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DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR: SOCIAL JUSTICE IN INDIA

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Abstract:-After the Second World War when a number of countries become free in Africa and Asia, egalitarian society over social justice which was popularly used in these countries. These countries had not only suffered from imperialist exploitation, but also from social imbalance because, one section of society which collaborated with the imperialist powers, had cornered much of the benefits at the cost of the weaker section of society looked towards the state for social justice. In India, the caste system is the problem of social justice, the caste system is the problem of untouchability made the situation worse. Ambedkar was reacted against such evils in his own way for the establishment of egalitarian Society in India. This paper will focus on Social justice in India in the view of Dr. Ambedkar.

Keywords:Social Justice , Liberalism , egalitarian Society .

INTRODUCTION

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar have unique place among modern Indian thinkers, he was not merely a thinker but also started popular movements to eradicate evils of social life and to reorganize society on the basis of equality and social justice. He imagined for India on ideal society in which benefits and privileges will not be monopolized by any one section of society but will be shared by all. In other words he wanted to establish on egalitarian society based on principals of equality and justice.

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:

Social justice suggests that, all benefits and privileges in society should be shared by all its members. If any group in society has suffered from structural inequalities inherent in the social system special care should be taken to remove such structural inequalities. The obvious implication is that the state should take affirmative action in order to remove such injustices perpetuated in the same society by one section over another section.

In so far as it seeks the help the state to remove inequalities and injustice inherent in the social system, it may be said, to be related with the ideology of positive liberalism and, therefore, with the concept of the welfare state.

The believers of Liberalism, every individual in society should get freedom for development of his personality. The state which attempts to provide necessary conditions for development of individuals in the society is known as a welfare state. It stands for that kind of state whose functions are not restricted to provide law and order but are extended and also to take care of those who are not in a position to help themselves. It enacts welfare legislation to provide for those who have suffered from deprivation and discrimination in society. In other words social justice is a function of the welfare state.

Dr. Ambedkar concept of social justice, was influenced by the western liberal ideas and the conditions that prevailed in the Indian society. His stay in America for three years (1913-16) and in England for two years (1920-1922) enabled him to come into direct contact with the ideas of liberal thinkers. He had also personal experience of the curse of untouchability which prevailed in the Indian society. He was born in a family of Mahar in Maharashtra, he had to face all indignities and discrimination that an untouchables was destined to face. Naturally, therefore, it

became the first concern of his life to fight against it at all levels, social, economic and political in order to establish in India a society based on social justice.

SOCIALASPECT:

Ambedkar wanted to recognize the society on equality and rationality and therefore, opposed the caste based social structure which, he thought, was characterized by graded inequality. At the outset, according to Ambedkar the Hindu Society, in common with other societies, was composed of classes. It consisted of four classes, viz, the priestly class (Brahmans), the military class (Kshatriyas) the merchant class (vaishyas) and the artisan and the minial class (shudras). It was essentially an open class system in which individuals. Such a sub-division in society was quite natural. But in course of development these classes lost their open door character and become self-enclosed units called castes and brought with it unequal distribution of privileges and benefits. The Shudras had to suffer discrimination and oppression is un-paralleled in human history. In order to reorganize society on basis of equality and fraternity the caste system must go.

He made a difference between Varna and caste and thought that while Varna was not hereditary either in states or occupation, caste made them hereditary. Varna and caste are identical in their de jure connotation, both suggest status and occupation. The purpose of this transformation by Brahmanism, he believed, was to accord higher status to higher varnas, specially the Brahmans. It introduced a most pernicious mentality among the Hindus, such as, to disregard merit and have regard only to birth and in turn it helped the development of castes and gave birth to what Ambedkar called graded inequality which was different from simple equality.

Under pure and simple inequality two things happen, it creates general discontent which forms the seed of revolution secondly; it makes the sufferers combine against a common enemy and on a common grievance. But the native and circumstances of the system of graded inequality leave no room for either of these two things to happen.

