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Children and Human Rights

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Abstract:

Millions of children around the world are exploited, abused, and discriminated against. They need special protection to promote their physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development. These children include child labourers, children affected by armed conflict, sexually exploited children, children in conflict with the law or in the care of the state, as well as children living on the streets, coping with disabilities, or suffering from discrimination because of their religious or ethnic-minority status.

It is because of the unique vulnerability of children that their rights are of priority concern within Canada's foreign policy. Canada played a key role in the negotiations that led to the adoption in 1989 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Convention, which is the most widely and rapidly ratified of the core international human rights treaties, together with its two Optional Protocols (the Optional Protocol on Children in Armed Conflict and on the - Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography), provides a solid foundation for the protection of children's rights worldwide.

Children's rights have earned increased attention across the United Nations spectrum. Resolutions on the rights of the child have been adopted at both the Human Rights Council, and its predecessor the UN Commission on Human Rights, and the UN General Assembly. The UN has designated November 20 as Universal Children's Day, marking the day on which the Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. Key words: Children's rights, United Nations, Human rights etc.

Introduction:

Defining human rights education and a human rights - based approach to education, based on international human rights instruments, human rights education (HRE) can be defined as education, training and information aimed at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and moulding of attitudes to prompt action directed at strengthening respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, tolerance, equality and peace, among individuals, within societies and among nations. Such education requires the adoption of a human rights - based approach to education, which promotes both - human rights through education, ensuring that all the components and processes of education-including curricula, materials, methods and training - are conducive to the learning of human rights, and - human rights in education, ensuring that the human rights of all members of the school community are respected and human rights are practised within the education system.

Prevention of Human Rights Abuses and Violent Conflicts:

The international community has increasingly expressed consensus on the crucial contribution of human rights education (HRE) to the realization of human rights as well as to the long-term prevention of human rights abuses and violent conflicts. Provisions on HRE, and in particular within the school system, have been incorporated into many international instruments, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

- 1) In the school system HRE is an important component of the right to education, as it enables the education system to fulfil its fundamental aims of promoting the full development of the human personality and appreciation of human dignity, of strengthening respect for human rights.
- 2) and of delivering a quality education for all. In this sense, HRE contributes to improving the effectiveness of the education system as a whole, which in turn contributes to a country's economic, social and political development by providing improved quality of learning achievements by promoting child-centred and participatory teaching and learning practices and processes, as well as a new role for the teaching profession; Increased access to and participation in schooling by creating a human rights - based learning environment that is inclusive and welcoming and fosters universal values, equal opportunities, respect for diversity and non-discrimination; A contribution to social cohesion and conflict prevention by supporting the social and emotional development of the child and by introducing democratic citizenship and values.

The World Summit for Children:

A little more than a decade ago, the largest group of world leaders ever convened at that time sat down at an immense circular table at the United Nations and discussed, in frank and impassioned terms, their responsibilities to children - and about the future.

As the high-level conversation at the World Summit for Children showed, no two subjects are more intertwined. And there was no more dramatic affirmation of the centrality of children to our common future

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1 die Summit's adoption of a set of specific, time-bound goals to ensure the survival, protection and development of children in the 1990s.

Proclaiming that "there can be no task nobler than giving every child a better future" (see World Declaration on the Survival, Development and Protection of Children, para. 25), the 71 heads of State and government and 88 other senior delegates promised to protect children and to diminish their suffering; to promote the fullest development of the human potential of every child; and to make them aware of their needs, their rights and their opportunities. "We do this", the leaders declared, "not only for the present generation, but for all generations to come" (see World Declaration, para. 25).

better world for children:

In adopting the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action for Implementing the Declaration (A/45/625, annex), world leaders promised something else of immense importance: that they would always put the best interests of children first - in good times and bad, whether in peace or in war, in prosperity or economic distress.

