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## Peasant Movement in Marathi Speaking Belt

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### Introduction

Non-Brahmin Movement (NBM) is closely related to Agrarian society. As the Leadership of NBM came from agrarian society; they were always supportive to agrarian interest. Though their personal contextual was associated to the Social and Educational Movement, their historical background was mostly connected to agrarian society. It was new class, which was thinking on agrarian society. Krushanarao Keluskar, Shamrao Desai was teacher and was thinking around agrarian society.

V. R. Shinde was associated with Depressed Class Mission, he was consistently thinking over issues related to agrarian distress too. Shahu Maharaj and Sayajirao Gaikwad both belonged to ruling class, but they were always trying to work on agriculture reforms (Interview Pravin Gaikwad 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017). They developed an 'Idea of Peasant'; idea of peasant was differ from farmer. Workers working on the agriculture fields, were termed as peasant, livelihood was main feature of being peasant. Since Indian independence, the concept of Peasant has been changing; it has changed from peasant to farmer. Idea of farmer has been linked to market. Market based farmer class is a new class, which is not as significant as old class of peasant. The decades of fifties and sixties was a period of paradigm shift in it, therefore peasant movements and farmers movements separated from each other and eventually their meaning was transformed (Interview, Vilas Sonawane, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016). Dajiba Desai, Shamrao Desai, R. N. Chavan, Baba Adhav, Bharat Pathankar have been reinforcing peasant movement and Political Leaders are also been supporting to peasant and farmer. Political leader's focus was on both farmer and peasant, whereas NBM's focus was only on peasant. Y. B. Chavan, Dayanant Bhandarkar was supporting to peasant and farmer, but not to rich farmers, in the decade of eighteen, the idea of peasant was started to decline. Farmer class started to dominate in the agrarian society and political society. It brought big change in Indian society, therefore, NBM also took stance against rich farmer movement, and this divided agrarian society further into four classes- Movement oriented peasant class, Peasant-farmer class, Farmers class and Rich farmer's class. This ultimately resulted giving peasant movement four multiple meanings and its effect also changed against political power and state. This is the central story of NBM after independence and new classes also emerged alongside to peasant movement. Its main paradigm, developed in nineteen centuries. In this context, political thought of agriculture

can be evaluated.

### Mahatma Phule's views on Peasant

In the Early 1883 Mahatma Phule was working on his book 'The Whiccord of the Cultivator's' (Shetkaryancha Asud-In Marathi) which he was writing in the interests of the shudra peasant community. Mahatma Phule was a great reader, He was fascinated by the readings of various personalities, and during his travels he studied manuscript as well. 'The Israeli Dharmadeep' a Marathi Weekly published by the Bombay Israelites, gave an account of a speech made by Jotiba Phule at Byculla in Bombay on December 10, 1882. The Speech was on the condition of peasants. It was very interesting speech (Keer Dananjay, 1964: 181- 192).

After completing the book he went to Baroda and read it out before Sayajirao Gaikwad, as the King of Baroda was gifted with a quick grasp of social problems, he showed genuine interest in the well-being of the lower classes, After listening parts of 'The Whiccord of the Cultivator's' (Shetkaryancha Asud-In Marathi), maharaja offered him financial help (Interview Baba Band, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017). Mahatma Phule completed the book by July 1883 and submitted copies of it to the Maharaja of Baroda (Keer Dananjay, 1974: 182). In the introduction of book Mahatma Phule stated in his thesis that the Kunbis, Malis and Dhangars were originally agriculturists, but because of pressure on land, the growth of population and the fragmentation of land, some turned to gardens for livelihood were called Malis and some those who turned to tend sheep were called Dhangars i.e. the shepherds. Originally they belonged to single community and interlined also but did they not intermarry (Keer Dananjay, 1974: 182). The first part of 'The Whiccord of the Cultivator's' described how a Brahmin priest persecuted a Shudra farmer all the year round from cradle to cremation, from pregnancy to pilgrimage, and how all this exploitation was done under the cloak of religion and its unending rites and rituals (Keer Dananjay, 1964: 181- 192).

The farmer had no money to send his children to school. The British officers, who mostly were given to merrymaking, did not pay close attention to the grievances of the agriculturists. The British officers relied upon the guidance of Brahmins who worked under them. The farmers did not have sufficient food and clothes for their families. Buddhism had exposed the designs of the Brahmanical religion and tried to save the poor classes from its clutches. The Brahmins did not admit the children of farmers to their Sanskrit Pathshalas. Bajirao II patronized the Brahmin Pandits, he did not care for the children of the poor peasants



who were the chief source of his income. The Brahmin clerks and officers in Government courts who ran the administration and dispensed justice were corrupt. They distorted the farmer's applications, evidences and documents, and managed to decide cases in favour of those who gave them the highest bribe (Keer Dananjay, 1964: 181-192).

Although the farmer and his whole family toiled hard, their monthly income was Rs. 31 while a European or native officer spent freely on enjoyment and drink Rs.15 or more a month. The big salaries of collectors and other officers indicated the unjust policy of the British Government. The income of a British soldier in India was ten times higher than the income of a hardworking farmer who with all the members of his family, toiled on the farm. Mahatma Phule compared peasant condition to that of the British soldier (Keer Dananjay, 1964: 188).

