of services or posts in connection with the affairs of Union or State. This is added by constitution 82nd amendment Act, 2000 to Article 335.
Article 338-A- provides for appointment of National Commission foe Scheduled Castes. This article was added by the constitution 89th amendment Act, 2003.
Article 339(1)- provides for the appointment of a commission to report on the administration of scheduled areas and the welfare of scheduled tribes in the states.
Article 341 and 342- provides for identification of SC's and ST's so that parliament may by law include or exclude from the list of SC's and ST's.

Other Legislations
Protection of civil rights Act, 1955:-
Earlier it was known as untouchability Act, 1955. This Act provides punishment for preaching and practice of untouchability, for the enforcement of any disability arising therefrom and for matters connected therewith. The punishment provided by this Act should be minimum of one month imprisonment and maximum of 6 month or fine.

The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled (prevention of atrocities) Act, 1989:-
This Act was enacted by the parliament of India, in order to prevent atrocities against sc/st. the purpose of the Act was to help the social inclusion of Dalits into the Indian society.
This Act provides for special courts to deal with cases of atrocities against sc/st and for relief and rehabilitation of Dalits.

Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993:-
Under this Act National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and various State Human Rights Commissions (SHRC's) were set up to deal with human rights violations including atrocities against Dalits.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's)
Various NGO's are working including All India Rights Organisation (AIRO) for the upliftment and rehabilitation of Dalits. It is seen that Dalits are not coming forward because of ignorance, backwardness, illiteracy, etc.

Media:-
Media is also playing a great role by highlighting the atrocities which are going on against the Dalits. Judiciary is also taking actions on the basis of reports published by media. For Example, Warangal court has asked the police to file a case against Chiranjeevi under sc/st Act, 1989.

Present Situation
In spite of all the above mentioned provisions of the constitution and various other legislations, the atrocities against the Dalits are going on. Some important instances are as follows-

- On August 2009 a Dalit man from MalaspiPalgaon was poisoned to death because he refused to beat drum during the Pala festival.
- The Hindu- 20th September 2009 published that an elderly Dalit man from Shivpuri (M.P) who had taken loan from a money lender was set on fire by the later's four associates at Magdijhara village, the old man suffered 60% burn injuries.
- In September 2014 a Dalit man was tortured and forced to consume human Faeces and Urine in Khaira village UP in district Janshi, UP.[32] Is not this a serious crime? The victim has not

[32] Times of India (Lucknow), 20th September 2014, p-1

only face the torture but also life to live with dignity which is against the spirit of constitution. This type of accuse should be publically hanged.

Amnesty International's Report
India; torture, rape and death in custody 1992- "Dalits and Adivasis are the poorest and vulnerable groups of people in India."
Experience shows that untouchability, bonded labour, etc. is going on in rural India. In order to curb the practice of untouchability, bonded labour and in order to uplift the Dalits so that they can live with dignity and full respect, we have to take strong measures.

Suggestive Measures

1. Create awareness among Dalits of their rights which are provided for them in international instruments, Constitution of India and various other legislations.
2. To encourage NGO's which are working for the upliftment of sc's/st's.
3. Creating more and more special courts to try cases of atrocities against sc's/st's.
4. Change the attitude of high caste Hindus by convincing them that Dalits are also human beings and they have also human rights like them.
5. Promote inter-caste marriages, etc.

IX. Conclusion

Though the efforts made by our social reformers and provisions made in law or praiseworthy but still the forces of status quo and discrimination is going on. It is shame on us that in the 21st century (where India is going to be world super power), we are facing the practice of untouchability and hatred among high castes and low castes. It needs to mention here that it is due to lack of political will and unawareness among Dalits the laws are not properly followed. The matter does not end here but I must want to conclude here with the message of Swami Vivekananda ji
"Arise awake and rest nottill the goal is reached"
So it is our duty to respect each other equally and try our best to abolish the untouchability and hatred among us, so that we can proudly say *"**merabharatmahan**"*

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