

Domestic Co-Meals as a Social Transformation Activity of Samaj Samta Sangha (SSS)

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Abstract

Indian society was divided into touchable, untouchable and ostracized classes. All the large and small Organisations were participated in these modernizing activities, "Eradicate the caste discrimination, Untouchability and ostracism. For this, these Organisations arranged the programme of Co-meals". In addition to this context Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar established Samaj Samta Sangh (SSS) at Dadar, Mumbai on 4th September, 1927. Vide this Organisation Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar started the social equality and the social Inter-relations through the programme of Domestic co-meals. Because Dr. B. R. Ambedkar comes to the conclusion that, Hinduism is antagonist of social liberty, equality and fraternity. Hindu social structure and identity is based on someone's birth descendantcy. Every caste member's social status and entity is considered by birth in which caste he is born. Then he may be so intellectual. It was wrong text of entity. Hindu society was divided in various caste, sub-caste, and profession. Every caste itself was considering status higher than below one as well as feeling self below to higher one. There was no inter- relation between caste and sub-caste. There were not co-livings, co-meals, no maternal relations between castes into caste. So, it was result that, every caste was living around and behind a strong fortified wall. To break or to destroy this solid wall Dr. B. R. Ambedkar introducing Domestic Co-meals and Inter-caste marriage system. The members of SSS organization should have arrange the Domestic Co-meals alternately or term wise by each member. By which the caste barriers will be broken among the members of SSS as well as Brahmanism will be lost. The common man will get inspiration and strength of living. It was the gracious objects of behind the Family co-meals. Those members of SSS were arranging this Domestic Co-meal programme, his name declared and highlighted in Bahishkrut Bharat, Samta, and Janata Newspaper. Thus Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the Samaj Samta Sangh (SSS) is to be considered as Torch lighted the way of equality to Indian society.

Keywords: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, 'Samaj Samta Sangh' (SSS, social equality, Indian society, Domestic co-meals activity, social condition.

Introduction

There was many socio, political and religious Organisations which come forward to make India as modern. Mostly, Indian society was divided into touchable, untouchable and ostracized classes. All the large and small Organisations were participated in these modernizing activities, "Eradicate the caste discrimination, Untouchability and ostracism. For this, these Organisations arranged the programme of Co-meals". In addition to this context Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar established Samaj Samta Sangh (SSS) at Dadar, Mumbai on 4th September, 1927. Vide this Organisation Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar started the social equality and the social Inter-relations through the programme of Domestic co-meals.

Logically, it can be explained that to create the feeling of social unification. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar executed Domestic co-meals, arranged sacred thread ceremony, to conduct night schools, inter caste marriage, entry in public festivals. These were action programmes. In this way the touchable and untouchables leaders come together for the achievement of social equality through these programmes. The Domestic Co-meals programme was decided and effective results. The orthodox and traditional trends also got great setback. Even Pandit Nehru, V. D. Savarkar, Barrister Jaykar and like these many heterodox praised this Domestic Co-meals activity. Indian society traditionally was divided into many castes and communities which benefited to invaders. So, to unify India was great problem for the Indian nationalist as well as reformers.

Historical Background of Samaj Samta Sangh (SSS)

The event of Mahad Satyagraha (1927) event is renowned as a landmark in the Ambedkarite movement. From this event, Ambedkarite started to work at various spheres. Like a Domestic Co-meals, people come together, festivals together, temple entry etc. action programmes were started. By which Ambedkarite movement organized the untouchables and ostracized communities against their contemptible position. The Ambedkarite movement executed the reformatory programmes not only for communal external social reformation but also implemented for internal communal reformation too. In his speech Dr. B. R. Ambedkar advised to the untouchables and ostracized community to eradicate their internal demerits and sub-caste system, internal discrimination and preference to Domestic Co-meals.¹ Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar required an Organisation to implement the above programme. Like these social reforms for equality, Bhai Parmanand in Punjab started through his "JAT PAT TODAK MANDAL" Organisation. Bhai Parmanand, previously was working in Hindu Mahasabha. But there he got disputed and discredited of Hindu Mahasabha and he left it. That means Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was intended to establish more speculative and active Organisation than Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal and Hindu Mahasabha.² To be members of this Organization there will not be any condition or limitations. Any person from any caste, creed, religion or sects can be member of this SSS Organisation. But he should be fearless to oppose the caste system, social discrimination and untouchability.³ Through the above nature of such organisation we can understand the scope.

