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## Social Audit: A Tool to Access Social Justice

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### Introduction

The ultimate goal of the executive, legislature, and judiciary system is to ensure justice for the citizens of India. Apart from this, there are other ways to access justice such as free legal aid, Public Interest Litigation (PIL), various efforts that have emerged out of the interventions of civil society organisations, such as Social Audit, Janta information system, Right to Information and so on. The idea of Justice (Social, Political, and Economic) introduced in the preamble of Indian constitution has roots due to thousands of years of evil practices and traditions of Indian society such as marginalization, exclusion (social and financial), vulnerability, oppression, discrimination, inequality, untouchability and so on.

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The injustice to the marginalised caste communities has pushed society towards underdevelopment.

Development is the ultimate goal to get social justice for all. “Development is argued here, as a process of expanding the real freedom that people enjoy” (Sen 1999). Amartya Sen argues that freedom is more important for development. And therefore, he cited an example of the labourer from Bangladesh who lost his life in a communal riot due to lack of freedom of choice to not go in search of work, due to his poverty and dependency on a daily wage. It means freedom comes with comfort and security, which assures a secure life. The data used in this chapter suggests how the labourers from Buldhana district had to forcefully get migrated to Sillod block of Aurangabad district for the daily wage work under the Employment Guarantee Scheme amongst which five labourers lost their lives. Majority labourers belonged to Marginalised caste groups who do not have land or other resources to earn to meet their daily needs.

The mandatory social audit in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) implementation provided an opportunity to access justice to the victims of structural violence by the system as Akhil Gupta has argued (2012). As the news of *Hindustan Times* dated 29 December 2013 suggests,<sup>1</sup> five NREGA labourers who had migrated from Buldhana district and worked in Sillod block committed suicides due to delayed payment. With the suo-moto intervention of the National Human Right Commission (NHRC), the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) had directed the government of Maharashtra to conduct the special social audit in Buldhana and Aurangabad district under the supervision of Committee of Experts on the Special Social Audit (COE henceforth). The COE combined members from Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, and Delhi. The Special Social Audit was conducted by the ‘Sparsh’ Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) from Maharashtra. The special audit provided the platform for the labourers to raise their concerns and get justice.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india/delayed-nrega-payments-drive-workers-to-suicide/story-MILZGwzDHkWE1ifOykxcrM.html>.

This chapter is an attempt to present the idea of social audit as a tool to access justice with various theories and their critics. It further unfolds the process of social audit and its significance in the life of powerless labourers through the case of Maharashtra.

## Theoretical Conceptualization of Problem

Before we discuss the key arguments, it is necessary to understand the concept of the problem concerning the marginalised section of the society through the lenses of different perspectives. The problem can be understood through the Hegelian perspective by the book *Elements of the philosophy of rights* Edited by Allen Wood (1991). Here, he argues that injustice begins with limiting the individual from accessing the rights and freedom. In fact, a similar argument is also made in the book called *Development as Freedom* by Sen (1999). Even the idea of liberty and equality with fraternity advocated by the key architect of the Indian constitution Dr. B.R Ambedakar was for the adequate freedom of individuals of social, political, and economic justice. Thus, contradiction with the relation of internal principles of human beings which come through the various experiences coming from the social, economic, legal institutions and events, including war.<sup>2</sup> The consciousness in the development of individuals plays a vital role that comes from socio-political-economic and cultural socialisation. For injustice practices, the most influential components are social, economic and political. The unskilled labourers from Buldhana district who worked in Aurangabad district went through a similar process as those who did not have the right to access work and wages granted by the law, especially labour laws and social security benefits.

