

**STUDY OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS:  
A CASE STUDY OF NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN**

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled "Study of New Social Movements : A Case Study of Narmada Bachao Andolan" submitted by Mohammad Aluddin is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of this university. This dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university and is his own work.

We recommended that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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MOHAMMAD ALAUDIN

## CHAPTER-1

### INTRODUCTION

The politics of 'New Social Movements' is a modern phenomenon representing social crisis which has emerged in many societies especially those of the advanced capitalist countries of the West. This phenomenon emerged in the mid-1970's in Western countries, in the early 1980's in India and by the mid-1980's in the socialist countries of the Eastern Europe. While the phenomenon of social movements has always been a part of human history, and the endeavour to bring about changes in the existing social order through collective mobilization. The more recent phenomenon of the new social movements is different from the earlier or conventional social movements, in terms of issues, mode of operation, social composition and organisational structures.

In terms of issue, while all the earlier movements or class movements were primarily concerned with the control of economic resources by one class or another, these New Social Movements (NSMs) have raised such issues and concerns which are related to the general problems and common goods of the society, which have been neglected or marginalised by the existing political institutions and political groupings.

Such issues are gender inequality, unemployment, environmental degradation and ecological disequilibrium, violation of human rights and civil liberties, unjust, unequal and unsustainable development, marginalization of tribals, poor peasant and other weaker sections of society in the process of social political and economic development of society following the pattern of dominant model of development.

These social movements neither aim at capturing state power nor revolutionary transformation of means of production and distribution. Rather, they aim at democratization of 'civil society' and decentralization of developmental process through peaceful and reformatory changes by peaceful mobilization of people at grassroots level. In addition these movements are challenging the conventional and dominant model of development as this has led to unequal development, and *marginalisation of* tribals, poor peasants, landless labourers etc, And after challenging the existing dominant development model, these movements and their supporters and sympathisers are arguing for an 'alternative development model' avoiding pitfalls in the existing one, in order to have equitable and sustainable development of all sections of society.

In terms of mode of operation these movements maintain autonomy and independence from the existing political

institutions and political groupings . It is because these social movements have come out as independent people's initiatives to solve the existing and persisting problems in the society through popular mobilization at grassroots level, because the existing political institutions and political groupings have failed to take up these problems in their agenda. Therefore, these social movements do not align or associate with any dominant political ideology or organisation.

In the process of popular mobilization , these social movements use various methods including non-violent and peaceful means like peaceful mass rallies, public demonstrations, public meetings, memorandums. dharna\$ hunger strikes etc.

As the issues of these social movements are concerned with the general problem of the society , these movements get support from people in almost all walks of life, particularly from intellectuals, social activists, environmentalists, students, women\$, and similar movements and organisations especially non-governemntal organisations both of national and international levels.

In terms of leadership and organisational structure,

these movements do not have centralised leadership and organisational structures <sup>but</sup> are loosely organised like a true federal system, with many working units at various levels in order to have greater mobilization at these levels. All decisions are taken with increased popular participation and freedom of expression.

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Since the phenomenon of 'New Social Movements' is increasingly coming up in Indian politics challenging the role of the state as the guardian of subaltern groups, and the discourse of development, it becomes imperative to study this phenomenon. It is being argued by these movements and their supporters that the present model of development homonises not only the economic but , social , secular and temporal spaces as well. The civil and social autonomy of the people is increasingly being threatened by the centralising tentacles of the states, and the developmental process has led to the skewed development in the society. As a result , the inequality between the dominant classes and the subordinate classes is being increased day-by-day. Further, the indiscriminate utilization of natural resources, has caused unsustainable development, causing widespread ecological damage and displacement and destruction of social, cultural, and economic life of the tribal people.



While in the past much had been written on the classical social movements, looking at a wide range of issues including the genesis of movements and the formation of their ideology and sources of their identity, as well as their organisation, leadership, internal dynamics and social consequences, no serious efforts have been taken or very few attention has been paid to the responses which have come up in the crisis-ridden spheres, in forms of a large number of popular movements which have been described as 'New Social Movements'.

Although these movements had started coming up in number of areas since the early 1980s, since then very few studies have been made, only in form of articles and essays in journals and magazines. However, recently, Gail Omvedt has produced a very good and excellent work explaining the politics of New Social Movements in Indian Politics (Gail Omvedt (1993): Reinventing Revolution: New Social Movements and Socialist Tradition in India, New York shape). In this work she has argued that these NSMs are movements by the marginalised sections of society, whose cause has been ignored or not taken up properly by the existing political institutions, particularly by traditional Marxism and socialist political parties who claimed to represent the

interests of the weaker sections of the society. But they have taken up only interests of the industrial workers, and a large number of other poorer and weaker sections (tribals, peasants, agricultural and landless labourers) have been left unrepresented. She has rightly argued that while traditional Marxism has called the historical materialism of the proletariat, what is needed today is a historical materialism of not only industrial factory workers, but also of peasants, women, tribals, dalits and lower castes, and oppressed nationalists. Therefore it can no longer be assumed that a theory (apparently) serves the needs of the industrial working class is adequate for the liberatory struggle of the whole society.

However apart from this work eg. Gail Omvedt, there has been no other scholarly endeavour to understand this phenomenon in Indian politics. My study will help in filling this gap .

That the ~~Label~~<sup>Label</sup> of NSMs has been rather uncritically appropriated in the Third World Country. one important difference ~~may~~<sup>may</sup> be that in the West , these movements are localised unambiguously on the terrain of civil society, in countries like ours , they may be seen as actively engaged in the task of creating a civil society. This study aims at understanding the relevance of this category (NSMs) to the

Indian experience. Even, today there are many kinds of movements which can not be termed as NSMs. For example , identity or religion based <sup>e</sup>cessionist movements like those of going on in Punjab Jammu and Kashmir and North East region in the Indian Territory, The Uttarakhand Movement which is demanding a separate state (autonomous region), also can not be called a NSM, it is a separatist movement based on different socio-cultural and economic identities.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose or objective of my study will be -

- a) To understand the politics of 'New Social Movements' as a general world-wide phenomenon in term of their salient features;
- b) To study the emergence of this phenomenon in India society, in terms of basic features, geneis , process of emergence, ideological issues, mode of operation, social composition etc. , differentiating them from the Western New Social Movements;
- c) To examine the nature of environmental or ecology movements in India and the West with special reference to the Narmada Bachao Andolan.

#### METHOD OF STUDY

This study is based on the critical and analytical

study of primary<sup>y</sup> and secondary sources. These include Books, Journals, Magazines, Newspaper clippings, Narmada Bachao Andolan's News letters, Narmada Samachar, Governmental and Non-Governmental Reports and Documents, particularly the Independent Review Commission's Report, constituted by the World Bank to re-evaluate<sup>or</sup> reassess the environmental and R&R aspects of the Sardar Sarovar Project, Jayant Patil's R<sup>e</sup>port, set up by the Ministry of Water Resources to review various issues related to the Narmada Project, raised by the Narmada Bachao Andolan its struggle. We have also conducted interviews with a few intellectuals. NBA leaders, sympathisers and activists who are aware of the ground<sup>re</sup> realities of the Narmada Valley Project and its impacts on the local populations and environment.

### Plans of Chapters

This study has been divided into five chapters dealing with various aspects.

CHAPTER 1 : In the 1st chapter we shall outline<sup>re</sup>, in somewhat ideal typical manner, the characteristics ascribed to new social movements, within recent socio-political discussions, their importance and objective of the study.

CHAPTER 2 : In this chapter we described<sup>d</sup> the emergence of the phenomenon of New Social Movement in a world wide perspective, explaining its meaning, definitions, salient

features , mode of operation, leadership and organisational structures , social compositions. Here we also examine various theoretical approaches to the study of both old and new.

CHAPTER 3 : This chapter deals with the emergence of New Social Movements in Indian Politics , in terms of its genesis , actual process, mode of operations, ideological issues, social composition. We have also made a comparative analysis between the new social movements in India and in the West,

CHAPTER 4: Here we have discussed the Narmada Bachao Andolan as an important example of the New Social Movements in India, Here we have described how the Narmada protest movement emerged in the Narmada Valley in its historical perspective, raising various issues associated with the project , in terms of displacement and destruction of the local population without alternate resettlement policies, environmental destruction and ecological disbalance etc. Here we will be dealing with its mode of operation organisational structure and social based. We would also analyse that , in spite of raising environmental issues , this movement is basically related with the tribal problems and issues of the Narmada Valley , demanding proper resettlement and rehabilitation policies for the oustees . Finally , we would see state's responses towards the movement, in terms of dealing with the movement activists and conceding their genuine demands. And

at last , we will see future prospects and strategy of the movement.

CHAPTER 5: This chapter deals with the concluding remarks of the study, where we have concluded , how the phenomenon of NSMs is increasingly coming up in our society, challenging the statist parameters of development and claim of the state to represent the interests of the society as a whole, particularly *the* interest of the weaker and poorer sections of society. The NBA is a result of destructive and inequitable model of development adopted in the Narmada Valley which has led to the destruction and displacement of the tribal population. In their Struggle the tribale have been supported by a large number of people, organisations and similar movements in and outside the valley. *Here we have* discussed how the Narmada protest movement emerged in the Narmada Valley raising various issues from demanding proper and comprehensive R & R policies for the Narmada oustees, environmental protection and ecological balance, and jirst, equal and sustainable development of the Narmada Valley, We have also mentioned the process by ehich the NBA has been able to mobilise a large number of people from various walks of life including oustees, intellectuals , social activists and their organisations, and NGOs.

## CHAPTER-2

### UNDERSTANDING OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements are endemic to society. They have been existing throughout the history of humankind in one form or another. With the gradual transformation of socio-economic, political and cultural structures of society as a result of various factors at various points of time, the nature concerns and organisational structures of the social movements have changed. The Industrial Revolution brought about radical changes in every aspects of social life, followed by some desirable and undesirable implication for the society. The development of capitalism and its inherent contradictions gave birth to communist or socialist movements. The socialist societies in turn too have witnessed witnessed the emergence of social movements for civil rights, human rights and democratic rights, etc., as a result of dissatisfaction with the prevailing system. The Third World has also experienced the phenomenon of social movements in one form or another at various points of time, including anti-colonial movement and also movements for other causes such as social justice. Thus social movements of one kind or another have always been found in human history, representing people's grievances / dissatisfaction with the existing system and their endeavour to change for a better order.

But ~~xx~~ since the end of 1960's and from the mid-1970's a different kind of social movements or mass movements have emerged with issues, mode of operation, organisational structures and support base quite distinct from the conventional social movements, and they have been defined as the 'New Social Movements' (NSMs). However this phenomenon has been described by different names by different scholars- i.e, 'grass roots mobilization', 'political movements' , 'independent peoples initiatives' and 'non-institutional popular mobilizations' , etc. Some examples of the new social movements are the peace movements ecological or environmental movements, women's movements, movements for civil rights and human rights, etc.

#### MEANING AND DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

MSA Rao' defines social movements as sustained collective mobilization through informal or formal organisations . A social movement is generally oriented towards bringing about change, either partial or total , in the existing system of relationships values and norms , although there are efforts which are oriented towards *resisting*

*change and maintaining the status quo. Thus he does*

1. Rao (MSA), Conceptual Problems in the study of social Movements, In his (ed), Social Movements in India , Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1984, p.2.



not draw<sup>f</sup> any distinction between institutional and non-institutional social movements, which in one of the basic differences between conventional and New Social Movements.

In the words of Lewis M.Killian, <sup>2</sup> the social movements is primarily a collective behaviour for social as well as cultural change.

Sheref and Sheref<sup>3</sup> define "Social movement as a formative stage of interaction in human relations. It express<sup>5</sup> and on-going processes . Furthermore, <sup>3</sup> social movement is always possessed by a sense of mission<sup>3</sup> " .

According to T.K.Oomen<sup>4</sup> social movements necessarily imply the projection of a desirable set of values; it is a project addressed to the future. He also says that social movements represent an effort to define or recapture the past<sup>f</sup>, to reconstruct the present and reorient the future.

Alan scott, defines social movements as" a collective

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2. Lewis M.Killian, Social Movements : A Review of the field. In Robert R.Envas (ed)-Social Movements : A Reader and source Book, Rand MacNally College Publishing Com. Chicago, 1973.

3. Quoted by Lewis M.Killian.op.cit.

4. T.K.Oomen, Protest and charge : Studies in Social Movements. Sage publication New Delhi, 1990.

actors constituted by individuals who understand themselves to have common interests and, for at least some <sup>significant</sup> ~~significant~~ part of their social existence, a common identity." =

After going through all these definitions we observe that the phenomenon of social movements has been described by different scholars in different ways. However, in broader term, the social movements may be described as non-institutional collective people's mobilizations based on direct people's action, representing their grievances and dissatisfaction with the existing social system, and are oriented towards bringing about positive and qualitative change in society based on a particular vision of a better life. Ramchandra Guha<sup>5</sup> says that a social movement<sup>6</sup> always has a sense of 'vision' or alternative model.

All collective mobilizations like sporadic violences, panics, strikes, etc can't be termed as social movements as they lack a sense of 'vision'. MSA Rao<sup>7</sup> considers ideology as an important component of social movement as it distinguishes it from the general category of movements involving collective mobilization. For example a student

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5. Alan Scott, Ideology and the New Social Movements London, Unwin Hyman, 1990 pp.6.

6. Ramchandra Guha, "The Problem". New Social Movements, a symposium of a growing responses to the crisis within the society, Seminar (355), March, 1989.

7. MSA Rao op.cit. pp. 7-8.

strike involves collective mobilization and is oriented towards change. But in the absence of an ideology, a strike becomes an individual and isolated event and not a movement. On the contrary, if a strike is organised by a student organisation with a defined ideology, it becomes an events in that ~~the~~ student movements. In the same way, a chauvinist organisation like the Skin-head in Germany, Hindu and Muslim Chauvinist organisations in India and Pakistan can not be treated as social movements as they do not have an ideology for positive change in society. Generally, a social movement is considered to be oriented towards bringing about changes in society for general common interest of the society as a whole.

Like convential social movements the phenomenon of New social movement is also a kind of popular mobilization, representing people's grievances with the existing system, and is oriented towards reformatory changes in the society to have a better and more humane social life. These movements are based on direct peoples participation and operates outside the traditional established political institutions. However, these social movements have some specific features which distinguishes them from the conventional social movements.

### NATURE OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The new social movements are distinguishable from conventional social movements, such as class movements. The new social movements raise such issues or values or demands which are diversified and universalistic in nature, not specific to a particular class or section of society, but rather oriented towards the general welfare and common interest of society. For instance, issues like world peace, environmental protection, ecological balance, democratization of society, human rights and civil liberties, social justice and equitable development etc, have <sup>general</sup> ~~under~~ implication ~~of~~ the whole society. By contrast, class movements raise issues which are oriented towards a particular section of society, like the interests of industrial labouring class, peasantry etc.

The NSMs, in contrast to the conventional/class social movements, are primarily social and cultural in nature, and secondary, if at all, political. For example, the Worker's movement, a case of class movement, was concerned with the question of Worker's rights and with gaining access for the working class into the political process and to the political power. In contrast, new social movements are less concerned with citizenship, and hence with the political power.

Alan Scott<sup>a</sup> says that the NSMs demand at autonomy in several senses. First, personal autonomy, for example, the growing consciousness in several women's movements that they should have maximum individual freedom from personal and ideological barriers. Secondly, the demand personal and group autonomy by challenging de jure and de facto restrictions on freedom. Thirdly, autonomy of struggle, i.e. the movements and those who represent it should be allowed to fight their own corner without interference from other movements and without their demands to the external priorities.

These aspects of autonomy are closely linked within the women's movement, for example the demand that a woman has right to develop her personality and think through her politics in a situation free from male influence, thematizes both personal and autonomy of the movement.

The NSMs raise issues and concerns which have been neglected by the traditional social movements and established political groups i.e. issues like women's rights; rights of depressed suppressed and marginalised sections of society e.g. tribals and landless labourers, and minority communities; ecology; and world peace, sustainable development; world

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8. Alan Scott, op. cit. pp.20.

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peace; human rights etc, which have hetherto been neglected by traditionally established political groupings Gail Omvedt<sup>9</sup> says that NSMs are movements of those groups that were either ignored or exploited by traditional Marxism (women, dalits, shudra) or who are exploited in the process of contemporary capitalist development (peasants forced to produce for capital through market exploitation managed by the state, peasents and forest dwellers victimised by environmental degradation) but left unconceptualised by a preoccupation with private property and wage labour.

