



LIFE AND MISSION OF Dr. B.R.AMBEDKAR

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Babasaheb Ambedkar was one of the greatest crusaders of humanity in the world. For the emancipation of depressed and oppressed masses he did not leave any stone unturned. He was a great Historian, Sociologist, Anthropologist, a great human right fighter, legal legendary, constitution maker, labour leader, Economist, Educationist and a great Buddhist.

Birth of Babasaheb Bhimaji Ramji Ambedkar

Bhimrao was born in a place called Mhow, Military headquarter of Klars near Indore in Madhya Pradesh on April 14th, 1891. He was the 14th son of Subedar Ramji Maloji Sakpal and Bhimabai. Ramaji was a subedar in 7th Pioneer Bombay Infantry and later served as Head Master in military school in Mhow. His mother Bhimabai was a religious (bigot) woman. His family was staunch, supporters of Kabir school of thought. Bhim was brought up amidst the religious environment. He describes "our family was totally religious. The strict rule for all my brothers and sisters to pray and to sing devotional songs called Abhangas of saint Kabir, saint Tukaram and saint Jnaneshwar before dinner. This tradition taught me a systematic life."

Education

Subedar Ramji Sakpal shifted his family from Mhow of Madhya Pradesh to Satara in Maharashtra state, when Babasaheb was hardly six years old. Where he lost his mother in 1897. Later Bhim was admitted to first standard in English medium school on 7th November 1900 in Satara. He completed his High School education in Satara and Bombay. Bhim by nature was most quarrelsome and good orator. He often fought with his friends but always gained the grace and sympathy of teacher because of his ability to impress with attractive and thought provoking speeches. He passed matriculation examination in 1907 from Elphinstone High School. Dada Keluskar Guruji and S K Bole felicitated Bhim for having passed matriculation examination. To celebrate this memorable incident a function was arranged in Parel, Mumbai. As a token of love and appreciation Guruji presented a book to Ambedkar entitled "Life of Goutam Buddha". This book exerted tremendous impact on the young mind of Babasaheb Ambedkar. Keluskar acted as a light in shaping the career of Babasaheb Ambedkar.

He married Ramabai daughter of Bhiku Walangkar! at the age of fifteen in 1906. Later he joined Elphinstone college and completed his B. A. degree with Persian and English in 1912. In January 1913 he joined service in Baroda state because of the financial help rendered to him for educational purpose by his Highness Maharaja Sayyajirao Gaikwad of Baroda. Subjected to the condition that he would serve the Baroda state for some period however, he was compelled to leave the service of Baroda owing to the ill treatment he had received in Baroda due to his caste and because of serious illness of his father and went back to Bombay. Later Maharaja Sayyajirao called him on 4th June 1913 and was selected for the award of Baroda Maharaja's scholarship for higher education in United States of America. He joined Columbia University, New York on 20th July 1913. He selected Economics as major subject and Sociology, History, Philosophy, Anthropology and Political Science as minor subjects. Subsequently he submitted Ph.D. thesis on the topic "The National Dividend of India, A Historical and Analytical Study", in 1917. Later he published it in the form of a book entitled "The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India" in 1928. Later he joined the London School of Economics and Political

Economy, in June 1916. However returned to India due to the expiry of his scholarship tenure. Many people congratulated him for accomplishing higher degrees, Mr. Bleek Clarke in Reader Digest, described few students on my campus ever established such a voracious appetite for knowledge. He became absorbed in History, Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology and Economics, where he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1917. He had more than double the credits required.

Babasaheb Ambedkar was appointed as military secretary to his Highness Sayyajirao Gaikawad the Maharaja of Baroda with a view to groom him for the post of the State Finance Minister in Baroda. However he returned to Bombay due to the ill treatment meted out in Baroda in July 1917.

He attended the conference of depressed classes held at Nagpur in 1918. He started "Mooknayak" Marathi paper in 1912. With the financial assistance of Chatrapati Shahuji Maharaja of Kolhapur. In 1920 he attended the conference of Mahar parishad at Managoan Kolhapur held under the president ship of Shahu Maharaja. Later he joined as a professor in Political Economy in Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay where he served up to March 1920. Bhimrao realized his mental intellectual potentiality after the completion of degrees such as M.A., Ph D. He realized the importance of higher education in personality development. Despite the fact that his family Economic condition was not good, he did not change his aim and determination. He said "I have personality elevated but I should struggle hard to uplift of my people and create awareness of their social, economical and political rights and wage holy war to restore human values in Indian Society. This was the vision of social service of Babasaheb. Later he joined the London school of Economics and Gray's Inn College and received Bar-at-Law in London in 1920.

