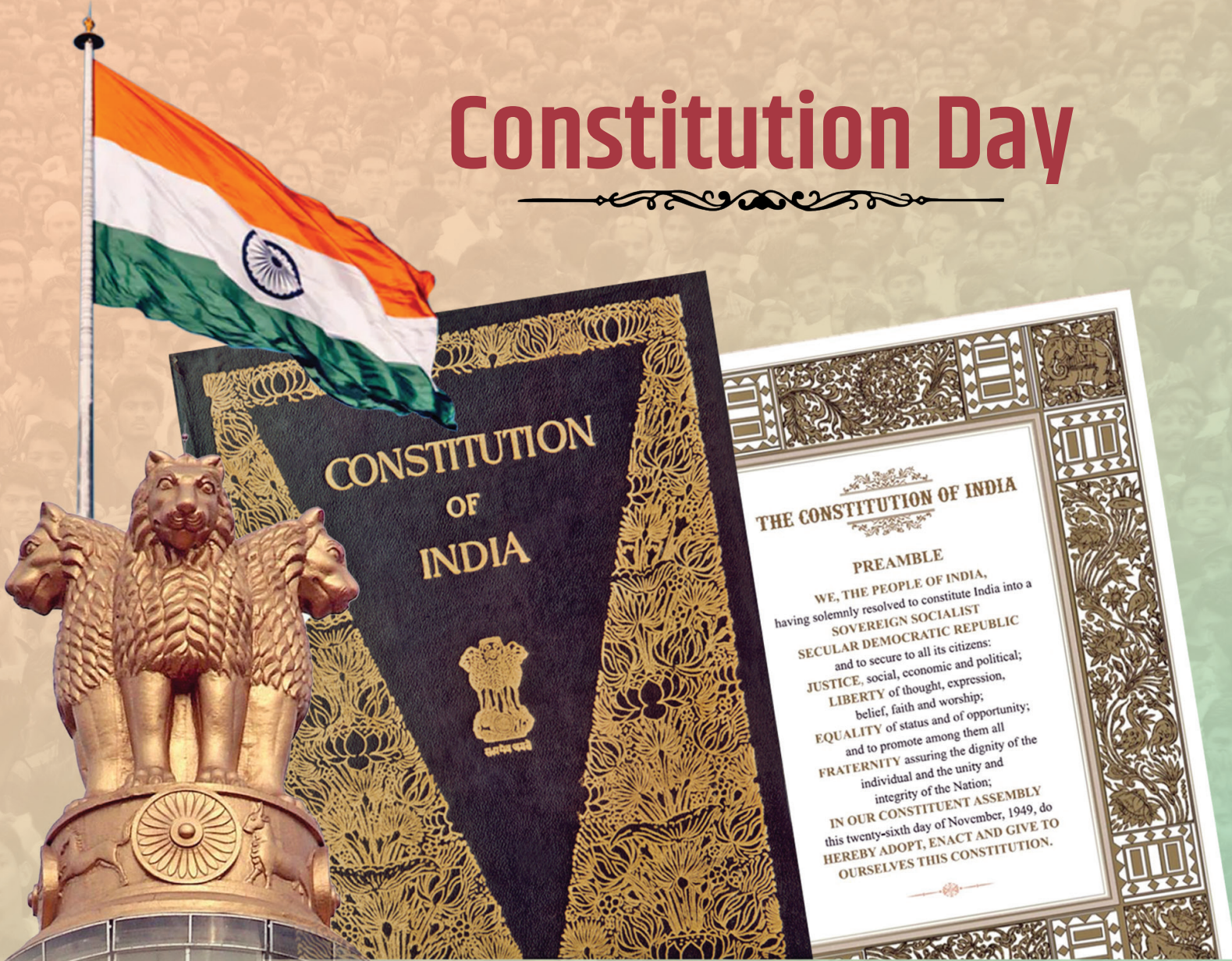


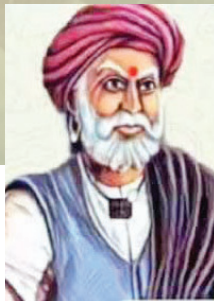
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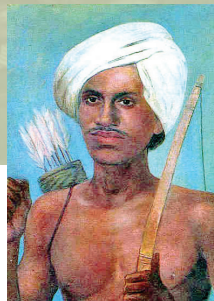
Constitution Day



12th November
Madan Mohan
Malaviya Death
Anniversary



14th November
Lahuji Salve
Birth Anniversary



15th November
Birsa Munda
Birth Anniversary



15th November
Sant Namdev
Birth Anniversary



19th November
Guru Nanak Dev
Birth Anniversary



26th November
Constitution Day



28th November
Mahatma Phule
Birth Anniversary

EDITORIAL

Observing Constitution day

November 26 is celebrated as Constitution Day or Samvidhan Diwas in India. This day is also known as National Law Day. The Constitution Assembly formally adopted the constitution on November 26, 1949. The decision to observe Constitution Day was taken in 2015 which underlines the nation's commitment to the constitution and values upheld therein. It also denotes deep respect for Dr B R Ambedkar as 2015 was his 125th birth anniversary.

Drafting the Constitution was not an easy task. The Constituent Assembly met for 166 days, spread over two years, 11 months and 18 days, before the Constitution was formally adopted. The members of the Constituent Assembly signed two hand-written copies of the document - one each in Hindi and English- on January 24, 1950. Two days later – January 26, 1950 - the Constitution of India became the law of the land.

Several critical issues were debated in the Constituent Assembly. This was natural as India, an ancient nation with diversities, was entering into a new era. Significantly, majority of the critical issues, were finalized with consensus even if Constituent Assembly comprised of people from various schools of thoughts including Gandhian, Socialist, Hindu Maha Sabha and those insisting on Dalit identity. This could happen as India has always sheltered various thoughts, which is an essential for democratic system. Democracy is a modern term but it was in practice in India in letter and spirit for a very long period. For India, democracy is not restricted merely to political structure but it also encompasses all aspects of social life.

The Constituent Assembly signifies that India needs representation and accommodation of all the thoughts for its strong and healthy existence. India is not a nation with one particular ideology but has nourished number of thoughts for several centuries. This is the strength

of India as it has created a temperament or psyche, which is needed for a true and healthy democracy. This temperament, certainly, made the task of Constituent Assembly easy. Otherwise, it would not have been possible to blend core ancient values with modern concepts or ideas in the constitution such as equal value of each human life, equal status to women, freedom of expression and structure for contemporary democracy.

The Constituent Assembly was witness to heated debates on several occasions but it respected even microscopic views by considering their spirit. Such views were accepted mainly because of the moral standing and credentials of the person who presented them. It is because of this reason that Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar could set the agenda on social issues. While Constitution unequivocally upholds the equality in all the spheres, it also steered us to the new era by abolishing several outdated customs or traditions like untouchability, zamindari, hereditary rights and gender discrimination. It happened as Indian society has always been open and ready to change as per needs of the time. It stands not merely as a testimony of democratic spirit but also commitment to the nation's progress on a healthy path.

We ought to understand that India has accepted a series of amendments in the past seven decades, indicating that we, as a nation, are open for changing needs of the time. We need to be grateful towards the makers of the constitution for leaving the space for such amendments. The Constitution has come up as a model of principle of 'checks and balances' in which none of the pillar of state gets deviated or dominated. In the course of time, Constitution has emerged as yet another cementing bond for India as it accommodates all the regional identities / aspirations and strengthens national integrity.

