

# UNHEARD VOICES

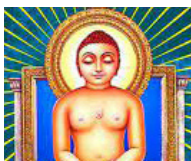
14 APRIL 2022 | Year 2 | Vol. 1

## TRIBUTE

On the occasion of the 131st birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, UNHEARD VOICES publishes analytical articles, which throws light on his thinking process. These articles stand as a testimony of Dr. Ambedkar's vision. He has come out with unique solutions to various problems of India and these solutions are still valid. We have chosen some of the topics, which need more attention and discussion. Please turn on page seven.



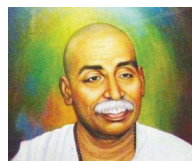
**14th April**  
Dr. Ambedkar  
Birth Anniversary



**14th April**  
Bhagwan Mahavir  
Birth Anniversary



**23rd April**  
Maharshi Vitthal  
Ramji Shinde  
Birth Anniversary



**30th April**  
Sant Tukdoji  
Maharaj  
Birth Anniversary



**6th May**  
Adi Shankaracharya  
Birth Anniversary



**6th May**  
Chatrapati  
Shahu Maharaj  
Death Anniversary



**7th May**  
Sant  
Ramanujcharya  
Birth Anniversary



## EDITORIAL

# Completing one year

We are pleased that UNHEARD VOICES is completing one year. The first issue of UNHEARD VOICES was published on April 14th, 2021. One year is not a long period to pat ourselves on, but it is a moment of satisfaction for us to share our views with the readers on this occasion. Social Studies Foundation (SSF), which publishes UNHEARD VOICES, is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination and establish social harmony to build a strong nation. With the same purpose, we are publishing UNHEARD VOICES.

Newspapers and periodicals play a vital role in shaping public opinion in modern days. It can organize public opinion, which was also realized by our forefathers. Almost all the freedom fighters and social reformers, who fought against British rule and social ills, used this tool very effectively to awaken and educate the Indians. We believe that newspapers and periodicals still play an equally crucial role even though doubts are being raised about their survival thanks to the internet.

This is the age of social media. All of us are driven by information that reaches us through social media. It comes with great speed and has a huge quantum. However, element misinformation or distorted information is a major handicap of social media. As against this, print media has managed to retain its seriousness. SSF opted for a hybrid model and decided to publish an e-magazine.

But we have specific objectives for the e-magazine. We decided to focus on issues of deprived people of India as the society needs robust reforms about these issues when India is making progress in all walks of national life. We strongly believe that problems of derived people are not restricted to the deprived section of society. These problems are the problems of all of us. This sentiment is born out of oneness among the Indians.

We, therefore, believe that solutions to the problems of deprived people need to be found by the entire society and not merely by the deprived people. These solutions can be found through the active participation of all the society members. The need of the hour is that all the people, who share similar thoughts and empathy, should come together and walk hand in hand to make

India free from all types of discrimination.

But bringing together like-minded people is a big challenging task because of the complexity of the problem. In India, we have four types of people – conservative, nationalist reformist, reformist nationalist and abolitionist. Conservatives believe in the old value system and are in support of discrimination. They are in denial mode to accept the fact that discrimination exists in society. But, this group is now in a microscopic minority as their thoughts are denied by modern India. Similarly, abolitionists have become outdated as they do not believe in the theory of one nation, which is a stark reality. These people prefer to live in a utopian world, neglecting the facts and never bothering to address society's contentious issues.

As against this, nationalist reformists and reformist nationalists share the same agenda, but they differ only on one point – prioritizing the agenda or issues. Both have the same concerns about society. For nationalist reformists, the nation comes first, while reformist nationalists consider reforms a top priority. This was also reflected in the freedom movement against British rule. But the need of the hour is to strike a balance between these two schools of thought. This is possible as India is a democratic country and we have been following the tradition of healthy debate since ancient days. If the said balance is achieved, India can become a vibrant and strong nation.

UNHEARD VOICES is an attempt in this direction. We want to create a common platform for two schools of thought where ideological untouchability and discrimination are absent. This platform is expected to have the collective wisdom and collective consciousness. We strongly believe that nationalist reformists and reformist nationalists will never be able to reach their destination if they continue to have separate paths. Instead of getting involved in blame games, India should have robust analysis on why it happened. We should focus more on why social evils like discrimination gripped society. We are well aware that this is a Herculean task, but we also strongly believe in the oneness of society, which will make it easier.

For feedback please click the below link : <https://forms.gle/XWQ19k9xC1CyNr6e7>

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The editor & publisher may not agree to it.



## CONTENTS

- 04** Going beyond conventional political considerations

---

- 07** What Dr. Ambedkar said on crucial issue of National security?

---

- 09** Dr. Ambedkar on irrigation and water management

---

- 12** The pros and cons of a linguistic state

---

- 14** Hindu Code Bill : a panacea to social malaise

---

- 16** Dr. Ambedkar : leader with firm roots in Indian soil

---

- 18** Journalism, a tool of social renaissance for Dr. Ambedkar

---

- 19** Hyderabad as second capital

---

- 21** Shravasti : Buddha spent rainy seasons

## Response

Namaskar, I am highly thankful for sharing such informative articles  
Thanks & Regards.

- **S. K. Parcha**, Scholar- Dehradun.

Excellent is every article. Your advocacy of social harmony sans any violent conflict is the main attraction of your journal. Hats off to all of your team. Hope your positive attitude spreads out to other journals as well.

- **Atreya Sarma**, Chief editor  
Muse India

The need to widen the path of knowledge in the Nation Building Mission has been there for a long time. I believe that this kind of ideological brainstorming will come to fruition to some extent. Their seriousness is underscored by the fact that sensitive topics are presented with restraint but effectively. Congratulations to all the team and thanks.

- **Dr. Mangesh Kashyap**,  
Pune

I have been reader of UNHEARD VOICES since the first issue. I congratulate the team because of their efforts, which are reflected in every issue. I am, particularly, pleased to note that a range of topics are considered, which otherwise are not noted by the mainstream media. I once again congratulate and wish all the best to UNHEARD VOICES.

- **Prasanna**, Pune



Election results to five assemblies have brushed aside conventional political ideas like caste and gender. It indicates that people are willing to look beyond caste. This can be considered as a welcome sign in which the intensity of caste is believed to be reduced. We hope that parties will be wise enough to have a lesson.



# Going beyond conventional political considerations

Satyajit



It is a rare occasion in the Indian politics that political pundits are unanimous on the overall take away from the recently concluded Assembly elections in five states. Everybody has agreed that Modi or BJP juggernaut is unstoppable and is likely to continue in 2024 elections. Some of the Congress supporters and hardcore BJP critics had even advised non-BJP parties to prepare 2029 Lok Sabha elections, implying that they should give up 2024 electoral fight.

Serious debate is going on among political academicians on drastic changes, which were underlined or emerged very sharply in the elections. BJP victory was mainly attributed to performance and governance, double engine, welfare schemes etc. The other side of BJP victory is miserable performance of opposition parties which include Congress, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi

Party (SP), Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). At the same time, AAP victory in Punjab is also significant on many grounds.

A strong common undercurrent in voting pattern or voting behaviour is seen in all five elections. Post poll survey suggest that Modi's leadership was a major factor in BJP victory, which was accompanied by other factors like welfare schemes like Ujjwala gas, toilets, direct benefit tax, housing, Ayushman Bharat and so on. This class is known as 'labharthi'. It is now widely accepted fact with great reluctance that Hindutva has become more accommodative with more castes coming under the umbrella of BJP.

How can one explain that Congress, which was a very dominant party in UP till few years back, lost deposits in 387 seats while the party had fielded 399 candidates? What is the reason that Congress has only two MLAs in UP, which decides fate of Indian electoral politics?

BSP, which ruled UP around a decade ago, was reduced to a non-player in UP. It got only one seat



while its vote share was reduced to 13 percent. SP increased its tally mainly because of MY combination – Muslim and Yadav – as both the communities have numerical strength in several constituencies in UP. Some BJP supporters maintained that SP's MY was countered by BJP's MY – Modi and Yogi.

It was difficult for BJP to retain power in three other states – Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur. These three states were handicapped by mainly state level local equations. Curiously, Congress was positioned better in all three states compared to Uttar Pradesh. However, Congress could not perform better.

In Punjab, Congress did all the tricks to retain power. It went to the extent of changing chief minister few months before the election. Channi was elected as the chief minister who comes from Dalit family. Punjab had more than 30 percent Dalit votes but Channi's selection failed to change Congress fortune.

Election result has posed some basic and fundamental questions before the Indian politics. These questions were never addressed by the so-called political pundits as they had lost connect with the ground reality. For years, this class has been writing and analysing politics with a particular prism, ignoring Indian psyche and aspirations. As a result of this, they miserably failed to read writing on the wall.

Indian politics has been revolving around three ideas – caste, gender and religion. This has been happening since independence. 2022 results suggest that all three terms have been shattered either partially or completely. People have raised above conventional political considerations and voted for something more than what they have been taught for years. This was little unexpected for many people as they were not aware of silent or bloodless revolution, which was taking shape.

Some new terms have emerged in the 2022 election. One of them is 'labharthi – the class of beneficiary. This class was silent and its strength was known only after ballot boxes were opened. Women are said to have voted for BJP in large number. They were also silent. Their strength was understood only on March 10. None of this class was vocal but seem to have decided long time back about their voting choice.

