

I. Dalit as Subaltern Subject

In the contemporary India and Nepal, there are tens of thousands of people suffering within the Varna system created by Hindu Religion. In Hindu philosophy, every creature in this world is created by the god, Brahma. According to Hindu Philosophy Brahmins are thought to be created from the mouth of Brahma to symbolize teacher groups, Kshetrias from the arms of Brahma to symbolize the warriors, Vaishyas from the lap of Brahma to symbolize a mother feeding her baby and Shudras from the feet of Brahma to symbolize a weight bearer. As NNDSWO report states “The source for proof for this setup is the “Bhaagabat Geeta”, one of the holy books of Hindu religion” (01).

During the time of extremely feudalistic society, the king (Kshetrias) used to rule the country with his might, the priest (Brahmins) propounded by the Vedas, the traders and farmers (Vaishyas) used to handle the economy of country, and Shudras had to serve all of these classes of people through menial works (Vishwakarma, 19). The religion, therefore, treated Shudras as inferior human beings. Vishwakarma further writes “This system was more formalized and ritualized by some famous Hindu sages like *Bhrigu* who propounded rules and regulations and formed “*Manushmriti*” which provided guidance to the kings and further enhanced the caste system” (20). And as Y. B. Kisan views that by enforcing restriction against study and worship the Veda, over time Brahmins could make it appear that Shudras were “naturally” inferior on a basis that they had actually originally established.

On the basis of “*Manushmriti*”, Casteism was made very strong and social moves of discriminatory nature were enacted. “Casteism in Nepal started during Malla period as Malla king of Kathmandu, Jayasthiti Malla formalized it under the law in the 14th century on the basis of occupations” (Vishwakarma, 21). The status of Shudra approximately was that of

slaves and they received nothing but wrath and hatred from the rest. The Shudra or untouchable groups were ostracized from social engagement, forbidden to enter temples, and prohibited from any contact with the high caste groups. The practice of untouchability emerged and is still strongly practiced in most of the rural parts of the country. As NNDSWO reports “Untouchables had to perform the menial jobs and enslaved to work in the fields of the landlords, which strengthened the feudalistic structure of rural country and encouraged the landlords with the opportunities of exploiting the labours” (01). Even Ram Shah of Gorkha and Prithvi Narayan Shah also could not eradicate the Caste system and untouchability. Lower castes or untouchable were not allowed to acquire property, construct comfortable houses, and touch persons of higher castes.

The rule of nation was thus, guided by Hinduism and was based on caste system under the feudalistic political system. In the 19th century, Junga Bahadur Rana, founder of autocratic Rana rule, brought Muluki Ain (National Code) in effect in 1853; and caste system got legal provision. The same Code of 1853 A.D., formalized the division of Shudras into two categories: one who could be enslaved or killed and the other who could not be enslaved or killed. Hira Vishwakarma states that all these untouchables were referred as Dalits. The Aryans began to practice caste discriminations and to proclaim that the Varna system was made by God. In this context, K. B. Bhattachan writes “As the Code was first ever law applicable all over the country, the untouchability practice was universalized and Hinduized indigenous nationalities were forced to practice untouchability in every-day-life, otherwise they were punished accordingly” (72).

Thus, untouchability is one of the hallmarks of Hindu society, culture and religion. The New National Code of 1963 A.D. abolished untouchability legally but its practice has

continued and unabated even a decade after the re-establishment of multi- party Parliamentary form of political system or democracy in Nepal.

The word “Dalit” comes from the Sanskrit root ‘dal’ which means to shatter, to break into pieces and to step on. The term is a product of a 19th century Indian reform movement. According to Y. B. Kisan, the literal meanings of the word ‘Dalit’, are shattered; overburdened; suppressed; squeezed; stepped upon; kneaded; ground down; shamed by being required to bow to someone else’s feet; or silenced through suppression (06). In the part, the word ‘Dalit’ was used to refer to all of those groups who were oppressed, but in contemporary Nepali parlance, it is used to refer only to those officially categorized within the untouchable castes.

The term “Dalits”, for the first time was used in India in the 1960’s in relation with Dr. Ambedkar’s thought and with reference to Symon commission’s report (1927) meaning as the group of further stratified Shudras who were considered as untouchable (NHRC,05). The term “Dalits” is a joint designation referring to a number of different caste groups. Similarly, according to social scientist Pro. Dr. Bidhyanath Koirala, ‘Dalit’ refers to a group of people who are religiously, culturally, socially, politically and economically oppressed. Dalit is not a caste group per se but a politically coined word used to refer to a socially backward community in Nepal.

Mass Media and Representation:

Previous constitutions guaranteed freedom of expression as a basic right, but in practice this right was severely curtailed. Prepublication censorship, cancellation of registration for publication, and other restrictive regulation severely handicapped the freedom of the press and journalists operated under constant threats of harassment and imprisonment. As an official authorized website www.countrystudies.com reports that in

1963 A.D. the king decreed that all newspapers were required to obtain official clearance for reports of political activities. In 1962 A.D. a government controlled news agency, Rastriya Samachar Samity a government controlled news agency was established to collect and distribute news about and within country. The Samity monopoly continued until the success of predemocracy movement. In addition, provision of the “Freedom of Speech Publication Act of 1980 A.D.” limited the publication of materials that might undermine the interest of sovereignty of the nation; contravene principles that underlie the constitution, or encourage, abet, or propagate purity politics. This act was repealed in July, 1990A.D.

The constitution of 1990A.D. guaranteed the freedom of the press as a fundamental right. It also prohibits the censoring of news items, articles, or any other reading materials. In addition, the registration of a newspapers or periodical could not be cancelled for publishing offensive news articles or reading materials. The operation of a free press was circumscribed, however, by vague restriction against undermining the sovereignty and integrity of Nepal, disturbing the harmonious relations among the people of different castes, classes or communities, violating decent public behaviour morality, instigating crimes, and or committing sedition or contempt of court. During the 1980s, several journalists were incarcerated and held without trial under the “Public Security Act and Treason Act”.

The Nepalese press was supportive of the predemocracy movement, when the government repressed the movement, the Central Committee of Nepal Journalists Association, headed by Gobinda Biyogi, issued a statement that declared all censorship, banning of newspapers, and arrests of journalists as illegal, unconstitutional, and undemocratic. Nepal journalists Association reported that between the months of January to April 1990, forty journalists were arrested for comment criticizing the government.

The Political changes of April 1990, freedom of the press has come into question only once, in November 1990, when authorities charged two reporters with slandering the Royal family in print, which was dismissed in Dec. when Nepal Journalists Association's protested. As mid of 1991, there were no reports of the seizing or banning of foreign publication to have carried articles unfavourable to the government or the monarchy.

www.news.com informs that in 1991 there were approximately 400 Nepalese newspapers, journals, including national dailies; however, only 125,000 copies were circulated. Two English national dailies "The Rising Nepal" and "Commander" were published in Kathmandu, but circulating newspapers however were published in Nepali including "Gorkhapatra", "Samichhya", "Matribhumi", "Rastra Pukar", "Daily News", "Samaya" and "Janadoot" and numbers of ethnic languages' newspapers were also published. The dailies "Gorkhapatra" and "The Rising Nepal" were government owned newspapers. "Nepal Rajpatra", the principal publication since 1951 contained of law decrees, proclamation and royal order was available in both Nepali and English.

Electronic Media consisted of Radio and Television programmings are controlled by the government. Only Government owned electronic media were available before 1990 A.D. After Restoration of democracy 1990, there are hundreds of F.M. Radios, dozens of Television Channels and thousands of Newspapers around Nepal.

Absolutely, the most progressed field after restoration of democracy of 1990 A.D. is journalism. In the same time, as Parajuli and Gautam states that, "from various concepts and practices, there are raising waves of the voices of social awareness and increment of organizations in every field. In the arena of media, there are waves of inclusion. (21) To talk about the representation, out of 956 editorial group members of publications, Janajatis 164 (17.15%), Dalits 17 (1.78%), Women 51 (5.33%) and rest of all Brahmins and Kshetris have

occupied outside the valley. There are 693 editorial group members in valley, out of them Janajatis 149 (21.50%) including Newars, Dalits 11 (1.58%), Women 31 (4.47%) and rest of all Brahmins and Kshetris. (21-56) So, representation of Dalits in media is seen very poor.

According to an investigation, there are one and half dozens of Dalits actively participating in media around the country. In regard, Baburam Vishwakarma writes that Mr. Cosmos Vishwakarma, Hiralal Vishwakarma, Ummid Bagchand, Baburam Vishwakarma, Ammar Sunar, Kamal Vishwakarma, Prakash Chandra Pariyar, Prem Nepali, Chhatra Shankar, Shivji Gayak, P.B. Diyali, Surya Vishwakarma, Diwakar Bagchand, Umesh Vishwakarma, Santosh Baraily, Binod Pahadi, Gobinda Pariyar etc. are representing Dalits in media. And, two dozens of Dalits journalists are actively working in newspapers, magazines and bulletins of Dalits, published by Dalits Organizations (71-73).

