

Ambedkar King Study Circle California, USA

First General Body Meeting
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Resolutions (Draft)

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Introduction

Self-dignity and self-worthiness is defined as what an individual feels about themselves. Self-respect is defined as how an individual allows her/himself to be treated by others. People can cultivate a sense of self-dignity and self-worthiness only under certain favorable material and social conditions which is necessary to assert self-respect. Wealth as a material factor and caste as a social factor are great impediments for the majority to live a self-dignified life where wealth is concentrated in a few hands and caste is manifested in all walks of life. Dalits and Adivasis share a very miniscule portion of the wealth and are subjected to untouchability, the most blatant form of caste discrimination, and are denied to develop any sense of self-dignity.

Dr. Ambedkar writes, "Most people believe that Untouchability is a religious system. That is true. But it is a mistake to suppose that it is only a religious system. Untouchability is more than a religious system. It is also an economic system which is worse than slavery ... As an economic system it permits exploitation without obligation. Untouchability is not only a system of unmitigated economic exploitation, but it is also a system of uncontrolled economic exploitation."

Ambedkar King Study Circle perceives on the lines of Dr. Ambedkar, Dr. King Jr. and social reformers that caste and race are economical, social, political and cultural problems and hence they have to be tackled at all these planes by rightly aligning with other oppressed sections of the society. Liberation of one oppressed class and caste is inextricably coupled with the liberation of all oppressed classes and groups.

AKSC is highly concerned about the Dalit middle class who have achieved certain economic independency but are not only unable to assert their self-respect but also helpless when poor Dalits and Adivasis are subjected to denial of basic economic, civil, cultural and social rights and subjected to social discrimination. What they failed to understand is that their self-respect is tied with the group-respect of all Dalits and Adivasis. Only by bringing these middle class through proper orientation and aligning with other social groups who are against and subjected to different forms of oppressions, the different forms of oppressions can be overthrown and overcome.

1. On Caste and Communal Violence

1.1. Caste Violence

Adivasis and Dalits are the most affected victims of violence which includes murder, rape and kidnapping. Most of the times the State is a silent spectator and fails to enforce the law. As can be seen from the table below, crimes against Dalits have been increasing while conviction rates have been decreasing or staying steady. Rapes of Dalit women have increased 65% since 2010, kidnappings have increased by 45% since 2010 and killings have increased by 30%. At the same time conviction rates have practically halved for crimes against SC since 2011, while barely showing a 1.57% increase in the case of crimes against ST since 2011. This shows the absolute inability, or more likely unwillingness, of casteist Indian society to give up its criminal privileges and also the extent to which privileged castes control the security apparatus as well as the judiciary in India.

YEAR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Rapes of Dalit Women	1349	1557	1576	2073	2233
Kidnappings/Abductions of Dalits	511	616	490	628	755
Killings of Dalits	570	673	651	676	744
Conviction Rate for Crimes against SC		27.79%	17.49%	16.50%	14.93%
Conviction Rate for Crimes against ST		18.27%	18.36%	11.27%	19.78%

Source : National Crime Records Bureau, India

1.2. Hindutva Extremism and Violence Against Minorities

Communal riots and violence are distinct feature of Indian communalism. Ambedkar King Study Circle's position on communalism is that it is a product of politics in particular power-oriented politics of the elites of any religious community and its modern. Communalism by the majority, which uses violence and forces the minority into a defensive position in order to survive

The late social reformer and activist, Asghar Ali Engineer writes, "Communalism, as is often thought by some, is not the product of religion; it is, in fact, the product of politics of the elite of a religious community. In other words, religion per se does not give birth to communalism, a religious community does. It is also important to note that communalism was not the product of medieval ages but of the modern period. Medieval polity was not competitive, much less democratic. The modern colonial polity was competitive and proto-democratic. It is not our case that religion played no role; it did. But this role was not fundamental, rather it was instrumental. Religion, since it has a powerful emotional appeal, was used (almost cynically) to mobilize believing masses." He added, "The question is whether it is the

people's problem-oriented politics or power-oriented politics. It is power-oriented politics which is divisive; problem-oriented politics tends to be integrative. But it was essentially power-oriented politics that brought about the division of the country and it is power-oriented politics that has made communalism so strong today.”

Historically, and continuing to the present day, the Sangh Parivar has been the main perpetrator of organised communal violence in India, such as the demolition of Babri Masjid. Secular parties such as the Indian National Congress are not innocent of exploiting communalism for their own gain. From the very outset, the INC was at least guilty of failing to deal firmly with right-wing Hindu elements. This was illustrated during the first major communal violence, after independence, in Jabalpur in 1961/62 when Mr. Nehru, the Prime Minister at the time was unable to bring the situation under control. It is also alleged that his own party men were involved in the violence and that he was helpless to rein in his party members. In the late 1960s, Indira Gandhi’s Congress (R) faction did not hesitate to woo Hindu voters with calculated anti-Muslim sentiments in order to prevent voters fleeing to the newly emerging Congress (O) led by Kamaraj, the Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh alliance. Her son, Mr. Rajeev Gandhi followed the same tactics after he assumed leadership of the Congress party. In a nutshell, as Tariq Ali, the Pakistani commentator and public intellectual puts it, “Communalism of the BJP is programmatic and Communalism of the Congress is pragmatic.”

Real concern is that there is unprecedented rise of communal violence since 2011. Beyond doubt perpetrators of such violence is Sangh Parivar to win the political power in the respect state election and at the center in 2014. Since the BJP’s appeal ‘Politics with Difference’ doomed and it’s no other means but to exploit the religious sentiments of the people to advance their power-politics.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Incidents of communal violence	580	640	823	644	751	703	4141
Number of deaths	91	93	133	95	97	86	595
Number of injuries	1899	2067	2269	1921	2264	2321	12741

Source : Ministry of Home Affairs, India

Religious Festivals, processions places of worship, Anti-cow slaughter legislation & cow vigilantism, and Social media are means to promote such violence. By and large the social class which is promoting such hated feeling is educated urban upper-middle and middle class which are in a bigger crisis thanks to unemployment and unavailability of resources. Historically middle class is the real promoters of such hatredness as happened in fascist Germany, Italy and Japan in pre-WW-II, of course instigated by the divisive forces by their propaganda machinery. This trend is continuing in India, USA and Europe where right-wing parties are elected to the offices. Once the communal and divisive forces attain power it’ll divert people’s attention from real issues to stay in power!

