

AMBEDKAR CONCEPTS ON PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

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Abstract : Dr. Ambedkar is popularly known as "the architect of Indian Constitution", as he was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee which prepared the Draft Constitution for adoption and approval by the Constituent Assembly. It is also known that the Indian Constitution opted for parliamentary democracy instead of a presidential democracy and to a great extent adopted the Westminster Model of Democracy. India has crossed sixty nine years experimenting and experiencing Parliamentary Democracy and with nearly a hundred ten amendments to its Constitution, yet finding the system inadequate to realize fully the dreams of the founding fathers. This historic document seems to have been lost sight of by political pundits, who are severe critics of parliamentary democracy. After a perusal of Ambedkar's views presented on the above occasion, anybody would say that it looks as if he was speaking of Parliamentary Democracy as prevalent today.

KEYWORDS: Dr. Ambedkar, Parliamentary Democracy, Social, Economic and Political Democracy, Indian Constitution, Government

Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. - DR.AMBEDKAR

Western writers on democracy believed that what was necessary for the realization of the ideal of democracy. Government of the people, by the people and for the people, was the establishment of universal adult suffrage could produce government the people in the logical sense of the phrase, in contrast to the government of a king, about it could not by itself be said to bring about a democratic government in the sense of government by the people and for the people.

Ambedkar criticized the views of western writers on politics regarding democracy and self-government. He said:

1. They omit to take into account the incontrovertible fact that in every country there is a government class.
2. They fail to realise that the resistance of a governing class is inconsistent with democracy and self-government.
3. Self- government and democracy become real when the governing class loses its power to capture the power to govern.
4. The governing class may be so well entrenched that the servile classes will need other safeguards besides adult suffrage to achieve the same end.
5. Social outlook and social philosophy of the governing class is not taken into account.

According to Ambedkar; parliamentary democracy meant "**one man, one vote and one value**". It was also meant that every government should be on the anvil both in its daily affairs and also at the end of a certain period when the voters and electorate would be given an opportunity to assess the work done by the government.

According to Ambedkar, democracy always changed its form. Indian democracy was quite different from American democracy. Even in the same country democracy was not always the same. English democracy before and after 1688 was different. He stressed the point that democracy always changed in purpose also. Ambedkar defined democracy as "**a form and method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed**".

Ambedkar summarized the conditions precedent to the successful working of democracy. They were as follows:

1. There should not be glaring inequalities in society, i.e. privileges for one class.
2. The existence of a strong opposition.
3. Equality in law and administration.
4. Observance of constitutional morality.
5. No tyranny of the majority.
6. Moral order of society.
7. Public conscience.

Ambedkar's aim was to get justice and freedom for the people. To him "**democracy is a mode of associated living**". He regarded that the roots of democracy were to be found in social relationship, in terms of the associated life between the people who formed the society. Poverty, illiteracy and caste distinctions were the positive dangers to democracy.

In his conception of democracy there should not any class structure in society, because "**in class structure there is on the one hand tyranny vanity, pride, arrogance, greed, selfishness, and on the other insecurity, poverty, degradation, loss of**

liberty, self-reliance, independence, dignity and self-respect". He regarded democracy in its practical aspect as the social organization of the people in the sense that the people included all members of society.

Ambedkar remarked; "**A democratic society must assure a life of leisure and culture to each one of its citizens**". The man and for the good of his country. Ambedkar regarded that the democratic principles of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness were essentials in human life. He gave prime importance to human rights. Ambedkar was keen that every member of society must share in exercising them. He was of opinion that there should not be any kind of discrimination in the exercise of human rights, because it would be a negation of social and political democracy. He attached more importance to the freedom to form associations in various fields of life. For that he sought help of a constitutional system, because he regarded that there was no freedom without constitutional government. According to him such institutions were the very soul of freedom and democracy.

According to Ambedkar, democracy was not a form of government but a form of social organization. He regarded that a favorable social setting was a prerequisite for the success of democracy, without it democracy would not last long. A democratic form of government presupposed a democratic form of society. The formal framework of democracy was a no value and would be a misfit if there was no social democracy. He remarked that the politicians never realized that democracy was not only a form of government; it was essentially a form of society.