After the Political change of 1990 A.D., Dalits and Dalits organizations have been publishing their own magazines, newspapers, and bulletins to broadcast the true news to the readers. As Baburam Vishwakarma reports, “Janautthan” and “Solidarity” by (JUP-Nepal), “Dalit”, “Jeejibisha” (DWO), “Unheard Voice” (NNDSWO), “Voice of Liberation” (DNF), “Voice of Dalits”, “Samanta”, “Nawasamanta”, “Utpidit Aawaj” etc. are being published by organizations (73). Radio and Television programmes related to Dalits issues, rights and movement are being broadcasted nowadays by organizations. “Dalit Janajagan”, “Sandarva ra Aawaj”, “Voice of Liberation”, “Dalit Aawaj” and “Sunaulo Bihani” are being broadcasted by Radio Nepal, Metro F.M., Kantipur F.M., Swargadwari F.M. Dang, and Srinagar F.M. Palpa respecting. And 12 other F.M. stations are broadcasting “Katwal Radio Patrika” around the country by Jagaran Media Center. Similarly, Dalts’ F.M. “Jagaran F.M.”, established in Butwal, is also broadcasting many Dalits’ programmes. Television programmes like “Kanchuli”, “Sahayatra” (DWO), “Social Justice” (LANCAU- Nepal), and

“Paribartan” related to Dalits’ issues, movement and rights are also broadcasted by Nepal Television. Furthermore, telefilms like “Manchhe”, and “Dalan” which are presenting voices of liberation and awareness, are being broadcasted by Image Channel and Nepal Television.

Dalits Media house JUP- Nepal and Jagaran Media Center are producing many Dalit journalists every year. After the “People’s Movement, 2006” Dalits’ voices, news and activities are excessively represented by media. During King Gyanendra’s direct rule, media house were seized and censored, so they couldn’t publish and broadcast the adequate news for Dalits.

However, the news directly related to Dalits’ Rights, eradication of social evils and vices, Dalits’ Social Movement and Social Justice are hardly represented by the mainstream media house.

The Political changes, following the 1950s revolution, have been catalytic to bringing about social changes in Nepal particularly with regard to breaking down of Caste taboos. (news.com) The declaration of the constitution regarding caste discrimination, like ‘untouchability’ as illegal and punishable by law, has been a jolt to casteism. However, Dalits are politically, socially, educationally, economically and culturally discriminated, oppressed, deprived and exploited. Six decades long Dalits’ social Movement has not achieved the goal. Social, Political awareness is growing among the educated members of the Dalits’ groups. They have launched a sustained movement to liberate themselves from the centuries of suppression.

After political change of 1990, Dalit leaders and rights activists revolted against state but were suppressed. Limited agreement and demands were fulfilled by government. Dalits actively participated “People’s Movement, 2006”, and after its accomplishment, Dalits’ Political Organizations submitted their demands and agendas related to Dalits Socio-

economic, political, cultural issues and issues of nation, equal representation or inclusion in Constituent Assembly, and current issues related to Dalits. After one year, they submitted their memorandum again to the prime minister of Nepal and declared the schedule of movement in the months of Shrawan and Bhadra. “United Dalits’ Republic Front”, “Joint Dalits’ Struggle Committee”, and “Dalits’ Civil Movement” separately started their movement according to their declared schedule. The movement continued for two months; the Government of Nepal called for the ‘Table talk’ to the revolutionary organizations. Without any achievements, the movement was postponed for the ‘Table Talk’. The ‘Table talk’ however, could not get progress (Janautthan, 12.10.56.2064).

On the basis of Hindu Philosophy, Shudras are treated as lower caste. During Malla period Jayasthiti Malla divided the castes on the basis of work which rooted in Nepalese traditional society and Junga Bahadur Rana legally discriminated to Shudras by National Code of country of 1854 A.D. by dividing the people into “Water Acceptable” and “Water not Acceptable”. Then Dalits were socially, educationally and culturally discriminated, oppressed, and exploited. Discrimination and Untouchability deeply rooted in society. Dalits’ position and identity was not in existence in society. Society suppressed Dalits on the support of State, Hindu Philosophy and National Code. Even after the centuries long suppression and half century long revolution against State and Caste System, mentality of society has not changed toward the Dalits. NDC reports in this context as says that, “Constitutionally all people are equal and discrimination is punishable but society is still in practice of traditional concept” (2059). Dalits of rural and remote areas are still far away from light of education and social awareness. They are still living under the suppression of society. A news which reveals the Dalits social status states that:

Member of Parliament (MP) who is in the village for Constituent Assembly (CA) Election started showing his true colours. MP Narendra Bam of Nepali Congress beat an 18 years old Dalit woman, Manisha Nepali, who was bathing at a public tap at Kotila-Baitadi. Her inner garment was snatched off and was reportedly beaten by Bam as well as cadres of Nepal Student Union and Tarun Dal. MP Bam plotted the action, claiming that Manisha touched the tap when taking her bath on 13 September 2007. (www.nepalcivilsociety.org)

As an example, incidents are happening every day against the Dalits on the basis of untouchability so the mentality of Dalits has not changed because they are victimized time and again by the authorized persons but no any punishment is given to the suppressors.

As a social construct, Dalits have low economic status. Due to their low literary rate, lack of political consciousness, and overall cultural practice, they have been termed as inferior beings. These situations have in fact, become influential in creating Dalits Identity as untouchable. In 2006, LAAD reported that “The social hierarchy is not only reflected in the patterns of social interaction, but also in economic and political participation. Due to their lower social status, Dalits are the social group holding the smallest portions of land, and are economically more vulnerable compared to other social groups”(xi).

Dalit community can not represent State’s reformation truly. Voice can find expression only by mastering the rudimentary codes of those socially sanctioned speech conventions. Dr. Sanjeev Upreti argues that:

The problem, however, is that the Dalits or the subaltern groups as argued by Spivak can not represent themselves. Dalits can not speak within the web of historical and linguistic context which they find themselves...Dalits are Dalits not only because of the exploited position that they occupy as the bearers of

political and economic exploitation but also because they lack language or the discourse to make themselves heard. It should be tried to continue to represent them with the purpose of generating public discourse so that it might lead to practical measures and programmes that will help liberate Dalits. (168-169)

This lack of discourse, as indicated by Upreti, is the need of the time. However, the dominant print media and other are not to uplift those discourses supporting Dalits once.

Media is fourth organs of State that broadcasts the news/messages to the public; so in a sense, media is bridge between government and Public. In Nepali context, how it should be needed to investigate the media for their inclusiveness to the all groups of people including Dalits, Ethnic groups and the marginalized groups. Was Dalits' Movement occurred in 11th July to 22nd August of 2007 given coverage in mainstream Nepali media or not? Are the mainstream Nepali English dailies i.e. *The Rising Nepal* and *The Kathmandu Post* are inclusive or not in the issues of Dalits? Every changes of nation, media plays a vital role from its sides.

Nepalese Dalits are naturally a part of Subaltern Studies because of the socio-economic, political status and representation to the State. Ranjit Guha's notion of 'Subalternity' was borrowed from Antonio Gramsci following which subaltern classes are deemed to have limited means of representation. Citing Guha Barbara says in this regard:

Limited representation is also the subaltern (358)...She further elaborates Gayatri Spivak however addresses the relation of the subaltern and the State for an angle different from that persuaded by Rabusa, Ghosh and Sen by a necessary return to the idea of representation. She begins with the strict definition of the subaltern as the position without identity... There are some of the questions we invited the symposium participants to address it the subaltern primarily a political

construct... The non recognition of subaltern resistance by the State is a problems of infrastructure, which produced by State is inadequate for subaltern voices to be heard. The subaltern is after all, that which the State doesn't interpellate. (362)

Dalits' voices are inadequately represented in mainstream print media. The news that supports for the Upliftment of the Dalit community is hardly given coverage; which can be one part of subaltern studies. Even in the news regarding Dalits movement, 2007 A.D., the dominant print media like *The Rising Nepal* and *The Kathmandu Post* could not speak adequate voices of Dalits as they were operated by elites who consider Dalits as inferiors.

II. Subaltern Subject and Representation

Subalternity and Its Historiography

The Subaltern, a discourse has been used to characterize the colonial subject by the European with subordinate identity of the Subaltern that has been constructed by the European discourse and internalized by colonial peoples. The Subaltern has been writing in a European language not to serve them but to resist their language and consolidate their own identities. The term 'Subaltern' is etymologically derived from the Latin terms 'sub' and 'alter' which respectively mean 'under' and 'other'. The term subaltern refers to those who are deprived of the opportunities and access in each and every aspect of the nation.

As the elite historiography is regarded as official history sidelining the repressed's or people's history. They only valorized their own cultures, mores, religion, castes, at the expense of the culture, religion, beliefs, and castes of the marginalized. In this regard, the issues of the marginalized have always been neglected, they are not incorporated in the crucial national policies and programmes, and hence their voices are unheard. Since their voices are not included in the mainstream historiography and / or literature, the subaltern writers intend to identify subalterneity as an autonomous domain. They want to write their own historiography which can confirm their representation. In this regard, Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci views "the history of the subaltern is necessarily fragmented and episodic..." (357-358).