AKSC will propagate about violence against Adivasis and Dalits, Muslims and other minorities through social media campaign, hall meetings, audio/video conferences and public demonstration to send a clear message to the government of India and to the respective Indian state government.

AKSC will organize a hall meeting/documentary screening/public lectures and discussion in Bay Area on 'Caste & Communal Violence' in the month of December. It'll be one day or half-day program.

“[Kilvenmani](#)” massacre in Tamilnadu took place on Dec 25th 1968 in which 44 Dalits are burned to death including 5 aged men, 16 women and 23 children. Babri Masjid was demolished by Kar Sevaks on Dec 6th 1992 which led to a great communal riots and violence across India in which at least 2000 people lost their lives. Anti-caste & anti-communal violence weekend in Bay Area will be a yearly event and AKSC will host the event with other like minded organizations. It'll be one of the major event organized by the AKSC.

Appendix A : Overall Crime Against Dalits and Adivasis

(A) Registered under the Prevention of Atrocity (PoA) Act, (B) Incidence of Crimes, Percentage (C) Registered under the PoA Act

Source : National Crime Records Bureau, India

YEAR		A	B	C
2005	SC	8497	26127	32.52
	ST	1283	5713	22.46
	Total	9780	31840	30.72
2006	SC	8581	27070	31.70
	ST	1232	5791	21.27
	Total	9813	32861	29.86
2007	SC	9819	30031	32.70
	ST	1104	5532	19.96
	Total	10923	35563	30.71
2008	SC	11602	33615	34.51
	ST	1022	5582	18.31
	Total	12624	39197	32.21
2009	SC	11143	33594	33.17
	ST	944	5424	17.40
	Total	12087	39018	30.98

YEAR		A	B	C
2010	SC	10513	32712	32.14
	ST	1169	5885	19.86
	Total	11682	38597	30.27
2011	SC	11342	33719	33.64
	ST	1154	5756	20.05
	Total	12496	39475	31.66
2012	SC	12576	33655	37.37
	ST	1311	5922	22.14
	Total	13887	39577	35.09
2013	SC	13975	39408	35.46
	ST	1390	6793	20.46
	Total	15365	46201	33.26
2014	SC	40300	47064	85.63
	ST	6826	11451	59.61
	Total	47126	58515	80.54

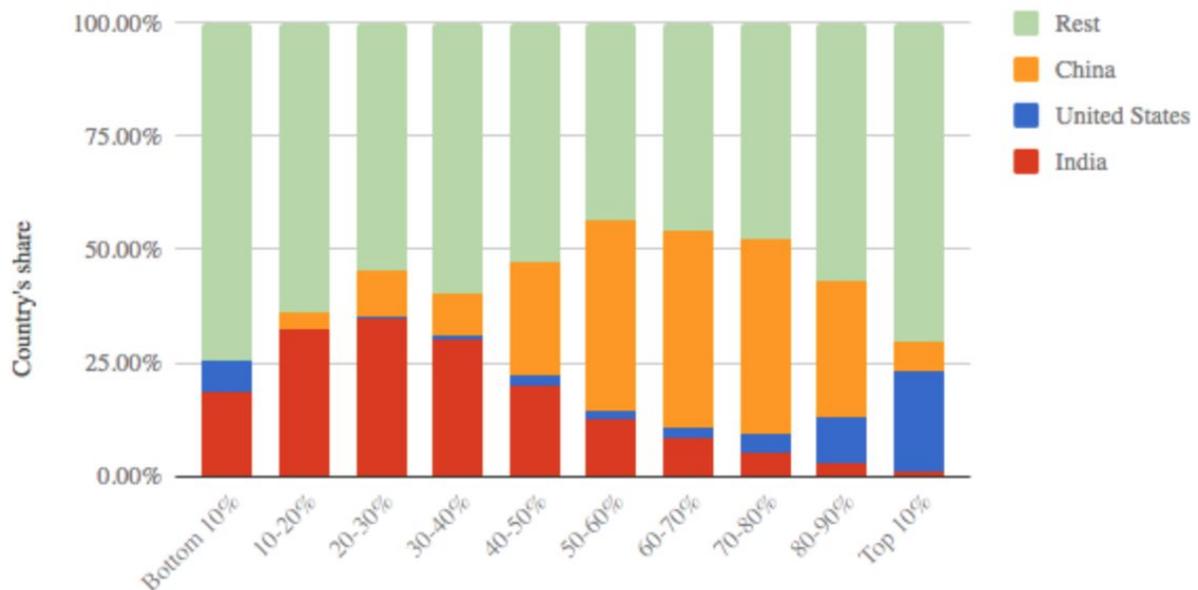
2. On Economic Inequality

2.1. Where India Stands at Wealth Distribution and Poverty

Poverty amidst plenty is a world reality and India reflects such reality brightly. While India's population is 17.74% of the world's population and India has the world's 7th largest GNI¹, India has a disproportionately large share of the world's poor. As shown in Table 1 below, India houses 20% of the world's poorest 10% of people (10th percentile) and 30% of those between the 10th and 20th percentile.

Table 1: India's Share of Global Poverty²

Share in global poor, middle and rich



India's GDP stands at USD 2.2 Trillion (\$2,263,522,518,124) and gross national income per capita of an Indian stands at \$1680, slightly above that of Pakistan and just below that of Republic of Congo³. However only 84 of the top wealthy families, own as much as the cumulative wealth of the bottom 920 million people.