Bhima studied hard and got M.Sc degree for the thesis entitled "Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Fmance in British India" and D.Sc degree for the thesis entitled "The Problems of Rupee". His revolutionary thought on Economics caught the eyes of the world economists. Eminent personalities like professor, R.A.Saligman, of Columbia University, New York and Professor Sidney Webb of London school of Economics and Political Science congratulated him.

Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha

In 1923 Babasaheb Ambedkar returned to India and started legal practice in Bombay High Court. He established 'Bahishkrit Hitakanni Sabham July 20,1924 under the registration Act XXI of 1860. Its head office was situated at Damodar hall Bombay. Babasaheb advocated his followers that the movement' must be based on the principle of Tri-Ratnas - educate, agitate and organized. The,main objectives of the Sabha were to promote the spread of education among the Depressed classes by opening hostels or by employing such other means as may seem necessary or desirable. To promote the spread of culture among the depressed classes by opening libraries, social centres or study circles. To advance and improve the economic condition of the depressed classes by starting industrial and agricultural schools lastly to represent the grievances of depressed classes. So on behalf of the 'Bahisknt Hitakarini Sabha', he opened hostels for untouchable students. In 1926 he was nominated as a member for the Bombay Legislative Council.

Mahad Agitation

Mahad is situated in Kolaba district of Maharashtra. The chowder tank is situated at the centre of the town, untouchables were prohibited from taking water out of it Therefore Babasaheb decided this place as an ideal for the agitation. It was popularly known as 'Mahad Satyagraha' which was started in 20th March 1927. The untouchables held processions and demonstration on the bank of the tank . They drank water from the tank as a mark of their protest. In the conference he burnt the 'Manusmanti' the constitution of Brahmin which upholds the negation of equality, liberty and fraternity in social, economic, political and religious life of people.

Dhananjay keer described this act. It was one of the greatest sacrilegious blows ever since the days of Martin Luther upon the egoistic bigots, custom, mongers and no changers on earth. December 25,1927 became a red

letter day in the annals of India as it was on this day Ambedkar burnt the old smriti and established new social order Mahad thus became the Wittenberg of India.

Kalaram Temple Entry Movement

The successful movement of Mahad inspired Babasaheb Ambedkar to wage another war which was against banning on Nashik's Kalaram! Temple entry for untouchables. The movement started in March 1930 and continued for 8 years. It raised a storm in the country. The door of the temple did not open for the untouchables.

These two movements created social awareness, among the downtrodden masses in a limited time span. The movement inspired the untouchables who had developed the feeling of mental slavery. It made possible what saints and mahatmas failed to do so in several years. Temple entry was not the only aim of the movement. Babasaheb said temple entry movement does not solve our problems, our salvation lies in rights and not in duties.

Babasaheb Ambedkar established samaj samata sangh in September 1927. Its aim was to bring equality among the untouchables and also amongst caste Hindu's. It had formulated programmes in favour of inter-dining and inter-caste marriages.

Babasaheb Ambedkar and Purushottam Solank were nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council. Both of them were introduced various bills in the council. The most important one of them was abolition of Mahar Vatan Bill. In every village Mahar families were subjected to serve village communities like Brahmin landlords, peasants and village panchayats to carry out menial job. In return they were given minimum land called as 'Maharki' for livelihood. Babasaheb Ambedkar wanted to abolish this cruel system. He introduced "Mahar Vatan Bill" in Bombay legislative council in March 1928. The bill was withdrawn due to the protest from the Legislators. Lastly the bill was re-introduced in 1937 and got passed.

Simon Commission

The British Govt, decided to re-examine and revise the first India Act. of 1919 and announced the appointment of the "Indian statutory commission" popularly known as Simon Commission in 1928. Babasaheb thought it was an excellent opportunity to represent the untouchables' grievances before the committee and get adequate representation to Depressed Classes in Legislature and executives of both central as well as provinces. He submitted his memorandum on behalf of 'Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha' on October 23rd 1928 in Poona.

Babasaheb Ambedkar founded "All India Depressed Classes Federation (Congress)" and organized conference in Nagapur on 8th and 9th August 1930. He stressed on political and social uplift of the depressed classes. He analyzed the social awakening programmes that have been bearing fruits. Political power is the key to progress.

Babasaheb Ambedkar put tremendous efforts for the social awakening among the depressed classes. He initiated self-respect. Zeal to fight for human rights and develop missionary attitude among the depressed classes. He turned his mind to take the untouchables problem in political field of the country. In his letter addressed to Baburao Gaikwad he said - "I started temple entry movement only because I felt that was the best way of energizing depressed classes and making them conscious of their position. I believe I have achieved that purpose. I have no more interest in temple entry movement. I want depressed classes should concentrate their energy and resources on politics and education and I hope that they will realize the importance of both."

