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Dr. B.R.AMBEDKAR'S CONTRIBUTION IN NATION BUILDING

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ABSTRACT :

Dr. Ambedkar was a freedom fighter of the truest kind, not merely dreaming of setting India free from British rule, but of transforming India into a country where freedom holds meaning for everyone. He was elected as a first law minister of independent India and appointed as a chairman of the constitution drafting committee. His role was to write a new constitution for India. By keeping in mind to bring equality in society he did great for untouchables. For this, freedom of religion was defined in the constitution. He created the system of reservation by keeping in mind untouchables and their condition in that India. He worked for the improvement of the status of women in India.

Not only this, but the formation of Reserve Bank of India in 1934 was also based on the ideas of Babasaheb that he had presented to the Hilton Young Commission. He was a trained economist of his time and even written very intellectual books on economics. Amartya Sen, who is Nobel prize winner in economics had said that Ambedkar is his father in economics.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was truly a builder of a nation and a global leader instead of just a Dalit leader. He is the one who had given the principles of social justice. Thus, Ambedkar is of great relevance to Indian society to achieve social justice, removal of untouchability, in establishing equality and true democracy. The objective of this paper is to draw an outline for Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's contribution in nation building.

KEYWORDS : Emancipation, Inequalities, Humanist, Dalits, Reformer.

INTRODUCTION:

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar (14th April 1891-6th December 1956) is a leader whose thoughts continue to be relevant even today. His ideas on equality, brotherhood, democracy, independence, international economics and politics are valid even in present times and his work continues to be effective and inspiring to many.

Some people are born brilliant, some have brilliantness. To the last division, Ambedkar belongs. Dr. Ambedkar was a great patriot, social thinker, political reformer, philosophical writer with progressive ideas. He stood for all political, social and cultural activities which increased the cause of human progress and happiness. Ambedkar believed that in the absence of economic and social justice, political independence would not bring about their social solidarity or national integration. He advocated the abolition of privileges on the basis of caste or status and vigorously fought for the liberty and dignity of the individual. He exhorted the nation to preserve independence by establishing equality and fraternity in all spheres of life.

Dr. Ambedkar's thought on Economic development and Economic Planning :-

Ambedkar's views on the economic development go back to the year 1918, when he participated in an academic debate on the problem of small holdings in India and its remedies. Although his paper, "Small Holdings in India and Their Remedies" (Published in the Journal of the Indian Economic Society, Vol1,1918) focused on the problem of small holdings, in its formulation and implied solution it contained a theoretical framework for economic development. Beginning with a discussion of the problem arising out of the smallness of landholdings, he went on to analyze the backwardness of the agricultural sector as a whole and ended with the proposed solution of capital investment in agriculture and industrialization for the overall development of the economy.

Dr. Ambedkar recognizes the importance of insurance in providing the state with "The resources necessary for financing its economic planning, in the absence of which it would have to resort to borrowing from the money market at high rates of interest", and proposes the nationalization of insurance. He categorically stated "state socialism is essential for the rapid industrialization of India. Private enterprise cannot do it and if it did, it would produce inequalities of wealth which private capitalism has produced in Europe and which should be a warning to Indians".

Dr. Ambedkar was the president of policy committee which was set up to formulate policy and plans for improvement in the condition of labour and development of irrigation and electric power. Development of infrastructure such as roads, communication, transport services, irrigation were treated as prerequisites for industrial development and therefore received top priority in the plan strategy. It was believed that development of infrastructure would bring a relatively higher annual rate of growth in industrial output and employment than the rural labour force and help to absorb the surplus labour from agriculture.

LABOUR POLICY :

As labour member of viceroy's executive council from 1942-1946, Ambedkar introduced a number of welfare measures for the working class of India. Notable among them are-

- Establishment of employment exchanges
- Machinery for fixation of minimum remuneration
- Tripartite dispute settlement mechanism
- Fixation of working hours
- Working conditions
- Maternity leave
- Leave with pay etc.

which even today offers a safety net to labourers. These labour welfare measures take care of not only the productivity of labour, but insurance of the claim of legitimate share of labour in the total production or income of industry in a sense, it takes care of growth and development as well. Higher productivity of labour means the growth of income and legitimate share of the labour means more equitable distribution of income and less inequality of distribution, which in turn means development. Ambedkar, a man educated in U.S. and U.K., was not an armchair economist. He was an economist in thought and action with a rare vision.

WATER AND POWER DEVELOPMENT :-

Dr. Ambedkar was a man of vision and foresight. While drafting the constitution of India, he was not put water resources and management entirely in the state list but he had concluded this subject under the provision of central control. He introduced the concept of multipurpose development of river basin and the concept of river valley authority. His efforts in this direction have culminated with multipurpose development of Damodar, Mahanadi and other rivers immediately after independence.

