



## A Historical Prospective of Dalit Organization in Uttarakhand

**Dr. Ranjana Rawat**

Associate Professor

Department of History

D.A.V. (P.G.) College, Dehradun.

Caste and untouchability in an integral part of Indian Society. In a unique historical event and is different from the other societies of the world. In ancient Indian society the process of organization had developed an idea of pollution throughout India. This is a unique phenomenon found in India Hindu society that a person who is born as untouchable and dies as untouchable, while the act of pollution in other societies could be changed into sacredness. So they are forced to live outside the village and kept away from the social amenities<sup>1</sup>. There was no mobility for the untouchable classes, because the upper caste Hindus were not allowing them to enjoy some privileges. However, the upper castes of Hindu society enjoyed privileges, while depressed classes were socially, economically and educationally poor. At this point of time, where the caste prejudices were so high social reformers and constitution makers thought that, unless the caste prejudice, inequality, discrimination were removed from the society it would not be possible to have a prosperous and egalitarian society.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the step undertaken by the social reformers in 19<sup>th</sup> century in their propogations was not promote social development. But Mr. Jyotiba Phule, Mrs. Savitri Bai Phule, Piriyaar, Sri Narayan Guru etc. took this problem seriously and started grass roots action and efforts to eliminate untouchability and discrimination and prepared the background of Dalit Movement. Dalit society of Utrkhand was inspired by national Dalit leaders and their organisations such as Jyotiba Phule's Satya Shodhak Samaj, Periyar's Atma Samman Andolan, and Shri K.P. Tamta formed Tamta Sudhar Sabha in 1905. Consequently, the Dalit of Utrkhand, locally known as 'Shilpkar' has also taken active participation in the Dalit movement for the eradication of social discrimination and social inequality. To achieve their objective, they formed the local organisations 'Shilpkar Sabha'. In a historic journey of dalit movement in Utrkhand it had assumed a major role in national movement. Subsequently Dr. Ambedkar took this problem in different ways of action plan. He gave new shape to Dalit Movement. Dr. Ambedkar had serious thought on Dalits problems and wanted effective and time saving solution in this regard. So, he started to organize Dalit people to agitate against upper caste Hindus discriminations. To achieve his goal finally he wanted the eradication of untouability.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, Dalit persistence

finally was rewarded as an organizational form, which continuously fought for their right during colonial period as well as post-colonial period in the formation of various Dalit organizations.

The Uttarakhand Dalit society in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was more or less the same as the rest of India. It seemed that their social, economic and political condition was very bad and they had been discriminated by the higher castes. The sense of purity and impurity in Hindu society was the cause of untouchability with Dalits on one hand and the colonial monopoly in production of cloths, mines, quarries etc. which destroyed their traditional sources of the economy on other hand. So, the local handicraft professionals were directly affected by this colonial approach 4. Apart from this, colonial administration had changed the traditional landowner rights and gave the permanent right of cultivation to traditional cultivator, which resulted in making Dalits landless.5 This policy of colonial administration robbed the chances of Dalits subsistence.6 In this situation, it was a timely demand to Dalits to organize themselves and fight unitedly for equality, which gave the new idea of organization to Uttarakhand Dalits to carry on their movements.

The prominent Dalit leaders of Uttarakhand such as Tamta, H.P. Tamta were strongly pro-colonial, while Jayanand Bharti, Baldev Singh Arya had pro-congress ideology. Apart from these Aryasamaj also took active part in Dalit movement of Uttarakhand. The first Dalit organization “Tamta Sudhar Sabha”7 was formed in Almora, which inspired other Dalits fight in an organized manner and for that they formed several other organizations in future. These are Shilpkar Sabha (1912) Shilpkar Sudharini Sabha (1913)8 Antya Sudhar Sabha (1914)9 Arya Shilpkar Sabha 10 and Garhwal Shilpkar Sabha, Garhwal Sarv Dalit Board and Harijan Sevak Sangh 11 Shoshit Samaj Dal (1968), Nirbal Verg Sangarsh Samiti and Parvtelya Shilpkar Sabha (1990). SC/ST Development Council (1988), SC/ST/OBC/Minorities Welfare Association (1994). Various actions under the banner and leadership of various leaders and organisation were undertaken. Each organisation has their own basic aims and objective for upliftment and progress of Dalit society. There were the people, who prepared background in the society in favour of the eradication of untouchability. To propagate their aims and objectives they organized meetings on the occasion of local fair and festivals.

In historical perspective of Uttarakhand we can say that these Dalit organization successfully struggled against untouchability, social injustices and for the welfare of their society. It is also noticed that these organizations continuously have been inspired by national Dalit movements and other activities. It seems that the aims and objectives of these organizations are similar to national organizations such as, Dalit panther of Maharashtra 12, BAMCEF, DS4 with minor modifications as per regional situations. These organizations are continuously applying pressure politics on local politicians as well as administration with the affiliation and support of national Dalit parties and other organization.

It is important that these organization continuously monitoring local administration and whenever administration ignore or discriminative Dalit Class interests they call for agitation.

However colonial administration gave a new approach to Indian society through western education and legislation. This system of education gave some chances to Indian Dalit to understand the western society and compare it with the Indian society. In this regard, Dr. Ambedkar was one of them who took leadership for social justice and began a movement against atrocities in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Maharashtra. He took the initiative to form the organization for struggle against all kinds of discriminations.

21<sup>st</sup> Century this procersss should be analysed properly the background of contemporary situation. The views of different leaders of different organisation are providing valuable information about the various developments of Dalit movement and present strategy of various organisations to unite themselves and transformed it as a political power.

In this paper an attempt has been made to show various the demands of different society deprived organisation. I want to focus on some of the aspects of commonality of aims and objectives of different organisations. This research paper exposes the sufferings of the oppressed and wants to be a source of information for other regions in India that one still neglected. This paper focusing on the subjectivity of the victimized class of society. Finally this paper aims to discuss some of the above mentioned issues with special reference to the Dalit organisations. It is very necessarily to highlight the problems of society and government should take cognizes of these to solve and make some strategies.

#### **References:**

1. Sharma G.L. 2003, Caste, class and social Inequity in India, Vol. II, 125 Mangaldeep Publication Publication.
2. Raju C.B. Social Justice and the Constitutioin of India (with reference to SC/ST), Serial Publications New Delhi 2008, 34-39.
3. Singh, Bhawan 2008 Gandhi and Dalit Bharat Jagran, Bhartiya Gyanpeeth New Delhi, 20-92.
4. Joshi M.P. 2007 Rajnitik Khetra Ke Itihas Main Uttarakhand ke Das Shilpkar, Almora Book Depot Almora 35.
5. Pathak Shekhar 1988 Dalit Awareness in Pre-Independent in Uttarakhand Pahar-2, 101.
6. Pande and Bhakuni 2013 Himalayi Itihas ke Vividh Ayam, 46. Anamika Publications, New Delhi.
7. Dalit Kusumanjali 2003, Almora.
8. Shakti 25 Nov, 2 Dec. 1919, 16 Nov. 1935.
9. Almora Akhbar 26 Oct 1914.
10. Prabhakar Samiti Prakash 1990, Karamveer Jayanand Bharti, Arya Samaj Somwali, Pauri.

\*\*\*\*\*