For those who were in New York in September 1990, the World Summit for Children was a transcendent experience. It was heightened by the fact that the Convention on the Rights of the Child (General Assembly resolution 44/25), adopted in 1989, had entered into force just weeks before, ratified more quickly and by more countries than any previous human rights instrument. The dreams and aspirations of a better world for children were embodied in the Summit goals for child survival and development which, taken together, represented the clearest and most practical expression of much of what the Convention on the Rights of the Child is about. Ambitious but feasible:

The World Declaration and Plan of Action set out an ambitious but feasible agenda and specified that it be implemented by the year 2000. To this end, the Summit called for a series of actions at the national and international levels to support the achievement of 27 specific goals relating to children's survival, health, nutrition, education and protection.

The Summit agenda was influenced by resolutions endorsed by the World Health Assembly, the World Conference on Education for All and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board, as well as by policy statements by United Nations bodies, the Bretton Woods institutions and international non-governmental organizations. This broad ownership was to prove crucial in the follow-up process, as well as in the reaffirmation of the Summit goals by the other major Summits and Conferences of the 1990s.

Follow-up and monitoring:

It is often said that in many United Nations conferences, goals are ever set but never met, and that commitments on paper are rarely translated into action on the ground.

In a decade spanned by a succession of United Nations development summits and conferences, the World Summit for Children stands out not only because it was the first major gathering but because its systematic follow-up procedures and rigorous monitoring have left an indelible imprint - and more than a decade later, the list of Summit follow-up actions continues to grow. **National action:**

These include the submission, by some 155 countries, of national programmes of action (NPAs) aimed at implementing the Summit goals; many have prepared subnational action plans as well. Over 100 countries have conducted monitoring surveys with the capacity-building support and active involvement of many United Nations agencies, multilateral and bilateral donors, universities, research institutions and NGOs.

Responding to the call of the Summit, a record 192 countries have now ratified or signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Moreover, the Secretary-General has reported periodically to the General Assembly on progress towards achieving the Summit goals, including a major mid-decade review in 1996. And each year since the Summit, UNICEF has prepared progress reports on the implementation of Summit goals and disseminated them through its flagship publications, *The Progress of Nations* and *The State of the World's Children*.

In 2000, a wide-ranging end-decade review process culminated in the preparation of substantive and comprehensive national progress reports by more than 130 countries. The breadth and quality of this follow-up response have greatly informed and enriched the SG's report on the end-decade review, and made it possible to form objective assessments of the decade's achievements, its setbacks, and the lessons learned for the future.

(Source: Paragraphs 1-15, *We the Children: End-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children*. Report of the Secretary-General.)

Conclusions:

- 1) Children's rights have earned increased attention across the United Nations spectrum. Resolutions on the rights of the child have been adopted at both the Human Rights Council, and its predecessor the UN Commission on Human Rights, and the UN General Assembly.
- 2) Based on international human rights instruments, human rights education (HRE) can be defined as education, training and information aimed at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and moulding of attitudes to prompt action directed at

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strengthening respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, tolerance, equality and peace, among individuals, within societies and among nations.

- 3) The international community has increasingly expressed consensus on the crucial contribution of human rights education (HRE) to the realization of human rights as well as to the long - term prevention of human rights abuses and violent conflicts.
- 4) As the high-level conversation at the World Summit for Children showed, no two subjects are more intertwined. And there was no more dramatic affirmation of the centrality of children to our common future than the Summit's adoption of a set of specific, time-bound goals to ensure the survival, protection and development of children in the 1990s.
- 5) In 2000, a wide-ranging end-decade review process culminated in the preparation of substantive and comprehensive national progress reports by more than 130 countries.

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डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांचे सामाजिक कार्य तथा योगदान

प्रा. डॉ. के. जी. पोकळे

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प्रास्ताविक :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांनी अनेकविध क्षेत्रांमध्ये कार्य केलेले असून त्याबाबत विचार प्रतिपादन केले आहे. त्यांना आर्थिक, राजकीय व सामाजिक तसेच इतरही क्षेत्रांमध्ये भरीव कार्य तथा योगदान दिलेले आहे. परंतु या सर्व कार्यांमध्ये त्यांचे सामाजिक कार्य अत्यंत मौल्यवान स्वरूपाचे आहे.

