



Netaji Subhas Open University  
(Established By Act (W.B. Act (XIX) of 1997 and Recognized by U.G.C)  
School of Social Sciences,  
DD – 26, SECTOR – I, SALT LAKE CITY, KOLKATA – 700 064. Phone : (033) 4066-3220,

Memo No: SSS/KLY/190/23

Date: 26.04.23

**Report of the UGC-DEB Sponsored One Day National Seminar on The Indian Democracy and the rise of the Marginal: A Cross Disciplinary Approach held on 31.03.23**

The UGC-DEB Sponsored One Day National Seminar on The Indian Democracy and the rise of the Marginal: A Cross Disciplinary Approach was held on 31.03.23 at Subhash Chandra Sabha Ghar, 7th Floor, Netaji Subhas Open University. The inaugural session started at 11.00 Am with the Welcome Address by Professor, Chandan Basu, Director, School of Social Sciences, NSOU. It was followed by an Inaugural Address by Ranjan Chakraborty, Professor of History, Jadavpur University. Thereafter the Key Note Address was delivered by Swaraj Basu, Professor of History, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU.

Professor Swaraj Basu asserted that today Dalits have succeeded to make their presence felt in representative government and also have participation in policy making at governmental level. But fragmentation within the dalit community along ideological lines for various reasons weakened the collective voice of dalits in determining their future. Electorally dalit parties have lost their strength because of division of dalit votes but dalit assertion in different forms in different regions have forced mainstream political parties to accommodate their interests in political agenda. Globalization, modernization, rise of centrist politics had its shadow on dalit assertion for rights. Basic needs of livelihood, health and education for majority of dalits are still a major concern but governments at national and state levels failed to address these concerns.

He maintained that majority of dalits are caught in vicious circle of poverty which the welfare measures of the government have failed to mitigate. Ambedkar rightly cautioned that ensuring political right is not adequate to make a democratic society. Social democracy alone can ensure equal right to masses. In his words “A political democracy without economic and social democracy is an invitation to trouble and danger.” So long caste and class oppression continue, political right to marginalized will fail to sustain democracy in any society. Democracy defined as ‘government of the people, by the people and for the people’ becomes really meaningful when marginalized voices are truly empowered to protect their interests.

This was succeeded by the Address of the Guest of Honour, Sobhanlal Dutta Gupta, Surendranath Banerjee Chair Professor of Political Science, University of Calcutta. He deliberated on the rise of the marginalized in Indian politics over the last few



Netaji Subhas Open University  
(Established By Act (W.B. Act (XIX) of 1997 and Recognized by U.G.C)  
School of Social Sciences,  
DD – 26, SECTOR – I, SALT LAKE CITY, KOLKATA – 700 064. Phone : (033) 4066-3220,

decades has deepened the meaning of democracy and generated a new kind of politics, the impact of which may broadly be described as: (a) Politics of recognition (new identities , i.e., lower castes, communities, ethnic groups etc); (b) Politics of visibility : the marginalized groups are now seen, as they are making their presence felt across the country. (c) Politics of claim: the demands of the marginalized are being articulated and transmitted through political parties and social organizations. This means objectification of a subject who remained unexplored.

It has also unfolded a set of problems although these were already there before the rise of the marginal, when Indian society was heavily predominated by the Brahminical hierarchy. He emphasized upon the following points:

- (a) Politics of celebration, superseding the politics of recognition, when one's identity is declared sovereign.
- (b) (b) Politics of exclusivity.
- (c) (c) Politics of intolerance, which at times generates violence.

The Implications were many such as: (a) Decline of ideology; (b) Valorization of the individual, leading to authoritarian political practice; (c) Obsession with the micro leads to disengagement from the macro, which jeopardizes the future of democracy.

The speech was followed by the Vote of Thanks by Sri. Debojit Goswami, Assistant Professor of Public Administration, School of Social Sciences, NSOU. Immediately after a short tea break, the First Technical Session was started. The session witnessed many vivacious and engaging papers presented by the young scholars and professionals. The session was chaired by Professor Pujan Sen of Public Administration, NSOU. The session was followed by Lunch which soon gave way to the second technical session that was presided over by Professor Sujit Narayan Chattopadhyay of Public Administration. The session too was made invigorating and it strode past through presentation of a cornucopia of diverse topics related to the theme of the day. The glorious day came to an end with distribution of certificates to the paper presenters by the Director and his faculties.

*Srabanti Choudhuri*

---

Dr. Srabanti Choudhuri,  
Organizing Secretary  
Assistant Professor of Sociology,  
NSOU