

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over the last four decades, especially since the seventies, there has been a visibly dismal trend of erosion in stability and authority of India as a State leading to a situation which Kohli designates as the "crisis of governability"¹— a situation more or less common to all the developing countries. The social and psychological ingredients of what social scientists define as 'crisis' exists in contemporary Indian society, e.g. perception of generalised social and ~~cultural~~ anomie, an acute sense of disorientation both among the intelligentsia and the public, unintended structural shifts and imbalances in society rendering older paradigm of national development open to doubts or even total rejection by some and the breakdown in the national consensus on the social and cultural design of society.² In the initial two decades after independence, many observers on Indian politics were sceptic about India's political viability.³ But the nation did not disintegrate and democracy has survived there. Despite these initial signs of moderate success the political concern that has been growing since the 1970s involves a different sets of questions as to whether India's democratic government will be able to simultaneously accommodate conflicting interests and promote socio-economic development; the basic framework of the Indian political system will remain intact with its basic characteristics; and the society will remain integrated exhibiting a smooth state society relationship. These questions become all the more relevant when one finds that India's governments that have been elected with large majorities have repeatedly failed to translate popular support into effective policies. The ruling elite has lost its contact with the people and even the genuine demands and popular aspirations of the people remain unfulfilled. The country is confronted with a phenomena of peasants revolts, unborn tensions, religious and fundamentalistic revivalism, insurrections and unabated orgy of violence and terrorism. Violence, crime and corruption have come to be associated with political life at all levels and people of India feel deceived and disenchanted with the performance of the system.⁴

Under the circumstances, we witness the proliferation of protest movements with the pronounced aims of expressing dissent from conditions of powerlessness, deprivation, injustice or loss of identity and seeking various remedial empowerments and entitlements. Numerous protest movements are going on in India and no serious effort has been made to find solution to them. In many cases, the cause of these movements is assumed to lie in the economic exploitation of the resources of the state by the people belonging to other states or even by the Union government. In several cases, the ethnic identity of the minorities and sometimes the people desiring to preserve their distinctive cultural and tribal heritage become the sole source of tension and agitation. In addition, protest movements from several segments of the Indian society are raising their voice of anguish and resentment for being ignored by the ruling elite. It is also assumed that the roots of India's growing problems of governability due to numerous protests and dissents are more political than socioeconomic. A highly interventionist state dealing with a poor economy has become an object of intense political competition leading to frustration for some in the game of politics thus resulting in the mobilization of common people for gaining access in and control over the political competition.⁵

It therefore, implies that as long as the feeling of discrimination, deprivations injustice and denial of fair treatment and genuine demands of such groups continue to exist, the phenomenon of protest in one form or other will continue to operate.⁶ As such, past experience shows that these protest movements have affected and are bound to affect the entire process of nation building and national integration in a multi-lingual, multi-regional, multi-religious and multi-ethnic polity of the continental size and importance of India. In fine, these protest movements, in ways as varied as the movements themselves have influenced and tend to influence the working of the Indian social, economic and political system in general and the federal governance in particular.

However, as remedial measures to counter the negative impact of these movements, India has witnessed a number of political accords concluded with the sole aim of meeting the grievances of the agitating section of the people in a particular region. The objective of these accords may also be to contain the intensity and expansion of these movements beyond the region so that they cannot assume the

national dimension thus challenging the legitimacy of the regime in power. But these accords could not provide respite to the ongoing resentments of the agitating people for various reasons.⁷ Hence, protest movements, now turned to be broader ethnic secessionist movements continue to operate with more vigour and intensity thus causing profound impact on the society and the polity as a whole.

Two broad perspectives may be identified on the perception of protest movements in India. At one end lies the view that these protest movements are to be viewed as potential instruments for bringing about desired change in the society. On the other hand, there is the perception which presupposes that these movements are antithetical to the smooth governance of the polity and as such, halt economic growth and social change. Accordingly, protest movements seem to pose threat to the basic structure and characteristic of the socio-political system and its legitimacy in general.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY :

Given this background, the present study seeks to explore the various causes of protest movements, their nature, leadership pattern, ideological orientation, and their overall impact on the political system and process in India. The study, by way of examining the various perspectives and theoretical frameworks about the protest movements also seeks to evaluate whether protest movements in India have been the rational instruments for bringing about desired social change or are responsible for the growing systemic crisis, leading to the so called crisis of governability. In fine, the present study is a modest attempt at explaining the relationship between the protest movements on the one hand and the state and the society on the other.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK :

It has been a worldwide phenomenon that the unprivileged and under privileged sections of the society, whether they are racial, religious or ethnic minorities or low castes and classes, organise themselves to fight against inequalities, and deprivation perceived to be addressed to them. They often violently agitate for their perceived

legitimate share in economic opportunities, social positions and political power. Widespread collective mobilization centered around such objectives has led to organized social movements with defined ideologies and leadership, which have brought about significant structural and organizational changes in the societies from where they originate.⁸

Thus viewed, "social movement and protest, which is a manifestation of it, is an effort to redefine or recapture the past, to restructure the present and reorient the future."⁹ The English word 'movement' derives from the old French verb 'movoir' which means to move, stir or impel, and the mediaval Latin "movimentum".