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Why comparing Dr. Ambedkar with E.V. Ramasamy Periyar?

The author challenges ideological credentials of E.V. Ramasamy Periyar. He disputes an attempt to draw parallel between EVR and Dr. Ambedkar. Author feels it is designed to set a particular narrative.



Venkatesan

An attempt is currently being done to draw similarities between E.V. Ramasamy Periyar and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. This is for obvious reasons to set a particular narrative. This is not merely restricted to Tamilnadu but is in progress all over the country. The supporters of this move are trying to portray Periyar as Dr. Ambedkar of the South and Dr. Ambedkar as the Periyar of the North. In few universities and colleges, Periyar - Dr. Ambedkar study circles are being set up trying to give the common attributes to both of them and add academic flavor to this attempt.

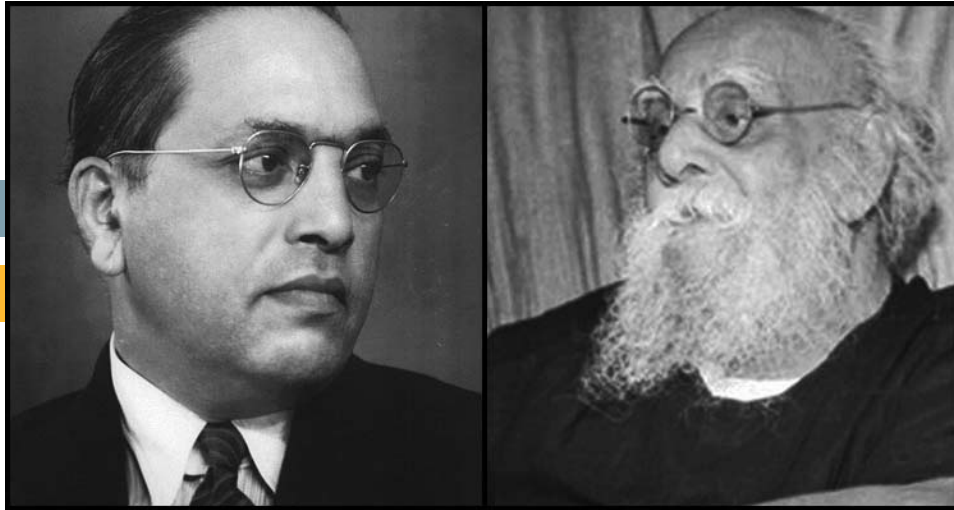
But Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, in no way, can be compared with EVR. Both had extreme opposition on various topics, which included education, social thoughts, national unity, foreign policy and economic policy. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a scholar, intellectual and genius who was learning till his last breath. His books stand as a symbol of

his wide knowledge as all of them had footnotes, sources, quotes from various scholars, indicating intellectual discipline. All this was adequately published in his books, which helped him to substantiate his argument.

But EVR, on the other hand, was not a scholar. He was not a person who had read too many books. From time to time, he spread the thoughts, which came to his mind. On several occasions he changed his thoughts as well, which was mainly to suit the contemporary situation.

EVR's social commitment is seen at a much later stage in his life. He was almost 40 years old at that time. But Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's deep interest in education could be seen since his childhood. It was seen at all the stages of his life. Therefore, comparison between the two on education grounds is not acceptable. In addition to this, one can find opposite theoretical views on several other issues. Some of the prominent of them are as below:

The Theory of Racism : EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar
 EVR's entire ideas were based on racism. He



was the person who spread Aryan-Dravid theory in Tamil Nadu. As a result he was instrumental in causing division among the people, along the line of racism. He campaigned that Aryans were invaders/foreigners and destroyed the indigenous culture. His campaign and theory resulted into hate among the people and causing division among Indians.

On the contrary, Dr. Ambedkar completely rejected the Aryan racist doctrine. Dr. Ambedkar rejected the theory that Aryan racism should go to the trash. He never accepted the doctrine of racism since he was a humanist who loved human beings.

Dalits: EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar

EVR encouraged all Dalits and backward classes to convert. In the process, he proposed Islam for conversion. He continued to propagate that Islam was the antidote to conversion and that all people should convert to Islam. His view was never based on any serious academic exercise. In contrast, Dr. Ambedkar proposed Buddhism for their conversion. According to him, Islam would neither ensure equality nor fraternity. His view was based on serious academic exercise. It was based on deep study of Islam. We have to remember that Dr. Ambedkar had rejected donations of crores of rupees to educational institutions for conversion to Islam. He had fear, which he explicitly declared on several occasions that conversion to Islam or Christianity would change nationality and thereby urged all Dalits to embrace Buddhism. Many believed that Dr. Ambedkar preferred Buddhism as it was born in India soil.

It is ironic that EVR, who advocated conversion, remained Hindu till his last breath. EVR was never "man in action", unlike Dr. Ambedkar, who fought for issues like water for Dalits and their entry in the temples.

EVR opposes the integration of Dalits with other caste Hindus:

E.V.Ramasamy Nayakar said, Does the elimination of untouchability involve just the entry to the temple and the inclusion of the Sudra to the Parayans? If the

lower caste of Parayan is not changed then should the Sudra be added to Parayan for that? The Sudras, who had hitherto had been the middle caste, have now been made the lower caste which we should not allow". (*Thread: History of Vaikkam struggle - Veeramani*)

EVR has always been against the Dalits. Despite the Muthukulathur riots and the Kizhvenmani massacre, EVR acted against the Dalits. When 44 Dalits were burnt to death in Kizhvenmani, the report by EVR says, "The Communist comrades are trying to cause unrest and revolution in the country without telling you how the workers should live in the economy available to them, and today they are trying to overthrow this regime, right-wing, left-wing and far-right communists. I ask that the comrades of agriculture and other working friends should not give place to it. The Communist Party instigated the riot in Nagai taluka. 42 people died due to it. The government did not stop at saying that the Communist Party was the party that cooperated with us. Government is taking the necessary action." (*Vidudhalai 20-1-1969*)

EVR says there is no need for a wage struggle. However, employers do not have the intention to raise wages despite their rising profits. EVR did not stand on the side of the affected Dalits but expressed his views in support of those involved in the riots. On the contrary Dr. Ambedkar brought various laws not only for the Dalits but for all the backward people. He continued to fight for their rights.

We can also learn from his speech how EVR thinks about people of the scheduled community.

EVR says, "Dr. Ambedkar is a little bit emotional. He asked me. 'What do you do for your people?' I gave him a lot of details. He started talking about it. The Brahmins immediately paid the price for him. That is, where he [Dr. Ambedkar] asked for 10 out of 100 of his people to get the educational facility, and job facility, he[Brahmins] said 'take it as 15'! He [Brahmins] knew that even if he [lower caste] was

given 25 seats, not even three or four of them would come. He [Dr. Ambedkar] signed the law written by the Brahmins. He does not care about the company of others. (Vidudhalai 11.11.1957).

Dalits in Pakistan: EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar

Dalits were persecuted in Pakistan during the partition. Thousands were massacred. Without rendering any feelings for the situation, EVR supported Pakistan and Muslims without condemning the massacre. But Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar suggested to sent the Mahar Regiment to save the oppressed Dalits in Pakistan. He issued a statement saying that Dalits in Pakistan should not convert to Islam. Similarly, Dr. Ambedkar gave full cooperation to the annexation of the Indian princely states. Dr. Ambedkar issued a public statement saying that none of the lower caste there should support the Hyderabad Nizam who refuses to connect with India.