Centre for Studies of Developing Societies and Lokniti conducted post poll survey. It said that positive effect of social welfare scheme, popularity of central government and religious polarization were the main factors for BJP win. These findings were largely accepted by political pundits. If these findings are to be believed, we have to accept a political reality that popularity of central government lies with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Another largely accepted conclusion that women voted for BJP in large number. Women are considered as crucial beneficiaries of several social welfare schemes like Ujwala gas, toilet, Ayushman Bharat and housing. If this theory is to be believed,

it can be argued that women lives had become easier as compared to past. Otherwise, they would not have voted for BJP. Women voters' turnout was higher, compared to men voters in all the states. This phenomenon was quite unusual. Its impact was seen after the result. BJP critics described this under current as "MY", which stands for Mahila and Yojana. Women voting for BJP is significant for another reason. Congress had projected Priyanka Gandhi as



Emergence of new political psyche needs burial of old psyche. New political aspirations and concepts can not take birth unless conventional and traditional ideas are brushed aside. The above explanation underlines – emergence of new vote bank and giving up old notions. If the old idea of politics, which was mainly driven by caste and gender, is fading, it has to be embraced for healthy India.

leader while Mayawati is undisputed leader of BSP. Women, however, neglected both parties, led by women and opted for BJP.

One more factor is said to have shaped the woman psyche in Uttar Pradesh. This factor is law and order. UP women still remember lawlessness of past regime, when crime rate was much higher. Women were feeling more secured during present period and they did not want to take any risk.

CDSS and Lokniti survey findings are supported by some ground realities. Congress, which used to consider itself as champion of Dalit cause, fielded 399 candidates and 387 of them lost deposits. Congress party must accept a fact that party was not even in the race in these 387 constituencies. Congress won only two seats as against seven in the 2017 elections.

Congress, which is still seen as a serious national



alternative to BJP, has been showing very poorly in UP for five decades now. Congress downfall in UP began from emergency (1977) and could never recover from the jolt. Congress had managed to win three-digit seats only twice – 1980 (309) and 1985 (269). In 1991, Congress won 41 seats and the party is showing erosion since then. It reached its rock bottom by bagging only two seats in 2022.

BSP was another major political force in UP. Low profile campaign by BSP chief Mayawati had puzzled workers. It was expected that BSP vote bank was set to go to some other political parties. It happened. BSP fielded 403 candidates and lost deposit in 290 constituencies. Mayawati who was seen as messiah of Dalit cause could win only one seat. BSP won only 13% votes.

Mayawati was chief minister thrice. She was chief



ministers in 2007 when BSP won majority on its own. This has to be remembered to understand that BSP was a big power in UP till ten years back. BSP's erosion can be seen from the fact that its candidates were on second position only in 18 constituencies. Mayawati confessed in the press conference that her vote bank, including Muslim, shifted to SP and BJP.

Chandrashekhar Azad had caught attention outside Uttar Pradesh. He has been in the lime light for statements and agitations. This time, he was again in the focus as he contested against Yogi Adityanath from Gorakhpur constituency. Azad, who is seen as an icon by a section of Dalit youths, however, lost deposit. There were no takers for his philosophy.

Another interesting under current is seen in reserved constituencies in all the five states. Uttar Pradesh has 86 reserved seats and BJP bagged 52

seats. Akhilesh's SP could win 23 seats. In Punjab, AAP won 28 reserved seats out of 34. Congress had won 21 reserved seats in 2017. Punjab preferred AAP despite the fact that Congress projected Charanjit Singh Channi, a Dalit, as the chief minister. Punjab has more than 30 percent Dalit votes, which is the largest Dalit share in the country. Still voters rejected Congress.

In Uttarakhand BJP won nine reserved constituencies out of 15. In the last election, BJP had 12 seats. In 2022, BJP vote share in reserved constituencies increased but number of seats was reduced. Small state of Goa has only one reserved seat, which was won by BJP.

Four states were won by BJP while Punjab was bagged by AAP. But Punjab trend also denotes the same trend. It has outrightly rejected old dynastic and conventional politics by electing newly born party. In four states, BJP did not face any challenge from the so-called anti-incumbency. In fact, BJP leaders, maintain that it had introduced new concept – pro-incumbency because of its performance and connect with the people.

Emergence of new political psyche needs burial of old psyche. New political aspirations and concepts can not take birth unless conventional and traditional ideas are brushed aside. The above explanation underlines – emergence of new vote bank and giving up old notions. If the old idea of politics, which was mainly driven by caste and gender, is fading, it has to be embraced for healthy India. The election outcome gives us a big solace that caste is unlikely to have dominant position in the Indian politics as in the past. It gives us a ray of hope that voters have started emancipating themselves from clutches of caste. This is a process, which may take some more years but the beginning is welcome.

Political parties must realize that new India is expecting them to meet their aspirations. New India has rejected traditional politics of caste, which was like a cancer to the country. Of course, politics of religion needs to be tackled differently. SP could increase its seats as Muslims are believed to have voted en-block. However, fact cannot be neglected that AIMIM did not win a single seat in UP. Its vote share is merely 0.43 percent. Voters also have sent a strong signal that politics of appeasement was not going to be tolerated.

Tectonic plates of Indian politics have begun to shift. India is making itself free from the colonial attitude, which was sown, cultivated and nourished for years by the people with vested interests. Caste has decisive role in social and political affairs in colonial attitude. Voters have refused to continue this colonial attitude when India is celebrating 75 years of Independence.

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## What Dr. Ambedkar said on crucial issue of National security ?

Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is known to all as ‘Messiah of Dalits’ and ‘Father of Constitution of India’. But the visionary and patriotic leader was also vigilant about India’s foreign policy and national security.

### Sanvidhan



**D**r. Babasaheb Ambedkar was one of the most intelligent leaders this nation had. His farsighted and visionary views on the national interests are relevant even today. His learned and well-construed opinions on various issues faced by the nation need to be considered seriously. School text books may limit him to the title of ‘Messiah of Dalits’, but Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s views, recommendations and decisions in relation to not only the creation of a casteless social system, but also with regard to national security are astonishingly brilliant. In the present days, consideration of national security has become far more important than economic development and military power. While citing examples of the 9/11 terror attack on the Twin Towers in USA and 26/11 attack on Mumbai, Dr. Vijay Khare (Head, Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, SPPU) underlines the importance of national security saying, “Social development, food security, health security and education safety are aspects of vital importance for a developing country like India.”

Review of national integrity is essential to understand the issues of border security and internal safety faced by India. Various factors such as prevalence of caste system, communalism and fundamentalism, regionalism etc.. are major

threats to the national integrity. The recent Hijab controversy, increasing caste atrocities in Maharashtra and other states, differential treatment meted out to the migrant labourers from Bihar or Uttar Pradesh, Naxalism etc. are major threats to national integrity. However, several regional and national parties ignore this and give far more importance to military power because it serves their political interests. This is worrisome. Being a visionary leader, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had foreseen these issues. Therefore, he laid stress on formation of smaller states, promoted the idea of developing two capitals in view of the security and integrity and provided for constitutional values such as reservations, equality, secularism and fraternity. Articles 5, 17, 23, 25-28, 29-30, 335, 334, 330 of the Constitution of India uphold these values and guarantee individual freedoms as well as national security.

Foreign policy is always linked with the national security. Therefore, India-China conflict, Indo-Pakistan relation and India’s relations with rebels in Sri Lanka are important issues of national security. A glance at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s opinions on Sino-India relations reveal that he had opposed Government of India’s stand on China’s permanent membership on Security Council of the United Nations. Besides, following the Panchasheel Agreement, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had sent a

# Chinese attack on both fronts

## Forward posts fall in NEFA, Ladakh after stiff fight NO MILITARY PLANES IN OPERATION: MENON

Express News Service

NEW DELHI Oct. 20

THE Indian posts of Dhola and Khinzemane, along the MacMahon Line, in the NEFA, fell to the Chinese in the Chip Chap river valley.

### Moscow silent

NEW DELHI, Oct. 20 (Express News Service)—The Soviet Government has remained silent on the Chinese attack on Indian posts in the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and Ladakh.



The P.F.P. leader, Mr. Anand Mohan, addressing the "Push Back China" campaign sponsored by the P.F.P.

## Relations with China: official view in Delhi

Express News Service

NEW DELHI, Oct. 20

When the news of the Chinese attack on Indian posts in the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and Ladakh reached Delhi, the Government issued a statement.

The statement said that the Government was deeply concerned at the news of the Chinese attack on Indian posts in the NEFA and Ladakh. It expressed the hope that the Chinese would withdraw their forces from the area.

### Reference to UN not yet, says Menon

Express News Service

NEW DELHI, Oct. 20

THE Chinese attack on Indian posts in the NEFA and Ladakh has not yet been referred to the United Nations, says Mr. Menon.

Mr. Menon said that the Government was still studying the situation and would refer the matter to the UN if necessary.

He also said that the Government was taking steps to strengthen its defences in the NEFA and Ladakh.

## Mystery over

telegram to Mr. N.R.Pillai, the then Secretary General, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India on December 9, 1955, expressing his dissent.