The origin of the term 'Subaltern' goes back to the medieval age which was applied to vassals and peasants, however, by eighteenth century; it came to denote inferior rank in military suggesting peasant origin. In nineteenth century, the historians and writers commenced writing about military campaign from the subaltern point of view. Later on

Antonio Gramsci adopted it to designate those groups in the society who are subject to the hegemonic exploitation of the rulers.

However, it had received an inspiring impetus in 1982 in India with the wake of Ranajit Guha in the arena of writing historiography and literature of the marginalized people. A distinct type of Subaltern Studies group emerged who tried their best to establish 'Subalternity' as an autonomous body with their own voice. From 1982 onwards, the concept and / or scope of the subalternity has broadened in such a way that it started to entail all who are deprived of basic rights and privileges because of their class, caste, age, gender, and office or in any other way. The histories, politics, economics, sociology, culture of the subaltern have appeared explicitly and directly which pave the way for the awareness of those marginalized. The people aimed at examining the general attribute of subordination of South Asian people in terms of class, caste, age, gender etc. They began to question and many a time undermine the subaltern representation prevalent that time and scenario. The elitist historiography did not incorporate and acknowledge the contribution made by subaltern in the betterment of the nation. In this regard, Guha comments that the elitist historiography fails to "acknowledge or interpret the contribution made by people own their own, i.e., independently of the elite" (SSI, 03). From this point it can be understood that the Subaltern history has aimed at incorporating the local agenda and the cultural specificity which have been contributing for the betterment of the nation.

In course of time, Subaltern Studies emerged as a theory of change in the changed politico-academic scenario, especially, because of the influence of post modernism and post structuralism. On the other hand, cultural studies were getting proximate to other disciplines and studies. In this backdrop, Subaltern Studies started to include the writing of the cultural theories like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Bernard S. Cohn who brought cultural

perspective in Subaltern Studies. In her seminal essay “Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography” (Subaltern Studies IV, 1986), Spivak gave a linguistic as well as cultural mode to subaltern studies. She says:

The possibility of action lies in the dynamics of the disruption of this object, the breaking and relinking of the chain. This line of argument does not set consciousness against the social, but sees it as if self also constituted as and on a semiotic chain. (332)

It clarifies that; subaltern studies in its later phase, broke the existing concept and restructured itself as interdisciplinary discourse by relinking different disciplines in a chain. Later on, the writers like Susie Tharu and Amitav Ghosh followed her strengthening the feminist issues raised by Spivak. Subaltern Studies was, then, changing rapidly with unprecedented momentum, however, socialist communist and Marxist systems were deteriorating throughout the world and the academic world was moving towards Post-Marxist Studies. In such a context, subaltern studies remained the only domain which could provide a platform to the third world voices, so it remained as the beacon of hope for the marginalized.

Now, the subaltern studies is moving ahead with remarkable momentum by assimilating ideas from diverse discipline history, literature, anthropology, culture, sociology and so on. It has become a new way of writing historiography of the marginalized people. Like other post structuralism and post colonialism, it is very crucial to those intellectuals who oppose the totalitarian concepts and meta-narratives like modernity, enlightenment as such.

Literally, Subaltern mentality refers to the attitude and feeling of thinking somebody else as submissive, dependent, uneducated, inferior, other etc who are always subject to be

subjugated. Such kind of mentality works highly not only in the Europeans and the elites but also in the subaltern themselves. The oppressors are of the opinion that they know everything concerning administration, politics, economics, etc, however, they show the lack of knowledge of the subaltern in these domains. So they are always desirous to rule over the subaltern. On the contrary even the subaltern think themselves as inferior, in terms of politics, economics, administration, culture etc. and hence are ready to be submissive. In this case, Gautam Bhadra clarifies the concept of subaltern mentality in this way: “it is well known that defiance is not the only characteristic of the behavior of the subaltern classes. Submissiveness to authority in one context is as frequent as defiance in another. It is the two elements that together constitute the Subaltern mentality” (54). From the above mentioned lines, it is clear that subaltern mentality refers not only to the mentality of the defense but also to the mentality of Submissiveness. The poor and the oppressed have time and again, and in different histories made voluntary sacrifices in favour of the rich and the dominant.

The co-existence of the oppressors and the oppressed is characterized by the idioms of domination, subordination and revolt which are inextricably linked together. That’s why subordination and / or domination is a never ending phenomenon/ process. And this process is marked by struggle and resistance which ultimately creates the tension. In this hierarchical community, the dominant himself/ herself will be dominated by another dominant. In this remark, Bhadra exemplifies in the poem ‘Kantanama’ that in hierarchical community, “one’s superiors also had their superiors, and one could always appeal to or in the name of – the higher authority” (88). Thus, it can be argued that subaltern mentality is the mentality of hierarchy which exists not only between the two levels- the elite and the subaltern, but also within the level itself.

Subaltern (mis)representation:

Representation simply refers to the act of presenting somebody/ something in a particular way, however, in its broadest sense ‘representations’ refer to the verbal formations which are the ideological products or cultural constructs which are created by the powerful person to circulate their power in the different strata of the society. New historicists are of the opinion that these cultural and ideological representations mainly serve to reproduce, confirm and propagate the power-structures of domination and subordination in a particular society. The person who is in power defines a thing, object or any issue in a particular way to produce the truth about that thing. The truth produced as such is circulated in different forms to the people and the one who knows that truth is said to have possessed the power, so s/he attempts to represent others. But the truth produced as such cannot become the objective truth because that is made/ constructed by the person who is in power and that person creates the truth for his own convenience which is subjective. There can be the traces of partiality and in consequence, the representation turns into misrepresentation. In this regard, the essayist Louis Montrose states, “representation bears traces of the professor’s values, beliefs and experiences – his or her socially constructed subjectivity - and also that it actively – if not always consciously and rarely consistently – instantiates those values, beliefs and experiences” (396). So, it can be said that representation is nothing but attributing some dispositions which cater the powerful to impose power on his own way.

As for the concern of the representation of the *Subaltern*, it is explicit that they cannot speak themselves because of their inaccessibility to the national policies and programs Subaltern groups are subaltern not only because of the exploited position that they occupy as the bearers of political and economic exploitation but also because they lack language or the discourse to make themselves heard. Spivak, in this reference, opines that

subaltern groups can not represent themselves. They cannot speak within the web of historical and linguistic context within which they find themselves. Nations and civil communities have their own forms of permitted speech and codes of expression but the subaltern are devoid of their own permitted speech and codes. Their voices can find expression only by mastering the basic codes of those socially approved speech conventions. They have to adopt others language where they cannot find their voices expressed. To express their voices; to make their solid identity, they have to use their own language, but their own language is not sanctioned by the society. As a result, they are compelled to follow the language of the elite.

If the subalterns want their language to have existence, they have to satisfy the demands of these civil and linguistic codes of the socially approved language. In course of satisfying these demands the subaltern almost loses its originality and becomes paralyzed in the end. In such a circumstance, how can we guarantee the true representation of the Subaltern even in the subaltern language? Such a representation is not representation but a misrepresentation.

Subaltern Studies entered into the realm of literature after Spivak rendered the linguistic as well as literary mode. She, in her seminal article “Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography”, announces that subaltern studies is not much concerned with change but with the representation of consciousness or culture of the subaltern classes. She is of the argument that the Subaltern can not manifest themselves in their own language, for their language is not sanctioned by the society. They have to take recourse to the socially sanctioned language while writing anything, to be specific, literature. The literature as such can not represent them truly. Nevertheless, the subaltern did not stop writing the literature, rather they, like the deconstructionists; aim at dismantling the binary oppositions like elite/

subaltern; superior / inferior; one / other, etc. This project is rather a positive one as it aspires to investigate, discover and establish a subaltern or peasant consciousness.

Even though the Subaltern have their own language, it is not approved by the society, so they have to take resource to the national language. Since they cannot use their own language, they are not able to write their own history with true representation, rather they are represented. They are subject to the activity of the elite groups even whom they raise the voice against the elite group. As they are subject to the means by which they can control their representation. They even have less access to social and cultural institutions. They have the subordinate identity in such societies and to get rid of that identity, they have to take the help to the intellectuals. Here, Gramsci is concerned with “the intellectual’s role in the subaltern’s cultural and political movement in hegemony” (78). Due to the lack of the means and strategies to approach the hegemony, they have to take the help of intellectuals to proceed ahead. To achieve the independence and confirm the solid identity, they should be turned into the revolutionary figures with the help of the intellectuals. Those intellectuals should revolutionize the subaltern and mobilize them.

Guha, further argues “the history of the subaltern is an autonomous domain, for it neither originated from elite politics, nor did its existence depend on the later” (4). The subaltern historiography was proceeding ahead on its own way though there was direct impact of colonialism. So it was as old as colonialism was. The bourgeois elitist historiography, Guha claims, fails to “acknowledge or interpret the contribution made by people on their own, i.e., independently of the elite” (3). It means that the elitist history ignores the contributions made by the subaltern people. Here it is seen that elitist history has adopted the legacies of colonialism. The national historiography fails to speak on behalf of the subaltern people. Their contribution, in the anti imperialist movement, to make the

country independent of the elite command and suppression is relegated by the elite. To ignore the thousand year long Indian history is definitely an act of colonial arrogance. The bourgeois nationalism inherited the same colonial legacy in post- independent India. It commenced to represent all people in a way as if it had got the consent from them. Just like colonialism, bourgeois nationalism confiscates the basic rights coercively rather than making the consent. Such kind of representation can not be considered as the true representation. So it is explicitly clear that the subaltern have been misrepresented a long time which is still continuous. Despite these all hindrances, Subaltern Studies has brought about the remarkable awareness/ consciousness in the subaltern in all modes of life. They are being emancipated day by day.

