NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

VI SEMESTER

Additional Course (In lieu of Project)

BA POLITICAL SCIENCE

(2011 Admission)

UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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STUDY MATERIAL

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NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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Concept and approaches-Gandhian-Liberal-Marxian and Postmodernist

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MODULE-1
NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Concept and approaches-Gandhian-Liberal-Marxian and Postmodernist

Introduction

Social movements are a type of group action. They are large, sometimes informal, groupings of individuals or organizations which focus on specific political or social issues. In other words, they carry out, resist or undo a social change. Modern Western social movements became possible through education, and increased mobility of labor due to the industrialization and urbanization of 19th century societies. It is sometimes argued that the freedom of expression, education and relative economic independence prevalent in the modern Western culture are responsible for the unprecedented number and scope of various contemporary social movements. However, others point out that many of the social movements of the last hundred years grew up, like the Mau Mau in Kenya, to oppose Western colonialism. Either way, social movements have been and continued to be closely connected with democratic political systems. Occasionally, social movements have been involved in democratizing nations, but more often they have flourished after democratization. Over the past 200 years, they have become part of a popular and global expression of dissent.

The study of new social movements occupies an important part in the study of political science. Unlike traditional social movements the new social movements are highly participative and have strong programme of actions. This phenomenon of new social movement can be traced back to the post world war II period. The end of World War 11 witnessed the emergence of a number of new states in the Third World. These states were formed with high expectations and thus there was a larger demand for political participation and power distribution. However many of these states failed to meet the demands of the citizen. This can be understood as a major cause for the emergence of new social movements.

Social deprivation remains widespread in the developing countries in spite of substantial improvements during the post-war period. Almost half of the developing world's children are still not protected by immunization against communicable diseases. In the rural areas of the developing world nearly two-thirds of families are still without safe drinking water and an even high proportion is without adequate sanitation. Corruption has been on the increase in many countries. Over-centralization, limited administrative capabilities, laxity of tax administration and authoritarian tendencies has combined to provide fertile conditions for corruption in many countries. All these factors promoted the cause of social protest in the states. Hence a large number of new social movements originated from the under privileged section of the globe.
Charles Tilly defines social movements as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others. For Tilly, social movements are a major vehicle for ordinary people's participation in public politics. Sidney Tarrow defines a social movement as collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interactions with elites, opponents and authorities. He specifically distinguishes social movements from political parties and advocacy groups.

New social movements emerge around new scopes and range of politics. The environment, the rights, and role of women, health, food and nutrition, education, shelter and housing, the dispensation of justice, communications and the dissemination of information, culture and lifestyle, the achievement of peace and disarmament none of which were considered to be subject matter for politics in which ordinary people were involved, are major concerns for the new movements. They have brought to the fore conflicts over productive resources that were hitherto neglected or were peripheral to the concerns of political organizations. If the scene of the 'traditional' class struggle was the field and the factory, the ecology movements represent a new kind of class struggle, one over natural resources like forests and water. Likewise, the women's movement has insistently questioned the downgrading of certain forms of work on sexual grounds, both in the work place and within the household, and the barriers to the entry of women in many professions.

**New Bases**

New social movements are distinctive in so far as they work outside the traditional party system. Much of their membership and force is the reflection of people's disappointment and frustration with and their search for alternatives to the political process, political parties and the state. The new social movements in the West are predominantly middle-class based. This class composition of the social movements reflects the changing stratification of society from more to less bipolar forms. In the third world, social movements are predominantly popular among working class. This class stratum has more bases in the Third World and its members are much more absolutely and relatively subject to deprivation and injustice which mobilizes them in and through social movements. Moreover, the international and national burden of the economic crisis falls so heavily on the already low-income people as to pose serious threats to their physical and economic survival and cultural identity. Therefore, they must mobilize to defend themselves through social movements in the absence of the availability or possibility of existing social and political institutions to defend them. These popular social movements and organizations are instruments and expressions of people's struggle against exploitation and oppression.

These popular movements have some middle-class leadership of middleclass intelligentsia, professionals, teachers, priests, etc. who offer their services as leaders, organizers or advisers to these community and other Third World social movements. In the process of initiating, organizing and directing the people movements, these outside intellectuals become an organic part of the oppressed and exploited masses and do not exist outside the common people. They are called 'organic intellectuals' because; they get organically allied with the common people in their ideological leanings and practical action.
New Methodology

The new movements have evolved an effective methodology of working with the disadvantaged sections of society which in turn has helped them to grow as an alternative agency of social change. This is a methodology of critical intervention, creative action and participatory mobilization. These groups make a critical intervention in the sense that they offer a critique of the micro mechanisms of domination and exploitation in which their clients, i.e., the underdogs in a locality, are involved. To achieve this end these groups have devised a strategy of creative action, which comprises of theatre workshops and street plays among other things. Theatre workshop and street plays serve as an important medium not only for conscientising clients but also for sensitizing the participants to the problems at hand.

All this leads to participatory mobilization in which these groups organize their clients to defy unjust norms, to resist exploitation and oppression and to fight a militant though non-violent battle for their rights. Another aspect of the methodology of these action groups is the measure of openness, innovative spirit and experimental strategies that these groups employ. Another component of their methodology is participatory research. The experiences and experiments undertaken by the social activists who at once combine both the roles of catalyst and analyst are producing a new social science. These new social movements do not believe in a rigid hierarchy. Their organizational structure is horizontal in nature. As these organizations do not have a rigid hierarchy, the concept of the leader and the led does not exist. The prominent members of these organizations prefer to call themselves organizers and not leaders. They represent a rejection of the unified, disciplined and militarized party machine, oriented toward seizure of the state and enforcement of a single ideological line.

New Roles

The new social movements and experiments manifest the true nature of contemporary world crisis and prepare for a future desirable society. The role of these people's movements and experiments transcends not only state power, but also the new existing civil societies. They work to transform the state itself to become more humane and responsive to the sufferings. The moral vision of the new movements is significant. By highlighting the question of ecology, health, gender etc., which were earlier considered as peripheral, the new movements have a valuable role to play in enlarging the scope of lower class movements. The new social movements in the Third World show a rare sensitivity to the heterogeneity of the sources and structures of exploitation and oppression.

The new social movements can be seen as vehicles of cumulative change in the social, economic and political fields. They are able to generate a new kind of consciousness among the socially deprived about the unjust arrangements in which they are placed and new social sensitivity to dismantle such arrangements. In the economic field these movements initiate alternative development strategies and are able to involve the poor and the dispossessed in self-reliant development projects.
Civil society and new movements

The assertion of new social movements in the contemporary world is clearly linked with the concept of civil society. Many of the new movements have their major thrust against the state rather than private property-based capitalism or the market. The theories stress the efforts of groups and sections in highly state-dominated societies to fight for space for democratic control and autonomy. The popular movements work simultaneously at two levels. At one level, they are defensive, seeking to protect civil society from the tentacles of the centralizing state; at another, they are assertive, seeking to change civil society from within.

Growth of Social movements

The early history of social movements was connected to broad economic and political changes in England in the mid-18th century, including political representation, market capitalization, and proletarianization. The first mass social movement catalyzed around John Wilkes. As editor of the paper The North Briton, Wilkes vigorously attacked the new administration of Lord Bute and the peace terms that the new government accepted at the 1763 Treaty of Paris at the end of the Seven Years War. Charged with seditious libel, Wilkes was arrested after the issue of a general warrant, a move that Wilkes denounced as unlawful. The Lord Chief Justice eventually ruled in Wilkes favor. As a result of this episode, Wilkes became a figurehead to the growing movement for popular sovereignty among the middle classes. Later Wilkes stood for the Parliamentary seat. When Wilkes was imprisoned in 1768, a mass movement of support emerged, with large demonstrations in the streets. This was the first ever sustained social movement. It involved public meetings, demonstrations, the distribution of pamphlets on an unprecedented scale and the mass petition march. It tried to rectify the faults in governance through appeals to existing legal precedents and was conceived of as an extra-Parliamentary form of agitation to arrive at a consensual and constitutional arrangement. The social movement on the streets of London compelled the authorities to concede to the movement's demands. Wilkes was returned to Parliament, general warrants were declared as unconstitutional and press freedom was extended to the coverage of Parliamentary debates.

Other political movements that emerged in the late 18th century included the British abolitionist movement against slavery and the upheaval surrounding the French and American Revolutions. From 1815, Britain after victory in the Napoleonic Wars entered in a period of social upheaval characterized by the growing maturity of the use of social movements and special interest associations. Chartism was the first mass movement of the growing working class in the world. It campaigned for political reform between 1838 and 1848 with the People's Charter of 1838 as its manifesto. They called for universal suffrage and the implementation of the secret ballot. The term "social movements" was introduced in 1848 by the German Sociologist Lorenz von Stein in his book Socialist and Communist Movements since the Third French Revolution (1848) in which he introduced the term "social movement" into scholarly discussions.

The labor movement and socialist movement of the late 19th century are seen as the prototypical social movements, leading to the formation of communist and social democratic
parties and organizations. In 1945, Britain after victory in the Second World War entered a period of radical reform and change. In the post-war period, women's rights, gay rights, peace, civil rights, anti-nuclear and environmental movements emerged, often dubbed the New Social Movements. They led, among other things, to the formation of green parties and organizations influenced by the new left. With the rapid pace of globalization, the potential for the emergence of new type of social movement is latent.

**Nature of New social movements**

The modern social movement is not only a structural phenomenon. It is a complex network of actors and interactions. It has to follow a three step strategy. The three steps are;

1. Diagnosis
2. Prognosis
3. Motivation

The actors, who organize a social movement, have to make clear their aims. They have to put into words what is wrong in society. This is termed as diagnosis. They have to identify the current issues and how to make it a public issue. The second stage is prognosis. Here the enquiry is how to rectify the wrongs in society. The next concern is what people have to do to bring the needed changes. This is called motivation. They do so in specific narratives or interpretive packages directed at authorities, movement participants, supporters, and at the public at large. Social movement actors give meaning to events, situations, and social practices; they function as signifying agents alongside other actors like media and government agencies. These social movements sought to alter the prevailing structures of power, project values of justice, equality and freedom adding new dimensions to them and marked the rise of a new social force.

The new social movements (NSMs) are largely ‘grassroots’ and apolitical movements whose main objective is social transformation rather than state power. This is a process of depoliticization of the social realm. However the new social movements are not only social but can have varied dimensions like political and economic and that it may not necessarily be grassroots but can include various other sections too.

There are many reasons behind social movements.

1. **Urbanization**: Urbanization led to larger settlements, where people of similar goals could find each other, gather and organize. This facilitated social interaction between scores of people, and it was in urban areas that those early social movements first appeared.

2. **Industrialization**: The process of industrialization which gathered large masses of workers in the same region explains why many of those early social movements addressed matters such as economic wellbeing, important to the worker class.
3, **Mass education:** Mass education is a major reason behind social movements. Many social movements were created at universities, where the process of mass education brought many people together.

4, **Communication Technologies:** The development of communication technologies accelerated the social movements. With the development of communication technologies, creation and activities of social movements became easier - from printed pamphlets circulating in the 18th century coffeehouses to newspapers and Internet, all those tools became important factors in the growth of the social movements.

5, **Democracy:** The spread of democracy and political rights like the freedom of speech made the creation and functioning of social movements much easier. It permitted people to organize freely without governmental restrictions. People can freely discuss matters and forums of free expression slowly developed.

**New Social movements and state**

The new social movements do address political economy. The state is a primary and unavoidable agent in their production of relations of domination in race, gender, sexuality, and environment and the new social movements struggle actively to block and remake these mechanisms of subordination.

Many social movements also respond to people's frustration with a sense of injustice towards, political economic forces beyond their control. Many of these economic forces emanate from the world economy in crisis. Significantly people increasingly regard the state and its institutions, particularly political parties as ineffective.

It is with the plight of these rejects of society and of organized politics that the new movements are concerned with. The new movements have to be seen as part of the democratic struggle at various levels. They are to be seen as attempts to open alternative political spaces outside the usual arenas of party and government. They are based on deep stirrings of consciousness, of an awareness of crisis that could conceivably be turned into a catalyst of new opportunities. It is to be seen as a response to the incapacity of the state to hold its various constituents in a framework of positive action. Its growing refusal to deliver goods and its increasingly repressive character. These movements are taking up cudgels against the government on behalf of the deprived and dispossessed, on behalf of the landless and dalits, the bonded labourers and the fisher folk deprived of their traditional livelihood. On behalf of the large numbers that are continuously displaced and dispossessed on their land due to construction of large projects like dams and highways. The new social movements represent part of a major crystallization of dissent and opposition.

**New Social Movements and Globalization**

Globalization promotes an agenda of economic liberalization in trade, investment and finance. It makes states increasingly powerless to control their own economies, and that states
adopt rhetoric of powerlessness to divest themselves of broader social responsibility. The new social movements view globalization as representing forces that disrupt communities, cultures and livelihood patterns of the poor without offering any viable and dignified alternative.

Their view of development is of a non hegemonic, pluralistic process, in articulation of which the new social movements use inductively arrived insights and criteria evolved by them through their own struggles. In this process they increasingly relate globally debated issues such as feminism, ecology and human rights to the economic social and cultural realities. Their politics is increasingly about making development a bottom-up process, directly relevant to and an edifying experience for the poor and the oppressed. Rather than opting out of development. They now seek to change the power relations on which the development paradigm is premised. They see the old idea of development as encoded in the emergent global power structure. The new political agenda of the forces of globalization is the dispersing of state control over the economies of the Third World on the one hand, and the centralization of global political and military power in the hands of the already rich and powerful countries on the other. This forms the basis of their global hegemony. The new global arrangement is seen as ensuring international economic and political stability under the continuing conditions of inequality among and within nations. When the governments of Third World themselves become willing instruments of powerful global forces, such campaigns render them more vulnerable to these forces in international politics.

Development and Alternative Politics

The grassroots movements in the Third World are articulating the idea of alternative development through concrete political struggles. This is reflected in the growing convergence that different movements have acquired on the issue of globalization i.e. in their assessment of the shift from the state-led model to the market-led model of development. The new social movements' mobilizational strategies focus on the new social political formations of the poor and the deprived which conflate the category of class with those of ethnicity and gender. Their general approach is to work for and with specific vulnerable groups, assault on whom has increased under globalization. They reject the inputs view of rural development and focus on creating capabilities of self-development among the rural poor and also on evolving mechanisms of protection for them against various forms of social terror to which they are often subjected to in this process.

Typology of social movements

Sociologists distinguish between several types of social movement. This typology is on the basis of scope, type of change, targets, method novelty and scope.

On the basis scope social movements were classified as reform movements and radical movement.

a, Reform movement – the reform movements advocates changing some norms or laws. Examples of such a movement would include a trade union with a goal of increasing workers rights, a green movement advocating a set of ecological laws, or a movement supporting introduction of a capital
punishment or the right to abortion. Some reform movements may aim for a change in custom and moral norms, such as condemnation of pornography or proliferation of some religion.

b, Radical movement - radical movements are dedicated to changing value systems in a fundamental way. Examples would include the American Civil Rights Movement which demanded full civil rights and equality under the law to all Americans, regardless of race; the Polish Solidarity movement which demanded the transformation of a Stalinist political and economic system into a democracy.

