



DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR'S SOCIAL MOVEMENT

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Abstract:

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar role in the social reformation movement in India is absolutely important. He was staunch protagonist of social democracy. He has given philosophical foundations to the social movement. He has also given practical dimensions to his philosophical framework by starting various civil right movements. He gave human face to Indian constitution. He was responsible for canalizing the social democracy in true spirit in India.

KEYWORDS:

Babasaheb Ambedkar , social reformation movement , philosophical framework.

INTRODUCTION-

The Indian social system was based on negation of democratic principles. The socio-political conditions on the eve of nineteenth century were undemocratic. Indian society was influenced by Chaturvanya, Caste, Untouchables, bonded labour, slavery and many other inhuman social practices. The ancient Indian Vedic and Hindu canonical text established a social order which was meant for discrimination of backward castes. These religious texts became social norms and the law of the society which generated inhuman social culture.

Babasaheb Ambedkar played decisive role in changing in human social system. Babasahebs Social Movement was propagating equality, liberty fraternity and social justice. Babasaheb established various social organization to expedite social movement.

A) Babasaheb Ambedkar : Social organization :-

Babasaheb Ambedkar established various social organizations and he also worked with some organizations which accelerated social revolution.

1. Bahishkrut Hitkarini Sabha :

Babasaheb established Bahishkrut Hitkarini Sabha on July 20 1924.¹

The aims and objectives of the Sabha were as under:

1. To promote education and socio-economic upliftment of the depressed classes.
2. To promote the spread of education among the depressed classes by opening hostels or by employing such other means as may seem necessary or desirable.
3. To promote the spread of culture among the depressed classes by opening libraries, social centers and classes or study circles.
4. To raise and improve the economic status of the depressed classes by starting Industrial and Agricultural Schools.
5. To represent the grievances of the depressed classes before the government.
6. To organize or help any club, association or any movement intended to bring about the general enlightenment, social upliftment or economic betterment of the Depressed Classes.²

It is noteworthy that all the programmes carried out by this organization were peaceful in nature and were in the parameters of democratic form of methods to achieve the human franchise.

2. Samta Sainik Dal :-

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar founded Samta Sainik Dal in order to create honorable, brave, disciplined and resolute fighter in the glorious cause of the emancipation of the depressed, oppressed and exploited class of India. Since Vedic era many restrictions were imposed on the untouchables under the pretext of religion and if this restriction were not observed by the untouchables, severe punishments were given to the untouchable person by the so called upper class.³

Dr. Ambedkar established 'Samta Sainik Dal' in order to safeguard human and democratic rights of the suppressed and depressed classes of India. It was his constitutional effort to fight against social injustice caused by Hippocratic socio-religious conditions since Vedic era and strengthen social democracy at large. 'Samta Sainik Dal' always supported the Depressed Classes when the democratic values were denied to them. Dr. Ambedkar wanted democracy to be the way in every walk of life of the people.⁴

3. The Depressed Classes Education Society :-

Dr. Ambedkar was very much influenced by Mahatma Phuley's ideology. He knew the importance of education in human life to attend overall development. Closing down the Bahishkrut Hitkarini Sabha on June 14, 1928, Dr. Ambedkar established the Depressed Classes Education Society to organize the school education of his community on a sound basis.⁵ He appealed to the Bombay Government to help the Depressed Classes Education Society in its work of providing hostels for the benefit of students of the Depressed Classes, who were unable to bear the burden of High School Education.⁶ Hindu social system denied right to education to the Shudra class under the pretext of religion.

4. Samaj Samta Sangh :-

Samaj Samta Sangh was the other organization established by Dr. Ambedkar in 1927 as a social reformation movement. This organization played a very significant role in the civil rights movement of untouchables in Maharashtra. Dr Ambedkar was its President.

Following were its aims and objectives:

1. The foundation of the League was of the belief that all human beings were equal and that they were entitled to equal opportunities for the realization of their personality and enrichment of their life.
2. The league further asserted that this right to equality is sacred, inalienable and inviolable.
3. The League believed that the right to equality is the birth right of every human being irrespective of race, creed, caste and sex.
4. This League believed that without the establishment of social equality a harmonious social life is not possible.
5. The league protested that all ideas activities and institutions that work for result in such disharmony are in negation of the principle of social equality.
6. The League aimed at the realization of all the above principles by all possible means.⁷

5. The People's Education Society :-

Dr B.R. Ambedkar established the People's Education Society. The society was registered under, registration Act XXI of 1860, registration no. 1375 of 1945-46, dated 9th July, 1945 and the Bombay Public Trust Act 1950 (Bombay XXIX of 1950) Reg. No. - F. 303 (Bombay).⁸

