Democracy has become the most popular form of Government in all over the world because it is the pattern of Government in which people have their say. They get the opportunity to choose their representatives by casting votes. They have rights and liberties and even can change the Government in the next elections if they are not satisfied with the performance of the Government as we see in India which is the largest democracy of the world. So the Government in democratic states is accountable to the people. The Government has to work for the welfare of the people. It provides social and economic justice to the people without any discrimination.

India after independence became the democratic state and first general elections after independence were held in 1951. Our leaders had to go through a long struggle and many had sacrificed their lives before we got independent. Even before independence the leaders of our country wanted to adopt the Democratic set up, as we had been suffering with slavery and humiliation for a long time. The people of India had been deprived of rights and liberties. But leaders like Dr. Ambedkar who was popularly known as ‘Masiha of Dalits’ perhaps realized that western pattern of democracy was not suitable for India because in Indian society there were many social evils and worst evil was the caste system. That’s why he emphasized that before becoming independent from the British rule we must get independence from this evil otherwise the Dalits will have to suffer from the slavery in the hands of upper caste even after independence. So Dr. Ambedkar said that we should work on social and economic democracy before getting Political Democracy. Because for democracy we need three pillars i.e. equality, rights, liberties. Democracy nearly fails in the absence of any one of the three pillars. All the people must be provided equal opportunities to grow. “By Democracy Dr. Ambedkar refers to fundamental changes in the social and economic life of the people and the acceptance of those changes by the people without resorting to disputes and bloodshed. He desired to remove the contradictions created by economic and social inequalities.” (Bakshi,2000,pg.47). But in India we can see that there are gross inequalities between rich and poor and between lower and higher castes. Dr. Ambedkar wanted to bring the equality not only in political but also in social and economic life of the people. Because he knew that there is no meaning of political democracy without economic and social democracy.

**SOCIO- ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY AND AMBEDKAR’S VIEWS**

Social Democracy could be established through Social reforms as Indian society was polluted by a number of social evils like pardapraatha, dowry system, sati pratha, female feticide etc. but the biggest evil that persist at present also was untouchability based upon the caste system. The untouchables were not allowed to drink water from public wells, were barred from entering into the temples, they were socially, economically and also politically discriminated and humiliated had to face atrocities by the upper castes. Such situations were against the social and economic democracy. So Dr. Ambedkar was of the view that political democracy cannot become successful until the social and economic democracy is established. “Political democracy means the principle of ‘one man one vote’ which indicates political equality. But if oppression and injustice exist, the spirit of economic democracy would be missing.” (Jaiswal, 2012). That means social and economic democracies are equally important.

“The reason why Dr. Ambedkar was adverse to joining the Indian National Congress is that its leaders did not realize the significance of social reforms. There were no programmes to improve the status of untouchables”(Bakshi,2000,pg.48). The basis of society must be on the principle of equality because without equality there will be no justice and hence no success of democracy. In the country like India that is full of diversities, people must be given equal opportunities to grow but inequality has become an established feature of Indian society where people belonging to lower castes are discriminated and humiliated in all the spheres of life on the basis of caste. Dr. Ambedkar while speaking in Pune on “Conditions precedent for the successful working of Democracy” emphasized that “The first condition which I think is a condition
precedent for the successful working of democracy is that there must be no glaring inequalities in the society.” (Bakshi, 2000, P:48)

Ambedkar’s thoughts are relevant at present also. Social tensions, caste conflicts, atrocities on lower caste people, discrimination and humiliation on the basis of caste, are still continue. He thought of an ideal society based on equality. Ambedkar’s aim was to cherish the goal of political, economic and social equality in Indian society.

But until and unless the caste system is abolished from our society we cannot think of an egalitarian society because it is the root cause of social inequality and injustice. He advocates that the people in society must support inter-caste marriages and they should interdine with each other without considering one’s caste. That is why Dr. Ambedkar was of the view that caste system must be annihilated from Indian society only then we can think of a society that will be based on equality and justice, so caste system is the biggest hindrance in the way of the establishment of social and economic democracy. It is totally against the ideals of social solidarity, liberty, equality, justice and fraternity in consonance with the principle of democracy.

**PROVISIONS IN THE CONSTITUTION AND ITS REALITY**

Assuming the importance of socio-economic democracy Dr. B.R. Ambedkar enshrined the Directive Principles of State Policy in part IV of the Indian Constitution because he himself had experienced the discrimination and humiliation for being an untouchable. He wanted to provide all rights and liberties to the lower caste people of his country so that they could lead an honorable life and have human dignity in an Independent India. So in the form of DPSP directions were given to the future Governments to establish socio-economic democracy and justice for all the people of the Nation without any discrimination. Thus for a just society Baba Saheb inserted these principles in the constitution.