भारतीय समाजात परिवर्तन घडवून आणण्यासाठी डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांनी अनेक संघटना स्थापन केल्या जसे की बहिष्कृत हितकारणी सभा, समता सैनिक दल तसेच अनेक सत्याग्रह तथा आंदोलने बाबासाहेबांना करावी लागली त्याती महाडचा चवदार तळे सत्याग्रह, मनुस्मृती ग्रंथाचे दहन, नाशिक येथील काळाराम मंदिर प्रवेश सत्याग्रह व धर्मांतर इ. महत्त्वपूर्ण आहेत.

गृहितक :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांचे सामाजिक कार्य समाजात सामाजिक समता प्रस्थापित करण्यासाठी केले होते.

उद्दिष्ट :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांचे सामाजिक विचार समजून घेणे.

संशोधन पध्दती :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांचे सामाजिक विचार समजून घेण्यासाठी विविध लढे व आंदोलनांचा अभ्यास करून त्यांचे विश्लेषण केले जाईल. सदर संशोधनात विश्लेषणात्मक पध्दतीचा वापर केला जाईल. त्यांचे सामाजिक कार्य समजून घेण्यासाठी निवडक ग्रंथ, वर्तमानपत्रे व नियतकालिके या दुय्यम साधनांचा उपभोग केला जाईल.

१) बहिष्कृत हितकारणी सभा :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांना अस्मृश्यांना संघटीत करण्यासाठी त्यांच्या समस्या सरकारपुढे मांडण्यासाठी एखाद्या संघटनेची गरज वाटत होती म्हणून त्यांनी ९ मार्च १९२४ रोजी दामोदर ठाकरसी सभागृह परळ, मुंबई येथे सभा घेतली. या सभेच्या ठरावानुसार २० जुलै १९२४ रोजी "बहिष्कृत हितकारणी

स्थापन केली. या संघटनेद्वारे अस्पृश्यांमध्ये शिक्षणाचा प्रसार करणे, मोफत चाचनालय चालविणे इत्यादी या सभेची उद्दिष्टे होती.

बहिष्कृत हितकारणी सभेचे 'शिका, संघटीत व्हा व संघर्ष करा' हे त्रिदवाक्य होते. या संघटनेच्या प्रयत्नांमुळे तुरुण व प्रौढ व्यक्तींसाठी वाचनालये, रात्रीच्या शाळा व वसतीगृहे स्थापन करून दुर्लक्षितांपर्यंत पोहचविण्याचा प्रयत्न बाबासाहेबांनी केला.

१) समता सैनिक दल :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांना दुर्लक्षित शोषितांची (अस्पृश्यांची) एक अराजकीय व सांस्कृतिक संघटना असावी असे वाटत होते म्हणून त्यांनी १९२६ मध्ये 'समता सैनिक दलाची' स्थापना केली. "शिलावर बांधणी शक्ती असे या समता सैनिक दलाचे बोधवाक्य होते. शोषित तरूणांच्या शारिरीक मानसिक व आर्थिक सामर्थ्यात भर टाकण्यासाठी व त्यांना शिक्षण, अनुशासन व स्वावलंबन देऊन भरीव कार्य करण्यासाठी आपल्या शक्तिचा विनियोग करण्याची प्रेरणा 'समता सैनिक दलाच्या' माध्यमाने मिळाली. संघटनेत तरूणांना योग्य दिशा देऊन त्यांना उचित प्रकारे प्रशिक्षित करून त्या शक्तीचा उपयोग काहीतरी नवीन कार्य करण्यासाठी व्हावा असे डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांना अभिप्रेत होते.