¹ World Bank 2016 Atlas Method - <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GNI.pdf>

² <http://www.thehindu.com/data/indias-staggering-wealth-gap-in-five-charts/article10935670.ece>

³ World Bank 2016, GNI/capita Atlas Method - <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>

Table 2: How Wealth Is Distributed Among Indians⁴:

Split for Top 1% and 5%

Of Population (%)	Population	Of Total Wealth
Top 1	13,240,000	49
Top 5	66,200,000	65.5

Table 3: Population Versus Wealth

Of Population (%)	Population	% Of Total Wealth
Top 10	132,400,000	74
Next 30	397,200,000	18.9
Next 30	397,200,000	5.7
Bottom 30	397,200,000	1.4
100%	1,324,000,000 ⁵	100

2.2. Dalits and Adivasis Bear the Brunt of Poverty

While poverty is prevalent among privileged castes as well, on average at the all-India level, poverty among Dalits and Adivasis is 6 times more prevalent in rural areas and 5 times more prevalent in urban areas, compared to non-SC/ST/OBC population. By other measures of socio-economic well-being such as ownership of economic establishments or consumption expenditure, Dalits and Adivasis are still at a serious disadvantage, reflecting failed economic policies of successive governments 70 years after independence.

⁴<https://scroll.in/article/815751/yes-india-has-massive-income-inequality-but-it-isnt-the-second-most-unequal-country-in-the-world>

⁵ India's population in 2016 was 1.324 billion

Table 4: State-wise Percentage of persons below poverty line, 2011-12

Source: Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No.1906 for answer on 05.08.2015

State-wise Percentage of persons below poverty line, 2011-12 (Tendulkar Methodology)											
S. No.	States	RURAL					URBAN				
		ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	24.1	13.1	9.3	6.8	11	12.1	10.9	5.5	4.3	5.8
2	Assam	33.4	28.2	34.4	34.9	33.9	15.6	30.5	11	21.2	20.6
3	Bihar	59.3	51.7	31.3	23.3	34.1	10.3	43	32.9	17.8	31.2
4	Chhattisgarh	52.6	48.2	38.7	7.7	44.6	35.2	39.5	24.9	10.6	24.8
5	Gujarat	36.5	22.3	18.9	6.1	21.5	30.1	12.7	15.3	5.1	10.1
6	Himachal Pradesh	9.5	16.5	2.3	7	8.5	4	9.9	9.9	1.7	4.3
7	Jammu & Kashmir	16.3	18.8	7.5	10.2	11.5	3	18	4.1	6.1	7.2
8	Jharkhand	51.6	40.4	36.4	31.3	40.8	28.7	40.6	28.2	12.5	24.8
9	Karnataka	30.8	37.1	20.7	21.6	24.5	33.7	25	15	8.8	15.3
10	Kerala	41	17.8	7.6	7	9.1	13.6	6	5.7	2.7	5
11	Madhya Pradesh	55.3	41.3	24.7	19.6	35.7	32.3	33.2	21	13.1	21
12	Maharashtra	61.6	23.8	18.2	16.5	24.2	23.3	15.8	8.7	6	9.1
13	Orissa	63.5	41.4	24.2	14.2	35.7	39.7	26.3	22.1	6.7	17.3
14	Rajasthan	41.4	18.6	8.5	3.8	16.1	21.7	19.2	12	3.6	10.7
15	Tamil Nadu	36.8	23.3	12.9	1	15.8	2.8	9.3	6.3	1.8	6.5
16	Uttar Pradesh	27	41.1	30.7	12.5	30.4	16.3	39.1	32.1	12.8	26.1
17	Uttarakhand	11.9	15.6	14.4	9	11.6	25.7	9.3	19.1	6.4	10.5
18	West Bengal	50.1	22.6	19	20	22.5	44.5	15.7	15.7	13.3	14.7
	All India	45.3	31.5	22.6	15.5	25.7	24.1	21.7	15.4	8.1	13.7

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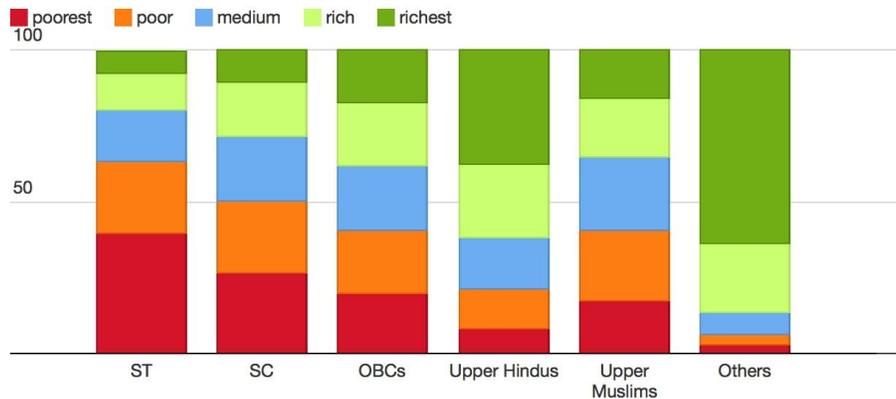
⁶ The poverty line was set at Rs.4,824 per month for a family of five in urban areas and Rs.3,905 per month in rural areas.