While problematising the society, the Marxist theory argues about the exploitation with reference to the class structure that occurs from the capitalist and proletariat society. The theory of class struggle was presented in the communist manifesto. Marx and Engels argue “the modern

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<sup>2</sup> For more details, read a paper by Louis Althusser (1962) ‘Contradiction and Over determination’ published by Penguin Press.

bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has been established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones” (Marx and Engels 1848: 15) to historicise the problem; they believed the exploitation based on class is not new and the feudal system was practising it in those society where the poor were slaves. Today, the same rulers have established a capitalist society, based on the exploitation of the poor. By connecting the Hegelian perspective with the concept of the class as superstructure, they argue that the state and all the legal, political and ideological forms come together to oppress the poor (ibid.). The division of labour has just limited them only to get wages but capitalists earn more profits using workers’ stable resources and labour.

Marx’s writing leads to the conceptualization of injustice narrowing class perspective which is altogether different from India where caste plays an important role in a negative sense. Their arguments provide analysis of how the capitalist gets a hold on the production process on whom society became dependent for consumption and earning. Labourers became economically weak due to dependence on the bourgeois for work and wages. Whereas more profit earned by capitalists provided space to control state and create the laws in their favour. Such practices ultimately develop an unjust society. In the Indian society, specifically with reference to the Buldhana labourers’ case, most of them were landless, belonging to Dalits and De-Notified-Tribes, and those who were in the power as Block Development Officers (BDOs) and engineers belonged to particular dominant caste that has political power backing. More than 1500 labourers were involved in the case presented below does not have either social or political capital. Therefore, they choose to end their lives. However, the social audit given by law came into the picture to rescue their families and provide justice.

Another perspective of Amartya Sen as a welfare approach invites attention. He argues about the comparative analysis based on the capabilities should be developed by individuals with the help of the state; also, he believes that development should consider the freedom to access various benefits or natural rights, rather than just giving importance to measure development based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross National Product (GNP) by the state. Sen is one of the leading figures

born in India to theorise the idea of justice who also criticised John Rowland and various other thinkers to expand his views on justice. His core argument around the 'freedom for development' leads to the justice of the individual. It is important to build the capabilities of individuals to access the freedom of choice. However, it was nothing new as Dr. Ambedkar has fought his entire life to annihilate the caste from the society. Caste as a horrific social institution has given birth to multiple socio-political and economic problems in India. "Ambedkar's perspective of social justice is based on social democracy which consists of three concepts of justice namely liberty, equality and fraternity" (Ranjithkumar 2011). The key concept of bringing liberty, equality, and fraternity in the Indian Constitution was to give social justice to the marginalised who are historically denied justice. The idea of socialist democracy given by Ambedkar is for justice. The nationalisation of the key resources such as land, industries, banks were considered as entry points for social justice through social democracy. However, to some extent, it could not happen. Access to social justice leads to positive changes in society, which brings ultimate development.

While conceptualizing the problem of Indian caste-based inequalities through 'Annihilation of Caste', Dr. Ambedkar unfolds the layers of the case and its process in India.<sup>3</sup> He argues, the caste system is the key problem in the society, which does not allow the equality, by presenting the fact from Karnataka's lower caste, he says that there was a rule made by upper caste people, and many restrictions were made for lower caste people with regard to their behaviour and living style (Ambedkar 1936). The text Manusmriti written by Manu did not allow the lower caste people to get educated or become rich; it explains that lower caste people were born from the god Vishnu's leg and they were considered Shudra and *atishudra*. Thus, they don't have any right to live the life the way the Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Brahmin live. They are the *Dasas*, that is, servants of these three Varnas and they have to serve by the division of work. There was no

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<sup>3</sup> Annihilation of caste was an undelivered presidential speech written in 1936 by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, which was supposed to deliver in Jat Pat Todak conference in Punjab but due to religious sentiment it got cancelled later it became an important text to understand the Indian caste system as exploitative and unjust.

opportunity for any lower caste individuals to change their caste-based occupation, which only serves the above three Varnas. Therefore, he argues the root cause of the injustice is inequality, restrictions based on the caste system, and untouchability practices which are key in the Indian society.

