

## **PRAKASH JHA'S FILM ARAKSHAN: AMBEDKAR'S MISSION AND VISION IN PRESENT SCENARIO**

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In context of Indian society the existence of 'dalit society' or 'untouchable community' has its roots very deep in Hindu "Grand –Narratives" or "Hindu Meta –Narratives" like 'Vedas', 'Puranas', 'Ramayana', 'Mahabharata' and typically in 'Manusamriti.' Indian society was classified in a hierarchical order i.e. 'Brahmin', 'Aakshatriya', 'Vaishya' and most suppressed, exploited 'Shudras' or 'untouchables' by the higher strata of the society to exploit this lowest, weakest, poor, marginal section of the Hindu community. This hierarchical classification is rigidly based on birth and every opportunity of educational development, economic development, social development, religious development and political development for this lowest strata of society is strictly, strongly denied by the socially, economically, religiously and politically privileged higher strata i.e. so called 'Brahmin' and as well as ruler of the society. This phenomenon of denying every opportunity of development is not only modern phenomenon but it is justified by so called Hindu religious 'Granthas' and has its root very deep in Hindu mythology when in 'Manusamriti' very religiously and very strongly it is preached that pour "melted lead" in the ears of 'Shudra' if he/she listened or heard any 'Veda –Mantra' or 'Shloka' or any Sanskrit word, knowingly or unknowingly or even by mistake or by chance. So, that is why Eklavya, the dalit protagonist in Mahabharata was denied right to education by a so called 'Brahmin Guru' (teacher) Dronacharya and he demands Eklavya's thumb to reduce maximum possibilities of any learning in future by this dalit protagonist of Mahabharata, and in the same way 'Sut-Putra' i.e. son of a dalit, Karana was also denied equal status and equal opportunity and irony is that, intelligence and knowledge of poor dalit students is put under question mark by the same teachers of higher strata of society. So, this mythological so called 'Brahmin Guru' can be kept on equal stage with the 'Modern Version' of 'so called Brahmin Guru' in the form of Professor Mithlesh Singh in film ARAKSHAN. Professor Mithlesh Singh is against mission and vision of Dr. Bhimrao Ram Ji Ambedkar, which is to give equal opportunity to all dalit, weak, marginal people of the society for equal development and equal opportunity for education with "positive discrimination" i.e. "RESERVATION" or "ARAKSHAN" for the so long depressed and exploited dalit society but protagonist Professor Mithlesh Singh very strongly deny this "positive discrimination" policy i.e. "ARAKSHAN" or "RESERVATION" to dalit students or students of marginal, economical weak society, students of poor society or in language of administration, students of "Reserved Category." Thus, Professor Mithlesh Singh very vehemently, very strongly denies any chance or all chances of equal opportunity to dalit students and it is not only Professor Mithlesh Singh only, but he is the representative of all those educational intellectuals, educational administrators, teachers and professors in Indian

Universities and in Indian educational institutions who belongs to higher strata of socio-economic, politically privileged society and operating entire education system and administration. That is why in present scenario Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar's mission and vision is as much relevant as it was relevant in Ambedkar's contemporary Indian socio-economic, political scenario.

The extreme necessity of Ambedkar's vision and mission in present Indian Socio-economic, political scenario is crystal clearly projected through the protagonist, Professor Prabhakar Anand (Amitabh- Bachan) who strongly advocated the cause of "weak and really deserving candidates" as well as "positive discrimination" and who strongly acted, raised his voice "to impart best education to every able and deserving candidate without any discrimination based on cast, religion or community" which is according to the spirit of Indian constitution and according to the spirit of Ambedkar's and vision mission. So, in film ARAKSHAN, Ambedkar's mission and vision is living through the character of protagonist Professor Prabhakar Anand who explore 'politics in Indian education system', 'politics of education system' and politics in "ARAKSHAN" and politics of "ARAKSHAN". Professor Prabhakar Anand very clinically diagnoses the crucial issues of dalit community in present Indian scenario through Ambedkar's eyes and attitude, with the spirit of Ambedkar's and vision mission.

