Pro-Dalit Politics towards Inclusive Democracy in Nepal

DB Bishwakarma ‘Sagar’

Secretary-General,
International Commission for Dalit Rights (ICDR)

National President,
Dalit National (NGO) Federation, Nepal (DNF)

Nepal today: Challenges Towards Inclusive Democracy
May 19, 07, The New York School, NY, US
Dalit population

[Bar chart showing population of Dalits from 1991 to 2001]
## General Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Dalit</th>
<th>National ratio</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy ratio*</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult literacy ratio*</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship due</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>10M</td>
<td>Out of 10 m. approximately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income (US$)</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
<td>$210.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landless Dalit</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>Out of national ratio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nepal today: Socio-Political status

Underlying Socio-Political Institutions, practices and codes of Behavior

- **ASSETS AND CAPABILITIES**
  - Lots of assets and capabilities
- **HIGHER CASTE**
- **MESO CASTES**
- **DALITS**

Political, Gov. Civil Society, Private Sector & Public Sector INSTITUTIONS

- Strong Influence
- Weak Influence

Few assets and capabilities
Areas of Social-Political Exclusion

- A Dalit has been facing 205 kinds of discrimination in their daily life.
- Triple discrimination - Dalit women
- New practices of untouchability or caste-based discriminations.
- Socio-cultural Inequality
- Civil and political exclusion
- Labour, skills, market and economic exploitation.
Dalit Participation in the political process through Political parties

![Bar chart showing participation of different political parties including NC, UML, NC-D, Maoist, Others, and C.H.H.E with Dalits and Others categories.](chart.png)
Existing National Index of Governance, 1990-2007
Dalit Agendas for Inclusive Democracy

- Proportionate Participation in Central to Federal state’s mechanisms.
- At least 25% Special Electoral Constituencies for Dalits.
- Mandatory Proportionate membership in the Political parties at all levels.
- Special Census for Dalits before Constituency Assembly.
- Ensure Reservation/Affirmative policies for Dalit in Education, Employment, Military, Civil, technical, medical and development programs.
- Powerful Independent Constitutional Dalit National Commission to monitor, measures and direct government agencies to make untouchability free country and society.
- Republican Federal system.
- Declare untouchability as human crime and set up state mechanism to implement it.

Secularism,
Ensure Equal Access before CA

Constituency Assembly and State Reformation process

“...to engage, influence and hold accountable the institutions that affect them”
Inclusive Democracy...

Equally sharing responsibility and resources

Inclusive Governance

“Removal of institutional barriers and enhancement of incentives to increase access of diverse individuals and groups to development opportunities”

Political Mobilization

ASSETS AND CAPABILITIES

INSTITUTIONS

HIGHER CASTE

MESO CASTES

DALITS
Pro-Dalit Politics towards Inclusive Democracy

Proportionate Participation

Information Sharing

Policy and Institution

Pro-Dalit Politic giving and receiving solidarity, supports and joint movement with minimum common political agendas. “Alliance building with Janjati and women movement, use of National level print and electronic media, none violent means”

Socio-Political Mobilization

Macro

Meso

Micro (DALIT communities)
References:

-----------------------------------. DNF’s Principle Direction.
- Bennett Lynn, Equality and Social Exclusion, World Bank
- Lawoti, Mahendra, Ethno-Violence- Inclusive Institutions.
- Neupane, Gobinda. Nepal ko Jatiya Prasna
- Nepal Cecnsus Reports
- Interim Constitution of Nepal-06