## State Approach for Justice

To achieve the larger goal of development and provide social justice to the marginalized, the government of India has implemented many schemes and programmes to eradicate poverty and to provide employment, shelter, food and so on, but due to the corrupt practices, it has not reached the beneficiaries, and the goal set 70 years back still remains a dream. Since most of the beneficiaries come from the socio-economically and politically weak backgrounds they are not in a position to articulate and ask the question to the government. They have not been considered for their rights; for instance, most of the rural schemes are linked with the Gram Sabha that is considered the highest body of the village. However, Dalit, Tribal, women are not given space for their participation to raise their grievances.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the government of India gave two very important laws: first, the Right to Information Act 2005, and second, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) 2005. In the History of India, for the first time, poor people got an opportunity to ask for the information they want through RTI and NREGA. Section 17 of NREGA makes it compulsory for all the states to conduct the social audit of schemes twice in a year. This was another important milestone for beneficiaries. The tool of social audit has become effective not only to curb the corruption but also to empower labourers to fight for their right, to challenge the system, to make the system accountable and transparent. States like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, are doing their best to bring transparency and accountability in the system through the implementation of this tool and empower the people to access justice.

To conceptualize the contemporary issues in policy implementation by the government, it is necessary to understand the role of the system. For any kind of injustice in the social status is key responsible factor in a democratic country like India. Thus, the welfarist state acts as a caretaker of the marginalized to ensure justice. However, despite that, the injustice in the society has become sustainable rather than achieve the sustainable goals of development due to the corrupt practices. After the Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) has become an important target for the state. Employment guarantee scheme is one of the key programmes to eradicate poverty in which the role of the state as implementing agency is crucial. Therefore, the proper implementation of such a programme by the state became the need of the hour.

After the 73rd and 74th Amendment of the Indian constitution, the decentralization of power has been initiated by the government of India to make sure that the people participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation. The idea of participatory planning and governance presented by Robert Chambers in the 1980s are incorporated in the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments. However, with that effort, corruption also got decentralized through traditional caste-based dominant stakeholders in the village. Corruption has been institutionalised in Indian bureaucracy and political system and has a direct impact on the poor and marginalized. The process of corruption begins with the recruitment of the employees and ends with their retirement (job or life) or in case of a politician with death. Politicians want their favoured top bureaucrats on posts; they lobby to recruit staff that support their party from village level to state and also take a certain amount of money from individuals for the post. Unfortunately, it has become an open secret which has been normalised in society. As Akhil Gupta argues, corruption became a culture to get done their work (Gupta 2012). In such corrupt practices, poor and socially marginalised suffer and face injustice. Thus, there is a need to make people aware and build their capabilities to raise the voice against such practices at democratic spaces such as Gram Sabhas.

## Literature Review of Theory of Social Justice

Social justice is “justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society”.<sup>4</sup> “‘Social justice’ is generally used to refer to a set of institutions which will enable people to lead a fulfilling life and be active contributors to their community” (Rawls 1971). “The term ‘social justice’ only became used explicitly from the 1840s. A Jesuit priest named Luigi Taparelli is typically credited with coining the term, and it spread during the revolutions of 1848 with the work of Antonio Rosmini-Serbati” (Zajda et al. 2006). The preamble to establish the International Labour Organization recalled that “universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice”.<sup>5</sup> Later in the twentieth century, social justice was made central to the philosophy of social contract, primarily by John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* (Rawls 1971). In 1993, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action treats social justice as a purpose of human rights education.<sup>6</sup>

Social justice is a property of social systems—or perhaps a “predicate of societies” (Jost and Kay 2014), as suggested also by Rawls (1971). A just social system is to be contrasted with those systems that foster arbitrary or unnecessary suffering, exploitation abuse tyranny oppression, prejudice, and discrimination (Jost and Kay 2014). “This concept of social justice emphasises individual liberties and equality of opportunity, rights and outcomes” (Occasion paper, 2011). J. S. Mill talks about the Utilitarian approach of social justice. As per his concept “the distribution of societal goods should be for the ‘greatest net balance of satisfaction’ for society” (Mill 1863). Mill argues, “utilitarianism was actually a ‘standard of morality’ which used happiness of the greater number of people as its ultimate goal” (ibid.). This view reflected an unequal distribution based on the status as it was often the disadvantaged whose rights were sacrificed for the good of the privileged classes of society.