Subaltern in Mass Media

Mass media include all forms of information communicated to large groups of people with/ from the use of handmade sign to an international news network. There is no hard and fast rule for the number of the audience in the mass communication and there are also no constraints on the type of information being presented. The information can be simply a ear advertisements and sometimes it can be of international significance like U.N. resolution. So that it's coverage ranges from trivial local news or events to the crucial global issue.

Mass Media include electronic, print and internet media that are used to convey or rend message to the mass. Mass Media helps to disseminate the news to the mass with the use of those media. Print media the oldest form of mass communication, which developed with the invention of the printing press, contributed much for the education of the people. This print media also preserve the treasure of knowledge. The print media includes the following media: books, manuals, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, brochures and

prospectuses, pamphlets, posters, banners, signboards, caption writing, etc. The next is electronic media which includes radio, television, and cinema. The term electronic refers to things or results produced or operated by a flow of electrons. Radio is an old electronic medium whereas television supported by computer network is known as 'new media'. Television is a more recent innovation. Both these media use open air-waves. In the same way, the movies, e-mail and internet occupy an important place in our culture. The attention of new media is mainly on the collective ensembles of activities that fall under the heading 'Internet' including online news, advertising, and the World Wide Web and certain community-forming potentials. Private e-mail, game-playing and many other more or less private services are less concerned or almost not concerned here.

It is widely approved that media is the fourth major organ of the country which is supposed to present social, political, economic, cultural, racial, ethnic issues without any partiality. However, the premises on which it was founded have been violated by the journalists, reporters and or the media persons. It is still prevalent that the marginalized groups do not hold the 'power over representation' and it is also the fact that representations of those groups are both flawed and few in numbers. Slowly and gradually, the issues of the Subaltern have occupied the space in the media; however, they could not thrive as they ought to have been. The media included only the activities, programs conducted by different organizations; they could not explore the researchable issues of the Subaltern which were buried deep beneath the surface. The media hardly incorporate the subaltern culture, their real life world and their problems in the local level. It can be argued that the writings concerning with the upliftment of the subaltern have not been published by the media. It has become so because the advocates of the Subaltern issues are more non- subaltern than the subaltern themselves. Due to this situation, it is assumed that the problems of the Subaltern

have not been illustrated clearly. To spread the awareness and bring them into the forth, incorporation of the subaltern is inevitable. In this regard, Spivak is of the opinion that the Subaltern makes an attempt at self- representation, perhaps a representation that falls outside the “lines laid down by the official institutional structures of representation” (306) yet, this act of representation is not heard. It is not recognized by the listener, perhaps because it does not fit in with what is expected of the representation. Therefore, representation by Subaltern individuals seems nearly impossible. Despite the fact that Spivak’s formulation is quite accurate, there must still be an effort to challenge status-quo representation. So the work of the minority writers, artists are nowadays getting space in the media.

Politico-Cultural in the Media and State Ideology

Mass media inculcate all forms of the means of communication which impart the current information to the lower one. It not only imparts the current information but also gives the different sorts of knowledge of various domains like public awareness, female empowerment, cultural heritage, etc. It can be argued mass media is one of the significant genres of knowledge like philosophy, literature, art, etc which plays seminal role to shape our intuition. The media which shape our intuition is in the direct inspection of the government and / or the state and the government as such has implemented its own sets of beliefs, codes of conduct which are supposed to be adhered by these media. While acknowledging these sets of belief and rules, codes of conduct, sometimes the media have to twist the reality and impart the knowledge or truth about something in favor of the state ideology.

In addition to the influence of the State ideology on media, sometimes the media themselves are used to writing to confirm their identity as superior in comparison to the Subaltern. Subaltern are hardly represented in the media. Even if they are represented, they

will be misrepresented because almost all media are in the access of the elites. Those elite cannot tolerate the upliftment of the Subaltern in any aspect of life. In this way, the Subaltern are doubly subjugated and misrepresented in the media. So, many analysts have argued that the media cannot simply reflect as it occurs but most inevitably represent events and ideas in particular ways. This is because media, like other texts, is a cultural construct that produces the version of any reality. Therefore, news is manufactured according to the rituals and routines of media not according to the true spirit of the events happened.

Thus, the news in media are developed from complex process of construction and reconstruction. The media analysts tend to argue that in support with the political and the legal constraints, media provides the receivers/ mass with the supposed truths. But media construct a particular version of truth where the truth is shaped by a wider context. The state explicitly controls media output is able to disseminate what is infact, a propaganda. Critics like Herman and Chomsky argue that the governing parties are able, through structure of media reporting, to ensure that certain view prevail, “the powerful are able to fix the premises of discourse to decide what the general populace is allowed to see, hear and think about, and to ‘manage’ public opinion by regular propaganda campaigns” (59).

Media, thus, becomes a means for the ruling group to control ideas in society. Media collect, select, present and constitute dominant ideology and serves ruling political interest and the use of language favoring the government and employer. Because of the long- term exposure to the state regulation, the news personnel start to censor themselves in agenda setting.

In the process of making agenda, the media personnel set them in choice and ordering of items by privileging one voice at the cost of another. Media have become dependent on the agenda set by the agencies such as government or concerned authority. It

seems natural by the selection, construction and presentation of news veils efforts to promulgate a dominant ideology. So media coverage might set the agenda concentrating merely on the events rather than its political origin. The result is seen as the perpetuation of the agenda sympathetic towards the ruling group.

News coverage of Subaltern groups are over or under represented in media, compared to their occurrence in population, can provide inside into the way dominant ideologies and values are reflected and reinforced by mainstream media. *The Rising Nepal*, a government funding newspaper, often puts the ruling parties at first of priority in ruling coverage. It has been run according to the government policy since its establishment. Because government policy towards media and mass communication generally encompasses two forms of interventions: regulation and funding. These can be used to shape a media system in order to promote ideas/ and of objectives their own.

Government run media systems are extremely common, particularly in the developing countries like Nepal. In these systems, the control of context and policy in general is directly handled by the government. The system is clearly advantageous for authoritarian government wishing to control information and create state-sanctioned forms of politics. In other words, government tries to create hegemony by controlling information.

The concept of hegemony extensively used in media has come to be of the central theoretical importance. It is a concept linked to the notion of power and ideology. The hegemonic model argues that media have the capacity to construct the limited range of views of the world. More specifically, media enhances a set of views based on the ideas of ruling alliance. Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci introduced the term and several others followed him as Gramscians. They believed that the role of media is important because journalism is dominated by a particular world view which effectively remove other ways of

seeing and presenting the things. *The Rising Nepal* puts the ruling power holders as prime importance over others common and Subaltern people as *The Kathmandu Post*, too. By attributing wide coverage to the elite and their allies, Media deify the ruling group and present the Subaltern as the docile devotee.

In media production and reception encoding /decoding was developed by Stuart Hall at the center for contemporary cultural studies in England. The model was an attempt to move beyond linear, transmission theories of mass communication; ideology and representation. It has been extremely influential in providing a general framework for the analysis of media power. Encoding refers to the ideological process that informs how the world is represented in media. So the decision to lead the news with publicity stunt by a leading politician is ideological because the printed song is probably more permanent than the visual one. In the sense politics is seen as defined and informed by political elites. So that the majority of the subaltern had much difficulty in literally and denotatively identifying what the linguistic sign, they read on the paper.

The media run by the government depend on government's financial policy and do not have their own independent financial policy. They are funded and economically supported by the government. Therefore, government takes all their overhead cost and determines financial policy as well. Because of their dependency to the government, the government run media are likely to be tailored the needs and interest of government in its news. In other words, government controlled media either subtly or overtly reflect the interest of those in power. This has an ideological consequence. It is an interest of government- fund media to favor politicians rather than the interest of the Subaltern citizens and to exclude negative message about government officials and those politicians in power.

Therefore, aim of the government funded media is to identify framework and interest or forms of representation that support the government policy at the cost of the Subaltern.

In media studies, ideology is generally understood to refer to a system of ideas, assumption and beliefs. Louis Althusser in his essay “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus” argues that the popular use of the term carries negative connotation, ideology being associated with particularly doctrinaire or inflexible sets of usually political beliefs. He further describes media as the communication “ideological State Apparatus”. He took “the institutions like the school and the church as ideological State Apparatus” (112) crucial to the maintenance to the society’s support for one set of ideological beliefs over another. The media Apparatus tend to reflect the ideological position of these who are in power, suggesting the notion of “dominant ideology” that serves the needs and interest of powerful elite in the name of nationalism, liberalism and moralism etc. by means of the print, audio and visual media. Powerful elite wants to indoctrinate Subaltern people through the means of mass media.

