

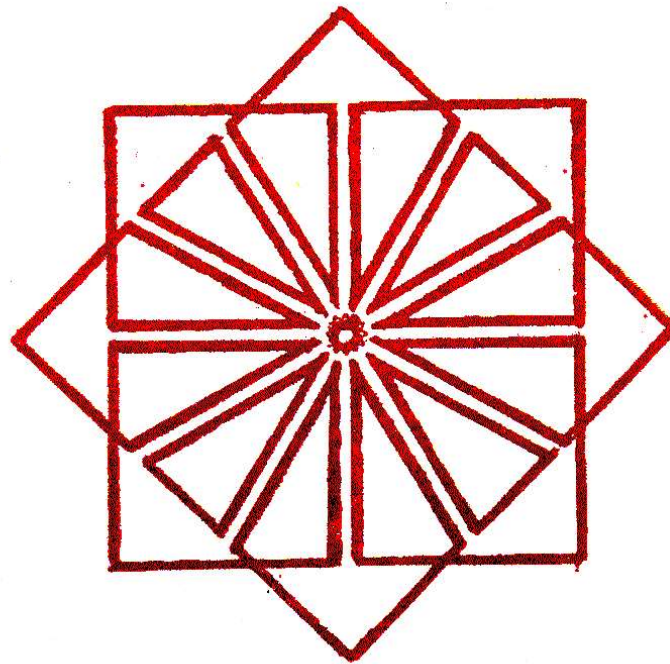
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Social Background and Occupational Mobility in Legal Profession

Virendra Pal Singh

The growth of professions is an indicator of social development as it reflects the degree of social stratification and specialization in a society. In the process of industrialization of western societies there emerged various professions in the fields such as law, medicine, education, technology, communication, banking and trading etc. The sociologists paid special attention to the study of professions from the very beginning and that has given rise to a special branch of sociological knowledge called sociology of profession. Their major issues have been centered around the problem of distinguishing a profession from a non-profession and of discerning processes of professionalization in a society. There from emerged the attributional and the processual approaches for the study of professions. In the developing societies like India the growth of professions is a result of the spread of modern western education rather than the product of industrialization. Therefore, in such societies the nature of professions in terms of perception and performance of roles differs significantly from that in the western societies as their traditional social structures have profound bearing on the process of professionalization.

The present paper is aimed to analyze the social background and patterns of intergenerational occupational mobility among the lawyers of Bhopal district courts. The data of the present study were collected between 1996 and 1997 by administering a highly structured questionnaire on a random sample of 150 lawyers practicing in district courts of Bhopal.

Bhopal is the capital of India's largest state Madhya Pradesh. It is best known as the major site of world's largest disaster in which a number of people were killed and thousands were permanently disabled or severely affected in various ways. Before independence it was a small central Indian state governed by succession of Muslim rulers beginning in the eighteenth century. Although, the early history of the city is vague but some historical documents reveal that it was founded in the eleventh century A. D. by Raja Bhoj (1010-1055), one of the line of Rajput kings who ruled Malwa region from about 800 to 1200 A. D. (Ali 1984: 2). The main attraction of the city are two lakes-*Bara Tal* (upper lake) and *Chhota Tal* (lower lake)-around which the city is built. At the time of independence it was a small town consist of the localities today known as *Ibrahimpura*, *Jummerati* and *Pir gate* as per description of an old resident of the city. In 1951 it had a population of 1,02,333 which had grown upto 10,63,662 in 1991. The major factors responsible for the growth

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of the city are the settlement of displaced people from west Pakistan in 1947-48, the being the capital of Madhya Pradesh since 1956 and establishment of a heavy industry-Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) in 1960 with about 2000 workers. Bhopal is one of the six industrially developed centres of the state. It is highest urbanized district of M. P. as 80 percent of its population is urban in character.

The growth of legal profession in Bhopal mainly took place in post-independence period. The total number of lawyers in district courts of Bhopal in 1996 was 1050. The number of women lawyer was only 80 at the time of the study.

Social Background

The social background of a lawyer is closely related to his value orientation, role perception and role performance. It involves an analysis of his place of origin, family type, age-group, caste and class background, educational background, membership of formal and informal groups and associations of the legal professionals. Further it also warrants an inquiry into the reasons for his preference to chose the legal profession as it may enable us in seeking the answer of two major questions : (1) Why people enter into legal profession? and (2) How far the profession serves as an avenue of social mobility?

In the present paper an attempt is made to analyse the social background of the lawyers in terms of their age-group, place of origin, family type, caste and class background, educational background, membership of professional associations, and the reasons for entering into the legal profession.

Age Group

On the basis of their age the subjects can be classified into three age groups (i) Youth (21-35 years); (ii) middle aged (36 – 50 years) and old aged (above 50 years). The data reveal that the majority of lawyers in Bhopal district courts are youth (46.67 percent) followed by middle aged lawyers who constitute about one-third (32 percent) of the sample. Remaining (21.53 percent) lawyers represent the older generation in the prrofession. It suggests that there has been a steady growth of legal profession in Bhopal in last four decades.

Sex Ratio

Sexwise distribution of the respondents indicates that the profession has very high representation of male lawyers. The representation of the women is low in the profession. The majority (65.38 percent) of female lawyers were in the age group of 21-35 years. Alittle less than one-fourth of female lawyers (23.08 percent) were middle aged (36-50 years) and remaining 11.54 percent came from old age group (above 50 years). Thus, there is a steady rise in number of female lawyers in the profession in past few decades.

Place of Origin

Place of origin of a person can be defined as the place where he or she was born. It may be a village or a town or city. In order to know their socio-cultural background they were asked to mention their place of birth and length of residence in Bhopal city. Most of the subjects (66.67

percent) have an urban background as they were born either in a town or in a city. Only one-third of the subjects have a rural origin. Thus, the legal profession in Bhopal has a high urban bias in its composition. As far as the length of residence in Bhopal city is concerned only 4.67 percent of them are local. Remaining subjects immigrated at different points of time. Most (79.33 percent) of them moved in between a span of 10-20 years. However, only 15.33 percent of the subjects have migrated to Bhopal in last one decade. Thus, most of the lawyers have migrated in Bhopal either from an urban area or from a rural setting.

Religion

The representation of Hindu lawyers in the profession was highest with 75.33 percent. Muslims who constitute almost one-fourth of the total population of Bhopal city have relatively low representation (15.33 percent). Jains, who constitute the other religious minority, have relatively fair representation in the legal profession of Bhopal. It is in accordance to the fact that most of the lawyers have come from the migrant groups moved from different places in post independence era.

Family

Two types of family units were identified among the subjects: nuclear- consisting of husband, wife and their unmarried children; and joint family unit - in which the subject was living either with parental family or with brothers' family. A little more than half (52.67 percent) of the subjects were having nuclear family unit. Remaining 47.33 percent of the subjects were staying in joint family. Thus, a good number of lawyers have joint family. Further analysis of the cases of joint families reveals that the tendency of staying with joint family was relatively high (65.71 percent) among the lawyers of young generation in comparison to the middle aged and old aged lawyers. However, among them a large number of the lawyers (26 percent) were unmarried youth.

Caste

The Hindu Castes were classified into three categories: 1. Upper castes-it includes Brahmins, Rajputs, Vaishyas, Kayasthas, Khatris, Arora, Bedi and Sarkar; 2. Middle order castes constituted by Khatris, Ahir, and other backward and land owning castes of the region; and 3. Lower castes comprised of mainly occupational castes such as Darji, Teli, Kurmi, Dhanuk, Tureha, Kalar and Balmiki. The Muslim Castes are put in a separate category. Non-Caste group includes Jains and Sikhs.

The legal profession in Bhopal is dominated by upper castes lawyers who constitute 63.33 percent of the sample. The middle order castes and the lower castes have low representation with 6.67 percent and 5.33 percent respectively. The Muslim minority has relatively better position in comparison to the castes of middle and lower order. But they are under represented in comparison to their proportion in the total population in Bhopal city. Among the Muslims most (21 out of 23) of the lawyers are drawn from upper castes stratum. The non castes groups consist of the Jains and Sikhs has a representation of 8 percent and 1.33 percent respectively. Among the upper castes lawyers Brahmins have a predominant position almost half (47 out of 95) of them were Brahmins

followed by Kayasthas (17.88 percent) and Rajputs (13.68 percent). Most of the upper castes lawyers (64.21 percent) have an urban background while among the middle order and lower castes lawyers only half of them were drawn from urban areas. Among the Muslims majority (91.3 percent) were having an urban background.

Type of Schooling

The type of schooling has an important bearing on one's achievements. The type of schooling is analysed in terms of the medium of instruction at the school level. At this level, out of 150 respondents as many as 129 (86 percent) received secondary level education in Hindi medium schools.

Intergenerational Occupational Mobility

Intergenerational occupational mobility refers to "change in the occupational standing of the son relative to his father" (Miller 1960:5). The intergenerational occupational mobility is analysed by comparing the present occupational status of the subject with the occupational status of his father. For analytical purpose different occupations are classified into seven categories arranged in a hierarchical order: 1. executives, managers and government officers; 2. professionals; 3. semi-professionals; 4. white collars; 5. small scale businessmen; 6. agriculturists; and 7. skilled and unskilled workers.

The father of one-fifth (20 percent) of the subjects were semi-professionals, 17.33 percent small scale businessmen, 16.67 percent professionals, 14.67 percent higher government officials, 6.67 percent white collars, 10 percent agriculturalists, 8 percent skilled and unskilled workers and 6.67 percent did not respond the question. Among those whose fathers were engaged in professional activities about half of them were intergenerationally immobile as their fathers were also in the legal profession. The remaining half of them experienced horizontal intergenerational occupational mobility from other professional pursuits other than legal profession. Thus overall rate of professional immobility was 8.67 percent and rate of horizontal intergenerational occupational mobility was just 8 percent. *The downward mobility took place in 14.67 percent cases mainly from executive, managerial and government officials.* As far as the case of vertical upward occupational mobility is concerned, it was *very high* with 60 percent and mainly took place from semi-professions (20 percent), business occupations (17.33 percent), white collar jobs (6.67 percent), agriculture (10 percent) and skilled and unskilled occupations (8 percent). Among those moved from executive, managerial and government official occupations 77.3 percent were having an urban background. Similarly among those whose fathers were professionals 80 percent have an urban origin. In case of those whose fathers were engaged in semi-professional jobs the urban representation was high with 77.8 percent. The urban representation was again high in case of those moved intergenerationally from white collar (70 percent) and skilled and unskilled occupations (83.33 percent). It suggests *that urban background of a person has a positive relationship with his/her vertically upward intergenerational occupational mobility. Thus, the legal profession in Bhopal is open for the persons having different social background reflected from the occupational position of*

subject's father. The range of intergenerational occupational mobility is also wide at has drawn its members from a wider range of occupations from unskilled workers to semi-professions. However, the mobility from the occupations of lower ranks was limited.

Agewise distribution of intergenerationally mobile lawyers reveals that among the young generation of lawyers highest amount of mobility was from professions (20 percent) closely followed by those whose fathers' were in executives/managers/ government officers (18.6 percent). In generation of middle aged lawyers the highest amount of intergenerational mobility took place from the category of business occupations (22.9 percent) followed by those whose fathers' were semi-professionals (20.8 percent). In both the generations of the lawyers i.e. young and middle aged, the rate of intergenerational mobility from white collar occupations was very low with 2.9 percent and 2.1 percent respectively. In the old generation of lawyers the highest rate of intergenerational mobility from the semi-professional occupations () and white collar occupations (). The amount of intergenerational mobility from agriculture occupation varies between a range of 10-15 percent only invariably. It is also significant to note that in the old generation of lawyers no one had moved from skilled and unskilled occupations.

Caste is an important unit of Indian social stratification system. in traditional Indian society caste has been associated with specific occupations. the dependency of occupation on caste was very high, in the sense, that caste restrictes its members to adopt certain occupations. The members of high castes were invariably engaged in the occupations of high prestige. On the other hand, the members of lower castes were restricted to adopt an occupation having a lower prestige in occupational hierarchy. The amount of intergeneratioan as well as intragenerational occupational mobility was negligible. But in due course of time the forces of modernization transformed the occupational structure of Indian society and accelerated the process of occupational mobility from traditional caste occupations to modern occupations. In post-independence period, special provisions were made to protect the interests of the weaker sections of the society by means of reservation in jobs. It enables these section to move upward into the occupations of higher prestige. But in case of legal profession these measures could not be very effective as here one has to make individual efforts for his/her entry in the profession. Therefore, an analysis of the range of intergenerational occupational mobilty in relation to caste background can be helpful in understanding the relationship between caste and occupational mobility.

The amount of intergenerational mobility is very limited (5.33 percent) in case of lawyers drawn from lower castes. The fathers of such lawyers were engaged in skilled and unskilled jobs (12.8 percent), agricultrure (25 percent), petty business activities (37.5 percent) and semi-professions (25 percent). It is important to note that no lawyers' father of this category were engaged as executive, manager and government officers or professional or white collar jobs. It suggests that in the previous generation of these lawyers the chances of mobility into these categories of jobs were limited. Similar position can be observed in case of lawyers of middle order castes who came from land owning castes. It can be said that in the previous generation of the lawyers the higher occupational positions were monopolized by the members of high castes. Thus the mobility to these occupations seems to be recent phenomenon. In post- independence period, the higher and

professional education was introduced at mass level and also in vernacular language which enables the members of the lower and middle order castes to enter in the legal profession.

Intragenerational Occupational Mobility

Intragenerational occupational mobility refers to “the changes in an individual’s occupational position during his life time, one point of his career is compared with another” (Miller 1960: 12). In the present study, intergenerational occupational mobility is analysed in terms of the subject’s movement from his first occupation or subsequent occupation(s) to legal profession. Out of 150 subjects covered under this study, 55 (36.67 percent) have experienced intragenerational occupational mobility. An analysis of the nature of first occupation from where the lawyers moved into legal profession indicates that highest amount of intragenerational mobility took place from white collar occupations (41.81 percent) followed by the semi-professions and business occupations with 21.81 percent and 12.73 percent respectively. The mobility from agriculture and skilled and unskilled job categories was 5.45 percent in each case. Thus the rate of intragenerational mobility was very high with 87.27 percent. However, in few (7.27 percent) cases downward intragenerational mobility also took place from the stratum of executive, managerial and government officers. Horizontal intragenerational mobility was experienced in 3.66 percent cases where the subjects were serving on the positions in private and public sector organizations.

Most of the intragenerationally mobile lawyers were males (87.27 percent). Of them five were started their career as semi-professionals and two as white collar workers. However, in case of male lawyers the range of intragenerational mobility was very wide as the mobility took place from all the occupational strata. The highest amount of mobility was from the stratum of white collar occupations. Among the intragenerationally mobile lawyers 36.36 percent have a rural place of origin remaining 63.64 percent were having an urban background.

Conclusion

The legal profession in Bhopal is highly represented by the youth. In the past, it has been male dominated profession but now they have registered their presence in the profession. But even today they are highly under-represented as they constitute less than one-tenth of the total strength of the lawyers in Bhopal district courts. The legal profession in Bhopal has a high urban bias in its composition as about two-third of them have an urban background. Most of the lawyers have been immigrated at different points of time from different parts of the country. The representation of Hindu lawyers in the profession is very high. Muslims who constitute almost one-fourth of the total population of Bhopal city have relatively low representation. However, Jains, who constitute the other religious minority, have relatively fair representation in the legal profession of Bhopal. Although, more than half of the lawyers have nuclear form of family unit but still the number of lawyers living in joint family is relatively high including about one-fourth of the lawyers who are unmarried and stay with their family of origin. The tendency of living with joint family in initial years of legal practice has also been observed in other studies of the lawyers (Singh 1997-2000, 2002). The legal profession in Bhopal is dominated by upper castes lawyers. The middle order castes and the lower castes have low representation. The Muslim minority has relatively better position in comparison to the castes of middle and lower order. But they are under represented in comparison to their proportion in the total population in Bhopal city. Among the upper castes lawyers

Brahmins have a predominant followed by Kayasthas and Rajputs. Most of the upper castes lawyers have an urban background while among the middle order and lower castes lawyers only half of them were drawn from urban areas. Among the Muslims majority were having an urban background. Most of the lawyers have got secondary level of education with Hindi medium. As far as the case of intragenerational mobility is concerned it was very high mainly from white collar occupations, semi-professions and business occupations. The mobility from agriculture, skilled and unskilled job categories was very low. However, in few cases downward intragenerational mobility also took place from the stratum of executive, managerial and government officers. Horizontal intragenerational mobility was rarely experienced in those cases only where the subjects were serving in private and public sector organizations. Most of the intragenerationally mobile lawyers were males. The range of intrageneration mobility was very wide as the mobility took place from all the occupational strata. the highest amount of mobility was from the stratum of white collar occupations. The legal profession in Bhopal is open for the persons having different social background reflected from the occupational position of subject's father. The range of intergenerational occupational mobility is also wide as it has drawn members from a wider range of occupations from unskilled workers to semi-professions. However, the mobility from the occupations of lower ranks was limited. The above findings of the study have some implications from the viewpoint of sociology of profession. first of all the findings contrast the observations of an earlier study of lawyers in Meerut (Singh 2002) where most of the lawyers were drawn from rural areas and a significant number of lawyers of middle order caste background moved into legal profession. The study further strengthens the views of Singh, Y. (1974) who observed that profession have high bias in favour of upper castes and urban areas and Similarly Gandhi (1984) in case of Gobindgarh of Punjab and Sharma (1985) in case of lawyers of Jaipur (Rajasthan) also found that most of the lawyers were having urban and upper caste background. Thus, the present study supports the general trend in the sociology of profession. But the situation of Meerut district courts presents a unique situation which has to be analysed in context of other socio-economic processes in the region which enable the caste of middle order to move into legal profession. The study also indicates the need to undertake similar studies in other parts of the country so that broad generalizations can be made in the field of sociology of profession.

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Women in Unorganised Sector A Case Study of Maid Servants in Dehradun City

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Women along with men, from time immemorial, have formed an integral part of the socio-economic structure throughout the world. In spite of their contribution to world's culture and civilization, it is almost universally accepted that the women's primary role is that of homemaker and it is for the man to provide subsistence to his family. Diverse social structures and supporting ideologies created by patriarchal society have confined as well as defined women by restricting them to roles and activities described as feminine within the four walls of the house.