Another unique feature of the NSMs in that they do not identify or align themselves with any particular ideology whether of the left or right . Rather, they remain independent and choose to be known by different names which are related to the issues persued by these social movements, like environmental movements, world peace movements, women's movements, human rights and civil rights movements etc. Although the NSMs tend to be organised around a range of immediate issues but, they are genrally linked to one single broad theme such as peace, environment etc.<sup>10\*</sup>

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9.Gail Omveelt, (1993): Reinventing Revolution: New Social Movements and the Socialist Tradition in India. New York, Sharpe publication

10. Alan Scott, op. cit. pp.26.

\*Furthermore, the NSMs are intra-systemic in

nature. Unlike class movement which are always antisystemic and seeking revolutionary transformation of the social structure the NSMs seek reformatory changes in order to improve, not change, the existing social system avoiding pitfalls in it and make it more humane, just, democratic and participative.

After criticising the existing social system, the NSMs try to provide an 'alternative model' to replace the existing one through reform. This alternative model is based on such issues and concerns which are generally preferred and accepted by society in general i.e based on social justice, substantiality, unexploitative and having maximum social autonomy. However, these social movements have not been succeeded in establishing a viable and convincing alternative model. Many scholars criticise the NSMs for the lack of a sound and viable alternative model. For example, Claus Offe<sup>11</sup> says that NSMs lack of a coherent ideological principles and an interpretation of the world from which an image of a desirable arrangement of society could be derived and the steps toward transformation could be deduced "However, we cannot ignore ~~social order by placing the issue of an~~ *the positive attempts made by these.*

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11. Claus Offe, "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of institutional Politics". Social Research, vol.52, 1985. No.4 Winter. ~~---~~

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social movements in the direction of establishing a more democratic and humane social order by raising the issue of an alternative development model.

In spite of commonness and similarities in NSMs in world over in terms of broad-based issues social bases, organisational structures and leadership and modes of operation, the issues and concerns of these movements vary from society to society which is based on level of economic development and the particularity of socio-political arrangements. For example, the NSMs of the West <sup>raise</sup> ~~sense~~ such issues which are primarily oriente towards improvement of 'quality of life' and increased personal and social autonomy. Whereas these movements going on in the <sup>Third</sup> World or developing society raise issues which are closely linked to the question of survival or economic needs of people.

#### MODES OF OPERATION

Since the NSMs are not parts of state machinery, and donot aim at capturing state power, they generally work outside the traditional Politics, institutions and organisations. They tend not to align with any political party. In fact, there movements are independent people's initiatives, operating with social autonomy using the politics of grass roots mobilization and active popular mobilization. There are movements by such sections of society which have been ignored by established political institution.



They have come up defying the claims of the established political parties and organisation to represent the interests of the people.

The terrain of resistance or domain of protest of the NSMs has been the 'civil society taking the term in its post-Hegelian meaning as designating something distinct from the state. The notion of civil society comprise the host of free associations, existing outside of any official sponsorship, and dedicated to ends which we generally consider non-political. No society can be called free in which these are not able to function. A civil society in a strong sense exists where beyond these multiple associations, or through their combination, society can operate as a whole outside the ambit of the state. The details about civil society in the Western liberal societies have been discussed by Habermas, Hannah Arendt and Charles Taylor<sup>12</sup>.

The primary aim of these movements has been to seek personal and social autonomy from the centralising tendencies of the social and political systems. They do not aim at capturing state power, rather they demand the democratization of society.

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12. Jurgen Habermas (1989): The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society. Polity press, Great Britain. Hannah Arendt (1958): The Human Condition. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, London. Charles Taylor, "Liberal Politics and the Public Sphere". THE THATCHED PATIO, March-April, 1994.

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with active and increased peoples participation in the decision-making process taking into account general people's interests . Ramchandra Guha<sup>13</sup> argues that the NSMs work simultaneously at two levels. At one, they are 'defensive', seeking to protect the 'civil society' from the tentacles of the centralising state , at another, they are 'assertive' seeking to change society from within , and in the process putting forth a conception of the 'good life' somewhat different from that articulated by established political parties.

According to Claus Offe the mode of action of the NSMs have two aspects—internal and external.<sup>14</sup> . Internal mode of action means the mode by which individuals act together in order to constitute a collectivity . This is highly informal, ad hoc, discontinuous, context-sensitive, and egalitarian. In their internal aspects of working , the NSMs don't rely, in contrast to traditional forms of political organisation, on the organisational principles of differentiation <sup>↳</sup>wether <sup>↖</sup> in horizontal (insider versus outsider) or in vertical dimensions (leaders versus rank and file members). External forms of action means the way in which the NSMs confront the external world and their political opponents. This consists\*

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13. Ramchandra Guha op.cit.

14- Claus Offe, op. cit.  
\*of demonstrations, dharnas, rallies, gheraos, petitions,

public meetings and other kinds of actions making use of physical presence.

It means that the NSMs use mostly unconventional means for popular mobilization. However, by and large they are non-violent and socially accepted. Unlike class social movements, they do not make use of violent means like armed insurrection and other revolutionary means.

As we have mentioned the NSMs operate outside traditionally established political institutions, they do not make use of political parties and other traditional forums for political mobilization. They organize public mobilization independently through the direct participation of people using the politics of grassroots movements.

#### LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Unlike traditional social movements which have centralised leadership and centralised organisational structures with fixed pattern of recruitment and the principle of democratic-centralisation, the NSMs are loosely organised like a true federal system, having various working units or centres at various levels—village, towns and national levels in order to insure direct and active people's participate in the movements struggle's. Further, all these units have autonomy in their working. Political decision are

taken at all levels and there is close and active cooperation between these various working units. It means that these social movements do not have the principle of democratic-centralisation where decisions are taken at higher level and other working units are forced to act in accordance with these decisions. This is because democracy is a crucial point of the agenda of NSMs. These social movements don't have fixed recruitment systems, rather the social composition of these movements is disparate. It consists of various kinds of people, voluntary groups, independent political individuals, directly affected persons and various similar organisations and movements. Since the NSMs are anti-authoritarian in nature, they stress on grass root action and are suspicious of institutionalised forms of political activity. They are distrustful of representative democracy because it weighs power in favour of the representatives who enjoy extensive autonomy, and away from those they represent. This critique of formal democracy is directed against not only the existing social institutions, but also against these social movements which have allowed themselves to be drawn into institutionalised politics and have developed large and oligarchical organisational forms in the process.

Jean L.Cohen<sup>15</sup> argues that instead of \*

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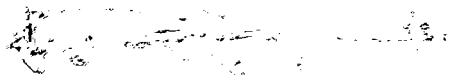
15. Jean L.Cohen, op.cit.

—formin unions and political parties of the socialist or

communist type, the NSMs focuss on grass roots politics and create horizontal , directly democratic associations that are loosely federated on the national level.

#### SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Prof. T.K.Oomen<sup>16</sup> argues that the issues of a social movements determines its social composition. Thus case of greater homogenization of issues, the movements social composition is smaller in scale, and in case of greater heterogeneity of issues , the scale of the movements is greater , provided the member involved is constant. Thus , if a movement is oriented towards the interests of a particular class, caste religion race, etc, its optimum scale will be smaller in comparision with a social movement which takes the issues related to larger sections of society and gneral social welfare.

  
As we have noted earlier that the NSMs raise such issues which are not 'class-specific', but 'class-unspecific' and oriented towards the general welfare of society. For example issues like human rights, democratic and civil liberties, democratization of civil society, substainable use of natural resources, world peace, social justice, equitable development etc, are of such a nature which are not 'class

16. T.K. Oomen, op.cit

specified', but are 'universalistic' in nature. Therefore, the social composition of NSMs is broad-based including supporters from various walks of life, not only from a particular class.

Generally social composition of NSMs consists of three kinds of participants. Firstly, these are the urban-based educated, middle class persons who play a key role in organising the movements by providing leadership and the ideological foundation of the movement. They mobilise public opinion by making aware the issues of the movement through their writings, speeches, public meetings, seminars and symposia and various awareness programmes.

The second kind of participants consists of persons who are directly affected by or related with the issues of the movement. For example, in case of Narmada Bachao Andolan the <sup>U</sup> <sub>A</sub> stees form this part of participants. This category of participants provides the material base of the movement.

The third category of participants consists of political individuals who apart from their party loyalty, supports these movements, attracted by the issues of these movements.

In contrast to Third World societies where the NSMs *persons, in the West, these movements are dominated* are preeminantly dominated by directly affected by the upper <sup>A</sup> middle classes with higher education. *F*or example in India the

Narmada Bachao Andolan is largely dominated and its organisational activities are sustained by oustees i.e persons displaced by the Narmada valley Projects. Whereas in the West movements like Green movement is largely consisted of higher educated middle class persons.<sup>17</sup> Who are basically interested in importing the 'quality of life'.

Further the NSMs have a close and active relationship with between similar social movements both at national and international levels. Various governmental and non-governmental organisations also support these movements whenever they find similar concerns. For example, the NBA which is raising the issue related to environmental movements has been actively supported by NGOs from various countries like WWF for Nature, Japan based Friends of the Earth Washington-based World Watch Institute and Environment Defence Fund and Survival International etc. There is close cooperation in all mobilizational activities of Chipko and NBA. Leaders from each movement support other movements. MR.Sundarlal Bahguna who is leading the Chipko movement in Tehri-Garhwal region of Uttar Pradesh has taken active participation in all major struggle of the NBA. Similarly, when Mr.Sunderlal Bahguna was attested while he was on\*

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17. S.Sarkar. (1993) : Green Alternative Politics in West Germany, Vol.1 The New Social Movements, United Nations University Press, Promilla & Com. Delhi.

\*indefinite hunger strike from May 9, 1995, Ms.Medha Patkar an

important leader of NBA was also arrested while she was going to show her solidarity with the Chipko leader.

### APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The long historical tradition of social movements is paralleled by long scholarly tradition of their study. Various approaches have been adopted to analyse this phenomenon. Before the 1970's there were three main approaches- Marxist, Psychological and Structural-Functional approaches.

In the Marxist-perspective<sup>18</sup> all social movements or mass movements are analysed within the framework of class movements. Here social movements are seen as a reaction against the antagonistic contradictions in the social relations of production, where the movements see to bring about revolutionary change through violent means of class struggle, in order to establish a democratic, equal and *first* society. Here movements are hierarchically organised with the principle of 'democratic-centralism' and 'organisational discipline'. Though organisational structures of Marxist movements are also spread over many centres but

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18. Karl Mark and Frederick Engels(1993) : Selected Works (THree Volumes).

Mascow : Progress Publications. Karl MARX, (1904) : A Contribution to the critique of political Economy.Chicago : Charles H.Kerr.



there is no freedom of action and decision at these levels. All working units are forced to follow the rules of central leadership. Furthermore, the concerns of these movements are oriented towards a particular class (industrial working class) and not to the interest of broader section of society.

After analysing this framework we see that this does not apply to NSMs as they do not seek revolutionary changes through violent means of class struggle. The NSMs are not the resultants of antagonistic contradictions in the social relations of production, nor are their organisations hierarchically organised.

Psycho-analytical theory or theory of sense of deprivation attributes the emergence of social movements to the sense of deprivation in society. It does not however adequately account for the politics of NSMs as the theory of sense of deprivation does not explain the motivational aspects of the movements. There are large groups of persons and organisations which support these movements not due to deprivation but out of commitment to a vision of a future society. This theory also can not explain the organisational aspects of such movements.

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19. GURR, T.R. (1970) : Why Men Rebel. Princeton, N.J : Princeton University Press. Runciman, W.C. (1966) : Relative deprivation and Social Justice. London : Rautledge and Kegan Paul.

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The structural Functional theory<sup>20</sup> or strain theory developed by Smelser and others to explain the phenomenon of social movements, also does not fully explain ~~to~~ the politics of <sup>NSMs</sup> ~~A~~ according to this theory, any collective behaviour outside the established institutional framework is seen as 'deviant', 'irrational' and result of strain in the existing system, leading to breakdown and dissatisfaction with the system. All NSMs however not come up due to breakdown or strain in the existing socio-political and economic structures. Moreover, they can not be treated as expression of deviant or 'irrational' behaviour. They are positive developments in society in the process of the improvement of social life through popular mobilization.

#### NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE NEW APPROACHES TO ANALYSE THEM

By the 1980's when it became clear that the classical approaches were unable to explain the phenomenon of NSMs. <sup>Two</sup> newer approaches were developed by the Western scholars to study these movements. These are Resource Mobilization theory and the Identity Oriented theory. To the resource .1s1

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20. Smelser, NEIL (1962) : Theory of Collective Behaviour  
London Routledge and Kegan Paul.

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mobilization theory<sup>21</sup> developed by US scholars, (Zald and MacCarthy) all forms of political action (institutional and non-institutional collective behaviour) are treated as socially structured, rational, goal-oriented and the resources available to activists are seemed to be patterned accordingly. The assumption is that movement activists are as rational as conventional political actors in terms of pursuing their calculated goals through collective mobilization using the network of organisational structures. Resource mobilization theorists lay emphasis on the question of organisation, interests, resources, opportunities and strategies. This theory does not make any distinction between classical social movements and NSMs.-

This theory has been criticised for placing too much emphasis on rational instrumentality social movements. For the NSMs are not always directed towards the achievement of the rational goals, of the movement activists. Movements like those for world peace, women's movement, anti-nuclear movement, environment etc, issues related to the general welfare of humankind. This theory also does not explain the

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21. Jenkins J. Cragg, Resource Mobilization Theory and the study of social movements. Annual Review of Sociology, vol.9 : 527.553

motivational aspects of the movements supporters. C.A.Roots<sup>22</sup> argues that the resources mobilization theory absolutely focusses upon how movements are organised, succeed or fail rather than why they exist at all. Jean L.Cohen<sup>23</sup> also thinks that this theory can not be applied to contemporary social movements as they are primarily defensive, and intend to defend spaces for creation of new identities and solidarities. They are, moreover, associationally organised. As these association can't be treated as simple interest groups but as ends in themselves.

In contrast to resource mobilization theory, European scholars such as (Alain Touraine, Pizzorno, ClausOffe~~f~~ etc.) have developed the 'identity-oriented' theory to explain the phenomenon of NSMs. On this approach the contemporary social movements are treated as assertion of new socio-cultural identities by the hitherto neglected and marginalised sections of society. Alain Tourain provides the broadest framework for the identity oriented paradigm where he defines contemporary social movements as normatively oriented interaction between adversaries with conflicting \*

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22. Roots (C.A) (1990) : Theory of Social Movements : Theory for Social Movements philosophy and Social Action 16)4), 1990.

23. Jean L.Cohen, op.cit

\* interpretation and opposed social models of a shared cultural

field. This theory rejects all versions of the breakdown theory as well as deprivation theory. Here social movements are not seen as deviant and irrational collective behaviour. Rather social movements are herer treated as an attempt to create new socio-cultural identities in the existing social system.

After discussing all these approaches we came to conclusion that neither of them is exclusively capable of explaining the NSMs . If resource mobilization theory neglects the motivational aspects, the identity-oriented approach neglects the organisational aspects of the contemporary social movements. An improved approach, sysnthesising 'resource mobilization', 'identity-oriented' and 'revitalization' theories together would in the view of this writer be helpful in explaining these movements. According to revitalization (This theory has been expounded by A.F.C. Wallace and other American scholars, Wallace, A.F.C. (1956): Revitalisation Movements. American Anthropologists, 58 (April) 264-281. According to this theory these social movements are viewed as an attempt to develop a positive programme of action and they tend to be double-edged. On the one hand, they express dissatisfaction, dissent and protest against existing situations, and on the other , they offer a positive Programme of action to remedy the situation . To conclude any theory in order to be effective

and sound in the explanation of contemporary social movements must take into account the ideology, issues, support base, genesis, organisational structure, leadership and mode of operation of the movements.

### CHAPTER-3

#### EMERGENCE OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA : A GENERAL OUTLOOK

As mentioned in the previous chapter social movements are endemical to human society. Social or popular movements of one kind or another has always been there in the history of humankind, which have been shaped and reshaped by the contemporary socio economic and political situations in the society. The Western world has witnessed movements like Renaissance, Reformation and Counter-Reformation, worker's movements and more recently ~~later on~~ movements ~~kind~~ like ecology movements, Women's movements peace movements, anti-nuclear movements student movements etc.