On the basis of change the movements were classified into innovation movements and conservative movements.

a, Innovation movement - movements which want to introduce or change particular norms, values, etc. are classified as innovation movement.

b, Conservative movement – Conservative are that movements which want to preserve existing norms, values, etc. For example, the anti-technology 19th century Luddites movement or the modern movement opposing the spread of the genetically modified food could be seen as conservative movements in that they aimed to fight specific technological changes.

On the basis of target the movements were classified as group focus movements and individual focused movements.

a, Group-focus movements – These movements focused on affecting groups or society in general, for example, advocating the change of the political system. Some of these groups transform into or join a political party, but many remain outside the reformist party political system.

b, Individual-focused movements – They are focused on affecting individuals. Most religious movements would fall under this category.

On the basis of methods of work the social movements are classified into peaceful movements and violent movements.

a, Peaceful movements – This includes Various movements which use nonviolent means of protest as part of a campaign of nonviolent resistance, also often called civil resistance. The American Civil Rights movement, Polish Solidarity movement or the nonviolent, civil disobedience-orientated wing of the Indian independence movement would fall into this category.

b, Violent movements - various movements which resort to violence falls under this category. They are usually armed and in extreme cases can take a form of a paramilitary or terrorist organization.

On the basis of novelty the social movements are classified into old and new movements. a, Old movements - movements for change have existed for many centuries. Most of the oldest recognized movements, dating to late 18th and 19th centuries, fought for specific social groups, such as the working class, peasants, whites, aristocrats, Protestants, men. They were usually
centered on some materialistic goals like improving the standard of living or, for example, the political autonomy of the working class.

b, New movements - movements which became dominant from the second half of the 20th century are classified into new movements. This includes the feminist movement, pro-choice movement, civil rights movement, environmental movement, free software movement, gay rights movement, peace movement, anti-nuclear movement, alter-globalization movement, etc. Sometimes they are known as new social movements. They are usually centered on issues that go beyond but are not separate from class.

On the base of range of operation the social movements were divided into global movements and local movements

a, Global movements – Global movements are social movements with global (transnational) objectives and goals. Movements such as the first, second, third and fourth internationals, the World Social Forum, the Peoples' Global Action and the anarchist movement seek to change society at a global level.

b, Local movements - most of the social movements has a local scope. They are focused on local or regional objectives, such as protecting a specific natural area, lobbying for the lowering of tolls in a certain motorway, or preserving a building about to be demolished for gentrification and turning it into a social center.

Charismatic Leadership

Many social movements are created around some charismatic leader, i.e. one possessing charismatic authority. After the social movement is created, there are two likely phases of recruitment. The first phase will gather the people deeply interested in the primary goal and ideal of the movement. The second phase, which will usually come after the given movement had some successes and is trendy. People who join in this second phase will likely be the first to leave when the movement suffers any setbacks and failures. Eventually, the social crisis can be encouraged by outside elements, like opposition from government or other movements. However, many movements had survived a failure crisis, being revived by some hardcore activists even after several decades.

Theories of social movement

Sociologists have developed several theories related to social movements. Some of the better-known theories include

- collective behavior/collective action theories
- relative deprivation theory
- value-added theory
- resource mobilization
- political process theory
- framing theory
- new social movement theory

**Deprivation theory**

Deprivation theory argues that social movements have their foundations among people who feel deprived of some goods or resources. According to this approach, individuals who are lacking some good, service, or comfort are more likely to organize a social movement to improve their conditions.

**Mass society theory**

Mass society theory argues that social movements are made up of individuals in large societies who feel insignificant or socially detached. Social movements, according to this theory, provide a sense of empowerment and belonging that the movement members would otherwise not have.

**Structural strain theory**

Social strain theory, also known as value-added theory, proposes six factors that encourage social movement development.

1. structural conduciveness - people come to believe their society has problems
2. structural strain - people experience deprivation
3. growth and spread of a solution - a solution to the problems people are experiencing is proposed and spreads
4. precipitating factors - discontent usually requires a catalyst to turn it into a social movement
5. lack of social control - the entity that is to be changed must be at least somewhat open to the change; if the social movement is quickly and powerfully repressed, it may never materialize
6. mobilization - this is the actual organizing and active component of the movement; people do what needs to be done

**Resource mobilization theory**

Resource mobilization theory emphasizes the importance of resources in social movement development and success. Resources are understood here to include: knowledge, money, media, labor, solidarity, legitimacy, and internal and external support from power elite. The theory argues that social movements develop when individuals with grievances are able to mobilize sufficient
resources to take action. The emphasis on resources offers an explanation why some discontented/deprived individuals are able to organize while others are not.

**Political process theory**

Political process theory is similar to resource mobilization in many regards, but tends to emphasize a different component of social structure that is important for social movement development: political opportunities. Political process theory argues that there are three vital components for movement formation: insurgent consciousness, organizational strength, and political opportunities. Insurgent consciousness refers back to the ideas of deprivation and grievances. The idea is that certain members of society feel like they are being mistreated or that somehow the system is unjust. The insurgent consciousness is the collective sense of injustice that movement member’s Organizational strength falls in line with resource-mobilization theory, arguing that in order for a social movement to organize it must have strong leadership and sufficient resources. Political opportunity refers to the receptivity or vulnerability of the existing political system to challenge. This vulnerability can be the result of any of the following:

- growth of political pluralism
- decline in effectiveness of repression
- elite disunity
- a broadening of access to institutional participation in political processes
- support of organized opposition by elites

**Framing Theory**

While both resource mobilization theory and political process theory include, the idea that certain shared understandings of, for example, perceived unjust societal conditions must exist for mobilization to occur at all, and this is not explicitly problematized within those approaches. The framing perspective has brought such shared understandings to the forefront of the attempt to understand movement creation and existence by, e.g., arguing that, in order for social movements to successfully mobilize individuals, they must develop an injustice frame. An injustice frame is a collection of ideas and symbols that illustrate both how significant the problem is as well as what the movement can do to alleviate it.

**Free-rider problem**

In emphasizing the injustice frame, culture theory also addresses the free-rider problem. The free-rider problem refers to the idea that people will not be motivated to participate in a social movement that will use up their personal resources if they can still receive the benefits without participating. In other words, if person X knows that movement Y is working to improve environmental conditions in his neighborhood; he is presented with a choice: join or not join the movement. If he believes the movement will succeed without him, he can avoid participation in the
movement, save his resources, and still reap the benefits. This phenomenon is called free-riding. A significant problem for social movement theory has been to explain why people join movements if they believe the movement can/will succeed without their contribution. Culture theory argues that, in conjunction with social networks being an important contact tool, the injustice frame will provide the motivation for people to contribute to the movement.

**New Social movement and social networking**

From 1990’s onwards social movement groups have been using the Internet to accomplish organizational goals. It has been argued that the Internet helps to increase the speed, reach and effectiveness of social movement-related communication as well as mobilization efforts, and as a result, it has been suggested that the Internet has had a positive impact on the social movements in general.

Many discussions have been generated recently on the topic of social networking and the effect it may play on the formation and mobilization of social movement. For example, the emergence of the Coffee Party first appeared on the social networking site, Facebook. The party has continued to gather membership and support through that site and file sharing sites, such as Flickr. The 2009–2010 Iranian election protests also demonstrated how social networking sites are making the mobilization of large numbers of people quicker and easier. Iranians were able to organize and speak out against the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad by using sites such as Twitter and Facebook. This in turn prompted widespread government censorship of the web and social networking sites.

The use of new communication technologies provide better platform for new social movements. This is well evidenced with the Philippine ‘Smart Mob’ of 2001. On January 17, 2001, during the impeachment trial of Philippine President Joseph Estrada, loyalists in the Philippine congress voted to set aside the key evidence against him. Less than two hours after the decision was announced, thousands of Filipinos, angry that their corrupt president might be left off the hook, converged in Manila. The protest was arranged, in part, by forwarded text messages reading, “GO 2EDSA, WEAR Blk”. The crowd quickly swelled, and in the next few days, over a million people arrived, choking traffic in Manila. It is estimated that Seven million messages were sent within a week. Despite of the supportive attitude of the Congress the president was sent out of power within three days.

The Arab springs is another classical example of new social movements which uses modern technologies. The term Arab springs is used to denote the popular uprisings in Middle East since 2011. For forty years or more the pace of change in the Middle East has been very slow. Throughout the years there were unexposed desire for democratic reforms and freedoms in the region. But the desperate act of a 26-year old street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, who set himself on fire in Tunisia in December 2011, triggered the astonishing train of events that led to the overturn of many regimes in the region. The tides are yet to settle and many states and leaders are afraid of a trickling bomb that may explode at any time. The popular upraising was not limited to Egyptian borders but extended to neighboring states.
The Arab revolutions that were commonly called as Arab Springs had certain common characters. The demonstrations are largely driven by younger citizens, using cell phones and social networking websites to circumvent state controls. New social media was also widely used to invoke public support. There was no visible leadership in many of these essentially grass roots movements.

**New Social Movements and Gandhism**

Gandhian principles of action provide an alternative framework by emphasizing social harmony, nonviolence, moral and ethical values of action, and rejecting the euro centric view of development and, more specifically western science and technology. It is possible to differentiate two distinct theoretical premises of the Gandhian approach to social action - constructivist and sarvodayite. While the constructivist have inspired development oriented social action groups, the sarvodayite have promoted struggle oriented ones. The constructivists believe in the self-sufficiency of villages that can be attained through greater prosperity and which in turn can be achieved through adopting various developmental programmes. They view the state as their ally in this effort and believe that the state can play a beneficial role in the upliftment of the poorest. A collaborative effort is hence always desirable. They are to be seen as attempts to open alternative political spaces outside the usual arenas of party and government though not outside the state. Rather, these new forms of organization and struggle are meant to rejuvenate the state and to make it once again an instrument of liberation from exploitative structure, in which the underprivileged and poor are trapped.

The impact of Gandhi on the new social movements has been significant. Gandhian influences can be traced to many important civic initiatives, movements and organizations around Third World liberation, peace and non-violence, international solidarity, the environment and democracy. The influence of Gandhian and Indian popular movements on other societies is of global interest.

The freedom struggle of India set an example for the whole of the colonized world in Africa, Asia and Latin America. A central question in the struggles was the means, especially the role of armed struggle. Gandhi addressed these issues already in his book Hind Swaraj in 1909, taking very strong stand against violence and for ahimsa. Based on his experiences with satyagraha in South Africa, he was able to outline the basic elements of the active non-violent struggle also. The ideas and practices of the support groups inspired by Gandhi for the freedom of India served as models for future solidarity campaigns all the way to the transformation of South Africa in the 1990s from apartheid to democracy. The Gandhian non-violent freedom struggle inspired many Europeans and engaged them in various support activities.

After the Second World War and Indian independence, also the Gandhian methods of social change found their way to the practices of European popular movements. What would bring mass participation to new popular movements were the four Gandhian and Indian inspirations simultaneously being introduced in a large scale. The four inspirations were
1, Boycotts against oppressive regimes,
2, Padyatras or long marches linked to direct action,
3, Intervention by direct nonviolent intervention in conflicts
4, Mass support for constructive programmes to give humanitarian support

New Social movements in India

In recent years in India, a number of social movements emerged. These movements are varying in nature and methods. However, they do have a substantial shared ideology. The following are some shared characteristics.

1. They claim to represent the people – the downtrodden Indian masses.
2. Most of these movements are against the demerits of globalization.
3. They claim to be fighting for oppressed groups such as Dalits and Adivasis.
4. They oppose the state as well as large corporations and large funding agencies such as the World Bank. They also oppose large-scale projects. They claim to be fighting for the protection of the environment.
5. They criticize the mainstream industrialized, corporate West.
6. The new movements reject universal indices of measuring development and progress such as GDP, life expectancy, child mortality, literacy rate, etc. Rather, they argue in favor of subjective and local yardsticks.

Liberal Approach

The liberal approach views the new social movements as a part of the larger freedom project. The individual and his groups demands larger autonomy and liberty. According to the liberal approach most of the modern social movements are directed to claim for rights and social goods. The target of the movements are the state which is being criticized for being in effective or unattentive to citizen needs. Democracy is another focal point of these movements. The demand is for better deliberations and democratic environments. The liberal thinkers argue that these movements are a sign of the ineffectiveness in the democratic mechanism. It can be well settled with effective institutional structures. Many of these modern movements are thus seem to be reformative demands.

Marxist view

Marxism as an ideology and theory of social change has had an immense impact on the practice and the analysis of social movements. Marxism arose from an analysis of movements structured by conflicts between industrial workers and their capitalist employers in the 19th century. In the twentieth century a variety of neo-Marxist theories have been developed that have
opened themselves to adding questions of race, gender, environment, and other issues to an analysis centered in political economic conditions. Marxist approaches have been and remain influential ways of understanding the role of political economy and class differences as key forces in many historical and current social movements, and they continue to challenge approaches that are limited by their inability to imagine serious alternatives to consumer capitalist social structures.

**Postmodernism and social movement**

In the 18th century, the Age of Enlightenment ushered in new ways of thinking in Europe and America. Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine and Voltaire sought to discard irrationality, superstition, and inherited dogmas with reason, science and rationality, and believed that systematic thinking should be applied to all spheres of human activity. Since then, many important intellectuals have accepted the basic values of the Enlightenment. These values represent “modernity” and form the basis of the rationalist scientific-technological outlook and the each-citizen-is-equal principles that lie at the foundation of the Western democracies. The Constitution of India, adopted in 1950, lies very much in the Enlightenment tradition.

Postmodernism denounces Enlightenment’s claim to universality. Postmodernists – like Ashis Nandy,– hold that acceptance of Enlightenment ideas represents a “colonization of the mind”. They reject the idea that the spread of rationality and scientific temper are emancipatory, and instead argue for the preservation of “local knowledge systems” embedded in “traditional cosmologies”, religions, and traditional practices of agriculture, medicine, etc.

The postmodernists views new social movements as an arena of new identities against the fundamentals of enlightenment. To them many of these movements were attempts to break out from the colonialization of mind and a trial to new emancipation. It happens in two directions. Firstly many of these movements are locally organized to attend the immediate issues of the community. Secondly it misses the universality in ideology and action.
MODULE 2:
ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

CHIPKO MOVEMENT

NARMADA BACHAVO ANDOLAN (NBA)

ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN KERALA:
- SILENT VALLEY MOVEMENT
- MOVEMENT AGAINST POLLUTION IN RIVER CHALIYAR
- MOVEMENT AGAINST ENDSULFAN
- MOVEMENT AGAINST COCA COLA

INTRODUCTION

India is a country blessed with abundant natural resources. There are large areas of forests which are inhabited by rare species of animal life. The country is also having many rivers which provides livelihood for a considerable number of people including the adivasies. However, these natural resources were a favorite prey for the vested interests in the state. They exploited the nature without any social concerns. This resulted in larger issues of development and displacement. With the endangered nature, the dependant population also faces many threats. Many of these threatened communities were also marginalized groups including the poor and adivasies. Their inability to fight against the mighty interests also accelerated the environmental exploitation and degradation.