Mahatma Phule made an appeal to Government to fix a reasonable assessment on land and to free the farmer from ignorance and the superstition, so that he might not join any Brahmin revolt and perish in that rebellion. Jotiba desired to put science at the service of agriculture, and to develop the idea of scientific breeding of farm-yard cattle. He gave a moving account of an Indian farmer who was engaged in a desperate struggle for a bare living, and was illiterate, ignorant and unemployed for a third part of the year (Keer Dananjay, 1964: 181-192).

#### **Vitthal Ramji Shinde's Views on Peasant**

Vitthal Ramji Shinde was Non Brahmin Leader in Maharashtra (Bombay state in British India). His Thought and work on Peasant and agriculture is fundamental. Agriculture thoughts of V. R. Shinde are multidimensional, because of his complex understanding on agriculture (Interview Randhir Shinde, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017). Shinde argued that the issue of Peasant was different from the Dalit issue. He said that we must think of Dalit issue when we think of the peasant issue. V. R. Shinde, born in farmer's family at Jamkhandi in Karnataka. Being the part of farmer's family he was aware of the problems of peasants. He said that the work of Peasant and Peasant Movement was sacred. He organized farmer's conferences (Shetkari Parishad) in Pune, Terdal (Karnataka), Borgaon (Tal- Walava), Satara and Chandavad from 1922 to 1932. He propounded the thought of the Peasant interest. In Maharashtra and Outside of Maharashtra he worked on the making peasant aware. In Vidharbha, Marathwada and Karnataka he delivered various lectures on peasant issues (Interview, Randhir Shinde, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017). He focused on education on peasant as a Priority. When he went to oxford (1898-1901) for religious education, he studied the British peasant and their agriculture status. Based on that he wrote on agriculture life in England, France and Holland. In 1926-1927 Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Organized Bardoli Movement against the government, at the same time Mumbai Council introduced the bill to increase revenue of agriculture but farmer protested against it again

another bill 'Separation of Farming' (Tukade Bill) was introduced which was again opposed by all farmers (Interview Randhir Shinde, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017). During the same period the capitalist class was purchasing large scale of Land for Sugar industry. Shinde noted peasant's unrest on this and opposed this bill by organizing and chaired meeting of 5000 peasants meeting in Ray market in Pune (Interview, Baba Adhav 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016).

Shinde Actively participated in Maharashtra Peasant Movement from 1926 and 1932. He organized many peasant conferences and he chaired some of these conferences. Shinde defined the peasant community, as per him peasant were those who lived in village and are far from civic culture. Peasant born, brought and died in the farm only (Interview, Randhir Shinde, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017). In ancient time 'peasant' was this king of Maharashtra. Kunbi was the king of Maharashtra. Brahmin and Vani were completely depending on peasant. Shinde opposed the concept of Mavla. Followers of Shivaji Maharaj were referred as 'Mavla', but Shinde explain the meaning of mavla. According to Shinde Mavla means Maratha who works in his owner land? Mavla concept was used from the period of Shivaji Maharaj. Shivaji Maharaj did not create the concept of Mavla but Mavla concept created Shivaji (Magudkar M.P (edit), 1963: 284).

#### **Idea of peasant**

V. R. Shinde defined the concept of peasant who belonged the land according to his and family needs and work hard (Magudkar M.P (edit), 1963: 291). Social needs, Limited storage and work on the field these three principles are important in Shinde's concept of peasant. Those make a lot of storage of land and do not work on field these are not peasant. Shinde Independent thinking opens mind, *soshik, hikmati, hadachaemani* and *jivachakarari* these are some features of Marathi farmers according to Shinde. He identified and wrote the causes of exploitation of peasant (Interview Randhir Shinde 6/8/2017). India now and then was an agricultural state. 80 percent of the population was dependent on agriculture. Indian farmer was weak, under debt and cheated by others and was under control of others. He was the nation's *poshida* but he was backward (Interview, Arun Chavan 9<sup>th</sup> June 2017).

#### **Priority to peasants' class**

Shinde published manifesto of Bahujan Party in 1920. Peasant class was given priority in it. He classified forward and backward class. Those who are rich in education, property and power, they are forward class and those who are poor in it, these are backward class. Peasant classes are the backward class. He classified 'Bahujan Samaj' in 8 types, but he gave atmost priority to peasant class. As per him the landlords are not included in peasant class. Those who work on land and those who give the equal wages to the worker, this class included in peasant concept. He centralized peasant issue on political agenda (Interview, Randhir Shinde 6/8/2017).



### Analysis of exploitation of peasant

He wrote peasant was exploited in different ways and levels. Colonial rulers, princely state, middle man (*Dalal*), capitalist class and bureaucracy exploited the peasant in all possible ways. Shinde said that every government was in the favor of rich class. Government was not ready for the distress of rich but it is easy to exploits the poor. Economic crisis, drought these are the major causes of peasant backwardness. Entire currency is in the hands of merchants and power holders. Shinde argued that, although currency will not be produced in the farm, the peasant will be exploited (Magudkar M.P (edit), 1863: 277).

### Critic on capitalism

Shinde said that, in every stage of history capitalism exploited the peasant. Shinde criticized on the different type of capitalism. Capitalism is the main obstacles before the progress of peasant. Peasant loved land like his child but capitalists always tried to take the land. In this way capitalists were the enemy of the peasants (Interview, Vilas Sonawane 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017).