Indian Independence: EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar

EVR was against Indian independence. A resolution was brought with the blessings of EVR at the Dravidar League Conference held at Salem on 27-08-44. The resolution, said, "The conference concludes that the main policy of the Dravidar League is to include the name Dravida Nadu as the first policy of our Madras Province to be divided into a separate (state) country which is not dominated by the Central Government administration and is directly under the administration of the British Secretary of State. Not only this, EVR also declared Independence Day as a day of mourning. He continued to spread the demand that Whites should rule here.

But Dr. Ambedkar always supported and participated in the fight for political freedom. No statement was issued in support of the White government by Dr. Ambedkar. He has strongly documented the demand for India's independence at the London Round Table Conference. He once said that I am more patriotic than the other Congress leaders.

EVR was at the forefront of disrupting Indian unity. Part of India was demanded by EVR as a separate Dravidastan. He also waged various struggles to separate the Dravidian country from India. It was similar to Jinna's demand for separate Pakistan. The British government and many others demanded that Dr. Ambedkar should ask for a separate Dalitistan for the Dalits. But Dr. Ambedkar never heeded to it. He did not agree with the Dalitistanisation of India. So, he firmly turned down the suggestion at the very start.

Hindi and Sanskrit: EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar

EVR had a deep rooted anti-Hindi and anti-Sanskrit attitude. He held anti-Hindi and anti-Sanskrit conferences and protests. He incited linguistic hatred and disrupted Indian unity. But Dr. Ambedkar said they needed Hindi for national unity. He said in Parliament that Sanskrit should be the national official language. Dr. Ambedkar never supported

any language barrier.

Communism: EVR vs Dr. Ambedkar

EVR had a deep attachment with Communism. After his visit to Russia, he actively spread the policy of commonwealth in Tamil Nadu. But Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was against Communism throughout his life. He said that Communism was based on violence and if ever he considered someone as his enemy, it was Communism. Dr. Ambedkar did not even have an electoral relationship with the Communists. He proposed Buddhism as an alternative to Communism for the Dalit people. It is the firm opinion of Dr. Ambedkar that India should not have relations with China and Russia even in foreign policy. He prophesied that China would one day invade India, which became reality in 1962.

Religion: EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar

According to EVR, humans do not need religion. EVR's view was that religion makes man foolish. But Dr. Ambedkar says religion is a necessity for man. He says that the good qualities he possesses are due to religion. Dr. Ambedkar opposed the statement that religion is an opium and explained why religion is important to man.

EVR has always been against the Dalits. Despite the Muthukulathur riots and the Kizhvenmani massacre, E.V.R acted against the Dalits. When 44 Dalits were burnt to death in Kizhvenmani, the report by E.V.R says, "The Communist comrades are trying to cause unrest and revolution in the country without telling you how the workers should live in the economy available to them, and today they are trying to overthrow this regime, right-wing, left-wing and far-right communists.

One country: EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar

EVR said there is no such thing as one country called India. He said that India is a mixture of several national races. He also campaigned that India has never been a single country. But Dr. Ambedkar clearly wrote that India has been one country for thousands of years in terms of its spiritual culture.

Indian Unity: EVR vs. Dr. Ambedkar

EVR was not interested in Indian unity. EVR wanted India to secede. But Dr. Ambedkar had an unconditional love for Indian unity. He was also clear that India should not be enslaved again. His speech in the Constituent Assembly will make us aware of this. Dr. Ambedkar says, "What worries me the most is that India has lost its independence many times due to the betrayal and treachery of the Indian people. When Muhammad bin Qasim invaded Sindh, the army commanders of King Tagir of Sindh refused to fight for their king with the help of Muhammad bin Qasim's henchmen. Jayachandran



invited Mohammad Gori to invade India and to fight against Prithviraj. He promised to help him and the Solanki kings. While Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was fighting for the liberation of the Hindus, other Maratha leaders and Rajput kings sided with the Mughals and fought against him. When the British fought against the Sikh kings, the commander-in-chief of the Sikhs was inactive. He did not help to defend the Sikh state. During the freedom struggle against the British in 1857, the Sikhs were having fun doing nothing. Will history repeat ...?It is even more worrying that a number of parties with different and opposing policies are now emerging with old hostile forces such as castes and religions. The people of India must carefully monitor the parties, which are striving for the interest of their party rather than the interest of the country. If not, the independence of

the country will be in jeopardy for the second time. It may become irreversible. We should ensure that our freedom is upheld until the last drop of blood”.

Dr. Ambedkar was speaking at the third round of debate on the Constitution on November 25, 1949. This call of Dr. Ambedkar is a call for Indian nationalism. We need to understand that the call is driven by a sense of nationalism - a passion that the Indian nation should never be distorted again.

EVR and Dr. Ambedkar were at odds over whichever field we take and study. Attempting to find some parallels between two for some other interests is great injustice to Dr. Ambedkar.

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"Jay Bhim"

Sending a loud message silently

Jay Bhim, a movie produced in Tamil Nadu, was recently released on OTT platform. Inspired by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, movie has become a big hit. At no stage viewer sees and hears the slogan - Jay Bhim but it is experienced throughout the movie. Jay Bhim not merely shows conviction in laws but also deep faith in the ideology of Dr. Ambedkar.



Viraj
&
Vijendra

Senggeni a tribal woman, also the protagonist turning her back to power, refused to bow down to the exploiting system. The film speaks about her lonely fight for self-respect and justice for her husband's custodial torture and death.

Senggeni had filed a suit in the Supreme Court about torture and death of her husband. She is brought to the police station when a police officer is attempting to force her to withdraw the suit. In the midst of this situation, top police cop calls the police station and asks the concerned police officer to drop Senggeni at her home by a police vehicle. But she turns down the police offer and decides to walk down to her home. Police find themselves in a helpless situation and start chasing her by their jeep, requesting Senggeni to get into the jeep.



A scene from Jay Bhim

She walks down from her village, where her husband was humiliated by upper caste people. These were the people, who had refused to help her. These were the people who had abused her.

'Jay Bhim' starts with a shot wherein prisoners are allowed to leave. The catch, however, is – prisoners are asked about their caste. If the prisoner is from an upper caste, he is allowed to leave. But the prisoners from scheduled castes and tribes are asked to stand in a corner. This is done so that police could pick them up again as 'suspect' in other cases.

The film throws light on the plight of the citizens, who are still facing humiliation and all other methods of torture. People from some tribes do not have any documentary evidence to show that they are Indian citizens. They do not owe a small piece of land. An incident in the film is self-explanatory. A local teacher, who is involved in an adult education drive, tries to get a voter id card for the tribe. The reaction from local political bigwigs was, "It's enough that we have to request lower caste people to vote for us. Should we also go to their houses for this purpose?".

Chandru in the film is not merely a lawyer of Senggeni but also a social activist. He fights for human rights. Suriya plays the role of Chandru very effectively. But Chandru stands for Senggeni, who was also pregnant when the incident took place.