Rawls’ perspective on social justice was more social than economic. He criticizes the Utilitarian approach, Rawls argues, the conception of

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<sup>4</sup>New Oxford American dictionary.

<sup>5</sup>International Labour organization preamble.

<sup>6</sup>Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, Part II, D.



distributive justice provided that “all social values ... are to be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of any or all of these values is to everyone’s advantage” (Rawls 1971). The two fundamental principles of Rawls’ original theory of social justice are “(1) Each person has an equal right to the most extensive system of personal liberty compatible with a system of total liberty for all. (2) Social and economic inequality are to be arranged so that they are both (a) To the greatest benefit to the least advantaged in society, (b) Attached to positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity” (ibid.). Basically, he argues more towards the liberty, freedom of the person along with the social values.

Miller’s approach to social justice rests on the idea that the market is capable of giving individuals what they deserve. This theory treats individuals as responsible for their own actions and proportionately rewards (or punishes) them in accordance with their actions and efforts, insofar as the actions/efforts are the results of their individual choices (Miller 1999: 149–155). He sounds more a capitalist and market-oriented thinker who thinks that human beings are capable of coping up with the present situation. If they try to find out their own way of justice, they can get it because everything is available in the market.

Amartya Sen’s *The Idea of Justice* gave a very important turning point for the Indians with the understanding of the Indian social system. He is more practical which provides an opportunity to take action on that to achieve. Therefore he argues, “Its aim is to clarify how we can proceed to address questions of enhancing justice and removing injustice, rather than to offer resolutions of questions about the nature of perfect justice” (Sen 1999). Sen’s comparative approach explores social alternatives, ranking them based on the values and priorities of the community. It is clearly visible how Indian social structure reflects in Sen’s social justice theory. He accepts that social arrangements have to make it possible for individuals to build their capabilities. For example, “a right to education concerns not simply an individual’s access to appropriate educational material but the responsibility of the government to provide a stable presence of certain institutions and institutional frameworks” (ibid.). His key focus of social justice is to emphasize developing individual capabilities in many ways and that leads him to promote a welfare economy that gives space for the marginalized to build their capabilities.

However, the institutional reforms in social values, adequate freedom to achieve social justice is an important component of the process. Sen acknowledges that his economic master is Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who had provided the Social Justice theory advocating liberty, equality, and fraternity as the centre of human life. He further made mandatory for the state to implement the programmes and policies with legal direction through Articles 14, 15, 17,19 and directive principles for the state. “The contents of Ambedkar’s concept of Social Justice included unity and equality of all human beings, equal worth of men and women, respect for the weak and the lower caste, regards for human rights, benevolence, mutual love, sympathy, to learn and charity towards fellow being”.<sup>7</sup>

## Injustice with NREGA Workers

In the case of Buldhana district, five labourers who worked under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MG-NREGA) and committed suicide due to delayed payment and financial corruption by the implementing agency, the majority belonged to SC and ST.<sup>8</sup> Though the act says that there should be social audit after six months, it never happened until January 2014 in Buldhana, Aurangabad, Jalna, and Parbhani districts of Maharashtra and it is no different in other parts of the state. When the case was highlighted by the *Hindustan Times* a leading newspaper, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) government of India appointed the Committee of Special Observers (CSO) and did the social audit by third-party organizations appointed by the government of Maharashtra. Unfortunately, the social audit was done as a formality, where oppressed voices were suppressed. The CSO submitted their report to the government of India in which they clearly mentioned that the process of the social audit was not done properly, five suicides took place due to government negligence and corruption made by the implementing agency.

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<sup>7</sup>[http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/10806/10/10\\_chapter%203.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/10806/10/10_chapter%203.pdf).