### Agriculture and Untouchability

Agriculture was solely depend upon peasant, Shinde argued that, 'we neglected the inter-relationship between Agriculture and other social units'. Shinde was the chairman of 'Untouchables Peasant Parishad' in Pune on 30<sup>th</sup> Oct 1926 (Interview Kiran Surwase, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017). He disagreed with the British agricultural policy. He criticized it, that it is a dual meal of British capitalism. He studied the relation between agriculture and untouchability. He said that, the issue of agriculture is economic while the issue of untouchability is related to exploitation of social, religious and political interests. Untouchables are not counted as a worker (*Majur*) but slavers on the land (Interview Kiran Surwase, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017).

### Independent village for schedule caste

In 1914 Shinde tried to establish an independent village of 'Mang' caste (Schedule caste in Maharashtra). For this he took help from British government. Government agreed to give one thousand acre land to depressed class mission near Sangli, around the same time world war started and the conflict or debate between Brahmin and Non-Brahmin started among the Kolhapur and Patwardhan Princely State. Tilak participated in this debate. As the result of this, government took the land from mission and gave it to start the Lord Wellington College at Sangli (Interview Randhir Shinde 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017).

### Politicization of peasant issue

Shinde stated that no political party was the savior of peasant. As during the every party regime the peasant remained poor only. Congress was not only the party of peasants, but of landlords and rich people. Congress did not give prioritized importance to the interest of the peasant class. As per him there is need of Peasant acquiring entire congress party or peasant should get the political power. If

peasants get the political power then they can solve their problems. Shinde analyzed reason behind why the peasants were not organized? As per him peasant community is more exploited and in order to protect their interest they should be organized. They should form organizations which should struggle with the state for their upliftment (N. D. Patil, 26th June 2017).

### Solutions on Peasant Issue

In Bargaon peasant conference Shinde give solutions on issues of peasant.

- 1) Peasants should establish talukawise peasant organizations as well as talukawise workers organizations.
- 2) Both of them should work together with establishing with joint organization and they should cooperate to each other.
- 3) People migrated from village to city as the peasants didn't get the work. Shinde said that not only peasant or workers unity is essential but also laborers class cooperation was important.
- 4) Peasants should try to come to power in local bodies. Peasant should take political power at Municipalities, boards and local self-government. Peasant should capture the political power.
- 5) Peasant has a right to confirm the price of his agricultural products. Capitalist class or politicians should not give the right to confirm the price.
- 6) Peasant should have to right to confirm the price of row material.

According to Shinde, peasant was working class only. Peasant is never depend upon the others work. He produces and gets feed, he is independent, but most exploited one. If peasants will united and get the political and decision making power then they will surely get better life (Interview Randhir Shinde 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017).

### Dayanand Bandodkar's Views on Peasant

Dayanand Bandodkar was two term chief minister of Goa in the period of 8 June 1962- 2 Dec 1966 and 5 April 1967- 12 August 1973 (Bhatt S. C. and Gopal Bhargava (ed) 2006: 67). Bandodkar was born in Pednem in northern Goa on 12 March 1911. Dayanand Bandodkar's work as Chief Minister of Goa, Daman and Diu can be considered as revolutionary in nature. His far-sighted vision for Goals development, deep concern for the people and his undisputed leadership, made him to be compared as 'Nehru of Goa' and 'Kamaraj of Goa'. He was the first leader to rule Goa in a democratic setup after centuries (Interview Ramesh Kolwalkar 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017).

He did his early education in Marathi and later in the Portuguese Lyceum, but besides these two languages he also acquired knowledge of French and Hindi. However, his love and devotion to Marathi as language and culture was predominant. As the leader of Maharashtra Gomantak Party in the Goa Legislative Assembly, he was seemingly



torn between two options during the period of agitation that prevailed over the Opinion Poll demanded by the Central Government to decide the future of the territory- whether it would merge with Maharashtra or retain its distinctiveness as the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu. Bandodkar's love of his people asserted itself. His ministry resigned on 3 December 1966 and Goa won the Opinion Poll (Interview Ramesh Kolwalkar 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017).

At the same time, the faith and trust of the people in Bandodkar's impartial and objective judgment was considerably strengthened and, in the general elections that followed the Opinion Poll in April 1967, his party was voted back to power. The people sustained their confidence in his leadership throughout, and for a third consecutive term of office he took over again as Chief Minister of Goa, Daman and Diu on 23 March 1972. During his fairly long tenure as Chief Minister, Bandodkar enjoyed full cooperation from his Cabinet colleagues and with his encouragement they set themselves to streamline the administrative machinery, agriculture and industry, and thus brought about speedy economic development of the territory. Several progressive legislative measures were introduced and among these was the radical Tenancy Act which fixed the rent for the tenants at one sixth of the produce and made their eviction punishable under the law (Interview Ramesh Kolwalkar 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017).

The regime of D.B. Bandodkar was noted for peaceful and harmonious relations between Hindus and Catholics, the two major communities, thereby continuing the tradition of over four hundred years (Interview Ramesh Kolwalkar 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017).