The environmental movements in India were of special significance in the history of new social movements in India. These movements can be classified as new social movements because of their following characteristics;

1. The movements were addressing novel issues like environmental degradation
2. The movements were massive with the active participation of marginalized groups
3. The demands of the new movements were novel in the sense that it demanded right to livelihood and rights of displaced
4. The environmental movements adapted non-violent strategy
5. The movements incorporated hitherto unrepresented sectors of society including adivasies, women and the marginalized.
6. Many of the new environmental movements forced the governments to take affirmative policies in the form of new laws and provisions.

CHIPKO MOVEMENT

The Chipko movement is a movement that practiced the Gandhian methods of satyagraha and non-violent resistance, through the act of hugging trees to protect them from being felled. The modern Chipko movement started in the early 1970s in the Garhwal Himalayas of Uttarakhand...
state. The landmark event in this struggle took place on March 26, 1974, when a group of peasant women in Reni village, Hemwalghati, in Chamoli district, Uttarakhand, acted to prevent the cutting of trees and reclaim their traditional forest rights that were threatened by the contractor system of the state Forest Department. Their actions inspired hundreds of such actions at the grassroots level throughout the region. By the 1980s the movement had spread throughout India and led to formulation of people-sensitive forest policies, which put a stop to the open felling of trees in regions as far reaching as Vindhyas and the Western Ghats.

**Ecofeminism and Chipko**

Today, beyond the eco-socialism hue, chipco movement is described as an ecofeminism movement. Women were its mainstay, because they were the ones most affected by the rampant deforestation, which led to a lack of firewood and fodder as well as water for drinking and irrigation. Over the years they also became primary stakeholders in a majority of the afforestation work that happened under the Chipko movement. In 1987 the Chipko Movement was awarded the Right Livelihood Award.

**The History of the movement**

The Himalayan region had always been exploited for its natural wealth including minerals and timber. The end of the nineteenth century saw the implementation of new approaches in forestry, coupled with reservation of forests for commercial forestry, causing disruption in the age-old symbiotic relationship between the natural environment and man. Notable protests in 20th century were that of 1906, followed by the 1921 protest which was linked with the independence movement imbued with Gandhian ideologies. The 1940s was again marked by a series of protests in Tehri Garhwal region.

In 1962 India met with heavy losses in India-China War. Though the region was not involved in the war directly, the government, cautioned by its losses and war casualties, took rapid steps to secure its borders, set up army bases, and build road networks deep into the upper reaches of Garhwal on India’s border with Chinese-ruled Tibet, an area which was until now all but cut off from the rest of the nation. However, with the construction of roads and subsequent developments came mining projects for limestone, magnesium, and potassium. Timber merchants and commercial foresters now had access to land.

Soon, the forest cover started deteriorating at an alarming rate, resulting in hardships for those involved in labour-intensive fodder and firewood collection. This also led to deterioration in the soil conditions, and soil erosion in the area as the water sources dried up in the hills. Water shortages became widespread. Subsequently, communities gave up raising livestock, which added to the problems of malnutrition in the region. This crisis was heighten by the fact that forest conservation policies, like the Indian Forest Act, 1927, traditionally restricted the access of local communities to the forests, resulting in scarce farmlands in an over-populated and extremely poor area, despite all of its natural wealth. Thus the sharp decline in the local agrarian economy lead to a migration of people into the plains in search of jobs, leaving behind several de-populated villages in the 1960s.
Environmental Awareness

By this time an ecological awareness was slowly developing in the area. It resulted in the growth of political activism in the region. The year 1964 saw the establishment of Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh (DGSS) set up by Gandhian social worker, Chandí Prasad Bhatt in Gopeshwar, and inspired by Jayaprakash Narayan and the Sarvodaya movement, with an aim to set up small industries using the resources of the forest. Their first project was a small workshop making farm tools for local use. Its name was later changed to Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh in the 1980s. Here they had to face restrictive forest policies, as well as the "contractor system", in which these pieces of forest land were commodified and auctioned to big contractors, usually from the plains, who brought along their own skilled and semi-skilled laborers, leaving only the menial jobs like hauling rocks for the hill people. On the other hand, the hill regions saw an influx of more people from the outside, which only added to the already strained ecological balance.

Hastened by increasing hardships, the Garhwal Himalayas soon became the centre for a rising ecological awareness of how reckless deforestation had denuded much of the forest cover, resulting in the devastating Alaknanda River floods of July 1970, when a major landslide blocked the river and affected an area starting from Hanumanchatti, near Badrinath to 350 km downstream till Haridwar, further numerous villages, bridges and roads were washed away. Thereafter, incidences of landslides and land subsidence became common in an area which was experiencing a rapid increase in civil engineering projects.

Public Protests

Soon villagers, especially women, started organizing themselves under several smaller groups, taking up local causes with the authorities, and standing up against commercial logging operations that threatened their livelihoods. In October 1971, the Sangh workers held a demonstration in Gopeshwar to protest against the policies of the Forest Department. More rallies and marches were held in late 1972, but too little effect, until a decision to take direct action was taken. The first such occasion occurred when the Forest Department turned down the Sangh’s annual request for ten ash trees for its farm tools workshop, and instead awarded a contract for 300 trees to Simon Company, a sporting goods manufacturer in distant Allahabad. In March, 1973, the lumbermen arrived at Gopeshwar, and after a couple of weeks, they were confronted at village Mandal on April 24, 1973, where about hundred villagers and DGSS workers were beating drums and shouting slogans, thus forcing the contractors and their lumbermen to retreat. This was the first confrontation of the movement; The contract was eventually cancelled and awarded to the Sangh instead. By now, the issue had grown beyond the mere procurement of an annual quota of three ash trees, and encompassed a growing concern over commercial logging and the government’s forest policy, which the villagers saw as unfavorable towards them. The Sangh also decided to resort to tree-hugging, or Chipko, as a means of non-violent protest.

The struggle was repeated in Phata forest, 80 km away from Gopeshwar. Here again, due to local opposition, starting on June 20, 1973, the contractors retreated after a stand-off that lasted a few days. Thereafter, the villagers of Phata and Tarsali formed a vigil group and watched over the
trees. The final flash point began a few months later, when the government announced an auction scheduled in January, 1974, for 2,500 trees near Reni village, Bhatt set out for the villages in the Reni area, and incited the villagers, who decided to protest against the actions of the government by hugging the trees. Over the next few weeks, rallies and meetings continued in the Reni area. On March 26, 1974, the day the lumbermen were to cut the trees, the men of the Reni village and DGSS workers were in Chamoli, diverted by state government and contractors to a fictional compensation payment site, while back home labourers arrived by the truckload to start logging operations. A local girl, Gaura Devi led 27 of the village women to the site and confronted the loggers. When all talking failed, and instead the loggers started to shout and abuse the women, threatening them with guns, the women resorted to hugging the trees to stop them from being felled. The women kept an all-night vigil guarding their trees from the cutters till a few of them relented and left the village. The next day, when the men and leaders returned, the news of the movement spread to the neighboring Laata and others villages including Henwalghati, and more people joined in. Eventually only after a four-day stand-off, the contractors left.

State Interventions

The news of protest soon reached the state capital. The then state Chief Minister, HN Bahuguna, set up a committee to look into the matter, which eventually ruled in favour of the villagers. This became a turning point in the history of eco-development struggles in the region and around the world. The struggle soon spread across many parts of the region, and such spontaneous stand-offs between the local community and timber merchants occurred at several locations, with hill women demonstrating their new-found power as non-violent activists. As the movement gathered shape under its leaders, the name Chipko Movement was attached to their activities. The term Chipko, means to stick.

Over the next five years the movement spread to many districts in the region, and within a decade throughout the Uttarakhand Himalayas. Larger issues of ecological and economic exploitation of the region were raised. The villagers demanded that no forest-exploiting contracts should be given to outsiders and local communities should have effective control over natural resources like land, water, and forests. They wanted the government to provide low-cost materials to small industries and ensure development of the region without disturbing the ecological balance. The movement took up economic issues of landless forest workers and asked for guarantees of minimum wage. Globally Chipko demonstrated how environment causes, up until then considered an activity of the rich, were a matter of life and death for the poor, who were all too often the first ones to be devastated by an environmental tragedy.

Role of women

Women’s participation in the Chipko agitation was a very novel aspect of the movement. The forest contractors of the region usually doubled up as suppliers of alcohol to men. Women held sustained agitations against the habit of alcoholism and broadened the agenda of the movement to cover other social issues. The movement achieved a victory when the government issued a ban on felling of trees in the Himalayan regions for fifteen years in 1980 by then Prime Minister Indira
Gandhi, until the green cover was fully restored. One of the prominent Chipko leaders, Gandhian Sunderlal Bahuguna, took a 5,000-kilometre trans-Himalaya foot march in 1981–83, spreading the Chipko message to a far greater area. Gradually, women set up cooperatives to guard local forests, and also organized fodder production at rates conducive to local environment. Next, they joined in land rotation schemes for fodder collection, helped replant degraded land, and established and ran nurseries stocked with species they selected.

The major figures of the movement were Gaura Devi, Sudesh Devi, Bachni Devi, Chandi Prasad Bhatt, Sundarlanl Bahuguna, Govind Singh Rawat, Dhoom Singh Negi, Shamsher Singh Bisht and Ghanasyam Raturi. Chandi Prasad Bhatt was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1982, and Sundarlanl Bahuguna was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2009.

Significance of the movement

The Chipko movement, occurred at a time when there was hardly any environmental movement in the developing world. The world immediately took notice of this non-violent movement, which was to inspire in time many such eco-groups. It helped to slow down the rapid deforestation, expose vested interests, increase ecological awareness, and demonstrate the viability of people power. Above all, it stirred up the existing civil society in India, which began to address the issues of tribal and marginalized people.

Chipko was actually not limited to the Himalayan forest issues. In Tehri district, Chipko activists moved against the limestone mining in the Doon Valley (Dehra Dun) in the 1980s. Finally quarrying was banned after years of agitation by Chipko activists, followed by a vast public drive for afforestation. Also in the 1980s, activists like Bahuguna protested against construction of the Tehri dam on the Bhagirathi River, which went on for the next two decades, before founding the Beej Bachao Andolan, the Save the Seeds movement, that continues to the present day.

Chipko activists started working a socio-economic revolution by winning control of their forest resources from the hands of a distant bureaucracy which is only concerned with the selling of forestland for making urban-oriented products. The Chipko movement became a benchmark for socio-ecological movements in other forest areas of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar; in September 1983, Chipko inspired a similar, Appiko movement in Karnataka state of India, where tree felling in the Western Ghats and Vindhyas was stopped. In Kumaon region, Chipko took on a more radical tone, combining with the general movement for a separate Uttarakhand state, which was eventually achieved in 2000. In recent years, the movement not only inspired numerous people to work on practical programmes of water management, energy conservation, afforestation, and recycling, but also encouraged scholars to start studying issues of environmental degradation and methods of conservation in the Himalayas and throughout India.

Narmada Bachao Andolan

Narmada BachavoAndolan is a social movement consisting of tribal people, adivasis, farmers, environmentalists and human rights activists against the Sardar Sarovar Dam being built across the Narmada river, in Their mode of campaign includes hunger strikes and garnering support
from noted film and art personalities. Narmada Bachao Andolan, together with its leading spokespersons Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, were the 1991 recipient of the Right Livelihood Award.

The Origin of the Problem

During 1947 the Government of India conducted investigations to evaluate mechanisms in utilizing water from the Narmada river, which flows into the Arabian Sea. The Narmada river passes through the states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. These states raised their demands for right share of Narmada river water. Due to inter-state differences in implementing schemes and sharing of water, the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal was constituted by the Government of India on October 6, 1969. This Tribunal investigated the matters referred to it and responded after more than 10 years. On December 12, 1979, the decision as given by the Tribunal, with all the parties at dispute binding to it, was released by the Indian Government.

The tribunal decided that 30 major, 135 medium, and 3000 small dams, were to be constructed in the river. It also suggested that the height of the dam should be raised. In 1985, after hearing about the Sardar Sarovar dam, Medha Patkar, a social activist and her colleagues visited the project site and noticed the project work being shelved due to an order by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. The reasons for this were cited as "non-fulfillment of basic environmental conditions and the lack of completion of crucial studies and plans". What she noticed was that the people who were going to be affected were given no information. Due to this, the villagers had many questions right from why their permission was not taken to whether a good assessment on the ensuing destruction was taken. Furthermore, the officials related to the project had no answers to their questions. While World Bank, the financing agency for this project, came into the picture, Patkar approached the Ministry of Environment to seek clarifications. She realized that the project was not sanctioned at all. After several studies, they realized that the officials had overlooked the post-project problems. Through Patkar's channel of communication between the government and the residents, she provided critiques to the project authorities and the governments involved. At the same time, her group realized that all those displaced were only given compensation for the immediate standing crop and not for displacement and rehabilitation. So she initiated the struggle.

Major groups in the struggle

The Narmada Bachao Andolan was led by groups such as Gujarat-based Arch-Vahini (Action Research in Community Health and Development) and Narmada Asargrastha Samiti (Committee for people affected by the Narmada dam), Madhya Pradesh-based Narmada Ghati Nav Nirman Samiti (Committee for a new life in the Narmada Valley) and Maharashtra-based Narmada Dharangrastha Samiti (Committee for Narmada dam-affected people) who either believed in the need for fair rehabilitation plans for the people or who vehemently opposed dam construction despite a resettlement policy. While Medha Patkar established Narmada Bachao Andolan in 1989, all these groups joined this national coalition of environmental and human rights activists, scientists, academics and project-affected people with a non-violent approach. With the support of
these groups Medha Patkar undertook a 22 day fast that almost took her life. In 1991, her actions led to an independent review by the World Bank. The Morse Commission, appointed in June 1991 at the recommendation of The World Bank President Barber Coinable, conducted its first independent review of a World Bank project. This independent review stated that performance under these projects has fallen short of Bank policies. This resulted in the Indian Government pulling out of its loan agreement with the World Bank. The World Bank's participation in these projects was eventually cancelled in 1995. She further undertook a similar fast in 1993 and resisted evacuation from the dam site.

**Supreme Court verdict**

The Supreme Court initially ruled the decision in the Andolan's favor thereby affecting an immediate stoppage of work at the dam and directing the concerned states to first complete the rehabilitation and replacement process. Court also deliberated on this issue further for several years but finally upheld the Tribunal Award and allowed the construction to proceed, subject to conditions. The court introduced a mechanism to monitor the progress of resettlement.

**Silent Valley Project**

Save Silent Valley was a social movement aimed at the protection of Silent valley, an evergreen tropical forest in the Palakkad district of Kerala. It was started in 1973 to save the Silent Valley Reserve Forest from being flooded by a hydroelectric project. The valley was declared as Silent Valley National Park in 1985.

**History of the movement**

The Kuntipuzha is a major river that flows 15 km southwest from Silent Valley. It takes its origin in the green forests of Silent valley. In 1928 the location at Sairandhri on the Kunthipuzha River was identified as an ideal site for electricity generation. A study and survey was conducted in 1958 of the area about the possibility of a hydroelectric project of 120 MV and one costing Rs. 17 Crore was later proposed by the Kerala State Electricity Board. The Kerala State Electricity Board decided to implement the Silent Valley Hydro-Electric Project centered on a dam across the Kunthipuzha River in 1973. The resulting reservoir would have flood a large area of virgin rainforest. The proposal was enquired by National Committee on Environmental Planning and Coordination (NCEPC) and suggested 17 safeguards to be implemented in case the project implemented. A shortage of funds delayed activity. From 1974 to 1975 a very large number of trees were felled in the area. KSEB announced its plan to begin dam construction in 1973.