The film is based on an actual incident in 1995

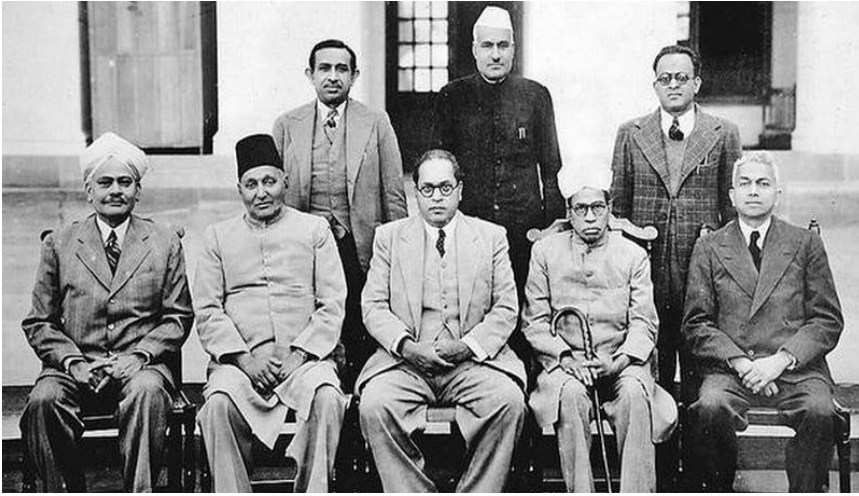
in Tamilnadu, which highlighted caste biases and police torture against the deprived people. The community, shown in the movie, is forced to catch the snakes as they have no other source of livelihood. A shot in the movie is moving. Rajkannu says, "I don't know how many bricks I have made but could not give my family a pucca house". The shot reminds Dr Ambedkar's famous speech in constituent assembly when he warned, "We are going to enter the life of contradictions. Politics will have equality, but social and economic life will have inequality. We will recognize the principle of one person, one vote, and one vote one value in politics. But in our social and economic life, we will continue to deny one person one value principle because of our social and economic structure".

Another shot in the movie takes the people in self-introspection mode. On seeing the school children, dressed like Gandhi and Nehru, Chandru asks, "Why Ambedkar is not here?". But Chandru never gets demoralized. As a staunch follower of Dr Ambedkar, he continues his fight with the help of law, in which he has deep faith.

The most significant part of the film is that at no point did we see or listen the slogan – "Jay Bhim". But it is experienced throughout the movie. It once again underlines "Jay Bhim" is the slogan for the fight against injustice.

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A drafting Committee was elected by the Constituent Assembly on 29th August 1947. It elected Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to be its President. The Constitution, as prepared by the Drafting Committee, was circulated on February 21st, 1948. This formed the basis of discussion. The seven member apart from Dr. Ambedkar were Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar, D. P. Khaitan, N. Madhava Rau, K. M. Munshi, N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, T. T. Krishnamachari, Saiyad Mohammad Saadulah.



Constitute Assembly in Session.

Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha was the first President (temporary) of the Constituent Assembly when it met on December 9, 1946. Later, Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the President of the Constituent Assembly and Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar became the Chairman of its drafting committee on December 11, 1946



Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha



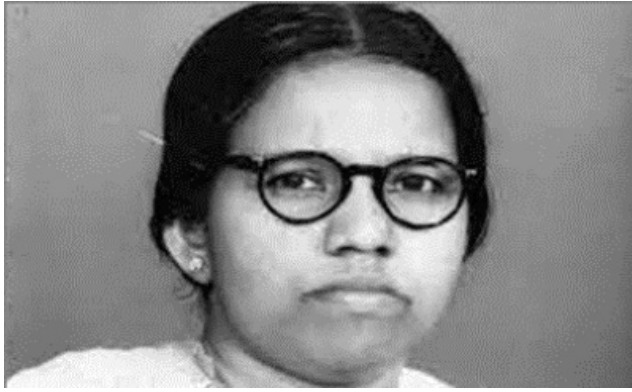
Dr. Rajendra Prasad



Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar



Members of the Constituent Assembly signing the Constitution of India



Dakshayani Velayudhan comes from the family in Kerala, which was heavily influenced by the caste system in the pre-independence era. The Constituent Assembly had nine women as its members and Dakshayani was the only Scheduled Caste of them.

Dakshayani Velayudhan: Only Dailt woman in Constituent Assembly

Dr. P.P. Vava

Kerala, the land of natural Beauty and battered as the land of purity and charity and lies in the southern part of India. It has its own particularities. The Namboodiries (the upper caste Brahmins, the Nairs (Sudras) and Pulayas, being the three of the many castes. They were a source of fascination for the natives as well as the foreign Anthropologists because of the strange customs and tradition.

The three independent states ruled by the kings of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar were united together to form Kerala, on the basis of language spoken by the people. The social customs and practices of Kerala, prior to independence, were so strong and influenced with communal and caste dissensions that Swami Vivekanda was constrained to remark abhorrence that Malabar was verified in lunatic Asylum. He visited Kerala in 1892 and came in close contact with the practice of untouchability and traditional slavery. The conditions of the untouchables were very pitiable prior to the time of Mahathma Ayyankali. The first best social reformer of the scheduled caste of Travancore, most of the untouchables were considered to be inferior in race. They were agricultural instruments in the hands of Landlords. They were not permitted to wear clean clothes or ornaments, they were not permitted to walk on public roads, not permitted to take water from common ponds, not permitted to enter in Temple, Tea shops or Barber shops.

This was the cultural and communal scenario at the birth time of Dakshayani. The pulayar were sold and bought in the market like cattle and Bonded

slavery was also in practice at that time. Pulaya Babies was not permitted to name as Dakshayani in Durga or Daughter of Daksha. Their names were Aghaki, Chirutha, Kali, Kurumba, Thalari etc. They were not allowed to cover the bodies above the waist. They wore a number of bead strings around the neck and used shells. brass bangles were worn by them.

In the Cochin state, the social and cultural status of the Pulayas were somewhat better than that of Travancore. The social reformers like Pandit K.P.Karuppan, Chanchan MLC, K.P. Vallon MLC have done very good work for the social uplift of the pulayas. K.P Vallon, MLC and Chanchan have encouraged the Pulaya community to start Bhajan Madh in every BASTIS and in turn have encouraged the entry of Pulaya boys and girls to go to schools.

The formation of Willington Island by dredging soil and mud from the Vembanadu lake has provided more employment to the Pulayan of Vypin Island. Hundreds of Pulayans were engaged as "Thoomba men" to level the dried mud and soil, and sickle men to cut and remove the bushes on the ground.

Childhood of Smt. Dakshayani Velayudhan

Dakshayani Velayudhan was born on July 4, 1912 at the Bolgatty village of Mulavukad panchayat. Bolgatty faces to the Cochin city.

Dakshayani was the daughter of Sri. Kallachammuri Kunjan and his wife was Smt. Maani (Thayyithara Maaniyamma from Elamkunnappuzha of Vypin Island). The house name of Dakshayani was Kallachammuri. Her maiden name was Kallachammuri Kunjhan Dakshayani (K.K.Dakshayani).

Dakshayani's schooling was in Mulavukadu, Little flower High school, Chathiyath. Graduation was done in Maharajas college which was under the Madras



University in 1935, and she completed her teachers Training course from the Madras University, three years later.

Her studies were supported by a scholarship from the Govt. of Cochin State. From 1935 to 1945 she worked as a teacher at Govt. schools in Trichur and Trippunithura. her husband was R. Velayudhan, the stepfather of sri. K.R.Narayanan (EX president of India). Mr. R. Velayudhan was a scheduled caste leader and later he became the Member of Parliament. Their wedding was held at Sevagram in Wardha, with Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba Gandhi as witnesses.