In India the seeds of social movements may be said to have been laid down by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the first modern man of India, who launched a powerful social reform movement in the early 18th century. Though the roots of Indian movements may be traced in the 8th century A.D. where a reform movements in socio-religious nature. (Bhakti Movement) had been launched in our country . But it got a concrete shape in the modern period where people after getting influenced by modern education, made endeavour to reform

society. Since then we have had movements of various kinds, raising various questions at various points of time. In the colonial period we had movements against Zamindars, moneylenders. And later on, we experienced a powerful national freedom movement which got institutionalised in 1885 after the formation of Indian National Congress. Though we obtained political independence from the British imperialism in 1947, but many socio-economic contradictions in terms of skewed possession of economic resources remained intact in our society. As a result we have had powerful caste and class movements, such as the Naxalite movement as well as movements of the peasants and backward castes.

In spite of raising several kinds of issues and questions, these social movements may be termed as class movements as in all of them control and recontrol of economic resources was the central question and were aligned with one or another political party following a political ideology. For example, the Naxalite movement which was a powerful peasant's movement spread over West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, was closely aligned with the Chinese version of Marxism, using the politics of violent means of struggle.

In contrast to these earlier class movements, we are witnessing the emergence of new kinds of social movements



following the politics of 'New social Movements' by the mid-1970's and early 1980's in India. These new social movements are different from the conventional class movements in terms of their issues, support base organisational structure and modes of operation.

Though the phenomenon of NSMs found every where it is more dominant in the industrially advanced countries of the Western Europe where it has become an important phenomenon challenging the existing capitalist ideology by posing an alternative development model' based on the sustainable use of natural resources, world peace and anti-consumerism.

Like capitalist society, Socialist society of eastern Europe have also seen the emergence of NSMs by early 1980's in terms of strong democratic movements demanding human rights, political and civil rights, and Women's rights. For example in 1989, the People's Republic of China saw a powerful student's movement demanding democratization of civil society. Similarly during this period the former Soviet Union also experienced a powerful democratic movement demanding decentralization of power, and decision making process which led to the formation of many new nation-states after the disintegration of Soviet empire.

In India 1972 was the landmark when a number of new social movement got emerged raising various issues. For

W<sup>as</sup>  
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nstance, there the formation of Jharkhand Mukti Murcha (JMM),  
demanding autonomy of Jharkhand region, the Self-Employed  
Women's Association (SEWA), various farmers movements and  
(hedut Samaj of Gujarat etc. And India's famous  
environmental movement i.e Chipko movement was too began in  
1972. Another environment-~~and~~ tribal's movement i.e Narmada  
Bachao Andolan was started in the early 1980's.

In this chapter we will be dealing with the NSMs  
in terms of their genesis, issues, mode of operation social  
composition, difference between India and Western NSMs and  
finally impact of these movements on Indian politics.

### GENESIS OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

The genesis i.e the condition under which a social  
movement emerges, is an important aspect in the study of  
social movements, what are the motivational forces?  
and structural conditions which led to the emergence of a  
social movement?.

There has been three traditional theories (Psycho-  
analytical, strain and structural functional theories) and  
two recent theories—resource mobilization and identity-

oriented to explain the phenomenon of social movements, which have been discussed in chapter-2. Here we will be primarily concerned with the actual factors which had led to the rise of politics of the NSMs in Indian society.

At the outset, it may be said that all social or mass movements emerged ~~concern~~<sup>in</sup> the society as a result of some dissatisfaction with the existing socio-economic and political condition in society, and the inability of existing institutions to eradicate these situations by fulfilling needs, aspirations and removing grievances of the people. Social movements are ~~a~~<sup>a</sup> collective effort by the masses to bring about changes in the existing system to meet their demands.

MSA Rao says that social movements seek to bring about social changes at three levels—reform, transformation and revolution. Explaining them he says "while reform aims at modifying the belief system and life-styles of the members of a group, revolutionary changes aim to bring about sudden and total changes in all aspects of society". "Transformative changes refer to changes in the traditional balance of power relations, altering the economic and political superordination-subordination relationships"<sup>1</sup>.

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1. Rao (MSA) (1984) : ed-Social Movements in India. Manohar Publication. New Delhi. p.xviii.

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Unlike the conventional class movements which seek revolutionary changes in society , and liberal social movements which aim at bringing about reformatory changes, the NSMs aim at bringing about changes of both kind reformatory and transformative . They do not seek revolutionary changes in the society, rather they seek peaceful but qualitative changes with the direct people's participation in the mass movement.

Many eminent scholars have sought to <sup>account for the</sup> rise of NSMs in India. Ghanshyam Shah<sup>2</sup> believes that the Indian Parliamentary system, that was adopted to satisfy people's grievances and growing needs and demands has not fulfilled their expectation, hence people have resorted to extra constitutional methods of protest. Peoples have tried to solve their grievances through direct mass mobilization adopting the politics of grassroots mobilization. However, he does not see politics of grassroots mobilization as negative phenomenon in India politics, rather he treats it as a positive development, vital to the practice of democracy that helps to bend the power-structure in favour of protesting masses.

2. Ghanshyam Shah (1989) : Grassroots Mobilization in India Politics. In Atul Kahli's (ed) India's Democracy.

3. Rajni Kothari (1989) : Parties and the people : In Search of a humane India.

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Rajni Kothari<sup>3</sup> is of the view that this new forms of political action i.e the 'non-party political has emerged in Indian <sup>politics as a result of</sup> of the decline of formal political institutions of Indian democracy. The process of the decline of formal political institutions was started when Mrs. Indira Gandhi, after coming into power, tried to personalise political power sidelining formal political institutions of governance. This was done also at the cost of individual and social autonomy.

This move of Mrs. Gandhi was responded to by growing peoples protest's movement involving peoples participation at grassroots level. For example, Jay Prakash Narayan launched a powerful non-party social movement involving greater students participation, in order to dismantle the dictatorial regime of Mrs. Gandhi during 1970's. Rajni Kothari further argued that- since the formal institution of governance and dispensation of justice got eroded, people's power got manifested at grassroots level. Though, responses to the crisis in the society do come from traditional struggles by political parties, Trade Unions, but the bulk of them are coming from the independent citizen's initiatives, Voluntary and non-voluntary formations.

Other scholars like Pramod Parajoli<sup>4</sup> and Ponna Wingnaraja<sup>5</sup> have attributed the emergence of NSMs to the conventional 'development strategy' adopted in India which has failed to secure 'equitable', just and sustainable development in society. As a consequence, many

sections of Indian society have been marginalised. These marginalised section of society are coming up in the form of grassroots mobilizations challenging the existing statist parameters of growth and asserting livability, sustainability and equality as new parameters of development. This prevailing model of development has not effected economic aspect, but social cultural and political aspects of social life as well and hence the politics of NSMs is most visible in the form of peasants or tribals movements, environmental movements, movements of democratization of civil society demanding human rights and civil liberties.

Ponna Wingnaraja says that these social movements

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4. Pramod Parajoli, Power and Knowledge in Development Discourse : New Social Movements and the state in India. International Social Science Journal, Feb.1991

5. Ponna Wingnaraja, Rethinking Development and Democracy". In his (ed) : New social Movements in the South : Empowering the power, Vistar Publication, N.Delhi, 1993.

are discrediting the conventional paradigm of national liberation, socialism and economic development. It is being argued that in the conventional paradigm of development people were treated as objects of history rather its subjects. They were non-participant observers and fell victims to hierarichical, centralised and bureaucratic process in both the development and the political processes. It means these movements are demanding humane development and participatory democracy.

Following this tradition of explanation faulty Gail Omvedt<sup>e</sup> is of the view that NSMs are the movements <sup>of</sup> groups who have been marginalised or exploited in the development process adopted in India. Further , the cause of these groups has not been taken up by the existing political groupings. Therefore, they have resorted to politics of non institutionalised political mobilization. She cites the example of peasants and tribals who are leading powerful movements in India challenging the present model of development and leading their struggle's outside the existing political institutions. For example, the Narmada Bachao Andolan is leading a powerfull social movement in the Narmada valley against the Naemada Valley Project which has led to

6. Gail Omnedt (1993): Reinventing Revolution: Socialist Traditions and New Social Movements in India. Newyork: sharpe.

the displacement of thousand of tribals in the name of development. This movement is continuing as independent people's initiative.

In sum it may be said that NSMs have come up in India politics as an account of several factors. However in broader term it can be argued that these movements are primarily by such sections of Indian society whose interest have not been taken <sup>up</sup> into consideration in the process of development in our country. Moreover, their interests have not been taken in the political agenda of the existing political institutions and political groupings including political parties and conventional social movements which are supposed to represent the interest of various sections of society. Therefore, these section of society have resorted to the politics of NSMs i.e mobilisation of these peoples at grassroot level, in order to solve their problems through direct action. However there are other activists, etc, who are not marginalised or represented but they support the cause of these NSMs as they identify themselves with these. In addition to issues which are directly related to their interest these NSMs raise other issues related to common problems of society, i.e just , equitable and sustainable development, environmental protections civil rights, human rights gender equality, world peace and democratisation of civil society and decentralisation of political power . As a



result these movements are <sup>t</sup> getting <sup>p</sup> support from various sections of society.

### IDEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

The ideology and the kind of identity that the concerned groups establish, forms an important aspect of any social movement. It interprets the environment and projects images of the movement. It codifies and organises beliefs, myths, outlook, and values, defines aspiration and interests, and directs responses to specific social situations. In the words of MSA Rao "it (ideology) is not only a 'framework of consciousness' but also a source of legitimising action".<sup>7</sup>

The ideology of Indian NSMs has been critical of both dominant ideologies i.e. capitalism and socialism as both have failed to tackle the social problem positively and adequately. The capitalist ideology is criticised for its failure to secure equitable, just and sustainable development in society. The capitalist model of development has led to the marginalization of the poorer section i.e. tribals and peasants and has also caused ecological degradation.

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7. MSA Rao, op.cit.p.7.

On the other hand, the NSMs have also been critical of socialist politics as it has taken up only the problems of industrial workers and neglected many other weaker sections (women, tribals, and dalits etc) in its struggle. The communist ideology is further criticised as it does not grant civil liberties and democratic rights which are essential for the development of a human society

After criticising both dominant development ideologies (capitalist and socialist) NSMs are putting forth another development model in terms of an 'alternative development model.' The development ideology of NSMs is not aligned or integrated with either dominant ideologies. This model is based on social justice and equity, economic viability and ecological sustainability and increased popular participation. Here all developmental activities are sought to be undertaken taking into account the specific needs and conditions of the local population.

In terms of social structure, a violent free, ~~with~~ with maximum level of individual and social autonomy is dreamed. This model is opposed to a consumption society, based on cultivation of every growing wants, destroying nature and ravaging land, plants and non-human species, and dehumanising social relations. In such a society there should not only be minimum standard of material living for all but, also a

maximum standard beyond which a resources must be transferred<sup>Y</sup>  
to those that have not yet achieved the minimum<sup>8</sup>

However, it may be said that the alternative model offered by these social movements is not convincing and credible. Nevertheless, they have raised an important question in the present development discourse.

#### MODES OF OPERATION

The mode of operation of NSMs has been different from conventional class movements in all societies. Unlike old traditional social movements the NSMs in India have been working outside existing political institutions and other political groupings. For example the Naxalite movement, the best example of a conventional class movement, was closely associated with Chinese version of social movements working in the framework of class movements and followed the marxist ideology of class struggle.

But NSMs like the Narmada Bachao Andolan and the Chipko movement etc, have not aligned with any dominant political ideology or political party. In fact, they are

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8. (Rajni Kothari, Foot steps into the Future:- Diognosis of the Present world and a design for an alternative, New Delhi: Orient Longman., 1974).

working as independent people's initiatives following the politics of grassroots mobilization. These collective groups are action-oriented and committed to solve their grievances through direct peoples action through popular mobilization.

In addition these social movements do not aim at capturing political power, which is a basic aim of the conventional social movements. Rather, these movements aim at improving social life, through mobilising public opinions. The domain of India NSMs has been 'civil society', neither public nor private, entirely. Its a space existing outside the formal political institution. It comprises of a host of free popular associations, dedicated to the ends which are non-political, rather social.

Further more, unlike old social movements which were hierarchically organised with fixed organisational discipline and fixed patterns of recruitment, the NSMs are loosely organised with decentralised leadership and participatory decision making process. There is close cooperation between the leadership and general activists of the movements. All organisational decisions are taken through open debate and discussion with maximum autonomy of expression. For example the NBA does not have a institutionalised organisation with centralised leadership,

rather it is loosely organised having many working units spread all over India. Among all working centres there is close cooperation in all areas of operation. Jean L. Cohen rightly remarks about the NSMs as he says "instead of forming unions or political parties of socialist or communist type, the NSMs focus on grassroots politics and create horizontal, directly democratic associations that are loosely ~~federated~~<sup>federated</sup> on national levels".<sup>9</sup>

Another important aspect of mode of operation of NSMs in India has been its nature of intra-systemic, not anti-systemic. That is unlike conventional social movements like (Naxalite) which was anti-systemic seeking revolutionary transformation of existing system, the NSMs like NBA and Chipko don't seek revolutionary changes in the existing system, rather reformatory changes in the existing one avoiding pitfalls in it and to make them more humane, participatory and oriented to general welfare of society.

Furthermore, the NSMs in India do not use violent and revolutionary means of peoples struggle rather use Gandhi means of non-violent like hunger strikes, dharnas, gheraos,

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9. Jean L. Cohen, Strategy or Identity : New theoretical paradigmism and contemporary social movements. Social Research, vol.52, 1985.

public meetings, petitions, memorandum etc. which are socially recognised and democratic.

### SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF NSMs IN INDIA

As we have seen in the earlier chapter the issues and concerns raised by a movement largely determines its social composition that is if the issues of the movement are homogenous its social base will be smaller, restricted to limited sections of society. And if a movement raises variety of issues i.e. heterogeneous related to the interests of larger section of society, its social composition or base would be broader. All the conventional movement like Naxalite movement, backward castes movement, communist movement etc had a fairly homogenous agenda, concerning the interests of a particular section of society. That's why their membership too was restricted to the relevant section of society not to society as a whole.

But in case of NSMs, issues raised are heterogeneous in nature. They are not related to only a particular section but to the broader sections of society. They raise issues like environmental protection, sustainable use of natural resources, protection of human rights, civil, political and democratic rights, democratization of civil

society and democratization of power, which are general in nature. Consequently these social movements get support from people of varied social background.

#### COMPARISON BETWEEN NSMs IN INDIA AND THE WEST

Although the phenomenon of NSMs is world wide, but the nature of these social movements has been different in different societies based on the level of economic development and socio-political and cultural conditions of these societies. Here we will be primarily concerned with the nature of NSMs in the West and in India.

In terms of ideological issue, while in the developed capitalist societies of the West, the main concern of these social movements has been to widen or improve the quality of life in every aspects, in India, access to economic resources is very much a central concern, inspite of having other issues as subsidiaries. Ramchandra Guha has agreed this point by referring to the environmental movements in the West and India. He argues that while in the West, the ecology movement is said to have by passed the class struggle taking nature exclusively as an 'item of consumption', a reservoir of biodiversity. Whereas in India ecology movement is viewed as peasant/tribal's movement draped in the cloth of environmentalism<sup>10</sup>.

Similar argument is made by Fuentes and Frank when they argue that the new politics in Europe is primarily concerned with a crisis in the quality of life. They are less concerned with the distribution of economic benefit and services .But in India the main thrust of ecology and Women's movements is to stop monopolistic control of the rich over the natural resources.<sup>11</sup> This point will become further clear in the next chapter where we will deal with the Narmada Bachao Andolan as a case study.

In the West the environmental movements have come up as a reaction against over industrialization with unsustainable use of natural resources which has caused environmental destruction and ecological imbalance. But in India, the environmental movements have primarily been led by the tribals and peasants who have been displaced or marginalised in the process of development. For example the Jharkhand movement, the Chipko movement and the Narmada Bachao Andolan, which are fairly viewed as environmental movements, been started by local tribal people in their respective areas. The Jharkhand movement was started by the Adivasis of Jharkhand areas in South Bihar as they were

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10. Ramchandra Guha, "The Problem " . New Social Movements: A symposium on growing Responses to the Crisis in Society. Seminar(355) March, 1989.



derived the fruits of industrialization of Jharkhand region. Further more, they have been deprived of their natural resources, and rendered homeless, jobless and have become industrial and agricultural labourers.