After the announcement of dam construction the valley became the focal point of "Save Silent Valley", India's fiercest environmental debate of the decade. Because of concern about the endangered lion-tailed macaque, the issue was brought to public attention. Romulus Whitaker, founder of the Madras Snake Park and the Madras Crocodile Bank, was probably the first person to draw public attention to the small and remote area. In 1977 the Kerala Forest Research Institute carried out an Ecological Impact study of the Silent Valley area and proposed that the area be declared a Biosphere Reserve.
In 1978 Smt. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, approved the project, with the condition that the State Government enact Legislation ensuring the necessary safeguards. In the same year the IUCN passed a resolution recommending protection of Lion-tailed Macaques in Silent Valley and Kalakkad and the controversy heated up. In 1979 the Government of Kerala passed Legislation regarding the Silent Valley Protection Area (Protection of Ecological balance Act of 1979) and issued a notification declaring the exclusion of the Hydroelectric Project Area from the proposed National Park.

The major players

Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP) effectively aroused public opinion on the requirement to save Silent Valley. They also published a Techno-economic and Socio-Political assessment report on the Silent Valley Hydroelectric project. The poet activist Sugathakumari played an important role in the silent valley protest and her poem "Marathinu Stuthi" (Ode to a Tree) became a symbol for the protest from the intellectual community and was the opening song/prayer of most of the "save the Silent Valley" campaign meetings. Dr. Salim Ali, eminent ornithologist of the Bombay Natural History Society, visited the Valley and appealed for cancellation of the Hydroelectric Project. A petition of writ was filed before the High Court of Kerala, against the clear cutting of forests in the Hydroelectric Project area and the court ordered a stop to the clear cutting. Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, the renowned Agricultural Scientist, and then Secretary to the Department of Agriculture, called at the Silent Valley region and he suggested that the reserve forests in the area should be made into a National Rainforest Biosphere Reserve, with the aim of preventing erosion of valuable genes from the area.

Silent Valley National Park.

In January 1980 the High Court of Kerala lifted the ban on clear cutting, but then the Prime Minister of India requested the Government of Kerala to stop further works in the project area until all aspects were fully discussed. In December, the Government of Kerala declared the Silent Valley area, excluding the Hydroelectric Project area, as a National Park.

In 1982 a multidisciplinary committee with Prof. M. G. K. Menon as chairman, was created to decide if the Hydroelectric Project was feasible without any significant ecological damage. In 1983, Prof. Menon's Committee submitted its report. After a careful study of the Menon report, the Prime Minister of India decided to abandon the Project. On November 15, 1984 the Silent Valley forests were declared as a National Park.

Ten months later, on September 7, 1985 the Silent Valley National Park was formally inaugurated and a memorial at Sairandhri to Indira Gandhi was unveiled by Rajiv Gandhi, the new Prime Minister of India. On September 1, 1986 Silent Valley National Park was designated as the core area of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. Since then, a long-term conservation effort has been undertaken to preserve the Silent Valley ecosystem.
MOVEMENTS AGAINST POLLUTION IN RIVER CHALIYAR

The struggle against water pollution in Chaliyar river is one of the significant environmental struggles in Kerala. Chaliyar River originates in the Western Ghats and flows through Malappuram district for most of its length. The river has deeply influenced the culture, custom and the lives of the people in Malappuram and Calicut district. Chaliyar river has been a means of transportation for the people since early times. Though agriculture was their major source of income, the river paved way for many other livelihood options for the people. Transportation of wood, fishing, boat services, etc were the other sources of livelihood. In the year 1963 Grasim Rayons was established in the area. They started producing pulp and viscose staple fiber at its Mavoor plant in Kerala.

The major issues that had emerged in the wake of setting up of Grasim Industries in this region included

1) Severe air and river water pollution

2) Health impacts and Environmental impacts of pollution

3) Loss of livelihood for people, mainly fishing and agriculture

4) Socio-political conflicts due to the various impacts of pollution

The struggle

Once the negative impacts of the industry started showing their signs, the agitation against the pollution started. Slowly, people in Mavoor and Vazhakad began realising the negative effects of air pollution and the dumping of untreated industrial waste into the river. These became the major points of contention because of the multiple links of water to various other aspects of life and livelihood. This further lead to escalation of agitation and protests against the industry. As pollution rose to dangerous levels local community could also see the incidence of diseases growing in the area. The number of cases of malformed babies multiplied, cancer, heart attacks, respiratory diseases, failing vision and retardation of mental faculties became quite common. During 1970s the conflict escalated further when the company failed to implement any pollution control measures. As the pollution problem increased the people of the area became restive and protests, demonstrations and submission of memorandum began. On the other hand the unit was facing operational problems due to dwindling river flow and the effluent and tidal water ingress began reaching the fresh water inlet of the unit. The company management found an easy solution to this by constructing bunds with sand bags at Elamaram, close to the factory. This resulted in tidal water ingress up to 20 km stretch of the river, mixing with effluent and forming a stagnant pool.

In 1974, an agreement was reached that the industry will treat effluent properly and discharge the treated effluent further downstream. All this while the company management kept denying any wrong doing and stating that they are treating the waste water within the prescribed limits. Yet, studies by 'Society for the Protection of Environment of Kerala' (SPEK) showed that the levels of hazardous metals like Mercury were very high in Chaliyar at Vazhakad and
Chungappalli. The conflict took another turn as it brought in the angle of trade unions versus the local community in the picture.

The state government during the initial periods supported the Grasim Rayons fully. The state government set up expert committees on the issue. However, these also remained largely ineffectual in implementing the envisaged solutions to the problem. In 1981 and 1995 KSPCB filed petitions to restrain the company from discharging effluents in the river. The court injunctions did not restrain the industry even a little bit as it went onto use unauthorized discharge outlets to pump effluents in the river.

The environmental groups played a very important role in shaping the struggle in the area. It is with their support and technical input that the community could prove scientifically what it already knew based on traditional knowledge and wisdom. Several studies, reports and scientific tests were carried out by these environmental groups to prove what the rural communities were saying the right thing. During this period a number of cancer deaths were reported from the area. Labour problems and technical problems haunted the working of the factory. This coincided with vehement opposition from the community. Finally the factory was shut down in the year 2001.

Ecologically, the region has suffered due to severe contamination from the Grasim pulp industries. The ecological impacts of contamination have manifested in various forms and it has changed the ecological surroundings of the area to a great extent by damaging the natural resources of the area. The river was the one which bore the maximum impacts of the dumping of pollutants in its water. The river ecology has been altered due to this reckless activity. This contamination of river water has led to death of large number of fish species in this stretch of the river. Even though after so many years since the factory has closed down, the river water has turned relatively clean than it was when the factory was operating. Yet, there are concerns that the pollutants still remain in the river water.

MOVEMENT AGAINST ENDOSULFAN

The struggle against the use of endosulfan and the struggle for compensation to the victims of endosulfan is one of the most serious social movement in the state of Kerala. Endosulfan is an insecticide, the use of which will badly affect the human life and environment. However this insecticide was widely used by the plantation corporation of Kerala in their cashew plantations in Kasargod. The corporation even sprayed the chemical from helicopters to control insects that attacks cashew trees. However the general public very soon became aware of the problem and started agitation. This resulted in the termination of endosulfan use. But the discontinuation of the use of chemical was not the end of the problem. It heavily degenerated the environment around the plantation. Water was contaminated, cancer death tolls raised to alarming numbers and genetical issues soon surfacing. Thus a new struggle for compensating the victims still going on in the state.

Enmakaje Panchayath in Kasrgod district was the worst affected area in the endosulphan episode. In this area, plantation corporation continued aerial spraying for 25 years. Earlier the people faced some minor health problems like suffocation. Later the social workers noted unusual abortion rates in human and animals. This was followed by the birth of many deformed babies.
Children became handicapped. Suicidal tendency and psychological problems were developed in many adults.

The environmental activists found that the plantation corporation never took any precautionary measures to reduce the impact of endosulfan spraying. They have made no studies in this connection. But due to the public opposition they were forced to stop the use of this dangerous chemical. The endosulfan movement gained support from major political parties. However it was led by environmentalists groups. Their continuous struggle helped to move the national and international community against endosulfan. Now the government of the state is seriously searching ways to compensate the victims. For this purpose peoples struggles are still going on.

**MOVEMENT AGAINST COCA COLA**

The movement against Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages Private Limited (HCBPL) at Plachimada in Palakkad district of Kerala is one of the notable environmental movements in Kerala. The Plachimada struggle, as it has come to be known, was emerged as a protest against pollution and depletion of groundwater by HCBPL. Later it was progressed into a struggle over rights to groundwater and its governance, opening up the fault lines in relevant laws governing groundwater. The official reports vehemently denied the allegation through weak arguments, but later confirmed the allegations against HCBPL and condemned them with the turn in the tide of the struggle and accumulation of evidence to the contrary. The major concerns in the Plachimada issue were;

1. Depleting ground water table due to over-exploitation by Coca-Cola
2) Decreasing water access to the local population for domestic as well as irrigation needs
3) Contamination of groundwater resources of the community
4) Hazardous solid waste disposal and distribution in the form of organic manure by Coca-Cola
5) Toxic contamination caused by organic manure produced using solid waste
6) Health impacts to local people

**Historical background**

The Coca-Cola of Atlanta, US, reentered in India in the year 1993 after being expelled from the country in 1977 when it failed to comply with the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) under which it was to reduce its equity stake. The Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Private, registered in1993 as a subsidiary of Coca-Cola, invested more than US$1 billion between1993 and 2003 establishing 27 wholly owned bottling operations supplemented by 17 franchisee-owned bottling operations and a network of 29 contract-packers to manufacture a range of products.

The HCCB (Coke) established its factory at Plachimada in Moolathara village of Perumatty panchayat in Chittoor taluk. Coke acquired 34.64acres, mostly paddy fields, in 1998. The
Perumatty panchayat granted a licence to Coke on January 25, 2003. The plant was commissioned to produce its popular brands such as Coca-Cola, Fanta, Sprite, and Thumps-Up. There were three lines of production. The KSPCB gave a permit to produce 5,61,000 liters of soft drink per day requiring 3.8 liters of water for a liter of soft drink. Thirty to forty per cent tribals, 10 per cent dalits and other communities make up the population in these seven worst-affected colonies, popularly known as “Plachimada” ever since the struggle emerged. Livelihood is largely agriculture based. Most of the STs and SCs, simply own land ranging from 1 to 10 cents used for dwelling. The major crops in the area were coconut, paddy, groundnut, vegetables, maize, mangoes, bananas, flowers and fodder grass. Plachimada, located in the rain shadow region of Western Ghats, depends on groundwater and canal irrigation.

The water issue

The October 16, 2001 agreement between the government and the Adivasi-Dalit Samara Samithy marked a watershed in the contemporary history of adivasi struggles. It was in this period of exuberance that the adivasis of Plachimada began associating the change in quality of ground water and the receding water table to the operation of the Coke plant. About 85 lorry loads of beverage products containing 550-600 cases each with each case containing 24 bottles left the factory premises daily. Six bore-wells and two open-wells in the factory compound sucked out some 0.8 to 1.5 million liters of water daily. Within two years, the people around the plant experienced problems that they had never encountered before, the receding of the water table and the drastic change in the quality of water spread around 1 to 1.5 km radius of the plant. Water shortage upset the agricultural operations. Water became unfit for human consumption and domestic use. The company sold the slurry and sludge waste as fertilizer to the unsuspecting farmers. Later it was given free to the local farmers. For three years, Coke dumped the sludge from the plant in open fields and even off loaded most of it to local farmers as manure/fertilizer. The people questioned the new developmental model and they started struggle.

The Plachimada struggle

The Plachimada struggle was launched by the ‘Coca-Cola Virudha Janakeeya Samara Samithy’ (Anti Coca-Cola Peoples Struggle Committee) on April 22, 2002 with a blockade by over 1,300 people, mostly adivasis, demanding that the plant be shut down as it was devastating their source of survival, that Coke be held fully responsible and liable for the destruction of the environment and their livelihood resources. They demanded criminal action against the company. The struggle soon became popular and large number of people enlisted for the movement. Coke filed a case on April 26, 2002 in the Kerala high court against the struggle committee demanding that the picket be dismantled and police protection be provided to the plant. The court conceded the right of people to protest peacefully and ordered the police to provide protection to both the plant and the protesters. In the earlier phase the struggle faced hostility and threat from the combined strength of the local political parties. The media also ignored the struggle or gave more credence to Coke’s version. Coke campaigned that the protests were “politically motivated”. Despite of all the odds the struggle continued with more and more energy. Many ordinary women became a part of
the struggle. Among them the name of mayilamma, a local women needs special mention. Very soon she became a symbol of the struggle.

The Plachimada agitation gained support from diverse sections, from society ranging from the Gandhians to the revolutionary left. They adapted many strategies including dharnas, blockades, sit-ins, marches, public rallies and meetings. People from all parts of the state joined the movement and thus it became one of the popular social struggles in the state. The Plachimada Solidarity Committee has drawn in some 32 organisations from across the state. Protests against Coke plants from other parts of the country also emerged. The media could no longer ignore the struggle. Coke then acknowledged that there indeed was a problem with the water for which they were not responsible. They offered drinking water, and started rainwater-harvesting programmes within and outside the plant. Coke itself had to organise water from elsewhere as the aquifers were depleted. With the struggle gaining popularity, the CPM, organised protests against Coke. JanataDal, which controlled the panchayat, also fell in line. Except the then ruling Congress Party, most of the small and large parties now vie with each other in declaring their opposition to Coke’s extraction of water. The boycott call of US-products caught popular imagination during the critical days of US-Iraq invasion.

Evidences against Cola

The water pollution in Plachimada was scientifically established as early as 2002. Laboratory reports proved that water from the panchayat well contains very high levels of “hardness” and salinity that would render water from this source unfit for human consumption, domestic use, and even for irrigation. The government primary health centre concluded that the water is “not potable “around the Coke factory and on the basis of the analysis carried out by the government’s regional analytical laboratory they asked the panchayat to ensure that the public be duly informed about the water situation.

In 2003 the Cola issue became an international issue with the BBC report on carcinogens found in the waste. The report evidenced high levels of two toxic metals, namely, cadmium and lead. Some other heavy metals, including nickel, chromium and zinc, were also present in soil and sludge. After the BBC report KSPCB ordered Coke to stop supplying the waste, recover all the waste transported outside and store them safely in the plant site. During this time the Centre for Science for Environment(CSE), New Delhi, reported that soft drinks, including that of Coca-Cola, tested for pesticides higher than the permissible level in the US and European Union. The Supreme Court Monitoring Committee on Hazardous Wastes (SCMC) visited Plachimada on August12, 2004. Its report of August 14, 2004 indicted Coke for the unauthorised disposal of sludge without prior approval of the authorities. The SCMC concluded that “the company will take quick measures to ensure water supplies to all the persons in the vicinity of the plant”.