Speaking in the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Ambedkar had categorically said that the Directive Principles were not intended to be merepious declarations. They were instead in the nature of an instrument of instructions and whoever capture power will have to respect these” Article 37 declares that the Directive Principles are “fundamental in the governance of the country and that it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws” (Kashyap, 2001, pg.152). These directives in the form of instructions were given to the future Governments to implement so that the socio-economic democracy may be established along with the political democracy. The following Directive Principles inserted in the part IV, Article 36-51 of the Indian Constitution shows Dr. Ambedkar’s efforts towards this aim:

**Article 38(1):** The state shall endeavour to secure a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people.

**Article 38(2):** The state shall, in particular, strive to minimize the inequalities in income and endeavors to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations.

**Article 39(a):** The state shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the citizens, men and women have the right to an adequate means of livelihood;

(b): that the ownership and control of material resources of the community are so distributed as best to serve the common good;

(c): that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment;

(d): that there is equal pay for equal work for both men and women;

(e): that the health and strength of workers men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and the citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter a vocation unsuited to their age or strength;

(f): that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

**Article 39(A):** The state shall strive to provide equal justice and free legal aid to the poor.

**Article 41:** The state shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.

The state shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions for work and for maternity relief.

**Article 45:** The state shall endeavor to provide within the period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.

**Article 46:** The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of people and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.
Article-47: There will be the duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health.

But the facts are totally against these provisions. The facts reveal the sad stories of inequalities in the country and these inequalities are widening day by day. Like in agriculture, the holding of land is limited to very few groups of people or castes. The lower castes and scheduled tribes are nearly landless. The number of suicides by the farmers & agricultural laborers in rural India and particularly in Punjab is increasing day by day. The technology in agriculture has remained the same. The new modes of farming have led to the huge loss due to increase in costs. “The rural borrowers have been depending upon institutional sources for production/investment credit requirements. But for consumption credit needs, these people are forced to go to non-institutional resources for which they have to pay a high rate of interest. The rural financial services have mostly been controlled by rich farmers, who are able to use their large endowment base and influence within the local power structure to secure loans at very advantageous terms. The marginal, small semi-medium farmers and agricultural laborers have almost been excluded from these financial services because they are not considered creditworthy.” (EPW, Feb 11, 2017, Vol. L11 No.6)

Dr. Ambedkar gave suggestions for solving agriculture problems like collective farming, economic holding of land, or equal distribution of land, large scale industrialization, provision of money, water, seeds and fertilizers by the Government, cultivation of waste land by allotting waste land to landless labor, minimum wages to laborers, control and regulation of private lenders of loan to farmers. (Gagandeep Singh, 2016). But the upper caste people are owning most of the land & only 1% of dalits have land holding in the country against the 17% of total population. The laborers are not paid adequate wages. Even at most of the places women are paid less than men infringing Article 39(d). The article published in Tribune on 4th December 2017 indicated that about 77% of agricultural laborers committed suicide due to indebtedness.

Dr. Ambedkar said that democracy is essential for providing justice to the people but in our Indian society even after so many years of independence, and besides the constitutional provisions, the concept of social justice has become only a showpiece in the Constitution or books. Baba Saheb talked about equality in Law and Administration but it seems that legal rights and justice has become a play toy for rich only. The poor people hesitate even to file a FIR or fight for justice.

“Ambedkar had warned at the end of the Constituent Assembly debates that India was about to enter a life of contradictions. In Politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality.” In his view, the failure to redistribute landed wealth in India would put “Our democracy in peril” (Stuart Corbridge, 2009, p.5)

Keeping in view the importance of socio-economic democracy in India, President Ram Nath Kovind in ‘Economic Democracy Conclave’ on 14th January, 2018 said “it is very important for our country and society to strengthen economic democracy through entrepreneurship. President said that political democracy cannot be strong in the absence of economic & social democracy. Improvement in the economic condition of deprived sections is imperative.” According to Baba Saheb Ambedkar unity among different communities irrespective of caste and religion is very necessary for the success of democracy. He said that caste is a notion; it is a state of mind. The destruction of caste does not mean the destruction of a physical barrier while giving the answer to the question of Dewey who embody this state of mind evil or had intentioned he said “To get the unity in purpose and mental attitude denoted by a democratic state of affairs, Ambedkar’s advice was to abandon the shastras and other constituent materials that make up Hinduism. In other words, the path towards democracy lies in renunciation of Hinduism and a conversion to a more beneficial (and as of yet unspecified) religious orientation.” (Scott R. Stroud, P.8) The Hindus are not evils or inhuman rather they are fundamental in terms of their religion. The Hindus observe caste due to their religiousness. Caste system is based on their Shastras. So Hindu religion itself is wrong and not the Hindus. Dr. Ambedkar had analyzed that the basis of the caste system are Hindu shastras and samritis and until and unless they are abolished, caste will remain in Indian society. He concluded that the hindus are not going to abandon their shastras in near future. That is why he ultimately converted to Buddhism. During the Yeola conference, Nashik in 1935 he announced “I will not die a Hindu” on 14 October 1956 Dr. Ambedkar converted to Budha religion.