A brilliant, intelligent, hard worker but 'dalit protagonist' named as Deepak Kumar in film ARAKSHAN, is also struggling very hard and facing problem of casteism in educational institution and in education system and he is victim of office politics based on cast and economical profits, dominated by higher strata of society. His soul and inner self are agonized at the very outset of the movie when interview board consisted of Professors of so called high society tries to know his cast and background by asking "What is your full name?", "full name" means name with 'surname' or 'gotra' so interview board can come to know about the particular caste of the candidate and no doubt this politics of asking "full name" is practiced throughout India in all universities, educational institutions, govt. offices and even in schools to know the cast of the candidate or student or employee. Thus, interview board tries to know cast and background of an intelligent and hard worker teacher without "asking even a single question" from his subject and thoroughly rejected him after discovered that his "identity" and "background" belongs to dalit community. So, right to equal opportunity was denied to a dalit, marginal, weak, poor but intelligent and hard worker teacher candidate by the educational administrators belonging to higher strata of society. Thus, spirit of Ambedkar's vision and mission for development of dalit community is being killed by some of the Govt. officers, teachers, ministers, professors of universities, and educational administrators of socio-economic privileged section of the society in present socio-economic, political scenario. So, Ambedkar's vision and mission is strongly relevant in present context also, which needs to be explore more and more to achieve "Utopian" state or "Ram-Rajya" of Indian society.

In the problem of exclusion of dalit students or dalit community from main stream of education, oil to the fire is added by educational mafia and coaching industry which doesn't believe in Ambedkar's mission and vision like "K.K. Coaching Classes" in film "ARAKSHAN" and thousand of "Coaching Classes Centers" which has become almost "Coaching Industry" with commercial ideology "that there is no big business than business of education, paid service without guarantee." Now trillion million dollar question is this who can enjoy this "paid service", who can afford this "paid service", can a poor student from dalit,

untouchable community can afford this “paid service” of education? No, certainly not, he cannot afford “paid service” of coaching industry like “K.K. Coaching Classes” who are far... far... away from Ambedkar’s mission and vision. So, again exclusion of dalit , poor, weak and untouchables by some of the so called “touchable” people of socio-economic privileged society who fails to touch the feelings of humanity and to touch the spirit of Ambedkar’s mission and vision but they never forgot to cut those “untouchable hands” which touch the pitcher of so called “touchable” just to quench the “untouchable thrust”, and they never forgot to kill those dalit boys or girls who don’t know the “love- laws” i.e. “who should be loved and how should be loved” of society but they know how to love a human but this is beyond the existence and reach of dalit, untouchable person and that is why they are killed by the dominating so called “touchable” people of higher society on the name of “honour” , which is known as ‘Honour-killing ‘ in present scenario of Indian media and Indian society and this “Honour killing” very realistically represented in movie “KHAP”. Again, exclusion of dalit community by the so called “Thekedar” (moral police) of moral order of the society, who themselves forget the moral values of humanity.

So, where has to go students of dalit community if they are excluded by the coaching industry or coaching institutions like “K.K. Coaching Classes” or if they are excluded by the public schools by denying 25% admissions from poor, dalit students of slums just for the sake of their economic profits by sidelining the Ambedkar’s vision and mission, by sidelining the spirit of “positive discrimination” provided to dalit society by constitution of India. So, Ambedkar’s mission and vision is strongly relevant in present Indian scenario and the need of same spirit of Ambedkar’s mission and vision is crystal clear visible in establishment of “Tabela Coaching Centre” which is run and managed by the spirit of Ambedkar’s vision and mission living in the body of “dismissed professor” Prabhakar Anand” for the development of dalit , poor, socio-economically weak students and who cannot afford the “paid service” of coaching industry in which centers like “K.K. Coaching Classes” are taking heavy amount for their coaching and this amount may be in lakhs of rupees like fees of “KOTA COACHING CLASSES”, “AAKASH INSTITUTE” and other various coaching institutions spread all over India.

