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ABSTRACT:

Haryana is one of the most prosperous states not only in India but also among the countries of South Asia. The state has a glorified past and a bright future. This paper is an effort to pen down the glory of the state, being the cradle of Indian culture and civilisation. With the recognition of Haryana on 1 November, 1966, it has carved out a special niche of distinction for itself, whether it is agricultural or industrial sector, rural electrification or canal based irrigation. Haryana keeps marching towards modernity, that brings a social and cultural change in the state. But behind this forefront, there is a hidden face which is always neglected, and no one is ready to



expose it. This paper discusses many recent issues of the state such as cultural and political division, social division on the basis of caste, role of local social judiciary, land acquisition, unequal distribution of property, increasing gender ratio, and uplifting status of women.

KEYWORDS: *Alluring, acquisition, disjunct, pollutant, polygamy, monogamy, indigenous, female-foeticide, honourable.*

INTRODUCTION:

Haryana has a proud history dating back to the Vedic period. The state was home to the legendary Bharata dynasty, after which the country was named Bharata. Ved Vyasa wrote *Mahabharata* epic on the pious land of Haryana. It was here that the disastrous battle of the epic was fought and Lord Krishna delivered the celestial gospel of *karam yoga* to Arjuna enshrined in *SrimadBhagwad Gita* about 5000 years ago. Being the gateway to north India, the

Huns, the Turks, and Tughlaq invaded Haryana and decisive battles were fought on this land. The battle between Lodhis and Mughals, Marathas and Ahmed Shah Abdali were fought here. Bold in spirit and action, the people of Haryana have always formed a bulwark against the forces of aggression and anti-nationalism. In fact, the history of Haryana reads like a saga of struggle of the righteous, forthright, and proud people of the state who are known for their traits of bravery and valour.

Being the victim and witness of circumstances, this paper is an effort to reveal the things experienced in society. Behind this forefront of a prosperous state, there is a hidden face which is always neglected, and no one is ready to expose it out. Though the

state has a glorious past but many recent issues contribute to make a complex state i.e.- cultural and political division, social division on the basis caste, unequal distribution of property, land acquisition, unequal distribution of property, increasing gender ratio and uplifting status of women.

In Haryana, people believe that it is a state where the identity of natives is culture and vice-versa. In this context famous Indian sociologist S. C. Dube says: "A question is often asked: Is man the creator or the creature of culture? He further says, the disjunct assumption, seeking on either/ or answer, implies that a creator cannot be at the same time a creature of what he created. Certainly mankind has created its culture, but the process has

shaped and conditioned not only its pattern of life but even the structure of its physical organism" (Dube,1992,13).

Two factors effected the culture of the state: one is division of property within family and another factor is the technological development in NCR (National Capital Region), especially in two adjacent districts of Haryana, Gurgaon and Faridabad. Agriculture was the major occupation in the state. But with the acquisition of land and division of property within family, it is getting more difficult for the natives to survive. Not only the Jat community, but also the other communities are affected by land acquisition. Rajput and Gujjar communities also received adverse effects of these factors. Land acquisition is the major cause for the destruction of Gujjar community, even though they have reservation. Due to lack of education and vision, people are not even aware how to save the next generation. But nobody is interested to peep into the dark recesses of the other sides of this development. In fact, in this complex society, people are trapped in their own created web and do not know how to come out of it. As Dube opines: "An architect of majesty and mighty civilization and the performer of breathtaking feats in the field of science and technology, the human animal finds himself helpless and desperately reaching remedies for the ills and afflict the social order"(Dube,1988,10).

Another issue is identity of natives. Almost 60 to 70 percent residents in these two districts, especially in urban sector, are not the natives of Haryana. Nowadays, this is the great matter of insecurity for the indigenous population that very soon the districts are going to turn into a portrait of the globe, not a part of Haryana, in the words of Dipesh Chakravarti, "The Province of Europe in India" (GIVE SOURCE)

Unequal distribution of property act as a major problem in maintaining social balance among the people of Haryana. Some people have abundant property while other have dearth of it. To resolve this issue government has taken two steps. One was Tenancy Reform Act implemented on 15th June 1952, under which 30 standard acres of land was allotted to the peasants. Only the person who cultivates can have the ownership of land. The second, Surplus Act or Haryana Ceiling of Land Holding Act came into existence on 1 January 1971 and was implemented by the then Chief Minister, Chaudhary Bansilal, who himself belonged to the most dominating and prosperous Jat caste of the state. Under this Act right to property was divided into three categories: in first, the fine land (three crops in a year), and an individual can own 17 acres of land; in second category (two crops in a year), an individual can own 27 acres and in third category (one crop in a year), an individual could own maximum 54 acres of land. Rest of the land was allotted to poor peasants. The Act implemented by government was very alluring but practically it was not very fruitful. People, who were allotted the land, sold it back to the owners to meet their requirements, i.e., to construct the house, for the marriage of their children, and in some cases to get rid of debts. It happened due to the lack of vision, lack of education, and unavailability of resources to cultivate. And once again, the state is striving with the same problem and is in desperate need of redistribution of property. Indira Gandhi has rightly said, "For these societies, poverty is the greatest pollutant. Removal of poverty will significantly contribute to improvements in the quality living. It should be noted that greed and lack of foresight have been responsible for considerable environmental degradation in the third world, it must be reversed"(qtd. in Dube,1988,8).