Aims and Objects of Samaj Samta Sangh

Samaj Samta Sangh was established on 4th September, 1927 at Dadar, Mumbai under the chairmanship of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Vice President Dr. R. N. Bhaindarkar and the Devrao Vishnu Naik (Editor of Brahmin-Non-Brahmin, Periodical), S. R. Gupte and D. V. Pradhan were Secretaries, R. D. Kawali was Treasurer. In this way the members from touchable and untouchables committee were established. The aims and objects of Samaj Samta Sangh were published in Brahmin-

Non-Brahmin, Periodical.⁴ According to this report there were six aims and objects of SSS which were declared as following.

- 1) The Samaj Samta Sangh believes on human equality and rights.
- 2) The rights of equality are holy, concrete and secured rights.
- 3) This right of equality is belonged to all classes, castes, cults, male and females. All are righteous for that.
- 4) Till the establishment of social equality there is no existence to socio co-life.
- 5) Samaj Samta Sangh is here by declaring to ban on the traditional rules, regulations, and practises which are hurdles to socio co-life.
- 6) Samaj Samta Sangh is bound to execute the above said aims and objects.

The above aims and objects of Samaj Samta Sangh remind some clauses of American constitution. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar published all these in a handbill for public known. According to the execution of these aims and objects which help to eradicate the social discrimination and helpful to create social equality.

To achieve the said aims and objects the Samaj Samta Sangh followed the action programme of Domestic Co-meals, To participate in Ganesh festival and promote to inter-caste marriage, having thread ceremony, to start night schools, these programmes were involved. Its effect was to start social equality and human rights. The Domestic Co-meals were to be arranged at the home of the members in large scale. The Samaj Samta Sangh very soon spread throughout Maharashtra. Its branches were established, Mumbai, Poona, Konkan, Nasik, Khandesh, Vidarbha etc. In every branch was bound to execute the above aims and objects. Due to this programme in society started to sprout the feelings of equality. In this way the Samaj Samta Sangh adopted and spread the programmes. To stretch the principles of equality. The Samaj Samta Sangh required a Newspaper which was started on 29th June, 1928.⁵ Observing the effect of SSS programmes can be flash out in throughout Maharashtra.

Domestic Co-meals Programme of SSS

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar comes to the conclusion that, Hinduism is antagonist of social liberty, equality and fraternity. Hindu social structure and identity is based on someone's birth descendantcy. Every caste member's social status and entity is considered by birth in which caste he is born. Then he may be so intellectual. It was wrong text of entity. Hindu society was divided in various caste, sub-caste, and profession. Every caste itself was considering status higher than below one as well as feeling self below to higher one. There was no inter- relation between caste and sub-caste. There were not co-livings, co-meals, no maternal relations between castes into caste. So, it was result that, every caste was living around and behind a strong fortified wall.⁶ To break or to destroy this solid wall Dr. B. R. Ambedkar introducing Domestic Co-meals and Inter-caste marriage system. The members of SSS organization should have arrange the Domestic Co-meals alternately or term wise by each member. By which the caste barriers will be broken among the members of SSS as well as Brahmanism will be lost. The common man will get inspiration and strength of living. It was the gracious objects of behind the Family co-meals. Those members of SSS were arranging this Domestic Co-meal programme, his name declared and highlighted in Bahishkrut Bharat, Samta, and Janata Newspaper.

In this way the members of SSS started the Domestic Co-meals programme. It was not just Family Co-meals but had a rooted discussion on the severity of caste system and untouchability. Also Dr. B. R. Ambedkar being a founder and instigator of SSS, he arranged first Domestic Co-meal at his house. Ramabai Amedkar, herself prepared meal for 25 to 30 peoples. As liking vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods. All members enjoyed and praised the meal. Next Domestic Co-meal programme was arranged by A. V. Chitre, and then Sitaram Sivtarkar, the secretary of Bahishkrut Hitkarini Sabha. His decided programme was published in SAMATA Newspaper. Sitaram Shivtarkar being cobalt so it was instructed in newspaper that, every member should donate 50 paisa to Shivtarkar.⁷ Mr. And Mrs. Shivtarkar also prepared very testy meal. The meal was going on at same time instant by Mr. Devrukhkar and Mr. Kajarolkar these peoples called