The word has different connotations. It was used to denote, now obsolete, certain "liberal", "innovatory" or "progressive" parties or functions as in 'movement party' in early nineteenth century Britain. The other usage of the term refers to 'historical tendency', 'trend', 'current', or 'drift'. As against these, the general English usage of 'movement', as found in the Oxford English Dictionary, designates a "series of actions and endeavours of a body of persons for a special object."¹⁰

However, there is no precise definition of the term 'movement'. It has virtually become "all things to all men."¹¹ Writing from a political scientist's point of view, Mackenzie argues that although political science cannot afford to neglect politicised movements, it is very difficult, in practice, to prevent such work from becoming "all inclusive and therefore vacuous."¹² Many writers have used the term, almost interchangeably with such words as 'organization' 'association', 'group' and 'union'. They sometimes appear to have hit on the word quite arbitrarily or for purely stylistic reasons.¹³ Like many other words, such as 'people', 'popular', 'democracy', 'equility', 'liberty', the term 'movement' is still regarded as a "hurrah! word."¹⁴

The term 'movement' gained currency in European language in the early nineteenth century—a period of social upheaval concerning the political leaders and authors, using the word 'movement', with the emancipation of the exploited classes and the creation of a new society by changing property relationships. However, since the early fifties, various scholars have attempted to provide thorough going definitions

of the concept of social movements. The works of Rudolf Heberle, Neil Smelser, John Wilson and Paul Wilkinson are important in this regard. Rudolf Heberle defines a social movement as a collective effort to transform established relations within a particular society.¹⁵ Neil Smelser views social movements as directly oriented towards a change in social institutions and social norms.¹⁶ Wilson defines social movement as a conscious, collective and organized attempt to bring about or resist large scale change in the social order by non-institutionalised means.¹⁷ Accordingly to Tilly, this definition by Wilson belongs to the Weberian tradition in sociology which says that a group of people somehow orient themselves to the same belief system and act together to promote changes on the basis of a common orientation.¹⁸ Most writers tend to agree with Paul Wilkinson's view that two basic elements, namely, a minimal degree of organization and a commitment to change, are necessary for the existence of a social movement.¹⁹ Paul Wilkinson gives the following working concept of 'social movement'.

1. "A social movement is a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into 'utopian community'."
2. A social movement must evince a minimal degree of organization, though this may range from a loose, informal or partial level of organization to the highly institutionalised and bureaucratised movement and the corporate group."
3. A social movement's commitment to change and the *raison d'être* of its organization are founded upon the conscious volition, normative commitment to the movement's aims or beliefs, and active participation on the part of the followers or members.²⁰

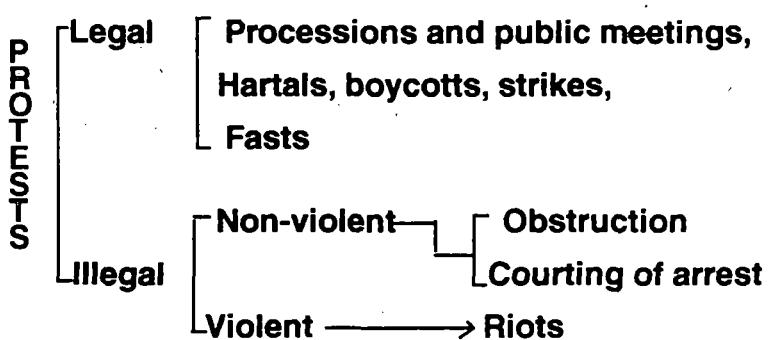
An analysis of the working concept shows that it does not claim to provide a precise definition. It is too broad, and encompasses both institutionalised collective action through legal means as well as violent extra institutional collective action. The 'minimum degree of organization' is problematic because it is difficult to say precisely what this 'minimum degree' is. It is also not clear whether social movement begins

with setting up an organization with committed members, or the organization evolves in the course of time as the movement develops. Finally such a definition may exclude protests and agitations which may not have an organization to begin with. However, despite these difficulties in Wilkinson's working concept, it has indeed, the heuristic value.²¹

