

### **Problems related to Scheduled Castes**

**Various problems faced by Schedule Castes—The Varna system which existed during the Vedic period in course of time degenerated into the caste system. Scheduled Castes who are known as Untouchables have been suffering from various social, religious, legal political, economic, educational and other disabilities.**

**For centuries they were not allowed for political representation legal, rights facilities educational and economic opportunities. During the British rule also nothing was done to uplift the Schedule Castes to relive them from their bondages. Even today the Scheduled Castes are not free from problems.**

#### **(A)The Social Restrictions and Disabilities of the Scheduled Castes;**

**The Scheduled Castes suffered for centuries from a number of Social disabilities ;**

##### **1.Lowest Status in Hierarchy**

**Scheduled Castes obtain the lowest status. They are considered to be unholy, impure looked down upon by the other castes. They have been suffering from the stigma of Untouchability Hence they have been treated as the servants of the other caste people. The Scheduled Castes have always served the other caste people.**

**They were kept at distance from other caste people.**

##### **2.Educational Disabilities;**

**They were forbidden from taking up to education during the early days..Sanskrit education was denied for them. Public schools and other**

educational institutions were closed for them .Even today most of them are uneducated.

### **3.Civic Disabilities;**

Prevention from the use of Public places. For a long time the untouchable castes were not allowed to use public places and could not have any civic facilities such as-village ponds, wells, temples, hostels, hotels, schools, hospitals etc.

They were forced to live on outside of the villages or towns during the early days.

### **4.Religious Disabilities**

They are not allowed to enter temples in many places. The Brahmins who offer their priestly services to some lower castes are not prepared to officiate in the ceremonies of the untouchable, castes.

The Vedic mantras are considered to be more pure could not be listened to and chanted by the Harijans because of the taboos. They were only permitted to make use of the Upanishadic mantras which are considered to be less pure.Burial grounds were also denied for them in many places.

### **5.Economic Disabilities**

The Harijans are economically backward and have been suffering from various economic disabilities also.

#### **1.No right of property ownership**

For centuries the Harijans were not allowed to have land and business of their own.It is only recently their ownership to the property has become recognized. The propertied people are comparatively less in them. Majority of them depend upon agriculture but only few of them have their own land.

#### **2.Limited occupations;**

**The caste system imposes restrictions on the occupational choice of the members. They were not allowed to take up to occupations which were reserved for the upper caste people.**

**They were forced to stick on to the traditional inferior occupations such as-curing hides, removing the human wastes, sweeping, scavenging ,oil grinding tanning, shoemaking, leather works etc.**

### **3.Landless Labourers;**

**Majority of the Harijans are today working as landless labourers.More than 90.1 of the agricultural labourers in India belong to these communities.**

**A large numbers of Harijan families are in debts. Harijans are economically exploited by the upper caste people. Even today they are the lowest paid workers. Some of them continue to continue to suffer as bonded labourers at the hands of the higher caste people.**

### **6)Political Disabilities;**

**The untouchables hardly participated in the political matters. They were not given any place in the politics, administration and the general governance of India, they were not allowed to hold any public posts.**

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