cobalt-caste conference, bellow the house of Shivtarkar, which took decision of ostracize to Shivtarkar from their caste. The Domestic Co-meal was going on at same time Shivtarkar got message from messenger that, he was ostracized. Hearing this news Mr. and Mrs. Shivtarkar got very nervous but they did not scared because the members of SSS co-operate and back to Shivtarkar.⁸ G. N. Sahastrabudhe the member of social league was close friend and co-worker of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, arranged to have Domestic Co-meal programme on 12th August, 1928. Even this time his daughter was suffering remittent fever. At this Domestic Co-meal, Shivtarkar, Prabodhankar Thakare, N. V. Khandake, D. V. Naik, Dr. Ambrdkar, Gangavane, Khodvilkar, R. D. Bankar, Rammurti Pratap Giri from Andhra Pradesh, and many others from various caste fellow members of SSS was participated.⁹ Even the sons of Lokmanya Tilak, Shridharpant and Rambhau Tilak arranged a Domestic Co-meal programme at their resident, Gaikwadwada, in Poona under the SSS branch. Prof. Sabnis from Nasik too arranged Domestic Co-meal programme. In this way the Domestic Co-meals programmes performed at large scale all over the corner of Maharashtra. Like Bombay region, Vidarbha, Khandesh, Konkan region, west Maharashtra etc.

Conceptual Differences between Co-meals and Domestic Co-meals

Before the started Domestic Co-meals programme by SSS there were various social organisations performing the social co-meals. Then it is the question why did SSS decided to start Domestic Co-meals? Actually, there was a waste conceptual difference in Co-meals and Domestic Co-meals. There, co-meals just performed disguisedly. It was not severity of eradicating the untouchability and caste system. Also, the co-meals were not destroying their orthodoxy and assumed holiness of their family or home. The concept of Domestic Co-meals of SSS was totally different from the co-meals. It was aims and objects of SSS to eradicate the untouchability from the house or home. To create fraternity and human affection. The Domestic Co-meals events were arranged at the home of the members. By which get boost to create the feeling of

equality among the participants. Also instigate a pragmatic feeling against caste system and untouchability. It's directly effect on the behaviour of the members.¹⁰ It was the explicate by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. It was the pragmatic thought behind the Domestic Co-meals. With the intension of little changes in Domestic Co-meals conditions. Some remedy or changes suggested by P. N. Rajbhoj, secretary of SSS Poona branch,¹¹ to answer him it was explained in SAMATA Newspaper that, "In our SSS the members from various caste are involve from scavenger to Brahmin. To reform in social structure the co-meals were arranged out of house at certain common place. But not at someone's home or family. In Co-meals activities, the Hindu males were attending this programme. Whenever he was leaving the house at that time his caste feeling, caste formula etc. were putting at his kitchen and in the pots for the security. It was preserved by his wife till his returning from co-meals. Then he was as it is. So, without disturbing caste structure and feelings, the co-meals were going on. The same thing is to destruct to SSS and create the feeling of social equality, fraternity and humanity". Further also it prolongs that, in the beginning it will be inconvenient to the members and the relatives but when the host man showed his conformity on the above ideology automatic the opposition will be loosen.¹² It was the conceptual differences between the co-meals and Familiar Co-meals. Why Dr. B. R. Ambedkar did purposely declare and praised in his newspaper. Domestic Co-meals action directly took action against caste structure and untouchability, restriction of social interaction.

Importance of Domestic Co-meals of SSS

In eradication process of caste system and practice of un touchability, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar explicates the importance of Domestic Co-meals of SSS. Further Dr. Ambedkar explains that, Indian caste system and Brahmanism is as an invincible castle. Which is fortified with a various fort-walls? For its security the untouchability is its first fort-wall. By which there is no social intercourse. If this first untouchable fort-wall is broken the enemies will enter in the fort and will start co-marriage and co-meals. So, the untouchability was the first fort-wall as well as the social intercourse. So, for that Brahmanism is very conscious on

restriction of social intercourse and co-relations.¹³ So to break these fort-walls and to establish the social equality and social intercourse is the main object and importance of the Domestic Co-meals action programme. Whenever the SSS started Domestic Co-meals programme in large scale effectively. Then automatically social intercourse will open for the untouchable and ostracized by the orthodox community.