The present century has witnessed the emancipation of women from their tradition bound ethos. Their emergence from exclusive seclusion within home to work outside the four walls of house has amounted almost to silent social revolution. This emancipation has brought about a great change in the life of the women throughout the world, influencing their attitudes, values, aspirations and ways of feeling and acting the effective participation in all walks of life. The socio-economic transformation of Indian society in the present century and especially in the post-independence period in the form of industrialization, urbanization, westernization, spread of education and enhanced employment opportunities for women has brought about a series of perceptible changes in the status, outlook, worldview and attitude of Indian women, specially educated middle class women. Now, more and more women have been coming out of the four walls of their homes in search of gainful employment which is evident from the slow but steadily rising female work participation rate (WRP) during the last three censuses. According to 1971 census female WRP for urban areas was 7.18 which rose to 8.31 in 1981 and finally to 9.91 in 1991. (Cf. Table No. 1).

Working women can be classified into two broad categories according to the degree of organization and nature of problems of these sectors of employment; viz, the organized and unorganized sector, for which John Kith Heart used the terms formal and informal sectors. According to the definition of Central Statistical Office, "The organized sectors comprise units registered under the Factories Act of 1948 and covers those using power and employing 10 or more workers as well as unit not using power but employing 20 or more workers". In addition, the organised sector is governed by a number of legislation aimed at protecting the interest and ensuring the

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welfare of workers such as Minimum Wages Act, Labour Welfare Legislation, The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, etc.

The unorganized sector, on the other hand, includes agriculture as well as various home based production and the service sector of domestic work. This sector of employment is characterized by the absence of all protective measures and machinery. Thus, employers are not bound to pay any minimum wages, nor are employees entitled to security of tenure, gratuity and pension, and paid leave. The worse part of it is that their claims against exploitative conditions cannot be taken to the court of law as employers are not legally bound by any regulatory act.

Table 1
Work Participation Rates in India (1951 - 1991)

Year	Rural / Urban	Persons	Males	Females
1951	Total	39.91	54.94	24.06
	Rural	41.00	55.03	26.47
	Urban	34.71	54.37	11.86
1961	Total	43.00	57.10	27.96
	Rural	45.10	58.20	31.40
	Urban	33.50	52.40	11.10
1971	Total	34.17	52.75	14.22
	Rural	35.33	53.78	15.92
	Urban	29.61	48.88	07.18
1981	Total	36.70	52.62	19.67
	Rural	38.79	53.77	23.06
	Urban	29.99	49.06	08.38
1991	Total	37.50	51.61	22.27
	Rural	40.09	52.58	26.79
	Urban	30.16	48.92	09.19

Source : Census of India 1991, Series 1, India Paper 3 of 1991

Working women are employed both in organized as well as unorganized sectors of economy. It is in the unorganised sector of rural or urban areas that the overwhelming presence and struggle of women is manifest. The National Commission of Self-Employed Women estimates that 94 percent of the total female workforce is found in this sector. According to census estimates a very high proportion i.e. 85.09% of the total working women in India are employed in the unorganized sector. The low level of education and training as compared to men, the traditional allocation of roles and limitations of female labour market for women are reasons for this discrepancy in women's

employment. Thus, a very high proportion is forced to work and live under subdued conditions with family and children devoid of proper living and working conditions, and receiving humiliating treatment. While it is true that the worker, irrespective of sex, are exploited in the unorganised sector, women suffer more by the fact of their gender. Thus, the helplessness of the women working in unorganized sector is compounded by gender role expectations and patriarchic values, which keep them hidden or invisible and bind them to monotonous and low paid works considered suitable for them.

The affluent classes in society employ domestic servants to maximise their comforts and maintain dignity and prestige and also as the status symbol. On the other hand, the rising number of middle or upper middle class women employed in the organised sector or as self entrepreneurs are required to fulfill the role expectations for a housewife along with the duties of an employee outside. The work role of working women inevitably encroaches on her time and energy approximately allocated for housewife's role. As a result these women are not in a position to effectively handle their traditional household tasks along with their newfound role as earners working outside the home. In such a situation certain compromises have to be made and these can be made only with the roles of housewife as it is not possible in case of work role of formal and contractual nature. As a result the housewife role is split and part of it is left to be performed by members of family or someone from outside, i.e. maidservant. This has led to the emergence of a class of maid servants to take care of the household activities of such families, thus, becoming a perceptible class of working women. Women domestic servants or maid servants constitute an important segment of unorganized labour of our country. These maidservants as a class come from very poor families- the majority of them being illiterate or having a very little formal education. The maid servants are mostly engaged in heavy and more labour consuming household activities such as scrubbing utensils, washing clothes, sweeping and cleaning house, mopping floor, assisting the employees in kitchen and going to market for petty purchasing.

The general socio-economic condition of maid servants is rather sad and deplorable. In most of the cases the husbands of these maid servants are either unemployed or underemployed. They invariably live in slums or tenements devoid of even certain basic amenities. Many of them do suffer from health problems such as anemia, malnutrition and a chain of related illness. Apart from that most of them develop cracked hands due to continuous work in water and the use of storing abrasive powders and detergents. Though they lessen the burden of household activities of their employers, but in this course they too face the same problem in their own housewife role. However, poor as they are, they cannot afford to employ other women and have to depend on their other family members, which frequently lead to tensions and quarrels in the family.

Maid servants as part of the unorganized labour are today victims of unmitigated hardships and indignities. They are paid shockingly low wages. There is no minimum wages fixed as the Minimum Wages Act does not cover the domestic workers. They do not have any job protection or security as they are hired and fired at the will and fancies of the employers. For even trivial reasons the maid servants can lose their job if the employers desire so. In the absence of any suitable legal measures to protect the interests of domestic/maid servants their plight remains unchanged and they are victims of exploitation.

Millions of words have already been spent touching upon the various problems of women

working in organised field but a very few studies on the women working in unorganised sector and still fewer on maid servants. The present paper aims to take up the task of exploring this new class of women workers, especially their working and living conditions.

Methodology

In the light of preceding discussion, the major objective of the present study is to explore the socio-economic conditions of the maid servants as an important section of the women working in the unorganized sector. The main thrust of the study is to explore and describe the living and working conditions of this exploited lot of women belonging to the poorest of the poor section in the society.

Locale and Universe

The present study has been conducted in Dehradun city, the gateway to Uttarakhand Himalayas and the capital (for the time being) of newly created state of Uttarakhand, is situated between the Shivalik ranges and the Great Himalayas in the Doon Valley. It is located between $77^{\circ} 35'$ and $78^{\circ} 20'$ east longitude and $29^{\circ} 57'$ and $31^{\circ} 20'$ north latitudes. The city is located at an altitude of 640 meters above mean sea level.

The calm and quite atmosphere, lush green surroundings and moderate climate lured a number of retired British and Indian civil servants and army officers to come here and settle permanently. This prompted Ruskin Bond to call Dehradun "a city of gray hairs and green hedges". A characteristic feature of Dehradun, which distinguishes it from other cities in Uttarakhand, is the high rate of literacy and a very high percentage of employed women (mostly in service and teaching). As per 1991 census the total population of Dehradun urban agglomeration was 2,53,628 and that of Municipal area was 2,11,838. As far as the literacy is concerned, according to 1991 census the rate of literacy in Dehradun city is 61.2 percent which is the highest one among all the towns and cities in the state. The high literacy rate of the city is also evident from the fact that the city claims to have highest per capita newspaper consumption not only in the state but in the whole country.

Characteristically the employment in Dehradun city is mostly white collar in nature. Though small in size, the city has a very large number of scientific and research institutions and the highest concentration of public schools in the country. So the city may rightly be called a scientific and literary town. The major employers in the city are the Government and the educational institutions. The large number of working women in organised sector have also offered job opportunities for women as maid servants in domestic sector.

Owing to the fact that maid servants constitute the unorganised sector of employment, it was not possible to know the exact number of maid servants as it required a census of the city, which is a time consuming and difficult exercise. Thus, in the absence of any reliable sampling frame it was decided to study 200 maid servants spread all over the city.

The data were collected as part of a project sponsored by Campus Diversity Initiative (A Ford Foundation Sponsored Project being run in the college). Ten students of M.A.(Final) Sociology collected the data on the living and working conditions of maid servants in the various localities of Dehradun city. Five *Malin Bastis* (Slums) were identified in the different areas of the city as these *Malin Bastis* have a very high concentration of maid servants. A pair of the students

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 20	38	19.00
21-25	33	16.50
26-30	42	21.00
31-35	45	22.50
36-40	29	14.50
41-45	02	1.00
Total	200	100.00

Table 3
Distribution of Respondents According to Their Marital Status

S. N.	Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Unmarried	28	14.00
2.	Married	135	67.50
3.	Widowed	14	07.00
4.	Separated	16	08.00
5.	Deserted	04	02.00
6.	Divorced	03	01.50
	Total	200	100.00

collected data from maid servants by interviewing them with the help of a structured schedule (to maintain uniformity in the data collected). The maid servants were interviewed at their place of residence to have a first observation of their living conditions. The collected data were coded and transferred on master sheets and the necessary frequency tables were drawn out of them. Since the present study is basically descriptive in nature, simple percentages have been worked out and used in interpreting the data rather than any high level statistics. The data have been analysed and interpreted for demographic profile, living conditions, working conditions and job satisfaction of the respondents. As far as demographic profile of the maid servants in Dehradun is concerned, most of the respondents (80.00 percent) are below the age of 35 years and among whom 19.00 percent are below 20 years (cf. Table:2). This overwhelming presence of young and middle aged women

among maid servants shows that domestic service is either a recent phenomenon for this population or in their middle age they generally give up the work. The distribution of respondents on the basis of their caste clearly shows that all of them belong to Scheduled Castes or Other Backward Castes. This fact affirms the traditional nexus between occupational prestige and caste. Domestic service is a lower occupation carrying much less prestige, and as traditionalism has still hold it is carried out by lower caste women. This also has a ray of hope and that is why the lower caste women mostly serve the families of high and middle castes and untouchability seems to be loosing its ground.

The majority (62.50 percent) of respondents are married which may imply that their family responsibility and poverty compel them to go for work. About one -fifth (18.50 percent) of them are spouseless who are widowed, separated, divorced or deserted (cf. Table : 3). They have to shoulder the entire burden of their family. The unmarried respondents support their parents with the intention to make savings for their marriage. Thus, poverty and the absence of other earning members in the family drive those women to take up the job of maid servants. The age at first marriage is quite low. In spite of all the efforts on the part of Government at raising the age of marriage, 61.60 percent respondents were married even before attaining the age of 20 years and more than 98 percent were married before 25 years of age.

Their education level is very low, most of them (88.00 percent) being illiterate and only 12.00 percent having some formal education. When compared, their husbands are better educated though not well educated. None is the illiterate among the husbands of the maid servants; 37.78 percent have got primary education, 45.18 percent have studied upto middle school level and 17.04 percent have gone up to high school or intermediate level of education. This shows the discrimination between thesesexes in providing them education.

As far as the number of children is concerned 23.00 percent respondents have no child, 13.50 percent have one child, 27.00 percent have two children 24.00 percent have three children, 4.00 percent have four , 3.00 percent have five and only 1.5 percent have six children (cf. Table : 4). The average number of children is 1.45 which is lower than the national average. This low number of children among the respondents can be attributed to their exposure to urban life.

Poverty is the main problem forcing the women to take up this low prestige, low paid job of maid servants. A great majority (92.50 percent) of the respondents have a total family income below Rs 1500/- per month only. More than a one-fourth of the maid servant's husbands (25.19 percent) is unemployed while 54.07 percent are casual workers, most of these husbands pass their time as idlers. Thus, poverty along with husband's unemployment is one of the most important reasons for the women to take up employment of maid servants as this profession requires no education and specialized training.

As far as living conditions are concerned, most of them live in slums and outhouses devoid of even basic amenities such as safe drinking water, electricity or even the toilet facilities (cf. Table :5), 46.50 percent respondents live in thatched huts or *Kuccha* houses. The remaining 53.50 percent live in *Pucca* houses mostly consisting of one room with very little or no separate place of cooking or bathing, only very few having more than one room accommodation. Poverty generates indebtedness. Most (78.00 percent) of the respondents are indebted. The amount of loan ranges from few hundreds to three thousand rupees. The loan may be taken only for some occasion or

Table : 5
Distribution of Respondents on Amenities in the House

Amenity	Frequency	Percentage
Running Water		
Available	121	60.50
Not Available	79	39.50
Electricity		
Available	105	52.50
Not available	95	47.50
Toilet Facility		
Available	136	68.00

Table : 6
Distribution of Respondents According to Reasons of Indebtedness

Reasons of Indebtedness	Frequency	Percentage
Day to day expenses	48	25.00
For buying consumer durable	26	13.54
Marriage in the family	63	32.82
Death	23	11.97
Illness	32	16.67
Total	192*	100.00

** Only the indebted respondents have been taken. As the loan has been taken for more than one purpose, the total shows more than the number of respondents*

emergency in the family such as marriage or illness, but in 25.00 percent cases it has been taken to meet the day-to-day expenses of family. The sources of loan are traditional moneylenders (generally some shopkeepers in the neighbourhood or employers). In one-third of cases the loan has also been taken from friends or relatives (cf. Table : 6 and 7). Occasionally, they have to pay a very high rate of interest, which puts them into a vicious circle of deficit financing, and with their meagre economic resources. It is very difficult for them to come out of this vicious circle.

Education is considered to be a vehicle for social mobility and the attitude towards children's education reflects one's mobility aspirations. 154 respondents have 293 children in school going age. Given their limitations of poverty and need of younger children especially younger daughters

Table 7
Distribution of Respondents According to Their Sources of Borrowing

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Moneylenders	79	37.21
Employers	68	31.42
Relatives	42	19.34
Friends	26	12.07
Total	200	100.00

Table : 8
School Going Children by Sex

School Going	Male	Female	Total
Going	110 (63.95)	62 (36.05)	172 (100.00)
Not Going	42 (34.71)	79 (65.29)	121 (100.00)
Total	152	141	293

to look after petty responsibilities in absence of mother, only 59.70 percent go to school and 41.30 percent do not go to school. Among school going children the gender bias is clearly visible. Out of school going children 63.95 percent are boys and only 36.05 percent are girls.

The situation is quite reverse in case of children not going to school, 34.71 percent boys and 65.29 percent girls are not going to school (cf. Table : 8). This is because the younger girls either remain at home to carry out domestic responsibilities or accompany their mothers to assist in their work of maid servants.

As far as the job satisfaction is concerned only one-fifth of the respondents are fully satisfied with their work, 46.50 percent are somewhat satisfied as in the absence of any other alternative job they consider it so, while 30.50 percent are unsatisfied with their job of maid servant. Among those who are unsatisfied with their job, all consider low wages as the main cause of their dissatisfaction, 89.23 percent complain about the heavy work load while 64.61 percent are not satisfied with the treatment given to them by their employers. 27.69 percent consider it a very time consuming in comparison to wages received by them (cf. Table : 9 and 10).

Table 9
Distribution of Respondents According to Their Job Satisfaction

Level of Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Fully satisfied	42	21.00
Somewhat satisfied	93	46.50
Unsatisfied	65	32.00
Total	200	100.00

Table 10
Distribution of Respondents According to Reasons of Dissatisfaction*

Reason of Dissatisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Less salary	65	100.00
Heavy workload	58	89.23
Bad treatment by employer	42	64.61
Very time consuming	18	27.69

** Only the dissatisfied respondents have been taken. The respondents mentioned more than one reason of their dissatisfaction. So, the percentage adds up more than 100.*

Thus, the present study reveals that the maid servants belong to the poorest among the poor sections of the society. Most of them are illiterate and working out of poverty. In the absence of any protective legislation and machinery they have to work under exploitative conditions. To improve the lot of this helpless section of the women workers there is a strong need of some protective legislation and to organise them so that they may be in a position to bargain for better wages and improved working conditions.

Political Criticism in Indian Cartoons: A Marxian Critique of State Policy

Anirban Banerjee

Cartoons are an important art form in the contemporary world. The aim of the cartoonist is to criticize contemporary society. And he does it through the medium of the caricature which, to some extent, exaggerates or distorts reality in such a way that the original can be easily recognized. The intention is to send a message to the viewer. Satire is a potent weapon in the hands of the cartoonist.

Cartoons as an art form originally arose in Europe and America. Journals like *Punch* regularly published cartoons. Precursors of cartoons in India may be found in Kalighat *pats* and the Chitpore Relief Prints of Bengal. They satirically depicted many facets of the seamy side of Indian social life. And like *Punch*, *Shankar's Weekly* was once famous for its cartoons. Since the early years of the twentieth century, India has produced many renowned cartoonists. Gaganendranath Tagore and Prafulla Chandra Lahiri (Piciel) may be regarded as pioneers in this field. They were followed by many who made it a profession like R.K. Laxman, Sudhir Tailang, Abu Abraham and Chandi Lahiri to mention a few. Newspapers like *The Times of India*, *The Hindustan Times*, *Sangbad Pratidin* regularly publish cartoons lampooning contemporary social, economic and political events. Others like *The Statesman* employ cartoonists to illustrate stories or features.

In an earlier article, I had discussed the role of cartoons in social criticism (see Bandopadhyay 2001). In this paper I will mainly scrutinize the Indian state's policies through cartoons. The cartoons were from contemporary English and Bengali newspapers, magazines and publications of political parties. Some of these cartoons have been used in political campaigns during the 2001 elections to the West Bengal Assembly. Educating the electorate through cartoons is much more effective than dull speeches punctuated by dry statistics.

A Critique of Liberalisation and Globalisation

India, at the time of Independence, had a very backward economy. The British had sucked the orange dry leaving the peelings on the table. *Swadeshi*, or economic self-sufficiency, was one of the main goals of the Indian freedom movement. But economic growth was not to be divorced from social justice. So, growth with social justice was to be the major thrust of Indian economic

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policy.

The founding fathers of our republic sought to emulate the policies of the Soviet Union. Through a series of five year plans, the Soviet Union succeeded in transforming herself from a backward, semi-feudal, semi-capitalist state to a socialist superpower. Despite the devastation caused by the Second World War, the Soviet Union became a superpower rivaling the USA which sought to impose its hegemony on the world.

Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the architects of modern India, was inspired by the Soviet model of development. It was a state centric model in which the State took the initiative to develop the economy and initiate progressive social change. A key plank of this model was the five year plans. Through these five year plans, the Indian state developed the economy. Public sector industries were used to build capital goods without which industrial development would not have been possible. The public sector also produced consumer goods, from watches to scooters, oil, coal and LPG. That apart, self-sufficiency was also sought on the food front. The Green Revolution made this possible. A social safety net for the people was provided through a system of rationing of commodities which enabled the people to get foodgrains at a subsidized price. Later, many other commodities like cloth, matches and even exercise books were made available through the Public Distribution System. On the eve of the reforms, i.e., in 1990 the Essential Commodities Act (1955) listed 70 commodities.