Most of the people are used to spending their time reading newspaper, but reading newspaper lies benefit the ruling class. The newspaper chiefly conveys its own ideology to docile readers. What is important in reading newspaper is probably its ideological content than the news in newspaper. Reading newspaper confirms individual as passive, isolated, privatized role and consumes a good deals of time that could be put to productive political uses. So, the main role of the newspaper is to spread the political ideology through the news.

In this regard, a post-structuralist theorist, Foucault, developed a theory of discourse in relation to the power structures in a society. His main assertion is that discourse is involved in power and such discourses are deeply rooted in social institutions so that social and political power operates through discourse. The discourse, therefore, is inseparable from

power because discourse is the ordering forces that govern every institution. Such discourse practices enable the media to exercise power and domination by defining and excluding the other. To exclude and / or represent other, the media persons produce certain set of standard and their dichotomies in which the elite are attributed with the positive qualities whereas the Subaltern are identified with the negative ones. The persons who produce such dichotomies are in the power and they run the newspaper reporting, publication dissemination. These media persons construct the discourses which exert certain truths about the Subaltern. When they create the truth about the subaltern, they start to represent them. But the truth and such representation is, indeed, a misrepresentation. But what the intellectuals and the political authorities lay down is supposed to be the truth which is followed by the citizens without any objection. In this sense, they become the docile subjects for the ruling class which alleviates the ruler to perpetuate their regime for a long time. In this issue, Foucault “simply identifies truth with power so that whatever discursive practices are operative or have powers in a given society are true or constitute a regime of truth” (102). People are made so ignorant and one directional that they recognize particular piece of philosophy or theory as true only if it fits the description of truth lay down by the intellectuals. The people / subaltern don't dare venture beneath the surface and find their own reality (ies). This is how; the ideology is practiced in a society with the help of the media.

Finally, print media can be decoded to show their ideological role in representation of the elite and the Subaltern, but is it suspected that such representations are the reflection or the distortion of something real. What we have to do here is to go beyond this and see the representation as constitutive. We need to question whether there is only one truth made by the superior or there are many versions of the truth which are relegated by the powerful people. In this regard, Stuart Hall's perspective is different from that of the elite. Hall claims

that there may be various truths but the power holder, to be specific, the media persons, only bring about such truths which is in accordance with the stereotypes creates to subjugate the powerless. But it is also the reality that nothing gets known until it has been represented. So what we call reality does not exist outside the process of representation Hall says, “nothing meaningful exists outside of discourse” (117). And that discourse itself is one of the constituents of the ideology. The ideology as such has the direct relation to the State, that’s why from the aforementioned illustrations it can be declared that everything is either explicitly or implicitly affected by the state ideology where media can not become the exception. Thus the main task of the research is not to try to measure the gap between reality and representation, but to try to understand how meanings or truths are produced through politico- cultural State ideology.

III. Politics of Representation of the Dalits in Print Media

Socially, Politically, Economically, Religiously and educationally exploited Dalit community became conscious about their rights and dignity since the Rana Regime because of discrimination, exploitation, subordination and suppression. Dalits were socially known as untouchable which was rooted to “Manusmriti” and formally practiced by Jayasthiti Malla and legally practiced by Rana Prime Minister J. B. Rana in 1910 B.S.

Basically, Nepali Dalits’ Movement came as a social movement because of its nature and social issues. Bhagat Sarbajit Bishwakarma (Baglung), a prominent Dalit leader led Dalits’ Movement during Rana Regime by organizing “ Bishwakarma Sarbajana Sangh” (1947) to protest against casteism and untouchability. He started to publicize about the organizations and was jailed as a result. A legal case was filed against him claiming that he had broken the traditional religious and caste systems. “Tailor’s Union” (1947) by Saharshanath Kapali, “Nepal Samaj Sudhar Sangh” (1947) by Jadubir Bishwakarma, Umalal Bishwakarma and T. R. Bishwakarma, “ Nepal Harijan Sangh” (1950) by Chandra Lal Bishwakarma (Tanahu), “Nimna Samaj Sudhar Sangh” (1951) by Hira Lal Bishwakarma and other, “Jat Tor Mandal” (1951) by Saharshanath Kapali, “Samaj Sudhar Sangh” (1952) by Siddhi Bahadur Khadgi, “Pariganit Nari Sangh” (1955) by Mithaidevi Bishwakarma, “Nepal Rastriya Pariganit Parishad” (1957) by Rup lal Bishwakarma, T.R. Bishwakarma, “Achhut Mukti Morcha” (1958) by T.R. Bishwakarma, “Rastriya Achhut Mukti Parishad” (1958) by Saharshanath Kapali were directly presented against the social discrimination of caste system. Significantly, during the time, King Mahendra issued the 1962 constitution of Nepal and "The Civil Code" 1963 was promulgated, both of them explicitly banned the untouchability system but practically did not change the social mentality.

Likewise, “Nepal Rastriya Dalit Jana Bikash Parishad” (1967) led by Ruplal Bishwakarma (Chitwan), “Samaj Sudhar Manch” (1979) led by Padmalal Bishwakarma, Hira Bishwakarma and others, “Pachhaute Jati Sudhar Sangh” (1980) by Manohar Roka, “Nepal Atipichhadiyeko Jana Biskash Parishad” (1980) by Narayan Kapali, Dhal Bahadur Bishwakarma and other, “Nepal Rastriya Samaj Kalyan Sangh” (1982) by Siddhi Bahadur Khadgi, Pratap Ram Lohar and other, “Chuwachhut Mukti Sanghathan” (1983) by Bal Bahadur Khati, “Jatiya Bibedh Unmulan Manch” (1989) by Rajesh Bishwakarma also played vital role for the elimination of caste system and untouchability. “Jatiya Samata Samaj” published numerous documents and booklets, along with the "Samata Saptahik" and "Samata Sandesh" newsletters. It also carried out many activities including anti-untouchability public awareness programs, Dalit reservation movements, arranging common meal programmes, temple entry movement, common water source use movement, seminars and people’s cultural campaign.

After the great change of 1990, “Nepal Rastriya Dalit Mukti Morcha” (1990) established by Rohit Hingmang, “Utpidit Janajatiya Mukti Morcha” (1990), “Bikashounmukh Samaj Sangh” (1991) by Ratna Bahadur Bishwakarma, “Nepal Dalit Utthan Sangh” (1991) by Dal Bahadur Bishwakarma, “Nepal Utpidit Dalit Jatiya Mukti Samaj” (1993) by Padmalal Bishwakarma, “Rastriya Prajatantrik Utpidit Jana Utthan Sanghathan” (1992) by Ram Kumar Bishwakarma, “Nepal Dalit Shramik Morcha” (1996) by Ruplal Bishwakarma, “Utpidit Jatiya Chetana Sangh” (1996) by Golche Sarki, “Nepal Dalit Sangh” (1997) by Man Bahadur Bishwakarma, “Nepal Utpidit Jatiya Mukti Samaj” (1998) by Chhabilal Bishwakarma, “Nepal Dalit Mukti Morcha” (1998) led by Santoshi Bishwakarma (Now leading Tilak Pariyar), “Prajatantrik Dalit Sanghathan” (1998) by Pratap Ram Lohar, Uttam Kumar Pariyar and Trilok Chandra Biswas Bishwakarma, and “Nepal

Dalit Utthan Manch" (2000) by Biseshwor Rajak have been taken great part of Nepali Dalits' Movement. Truly these organizations are affiliated to Political Parties as their sister organizations which cover the most Dalit leaders who are truly contributed to Dalits' Movement for the elimination of Caste based social problems of untouchability and discrimination.

All the political, social and cultural movements are affected by the quality of the organizations that comprise them, as well as the personal qualities, behaviors, skills, and activities of their leaders. After the Restoration of Democracy in 1990, mostly Dalit leaders, organizations have played great role for Dalits. During the "People's war" Dalits' participation was appreciable. Other organizations and sister organizations of political parties were also moved to protest and agitate for the social, political, religious, economical, and educational liberation and special rights for Dalit community. Dalits' Movement's agenda and demands are also broadened but not only the caste discrimination and untouchability. Dalit Human Rights, special Rights and its provisions, proportional representation and reservation have been highlighting in the movement. Establishment of "Upechhit, Utpidit tatha Dalit Barga Utthan Bikas Samiti" (1998) and "National Dalits' Commission" (2002) are also partial success of Movement.

During "People's Movement", 2006, Dalit community contributed remarkable role for the establishment of Sovereign People's rule and Democracy. Each and every National events and changes Dalits have been contributing to country, even though Dalits' Rights are not provisioned and implemented. Social, political, economic, educational, cultural and religious rights/ equalities are not grabbed by Dalits. In this reference Dalits Activist Binod Pahadi says "Dalits' voices are ignored, Dalits' movements are repressed so Dalits' movement are not reached to the summit / peak of the success". State has not addressed

Dalits and their contributions to the country properly by subordinating them, that's why; causes behind subordination should be identified to consolidate the identity of their community.

Time and again Dalit community declared movement with burning agenda and demands related to their rights and dignity and participation in all sectors of State.