The Hazards Centre, New Delhi and People’s Science Institute, Dehradun released a report on Plachimada, in June2006. According to the study Cadmium was found in all the wells together with lead and Chromium. The concentration was above the permissible level. Thus it was clearly established that total natural sources around the plant were contaminated.
Panchayath Action

By this time the Perumatty panchayat resolved to cancel the license issued to Coke under the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act and issued a show cause notice to the company. The Panchayat cancelled the license on May 15 and asked Coke to stop production. The high court asked Coke to approach the local self-government department which stayed the decision of the panchayat to cancel the licence on the grounds that the Panchayat had exceeded its powers under the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act. The KSPCB meanwhile ordered Coke to stop the supply of the waste due to the presence of cadmium beyond the permissible limit. The panchayat responded with a show cause notice to Coke which was challenged by Coke in the high court. The High court ordered that the panchayat was within their powers to refuse licence. Coke challenged the cancellation of the licence claiming that the decision to cancel licence was arbitrary. The court directed Coke to close all the bore wells and to stop extracting groundwater. Further, the government was asked to carry out elaborate investigations into all allegations related to water and contamination of water and land. The court held that groundwater was a public property held in trust by a government and it had no right to allow a private party to overexploit the resource.

Closing the Plant

In 2005, Coke filed an application to the panchayat for renewal of licence. The Struggle Committee and the Struggle Solidarity Committee declared that Coke would not be permitted to operate in Plachimada. On April 26, the panchayat rejected the application. Later on court directives the company was issued a three-month licence imposing conditions. The company was ready to accept the conditions and the plant was shut down in 2004. Consequently the government of Kerala banned manufacture and sale of Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola in all of Kerala in the interest of public health. However, criminal action against Coke for contamination of groundwater in Plachimada was yet to be undertaken despite mounting evidence. The state legislature of Kerala has passed a bill in this respect. But As on March 2014, the bill is still pending before the president of India.
MODULE-3

WOMEN’S MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Women’s Issues in India: Domestic Violence and Domestic Violence Act 2005
Women NGOs in India: SEVA (Self Employed Women’s Association and sakhi

Introduction

In India traditionally the women’s movements were less promoted and less heard of. The traditional society put many limitations on women’s freedom and liberties. Women’s movement in India can be divided into three waves or periods: the first wave saw social reform movements that began in the 19th century and mass mobilization of women in the national movement. After Independence, between 1950 and 1960, we find the growing legitimacy and power of the post-colonial state and various development plans that overpowered the other aspects of society. As a result, there was a lull in the various campaigning and political activities on the part of women.

The period from the late 1960s onward can be called the second wave, which saw the resurgence of political activity from women. The very futility of the economic policies by the government that led to growing unemployment and price rise in India led to mass uprising. In the 1960s, women dissatisfied with the status quo joined the struggles of the rural poor and industrial working class. The activities of women during this period included in the Participation in Naxalbari movement, anti-price-rise demonstrations, Navnirman Movement in Gujarat and Bihar, rural revolt in Dhule District in Maharashtra and Chipko.

But at the same time, with the splintering of the Indian left by the early 1970, there was a questioning of the earlier analysis of the revolution. The Shahada movement in the Dhulia District of Maharashtra saw an active participation of women who began to take action against physical violence associated with alcoholism. The period also saw the emergence of various women’s organizations which included urban middle-class women as well working women of various strata. The Self-Employed women’s Association (SEWA) and Working Women’s Forum in Madras were formed in this period. The phase of women’s struggle was associated with movements which were anti-feudal, anti-capitalist and anti-state in character as well as the beginning of women’s organization in the informal sectors apart from formal party lines.

While this second wave saw mass in popular upsurges against the government and the power structures in general, but the third wave, which can be said to emerge in the late 1970s, had a specific feminist focus. By the mid-1970s, devaluation of life had become an everyday experience for women. This point was driven home by the report on the status of women in India. The major difference that one could encounter in the women’s movement during the 1970s and more particularly in the mid-1980s is that we see women’s voice were raised not for freedom for all or in relation to questions of land or class issues but specifically for women; women as an autonomous group raised issues specific to them. Thus, the women’s movement during this period had participants that cut across class character and had women from elite, poor and middle class
sections. The issue that brought them together was not class but gender relations. Again, it does not mean that the class character vanished but rather it was given a new dimension, that is, women as a class was largely an economically dependent class- and that became an issue of protest. During this period the issue of violence against women became a focal point of many of these debates. The governments came with various legislations that protect women against private and public violence. These laws range from dowry prohibition act to act against domestic violence.

**Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence has been an intrinsic part of the society we are living in. The contributing factors could be the desire to gain control over another family member, the desire to exploit someone for personal benefits, the flare to be in a commanding position all the time showcasing one’s supremacy so on and so forth. On various occasions, psychological problems and social influence also add to the vehemence.

**Domestic Violence against Women**

Domestic violence against women is most common type of domestic violence. One of the reasons for it being so prevalent is the orthodox mindset of the society that women are physically and emotionally weaker than the males. Though women today have proved themselves in almost every field of life affirming that they are no less than men, the reports of violence against them are much larger. The possible reasons are many and are diversified over the length and breadth of the country. According to United Nation Population Fund Report, around two-third of married Indian women are victims of domestic violence and as many as 70 per cent of married women in India between the age of 15 and 49 are victims of beating, rape or forced sex. In India, more than 55 percent of the women suffer from domestic violence, especially in the states of Bihar, U.P., M.P. and other northern states.

The most common causes for women stalking and battering include dissatisfaction with the dowry and exploiting women for more of it, arguing with the partner, refusing to have sex with him, neglecting children, going out of home without telling the partner, not cooking properly or on time, indulging in extra marital affairs, not looking after in-laws etc. In some cases infertility in females also leads to their assault by the family members. The greed for dowry, desire for a male child and alcoholism of the spouse are major factors of domestic violence against women in rural areas. There have been gruesome reports of young bride being burnt alive or subjected to continuous harassment for not bringing home the amount of demanded dowry. The Tandoor Murder Case of Naina Sahni in New Delhi in the year 1995 is one such dreadful incident of a woman being killed and then burnt in a Tandoor by his husband. This incidence was an outcome of suspicion of extra marital affairs of Naina Sahni which led to marital discord and domestic violence against her.

In urban areas there are many more factors which lead to differences in the beginning and later take the shape of domestic violence. These include – more income of a working woman than her partner, her absence in the house till late night, abusing and neglecting in-laws, being more forward socially etc. Violence against young widows has also been on a rise in India. Most often
they are cursed for their husband’s death and are deprived of proper food and clothing. They are not
allowed or encouraged for remarriage in most of the homes, especially in rural areas. They are
brutally beaten and tortured for not conceiving a male child. Female foeticide and female
infanticide continue to be a rising concern.

A common Indian house wife has a tendency to bear the harassment she is subjected to by
her husband and the family. One reason could be to prevent the children from undergoing the
hardships if she separates from the spouse. Also the traditional and orthodox mindset makes them
bear the sufferings without any protest.

**Pattern of domestic Violence**

Domestic violence occurs in many forms ranging from physical violence to mental torture. Generally these violences are classified into four categories

1. Physical violence
2. Economic violence
3. Sexual violence
4. Emotional violence

**Physical violence**

Physical injury is the most visible form of domestic violence. The scope of physical
domestic/intimate partner violence includes slapping, pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, throwing
objects, strangling, beating, threatening with any form of weapon, or using a weapon. Worldwide,
the percentage of women who suffer serious injuries as a result of physical domestic violence tends
to range from 19% - 55%. Physical injuries as a result of domestic violence against women are
more obvious than psychological ones, and can be more easily discerned by health professionals as
well as courts of law in the context of legal prosecution.

**Economic Violence**

Economic violence is a dominant form of domestic violence in India. In this pattern of
violence women is denied of their economic freedom. They were allowed to have personal savings
or income. Economic decisions are taken by other members in the family. At times even basic
economic necessities were denied to women member in a family. This kind of violence is also
applicable to working women in the family as their income is collected and spent by other members
of family, mostly by husband. On the other hand they will have little say in the income and
spending of other members in the family including husband.

**Sexual Violence**

Sexual assault is another common form of domestic violence in India. Sexual violence can
include a range of forceful and non-forceful acts including unwanted kissing, touching, or fondling;
sexual/reproductive coercion; rape; and marital rape. In a 1995-1996 PubMed study conducted in Northern India, wife abuse appears to be fairly common throughout the region as a whole. 22% of the 6632 adult men surveyed reported sexually abusing their wife without physical force in at least one instance and 7% reported sexual abuse with physical force. Abuse was most common among men who also had extramarital affairs, and among those who had STD symptoms. Abusive sexual behaviors were also found to be correlated with an elevated rate of unplanned pregnancies. In 2013, a court in Mumbai ruled that depriving a woman of sex is a form of cruelty.

**Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse has been gaining more and more recognition in recent years as an incredibly common form of domestic violence (and therefore a human rights abuse) within the private home throughout developing nations such as India. Psychological abuse can erode a woman’s sense of self-worth and can be incredibly harmful to overall mental and physical wellbeing. Emotional/psychological abuse can include harassment; threats; verbal abuse such as name-calling, degradation and blaming; stalking; and isolation. Women who experience domestic violence overwhelmingly tends to have greater overall emotional distress, as well as disturbingly high occurrences of suicidal thoughts and attempts. According to a study by the National Centre for Biotechnology Information, suicide attempts in India are correlated with physical and psychological intimate partner violence.

**Consequences of Domestic Violence**

There are varied consequences of domestic violence depending on the victim, the age group, the intensity of the violence and frequency of the torment they are subjected to. Living under a constant fear, threat and humiliation are some of the feelings developed in the minds of the victims as a consequence of an atrocious violence. The consequences of the domestic violence in detail can be broadly categorised under the following categories

1 Effect on the victim himself/herself and the family

2, Effect on the society and the

3, Effect on nation’s growth and productivity.

**Effect on the victim and the family**

Battered women have tendency to remain quiet, agonized and emotionally disturbed after the occurrence of the torment. A psychological set back and trauma because of domestic violence affects women’s productivity in all forms of life. The suicide case of such victimized women is also a deadly consequence and the number of such cases is increasing. A working Indian woman may drop out from work place because of the ill-treatment at home or office, she may lose her inefficiency in work. Her health may deteriorate if she is not well physically and mentally. Some women leave their home immediately after first few atrocious attacks and try to become self-dependent. Their survival becomes difficult and painful when they have to work hard for earning two meals a day. Many such women come under rescue of women welfare organizations like
Women Welfare Association of India (WWAI), Affus Woman Welfare Association (AWWA) and Woman’s Emancipation and Development Trust (WEDT). Some of them who leave their homes are forcefully involved in women trafficking and pornography.

One of the severe effects of domestic violence against women is its effect on her children. It is nature’s phenomenon that a child generally has a greater attachment towards the mother for she is the one who gives birth. As long as the violence subjected to the mother is hidden from the child, he/she may behave normally at home. The day when mother’s grief and suffering is revealed, a child may become upset about the happening deeply. Children may not even comprehend the severity of the problem. They may turn silent, reserved and express solace to the mother. When the violence against women is openly done in front of them since their childhood, it may have a deeper and gruesome impact in their mindset. They get used to such happenings at home, and have a tendency to reciprocate the same in their lives. It’s common in especially in rural homes in India which are victimised by the evil of domestic violence.

In cases of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), violence against women leads them to maintain a distance from their partner. Their sexual life is affected adversely. Many of them file for divorce and seek separation which again affects the life of children. Some continue to be exploited in lack of proper awareness of human rights and laws of the constitution.

Effect on the society

All the different forms of violence adversely affect the society. Violence against women may keep them locked in homes succumbing to the torture they face. If they come out in open and reveal the wrong done to them for help and rescue, it influences the society both positively and negatively. At one hand where it acts as an inspiration and ray of hope for other suffering women, on the other hand it also spoils the atmosphere of the society. When something of this kind happens in the society, few families may witness the evil of domestic violence knocking their door steps. Some families try to imitate what others indulge in irrespective of it being good or bad for the family.

Effect on the productivity

Domestic violence affects the productivity level of the victim negatively. Men and women lose interest in household activities. If they are employed they fail to work with full capabilities in workplace. Children are found to concentrate less on studies. They drop out of school and do not get the education which otherwise they might have got if they were not tormented and thus the country loses a productive asset. Therefore, the nation’s productivity altogether gets affected because of domestic violence in homes. When old people are tortured and physically abused, they separate themselves from family members and their daily activities are restricted to themselves. The guardianship they can provide out of their experience, the moral values which they can instill in the grandchildren are all not done as they are unwanted in their own homes. People need to spend their part of income for medication when they are met with worse forms of domestic violence which again leads to loss in productive use of a family’s income. The cumulative effect of
the domestic violence at all levels and across all regions is the country’s hindered development and slow economic growth.

**Remedies for Domestic Violence**

A recent study has concluded that violence against women is the fastest-growing crime in India. According to a report prepared by India’s National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a crime has been recorded against women in every three minutes in India. Every 60 minutes, two women are raped in this country. Every six hours, a young married woman is found beaten to death, burnt or driven to suicide.

The response to the phenomenon of domestic violence is a typical combination of effort between law enforcement agencies, social service agencies, the courts and corrections/probation agencies. The role of all these has progressed over last few decades, and brought their activities in public view. Domestic violence is now being viewed as a public health problem of epidemic proportion all over the world – and many public, private and governmental agencies are seen making huge efforts to control it in India. There are several organizations all over the world – government and non government – actively working to fight the problems generated by domestic violence to the human community.

**Legislation against domestic violence**

Legislation is a major step to curb the menace of domestic violence. For this purpose the government of India has initiated much legislation including dowry prohibition act and protection against domestic violence act. In 1983, domestic violence was recognized as a specific criminal offence by the introduction of section 498-A into the Indian Penal Code. This section deals with cruelty by a husband or his family towards a married woman. The main legislative measures at the national level for the children who become a victim of child labor include The Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act -1986 and The Factories Act -1948. The first act was categorical in prohibiting the employment of children below fourteen years of age, and identified 57 processes and 13 occupations which were considered dangerous to the health and lives of children. The factories act again prohibits the employment of children less than fourteen years of age. The Government of India passed a Domestic Violence Bill, 2001, “To protect the rights of women who are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto” An act called Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 also has been passed”. This Act ensures the reporting of cases of domestic violence against women to a ‘Protection Officer’ who then prepares a Domestic Incident Report to the Magistrate.

**Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

In curbing domestic violence the non-governmental organization is also having a crucial role to play. There are many organizations and initiatives in the NGO sector to fight domestic violence. Sakshi – a violence intervention agency for women and children in Delhi works on cases of sexual assault, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse and domestic abuse and focuses on equality.
education. Women’s Rights Initiative – another organization in Delhi runs a legal aid cell for cases of domestic abuse and works in collaboration with law enforcers in the area of domestic violence. In Mumbai, bodies like Majlis and Swaadhar are doing meaningful works in this field. Sneha in Chennai and Vimochana in Bangalore are working on many women’s issues arising from domestic abuse. They are also doing active work in issues related to labour. Services ranging from counseling, education and outreach, giving provisions, and mobilizing them for gaining self-confidence are provided to them. Anweshi is a women’s counselling centre in Kozhikode providing meditation, resource and counselling for battered women. These NGOs continue to spread awareness amongst people regarding the legal rights they have in hand for fighting against the atrocities they are subjected to. They are encouraging more and more people to report any case of domestic violence so that proper action may be taken against the culprits.