Since the beginning of the nineties, the Nehruvian line was abandoned. The same Congress, which under Nehru and his daughter, Indira, tried to make India an economically self-sufficient country, turned head over heels and adopted the policy of 'Liberalization' under Narasimha Rao. In an interview to Partomita Shastri, of Outlook magazine, Manmohan Singh attributes the abandonment of the Nehruvian model to the acute balance of payments crisis that hit India in the early 90s (Shastri 2001: 38). Was there no other alternatives to this? Sudhir Tailang has severely criticized the abandonment of the Nehru line in a cartoon. Pandit Nehru is seen phoning Narsimha Rao. And Rao responds by saying "wrong number" (Fig. 1).

Abandoning the Nehru line meant abandoning the 'socialistic pattern of society' envisaged by him, abandoning the policy import substitution, social security, economic self-sufficiency, and finally an independent role in world politics (see Table-1). It may be noted that the NDA came to power on an anti-liberalization plank but has pursued liberalization more vigorously than the Congress.

Liberalization of the Indian economy has gone hand in hand with globalization. Giddens (2001:690) defined globalization as growing interdependence between different peoples, regions and countries in the world as social and economic relationship come to stretch worldwide. Our experience of globalization is different. It means dominance of western finance capital over India.

Since the nineties, the Indian economy has been hijacked by IMF & World Bank. A cartoon aptly depicts the situation. The big bad wolf (representing global interests) is carrying away the weak lamb (the Indian economy) [Fig 2].

The process of "liberalization" began in the early nineties when, to tide over the balance of payment crisis, the Indian government approached international agencies for a loan. What has a

Table No. 1: Jawaharlal Nehru and Narasimha Rao: Contrasting Policies

Nehru Model (followed upto 1990)	Rao Model (followed since 1991)
<p>I. BASIC PHILOSOPHY <i>Democratic Socialism</i> Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Faith in democratic values (b) Removal of poverty (c) Reduction in inequalities of income and wealth (d) Equal opportunities for all (e) Faith in mixed economy <p>II. ECONOMIC POLICY Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Heavy industrialization (b) Dominant role of public sector (c) Check on monopolistic tendencies through MRTP Act (d) Fiscal policies aimed at reducing inequality of income and wealth through progressive taxation (e) Import substitution through indigenizing everything including foreign high yielding variety of seeds, transfer of technology in key sectors like defence production. <p>III. FOREIGN POLICY Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Non-alignment (b) Peaceful co-existence. 	<p>I. BASIC PHILOSOPHY <i>Liberalization</i> Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Faith in democracy (b) Privatization (c) Encouraging multinational corporations to enter the country (d) Encouraging imports by removing tariff barriers (e) The model followed IMF-World Bank prescription of stabilization and structural adjustment. <p>II. ECONOMIC POLICY Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Heavy industrialization (b) Private sector allowed to make inroads in areas reserved for public sector. (c) Ceiling on assets under MRTP abolished; concentration of economic power encouraged. (d) Foreign direct investment encouraged in high-priority areas. (e) Open encouragement to imports by removing tariff barriers. <p>III. FOREIGN POLICY Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Non-alignment is being diluted. India started playing a subordinate role vis-à-vis USA. (b) The policy of peaceful coexistence was replaced by war mongering

Fig.1 The Nehruvian Line

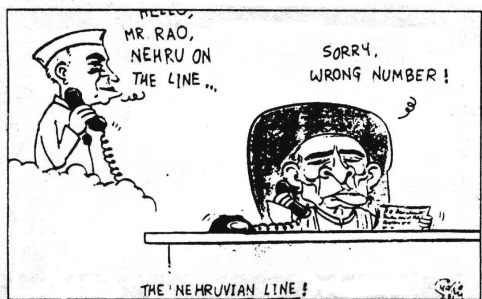


Fig. 2 Hijacking India's Economy



Fig 3 Deinvestment

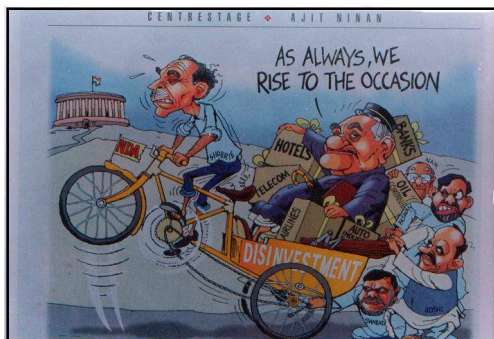


Fig. 4 One Crore Job Cuts



Fig 5 Managing the Farmer



Fig 6 Abolishing the Rationing System



Fig. 7 The Poverty Line

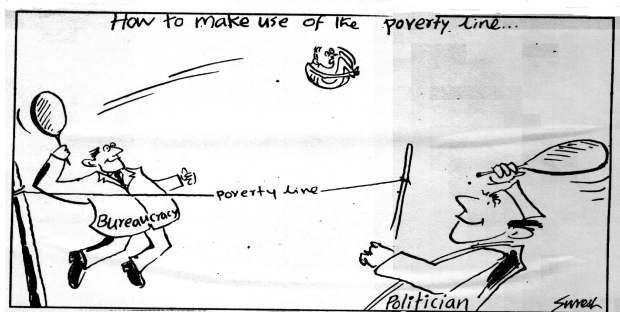


Fig. 8 Uncle Sam's Dollars



decade of liberalization done to the Indian economy? Firstly, the Public Sector Undertakings, the backbone of the Indian economy are being liquidated.

Some profit making PSUs like BALCO have been sold to the private parties. Others, which were running at a loss, were closed down. The closure of the century old Kolar Gold Fields was not merely closing of a mine. It was the destruction of a way of life. The disinvestment policy of the Government has come under heavy fire from both inside and outside the Government. On 30th August 2002, George Fernandez and Ram Naik, both ministers in the Central Cabinet objected to the manner in which PSUs were being disinvested. The controversy they raised stalled the disinvestment process for three months. But they failed to prevent disinvestment of strategic oil PSUs. Arun Shourie had to make certain compromises like agreeing to a public issue of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited but he won the support of the cabinet.

Outside the Government, Opposition parties have criticized privatization. Many public sector companies are being sold at throwaway prices. The CAG report has already indicated that BALCO has been sold at far less than its market value. The privatization of other PSUs will also go the BALCO way if the Indian public opinion does not force the Government to bring some element of transparency into the deals. Thus, the market value of Jessop is more than Rs. 230 crores, but it is proposed to be sold for only Rs.13 crores, [Basu 2002 a&b].

Economist, Dipak Basu, [2002a&b)] showed that privatization results, firstly, in abuse of natural monopolies i.e. Public utilities, as happened in Thatcher's Britain. Secondly, privatization results in private monopolies which are worse than public monopolies. Thirdly, privatization does not necessarily enhance the efficiency of an organization.

One cartoonist has severely criticized the policy of privatization. Fig 3 shows Vajpayee and his colleagues taking PSUs like banks, hotels, etc. to the market. Arun Shourie is in the driver's seat.

Recent news reports reveal that the Government is bent on selling key resources of the nation to the private sector. The country's four international airports in Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai and Delhi are to be sold to private parties.

More alarming is the order of the Government to privatize even municipal services like water-distribution. The Left Front Government in West Bengal has rightly decided not to obey the recent order of the Central Government regarding privatization of water services

Will selling off the country's assets save it from impending bankruptcy? India should take lessons from Argentina's experience.

Liberalization has had an unfavourable impact on employment generation. Before the elections, the NDA promised one crore jobs. Now the government also has taken steps to "downsize" and "right size" many departments creating crores of unemployed. Fig 4 shows two panels. In the left hand panel Vajpayee promises one crore jobs in his election manifesto. In the right hand panel, the Government's economic policy envisages one crore people being retrenched. Restructuring the Indian Iron and Steel Company, for example, will cost 10,000 jobs.¹ The Government has already abolished 300,000 posts in the Central Government services. If it has its way, 500,000 Government

employees will also be axed. This has naturally created great resentment among them.²

The budget proposals for 2002 proposed retrenching 120,000 employees of Government and public sector organizations. The Government also proposed to give employers wide powers to sack staff without notice, a move which could not be carried out in the teeth of strong opposition from trade unions.³

Thirdly, our Government's economic policy is not only proving ruinous to the working class. Farmers have also been hard hit due to the withdrawal of subsidies on fertilizers and the opening up of the country to cheap rice imports from the south-east Asian countries like China, Korea, Taiwan and Thailand. Since the mid-nineties, the farmers have been terribly suffering from crop failures and other problems. In 1998, the suicides of farmers in Andhra Pradesh forced the National Human Rights Commission to enquire into the causes of this crisis. Chandi Lahiri's "Cashir Fansi" is a severe indictment of the Government's policy towards farmers [Fig 5]. The cartoon shows Vajpayee hanging the Indian farmer while the foreign farmers admiringly look on.

Fourthly, the food policy of the Indian Government has been lampooned in another cartoon by Chandi Lahiri. Despite having buffer stocks in food, the Government has decided to do away with the rationing system. The black marketers cornered the food stocks. So the poor will be deprived of subsidized meals [Fig 6].

While more than 50 million tons of food grains rot in Government godowns, 50 million people live on the brink of starvation. It is disgraceful that even after 55 years of Independence, starvation deaths continue to occur in India. The 34 starvation deaths that took place in Kashipur bloc in Orissa in mid-2001 show that famine can co-exist amidst plenty of food stocks in contemporary India. During the Bengal Famine (1943) foodstuff were diverted by the colonial administration for the purpose of war.

In 21st century India, the callousness of the state combined with unscrupulous profiteers and black-marketers led to starvation deaths. With the delisting of rice and wheat from the Essential Commodities Act, the problem will worsen. At a recent *jansunwal*(public hearing) in New Delhi, organized just a fortnight prior to the 54th Republic Day celebrations, fifty horrific testimonies were presented from Bihar, Chattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. They revealed how even today, 55 years after Independence, people eat wild shoots, *mahua*, grass, rats, and even undigested grains scavenged from cow dung to survive. Even if they temporarily escape hunger, most still lack safe drinking water. The public hearing, organized by the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, as part of its Right to Information Campaign, brought the city bred, well fed citizens a chance to come face to face with the harsh reality and traumatic life of a people who are forced to live with crushing hunger (for details, see Kaul 2003).

The Central Government is reportedly toying with the idea of using *Indiamix*, a nutritious mixture of wheat (75%) and full fat Soya bean (25%), to combat hunger. A mere 80 gram a day of *Indiamix* is reportedly enough for preventing malnutrition in children. 100grams of the substance will be enough for a non lactating woman. And 120 grams will be adequate for an adult man (for details, see Kang 2003). How far *Indiamix* will succeed in combating hunger depends in part on

the political will of the Government in reaching out to the masses and on its ability to combat corruption at the distribution level. Bureaucrats and politicians are playing ball with the poverty line [Fig 7]. This is evident in the controversy over BPL (Below Poverty Line) cards in West Bengal. While accusations of politicization of poverty flow thick and fast, the real losers in this battle of words are the poor.

Fifthly, the Government is hungry for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). To attract FDI the Government must open up the economy. And so it sought the advice of the American Chamber of Commerce. Its demands strike at the roots of our economic sovereignty. The American Chamber of Commerce wants the Indian Government to open up 74% of our telecom sector, 49% of the insurance business and 51% of the banking business to Foreign Direct Investment.⁴ If the managers of the Indian state act according to the recommendations of the Chamber the USA will have a stranglehold on our economy. Can any self-respecting government accept these recommendations?

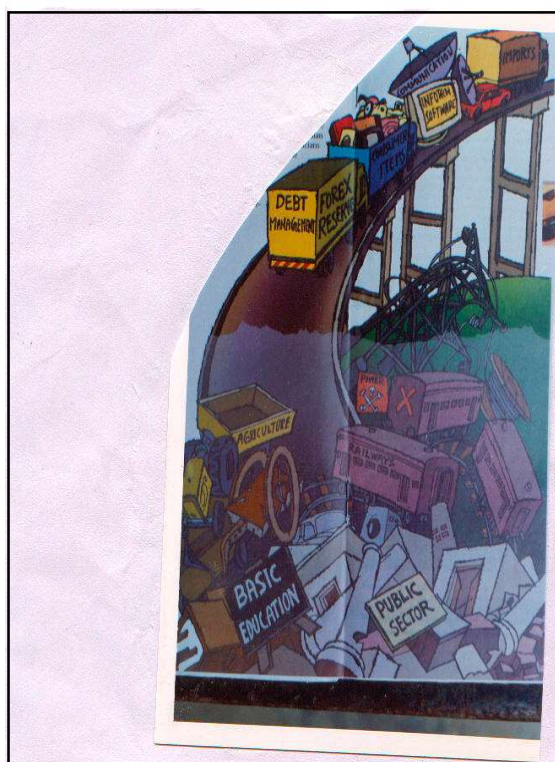
In case of Enron Power Project, the Government in fact accepted very humiliating terms, even overruling the advice of the World Bank not to do so. The Power Purchase Agreement stipulated that Enron could seize the assets of the Government if it failed to honour its obligations (see Vombatkere 2001).

So, it is American business which calls the shots in Indian economy despite the US ambassador Robert D. Blackwill's laments about the absence of Californian raisins from Indian dinner tables. The American state is not satisfied with the limited opening up of the Indian economy. It wants total capitulation of India to American financial interests. The accompanying cartoon is a critique of American foreign policy. It shows Uncle Sam dangling dollars at the poor Indian [Fig 8].

Opening up of the economy has not been matched by a corresponding increase in FDI flows. On 10th August 2001, Union Commerce & Industries Minister, Mr Murasoli Maran, informed Parliament that the Government set a target of Rs 37,039.45 crores of FDI in 2000. But only about half of that amount, i.e. Rs 19,341.74 crores of FDI, was forthcoming.⁵ Over-reliance on FDI could prove ruinous to the economy. Basu (2002 I & II) rightly observed that no country can develop by relying exclusively on foreign investment. So, this overdependence on FDI should stop. And the fiscal deficit threatens to derail the economy [Fig 9].

In 1999-2000, the actual fiscal deficit was Rs 1, 04,717 crores,⁶ and by December 2001, the fiscal deficit has climbed to 3.6 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

The Budget proposals for 2002 had an adverse impact on the common man, in particular the middle class. The Indian middle class is mainly composed of salaried people was badly hit by the Finance Minister's decision to lower the interest rate on the Provident Fund and Public Provident Fund. At the same time only 10% of the amount saved could be deducted from the tax instead of 20%. That apart the prices of every consumer item including LPG, kerosene, postal articles, etc. were subjected to a hefty increase. In case of Income-tax too the middle class was the loser. A survey of middle class opinions reported in *Outlook*, September 23, 2002, found widespread middle class disenchantment about the NDA government. The *Outlook CFore Survey* found that 69% of the 1,618 middleclass people interviewed in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad

Fig. 9 Closing the Fiscal Gap**Fig. 10 India's Economy in Doldrums**

and Bangalore thought that the NDA government has neglected the middle class in its economic policies, 61% regard the tax policies as harsh, 63% feel that the Government has been harsh towards senior citizens, 77% hold that the Finance Minister's sops in the budget are not enough, 68% do not think that the NDA has done enough to protect the UTI investors, 62% think that their financial security has gone down compared to five years ago. 66% are not satisfied with the overall performance of the Government. But when asked whether they will vote for the BJP in the next elections, 32% said "yes", 33% 'no' and 35% were undecided.

A cartoon in *Outlook* magazine has aptly depicted the state of the Indian economy today. The Indian economy is going down the hill. At the top are imports of InfoTech software, communication equipment, and consumer items. At the bottom are agriculture, basic education and the public sector [Fig 10].

To conclude, cartoonists have played an important role in criticizing state policy. The cartoon is a very effective medium of mass communication because anyone can understand them. It is no wonder that cartoons were put to very effective use during election campaigns. The West Bengal Assembly elections in 2001 saw a very effective use of cartoons by both the ruling Left Front and the Opposition. Very recently, in January, 2003, an old cartoon published in an Iranian newspaper caused such controversy that it created ripples in the international Press. Such a controversy over a cartoon also occurred in Myanmar. This shows that cartoons are sometimes taken very seriously by the ruling classes of modern states. Does this indicate lack of a sense of humour on part of the rulers or a genuine fear that the cartoonist will provoke the people to question their misdeeds?

It is sad that such an effective means of communication is dying out in western countries. In a press conference at the Karnataka Press Academy, noted cartoonist, R.K. Laxman, lamented that in England, the birthplace of cartoons, the art of cartooning is on its deathbed simply because editors of newspapers are no longer interested in publishing cartoons.⁸

In India, however, the art is thriving. Many newspapers and magazines regularly publish cartoons. And cartoonists continue to shape public opinion through their creations.

Notes

- (1) See "Sail's partial support to IISCO" in *The Statesman* 'Business & Finance', Kolkata, 24th August 2001.
- (2) See *Deshitaishee*, 39th Year No. 21, 30th November 2001, p.1.
- (3) See recent news reports.
- (4) Statesman News Service: "FDI may get derailed" report in *The Statesman*, "Business and Finance", Kolkata, 4th August, 2001.
- (5) "FDI flows lagging behind target: Maran" in *The Statesman* "Business and Finance", Kolkata, 11.08.2001.
- (6) Vide "Budget at a Glance" in "Business Telegraph Budget 2001", Calcutta, 1 March 2001.
- (7) Vide Parishista EK (Table-I), in "Paschimbanger Prakritik Durjog, 2000", *Pascimbanga*, Flood 2000.
- (8) R.K. Laxman cited in "Hai Cartoon" – report published in *Aajkaal*, Kolkata, 25.12.2002.

Dedication: This paper is dedicated to the memory of two noted cartoonists, the late N.K. Ranga and the late Abu Abraham.

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Primordial, Civic and Political Identities in Mobilization of Peasants

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In collective actions specific social categories are mobilized in order to pursue the projected common interests. The specific social category has numerous identities related to caste, lineage, religion, etc (primordial) affiliation to occupational associations (civic) and political loyalties. Out of the several identities, certain structural attributes attain strategic significance in the mobilization process (Oommen 1990). In the case of BKU pre-existing communal solidarities based on lineages, who competed among themselves for power coalesced against the urban capitalism and the state, with a commonly trusted Chowdhary acquired strategic significance than civic and political identities, in the initial collective actions of BKU and mobilization of kisans. The mobilization failed to attain a macro-orientation but remained with micro-orientation as it insisted to maintain autonomy from the existing political parties. Divisiveness among the coalesced lineages on the basis of means, strategy and defining BKU's relations with the existing political parties resulted in a void within, which further delimited the scope of mobilization. Under such conditions BKU sought help from urbanites and traders. Some kisan associations affiliated with C(I) and CPM though discredited the actions of BKU but others extended their contribution in the mobilization. Opposition parties on their own not only directed its party workers to mobilize more kisans to different collective actions but also articulated the demands in Assembly and Parliament but in vain. The state not only discredited the collective actions on the basis of the participants in the actions but also on the possible consequences of the demands on the wider society. The state used repressive measures and made efforts to create divisiveness within the leadership.