Kashmir issue plagues India. In his address to the students of Lucknow University on November 7, 1952 on the issue, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had pointed out that Kashmir was a mixed state comprising of the Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists and not a uniform state. Further, he had raised questions, "How would the Kashmiri citizens be able to exercise their franchise at a time when India has committed to the United Nations to conduct plebiscite and what would happen to the 20% non-Muslim population of Kashmir if the verdict of the referendum goes in favour of Pakistan?" Moreover, he had recommended partition of Kashmir to accede the areas dominated by the Buddhists and Hindus while joining the areas dominated by Muslims to Pakistan. He had minced no words stating, "We have nothing to do with the area dominated by the Muslims. Since it is the issue concerning the Muslims and Pakistan, let them address it. If need arises, plebiscite be conducted after dividing Kashmir into the area where ceasefire has been declared, Kashmir valley and Jammu-Ladakh." One cannot miss the relevance of the serious warning about the Kashmir issue given by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

In relation to the Pakistan-US relations, he had warned that there would be grave consequences of US providing military aid to Pakistan. Similarly, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's opinions on India's policy regarding its relations with Soviet Russia, Indochina and other countries display his elaborate study and deep understanding of issues.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was well aware of the conditions prevailing in the country. Besides, he had developed a global vision due to his education in the Western countries. There is no alternative to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's vision of socialist state

to ensure financial security in the era of machines, development of military equipment and economic recession. His vision of socialist state was explained in the 'State And Minority' memorandum presented by the Scheduled Castes Federation envisaging the Constitution of India. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's view on national security were comprehensive because he constantly monitored aspects like agriculture, industrial sector, employment generation, poverty alleviation etc.

While elaborating on Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's patriotism in 'Anant Pailuncha Samajik Yoddha' (A Multi-Faceted Social Crusader) Prahlad Lulekar writes, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had displayed his unmatched patriotism when he stated in a lecture given before departing for New York to attend the graduating ceremony after the Columbia University conferred the degree of LL D on him, "I am short tempered. I have criticised show of work of several big leaders and argued with them. However, I have never committed any treachery. I will never expose my nation to a foreign country. I understand perfectly as to where and how to show respect for my nation. I have never spoken ill of our nation to any foreigner till this date. Therefore, the possibility of I speaking ill of our nation abroad does not arise." Such a patriot and statesman, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar recommended drafting of a rational foreign policy for the nation and lamented that the government ignored it.

Therefore, there is a need to adopt an unbiased and balanced approach towards Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. His contributions to protect sovereignty and greatness of the nation are invaluable and therefore should be considered while reviewing and framing the relevant policies.

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# Dr. Ambedkar on irrigation and water management

Unlike Jawahar Lal Nehru, Dr. Ambedkar did not merely desire for maximising economic growth, rather he stood for the value based economic development in which the labour forces particularly from the marginalised sections i.e., scheduled castes and backward classes could enhance their standard of living. Dr. Ambedkar envisioned a better plan for the distribution of national income to the common people. Such a vision of inclusive labour policy was reflected in the context of water management and irrigation. Dr. Ambedkar highlighted the need for cheap and abundant electricity in India.

## Dr. Sanjeev and Unnati



Dr. Ambedkar had his formal education in economics, sociology, political economy, anthropology and law, but he passionately contributed in the field of human geography, agricultural geography or agricultural economics, transportation geography, commercial geography, power, water, electricity, hydro-power and development economics etc. His outlook on agriculture is found in his works "Small Holdings in Indian and their Remedies"(1917) and also in "States and Minorities"(1947) together with various speeches at different occasions. Though Dr. Ambedkar had started visioning the issue of agriculture, water and power since 1918, but his major intervention can be seen when he joined the Viceroy's Executive Council in 1942.

With the formation of an independent Department of Labour in 1937, Dr. Ambedkar was trusted with the chair and he became a member of Viceroy's Executive Council who was in charge of the department of Labour, Irrigation and Power

portfolio during 1942-46. In addition to that, he was directly involved in policy making with the capacity of being the Law Minister in the Central Cabinet of independent India during 1947-51. In the course of these two portfolios, Dr. Ambedkar contributed by bringing about a revolution by shaping the labour, irrigation and water policies of India. Dr. Ambedkar's contribution in laying the foundation of future's labour, irrigation and water management policies in India was also appreciated by the Union Minister of Water Resources, Uma Bharti in 2016, in her message to the document published by Central Water Commission in 1993. She highlighted that,

"Dr. Ambedkar evolved a new water and power policy during 1942-46 to utilise the water resources of the country to the best advantage of everybody and the Tennessee Valley Scheme of USA was an ideal model to emulate. He rightly visualised that only multipurpose project can be a fine prospect for the control of the river, a prospect of controlling floods of securing a fine area for perennial irrigation with resultant insurance against famine, much needed supply of power and uplifting the living standard of poverty-stricken people of India."



A representative photograph Damodar Valley, Jharkhand.



### **Dr. Ambedkar's Multipurpose Approach**

During his tenure of four years and eleven months (from July 20, 1942 to June 29, 1946), he emphasised on the national importance of 'hydro-electric power' and initiated a 'definite all-India policy for 'water and electricity power resources'. Furthermore, he raised the administrative units at the centre to help states in developing irrigation and electric power resources. Additionally, he adopted the concept from River Valley Authority to mitigate difficulties between centre and state; introduced the concept of regional and multipurpose development of river valley basin for the first time. He has also initiated various important river valley projects such as Damodar River Valley, Sone River Valley, Orissa River valley including Mahanadi (Hirakund project), Chambal and rivers of Deccan etc. Thus, Dr. Ambedkar has not only laid the foundation of the present day's irrigation, electric power and water policy provisions, besides he significantly promoted them as sectors of national, economic, social, cultural and political importance. Thus, for Dr. Ambedkar, economic development and planning was not only a matter of increasing GDP or national income but also a mechanism to ensure redistributive justice to the last man of the society. That being so, this paper covers three important issues that were central to Dr. Ambedkar's thought on Farming and Water Management i.e., Land Holding, Water resource and Labour.

#### **Problems with Land Holdings**

According to the official statistics, 75% of the Indian economy is dependent on agriculture and a majority of villages in rural India are reliant. Dr. Ambedkar found some faults and flaws in the existing system which tends to favour the powerful and exploit the unfortunates. He opined that law of succession and fragmentation of agricultural land are practised which thwarts economic progress.

Dr. Ambedkar opined that fragmentation of land and the old customary agricultural practices are the reason for the low productivity and slow economic growth. He wrote an essay on farming and farm holding which was published in the Journal of the Indian Economic Association. According to Dr. Ambedkar, productivity of agriculture is related not only with the size of holdings of land but is also an outcome of other factors such as capital, labour and machines, fertilizers and other factors. Therefore, if capital or labour etc. are not available in adequate quantity and quality, then even a large size land can become unproductive.

Dr. Ambedkar was a member of Reconstruction Committee of the Council (RCC), President of the Policy Committee on Irrigation and Electric Power and was associated with the official committee in the labour Department during early 1940s. With his intellect and capacity to intervene in the policy making, he brought various significant transformations which can foreground the present-

day water, irrigation and electricity policies.

In context of agricultural land, Dr. Ambedkar found a causal relation between the problem of small holdings and backwardness of agriculture and suggested for greater capital investment in agriculture and industry and emphasised on more active and positive role for the states keeping in mind the poor and socially oppressed sections. He did extensive research on the question of 'enlargement' and 'consolidation' of small holdings and its impact on the hindrance of agricultural growth. He considered that consolidation of holdings was a practical problem while enlargement was a theoretical one. He further stated that evil of small land holdings was not fundamental rather derived from the evil practices of maladjustment which had resulted in the distortions in the factor market, scarcity of capital in relation to land and land scarcity in relation to rural land holding. Using a survey, Dr. Ambedkar demonstrated a deficiency of agricultural stock such as ploughs, cattle, irrigation wells and manure.

For that reason, Dr. Ambedkar was of the view that the existing agricultural equipment was inadequate not only for the larger holdings but also for the small holdings. He argued that the reason behind low capital investment in the agricultural sector rests with the low surplus gain in the sector. Consequently, the reason behind low surplus in the agricultural sector was due to high pressure of population on land and that too on the small holdings wherein a large part of land as well as agricultural population was idle. The high pressure of population has resulted in small holdings and these could not generate surplus in the agricultural sector as it reduced the income per worker to barely subsistence level (CWC, 1993).

In view of that, Dr. Ambedkar advocated that the productivity of agricultural sector could be increased by expanding capital and capital goods and cutting out surplus labour in the sector. He points that in order to solve the problem of small holdings, these two efforts should go simultaneously. Failing so it would further subdivide the holdings and reduce the labour productivity. Therefore, Dr. Ambedkar emphasised on transferring agricultural labour force to other sectors of economy such as manufacturing industry.

Thus, Dr. Ambedkar's insistence on industrialisation as a solution to agriculture and irrigation did not mean the reduction of direct capital investment in agriculture to improve productivity. He believed that improvement in labour productivity was important for surplus generation in the agriculture similar to what Arthur Lewis propounded for the inter-sectoral linkages of labour and capital. Dr. Ambedkar's concern on the land, irrigation, productivity and need for industrialisation was well associated with his thought on labour and water management.