Broadly thus, social movements may be defined as a wide variety of collective attempts in which the participants organize themselves to bring about a change in certain social institutions or to create an entirely new order or to resist a change.²² It has specific objectives to be achieved, an organizational structure, and may also have an ideology oriented towards change. It appears from all the definitions cited above that social movements encompass both institutionalised collective actions such petitioning, fighting legal battles in courts of law etc. and non-institutionalised collective actions such as protests, agitations, strike, gherao, riot etc. Thus, protests may not strictly seem to be social movements. But more often than not a social movement develops in course of time, and it begins with protest which may not have the 'organization' or ideology for change. Taking an example from Shah, when the students of the engineering college in Gujarat protested against the Mess bill, it was a relatively spontaneous act. But that protest led to the Nav Nirman Andolan of 1974 in Gujarat.²³

Thus, it can be safely said that protests is a form of social movement. It is a non-institutionalized mode of bringing about the desired state of affairs—either change in the existing socio-economic and political order or resist that change. There may be a large number of techniques of protests. These include small public meetings, leaf letting, posterizing, submitting a memorandum, press conference, press statements, mobile announcements, street corner meetings, long marches on foot, holding meeting at public places, mass rallies, processions, celebrating protest days, political drama, mass deputation, torch light procession, demonstrations, hartals, strikes, picketing, satyagraha, dharna, fasting, including chain fast, fast unto death, sympathetic fast, self immolation, destruction of public property, holding up of transport, uprooting of the railway tracks, damaging control boxes, dislocating telephone, and telegraph wires, burning of police stations and other government buildings, disturbing the public meetings of the opponents, gherao, go slow, mass casual leave, looting of public and private property, riot, localised attempts to throw off state authority and run parallel

administration, declared or undeclared warfare in a region etc.²⁴ David Bayley,²⁵ writing in the Indian context, has six primary forms of protests: i) Processions and public meetings. 2. hartals (work stoppage not aimed at employers), boycotts and strikes , 3) fasts, 4) obstruction, 5) courting of arrest, and 6) riots. These general type forms can be divided into two main groups: the legal and the illegal. In turn, the category of illegal protest can be subdivided into violent and non-violent. These distinctions Bayley has organized schematically as:



Though a distinction is sought to be made in terms of organization, ideology²⁶ and strength of participation, nature of the goal and coverage or area of operation between social movements and protest movements, these two virtually overlap, sometimes social movements assume its form through protest while protest in any form happen to be a precondition for social movement. For our purpose, then, protest movement may be operationalized as those collective actions—legal and /or illegal, violent and/or non-violent—which seek to bring about a desired state of affairs either by bringing about change or resisting any change in the existing order. Since it is a collective endeavour it needs to develop an organization and an amount of commitment to the goal and in turn, sharing to a set of ideas for legitimizing the goal and the means to reach the goal. The goal is indeed political, though may appear to be social because, to differentiate between social power and political power in the contemporary world is to obscure the reality and ignore the complexities of political processes.²⁷ Any collective endeavour to bring about social transformation – change in the labour and property relationship — and to struggle for justice, involves capturing or influencing political authority, though it may not be on the immediate agenda.

This has been the general trend that analyses of protest movements follow either a Marxist or non-Marxist framework. Scholars following the Marxist approach locate the causes of protest movements in the economic structure of the society. Antagonistic interests between the propertied and labour classes are inherent in a class based society which generates contradictions. The former use the coercive power of the state, as well as of other institutions, including religion, education, mass media, to impose their ideology on society and to control the exploited classes. The latter resist and protest and occasionally revolt or launch organized and collective action against the dominance of the propertied class. Members of the same class not only have common interest vis-a-vis other classes, but also share a common consciousness regarding their position in society and the common interest they share. This facilitates their collective action against the ruling classes and the state.

