

# Role of Ambedkar in Constitution Making of India and Tribal Welfare

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Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, while framing the India constitution, was aware of all the political, social and economic problems of the tribal population constituting about 7 per cent of the total population of the country. His policy was to integrate the tribals with the larger society. His keen interest was to ensure building up of the required strength in the tribal people to meet competitive situations by providing built-in special arrangements. In constitution, the scheduled tribals have the following advantages.

1. Political-Reservations of seats in legislatures and local bodies.
2. Protective-Special legislations for protecting economic interests.
3. Development – Implementation of special programmes for educational and socio-economic development.

The Constitutional measures give scope to devise methods, which would protect the economic interests of the tribals, safeguard their way of life and ensure their rapid development in accordance with their own genius. Let us see a few articles of the Constitution. Article 46 of the Constitution enjoins upon the state to promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Article 244 of the Constitution prescribes special provisions for the administration of scheduled areas, scheduled tribes and tribal areas. Article 275 provides for central grants in-aid to states for undertaking development work for the purposes of promoting the welfare of the scheduled tribes. There are also provisions for the reservation of seats in the Houses of Legislature both at the national level and the state level (Articles 330 and 332). Article 335 of the constitution enjoins upon the Government for safeguarding the claims of the

members of the scheduled tribes. Article 339 lays down that the Central Government can give directions to states as to the drawing up and execution of schemes specified to be essential for the welfare of scheduled tribes in the states.

Thus, a few articles as given above, emphasized the national effort for the development of the scheduled tribes and the tribal areas.

## Planned Development of Scheduled Tribes

Since the first Five Year plan (1951-52) efforts were made to provide for the welfare of scheduled tribes and tribal areas through special sector development. Namely, welfare of Backward classes. An integrated development of the tribal population was started in the second Five Year Plan by establishing special multi-purpose Tribal Blocks. By the fourth Five Year Plan, 43 per cent of the tribal population was covered in 504 Tribal Development Blocks. The fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) will be regarded as a golden period in the history of tribal development. Government involved anthropologists in framing the rules for tribal development. In 1972, a Task Force on 'Development of Tribal Areas' was set up with eminent anthropologist, Prof. L.P. Vidyarthi as the Chairman to review the nature and level of development. In the same year. An expert committee on tribal development of social welfare, submitted its report defining the new strategy for tribal development headed by anthropologist, S.C. Dube, Constituted by the Central Department of social welfare, submitted its report defining the new strategy for tribal development in the fifth Plan. Most of their views tallied with the consciousness of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and his solutions for weaker communities. The long term objectives in the sixth Five Year Plan continue to be the same as the fifth Plan, Viz., (a) narrowing the gap between the level of development of tribal areas and others and (b) improving the quality of life of the tribal people.

The sixth Plan period 1980-85, worked a little more confidently. As analyzed broadly in my paper (Parthasarathy: 1988:4-9) during the sixth plan in respect of anti exploitative measures many states have passed enactments against alienation of tribal lands, tribal lands tribal indebtedness, bonded labour, liquor vending in tribal areas. For ensuring marketing of surplus farm and minor forest produce of tribals. And a reasonable return on it, co-operatives at the primary and secondary levels have been set up. More than 2380 primary Large-sized multipurpose societies (IAMPS) have been set up. Some steps have been firmly taken for raising the technological level in agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry fields. There was a widespread recognition that more economic measures and even legislative steps may not succeed unless the capability of the tribal himself is built up through education. With this reason, sixth plan accorded much higher priority to education, adult education and youth training.

In 1984 the working Group on Development of scheduled Tribes during seventh live year plan considered the matter at some length, particularly in the context of the constitutional provisions as visualized by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for tribal welfare. The working group laid great stress on preventing exploitation of the scheduled Tribes and activity promoting the educational and economic interests of the scheduled Tribes. According to their report, the scheduled Tribes should be given special treatment in the poverty alleviation programmes of the country as even now over 85 per cent of the tribal families continue to remain below the poverty line (vide 1981 Census data analyzed under IT'DP). The report finally concluded that, the advancement of education among the scheduled tribes is a prime need for more reasons than one. In this respect, at this hour, it is our moral duty to remember what Dr. B.R. Ambedkar reported in 1956, while submitting his evidence before the backward classes Commission (1956:73-75).