When he was the member of the viceroy's executive council (1942-46), his major achievement was the establishment of two technical organizations, presently known as 'central electricity authority', that have contributed for the development of irrigation and power in the country. The proposal for creation of central

irrigation, waterways advisory board was approved in September 1944. Subsequently it became central waterways, irrigation and navigation commission (CWINC) and was approved in April 1945 by Dr. Ambedkar. It became Central Water Power Irrigation and Navigation Commission (CWPINC) in January 1948 and subsequently it became Central Water and Power Commission (CWPC) in April 1951. It was bifurcated into CWC and CEA in 1974 October.

He created the central technical power board (CTPB) on November 1944 merged with CWPINC and became CWPC in 1951. Irrigation and power sector which grew at a tremendous speed was envisioned by the Ambedkar.

Reforming Hindu Social Order and Women Empowerment:-

Dr. Ambedkar can be regarded as one of the greatest intellectual and social reformer of modern India who struggled throughout his life for the liberation of Indian women from the lifelong bondage and slavery under the weight of Hindu social institutions. He introduced and got passed four acts which strengthened the position of women in the society.

These are:-

- 1). the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
- 2). the Hindu Succession Act, 1956
- 3). the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956
- 4). The Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956

As the chairman of constitution drafting committee, Dr. Ambedkar made a pioneering contribution in introducing Articles 14, 15, 16, 39, 42 in the Indian constitution that guarantee protection to women from any kind of discrimination. This shows the great importance he attached to the cause of gender equality in India.

SOCIO ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEMOCRACY:-

Dr. Ambedkar firmly believed that political democracy cannot succeed without social and economic democracy. He suggested democracy as the 'governing principle of human relationship' but stressed that principles of equality, liberty and fraternity which are the foundations of democracy should not be interpreted narrowly in terms of the political rights alone. He gave an expression to the objectives of economic democracy by incorporating the directive principles of state policy in the Indian constitution. Being the law minister, Dr. Ambedkar fought vigorously for the passage of the Hindu code bill, most significant reform for women's rights in respect of marriage and inheritance. He resigned in September 1951 when the bill did not pass in the parliament. Ambedkar's philosophy is fundamentally ethical and religious. According to him, the social precedes the political. Social morality is main focus to his political philosophy. His ideas of democracy internalize the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity in their true spirit. Though there are many attempts but one may find difficulty in locating him in dominant political traditions often this may lead to mis-interpretation of the essence of Ambedkar. Their political thought stresses a new language to understand the intricacy of his opinions.

QUESTION OF DALITS AND RESERVATION POLICY :-

Dr. Ambedkar was mainly against the social discrimination of Dalit's. The social practices which were followed in the society that time were created a system which was resisting any kind of development of Dalit's irrespective of their talent and ability. He himself faced so many hurdles in his life only because of his caste. The main cause of reservation for Dalit's was social discrimination and which forced them to be educationally and economically backward. The reservation of seats for the depressed classes was incorporated into the government of India Act of 1935, legislation by the British designed to give Indian provinces greater self-rule and set up a national federal structure that would incorporate the princely states. The Act went into force in 1937.

Efforts by both Indians and British officials encouraged untouchables and the lower castes to form their own organizations to call for more equitable treatment and to demand economic assistance. Ambedkar was at

the center of these activities, seeking a vehicle to bring pressure to bear on the government to secure more resources for the depressed classes. He had formed the independent labour party in 1936, changing tactics, he used a July 1942 All India depressed classes conference in Nagpur to establish an All India Depressed Classes Federation.

When Ambedkar became a member of the viceroy's executive council, he used his new position to advance the interests of the scheduled castes. Ambedkar submitted a memorandum demanding reservation for the scheduled castes in services and scholarships and financial aid for the promotion of their education. The government accepted the recommendations, and in 1943 reservation in services in favour of the scheduled castes became effective, hence reservation policy plays a major role to improve the socio economic conditions of Dalits, which is clear by table.

Percentage of SC employees in central government services :- 15 page

Class	1959	1965	1974	1984	1995
I	1.18	1.64	3.2	6.92	10.12
II	2.38	2.82	4.6	10.36	12.67
III	6.95	8.88	10.3	13.98	16.15
IV	17.24 *	17.75	18.6	20.2	21.2*

*- excludes sweepers

Source - National commission for SC and ST, seventh report-April 1984-March 1985, 5; National Commission for SC and ST, fourth report 1996-1997 and 1997-1998 volume 1, 14.

SC enrollment in undergraduate, postgraduate, Technical and professional courses:-

Year	Total Enrollment	SC Enrollment	%SC Enrollment
1978-1979	2543449	180058	7.08%
1995-1996	7955811	10,58,514	13.38%

Source – National commission for SC and ST, Annual Report : 1996-97 & 1997-98

From above table, it is clear that percentage of SCs in courses of higher education has nearly doubled since 1978. These are good indications that reservation are working.