Police and Health Care

Police plays a major role in tackling the domestic violence cases. They need to be sensitized to treat domestic violence cases as seriously as any other crime. Special training to handle domestic violence cases should be imparted to police force. They should be provided with information regarding support network of judiciary, government agencies/departments. Gender training should be made mandatory in the trainings of the police officers. There should be a separate wing of police dealing with women’s issues, attached to all police stations and should be excluded from any other duty.

Authorities should also take steps to recognize Domestic Violence as a public health issue. A crisis support cell needs to be established in all major Government and Private Hospitals with a trained medical social worker for provide appropriate services. Training programmes must be organized for health professionals in order to develop their skills to provide basic support for abused people. Documentation on the prevalence and the health consequences of domestic violence should be undertaken by the concerned government departments, health care institutions, NGOs and counselling centres.

Dowry system in India

Dowry issues contribute mostly to Domestic violence in India. Dowry is a cultural practice deeply rooted in many Indian communities, which is the money, goods, or property the woman/woman’s family brings to a marriage to now become under the ownership of the husband. This practice continues even today in India although banned by law since 1961, and in recent years dowry amounts have risen dramatically. The danger of dowry system includes not only common physical and emotional abuse such as hitting and continual degradation, but in some cases dowry death and bride burning as a result of the husband’s dissatisfaction with the dowry payment. As per the 2010 estimates, 8391 dowry deaths were reported in India. It shows a steep rise from 6995 such reported cases in 1997.
Domestic Violence Act 2005

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 was brought into force by the Indian government from October 26, 2006. The Act was passed by the Parliament in August 2005 and assented to by the President on 13 September 2005. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 differs from the earlier law, in that it explicitly defines domestic violence in addition to dowry-related cruelty. Domestic violence is defined as: habitually assaults or makes the life of the aggrieved person miserable by cruelty of conduct even if such conduct does not amount to physical ill-treatment; or (b) forces the aggrieved person to lead an immoral life; or (c) otherwise injures or harms the aggrieved person.

The act is mainly intended to provide protection to the wife or female live-in partner from domestic violence at the hands of the husband or male live-in partner or his relatives. However the law gives further extension to domestic violence by extending protection to women living in a household such as sisters, widows or mothers. Domestic violence under the act includes actual abuse or the threat of abuse whether physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic. Harassment by way of unlawful dowry demands to the woman or her relatives would also be covered under this definition.

Salient features of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act

The Act seeks to cover those women who are or have been in a relationship with the abuser where both parties have lived together in a shared household and are related by consanguinity, marriage or a relationship in the nature of marriage, or adoption. In addition to this relationship with family members living together as a joint family are also included. Even those women who are sisters, widows, mothers, single women, or living with the abuser are entitled to get legal protection under the Act. Domestic violence includes actual abuse or the threat of abuse that is physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic. Harassment by way of unlawful dowry demands to the woman or her relatives would also be covered under this definition.

Housing: One of the most important features of the Act is the woman’s right to secure housing. The Act provides for the woman’s right to reside in the matrimonial or shared household, whether or not she has any title or rights in the household. This right is secured by a residence order, which is passed by a court. These residence orders cannot be passed against anyone who is a woman.

Protection Order: The other relief envisaged under the Act is that of the power of the court to pass protection orders. This protection order is issued to prevent the abuser from aiding or committing an act of domestic violence or any other specified act. The aggressor is also prevented from entering a workplace or any other place frequented by the abused, attempting to communicate with the abused, isolating any assets used by both the parties and causing violence to the abused, her relatives and others who provide her assistance from the domestic violence.
Protection Officers: The Act against domestic violence provides for appointment of Protection Officers and NGOs to provide assistance to the woman. These officers will assist the victim for medical examination, legal aid, safe shelter, etc.

Punishment: The Act provides for punishment for violating the provisions of the act. The breach of protection order or interim protection order by the respondent as a cognizable and non-bailable offence punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to twenty thousand rupees or with both. Similarly, non-compliance or discharge of duties by the Protection Officer is also sought to be made an offence under the Act with similar punishment.

Economic abuse: The new act defines economic violence in clear terms and makes it a punishable offence under the act. Economic abuse includes deprivation of all or any economic or financial resources to which the victim is entitled under any law or custom. It is not limited to, household necessities for the aggrieved person and her children, but also includes, property, jointly or separately owned by her, payment of rental related to the shared household and maintenance and disposal of household effects, any alienation of assets, valuables, shares, securities, bonds and the like or other property in which the victim has an interest by virtue of the domestic relationship.

Grievance redressal

An application regarding domestic violence can be presented to the magistrate seeking reliefs mentioned in sections. The application can be filed by the aggrieved person, Protection officer on behalf of aggrieved person or by any other person on behalf of aggrieved person. The first class magistrate court or metropolitan court shall be the competent court to deal with the issue. Any order made under this Act shall be enforceable throughout India.

Every woman in a domestic relationship shall have the right to reside in the shared household. This is applicable irrespective of the fact that she has right, title or beneficial interest in it. The aggrieved person shall not be evicted from the shared household by the respondent without the procedure established by the law.

While disposing application the magistrate shall take in to consideration any domestic incident report received from the protection officer or service provider. Magistrate can issue different orders such as Protection order, residence order, monetary relief, custody order or compensatory orders as per the circumstances of the case.

The magistrate may direct the respondent to pay monetary relief to meet the expenses of the aggrieved person and any child as a result of domestic violence. This relief includes loss of earnings, medical expenses and loss caused due to destruction or removal or damage of any property. The magistrate can also pass order as to maintenance for the aggrieved person as well as her children if any.
SEVA (Self Employed Women’s Association)

Self Employed Women’s Association (SEVA) is a trade union registered in 1972. SEWA was founded in 1972 by the noted Gandhian and civil rights leader Ela Bhatt. SEWA’s main office is located in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, and it works in several states of India. SEWA had a membership of 966,139 in the year 2008. SEWA members are women who earn a living through their own labour or small business. They do not obtain regular salaried employment with welfare benefits like workers in the organized sector. They are the unprotected labour force of India. Constituting 93% of the labour force, these are workers of the unorganised sector. Of the female labour force in India, more than 94% are in the unorganised sector. However their work is not counted and hence remains invisible. In fact, women workers themselves remain uncounted, undercounted and invisible.

History of SEWA

The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) was founded in 1972 as a trade union of self-employed women. It grew out of the Textile Labour Association (TLA), India's oldest and largest union of textile workers founded in 1920 by Anasuya Sarabhai. The inspiration for the union came from Mahatma Gandhi, who led a successful strike of textile workers in 1917. He believed that by developing unity as well as personality, a worker should be able to hold his or her own against tyranny from employers or the state. In 1954 TLA formed its Women's Wing. Its original purpose was to assist women belonging to households of mill workers and its work was focused largely on training and welfare activities. By 1968, classes in sewing, knitting embroidery, spinning, press composition typing and stenography were established in centers throughout the city for the wives and daughters of mill workers. The scope of its activities expanded in the early 1970s when a survey was conducted to probe complaints by women tailors of exploitation by contractors. The survey brought out other instances of exploitation of women workers and revealed the large numbers untouched by government legislation and policies.

In 1971, a small group of migrant women working as cart-pullers in Ahmedabad's cloth market came to the TLA with their labour contractor. He had heard of a transport workers' union organized by the TLA and thought they might be able to help the women find some housing. At the time, the women were living on the streets without shelter. They were sent to see Ela Bhatt, the Head of Women's Wing. After talking with the women in her office, she went with them to the areas where they were living and to the market area where they were working. While there, she met another group of women who were working as head-loaders, carrying loads of clothes between the wholesale and retail markets. Following the meeting, Ela Bhatt wrote an article for the local newspaper and detailed the problems of the head-loaders. The cloth merchants countered the charges against them, denying the allegations and testifying to their fair treatment of the head-loaders. The Women's Wing turned the release of this story to their own advantage by reprinting the merchant's claims on the cards and distributing them to use as leverage with the merchants. Soon word of this effective ploy spread and a group of used garment dealers approached the Women's Wing with their own grievances. A public meeting of used garment dealers was called and over hundred women attended. During the meeting there was a suggestion to form an association of their own. Thus the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) was born in
December 1971. The women felt that as a workers' association, SEWA should establish itself as a Trade Union. This was a fairly novel idea, because the self-employed have no real history of organizing.

The first struggle SEWA undertook was obtaining official recognition as Trade Union. The Labour Department refused to register SEWA because they felt that since there was no recognized employer, the workers would have no one to struggle against. Finally, SEWA was registered as a Trade Union in April 1972. SEWA grew continuously from 1972, increasing in its membership and including more and more different occupations within its fold. The beginning of the Women's Decade in 1975 gave a boost to the growth of SEWA, placing it within the women's movement. In 1977, SEWA's General Secretary, Ela Bhatt, was awarded prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award and this brought international recognition to SEWA.

By 1981, relations between SEWA and TLA had deteriorated. TLA did not appreciate an assertive women's group in its midst. Also, the interests of TLA, representing workers of the organized sector often came into conflict with the demands of SEWA, representing unorganized women workers. The conflict came to a head in 1981 during the anti-reservation riots when members of higher castes attacked the Harijans (untouchables), many of whom were members of both TLA and SEWA. SEWA spoke out in defense of the Harijans (untouchables), whereas TLA remained silent. Because of this outspokenness, TLA threw out SEWA from its fold. After the separation from TLA, SEWA grew even faster and started new initiatives. In particular, the growth of many new co-operatives, a more militant trade union and many supportive services has given SEWA a new shape and direction.

Major Goals

The main goals of the organization are to organise women workers for full employment. Full employment means employment whereby workers obtain work security, income security, food security and social security. SEWA organises women to ensure that every family obtains full employment. The organization tries to make women autonomous and self-reliant, individually and collectively, both economically and in terms of their decision-making ability.

SEWA organise workers to achieve their goals of full employment and self reliance through the strategy of struggle and development. The struggle is against the many constraints and limitations imposed on them by society and the economy, while development activities strengthen women’s bargaining power and offer them new alternatives. Practically, the strategy is carried out through the joint action of union and cooperatives. Gandhian thinking is the guiding force for SEWA’s members in organising for social change.

SEWA Organisations

In order to realize the objectives SEWA is associated with many sister concerns. This includes:
SEWA Bank: In order to address the problem of lack of access to timely and efficient savings and credit facilities and to free themselves from the vicious cycle of eternal debt, SEWA members established a bank of their own. 4,000 women members of SEWA contributed share capital of Rs.10 each to establish the Mahila SEWA Co-operative Bank in May 1974.

SEWA Academy: SEWA Academy was created in 1991. It is the organizational wing responsible for basic membership education and for capacity building, leadership training, communications and research.

SEWA Communication: SEWA has also explored several channels to support members in their communication efforts. These include fortnightly news letter and monthly magazine for adolescent girls. SEWA also publishes an electronic newsletter. Video SEWA was established in 1984 as a means to provide training to the members of SEWA and to motivate, mobilize and strengthen the existing membership of SEWA through the use of video recordings and tapes.

SEWA Research: Credible, scientific based research has been a critical tool in SEWA’s advocacy efforts. Through research, SEWA strives to bring its members, the self-employed women, into the mainstream of the world of knowledge.

Gujarat State Women’s SEWA Co-operative Federation Ltd.: The Federation has concentrated in providing comprehensive training in cooperative education, marketing, management, record keeping, leadership and technical training. It also provides assistance in various areas of cooperative development.

Vimo SEWA: It is an integrated insurance program aiming to provide social protection for SEWA members to cover their life cycle needs and the various risks they face in their lives, through insurance.

SEWA Housing: In 1994, the Gujarat Mahila Housing SEWA Trust (MHT) was registered with the I objectives of improving the housing and infrastructure conditions of poor women in the informal sector.

SEWA Trade Facilitation Centre: In response to the demand for creating sustainable livelihood strategies for the poorest of the poor women producers, The SEWA Trade Facilitation Centre (STFC) was established in May 2003 as the commercial arm of SEWA by more than 15000 women artisans in the textiles and handicrafts sector.

SEWA ICT: SEWA realized the potential of new information technologies in facilitating capacity development. SEWA ICT has enabled poor people, particularly women, living in remote areas to access vital information related to their trade, livelihoods, government schemes including Panchayati Raj, seeking and sharing expert opinions on disaster management, management of enterprise, marketing of produce and products. SEWA ICT represented a powerful strategy for overcoming various notions of a 'digital divide' and making the information available to the powerless.
**SEWA Bharat**: SEWA Bharat is a federation of SEWA member organizations, with the mandate to highlight issues concerning women working in the informal sector, and to strengthen the capacity of the organizations that serve the interests of these women. Presently nine such SEWA member organizations are working in 35 districts of seven states.

**HomeNet South Asia**: HomeNet South Asia is a network organization of women home based workers promoted by UNIFEM and SEWA. It was set up after the Kathmandu Declaration, formulated in an international conference convened in Nepal in year 2000.

**SAKHI**

The organization Sakhi for South Asian Women was founded in 1989 by a group of five South Asian women from diverse professional fields such as banking, film, law, and public health. The term Sakhi means woman friend. The organization was created to enable women to address domestic violence within the South Asian community. The stated mission of Sakhi for South Asian Women is to end domestic violence against women by uniting survivors, communities, and institutions. Sakhi uses an integrated approach that combines support and empowerment through service delivery, community engagement, media advocacy, and policy initiatives. Sakhi has served as a safe conduit to provide South Asian women with ongoing emotional support, culturally-sensitive and language-specific assistance in order to face the violence in their lives. Sakhi has also been at the forefront of the effort to end domestic violence through community engagement, education, and outreach as well as broad policy and institutional change. The major programmes of Sakhi includes;

1. Crisis responses- It attends to request from Asian countries with regard to the issues of women
2. Case management that encompasses translation services, accompaniments to courts, public benefits offices, health care visits, referrals for health, housing, legal assistance, and job training & placement.
3. Unique programs developed and tailored in-house to address survivors’ needs, including monthly support groups, computer classes, financial literacy workshops, and grants for educational advancement.

Sakhi is also involved in community engagement and media advocacy. In this field they undertake presentations and expert testimony, leading the discussion on domestic violence in different venues locally and nationally. The organization is also active in the creation of innovative media products, including short films, a public service announcement and a digital monthly newsletter. Community campaigns to end violence including a neighborhood-based community action project is also a part of the programme.

In the sphere of policy advocacy, Sakhi conducts a legal access campaign to enhance court interpretation: via innovative research, presentations, and coalition-building, Sakhi has mobilized concrete changes in New York State courts including enhanced interpreter testing and training.
procedures as well as a landmark court rule providing access to an interpreter in civil and criminal cases. The mental health advocacy project includes research and presentations on the link between mental health and domestic violence as well as expert testimony on the relationship between suicide and domestic violence.

**Major Initiatives**

Through the Swarna Chalasani Scholarship Fund, which was established in 2002, Sakhi advances the ability of survivors of violence to complete higher educational goals and supports them in obtaining the necessary licensing and vocational certificates in order to obtain and retain jobs. The Economic Empowerment Program of Sakhi seeks to provide financial stability and economic security to survivors of domestic violence from the South Asian Diaspora. Sakhi recognized the close links between domestic violence and economic control as well as self-sufficiency and the ability to make choices that enable safety for women and their families. Realizing the need for services aimed at improving survivors’ economic opportunities, Sakhi has provided skills-enhancement activities since the mid-1990s under the banner of the Economic Justice Project. Through this project the organization provide case management, workshops and trainings, and scholarships to women so that they can access public benefits, jobs, credit, banking and other forms of support so that they can reach their goals of self-sufficiency and safety.