#### **Bandodkar's views on Peasant**

Major work of Bhadodkar was anti feudalism, he was provided political power to the movement of anti-feudalism. He has great work on emancipations of tenets in Goa (Interview Ramesh Kolwalkar, 20/6/2017). Goain society was based on a ruling class of slave owners and a class of slaves; feudalism was based on landowners and serfs. Bhatakar (landlords) was the part of feudalism and tenants were slavers during the period of Portuguese government. Feudal Structure of society was maintained by the Portuguese government (Goa). Goain rural society had been divided between landlords and landless people; there was conflict between them. This was the major conflict in rural society (Interview Ramesh Kolwalkar, 20/6/2017). Bandodkar was influenced by M.N. Roy and he was the friend of Yashwantrao Chavan; his vision was to focus on changing agricultural society (Government of Goa, 1975, N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 122-123). By then Bandodkar had already chalked out a program (i) to give relief to the tenants and 'Mundkars' by introducing the tenancy as soon as possible and similar agrarian legislations; (ii) to provide as many amenities and facilities as possible to the people particularly in rural areas; (iii) to provide better road communications as far as possible, particularly in rural areas;

(iv) to ensure that Gram Panchayats function effectively and efficiently; (v) to remove all obstructions in the way of Gram Panchayats; and (vi) to rehabilitate the political sufferers as far as possible. These were then the main items of work needed to be undertaken for the people (Aureliano Fernande, 1997: 183, N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 122-123). His major contribution to agricultural society is as following:

#### **Agriculture**

Bandodkar gives priority to Agriculture. He made Agricultural Tenancy Act in 1964. This act was against to *Bhatakar* (Jamindar) (Sirdesai Manohar, 1991: 471). The act of Land to the tiller (*Kasal Tyachi Jamin*) was not passed in his tenure. On 20<sup>th</sup> April 1976, the act of land to the tiller was passed in Goa Assembly (5<sup>th</sup> Amendment to Agricultural Tenancy Act). Those tenants worked on Bhatakar's (landlords) land, he became the owner of the land (Sirdesai Manohar, 1991: 472). Sashikala Kakodkar was the daughter of Bhadodkar, she was the Chief Minister of Goa from congress party. She passed the act of 'Land to the tiller (*Kasal Tyachi Jamin*) and Agricultural Tenancy Act in Goa Assembly (Khalap Ramakath, Times of India, 29 Oct 2016). This law was based on Maharashtra's Land to the tiller and Agricultural Tenancy Act, law was implemented to paddy land as well as irrigated land, the landlords in Goa went against Sashikala Kakodkar government because of this law. Landlords petitioned against this law in high court. High court declared that, this law was unconstitutional, but Sashikala Kakodkar with the help of Morarji Desai included this law in the ninth Appendix of Indian constitution. This led to dismiss tradition of landlord and tenants got the lands and they became the owners of the land.

#### **Modernization of Land production**

Indian Agricultural thinker, M. J. Rande propounded land modernization in nineteenth century (Prakash Pawar, 2017). This thought was discussed in the Non-Brahmin Movement. Issue of modernization of land was brought in the policy of Maharashtra and Goa government led by Yashwantrao Chavan and Dayanand Badodkar respectively (Prakash Pawar, 2017). The process of land modernization rapidly occurred under the leadership of Badodkar in Goa. Bandodkar had a dream to develop the agriculture in Goa for the reason that it was the most important resource of livelihood to the big mass. Though agricultural output was very low, in the decade of fifty and sixty, sixty-four percent of the labour force was engaged in agricultural and allied activities. N. Radhakrishnan has given some example on this. These examples are following -

- A) Swamps has major problem of Agriculture. Government of Badodkar was working on swamps reduction and it was successfully changed swamps into useful land, about 11,000 hectares of land were reduced to useful land (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994:135).
- B) Bandodkar government was working on horticultural so, production of horticultural crops



had increased Coconuts, areca nuts (Ramesh Kolwalkar, 20/6/2007).

- C) Paddy farm was the base of rural society, but the production of paddy was very less in decade of fifty. Bandodkar government was working on increasing of paddy production. Bandodkar government took several steps to strengthen agricultural activities. He was determined to develop the conditions of farmers. As a result of his efforts, food shortage of 30,000 tons of rice was reduced to 10,000 tons only (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 135)
- D) They supported the change in crop pattern and groundnut cultivation was started for the first time in Goa during the tenure of Bandodkar government. Bandodkar adopted various strategies to enhance agrarian productivity. He launched high yielding seed programs and provided chemicals and fertilizers to cultivators at subsidized rates. The government also supplied tractors and bulldozers for the agricultural operations of ploughing and leveling at nominal charges and provided financial assistance towards land reclamation for agriculture, improvement of land, irrigation works and purchase of pumping sets and fertilizers. Crop competitions were organized to provide incentives to increase the average yield per acre of land. By 1971, the production of rice had increased by 45 per cent (ParagParobo, 2016: 180).
- E) They also changed the methods of cultivation. Japanese method of cultivation, construction of minor irrigation works, reclamation of 'khajan' lands and mechanical cultivation, etc. were some of the programs initiated. Investigation Division of the Central Water Commission was set up and explorations began, in 1964-65. By March, 1966, 30,000 acres of land were brought under cashew nuts, 3000 acres under coconut, 500 acres under pineapples, 1000 acres under mango, banana, jackfruit and chickoo (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 136)
- F) The Agricultural Tenancy Act which was brought out on his personal initiative gave security of tenure to cultivators and also ensured efficient management of land, leading to increase in output. The situation in the live-stock, forestry and fisheries and other sectors of the economy was not far different. Animals were malnourished and prone to diseases and veterinary services were absent. Fishing was declined because of absence of modern technologies used for fishery (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 136).
- G) The Mundkar law is yet another important legislation which brought the relationship between the Bhatkars and Mundkars on a more rational