NATION AND NATIONALISM :-

In view of Ambedkar, nationalism means expression of inner unity of a people and it is a process of social assimilation. Therefore, irrespective of caste, colour and creed, nationalism gets perfect harmony if social brotherhood of men prevails everywhere within a nation. To Ambedkar, nationalism is negation of caste spirit and caste spirit is nothing but deep-rooted communalism. He emphasized to fight against casteism, linguism, communalism and separation because he was of the opinion that these social evils divide the people into small social units which are against the spirit of nationalism.

Nationality and nationalism are two different psychological states of human mind there cannot be nationalism without the feeling of nationality. In view of Ambedkar, nationality is a feeling of consciousness of kind which is on one hand binds together to those who have it, so strongly that it overrides all differences arising out of economic conflicts or social gradations and on the other hand, severs them from those who are not their kind. It is a feeling not to belong to any other group. This is the essence of what is called a nationality and national feeling. He opined that nationality may turn into nationalism when two conditions are satisfied.

- There must arise the desire to live as a nation and nationalism is a dynamic expression of that desire.
- There must be a territory which nationalism could occupy and make it a state as well.

Role of Buddhism in reconstruction of Indian society :-

Ambedkar found that the means to develop essential social and moral conscience of the society for

establishing democratic society in Buddhism. He holds that the essence of Buddhism consists not in the removal of suffering- which is only negative and incidental, but in the attainment of perfection, which is positive and fundamental i.e.; establishing a democratic society. He declared his mission to make India as PRABUDDHA BHARAT, an enlightened India. New Identity, New Personality and New Social Order.

A Buddhist is an identity of an individual who is liberated from the bondage of dogma, an interrogator of the sources of oppression, a self-consciously liberal and secular in world view. Dr. Ambedkar calls for a change in the personality of a Buddhist based on the ideals of Pradgna, Sila and Karuna - competence, character and compassion, which he himself has embodied. He exhorts that morality is not passive, it is proactive. To defend democracy, in its true sense, becomes the moral duty of every Buddhist.

STATES AND MINORITIES :-

States and minorities is a memorandum on the safeguards for the minorities in general and the scheduled castes in particular drafted by Dr. Ambedkar and submitted to the constituent assembly on behalf of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation in the year 1946. It is in the form of draft articles of a constitution, followed by explanatory notes and other statistics. The memorandum sets out in specific terms fundamental rights of citizens, safeguards of the rights of minorities and scheduled castes to representation in the legislatures, local bodies, executive and services. It also provides for special provisions for education and new settlement of the scheduled castes in separate villages. The very first article is allotted to the admission of Indian states into the union which are here classified as qualified and unqualified on admission to the union. The qualified state has an obligation to have an internal government which is in consonance with the principles underlying the constitution of the union. The territory of the unqualified states will be treated as the territory of the union. The memorandum not only prescribes the rights and privileges of the SC but also lays down the remedies in the event of encroachment upon them. One of the novel features of the memorandum is the provision for the election of the PM union and provincial - by the whole house of the legislature of the representatives of the different minorities in the cabinet by members of each minority in the house and of the representatives of the majority community in the executive again by the whole house.

Another unique feature is the provision of remedies against invasion of the fundamental rights of citizens of freedom from economic exploitation and from want and fear.

REORGANIZATION OF STATES:-

The observations of Dr. Ambedkar, the principal architect of our constitution, on the desirability of smaller states are prophetic. He welcomed the recommendation of the state's reorganization commission in 1955 for the creation of Hyderabad state consisting of Telangana region and creation of Vidarbha as a separate state. Further, he envisaged the division of UP into three states (Western, Central and Eastern), Bihar into two (North and South or present Jharkhand), M.P. into two (North and South) and Maharashtra into three (Western, Central and Eastern). He was for linguistic homogeneity of a state in the sense of 'one state one language' and not 'one language one state'. He thus envisaged two Telugu speaking states, three Marathi speaking states and a large number of Hindi speaking states.

While arguing for smaller states, Ambedkar was guided basically by two considerations. One, no single state should be large enough to exercise undue influence in the federation. Drawing from the American experience he thought that smaller states were in the best interests of healthy federalism. Second he thought that socially disadvantaged sections are likely to be subjected to greater discrimination in bigger states because of the consolidation of socially privileged or dominant groups.

CONCLUSION:

Dr. Ambedkar was a short life and yet a most remarkable one. He rose up from dust, from being treated worse than an animal to becoming the father of the Indian Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar was a truly a multi-faceted personality. A veritable emancipator of Dalit's, a great national leader and patriot, a great author, a great educationalist, a great religious guide and above all a great humanist without any parallel among his

contemporary. All these facts of Ambedkar personality had strong humanist underpinnings. It is only regrettable that the press in the past as well as the contemporary has projected Ambedkar mainly as a great social rebel and a bitter critic of the Hindu religion. Critics of Dr. Ambedkar have ignored his basic humanistic instincts and strong Humanitarian convictions behind his every act or speech throughout his life. Thus we conclude Dr. Ambedkar was one of the foremost makers of Modern India.

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