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tendulkar-poverty-line-will-remain-reference-point/article2509910.ece>)

Table 5: Caste Based Inequality in Consumption Expenditure Measures⁷

Well-being levels follow caste hierarchy

Columns show that STs and SCs have the highest percentage share of people in the lowest consumption expenditure quintile

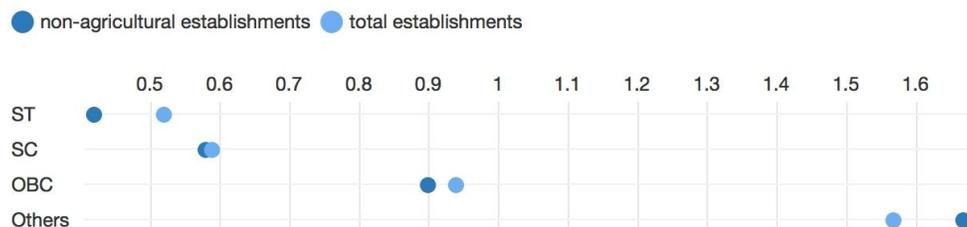


Source: 2011-12 NSSO Data from Indian Labour and Employment Report, 2014

Table 6: Caste Hierarchy In Economic Establishments⁸

Ownership of economic establishments follows caste hierarchy in India

Upper castes have the highest relative share in ownership of economic establishments in India, while SCs/STs have the lowest share



The dots show relative share of different social groups in ownership of economic establishments. They have been calculated by dividing the percentage share of establishments owned by each social group in the sixth economic census held in 2013 with their share in workers' population in 2011-12 NSSO data. A greater than one relative share shows that a given caste group has a bigger share in ownership of establishments than its share among workers.

Source: Sixth Economic Census and India Labour and Employment Report

⁷<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/ino3tfMYVsd6VVGUdWXB8H/The-many-shades-of-caste-inequality-in-India.html>

⁸<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/ino3tfMYVsd6VVGUdWXB8H/The-many-shades-of-caste-inequality-in-India.html>

2.3. Dalits and Land Ownership⁹

The disparity in land ownership and landlessness across social groups is apparent. There are a few things that are striking in the tables below. Firstly, they clearly show a high degree of concentration of holdings in the hands of non-Dalits. Secondly they show a significant and disproportionate degree of landlessness among Dalits. Thirdly they show that when Dalits do own any land, the average holdings are more than two times less and sometimes twenty times less than the average holding of non-Dalits. Since successive governments have aggressively pursued neo-liberal economic policies that have rendered cultivation unviable for most small and marginal farmers, more Dalits are impacted to a much larger degree.

Table 7: Inequality in Landownership¹⁰

Table 2: Inequality in Landownership across Social Groups

State	Gini Coefficient	Scheduled Caste				Non-ST/SC (OBC-Gen)			
		Population Share	Land Share	Average Land Size in ha	Population Share/Land Share	Population Share	Land Share	Average Land Size in ha	Population Share/Land Share
Jammu and Kashmir	0.56	10.49	6.31	0.23	0.60	77.10	80.30	0.41	1.04
Himachal Pradesh	0.67	28.65	15.38	0.19	0.54	66.37	81.39	0.44	1.23
Punjab	0.85	39.85	2.80	0.04	0.07	60.06	97.17	0.88	1.62
Uttarakhand	0.72	21.08	10.90	0.15	0.52	73.48	85.53	0.34	1.16
Haryana	0.76	17.54	1.04	0.04	0.06	82.34	98.06	0.81	1.19
Rajasthan	0.69	25.06	13.68	0.72	0.55	59.84	75.32	1.65	1.26
Uttar Pradesh	0.71	24.65	10.53	0.19	0.43	74.66	88.95	0.53	1.19
Bihar	0.84	16.36	3.10	0.04	0.19	79.91	96.63	0.25	1.21
Tripura	0.78	18.60	16.89	0.18	0.91	45.80	26.88	0.12	0.59
Assam	0.65	8.45	6.36	0.37	0.75	76.05	70.77	0.45	0.93
West Bengal	0.79	31.44	18.64	0.08	0.59	60.99	73.44	0.17	1.20
Jharkhand	0.63	8.82	5.16	0.24	0.58	50.05	32.25	0.27	0.64
Odisha	0.71	19.23	11.27	0.19	0.59	53.94	57.52	0.35	1.07
Chhattisgarh	0.60	8.92	9.04	0.73	1.01	52.77	42.59	0.58	0.81
Madhya Pradesh	0.69	18.34	7.14	0.42	0.39	50.31	72.17	1.55	1.43
Gujarat	0.73	7.75	2.64	0.27	0.34	67.59	83.90	0.97	1.24
Maharashtra	0.70	9.19	5.07	0.48	0.55	73.44	85.87	1.03	1.17
Andhra Pradesh	0.82	21.86	7.52	0.15	0.34	71.96	82.88	0.49	1.15
Karnataka	0.71	23.90	12.24	0.39	0.51	70.35	82.48	0.89	1.17
Kerala	0.83	13.48	2.22	0.02	0.16	85.35	96.96	0.16	1.14
Tamil Nadu	0.83	27.35	14.40	0.16	0.53	71.94	84.08	0.36	1.17
Telangana	0.71	27.04	20.88	0.51	0.77	63.57	65.20	0.68	1.03
Total	0.76	20.17	9.08	0.24	0.45	67.92	77.65	0.61	1.14

Table 7: Landless Households¹¹

⁹ <http://www.epw.in/journal/2016/47/commentary/dalit-emancipation-and-land-question.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.epw.in/journal/2016/47/commentary/dalit-emancipation-and-land-question.html>

¹¹ <http://www.epw.in/journal/2016/47/commentary/dalit-emancipation-and-land-question.html>

Table 1: Landless Households by Social Group in Major States (%)