On one hand, people are demanding redistribution of property and on the other hand reservation for agrarian community. Demand of this reservation is not prevailing in Haryana, but among other agrarian communities, i.e. Patidars aka Patels in Gujarat (July 2015), Marathas in Maharashtra (August 2015), Gujjars in Rajsthan (2011), and Kapus in Andhra Pradesh (January 2016) and Jat agitation (February 2016).All the other agitations remained peaceful, while Jat agitation and the Patidars protests held the authorities over a week for ransom.Unfortunately, Jat agitation turned into the caste feud between Jats and Non- Jats, resulting in huge loss of property (roughly worth rupees, 35000 crores).This agitation was initiated by people only to help those in the state who are not well-off. Before two or three decades, people had sufficient agricultural land. But now, many people of the same community have only one or two acres, some of them even do not have a piece of land and are mere labourers, they are the victims of reservation. Being the people of general caste, they are unable to get reservation and because of lack of resources they are unable to get their right part in the society. They

have neither received any help from the government nor the reservation: so the question is, how can they survive? Ten percent reservation under Special Backward Class was given to the people of some caste, i.e., Sikhs, Tyagis, Bishnois, Rors, and Jats, in Haryana by the former Congress government on 12 December 2012, under the leadership of former Chief Minister Shree Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Haryana Cabinet accepted in principle, a 10% reservation for five 'special backward classes' on the recommendation of Haryana Backward Commission. This took the existing 47% reservation (20% for SCs and 27% for OBCs) to 57% in the state. But it was only a political announcement. A Jat leader, Shree Yashpal Malik said in one of his interview, "We want reservation within the 27% meant for OBCs. Since reservation cannot exceed 50%, it will be struck down by the court. Also, if the Jats are outside, the center will not include us in the list" (*Tribune*, 13 Mar. 2015).

Under reservation many young people were appointed and got the job. Some of them were appointed but not joined the duties and in the meantime reservation was withdrawn by the succeeding BJP government. It was a major pushback for those young people in the state who were selected for employment in different departments, but could not make it to joining. This created great unrest among young blood that resulted into the form of a movement against this impossible and politically announced reservation. This movement not only created bitterness against the government, but also broke the spirit of *bhaichara*¹ among people of different castes, which was the strength of civilization.

Another aspect is, shifting paradigm of the status of women in Haryana. Throughout the years of Vedic culture, women had always been given the highest level of respect and freedom. There is a Vedic saying "Where women are worshipped, there the gods dwell." *Manu-Samhita* also explains the status of women:

Women must be honored and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands and brother-in-laws, who desire their own welfare. Where women are honored, there the gods are pleased; where they are not honored, there are no sacred rite yields rewards. Unfortunately, these standards have declined primarily due to the outside influences that have crept it because of foreign invaders, either military or culturally. These foreign invaders who dominated India mostly looked at women as object of sexual enjoyment and exploitation, and as a spoil of war to be taken like a prize. This oppression increased in India because of Mugal rule. (Knapp, web).

But the status of women in Haryana was not honourable, except in a few families. These were the landlord families, where people were educated. Before the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 which declared polygamy illegal and a cognizable offence punishable by law, people often practised polygamy. In the older generations, several people had more than one wife; but among post-colonial generations monogamy has become a tendency of educated people. Earlier four types of marriages were practised. First is traditional marriage where head of the family or father looks for a perfect match for his daughter. Second is widow remarriage. Soon after the death of her husband she starts to live with her husband's brother. It is automatically accepted by the family, only with a small custom of giving only one rupee to him by her father, this practice is called *bithana*. Third type of marriage is *mol-lana* or marriage by purchase of bride. It is usually practised in both the cases, with a woman of high cast and also with the woman of low cast. Fourth and the last type of marriage is marriage by elopement or *bhaga-lana*. Children by this marriage cannot enjoy their social status and they are always cut-off from the main stream of the society, even though they are the legal heir of the property of their father.

