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09

Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj: Pioneer of social change

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Abstract :

In the history of modern Maharashtra, the name of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj from Kolhapur is very special. He strived for the welfare of the people in his state by making substantial reforms in the social, educational, religious and economic spheres. Shahu Maharaj has to be mentioned as a popular ruler. His work seems to have had a far-reaching effect on Indian society. His popularity as a leader of Bahujan and Dalit communities is still alive today. He considered it his duty to work for the welfare of the common man, to free the masses from bondage, to educate them, to create awareness among them and to make them advanced, and he acted accordingly throughout his life. In this research paper, we will study the SOCIAL work of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj and its effect on the society.

Key Word: Pioneer, social change.

Introduction:

The life and work of Chhatrapati Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj was a storm. During the reign of Shahu Maharashtra became a center of social inequality and unrest. New social movements had begun. The spread of education and the elimination of untouchability had begun. Nevertheless, Shahu Maharaj was instrumental in bringing the leadership of the political, social

and educational movement to the Bahujan Samaj, which was led by the Brahmin class. Shahu played the role of a social revolutionary in his organization by promoting the business of spreading education and untouchability. He did fundamental work of social awareness in his field.

Objectives:

1. To study the social work of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj.
2. To study the impact of the social work of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj on Indian society.

Research Methodology :

For present research researcher has been used Analytical research method. Also used secondary resources in this research paper.

Nature & Scope:

In the present research, a brief review of the work of Shahu Maharaj has been done and the effect of his social work on the society has been studied.

Limitations:

Present research focuses on the impact of Shahu Maharaj's social work on the society.

Analysis:

Rise of non-Brahmin movement:

When the Brahmins challenged the right of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj to perform Vedic rites, he became very upset. Traditionally, only some castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas) had the right to perform Vedokta rituals. So the Shudras had the right to the Puranokta ritual. The Brahmin community in Kolhapur was skeptical that Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was a Kshatriya.. Therefore, the Brahmins denied Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj the right to perform Vedokta rituals. Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj decided to break the dominance of Brahmins from his state and bring about the upliftment of non-Brahmins. When he was convinced that the Marathas were indeed Kshatriyas, he ordered Vedic rites to be performed in his palace in 1901. Appointed non-Brahmin priests in the temple. Due to the fact that Maharaj established a 'Purohit School' to train the youth of the Maratha

caste to perform Vedic rituals, the society was divided into two classes, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, and non-Brahmins began to oppose the supremacy of Brahmins. This movement was led by Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj.

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj revived the satyashodhak movement of Mahatma Phule and set the stage for the non-Brahmin movement in 1917. The movement of Satyashodhak Samaj, which was in full swing till the nineteenth century, had cooled down a lot in the twentieth century. The Satyashodhak Samaj was founded by Mahatma Phule on 24th September 1873. This society had started a movement to liberate the Bahujan Samaj from the bondage of Brahmin supremacy and for their upliftment. But the movement of Satyashodhak Samaj which was flourishing till the nineteenth century had cooled down a lot in the twentieth century. Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj tried to revive this movement in his state. The Vedokta case, Shankaracharya's racist experience convinced Shahu Maharaj of the importance of truth-seeking movement. In 1910, he conceived the Satyashodhak movement and on 11 January 1911, established the Satyashodhak Samaj in Kolhapur under the chairmanship of Parashuram Ghosarwadkar-Inamdar. As a result, the youth of Bahujan Samaj were inspired and they joined the Satyashodhak movement and took part in social work. This led to the establishment of social equality

Legal Establishment of Social Reforms:

Shahu Maharaj tried to establish social equality through social reforms, for which he gave legal status to social reforms. In the caste system, the upper castes were getting many benefits and the lower castes had to be deprived of many things, so Maharaj took many steps for the upliftment of the lower castes. In 1908, he set up an organization to spread education among the lower castes. Prohibited by an order to divide on the basis of caste. The Baluta system, which was a nuisance to the lower castes, was abolished by Chhatrapati Shahu

Maharaj in 1918. In 1919, he banned untouchability in his state and opened taps, wells, hospices, hospitals and other public places for the untouchables. To eradicate social inequality, Shahu Maharaj passed a law on 26 July 1902, reserving 50% of non-Brahmin seats in government service

Social equality or social peace will not be established without inter-caste marriage so On 12 July, 1919, they passed the Interracial Marriage Act. Also in July 1917 the Widow Remarriage Act was passed in the institution and on 27th July 1918 an order was issued to close the untouchable system. In May 1921, the Mahar Vatana Act was passed & This freed the Mahar people from the social and economic slavery of all.

As all the above amendments were made in the form of a law, the law weakened the opposition to social reforms and forced them to approve these social reforms.

Educational revolution

In 1913, the shahu Maharaj issued an order that there should be a school in every village of the Sansthan. In 1918, he issued another order making primary education free and compulsory for all. He collected taxes from well-to-do citizens to help them in their educational work. Appointed persons from the majority caste as teachers in such schools. He used the village chawdi and temples to fill the school classrooms. Patil and Talathi schools were started to run the affairs of the village properly. Also started a training center for teachers. Shahu Maharaj was of the view that women's education contributes to the development of family and society and also gives women a place of respect and dignity in the society. Miss. Little was first educational officer in his state. Then appointed Rakhmabai Kelvakar as a educational officer & He accelerated women's education. Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj continued the legacy of the educational revolution carried out by Mahatma Phule in the nineteenth century in his twentieth century. This had a far-reaching and positive

democracy.

the democratic king who laid the foundation of in his kingdom. Therefore, he is considered as Maharaj was the first king to decentralize power democratic values like freedom, equality, brotherhood and justice in the society. Shahu Shahu Maharaj's work helped in establishing many laws to establish equality in the society. welfare measures in his kingdom. He enacted Shahu Maharaj implemented many

Laying the foundation of democracy:

backward class concessions). education, prevention of untouchability, the Constitution after independence (e.g. free taken into consideration during the drafting of population. This work of the Maharajah was prevent injustice to the weaker sections of the health care, employment, reduce inequality and state. He used his power to provide education, programs and laid the foundation of the welfare Maharaj carried out many public welfare Using the power in his hands, Shahu

economic upliftment of the society.

promoting industries. Its benefit was the of the moneylender. Created employment by became self-reliant and free from the clutches sector increased tremendously. The farmer their efforts, the production of the agricultural Handloom Factories on Shirur Road. Through financial support to Jinning Factory and on co-operative basis in 1906. He provided spinning and Weaving Mill. Started a textile mill

In 1906, he set up Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj encouraged the creation of industries. remained as Maharani 'Lakshmi Bai'. Shahu decided to build this dam in 1908 and it was by building dams on Dajipur and Bhogawat plan was drawn to supply water to agriculture attention to the problem of agriculture. In 1906, income, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj paid special As agriculture is a major source of

Economic upliftment of the society:

effect on the education system then and later.

Conclusion:

During his tenure, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj showed the direction of social reform not only in Kolhapur but also in the whole country. In the pre-independence period, kings lived a luxurious life, but Shahu would be the only king in the colonial world who would solve all these problems by staying in the minds of the people. He felt that if he wanted to give a place to Bahujan Samaj in his Sansthan, he wanted reservation and education. and he created competent education system for it. He believed that there should be a revolution in behavior, not just an ideological revolution. That is why he revolutionized behavior along with ideological revolution. This makes him a leading reformer in the pre-independence period. Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj is at the forefront in the history of social reform in India. The thoughts and deeds of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj will always be a guide not only for Maharashtra but also for the whole country.

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