	ST	SC	OBC	General	Total	SC/ Total
Jammu and Kashmir	7.3	17.1	11.3	11.9	11.8	1.5
Himachal Pradesh	20.1	17.9	17.9	29.6	23.9	0.7
Punjab	76.5	86.6	68.5	32.2	60.5	1.4
Uttarakhand	0.9	38.5	30.3	40.1	36.5	1.1
Haryana	7.8	92.1	51.2	21.3	44.3	2.1
Rajasthan	9.6	33.5	25.3	18.2	24.2	1.4
Uttar Pradesh	46.2	44.4	30.0	21.3	32.1	1.4
Bihar	97.7	86.0	55.5	40.3	59.6	1.4
Tripura	45.1	63.9	74.3	71.7	61.2	1.0
Assam	24.0	39.8	51.4	37.5	39.6	1.0
West Bengal	61.3	69.4	44.7	47.7	55.2	1.3
Jharkhand	6.7	35.7	36.2	17.1	22.2	1.6
Odisha	39.6	61.1	41.8	35.7	43.9	1.4
Chhattisgarh	19.4	27.4	38.2	73.9	31.1	0.9
Madhya Pradesh	33.7	55.5	27.3	23.1	33.9	1.6
Gujarat	39.2	77.0	48.4	26.5	44.3	1.7
Maharashtra	53.8	63.3	42.5	26.0	41.3	1.5
Andhra Pradesh	43.0	62.6	57.8	66.2	60.6	1.0
Karnataka	42.1	46.8	35.1	33.7	38.0	1.2
Kerala	93.2	72.3	58.6	41.3	56.6	1.3
Tamil Nadu	38.6	77.4	57.8	72.8	63.4	1.2
Telangana	25.6	35.9	51.2	56.9	45.1	0.8
Total	34.8	58.4	43.3	36.6	43.8	1.3

Source: Author's calculations from unit-level data, L&L S, 70th round, NSSO.

While the need of the hour is to fight for rolling back policies which are responsible for the agrarian crisis, land redistribution remains important from a social justice perspective. Land ownership to Dalit households will not completely resolve the crisis of rural livelihoods, but it will provide an opportunity to the socially deprived sections to move away from humiliating caste-based occupations like manual scavenging and other low dignified occupations and prove to be an important step towards redeeming Dalit dignity.

As AKSC, we believe it is impossible to work towards a truly just economic system without also actively fighting to annihilate caste and capitalism. Also we would like to reiterate the need for combining our resistance to caste and capitalism with a resistance to the oppression of women because all of these forms of oppression are deeply linked at their roots. AKSC will organize seminars, hall meetings and audio conference on economic inequality and how it's inextricably coupled with the social system.

3. On Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan 2017-2018 Budget - Reversing 30 years of development

The Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) were formed in the 1970s, to bridge the development gap between SC/ST and privileged Indian society. The SCSP and TSP guidelines of the erstwhile Planning Commission mandate that public resources towards SC/ST welfare must be earmarked in proportion to their share in the total population. According to the 2011 census, SC citizens are about 16.6% of the population and ST citizens are about 8.6% of the population.

The Jadhav Committee further clarified the intent of the sub-plans when it stated in its guidelines that only schemes that “directly benefit individuals, families and hamlets belonging to the SC/ST community” should be categorised as targeted schemes.

While the 2017-2018 Union budget seems to have increased the allocation from previous years, the reality is that there is a sleight of hand behind the figures.

- Firstly, the total allocation is severely less than what policy and guidelines mandate.
- Secondly, generic non-targeted schemes are included in the sub-plan in direct violation of the Jadhav Committee guidelines. This has been accomplished by scraping the Five Year plans which housed the SCSP and TSP and replacing the SCSP and TSP with an “allocation for welfare of Scheduled Caste” and “allocation for welfare of Scheduled Tribes” components respectively. An additional issue with non-targeted schemes is that they are easily diverted to schemes that do not in fact benefit SC/ST citizens.
- Thirdly, there has always been a gap between budgeted expenditure and actual expenditure and deviating from the Jadhav Committee guidelines will make the gap even larger.

So the 2017-2018 budget SCSP and TSP allocations actually represent a decline from the 2016-2017 allocations and, sadly, an even steeper decline from the 2014-2015 UPA budget allocations. In terms of gender, “1.19% of the total allocation for SC/STs has been allocated for SC women and 1.68% for ST women. Overall allocation for gender budget is only 0.99%”.

	Amount (crores)	% of total budget
Total Budget	2147000	
Defence Spending	274000	12.76%
Total Allocation for SCs	52393	2.44%
Mandated Allocation	96847	4.51%
Under Allocation for SC	44454	2.07%
Allocation for Non-Targeted Schemes	26685	1.24%
Actual Targeted Allocation	25708	1.20%
Total Allocation for ST	31920	1.49%
Mandated Allocation for ST	49992	2.33%
Under Allocation for ST	18072	0.84%
Allocation for Non-Targeted Schemes	16277	0.76%
Actual Targeted Allocation	15643	0.73%

Defense spending is exactly 10 times the amount spent on actual targeted plan for SC and 17 times the actual targeted plan for ST.

Compared to the 2014-2015 UPA budget, the 2017-2018 BJP budget actually represents a decline of 50% for SC welfare and of 52% for ST welfare.

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4. On Manual Scavenging

“The [International Labour Organization](#) describes three forms of manual scavenging in India¹²

- Removal of human excrement from public streets and "dry latrines" (meaning simple [pit latrines](#) without a water seal, but not [dry toilets](#) in general)
- Cleaning [septic tanks](#)
- Cleaning gutters and sewers

Manual cleaning of railway lines of excreta dropped from toilets of trains is another form of manual scavenging in India.“

According to the India Census 2011, there are more than 2.6 million dry latrines in the country. There are 13,14,652 toilets where human excreta is flushed in open drains, 7,94,390 dry latrines where the human excreta is cleaned manually. Seventy three percent of these are in rural areas and 27 percent are in urban areas. According to the House Listing and Housing Census 2011, states such as Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal account for more than 72 percent of the insanitary latrines in India

Manual scavenging is forced upon Dalits due to their caste. Predominantly the women are employed in this inhuman job. Currently most of Indian State Government downsized the workforce of Manual Scavengers by eliminating from payroll, and outsourced those cleaning jobs to private contractors, who illegally uses the same Manual Scavengers without providing any safety and pay them very less. The much publicized “Swachh Bharat” (Clean India) campaign also doesn’t have any plan for mechanized cleaning of those pits and sewer lines so far, and it’s doesn’t have any plan for rehabilitation at all. Despite government’s “clean India” promotion, manual scavenging goes on, status quo of people continues.

