

## **Revision Notes**

### **Class – 7 Social Science Political Science**

#### **Chapter 9 - Struggles For Equality**

- **Financial Inequality**

- ❖ As we have read previously, Kanta, a domestic worker enjoys equal suffrage. But when it comes to taking her child to a doctor, she has to go to a government hospital while her employer gets private medical care. Kanta & countless such other people living a life of poverty can't afford houses in prime locations. Nor can they send their children to a private school. So citizens might enjoy equal voting rights but there is the fog of financial inequality that engulfs the society.
- ❖ This financial inequality then spills over to the business and professional sector as well. First of all, a poor student can't afford education in the premier institutions of the country. So he/she has much fewer opportunities than her richer counterparts. She has to remain happy with medium paying job.
- ❖ On the other hand, your book gives the example of juice seller who cannot compete with giant brands who can advertise well, employ thousands of people & use advanced technology. The poor juice seller has very little to contend with a limited scope of his business.

- **Gender-Based Inequality**

- ❖ Apart from such financial inequalities, there are also other forms of inequality. In Bollywood, the female actresses are much paid lesser than their male counterparts. This wage gap also exists in many other professions. The female workers get paid less for same amount of work than their male counterparts do.

- ❖ Not just in case of wages, the women are also subject to inequality in other aspects of professional life as well. Some work is normally considered to be men oriented work although there is no logic behind that notion. We also have mentioned in the previous chapter how jobs like bus driving, masonry etc are occupied by males - 99% of the time.

- **Caste & Religion Based Inequality**

- ❖ Another kind of inequality which we have learnt in the previous chapters is caste or religion-based discrimination. You have read the story of Omprakash Valmiki who was not allowed to sit in front in his class, who was made to sweep the whole playground while his classmates watched him. Him being a Dalit made him a subject to such discriminatory practices. On other hand, the Ansaris were unable to get an apartment because of religious discrimination.

- **When Border between these Discriminations Merge**

- ❖ Inequality in India is not black & white. Sometimes the one kind of discrimination merges with another kind & you cannot fathom where one ends and another begins. For example, in urban areas, it is Dalits who perform the role of manual scavenging (yes, even to this date).
- ❖ We generally see that it is Dalits who have to go to the neck-deep pool of liquid waste in drains. On one hand, they are also employed exclusively in this murderous job because they are Dalits, and on other hand, these Dalits are so poor that they cannot escape this life of degradation.

- **The Fight for Equality**

- ❖ As said earlier, that nobody is going to grant rights that these marginalised people deserve. It is up to victims of inequality that they fight to take back what is rightfully theirs.

- ❖ There are many ways this struggle for equality can happen. Sometimes, like Rosa Parks, act of a single person can also inspire other members of the community to stand up & ask for equality. Sometimes it is group of persons in the community that take proactive measures to try and eliminate the aspects of inequality.

- ❖ **The Coming Together of Marginalised Folks**

The fact that the people of particular community, gender or class are marginalised works as unification thread. These people often come together & fight for the common cause. Your textbook tells the story of the Tawa Matsya Sangh group of villagers that came together and formed a ‘Sangh’ or group. There are many other communities like the beedi workers, the domestic workers, the slum dwellers etc who are fighting in their own unique ways.

- **The Story of Struggle for Equality**

Your book tells the story of Tawa Matsya Sangh.

When a dam was built around the Tawa river, villagers living in the area (Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh) got displaced as their villages got submerged in water after the dam became functional. But the peaceful villagers still compromised with it and took up fishing as a new means of livelihood. They used to catch some fish from the reservoir. But the government helped the private contractors in order to get the rights for fishing in the area. They banished the villagers from that area. The villagers were then left with nothing. So they came together & formed the Tawa Matsya Sangh. The organisation protested, blocked roads & lobbied the government. Ultimately they were successful in getting the fishing rights back to the,. But the organisation did not just stop here. It set up a cooperative to help other villagers get fair prices for their catch. The cooperative also shouldered the responsibilities of marketing.

- The activism of Viji Penkoottu tells another inspirational story. In the early 2000s, the female workers in textile industry in Kerala were subjected to

inhumane working conditions. They were not allowed to sit or even go to the toilet there. Viji Penkoottu relentlessly fought for the rights of the women workers. When the established trade unions did not show any support to the cause of the female workers, Viji formed a trade union for the women and by the women. Ultimately the shops in Kerala had to allow women to sit & go to the toilet. But Viji did not just stop there. She campaigned like a superwoman & to give this change a legal validation. In 2018, the government was forced to bring a crucial law which officially prevented female workers from being subjected to such inhumane conditions.

- **Indian Constitution - The Holy Book of Equality**

Thanks to the visionaries leaders like B.R Ambedkar (who incidentally was a Dalit), the Indian Constitution unequivocally proclaimed that each and every Indian citizen is equal before the eyes of the law. It has outlawed any discriminatory practices, injustices & untouchability. Whenever a group of people or any organisation fights to establish equality in any particular sphere, it shows the Indian Constitution as the reference point - and rightly so - the Indian words of the Indian Constitution are considered final in case of any legal issues.