The next action programme was inter-caste marriage. Whenever the inter caste-marriage proposed by SSS then automatically the co-meals and co-relations were opened the untouchable and ostracized.¹⁴ It comes to know, to break the caste barriers the Domestic Co-meals action programme was supposed very important. "The untouchability was not only practiced for the untouchable community but also practiced among the total Hindu society. Not only non-Brahmin society but the untouchability is practiced and followed in Brahmin community also. For example, the Brahmin does not touch the KIRVANT BRAHMIN. His wife was not called by Brahmin women for religious co-activities. The KIRVANT BRAHMIN children was not allowed to play with other Brahmin's boys. So, to break this practice of untouchability and social discrimination the SSS purposely started Domestic Co-meals.¹⁵

Not to fallow the caste system and untouchability was the text of to be the members of SSS. In the action programme of Domestic Co-meals creates the feeling of respect of each other participant. It creates the love in each participant. To create social integrate, to which called fraternity. Saint Poll also praised this social action programme of equality. He gave example of Europe, there are various group peoples live together. Like Jew, Greek, male, female and Slaves all these people lives with fraternity. "Social integrity is based on fraternity" because in fraternity, others feelings are always considered. So social integration is the base of Nationalism. Where there is no fraternity there is no integrity.¹⁶ It is to abstract from Saint Poll statement that, there is no liberty, equality, and fraternity in Brahmanism and to established these values there is the way only Domestic Co-meals and inter caste marriage in society.

Opponent to SSS

Within one year the SSS established the concrete position in Maharashtra because of its wholesomeness policy. It was great strong hammering on the fortified of the caste system and untouchability. Naturally the orthodox stood for its opponent. Because orthodox want to promote the caste system and untouchability. So, they oppose the social integration action programme of SSS. Among them was Hindu Mahasabha, the leaders of Brahmin movement Poona, the editor of BHALA Newspaper Mr. Bhopatkar and those untouchable personality followed congress also were opponent of SSS. Mr. Bhopatkar was a totally orthodox Brahmin. He always criticised on SSS action programmes through his newspaper. He did not leave any chance to criticise on reformatory programme and leaders also. In this concern on dated 12/13 December, 1928 at Poona region youth conference was held. Mr. Bhopatkar also criticised in this conference that, like these people will create the pollution in Brahmanism by which the Brahmin youth will become non- vegetarian too. Such types he criticised.¹⁷the untouchable opponent Mr. K. K. Sakat a person from MATANG community in Poona established the separate organisation, Untouchable Samaj Samta Sangh. Mr. Bhopatkar praised him and said that, there will require seven generation to established social equality and integration through the co-meals.¹⁸ Mr. Bhopatkar not only criticised the action programmes of SSS but also criticised of Hindu reformers. For example, V. D. Savarkar and his social reformatory activities.¹⁹ Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya started sacred thread ceremony for untouchables, on this programme also criticised by Bhopatkar. In his satire comments he marked that, no single thread but may have double sacred thread on both shoulders even to wear on waist may have sacred thread, even then the caste system and untouchability will not eradicate from Hindu society. When the Brahmin group arranging the "Tilak co-meals" programme, in handbill they were giving note that, "the untouchable should not come". Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his speech strongly opposed to the slightly rancid critic of Bhopatkar. Also, the editor of SAMTA SANGH newspaper, D. V. Naik denies the critic of Bhopatkar.

On the Way of Achievement of Equality

Samaj Samta Sangh (SSS) always praised and instigate to those personality and organisations those who worked in the programme of caste eradication and work for social equality. The organisations participated from Vidarbha, Khandesh, Konkan, and western Maharashtra. The SSS praised the various persons who were activated in his social equality action programme. For example, P. K. Atre when married with Godutai Mungi, a Vaishya woman, this event was highlighted by the SSS praised him in Bahishkrut Bharat newspaper.² A north Indian incident that Radha Swami Satsang took lead in the inter-caste marriage was also praised in Bahishkrut Bharat Newspaper. Prof. Sabnis from Nasik and Advocate Barve from Chiplun arranged the Domestic Co-meals also praised in Bahishkrut Bharat Newspaper. It is the notable effect of the SSS Domestic Co-meals action programme.

Conclusion

In the sum up of this lengthy article it is to state that, the Domestic Co-meals action programme was recognised and praised by Bhai Parmanand from Punjab, secretary of JAT PAT TODAK MANDAL, the editor of DNYONODAYA newspaper from Nasik ²² also praised the Domestic Co-meals action programme as a National and religious holy activity. V. D. Savarkar gave a praiseworthy and considerable letter to SSS. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Poona, in a Bengali student's youth conference praised the work of SSS.²³ In his speech he too praised Tilak brother's activity and involvement in SSS. So Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the Samaj Samta Sangh (SSS) is to be considered as Torch lighted the way of equality to Indian society.

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