A brief account of the endeavors of kisan associations to develop a peasant association with micro-orientation is presented first. In Tamil Nadu peasants resorted to collective actions against the hike in electricity tariff, growing indebtedness and discrepancy in the agricultural input and produce prices in the 1960's under the banner of Tamil Nadu Agriculturists Association. During the Janata Party rule, Mr. Narayana Swamy Naidu toured different parts of India and established units of peasants' union at Khanjhwala, Chandigarh, Baraut, etc in 1978. National Body of Indian Farmers Association came into being in which different units of peasant unions in the country were integrated in 1980. In North India, this Association was named as Bharatiya Kisan Union [BKU]. Green Flag became the symbol of this Association and remained largely non-

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political. The peasant leaders rallied the peasantry around a new leadership, with independence from the control of the existing political parties and their leadership. Thus, the association intended to play the role of a pressure group in the Indian democracy. In Tamil Nadu, Mr. Naidu transformed the association into a political party to avoid the defection of kisan representatives to the fold of existing political parties in the legislative bodies. This measure contributed to break down of the association. Thus, the initial endeavors of forming a monolithic union with one flag and one leader at national level for peasants might not be accomplished as divisiveness emerged on defining its relation with the existing or creating a new political party (ies). The Baraut unit of BKU played a limited role in the mobilization of kisans for kisan melas when Chowdary Charan Singh was expelled from the cabinet of Janata Party. Till 1986 the unit at Baraut remained quiescent.

Primordial loyalties played more important role than the civic and political identities in aggregation of peasants' interests under the banner of BKU from 1986 in Western Uttar Pradesh. Khanjhwala unit of BKU leaders made strenuous efforts to contact the leaders of BKU unit at Baraut in 1986 but in vain. They met Mr. Sukha Vir Singh, a rich peasant, Chowdhary of Desh Khap, and member of the managing committee of the J.V. College Baraut and shared the Haryana experiences of collective actions in the reprisal of peasants' grievances. It prompted the Desh Khap Chowdhary to call a meeting of kisans of his Khap area in the presence of Haryana kisan leaders. The kisans individually aired their troubles related with the raising indebtedness, drought associated issues, lowering ground water table, problems connected to the supply of electricity and the growing disparity between the agricultural input and agricultural produce prices. Individually each participant in the meeting conceded the relevance of kisan union to rectify their grievances. The grievances of individual cultivators thus became general and public (Mills 1955). Thus, the peasants who used to compete for scarce critical agricultural inputs became aware of common grievances in smaller groups at local level. Nonetheless, their negative perceptions towards their chowdhary as untrustworthy, politically ambitious, cunning, and dishonest, etc restricted the formation of BKU unit afresh at Baraut. Thus, the lack of trusted leadership postponed the collectivization of kisan grievances.

Mr. S.V. Singh, later, called a meeting of chowdharies of all Khaps in the area in the absence of Khanjalawal peasant leaders. The Chowdharies of Baliyan and Chaugama khaps, some active members of Chaprauli and Ghatwala khaps, and Mr. Veerendra Verma [MP of Lok Dal] participated in the meeting. The kisan participants expressed their experiences about the deteriorating conditions of peasants in terms of raising indebtedness, drought, electricity supply, sinking ground water table, availability of drinking water, widening gap between the prices of agricultural inputs and produce. Thus, individual problems of kisans were shared beyond a single Khap territory. The participants in general asserted the relevance of a non-political union for kisans. They also decided to form units of kisans' unions, initially at each district and to extend them to village level at a later stage.

The Baliyan Khap Chowdhary [Mr. Mahendra Singh Tikait] expressed his views about the prevalence of intense factional hostilities and conflicts in his own Khap capital village Sisauli, which he was unable to resolve. He felt such factional disputes could impede the aggregation of

kisans' interests. Mr. S.V. Singh, along with some of the participants, visited Sisauli and made endeavors to resolve the factional conflicts in a Panchayat but in vain. Thus, there was a prevalence of common grievances in this area even before September 1986. Yet the primordial loyalties based on Khap and factions, and perceptions about their Khap chowdharies impeded the aggregation of peasant grievances in the area. The chances for the formation of union of peasants were further hampered by caste loyalties and rivalries, which can be substantiated with the role of Kairana Gujars.

Simultaneously the Gujar Khap Chowdhary in Kairana area autonomously made endeavors, to mobilize peasants of his own Khap area. His younger brother Mr. Hukum Singh shifted his political affiliation from L. D. to Congress (I) in 1984 elections as one of his political rivals from Gujar caste joined L. D. The Congress Party leaders of U.P. considered Mr. Hukum Singh as a close associate of Mr. V. P. Singh. Mr. V. P. Singh left Congress [I] and formed Jan Morcha. Under these conditions, Mr. Hukum Singh was inducted into the Ministry of Mr. V. P. Singh to lessen the chances of Mr. Hukum Singh shifting his alliance to Jana Morcha. Once Mr. Hukum Singh got a berth in the U.P. Ministry then his brother became inactive in the mobilization of peasants. In the latter phases, he tried to mobilize peasants of his Khap area against the BKU activities. The other castes were also suspicious about the potential dominance of Gujars over them if they align with them under the leadership of Gujar Chowdhary. Thus, power struggles not only between castes but also within caste have contributed in delimiting not only the formation but also the extension of union. Thus, primordial loyalties could succeed at least in the formation of smaller groups where the kisans shared their common sufferings. Though the primordial loyalties awakened peasants at local level but coordination could not be achieved at a broader level to redress their grievances.

The opposition party candidates, who lost in the elections held just after the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, made endeavors to aggregate the interests of peasants in this area. The defeated opposition party candidates in 1984-85 elections called meetings of kisans in 1986. Cultivators of this area, however, responded in a lukewarm manner to these meetings as they developed an attitude of aversion and distrust towards political party leaders. The leaders of various political parties, according to kisans, shifted their stand on agrarian issues with their changing political affiliation and relations with the party in power. Kisans also allege that the Members of Legislative Assembly and Parliament were unable to safeguard the interests of kisans all the way through various policies related to rural life and agriculture. The representatives of people in the parliament and legislative bodies, according to kisans, acted more or less as power brokers. These factors seem to have contributed to the lukewarm response from kisans to the opposition party candidates' meetings.

Villagers of Haryana, claiming their affiliation with the BKU unit of Haryana, visited the villages nearby Sisauli and Shamli along with two kisans of Shamli, on an Ambassador. They collected membership fees for BKU with the help of a Homeopathic doctor of Bora Khurd. The Homeopathic doctor was a rich peasant, post-graduate, owner of kholu, tractor, thrasher, lives with his unmarried brother and widowed mother along with his wife and two children. His interests

related to kohlu were affected as a consequence of changes in the governmental policies. The collectors of membership fees were later found as cheaters. The contributors of membership fees were in turn inquiring about the activities of BKU claimants, in the severe drought period for them. The Homeopathic doctor met the Shamli residents and collected a portion of the contributions from them. He returned the amount to the contributors. Thus, aliens with civic identities were, though primarily treated with trust as they were accompanied by local kisans but such trust could not be continued for long.

The Homeopathic doctor discussed the problems of peasantry, in smaller collectivities, in the absence of 'Goonda [deviant legally], Neta [leader], and Pradhan [Village Panchayat president]. Kisans of this area do consider these three categories of people as exploiters, power brokers and usurpers of peasants' surplus. In these smaller collectivities problems related to supply of electricity, sinking ground water table, drought, kohlu plant policies, growing indebtedness, corruption and humiliating behavior shown towards peasants by the bureaucratic elements in the formal institutions like banks, cooperatives, police, electricity and revenue departments, and sugarcane purchase centers were discussed. The aggregator of peasant grievances proposed for the non-payment of loans borrowed from the formal financial institutions, operation of kohlu plants without renewal of licenses upto December 1986. Finally, he proposed for the withdrawal of individual savings from banks. He also proposed to uproot the electricity poles standing on the peasants' lands, if the government opts for coercive actions. The collectivity of cultivators became conscious that the grievances are general in nature rather than of a particular individual and of a particular village. The collectivity felt such deteriorating conditions need to be altered through collective actions. Though the participants agreed on the commonness of the goal but they differed on the means with the aggregator of kisans' grievances. In addition to this, they also looked the aggregator of kisans' interests with distrust, as he purchases sugarcane from the cane cultivators at prices lower than the mill prices to operate his kohlu. The participants in the meeting called the aggregator of kisans' interests as 'pagal' [mad] and went back to their respective villages. Formation of Kisan Union could not materialize, as he was younger in age within his own lineage. In addition to this, traditional leaders of some importance either at Khap, or Khamba have not attended the meeting.

Two peasant leaders of Khanjhalawala unit of BKU revisited Barium in September 1986 in order to comprehend the various problems associated with the formation of BKU unit in the Meerut Commissary. The Homeopathic doctor of Bora Khurd got the information through his patients, the kisans who attended the earlier meeting, and kin. He met the Haryana peasant leaders at Barium and requested them to visit his village. An indoor meeting was called in the residence of the doctor. Twelve peasants of his village attended the meeting. They belonged to different castes and owners of different sizes of landholdings. The participants in the meeting resolved 1) to bestow the leadership role of BKU to honest, trustworthy, and assertive Chowdhary of a Khap in a district. They thought that the leadership at commissary level could pass slowly into the hands of those persons who lived up to the expectations of kisans and fought for their interests. As political and economic identities failed to sensitize kisans for collective actions. It resulted in entrusting leadership role to primordial identities i.e., Khap chowdhary. Secondly, they opted to

place the union membership fees in the local banks on the union account in order to avoid individual misappropriation of funds. Thirdly, politicians and corrupt people are considered as enemies of the union. Finally, the participants decided to operate kohlu plants without renewal of licenses unto December 1986. These decisions reflect an attitude of reverence and trust towards the traditional sources of authority, patriarchal. Further holders of formal positions in the non-traditional authority and power structure are treated with aversion and mistrust. In addition to this, the interests of the kohlu owners are manifestly articulated in the meeting.

After this the kohlu owner spent nearly one month in contacting the kisans of different villages adjacent to Sisauli. He finally called a meeting of peasants at Sisauli on Seventeenth of October 1986. Nearly 2000 kisans attended the meeting. Captain Bhopal Singh and Major Ash Ram [both retired army persons], Mr. Carpal Singh [a Primary School Teacher], Mr. Dada Umbrac Singh [an old aged kisan revered by most of the kisans of this area], Mr. Mohair Singh [a retired high court Judge], Mr. Sukha Vir Singh, the homeopathic doctor were the prominent persons who attended the meeting. Sisauli is the capital village of Baliyan Khap. Mr. M. S. Tikait as its Chowdhary chaired the meeting. The participants requested the Chairperson to lead the peasants of Muzaffarnagar district in the redress of kisans' grievances. The Chairperson refused to lead the peasants with the plea of widespread factional disputes within the village, which he was unable to resolve as Chowdhary of the Khap. Then the collectivity of peasants refused to accept the hospitality of the Baliyan Khap Chowdhary and resolved to persist with fast until the Chowdhary concedes to their request. Refusal of guests to accept the hospitality of the host is a way of showing general disrespect to the host particularly in the group where honor considerations are treated as important than rational calculations. Thus, the participants kept the honor of the Khap Chowdhary at stake, which compelled the Chowdhary to call a separate meeting of the Chowdharies of different Patties of Sisauli village on the same day. The Chowdharies of Sisauli village conceded not only to play down the factional conflicts in the village but also to extend their cooperation in the aggregation and articulation of the interests of peasants. After this decision the formation of BKU unit came into existence on 17th October, 1986 at Sisauli with Mr. Ash Ram [retired army person] as its president, Mr. Tikait as its treasurer and Master Carpal Singh as its secretary. Thus, the formerly competing groups / factions within a lineage merged in mutual alliance against an outside oppressor or ruler who refuses to consider their problems in the successive severe droughts for four years.

After the formal announcement of the formation of BKU, the participants aired their grievances, which became the charter of their demands. They describe these demands as their rights. The demands basically revolved around electricity. They are 1] hike in the rate of power tariff, 2] collection of extra-charge for the bulb fixed at the tube well, 3] location of electricity tariff collection centers at far away places from villages, 4] delay in the repair and restoration of disconnected and loose electric wires, 5] irregular and erratic supply of electricity for tube wells, flour mills and kohlus, 6] lack of rural and urban parity in the supply of electricity, 7] prevalence of corruption in electricity department, 8] disconnection of electricity connections to those cultivators who either failed to pay the dues in time or those who became defaulters overtime, 9] imposition of penalty in the event of late payment of power bills, 10] collection of money as security from

new aspirants for electricity connections for their tube wells and finally, [11] incompatibility between the supply of power and the power tariff charged.

If the articulated grievances depict the composition of the collectivity, then it was mainly composed of electricity consumers. The consumers of electricity in rural areas mainly belong to the category of owners of electrified tube wells, flour mills, sulfur plants [kohlus] and household consumers of electricity. The electrified tube well owners mainly belong to the category Maldars (rich peasants), i.e., owners of more than 10 acres of land and Khatae-petae-loag (middle peasants) owners of 5 to 10 acres of land respectively [Satyanarayana 1985]. Kohlu owners too mainly belong to the category of rich peasants while flour mill owners belong to middle peasant category. Cultivators who own less than two hectares of land with secondary sources of livelihood or the owners who got land through inheritance too own tube wells jointly. Thus, issues related with electricity, at the initial phase, became similar structural sources for the genesis of discontentment among the rural inhabitants. Latter the collectivity directed its attention to some important questions: what action to be taken, when, how, by whom and where? Mr. S.V.Singh proposed the name of Mr. Tikait to lead a Dharana either at Sakauti or at Shamli electricity sub-station. Some of the possible reasons for such proposal may be due to the limited capacity of Mr. S.V.Singh to mobilize kisans of his own Khap area. In addition to this, the inter-Khap rivalry between the Desh and Ghatwalas has its own role to play in this proposal. The collectivity finally agreed to organize a dharana at Kharmukherhi.

Organization of first dharana took place on January 27, 1987 with 300 participants on the first day drawn from Baliyan, Ghatwala, Chaprauli, and Desh Khap areas and affiliated to Lok Dal [Interview with a peasant who participated in the first Dharana]. The dharana continued for three days and number of participants roused to 30,000 who spent their severe cold nights by singing "Raaginis," folk songs. In the folk songs they depicted the prevailing darkness in villages and glittering lights in cities but also the insincerity of the state government to redress the electricity linked grievances. The villagers nearby Kharmukheri supplied food to the participants in Dharana. In the meantime, the DM of Muzaffarnagar district conceded to meet the kisans on Dharana, which enhanced the group morale, status, and consciousness of collective power in contrast to the humiliating behavior meted out to individual peasant's grievances in day-to-day interactions with the bureaucracy. The DM reached the place late and customarily addressed and rendered apologies to the panchayat for the delay as insisted by the participants in the panchayat. Non-observance of the custom is considered as a mark of disrespect to the panchayat Chairman and to the members. Mr. Tikait asked the DM to sit on the floor. This type of behavior may depict the dominance of custom over the bureaucratic rules and the principle of equality over hierarchy, and collective informal power over formal authority. The DM listened the grievances and assured the peasants that the local problems of electricity will be resolved soon. He pleaded for additional time to pursue the hiked electricity tariff issue with the state government. The DM suggested for the payment of electricity tariff according to the older rates and also proposed for the payment of balance if any after the final decision from the government.

Such an overt collective action depicts at least two points: Firstly, it may be an expression of accumulated grievances against bureaucracy which not only failed to resolve the problems under their control in the drought period but also humiliated peasants in their day-to-day interactions. It may also indicate that self-respect and honor are dearer to them. Both the bureaucracy and other components of the state apparatus have established fixed informal claims over the peasants' surplus as service charges, in the normal agriculture production. Position holders in the formal institutions are reluctant to reduce such claims on peasants even in the recurrence of severe drought for four years. The situation has further deteriorated due to hailstorms, insect attacks, and scarce supply of agricultural inputs at an appropriate time in the crop cycle. Continuity of such claims on the surplus in the abnormal conditions and meager supply of agricultural inputs at the time of need, have affected the capacity of poor and middle peasants' ability to cope with their own subsistence needs. Such a behavior of peasants has an element of instrumentality in their interactions with the formal bureaucratic institutions, i.e., to change the informally fixed claims of bureaucracy on the peasants' surplus, at least temporarily.

Secondly, such a behavior in turn may provide a feeling of enhanced self-respect and courage to the peasants that the same type of behavior could be shown collectively towards the lower rungs of bureaucracy without retaliation from the latter. Thus, the dharana according to the participants not only safeguarded the prestige, honor, and self-respect of the peasants but also gave them power to collectively interact with bureaucracy, i.e., it served the expressive goals of the participants in dharana. Thus, initially the collective action has both instrumental as well as expressive goals. Two types of collectivities are mobilized to the dharana, i.e., primordial (Khap, caste) and L.D. affiliated kisans.

After the departure of DM from the dharana site, the kisans panchayat has unanimously entrusted the responsibility for the promotion of units of kisans union in their Khap areas and to mobilize the peasants in larger number to the March 1, 1987 dharana. Thus, the participants in the dharana realized the significance of primordial identities. Surana (1987) found the super-imposition of primordial loyalties, Chokla (Chauhan 1968) over civic collectivities in the mobilization of kisans against the Jagirdari system in Rajasthan. Thus, at the initial level of the collective actions, there was no provocation from the 'state' and the participants have adopted non-violent methods to redress their grievances. The adaptation of non-violence as a strategy reflects that the participants mainly belonged to the middle peasants. If they turn the movement violent, then they have more at stake than what they can get.

Panchayat meetings were organized at village and Khamba levels by the BKU activists and promoted the formation of BKU units from February 1987. Strains aroused between the lambardars (officially appointed representatives of village community under British revenue system) Mukhiyas (Headman of proprietors in British Land tenure system) and BKU activists on one hand; the ineffective Khap chowdharies and the BKU activists, on the other hand, where these identities were not superimposed i.e. Khap chowdharies were also not effective BKU leaders. Lambardars remained aloof from the BKU with an allegation that the activists did not consult them, at least, at

the time of announcing the second dharana. They felt that the BKU activists could not mobilize the kisans without their active support and cooperation.

While organizing panchayat meetings at Khamba and Khap levels, the effective members of the BKU unit have chaired the meetings even in the presence of Khap and khamba chowdharies. Old aged kisans of the area questioned this practice on the grounds that such practices lower the status, honor, and prestige of chowdharies. The other section of peasants mainly drawn from youth asserted that 'this is a kisan panchayat and not a Khap panchayat. If you consider that the status of the Chowdhary will be lowered because of the above-mentioned practices, then take him away from the meeting'. It means that problems of relative importance of identities between civic and primordial identities have emerged in the meetings organized at Khamba and Khap levels. In the crisis of relative importance of identities, the identity of kisan emerged and acquired more importance than the primordial identity like Khap. Instrumental values acquired relatively more importance within the group than the expressive values like status, honor, and prestige. These facts do indicate that instrumental values have acquired more importance within group interactions while expressive values got priority in dealing with out-group. Discussions in these meetings revolved around electricity problems, debt, and disparity between agricultural input and produce prices.