However, the dominant Marxist approach has been subjected to criticism by a group of Marxist historians, the Subaltern studies group. They have begun to study history from below. They criticise the traditional Marxists for ignoring the history of the masses, as if the 'Subaltern' classes do not make history of their own, depending solely on the advanced classes or the elite for organization and guidance. It is argued that the traditional Marxist scholars have undermined cultural factors and viewed a linear development of class consciousness.²⁹ On the other hand, the subaltern studies historians are strongly criticised by other Marxist scholars for ignoring structural factors and viewing consciousness as independent of structural contradictions. They are accused of being Hegelian idealists.³⁰

Non-Marxist scholars, while accusing the Marxist studies of being 'reductionist', 'mechanical' and of overdetermining economic factors, also suffer from great deal of variations among themselves in their approach to the analysis of protest movements. It is argued that mass movements are the product of mass societies which are extremist and anti-democratic and hence, masses are to be excluded from the day-to-day participation in politics which hampers the efficient functioning of the government.³⁰ The scholars adhering to the theory of political development, consider that the rising aspirations of the people are not adequately met by existing political institutions which are rigid or incompetent. As the gap between the two widens political

instability and disorder leading to protest and mass upsurge increases.³¹ Writing in the Indian context, some scholars explain that the protests and agitations in post-independence India are the result of the conflict between tradition and modernity³² while others blame the opposition leaders, parties and trade unions for instigating the masses to protest activities.³³ Rajni Kothari argued that protest or direct action was inevitable in the context of India's present day parliamentary democracy because the general climate of frustration, the ineffectiveness of known channels of communication, the alienation and atomization of the individual, the tendency towards regimentation and the continuous state of conflict between the rulers and the ruled—all these make the ideal of self government more and more remote and render parliamentary government an unstable form of political organization.³⁴ Kothari continues to argue that democracy in India has become a playground for growing corruption, criminalization, repression and intimidation of large masses of the people. The role of the state in social transformation has been undermined. People have started asserting their rights through various struggles.³⁵ Devid Barley observes that before and after Independence, the institutional means of redress for grievances, frustrations and wrongs—actual or fancied were inadequate and hence called for protests.³⁶

However, Kothari and Bayley confine their discussion to the direct action which are against the government. They do not consider the direct actions and protests against socio-economic dominance and power structure in society. A.R. Desai joins issue with Kothari and Bayley and argues that the movements and protests of people will continue till adequate political institutional forms for the realizations and exercise of concrete democratic rights are found.³⁷ He reiterates his position that the civil and democratic rights of the people are not protected by the constitution and hence, the movements for their protection have increased.³⁸

Given the above analyses of different dimensions of protest movements, theories, which are generally accepted as explaining the structural conditions and motivational forces that give rise to a protest movement, may be considered. There are three main theories that are relevant to the explanation of the protest movements:

- 1) Theory of Relative Deprivation; 2) Theory of Strain; and 3) Theory of Revitalization.

In addition, one more analytical framework is sought to be suggested in the present study for explaining the cause of protest movements. This may be conceptualized as the theory of Relative Deprivation of Elites of the Deprived.

The theory of relative deprivation has developed on two different lines: social mobility and social conflict. Although the authors of the 'American soldier'³⁹ were the first to use the notion of relative deprivation, it was Merton⁴⁰ who systematically developed the concept in relation to reference group theory and applied the concept to analyse social mobility. Later, Runciman⁴¹, following Merton, developed the concept in relation to reference group and problems of inequalities and social justice. In this approach, relative deprivation is made the basis of a study of social mobility as occurring through emulation and positive group behaviour. Marx and Engels⁴² recognized that dissatisfaction with the status quo was not determined by absolute condition but by relative expectations, thus leading to conflicting situation. Aberle,⁴³ defining relative deprivation as a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and actuality, treated it as the bed-rock for the study of social movements. Gurr⁴⁴ observed relative deprivation as a gap between expectations and perceived capabilities involving three general sets of value: economic conditions, political power and social status. This gap may originate when expectations remain stable but capabilities decline (decremental deprivation); expectations rise but capabilities decline (progressive deprivation); and expectations rise but the capabilities remain stable (aspirational deprivation).

However, the Relative deprivation theory is limited on that the structural conditions of relative deprivation provide only the necessary conditions. Sufficient conditions are provided by perceptions of a situation and by the estimate of capabilities by the leaders that they can do something to remedy the situation.⁴⁵ The theory ignores the importance of consciousness and the ideological aspects of the participants.⁴⁶ Similarly the theory assumes movements as 'temporary aberration' rather than as 'ongoing processes of change'.⁴⁷ For Gurr, deprivation is primarily psychological; therefore he does not deal with the socio-economic & political structure which is the source of deprivation.

The strain theory propounded by Neil Smelser⁴⁸ treats structural strain as the underlying factor leading to collective behaviour. Smelser considers from the structural functional framework, strain as the impairment of relations among parts of a system leading to the malfunctioning of the system and includes deprivation under strain. Structural strain occurs at different levels of norms, values, mobilization and situational facilities. While strain provides the structural condition, the crystallization of a generalized belief marks the attempts of persons under strain to assess their situation, and to explain the situation by creating or assembling a generalized belief. Both strain and generalized belief require participating factors to trigger off a movement.