The couple had five children: 1. Dr. Reghu (Doctor for Indira Gandhi), 2. Prahladan 3. Dhruvan 4. Bhagirath (Secretary general, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) 5. Meera

Outstanding Honours on Dakshayani Velayudhan

1. She was the first woman from the Pulaya community (Scheduled caste women) graduate in India – A science graduate, 2. Member of Cochin Legislation Council (MLC) 1945. 3. She is one among

Political and socio cultural activities


1. Dakshayani Velayudhan was president of the Depressed Classes Youths Fine Arts Club.
2. She was the Managing Editor of 'Common Man' in Madras from 1946-1949.
3. Dakshayani Velayudhan became the founder President of the MAHILA JAGRITI PARISHAD.
4. She also contested the general elections of 1971 from the ADOOR LOK SABHA constituency, but ended up fourth in a fray of five candidates.
Dakshayani Velayudhan will be always credited for Access to have a free entry to public roads, temples, tea shops, barber shops, common ponds to take water etc. to end untouchability and traditional slavery. She breathed her last on July 20, 1978.

the nine female members of the constituent Assembly of India. She was the first, and only scheduled caste woman to be elected to the constituent Assembly from 1946-1952. She has attended the provisional parliament of India, and she took special interest in the matters of education, especially that of the scheduled castes.

Although a staunch Gandhian, Dakshayani sided with Dr. B.R.Ambedkar on many issues relating to the Scheduled Castes, during constituent Assembly debate. She agreed with Dr. Ambedkar, giving up the Demand of separate electorate, arguing for greater "moral safe guards" and the immediate removal of their social disabilities. On November 8, 1948, during

the discussion "Article 11, which aimed to prohibit discrimination on the basis of caste", the vice president of the constituent Assembly permitted her to talk on more time saying that she is a lady member of the community. Dakshayani Velayudhan called for implementation of the Non- Discrimination provisions through public education, which shall send a great public signal.

The working of the constitution, she said, will depend on how people conduct themselves in the future, not on the actual execution of the law. Being the only SC woman in the Assembly, she made key interventions on issues of untouchability, forced labor, reservation and separate electorate for Dalits. Her belief was that "constituent Assembly not only frames a constitution, but also gives people a new framework of life."



“We should not make ourselves the laughing stock of our future generations by harping on separatism. Communalism, whether Harijan, Christian, Muslim or Sikh, is opposed to nationalism. What we want is not all kinds of safeguards. It is the moral safeguard that gives real protection to the underdogs of this country.”

Dakshayani Velayudhan

She strongly opposed untouchability, but as long as it was practiced, the word Harijan would remain irrelevant. She refused to view that Dalits as minorities, and believed that Harijans are Indians, and they have to live in India as Indians. Dakshayani Velayudhan placed the struggle of her community, ahead of her gender unmistakably evident from her impassioned speech at the constituent Assembly. She never talked as a Pulaya Woman, and hoped to see "No barriers based on caste or community" In the Indian Republic.

She was vociferous in her support for Article 17 of the constitution of India that abolishes untouchability and forbids its practice in any form. She asked too many questions in the assembly, as told by Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Sarojini Naidu. Her political, social and personal realm was to do that by independent thought and opinions. She never converted to Christianity as her mother and elder siblings did.

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Indian Constitution and social justice



Constitution of India is a living document which upheld the rights of denied and deprived class in the free India, it is not only social deprivation which is being addressed but also economic discrimination is taken care of. It is only for this supreme law of the land and the foresight of the constitution maker we are witnessing the positive transformation in the lives of hundreds of million people in India who were living life of miseries and wants.

Dr. Ravishankar

With the independence of India on August 15, 1947, hundreds of million people, who live under denial and deprivation till date, also dreamt and hoped for a better life, freedom from wants and miseries and a life with dignity of a human being. This was well within the knowledge and consideration of the constitution makers, they were much aware of their responsibility towards these downtrodden and therefore, the

constitution of India has many provisions, which are in fact revolutionary in nature such as Article 17 which completely and unequivocally forbid the practice of untouchability in all its forms.

In this article an attempt is made to evaluate the contribution of constitution of India in uplifting the lives of millions of deprived and denied people. On December 9, 1946, first meeting of the constituent assembly took place and it was almost clear by then that declaration of freedom for India can come anytime soon.

Among the first few resolutions which were passed in the constituent assembly was the resolution on the statement of object which later became the Preamble of Indian Constitution. The statement of objectives among other thing ensured a social order based on justice, liberty and equality. The Justice promised in the preamble is further expanded by using words social, economic and political. This explains the importance the freedom fighters and the constitution makers attached



to the cause of social justice. I would like to quote the words of Dr. B.R.Ambedkar from his classic work Annihilation of Caste, “A just society is that society in which ascending sense of reverence and descending sense of contempt is dissolved into the creation of a compassionate society.”

This is precisely what the constitution makers though while giving the assurance of justice in the preamble. The preamble of the constitution also assures the equality which is also essentially a component of justice. The recognition of the equality in the statement of objective is a big assurance to the people of free India that the causes of all discriminations and deprivation will no more exist in new India.

In order to fulfill the objectives of the preamble the constitution contains in its most powerful part of fundamental rights provisions such as Article 14, which states “the state shall not deny any person equality before law or equal protection of the law within the territory of India” this was a huge recognition of unqualified equality for all Indians irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex or place of birth. This was a giant step in the direction of uplifting the deprived and denied.

To make it more specific and unambiguous, Article 15 and 16 not only further prohibits any discrimination on the basis of above stated factors but allows the special provisions like reservation for the socially and economically backwards and other weaker sections of the society. There is no parallel example in the world constitution which has gone so further to ensure equality in the society.

Not only this, Article 17 prohibits untouchability in any form and Article 18 abolishes the Titles of all sorts which could perpetuate the social hierarchy based on the status, power or wealth. These are not only the words but the guarantee under the supreme law of the land. The things didn't stop here. Article 19 further guarantee certain freedoms such as freedom of speech and expression, assembly, association, movement, residence and profession for everyone irrespective of any caste, creed, religion, race, sex or place of birth. This was also to further the cause of social justice in a way where the society which has stratified certain professions based on the caste of a person was no more a reality, while everyone equally was allowed to choose the profession of once own choice.

Article 21 further guarantees right to life and personal liberty in widest possible way, it reads as “No person shall be deprived of his right to life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law” this right to life includes within its scope everything which is necessary to live dignified life of a human being. The Supreme Court of India while interpreting and determining the scope of Article 21 has read within its scope, right to clean air to breath, pure water to drink, right to access to medicine and health facility, right to recreation, right to food, right

to work, right to shelter, right to education, right to healthy environment, right to privacy and so on and so forth. This is how the constitution makers have guaranteed the most basic human values to ensure every person in free India gets opportunity to lift himself out of depravity and wants. This is the assurance of the law makers that all lives are equal and equally important for the state.

Beside these individual guarantees under part III of the Constitution, a separate chapter on the collective rights and aspiration is also there in the constitution, which signified the desire and expectations of the constitution makers from future India. These are called as Directive Principles of State Policy, they are the directives to the future Governments to ensure the maximum good of the maximum people. Part IV of the constitution specified the direction in which this nation is to trade its progress. This was a kind of promise taken by the constitution makers from the future governments in India to ensure more social progress, prosperity and harmony in the country.

