



DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKARS VIEWS ON AGRARIAN ISSUES

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INTRODUCTION :

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was great philosopher, social reformer, Constitutionalist, Social scientist and above all he was true great Economist having vision of economic democracy in true sense. He had definite vision about development of agriculture in India. He propagated the idea of political, social and economic democracy along with the idea of political democracy through his writings and speeches.

DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKARS VIEWS ON ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY:

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's thoughts on economic Democracy are in favour of solving the issues of peasant classes in India. He defined Democracy as, "a form and method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about in without bloodshed." It becomes clear that he wanted to bring revolutionary change in the socio economic life of the people. It is observed that King ship in India and colonial rule in India had not framed permanent constant policy of welfare of the peasant classes. Feudalism in the medieval period of Indian History has exploited the farmers too extreme extent. Therefore the political model of Kingship was not in the human interest of the peasant class. Its land revenue system had ruined the life of farmers. It was based on the principal of discrimination and exploitation.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar wanted to develop economic Democracy in India. He once said, "we do not to install by any means whatsoever a perpetual dictatorship of any particular body of people. While we have established political democracy, it is also the desire that we should lay down a mechanism to enable people to come and capture power. The Constitution also wishes to lay down an ideal before those who would be forming the Government. That ideal is economic Democracy whereby so far as I am concerned I understood to mean one man one value." Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar wanted to root economic Democracy in India and he wanted to wipe away the model of Kingship and feudalism which had ruined the life of depressed classes.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar believed that, “the soul of democracy is the doctrine of one man one value.”³ According to him, “An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society there should be social endomosis.”⁴ Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was in favour of establishing society where there will be mobility in the society.

“SMALL HOLDINGS IN INDIA AND THEIR REMEDIES AND STATES AND MINORITIES”

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in his research work ‘Small Holdings in India and their remedies and states and minorities’ has evaluated the various issues pertaining to agriculture. The essay was published in 19185. Indian Agriculture System was facing lots of problems. One of the problem was not that holdings were small but that they were also scattered. According to Raj Kumar, “The small size and fragmentation of holdings resulted in inefficient use of resources which, by raising cost of production, ultimately culminated in low agricultural productivity. Thus, on one hand, overwhelmingly large population depended on agriculture that being a major national industry, and on the other its productivity was low.

According to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar the basic problem of Indian agriculture was that it was not capable enough to generate surplus which ultimately created scarcity of capital. Raj Kumar in his book, Economic thought of B.R. Ambedkar, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar suggested that “Industrialization of India was the soundest remedy for the agricultural problem of India”⁶. He argues that industrialization would have cumulative effects. Firstly, it will enable us to sponge of idle labour in non-agricultural channels of production. When productively employed, idle labour will not only cease to live by predation but will earn its will destroy the premium on land and reduce the pressure on it.

ABOLITION OF THE KHOTI SYSTEM AND VIEWS OF DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s views on Khoti System were published in his fortnightly Bahishkrit Bharat on 3rd May, 1929. According to him, “Khoti System existed in Kokan in Ratnagiri and Colaba District. Khoti system deteriorated economic condition of the peasant class. It propagated the idea of slavery and bonded labour system. It humiliated the farmers.⁷ Dr Ambedkar was of the opinion that Khoti System must be abolished. He proposed to put forth bill in Legislative Council to end up Khoti System.

Under the Khoti System the Khot was obliged to collect revenue from the tenants and then he was paying its certain part to the Government. After his payment to Government he enjoyed the privilege to collect excessive revenue. Khot misused its right to collect revenue and exploited the tenants.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar pt forth the demands of farmers to the Mumbai Government. He demanded fundamental needs of farmers wherein he demanded following demands:

1. Government should abolish Khoti System by passing an Act in this regard.
2. Government should assure farmers about their minimum wages.