Even though the Prohibition of Employment of Manual Scavengers is passed, it’s still being done, and according to various news reports more 1300¹³ human lives lost in the Manual Scavenging in the past couple of years.

AKSC would campaign for action on eradicating the inhuman job by working with activists and other partners who were already working in the field. AKSC would be raising the awareness in US by making impressions on the Social Media and through other avenues like screening the documentary film, “[Kakkoos](#),” in Aug 2017. Apart from that AKSC should make this as manifestation of Caste Discrimination in every opportunity, say if any of the representative from AKSC is giving a speech he/she should talk about Manual Scavenging. For every death of Manual Scavengers, AKSC should make a huge noise in Social Media by encouraging members to make their impression with a specific hashtag. AKSC should have a goal on representing or raising this issue in international forum like UN.

AKSC made a resolution sent out to UNHCR, WHO to push Govt of India to take necessary action.

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manual_scavenging#cite_note-HRW2014-2

¹³ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Over-1300-manual-scavengers-died-at-work-Safai-Karmachari-Andolan/articleshow/51826182.cms>

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5. On Sub-Caste Discrimination

Social structure is so well structured that there is always someone beneath one caste to harass to feel good within. Or at least, You're NOT the last one in the chain of hierarchy, known as 'graded inequality'. Social structure and system guarantees one caste behind other, unfortunately last in the lineup of castes doesn't have one behind, one above above in caste line up are allowed to abuse and it is accepted by the social system. Although Dalits are the lowest in 'varna' ranking and seen as vermin by rest of social system, and yet within Dalit castes, there is hierarchy. One insults other by various means¹⁴. Last among the lowest are so unfortunate, they take in all absorb sins of society, no salvation in sight.

Another aspect of this discrimination and hierarchy blocks the Oppressed Caste to reach out to their peers, like the marriages between the inter sub-caste (it's still a big struggle), the place of worship also different for each of these subcastes. The presence of Sub Caste discrimination deprive the Oppressed Caste people's ability to fight unitedly for their rights and really hard for them to align, unify and agitate against the atrocities and injustices meted to them. And the ruling class which comprised of mostly the Oppressor Castes actually exploit this divisiveness and made sure that oppressed people (SC/ST)'s are not all unified and fighting for their rights.

It's a problem of Brahminism seeped into the marginalized society too. As Dr. Ambedkar stated "Caste is a state of mind, it's a disease" which makes even the oppressed people to practice the discrimination among themselves. In a Brahminism, there is a victim for a victim. As Dr. Ambedkar stated there is no point in blaming them, it's the Oppressor Caste people have made them to believe in the hierarchy which is discriminatory.

It's a hard fight to get rid off this, there are so many challenges. One of the challenge is to get those people from those castes come back to their roots and work/talk to their people to raise the awareness and educate them on their rights and other initiatives. This is a biggest problem when Com. Adhiyamaan, founder of Aathi Thamizhar Peravai (ATP), stated during the teleconference call. He is admitting that even the prominent Dalit political parties are not open to these people belongs to these sub castes, thought the party head remains supporting, there is still that mindset of party cadres is discriminatory.

- AKSC can conduct awareness programmes, like creating study circle, for people belongs to these different castes and make them understand that all these divisions were created to keep them away from unifying across and fight for their rights.
- AKSC can actually make an effort in the Identifying the educated people in each sub castes and make them understand the importance of getting rid of their inner caste discrimination and use them as a role models to influence the people to see over the Caste barrier.
- AKSC can actually make a request to Dalit parties like Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) to have representation from each of these sub castes in their office bearers.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/living-as-the-lowest-among-the-lowest/article19826702.ece>

6. On Honor Killing and Inter-Caste marriage

Honor killings are an example of blatant, bloody violence, but the caste code is also enforced by many other less visible forms of violence. Every year [~1000 honour killings occur in India](#). People are not free to love, and there is no fraternity. Because these structures benefit the oppressors, they protect and maintain them using violence.

The strict moral code of caste completely permeates and affects the way in which people interact with each other in the social sphere, and the strong moral law against inter-caste marriages (which is enforced by oppressor caste people using violence, such as honor killings) is but one manifestation of the caste codes.

As a result of the prevalence of the caste mindset, [~95%](#) of the marriages are same caste marriages. Looking at this statistic, how can anyone continue to claim that caste is a thing of the past? Some people from oppressor castes also claim that they prefer same caste marriages only because they want to a partner who shares their culture. When examined closely, we can see that this is a complete falsehood, because what they call “culture” is really just casteist, oppressive practices and violence, and when they say they want to “protect their culture”, they really just they want to protect their dominant status, not let of caste based power that is highly beneficial to them, and keep wealth within their caste circles.

The prevalence of same caste marriages is diagnostic of a social illness. When people are not free to bond with each other in our social spaces, how can we claim that we live in a free democracy? When our interactions with those around us are not democratic, and instead mediated by the powerful caste system, how can democracy arise out of thin air just because we go to the polling booths once every now and then. In this brilliant essay [Love and Marriage: Caste and Social Spaces](#), Kadhiravan, a writer, follows Ambedkar in stating that, without a democratic social space, political democracy is meaningless. He quotes Ambedkar's Annihilation of Caste, “....This is fraternity, which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of Government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellow men.” Hence, Kadhiravan wants us to create a new social space: “The space could....aid the ideals of love, compassion, cooperation and humanity that would facilitate social interactions and alliances cutting across caste-lines leading towards annihilation of caste, towards an egalitarian society.” As he writes, we must work to create a world where fraternity and compassion are practiced, and in such a world, people would be free & equal and would love freely as well. For as long as caste is not annihilated, that is not possible.