In some areas, the BKU activists failed to trace its Khap Chowdharies. In such cases, affective members of such khaps took the responsibility of mobilizing peasants. Thus, the leadership of BKU units emerged from kisans who are not only affective chowdharies of khaps and Khambas but also affective persons. While Lambardars, Mukhiyas and ineffective chowdharies of khaps remained aloof from the meetings. Mr. Tikait latter nominated them into BKU leadership while resolving the disputes in panchayats.

On one hand, the BKU activists are organizing their meetings at grass root level. On the other hand, the U. P. Government deployed police and P. A. C. without seriously considering the grievances of the peasantry and their charter of demands. Such steps most probably are aimed at repressing the peasants' proposed overt action of March 1, 1987. The second interpretation of deploying force in this area may be aimed at maintaining law and order. The second interpretation is less valid because the force not only arrested nearly 25 BKU activists on Feb 26 and 27 but also imposed section 144. They sealed all roads leading to Shamli, the place of proposed dharana. The district administration made futile efforts to arrest Mr. Tikait. Till this effort to arrest Mr. Tikait, kisans are extending the units of BKU at a slower pace as they are facing the problem of leadership claims and relative importance of identities and instrumental versus expressive interests. After this arrest effort not only extension but also consolidation of BKU units and supporters became faster. Thus, repressive measures of the state contributed to extension of BKU units at a faster speed.

BKU activists called a meeting of kisans at Sisauli on Feb 27, 1987. In that meeting, the kisan leaders resolved to mobilize kisans in larger numbers towards the dharana place. Such mobilization of kisans was perceived as functional to the BKU as police forces have to think twice before resorting to coercive actions. They also resolved to retaliate violently against any provocation

from the police and P. A. C. The role for the mobilization of kisans was entrusted to the khamba; Khap and village level chowdharies wherever they are capable of mobilizing peasants. In other parts, the responsibility was entrusted on the effective leaders with kisan identity. They used the notions of status, honor, and prestige, expressive notions, in order to stir the kisans against the state oppression. These expressive notions aroused the innate antagonism of kisans towards oppression in this area. They argued, if the administration succeeds in averting the dharana of first March 1987 'each Khap and kisans 'status and honor will be at stake'. If we see these facts in the light of values of Jats towards life, antagonism to oppression, principles of equality, and freedom and not to back out at the expense of self-respect and honor (Ibbetson 1974) then the use of such notions need to be interpreted. Such notions became effective in the mobilization of kisans to the dharana in particular and to the movement in general. These notions were used more effectively even in the breaking of barricades erected on the roads.

In the process of breaking the barricades, two kisans became martyrs in the side of kisans and more were injured while on the side of police one police personal lost his life in the maintenance of law and order. One out of the two kisans who lost their lives belongs to the religion Islam and the other to Hindu. On caste lines they were affiliated to Teli and Jat. The first one is a landless laborer and the second one is a son of landowner. Release of kisans imprisoned prior to the dharana acquired more importance and the BKU activists demanded for the release of kisans at the dharana site as such. The district administration facilitated the release of imprisoned kisans at the dharana place. The administration pleaded for one more month time to have a response from the State Government. The kisan collectivity conceded one more month time and nominated unanimously Mr. Tikait as the president of BKU. During the dharana period, a truck union leader brought food to the participants from the neighboring villages. The truck union leader along with nearly one thousand kisans took the dead bodies to their respective villages. The kisans paid homage on the eve of burial of the landless Muslim Teli's corpse and cremated the corpse, a landowning Arya Samaj Jat, at Lisarh. Ashes of the Jat and the soil from the buried place of the Muslim Teli were taken to Sukratal and immersed in Ganges. More than one lakh kisans observed the immersion and took a pledge to protect the cause of the peasants for whose cause these two persons laid their lives. Such an assemblage in turn resulted in the realization of the importance of collective power in dealing with the 'State'.

Why the assemblage at dharana unanimously nominated Mr. Tikait as President of BKU? Answer for such question need to be looked in a historical perspective of relations between the five important lineage groups among Jats and within a lineage will provide us some insights in the comprehension of such a decision. The Desh Khap is known as the first inhabitant of this area. Historically, Desh and Ghatwala Khaps had clan rivalries, which prompted the Ghatwalas to restrict the ascendancy of its rival to the position of BKU President. On the other hand, Mr. Sukha Vir Singh became the chowdhary of Desh Khap after replacing his own elder brother from the position. His own Khap kisans treat him with mistrust and suspicion as they allege that he has political ambitions and after fulfilling his personal ambitions he will treat them as political party leaders are treating them. Both exogenous and endogenous factors limited the possibility of Desh

Khap chowdhary becoming the president of BKU. The Chowdhary of Ghatwala was ineffective while the collectivity failed to trace out the Khapwar Chowdhary of Chaprauli. Mr. Tikait, Khapwar chowdhary of Baliyans, is not only treated as honest, and trustworthy but also as one among them as an owner and worker on land. Simultaneously, kisans of this area perceived him as protector of their self-respect, honor, and prestige, while interacting with the administration. On the other hand, in one of the earlier meetings, i.e., prior joining in the movement itself, the factional disputes, within Baliyan khap, were kept out-of-the-way in the pursuance of collective interests of peasants. These factors not only depict the milieu from which the movement has originated but also the milieu in which the movement has to work. Thus, the local competing groups merged in mutual alliance against an outside group (Middleton and Tait 1958).

Under such environment, the CM of U. P. announced three differential rates of electricity tariffs connecting it with the moment of its payment. The three categories of tariff payers will be firstly, those who pay the tariff in advance for six months; secondly, payers of tariff in time and finally the late payers of tariff. The rates do also vary according to the time, i.e., Rs.22.50, Rs.25.00 and finally Rs.30 00 respectively. By announcing the differential rates of tariffs, the state tried to spread divisiveness within the collectivity on the basis of the economic status and finally to deter the rich peasants from the movement. BKU panchayat unanimously rejected the proposal of the State on the base of following grounds on April 1, 1987. The BKU representatives were neither consulted nor incorporated in the decision-making bodies. Such decisions were not taken in Kisan panchayats. In addition to this the government stated that these decisions were taken on the request of Congress [I] Legislators only. Thus the state absolutely neglected the existence of BKU and its role as an aggregator and articulator of Kisans interests. The kisans felt that such decisions are affecting their self-respect and honor and degraded the role of non-congress [I] affiliated kisans.

After sharing the feelings, the BKU leaders announced non-cooperation with the state from April 2, 1987 as the latter failed to react to the charter of demands positively even after availing two months time. In disobedience the participants decided not to pay land revenue, irrigation and panchayat taxes, electricity tariffs, and finally loans. On the issue of non-payment of loans, Mr. Tikait hurriedly announced, after some murmurs from within the close circles, that the non-payment of loans would be confined to loans borrowed from formal institutions only but not to the loans borrowed from moneylenders. In a personal interview with the Secretary of BKU, it became clear that in non-cooperation, loans borrowed from private sources would be repaid. Payment of loans borrowed from informal sources was considered necessary to maintain relations of trust between moneylenders and borrowers of loan. These statements reflect that interests of local traditional moneylenders in the movement are protected. Non-payment of land revenue and electricity tariff is not applicable to poor peasants. The non-payment of irrigation and panchayat taxes and loans to formal lending institutions is bringing all cultivators cutting the boundaries of caste and class on a single platform. The resolution of disputes within village panchayats entails reinstallation of more power to the time-honored village panchayats headed by Lambardars, Mukhiyas, and rich peasants. Thus, primordial identities like Khap, Khamba, personnel associated

with the British land tenure system like Lambardars and Mukhiyas were effectively used in the mobilization of kisans. Beliefs like justice, respect, honor, prestige, equality, and minimum comfortable living brought commitment to the movement. These super structural elements were repeatedly used to disguise internal class differences. Later, the old power tariff was restored. The actions of the authorities in reply to union's actions set in motion a mechanism forming consciousness linkages. The price was called immediately though under the pretext of Congress (I) appeals, which undermined the image of competent government making rational plans and effectively realizing its own designs strengthened the kisans' feelings of violation of justice and equality.

The BKU leaders made endeavors to bring cohesion among the stirred sections of the rural population through social reforms, constructive programs and emphasizing more on economic struggles rather than on religious conflicts. Resolution of disputes in the local village panchayats promoted unity within village. Extension of demands from electricity linked grievances to parity between the prices of agricultural inputs and agricultural produce and improvement of rural educational facilities, reservation of jobs to the educated children of kisans, repeal of restrictions on the inter-state movement of agricultural produce on private accounts, and old age pension enhanced the extension of BKU in geographical and social space. Such expansion of demands led to the consolidation of BKU's hold on the already stirred areas of the movement. Hostilities between the BKU leaders on the distribution of power positions and control of the funds emerged as the movement is drawing associations of peasants affiliated to different political parties. Such hostilities in the areas of Khap were contained by the arbitration of Khap councils but could not be contained in the non-Khap areas. It resulted in the vertical split of BKU and later the development of its affiliation to the Kisan Kamgar Party and finally its decline.

Construction Programmes and Dispute Resolutions

Under the influence of notions of self-respect and honor of khaps and kisans even the lower stratum rural dwellers like Scheduled Castes, artisan and service castes were mobilized as the inhabitants in the Khap area claim their affiliation with the Khap. The BKU leaders initially adopted constructive programme in order to retain their support to the movement. At a later stage when the Mazdoors raised the issue of wages in some villages, the wageworkers faced oppression from the dominant landowning groups. Some of the kisan associations discredited the movement as feudal, casteist and class specific. Then, the leaders of the movement incorporated the issue of wages for agricultural labourers, as equivalent to that of a Jawan in army.

For instance, leather workers, traditionally lifted the carcasses of dead cattle on the basis of Jajamani system [Wiser 1958] and provided services to their Jajamans in the form of shoes, irrigation buckets to lift water from Persian wells and other essential services. This was replaced by contract system with a number of intermediaries between the village level collector of carcasses and the factory level processors. The village level contractor pays more than Rs. 4000, depending on the size of the village, to the block level contractor, who in turn pays the amount to the district level contractor. The amount goes to the government while the actual owners of the dead cattle do get only a nominal amount and the contractors receive profits. This contract system affected not only the flyers but also the tanners who mainly belonged to the Scheduled Castes. The traditional

flyers were unsuccessful to secure contracts for the collection of carcasses of dead cattle because of their weak economic position and became either wage earners of the contractors or gave up their traditional occupation of carcass recovery and their flying under the influence of 'Sanskritization' (Srinivas 1977) and social reform measures. The contractors who secured contracts sold the raw hides at a much higher price to ensure a good margin of profit over their investment. Consequently, the tanners became unsuccessful in getting raw hides at price which they can afford while under the traditional system they paid no cash excluding services to their Jajamans. The contractors delayed the lifting of carcass of dead cattle.

The villagers near Sisauli refused to hand over the carcasses of dead cattle to the contractors under the influence of BKU and made endeavors to restore the traditional Jajmani system or gave the carcass on contract to the traditional carcass lifters at a much lower rates. Such a practice affected the main contractor as the village level contractors could not pay their dues and failed to supply the carcass to them. After facing such situations, the main contractor visited such villages along with police force and made endeavors to restore the formal contract system but failed as the kisans refused to hand over the carcasses of dead cattle and buried the carcasses in their own fields. The cultivators tried to establish their own system of contract and announced the dates for each block. Nevertheless, it could not materialize the contracts as contractors either failed to reach the place or failed to pay the total amount of the contract to the BKU. Thus, the initial enthusiasm faded away.

In addition to this, BKU made endeavors to collect a sum of Rs.1 to Rs.2 per household from the lower socio-economic categories. The house tax, which the kisans withheld under non-cooperation, was collected and spent on the construction and repair of roads, hand pumps and repair of the residences of landless artisan and service castes. At the initial stages of the movement, the issue of wages for agricultural workers was not incorporated in the charter of BKU demands as they believed and propounded the trickle down effect theory. Carpenters too expressed the same viewpoints. According to them "higher agricultural produce prices will bring more money to the cultivators. The cultivators then will spend the money in the purchase of more furniture for not only day-to-day use but also at the time of marriages to their daughters".

Lambardars, Mukhiyas and BKU representatives headed the traditional village panchayats to resolve the disputes within villages. Such a practice not only theoretically enhanced the chances of village unity but also the credibility of the BKU chief. Through this process Lambardars and Mukhiyas entered into the movement. The BKU chief initially resolved various disputes related to property inheritance, deserting of wives, dowry cases, etc., on the spot harmoniously and without much delay and expenses. Yet, in some cases, his decisions were questioned and the persons knocked the doors of police and legal institutions. Slowly such cases were increasing in number. Under such prevailing conditions, the BKU chief withdrew from the role of arbitrator. To bestow with speedy resolution of disputes, he restored to community-based politics by sending a team of BKU representatives of that area who with the assistance of the Lambardars, Mukhiyas and Chowdharies of Khap units tried to resolve the disputes to a large extent affably. Still unresolved cases were referred to the Serve Khap panchayat and to the BKU executive. This strategy

implicitly meant to dispense with the formal institutions like police, courts, etc. and to promote solidarity within villages. However, on occasions, such strategy could not become effective in the realization of the intended goal but boomeranged. A case is presented to support this argument.

For instance, Bavali Serve Khap panchayat took a land sale dispute case into deliberation in 1988. In this dispute, households of Ghatwala and Desh khap Jats were occupied. The Ghatwala kisan's uncle had only one daughter and expired after his daughter's marriage to a Desh Khap kisan. The Desh Khap Kisan too expired. The son inherited the property of his mother's father and wanted to sell the land. Many kisans of the Ghatwala khap refused to buy the land as the uncle had a keen interest in the purchase of that piece of land as it falls just adjacent to his lands. The nephew borrowed a sum of Rs. one lakh in instalments from his uncle with an assurance that land will be sold to him only. The payment was not recorded to lodge a complaint in the concerned court in the event of non-transfer of land. At the same time, the nephew negotiated sale deal with another kisan of Ghatwala khap. The nephew before the arrival of his uncle to the Registrar's office registered the land on the name of the kisan with whom he was negotiating. The uncle could neither get the money nor the land. Repeated requests from the uncle at an individual level yielded no consequences but only assurances. Earlier to April 1988 a combined panchayat meeting of the Desh and Ghatwala khaps was called at least thrice yielding no outcome. The panchayat of both the khaps jointly decided to boycott the nephew socially but that too remained ineffective.

On April 1988 different khap chowdharies attended the Serve Khap panchayat meeting to resolve the dispute. The nephew was absent in the meeting and repeated reminders were sent to him. He responded by saying that he will be attending the meeting soon but failed to turn up. In the earlier panchayats at least he conceded that he took money from his uncle and he will return it soon. In the absence of the nephew participants in the meeting floated many proposals but failed to reach to a consensus. The participants floated collection of the amount from the Desh khap kisans in order to pay it to the Ghatwala khap kisan. A section of Desh khap kisans rejected the proposal on the plea "why all members of Desh khap have to bear the burden? Such a practice will cause extensive violation of trust and good will in the near future. It will lead to more burdens on the law and custom-abiding households. Finally, the Serve Khap panchayat has assigned the task of decision making to a sub-committee on that day and they came out with the proposal to socially boycott the nephew and not to give sons and daughters in marriage to that family. Observations on the next day morning do indicate that the concerned person was sitting at his brick kiln along with five kisans and sharing hookah, food, water, and cot. This pattern of behavior reflects the emergence of land as commodity. Besides this, the hold of traditional institutions on rural population is declining.

Fission within Khap played a pivotal role in the manifestation of such behavior. Traditionally the elder brother of Mr. Sukhvir Singh was the chowdhary of Desh khap. Mr. Sukhvir replaced his elder brother from the position and the nephew received support from one of the factions within the Khap. Thus, the dispute resolution procedure played the role of double-edged sword. But such tendencies of fission could overcome in the context of struggles with outside forces like

the state for better infra-structural facilities, development of forces of production and remunerative prices for agricultural produce.

The movement also believed and propounded the populist ideology, where social differentiation among peasants was ignored. This element is visible in the explanation or sense ascribed to the word kisan. For the participants in the movement the word kisan means any person whose living is reliant either directly or indirectly on land. With this shared meaning even potter, agricultural laborer, Teli (Oil man) Sakka (water man), carpenter, ironsmith, etc. in the village were included under the category of kisan. Such a populist ideology and the meaning given to the word Kisan were superimposed by the traditional bhaichara notions of egalitarianism, status, honor and prestige of bhaichara system, i.e., expressive notions became important. Thus, these ideologies and the expressive notions of status were essentially aimed at the promotion of solidarity, cohesion and unity among the antagonistic interests within agriculture.