Article 38 and 39 speaks of the promise from the

In order to fulfill the objectives of the preamble the constitution contains in its most powerful part of fundamental rights provisions such as Article 14, which states “the state shall not deny any person equality before law or equal protection of the law within the territory of India” this was a huge recognition of unqualified equality for all Indians irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex or place of birth. This was a giant step in the direction of uplifting the deprived and denied.

future government to establish a social order based on the equality and justice; 38.1- The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life.

2.The State shall, in particular, strive to minimize the inequalities in income, and endeavour to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations.

39. The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing— (a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood; (b) that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; (c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment; (d) that there is equal pay for equal work for both men and women;

(e) that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength; (f) that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

These provisions and similar other provision in Part IV of the Constitution are aimed at establishing society guided by the principles of equality, justice and liberty. Though the provisions of part IV are directory only and not mandatory yet considering them directives to achieve larger good. The Courts in India have accorded them priority even over fundamental rights and permitted the state to take welfare measures by making laws to give effect to these directive principles.

Following are some of the instances wherein court have recognized the welfare measures even with priority over fundamental rights. In *Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. v/s Hansrajbai V. Kodala* (2001) the Apex Court held that "The object is to expeditiously extend social justice to the needy victims of accidents curtailing delay -If still the question of determining compensation of fault liability is kept alive, it would result in additional litigation and complications in case claimants fail to establish liability of defendants - Wherever the Legislature wanted to provide additional compensation, it has done so specifically".

The Supreme Court has firmly ruled in *Balbir Kaur v/s Steel Authority of India* (2000) that "The

"Social justice is a device to ensure life to be meaningful and livable with human dignity. State has to provide facilities to reach minimum standard of health, economic security and civilized living to the workmen. Social justice is a means to ensure life to be meaningful and livable".

concept of social justice is the yardstick to the justice administration system or the legal justice and it would be an obligation for the law Courts to apply the law depending upon the situation in a manner whichever is beneficial for the society" as the respondent Steel Authority of India was directed to provide compassionate employment to the appellant.

In *Superintending Engineer, Public Health, U.T. Chandigarh v/s Kuldeep Singh* (1997) the Supreme Court held that "It is the duty of the authorities to take special care of reservations in appointments as a part of their constitutional duties to accord economic and social justice to the reserved categories of communities. If ST candidate is not available, the vacancy has to be given to SC candidate and the

reserved roster point has to be filled in accordingly".

In *Ashok Kumar Gupta v/s State of U.P.* (1997) it was held by the Apex court that "To give proper representation to SC/ST Dalits in services is a social justice which is a fundamental right to the disadvantaged. It cannot be said that reservation in



promotions is bad in law or unconstitutional".

In *Consumer Education and Research Centre v/s Union of India* (1995) it was held that

"Social justice is a device to ensure life to be meaningful and livable with human dignity. State has to provide facilities to reach minimum standard of health, economic security and civilized living to the workmen. Social justice is a means to ensure life to be meaningful and livable".

There are innumerable instances wherein courts have intervened to protect the rights of deprived class, starting from the *Anna Durai Rajan* in 1951 till today. In nutshell we can conclude that Constitution of India is a living document which upheld the rights of denied and deprived class in the free India, it is not only social deprivation which is being addressed but also economic discrimination is taken care of.

It is only for this supreme law of the land and the foresight of the constitution maker we are witnessing the positive transformation in the lives of hundreds of million people in India who were living life of miseries and wants. Today society is becoming more homogeneous and barriers of caste, sex and race are fast diminishing. The people of India needs to be congratulated for achieving this feat and small period of 75 years of Independence.

Long live the Constitution of India.

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Fostering social cohesion and constitutional road map

On a holistic reading of ‘fundamental rights’, ‘directive principles of state policy’ and ‘fundamental duties’ in the light of the preamble of the Constitution of India, it appears that the idea of upholding “dignity of the individual” runs through the length and breadth of the Constitution.



P. Puneeth



IT IS axiomatic to state that fostering connectedness and solidarity or, in other words, social cohesion among all sections of the society is a sine qua non for forming a strong and united country. Social cohesion can not only yield political stability but also economic growth and development. It is this realization that has led to efforts being made by different countries and regions in the world for fostering it.

The concept of social cohesion, according to Regina Berger-Schmitt, has two dimensions – the first can be denoted as ‘inequality dimension’, which focuses on promoting equal opportunities and reducing inequalities and divisions within a society and the second, denoted as ‘social capital dimension’, focuses on strengthening social relations, interactions

and ties. Measures to promote social cohesions in societies, which are deeply divided - socially, economically and politically – should include both.

India is one of the most diverse countries in the world. Framers of the Indian Constitution were acutely aware of not just the problems of governing large and incoherent countries but also the painful and dramatic reality of marginalization, inequalities and social exclusion. Thus, while laying the foundation for the governance of free India, they specifically took care to incorporate appropriate provisions in the Constitution to address those problems, which can in turn promote social cohesion and sense of belongingness among all sections of the society. The preamble proclamation to ‘secure’ “social, economic and political justice”; “equality of status and of opportunity” and to ‘promote’ “fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of

the nation” clearly manifests at the outset the goal of fostering social cohesion. If one reads the preamble of the Indian Constitution and the provisions that follow, particularly the fundamental rights and the directive principles of state policy, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the Constitution embodies, though not in equal measure, both the ‘inequality dimension’ and the ‘social capital dimension’ of the concept of social cohesion.

Apart from right to vote based on the principle of universal adult franchise and equal entitlement to basic civil and political rights, guaranteed as fundamental rights in Part – III (which Part also contains clear provision to abolish cruel, inhuman and degrading practice of ‘untouchability’ and enabling provision for affirmative action for the emancipation of certain weaker sections of the society), the Constitution also mandates the ‘state’ to take the steps to reduce socio-economic inequalities. These mandates are contained in Part – IV designated as ‘Directive Principles of State Policy’. This Part, inter alia, mandates the state to “strive to minimize the inequalities in income, and endeavor to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations”; secure adequate means of livelihood; ensure that the “ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as to best sub serve the common good”; ensure that the “operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment”; secure “equal pay for equal work for both men and women”; ensure that the “operation of the legal system promotes justice, on a basis of equal opportunity.”

Part – IV also requires the state, in particular, to “promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people”. The overarching idea is “to establish a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of national life.” The Constitution, even though makes these directive principles not enforceable by any court, declares them in unequivocal terms as “fundamental in the governance of the country” and specifically states that “it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws.” The aforesaid provisions aim at addressing inequalities in society, which impedes development social cohesion.

On a holistic reading of ‘fundamental rights’, ‘directive principles of state policy’ and ‘fundamental duties’ in the light of the preamble of the Constitution of India, it appears that the idea of upholding “dignity of the individual” runs through the length and breadth of Parts – III, IV and IVA of the Constitution. Various rights and freedoms that are explicitly guaranteed and those that are implicit in them enable individuals belonging to different sections to create networks among them, develop relationships and strong bonds.