Before 2000, the State was in great gulf of gender unbalancing, female feticide and honour-killing² were at height. Marriage by purchase, *mol-lana*, and marriage by elopement, *bhaga-lana*, were practised. Marriage by elopement was the major cause of honour killing in the state. People considered this practice as an attack on the honour of their clan. The second reason is, people from Jat community do not want to share their property with the low caste people. If a girl is married to a lower caste boy, she can claim over her parent's property and it will automatically be attached to that low caste boy. It is also mentioned in *Mahabhart*, edited by Rajagopalachari, that from the ancient time there was no permission to the females of upper class to marry to a lower class man but an upper class man can marry a lower class woman. Same is followed by the people in Haryana: for upper class male inter-

caste marriage is permitted, but for female it is not. They are also very particular about the selection of match for their daughter even within the caste. In this context a famous saying among the Jats³ is that daughter and vote should be given to another Jat only. M.C. Pradhan says, "The Jats never marry girls outside their own cast whether higher or lower"(Pradhan,1966,90). A very famous Haryanvi anecdote about the selection of bridegroom within caste is, *GharHeenaDijo, Bar HeenaNaaDijo* (They can marry their daughter to a family not equally prosperous to them but cannot marry her to a physical weak man, they believe that their daughter will be safe with a strong man). People still believe, that this is the impact of Mughal period. We can also see the impact of that period in other way, i.e. *pardahpratha*. Even in this modern era, women usually wear veil when they move out of their house. But among new generation, it is only a tradition to carry forward their culture.

There were so many cases, as mentioned in media against women, but after that period there is a rapid change in social and cultural scenario in the state, i.e., liberalization of marriage, security of female child birth, and support for female education and games. In the last decade, the state was known by honour-killing, but in this decade no more honour-killing can be seen. Now, the girls are an icon of power and honour, not only in Haryana, but also across the globe. Many eminent personalities, especially in the field of games, are from Haryana, i.e. Balali sisters and Sakshi Malik in wrestling, and Deepa Malik in Paralympics. To support this transformation in a complex society B. Kuppuswamy opines, "The more complex societies have built-in-mechanism in the various institutions to enable them to change themselves in response to the strain and stresses which arise and in response to the new knowledge and techniques deliberately developed to overcome the strains and stresses" (Kuppuswamy,1972,7).

In Haryana this happened due to the efforts of government and awakening of the people by education. On the occasion of a convocation in a reputed women college in Haryana on 27 September 2016, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi (Union Cabinet Minister for Women and Child Development) stated that government started the scheme of *BetiBachao, BetiPadhao* (a scheme launched by center government to improve gender ratio), especially targeting Haryana and was launched from Panipat on 22 January 2015. She declared that before the launch of this scheme sex ratio was 840 to 860, but after a year it has reached to a great height and now the highest ratio is in Sirsa district, where it is 999. Three districts, Bhiwani, Narnaul and Jhajjar, in south Haryana, are nominated for awards for improving sex ratio, though Jhajjar still stands at the lowest on the list with having 794 girls against 1000 boys.

Khap-Panchayats⁴ are also one of the important parts of culture in Haryana. Regarding the history and origin of Khap-Panchayats, we have the only evidence, *Harshcharita* written by Bhanabhata. Harsha was a Jat king, who ruled over Thaneshwar(Haryana) between 606-647. In 643 AD, Harshvardhan called for a meeting of Jat warriors in Kannauj and established *Haryana Sarva-khap Panchayat*. Approximately five lakh people and twenty kings participated in this meeting, and was continued for 75 days. *Sarva-Khap Panchayat*⁵ was not only meant for Jat community but all communities participated in this, and the word *Bhaichara* came into existence. It symbolises the respect and equality between different castes and clans. People in Haryana still believe in Khap-Panchayat, but it is mutable with the changing paradigms. Sarva-Khap Panchayat is the supreme authority, and when any conflict arises, the decision taken by Sarva-Khap Panchayat, is the final decision one has to accept. The punishments given for the offences are either to put a fine on the accused or dismissal from community. This formation of local judiciary in Haryana was once the spine of society but with the wheel of time, it rotated and people of new generation are not ready to follow it blindly. They are prolific adaptor of changing circumstances. In fact, they are adjusting themselves to find harmony, and are educating with what is prevalent.

CONCLUSION:

With a glorious past and bright future, Haryana is a state which is known for controversial issues more, than its development. Due to its geographical situation, the state is surrounded by four states and a national capital (Delhi) and it effects the culture, tradition and development. Though the

area of state is not very wide-spread, but it has its own complexities regarding social and cultural construction, technological development and economic growth. But, people of new generation are very flexible and are trying to adjust and adopt what is prevalent.

NOTES

1. A spirit of togetherness of all communities in a society in Haryana.
2. Murder of a girl who eloped with another caste/community boy and got married.
3. A hard-working, prosperous and dominating cast in North-India.
4. Social-judiciary of a single clan/ gotra/surname in a community.
5. Social-judiciary of all clans/gotras/surnames/castes of a community.

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