Inclusive Labour Policy, Water and Electricity



A representative photograph of Hirakund Project, Odisha

Unlike Jawahar Lal Nehru, Dr. Ambedkar did not merely desire for maximising economic growth, rather he stood for the value based economic development in which the labour forces particularly from the marginalised sections i.e., scheduled castes and backward classes could enhance their standard of living. Dr. Ambedkar envisioned a better plan for the distribution of national income to the common people. Such a vision of inclusive labour policy was reflected in the context of water management and irrigation. In October 1943, in his presidential address to the policy committee on electric power, Dr. Ambedkar highlighted the need for cheap and abundant electricity in India. He envisioned that accessibility to electricity to all people across the segments can really “rescue the people from the eternal cycle of poverty”.

For Dr. Ambedkar the foundational spirit of any development must be premised on the welfare of the people. He favoured industrialisation but not at the cost of agriculture. His purpose was to create sectoral interlinkages to reduce the disguised labour. Moreover, his vision for various valley project was to not only speed up the national income but primarily to help the indigenous people from the developmental projects. In his presidential address to the Conference on Multipurpose Development of Damodar Valley, Dr. Ambedkar emphasised that,

“The Centre expect the Provinces to bear in mind the absolute necessity of ensuring that the benefits of the project get ultimately right down to the grass roots i.e. everyone living in the valley and some of those in the vicinity, all have their share in the prosperity which the project should bring. This, in my view, is essential and for this reason we want the establishment of some agency early enough so that agency can set about planning at once in a manner in which its essential and ultimate objective can be secured”

Irrigation and Water: Need for a Strong Centre

With the efforts and vision of Dr. Ambedkar, the Central Water, Irrigation and Navigation Commission was established in 1945 which is now called as Central Water Commission. This commission is executed as the central agency for the guidance and implementation of Government’s national policy for water. Apart from this, Dr. Ambedkar was the brain behind the enactment of Inter-State Water Dispute Act, 1956 and the River Boards Act, 1956 which has been functioning significantly to manage the inter-state relations relating to water disputes.

Currently, there are various water related disputes between states because of the vast stretch of rivers. To counter that, Dr. Ambedkar propounded an integrated approach with the objective of optimal utilisation of water resources. Though it was not an easy task for Dr. Ambedkar because, at his time, the Government of Indian Act 1935 had put the subject of water management under the jurisdiction of states. Here, Dr. Ambedkar visualised a greater role of centre and by arguing that, “there has been an absence of positive all-India policy for development of water resources and government of India wishes to take steps to evolve a policy to utilise the water resources for the purpose for which they are made to serve in other countries”. Therefore, Dr. Ambedkar wanted an all-India level policy by rejecting sectarian state-based policies because he considered water as a national heritage which is to be served and protected by the central government for the larger benefit of the entire nation. Such an argument and measures suggested by Dr. Ambedkar even before the independence was ignored by several successive government stemming into an increased numbers of inter-state water/river disputes. Thus, the water and river policy of Dr. Ambedkar, which had foundational impact on the post independent water policies, could also resolve the water dispute if centre takes over this subject into its jurisdiction.

Consequently, Dr. Ambedkar’s tenure as member of Viceroy’s Executive Council from 1942 and as a Law Minister from 1947 onwards can be termed as the foundational period for irrigation, water, electricity and other public work departments which saved the nation from going in the hands of Nehruvian Capitalist clutch. Owing to Dr. Ambedkar, the policies concerning above do contains human, labour, welfare, and right perspectives so that the benefits of economic development could be enjoyed by the all the people. However, it depends on to what extent people and the government have been able to understand and implement Dr. Ambedkar’s thought on agriculture, industrialisation and water resource management.

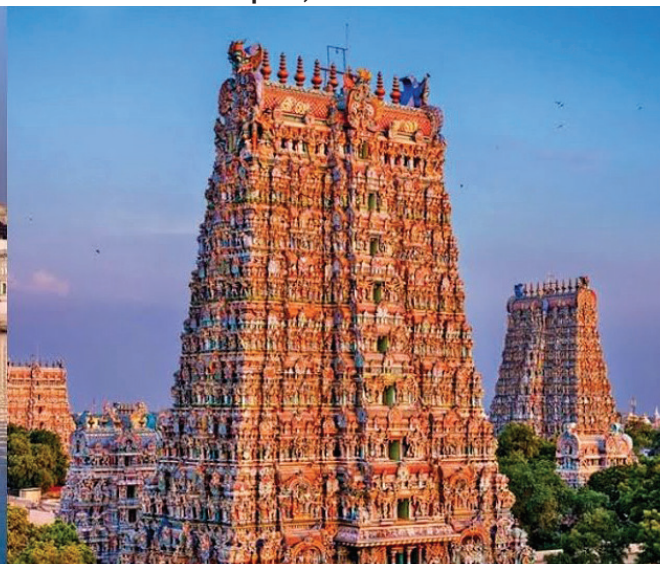
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Golden temple, Amritsar



Meenakshi temple, Madurai



# The pros and cons of a linguistic state

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was in favour of linguistic states. He has explained extensively on the advantages of linguistic states. At the same time, however, he has also feared some of the dangers of the linguistic states. He goes on to say that India will cease to be modern India if it happens. It will be again medieval India, he says. Language can unite the people and divide them, he has said.

“One State, one language” is a universal feature of almost every State. Examine the constitution of Germany, examine the constitution of France, examine the constitution of Italy, examine the constitution of England, and examine the constitution of the U.S.A. “One State, one language” is the rule. Wherever there has been a departure from this rule there has been a danger to the State. The illustration of the mixed States are to be found in the old Austrian Empire and the old Turkish Empire. They were blown up because they were multi-lingual States with all that a multi-lingual State means. India cannot escape this fate if it continues to be a congeries of mixed States. The reasons why a unilingual State is stable and a multi-lingual State unstable are quite obvious. A State is built on fellow-feeling. What is this fellow-feeling? To state briefly it is a feeling of a corporate sentiment of oneness which makes those who are charged with it feel that they are kith and kin. This feeling is a double-edged feeling. It is at once a feeling of fellowship for one’s own kith and kin and anti-fellowship for those who are not one’s own kith and kin. It is a feeling of “consciousness of kind” which on the one hand, binds together those who have it so strongly that it over-rides all differences

arising out of economic conflicts or social gradations and, on the other, severs them from those who are not of their kind. It is a longing not to belong to any other group.

The existence of this fellow-feeling is the foundation of a stable and democratic State. This is one reason why a linguistic State is so essential. But there are other reasons why a State should be unilingual. There are two other reasons why the rule “one State, one language” is necessary. One reason is that democracy cannot work without friction unless there is fellow-feeling among those who constitute the State. Faction fights for leadership and discrimination in administration are factors ever present in a mixed State and are incompatible with democracy.

The present State of Bombay is the best illustration of the failure of democracy in a mixed State. I am amazed at the suggestion made by the States Reorganization Commission that the present Bombay State should be continued as it is to enable us to gain experience of how a mixed State flourishes. With Bombay as a mixed State for the last 20 years, with the intense enmity between the Maharashtrians and Gujaratis, only a thoughtless or an absent-minded



person could put forth such a senseless proposal. The former State of Madras is another illustration of the failure of democracy in a mixed State. The formation of a mixed State of United India and the compulsory division of India into India and Pakistan are other illustrations of the impossibility of having democracy in a mixed State.

Another reason why it is necessary to adopt the rule of "one State, one language" is that it is the only solvent to racial and cultural conflicts.

Why do Tamils hate Andhras and Andhras hate Tamils ? Why do Andhras in Hyderabad hate Maharashtrians and Maharashtrians hate Andhras ? Why do Gujaratis hate Maharashtrians and Maharashtrians hate Gujaratis ? The answer is very simple. It is not because there is any natural antipathy between the two. The hatred is due to the fact that they are put in juxtaposition and forced to take part in a common cycle of participation, such as Government. There is no other answer. So long as this enforced juxtaposition remains, there will be no peace between the two. There will be people who would cite the cases of Canada, Switzerland and South Africa. It is true that these cases of bilingual States exist. But it must not be forgotten that the genius of India is quite different from the genius of Canada, Switzerland and South Africa. The genius of India is to divide—the genius of Switzerland, South Africa and Canada is to unite.

The fact that they have been held together uptil now is not in the natural course of things. It is due to the fact that both of them are bound by the Congress discipline. But how long is the Congress going to last ? The Congress is Pandit Nehru and Pandit Nehru is Congress. But is Pandit Nehru immortal ? Any one who applies his mind to these questions will realize that the Congress will not last till the sun and the moon. It must one day come to an end. It might come to an end even before the next election. When this happens the State of Bombay will find itself engaged in civil war and not in carrying on administration.

We therefore want linguistic States for two reasons. To make easy the way to democracy and to remove racial and cultural tension.

In seeking to create linguistic States India is treading the right road. It is the road which all States have followed. In the case of other linguistic States they have been so, from the very beginning. In the case of India, she has to put herself in the reverse gear to reach the goal. But the road she proposes to travel is well-tried road. It is a road which is followed by other States. Having stated the advantages of a linguistic State I must also set out the dangers of a linguistic State. A linguistic State with its regional language as its official language may easily develop into an independent nationality. The road between an independent nationality and an independent State is very narrow. If this happens, India will cease to be Modern India we have and will become the medieval India consisting of a variety of States

indulging in rivalry and warfare.