3. Government should cancel all types of taxes imposed on farmers.⁸

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar put forth Bill in Mumbai Legislative Assembly for abolition of Khoti System on September 17, 1937.⁹ Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar through this Bill tried to put an end to economic exploitation of poor tenants by Khots it proved to be forerunner to the land reforms legislation in the post-independence India.¹⁰

DR. AMBEDKAR'S VIEWS ON AGRICULTURE TAX

According to Dr. Ambedkar, the socio-economic development of an economy depends primarily upon the availability of adequate finance and their proper utilization. Dr. Ambedkar had analyzed the revenue system of the British Government. He criticized British revenue system because it was highly oppressive; therefore, he argued that Government should undertake legislation to make the tax policy more equitable and elastic.¹¹ According to Dr, Ambedkar the first and most essential requirement of good tax system is that it should be reliable. It does not matter whether that revenue system brings it ought to be certain in its yield.¹²

Dr. K.S. Ingole has listed the main features of taxation policy advocated by Dr. Ambedkar as follows :

1. Tax must be levied on taxable capacity or income.
2. It must be progressive i.e. the rich must be taxed more and the poor less.
3. Exemptions to tax payers should be allowed to those who have income below certain limit.
4. Land revenue item must not be rigid but elastic and subject to variations.
5. There should be enquiry in taxation.
6. No taxation system should be manipulated to lower the standard of living of the people.
7. There should be efficiency in taxation (Dr. Ingole K.S., Dr. Ambedkars views on Agriculture Inome Tax, Research Paper).

Dr. Ambedkar's concept of taxation was based on the idea of bringing uniformity and equality while framing up the taxation policy. He opposed feudalist pattern of society and even he opposed indirect collection of taxes from farmers by mediators.

DR. AMBEDKAR'S VIEWS ON DEMOCRATIC STATE SOCIALISM

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar firmly believed in the principal of State Socialism. He believed in democratic pattern of society. He was of the opinion that State must play decisive role in overall development of nation. Dr. K.S. Ingole has put forth his ideas about State Socialism that following principles will be followed in it.

- a) Active role of State in the planning of economic life of people.
- b) Emphasis on increasing the productivity and production by providing physical capital and human capital.
- c) Freedom to private sector to plan and manage their industries and trade except in selected areas.

d) Equitable distribution of National Wealth and Income among all sections of society irrespective of castes, creed, gender, region and religions.¹³

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Association for Education, Japan in its article on Impact of Dr. Ambedkar's thoughts on Indian Economy has enlisted Dr. Ambedkar's ideas which were presented to Constitution Committee.

The main points of it are as follows which represent Idea of Democratic State Socialism.

1. All basic industries should be nationalized and managed by State.
2. Insurance and agriculture should be nationalized and managed by State.
3. Maintenance of productive resources by State.
4. Just distribution of common produce.
5. Provision for compensation of land or industry acquisition in the forms of bonds.
6. The distribution of village and among the families in a village for collective farming.
7. No discrimination as landlord, tenants and agriculture laborers.
8. All agriculture input like capital, seeds, fertilizers etc. Would be provided to collective farmers by the Government.
9. Distribution of agriculture income only after payment of land revenue tax.
10. Punishment according to rules who do not follow.¹⁴

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has rightly framed Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution of India which propagates the principles of State Socialism.

DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR'S VIEWS ON WATER MANAGEMENT

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was Labour Minister of India during the period 1942 to 1946. He had portfolio of Water and Energy Department also. He played a very important role in framing up the water policy of India. Some of the important features of his water management policy are as follows :

1. To develop multiple beneficiary projects aiming to develop and utilizing water resources from rivers.
2. To utilize water resources for developing Thermal Projects in India.
3. To use waterways for transportation.
4. To utilize rivers for internal transportation.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was responsible for developing Damodar River Valley Project. Damodar river was called as river of sorrow because due to flood in rainy season it was causing huge loss of property and life of human life. During 15th November, 1943 to 8th November, 1945 there were Five Conferences on the Damodar River Valley Project. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has explained his views about this project which aimed at :

1. Solving the problem of flood distraction in Damodar Valley area.
2. Solve the problem of soil erosion.

3.To built hydro-electric dam which will generate electricity at cheaper rate for the common people.

Hiracud Dam Project, Son River Valley Project were also developed by Dr, Babasaheb Ambedkar.

DR. BABASAHEB AMEDKAR'S VIEWS ON WATER MANAGEMENT IN INDIAN CONSTITUTION

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in the Indian Constitution included useful provisions regarding Water Management in Article 239 to 242. Article 242 aimed at appointing commission to resolve issues pertaining to the issues arose out of water issues later on in Article 262 some related provisions were included. In 1956 Act was passed regarding river issues.

CONCLUSION :

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had a great vision, therefore he tried to resolve the issues pertaining to agriculture and water management. He developed the vision of State Socialism through the Directive Principals of the State Policy in the Constitution of India. Amartya Sen, Deton had referred to Dr. Ambedkar's thoughts on agriculture while studying Indian Agrarian Economics. Dr. Ambedkar developed vision of welfare of peasant class.

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