Wallace⁴⁹ championed the theory of Revitalization. According to the theory, individuals involved in cultural revitalization process usually first of all realize the culture as a whole and then move gradually towards a movement for cultural change. Wallace posited that social movements develop out of a deliberate, organized and conscious effort on the part of members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture for themselves. He analysed the dynamics of revitalization movements in four phases: period of cultural stability, period of increased individual stress, period of cultural distortion and consequent disillusionment, and period of revitalization.

In all these theories what is common is the prime emphasis on the participants of a movement. The assumption is that if the people feel deprived of, or are under strain, or feel the necessity for the cultural revitalization, the movement will emanate, as if other factors and conditions of the movement will automatically follow. To accept this basic analytical framework in its totality is to oversimplify the reality. May be that there exists the objective conditions for a movement, namely, deprivation, strain and the urge for revitalization but the mere presence of this necessary condition will not lead to a protest or movement unless driven by a driving force—leadership, ideology and organization. It is true that at the initial stage of a protest or movement there may not be any well defined organization and ideology and once the movement gets triggered off, organization and ideology will get articulated. But it cannot be denied that to trigger the movement off, leadership is a concomitant necessity with the

prime necessary condition i.e. the people. Leadership provides the driving force for the movement. Under this framework of analyses, people's feeling and leadership to channelise the feeling need to be present simultaneously.

It is on this that the present study seeks to float the analytical framework that movements, and for that matter protests do not originate; they are made to originate and imposed on the passive, ignorant masses. Taking cues from Elic Kedourie's 'Nationalism'⁵⁰ and 'Nationalism in Asia and Africa'⁵¹ that nationalism is not a reaction against European political or economic exploitation (feeling of deprivation causing strain and/or, urge for revitalization!) but essentially an emotional reaction by Asian and African intellectuals against their rejection by Europeans.

On a similar vein, Banton observes "National consciousness was not an inherent feeling, but something taught and cultivated to serve specific ends."⁵² The role of elites in the emergence of nationalist movements is critical in Smiths' analysis. He distinguishes between the intellectuals who formulate ideals and definitions, and the professional intelligentsia which actively pursues nationalist goals which it perceives as being in personal as well as collective interests.⁵³ If we stretch the argument it will lead to the observation that consciousness is created, mobilised and imposed by the few for their own parochial interest to be garbed as universal interest for legitimacy. Iqbal Narain asserts that political elite exploits situations of regional deprivation and unrest and converts them into movements to forge and strengthen its individual and factional support bases.⁵⁴ Thus, it implies that political leaders excite regional or nativist sentiments (in the middle class) for their political ends. The framework may be elaborated as under:

As has already been mentioned, the poor economy and the limited economic resources on the one hand, and almost inevitably interventionist nature of the state in the developing countries entail intense political competition. Remaining in and around the power centre only ensures access to and control over the poor but otherwise lukrative economy and thus begets social and political status. Hence, one witnesses intense political competition among the aspirants of power and the aspirants even go to the extent of adopting irrational means to be in and around the power

centre. In view of the intense competition some of the aspirant political leaders in the game of politics, inevitably get frustrated because they are defeated in the game of power. This section of the frustrated leaders who are out of the helms of power centre/s but want to be around it mobilize the already deprived common people, mostly on primordial considerations, to protest, against their injustice, discrimination and deprivation. In reality, however, this section of the leadership wants to serve their personal parochial interest of achieving or regaining their social, economic and political position but that too, in the name of universal common interest. Thus, it implies that objective or necessary conditions of discrimination and deprivation alone may not necessarily lead to the protests and movements as is assumed by the relative deprivation theorists. Observation shows that in most of the cases, it is the frustration of the section of the leadership and the desire to be near the power centre that actually lead to the actual or perceived deprivation of the common people to be channelised into protests and agitations. Hence, it is not the existence and content of deprivation but the politics of deprivation that originates protest movements.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Given the objective of the study and the theoretical framework outlined above, the present study, while seeking to find out the general implications of the protest movements in India, seeks to address itself to the following questions:

1. To what extent, are these protest movements capable of expressing legitimised form of conditions of powerlessness, injustice or loss of identity of the different sections of the people ?
2. How far are these protest movements essentially remedial in nature ?
3. In which way, can these protest movements be related to the issues like relative deprivation of a section of population ?
4. What have been, in general, the leadership pattern and the strategies of

these protest movements ?