The Serve Khap (Pradhan, 1966) played a significant role in the mobilization process. A Serve Khap panchayat meeting was held in Shoraon, Muzaffarnagar district, on April 27, 1987 after the announcement of non-cooperation. Chowdharies of 18 Jat clans representing some 10 lakh Jats in the eight districts of Western U .P. and Khanjalawala from Haryana too participated in the meeting. In that meeting the resolutions of 1950 Serve Khap panchayat were considered and modified some, retained the others and added some more items to the list. Implications of those decisions on the mobilization process are looked into. Issues such as shunning of dowry, restrictions on the number of guests to a maximum eleven at the time of marriage, discouraging alcoholic drinks by ostracizing addicts, and the diversion of saved money for education were retained. These were social, reformative in nature. The influence of shunning was so great that most of the private buses plying on the rural routes of Muzaffarnagar and Meerut districts carry the message “ the bride is the dowry” [DULHAN HEE DAHEJ HAI]. In practice, it is observed that the fear of social boycott has led to either the postponement or delay of marriages among Jats in this period. Along with these resolutions, the panchayat also took a decision to punish those husbands who were deserting or harassing their wives or breaking the relations even after Sanskar. Many cases relating to the broken marital relations have reached the BKU panel of adjudicators and actions were taken in many cases. The panchayat further prescribed the age of boy and girl at marriage should be 21 and 18 respectively, i.e., incorporating the legal aspect of minimum age at marriage for both boys and girls. Issues such as protection of cow, use of votes in elections for a particular political party and promotion of inter-caste marriages were dropped from the resolutions of the 1950. Implications of dropping such issues on the mobilization of peasants were great as the dropping of the protection of cow enhanced the chances of incorporation of non-Hindu peasants into the collective actions. In the Baraut Panchayat utterances of slogan “Gow Mata Zindabad” itself has resulted in the outright withdrawal of Muslims from the kisan panchayat even early to this Shoran panchayat meeting. Secondly, the non-political stand, the supra-political function of the Serve Khap, enhanced the chances of incorporation of peasants affiliated to different political parties into BKU and the effective observation of non-cooperation for nearly a year. The issue of inter-caste marriages is very sensitive in the context of sharp status claims by the middle castes

and the non-acceptance of such claims by the elite castes like Brahmans and Rajputs. By dropping this issue, the potential hostilities being converted into sharp conflict was averted which could have limited the scope of mobilization process. For instance, the importance of these issues will be highlighted in the context of the experiences of the Baraut panchayat meeting slogans in which the participants have uttered the slogans like “Gow Mata Zindabad”, “Chowdhary Charan Singh Zindabad”, “Gandhiwad Zindabad” resulted in the withdrawal of Muslim peasants saying the meeting is meant only for Hindu kisans but not for Muslims; the participants are articulating the interests of only those who are politically affiliated with Mr. Charan Singh and the non-followers of *Sewa Sewa Samiti* too withdrew from the meeting by saying that BKU “is not for all peasants, it is only for Hindus and supporters of L. D. and Janata Party. After that, such slogans never appeared again in the panchayat meetings of BKU. Thus, *Serve Khap* as supra-political organization adopted the above resolutions to promote consensus among cultivators of different castes, religions and political parties on the basis of agrarian issues. In addition to this it promoted those conditions that facilitate the effective mobilization of kisans to a certain extent and undermined those issues which hamper the mobilization process. Though the primordial identities like caste, clan and religion are part of the Indian social reality, they were given less importance in comparison to the identity of kisan. Such steps are intended to enforce solidarity in the countryside and to restrict “contingent expenditure” (Bailey 1957]. Thus, the pre-existing bases of communal solidarities like *Khap*, *Serve Khap*, *Barah Basti*, *Barah Goan*, etc were effectively used not only to mobilize kisans in collective actions to redress their grievances but also to sustain the peasant movement (Oberschall 1973). The movement maintained its autonomy from the existing political parties as it maintained a non-political stand.

Simultaneously, he announced for unanimous elections of village Pradhan from among the mukhiyas and lambardars to strengthen village solidarity and latently to strengthen the hold of BKU in the area. But such efforts could not become successful as in most cases the village statutory panchayat elections were contested. Such positions provide a hold on the patronage distributing agencies (Viahwa Manav 1988; May2: 6; V.M. 1988 May 20: 8). Some of the old remnants of British revenue and administrative system were not acceptable to many. Thus, community level power politics not only affected the village level solidarity but also in facing the government such politics had some role in the maintaining distance from BKU or in extending support to it. This aspect will be dealt with in detail while dealing with the role of peasant associations in the mobilization of kisans in the collective actions and their relationship with political parties.

The BKU underlined the significance of economic struggles (Mukhopadhyay 1988) in place of communal disturbances in the Meerut city. Kisans of Muslim religious affiliation were incorporated into the collective actions and thus expanded the scope of mobilization. For instance, *Barah Basti Chowdhary*, an area of twelve villages where Mule Jats were in preponderance, Jats of Hindu religious affiliation converted to Islam religion, called the *Biradari* (brotherhood) panchayat and informed the participants about the instructions of religious leaders of Meerut city to flare up hostilities and riots of religious nature in rural areas too. Both the chowdhary and the participants asserted the need for the maintenance of inter-religious amity in the countryside. The participants

in the panchayat pleaded to call the BKU president in the next meeting of Biradari panchayat after the Baraut kisan panchayat to be held on 25th May, 1987. The rationale for such a decision had its base in the logic of proportion of Hindu population to Muslims in rural areas and also the amount of atrocities the Muslims faced in the carnage of Meerut riots, and the hope of facing even the Government on the basis of some common interests cutting the boundaries of religious affiliation. Tikait remained aloof from the Baraut Kisan panchayat on the pretext of presence of extensive and intensive inter-religious hostilities. On the invitation of the Barah Basti Biradari Chowdhary, the BKU chief attended the panchayat meeting and asserted, “We have no other Dharma (religion) except Kisan Dharma, and no other Jaati except Kisan Jaati (caste). In the pursuit of kisans’ rights, he emphasized the need for inter-religious harmony and camaraderie”. Thus the formerly competing groups merged against an outside group. This type of inter-religious amity was nurtured repeatedly against the wishes of opponents and detractors through slogans, sharing food, hookah, and water in the rallies, dharanas, Gheraos, etc. For instance in Laliyana panchayat both Hindus and Muslims contributed resources to the Madharsa. The Maulvi accepted such charity. Mortuary services from Hindu, Muslim and Sikh religious traditions were observed simultaneously, though the religious belief of the dead received the ultimate priority. These types of practices were both ideological and political in nature as Muslims constitute more than 20 per cent of the total population in the commissary.

The “Jail Baran Andolan” started on March 7th 1988 continued up to June 22nd 1988 in which nearly 10,000 kisans filled the jails demanding for judicial inquiry of Reaper police firing on kisans in the period of Meerut Dharana. These kisans, with their own contributions, travelled on their own in-groups from different villages to Rajapur. The kisans were imprisoned in diverse jails of the state. This facilitated the geographical mobility for a shorter time and promoted contacts with the kisans who came to see them in prisons. Meetings of jailed kisans were held with the local kisans who came to see them from villages in the close vicinity of jails. Mainly two patterns of communication channels; viz., oral and mass media, i.e., news papers and TV played a pivotal role in the diffusion of information about the actions of BKU and contacting the peasants in prison. The imprisoned kisans after their release from prisons visited the villages nearby the prisons on the request of the local cultivators. Village panchayat meetings were called. In these panchayats the actions, issues that BKU is pursuing and its experiences in Western Uttar Pradesh were shared with the local cultivators. After sharing the experiences, the Western UP Kisans promoted the formation of BKU units in these villages. The Jail Bharo Andolan continued for more than 100 days and forced the Government to concede a legal inquiry on Rajapur police firing. The Jail Bharo over these 100+ days extended the BKU units to Eastern UP too.

As the movement spread both geographically and socially, the list of the demands became tripled, i.e., from 11 with a limited aim of electricity linked grievances to 35 incorporating the other sources of discontentment too in the list of the demands just at the time of Meerut Dharana. Why there emerged a need to increase not only the number of demands but also representing the varied grievances of the peasantry of the region? At the time of Meerut Dharana many peasant associations articulating the demands of different crops joined the collective actions of BKU

which is not only manifested by the composition of the executive of BKU but also the ideological tones in the speeches at Meerut Dharana. Peasant associations like All India Kisan Sabha, Sugarcane Producers Sangh, Potato Producers Sangh, Kisan Sangh, etc. were identified. Thus, the enhancements of demands not only in number but also in its nature reflect one of these two arguments as valid or both of them valid. Firstly, increasing the number of demands can extend the scope of mobilization. Through this, grievances of different strata in the agrarian structure are incorporated. It also indicates that with the limited number of grievances linked with only electricity the mobilization is becoming difficult to extend to others who are not users of electricity. Secondly, the other strata in the agrarian structure were already stirred and joining the movement without the efforts of BKU and forcing the leadership to incorporate the grievances other than electricity in the list of demands. At the same time the demands do reflect the composition of already stirred sections of peasantry belong to the old aged persons, and poorly educated unemployed rural youth. The second view point seems to be more valid as in the meetings speaker after speaker says the difficulties he was facing over the last two decades and the deteriorating situation of their households. After this aggregation of interests, the list was submitted to leadership for consideration. For instance, one speaker has articulated the need to protect the kisans from the exploitation of kohlus by fixing minimum price to the cane supplied to the kohlus. Another projects the need to provide pensions to old aged family members and other young person speaks of job reservation to the children of kisans, etc. Thus, the enhancement of number of demands is a consequence of more and more kisans, from beyond the khap areas joining the movement with varied interests and their interests too were aggregated and articulated in the enhancement of the list of demands. In this list of 35 demands, issues of some importance to the marginal and small peasants too were incorporated such as 1] fair price to farm produce, which means a correlation between the prices of the agricultural produce and the cost of inputs, 2] Qualitative improvement of educational facilities in the countryside, 3] More jobs [reservations] for the children of kisans 4 old aged pension to kisans as old age pensions are given to the service personnel, 5] To narrow the yawning gap between the standard of living in towns and villages.

In the village Nagla, the agricultural workers demanded collectively for higher wages from their employers. The rich [Maldars] and middle peasants [Khate-peate-loag] are mainly dependent on wage-labor. Such kisans resisted the demand for higher wages from wage-workers with the support of BKU. The kisans called panchayat meetings and decided that the high wage demanding workers should not be allowed to enter into their fields for the collection of fodder to feed their domesticated cattle. Then the wageworkers with the hope of getting higher wages either sold of their cattle, very few cases, or left them with their kin in the neighbors' villages. Finally when the issue of paying higher wages for the wageworkers cropped up, then the kisans brought wageworkers from the neighbors' villages at an agreed higher wages but refused to pay the same wage to the agricultural workers of the village. It indicates lack of unity among the agricultural workers on the issue of higher wage as they are heterogeneous both on social and economic statuses. To promote the formation of class at least the workers' work situation, economic and social situation should be similar in nature [Lockwood 1958] with similar political situation. Such experiences hindered the

support of agricultural workers to the BKU movement. The constant pressure from below and the criticism from the urban sections of society led to the incorporation of the demands of agricultural workers in the charter of BKU movement, i.e., payment of wages equivalent to that of a Jawan [soldier] in the military service. At the same time the peasant associations affiliated to Congress [I] and CPI [M] have criticized the movement as the feudal one neglecting the interests of the rural poor. Such inclusions of wagedworkers' demands were most probably aimed at strengthening the village solidarity against the Government and reduce fission within villages based on the antagonistic nature of interests between the employers and employees.

Kisans of Western U. P. stopped the payment of power bills under the directions of BKU leadership, in spite of the reinstatement of the older rates of power tariffs, i.e., Rs 22.50 per Horse Power, in quest of the waiver of electricity tariff for six months. In addition to this other forms of governmental dues like repayment of loans to the formal financial institutions, revenue, water tax, house tax, etc. were also blocked as a form of disobedience with the Government. In addition to this, the BKU president announced not to allow the entry of ML As and MPs in to the villages during the movement (VM 1988, March 28: 8). In the first week of April, the C. M. of U. P. has issued instructions to collect the government dues through coercive measures, if required. The C.M. asked his party MLAs and MPs to persuade their party workers for the payment of government dues. Such efforts of MLAs and MPs could yield no results as the kisans are not willing to be separated from the BKU even in those areas, which are considered as the strong forts of Congress [I]. Collectivities of kisans resisted in the various forms of coercive actions of administration in different areas either by manhandling the Amins and electricity employees, or releasing the arrested kisans in the areas of Mawana, Jalalabad, Noorpoor, Chaprauli, Bhagpat, Baraut, Bawali, Bahadrabad, Nagla Shekhu, Phugana, Narsan, etc. where the union is relatively strong (AU 1988: March 27: 1; VM 1988: April 4: 8). BKU considered such attacks on the administration as legitimate. It also announced rewards to such kisans in the form of cash and in the form of kind, ghee (AU 1988: March 31: 1). In Nagla Shekhu the electricity board employees were manhandled and imprisoned in a room. Intervention of police and PAC officials resulted in the release of such employees. Cooperative Land Development Bank Officials were advised at Gangohi not to collect any loan payments by force. It is not feasible for the leader to physically visit the place and give warnings to the personnel in the administration as the movement is geographically widespread without coordination. This had three types of ramifications on the movement: Amin Sangh called meetings at the village Kairana and expressed their grief and frustration against such incidents and demanded for the arrest of kisans named in the FIR. In the absence of non-action, the Amins agreed to initiate regional level Hartal. Electricity Board employees too expressed their displeasure against such actions. Thus, the process of counter mobilization acquired importance. Secondly, some peasants started paying governmental dues under direct coercion or fear of coercion from June 1988. This process was clearly visible in those areas where the union is relatively weak like Pareekshitgarh, Chota Mawana, Chartwala area, etc. Under such conditions, the BKU chief alleged that kisans paying governmental dues are mainly affiliated to the Congress [I] and advised them to pay the electricity dues at the rate of Rs.30 per horse power instead of Rs. 22.50 per horse power as the restoration of pre- August,

1987 rates could take place only under the concerted efforts of the BKU(AU 1988: June30: 9). On the other hand the kisans who obeyed the instructions of BKU and assaulted the officials collecting governmental dues are facing harassment from the police and PAC officials. Such kisans alleged that the BKU Chief is acting as a Mughal Nawab and issuing orders without coming to the rescue of such kisans. Thus, BKU activists and volunteers became dissatisfied. Such disgruntlements have their ramifications even on the observance of Jail Bhara Movement.

The U. P. government entrusted the responsibility of purchasing 25 lakh tons of wheat through 6101 Government purchase centers. In Meerut division alone 949 purchase centers were opened to purchase wheat. The maximum number of purchase centers is located in Bulandshahar district [265] followed by Saharanpur [204], Meerut [181], Muzaffarnagar [162] and Ghaziabad [136]. In the drought period, open market prices stood significantly higher than the state regulated prices. The state government imposed controls on the inter-state movement of cereals on private account even for personal consumption in order to cater not only to the needs of the public distributive agencies but also to regulate the prices in the open market. The government fixed the support price of wheat at Rs. 173. Later, it announced Rs. 2 as bonus per a quintal of wheat. Under the instructions of BKU wheat producers refused to sell wheat to the government purchase centers. Controls on inter-state movement of cereals were considered as anti-national and anti-traders (VM 1988, May 12: 8) and appealed for support from traders and urban population to oppose the controlst (VM 1988, May 2: 8). In order to force compliance of controls, raids were conducted at different places like Bhagpat, Chaprauli under essential commodities act and confiscated few quintals of wheat and mustard oil seeds. At places like Kheri town, the kisans broke the Krishi Mandi Barriers. Police fired on such kisans. In the police firing seven people lost their lives (AU !988, May 17: 8). These facts are based on interviews with peasants of Iglas and Chaprauli. In addition to that traders were purchasing wheat and stocking it with peasants and taking that much, which falls under the state imposed limits. Some efforts were also made to violate the state controls imposed on the inter-state movement of cereals. The districts adjacent to the neighbors' states could easily violate it on occasions when the check post officials were lenient as in the case of Amin Sarai area. In the case of Aligarh, which had no inter-state boundary efforts were made to follow such instructions effectively. BKU units from other districts could not overtly come to the rescue of such peasants. In the mean time, the Government initiated coercive action on the defaulters of electricity tariffs and disconnected the electricity connections, imprisoning the defaulters and threats to auction the property of such kisans. Some of the defaulters paid the dues and got the electricity connections restored on the spot while others opted for illegal connections. Even the strong supporters of BKU were dissatisfied with the attitude of their president and said "he was giving orders just like a Nawab sitting in his fort but not coming to the rescue of those kisans who were following his instructions and facing the coercion from the administration". In this context Tikait alleged that "Kisans affiliated to the Congress (I) are not participating in the non-cooperation and gave advice to such kisans to pay the electricity tariff at the rate of Rs.30 per horse power in place of Rs.22.50 as the union through its struggles forced the state to restore the older rates of electricity tariff". In an earlier context too he has stated, "I will not allow others to

reap the fruits of BKU efforts". These statements do indicate that though the BKU was struggling for the better living conditions of peasants in general but wishes to demit the fruits of collective actions to those cultivators who participated in the non-cooperation.

Hostilities within BKU leadership emerged on different occasions on the issues of tactics, defining its own role in the Chaprauli assembly by-elections and its relations with political parties in general and the distribution of power positions in BKU. In averting such situations of fission the B.K.U. effectively used primordial loyalties based on lineage councils, to a certain extent and for a limited time, in the khap areas. But when the hostilities spread to non-khap areas where such 'safety valve institutions' were absent, it culminated in a vertical split in the BKU.

Even in the Meerut Commissary Gherao, two major groups broadly emerged in the BKU; viz., the hard liners and the soft liners. The hard liners were inclined to continue the dharana till the Government concedes some of their demands. The participants treated the list of their demands as their rights, especially on the fixation of state regulated prices for sugarcane. They already collected sufficient amount of evidence, from different mills, on the differential recovery of sugar. The data indicated that the recovery component was higher than 8 per cent, in general, even in the drought period. A variation of the recovery of sugar was attributed to the differences in the machinery under use in these mills. They also propounded to avail the support of peoples' representatives in the assembly and the parliament in the pursuit of their demands. If there was a need to withdraw the dharana, road blockades [means converting the movement from non-violence to violence] or a march to Delhi with the observation of non-cooperation in the villages could be taken up seriously as alternative patterns of collective actions. With this the hardliners could prolong the dharana till Feb 19, 1988 but in the meantime Mr. Tikait had repeatedly shown his disinclination to lead the movement any longer. The hardliners could not get a leader of the stature of Mr. Tikait. The other section of peasants were not showing interest to continue the dharana as both the state and center refused to concede their two pivotal demands: one of the two was involving the honor and status of the peasants who struggled and lost some of the repeatedly discredited the movement by not recognizing even the existence of BKU but also alleging the movement as led by a particular caste, class, political party and people with political ambitions. Thus they propounded for the withdrawal of the dharana and to carry out the collective actions at village level in the form of non-cooperation through non-violent means and to take care of the harvest of sugarcane, irrigation of other crops and the students' examination.

The scope of executive committee of BKU was expanded and more members from other areas participated in the movement while the second involved the interests of the majority of small, medium and rich peasants as majority of the peasants belonging to these categories cultivate sugarcane under contract system with the sugar mills whose harvest need to be completed before the onset of summer. On the other hand, the softliners were for the withdrawal of the dharana as violence began to spread in different parts with the entry of political parties into the movement of the region like Hapur, Modi Nagar, and Rajabpur. Mawana [Chota] and both the governments had stubbornly reiterated their stand that the demands cannot be conceded in the larger interest of the nation as a whole. Both the governments characterized the demands as unreasonable and unjustified.

The softliners preferred to maintain their autonomy from political parties. They also felt if any political party articulates their demands with the consent of BKU, then the movement will be labeled as a movement of that political party and will cause divisiveness in the movement on party lines and the withdrawal of even moral support articulated in the form of observance of non-cooperation, from a majority of peasants and will undermine the significance of agrarian discontent articulated by BKU. Beside this the ruling party were incorporated as district level presidents. In addition to the lambardars, mukhiyas, and khap chowdaries leaders of different peasant associations like Kisan Sabha, etc. Thus the numerical strength of softliners increased in the executive of BKU, which facilitated the withdrawal of the dharana. The softliners mainly belonged to the rich and upper crust of the middle peasantry and they opposed the move to adopt the violent means in the movement as their interests will be more affected rather than protected.