This danger is of course inherent in the creation of linguistic States. There is equal danger in not having linguistic States. The former danger a wise and firm statesman can avert. But the dangers of a mixed State are greater and beyond the control of a statesman however eminent. How can this danger be met ? The only way I can think of meeting the danger is to provide in the Constitution that the regional language shall not be the official language of the State. The official language of the State shall be Hindi and until India becomes fit for this purpose English. Will Indians accept this ? If they do not, linguistic States may easily become a peril. One language can unite people. Two languages are sure to divide people. This is an inexorable law. Culture is conserved by language. Since Indians wish to unite and develop a common culture it is the bounden duty of all Indians to own up Hindi as their language.

Any Indian who does not accept this proposal as part and parcel of a linguistic State has no right to be an Indian. He may be a hundred per cent Maharashtrian, a hundred per cent Tamil or a hundred per cent Gujarathi but he cannot be an Indian in the real sense of the word except in a geographical sense. If my suggestion is not accepted India will then cease to be India. It will be a collection of different nationalities engaged in rivalries and wars against one another.

God seems to have laid a heavy curse on India and Indians, saying 'Ye Indians shall always remain divided and ye shall always be slaves !' I was glad that India was separated from Pakistan. I was the philosopher, so to say, of Pakistan. I advocated partition because I felt that it was only by partition that Hindus would not only be independent but free. If India and Pakistan had remained united in one State Hindus though independent would have been at the mercy of the Muslims. A merely independent India would not have been a free India from the point of view of the Hindus. It would have been a Government of one country by two nations and of these two the Muslims without question would have been the ruling race notwithstanding Hindu Mahasabha and Jana Sangh. When the partition took place I felt that God was willing to lift his curse and let India be one, great and prosperous. But I fear that the curse may fall again. For I find that those who are advocating linguistic States have at heart the ideal of making the regional language their official language.

This will be a death knell to the idea of a United India. With regional languages as official languages the ideal to make India one United country and to make Indians, Indians first and Indians last, will vanish. I can do no more than to suggest a way out. It is for Indians to consider it.

*Source : DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR :  
WRITINGS AND SPEECHES, Volume 1. Ministry of  
Social Justice & Empowerment.  
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# Hindu Code Bill : a panacea to social malaise



Through the Hindu Code Bill, Dr. Ambedkar initiated the codification and modification of the numerous branches of the Hindu Law which pertained to the social domain of the society. While doing this he made women as a focal point of reference in shaping the values, beliefs and attitudes in the social domain. It was an attempt to free the women from the domination and violence of coercive traditions. However, Dr. Ambedkar did not stop there. Through the Hindu Code Bill, Dr. Ambedkar extended his political idea with the concerns of social, cultural and economic domains of the life of the women that had the capacity to bring changes in the structure of the society.

## Dr. Neha Singh



There is a very interesting article by Mrs Hannah Sen that reads, "Women have supported the Hindu Code Bill not because it has met all their demands but because they believed that half a loaf is better than none... the Bill replaced the women's limited estate and gave her an effective voice in family matters. The Bill is of vital concern to modern India." This proves that Hindu Code Bill was one of its own kind to interpret, experiment and interplay with the existing social, religious, political and economic structures and institutions. It worked at two levels. First it aimed at the democratisation of the private sphere and two "it saw the conservative opposition as the suspension of the democratic social contract."

From 1916 seminal work titled 'Castes in India: Genesis, Mechanism and Development' to the Hindu Code Bill in 1936, Dr. Ambedkar engaged

himself with the question of women at various occasions. He understood that 'the social' was very important in an individual's life and that none can skip it. However, being pragmatic in his approach, he wanted a framework of a society that was based upon non-discrimination, equality and respect. Inspired by Buddhist ideology, Dr. Ambedkar sought to challenge the existing imbalance in the patriarchal social structure of the society in two ways. One, he wanted development of an individual based upon reason and values who simultaneously shun the orthodox doctrine and dogmas and two he wanted to promote an association to kill the inequalities in the society and consolidate egalitarianism. Thus, "the Hindu Code Bill held a vital importance in accommodating these strong ideas. It tried to weaken the grip of religion from social and other aspects of the society like that of culture and economy."

Through the Hindu Code Bill, Dr. Ambedkar



initiated the codification and modification of the numerous branches of the Hindu Law which pertained to the social domain of the society. While doing this he made women as a focal point of reference in shaping the values, beliefs and attitudes in the social domain. It was an attempt to free the women from the domination and violence of coercive traditions. However, Dr. Ambedkar did not stop there. Through the Hindu Code Bill, Dr. Ambedkar extended his political idea with the concerns of social, cultural and economic domains of the life of the women that had the capacity to bring changes in the structure of the society. He transcended the question of 'the social' domain into the 'political' domain of the society by interrogating about the public-private dichotomy that within the ambit of liberalism sought the innovation of the modern state in the independent India. Probably that was the reason why Dr. Ambedkar was popularly known as the 'Modern Manu.'

"Dr. Ambedkar through Hindu Code Bill designed these rights with the chief objective of eliminating and for abolishing inequalities. The safeguards he contemplated against a possible invasion by the State or the individual was through the judicial power, guided by the due process of law." He was aware of the fact that an effective and efficient political ground could only be set when there is a cultivation of the "...sense of justice and fair play among stronger sections towards the weaker sections of the Indian society." That was the importance he attached to the Hindu Code Bill.

The debates over the gender injustices during the first half of the 20th century in India were mostly confined to the religious reforms in terms of putting a ban on sati and child marriage. By raising voice against the endogamy, dowry and other patriarchal evil practices, Dr. Ambedkar tried to cultivate endosmosis of the social groups/categories. Until then, the rights and representation of women were not the question of politics at all.

For the first time, Dr. Ambedkar considered women as equal human beings who had equal rights as men in the society. Religion and caste acted as the major obstacle to women's rights which sanctioned all the inhuman practices and unequal status which could never be challenged in politics because religion was a matter of social reform and not the concern of politics. The matters of religion, society and family came under the domain of 'the social' category and social reform which was completely segregated from the domain of 'the political'.

Dr. Ambedkar broadened the sphere of the political itself and brought caste and gender questions within the ambit of politics by using a fine blending of Buddhist, Dewey and western political thinking inspired by the French Revolution. He tried to consolidate a democratic social order where through questioning the institutionalised social oppression, he percolated himself in the understanding of the

equation of power and dominance in the patriarchal society and moulded himself towards the action oriented political thinking. He treated an individual as an agent of change and signified "liberation of religion from social entanglement" making religion free to address itself to society; to give (individual) guidance and (collective) orientation.

The Hindu Code Bill provided the pedestal to initiate the modification and codification of the numerous branches of the Hindu law that not only tried to engage with the question of individual's right and representation but also dealt with the structural changes by transience from 'the social' to 'the political.' Thus, in the process of increasing the ambit of politics, Dr. Ambedkar tried to empower the state to perform an interventionist role in opposing the ascriptive traditional hierarchy of the patriarchal system of the society. By doing this, he tried to emancipate women from the oppression by providing them with suffrage and equal rights and representation related to the inheritance, marriage, divorce, property, adoption and others which marks his understanding of the 'political.'

Thus, with the drafting Hindu Code Bill, he transcended the boundary of social and created the horizon of the political to deal with the question of gender based on his egalitarian perspective he laid down rational principles for the future generations to enact laws for gender emancipation. But still, the core patriarchal values which Dr. Ambedkar endeavoured to break through constitutionalising Hindu Code Bill has remained intact to a major extent. The Bill faced vehement opposition not only internally from imminent nationalist leaders but also, by casteist sections of the society as a dishonour to the Hindu society. Despite the deliberations, disagreements and unanimity in parliamentary position viz a viz the discussion on the Hindu Code Bill, there was never really a consensus on the issue of equality of rights so far as women were concerned. This proved to be a major cause of the failure of the Hindu Code Bill.

Moreover, the patriarchal values which could not be annihilated due to the failure of Hindu Code Bill to get passed, has entered into a different sphere and taken even more rigid forms despite implementing the bits and pieces of Hindu Code Bill via different marriage, inheritance and property laws. The fate of Hindu code Bill suffered the same as the provision for separate electorate for depressed classes had suffered. In both these cases, both caste and patriarchy had entered into new forms. Nonetheless, Dr. Ambedkar through his Hindu Code Bill emancipated gender as the sociological category and made it a political category which became a ground for several laws for gender justice to get enacted in post-independence India.

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# Dr. Ambedkar : leader with firm roots in Indian soil



In his book “Buddha or Karl Marx”, Dr. Ambedkar rejects Communism or Karl Marx saying that there was no place for dictatorship, and violence in Buddha’s philosophy. He never agreed with the economic ideology of Communism. He was of the view that the aim of Communism was to make the pigs fatter. He insisted that human beings are not like pigs and argued that spiritual development was equally important along with physical development. He formed a separate political party with the same view as he was more eager to find the solution to the problems of Dalits and to protect their interests. He was more interested in the solutions, which have their roots in Indian soil.

## Dr. Kismat Kumar

In the current scenario, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s life, background of his work, struggles, and their solutions need to be studied in a special light. In 1935, Babasaheb announced “ I don’t want to die as a Hindu”. People interpreted this remark with their own perception. A lot of people took it directly as conversion. The topic of discussion seems to be that Dr. Ambedkar was going to change his religion. What does Dr. Ambedkar mean by Hindu? Was he referring to social ethics, customs and traditions? Does he mean freedom from slavery of upper caste people? It is difficult to differentiate all these angles. But it is very clear that he started a fight against the whole Indian society. It is because of his fight against the Indian society that his thoughts on nationalism do not get much required attention.