5. What has been the specific role of the Indian state in providing remedial reliefs to redress the oppressive aspects of state policy in contemporary times?
6. How can the protest movements be related to the issues of change and national integration in India ?
7. What are, in general, the nature and content of challenges of the protest movements and how do they affect the process of secularisation of politics and democratisation of the Indian polity?
8. How far is it correct to say that the Indian state, being substantially interventionist in character, has failed to change the deeper structures which operate in the background of the policy making process ?

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE :

In recent years, sociologists and social anthropologists have shown increasing interest in the study of protest movements—a field that has long been considered to be the field of the historians. Political scientists have, by and large, ignored this area.⁵⁵ And in India, Political Science has largely concentrated on the analyses of political institutions such as the executive, legislature parties, elections. The study of the politics of masses, their aspirations and demands, the articulation of their problems and their modus operandi in the assertion of their demands outside the formal institutional framework is, by and large, ignored by the political scientists.⁵⁶

The reasons for such an apathy is said to be the heritage of Indian political science. Earlier, under the influence of British tradition, Political Science was confined to political philosophy, formal government institutions and international relations. From late fifties, emphasis shifted to empirical studies under the influence of the Behavioural school developed in America. Positivism dominated analysis, and the question 'why' has been relegated to oblivion. Again, the concept of politics adopted by political

scientists influenced by the American and British tradition, confined to the narrow area of the political system. This dominant concept of politics delimit the study of politics to the functioning of the government and the state; or politics of the ruling class or elite. Finally, due to the dominance of the post world war II liberal political ideology and the structural functional approach there is greater emphasis in the social science literature on 'equilibrium and harmony' rather than on conflict and change. Political science though primarily concerned with power and conflict, has refrained from researching the issue of societal conflict for social change.⁵⁷ However, a small section of political scientists, both liberal and radical have begun exploring the area of protest movements for greater understanding and identifying their impact on the Socio-political and economic environment.

At the outset, mention must be made of Ghanashyam Shah's "Social movements in India : A Review of Literature."⁵⁸ In this volume, Shah reviews the literature available on social movements in India in general in an exhaustive and intensive manner thus making the task of a researcher on social movements in India easier. His other two works, namely, "Protest movements in two Indian states"⁵⁹ and "Caste association and political process in Gujarat : A study of Kshatriya Sabha" deal exclusively with protest movements, their origin, expansion and consolidation in specific context.

David Bayley,⁶⁰ writing in the early sixties, observed that the parliamentary form of government in India could not redress the grievances of large number of people and hence, that was the functional utility of public protests. Rajni Kothari, taking similar stand, argues that direct action is inevitable in India's present day parliamentary democracy⁶¹ and feels that mass mobilization at the grassroots level is both necessary and desirable.⁶² His other works-'State against democracy'⁶⁴, 'Transformation and Survival'⁶⁵. Rethinking development,⁶⁶ 'Politics and people'⁶⁷ also deserve mentioning as he, in all his studies succinctly analyses the internal dynamics of Indian politics. Taking an opposite stand, scholars like Phadke,⁶⁸ Aiyar⁶⁹ and Srinivasan⁷⁰ disapprove of agitations and protests in India after independence because they feel that recognised formal/constitutional means are enough for redressing the grievances of the people.

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Some scholars assert that protests are redundant in the Indian culture and civilization due to its 'multilinear character' and 'all pervasive hierarchy'. Moore⁷¹ Pratap Chandra⁷² and Badrinath⁷³ observe that because of the Brahminical ideology and hierarchical social structure, the oppressed classes have become docile, obedient, and fatalist. Gough⁷⁴, Thapar⁷⁵, Damle⁷⁶ and Dhanagare⁷⁷ refute such assertions and point to a number of struggles by the oppressed classes in the pre and post Independence India.

A. R. Desa, a noted sociologist has made significant contribution to this field. As a sociologist and social activist, he has analysed the problem from mainly human rights perspective. He feels that the parliamentary form of government, as a political institutional device, has proved to be inadequate to continue or expand concrete democratic rights of the people. The protests of people will thus continue till adequate political institutional forms for the realisation and exercise of concrete democratic rights are found⁷⁸. Desai reiterates his position that the civil and democratic rights of the people are not protected by the constitution. Consequently, the movements for their protection have increased 79, 80.