<sup>8</sup><http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/delayed-nrega-payments-drive-workers-to-suicide/article1-1167345.aspx>.

More than 1500 MG-NREGA workers who migrated from Buldhana district to Aurangabad district with the help of contractors worked in Sillod block on MGNREGA work for more than two years. During that period, they received weekly Rs. 300 per couple (Husband and wife). The MG-NREGA works were implemented by the Sillod Block Development Officer (BDO) and his staff on a contract basis with the help of a local contractor who would get a commission for as per number of labourers. Initially, labourers were promised that they will get Rs. 300 per couple for a weekly market and payment after completion of government process. The wages were decided based on the task which they were supposed to complete in a day; hence, they would work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. hoping that they would get good wages. However apart from the weekly amount, they did not receive any amount. To get the payment in the name of the labourers, the BDO and his staff made fake job cards with the help of the local Gram Panchayat and took the amount from the local post office. The total wage amount was more than four crores as per the calculation. The labourers who migrated from the Buldhana to Sillod had hopes and plans to fulfil from wages, for example, daughter's marriage, children's educational expenses, building home and so on. When they realised that their amount has been taken away by the government officials, five of them committed suicide.

## Methodology

The researcher adopted a participatory method through a social audit that involves the mixed qualitative and quantitative data through in-depth interviews of the labourers and government officials. The data was collected through participation in the entire social audit process. The rationale of using this method is defined as "The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or

not ejecting them; between human solidarity or alienation; between following prescriptions or having choices; between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out or being silent, castrated in their power to create and recreate, in their power to transform the world. This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed which their education must take into account” (Freire 2006). It needs to develop the capacities of the oppressed to fight for their rights by making them empowered enough. The empowerment can be possible only with their full participation in the process and bringing them into the mainstream flow of the development. The tool of social audit was the best method to access social justice for the MGNREGA labourers who were exploited in Buldhana and Jalana. Before going on to the practical methodology of the social audit, let’s understand the concept of social audit.

## Social Audit: A Tool to Access Social Justice

“The term audit originates from the Latin word ‘*audire*’, which means ‘to hear’. Audire in ancient Greece referred to the ‘hearing of accounts’” (Kidambi 2011). According to Charles Medawar, “The concept of social audit starts from the principle that in a democracy the decision-makers should account for the use of their powers and that their powers should be used as far as possible with the consent and understanding of all concerned”.<sup>9</sup> Yamini Aiyar, who has done a study of social audit in Andhra Pradesh says, “This process of reviewing official records and determining whether state reported expenditures reflect the actual money spent on the grounds is referred to as the social audit”.<sup>10</sup>

As per the Society for Social Audit Accountability and Transparency (SSAAT), a leading organization in MG-NREGA social audit, “Social audit is a process by which an attempt is made to find out whether the benefits of the project/activities reach the people for whom it meant. It is

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<sup>9</sup><http://www.cgg.gov.in/publicationdownloads2a/Social%20Audit%20Toolkit%20Final.pdf> also see the article by Dhaktode 2016.

<sup>10</sup>[http://knowledge.nrega.net/193/1/transparency-accountability\\_Andhra.pdf](http://knowledge.nrega.net/193/1/transparency-accountability_Andhra.pdf) also see the article by Dhaktode 2016.

a democratic process in which all stakeholders involved in a particular project take part. Social audit is not only an audit of expenses or decision but it also covers the issues of equity and quality in programme implementation. It is a verification of Government records with people and the works/projects executed at the field level in great detail” (Dhaktode 2016). “In a social audit, the people and the government jointly monitor the project. It brings on board the perceptions and knowledge of the people, involves people in the task of verification and also brings about much greater acceptability of the government”.<sup>11</sup>

The concept of social audit is not new in India. It has been used in ancient times, also in kingdoms, but not under the name of “social audit”. “Social Audit gained significance after the 73rd Amendment of the constitution relating to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) in 1993”.<sup>12</sup> The process of social audit in social policies was started with the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), a people’s organization that has fought for peasants’ and labourers’ rights since 1990. In June 1994, MKSS had first *Jan Sunwai*, the first public hearing in Kot Kirana (Pali district) in Rajasthan.<sup>13</sup> The process of social audit began in Rajasthan with the slogan ‘*Hamara Paisa Hamara Hisab*’ (Kidambi 2011; Dhaktode 2016).