In the same way, now a day “Private Public Schools” run and managed by private sector or capitalist of the society to earn more and more money by their “heavy paid service” which starts with admission fees ranging from four five thousand to lakhs of rupees and continue with monthly fees of Rs.1500 to Rs. 5000-6000 rupees. Can a student from economically weak section of the society, a student from poor, dalit, untouchable society, a student from slum is able to pay this heavy amount ? Can a student, who’s parents earn Rs. 22 per day (in villages) and survive only on this amount and can a student, who’s parents earn Rs.26 per day (in cities) are able to “purchase” this “paid-service” of “coaching industry”. No, certainly not, these so called “rich people” according to “democratic” government of India find themselves unable to afford the fees of coaching institutions and costly ‘Private Public Schools’ and that is why, Ambedkar’s vision and mission is essential for the equal existence, for the equal opportunity, for the equal development , for the equal survival, for equal education, for equal employment , for equal income , for equal social states and to bring the spirit of Ambedkar’s vision and mission very recently the Honorable Supreme Court of India has finally decided to impart free education to 25% students in “Private Public Schools”, and these 25% students should be from the socio-economically weak society, from dalit, unprivileged section of the society. Ambedkar’s vision and mission i.e. “positive discrimination” for the “equal opportunity” for “equal

development” of “weak and really deserving candidate” to “impart best education to every able and deserving candidate without any discrimination based on caste, economy, religion or community”, is crystal clearly visible in the decision of Honorable Supreme Court of India. No doubt, this decision of Honorable Supreme Court of India is inspired by the spirit of “positive discrimination” inherited in Indian Constitution with the spirit of Ambedkar’ vision and mission for the upliftment of deprived, suppressed, marginal, dalit, exploited section of the society.

Thus, Ambedkar’s vision and mission is much relevant in present scenario in which Private Public Schools try to escape, try to ignore and not ready to give 25% admission to poor students, Ambedkar’s vision and mission is more relevant in present scenario in which coaching centers like “KOTA CLASSES”, “AAKASH INSTITUE” etc symbolically represented by “K.K. COACHING CLASSES” in film “ARAKSHAN” which does not have any soft corner for the poor students and their ‘paid-service’ is beyond the reach of poor student, Ambedkar’s vision and mission in present scenario in which “untouchable hands” are cut down by the so called “touchable hands” are more relevant, Ambedkar’s vision and mission is more relevant in present scenario in which dalit’ colonies are set on fire to destroy them, to subjugate them which is symbolically represented by the efforts of administration to break down “TABELA COACHING CENTER” I.e. a poor place of high quality learning which is “for the poor people, by the poor people, and to the poor people”, in film ARAKSHAN. This “Tabela Coaching Center” is rescued very dramatically by Shankutla Thakran who believes in Ambedkar’s vision and mission of upliftment of poor society. But irony is this how many ‘Shankutla Thakran’ living with the spirit of Ambedkar’s vision and mission, do we have in India? How many teachers like protagonist Prabhakar Anand (Amitabh Bachan) in film ARAKSHAN, who teaches poor, dalit, students of slums with the spirit of Ambedkar’s vision and mission by ignoring their personal economic profits, by ignoring their career, by ignoring their own family and all comforts luxury of life, do we have India? So, in present scenario of Indian education system, of Indian socio-political system Ambedkar’s vision and mission is as much relevant as it was philosophised by Dr Bhimrao Ram ji Ambedkar in contemporary scenario. Relevance of Ambedkar’s vision and mission should not be limited only in Indian context but it has its importance at global level or all over the world which is full of various kinds of discriminations, differences based on caste, class, religion and race and Ambedkar’s vision and mission is the only “Panacea” for all kinds of these socio, cultural and psychological diseases infected by the “virus” of discrimination based on cast, class, religion and race. Thus, only the shining sun of Ambedkar’s vision and mission or humanistic vision and mission of “The First Genius of the World” (declared by CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY) can remove the darkness of poverty, discrimination prevailed in entire materialistic world. The same spirit of Ambedkar’s vision and mission has been projected very intelligently and successfully in film ARAKSHAN. So, film ARAKSHAN is not only a film of three hours for entertainment but it is a living document of present scenario of Indian educational institutes and historical document of Indian Dalit History and spreading the light of Ambedkar’ vision and mission.

## Works Cited

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