In addition, Part – IVA of the Constitution that deals with fundamental duties imposes duties on every citizen, inter alia, to “promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities” and to “value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture”. Mutual respect, appreciation and accommodation of each other’s beliefs, faith, points of view and ways of life are the foundational requirements for fostering social cohesion. Sometimes it may be desirable “to make concessions even to the prejudices” of those who feel left out of the mainstream in order to carry them along. This is what the chief architect of the Constitution of India, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had suggested in his speech delivered on December 17, 1946 in the Constituent Assembly. It is important to do so in order to achieve social cohesion.

To achieve social cohesion is, of course, a long road to travel but one need not look elsewhere to find the roadmap, the Constitution itself contains it. It is evident from the brief enumeration above that the aim of the Constitution of India, which is a political document, is not just political transformation but also socio-economic transformation. It seeks to establish a new socio-economic and political order. It is truly and, compared to Constitutions of many other countries, much more deeply transformative in character. Transformative vision is emphatically embodied in the Constitution.

The emphasis on the urgency to implement socio-economic transformative vision of the Constitution was laid by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his speech in the Constituent Assembly, where he observed: “On the 26th of January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man, one vote and one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting out political democracy in peril. We must remove these contradictions at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy, which this Assembly has so laboriously built up”.

Thus, the steps, as envisaged under the Constitution, shall be taken to remove those contradictions and eliminate injustices arising out of inequalities and marginalization. Then only a large and diverse country like “India i.e., Bharat” can truly transform itself into a united and strong country and flourish and also be in pursuit of becoming Vishwa Guru.

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Social reforms and Constitution

Though many provisions have been provided to stop the caste based discrimination, prevent atrocities and crimes, India is still far behind from getting rid of these social evils that prevail in the society. But through the legislations and provisions provided in Constitution as well as other acts it has been possible to prevent the crimes, discrimination, atrocities.

Adv. Hrushikesh

Before Independence and still today India was and is a socially as well as economically backward nation. Though we have been successful in uplifting the masses to a great extent, we have a long way to go to achieve the equality that the framers of our Constitution wanted to achieve. The main reasons for this backwardness in our society was poverty, lack of education, prevailing customs, the caste system etc.

While drafting the Constitution the main object which can be inferred from words of Dr.B.R. Ambedkar from his speech on 25th November 1949 after submitting the draft of Constitution where he said, "for political democracy to succeed, it needed to be founded on the tissues and fibers of social and economic equality", from which we can understand that the framers of Constitution wanted to bring an end to the backwardness in society and bring everyone in the mainstream.

The main objective of this article is to discuss a few social reforms that have happened in our country since we have adopted the Constitution.

Reforms relating to women

Before Independence Indian women were considered subordinate to the men, they were considered as a gender which did the household chores and were denied education, right to property, were not given equal status with the men in any aspect. Women had to face atrocities like Sati, domestic violence, female infanticide i.e. killing of girl child and many other social evils were practiced against women.

After Independence a lot of efforts have been put in to improve the condition of women in the country and to bring them in the mainstream with men. The Constitution of India has guaranteed women equality before law. It has also provided powers to the state to adopt measures ensuring women do not face any socio, economic, educational or political discrimination.

Here are a few provisions of the Constitution towards improving the position of women in society and to ensure that there is no discrimination against women-

Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees women equality before law.

Article 15 (i) provides that The State not to discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

Article 15 (3) provides, The State to make any special provision in favour of women and children.

Article 16 provides Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

Also the Directive principles direct the state to-

Article 39(a) The State to direct its policy towards securing for men and women equally, the right to an adequate means of livelihood.

Article 39 (d) equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

Article 42 provides The State to make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief.

Also a many legislative provisions have been enacted for ensuring the safety of women, stop crimes and violence against women, to see that there is no discrimination against women, etc.

Indian Penal Code criminalizes below listed offences-

376 Rape, 302/304(B) Dowry Death, 498(A) Torture (Physical and Mental), 509 Sexual Harassment etc. Also a few special legislations have been enacted like Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 with amendment in 2005, Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987, The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 etc. to stop crimes, atrocities against women, give women right in property etc. ensure women are brought in the main stream.

Various Commissions and policies like National Commission for Women, National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001, Reservation for Women in Local Self –Government, The National Plan of Action for the Girl Child (1991-2000) have been set up to look after the issues faced by women and to redress them also to ensure upliftment of women.

Today though many of these social evils like Sati, Child Marriages, killing of girl child etc. have been eradicated, still there are a lot of issues that women face every day. The number of crimes against women is still high, women are still considered as a subordinate gender and in rural areas and weaker sections of the society women are still subject to atrocities and not provided equal treatment as men.

We have been successful in uplifting women, giving them equal treatment and opportunities and reducing social evils that women faced through these provisions, legislations etc. but it is still a long way before we totally eradicate discrimination against

women and bring the last of the women in the main stream through providing proper education, security and a safe environment.

Reforms relating to caste discrimination

Caste Discrimination i.e. Casteism is one of the major problems that even today is deep rooted in the Indian Society. Caste system has been going on for thousands of years in Indian history and it has become an integrated part of the society. Caste system is the major cause of Caste discrimination in India. Untouchability, employment based on caste, atrocities, violence, denial of education etc. was dominant before independence, creating inequality in society. It also led to the exploitation of the lower castes. Thus the caste system became a major hurdle in the development of a healthy, democratic and progressive society. In the past two centuries, many social reformers started a fight against caste system and discrimination faced by people from lower caste and to raise voice against caste system.

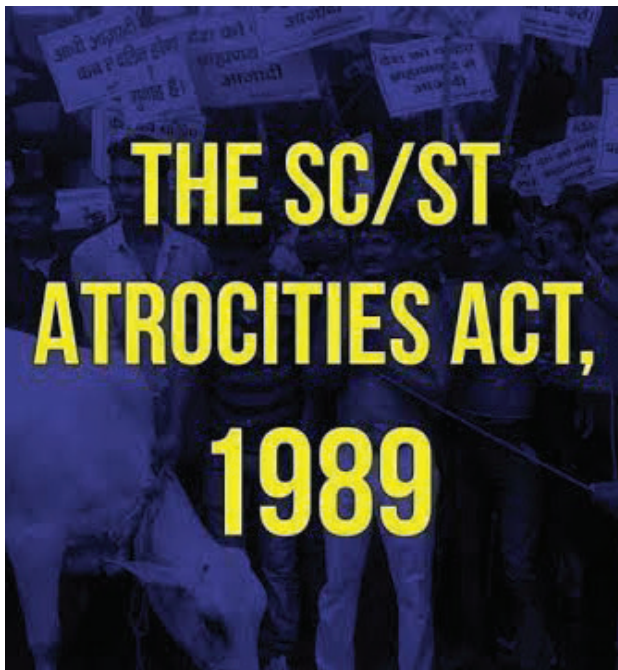
Mahatma Phule, Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi and a few others were prominent reformers, who wanted to prevent and stop this caste based discrimination, atrocities, evils prevailing in the society and worked towards the same.

After Independence a lot of efforts have been put in to improve the condition of women in the country and to bring them in the mainstream with men. The Constitution of India has guaranteed women equality before law. It has also provided powers to the state to adopt measures ensuring women do not face any socio, economic, educational or political discrimination.

After Independence, Indian Constitution brought various measures to ensure that Casteism is put to an end and that there is no discrimination based on caste. A few provisions from the Constitution to highlight are - Article 14 which provides equality before law to all citizens. Article 15 provides for Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 16 provides for Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment. Article 17 provides for the abolition of Untouchability which was the most evil custom that prevailed in the ancient Indian society where people of lower caste were not allowed to touch people from upper caste. Article 46 provides for promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes and other weaker sections.