T. K. Oommen⁸¹ analyses the potentiality of protest as a source of change. He argues that the basic sources of change have been taken to be the economy or the agrarian, industrial or information revolution. In contrast, political revolutions, by definition, imply the transfer of power from one category to another and those likely to be deprived of it, as also those sections of the population who support the ruling elite, disapprove of protest. This 'displacement syndrome', Oommen says, renders the potential of protest as an instrument of change. In another book, Oommen⁸² explores and analyses the problematic of nation building in India. Some of these problems, the author argues, are the result of erroneous conceptions arising out of misplaced polarities juxtaposing nation vs. state, political nationalism vs. cultural nationalism, Indianism vs. localism. These dimensions coexist and are mutually reinforcing and enriching. The Indian genius is one of gradual transformation, piecemeal accretion and cautious reconciliation. Therefore the real task of nation building entails nurturing pluralism in all contexts : values, technology, culture.

Atul Kohli⁸³, in his penetrating and insightful study on Indian politics, describes how and explains why India has become difficult to govern. Kohli observes that the roots of India's growing problems of governability are more political than socio-economic. A highly interventionist state dealing with a poor economy has become a subject of intense political competition. The spread of egalitarian political values and the opportunities provided by democracy have, in turn, helped to transform what was once a heterogeneous social structure into many groups of mobilised activists. Failure of leaders to make timely concessions has only intensified political demands and activity.

Paul R. Brass⁸⁴, in his stimulating analyses of 'Indian Politics Since Independence', has argued that the Indian state, society and economy are in the midst of a systematic crisis which has intensified, revealing itself in secessionist movements and in increased inner caste and inter-religious conflicts. The issue before the country, Brass feels, is whether or not it can find within its own traditions the moral and material resources and the leadership to restore a political and communal balance in state and society. In another work, Brass⁸⁵ looks at elite competition as the basic dynamics which precipitates ethnic conflict under specific conditions. These conditions arise from the broader economic and political environment. He feels that the political economy of India induces strong conflicting drives towards centralization and decentralization in the Indian polity and this in turn, manifests itself in various forms of ethnic upsurges.

Zoya Hasan et.al⁸⁶, edited volume discusses and explores the potentially dangerous challenges posed to Indian polity. The essays in the volume examines in particular the unprecedented upsurge in communal, sectarian and regional tensions in the recent past and simultaneous emergence of religious, class and caste groups as powerful expression of political consciousness. Taken together, these developments have had the effect of bringing the very nature of the Indian state into question.

Another edited volume by Upendra Baxi and Bhikhu Parekh⁸⁷ addresses inter alia on the problematic of tradition and modernity shaping religious and secular

identities. Again, it focuses on the issues of civil loyalty and primordial politics emerging as a part of a dialectic shaping of modern India, the crisis of governability and the nature of Indian politics.

Rudolph and Rudolph⁸⁸ accepting the modernization paradigm seek to explain how the state in India came to play a dominant role in the economy and how the interplay between the state as an interest group and other interest groups in the society brought about a centrist thrust to economic policies. The book's basic thesis appears to be that the formulation and the implementation of economic policies in India have been influenced by the "overload" on the state which has changed its character from 'being autonomous' to 'being constrained.' In a similar way, Pranab Bardhan⁸⁹, Francis Frankel⁹⁰ and C.P. Bhambri⁹¹ deal with the economic dimension of various problems confronting the Indian polity.

David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp's⁹² edited volume deals with the relationship between language, religion and political identity in South Asian perspective. Primary attention in the volume is paid to linguistic and religious factors in the making of political identities and the formulation of new political demands, but the operation of these factors is seen as being conditioned and in some cases determined by grander political and economic forces.

M.S.A. Rao's edited volumes⁹³ are the attempts to bring together twelve studies of diverse social movements in different parts of India. The papers included in the volumes provide valuable insights into the genesis of the concerned movements, their ideological foundations, organization and leadership, event structure, internal dynamics and social and cultural consequences.

Besides these general studies, there are some important contributions on specific studies of protest movements in India. On peasant protests, studies by Mishra⁹⁴ Kling⁹⁵, Mitter⁹⁶, Natarajan⁹⁷ deal with indigo movement in Bengal and Bihar; studies by Gopalan⁹⁸, Dale⁹⁹, Hardgrave¹⁰⁰, Choudhary¹⁰¹, Hitchcock¹⁰², deal with the Moplah rebellion in Malabar region, Kerala; studies by Dhanagare¹⁰³, Sarkar¹⁰⁴, Custers¹⁰⁵ examine the Tebhaga movement in Bengal; studies by Rao¹⁰⁶ Dhanagare¹⁰⁷, Elliott¹⁰⁸, Pavier¹⁰⁹ deal with the Telengana movement in Andhra