and permanent basis which also had a radical effect on the life of the common people. Many attempts were made by temple Mahajans to usurp the land of the temple servants that had actually been given to them for rendering services to the temple and cult. Liberation saw several emigrants returning to Goa. Many of them now wanted to see immediate displacement of the Mundkars who had been staying for more than one generation. The 'Lei de Mundcarato of 1959' regulated the relationship between a Bhatkar and Mundkar failed to provide adequate protection, leading to a large-scale eviction of Mundkars from their houses. There was no protection for a Mundkar under law if Bhatkars decide to evict them from their home. Taking resources to the law was expensive and time consuming and so a Mundkar choose a life of dependence rather conflict (ParagParobo, 2016: 177). The Mundkar Act abolished the system free labour at the service of a Bhatkar. The rights of the Mundkars were made inheritable and they became deemed owners of land, having the right to repair, maintain and improve their dwellings (ParagParobo, 2016: 179). This is considered as an important contribution of Bandodkar which has gone a long way in transforming the living conditions of the masses in Goa. Bandodkar's contribution led to reform feudal structure and value system among in Goan society which resulted to bring in humane relationship among Bhatkars and Mundkars. Bandodkar's contribution also led to provide dignified life to Mundkars and now they were actually enrolled as citizens in Goan society.

- H) Forest resources were exploited and illegal felling of trees reduced the forest wealth. Bringing in the various legislations during his tenure was a revolutionary work, which has enabled Goa to be on par with other parts (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 144).
- I) Over 130 legislations were introduced and passed. Some of these laws, like the Agricultural Tenancy Act and the Mundkars Act have had a radical effect on a long-term basis on the welfare of the poor and the suppressed people who had no security of their dwelling lands and houses and who were entirely at the mercy of the landlords for centuries (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 145). These progressive and helpful legislations implemented for the common people were a product of Bandodkar, his far-sighted vision and enthusiasm for the emancipation and prosperity of the common people of Goa is considered as a memorable event in the history of Goa (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 145).



**Dam**

- A) Bhandodkar was attentive that dams are the major sources to uplift the life of the masses, so he approved long-term irrigation projects. He constructed two dams across Paroda and Khandepar Rivers. Bhandodkar gave priority to the irrigation in Goa (Interview Ramesh Kolwalkar 17 December 2017). In his period Central Water Commission was opened in Goa. He studied Salaulim project firstly then gave permission for it to enhance development of Goa.
- B) He tried his best to make Goa self-sufficient in food-grains. Agricultural production was increased during his period. He was a visionary leader; his vision was to complete the project so that it would help to raise the output of food grains. The project has brought under irrigation for 8200 hectares of land. This project also helped to increase production of sugarcane and was also helpful for drinking water (Ramesh Kolwalkar, 17/12/2017).
- J) Sanguem, Quepem and Salcete talukas as were beneficiary of this project. Bhandodkar also planned other projects like namely Damanganga project (for Daman), Tillari project, Dudhsagar project and Anjunem projects. (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 185).
- K) Tillari project site is in Maharashtra, the Govt. of Maharashtra agreed to set up this project which will give 75% benefit to Goa, this could have happened only because of political will and great interstate relations of Bhandodkar with political leaders of western Maharashtra (N. Radhakrishnan, 1994: 185).

Bhandodkar ruled Goa under the leadership of Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party for ten years. Being the activist politician he was aware about equity and justice. Common mass was his priority. He worked on motto: *Bahujan Hitay, Bahujan Sukhay* (For the Interest of Bahujan community and for their happiness). He gave belief to the people that this government is their own government. His political will power always solved the problem of masses. Bhandodkar worked on women issues and heard their grievances whenever required (Interview Alaknanda Shingare, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017).

**Baba Adhav's views on Dams and Development**

The dam Oustees organization in South Maharashtra has led historic sit-in struggle (thiyya andolan) in Satara. Seven local revolutionary dam outstees organizations from different projects in Satara district came together to launch Do or Die indefinite sit in struggle from December 24, 2001. Under the banner of the Maharashtra State Dam-Oustees and project affected peasants organization, with Bharat Patankar as an organizer, the sit-in struggle was launched with a bang, with the support of various sections. Local politicians also

supported it. The specificity of the struggle was that seven dam-oustees organizations had launched the aggressive united action of indefinite, sit-in struggle, till their demands, including that for financial allocation were granted (Phadke Anant, 2002: 1016).

The sit-in struggle has resulted in the actual delivery of ownership deeds of a minimum of two acres each to all the dam oustees in Satara district irrespective of their landholding. Rs. 2 crores was sanctioned by the chief minister towards the outstanding water-allowance dues to the dam oustees. The sit-in demanded that no future progress will be made in any dam construction till the water in existing dams was equitably distributed. The policy for Equal water Distribution is important (Interview Sampat Desai, 5<sup>th</sup> August 2017). It also opposed in concrete terms the privatization and commercialization of the dam water. Equitable distribution of water would stop to practice; it would also mean construction of canals and lifts through public funds (Interview Bharat Patankar, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017). The agitation has indicated the new path of unity of two of the most unorganized sections of the toiling poor in Maharashtra. It also shows the way to eradicate drought and to lay the foundation of an alternative path to development. This project affected people have been propagating this path of development (Phadke Anant, 2002: 1016).

The freedom struggle in Satara district, during the early 1940s led the way for the freedom struggle in rural Maharashtra. Patankar's father was one of the leading activists of this struggle, including the famous Parallel government in Satara district. Nagnath Anna Naikwadi (Satyashodhak and Non-Brahmin leader) has been the leader of the oustees dam struggle in south Maharashtra wash himself a part of this parallel government. This Satara heritage of path breaking struggle is being continued in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Phadke Anant, 2002: 1016).