Provisions relating to political reservations

Article 330 provides for reservation for Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes in the House of People. Article 332 provides for reservation for Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes in Legislative Assemblies of state. Also reservations in education, jobs etc. are



provided for upliftment and betterment of Scheduled Castes and Tribes and Other Backward Castes to bring the people who were left out from the mainstream due to the caste system and were deprived of their rights, education, opportunities. Laws and Legislations have been passed to end discrimination against people belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other lower sections of the society.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 was enacted to prevent the atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Also Indian Penal Code criminalizes certain offences against SC's and ST's.

Though many provisions have been provided to stop the caste based discrimination, prevent atrocities and crimes, India is still far behind from getting rid of these social evils that prevail in the society. But through the legislations and provisions provided in Constitution as well as other acts it has been possible to prevent the crimes, discrimination, atrocities etc. to a certain level. Education is made available to all irrespective of their caste, untouchability is completely abolished, inter caste marriages are being promoted and are taking place on a large scale. But all this is not enough, we need to take more steps to completely eradicate caste based discrimination in the society and provide everyone irrespective of their caste equal status in our society.

Educational Reforms

In ancient and medieval India education was only privileged and people from the upper caste had access to education. Lack of education can be considered as a significant factor for backwardness among the Indian society. As education was only available to a few and controlled by the same few upper caste people, the majority of people were illiterate. Towards the end of the 19th Century, a few people like Mahatma Jyotiba

Phule, Chatrapati Shahu Maharaj etc. understood the importance of education and started movements to provide and promote education for the lower sections of the society, who were deprived of education for centuries. Framers of the Constitution were aware that for a person to realize his personal protection and for him to protect his rights, education was an important tool and thus provisions relating to providing education were added to the Constitution.

Right to Education is referred to in Articles 41 to 46 as well as 45 of the Directive Principles of the State policy but it remained neglected and the focus shifted back on Education when the Supreme Court in the case of Mohini Jain vs State of Karnataka 1992, held that, "the right to education flows directly from the right to life and the dignity of an individual cannot be assured unless it is accompanied by the right to education and the fundamental rights guaranteed under Part III of the Constitution of India, including the right to freedom of speech and expression and other rights under Article 19 cannot be appreciated and fully enjoyed unless a citizen is educated and is conscious of his individualistic dignity enjoyed by all."

Also the Supreme Court in Unni Krishnan vs State of A.P. observed, "Fundamental right to education flows from Article 21". And thus the 83rd Constitutional amendment was passed in 2020 which inserted Article 21(A) to the Constitution which made primary education for children till the age of a fundamental right. Also a few states have passed legislation to make primary education compulsory.

Today the Educational scenario of India has changed drastically. Almost everyone has access to education. But, still children belong to the poor section as well as the weaker section of the society are deprived of education. To bring the last person in the mainstream the government needs to increase the effort and improve the educational system of the country.

Conclusion

After Independence and commencement of the Constitution there has been a constant efforts by the governments to eradicate the social evils prevailing in the society. There have been reforms with respect to position of women and their upliftment, getting rid of caste discrimination and atrocities, educational reforms etc.

Laws and legislations have been enacted from time to time to ensure that these reforms are achieved and make the society free from all the social evils. The provisions provided in the Constitution have paved the way for these social changes and reforms in Indian society. Though we have to accelerate our efforts to achieve the objectives of a socially reformed society that the framers of the Constitution have imagined.

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Abrogation of Article 370 : A step towards social equality



Abrogation of much debated Article 370, conferring special status to Jammu and Kashmir, has not merely changed India's long time fight for national integration but it has brought about some major changes at the ground level as well.

Ritika

The change in the citizenship rules enforced by the abrogation of Article 370 of Indian Constitution has been a significant step towards gender equality. Earlier, citizenship rules were inequitable - the citizenship accorded to women did not hold the same power, compared to men. Women, both permanent residents of J & K and those belonging to the West Pakistan Refugee community - have suffered alike. If any woman married outside J & K, her citizenship was not transferable to spouse and children. It was more problematic for single girl

child, widows, and divorcees, who claimed their ancestral property.

Unlike women, men retained their citizenship and it was also transferable to spouses and children. Likewise, many girls from the West Pakistan Refugee community were married off early to unsuitable matches who had state citizenship with the hope that they would continue education and gain state citizenship thereby making them eligible for government jobs. Any of the career aspiring women seldom materialized and remained largely backward. In the case of West Pakistan Refugee men, there were no roads to state citizenship as they existed in the



A sense of fear and uncertainty is there, as not much has materialised yet. The system is taking its own time to adjust to the changes and people are at the receiving end of the things.

KULDEEP KUMAR



Reservation is crucial to ensure equality. The deserving and talented youth who otherwise doesn't get opportunities will get better opportunities.

SANT KUMAR



Reservation will benefit the local population who were denied benefits earlier. It will increase their representation in the politics, administration and government jobs, thereby lifting their living standards and morale.

ARJUN ATRI



Electoral rights matter a lot being a woman. They bring a sense of power and participation.

SEEMA MOTTAN

case of women.

The citizenship of permanent resident women was not transferable to spouses and children, unlike men. The changes in citizenship rules have made citizenship of women not only equal and transferable as men and made West Pakistan refugees eligible for government jobs.

Benefits of Centrally Sponsored Schemes

West Pakistan Refugees and Valmikis constituting a significant portion of SCs in J and K were not eligible for various centrally sponsored schemes earlier, requiring state citizenship. With the new domicile rights, they are now eligible for various benefits provided by the central government both for the general public and the upliftment of the SC community. Many meritorious students belonging to these sections were not eligible to avail benefits of the Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme for J and K, which provides scholarships to students for pursuing education outside J and K. With the change in the domicile rules, a significant number of such students availed the benefits in the academic year 2021-2022. Many other central government schemes coming under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) department, Social Welfare Department, and Agriculture Sector were made available to the poor and backward of the Community, ending their accessibility of seven long decades. Ladli Beti, the J and K Government-sponsored social assistance scheme meant for newborn girl children of UT of J and K, and Ladakh was unavailable to these sections which needed it the most. The new domicile has helped many of these people avail the benefits.

There has been a significant increase of applicants

post the changes in the citizenship rules. The extension of reservation benefits to these sections both within J and K and in the central government jobs and institutions is sure to uplift these sections of the SC community after seven decades of marginalization.

Voting Rights

With the newfound citizenship of J and K, West Pakistan Refugees and Valmikis also gained electoral rights in the state elections. They can not only vote but also contest elections, thereby increasing their representation in the government and increasing their socio-political relevance. As earlier, these sections could not vote for panchayat, municipal, and legislative Assembly elections; neither they nor their issues were relevant for the local leaders.

While abrogation of article 370 has made these people hopeful, the government is expected to address their some issues, which have surfaced now. People here have a little sense of insecurity because of the changing situation. As Indians from the rest of the country are now allowed to purchase land in Jammu and Kashmir, they fear that money would play a big role in changing the ownership of the land. They also have a sort of resentment that their local culture and identity would get affected in the new circumstances. Feedback also suggests that the administration is yet to make its mind to cope with the new situation because of which some reformations are moving at snail's pace. They hope that administration would be monitored once an elected government is installed there.

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