Nation has seen many social reformers who

started social protests or reforms against such rituals. As Dr. Ambedkar, these reformers also tried to end such rituals and bring change in the society. People named them as social reformers but in Dr. Ambedkar’s case he is mostly considered as a Dalit leader. It creates doubts about his work. Dr. Ambedkar's statement about nationalism shows his great personality. When asked about Nationalism he once said “ Instead of imbibing we are Indians first then Muslim, Sindhi and Kannada, we should imbibe the feeling that we are Indians firstly and lastly. It means Dr. Ambedkar’s vision was also centred on a nation first.

Dr. Ambedkar rejects the path of Islam and Christianity as he saw them as foreign inspirations. For the same reason, he rejected Communism also. He considered to follow the path of the Khalsa Panth or Tathagata Buddha of the Dasguru tradition as they had Indian origin. Keen observation of the Buddha religion also made him to understand the



regional groups and caste discriminatory systems. From 1935 to 1956, a period of 21 years, he vividly studied and tried to understand options as to how Hindu religion can be emancipated from the upper castes and make it flawless.

Dr. Ambedkar shared this pain in strong and rigorous words in the period of 1937 to 1951. But he refrained himself from taking any final decision and focused more to get empowerment to his movement against the backdrop of political scenario. He tried to find a solution to this problem in active politics. For Dr. Ambedkar, untouchables were suffering because of the mental illness of Savarna Hindus. He organized the movement and tried to steer it in the proper direction. In all this journey, Dr. Ambedkar emerged as a great social reformer as well as a matured politician and philosopher.

In fact, Dr. Ambedkar must have closely studied the situations at the time of the Russian Revolution in 1917 when he was young. He presented a logical and factful research essay in Columbia University in 1916 on the issue. His argument 20 years later – that is in 1936 – was the same when he called upon abolishing caste to strengthen Indian society. Considering his vision, it is difficult to believe that he was not aware or ignorant about the socio-political, economic and cultural happenings on the world stage. It is for this reason that he did not enter into the elusive trap of Communists, which greatly influenced the contemporary period. It was very easy that the Indian oppressed class might have entered the Communist trap considering all the background. But Dr. Ambedkar led the movement as a mature leader and thereby prevented this class from getting influenced by Communism.

In his book “Buddha or Karl Marx”, Dr. Ambedkar rejects Communism or Karl Marx saying that there was no place for dictatorship, and violence in Buddha’s philosophy. He never agreed with the economic ideology of Communism. He was of the view that the aim of Communism was to make the pigs fatter. He insisted that human beings are not like pigs and argued that spiritual development was equally important along with physical development.

He formed a separate political party with the same view as he was more eager to find the solution to the problems of Dalits and to protect their interests. He was more interested in the solutions, which have their roots in Indian soil. He was of the firm view that Communists should not see Indian Dalits to spread their ideology and expand their wings. Formation of a separate political party by Dr. Ambedkar is evidence of his thought process. Expressing his apprehension, Dr. Ambedkar says, “Between scheduled castes and communism, Ambedkar is the barrier and between caste Hindus and communism Mr. M.S.Golwalkar (the then Head of RSS) is the barrier.”

As a result, he decides to walk on the path shown by Buddha. The path of Buddha is also considered

most suitable from the point of view of Indian or Hindu society. Dr. Ambedkar says that other paths or beliefs prevalent in India care more about the life after death than the life they are living. The main reason for getting their rituals done is to improve the life after death. They consider this world to be an illusion anyway. But Buddha is special because he thinks about this world and not the other world. Talking about beautifying this world, he seems special and practical than other ways.

By choosing the path of Buddha, one thing also comes to mind that Dr. Ambedkar gives priority to ending the evil practices in the name of religion in the society by following the religion-based system itself. The life of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was influenced by the three gurus Tathagata Buddha, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Sant Kabir. All three of them were the pioneers of bringing the society



out of the deep trenches of casteist division or mental divisiveness in Indian or Hindu society in their respective periods. All three were the symbols of spirituality for the entire society. After this, in order to carry forward this responsibility, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar presents himself to the Indian society to drink the poison that is caused by the contagious disease of untouchability. And after this Dr. Ambedkar seems to be directing the society in his multi-faceted way. The need is to stand on the same ground and understand him. By following the Sanyasi tradition, Dr. Ambedkar submitted himself to Buddha and dedicated the divine energy existing inside and out for the bright future of India. Dr. Ambedkar, by adopting the path of Buddha, made a permanent arrangement to avoid inequality, hatred arising out of inequality and that the untouchable brothers should not move away from the idea arising from the Indian soil. After all, Indian soil brings oneness, affection and cohesiveness among all of us.

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The journey from Mooknayak to Prabuddha Bharat reflects Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's journey in cultural, social and political walks of life. The journey also manifest evolution of Dr. Ambedkar's thought process.



# Journalism, a tool of social renaissance for Dr. Ambedkar

Pankaj



Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was born on April 14, 1881 as 14th child of Bhimabai and Ramji Sakpal at Mhow, near Indore in the Central Province, now Madhya Pradesh. His early life was full of struggle. Thanks to assistance by the King of Vadodara Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad, he went to USA for higher education but he could never overlook the inequalities that Indian society had due to centuries of slavery. While reflecting on this, he realised that newspaper was the most powerful tool to discuss ways to achieve progress in future. This realisation came in the beginning of the 20th century, at a time when Lokmanya Tilak was underlining the need of newspapers functioning as a watchdog, night patrolman and the streetlights that illuminate the roads at night.

Early 20th century, a turbulent era of the World War I, intense agitation against the British rule in India, impact of the Russian work's revolution on Hindi newspapers and Indian life, emergence of Lokmanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi in Indian politics and freedom struggle. Newspapers like Kesari, Kaal, Sandesh, Desh Sevak were influencing public opinion. Hindi newspapers were opposing partition of Bengal to the hilt. Thus, newspapers were playing an important role in building public opinion in favour of political independence and social reforms. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's journalism began on this backdrop. He spent 37 years of his lifespan from 1920 till 1956 as a journalist, writing and publishing five newspapers including Mooknayak (1920), Bahishkrut Bharat (1927), Janata (1930) which was later renamed

as Prabuddha Bharat (1956) and Samata fortnightly which was started as mouthpiece of samaj samata sangh in 1928 and in which Dr. Ambedkar wrote in his capacity as President of Samaj Samta Sangh. Thus, Dr. Ambedkar led people of outcasted India to awakened India and gave a new identity to Marathi Dalit newspapers of Maharashtra.

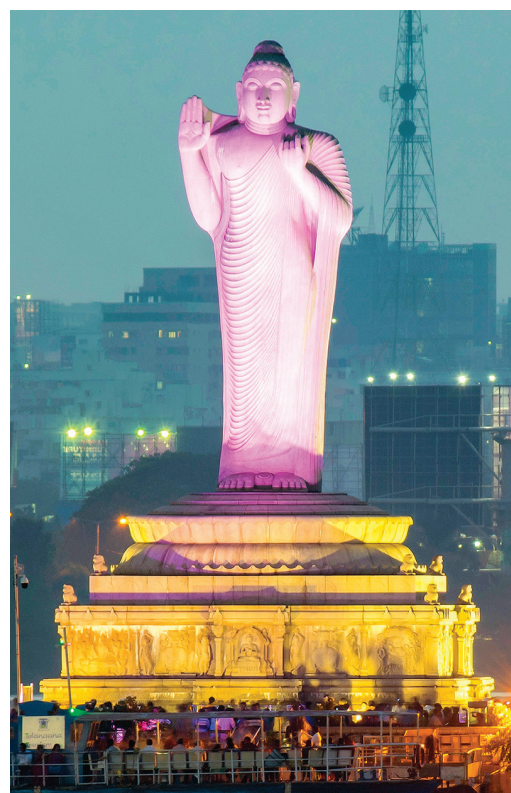
Initially, he would send his articles to English newspapers for publication. He made his mark by putting forth his point of view on an important issue. Sir Pherozeshah passed out at Mumbai in 1915. Proposal to install his statue in front of Bombay Municipal Corporation was tabled. When this came to the notice of Dr. Ambedkar, he wrote underlining to set up a huge library in the name of Sir Pherozeshah to ensure that people will remember his sacrifice and dedication to the nation eternally. He argued that libraries play important role in intellectual and social progress of any country and setting up a library in memory of Sir Pherozeshah will inspire future generations.

Many newspapers were being published in Maharashtra in those days, but Dr. Ambedkar felt none of them treated issues of untouchables with due importance and prominence. Therefore, he started Mooknayak fortnightly in Mumbai on January 31, 1920 to voice the opinions of people whose voice was unheard for centuries. Since he himself was working with the Sydenham College, Pandurang Nandaram Bhatkar, a member of Dalit community was made its editor in a great leap towards social reforms. Despite short span, Mooknayak awaked the hopes of Dalit towards social justice and rights of equality. Bahishkrut Bharat displayed its sensitivity towards the literature of Sants by (On page 20)



# Hyderabad as second capital

Dr. Ambedkar was a visionary leader in the sense that he did not merely address and analyse contemporary issues but also foresee some other problems. They include several issues like women, education, development of India, delimitation, central funds, population control and the divide between North and South. National integration was always the core point for Dr. Ambedkar. He has specifically thought about the divide between South and North and has given a solution as well. Here we reproduce his thoughts. He has suggested Hyderabad as second capital.