Dalits' Movement since 11th July to 22nd August, 2007

Dalits' movement has not been reached to its top success though it has a long history. In the beginning period, it could not get popularity and support of all Dalits. After restoration of Democracy in 1990, Dalits' social organizations, established for social change and social justice were mostly politicized and changed into sister organizations of political parties and some were appeared as the Non- Governmental Organizations. After the People's Movement 2006, the country was going to face constituent Assembly (CA) poll and the date was also declared for Nov. 2007.

"Joint Dalits' Struggle Committee" has formed after the propagation of Dalit's Movement. After the Royal Coup in 2002, Dalit also started movement for liberation and Democracy. "Joint Dalits' Struggle Committee" was formed in 2004, where five sister organizations of Political Parties were involved. "Jatiya Samata Samaj" (People's Front), "Nepal Utpidit Jatiya Mukti Samaj", "Nepal Utpidit Dalit Jatiya Mukti Samaj" (UML), "Nepal Dalit Sangh" (Congress), and "Nepal Dalit Sangh" (Democratic) formed "Joint Dalits' Struggle Committee" with the agenda of protest against Royal Coup, and determination of achieving the true democracy. During the People's Movement 2006, "Joint Dalits' Struggle Committee" became successful to bring the thousands of Dalit people to the movement. In 2007, it declared the movement with the burning agenda of Dalit community. Some more agenda which are as follows:

- i. To implement practically the parliamentary declaration of “Untouchability free country”.
- ii. To provide the needed land to landless people by identifying for rehabilitation.
- iii. To provision of 20% proportional representation by the re-amendment of Interim Constitution.
- iv. To provide free education to Dalits Students in government institution and private institution.
- v. To preserve and promote traditional profession of Dalits, by establishing vocational training centers and provide loan and identify the market to sell the produced goods.
- vi. To provision National Dalits’ Commission an independent and constitutional commission.

Altogether 20 points agenda / demands were presented to government and they declared their schedule of movement. On the other hand Dalit Civil Society was also raising the voice for the liberation of Dalits and for addressing the burning issues of Dalits near the CA poll which does not happen time and again. It was the great opportunity for the fulfilment of Dalits’ demands.

For the proportional representation, reservation and special rights in election, some regional parties, marginalized groups, Indigenous Nationalities were in movement to ensure rights in Interim Constitution 2007. "Dalits’ Civil Conference" started in Kathmandu in 16th June 2007 and ended in 17th June, 2007 with the declaration of *Kathmandu Dalits Charter* which was organized by sixteen organizations together, where more than two thousand Dalit social activists (workers), teachers, students, intellectuals, lawyers, Human Rights activists and volunteer were participated by representing 61 Districts around country (out of 75). 17 burning issues of Dalits communities got floor for the matter of discussion. In Kathmandu charter, it is coded “the 15 points concluding agenda will be submitted to eight political

parties and Government of Nepal. And, to implement these issues of Dalits community, the Conference also declared the lobbying –visiting, mass mobilization, pressure strike, relay hunger strike and other effective programmes if needed” (Kathmandu Dalits Charter). Dalit Civil Society also declared the 15 points agenda are as follows:

- i. To address the racial, gender, regional, lingual and all other structural problems of society, the political, events have still marginalized the Dalits' issues for the progressive transformation and restructuring of the society. The Interim Constitution is the latest example of it. It could not have addressed the proportional representation of the Dalits in Constituent Assembly. It has deceptively confined the Dalits only within 6%. Social, economic, political, and cultural rights are dormant or hidden/ unaddressed. That's why; this Conference has assumed the second amendment incomplete, and demanded eight political parties and Government of Nepal to re-amend the constitution by addressing the basic demands of the Dalits with the correction of that historic error.
- ii. There should be proportional representation of Dalits in all spheres of the State. And, it has strongly demanded to ensure the 20% obligatory presence of the Dalits in CA. For this, the Charter has expressed the hearty commitment to create strong pressure.
- iii. This Conference has appealed the eight political parties and Government of Nepal to declare fixed date of CA poll as soon as possible and it has appealed to declare "Federal Democratic Republic" immediately from Parliament by eliminating the conspiratory Monarchy.
- iv. While analyzing the specificity of Dalits problems, their social, cultural and political rights can not be ensured without guaranteeing their access in natural resources; these issues have not been included in the Constitution of Nepal and other procedures. That's why, this conference has appealed to ensure Dalits' rights in land and to implement this

immediately by criticizing the indifference shown by the political parties in the issues of land-reform.

- v. With the consciousness of the surface policy taken by the political parties in Dalits' issues, this conference has appealed to acknowledge the specific features of Dalits issues and to practically apply it in progressive transformation.
- vi. Though, political consensus has been made to-wards the Federal, all other groups have neglected how Dalits' issues will be addressed in Federal System. So, the Conference has appealed to include Dalits' issues as the main issues in any form in the transformation of the State.
- vii. Dalits are being deprived of the skill, profession and the employment because of neo-liberation and open market economic policy led by the State. On the contrary Dalits have been discriminated due to different projects such as drinking water, electricity and other to be established for the utility of natural resources. This Conference, to strengthen national economy and protect the existence of Dalits, has appealed the integrate declaration of commercial Institutions, multi-national company and market economy.
- viii. Dalits are being compelled to immigrate to the dangerous place for labor because of their inaccessibility of any means of the livelihood and the land. Because of this, their health and social status have become adverse. That's why this conference has appealed instant declaration of special policy and programs to the livelihood and health problems of Dalits.
- ix. It demands to scrap all serts of labour exploitation concerned with land production like 'Haliya', 'Kamaiya', 'Balighare', 'Khali', 'Haruwa-Charuwa'.
- x. Interim Constitution has provisioned 33% representation of the women in every level of State. But no issues have been mentioned about the representation of Dalits female in it.

This Conference strongly demands the representation of Dalits women and Social, economic, political, and cultural problems faced by Dalit women should be immediately solved. Government has to declare the special policy and the programs for the rehabilitation of "Badi Women".

- xi. In the name of Dalits only the people from certain race/ caste, region and class have their access in Dalits organizations and different agencies of the State. This Conference strongly appeals the representation of the minority in the Dalits themselves, Madhesi, Women and deprived class and caste in those organizations and agencies.
- xii. Special policy should be made about Dalit in the private and government owned media. And, this conference strongly demands the representation of Dalit community in these media.
- xiii. This Conference strongly demands for the provision of constitutional "Dalits' Rights Commission" by amending the Interim Constitution.
- xiv. The Conference appeals the provision of the punishment for the convict accordingly by defining Untouchability and discrimination as "The Evil of Human being" in constitution and accepting it as "Serious Social Crime".
- xv. Dalit students should be provided with scholarship and free-ship up to the higher level.

On the Coordination of Binod Pahadi, thirteen members' "Dalit Civil movement Central Coordinating Committee" was formed and submitted *The Kathmandu Dalits Charter* to government but State did not show proper interest for the fulfilment of Dalits' agenda. So from 11th July, 2007, Dalit Civil Movement Central Coordinating Committee started to protest against Government/ State. Some events were as follows:

-11th July- Protest near Singh Durbar Southern Gate with the slogan of dismiss of the budge of Narayanhiti Durbar.

-12th July- Protest at Maitighar Mandala and continued movement for whole July with various agenda.

-July/ August- Delegation and discussion with prime minister, speaker of parliament all ministers, 330 members of parliament, Chief -Secretary and secretaries of various ministries.

-11th Aug. – Blocked to official works, arrested Dalits more than 150 and released.

-12th /13th August- Protest at Maitighar Mandala.

-14th /15th & 16th – Relay hunger strike for proportional representation.

-17th /18th & 19th – lobbying and visiting to Stakeholders.

-20th – Cultural rally in valley.

This process continued for long until the government did not call for ‘Table Talk’.

On the other side “United Dalits’ Republican Front” was formed by “Dalit Liberation Front”, “Dalit Liberation Organization” and "Nepal Dalit Upliftment Organization (United)”. After the formation of this committee, it forwarded the agenda to government and political parties. After one year, July 25, 2007, "United Republican Dalits’ Front, Nepal, Central Coordinating Committee" submitted the memorandum with 10 points burning agendas of Dalits to Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala. 10 points memorandums were:

- i. CA Poll should be done in concerned/ fixed/ declared time. All kinds of conspiracies of disturbing the CA Election should be ended/ eliminated.
- ii. There should be end of Monarchy and declaration of Federal Democratic Republican system.
- iii. Constituent Assembly should be full inclusive and proportional electoral. Through full inclusive proportional electoral system, proportional on the comparison of Dalits’

population and there should be additional rights as compensation by 20% Dalit inclusion Constitutionally in State's all organs and all spheres from higher level to lower.

- iv. Untouchability and discrimination should be defined as an evil of human beings constitutionally accepting it, there should be legal provision against untouchability.
- v. Investigation reports of Rayamajhi Commission should be publicized. All suppressers and criminals of "People's Movement, 2006" should be started to punish.
- vi. There should be provisioned of Constitutional Independent Dalit Rights commission.
- vii. There should be taken a great step of declaration of secular state and its implementation.
- viii. There should be provisioned of free education with scholarship to higher level to Dalits students.
- ix. There should be addressed the true and burning demands of Madhesis, Janajatis, Ethnic, and women.
- x. There should be started the "Table Talk" process to address the agenda or demands of Dalits communities.