२) महाड चवदार तळे सत्याग्रह :

महाड येथे डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांनी चवदार तळ्यावर जाऊन सत्याग्रह केला. "मुंबई हिंमंडळाने एका ठरावाद्वारे तळे, विहिरी, पाणवटे इत्यादी सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी पाणी भरण्यास अस्पृश्यांना मनाई करू नये असे कायदे केले" परंतु तरीही अस्पृश्यांना सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी पाणी भरण्यास मनाई केली जाई म्हणून त्याबाबत आंदोलन करण्यासाठी बाबासाहेबांच्या प्रेरणेने "२० मार्च १९२७ रोजी सत्याग्रह सुरु झाली. डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर परिपदेचे अध्यक्ष होते... कुलाबा जिल्ह्यातील महाड हे एक गाव... मापण संपताना आंबेडकरांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली महाराष्ट्राच्या विविध भागातून आलेले स्त्री-पुरुष पायऱ्या घालून चवदार तळ्याच्या पाण्यापाशी पोहचले प्रथम आंबेडकरांनी आपल्या ओंजळीत पाणी घेऊन त्याचे पोशन केले" अशाप्रकारे अस्पृश्यांना पाणी भरण्यासाठी महाड येथे डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांना सत्याग्रह चालवा लागला.

३) मनुस्मृतीचे दहन :

मनुस्मृती या ग्रंथाने जाती व्यवस्था व अस्पृश्यतेचे समर्थन केले होते म्हणून डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांनी मनुस्मृतीचे दहन केले. "परिपदेने हिंदू धर्मातील अस्पृश्यतेच्या परंपरेचा निषेध करणारा

मनुस्मृती दहनाचा कार्यक्रम पार पाडला." थोडक्यात सामाजिक विषमता व भेदभावाचे समर्थन करणाऱ्या या ग्रंथाविरोधी प्रतिक्रमक कृती करण्यासाठी २५ डिसेंबर १९२७ रोजी 'मनुस्मृतीचे दहन' करण्यात आले.

५) काळाराम मंदिर प्रवेश सत्याग्रह :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांना आपल्या अनुयायांसोबत काळाराम मंदिर प्रवेशाचा सत्याग्रह करावा लागला. त्यांना अस्पृश्यांच्या प्रवेशाने मंदीरे अपवित्र होत नाही हे सिद्ध करून देण्यासाठी मंदीर प्रवेशाचा सत्याग्रह करावा लागला. नाशिक येथील काळाराम मंदीरात त्यांनी २ मार्च १९३० रोजी आपल्या हजारो बांधवांना सोबत घेऊन मंदीर प्रवेशाचा सत्याग्रह केला.

६) धर्मांतर :

हिंदू धर्मात अस्पृश्यांना हक्क मिळावेत म्हणून बाबासाहेबांनी कसोशिनै प्रयत्न केले परंतु अथक परिश्रमानंतरही हिंदू धर्माच्या विषमतेवर आधारित व्यवस्थेत फारसा फरक पडत नाही असे लक्षात आल्यानंतर त्यांनी १९३५ ला येवला येथे "मी हिंदू म्हणून जन्माला आलो असलो तरी हिंदू म्हणून मरणार नाही" अशी घोषणा केली. व त्यानुसार १४ ऑक्टोबर १९५६ रोजी नागपूर येथील दिक्षामुमीवर लाखो अनुयायांसमवेत बौद्ध धर्माची शिक्षा घेतली.

निष्कर्ष :

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांनी वहिष्कृत हितकारणी सभा, समता सैनिक दल, महाडचा चवदार तळे सत्याग्रह, मनुस्मृती ग्रंथाचे दहन, मंदिर प्रवेशाचा सत्याग्रह व धर्मांतर या सर्व संघटना तथा आंदोलने व कार्यक्रमाचा उद्देश समाजात समतायुक्त विचारांची पेरणी करणे हा होता. थोडक्यात समाजात सामाजिक समता प्रस्थापित करण्यासाठी डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांनी विविध संघटनांची स्थापना व लाखो अनुयायांसमवेत आंदोलने तथा कृतीकार्यक्रम आखल्याचे दिसून येते.

संदर्भ :

- १) गरूड प्राचार्य आण्णासाहेब, सावंत प्राचार्य बी. बी., महाराष्ट्रातील समाज सुधारणेचा इतिहास, कैलास पब्लिकेशन्स, औरंगाबाद, प्रकाशन १९९५, पृ. क्र. १८३.
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