He the purpose of bringing these people up are not that we should have primary schools and secondary schools for these people. Out of 100 boys 20 remain and 80 go away. My idea is something fantastic I would suggest that schools should be opened for them in their own locality or some central place. I would suggest to collect the best boys from the primary schools and give them food, shelter and

education in that very place, away from their parents. Upto the Matriculation examination you give them education there. As soon as they pass the matriculation examination, send them to a college and give them tuition fee. After that select a number of student from amongst them and send them to other countries, for them to get the best of education. After that give them service in the Government Department. I would be quite period to send of Rs. For the scheduled Castes and one Crore for the scheduled tribes for ten year. Thus you will create a few people with high qualification and place them in high posts Prof. Nirmal Kumar boss (1972: 278) Analysed this statement and concluded that. "Dr B.R. Ambedkar is quite correct when he says that we should raise the status of Backward (classes as a whole and not individually; but that can only be done by producing highly qualified people from amongst these communities and placing them in key positions of Government service".

Thus, development ideas of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, after his death, reaching slowly to the planned schemes of the government. There is a wide criticism by anthropologists and other social workers on the present efforts of Government for tribal development. They felt that present planners have not understood the needs of the groups. Moreover, the Tribal Development programmes have been top heavy with 80 to 90 per cent of the funds going towards maintaining an administrative structure, which supervises the distribution of the remaining meager allocation (Bhowmik, S.K.: 1988). Roy Burman stated that the government has been insensitive downright oppressive. N.G. Basu noted that most tribal plans are not development oriented. They are philanthropic exercises. These plans end up helping non-tribals more than the tribals. Ashok Mitra (Bhowmin, S.K.1988) pointed out, the new laws seeking to protect the tribals actually lead to greater exploitation of tribals. This, he felt, was because tribals have not been allowed to take the initiative for their own development. Hence they have to depend on the government for their welfare. Bhupinder Singh (1977:242) predicted that. 'if we fail to achieve the objectives, tribal expectations having been aroused, we shall succeed in generating frustration. There is the possibility that, having failed to secure satisfaction, the tribal leaders and the tribal mass may

turn to assertion of their identity through other channels, i.e. sub-nationalism, separate state etc.

Thus, what anthropologists and other social workers feel now was said by Dr. BR. Ambedkar, 40 year back that, “we want that all communities should come up to the same level and one class should have the same respect for the other as the other class has got for it.....”

#### CONCLUSION

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the father of Indian constitution, advocated an equality provision for underprivileged communities. Born of an untouchable Mahar family of central India, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar studied at the United States, Britain and Germany and received MA, PhD and D.Sc degrees. With a bitter taste of untouchable treatment by his Hindu high caste colleagues he turned to legal practice and teaching. His nomination to the Bombay legislative council put him in a clear leadership position among scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. He has become a rational thinker on Hindu social philosophy especially the exploitation of untouchable communities. His pure and direct conflict with the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi made him an ignored person to the Congress authorities. He came into limelight when he became a law minister and chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian constitution, which declares untouchability abolished. At the end, unable to stop the perpetuation of untouchability in Hindu doctrine, he became a Buddhist and died as a great savant and humanist.

To promote the desired interaction of the tribals into the national life of India, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar provided in the constitution special safeguards for the scheduled tribes along with the scheduled castes and other down-trodden communities. Dr. Ambedkar's humanistic feelings were well identified by the anthropologist whose interest with his discipline is a holistic approach to human culture. The study found that consciously or unconsciously, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's radical solutions were incorporated in successive plan periods for tribal development but failed at implementation level. A great responsibility therefore rests upon all anthropologists to educate the people on the human culture of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar for economic protection and social security of the scheduled tribals. Human purity lies in Ambedkar's message of glory to those who would keep on their struggle for the liberation of the enslaved in spite of

heavy odds, carping humiliations, storms and dangers till the down-trodden secure their human rights”.

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