## Process of Social Audit

The SSAAT, a leading organization established by the state government of Andhra Pradesh in 2009 (including Telangana), has considered the ideal and acknowledged that the MoRD has issued social audit rule 2011 as a guidance to replicate the same model across the nation. To access the justice for the MGNREGA labourers, the following few states and methods have been used by the SSAAT.

Social audits are conducted for the most part by literate youth (men and women) from the labourers’ families. The person begins with-

<sup>11</sup> <http://125.17.121.162/SocialAudit/AboutUs.jsp>.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.cgg.gov.in/publicationdownloads2a/Social%20Audit%20Toolkit%20Final.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.india-seminar.com/2001/500/500%20aruna%20roy%20et%20al.htm>.

1. Drawing up the Social Audit Schedule
2. Intimation letters
3. Team Selection
4. Identification and training the Village Social Auditors
5. Training and consolidation of records
6. Formation of teams to do the Social Audit
7. The Social Audit process
8. Awareness building of the rights and entitlement
9. Social Audit Gram Sabha
10. Social Audit Public Hearing
11. Presiding Officers and Decisions Taken
12. Decisions Taken Report
13. Days Follow-up and Appraisals
14. Social Audit Report Public Disclosure
15. Action Taken Reports Public Disclosure.<sup>14</sup>

## How It Links with Social Justice

The important steps in the above process to get justice are (1) auditors from the wage seekers' families from Village Resource Person (VRP) to State Resource Person (SRP) all belong to the same socio-political and economic process. They do their best to ensure justice for the wage seekers whose labourers face injustice, (2) the awareness built by the facilitators and auditors was most effective during the process. They provide information about the MGNREGA rights and entitlement along with their role in the entire process of implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the scheme. Also, another important step is transparency and accountability with the use of RTI. They spread awareness about RTI. (3) Most important is an open forum where labourers raise the concerns and questions in Gram Sabha and taluka/block-level public hearing. Due to caste hierarchy and political pressure, they may not raise their voices in the Gram Sabha, but they have an opportunity at the Block level public

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<sup>14</sup> <http://125.17.121.162/SocialAudit/AboutUs.jsp>.

hearing, in that they raise their issues. (4) Last but not least is the accountability ensured by the government: in the public hearing, the government officers, political leaders, media, labourers participate and the higher authority listen to both sides—labourers' issues and government employees' explanations on the same. Once it is proved that the functionaries are guilty, serious action is taken on them. In this particular process, the role of social auditors is very important in terms of presenting issues and evidence properly, facing political pressure, and so on.

With the above process, the Society for Social Audit Accountability And Transparency (SSAAT), government of Andhra Pradesh has conducted more than 9363 public hearings in 6–7 rounds in 22 districts until 30 April 2014 (SSAAT, Month of May state review meeting notes). In 2012–2013, SSAAT audited public funds worth Rs. 5000 crores. As of February 2014, misappropriated funds worth Rs. 93.2 crores have come to light, of which around Rs. 31.74 crores have been recovered, 64,907 field-level functionaries have been implicated; 5954 staff members have been dismissed; and 1741 suspended. Punishments have been imposed on 24,573 officials and 64,907 departmental enquiries have been initiated. All this has been possible due to the efforts of 86.612 Village Resource Persons (VRP) trained by District Resource Persons (DRPs) and State Resource Persons (SRPs).<sup>15</sup>