Can India afford to have one Capital? That India has now one capital does not close the question. If the Capital of India is not satisfactorily located, now is the time for considering the question. Since the departure of the British, India has had only one capital and that is Delhi. Before the British, India has always had two capitals. During the Mughal period, India had Delhi as one Capital and Shrinagar in Kashmir as another Capital. When the British came, they too had two capitals, one was Calcutta and another was Simla. Even when they left Calcutta for Delhi, they retained Simla as their summer Capital.

The two capitals maintained by the Moghuls and by the British were the results of climatic conditions. Neither the British nor the Moghuls were able to live in Delhi or in Calcutta continuously for 12 months. The summer months in Delhi were unbearable to the Moghuls. They made Shrinagar their second capital for summer months. The summer months in Calcutta were equally unbearable to the British. They, therefore, established a second capital. To these climatic conditions must now be added three other conditions. There was no popular Government when the Moghuls ruled or when the British ruled. Now we have a popular Government and the convenience of the people is an important factor.

Delhi is most inconvenient to the people of the South. They suffer the most from cold as well as distance. Even the Northern people suffer in the summer months. They do not complain because they are nearer home and they are nearer the seat of

power. Second is the feeling of the Southern people and the third is the consideration of Defence. The feeling of the Southern people is that the Capital of their Country is far away from them and that they are being ruled by the people of Northern India. The third consideration is of course more important. It is that Delhi is a vulnerable place. It is within bombing distance of the neighbouring countries. Although India is trying to live in peace with its neighbours it cannot be assumed that India will not have to face war sometime or other and if war comes, the Government of India will have to leave Delhi and find another place for its location. Which is the place to which the Government of India can migrate? A place that one can think of is Calcutta. But Calcutta is also within bombing distance from Tibet. Although India and China today are friends, how long the friendship would last no one can definitely say. The possibility of conflict between India and China remains. In that event Calcutta would be useless.

The next town that could be considered as a refuge for the Central Government is Bombay. But Bombay is a port and our Indian Navy is too poor to protect the Central Government if it came down to Bombay. Is there a fourth place one could think of? I find Hyderabad to be such a place. Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Bolarum should be constituted into a Chief Commissioner's Province and made a second capital of India. Hyderabad fulfils all the requirements of a capital for India. Hyderabad is equidistant to all States. (On page 20)



# Journalism...

(From page 18) publishing lines of Sant Literature. Launch of Mooknayak and Bahishkrut Bharat was followed by publication of Janata to awaken the Dalits to struggle for their betterment. Janata became a stage to raise fundamental questions about issues relating to social conditions and education as well as to express comprehensive thoughts about religious conversion. Dr. Ambedkar wanted to continue publishing it for a long time and to expand it to a large scale for its independence and to encourage political struggle. Janata newspaper continued for almost 25 years, with a few breaks and was later renamed as Prabuddha Bharat on February 4, 1956. After the death of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, an editorial board was constituted to run it. The newspaper was closed in 1961.

The journey from Mooknayak to Prabuddha Bharat reflects Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's journey in cultural, social and political walks of life. These publications were the social need of the time. They provided comprehensive point of view on the contemporary agitations being staged, incidents happening and reforms taking place. These publications moulded public opinion and gave a new vision, a new understanding to the people of the society which lacked self-realisation and grappled in the darkness. This work did not remain restricted to only the untouchables but encompassed the entire Hindu community. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar strived to create a new social order through social reforms and transformation for which articles published in his newspapers proved to be a powerful tool. These publications published reports, articles and editorials that gave a new direction, a new vision to the society. These articles would be of Dalit as well as non-Dalit writers. Instead of focussing merely on the issues faced by the untouchables, these articles would comment on social, economic and social downfall of entire Hindu community and propagate social

reforms. Dr. Ambedkar's writing would provide a glimpse of his rebellious personality besides rightly portraying him as a self-conscious, rational, thinker, critic and a social leader. Not many people are aware that Dr. Ambedkar would be given sound publicity in foreign media too. Many reputed international newspapers including The Times of London, Daily Mercury of Australia, New York, Amsterdam News, Baltimore Afro American, The Norfolk Journal etc. showed keen interest in Dr. Ambedkar's campaign against untouchability and his differences with Mahatma Gandhi. These newspapers gave wide publicity to Dr. Ambedkar's opinions, reports and his campaigns. Besides, several newspapers run by non-whites in USA used to publish Dr. Ambedkar's thoughts prominently. Be it Dr. Ambedkar's role in drafting the Constitution of India or his speeches during parliamentary debates or reports about his resignation from Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet, the world watched it all carefully.

Thus, although their nature and circulation were not like the mainstream publications, publications of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar played a vital role in making public aware about his thoughts on rebuilding the society and cultural, religious and political reforms. This helped in creating an awakening in the society that remained oppressed for centuries. By and large throughout his life his journalism was in local language-to spread the idea of renaissance among the localities, despite a reputed lawyer and economist his papers suffered from financial crisis, he never used his any of his news paper as a source of income, it was purely meant for the Indian society, to abolish social indiscrimination, to establish harmony. In conclusion, his journalism was not only confined up to untouchable, but in broad sense it was for great motherland Bharat. That's why in his speech once he told in starting & in last "first i am Indian".

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# Hyderabad...

(From page 19) From the defence point of view, it would give safety to the Central Government. It is equidistant from all parts of India. It would give satisfaction to the South Indian people that their government is sometimes with them. The Government may remain in Delhi during winter months and during other months it can stay in Hyderabad. Hyderabad has all the amenities which Delhi has and it is a far better city than Delhi. It has all the grandeur which Delhi has. Buildings are going cheap and they are really beautiful buildings, far superior to those in Delhi. They are all on sale. The only thing that is wanting is a Parliament House which the Government of India can easily build. It is

a place in which Parliament can sit all the year round and work, which it cannot do in Delhi. I do not see what objection there can be in making Hyderabad a second capital of India. It should be done right now while we are reorganising the States. Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Bolarum should be constituted into a second capital of India. Fortunately, it can be very easily done with satisfaction to the whole of South India, to Maharashtra and to the Andhra's. This is another remedy for easing the tension between the North and the South.

*Source : DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR : WRITINGS AND SPEECHES, Volume 1. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.  
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# Shravasti : Buddha spent rainy seasons

Dr. Manjiri Bhalerao

Shravasti, situated on the bank of the Achiravati (modern Rapti), was the capital of the kingdom of Kosala in ancient times. Today it is the district headquarter of the same name. It is located very strategically on the trade route going to various important trade centres of the Indian subcontinent including Nepal. All the ancient literary sources unanimously record that Shravasti was a great prosperous urban centre of ancient India. Ancient Buddhist, Hindu and Jain literature and even the accounts of the foreign travellers have given vivid descriptions of Shravasti.

In the Buddhist context, it is considered as one of the most favourite places of the Buddha as he had spent around 29 of his rainy seasons (Varshavasa) at this place. He is said to have performed many miracles in Shravasti. A monastery was constructed at this place by a devout lay follower Sudatta, who was famous by the name Anathapindika.

Shravasti, although, is extremely famous in the literary source, did not retain its name in the oral tradition. When the town of Shravasti was searched for, researchers proposed that the site of Sahet – Mahet should be considered as the ancient city of Shravasti because of the habitation remains there and the huge fortification walls around the towns. In the Buddhist literature, the miracles of the Buddha that he had performed here, have been described in detail.

The most famous of them are the Yamakapratiharya (i.e. the twin miracle) and Mahapratiharya the miracle of the thousand Buddhas. When the Buddha was challenged by the rival teachers to perform a miracle, he accepted the challenge and declared that he will perform the miracle on the full moon day of the Ashadh month under a mango tree. Hearing this all the mango trees in the vicinity were cut by the rival teachers. But on the full moon day, a gardener found a mango fruit and offered it to the Buddha.

Buddha ate the fruit and buried the seed in the ground and washed his hands. Immediately, a new tree grew up. He then created fire from the upper

part of his body and water from the lower part of his body, later he switched them. Later on, he appeared in multiple forms, generally called as 'the Miracle of Thousand Buddhas'. As these miracles were performed at Shravasti, it became a very important pilgrim place.

Shravasti is also famous for the Jetavanavihara, donated by Anathapindika. Even though his name was Sudatta, he was famous as Anathapindika as he used to give food (Pinda) to the homeless (Anatha). He was a very generous merchant of Shravasti. He was a great devotee of the Buddha too. He wanted to construct a vihara for the Buddhist monastic order in Shravasti. Hence he requested the Buddha to choose the land for the same. Buddha chose the location of a garden, known as the Jetavana, outside the city. It was owned by the prince Jeta. When Anathapindika contacted Prince Jeta for the purchase of the land and the price for the same, Jeta told him to cover the selected area with gold coins and that was the price of the land. Anathapindika did that and constructed a beautiful monastic establishment.