The Declared schedules of movement of "United Dalits' Republican Front" are as follows:

-25th July, 2007- Submission of memorandum to prime minister.

-26th-28th July- Delegation to Political Parties' Offices.

-29th July- Protest rally, mass demonstration and Flame Rally in the evening in Kathmandu.

-30th July-August first week- Distribution of Pamphlets, Appeals, conduct of Interaction, Awareness meeting around country.

-10th August- A Procession with torch / flame beam around country.

-12th August- Traffic Jam for one hour

-18th August- Strike in Chitwan

-22nd August –Strike in Kathmandu Valley (Bandha)

The declared schedule was signed by Mr. Tilak Pariyar, Chairman of “Dalit Mukti Morcha”, Coordinator of “United Dalits Republican Front, Nepal, Central Coordinating Committee”. And the memorandum has also coded the second phase schedule of movement would be declared after the completion of first phase movement, and if incase again the voice is unheard.

The movement continued according to its schedule till the government and Dalits “Table Talk”. "Joint Dalit Struggle Committee", "Dalit Civil Movement" and "United Dalit Republican Front" continued the movement around the country with the common agenda related to Dalit communities’ problems and burning issues and the common agenda related to radical political change of country.

Because of Dalits’ Movement government called for ‘Table Talk’ in August, 2007. So 17 members “United Dalit Dialogue Committee” was formed on the coordination of Mr. Tilak Pariyar and sat for talk where Dalit tabled the agendas of Movement. The Second phase ‘Table Talk’ was on uncertain. Government did not show the interest to the Dalits agenda and issues. Even though, before CA poll, many Dalits’ agenda were addressed without agreement to the revolutionary organizations. Declaration of Proportional Representation in CA, Republican country, and other common issues were the some of the achievements of “Dalits’ Movement.

Media and Its Role

Independent media or press is the fourth organs of the State. Print, electronic and other media play the vital role for any radical change in country. For any success and failure of movement and change, the credit goes to media. True reporting of news, events and incidents helps or does not help to concerned parties.

"Dalits' Movement" continued for months and at last, government called for 'Table Talk' where they did not get actual/ concrete/ true/ sole/demanded achievements although few agenda were addressed. According CA member and coordinator of Dalit Civil Movement Central Coordinating Committee, Mr. Binod Pahadi "Media did not help to raise the issues of Dalits during the Dalit Movement". It is accused that media also run after power. Dalits' issues and news coverage is seen miserable. Sushil Bishwakarma a researcher writes that "Failure of Dalits' Movement is the disinterest of Press and Civil Society." (Nawa Samanta, 2065, Jestha: 17)

Media's role should be neutral and should report the true and reality based news without any pressure and bias. Media should play a vital role for the establishment of equality based society where there would not any exploitation and discrimination. It should be the true judge of society but the commercial journalism is evil for society, country and even to the journalism. Because of the media's bias there may happen unimaginable and dangerous events. If the state is wrong, media should control and should help to run in right track. Even Hitler and Mussolini, the dictators of world, frightened by media, that's why they should be dutiful according to the principles of Journalism. They should be determined to the basic element of journalism. According to Dalits activists and intellectuals, media did not support to the Dalits' Movement that's why Dalits' movement did not get the excessive success.

Representation of Dalits' Movement in *The Rising Nepal* since 11th July to 22nd August, 2007

As Dalits' Movement was declared by "Joint Dalits' Struggle Committee", "United Dalits' Republican Front", and "Dalit Civil Movement Central Coordinating Committee" since July, though, they have similar agenda and demands, they declared movement separately, that "Dalit Civil Society" started since 11 July after the ending of "National Convention" and formation of "Central Coordinating Committee". "Dalit Civil Movement" was in protest near Singha Durbar Southern Gate, Maitighar Mandala and other important places, though *The Rising Nepal* was far from reporting these activities and news. One of revolutionary organization "Joint Dalits' Struggle Committee" was demanding for rehabilitation and resettlement of Kamaiyas which news reported in *The Rising Nepal* with feature photo on 20th July, 2007 and news entitled "Landownership Certificate to Ex-Kamaiyas in five months". SSS further writes:

On the occasion of Kamaiya day Wednesday, Landownership certificates were distributed to 96 freed Kamaiyas of Kailali district...the Dalit families realized themselves to be the citizens of the nation only after receiving landownership certificates of the land and they possessed. (20th July, 2007)

The news and photo also says that hundreds of landless Ex-Kamaiyas have various demands including the basic needs of human beings. Most of the Kamaiyas were from Dalit community. The news says "A total of 43-10-3 ropanis of land has been distributed to the Dalit families". Landless Dalits were not feeling that they were also the citizen; the news story writes that the families realized the citizen of the nation only after getting the ownership certificates. (20 July, 2007) Most of Kamaiyas Dalits have been suffering by landlessness and poverty. Kamaiyas were emancipated by Government but did not provide

them land and shelter. Non-Kamaiya Dalits are also suffering by poverty. 60% of Dalits are living under extreme poverty line according to the official report. In the same issue *The Rising Nepal* reported on 21st July, 2007, news on the topic "16,000 Ex-Kamaiyas rehabilitated" which writes :

Minister for Land Reform and Management Jagat Bahadur Bogati, informed that the government has rehabilitated some 16,000 Kamaiyas out of all the Kamaiyas freed some seven years ago by providing them land...responding the queries of the journalist, he said that the government has sanctioned Rs 22 million for the professional development of the Kamaiyas in this budget and it would be extended if it is found inadequate. (21 July, 2007)

The news further writes that "would take initiatives to address the problems of Bajura district by the supplementary budget" for the Kamaiyas. Kamaiyas were compelled to live under the open sky without shelter, land and food, though; government had not taken it initiatively by government. These types of news that pressures the government are hardly published by *The Rising Nepal* because government funded media only highlights the governments' activities and run under the direct of government. General news about Dalits are given coverage like looting, fighting, entering into the temple and so on. "10 held on charge of looting bus" published where Dalits youths were also involved and "police arrested" them. (16 July, 2007). Dalits' Movement was continuing differently with various programmes like relay hunger strike, agitation and interaction with governmental staffs, civil society and intellectuals, that were rarely published in print media like *The Rising Nepal*.

Dalit women in Dalit community have been exploited and discriminated since long but in present context they are being aware and conscious about their rights and duties. They

are involving in different sectors that the news reported "Dalit Women's Involvement in media sector stressed." The news story further writes:

Working Women Journalists (WWJ) Thursday said Dalit women should be given access to work in the media to increase the coverage of exploited and victimized Dalit women in the society... speaking at the interaction programme 'Role of Dalit women in Media', they said Dalit women are the real social victims and exploited by the society but media has not been able to disseminate their problems as a main issue. (27 July, 2007)

In the news "the presence of Dalit women in main stream media including both print and electronic in virtually non-existent" shows the Dalits and Dalit women's access in media. Non-Dalit journalists or reporters can't report truly because they don't know the pain of victims. Dalits and Dalit women are not given opportunities in media as reporter while those who have access to electronic media are also working in the technical and entertainment sector. According to a survey carried out by Sancharika Samuha only 1.8% Dalit women have access to the media (27 July, 2007) Media has failed to address and cover the existing problems and issues of Dalit Women including their health, education, employment, poverty, failure of inter-caste marriage and ethnic autonomy. Dalits women are the victims of both domestic and social violence, which media has not cover. The news writes in detailed presented by Pabitra Sunar that "Many Dalit women are forced to be displaced and commit suicide due to the failure of inter-caste marriage because of not getting justice from society" (27 July, 2007). The lack of education, deprivation of opportunity and lack of government attention to Dalit community has led the Dalit women to be backward and exploited from the society. They have not given special subsidy in education, vocational and media training to boost their skills and not provide equal opportunity in the society.

The Rising Nepal repeated the same news differently in the next volume in topic "Dalit Women Voice for their Coverage in Media" which writes that Dalit women's problems and issues should be raised by the media. Further writes: "Journalists should be committed to professionalism rather than party and mission journalism...promoting professional journalism which writes and tells the truth based news" (28 July, 2007). Dalit Women voice for the coverage in media is seen poor. Women violence and general incidents are given coverage rather than awareness activities and programmes in media.

On 6 July, 2007, "Dalit Leaders Seek place in Govt." published in *The Rising Nepal*. Dalits' Movement was centered for equal representation through reservation in each and every sphere of state. The above mentioned news story further writes that:

The Dalit Civil Campaign organized a street interaction programme Sunday demanding inclusive participation in the government...the party leaders usually talk about their representation but in reality they are never concerned about what the Dalits have been demanding, despotic their promises to include the Dalits in the decision making process, the Dalits still suffer discrimination. (6 August, 2007)

Dalit Civil Society, Central Coordinating Committee was continuing the various kinds of programmes/ activities as movement. It was one of intellectual activity of movement which *The Rising Nepal* has openly supported by providing coverage in media/ news. There are not represented Dalits in "political parties and their sister organizations" that they were "indifference to Dalits demands". The news also covered the speaker voices "warned of intensifying the protest if the government ignored demands. Dalits agenda and demands were appropriate in appropriate time where Civil Society leaders also "expressed solidarity" to Dalit and accused the government turned dead ears to the demands of Dalits (6 August, 2007). Government was indifference and disinterested to the Dalits' demands that of "equal

participation of the Dalits in the public sphere" and other many current agenda. It was first time, *The Rising Nepal* covered this much news of Dalits' Movement in four weeks period. These types of news were not published regularly because State always use state ideology and news against State are censored and hardly given place but common news are sufficiently published.