Followers of Arya Samaj in the BKU, predominantly Jats affiliated to Lok Dal, raised doubts about the presence of Imam Bukhari on the BKU platform and its denial to Mrs. Gayatri Devi, W/O late Chowdhary Charan Singh and to their son Mr. Ajit Singh on the basis of their political affiliation. Peasants of this area, in general, and Jats in particular show a lot of reverence to Chowdhary Charan Singh. The peasants allege that Imam too had political links and affiliations. If both had political affiliations, the participants questioned repeatedly and objected for such differential treatment (VM 1988, Feb 25: 8). After March 1, 1988, Imam hardly shared the BKU platform may be due to the pressure from some sections of kisans in the Executive Committee of BKU.

Chaprauli Assembly by-elections of 1988 too contributed to the intensification of hostilities within BKU. Captain Bhopal Singh, an army retired person, courted arrest in the Jail Bharo Andolan in March 1988. At Fatehpur jail there emerged hostilities between two arrested kisan leaders. The section of kisans who courted arrest on the first day of Jail Bharo Andolan was released and a section within this too was refusing to leave the jail without the release of CBS. Finally CBS and his team of kisans were not released. The released kisans on their arrival to Sisauli were given standing ovation by the kisans attending the monthly panchayat on March 17, 1988. The kisans of Chaprauli area withdrew from the panchayat in protest against the non-release of their area BKU leaders. CBS was released from jail on bail, after a year's imprisonment under National Security Act, just before the commencement of Chaprauli By-elections. As usual all the kisan leaders courted arrest under the Jail Bharo Andolan used to meet the chief of BKU at his village. But CBS did not follow the practice and called a panchayat meeting of 72 villages of his Khap area and announced the support of BKU to the J.P. candidate in the presence of Mr. Sukha Vir Singh who was negotiating with the state government as a representative of a faction of BKU dissociated from Mr. Tikait. Such an announcement caused suspicion on the non-political character of BKU by the detractors of CBS and the BKU (S). While negotiating with the state Mr. Sukha Vir assured the government that he will announce his support to the Congress [I] candidate if the demands of BKU were conceded by the government. The state not only failed to keep its words in fulfilling the demands but also could not concede to give the ticket of Congress [I] to the candidate proposed by Mr. Sukha Vir Singh. Mr. Tikait at his level negotiated with the center on the demands but the Center could not concede to the demands till 15th of June. The non-

announcement of conceding the demands by the center compelled even the chief of BKU to announce his support to the JP candidate though initially he opposed the CBS's announcement of support to JP but also supported action against the CBS. Kisans of this area perceived that it would lead to a vertical split of the organization (VM 1988 June19: 1). They also had a grievance against Mr. Tikait as he failed to visit the area while CBS was in jail under National Security Act. A batch of representatives from the area met the chief of BKU and persuaded the latter not to take disciplinary action against CBS. After this Mr. Tikait too justified the decision (VM, 1988 June27: 8) and assured such decision will not affect the general non-political stand of BKU. The representatives pleaded not to make the BKU highly bureaucratic in nature with formal rules and hierarchy. They pleaded for the abolition of all posts in the BKU except the position of president and secretary. In addition to this they proposed to nominate five leaders from each district into the executive committee of the BKU. They also pleaded for the maintenance of BKU's autonomy from the primordial loyalties like Khap. Accumulation of hostilities was thus released through the Executive Committee of BKU, which acted as a safety valve institution and averted the potential vertical split within BKU.

Mr. Tikait allegedly filled the positions of importance in terms of power, authority and control of resources by nominating leaders of BKU at district level, which was a source of discontent and potential seed of divisiveness. Through the nomination process the representation of youth and educated section in the BKU was curtailed and caused discontentment among these sections who worked very closely at the time of crisis when the peasants faced the atrocities of police at Delhi where even water supply to the peasants on dharana was stopped and the trolley bringing food from the nearby villages were stopped at the border of Delhi. The young educated unemployed youth, lawyers, teachers, and social workers made significant contribution in the aggregation and articulation of agrarian interests. This dissatisfied section of BKU floated an independent unit of BKU [A] and made endeavors to establish links with the national coordination committee in which the kisan associations of different states were members (Sunday Mail 1991, Oct 20, 1-2).

Tikait repeatedly used to change his statements without consulting the kisans in panchayats. For instance, in one of the monthly BKU panchayat, Tikait called on peasants to cast their votes to C (I) if the opposition parties fail to coalesce and persist to pull the legs of one another in the context of kisans' unsolved problems. For this statement kisans in the panchayat described him as mad person. On another occasion he stated that BKU is not a vote reservoir as the electorates are free to cast their votes to any political party as the BKU is non-political.

State, Political Parties and BKU

The state i.e., the central and state governments and the opposition political parties responded differentially on the demands, i.e., rights of peasants, and on the composition of the participants in the movement. The state and the ruling political party discredited the movement on the basis of the issues it raised, nature and composition of the participants in the movement. It also tried to exercise coercive and violent means to suppress the movement. The opposition political parties in general excluding CPI (M) insisted on the government to concede the demands in the light of severe continuous drought, hailstorm and pests' attack. They also criticized for the application of coercive

measures in the collection of governmental dues. The BKU characterized the movement as of all kisans, castes, religions and those who characterize it class specific are labeled as intellectually bankrupt people. Let us take atleast three demands of the BKU in order to comprehend the position of state and opposition political parties.

Cultivators in the Meerut Commissary with a demand for the waiver of accumulated power tariff dues for six months of the severe drought period observed non-cooperation with the state government in U.P. from April 1987 though the older rates of power tariff were restored. Though negotiations were undertaken both with the central and state governments but they could not reach to a negotiated settlement as the state refused to concede the demands. The Meerut commissary gherao was lifted on 20th January, 1988 after the C (I) organized its own kisan rally at lucknow in which participation of western UP's kisans was insignificant as the transport owners were directed by the BKU that such participation will affect the transport bus services in rural areas. Secondly, they observed closure of all routes. After this only the state explicitly maintained a stand saying that waiver of power tariff for six months will benefit only the rich peasants but not the marginal and small cultivators who use diesel and other means for irrigation (IE 1988, Feb 28: 10). The state government instructed the administration to collect the power tariff dues. In the collection of accumulated power tariff dues the party MLAs and MPs were advised to help the administration in the collection of power tariff dues from the cultivators. The BKU announced ban on the entry of officials, MLAs and MPs into villages. It further directed its units to arrest and imprison them under NSA of BKU. Some of the C(I) MLAs and MPs made endeavors to persuade their followers for the payment of power tariff arrears but in vain as the latter were not inclined to be separated from BKU (VM 1988 March 28 :8). The C(I) MLAs and MPs were in a dilemma whether to follow the instructions of the CM or not in the endeavors of the administration for the collection of governmental dues. One of the C(I) MPs planned to organize a meeting at Narsan in this connection, where the Narsan degree college President with the support of kisans forced to hold the meeting in closed door within the residence of a Chaudhary of the village. Even his followers were not inclined to pay the government dues. The C (I) leaders attributed even the withdrawal of Meerut commissary gherao by BKU to the lack of support from kisans. They claimed that nearly 70 percent of the cultivators paid the power tariff arrears. Out of the remaining 30 per cent only 15 per cent are with BKU (VM 1988, Feb 23: 8) and the CM described the demands of the movement as "wholly unjustified" (TI 1988, Feb 14: 1). So, the C (I) leadership found a middle path of appealing to the government to collect the accumulated power tariff arrears in installments without penalty and collection of the current power tariff on monthly basis. They also pleaded for 14 hours supply of electricity within a day (DJ 1988, April 10: 4) and more facilities to kisans (AU 1988, May 3: 3).

On the other hand they tried to convince their supporters with the argument that the early efforts of the C (I) in the expansion of electricity to tube wells and canals for irrigation has reduced the intensity of four years' severe drought to a large extent and appealed for the prompt payment of accumulated power tariff arrears (AU1988, April 20: 10). They also pleaded that continuous supply of electricity without the payment of its tariff is incompatible (AU 1988, April

18: 6). In reality the government was unable to collect the accumulated arrears to the tune of 50 crores in the context of financial crisis. Though the government made some efforts to collect the dues in the early 1988, kisans collectively resisted the efforts of the government. From then the government stopped the collection of government dues in the form of electricity, revenue, irrigation charges, etc (Bansal 1988). On the other hand, the opposition party members in the U.P. assembly raised the issue of non-action against the 226 industrialists who had accumulated power arrears worth of 138.23 crores. The members opposed punitive action against kisans whose accumulated dues in total ranged up to 50 crores only. The minister felt tight in the house and assured government action against the 226 industrialists who were power tariff defaulters (HT 1998, Feb 25: 7).

Even in the Meerut Commissary gherao, Youth Janata Leadership and LD (A) appealed to its volunteers to participate in large numbers in the gherao till the fulfillment of kisans' demands. Youth Janata leadership criticized the government for its failure to concede the BKU demands. The LD (A) president directed his party representatives in the U.P. assembly to gherao the CM in Lucknow for his failure to concede the kisans' justified demands. Tikait welcomed this. BJP pledged support to the kisans' demands (HT 1988, Feb 11: 1). In response to such instructions former CM of U.P. with 13 MLAs and 200 Rastriya Morcha workers sat on dharna sympathizing with the cultivators' agitation in Lucknow and were arrested. A former MLA from Meerut met the Governor with a delegation and requested him to use his office in resolving the agitation (HT 1988, Feb 18: 1). Even LD (B) expressed its solidarity with the movement and condemned the government tactics to suppress it (VM 1988, Feb 18: 8). Even Mr. V. P. Singh decided to back the movement as it mobilized people on the basis of issue and resources from people (IE 1988, Feb 21: 9). A Janata Party MP pleaded to stop all sorts of oppressions against the non-unionized kisans in the collection of governmental arrears (AU 1988, May 3: 3). All the opposition party members in the State Assembly staged walk out to protest against the failure of the government to concede the demands of BKU related to power tariff arrears, revenue, irrigation charges and remunerative prices to agriculture (VM 1988, April 14: 8) and against the use of coercive measures in the collection of accumulated arrears from cultivators (VM 1988, April 27: 2). Besides this even the CPI asked its cadre to mobilize large number of people to the Meerut gherao. Only CPI (M) from the non-ruling party criticized the movement as feudalistic and asked its cadre to oppose the collective action. They also organized a rally in Muzaffarnagar to protest the atrocities against the landless workers from the BKU. Thus, all the opposition parties came together on the issue articulating the interests of kisans working under the banner of BKU. Besides C (I), CPI (M) also tried to take a stand against this demand.

The second demand is related with the issue of higher prices for sugarcane. The state vehemently opposed it on the ground that the recovery of sugar is not reaching even up to 8 per cent and not above the existing prices of Rs. 25 per quintal (VM 1988, Feb 22: 8). Even under the prevailing conditions too the sugar mills are running in losses. Further increase in the prices unto the extent of Rs. 35 per quintal will lead closure of the mills. Then the Kisans have to burn their crops in the fields. They further argued that the higher sugarcane prices would benefit only the rich peasants but not the marginal and small cultivators. The rich peasants purchased the sugarcane

from the marginal and small cultivators at less than Rs20 and sold the same to sugar mills at Rs. 25 per quintal. So, the rich peasants are exploiting the marginal and small cultivators. The C(I) leadership demanded for the establishment of new sugar mills within a range of 40 kilometers between two mills in order to cope with the excess production of sugarcane in the commissary. LD(B) provides the facts from Haryana and Maharashtra where the millers are providing higher prices to sugarcane and earning profits. Why not in UP? The participants in BKU activities feel that the nature and type of technology affects the intensity of extraction of sugar from the sugarcane. In Meerut gherao when the negotiations were going on with the state the BKU representatives collected facts from both private and government owned mills and found that even the government operated sugar mills' recovery of sugar is higher than 8 per cent. However it is lower than the private owned mills where the recovery came about 10 per cent. They attribute such variation in the sugar recovery to the technology, mismanagement and corruption prevalent in the government operated sugar mills. Besides this the BKU president of Saharanpur has a point to make. One quintal of sugarcane supplied to the mills yields around 8 kilograms of sugar. It also yields seera and Khoi as by-products. From one quintal of the by-product received from a quintal of sugarcane will further 10-12 bottles of beverages that costs around Rs.300. From this a large portion of prices goes to the government in the form of excise duties while the millers are retaining the remaining as profit. However, kisans receive nothing from this.

Under the conditions of severe drought controls on the inter-state movement of cereals on private account were imposed. The intensity of such impositions were so severe that a traveller can not carry even 5 kilograms of wheat for his personal consumption without the prior approval of the department of cereals controller (AU 1988, May 17: 8). The government announced its support price to wheat as Rs.173 per quintal and adopted a firm stand on the demands "rights of kisans". So the dissatisfied BKU leadership announced not to sell wheat to the government purchase centers at Rs.173 per quintal. Besides this the prices of wheat in the open market stood relatively higher. The leadership characterized the controls as 'anti-kisan and anti-trader'. So Tikait asked the kisans to oppose it. Besides this he argued "wheat is the product of our labor. It is our property. We will sell our wheat wherever we get relatively higher prices" (VM 1988, May12: 8). The government purchase centers looked like a desert and much of the wheat was sold to private traders at Rs.200+. Then the government announced a bonus of Rs.2 per a quintal of wheat. Then also the bite failed to work not only the prices stood significantly high in the open market but also the traders and the cultivators were in alliance with each other. Then the government reduced the stocking capacity of trader from 500 quintals to 100 quintals and also reduced the stocking capacity of a flour miller unto one-week milling capacity. Wholesale trader and commission agent's capacity of stock is reduced from 500 quintals to 100 quintals (AU 1988, May 12: 8). Then also the government could not get much wheat to its purchase centers. The whole traders and commission agents were forced to render nearly 200 quintals of wheat per week to the government purchase centers at the government support price. The failure of the government to purchase at support prices was caused not only due to the instructions of BKU but also the traders purchased wheat from kisans, paid them a portion of the amount, retained it with the cultivators and lifted that much amount which fell below the stocking capacity. The flour millers too resorted to such practices.

Besides this 1000 quintals of wheat per day is transported to Delhi from Philava area without any check up (AU 1988, May 17:8) and so also to Haryana from Chaprauli (AU 1988, May 20: 8). Justice for farmers means giving them right price for their produce with factory goods and the cost of production determines the cost of produce (Singh 1988: 6) The congress leadership advised the kisans to sell the wheat to the government purchase centers. They opined that by selling wheat at higher prices to the traders they may be benefited temporarily but in long run they will be the losers as they have to purchase the wheat in lean season at further inflated prices. The government after the purchase of wheat at state regulated support prices will sell it back at controlled prices through fair price shops and public distributive system (AU 1988, May 2: 3) but in vain.

In the context of overt support to the BKU demands Tikait alleged that the opposition parties are supporting the demands of kisans with the main motive of getting into power. Prior to the formation of BKU (except Ch. Charan Singh to a certain extent) none could articulate effectively the interests of peasants with regard to remunerative prices to agricultural produce (VM 1988, April 10: 1). He also refused the advice of Mr. Devi Lal to convert the BKU into a political party though he provided transformers and cash for the movement, and to acquire power rather than acting as a pressure group (VM 1988, Feb 23: 8) On occasions he insists that the BKU will bring both Ajit Singh and Devi Lal under a single platform. Merger of LD (A) with Janata Party without prior approval from kisans of this area by Mr. Ajit Singh led to grievances among kisans as they never expected such action without their consent (VM 1988, April 10: 1). The kisans were in agreement with Mr. Ajit Singh when he pleaded that such a merger was made to realize the dreams of Chowdhary Charan Singh with regard to kisans. These facts do indicate that though partly BKU is maintaining autonomy from political parties manifestly but latently it maintained a sympathetic and soft corner to LD (A) and LD (B).

BKU and Other Associations

With regard to its interactions with other associations in the area during Meerut Gherao for higher remunerative agricultural produce prices, waiver of accumulated arrears of the government, on the other hand, the economists and the Merchants of Chambers of Commerce and Industries were pleading on other grounds with the government. Economists viewed that green revolution contributed to the emergence of affluent section in villages that constitutes 10 per cent of the total rural households (HT 1988, Feb 16). The contribution of agriculture to the total tax revenues, center, and union territories has sharply declined from 8.8 per cent in 1950-51 to 1.1 percent in the budget estimates of 1987-88. The share of land revenue was 8.1 per cent in 1950-51 declined to 0.9 per cent in 1979-80. Under the prevailing position the economists felt that taxes can be levied either directly in the form of agricultural income tax on the affluent 10 per cent of rural households or curtailment of subsidies on fertilizers and levy direct taxes on tractors, diesel and electric pump sets purchased by the rich farmers (TI 1988, Feb 10). Even the merchants of Chambers of Commerce and Industries also felt that the affluent section that emerged due to green revolution fall in the purview of tax net if agricultural income is brought under income tax. It yields large revenue to the state (TI 1988, Feb 10).

On the issue of curtailment of subsidies Tikait comments “ People who benefit from these so called subsidies are government departments alone. We should decide what we get that is why we are here in collective actions rather than in fields (interview with Mr.Tikait). According to Sandeep (1988) subsidies meant to benefit the farmers are rendered to the urban classes by providing agricultural products at a price, which neither reflects the true input prices nor gives remunerative prices to cultivators. According to the president of Bandhuva Mukti Morcha kisans is subjugated to indebtedness on the basis of agricultural price policies. For instance, according to him on scientific grounds the production of one quintal of wheat will cost Rs.265 + a profit of Rs.10 per quintal means the price should be Rs.275 per quintal while the government purchases it at Rs.175 inclusive of a bonus of Rs.2 per quintal. Organized struggles only can free them from such price policies. Progressive Youth Kisans roused the issue of partial treatment to the Kisan Sangh affiliated kisans who were imprisoned during the violence at Niloha and Bajadka by Tikait. The statement of the Progressive Youth Kisans from Baraut, in a meeting of Baraut, Chaprauli and Baghpat Blocks’ kisans, need to be comprehended in the wider perspective of the movement. Mr.Sukha Vir Singh’s expulsion from BKU became clear even during the Meerut commissary gherao as he was sitting with a former MLA of the area and finally he was expelled from BKU on March1, 1988 in the Rajabpur Kisan Panchayat. The presiding person of the meeting was a former president of the student union of the JV college who had close links with Mr.Sukha Vir tried to strengthen support to BKU(S) from other kisan associations and to isolate Mr.Tikait. The meeting was attended by a few Desh Khap peasants. They alleged that the leaders of BKU are using the union to pursue their political ambitions.. They were unconcerned to extend support to the kisans arrested under NAS in an alleged involvement of burning the roadway transport bus. Before expulsion of Mr. Sukhavir from BKU itself Mr. Sukhavir formed a splinter group under the banner BKU(S) alleged that the BKU(T) lacks democratic functioning and the former is supporting the latter as Mr. Tikait is honest, sincere and looks primarily the interests of kisans. He demanded direct subsidies to peasants and participants in the movement belong to different castes, religions and classes. The people who are discrediting the movement as that of a specific class reflects their intellectual bankruptcy (VM 1988, Feb 28: 8). On the other hand, the All India Kisan Sabha associated with CPI characterized the movement as belonging to all classes and castes and supported the movement on the remunerative prices to the agricultural produce at par with the industrial goods. The president of Muzaffarnagar Bar Association President along with 11 lawyers and clerks sat on indefinite fast in support of BKU demands in the premises of Bar Association of Meerut from Feb 3, 1988.Organizer of Kisan Cell resigned from C (I) and joined the BKU as the government refused to concede the demands of kisans which he considers as rightful ones. The Sugarcane Producers Sangh of Nanauta too joined the movement in pursuance of the payment of sugarcane arrears.