**R.N.Chavan's views on peasant**

Chavan wrote various articles in edited books, journals and newspapers related to peasant issue. Just few to name: Workers World (Kamgar Jagat, Miraj), Greatness of peasant and peasantry (*Kasth, Kasth karyanchi Mahanata*) and Rationality of worker's world, Diwali 1992.

He authored ten articles on peasant issue in newspapers entitled, *Rashtra Veer* (Belgavi, Karnataka). Intellectuals and labors (*Buddhijivi and Shramjivi*), 21, 28 March and 4 April 1958, Thought and idea of Agriculture and peasant (*Shetiva Shetakaryachaa Vichar*), 24 Jan. 1979, renaissance of peasant Samaj, 28 Feb. 1979 and 6 Feb. 1980, peasant workers party, 20 May 1969, A Study of peasant and workers party and Marxism, 27<sup>th</sup> July 1977, Development and conservation of peasant workers party part-1, 2, 31<sup>st</sup> Jan. 1990 and 7 Feb. 1990, Ways of upliftment of peasants and rural people, 20 Nov. 1985. News of Satara (*Satara Samachar*). Importance of workers, 3 April 1984.

His articles on peasants in Newspapers entitled, *Sagaram* (Thane) was focused on giving priority to issues



of rural people and their development, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1979, Policy of secularisms and peasant's workers party, 8<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1979, Mouth piece and literature peasant's workers party, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1979, Peasant and Bureaucracy, 18<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1980, Vision and action of peasant, 14<sup>th</sup> July 1980, Peasant and workers party of India, 6<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1983, Vision of Indian peasant and workers, Dec. 1975, Thoughts on Agriculture and peasant, Diwali 1982, Mahatma Phule and Issue of peasant and labour, 1979.

#### **R.N.Chavan's views on peasant and worker:**

Peasants, workers and Bosnians (labour) are in every state and all over in India as well. Peasants were facing issues but they were actually not aware of its roots, this was the major reason behind their unorganization and this was same in Maharashtra and other part of India as well. In urban area or metropolitan cities, mill workers established their organizations to solve their issues as well as all political party took support of workers for election gains. In metropolitan cities trade unions were actively working to protect the interest of the workers. In order to do reforms in agriculture or to improve the standard of peasants, there was drastic need of united or organized peasant class. Peasant conferences were not held regularly. Peasant organizations were weak as compared to workers organization. Workers in urban area were more aware of their interest but peasants in the villages were not. As per R.N.Chavan, India being an agricultural state, peasants in whole country should come together for their good even the political leaders elected from rural area were not aware of its benefits.

#### **India and All India**

According to R.N.Chavan, After First World War, western economic philosophy and communism came to India. In big towns, industries and mills were established and then issue of worker started emerging, but peasant issue was still persistent from ancient era. During war or civil war peasants crops were destroyed and kings of princely states ignored issues confronted by farmers and also ignored to develop agriculture. Some severe droughts occurred during the British time; British kept on ignoring on problem arose by droughts. Indians started accusing British as a responsible for these droughts and demanded British to quit India, for their irresponsible approach. During the droughts, lack of food forced common Indians to face starvation. In 1877 a severe drought happened, and then Deccan Agricultural Act was passed. Indian National Rashtra Sabha was established for reducing gap among common mass and government, before this Madras, Kolkata, and Bombay associations were established (Interview Nisha More 21<sup>st</sup> January 2018). In 1885, Indian national congress was formed, after Congress many organizations were established, these all claimed themselves as Akhil Bharatiya e.g. *Akhil Bharatiya samajik parishad*, *Akhil Bharatiya Industrial Parishad*. Calling organizations as *Akhil Bharatiya* became a fashion. Exception was Peasant Workers Party. They called themselves as *Bharatiya*, which meant they

accepted the western economic socialism or communalism but its nature was Indian. Peasant Workers Party adopted the principles from outside and connected it with local situation.

#### **Regionalism and Peasant Approach**

R.N.Chavan argued that, Regionalism carries a separate importance in India, as it doesn't danger Indian nationality. More than the regional politics the issue of peasant was more important. Chavan differentiated urban worker and labor. Urban worker works in industry or mill, his rights are protected by law and he is salaried employee, whereas labor is different from urban worker. India being the agricultural country, the peasants are more in number and as Indian constitution have given the freedom of doing work, service or business anywhere, irrespective of his caste, creed, religion, languages. So as per Chavan the issue of workers was not religious or caste and creed related. Indian workers workaholic approach is now secularly organized. Bureaucratic staff was organized and demanded increase in salary and other facilities, whereas pension for the peasant was totally neglected by the bureaucracy as they remain within the framework of secularism and socialist democracy. Therefore Chavan's at most priority was to solve the issues of peasant, worker and Labor.

Chavan argued that, Maharashtra congress had failed to protect the interest of the peasant. Congress also failed to create welfare peasant state. If congress neglects the issue of peasant or women, then it will not survive. Congress has to follow rural approach for its survival (Bikaji Bhilare 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016).