Similarly the Chipko movement which is continuing in the Himalyan foothill region of Tehri <sup>Y</sup>~~G~~<sup>A</sup>wal region of U.P since the colonial period, was basically started by the tribals and peasants of this region when they were deprived to use the forest products and other natural resources of the region!<sup>2</sup> Later on, this movement included other issues concerning ecology. In the same way the Narmada Bachao Andolan was also started by the tribals with the cooperation of some socially concerned peoples outside the Narmada region around 1985. Initially this movement was primarily concerned to secure adequate alternative lands for the ~~owners~~ <sup>custeers</sup> of the Narmada Project. Like Chipko movement, the NBA too included environmental issues later on, in order to get support from the outside peoples, organisation and NGOs. In this way it can be ~~generally~~ concluded that environmental movements in India have primarily been peasants/tribals movement in their evolution. Gail Omvedt also argues environmental "movements are peasants movements" as much as the new farmer's movements

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11. This argument has taken from Pranud Parajoli; op. cit. .  
to use the forest products and other natural resources of their  
region. ~~to use the forest products and other natural resources of their  
region. to use the forest products and other natural resources of their  
region.~~ ecological balance, environmental protection and opposition  
to Tehri dam etc in its ambit..ls2

but with a different focus—immediate survival in the face of a threat to their traditional way of life.

To conclude, ideologically the NSMs in India provide<sup>a</sup> counterdiscourse to the prevalent model of development, seeking to promote personal and collective identity. They have shifted emphasis from capturing state power to reactivating civil society and constructing social movements to transform their words.

In terms of the relationship of these new social movements with the established political institutions also these movements are different in both societies. In India, these social movements have opted to operate outside or independent of these institutions, they are autonomous of political parties, they do not seek to control political power, nor do they contest political election nor do they support any particular political party in the election. For example NSMs like NBA or Chipko movement has not contested elections, nor has supported any political party in the election. In the West, however the NSMs maintained a close relationship with the existing political parties and some

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12. For detail see Ramchandra Guha's *Unquiet Woods : Ecological change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1989.

times they also contest elections. For instance, the ecology movement of former West Germany, which was emerged around 1969, by the end of 1980 formed a political party called the Green Party<sup>13</sup>. And since then it has become a major political party.

In terms of the social composition of these social movements, whole in the West the major support base these social movements has been largely the new middle classes—petty ~~bourgeois~~ <sup>bourgeoisie</sup>, intellectuals, students, government officials etc. In India these groups have been peripheral and it is the directly affected persons who have provided material base of these movements. However here too, the new middle class is playing important role by providing leadership and ideological foundation to these movements. It is the educated middle class intellectuals and social activists who construct view points about these movements and make aware the general masses about the problem, grievances and demands of these movements.

Conclusion To conclude it may be said that like many other societies India too has experienced the emergence of NSMs since the mid 1970's and in the early 1980's. They have

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13. For detail see Saral Srkar (1993) : Green Alternative Politics in West Germany, vol.1. The New Social Movements. United Nation University. New York, Tokyo, Paris. Pramilla and Co. Publishers N. Delhi.

<sup>em</sup>erged in a number of areas like environment social justice Women's rights human rights, world peace, democratization of civil society and decentralization of decision-making process. These movements have challenged or questioned the existing condition in the system and hence sought to provide an 'alternative model of development'. However, this claim has not been proved as a convincing and viable alternative.

These movements have sought to represent various underprivileged sections of society who have been marginalised in the development process. These movements have raised such issues which have been not taken up by the existing political groups i.e. question of environment, Women's rights, just an equitable development model and democratization of 'civil society'.

In spite of late coming, the phenomenon of the new social movements is, increasingly coming up in our society, challenging the statist parameters of development and claim of the existing political institution and political parties to represent the interest of various sections of society. These movements have posed an important debate in the developmental strategy in our country.

## CHAPTER 4.

### NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN AS A NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS.

INTRODUCTION:- In this chapter we will be dealing with the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) as a case study of New social Movements (NSMs) in India . The NBA has been an important NSM in India. This movement was started by the oustees of Narmada Valley around the mid-1980's. It represents a self-assertion of the people of the Narmada Valley which are opposing the Narmada Valley Development Project as this project has sidelined or marginalise them in ther name of development of the country.

This protest movement was started by various oustee's organisations in the Narmada Valley with a narrow support base i.e within the few tribals who were directly affected by the project. With the passage of time these organisations got united under one umbrella like organisation i.e. the Narmada Bachao Andolan when some middle class, urban educated and socially concerned persons came into the valley and started mobilizing the oustees for their rights . Later on this movement widened its support base including peoples, similar movements and organisation from outside the valley both at national and international levels.

In terms of issues the andolan in its 10 yrs long history of struggle has raised many issues including proper and adequate alternative Rehabilitation and Resettlement programmes and policies to the ou<sup>s</sup>tees. preservation of human rights, and civil liberties and democratic rights of the oustees, proper appraisals of the Narmada Valley Projects keeping in view economic social and environmental aspects of the project. Later on the Andolan started questioning the very development model in the valley on social, economic, cultural and environmental bases. And in the process, it has put forward its own 'alternative development model' which will be discussed in detail later on. This Andolan does not aim at capturing state power, rather it is focussing on democratisation of civil society respecting economic, social and cultural freedom of the people.

Following the tradition of NSMs, the NBA has been autonomous of existing political parties and dependent upon the politics of grassroots people's mobilization.

Due to its popular mobilization, the NBA has successfully forced the project authorities to commit themselves to reviewing the Narmada Valley Projects but has not succeeded in getting an objective review to this

Project..

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE NARMADA VALLEY PROJECT (NVP)  
NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN:-

Since the NBA is closely related with the NVP , we would like to see the commencement of this project and politics and strategies behind it, which will help in understanding the Andolan.

The NVP is the culmination of a long-time idea of harnessing the waters of the Narmada river for the purpose of development of the Narmada Valley and surrounding neighbouring states. Though this idea was first exposed during the colonial period in 1920's, it was again mooted soon after independence.

In 1946, the governments of Central Province (M.P) and Bomaby (Gujarat and Maharashtra together) requested the Central Waterways, Irrigation and Navigation Commission (CWINC) to take up the investigation on the Narmada river system for the development of the Narmada valley with the aims of flood control, irrigation and power facilities and navigation. On the advice of CWINC, the Ministry of Power appointed a 3-member committee, consisting of A.N.Khosla,

chairman of CWINC; Dr.J.C.Savage and Dr.M.Narsimhaiya to make study of the project . This committee submitted its report in 1965, proposing construction of a dam with 160 feet height which later on extended to 300 feet. But this recommendation did not materialise as the state of Bombay was bifurcated into Gujarat and Maharashtra on 1 May, 1960. However, the government of Gujarat gave the administrative approval to the Navagam Project (Later renamed as Sardar Sarover Project). In April 1961, the foundation stone of the Navagam Project was laid down by late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

In order to chalk out details of the project a high level meeting was held between the Union Minister of Irrigation and Power, Dr.K.L.Rao and the Chief Minister of Gujarat and M.P at Bhopal in November, 1963. In this meeting following decisions were taken:-

a) The construction of the Navagam Dam upto 425 feet at Full Reservoir Level (FRL).

b) A dam at Punasa (M.P) upto 850 feet at FRL whose cost and benefits to be enjoyed in the ratio of 1:2 between Gujarat and M.P.Madhya Pradesh was asked to provide half of its share of power to Maharashtra for 25 years for which Maharashtra was to provide loan on credit to the extent of



1/3 of the cost of Punasa dam.)

c) Construction of another dam in M.P at Bargi with the financial cooperation of Gujarat and Maharashtra<sup>1</sup>.

However , on 28 November, 1963 , D.P.Mishra, the chief Minister of M.P informed state's disagreement with the Bhopal Agreement, objecting the height of the Navagamdam. Madhya Pradesh wanted to restrict the height of this dam upto FRL 162 feet so that no areas in M.P would get submerged (162 feet is the bed level of the Narmada at M.P. Gujarat border.

In order to resolve this tangle, a high level committee headed by Dr.A.N.Khosla, was appointed in 1964 to prepare a master plan for the Narmada basin. The committee in its report (1965) recommended the height of Navagam dam upto 500 feet at FRL and construction of 12 major dams in M.P and allocation of waters between these states. The Khosla committee also for the first time recommended the provision of drinking water facilities to Rajasthan .However this time too, M.P did not accept this plan.

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1. Vijay Pranjpye (1990): High Dams on Narmada : A holistic Analysis of the River Valley Projects. an INTACH series on Ecology and Sustainable development INTAC, New Delhi.

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Finally, on the request of Gujarat, the Central Government appointed the Narmada Water Dispute Tribunal (NWDT) in 1969 under the Inter-state Water Dispute Act of 1956. The Tribunal after 10 years of serious deliberations came out with its final award in 1979 deciding height of the Sardar Sarovar Dam at 455 feet, possible submergence area of 77,000 hec of land in three states—M.P, Gujarat and Maharashtra of the estimated available water of 28 million acre Feet (MAF) which was based on 75 percent dependability. M.P, Gujarat, and Maharashtra and Rajasthan were allotted 18.25 MAF, 9MAF, 0.25 MAF and 0.5 MAF respectively. Each state was permitted to utilise its share of waters in its own way. Of the estimated 1450MW of hydro-power, the states of M.P, Maharashtra and Gujarat were allotted in the ratio of 57 percent , 27 percent and 16 percent respectively. The appropriation of water is to be reviewed only after 45 years.

The Tribunal also provided provision for Rehabilitation and Resettlement policies and environmental aspects of the Narmada Project. The provision for establishment of Narmada Control Authority (NCA) as an inter-state administrative agency chaired by the Secretary of the Union Water Resource

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2.B.G.Vergheese (1994) : Winning the Future : From Bhakra to Narmada, Tehri, Rajasthan Canal. Konark Publishers. New Delhi.

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Ministry, was also provided to secure the compliance of the award.

#### WORLD BANK'S INVOLVEMENT

During 1978-79 while the Narmada Tribunal was expected to deliver its final award, the World Bank was requested to finance the Sardar Sarovar Project, a major component of Narmada Valley Project which consists of 30 major, 135 medium and over 3,000 minor dams. In November, 1978 the first reconnaissance commission of the World Bank recommended certain measures to be adopted before financing the project - a) establishment of a high level Narmada Planning Group (NPG), b) retention of foreign experts in certain key areas through the UNDP and c) retention of private/independent consultancy agencies for study of various aspects of the project. Accordingly the NPG was formed in 1982 by the government of Gujarat and private Consultancy agencies like Operational Research Group (ORG), Baroda, and Tata Economic Consultancy Service (TECS)-Bombay were assigned the jobs. In 1979, the Gujarat Irrigation Department received US \$10 million credit for project formulation.

In May 1983, the TECS in its economic approval

report of SSP provided benefit-cost ratio at 1.39 at market price and 1.84 at economic prices. The Sagar University in its preliminary study of environmental aspects of the SSP concluded that more detailed study was needed to come at a meaningful conclusion. However, inspite of having not a proper study of all aspects of the SSP, the Central Water and Power Commission, sanctioned this project in 1985.

Similarly, inspite of having proper study of the SSP, the World Bank in 1985 entered into a Credit and Loan Agreement with the Government of India on behalf of governments of Gujarat and M.P, providing US \$450 million. The world bank's loan was conditional related to proper R & R policies for the oustees and environmental impact assesment.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

Under the existing condition in terms of existing many parliamentary acts relating to the preservation and safe guard of ecological balance, protecting forests, wildlife, historical monuments etc, every major project was required to take environmental clearance from the Union Ministry of Forest and Environment before its commencement. There were many acts related to this aspect like the Indian forest Act, 1927, .The Forest (COnservation ) Act, 1980, the Environmental

(Protection) Act , 1986 .Indian Fisheries Act, 1897, Indian monuments Protection Act, 1904, Wildlife Protection Act 1972 etc.

The MOEF was not in favour of granting clearance to the SSP on the grounds of a) unsatisfactory environmental assesment , b) Unavailability of alternative land and policies for R & R of the oustees, and c) the great height of the Sardaar Sarovar dam<sup>3</sup>.

However, the MOEF was politically perssurised to grant clearance to these projects. In m,ay, 1987, the Chief Minister of the 3 reparian states - M.P, Gujarat and Maharashtra had a meeting with the then Prime Minister, late Rajiv Gandhi, to discuss environmental clearance. Ultimately the MOEF was forced to grant environmental clearance to the SSP on June 24, 1987. But it was a conditional clearance which asked for a detailed plans for adequate R & R policies and environmental safeguard measures by 1989. The Narmada Control Authorities was asked to secure the compliance with these policies and they were to be executed Pari Passu with the progress of work on the dam, which was to be informed to the MOEF.

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3. A Note from MOEF entitled 'Environmental Aspects of Narmada Sagar and Sardar Sarovar Projects' April 1986.  
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The planning Commission accorded investment clearance to the SSP on October 5, 1988 at a cost of Rs.6406 crores. Work on the SSP was now started in full swing.

#### PROTEST MOVEMENT

The protest movement against the Narmada Valley Project (NVP) had an early beginning. While the Khosla committee was studying the project, an agitation 'Narmada Bachao, Nimar Bachao' was started in 1974 by the oustees of the Narmada Valley, led by an oustee engineer<sup>4</sup>. However, nothing came out of this protest movement. After the Khosla committee Report, another protest movement, named 'Narmada Bachao, Nimar Bachao' was organised in 1978 in the valley. This time this agitation was actively supported by Mr. Arjun Singh, the leader of opposition (Congress Party) in the M.P. Assembly<sup>5</sup> raising the issues of protection of Nimar, the rich forest areas to be submerged.

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4. Sardar Sarovar Oustees in Madhya Pradesh : What do they know? (5) Tehsil: Dharampuri District : Dhar MARG, New Delhi. August, 1986. pg.13.

5. ibid, pg.13.

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This movement had started from Dharampuri town, but had involvement of large number of people from other tehsils. Though nothing substantial came out of this movement, and no follow-up action was taken, it helped to conscientise the people regarding the various issues pertaining to the dam. But the people remained confused as no precise information from any authentic sources was made available to them. Sometimes, they had heard the work<sup>ON</sup>~~ed~~ the dam had started, some heard it had stopped, some heard it was started but with reduced height. Anyway, this movement got a serious jolt when Mr. Arjun Singh who had earlier actively supported the movement became the chief Minister of the state in 1980, and forgot about the movement.

It must be noted that it was not only the protest movement which was continuing in the valley since the conception of the NVP. There are also instances of existing pro-dam movements existing side by side with the anti-dam movements. The villagers of Nimbola told the MARG team that a movement demanding the construction of the dam had taken place in Gujarat. Further, another movement first protesting against the dam, and then for construction of the dam with reduced height had taken place in M.P.

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6. ibid pg. 17.

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Though agitations against the Narmada Valley Project had been there from the very beginning in one form or another, a concrete, sound and effective protest movement was only started around mid-1980's when urban-educated middle class people and social activists started taking interest in the problems of the oustees of the valley.

In 1985 Ms. Medha Patkar, an alumna of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, came in the Narmada Valley and seeing the pitiable conditions of the oustees, started taking interest in their problems and grievances, and started organising them to fight for their rights. Ms. Medha Patkar after doing her Ph.D thesis on "Developments and Its Impact on Tribal People" was very much aware of the effects of the 'Narmada Development Project' on the tribals and their surrounding including their means of livelihood, lands, homes, and environmental destruction, and the loss of forest, wildlife, fertile lands, siltation and salination of agricultural land.

In April 1986, Ms. Medha Patkar with association of Narmada oustees established the 'Narmada Dharanrast Samiti' in Maharashtra. At the same time similar organisations were working in the villages of the Narmada valley on behalf of the oustees. They were Narmada Navnirman Samiti in Madhya



Pradesh, Lok Adhikar Sangh and Narmada Asargrast samiti in Gujarat. Arch-Vahini was the other important and powerful organisation, working to secure better R & R policies for oustees in Gujarat. SETU was yet another Ahmadabad-based organisation with which Medha Patkar was initially associated, but due to some differences on strategy, she left and formed her own organisation, Narmada Dharangrast Samiti in 1986.

This protest movement was started with limited issues (demanding adequate and proper R & R policies for the oustees) and with narrow support base i.e with the oustees and some social activists, on the grassroots level in the Narmada Valley. But over the time this movement widened its support base and broadened its issues related to environmental protection, alternative development model based on equality, social justice and economic viability and ecological sustainable development. In the process of organising for a broader agenda, the 'Narmada Bachao Samiti' was set up at Bombay in November 1987. And in September 28, 1989, at Harsud Ralley an Umbrella like organisation, 'Narmada Bachao Andolan' representing many

oustees' organisation was got formed. At the same time a 'Jan Vikas Andolan' was also established.