To him, social democracy involved two things: an attitude of mind, an attitude of respect and equality towards their fellows and a social organization free from rigid social barriers. To him, democracy was incompatible and inconsistent with isolation and exclusiveness resulting in the distinction between the privileged and unprivileged. He wanted high political objectives, but they must keep harmony with social aims. He regarded democracy as both a social ideal and a political method.

According to Ambedkar, political democracy rested on four premises;

1. The individual is an end in himself;
2. The individual has certain inalienable rights which must be guaranteed to him by the constitution;
3. The individual shall not be required to relinquish any of his constitutional rights as a condition precedent to the receipt of a privilege;
4. The state shall not delegate powers to private persons to govern others.

In democracy every party has right to criticize and capture political power. The party in power tries to keep the power in its hands. According to Ambedkar, the real test of the party system would come when the governmental power might shift from the ruling party to some other political party or parties.

According to Ambedkar, laws are made by man for man. Law has not created man, but man has created law for his own happiness. Law might require amendments and these amendments should be made with the consent of all men. He emphasized the point that law must be the same for all and in the interest of all. It must be social and human, i.e. universal in effect. In his conception of law, it is implied that law should be enforced not only by punishment, but also by education-by an appeal of the mind of man and the spirit of India has enunciated the principles on which law should be based.

Ambedkar thoughts on constitutional law are based on the dignity of mankind. It has five fundamental human elements;

1. It is a rule in public interest;
2. It is not an arbitrary force;
3. It is secular law applicable to all;
4. It is not divinely inspired, but it is man-inspired;
5. It can be changed, according to time and need.

Ambedkar regarded democracy as a way of life. It involved rational empiricism, emphasis on the individual, the instrumental nature of the state, voluntarism and the law behind the law, nobility of means, discussion and consent, absence of perpetual rule and basic equality in all human relations. He held that a democracy way of life could be conceived without an ideal society. According to Ambedkar, An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one to other parts. In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. In other words, there must be social endosmosis.

According to him, certain political rights alone did not constitute the basic of democracy. Sociability and morality were the important elements of his concept of democracy. The keynote of his concept of democracy as a way of life was the necessity for the participation of every human being in the formation of social, economic and political values that regulated the living men and kept them together. The fundamental elements of his concept of democracy, in short, were liberty, equality and fraternity, reason human experience, the rule of law, natural rights and an emphasis on the individual in social relationships.

According to Ambedkar, the following devices were essential to maintain democracy.

1. **Constitutional methods:**

He insisted on abandoning the bloody methods of revolution and the methods of civil disobedience, non-cooperation and Satyagraha. He regarded these methods as **grammar of anarchy**.

2. **Not to lay liberties at the feet of a great man:**

According to him, there was nothing wrong in being grateful great men. He regarded bhakti in religion a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, bhakti or hero-worship was a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship.

3. **Make a political democracy a social democracy:**

Political democracy could not last unless there lay at the base of it social democracy. To him, it meant a way of life which recognized liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. They formed a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other was to defeat the very purpose of democracy.

Ambedkar said, on the social plane, we have in India a society based on the principle of graded inequality, in politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. He urged to remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy. The Constitution of

India has laid down the idea of economic democracy. To Ambedkar, the directive principles had a great value; for they lay down that our ideal is economic democracy.

The success of democracy in India depended upon the satisfaction of the millions of people who were devoid of preliminaries of life. The discontent against parliamentary democracy was due to the realization that it has failed to assure the masses the right to liberty, property or pursuit of happiness. But unfortunately parliamentary democracy in India took no notice of economic inequalities and did not care to examine the result of freedom of contract. It has failed to realize and feel that it could not succeed where there was no social and economic democracy, because they were the tissue and the fiber of political democracy.

Ambedkar maintained that political societies were divided into two classes: The rulers and the ruled. Rulers were always drawn from the ruling class. This was a political democracy could not become a government of the people or by the people. He warned the harbingers of democracy, that if failed in this land, the result will be rebellion, anarchy and communism.

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