As the Buddha stayed there, it became famous as the Mulagandhakuti or Gandhakuti. The Buddhist art has given a lot of importance to these three events in the life of the Buddha

i.e. the two miracles and the donation of the Jetavanarama. The events are depicted at many stupa sites like Bharhut, Amaravati, Kanaganahalli and also in the Gandhara region i.e. in modern Pakistan.

The excavations carried out at both Sahet and Mahet have revealed various structures, starting from third century B.C. Some of them are believed to be the part of the Jetavana-arama. Along with these ruins, the site also revealed the remains of a few stupas, viharas, images with inscriptions, chaitya complex constructed there over the period of more than 1000 years i.e. till 13th century A.D. Today also it is a very significant pilgrim and tourist place. Numerous pilgrims visit these places to offer their homage to the Buddha as well as Anathapindika.

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# SSF INITIATIVE

Social Studies Foundation (SSF), Pune and Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy School of Social Sciences Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi have jointly organized a two-days seminar on Marginalisation and Social Inclusion: The cultivation of Indian Social Cultural thought. The seminar has been organized on the occasion of birth anniversary of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar on April 13 and 14, 2022. This is the concept note of the seminar.

The Indian society, culture and history encompasses varieties of thought traditions. The ancient thought had two major strands, sanatan and shramanik. The larger philosophical premises of these traditions was to enter into the deep metaphysical and transcendental realm of the existence, being, self and the super self or cosmos. Interestingly, the deep insight of these traditions could not prevent them to deliberate on the day-to-day practical life-worlds. In fact, the gist or the telos of their philosophical inwardness helped to produce thoughts on the practical courses for all beings. The thoughts of Vedic and Buddhist and Jaina Shramanik thinkers, Gautama (the Buddha), Mahavir Jaina, Charvaka, Nagarjuna, Brihaspati, Vedvyasa, Kumarila, and many more ancient intellectuals provides a gamut of thoughts not only on the greater discourses of life and after life, but mainly they provide how to create an environment of osmosis, sahanvatu (togetherness), inclusive society, just and welfare for all beings including humans. With the coming of Bhakti, there was an emergence of new reformist Indian thought traditions that had started since 12th century AD. The great saints such as Kabir, Ravidas, Raheem, Meera, Raskhan, Nanak, Chokhamela, Tukaram etc. taught the values of life and revolutionised the relationship between human and the God. They provide the philosophy of immediacy and removes all ritualism and mediators between the devotee and the God.

Their other central concern was to create an all-inclusive society without any discrimination. The Bhakti movement, in India, was birthed by the urge to disassemble the rigid, orthodox and fractionated society that flourished under the shelter of the caste system. The Bhakti leaders manifested their will in forms of songs and literary pieces. Their aim was to propagate a more fulfilling method of worship that was inclusive of the underbelly of Indian society. They emphasised absolute surrender to God, one's direct connection to the supreme being without any intermediary, and an egalitarian society. Started by Basavanna in the 12th century, Bhakti movement still continues as an evolved phenomena today.

The literature that came out of the Bhakti saints challenged the societal norms of their times and wanted to bring about a change in the way society treated its vulnerable groups who were supposedly 'lowborns'. It was a threat to caste hierarchy and a conscious effort to broaden the social fabric. In Maharashtra, Bhakti leaders like Tukaram, a Shudra by caste, wrote on religious matters in Marathi—the language of the people. The rebellion became intersectional. With the writer being a Shudra, the orthodoxy was challenged, while the language broke the barrier of Sanskrit writings. There were others like Mirabai, who challenged the patriarchal norms by devoting herself to Krishna while fighting her family for the same, Guru Nanak, who founded Sikhism, a syncretic religion that preached devotion devoid of ritualism, Kabir, whose songs appealed to the poor due to its practise of worshipping one god and even attaining salvation without any help from the upper caste. The Bhakti Movement was aimed at social regeneration and was a way of celebrating the people from the periphery.

Another paradigm in history of Indian thought on marginality and inclusiveness comes with the arrival of modern times. The thinkers such as Dayanand Sarasvati, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Jyotiba Phule, Savitribai Phule, Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, Ram Krishna Paramhansa, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, M. K. Gandhi, V. D. Savarkar, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Ram Manohar Lohia etc. transformed the thought tradition of India in many ways. The modern Indian thinkers were not much engaged with the deeper questions of divinity and transcendence except Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Gandhi and Tagore, but all of them were concerned about the contemporary problem of society which was marginality and social inclusion. Having a great thought tradition on social inclusion since from ancient (Vedic), Bhakti and post bhakti period, these two days national seminar endeavours to not only revisit the social and cultural thoughts of the great thinkers of India but also explores various other less known thinkers who have contributed to idea and practice of social inclusion.

# Journey so far...



**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 APRIL 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 1

A tribute to the true hero - the 'Mooknayak' who relentlessly fought for the rights and welfare of those, who's voices were not heard since times historic.

14th April 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 MAY 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 2

14th May 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 JUNE 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 3

Year long COVID lockdown has severely added to woes of underprivileged people across the country. Unheard voices called to people to understand their sufferings and hardships. The cover story throws light on the loss of job opportunities, migration and fights to live. COVID lockdown has made them further anxious and insecure.

14th June 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 JULY 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 4

New policy  
New horizon

14th July 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 AUGUST 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 5-6

Silent Contributors of Modern India

14th August-September 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 OCTOBER 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 7

Dikshabhoomi :  
A source of inspiration

14th October 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 NOVEMBER 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 8

Constitution Day

14th November 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 DECEMBER 2021 | Year 1 | Vol. 9

"PADMA" FOR DEPRIVED

14th December 2021

**UNHEARD VOICES**  
14 JANUARY 2022 | Year 1 | Vol. 10

370

JK Ladakh

14th January 2022



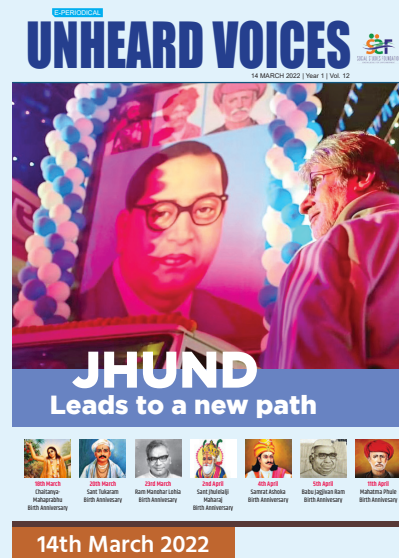
# Looking back

The kind of thoughts that Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had given in the first issue of Mooknayak in 1920 was like this, "There is no better source than newspaper to suggest remedy against the injustice being done to our people at present and also to discuss the ways and means of our progress in future." The first issue of UNHEARD VOICES was published on the birth anniversary of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, 2021, with the same objective.

The first issue of UNHEARD VOICES was published amidst the Covid pandemic, but we had resolved to continue with our mission despite major and minor hurdles. We have successfully executed our commitment to publish UNHEARD VOICES on the 14th day of every month in the past year.

We have tried to raise and write a range of issues of the deprived class during this period. We have successfully covered topics from various states with the help of well-wishers. Let us take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all our well-wishers. We have also published articles that were not directly related to India on a few occasions. But we did this to have a better understanding of human nature and suffering.

While raising the voice of the people, who are unheard of, we were cautious about publishing some success stories. The objective is very simple. We seriously believe that deprived people, particularly youths, have to have models or icons to bring themselves out of the clutches of social ills. For this purpose, we have been publishing stories



of couple who have inter-caste marriages. We believe that inter-caste marriage is a big step toward social cohesiveness. Similarly, we also published stories of those people of deprived people who had significant achievements on their accounts.

Stories on Rekhaben Parmar of Gujarat, Baban Rawatji of National Commission for Safai Karmacharis, National Commission for Scheduled Caste member Dr. Anju Bala, Australia based film producer, and director Girish Makwana, Aishwarya Chikte, studying at the London School of Economics and former chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Caste Vijay Sampala, were published in the past one year.

We published a special issue on August 15 on the occasion of independence day. We have published the contribution of a few deprived who were probably unknown to the people. They include the people from politics to movies and sports to academicians. In the same issue, we published the interview of K.G.Balkirshanan, who was the first Dalit Chief Justice of India.

UNHEARD VOICES is also closely looking at developments in contemporary issues, and we published articles on a variety of fields like art, culture, literature, and cinema. Article on

Jhund, produced and directed by Nagraj Manjule, can be cited as an example. Jhund articles receive good appreciation from the readers. At the same time, we published articles on Savitribai Phule and V.D. Savarkar as well.

Social Studies Foundation, which publishes UNHEARD VOICES, has a motto of – Knowledge for Empowerment – We do not believe in ideological untouchability and believe only in the power of knowledge. Therefore, we are trying to motivate the readers by putting the issues on a bigger canvas.

We are yet to return to normalcy as COVID is still showing direct and indirect signs of its existence. But deprived people – may be socially or economically – were the worst affected people because of the Covid pandemic. Keeping this in mind, we published a series of articles in June last year on their woes. We wrote on issues like migration, economic suffering, the treatment being given by the people, and how Covid made their lives more miserable.

Dr. Ambedkar's message was: Educate, Unite and agitate. We worked in this direction and will continue to walk the same path. We once again express our gratitude to all readers and well-wishers who support us in our mission.