With the development of the casts all the essentials of a just social order was lost, with the fixation of individuals into castes and sub castes their status and occupation were fixed with birth. Caste does not result in economic efficient, Caste cannot and has not improved the race, Caste has however, done one thing. It has completely disorganized and demoralized the Hindus.

The Shudras were the worst sufferer of their position and became worse than slaves and slavery was never obligatory. The other difference was that untouchability was an indirect and therefore, the worst kind of slavery. Any deprivation of a man's freedom by an open and direct form was a preferable form of enslavement. It made the slaves conscious of his enslavement and such a consciousness was an important step in the battle for freedom.

According to Ambedkar, a close relation between the caste system and untouchability. It was, therefore not possible to abolish the one without abolishing the other. Idea to remove untouchability without destroying the caste system in an utter futility, the two are one and are inseparable. Untouchability is an extension of the caste system. There can be no severance between the two. He, therefore, favoured abolition of the caste system and reorganization of society on the basis of equality and justice. Only then social justice could be achieved.

ECONOMICASPECT:

He was not oblivious of the fact that economic injustice was a major factor in social injustice. In order to secure the interest of the weaker section of society he highlighted the role of the state. In the 'States and minorities' he stated that industries which were key industries must be owned by the state and should be run by the state or by corporations established by the state, insurance should be a monopoly of the state and agriculture should be state industry. He thought that in order to provide the equitable distribution of wealth it was necessary to put an obligation on the state to plan the economic life of the people. Such an obligation should not be left on the will of the legislature but should be prescribed by the law of the constitution.

He believed that there is very close relationship between individual liberty and the shape and form of the economic structure of society. If the system of economy was based on private enterprise and the pursuit of personal gain, it was bound to undermine the functioning of political democracy. If inequality continued in social and economic structure, political democracy could not be safe in India, he stated in his last speech in the constituent assembly.

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 on vote 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. If we continue to deny it for long, we shall do so only by putting our political democracy in peril.

Therefore, in order to establish a society on the principle of social justice he stressed that the economic structure must be based on the principles of democratic socialism and the state should take the responsibility to reorganize the economic structure of society.

POLITICAL ASPECT:

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar believed that a centralized polity with a strong Central Government was necessary for India to ensure building up of Indian nation and also to protect the interest of the weaker section of society. It was from this point of view that he supported a unitary Government for India at the Round Table Conference. He was however not opposed to a federal polity if the centre was strong enough to protect their interests.

CONCLUSION:

One of the key themes in most of the writings of Baba Saheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was the establishment of an 'ideal society' or a 'casteless society' or a society based upon the 'principle of justice'. Therefore, by taking a clue from his basis of an 'ideal society', we have entitled this essay as: Dr. Ambedkar's Vision of a Just Society. Because in his own words, the "ideal would be a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity" and again while giving the meaning of 'justice', he said: "Justice is simply another name for liberty, equality and fraternity". Therefore, to understand Dr. Ambedkar's vision of a 'just society', we in real sense have to understand the meaning of these three expressions, i.e., liberty, equality and fraternity. But, before making an attempt to understand these three expressions, we need to know the context out of which, a need for a 'just society' arose for him. This means we have to explore the possibility of understanding, the existing nature of Indian society or social order.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar believed in social justice and endeavored throughout their life to establish in India an egalitarian society based on the principle of equality and rationality. He believed that the end of the freedom movement was not only to achieve independence from the British but also to establish in India such a society which should be free from such evils as untouchability and inequality in social, economic and political spheres. He believed that special care should be taken of the weaker section of society and more particularly of those who had been victims of discrimination in the Indian Society.

Ambedkar was opposed to it and thought that if social system was attached to birth, status and occupation of the individual would be decided not by merit but by heredity and it was bound to degenerate the system. In the economic sphere Ambedkar favoured industrialization and nationalization of important means of production. According to Ambedkar the state should play a leading role in managing the economic development of the country as well to remove economic injustice between different segments of society. Ambedkar believed in centralized polity. He thought that it was necessary not only for building up Indian nation but also to protect their interests and to give a helping hand in the establishment of an egalitarian society based on social justice.

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