The recent study by Ishan Anand & Anjana Thampi reveals that the lopsided policies of the Government have caused the continuous growth of economic inequality in India. The survey data of the study shows the greater concentration of wealth with the top 10%, particularly after 2002 (EPW, Dec 10, 2016, Vol. 11, No.50) these trends of inequality show the economic injustice prevailing in the country.

The Directive Principles of State Policy were included in the constitution to ensure social and economic justice in a democratic Indian society. But these principles remained limited to the constitution only and...
most of these principles did not come into force like Article 39(d). This article provides economic and gender equality ensuring ‘equal pay for equal work’ for men and women. But the fact is that till today the women have to face discrimination at workplaces as well as in social life. They are not paid equal wages like men. In his article Prasanna has argued that notwithstanding the judgment in the Jagjit Singh case, the judicial approach to “equal pay for equal work” is yet to explore the potential for application of this principle and many more facets to this principle require to be elaborated.

Although the Article-41 and Article-45(DPSP) were included in the constitution to ensure free and compulsory education to all the children without any discrimination and it was made a fundamental right also but in spite of these provisions the poor children are unable to get education. They cannot afford good education in public schools due to their poor economic conditions hence unable to compete in big competitions.

The atrocities against dalits in different parts of the country have become a routine and are increasing at alarming rate as reveals the data of National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB). But the conviction rate is very poor. The case of Muzaffarapur district in Bihar in July 2016 is its recent example when one sawarn caste Bhumiwar urinated in the mouth of two Paswans youth. (Mohammad Sajjad, 2016, EPW, Dec 17, 2016, Vol. L1 No. 51)

The atrocities do not stop and continue to rise with ferocity and frequency. In Bihar the massacres of SC’s at Belch in 1979 and in Pipra in 1980. In Uttar Pradesh massacre following SC bridegroom riding on horseback at Kafalta in 1980. In Madhya Pradesh the killing of Bachidass in Mandsaur district in 1982, In Bihar the killing in police firing on 15 STs in Banghi in Sahibganj District in 1985. In all such cases, the Indian state at both the national and state level avoided addressing the basic Contradictions, Vulnerabilities and Causative factors, the treatment was symptomatic and palliative instead of the required radical solutions. Under continued pressure from Dalit MPs and political leaders, the magnitude and gravity of the problems was finally recognized by the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

In his Independence address on 15th August 1987, he announced that an act would be passed to check atrocities.

The SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) act 1989 was enacted on 11-9-1989 and the rules of were framed there under on 31st March 1995, The act was further amended through ordinance on 04-3-2014 which was further replaced by an amendment by Parliament in 2015 to strengthen it.

The Fundamental Rights were created and tried to assure

Justice: - Social, economic and Political
Liberty: - of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship.
Equality of Status, and of opportunity and to promote among them all.
Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of nation.

The special provisions were made to protect the rights of SC/ST, through Article 15(4), 16(4), 17, 21, 23, 24.

The Government has enacted the following legislation against the atrocities

(ii) The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) act 1989

Inspite of these legislations the crime against the vulnerable section continued to rise as under:

Pendency of cases for the violation of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) act 1989.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
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<td>2014</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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Source: Data of National Crime Record Bureau.

But inspite of all these provisions the atrocities against Dalits are increasing day by day. Not only this, the Hon’ble Supreme Court of Indiahad also diluted the provision of SC & ST Act (POA) 1989 in recent judgment dated 20-3-2018 in case of Subash Kashinath Mahajan V/S State of Maharashtra as per report and Data on SC/ST Atrocities Act points to weak implementation, not abuse.

The directions given by the Hon’ble Mr. Justice Adarsh Kumar Goyal are as under

i) Proceedings in the present case are clear abuse of process of court and are quashed.
ii) There is no absolute bar against grant of anticipatory bail in case under the Atrocities Act if no prima facie case is made out or where on judicial scrutiny the complaint is found to be prima facie mala fide. We approve the view taken and approach of the Gujarat High Court in Pankaj D Suthar.
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