The then prime Minister of India, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, addressed a convention of Bharat Krishak Samaj at Hyderabad during the Meerut Commissary gherao and assured subsidies on agricultural inputs will continue and remunerative prices to cultivators to strike a balance between cost of inputs, their subsidies, and farm produce prices. He also assured that the short-term loans will be rescheduled for 10 years . He characterized the demands for the waiver of power tariff arrears for six months and loans as irresponsible demand (TI 1988, Feb 18: 1). Just after the withdrawal

of Meerut Commissary gherao, the Kisan Union Bharat organized a meeting at Baraut, which was attended by 65 participants only from Meerut commissary. The participants were urban educated, and affiliated to C(I) in which they alleged that BKU is serving the interests of rich farmers only and neglects the demands of small and marginal cultivators. The marginal and small cultivators joined the movement without knowing the nature of demands and their consequences on them. The khap and caste panchayats will safeguard one's own caste but not in the betterment of small and marginal cultivators. They further viewed that in the khap system the principle of big fish engulfing the smaller ones works effectively. Non-payment of power tariff arrears and its illegal use will further affect the supply of electricity to those areas where canal irrigation facilities do not exist (VM 1988, Feb 28)

Initially, both political and civic identities failed to mobilize kisans though grievances at individual level were prevalent. Primordial identities, khaps and its chowdharies unionized under BKU title, could succeed in transforming private worries into public concerns and generated consciousness among kisans. It succeeded largely in mobilizing kisans not only for monthly panchayats at district, block and commissary levels, and dharanas, but also resisted the coercive measures of the state in the collection of arrears of power tariff, revenue, irrigation charges application of controls on the movement of cereals on private account, and power disconnections. However, internal fission within the traditional social structure on the basis of means, tactics, competition among khaps and definition of its relation with the existing political parties delimited the scope of mobilization. Some kisan associations or unions filled the void on the basis of common concern and associated themselves with BKU. Other associations discredited the movement but failed to mobilize kisans in support of their argument significantly. Through these associations political parties too entered into the movement at the grass root level and at state and parliament the political leaders made concerted efforts to articulate the grievances of kisans. However, BKU maintained its autonomy largely from the existing political parties and acted as pressure group in the Indian democracy in the pursuit of kisans' interests.

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Book Reviews

Virendra Pal Singh 2002 Network, Education and Mobility in Legal Profession, Meerut: ETDR Publications, viii+116 (HB), Rs. 300/-.

Professionalism as a phenomenon of modern culture and society has in the recent past attracted the attention of social scientists in India. Indian occupational structure has been undergoing a process of change under the impact of western education and the growth of middle class in the historical context of Indian tradition. The study under the review intends to examine the process of professionalization in the legal sphere in India. The legal profession as process becomes of the attainment of legal education, mobility into the profession, entry through training in the requisite skills, and performance and specialization of professional role. The entire process is mapped by the author by applying the network approach of analysis in sociology to the lawyers of Meerut city.

The book organized into six chapters, in all, along with preface, bibliography and subject and author indexes opens with a compact but thorough review of the studies on social (occupational) mobility, social networks, networks and occupation, education and occupation and methodological issues attempted with a view to conceptualize the research problem. An analysis of background of the lawyers made to contextualize the problem reveals the dominance of the rural based upper caste Hindu youth in the profession, the significant emergence of the castes of middle order and insignificant emergence of the lower castes in this region of green revolution and the Muslim lawyers reduced to a minority fraction in view of the shifts of population at the time of partition of India. By the patterns of occupational mobility of the lawyers into the profession from their fathers' own occupation based on its direction the profession has the two types of mobility; namely, intergenerational and intragenerational. Intergenerational mobility is mostly upward vertical mobility of the rural based lawyers from the agricultural, white collar and business occupations and also downward vertical mobility of a small fraction of the retired high class officials, etc. Intragenerational /horizontal mobility into the profession from the occupations of equal status consists of the one third cases mainly among the rural lawyers. During the attainment of legal education and the learning, performance and specialization of professional role there emerged two ties; viz., structural (strong ties of family, kinship, friendship and neighbourhood) and network (weak ties of acquaintance, kinship, friendship and neighbourhood, etc.). The former provided the rural lawyers financial, logistic and motivational supports and the latter extended help in finding accommodation during the education. In their professionalization the network ties of lawyers were more significant for their entry into the profession by getting contact with some senior lawyer. Initially, their role performance was supported by the structural ties in getting a case but later a new sector of old clientele emerged as the network source of the lawyers or their Munshis (clerks) to support their practice. The urban based lawyers have mostly used their structural ties. Their specialization emerged over the years of professional practice is not a pure type of exclusives or non-exclusives; it is the mixed type but with overtones of one of the types of legal cases (criminal, civil, revenue and taxation).

The study particularly signifies the emergence (occupational mobility) of the rural based middle order castes in an urban setting, which is the feature of a social set up emerging with rural-urban articulations under the modernization impact of agriculture in the green revolution areas. This

is a new phenomenon of the emerging dominance along with the continuing the over access of the upper castes and the limited access of the lower castes in the Indian society in transition. Further, on the concept of social network the study brings out that in the fast developing (green revolution) regions the social networks or weak ties do not constitute a third sector linking the stationary (domestic, agricultural and administrative) and the fluid (industrial activities of fishing vessels, marketing, cooperatives and herring oil factories) field in Barnes' terminology. It is the field formed of the vague, weak and inactive units which overlap both the fields in the given setting of increasing rural-urban articulations. Besides, the rural-urban articulations lead to the emergence of professional specialization of somewhat mixed nature in view of the nature of the varied needs and networks of the rural clients.

So far as the organization of the study is concerned there are some gaps to be filled in. The study identifies two patterns of social mobility at the very beginning of the analyses of the legal profession. But they remain unattempted in the analyses of social network in the process of the legal profession. Their network analysis would have made the study still more enriched with professional dynamics and diversification, on the one hand, and with better organization in a processual sense of the legal profession, on the other. Moreover, the study denotes the entry of the retired high class officials, etc. as a process of downward vertical mobility whereas actually these lawyers have moved from the status of the retirees and not from any official position. Therefore, it is rather upward mobility in the context instead of downward mobility. This observation and its analyses in the network framework may lead further to new insights on the legal profession. Then, the sector of old clientele (stars) emerging around the achieved professional reputation of a lawyer does point to the growth of a third sector of the elements not fixed, ultimate fate of which will depend on the uninterrupted enhancement and advancement of the rural-urban articulations. Quintessentially, a connectivity of network, education and mobility through the processual view in the legal profession running all through from the legal education of a lawyer to his professional specialization through entry and performance of role is to definitely lend still more credit to the study that it deserves.

In sum, this compact, brief, neat and handy volume is small but sweet and beautiful. It is useful for all those showing interest in the areas of networks, education, social mobility and professions and professionalization.

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Singhal, A. and Everett M. Rogers, 2001: *India's Communication Revolution-From Bullock Cart to Cybermarts*, New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., pp. 297, ISBN: 81-7036-946-0 (India-Hb), Price Rs. 475.

The book under review basically throws light on how the new Information and communication technologies have revolutionized the nature and pace of human interaction across a world, which is increasingly assuming the contours of a "global village". India is still far from becoming an "information society", but with a significant number of its workers employed in the information sector, it provides fertile ground for analyzing the impact of the new technologies on its society, including their crucial role in the development process. This extremely readable book describes how new technologies and their various applications in radio, television, cable, telecommunications, computers, and the Internet

are rapidly leading India toward becoming an information society. The authors discuss extensively India's path to development through what they call '*informatization*' strategy, in which new communication technologies are harnessed for socio-economic advancement. Informatization, maintain the authors, has the potential to not only improve the delivery of education, health, and nutrition in rural India, but can also facilitate an efficient, responsive, and transparent government.

Getting into the details of the book, one can notice authors' discussions and arguments on various topics beginning with India's communication revolution in the first chapter to a detailed summary of the entire discussion with the lessons to be taken by one and all from informatization, in the last chapter. Other topics of discussion include, the public broadcasting revolution, the private television revolution, rising technopolises, the telecommunications revolution, and the computer and internet revolution logically placed in second to the sixth chapters

The first chapter begins by quoting the main theme of the book, that is, 'the communication revolution that the new communication technologies are bringing about in India', provides an example for the world in proving the role of the new communication media in the development process through which the country moves from being an agricultural-based economy towards becoming an information society. How India has been fuelled up in becoming an information society by not only the citizens within the country, but also those in the Silicon Valley from half the world away, along with the forces such as globalization, freewheeling capitalism, entrepreneurship, and opportunity, is shown in this chapter citing examples of Migrant Indian Cyber workers. It talks about the new communication technologies like the satellites, cable television, wireless telephony, the internet, and computers which also includes hardware equipments, organizational structures and social values by which individual collect, process, and exchange information, how these are inter-linked giving birth to *informatization* – a process through which the new communication technologies are used as strategies for furthering socio-economic development of India. The authors further explain about how *informatization* is being used extensively for the developmental activities in administration providing public services not only to the urban but also the rural areas, about how radical changes were brought about resulting in the Economic Policy and Information Technology Policy, and citing examples of e-governance and Azim Premji: India's Cyber Czar. Then the authors move on to show the rate of sudden growth of adoption of various communication media in India, representing them graphically, making it easier to digest, and also presenting the a detailed description of the role of some research universities like the IITs and IIMs in high-Technology. The chapter concludes by giving a picture of how the state-owned mass media in India faced increased competition from both domestic and foreign corporations in the global market, and were forced to improve the production quality of their programs.

The authors, in the second chapter concentrate on the public broadcasting revolution, where they present a detailed account of the development of Radio broadcasting in India – its development potential; how it is was useful in providing entertainment as well as education to the mass, the private FM radio, the Television revolution in India – how the SITE and the INSAT were started; how this became popular tool of entertainment for the masses; graphically representing the rise of entertainment both in the urban as well as rural areas, the arrival of the Cable and Satellite channels - making television more popular for development as an important source of education and entertainment for the people who missed opportunities and the Kheda communication project – an educational SITE project. These developments are efficiently discussed by the authors, quoting suitable and successful examples like that of the community effects of Radio in Lutsaan, how Internet broadcasting is being

used for TV and Radio stations, the successful use of Chicken-Mesh Antennae and Ruggedized Television Sets, and the Jahbua Development Communication project that used satellite-based broadcasting network in order to support development and education for the people of the hilly region. This chapter finally throws light on some of the contentious policy issues concerning public television and discusses some of the related problems. Thus, this chapter provides an extensive review of how the radio and television (especially Doordarshan) successfully developed as means of public broadcasting initially but later failed to realize its full potential in India because of no clear-cut, non-existence of no long-term broadcast policy, and because of political interference, apathy, and missed opportunities.

The third chapter basically talks of the birth and growth of the private channels, that is, the private television revolution. It presents descriptive, pictorial as well as graphical views of the rise of, success of and war-like competition between some of the cable television private channels such as the Star-TV, Zee-TV, MTV, Sony and Discovery channels. It goes on to discuss the impacts of such private channels on Doordarshan – how it was forced to make several changes in its programs after facing threat from these channels and the impact of private TV on the Indian audiences – like the amplified growth of consumerism and conservative nationalism. Best part of this chapter is perhaps the way the authors have skillfully linked up this growth in *informatization* with the social conditions of the Indian population. The very theme of this chapter can be considered to be the struggle of the private networks and Doordarshan for audience ratings, and competition for the choice audience demographics of urban, well-educated viewers who have the disposable income to purchase advertised products as the disparity between the average income of the mass of poor villagers and that of urban educated elites is high in India. The financial attractiveness of the urban audience encouraged TV broadcasters to air imported western programs and also Indian programs that exclusively promoted consumerism. The chapter ends with a note on how the private TV broadcasting provided a kind of laboratory for understanding the nature of social change as a nation pursues a strategy of *informatization*, which would further speed up if the government policies are favorable.

Chapter four gives a narrative of some the rising technopolies – a geographically concentrated high-technology complex characterized by a large number of entrepreneurial spin-off companies; a center of technological innovations; as well a mint for producing great wealth like silicon valley in northern California, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pune in India and the like. The authors talk about various related issues and development of various technologies that underlie these technopolies, high-technology – its relation to the new economy in India, the characteristics of the Indian Diaspora, Austin's "Silicon Hills", Bangalore: India's "Silicon Plateau", Hyderabad: An emerging Technopolis, Government Policies towards High-Tech development and also some of the resulting social problems like pollution, traffic jams, burden on civic infrastructure, high cost of living, greater socio-economic inequality and the like. Embedded in the chapter are many case studies related to technopolies, some with appropriate illustrations like that of Epinions.com: The Mother of all shopping services – Dot-com company headquartered in Mountain View, CA, cases of some Indians on how they got rich in the silicon valley, Successful Indians in the Silicon valley - Lata Krishnan of SMART Modular Technologies: A successful Woman Entrepreneur in the silicon valley; Vinod Khosla of Sun Microsystems: one of the richer Indians in the silicon valley, Sabeer Bhatia of Hotmail, Atin Malaviya of Redstone communications and Gururaj Deshpande of Boston's Route 128 technopolis and the like, Sulekha: the global web magazine from Austin, the Mysore military rockets etc., which show that

Indians have an unique ability to flourish in high-technology entrepreneurship, a part of the success being traced to the excellent education provided by the IIT's and the IIM's.

The authors provide the readers with a comprehensive picture of the developments that happened in the telecom industry in their fifth chapter – The Telecommunications Revolution. Beginning with a graphical representation along with factual description of the India's telecommunication expansion, the chapter moves on to provide wide-ranging appraisal of the rise of the Mobile telephony and its impact on the urban-rural population, changes that have been brought about in the telecommunications policies, how the tech-savvy – Rajiv Gandhi sowed the seeds of social change by unleashing the Indian potential for telecommunications, the impact of the new economic policy on telecommunications after the fall of Rajiv Gandhi; the problems that popped up in implementing the policy, and the effect of the use of telephony on rural development. These issues are effectively handled by the authors by providing interesting case studies (with some illustrations, making it more effective) like the account of Sam Pitroda: Telecommunications visionary who revolutionized the telecommunications services for Information strategy, development of the a state-of-the-art technology: WLL (Wireless Local Loop) system, advent of mobile phones, Grameen bank in Bangladesh with Telecommunications access and the Kittur rural telephony project in Karnataka state where a RAX(Rural automatic exchange) was installed. In toto, through this chapter the authors provide a spectacular case study of the role that telecommunications has played and is playing in the nation's socio-economic development, especially, in aiding business activity and in enhancing the quality of life in India's rural areas.

An extensive analysis of the most recent and most important revolution, the Computer Revolution, is presented in the chapter six of the book, which focuses on the expansion of both computer hardware and software services, and the rise of Internet. It begins with a historical description and a graphical representation of the growth of computers in India and adoption of computers in India, moving on to show the impacts of computers in India by pointing out the inequalities and growing information gaps between the socio-economic elites and the less advantaged and also touching upon *deskilling* – a process which renders the individual to fall further in the socio-economic scale by replacing human skills with information handling equipments like the computers, development of software in India – quoting the case study of the famous and successful Indian software tycoon: Narayana Murthy of Infosys, its link to economy and development – in the form of rise in Indian software exports; providing employment to a large number of skilled workforce and the like, supportive government policies and the software Vs hardware competition. Later, it shifts to the Internet Revolution, wherein the chapter provides a graphical picture of the growth of Internet in India including the case studies of the growth of the Hand-held Internet micro browsing and the Internet cafes, the Internet and the Internet policy in India that provided a highway for a global economy, remote processing – a process that undermine geographical barriers and finally, how internet is gradually replacing silicon, providing many services like e-commerce, e-governance etc. The authors rightly conclude by declaring that the computer hardware, software, and the Internet-based e-governance and e-commerce have now become vital ingredients in the New India, fueling its progress along the route of *informatization*.

The last and the seventh chapter provides an all-embracing summary of the various revolutions that happened in the 'Information and Communication Technology' world. The authors also provides some constructive suggestions for the use of information technology to improve the quality of life of the mass of its citizens to solve their pressing problems, and to readily empower them through readily accessible information in a language that they can understand and thus making the process of

informatization more industry-friendly and people-centered, also providing new opportunities for communication research.

The authors thus systematically analyze the various facets of the unfolding communication revolution in India in toto, including the proliferation of public call offices, Internet cafes, and software technology parks; the growth of entrepreneurship, venture capital, and supportive government policies; and the very successful networking between Indian entrepreneurs in silicon Valley and their India-based counterparts. The various lessons learned about the *informatization* strategy are distilled, including strategies to harness new communication technologies to empower the disadvantaged in Indian society. Interspersed with personal narratives of successful Indian entrepreneurs, and case illustrations of participatory communication approaches, this comprehensive account of India's journey on the road to *informatization* will attract practitioners and scholars in mass communication, information technology, development studies, as well as entrepreneurs, industrialists, policy makers, and the general reader. The book is informative but is not suggestive at places, in the sense that, though last part of the book concludes with a note that the mantra for India's *informatization* strategy must necessarily be "growth with equity", suggestions on how to accomplish this aim, seems to be missing. The authors could have suggested some probable remedial measures to curb or lessen the negative effects, the communication revolution brings along with it (like the inequalities and growing information gaps between the socio-economic elites and the less advantaged and *deskilling*), which are effectively pointed out by the authors themselves, to make it more useful and help the readers to seriously ponder over the issues and take action. However, reading this useful book is a real feast for its readers.

Thus, reading the book gives a wide-ranging information and knowledge about the gradual development of communication technology in India, giving one a real experience of the journey undertaken by the communication technology in India from the 'Bullock cart to the Cyber marts', as the title of the book appropriately suggests.

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