In 2011, Sakhi expanded their area of services to teenagers. It was done through the Youth Empowerment program which was designed to expose youth to leadership, self-exploration, and advocacy skills through social, emotional, and academic support. Hosted as an after-school program, the Youth Empowerment group is open to youth ages 13 to 19 and takes place in the form of group sessions.
MODULE-4 DALIT MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Dalit Issues in India: land Question

Political Consolidation of Dalit-Republican Party of India

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)

Gothra Maha Sabha in Kerala

Dalit Issues in India

The Dalit movement in India began around the mid-19th century. It was Jyotirao Phule, a middle caste, social revolutionary from Maharashtra, who questioned the caste system itself and its evil practices. By the end of the 19th century, there were a number of anti-caste movements in various parts of India. This includes Phule’s Satyashodhak movement, Namashudra movement, the Adi-Hindu movement, the Adi Dharma movement, the Ezahava movement of Sree Narayan Dharma Paripalana [SNDP] Yogam, the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Samajam [SJPS] and the Pulaya Mahasabha.

However, these movements were largely socio-religious in nature. Later, Dalit movements got politicized in the early decades of the 20th century, and especially, when the Britishers introduced the system of a separate electorate in the Minto-Morley reforms of 1909. By 1917, Dalit movements got separated from non-Brahmin movements and they got a further fillip after a resolution was passed in the Indian National Congress in the same year. The resolution stressed on bringing the attention towards the socio-economic conditions and with the presidency of Gandhi in 1920, this process gathered momentum.

Ambedkar and Dalit issue

By the 1930s, Gandhi and Ambedkar had emerged as competing spokesmen and leaders of the depressed classes in India. Gandhi thought that untouchability was a moral issue, which is internal to the Hindu religion and that there should be a peaceful and gradual abolition of untouchability. To Gandhi, there was nothing wrong in the varna system and that ‘ati-shudras’ should be included in it too as they also constitute the part of the Hindu religion. On the contrary, Ambedkar found untouchability to be a political and economic issue. He felt that abolition of the caste system was essential for abolishing untouchability. Ambedkar favored the issue of a separate electorate of MacDonald’s proposal of 1928. But, Gandhi was vehemently against it and went on a fast unto-death. At last, Ambedakar had to give in and signed the Poona Pact that gave reservations to Dalits within the Hindu community.

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was one of the greatest leaders that India has ever produced. Ambedkar and his ideas provide inspiration, dignity, and a practical way forward for millions of oppressed people in India. Coming from an Army background, young Bhim got a rare opportunity to acquire a modern education. He was one of the first untouchables to go through college. He was...
much influenced by the thoughts of John Dewey. Dewey’s ideas were very much in the Enlightenment tradition. Ambedkar, like Dewey, held that reason and scientific temper had the potential to challenge unexamined tradition and prejudices by cultivating a collective, democratic “will to inquire, to examine, to discriminate, to draw conclusions only on the basis of evidence after taking pains to gather all available evidence”.

He attended the dalit issue as an immediate concern and demanded affirmative action. To him dalit emancipation is not a matter that can be set aside, but needs more pragmatic approaches and fruitful policies. For this purpose political organization is a must for the down trodden. A true dalit consolidation is possible with the awakening of dalit consciousness in India. It is in this context he attempted to establish political organization for the dalits.'This started with the Indian labour party and later Republican Party of India.

**Republican Party of India**

Ambedkar formed the Indian Labor Party [ILP] in 1936 bringing in all the depressed sections of the society- Dalits, non-Brahmins, peasants and workers. However, unable to consolidate and resolve differences between Dalits and non-Brahmins, he dissolved it and formed the All India Scheduled Caste Federation (AISCF) in 1942. Later, as some of AISCF non-Brahmin members got disillusioned with the party and joined the Congress. Finally, Ambedkar had a plan to establish the Republican Party of India (RPI), which got established posthumously in 1956. But, eventually, it too met the same fate as the earlier ones, with most of its members disintegrating and joining the Congress.

The republican party is now divided into various groups. A major group is The Republican Party of India (Athavale). After 2004 election, it has a small representation in the Lok Sabha and was a constituent of the ruling United Progressive Alliance. Its presence is limited to Maharashtra. Recently, all factions except Prakash Ambedkar's Bharipa Bahujan Mahasangha reunited to form a united Republican Party of India. RPI (Athavale) is also merged in this united RPI. In 2011 the party has aligned itself with the BJP-led NDA.

**The Emergence of Dalit Panthers (1970s):**

The first wave of the new anti-caste movement began with the emergence of the Dalit Panthers in 1972. It mainly comprised ex-untouchable youth of Maharashtra. The formation of the Dalit panthers took place against the background of continued atrocities by the upper-caste elites and ‘such oppressive developments-namely, the repeated failure of the Republican party to fulfill any of the hopes of the Dalits, rising of tensions on the countryside and of the revolutionary inspiration provided by the Naxalbari insurrection, which was crushed by the State.

The movement was largely concentrated in cities like Bombay and Poona, which began with the publication of creative literature (in socialist magazines such as sadhna). It was militant and aimed at power in its manifesto, yet it did not really carry any political strategy. However, the Dalit Panthers fought their battle on two fronts: at the symbolic level against Hindu peasants and artisans who were directly responsible for numerous atrocities committed against ‘ati-shudrs’. But
like many earlier Dalit movements, it too got engulfed in party politics. There was a split in the organization when Raja Dhale and Namdev Dhasal (two prominent leaders of Dalit Panthers) developed differences of opinion. Differences arose over whether Dalits Panthers should be a caste-based movement of Scheduled Castes or a class-based movement including the poor people of all classes. Here Dhale was representing the ‘Ambedkarite’ position and Dhasal a ‘Marxist’. The Communist Party of India (CPI) wanted to bring Dalits in its fold. But, in the end, it was the ‘Ambedkarite’ position that easily won this battle, when in 1974; the Dhale group took control and expelled Dhasal. This was largely due to the very real fear of the Panthers ‘of control by Brahmin leftists of supportive organizations, platforms, money for campaigns, even the media. Their deep-seated suspicion was that they were now given only hypocritical support by communists.

As far as the Dalit panthers were concerned, it was more symbolic and cultural in focus. Though militancy continued against the atrocities inflicted on Dalits, but at the broad political level, ‘Panthers like earlier Dalit leadership continually fell victim to Congress blandishments and Congress progressive rhetoric: both Dhasal and Dhale supported Indira Gandhi during Emergency and even the recognized Panthers gradually came to be a kind of political reserve army of the Congress’.

**Dalit consolidation in 1980s:**

The 1980s can be seen as a period of Dalit and OBC unity. It was prominently marked by the emergence of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) as the party of Dalits, backwards and minorities. BSP emerged as a political wing of the Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation (BAMCEF), launched by Kanshi Ram in 1978. It made its appearance particularly in the northern states of India, such as Uttar Pradesh (UP), Rajasthan, Bihar, Delhi, Punjab, and Madhya Pradesh (MP). The primary agenda of the party was to acquire power through the electoral process, which it did achieve considerably. But it lacks a wider social, economic or political programme of action beyond uniting the SCs, STs OBCs, and minorities. Later, by the end of the 1990s, it also became a part of coalition politics and even went on to join the BJP.

The issue of reservation for OBCs led to riots in Gujarat in 1981 and 1985 (after the Baxi and Rane Commission’s Report, respectively), but unlike Marathwada, here Dalits were targeted by the upper castes who blamed them for the extension of reservation. In the first riots, the OBCs remained passive but in the second one, they attacked the upper castes. And then this Dalit/OBC conflict got transformed into communal riots.

By the early 1990s, the debate about reservation for OBCs became more vehement with the submission of the Mandal Commission report and its strong opposition by the upper castes. Here the Dalit movement has narrowed down to pressure groups. The state has, besides providing an institutional framework of incorporating identity politics, played a very critical role in bringing about any substantial change as far as the Dalits are concerned. Yet, ‘within the Dalit politics, the new generation of Dalit leadership has taken into transnational alliances and networks to further the Dalit cause.
THE OBC MOVEMENT

It is difficult to give any precise definition of caste; it is all the more difficult to define ‘backward castes’. This is because ‘backward castes’ are not a homogeneous category in India. Most of the scholars consider all castes other than dwija (the twice-born who have the right to wear the scared thread) as backward castes. But there are several castes in the different parts of the country, which are not dwija and yet they do not consider themselves backward castes. They enjoy control over economic resources and political power. They struggle and mobilize for power among themselves or against the Brahmans, and hence they cannot be considered deprived groups. These include Kayasthas of Bihar, the Jats of Rajasthan and the Patidars of Gujarat. But then again, all the backward castes do not enjoy a uniform socio-economic status.

The main debate in the Constituent Assembly was regarding the very definition of the backward castes and who should be included in it and whether there should be class or castes as the main criteria of considering any section as backward. Nehru and Ambedkar had a difference of opinion regarding this, while the former preferred class, the later stressed on caste as the basic criterion. As far as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were concerned, the situation was quite clear. However, with regard to OBCs, the Constituent Assembly reached a decision that the president of the republic can, by decree, nominate a commission formed by persons he considers to be competent to investigate, within the Indian territory, on the condition of classes suffering of backwardness as well in social as in education terms, and on the problems they meet, the way of proposing measures that could be taken by the central or a state government in order to eliminate difficulties and improve their condition. This argument eventually became Article 340 of the Indian Constitution. Also, the adoption of preferential treatment of backward-caste people was specifically sanctioned in Articles 15(4) and 16(4).

The Classification of OBC Movements:

M.S.A.Rao classifies backward caste movements into four types:

1) the non- Brahmin movements concentrated in the southern part of India, for example, the ‘self- respect’ movement in Madras in the late 1920s. The non- Brahmin movements in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu raised cultural issues.

2) Movements led by low and intermediate castes such as the Ahirs and the Kurmis in Bihar, the Noniyas in Punjab, the Kolis in Gujarat, and the Malis in Maharashtra.

3) Movements by the depressed classes or untouchables against upper and other backward castes.

4) The tribal movements.

Rao also deals with two kinds of ideologies with regards to the backward-caste movements. First, many castes belonging to the other backward classes claimed a higher varana status through a reinterpretation of and recasting of appropriate mythologies of origin, such as Ahirs in many parts of north India, the Gopas in Bengal, the Gaulis in Maharashtra, the Gollas in Andhra Pradesh and
Karnataka, and the Konnars in Tamil Nadu claimed dissent from the Yadu dynasty. In the second decade of the 20th century, they organized themselves into an All India Yadava Association. In parts of north India, especially Bihar, the Yadava came into direct conflict with Bhoomihar Brahmins, when the former donned the sacred thread (symbol of twice born) in public.

The second variety of protest ideology was based on the rejection of the Brahminical Aryan religion and culture. Adherent of these views included the Dravida Kazhagam Movement in Tamil Nadu, which idealized Dravidian culture and religion and attacked Aryan culture and religion. The Mahar movement in Maharashtra was another movement that abandoned Hinduism altogether.

**The OBC Movement in Independent India**

After India gained independence, the OBC movement in India concentrated on its demands for reservation and job quota. Considering Article 340, the Government of India appointed the first backward Classes Commission in 1953 with Kaka Kalelkar as its head. The Commission identified 2,399 castes as socially and educationally backward classes. The Government, however, did not accept the recommendations on the grounds that the commission had not applied any objective tests for identifying the backward classes. The commission was also doubtful about identifying the backward classes. However, though the report of the first backward classes Commission was shelved, it created milestone for the low-caste movement in north India. The best example of such movements is provided by All India Backward Classes Federation.

The next step in the OBC movement was to be accomplished by the political actors. From the late 1960s onwards, the OBCs were to advance through the socialist movements. While the southern pattern of the low-caste mobilization was linked to ethinicization and strategies of empowerment, in north ‘quota politics’ was the key factor.

In 1978 that Janata coalitions displaced the Congress power at centre. With considerable support in north India from the backward caste groups, the central government again took up the issue of the preferential treatment for the backward castes by appointing the Second Backward classes Commission with B.P Mandal as its chairman. The second commission explicitly recommended ‘caste as a criterion’ and 3,248 castes as backward. But by the time the Commission submitted its report in December 1980, the Congress had returned to power. The Congress government took no action on the report. In August 1990 Prime Minister V.P Singh, announced a further 27 per cent reservation in addition to the 22 per cent set aside for SCs and STs.

The commission, here, recommended reservation of jobs for backward castes not as an egalitarian measure or a step towards secularism or social justice, but primarily to boost the morale of the backward castes. The implementation of Mandal report led to the politicization of cast in India, which not only led to various coalitions, but also created various factions, for example, in the case of Janata Dal, which has around 10 splinter groups.

In fact, caste conflict and competitions came into the forefront of Indian politics only after the Nehru period, particularly after the split in the Congress in 1969 and during and after the 1971 elections. The Congress led by Mrs. Gandhi intensified its appeal to the disadvantaged group, to
counter the power of the state party base, which rested mostly on the upper and landed castes. With this began the trend of political cooptation by various political parties to bring in various factions into their fold. In north India, for example, several political parties, particularly the Samyuktha Socialist Party (SSP) of Ram Manohar Lohia and Bharathiya Kranti Dal (BKD) of Charan Singh, developed strength among the backward castes and advocated policies of preferential treatment.

While in south India, where the mobilization of the non-Brahmin castes took place earlier than in the north, neither in Karnataka nor in Tamil Nadu were the non-Brahmin movements seeking radical change but rather, aiming to gain greater power in administration and in local elected bodies and state legislatures.

In Karnataka, the Congress leadership in the 1950s came predominantly from Lingaayats and Vokkaligas. In the 1970s, Devraj Urs as permanent Congress leader in Karnataka broadened the social base of the party by appealing to the more disadvantaged backward castes and Scheduled Castes. However, after the defeat of the Congress by the Janatha Dal in 1977 there were differences between Urs and the Congress which led to a split in the party. After the split, the Congress reduces its dependence upon the non-dominant backward classes and increased the representation of the dominant Lingayat and Vokkaliga communities.

In Tamil Nadu, the Dravidian movement was committed to the destruction of caste system but in practice, it used caste as a means of political mobilization and ultimately increased the political importance of caste. Through the Congress initially succeeded in gaining the support of non Brahmin elites, the DMK was ultimately able to win control of the state by transforming its anti-Brahmin ideology into an anti-northern one.

Though caste lost its moral legitimacy in Independent India, but still the same middle and lower castes sought equality with the upper castes through the process of ‘Sanskritization’. However, at the same time, they proclaimed their status as backward castes and demanded greater political power.