Round Table Conference

The round table conference started on 20th November 1930 in London in which Babasaheb Ambedkar and Rao Bahadur.R. Shrinivasan represented the depressed classes. Both of them submitted a scheme of political safeguards for the protection of depressed classes' interests in the future constitution of a self-governing India. They demanded that these were the terms and conditions on which the depressed classes will consent to place them under a majority rule in a self-governing India.

First Round Table Conference ended without taking a decision on minorities. The Second Round Table Conference called on 7th September 1932 to discuss the Federal Structure of "Minority's issue" Babasaheb Ambedkar and Rao Bahadur Shrinivasan again submitted a memorandum for the special representation for depressed classes as a measure of safeguard.

Gandhiji represented the congress party at the second round table conference. He claimed that he alone is the true representative of minorities, Muslims, Dalits and Hindus. He discarded the special representation in Legislature for the untouchables, on the ground they were the part and parcel of Hindu society. But Babasaheb Ambedkar criticized Gandhiji for his undemocratic statement. The Second Round Table Conference completed without having any concord between Hindus, Muslims and Untouchables and other Minorities. Then all participants of the conference were asked to give an undertaking that, they will abide by the decision of British Govt, including Mr. Gandhi every Accepted it and signed.

After returning from London Mr. Gandhi was arrested and put into Yeravada Jail due to his announcement of civil disobedience movement when P.M. of England Mr. Donald announced 'Communal Award' Mr. Gandhi became very much unhappy and started fast unto death by opposing 'Communal Award' given to untouchable in 1932. This shows his attitude towards the suppressed masses.

Establishment of Independent Labour Party

Babasaheb Ambedkar founded independent labour party in August 1936. It propagated the principle of state management and state ownership of basic and key industries. It proposed for creation of a legislation to protect the interest of agricultural tenants from the act of executions and evictions by the landlords. To protect the tenants they proposed abolition of the Khoti system. He also proposed several schemes for the betterment of the employees, provision for leave facility, bonus, pension benefits, provision for social insurance, provision to provide a shelter for dwelling etc as welfare measures for the workers. He also suggested a scheme of providing employment to the unemployed landless labours.

The political party started by Babasaheb Ambedkar aimed at making village life cheerful by providing all basic amenities. In order to cater to the needs of village sanitation facilities and housing similar of town planning the also proposed the welfare measures such as establishment of village libraries, community hall and village entertainment centres in order to expose the villagers and to bring the change in their outlook.

The independent labour party which was founded by Babasaheb Ambedkar who won 15 seats in Bombay presidency and became opposition party in the provincial council. As an opposition party it was largely responsible for the introduction of many valuable bills such as "abolition of Mahar Vatan", (1937) and industrial Dispute Bill (1938). Babasaheb Ambedkar played a very (effective) and purposeful role in Bombay Legislative Assembly.

All India Scheduled Caste Federation

All India depressed classes conference was held at Nagpur on 18-19th July 1942. In the conference All India Scheduled Caste Federation was formed and put-forth their demand before the British Govt, for the establishment of separate village settlement. Babasaheb Ambedkar joined the viceroy's executive council as a labour minister on 20th July 1942. He introduced and got passed many important bills.

Conversion to Buddhism

Babasaheb Ambedkar preferred Nagpur for conversion ceremony. It was a historic and a sacred town where Buddhist Nagas flourished in ancient period.

On October 14, 1956 a large gathering had assembled at Diksha Bhoomi sitting on the dais were D. Walisinh, Ven. M. Sangharatna Thera, Ven. Sadda Tissa Thera and Ven. Pammand Thera along with Babasaheb Ambedkar and his wife and Mr. Nanak Chand Rattu the close associate and most faithful disciple of Babasaheb

Ambedkar. The eighty three year old Burmese Monk Ven. U.Chandramani of Kushinagara and his four associated Bhikkus administered in polite to Babasaheb Ambedkar and his wife. Both of them bow down before the image of the Buddha shining Tisarana. (Triple - Refuge) under Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha and Panchasila (five precepts) in marathi.

Babasaheb said "I started the movement of renouncing the Hindu religion in 1935 and since then I have been continuing struggle. This conversion has given one enormous satisfaction and pleasure unimaginable. I fell as if I have been liberated from hell".

Buddhism is a true religion and I will lead a life guided by the three principles of knowledge right path and compassion. Babasaheb Ambedkar wrote Buddha and his Dhamma which is considered as the bible of Buddhism. He had planned to established the Buddhist monastery to train the young people to propagate the Buddhism in India.

Mahaparinirvana

The last Journey of Babasaheb Ambedkar was on the morning 6th December 1956. His body was brought to Bombay and was cremated on 7th December 1956 at Dadar Bombay on the shore of Arabian Sea. Lakhs of people embraced Buddhism as a monk of respect and homage to the great departed soul

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