#### **Importance to work and workers**

R.N.Chavan gives importance to work and workers, basically society was not given status to the workers and peasants. Chavan argued that non-Brahmins were the peasants and workers. In ancient period in Indian society was based on *balutedars class* consisting twelve *balutedars*. They were working as servants (*sevak*). *Balutedar* class was worker class. Landlords treated these *balutedars* as slaves. To end the slavery of Scheduled Caste and other Backward Class, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar introduced the bill of *Balut* and to end slavery of *Kunbi* (Caste in Maharashtra), he introduced the bill of *Khoti*. To end discrimination of SC and ST (*Shudra* and *Atishudra*) Ambedkar introduced Hindu Code Bill. He established his first political party named Independent Labour Party focusing emancipation of workers (Interview Ramesh Chavan 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2017).

#### **Creator (Nirmik)**

Chavan argued that peasants and workers was the creator (*Nirmik*). According to Chavan those who work in the farm and produce the gains, are called peasant. Tenancy (*Kul*) worked in the farm so that the Law of Tenancy should get merged and finally Tenancy gets the ownership of the land. Workers working in the farm and mill (*Girani*) called *Kasthakari* class. *Kasthakari* class works very hard and



treated with a red flower and Dhurva (green grass), but leaving this side and peasant should accept knowledge based scientific approach (Chavan R.N. Sangram, Nov-Dec. 1975).

Chavan argued that intellectual work and physical work is differs from each other. Physical work is difficult and intellectual class lives upon the work done by worker class. In Mumbai cotton mill workers are exploited by the bureaucracy (Karkun), emergence of *Satyashodhak* movement was originated from this exploitation only. Dinbandu was the mouth piece of the mill worker. Chavan stated that Narayan Meghaji Lokhade was the trade union leader and he worked for the interest of the working class. Hamal Panchayat and Mahatma Phule Samata Partishthan, Pune under the leadership of Dr. Baba Adhav also worked for the working class (Interview Ramesh Chavan, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017).

Peasants were in trouble and remained poor because of constant droughts, diseases like plague and *Pataki*. Peasant land was captured by rich landlords (*Savkars*) so in 1877 peasant agitation occurred. During the period of Mahatma Phule, there was no discrimination among the peasant on the basis of economic level, so Phule didn't classified classes based on economic level of peasant. Later during green revolution rich and poor peasant were seen among the peasant class. Government also classified peasant into rich and poor from the policies but Chavan argued that, rich and poor classification found in every class and caste. E.g. rich and poor merchant, rich and poor capitalist. In Brahmin caste there were rich and poor Brahmins. So Chavan argued that, poor's should not be classified in class or caste. Poor's should get united and should form their organization (Interview Pandit Tapre, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016).

Chavan said that, urban intellectual class blamed rich peasants as the their peasants richness was depend upon the rate of his food gains. If his agricultural produce priced low, then he becomes debt ridden and financially unstable, whereas intellectual class's salary is depending upon the market rate and dearness allowance is not cut down if the market rate is down (Interview Pandit Tapre, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016).

Some peasants are economically rich but culturally poor; Peasants were divided in different political parties and were part of much traditional conflict also there. Even after election result is out, they hardly forget their conflict, but they forget the basic thought of agriculture, development of agriculture and increase in production (Interview Pandit Tapre, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016).

Chavan said that, peasants sit on a Panchayat to discuss their agriculture problem, but there is no proper mechanism to solve their problem. Chavan insisted need of a proper local mechanism to solve the problems of peasant. Gram Panchayat must think about agriculture and peasant (Interview Nitin Birmal, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017).

Chavan said that agriculture is a business but in this business there was no method to put the record of profit

and loss, both poor as well as rich peasants did not keep any audit of their profit and loss. Peasants will be happy if he has produced enough foodgrain for his family, peasants were seen satisfied in that. Peasant did not see agriculture as a business model so the agriculture as a business model did not get developed. As per Chavan this was major problem as peasant remained old fashioned and lost an opportunity to become modern. Eventually peasants next generation were educated, they joined various services and jobs and they never wanted to return to agriculture (Interview Rajan Gavas 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2017).

#### **Peasants and workers party of India (PWP) and peasant**

According to Chavan, PWP worked for peasant. It established for the interest of the peasant, basically it is a rural party. With the help of PWP, Sahrad Pawars party formed government in Maharashtra in 1978. PWP's aim was not to achieve the political power. Yashwantrao Chavan criticized on this stance of PWP, but PWP's principles, programs were important and value based. R.N. Chavan argued that, though PWP is local party today but it would be All India Party.

Chavan argued that, PWP's thought is mixture of economic as well as political ideas. The responsibility of all round development of a village is on PWP. Politics cannot be excluded from life, Panchayat Raj and co-operative institutions are important. After independence Public Works Department and Postal departments were established, but these departments were occupied by urban bureaucracy and poor and rich farmers remained debt ridden at rural level (Interview Pravin Gaikwad 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017).

#### **Peasant's role**

R. N Chavan considers, Ideology reflects in voting pattern; peasant voters must have their own thought. In democracy if the peasant thinks before voting then democracy will surely be modified and will help to become a peasant self-state (*swaraj*). Peasant must be aware on who his friend is and who is enemy? He must know his interests and should understand his own identity. In order to get succeed in politics peasant must have their own literature, they must have their own journal, which can work as their mouth-piece. These journals and mouth pieces must reach home of every peasant of every village. This journals and mouth pieces central idea should only be the interest of the peasant. They must think about the village. Village problems, issues must be reflected in these journals. Overall welfare of peasant should be taken into account. Peasant should be visionary while working on agriculture. For peasant agriculture is a culture as well as a business. Agriculture is a business of life and death. Chavan argued that agriculture is done by peasant. He has status of owner of the land, in this context peasant is called as a *Dhani* (Owner), so peasant is a landowner as well Dhani. Peasant must be independent. Peasant should not be slaves and should be liberal and board minded (Interview Pravin Gaikwad 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017).