New demands after Mandal

Another issue that arose after the Mandal report and during agitation against it was redefinition of ‘poverty’ and ‘backwardness’ by a section of dominant elite. As a result, the Gujarat Kshatriya Sabha argued that all Kshatriyas should be considered as backward because they were economically backward and the various castes among the Kshatriyas share a common culture and social customs. According to Rajputs, those who were unable to compete openly should get the benefit of reservations. Similarly, the Lingayatas and the Vokkaligas communities, realizing that they would not get backward status, insisted that the Chinnappa Readdy Commission adopt economic criteria to identify social and educationally backward classes. But again, one of the shortcomings of these reservations was that it had largely benefited the upper echelons of the social hierarchy, leaving large sections of the lower echelons with no access to knowledge and political power and with no benefits whatsoever.
THE ADIVASI MOVEMENT

The adivasi or tribal movements have a long history. Numerous uprisings of the tribes have taken place beginning with the one in Bihar in 1772, followed by many revolts in Andra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram and Nagaland. Tribal movements in early India had their origins in religious upheavals like Bhudhism and Vaishnavism, for example, Meithie in Manipur, Bhumij in West Bengal, Nokte Naga in Assam, Bathudi in Orissa, and Kols and Bhils in Rajasthan. Then in the 19th and 20th century, the British also faced tribal movements when they stopped head hunting human sacrifice or slavery in north-eastern India. There were movements against oppressive landlords, moneylenders and harassment by police and forests officials in Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and the central Indian states.

The adivasis and their areas largely remained out of the purview of the administration in the pre-independence period. But the 1930s saw the emergence of a new discourse on tribal development. Sections 52 and 92 of the Government of India Act, 1935 provided for tribal majority areas to be demarcated into the excluded areas. This meant that these tracts were to be administered by the Governor outside the framework of the constitution, and norms and procedures of governance in the Fifth and Sixth Schedule areas were to be different from the rest of the country. The assumption of this policy was that tribals have suffered a great deal during the colonial rule and that their cultural and economic rights should now be protected. The Nehruvian view essentially was that the economic life of the tribals had to be upgraded and modernized even as their culture needed protection.

The left, had in general, support the Nehruvian position on both modern tribal development and the need for protection of tribal from the market forces. The tribal activists have also backed the idea of Nehruvian protectionism for tribal but only to the extent that it should help in the revival of traditional tribal institutions. But their ideal is significantly different from the Nehruvian dream of slowly drawing the tribals into the mainstream of bourgeois democracy. The Left position also recognizes the importance of democratization of the tribal society, but wanted to develop a different type of democracy was thus dependent not only on political freedom and self-governing institutions but also on correcting the inequities between the tribal region and the dominant political economy.

Nehru’s ideas formed the basis of the tribal policy in Independent India and he argued that modern ideas should be allowed to permeate the institutions of everyday life through the education and employment of tribal. The bulk of allocations for STs were as grants for educations and social services.

Among the works on tribal in India, one that stands out is by Verrier Elwin. He was an English anthropologist who had spent almost his entire life in the association and intimacy with the tribal in India. He was a symbol and slandered bearer of the movement for the recognition of tribal rights. In defending tribal people, he clashed often eloquently with those Hindu puritans who were trying to reform the tribal society in their ascetic mode. Elwin found through experiences with tribes of Gonds and Baigas that they did not require a new religion but were desperately in need of
Elwin had also proposed a policy of ‘development in isolation’ to the British government in 1939 and its influence could be seen in the five principle of Nehru’s Panchasheel, namely to allow people to develop along their own cultural lines, to respect land rights, to train tribal for the administration of the schemes, to work through tribal social institutions, and to judge results not by statistics and expenditure, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

Classification of tribal movements

The tribal movements may be classified into three groups

(1) Movements due to exploitation of outsiders (like those of Santhals and the Mundas),

(2) Movements due to economic deprivation (like those of Gonds in Madhya Pradesh and the Mahars in Andhra Pradesh), and

(3) Movements due to separatist tendencies (like those of Nagas and Mizos).

The tribal movements may also be classified on the basis of their orientation into four types:

(1) movements seeking political autonomy and formation of a state (Nagas, Mizos, Jharkhand)

(2) agrarian movements,

(3) forest-based movements, and

(4) socio-religious or socio-cultural movements (the Bhagat movement among the Bhils of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, movement among the tribals of south Gujarat or Raghunath Murmu’s movement among Santhals).

Surajit Sinha referred to five types of tribal movements in India:

(a) Ethnic (tribal) rebellions during the early days of the British rule in the 18th and 19th centuries: Sardar Larai (1885) and Birsa movement (1895-1900) among the Munda; Ganganarain Hangama (1857-58); Rebellion of the Kacha Nagas (1880s) and so on.

(b) Reform movements emulating the cultural pattern of the higher Hindu castes: Bhagat movement among the Oraon; Vaishnavite reform movements emulating the cultural pattern of higher Hindu castes: Bhagat movement among the Oraon; Vaishnavite reform movement among the Bhumij; social mobility movement Bhumij for Rajput recognition; Kherwar movement among the Santal and so on.

(c) Emergence of inter-tribal political associations and movements for recognition as ‘tribal’ states within the Indian Union in the post-Independence period: the Jharkhand movement among the tribes of Chhota Nagpur and Orissa; hills states movement in the Assam hills; Adisthan movement among the Bhil and so on.
(d) Violent secessionist movements among tribes located near the international frontier: the Nagaland movement; Mizo National Front movement and so on.

(e) Pockets of violent political movements in the tribal belt linked with the general problem of agrarian unrest and communist movement: Hajng unrest (1944); Naxalbari movement (1967); Girijan rebellion at Srikakulum (1968-69); Birsa dal movement in Ranchi (1968-69).

All the above mentioned tribal movements in India were mainly launched for liberation from (1) oppression and discrimination, (2) neglect and backwardness, and (3) a government which was callous to the tribals poverty, hunger, unemployment and exploitation. Here, it is also important to mention that the withdrawal of the State from the social sector and its increasing tendency to privatize common and natural resources have further jeopardized the future of displaced people who are mainly adivasis.

**Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)**

After the failure of RPI as a Dalit political party, the 1970s and 1980s were crucial for the Dalit Movement in UP. The state witnessed a very animated and path breaking movement under the leadership of Kanshi Ram who had put Dalit Politics in mainstream politics in the state. It was also the era when the Dalit Panthers emerged. It was a gathering of Dalit youths with a more militant approach to voicing their concerns. Kanshi Ram, however, was not influenced by these waves of extremism and paved the way for a wholesome political movement. He had a broader view than any other Dalit leader in the past of a movement that could unite all the social sections affected by the discriminatory social arrangement of Hindu society. Kanshi Ram argued that only 15 per cent of the upper castes was ruling over the 85 per cent backward and lower castes along with religious minorities. Therefore, the fraction of 85 per cent should come together and take the advantage of democratic politics. Kanshi Ram used the basic principles of representative democracy, which had been criticised by the early Dalit leaders for not giving space to the Dalit community, i.e. rule of the majority as a political strategy. This strategy is reflected very clearly in the slogan “jiski jitni sankhya bhari, uski utni bhagidari” (share in power according to the ratio in population). Kanshi Ram’s view of an egalitarian society was not an idea of absolute equality but of the ‘rational distribution’ of the power based on the population strength. In his theory, he is more realistic than the earlier propagators of the Dalit Movement.

**Kanshi Ram and Bahujan**

Kanshi Ram established a category called bahujan, which comprises 85 per cent of the society. He used this category explicitly as a political tool for the Dalit mobilisation. Keeping this view in his mind, Kanshi Ram established a non-political organisation called the All India Backward and Minority Castes Employees Federation (BAMCEF) on December 6, 1973. The membership of the organisation was open only to Dalits employed in the public sector. The BAMCEF widened its base swiftly across the country. The BAMCEF remained a base organisation which accepted membership only from the government employees so that they could contribute
economically for the implementation its further agendas. This was a strategic and organised technique to precede the Dalit Movement.

After leveling the ground for his progress to the political arena, in 1981, Kanshi Ram established the Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti, popularly known as DS-4, which was a political organisation. In 1984; Kanshi Ram turned the DS-4 into a full-fledged political party, namely the BSP. It was launched on Ambedkar’s birthday with the slogan ‘vote hamara, raj tumhara; nahi chalega, nahi chalega’ (we vote but you rule, it won’t continue). The goal was based on an axiom of Ambedkar that political power was the key to all problems. The establishment of the BSP as a political party was part of a broader Dalit Movement initiated by Kanshi Ram in northern India mainly in UP.

The BSP has been very successful in grasping the Dalits votes in UP. At the beginning of its political career, the BSP could make its presence felt only marginally, but very soon it occupied an influential place in state politics. When the BSP contested the election for the first time, it had already nearly 10 per cent of the votes as its social base. The Assembly elections in 1993 proved a turning point for the BSP when it made a political coalition with the SP to prevent the BJP from coming to power. This election was launched the BSP and it created more political space with an increase in its vote share from 10.26 to 28.53 per cent of the seats for which the party contested. The year 1989, when BSP entered into the competitive electoral politics, was the time when the Dalit Movement in UP turned into a complete political movement with less focus on social reforms and economic equality.

The BSP’s political strategy was mainly based on caste rather than classes. It was heavily dependent on the lower castes and could garner political support only from the Scheduled Castes and not other sections of society. This development restricted the expansion of the BSP’s electoral base. Therefore, BSP brought a decisive and surprising shift in its basic ideology and electoral strategy. During the initial years of the first decade of the 21st Century, the BSP focused on ‘social engineering’ to bring Brahmins and other upper castes together through the policy of Sarvajan.

Though the BSP claims in all public forums and political manifestos that this policy brings the Dalits and upper castes together, it included only Brahmins in its political strategy with explicit focus. This social engineering brought Dalit and Brahmins together. The logic offered to rationalise this peculiar coalition was that if both castes could remain on one political platform, the atrocities and deprivation of the Dalits that were being caused by the Brahmins could be stopped.

**Dalits and Land issue**

Land is a major problem that leads to discontent and sufferings in the marginalized groups. This is very particular in the case of dalits and tribals in India. In the state of Kerala around 30 per cent of the tribal house holds are landless. Landlessness is lowest in the former princely state of Travancore and Cochin. The proportion of landless tribal households is highest in the Malabar area, with the districts of Wayanad and Palakkad taking the lead. The Paniya and Adiya were traditionally slaves and had not owned any land in recent centuries. As a result of the large-scale influx of non-tribals, particularly from the former Travancore state, a sizeable chunk of arable
land, which the adivasis had used for shifting cultivation, have been encroached upon depriving them of their only means of subsistence. The post-second world war ‘grow more food’ campaign initiated by the government contributed considerably to this migration to the Malabar region. Extensive tracts of tribal land were surreptitiously acquired or usurped by cultivators who emigrated from the plains and the adivasis were reduced to the position of landless serfs of these exploiters. The greatest suffering has naturally been inflicted on the Paniya and Adiya. Large number of Kurichian and Kuruman who were traditionally landholding tribes were dispossessed from the mid 19th century in the wake of expansion of a land market to the forest region. In Attapady, the migration of plainsmen started in the 1950s. Within a span of 25 years, 20 per cent of the tribal households in the district have been rendered landless.

As the successive waves of non-tribal immigrants pushed the adivasis to inferior lands, the proportion of cultivable land to the total area possessed progressively declined. On the whole 62 per cent of the land holding tribal house holds in the state possessed less than two acres of land on an average. In this context, land in their traditional homelands has become the single most crucial element for the survival of these communities.

**Gothra Maha Sabha in Kerala**

The Gothra Maha Sabha is an organization which stands for the rights of tribals. It operates in the tribal areas of the state. C K Janu and M Geethanandan were the prominent leaders of this organization. In the initial stages the organization effectively motivated the tribals on their fight to right to land. The land question was one of the major problems faced by the tribal communities in Kerala. They were not given any clear titles to their land holdings as many of these possessions were located near or inside forests. The governmental attitude to the adivasi issue was also not positive. There were many developmental programmes in the state but many of them failed to bring the intended benefits to the marginalized sections. It is in this context that the tribals organized under the banner of Gothra Maha Sabha and demanded their rights.

**Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha and Muthanga Incident**

The major incident that consolidated the organization of tribals under Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha (AGMS) was the Muthanga Incident. Muthanga is a place in Wayanad district of Kerala state. The Muthanga struggle has a long history that was closely linked with the land rights of adivasis.

As a result of land alienation and consequent economic crisis, in mid-July 2001, 32 starvation deaths were reported from the tribal areas of Palakkad, Kannur and Wayanad districts. Responding to this, an intense struggle was launched with the setting up of refugee camps before the residence of the chief minister and the Secretariat at Thiruvananthapuram, the state capital. It was this struggle that spawned the AGMS and negotiated the historic 2001 accord with the government. The major components of the commitment undertaken by the government are the following:
(1) Five acres of land to all adivasi families having less than one acre of land. To begin with, 42,000 acres of land of between 1-5 acres would be distributed and the work would begin from January 1 to December 31, 2002.

(2) A master plan would be made before December 2001, to be included in the 10th five-year plan beginning from 2002.

(3) A cabinet decision to include adivasi areas in the V schedule and a proposal would be made which shall be sent to the centre for further notification by the president

(4) A tribal mission would be constituted to carry out all the above headed by a senior IAS officer.

However, the state bureaucracy and its political leadership failed to implement these clauses. Only 3 per cent of the Promised Land has been allotted in a year. At this rate it would take the government another 33 years to complete the task. Also the rate of allotment has gone down. In May 2002; the head of the tribal mission was replaced by a forest official of the governments’ choice.

As the government was not positive to their demands and assurances given on January 4, 2003, AGMS had entered the deforested portions of Muthanga. This area was planted with eucalyptus and was successfully passed off as forest state and forest department. The number of adivasis had swollen to over 1,100 families since then. They had gone there in pursuance of their demand for land. It was in continuation with an earlier agreement between the state government and the Adivasi Dalit Samara Samithi (ADSS) headed by C K Janu and M Geethanandan on October 16, 2001. The decision to move to Muthanga evolved out of wide spread consultative process across the state’s adivasi belt. It was decided that the AGMS would go by the time-schedule that the government had drawn up for itself, after which it would be the bounden and solemn duty of AGMS to bring the agreement into effect. This participatory democratic process culminated in a huge gathering of thousands of adivasis from across the state at Mananthavady in Wayanad district on August 25, 2002 when a 60 member tribal court representing different tribal communities was constituted. The tribal court declared once again that in view of the non-implementation of the ‘agreement’, the adivasis shall establish their rights by occupying the lands. It was thus that thousands of adivasis had moved into Muthanga after the deadline prescribed by the government expired on December 31, 2002.

Adivasi groups and families belonging to the Adivasi Gothra Mahasabha (AGS) encroached upon and occupied a stretch of land in the Muthanga sanctuary. For 45 days the drama of ‘forced occupation of forestland’, continued unhindered. On February 17, clashes between the police and adivasis erupted following a mysterious fire and the capture and detention of government officials. While the number of dead still remains a matter of speculation, the harsh clampdown has led to several adivasi families being displaced, while many have been detained or are missing. The events marked a sordid highpoint in the five-decade struggle waged by different adivasi groups for restoration of alienated land. In October 2001, following a seven-week agitation, the government had reached an agreement with the AGS, promising an amicable end to the agitation. Though the
events at Muthanga sent shock waves across the state, there were attempts by the government to justify its brutal actions. The government has refused to constitute a judicial probe into the incident. However Muthanga incident established the political foundations of Gothra Maha sabha. It proved that tribal political consolidation is no more a myth and that no government can ignore the power of marginalized groups. Since then successive governments handled the land issue with more care and prudence.