From then onward the Narmada Bachao Andolan has been conducting a powerful struggle, mobilising oustees and general public opinion, raising problems and grievances of the oustees and other general problems related with the Narmada Valley Project. In its 10 years of long historical struggle, the NBA has raised various issues and has got many success and failures to its credit.

## MODE OF OPERATION OF THE NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN

As we saw in the earlier theoretical part of this study the New social Movements, operate outside the established political system of institution and political parties. Further, they do not aim at capturing political power, rather they are working for assertion of peoples rights, particularly the weaker and marginalised sections of society and democratization of 'civil society'.

Following this tradition, the Narmada Bachao Andolan has adopted the politics of grassroots mobilization, operating outside the existing political parties and political institution. This movement is basically a movement of the tribal people who have been marginalised in the process of development in the Narmada Valley, who are struggling for their survival in cooperation with many educated social activists, similar organisations and governmental and non-governmental organisations.

In its about 10 years long struggle, the NBA has adopted various techniques and strategies in order to mobilise the masses and general public opinion to achieve its aims and objectives. These techniques and means have been

broadly Gandhian and non-violent like dharnas rallies, petitions, memorandum, public meetings, hunger strikes etc. All are meant to direct mobilization and participation of people at grassroots levels in order to force the project authorities to consider the demands, grievances and problem of the oustees and problems of the general development pattern in India. The terrain of resistance of the Andolan has been the 'civil society'

The Narmada Andolan had has been working in four direction:-

i) Mobilization of oustees for proper and adequate Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policies

ii) Putting pressure on the MOEF to withdraw its approval from the NVP especially SSP,

iii) Pressurising the international financial institutions and donor countries to not support the project, and

iv) Pressurising the project authorities to concede the demand of reevaluation of the projects by independent experts committees.

Since the NBA has adopted the coordinated struggle in all these direction, they cannot be dealt seperately. Therefore, in the following paragraphes we would see the actual process through which the movement has continued its

struggle.

As we know in the beginning the protest movement was restricted to get adequate alternative land for the oustees. For this purpose, the movement mobilised the oustees. On January 30, 1988, over 4,00 oustees from the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and M.P staged a massive rally at Kaveria collenu demanding proper R & R policies for the oustees<sup>9</sup>. Even some of the government officials supported the oustees cause. For example, on February 2, 1988, Mr. Sushil Chandra Verma, the chairman of the NVDA (M.P) resigned from his post in protest against the lack of sincerity and inadequacy regarding R & R plans<sup>10</sup>. He also said that he would lead an agitation to safeguard the interests of the oustees.

In April 1988, the Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini, an organisation involved with the oustees in Gujarat started agitation in Gujarat against the constructing of the project without providing proper R & R policies to the oustees<sup>10</sup>.

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9. The Indian Express, New Delhi, February 3, 1988

10. V. Preajpe opp.cite p.29.

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Over the time protest movement gained momentum as many organisations and social activists started supporting the cause of the oustees. On September 12, 1988<sup>11</sup>, over 300 scientists, academicians and prominent citizens including , Dr.M.S.Swaminathan, justice V.K.Krishna Iyer, Dr.Satish Dhawan and prof.Anil Agarwal etc. submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister asking for a complete appraisal of the SSP<sup>12</sup>. They highlighted the environmental costs involved financial, social, cultural and environmental costs involved in the project which the country had to pay for. This was the first time that so many prominent citizens had come together on the issue of such nature.

But the project authorities has ~~been~~<sup>been</sup> not fair~~ly~~<sup>ly</sup> to the NBA and its supporters. They have been dubbed as anti-development; 'agents of imperialist powers' etc, and repressive measures hav been adopted to supress the protest movement in the valley. In order to check the increasing mobilization of the people, the Gujarat government invoked the Official Secret Act of 1923 on October 18, 1988 in 12

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11. The times of India /ND/Sep.13 1988.

12. The Indian Express, New Delhi February 1989.

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villages surrounding the dam including Kanedia, Kothi, Bhomalia, Khialari, Ramboh, Gora, Vadgam, Mokhadia, Thardia, Vogachia, Limoli and Navagam<sup>13</sup>.

But the movement continued with increased popularity among the people. From November 14 to 21, 1988, over 70 activists, journalists and environmentalists undertook a 'conscientization March'<sup>14</sup>, through 15 affected villages, in order to appraise the inhabitants about various aspects and problems of the SSP. Most of the organisations involved in this agitation in Maharashtra, now joined hands to form the 'Narmada Bachao Samiti' support groups were formed in different places of the submerged area. In Gujarat over 25 organisations united to form the 'Narmada Priyojna Pratikar Munch' to create awareness among the people and mobilise public opinion against the Narmada Project.

On February 22, 1989, over eight thousands people from the villages of Maharashtra, M.P and Gujarat staged a massive dharnas the site of the Sardar Sarovar dam to oppose the

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13. The India Express, New Delhi, February 24, 1989.

14. Vijay Pranjyee, op.cite.

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Official Secret Act, which had been imposed since October 18, 1988. After a massive public meeting all of them courted arrest. Ultimately, after a long struggle, the official secret Act was withdrawn from the areas on March 29, 1989<sup>15</sup>.

In the process of mobilising the public opinion against the Narmada Project, the NBA incooperation with similar movements and organisation and oustees from all three riparian states organised a historic rally at Harsud<sup>16</sup> on September 28, 1989. In a day long meeting the people were appraised about various problems related with the project such as violation of human rights social and cultural rights etc. They demanded all works on the SSP to be stopped. They also drafted a resolution, to be submitted to the US congress. to pressurise the World Banks to withdraw from financing the SSP.

As we have earlier mentioned that apart from mobilising the oustees the NBA has also pressurised the foreign countries and financial institutions to not support the

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15. Smitu Kothari and Rajni Bakshi, on Dams and Protest, Lokayan Bulletin, January-February, 1989.

16. The Indian Express, New Delhi, September 24, 1989.

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'destructive' Narmada Project. On October 24, 1989, a delegation of oustees organisations led by Ms. Medha Patkar along with Girishbhai Patel, Vijay Pranjpye and others went to the United States to appraise the US congress about various destructive aspects of the project so that it would compel the World Bank to withdraw from financing the SSP<sup>17</sup>. However, at that time, the US government did not concede the demand of the NBA and described the SSP as "economically and financially viable which would promote development". But it should hope that the project authorities would be able to implement the R & R and environmental safeguard measures.

The NBA and its supporters in cooperation with other organisation and non-governmented organisations forced the Japanese government to withdraw from the SSP in May 1990. Again when a West German parliamentary? delegation was visiting the Narmada Valley to assess the environmental aspects of the project, the oustees protested, and asked them not to support the project.

Due to the mobilisation of oustee's problem at a national and international level, the World Bank (finally

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17. The Hindustan Times , New Delhi, October 25, 1989.

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agreed to the demand of assessing or reviewing the R & R and environmental aspects of the SSP in June 1991. As a result an Independent Review Commission headed by Bradford Morse was set up in June 1991. The commission in its report of 1992 had severely criticised the project authorities including the World Bank and the government of India

for their failure to implement the R & R and environmental safeguard measures. It also recommended the Bank to withdraw from the SSP. As a result, the World Bank withdrew from financing the SSP in March 1993.

In a bid to force the project authorities to undertake review of the Narmada Project, the NBA has mobilised people at various levels, and has organised many seminars and symposium to popularise its demands. In a bid to force the M.P. government to concede the demand of review of the project, the NBA led by the Baba amte and Ms Medha Patkar staged a 28 hours long 'Rasta Roko' agitation<sup>18</sup> on March 6, 1990, on khalghat bridge on a Agra-Bombay busy route. The Agitation was called off when the chief Minister of the

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18. the Patriot, March 30, 1990.

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state Mr.Sunderlal Patwa agreed to go to the centre to review the NVP keeping in mind various issues of the project including displacement and resettlement, economic viability, cost-benefit ratio, and environmental destruction etc. However later on, the M.P. government did not fulfil its promise. From the day of Kalghat agitation Baba Amte started living in the Narmada Valley.

Again from March 28 to April 5, 1991, a dharna was staged before the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha urging the MLAs to force the government to concede the demand of the NBA ~~to~~ review of the project Medha Patkar , Armdhati Dhuru, Rama Padvi and kelyabhao resorted to indefinite hunger strike. The hunger strike was called off on April 5, 1990 when the state chief mininster Mr, Sharad Pawar assured that not any people will be submerged/displaced without providing alternative resettlement to them<sup>19</sup>.

From April 16-20, 1990 the NBA organised a dharna before the 'Shram Shakti Bhavan' (New Delhi) involving over 300 tribals from Maharashtra, M.P and Gujarat, demanding

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19. Hum Ladenge Sathi, NDA, 1994, p.810

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stoppage of work on the SSP. The Dharna was called off after a meeting with the Union Minister of welfare and Water Resources<sup>20</sup>.

Another a week long dharna was organised before the Prime Minister residence at New Delhi from may 14 to 18, 1990. On May 17, the Prime Minister, Mr. V.P.Singh had a talk/meeting with the Narmada activists and assured that he would look sincerely into the problems of the oustees. Though he did not agreed to the demand of immediate halt of the work on the SSP and setting a review committee, but agreed to see the problem in future. Taking it as the first major step in the direction of review of the project ,the NBA called off its dharna.

In a bid to create awareness among oustees and general population about various destructive aspects of the SSP and forcee the project authorities to stop the work on the SSP till the review of the project not undertaken , the NBA organised an one-month long historic 'Jan Vikash

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20. The Times Of India New Delhi, April 19, 1990.

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Sangharsh Yatra'<sup>21</sup> between December 25, 1990 to January 31, 1991. This Yalley was started on December 25, 1990, and after passing through affected villages of Madhya Pradesh reached to Ferkuwa , the M.P.Gujarat border. Here it was stopped by the government of Gujarat where a pro-dam rally was organised in by the government in cooperation with the government officials, industrialist and rich farmers.The entire border area was put under Section 144 of the Indian Penal Code to prevent the Narmada activists from entering the Gujarat border in their efforts to go to the dam site. The Narmada activists remained stranded there for one month inspite of cold weather and without having proper fooding and lodging provision. When the Narmada activists tried to cross the border, they were lathi-chargedand badly beaten by the police, eventhe womens were not spared Ms Medha Patkar along with 5 other activists had resorted to indefinite hunger strikes for 22 days.

Without gaining anything, the Sangharsh Yatra was called of as the project authorities and government of Gujarat did not show any sympathetic attitude to the

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21. Amita Baviskar, Narmada Sangharsh Yatra: State's Responses and Its consequences, EPW, March 2-9, 1991.

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Andolankaris .However the movement activists returned their home with the determination to oppose all governmental activities related with the project inthe valley and continue their struggle in more rigorous form.

Though the project authorities including the government of India did not accept the demand of review of the project, the World Bank agreed in principle to review the SSP on January 13, 1991. And in June 1991, an Independent Review Mission was set up which published its report in 1992 criticising R & R and environmental aspects of the SSP . The IRM reports was severely criticised by the project authorities and pro-dam supporters as 'biased', 'one sided' 'anti-India' and a 'part of conspiracy to block India's' progress and advancements inthe economic , scientific, nuclear and defence field'. But the NBA and its supporters applquded the report. Medha Patkar said, "The report is a slap on the face of those who have arrogantly refused to accept what the Andolan had been trying to say all these years"<sup>22</sup>.

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22. Mainstream , September 26, 1992.

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The Morse Commission Reports boosted the morale of the people of Munibeli, a village in Maharashtra, who were struggling against the government's efforts of evicting them forcefully from their village as it was going to be submerged in the Narmada water. Since April 13, 1992, people from Manibeli in cooperation with people from neighbouring villages had sat on Satyagrah outside a Police Chawoki which had been set up to implement the process of eviction. The people were demanding the removal of the police chauki from their villages. This chauki had been set up on April 11, 1992 neglecting the desire of the people, on the pretext of providing protection to the families who were going to Parveta (Gujarat) in order to be resettled, however the real intention was to assist in the process of eviction of the tribal population. On April 18, 1992 the satyagrahis were attacked by the police, their belongings and Andolan office, the 'Narmadai' were ~~arrested~~<sup>destroyed</sup>. They were ~~destroyed~~<sup>arrested</sup> and many of them were released on April 19, 1992 after regirous harras<sup>s</sup>ment in the police custody.

In order to mobilise the oustees or tribal people in the submergence villages in all 3 riparian states against the Narmada project and to make aware them about various issues related with the project the NBA launched a unique experiment

in the valley. From January 30, 1992 to March 5, 1993, Lok Niveda campaign (people's Referendum)<sup>23</sup> was

started in the valley, which was going through oustees villages, making aware them about the project and seeking their opinion about the project. The Lok Niveda campaign groups were accorded warmed welcome in the tribal villagesw, and whose usual response was 'Hum nahin hatenge, bandh nahin banane denge' ( We would not move, we would not let dam to be built). The referendum was ended on March 5, 1993 after a massive ralley, organised at Rajghat (Badwani) . In this campaign 22, 523 families had showed their determination to not move from their villages.

This was an unique experiment both to the NBA as well as to the project authorities . To NBA, it showed its support base or popularity among the tribal people. And for the project authority, it challenged the question of legitimacy of constructing the dam.

Again in June 1993 the NBA intensified its struggle in the village of Manibeli against the project authority's

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23. Narmada Samachar, December, 1993- January 1994.

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efforts to forcefully evict the oustees from the village. The first house in Manibeli was submerged on June 3, 1993 and the NBA's office was destroyed on June 8, 1993. <sup>24</sup>

Against this, the NBA organised protest rallies and dharnas in all major towns and states capital in the Narmada Valley. On June 11, a mass meeting was held at Bombay demanding protecting the interests of the oustees.

In a dharna held at Rajghat (New Delhi) the NBA announced the 'Jal Samarpan Abhiyan' (July 22-28, 1993). The NBA announced Abhiyan that is to die in the waters of the Narmada rather than to move from their villages. The NBA threatened to go with 'Jal Samarpan' Abhiyan on August 6, 1993 if the project authority would not agreed to set up an independent review commission, to review all aspects of the Narmada project. The Jal Samarpan Abhiyan was called off on August 5, 1993, when the Union Minister of Water Resources, Mr. V.C.Shukla agreed to set up a 5 member review committee, headed by Jayant Patil, other members consisted of L.C.Jain, ex-member of Planning Commission, Dr.Vasant Gowarikar, former scientific advisor to the Prime Minister,

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24. *ibid*

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Dr. Ramaswamy R.Iyer of Centre of Policy Research (New Delhi, and Dr.V./c.Kulandiswamy, Vice-Chancellor of IGNU. The committee was asked to submit its report within 3 months . But it submitted its report on April 14, 1994 to the government, and was made public on December 14, 1994 when the NBA filed a writ petition in the Supreme court.

However, the reports of the Jayant Patil has not been comprehensive as its term of reference was not specified. It has published a very restricted report suggesting how the SSP would successfully be implemented, rather suggesting measure to improve the various aspects of the project<sup>25</sup>. As a result the Supreme Court has directed the committee to make further detailed analysis of the project and submit its report by April 14, 1995, but the Committee is yet to submit its detailed report, and the case is in the apex court.

In the meantime , the protest movement is going on in the Narmada valley with increased peoples participation and popular mobilization against the Narmada Project . Recently,

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25. Narmada Samachar, December 1994 - February 1995. p.6.

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the NBA has raised the issue of scaling down the height of SSP from the estimated 455 feet, to 432 feet, to minimise the social, cultural and environmental costs involved in the construction of the project. Mr. Digvijay Singh, the Chief minister of M.P has supported this issue, but the government of Gujarat is opposed to any alteration in the existing design of the project . However the NBA continues its struggle.

#### LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE NBA

Following the tradition of New Social Movements, the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is not hierarchically organised with the principle of democratic-centralism and organisational discipline i.e 'iron law of oligarchy' and with fixed recruitment . Rather , they are loosely organised system, at various levels. The many working units are meant to ensure active peoples participation in all mobilization activities at various levels. In all working centres, there is close cooperation and coordination , having maximum level of autonomy in their workings.

In the beginning, the leadership to the protest movement was provided by the local people, who mobilised the oustees i.e project affected persons to get proper and adequate

alternation lands. In the beginning,, there were many oustees' organisations working in various villages in the Narmada valley mobilising the oustees for their democratic, social , cultural and economic rights. In April 1986, Ms.Medha Patkar established the 'Narmada Bharangrst Samiti' in Maharashtra.