this demand he published seven articles. All the problems of peasant will be solved through this policy. Dajiba said that in the development of agricultural process the rich class of peasant emerged, but this class was not independent, they are the slaves of capitalist economy. This class was dependent upon the capitalists and government for help. The rich class emerged only because of concessions given by government, grants and facility of co-operative institutions. As the congress government approved concession to this class, this class voted to Congress again. This rich Peasant class exploited small peasants, workers, dalit and tribal peasants. Dajiba said that because of the political influences, all power is centered in rural area in the hands of rich peasants. In 1979, he has mentioned that the conflict between rich and poor peasant started emerging in rural area (Patil N.D, Rajabhau Patil (edit), 2010: 11 – 22).

### Conclusion

Four major debates on agricultural issues occurred in recent two centuries, first debate was regarding exploitation of peasant by the socio-religious traditions, led by Mahatma Phule. Second debate was on use of modernization for agriculture reforms led by M. G. Ranade which was further developed by Sayajirao Gaikwad, Shahu Maharaj, Pandit Nehru and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as well. They amended this model according to their respective thoughts. Ambedkar came up with idea of State Socialism in the field of agriculture where as Nehru came up with Nehruin Socialism, with the combination of Ranades and Phules outcome, the model of Y.B. Chavan and Dayanand Bhandodkar was created. Third debate was regarding use of small machines for agriculture led by Mahatma Gandhi; this model was developed by R. M. Lohia. Forth debate was between socialist and Marxist where redistribution of land and ownership of sources of production was debated. If we see the recent PWPs model we can trace that it is the blend model of all the four debates where PWP has accepted and rejected ideas from these debates and has created a blend model based on above four debates. (Chavan Bhandodkar Model) this model also includes Yashwantrao Mohite- Karad, Shankarao Mohite- Akluj, etc. Therefore few of the leaders from PWP joined Indian National congress. As we hardly trace any difference in ideology and programs undertaken by them, in a same way some followers from Maharashtratravadi Gomantak Party of Goa joined Congress (Shashikala Bhandodkar Kakodkar, Ex CM of Goa); however a group of socialist and Marxist kept on targeting Congress for its idea of Capitalism. This whole process led to synthesize thoughts of Mahatma Phule, Socialism and Marxism (PSM Model) this includes R. N. Chavan, Baba Adhav, Bharat Patankar, etc. R. N. Chavan criticized Chavan Bhandodkar Model as this model limits itself to resolve issues with poverty, landless laborer, and agricultural worker. Whereas PSM model does not show any limitations in resolving issues mentioned above. Therefore Chavan argued importance of awareness of peasant in his issues and

emphasized on their financial development as well as education. Chavan also emphasized need to form their organization and need of their participation in politics for giving voice to their issues and demands.

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## Interviews

Sr. No	Name	Place	Origination	Date
1	Dr. Baba Adhav	Pune, Maharashtra	Mahatma Phule Samata Pratishthan	12/4/2016 17/12/2017 12/2/2018
2	Mrs. Vaishali Chavan	Wai, Maharashtra	R. N. Pratishthan	14/4/2016 2/6/2017 10/2/2018
3	Mr. Ramesh Chavan	Wai, Maharashtra	R. N. Pratishthan	15/4/2016 17/12/2017 11/2/2018
4	Mr. Krushna Shahapurkar	Belagavi, Karnataka	Senior Journalist	5/5/2016 29/8/2017
5	Adv. Rajabau Patil	Belagavi, Karnataka	Editor Rashtraveer	6/5/2016 29/8/2017
6	Dr. Alkanda Shingare	Panji, Goa	Civil Society	10/5/2016 20/6/2017
7	Dr. Randhir Shinde	Kolhapur, Maharashtra	V. R. Shinde Pratishthan	12/5/2016 6/8/2017
8	Mr. Sampat Desai	Ajara Maharashtra	Shramik Mukti Dal	14/5/2016 5/8/2017
9	Dr. Rajan Gavas	Gargoti, Maharashtra	Jata Nirmulan Movement	20/5/2016 23/9/2017
10	Dr. Bharat Patankar	Kasegaon, Maharashtra	Shramik Mukti Dal	21/5/2016 10/11/2017
11	Mr. Pandit Tapure	Wai, Maharashtra	R. N. Pratishthan	2/6/2016 16/9/2017
12	Mr. Ramesh Dubal	Satara, Maharashtra	R. N. Pratishthan	3/6/2016 17/9/2017
13	Mr. Bikaji Bhilare	Bhilarwali, Maharashtra	NBM Leader	8/6/2016
14	Mr. Arun Chavan	Indapur, Maharashtra	Peasant Movement	12/6/2016 9/6/2017
15	Mr. Sushil Daskate	Pune, Maharashtra	Bahujan Feminism	16/6/2016 18/8/2017
16	Dr. Nitin Birmal	Pune, Maharashtra	Political Economist	15/8/2016 16/12/2017
17	Dr. Nisha More	Pune, Maharashtra	Dalit Movement	9/9/2016 21/1/2018
18	Mr. Pravin Gaikwad	Pune, Maharashtra	Peasant & Workers Party	27/5/2017
19	Dr. Kiran Surwase	Solapur, Maharashtra	Dalit Movement	20/10/2017

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