Some of the aims and objectives of the People's Education Society were as follows:

1. To provide facilities for education: secondary, collegiate, technical, and physical.
2. To start, establish, conduct and or aid educational and Buddhist religious associations such as schools, colleges, vihars, hostels, libraries, playgrounds, Buddhist institutes etc. at suitable places in the state of Maharashtra as well as any other parts of India.
3. To provide facilities for education of the poor and the Buddhist.
4. To create and foster general interest in education among the scheduled Castes and Buddhist [...] to give them special facilities, scholarships and freeships for higher education.
5. To promote science, Buddhist and other literature and fine arts and to import useful knowledge in comparative studies of religion.
6. To do all other lawful things and act as are incidental or conducive to attainment of its aims and objects.⁹

6. The Buddhist Society of India :-

The Buddhist Society of India was registered by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on 4th May 1955 in the office of the Registrar of Companies, Mumbai.¹⁰

On May 8th, 1955 at the function held at Nare Park, Bombay, he made a formal announcement of the establishment of this society for propagation of Buddhism.¹¹

Some of the aims and objectives of the society were as follows:

- 1) To promote the spread of Buddhism in India.
- 2) To establish schools and colleges for religious and scientific subjects.
- 3) To establish orphanages, hospitals and relief centers.
- 4) To promote comparative study of all religions.
- 5) To undertake publication of Buddhist literature and to issue leaflets and pamphlets for giving a true understanding of Buddhist religion to the common masses.
- 6) To hold gatherings and conferences of the Buddhists of India for common action and to establish fellowship.¹²

B) Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Civil Rights Movement :-

i) Mahad Satyagraha :-

Dr. Ambedkar being staunch follower of democracy, tried to imbibe democratic ideology through the programmes of his civil rights movement. Mahad Water Tank Satyagraha is part of Dr. Ambedkar's Civil Rights Movement. This Satyagraha helped to create awareness amongst depressed classes regarding their human rights.¹³

ii) Burning of Manusmriti :-

The conference also passed the resolution of condemning Manusmriti, a holy Hindu scripture on the grounds that it did not allow the Shudras or the untouchables either to hear or read the Vedas. It was also condemned because it preached the principle of inequality. Eventually, the copy of *Manusmriti* was burnt in a pit, which was dug for this purpose in view of the mammoth gathering. Dr. Ambedkar believed that it decried the Shudras, stunted their growth, impaired their self-respect and perpetuated their social economic religious and political slavery. Fiery speeches were made on this occasion condemning the inhuman practice of untouchability and the scripture *Manusmriti*.¹⁴

iii) Kalaram temple entry :-

Dr. Ambedkar's contribution in reconstructing socio-religious culture of India is of immense importance. He is one of the greatest reformers in cultural renaissance in India. He was the one who not only challenged the inhuman religious Hindu texts but the orthodox Hindu traditions also. Among the various restrictions imposed on untouchables, one of the restrictions was that they were not allowed to enter in the Hindu temples. Dr. Ambedkar wanted to break this Brahminic monopoly and sought the untouchables to attain the right to enter the temples. He was not interested in worshipping the gods in the temple but he was interested in achieving the human rights of the untouchables.¹⁵

Dr. Ambedkar gave a thought-provoking speech about the entry of Kalaram Temple. He said, *"Today we are about to enter the temple, but the entry in the temple would not solve the whole problem. Our problem is comprehensive. It is political, social, religious, economic, and educational. The issue of Kalaram Temple is to appeal to the Hindu mind. The high caste Hindus deprived us for the ages. Whether the Hindus are willing to grant our humanitarian rights will be a question raised in this Temple Entry Satyagraha. Whether the Hindu minds are willing to accept us as human beings is an issue. These are the questions to be tested through this Satyagraha. The high caste Hindus looked upon us and treated us even worse than cats and dogs. We wish to know whether those very Hindus would give us the status of Man. This Satyagraha will provide answers to these questions. This Satyagraha is one of the efforts for bringing about a change of heart among the high caste Hindus. Hence, the success of this effort depends on the Hindu*

*mindset.*¹⁶

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's social movement was for social change.

CONCLUSION :-

1. Babasaheb Ambedkar played important role in social reformation movement in India.
2. His civil right movement was responsible for creating awareness about human rights of Depressed classes.
3. His various organizations emphasized the need of united efforts for upliftment of depressed classes.
4. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's role as chief architect of Indian constitution has given the various constitutional safeguards to the minorities, women's and depressed classes.
5. Babasaheb Ambedkar's social movement is based on democratic non violent method's which laid to constitutional democratic movement.

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