In November, 1987 a broader organisation, in cooperation with many similar organisation was set up at Bomaby, named as 'Narmada Bachao Samiti'. This samiti, later on was renamed as the Narmada Bachao Andolan' during 1988-1989 .Since then the NBA is working as an umbrella organisation, representing many oustees organisation in the Narmada Valley, and is busy with raising problem demands and grievances of the oustees, through a powerful peoples movement.And inthe process, this has been able to mobilise large number of people, from various walks of life, similar organisation and movements, governmental organisations in its favour.

The Narmada Bachao Andolan has been organised at three levels<sup>26</sup>. Firstly at local level, there is a committee of local people' in every villages in the submergence area,

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26. The details of the organised structure has been taken from an interview with Himanshu Thakkar, an NBA activist working at DELhi Forum , Malviya Nagar, New Delhi.

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engaged in mobilising oustees, and making them aware about various aspects of the project and programmes of the movements . Here people are mobilised through various awareness programmes, public speeches, video shows etc, .They are prepared to fight for their rights..1s1

At the intermediary level, the various working centres of the movement have been organised in the major towns, cities and capitals of the concerned states. For instance there are many working centres located at Bhopal, Indore, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Surat, and Bombay. All are engaged in mobilising public opinion in their respective areas through many programmes and activities.

Finally, at national level, there is a 'National Coordination Committee' represented by activists from various levels and other important persons, intellectuals, social activists and sympathisers of the movement.

However, it must be noted that inspite of having various working units at different levels there is no hierarchical division of labour and power at these

levels. Among these various levels of organisational set up, there is close cooperation and coordination while taking any decision relating to the movement there is free flow of information and decision at all levels following the principle of feed-back process. Decision are taken at all levels and communicated to all levels. there is no hard and fast rule, like organisational discipline.

### SOCIAL COMPOSITION

As we have seen in the theoretical chapter that the issues and concerns of the movement, determines its social composition or support base in the society. Since the issues of the NBA are not entirely homogenous but also heterogenous it has wide support base from different section of society.

In the beginning the Narmada movement started with a narrow support base, particularly with the support of the tribal population in the Narmada valley, and was restricted to issues i.e securing proper R & R policies for the oustees. But with the passage of time, the NBA has broadened its social base inside and outside the valley, and has included various other issues which are not directly related with the tribal population, .

The first category of NBA supporters consists of middle

class and educated social activists who are closely concerned with the problem of the oustees or tribal population who are facing the problem of the survival after displacement from their inhabitants. These persons are keenly interested in solving the problem of the oustees and actively participate in all activists of the movement. They provide the ideological basis and leadership of the movement. They decide about all organisational activities and various awareness programmes in cooperation with other activists or supporters of the movement. People like Ms. Medha Patkar and Baba Amte will be included in this category.

The second category consists of those people who are directly affected by the project, and they provide material base of the movement. Here all people of the Narmada valley who are affected by any activities related with the Narmada project, and who are supporting the cause of the movement may be included.

The third group consists of such similar organisations and movements and their leaders, governmental and non-governmental organisations who support the cause of the NBA at national and international levels through their writings and organisational support to the movement. Organisations and movements like Chhatisgarh Mukti Murcha, (M.P) Sharamik

Sangathan (Maharashtra), Soohit Jan Andolan (Maharashtra, Chipko movement, international governmental and non-governmental organisations like Friends of the Earth (Japan), World Wildlife Fund for Nature World Watch Institute, Environmental Defence Fund, Survival International, OXFAM, Amnesty International etc. have actively supported the Narmada Protest movement at their respective levels. It is due to the pressure mounted by the international non-governmental organisation the World Bank was forced to set up an independent review commission. first time in its history, to review the R & R and environmental aspects of the SSP the major demands of the movement.

Organisations like Lokayan and INTACH and their leaders have contributed greatly in popularising the Narmada movement through their writings and organisational support. They have highlighted various issues of the project and have made aware the oustees about their rights. In addition to these, there are large number of other people, students and their organisation, independent political individuals who have been closely associated with the movement.



MAJOR ISSUES AND DEMANDS OF THE NBA.

Following the tradition of NSMs, the MBA does not aim at capturing state power or sole control of economic resources. But it has raised varied issues some are related to the interests of the oustees while some are general in nature. The issues and concerns of this andolan have not been constant, rather they have been changing with the passage of time according to needs and circumstances. Some of the issues raised by the NBA in its about 10 years of struggle are the following, which have been varied in the various phases.

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Regulatory and Debarment Forum.

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## FIRST PHASE

### 1. Just Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policies for the oustees

In the beginning the various organisations which later combined to form the NBA, were restricted to the demand of providing just and adequate alternative lands for the oustees. An important NGO named Arch-Vahini led by <sup>Anil</sup> patel raised issues of Just rehabilitation of the oustees being displaced by the SSP in Gujarat. SETU, an Ahmadabad based organisation with which Medha Patkar was associated, also joined to work on studying the problems of the state and preparing them for fighting their struggle. In this way, we see that various oustees organisations, social activists like Anil Patel, Ms. Medha Patkar and their organisations, various charity societies like the Rajpipla Christian Service society Organised the oustees and made them conscious about their rights and various aspects of the project. They exposed the weakness of the R & R policies and the lack of sincerity on the part of the government to implement them. They also objected to and protested against the arbitrary implementation of the project without providing alternative land for the oustees<sup>27</sup>..

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27. Pravin Seth (1994): Narmada Project : Politics of Ecological Development. Her Anand Publication, New Delhi.pg.57.

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This type of demand continued till 1989 by which time the project authorities were required to come out with detailed plans for R & R and environmental aspects of the project. When the project authorities and respective state governments failed to come out with the plans and went ahead with the construction of the project arbitrarily, the protest movement changed its ~~start~~ <sup>stand</sup> and ~~stand~~ <sup>started</sup> objecting to the very construction of the project.

## SECOND PHASE

2. TOTAL OPPOSITION OF THE NARMADA PROJECT:- when the three riparian states—M.P., Gujarat and Maharashtra where displacement occurred due to NVP, failed to come out <sup>with</sup> the ~~oustees~~ <sup>R&R policies for the oustees by 1989, the</sup> organisation decided to oppose the very construction ✓

of the project. They ~~realised~~ <sup>realised</sup> that the proper R & R policies were not possible under the present circumstances. The newly reshaped umbrella organisation i.e the Narmada Bachao Andolan launched an aggressive protest movement against the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Project—an important and ambitious component of the Narmada Valley Project (NVP) on various grounds. They are as follows:-

(A) No Just and Adequate R & R Policies were possible :- The first point on which the NBA attacked the construction of the

SSP and Narmada Sagar Project (MMP), the two major component of the NVP, has been the failure of the project authorities to come out with concrete R & R plans for the oustees, so oppose the dams in toto. It is being asserted that just and proper alternative R & R is not a matter of state's generosity. It is the fundamental right of the oustees granted by the constitution to have alternate places for living and alternative means of livelihood once they are displaced in the process of development of the country.

The NBA argues that no doubt, all development activities do involve social and human costs i.e displacement of people and deprivation from traditional means of subsistence. But it does not mean that every displacement or deprivation of whatever scale, affecting whichever communities, caused for whatever project, undertaken in the name of 'development' is justified. The NVP is such a development project which has been undertaken without considering the scale of displacement of millions of weaker and marginalised sections i.e, the tribal people and poor peasants, of the society without having just and adequate <sup>policy</sup> for their rehabilitation and resettlement.

No doubt, very generous provision relating to R & R policies for the oustees had been provided by the Narmada

Tribunal award of 1979 and the world Bank's loan and credit agreement of 1985, but the concerned riparian states have failed to implement these provisions for one or another reasons.

In order to make our point stronger we would like to see the provisions relating to R & R, stipulated under the Tribunal award and World Bank loan and credit agreement, and their implementation by the project authorities -

Provision under the NWDT award:- It is true that the NWDT award had provided very generous provision for R & R for the oustees, never undertaken in Indian development history, but these provisions have not been implemented with sincerity. The Tribunal Award had made the following provisions—

- i) every family in the submergence area losing 25 percent or more of its land, would receive a minimum of 2 ha/5 acres of irrigable land in the command area ;
- ii) every major son above the age of the 18 years to be considered as a separate family for R & R purpose;
- iii) The oustees have the option or 'choice' either to resettle in their home state or in Gujarat. In each case, the Government of Gujarat is required to bear the entire cost of the R & R for the oustees in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Inspite of these so called generous provision, the Tribunal award may be criticised as it did not make any provision for the so called landless oustees (i.e people having not legal patta which has never been cared in the tribal areas). It also did not mention the problem of the oustees of Gujarat. The Tribunal estimated the number of oustees families in M.P and Marashtra to 6603. Today this figure exceeds to above 25,000. Futher more, the 'encroaches' and Canal- Affected Persons (ACPs) have also been not taken into consideration.

Provisions under the World Bank's Credit and Loan Agreement<sup>28</sup>

While entering into a credit and loan agreement with India to finance the SSP with US \$ 450 million, the World Bank provided some safeguards to protect the interests of the oustees resulting from this project. Under this Agreement ,it was provided that the PAPs (Project Affected Persons), must :

- i) improve or at least regain their previous standard of living;

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28. Independent Review Commission Report. Resource Future International (RFI) INC. 1992.

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- ii) be relocated as village units, hamlets or families, in accordance with their choice.
- iii) become fully integrated within the community in which they are resettled; and
- iv) be provided with the appropriated compensation and adequate social and physical rehabilitation infrastructure.

In addition, the Project authorities were required to ensure oustee's participation while providing R & R facilities to them. The World Bank's Agreement provided separate loan for the project and separate for the R & R facilities so that R & R policies would not be affected on the plea of paucity of funds . Above all, ~~all~~ these policies were to be monitored and evaluated by independent social science research organisation. As a result, three social science institutions Tata Institute of Social Sciences (Bombay); Centre for human Settlement and Environment (Bhopal); and the centre for Social Studies (Surat) were assigned the monitoring and evaluation tasks in Maharashtra, M.P, and Gujarat respectively.

The three riparian states were required to submit semi-annual reports to the Government of India about their progress in areas of R & R .For this purpose, a central agency, the National Institute of Construction Management and

Research (NICMAR) was appointed by the Narmada Control Authority to monitor compliance with the provisions stipulated under the tribunal and the World Bank's Agreement.

Now, we will see the implementation part of these provisions by the three riparian states which are substantially inadequate, creating resentment among the oustees and consolidating their protest movement.

R & R Policies in Gujarat : The R & R policy-package for the oustees of Gujarat has been acclaimed as among the best and most progressive by the Sardar Sarovar Project authorities. But the reality is that the Gujarat government has never enacted any legislation for the oustees in the states > Neither the Tribunal award has mentioned about the oustees of Gujarat relate to SSP. However, in 1979, the Gujarat government issued a resolution defining "oustees" and facilities granted to them resulting out of any project in the state. Again in 1987-88, the state government adopted an R & R policy-package which echoed <sup>with</sup> the provision of the Narmada Tribunal award of 1979. Under it, every oustees family including major sons, is liable <sup>to</sup> get a minimum of 2ha/5 acres of arable land. Furthermore, landless oustees are also provided 2 ha of arable land. However the 'encroachers' and canal-affected persons have not been provided with any



provision. Further, even the legal oustees have been not fully resettled. For example, the legal oustees have been not fully resettled. For example, the oustees of Kevadi and Godher who were displaced 12 years ago (1977-78) are not fully resettled and are struggling for their survival. The Gujarat government has not been able to acquire required amount of alternate lands by using legislative measures such as land (ceiling) Act and land Reform Act. Instead, it is buying land at the market price which is not an easy task as it would involve a huge amount of money. Even though the Gujarat government claims to identify more than 39,000ha of waste land for the oustees, much of these lands have been found to be uncultivable.

R & R Policies in Maharashtra :- After M.P., it is in Maharashtra that the maximum number of people will be displaced spread over 33 villages. Among them nearly 80 percent will be tribal population<sup>29</sup>.

Till 1989, there was no clear-cut R & R policy in Maharashtra for the oustees resulting out of SSP. In 1989

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29. Independent Review mission Report, op.cit. pg.137.

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when the World Bank Mission warned that if Maharashtra would not formulate a concrete R & R policy-package by June 1989, it would terminate the loan agreement. Then Maharashtra government quickly passed a Government Resolution on June 29, 1989 setting out the provisions for the SSP oustees.

A most comprehensive policy for SSP oustees was in its 1991 Master Plan (Sardar Sarovar Project: Master Plan for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the Project-Affected Persons of Maharashtra state, Dhule; Office of the Add. Collector, 1991)<sup>30</sup>.

The provisions of this Master Plan echo<sup>e</sup> with the provisions of the World Bank's Agreement i.e., the oustees must improve or at least regain the previous standard of living, relocation of oustees in units and provided with adequate compensation. Here too, the oustees are to get a minimum of 2ha/5acre of irrigable land. And the 'landless' oustees—including major sons and major unmarried daughters of landed oustees, encroachers who encroached before March 31, 1978, unregularised encroachers and landless labourers etc. are to get a maximum of one ha/2-5acres of irrigable land

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30. ibid,

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on the basis of 'first-come-first serve' if they go to relocation sites with the oustees.

However despite the availability of such written provision, the Maharashtra government has been not able to resettle all oustees related to SSP. The oustees from maharashtra (from Munibeli) who had been relocated in Parveta (Gujarat) are not happy there due to lack of adequate evidence . Some of them are even reported to have returned to their original habitat. However, the oustees who are been resettleing in Taloder forest area (Gujarat) are happy to some extent due to the availability of forest resources. (Sardar Sarovar Project : Review of Resettlement and Resolution and Rehabilitation in Maharashtra. A TISS Report EPW , August 21, 1993.)

#### R & R Policies in Madhya Pradesh :-

Among the 3 riparian states Madhya Pradesh is likely to have maximum number of oustees displaced from th SSP and NSP. In 1985 M.P executed a state legislation for the resettlement of people displaced from any public project. In 1987, it approved policy for NSP oustees which was revised and extended to Sardar Sarovar oustees in 1989 put together in Sardar

Sarovar: Action Plan for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of  
oustees of Madhya Pradesh, January, 1992.

Under this plan too each landed oustee family is to get a minimum of 2ha of irrigable land. However, in order to get this benefit, a person must have cultivated land for at least 3 years prior to notification under Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act. Those who "encroached" land before April 4, 1987, are eligible for a minimum of one ha and a maximum of 2ha of land. However, no landed facilities have been provided to major sons of the landed oustees, encroachers who encroached after April 4, 1987, and the landless oustees<sup>31</sup>.

Like other two riparian states the M.P. has also not been able to resettle all oustees in the states. The 1991 April/May World Bank Review Mission observed the failure of M.P. to finalise the list of all oustees and harmonise its R & R Policies with those of Gujarat. Michael Baxter of the World Bank who visited in M.P. in August 1991 observed the progress on R&R as disappointing and R & R organisation a 'differential'<sup>32</sup>.

*dysfunctional*

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31. Sardar Sarovar Project : Review of R & R in Maharashtra, EPW August 21, 1993.

32. IRM op-cint 1992.

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From the above discussion it becomes clear that the Narmada Project authorities have not been able to properly deal with the problems of the oustees displaced by this project. The tribal population after their displacement has been rendered jobless and homeless and become marginalised in the process of present model of development.

There are various reasons for this poor condition of the Narmada oustees-

- a) Lack of future vision *while planning the* ~~including the~~ Narmada development project,
- b) lack of cooperation between the project authorities and the affected persons while formulating the R & R policies
- c) No proper prior studies of the scale of displacement of oustees,
- d) Non-availability of alternative land is *insufficient* amount; and
- e) The failure of the governments to acquire surplus lands by using legislative measure such as Land Ceiling act and Land reform Acts etc.

It also been observed that whatever amount of oustees who have been resettled are not happy in the relocation sites

due to lack of facilities like drinking water, proper housing, alternate source of livelihood, proper transportation system, medical facilities and other civil amenities. Therefore, the oustees are not in a mood to shift from their original habitat. These aspects of oustees problems have consolidated the protest movement in the valley.

The weakness and insufficiencies of the R & R policies have been revealed by many review commissions. The first study about the oustees problems was made by MARG a Delhi-based non-governmental organisation. The MARG has ~~has~~ published its studies reports in three volumes each entitled, "Sardar Sarovar Ousteas in M.P What do they Know"<sup>33</sup> which were published in May 1986, February 1987

and May 1988. The purpose of the study was to assess the extent of information communicated to the inhabitants of the affected persons in Madhya Pradesh by the government. The reports concluded that the tribal population had been not informed about the project and their displacement and R & R policies for them. Their lands had been taken away without

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33. Sardar Sarovar Ousteas in M.P : What do they know? op. cit.