7. On Incarceration and Police Brutality

All over the world, the police are machineries of the State and the powerful. India is no exception. In India, the police function to uphold the existing caste, class and gender order by using its State-sanctioned methods of violence against oppressed people who resist this order by seeking justice and, more broadly, anyone who is oppressed and vulnerable. This tendency to prey on the marginalised and its deep seated anti-Dalit, anti-Muslim, anti-women, anti-poor tenets (which is normalised in almost every institution in India) manifests itself in many ways. For example, the essay *The sorry state of Indian Prisons* analysed *Prison Statistics In India 2015* and noticed that “92 percent of Tamil Nadu’s prison population are SC, ST & OBC inmates”!!

Corroborating this, the experiences of M. Chandrakumar, a writer and auto-driver in Coimbatore, remind us that the police are never on the side of the oppressed. In his book *Lock Up* (ശങ്കടം), M. Chandrakumar, narrates the violence he and his friends endured in prison when they were detained and brutalised by the police. The police inflicted violence on them knowing that they were marginalised people and that they didn’t possess the economic or social capital to seek justice against these police atrocities.

Victims who belongs to the marginalized caste has to protest and fight for filing their cases. Even if Police accepts the case and files First Information Report(FIR), they make it in such a way that the cases can be diluted later by the prosecution; they leave those loopholes or skip crucial details in the FIR so that cases would drag on or be diluted. The classic example is the murder of Nandhini¹⁵, a 17 year old girl who is SC and was sexually assaulted and killed by her estranged boyfriend and his 3 friends belonging to an Oppressor Caste.

As writer Charu Nivedita’s *Oped, Nandini: The Untold Story*¹⁶, reports, “Although the culprits were arrested, the intermediate issues leading up to their arrest clearly exposed the casteist face of the crime. The police had repeatedly neglected requests by Nandini’s mother to file an FIR, which was eventually done 17 days after her body was discovered. They even stooped to taunting Nandini’s appearance and character. By refusing to lodge the complaint, the police gave time to the culprits. Manikandan belonged to upper caste and was also a functionary of a right-wing organisation, Hindu Munnani.¹⁷”

The essay *The sorry state of Indian Prisons*¹⁸ also shows us that Chandrakumar experiences are very common. This essay states the following deeply tragic facts:

- Seven out of ten prisoners behind bars are still awaiting trial. This has been the case for more than a decade.
- The situation in Bihar and Jammu & Kashmir is even worse with 82 percent and 81 percent prison undertrial population.

¹⁵<http://www.thenewsminute.com/article/gangraped-and-dumped-well-four-arrested-murder-dalit-girl-ariyalur-56201>

¹⁶ <http://www.asianage.com/opinion/oped/120217/nandini-the-untold-story.html>

¹⁷ <http://www.asianage.com/opinion/oped/120217/nandini-the-untold-story.html>

¹⁸ <https://factly.in/the-sorry-state-of-indian-prisons/>

- One fourth of undertrial prisoners have been inside prison for more than a year
- Three out of every ten undertrial prisoners have spent less than 3 months behind bars.

Further, as the online blog [Dr. Ambedkar's Caravan reminds us](#):

In Maharashtra, Muslim population is about 10.6% but their share in total prison inmates is 32.4%; in Gujarat, Muslims count to about 9% but more than 25% in jail inmates; condition is worst in capital of India also, Muslims count to about 11.7% of the Delhi's population but more than 29% in jail count. Does it mean upper caste people don't commit any crime? (Remember [Sadhavi Pragya Thakur](#), Lt Col Prasad Purohit, Swami Dayanand Pandey?) The only place where Muslims and Dalits can claim a share in proportion to their population is in prison! (Muslims convicts in India is 19.1%, while the number of under trials is 22.5%, which exceed their population ratio) The condition of Dalits is also the same; one might find more Dalits in jails than in schools or at any other service sector. Can you smell something fishy?

In India, the situation is almost the same for Dalits, Adivasis and minorities similar to the anti-black, anti-poor justice system prevail US. Why it is always oppressed people at receiving end? Don't all these incidents show that money, caste, class and abuse of power play much important role in decisions of courts?

In conclusion, the police work against oppressed people and they are one of the tools used by the ruling class, ruling caste to maintain the current world order and to punish anyone who resists. As AKSC, we name that the police are against justice and will take steps to increase police accountability (for instance, by creating awareness about police brutality and working to establish institutions that check their power) As AKSC, we join Critical Resistance and many others in imagining a world free from policing where we practice restorative justice instead of punitive justice. And AKSC should work for transparency the judicial process by working with partners and try to put in a mechanism of watchdog organisation every district.

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8. On Civic Education

Having the caste system in place for more than 2000 years, its most cruel and inhuman manifestation i.e untouchability being practiced for 1400 years at Indian subcontinent (dates may be slightly later in the southern India) have made a marrow deep sense of **superiority** and **inferiority** among the people based on their caste identity.

This sense of **superiority** and **inferiority** have profound impact on self-dignity and self-respect of an individual. Self-Dignity or Self Worthiness is defined as how someone think of himself or herself based on confidence or belief in him/herself etc. Self-respect is how someone allows him/herself to be treated by others. Thanks to the historical **discrimination and oppression** so called the lower caste people are NOT able to inculcate sense of self-dignity and hence self-respect.

As Dr. Ambedkar writes, “a mental attitude manifesting itself in social discrimination” is still continues. He added, “You cannot untwist a two-thousand-year-twist of the human mind and turn it in the opposite direction.” Such un-twisting demands correct historical explanation.

1. Who are Dalits and how they are seen in the society

There is a mass / collective consciousness who are untouchables and how they are made so amidst Indians? They are UNCLEAN hence doing UNCLEAN work. It's completely wrong. No, they are doing unclean work hence they are unclean. This is still WRONG despite NOT completely. Historic facts established that the people who challenged Brahmanism are made as UNTOUCHABLES.