Pradesh; and the Naxalite movement in West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh has been studied by Dasgupta¹¹⁰, Ghose¹¹¹, Banerjee¹¹², Sengupta¹¹³. Historical analysis of peasant movements have been offered from different perspectives by Choudhary¹¹⁴, Kaviraj¹¹⁵, and Sen¹¹⁶ on Bengal, Das¹¹⁷ and Henningham¹¹⁸ on Bihar; N.G. Ranga¹¹⁹ on Andhra Pradesh; and by Namboodripad¹²⁰, Oommen¹²¹ and Kannan¹²² on Kerala. However, a comparative approach to regional struggles is missing in these studies though the studies by Dhanagare¹²³ and Custers¹²⁴ are the exceptions in that direction.

Various studies on tribal /ethnic movements highlight militancy of tribals in various struggles during pre and post-Independence period. They also point out the line between the changing nature of issues that the tribals raised in the past and the present movement is getting blurred as tribals become peasants. Though the number of studies on tribal movements is large, only a few are intensive and well documented. Political Scientists and social historians have almost neglected the field. Mention may be made of the studies by Singh¹²⁵, Anand¹²⁶, Augustine¹²⁷, Sareen¹²⁸, Weiner¹²⁹ Bhattacharjee¹³⁰, Chattopadhyay¹³¹, Das¹³², Dutta¹³³, Hall¹³⁴, Hussain¹³⁵, Goswami¹³⁶ Mathur¹³⁷, Nibedan¹³⁸, Phukan¹³⁹, Bhattacharjee¹⁴⁰, Lama¹⁴¹, Subba¹⁴², Syangden and Moktan¹⁴³, and Mukharjee¹⁴⁴.

The studies on the Dalit protests in pre and post Independence period are not many. Most of the studies available so far are confined to Maharashtra. The studies on Dalit movements include Pimpley and Sharma¹⁴⁵, Kamble¹⁴⁶, Lynch¹⁴⁷, Rajendran¹⁴⁸ Rao¹⁴⁹, Shah¹⁵⁰, Shyamla¹⁵¹, Verba, Ahmed and Bhatt¹⁵², and Kothari¹⁵³.

The theme of protest movements has also attracted, though marginally, the scholars dealing with state politics in a general way. The studies conducted so far from different perspectives of state politics either as a specific case study or in a general comparative way have touched upon this vital aspect affecting the governing process in India. In this connection mention may be made of Innaih¹⁵⁴, Irani¹⁵⁵, Kapoor¹⁵⁶, Katzenstein¹⁵⁷, Narang¹⁵⁸, Nayar¹⁵⁹ and the like.

On the government response to various protest movements by way of signing accords the study by Dutta¹⁶⁰ deserves special mention. In this volume, the author brings together the full text of all the peace accords since 1947 signed between various protesting groups and the government.

Besides, there are innumerable research articles published in periodicals on various aspects and dimensions of protest movements all of which could not be covered in this review. However, these too, provide sufficient insight into the different contours of protest movements and their impact on the socio-political and economic environment in India.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY :

It is evident from the literature reviewed above that in most cases, the studies are unidimensional in character. Hardly, in any work, specific, in depth analyses of the political implications of protest movements in India has been made. The present study in this sense, seeks to bridge the existing research gap in this area. Herein lies the significance of the study as it seeks to fill the research gap thus opening the possibility of formulating a broad theoretical framework to understand the political processes of the developing countries in general and India in particular. The applied aspect of the present study is also significant as it has a prescriptive suggestions for the stability of the political process in India in the face of the protest movements of varied nature that tend to affect the governing process in general and the federal polity in particular.

METHODOLOGY :

The method for collecting informations for the present study is essentially historical analytical and as such, exploratory in nature. As such, the informations were collected mainly from the secondary sources i.e. published books and articles on protest movements as also the documents and/or reports by the Government on various movements. Thus, the specific method that has been followed is the content

analyses of materials published on protest movements. As the purpose of the study was to explore, reliance was on review of the available literature on the subject. By its own logic, the study is thus limited on the ground that it could not undertake any field work for collecting primary data. But it is also obvious that the objective of the study was too broad to permit field work and the nature of the study was so that there was, infact no scope for field study. Besides, one of the important technique to understand properly any movement is to resort to participatory action research that is, study of on-going movements. The present study could not go for the participatory action research too because the objective is a holistic one to cover a large number of protest movement to arrive at generalised formulation of the impact of the movements on the plitical system and processes in India. In fact, impact study can be made only after some amount of progress have been there in a movement.

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