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proper prior notification as required under the Land Acquisition Act of 1894.

The National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR) the official agency to monitor the R & R policies , in its report of January 1989 stated, "As a central monitoring and evaluation agency, we tried to locate if there was any detailed information for R & R work, we have not come across any such plan, central or inter-state or even at the level of individual state"<sup>34</sup>.

Even the Bradford Morse Commission Report which was set up by the World Bank to review the R & R and environmental aspects of the Sardar Sarovar Projects has finds that in spite of government effort, the Sardar Sarovar Project as they stands are flawed , that R & R of all those displaced by the projects is not possible under present circumstance..."<sup>35</sup>. The commission has criticised both the Government of India as well as the World Bank for not taking account the scale of displacement prior to commencement of the project and signing of the credit and loan Agreement.

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34. Rusi Engineer ( ) : The Sardar Sarovar Centrocersary ; Are the critics rights.

35. IRM, Pg.

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(B)- ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION :

Another ground on which the NBA is opposing the construction of the SSP, NSP and other components of the Narmada Valley Project is that the NVP would involve huge and unrecoverable environmental and ecological resources as it would submerge thousands hectares of forest and agricultural lands, huge loss of wildlives, historical monuments, the combined seismic impacts of all the reservoir, change in downstream and upstream ecosystem of the dam and other components of ecosystem. On these grounds the NVP has been described as "the Worlds greatest man-made ecological disaster by man"<sup>36</sup>.

According to official sources the Narmada Project would submerge over 37,000 ha of land of which 11,000 have been classified as forest land. But the non-official sources estimate this loss to be much greater. Baba Amte argues that this project would submerge about 1,30,482 ha of agricultural lands and 56,000 ha of forest land<sup>37</sup>.

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36. Claude Alvares and Ramesh Billorey (1984): Damming the Narmada. The Third World Network. 1989.

37. Baba Amte, Why I oppose the Narmada Project. the Indian Express, New Delhi March 13, 1990.

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In addition to this, huge amount of lands would be required to resettle and rehabilitate the huge amount of oustees. Further, no concrete efforts has been made to provide "compensatory offorestation" plans. Many experts has doubted the devastating impact of the Narmada Project in seiesmic terms. A team comprising geologists and geophysists from Accademy for Mountain Eenvironies, a Dehradun based NGO.which visited the Sardar Sarovar dam has questioned the SSP and its Riber-Bed Power House (RBPH) on geological limitations<sup>38</sup>.

The NBA argues that the Narmada Project was conceived without proper studies of the environmental aspects on the region. Further more resolution the provision of the Tribunal award and World Bank Agreement for environmental safeguards for the projects these have not been effectively and sincerely implemented . Even the conditional environmental clearance of the MOEF has been totally ignored by the project authorities as uptill now no concrete and adequate compensatory plans and seismological studies have been made by the project authorities.

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38. The Pioneer, New Delhi, August 20, 1994.

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The Morse Commission, appointed by the World Bank to evaluate and review R & R and environmental aspects of the SSP, has severely criticised the project authorities for non-compliance with the environmental provision of the project. The commission observed that "the history of environmental aspects of the Sardar Sarovar Project is a history of non-compliance."<sup>39</sup>

It further maintains that the environmental impacts of the projects have not been properly considered or adequately addressed"<sup>40</sup>.

(C) CCOST - NENEFIT ANALYSIS : The project authority of the Narmada valley Project proclaims that it is the most viable and economically sound viable project that this project has been most studied was undertaken after well consideration taking into account all pros and cons<sup>7</sup> various aspect of the Project . The SSP the most controversial component

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39. IRM, pg.xii.

40. Ibid, pg.xii.

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of the NVP has been projected as " life - line " of Gujarat. The NVP is treated as a " revalutionary Step, representing a break with traditional development project in India "41

The SSP is expected to provide many benefits including ~~changing~~ irrigation facilities to 1-8 million has of-land in Gujarat, 75,000 ha in Rajasthan; power facility of 1450 MW and Domestic and industrial water to over 30 million people including drought - prone areas of kutch and sourashtra in Rajasthan . It is also expected that this project would bring about Green Revolution as in Haryana and Punjab in all command Areas<sup>42</sup> .

On the other hand, the NBA and its supporters argued that the Narmada project is a faulty project in terms of cost - benifits analysis. It is argued that this project has been commenced without proper cost benifit analysis . The expected benifits have been over

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41. Prof Y.K. Alagh, while speaking on a seminar \* Narmada Project : Planning for the better Future at Ahemedbad . The Financial Express , New Delhi, November b, 1990.

42. B. G. Verghese, op. .

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estimated without assessing all costs occurring upon R&R and environmental destruction and social Costs, compensatory afforestation etc. For example when the SSP was commenced in 1988 its total estimated cost was Rs.6406 at 1406 crores. But uptill now more than Rs, 3000 crores has been spent and not ~~over~~<sup>even</sup> one half of the work has been completed . The NBA argues that if all costs including financial, social, human and environmental are concluded , the SSP Would cost about Rs. 25,000 crores,<sup>43</sup>

According to Planning Commission norms a river project must have a minimum cost - benefit ration of 1: <sup>1.5</sup> i.e forevery rupee spent, these must be a return of one and half rupees. But even in 1988 it was found that the cost benefit ratio of SSP was negative i.e less than 1:1 <sup>44</sup>.

It is also argued that if the project is not completed on time , it would cost more money . And we know that according to original plan the SSP was expected to be concluded by 1998. Since the work or the project is much

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43. N. B. A. , 1991-92.

44. C.C. Patel 1988: Review and rescheduling of the implementation Programme. Saudus Saconns and Narmada Sagar Project, Narmada Nigaim Government of India.

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behind schedule , its cost benefit ratio would further declined . therefore the NBA opposes the NUP on this ground.

(D) ECONOMIC UNVIABILITY: The NBA also opposes the Narmada Valley Project on grounds <sup>of its</sup> economic un viability. It is being argued that the estimated costs are escalating day by day . The SSP , the more important component of the NVP, was commenced with an initial estimated cost of Rs. 6406 crores by the Planning Commission. But since then its costs have greatly increased. The Tata Economic consultancy Services during 1983-84 estimated a cost of Rs. 4840 crores at 1981-82 economic price and at the cost-benefit ration of 1:64 and today its costs are expected to more than Rs25,000 crores. This escalating cost of the SSP and other components if the NVP is going to have serious repercussion for project authorities as well as for the people of the concerned states particularly after the withdrawal of the World Bank and donor countries from financing the projects. The government of Japan withdrew from financing the SSP in May , 1990 when the NBA in cooperatoin with other governmental and non-governmental organisations pressured citing R&R and environmental cause of the project . The World Bank withdrew in March 1993 when the Morse Committee recommended for this as the project authorities failed to implement the R&R and environmental aspects of the project.

Inspite of claims of the Project authorities that the SSP is not lacking financial resources the NBA argues that the SSP and other components of the NVP are not going to be financed in time as these projects are economically unviable.

### THIRD PHASE

#### RE-VALUATION OF THE NARMADA VALLEY PROJECT

After attacking the Narmada Valley Project (NVP) on the above mentioned grounds the NBA, in recent times, has raised an important issue / demand that is, reevaluation of the project. The NBA argues that since it has been proved by many review committees (World Bank appointed Mores Commission, Jayant Patel committees and many NGOs reports) that the NVP was begun without proper studies and appraisals of the various aspects of the project especially estimated cost, R&R Policy, Social & Cultural costs, and Environmental Impacts, there is need to evaluate the entire project taking into consideration all aspects of the project. It is also being argued that the expected benefits have been over estimated and the costs under estimated.

The NBA has been making demand since 1989 and has mobilised national and international public opinion with the cooperation of oustees , similar organisations and many governmental & non governmental organisations at national & international levels. On September 28, 1989 the NBA organised a historic Harsud ralley in M.P. demanding stoppage of the work on the SSP and evaluate the project<sup>45</sup>

In this ralley a large number of oustees from all three riparian States, social activists and their organisations similar movements , intellectuals and independent political persons had participated.

Again on March 6, 1990, the NBA led by Baba Amte and Rs. Medha Patkar, stagde a Rasta - Roko (Road Block) agitation <sup>46</sup> on the palghat bridge on Agra - Bombay route for 28 houses ,in order to force the project authorities to concede the demand of reevaluation of the project, keeping in view of the escalating problem of R&R in the state . Since then many mobilizations , like a dharnas at the Prime Minister residence at New Delhi in May 1990, one month-long 'Sangharsh Yatra' During December 1990 to January 1991, Jal

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45. The Indian Express, New Delhi , September 29, 1989.

46 The Times of India , New delhi, March 6 , 1990.

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samarpan Abhiyan in 1993 etc had taken place demanding reevaluation of the project . As a result in June 1991 the World Bank agreed to appoint an Independent Review Mission led by Morse which in its report published in 1992, has severely criticised the World Bank and the Government of India and three riparian states on R&R and environmental aspects of the project , In August 1993 , the Government of India also appointed a review commission headed by Jayant Patil and other five persons, which has also doubted various aspects of the project in its reports published in April 1994. All there reviewed commission reports have suported the NBA's stand that the Narmada Project has been launched without having proper appraisals of various aspects of the project.

However it must be noted that neither of these review commission have under taken a review <sup>of</sup> all aspects of the projects. ~~The~~ Morse Commision was asked to revies only R&R and environmental aspects. And the terms of reference of the Jayant Patil's Commision were severely restricted , which has been noted by the supreme court . As a result, the ~~app~~ court has directed the commision to undertake more detail analysis of the project especially relating to four issues - hydrology of the project , height of the dam, R&R <sup>polices</sup> ~~Policy~~ and environmental aspects of project.



ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT MODEL : It is a feature of the *NSMs that they not only criticise the existing conditions* conditions in the society but also provide an alternative model to replace the existing one , avoiding pitfalls in the existing one in order to establish a better conditins of living. Following this tradition, the NBA and its supports and sympathisers do not only criticise the Narmada Project and the existing development model in Indian. But at the same time, they have tried to provide an alternative to the SSP, NSP and other components of the NVP and the existing model of development in India.

First we would like to see the alternatives to replace the NVP and then we would examine the more general question of an alternative model of development in India.

After criticising the NVP on various grounds i.e financial social , cultural, and environmental costs, the NBA and its supports have provided the following alternatives.

Alvares and Romesh Billorey<sup>47</sup> argue that

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47. Alaneres (cloude) and Billorey (Romesh) (1988( : Daming the Narmada Natriy Publication . Dehradun.

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instead of constructing large multi-purpose projects like SSP and NSP which involve irreparable social, cultural and environmental costs, our planners should adopt the strategies of constructing medium and small size of single-purpose dams, river lift irrigation systems, taking the needs and situations of the local population.

Vijay Pranjpe<sup>48</sup> who has studied the Narmada Project in details argues that instead of constructing Narmada Project which has marginalised the local population as homeless jobless, and /landless agricultural and industrial labourers and has caused displacement of large amount of tribal people and caused great environmental loss, there is a need to construct medium dams on selective basis, use of non-conventional sources of energy like natural gas, which is available to tremendous extent in Gujarat. This would reduce or minimise the social, cultural and environmental costs.

Baba Amte<sup>49</sup>, criticises the Narmada Project on its proclaimed benefits, social and cultural and environmental costs. He argues that even the government reports indicate

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48. Vijay Pranjpe (1990) op.cit

49. Baba Amte, EPW, April 21, 1990.

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that 56 out of 69 talukas of water-starved Saurashtra (i.e.81 percent) are to get no water from the SSP. Two-thirds of Gujarat's drought-prone or arid talukas are to get little or no water from the project. It is the rich and prosperous region of Surat and Ahmedabad which would get maximum amount of benefits. As far as Narmada Sagar Project (in M.P) is concerned, its main rationale is storage of water for the SSP. Baba Amte also oppose the NVP as it would lead to large scale social and cultural genocide and large amount of environmental destruction. In terms of alternative to the Narmada Project, he argues that instead of saying a firm no to the projects, we need to work out an optional mix of improved dry-farming technology, watershed development, improving efficiency of major projects that are already complete, reclamation of land damaged by canal irrigation, immediate review of ongoing projects and expeditious completion of those regarded as viable and better utilization of already created irrigation potential."<sup>50</sup> He further argues that we must develop energy conservation measures, decentralised power generation and centralised natural gas plants.

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50.op.cit.

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These are the alternatives to the NVP suggested or put forwarded by the NBA and its supports. However, the project authorities and pro-dam scholars don't see anything substantial in them. To them these alternatives are ideal and impractical families. For example, B.G. Verghese says "all these alternatives" are fantasies or supplementary devices which would certainly have a place where and if technologically and economically feasible".<sup>51</sup>

He further argues that the small versus big dams debate is thoroughly misconceived and rests on an unscientific premises which sought to be sketched and made an absolute principle. ~~Small~~ <sup>Small</sup> dams are neither cheaper nor do they cause any less social, cultural and environmental destruction.

It means that although the NBA and its supporters have not been able to provide sound and convincing alternative to the NVP, they have made an important contribution in term of exposing various fallacies of the project which would be minimised if proper strategies adopted for the development of the region. But the project authorities are sticking to

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51. B.G. Verghese (1994) opp.cite, pg.228.

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only alternative to the NVP i.e to go with the project as it is.

In the following paragraphs we would like to see the questioning the existing model of development by the NBA and its vision for an alternate development model.

The NBA criticise the existing development model for its failure to secure equitable, just, sustainable development in the society. It is being argued by the NBA that since independence ~~we~~, all developmental activities in society have been undertaken in the interests of the richer sectors of the society i.e landed aristocrats and bourgeois class, neglecting the interest of the poorer section like tribal peasants and the rural poor. This has led to unequal development and various remaining socio-economic contradiction and social clashes in the society.

Most of the development projects are the products of the legislators and executives without people's participation which are never found to be above the risk and weaknesses. These are politically motivated, unscientific, based on unjustifiable vested interests, inefficient, ill-based in terms of strong and incomplete data-base without full-proof

plans for minimising and compensating the losses<sup>52</sup>.

In terms of an alternative development model, the NBA argues that the present model of development should be replaced by another in which all developmental activities would be undertaken, keeping in view the socio-economic condition of the local communities, and provide equal, just, viable and ecological sustainable development in the society. In all development activities people's participating and their consents must be ensured. In addition, ecological and environmental costs and economic costs must be taken into consideration while taking a decision for development.

In fact, the Narmada peoples struggle against the controversial Narmada Project, in the country has become a symbol of peoples struggle for a new model of development<sup>53</sup>. since last 10 years, the tribals, peasants,

men and women, in the valley along with their supporters, all

over India, have been <sup>waging</sup> ~~urging~~ an unequal battle against the

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52. Social Costs of the SSP: Displacement and Rehabilitation. NBA, November 1, 1993.

53. Tomarels sustainable and Just development: The people struggle in the Narmada Valley, NBA, 1991-92.  
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Narmada valley Development Project, pursued by the three riparian states with the cooperating of multinational financial institution. The NBA has become an important peoples movement in the post-independence era to preserve and protect our forests, lands independence of civil society and democratic social and cultural rights of the people of Narmada Valley as well as general population of the country.

The NBA is raising an important question regarding development pattern. For instances, whose development At whose cost? Is this development sustainable, socially *First* and sustainable for a nation like India? Do the benefits of the projects outweigh the costs? Who decides the costs and who chooses the benefits? Are the decisions taken after complete and comprehensive investigation.

To sum it may be said that though the Andolan has not been able to provide a credible and convincing alternative model of development, it has raised certain important question relating to the present model of development which need to be taken into consideration if one is interested in providing just, viable and sustainable development of the whole society. Even the movement leaders like Ms-Medha Patkar does not see that they have been able to prevent a complete and detailed alternative of the present development

policy<sup>54</sup>. Himanshu Thakkar, another activists of the NBA thinks that due to lack of resources both human and financial the movement is unable to come out with a concerted policies and programmes for an alternative development model<sup>55</sup>..1s1

However, the movement and its supporters are working hard in this direction. In April 1 to 2, 1995, the NBA organised a two-day convention at Pune, involving a large number of activists, leaders and intellectuals and sympathisers. The theme or aim of the convention was to discuss a number of issues like

- a) Evaluation of action programme of NBA
  - b) Organisational structures of NBA at Narmada Valley national and international levels;
  - c) NBA and other people's organisation coordination
  - d) Struggles and Media, Experience of NBA
  - e) Judicial Process and Struggle of NBA
  - f) NBA in future and strategies
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54. Roy, DUNU and SEN, GEETI, "The strength of People's Movement". Interview with Medha Patkar in India International Centre Quarterly, vol 19, Nos 1 & 2, Spring-Winter, 1992. pg. 279.