## Justice for Buldhana NREGA Labourers Through Social Audit

As it has stated above, the social audit wasn't carried out as per the Social Audit Rule, 2011 in Sillod block. Nevertheless, the members of COE were from different places such as (1) Director of SSAAT Hyderabad, (2) Director of Orissa Society for Social Audit Accountability and Transparency (OSSAAT), (3) Secretary of 'PragatiAbhiyan' NGO, and other members two programme managers (researcher was one amongst) of SSAAT, and three members from Programme Advisory Group Secretariat (PAG), Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi. The

<sup>15</sup><http://www.satyamevjayate.in/Kings-Every-Day/EPISODE-4Article.aspx?uid=E4-sAud-i1>.

COE has submitted the report to MoRD and stated non-payment as the prime factor responsible for the suicides in the districts. The high amount of corruption had taken place in the implementation process of MG-NREGA, labourers were denied their rights and entitlement, even the serious issues were not raised by the social audit team, and the process was not followed up by the third-party organization.

Based on the report, government of India issued a guideline and has given compensation to the family members who had committed suicide, taken action on the government employees (they were in jail), recovery was done, and the payments were made to all the labourers. Government ensured that minimum 100 days work will be given to needy under MGNREGA at their village itself and check whether the payments are made properly. The labourers are getting a choice of freedom to work, getting right of work, and other entitlement including payment in 15 days, worksite facilities and so on. Today, labourers can ask the government about their rights and the demand for work. They could build their capabilities through this process. If the payment does not take place in a given time, the government employees are held responsible for this. Labourers participate in the work from planning to evaluation.

As Amartya Sen argues on the freedom of choice theory, the Buldhana labourers did not have a choice to get work at their village; therefore, they migrated and were exposed to exploitation. Similarly, they were unorganised and away from the mainstream village process. After social audit, they got a choice to get work at the village, they developed their capabilities to find out the ways to cope up with exploitation, the tool of social audit helped empower them. Paulo Freire, Brazilian Educator and Philosopher, argues that revolution can be possible only when the oppressed develop the capacity to fight against this. Here the social audit process has given a boost to the confidence of labourers to fight for rights. As a result of this, they got justice and created such a system where the process of injustice has gone down.



## Conclusion

To achieve the goal of being a developed country, there is a need to achieve and ensure social justice for the citizens in the computation of becoming a developed country. Today, the meaning of development is more economy-oriented, where industrialization is playing a vital role. At the same time, promoting industrialization is pushing the state back from its key role. Once industrial development takes hold of the economy, its key objective is to earn profits. In this given situation, the principle of social justice gets manipulated and violated on various grounds. The budget allocation for health, education, and social security provide a depth of state seriousness towards these components. The people who get displaced from their land have no freedom of choice to work the way they want, since they have lost their land and natural resources. The policy of new liberalization adopted by the government is more money-oriented, which does not provide an opportunity for welfare-based policies.

The important social welfare policies such as MGNREGA, Mid-Day-Meal, Social Security Pension, Public Distribution System and so on are caught in the corruption and malpractices. The political and bureaucratic systems are becoming money-oriented. As a result of this, beneficiaries are suffering and exposed to various injustices. Though they have the right to get work in their village, they did not get that and hence migrated. In the case of Buldhana, it clearly shows this. Though, it is mandatory that their payment should be given in 15 days as per MGNREGA, they didn't get this for more than two years, since they migrated and were away from family and faced everyday life issues. Moreover, their children did not get an education. When the poor are not able to access the basic facilities, then absolute injustice happens to them on multiple fronts.

Until people become aware of injustice and get mobilised to fight against it, the problem is not going to be resolved. Paulo Freire, a Brazilian Educator and Philosopher, argues on the same grounds. He believes that there is a need to empower the oppressed, to revolt against the exploitative system. Nevertheless, the tool of social audit is all about this. It ensures people's participation through awareness about their rights and

entitlement, while doing the social audit of particular schemes and programmes. It gives strength to the poor to access the rights and entitlement ensured by the Constitution of India.

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