Dalit is a socio-political term, and the legal term is Scheduled Castes. The term Scheduled Castes was introduced as per Government of India Act 1935. Till 1935 the same people were referred as '**Depressed Class / Caste**'. *The term 'Depressed Class / Caste'* was introduced in the 1910 census to differentiate the Hindus whose certain practices differed from other Hindus. These Hindus whose certain practices are different are those who:

(1) denied the supremacy of the Brahmins, (2) did not receive the Mantra from Brahmana or other recognized Hindu Guru, (3) denied the authority of the Vedas, (4) did not worship the great Hindu Gods, (5) were not served by good Brahmanas, (6) have no Brahman priests at all, (7) have no access to the interior of the ordinary Hindu temple, (8) cause pollution, (9) bury their dead and (10) eat beef and do not revere the cow.

Out of the 10 points, 6 points emphasize that the group of people who stood against Brahmanism were excluded by the Brahmanic caste and made as chandals or untouchables.

Both Dalits and non-Dalits should be educated that Dalits are condemned as untouchables because they stood against Brahmanism. Dr. Ambedkar establishes this fact in his well-researched book 'The Untouchables: Who Are They and Why They Became Untouchables'. Such historical analysis will NOT only help the Dalits to practice the sense of self-dignity and self-respect BUT also it gives them a historical responsibility to fight the Brahmanism still in practice today.

AKSC is committed to propagate such civic education to the masses in India and in the USA. In India, it'll work with progressive and committed individuals and organizations to conduct classes, seminar and workshops on civic education. In the USA, AKSC will work with the progressive American and Indian

organizations and individuals to give them the right understanding about the caste system and untouchability in practice to exert pressure on the Indian government to fight the caste apartheid.

AKSC with other like-minded organizations will organize a hall meeting or seminar during a weekend which falls close with Periyar E.V Ramasamy's birthday i.e. Sep17th to propagate the idea of self-dignity and self-respect.

9. Encouraging Study Circles

Before we begin, we would like to acknowledge the crucial role that Ambedkar study circles play in India, and thank the students who keep these organisations running through their commitment to creating a more equal, more free and loving world.

We want to encourage more people especially students to become involved in study circles, where members read great thinkers like Dr. Ambedkar, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr , Periyar and other social revolutionaries and reformers whose works have been systematically excluded from the mainstream curricula. In these study circles, students learn about their fellow citizens and the state of the world. This will be a place of true education, where questions that shake the foundations of the present day society will also be raised and where oppressed people are heard well and not silenced.

Social and political awareness is missing all over the world, not just in India, and study circles are way of creating such awareness.

In our schools today, students do not learn about the way our societies work. They do not learn about caste, race, gender and class (which are structures that power the world right now), and they do not learn about political or social theories. They do not read intellectuals like Ambedkar and Periyar who've written about these topics and how to work against them for freedom and equality. Instead, they learn facts about the world that are removed from their everyday life experiences, and which they cannot connect back to their realities except in a superficial manner. In our schools today, students are pressured and coerced into becoming careerists, who are primarily concerned with making money or becoming successful. They are not allowed to think critically about what this normative definition of success leaves out. They are not asked to raise question, and instead told that obedience is the biggest virtue. Obedience is a feudal trait, and that this is the primary focus of our schools tells us a lot about the nature of our education system.

Study circles and true education must involve dialogue and thought. Through this, students will understand the myth of merit, and that the less privileged/powerful students who do not have cultural capital need to work a 1000 times harder to prove that they are worthy and be promoted to the next level.

Study circles strive to be places fraternity, and this will be so important because fraternity is completely absent from our societies in general. In study circles, students will work against manufactured hierarchies and power structures that segregate students from one and other. In order for this to become a reality, the students from ruling class, ruling caste families need to shed their internalised entitlement and oppression. They must recognise that the ways of being that they've normalised since childhood are in itself wholly oppressive, and that they cannot be a part of any fraternity as long as they uphold their ties and links to these oppressive structures. In study circles, these students (if they are able) will be invited to remake themselves in ways that allow for equality, shared compassion and moral courage.

When our schools and colleges are failing us, starting more study circles is the way of spreading a true education. AKSC will work with like minded people and organizations to start such study circles in their respective educational institutes and in their neighborhoods in India and in the USA.

10. Conduct Annual Conference In The USA

Since year 1990, the Indian diaspora community population have steadily increased in US. Prior to that period, coming to US was possible only by certain privileged people. But due to huge demand in Information Technology domain happened from 1990, many educated people from indian middle class migrated to US. However, the caste and class conscious from these people are far from over, even though they now live very far from india. Directly and indirectly they are one of the elements in either in continuing their caste practices or being silent and/or ignoring whenever they come to know about caste based oppressions happening to their fellow indian back in India. Moreover, in many occasions, the indian diaspora view and their approach towards African American people are not different than how Dalit people treated in India.

ASKC will promote dialogues among Indian diaspora about caste, race and class based oppressions whether it is in US or in India. The way to promote these dialogues can only be achieved by increasing the visibility of many organizations like AKSC.

There are so many indian based organizations in US. From language based organizations like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada,etc associations and also various minority groups like Dr.Ambedkar Sikh foundations, Periyar groups, study circles. These organizations are mostly play reactive roles and visible only once-in-a-while. They get organized only when there is an on-going issues back in India or US.

AKSC will take a lead to find common grounds among these organizations, conduct annual conference. There will be 1-2 days conferences/hall-meetings, requiring all organizations to submit papers, propose ideas and means to unite people in US & India against caste, class, gender based oppressions. AKSC believes this would create dialogues among indian diaspora and opening up their minds to accept and view everyone as one among them.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. writes that Edmund Burke said on one occasion: “When evil men combine, good men must unite.” ... When evil men plot, good men must plan. When evil men burn and bomb, good men must build and bind. When evil men conspire to preserve an unjust status quo, good men must unite to bring about the birth of a society undergirded by justice.