55. Interview with Himanshu Thakkar, an NBA activist.

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- g) Planning for future action and
- h) Alternative Development Paradigm-sysmosism etc.

## STATE'S RESPONSE TO THE NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN

With regard to state's response to the social movement Prof. T.K.Domen points out four conceptual possibilities : facilitation, toleration, discreditation and repression<sup>56</sup>. He argues that if there is a congruence between the ideology of the state and that of a social movement, and the means adopted by the movement is legitimate or socially recognised the state would facilitate the movement. And if the ideology and goals of the movement is in conflict with the state's model, there would be confrontation or repression and discreditation, depending upon the nature of the state.

As we know the NBA is objected to the statist model of development and growth and challenging the role of the state as the guardian of the sub altern groups (tribal, peasants of the Narmada valley) it is bound to face the confrontationist attitude from the state. But, since the NBA is avoiding violent means of struggle and instead using non-violent means

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56. T.K.Domen, opp. cite, p.

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like dharnas , hunger strikes, public meetings, petitions, memorandums, it is not getting treatment like of earlier class movements i.e Naxalite and other peasant movement. Nevertheless, it is either not getting responses like toleration and facilitation.

From the very beginning the state's responses has been repressive and unresponsive to the movement and their demands and attempts have been made to discredit the movement. ~~the Andolan~~ <sup>And</sup> its demands and supporters have been described as 'anti-development', anti-national' and 'agents of imperialist powers' who are not interested in the development of the country.

Mr. Himanshu Thakkar<sup>20</sup> believes that with the change of leadership at the reign of the state power the states responses have been different to some extent .For example , when Mr.V.P.Singh was in power, the central government seemed to be responsive to the demands of the movement, but due to his political instability he could not take any concrete

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59. An NBA activist

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steps. When Mr. Sunderlal Patwa, the leader of B.J.P., was in power in Madhya Pradesh, the state government was very repressive and unresponsive to the demands of the Andolan. During Narmada Sangharsh Yatra (From December 25, 1990 to 31 January 1991), the Andolan leaders were badly treated and very often were lathicharged and fired by the M.P. Police. But this scale of repression and unresponsiveness has been minimised in Mr. Digvijay Singh regime who is supporting the demand of the movement to scaling down the proposed height of the SSP, so as to minimise the problems of R & R and environmental destruction. However in spite of this little shift in the state's attitude with the change in leadership the relationship between the Narmada movement and the project authorities has been one of non-cooperation, confrontation and unresponsiveness. On the part of the state this aspect of the movement would become more clear if we go through various mobilizational activities of the movement's struggle.

Though the Narmada Protest movement was started around mid-1980's it gained momentum by 1990 when it was able to mobilise a large number of people. And at the same time the project authorities tried to suppress the rising popularity of the movement. During the Narmada Sangharsh Yatra between December 25, 1990 to January 1991, the Gujarat government adopted harsh measures to stop the Andolanaries from

crossing the M.P Gujarat border at Ferkua. It did not even agreed to have talks with the movement leaders. And when, they tried to move into the state of Gujarat, the Gujarat police attacked them and they were lathi-charged.

On April 6, 1990 the M.P. police attacked peaceful dharna by the oustees of over 500 men & women at Badwani . Again in May, 1990 the state police attacked on the agitating villagers of Alirajpur tehsil, even old and pregnant women and children were not spared<sup>60</sup>.

Even the protesting masses in Maharashtra particularly oustees of Manibeli have recieved similar treatment from the Maharashtra police and state authorities. On November 19, 1993, while the oustees were agitating against the survey work in the villages of Maharashtra, Rehmai Punya Vasawa, a 15 years old boy of surung village , was killed in police firing<sup>61</sup> like this, the Narmada Andolankari have been attacked at several times.

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60. Sanjay Sanghvi and Alok Agarwal , State Repression in Madhya Pradesh: Target : Popular movements, EPW, November, 23 , 1991.

61. Bina Srinivasan, Repressiove in Narmada Valley, EPW, December 4, 1993.

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## NARNADA BACHAO ANDOLAN AS A NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Following the tradition of New Social Movements which emerged by the end of 1960's in the Nordic countries and in West Germany, the NBA was organised in the mid-1980's in India

Like all new social movements, the NBA has been organised by independent people's , outside the established political institution and political parties Unlike classical social movements, the NBA is not exclusively oriented towards the interest of a particular section of society, rather it has raised a variety of issues including social justice, ecology just and equitable and sustainable development.

There are certain features of the NBA which differentiate it from classical social movements, and put it in the category of NSM's,

i) Unlike traditional social movements, the NBA has got support from people from various walks of life, with diverse backgrounds. (For detail see section on social composition of the NBA).

ii) The issues and concerns of the NBA are of diverse nature oriented towards the interests of the Narmada oustees as well as to the general welfare of the society (See section in ideology and concerns of the movements,).

iii) It deals with a number of issues of which are interconnected. It stresses the interdependence of man, nature and society.

iv) The NBA shares some concerns with NSMs particularly ecological movements in the other parts of the world, thus emphasising the idea of universal interconnectedness of issues.

v) Unlike conventional social movements, the NBA adopts peaceful, non-violent and non-revolutionary means for struggle, seeking peaceful change or reform not revolutionary change in society.

vi) Unlike traditional social movements the NBA is loosely organised having increased peoples participation at various organisational units spread all over the region.

#### NBA AS A PEASANTS MOVEMENT OR AS ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT

As we have seen in chapter 2 while the ecological movement in the west has been opposed to over-industrialization and in favour of preserving the environment ~~in India~~ and maintaining ecological balance, the ecological movements <sup>in India</sup> have primarily been peasants or tribals movements who are fighting for their survival. The environmental issues have been important but secondary in nature.

The NBA though it often considered as an environmental movement has been primarily a peasant and tribal movement started by the tribals of the Narmada valley against the Narmada project which was displacing them from their houses ~~and~~<sup>and</sup> means of livelihood. It has raised issues like proper R & R policies for the oustees and of alternative source of livelihood for them. Though it has raised many issues related to environment and ecology like safeguard of forest, Wild life, etc., they are of secondary importance.

CONCLUSION :- The Narmada Bachao Andolan represent the notion of a long tradition of protest in the Narmada valley against the destructive Narmada project, which has led to the marginalization of the tribals and poor peasants in the valley.

In the beginning the protest movement was started by various oustees organisation in the submerged villages in three riparian states later on, these various oustees organisation were organised as an umbrella like organisation/movement i.e the Narmada Bachao Andolan. Since then the NBA is leading a powerful people struggle or mass movement on behalf of the people of Narmada valley.



In its about 10 years of long struggle, the movement has raised many issues like proper R & R policy for the trustees environmental and ecological safeguards, just and equal development pattern in the valley. It has questioned the present model of development for its unequitable, unviable and unsustainable and has raised the issue of an alternative development model. However, the movement has been not able to establish a convincing and credible and alternative development model.

Though the movement was started with narrow support base and limited issues, but with the passage of time it has gained wider support base and has broadened its issues which are related not only with the interest of the trustees of the Narmada valley, but <sup>along with</sup> ~~also~~ with the general welfare and common good of the society. By its nature, the movement has <sup>been</sup> able to mobilise a large number of people both in and outside the Narmada valley, including many similar movements and organisation and non-governmental organisation.

In terms of mode of operation the movement is working independently of existing political parties and political institutions. In fact, this movement has come out as the existing political institutions have failed to take up the issue of weaker and marginalised section of society i.e

tribals and peasants of the valley. In fact, this movement has come out as independent people's initiatives following the politics of grassroots mobilization. This movement does not aim at capturing state power, rather it is aimed at empowering the weaker section and democratization of civil society. That is the terrain of resistance of this movement has been civil society.

In spite of the hostile attitude of the project authorities the NBA has achieved many successes. It is due to the pressure mounted by this movement in association with many similar organisations and movements that the riparian states have come out with better R & R policies for the oustees. The World Bank, due to the pressure of NBA, set up an Independent Review Mission to review the R & R and environmental aspects of the SSP, whose findings strongly supported the stand of the movement. The NBA has also been succeeded in pressuring the central government to set up Jayant Patil committee to look into the various aspects of the project. Through its relentless struggle, the NBA and its supporters has made aware the people of Narmada valley about their rights and prepared them to fight for their rights. This has provided incentive to other similar movements who are struggling for people's rights.

In the last it may be said that though the movement was started for the people of Narmada valley, but now it is concerned not only for the interest of them, but it is struggling for the improvement of general social condition in the society. This movement is trying to establish a coordinated peoples movement incorporating all people's movements in the country, to safeguards the interest of the common people in the society.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

In a democratic society when the logic and dynamics of development fails to take into consideration the peoples aspirations, the logic of democracuy takes its own course when the formal institution of governance and the dispensation of justice and welfare have been eroded, new assertions of popular will have been taking place at the grassroots, Precisely at a time when the party system is losing credibility and the party leaders are themselves closing and contacting political spaces new institutional spaces are opoening up and have given rise to the phenomenon of 'the non-party political process' or 'New Social Movements ' in almost all parts of the country ( Rajni Kothari (1989) ,Politics and the people , Ajanta Publication ,NewDelhi )

Though in India NSMs are a part of the world- wide phenomenon of NSM, they are different from their Western counterparts in term of issues . While in the West , these movememnts are primarily concerned with assertion of new identities and widening of 'quality of life',the Indian Social Movements, are cencerned with the variety of issues ,

from preservation of natural resources to assertions of new identities ( Women's Dalit's movements, reform of socio-political spheres of, society (civil rights movements, human rights movements), democratization and decentralisation of decision-making process and preservation or respect of economic rights of the marginal sections (Narmada Banalok Andolan) etc.

In fact the Indian NSMs are movements of the marginalised sections of society, who are struggling for the maintenance of their social, political, cultural, human and economic rights by the state in association with other sections of society which are aware and sympathetic to their grievances. Thus, these social movements also represent responses to the various crises in society such as the federal system and institutions of local autonomy; devastation or destabilization of natural resources; the degrading women ~~as~~ commodities; the marginalization of tribals and peasants in the development process etc. Though, some of the responses to the social crisis do come from traditional/conventional struggles waged by political parties, trade unions and the like. But the bulk of these responses are in the form of independent citizens initiatives, of voluntary and non party formation

The new social movements work outside the logics of both dominant ideologies i.e. liberal and Marxist unlike the liberal ideology, this (Phenomenon of NSMs) does not seek the furtherance of individual self - interest heedless of social development. Similarly while the logic of marxism seeks liberation and the empowerment of the proletariat i.e the industrial working class the logic of NSMs seeks the liberation and the empowerment of all marginalised sections of the society including peasants, tribals women, dalit suppressed nationalities and as well as industrial working class . Thus the ideology of NSMs recognises that there multiple sources of oppression and exploitation in society , not all of them deriving from factors relating to the mode of production . Consequently , the NSMS donot align with any dominant political ideology. Rather they attempt to maintain autonomy and independence in their area of operation .

The domain of the NSMs is 'civil society'. They operates with the direct and increased mobilization of people at gressroots level. However, in order to intensify mobilization, they maintain close cooperation and coordination with simmilar movements and organisation particularly voluntary and nongovernmental organizations . Some independent political persons do also support these movements . Most importantly , these movement get support from

the 'new middle class mediators, called the activists, upper and middle classes in their social origin but identifying themselves with the lower orders of society - the poor, the oppressed and whole variety of constituencies ranging from the untouchable castes and destitutes among the tribes and the ethnic minorities to the victims of sexual, ethnic ecological and generational discrimination, atrocities and violence.

Thus, these social movements are multidimensional in nature. Whether, it is in chipko movement or the Chhatisgarh minor's struggle, the NBA or the various Dalits movements in Maharashtra, Gujarat the struggle is not limited to economic or political demands, but seeks to concern ecological and cultural issues as well.

Though, the phenomenon of NSMs has only lately become visible in Indian politics i.e by the end of 1970's or early 1980's. In a short span of time this phenomenon has become an important socio political force challenging the dominant model of development of the state and questioning its legitimacy or claim to represent the interests of the weaker section of society. This has mobilised the state authorities to take several measures in order to improve socio, economic, and political ~~aspects~~<sup>aspects</sup> of civil society. For

example, it is due to mounted pressure exerted by voluntary and non-governmental organisation, that the central government has decided to do away with the draconian law i.e TADA. Further, many measures have been adopted to improve the living condition of the tribals and womens, industrial or agricultural labourers etc.

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is one such movement which has emerged as an important social force challenging the pattern of development in the Narmada Valley by the tribals of th valley questioning the legitimacy of the state to represent their interests with the interest of the dominant classes—industrialists and big landlords.

The NBA is a culmination of a long-time protest movement by the oustees of the Narmada Valley who started this movement against their displacement and destruction by the Narmada Valley Development Project (NVDP). The NVDP was launched ostensibly to develop the Narmada regim with the utilization of waters of Narmada river spread over M.P, Maharashtra and Gujarat. But this project has led to the displacement of the tribal people without providing them alternative rehabilitation and resettlement, in the name of development.



In the beginning the protest movement was started by various oustees organisation from the late 1970s . However these various oustees organisation got united under an umbrella like organisations i.e NBA around mid-1980's with the active support of some social activists (Medha Patkar and Baba Amte) who organised the oustees and made aware about their rights and negative impacts of the project on their socio-economic, cultural and environmental condition. Thus, later on this protest organisation was transformed as a protest social movement.

In its long history of about 10 years, the NBA has raised many issues. In the beginning its demands were restricted to proper R & R policies for the oustees. It was only after a painful realisation that there was not enough land to rehabilitate those who would be affected, as a gradual recognition of a whole host of problems grim condition at the resettlement sites, incomplete environmental studies, additional displacement of more than double the original estimate of 100,000 peoples gross exaggeration of benefits etc). that a decision was <sup>taken</sup> to oppose the NVP and to seek a comprehensive review of the project. Recently, the NBA has raised a more general but important issue, that is a demand for an 'alternative developmental model' based on equal, just, viable and sustainable development.

In fact, the NBA may be seen as a product of the development strategy adopted in our country since independence. All developmental activities have been undertaken with 'political motive' keeping in view the interest of the dominant classes i.e industrialists and big landlords, neglecting the aspiration and needs of the weaker sections (tribals, peasants and landless labourers. The externalities of the project on the surrounding environment have also been neglected. This development model has led to skewed development in our society, as a result of which there have been wide-spread protest movements for example, the 'Green Revolution' was adopted keeping in view the interests of the big landlords, which led to the marginalization of small and marginal farmers. As a result, there was a powerful peasant movement.

Similarly, the NVDP has tried to benefit to the industrialists and big land lords of the region and has led to the marginalization and destruction of tribals of the valley. This has other externalities in term of environmental destruction and ecological disturbance by submerging forests, agricultural lands or forest lands, wildlife, historical monuments etc. It is because the NVP was commenced without proper appraisals and studies of various aspects of the

project.

The popular movement in the Narmada Valley , representing a significant proportion of those who would be affected by the Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP), (NSP) or other components of the Narmada valley project (NVP), has emerged as one of the most unique popular struggles in the post-independence period, in this country. Politically, it shares, in part, the legacy of the earlier rebellions against the British- particularly in our tribal areas as well as the protracted Jharkhand agitation, in that , it articulated both a reaction to centralised state control over local economies as well as the imposition of 'remote' administrative and political procession on local societies. At another level, however, its politics is significantly different it is not, for instance , a class movement; neither it is an effort to redraw the internal boundaries of the country into a more politically autonomous region.

The challenges of the NBA are obviously not confined to the dam on the river Narmada. They are closely linked to other popular struggles who are struggling against the victimisation by the paameters of development and asserting their socio-cultural and economic rights. This movement is questioning the tyranny of the official 'expert'- the

economist, the engineer, the consultant, who assumes that his/her model is the only truth. This movement is demonstrating how this arrogance has reduced complex natural and social systems into commodities. (Smitu Kothari, Lokayan Bulletin, May, August, 1991).

In spite of hostile attitude towards the movement and its supporters by the states, the NBA has been able to mobilise a large measure popular support in its favour, raising the demands of the oustees, and for internalization of the externalities of the Narmada Project. The NBA has offered the most vocal and sustained struggle from the grassroots against the states agenda of development in general and of damming in particular.

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