In the number of volume, "JTMM Cadres Kill Dalit leader in Kapilbastu" news reveals that:

... a group of Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morcha (JTMM, Jwala Singh Group) workers shot dead Purna Bahadur Sunar, president of Federation of Dalit Non-government Association in Kapilbastu at Lokreta of Rajpur VDC in Kapilbastu... dozens of organizations working in the field of Dalits have condemned the murder. (15 August, 2007)

These types of events happen time and again. Dalit social leaders are threatened and murdered, who have been working for community from different field and perspectives.

The Rising Nepal's another version wrote "Government asked to do more for cause of Dalits". The news story further writes:

Lawyers and politicians voicing for the rights of Dalits Tuesday said the government had not been doing enough for the promotion and protection of Dalit rights ... the constitutional amendments declared Nepal a society (Untouchability) free from all caste hierarchies are only limited to the documents and have not been implemented into meaningful practice. (15 August, 2007)

Government has not taken the Dalits issues, agenda, problems and demands seriously.

Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives Chhabilal Bishwakarma said that "India's Dalit Movement was initiated following the success of social revolution and social reforms".

Though, Dalit had played a leading role in the then democratic movement against the Ranas as well as during the April Movement (People Movement 2006); their contribution and role is never valued properly. Dalits have demanded equal participation /representation in the Constituent Assembly election through proportionate participation but ignored. There is virtually no participation of the Dalits in the judiciary, too, and other spheres of State's high level.

On 15 August, 2007, *The Rising Nepal* published the feature photo of "a day-long relay hunger strike" organized by Dalit Civil Movement. The feature photo speaks itself, so that the news had not been written about it. The participants or leaders of movement were on strike with various agendas.

On the other side, Badi women who have been socially and sexually exploited were also in protest for rights and news provision in constitution. "Badi people demand rights" says about the movement of Badi and their demands. The news further writes:

The people of Badi community have been gathered in the capital with the demand rights to live recently...they have come with the 12-point demand which includes that the state should manage land, employment and education to them, three percent out of 13% reservation allocated for Dalits in the Constituent Assembly (CA) election, should be given to Badi community. (17 August, 2007)

Although, Badi community are also come under the Dalit; their social issues, agenda are just related to their own caste and community which do not relate to the whole Dalit community. Starting of the "Badi Movement" their voices are highly supported by media both print media and electronic media. "Badi Women at a Press Meet" published with feature photo. (18 August, 2007) "Badi women warn of Protests" writes about the announcement of Badi women's movement (19 August, 2007), "Badi Protest" feature photo (20 August, 2007),

"Badi male naked movement" feature photo published in *The Rising Nepal* page-3. (21 August, 2007). Because of Badi communities own social problems Dalit movement supported them. Their movement's activities were highly given coverage by media but actually mis-represented because of their style of naked protest which is unusual for Nepali society. However, social organizations and Civil society blindly supported to Badi women movement.

Dalits Movement and Badi Movement's agenda and issues are different from their historical ground and continued separately. Badi Movement was continued for two months. But it is true that all the movements of Dalits, Janajatis, and Marginalized groups are overlapped by Badi Movement because of their unique style. So, Dalits' Movement was also in shadow and could not get sufficient support from all, including print media. Though, it partially got success in its end.

The Rising Nepal, actually a government funded and run print media always supports the government and tries to impose the governmental strategy, policy and ideology to each and every sphere. It does not favor any activities against the State and government. In this long movement very few numbers of news of Dalits movement were given coverage.

Representation of Dalits' Movement in *The Kathmandu Post* since 11th July to 22nd August, 2007

The Kathmandu Post, a private publication and a sister publication of Kantipur daily which is continued since 1998 AD as an English National daily where no any Dalit journalists are officially involved as reporters. Official representation plays a vital role for the coverage of the news and issues.

The Kathmandu Post also favors common events/ incidents like *The Rising Nepal*. Dalits' Movement broke out and "United Dalits Republican Front", "Joint Dalit Struggle

Committee" and Dalit Civil Movement Central Coordinating Committee were at street with various demands resisting for the rights since July, 2007. Dalits have been suffered by society and State since centuries. General events like raping and looting are happened time and again to Dalits community, why it happens? How can we eliminate? These issues are not analyzed well by concerned parties and media. Dalits become mostly victims of these cases in comparison with other castes. "Rape Victims file Complaint after 10 days" published in *The Kathmandu Post*. The news story writes:

. . . a gang rape at a Dalit settled Kaluniya VDC-9 in Rautahat district... the incident occurred 10 days earlier, the victims, including a 14 years old girl did not file the complaint as the perpetrators have been threatening them with dire consequences if they made the crime public. (16 July, 2007)

Though, superintendent of police said that "police would arrest the alleged rapists and take action against the guilty and provide justice to victims", Dalits case could not reveal and file for 10 days, and it can be cleared that Dalits could not get justice since the very beginning. Administration also did not move for Dalits rights. The news did not publish about punished given by the police administration to those rapists. These types of news get coverage in media regularly but news about providing justice to victims are rarely published.

Indigenous Nationalities (Janajatis), Madhesis, Women, Dalits and Marginalized groups were demanding for reservation in every sphere of government. In this context " 45% Civil Service Reservations coming" published in *The Kathmandu Post* on 18 July, 2007. The news further writes:

A sub-committee of parliament's Administration Reform Committee has agreed on 45% reservation in Civil Service for disabled, women, Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis

and other marginalized groups, a move aimed at making the bureaucracy inclusive ...and the reservation are likely to be based on proportional representation scheme for the Constituent Assembly (18 July, 2007).

The reservations, if enacted, will have far-reaching implications for the bureaucracy, which has traditionally been dominated by Brahmins and Kshetriyas. Dalits Movement has been demanding for reservation since long. But the organizations are not cleared about the reservation. What type of reservation are Dalits expecting for? Different organizations have different ideology about the 'reservation'. Nepal Dalit Sangh uses the word "reservation", Nepal Utpidit Jatiya Mukti Samaj uses "progressive reservation", Nepal Rastriya Dalit Mukti Sangathan uses "reservation rights", Nepal Dalit Mukti Morcha (United) uses "special rights" so that the organization don't have similar voice while using the word.

While reporting of common issues, *The Kathmandu Post* published the news "After fathering 16, Ate BK wants more" which writes further that: Ate BK of Darling village has crossed 54. His 16th child Roshu is four yearsold...unconcerned by various family planning campaign, BK is, however, surprised at to why he is not able to father another child.(24 July, 2007). It shows the Dalits' illiteracy and unawareness in lack of education. Ate BK is an example of Dalit community who doesn't know about family planning and does not believe in it and just think that children are gift of god. The news shows the miserable condition of Dalit but media should also write about the awareness programmes especially to Dalit community. "If god gives, he will manage their upbringing, too." (24 July, 2007) The extremely poor locals of the remote village are competing in numbers of children they give birth to. The news also shows the health problems of Dalits that many of the women in the village areas have been suffering from uterus prolepses.

Talking about the movement, *The Kathmandu Post* published "Elites dominate women's Movement: Dalits". The news further writes: "Dalit Women activists have said that women's movement in the country has been dominated by the elites and that the core issues of Dalit women have been pushed into the background...in the name of inclusion Dalit women have been excluded" (27 July, 2007). Dalit women are not only suffered and victimized by male Dalit but also from elite class women. In the name of "opportunities reserved for women are exploited by women of elite class". Media also has not played positive role for the Dalit women. Durga Sob, Chairman of FEDO said, "Though the issues of non-Dalits marrying Dalits are their life after marriage never reported" (27 July, 2007). Not only this much, Dalit women are the worst victims of trafficking that 40% of total trafficking survivors are Dalits. These types of room activities and programmes are reported by print media regularly.

The Kathmandu Post "Deal Untouchability firmly" news published which is an important news for the change of Dalits' mentality. The news story writes: "Dalits activists on Saturday stressed the need to increase punishment for those who treat Dalit people untouchables, and demanded that the government introduce a plan to uplift the financial status of the Dalits" (20 July, 2007) Many policies, laws, bi-laws, constitution are made and declared but implementation parts are flexible and weak/miserable. "While we talk about changed in every section of society, there is hardly any significant improvement in the conditions of the Dalits", a Dalit social activist said (29 July, 2007). Dalits always demand for the implementation of legal provisions and severe punishment to those who label, Dalits as untouchables but its main cause is lack of education, poverty and deplorable condition of Dalits. Social awareness programme and rights based-advocacy programmes are very few

conducted in community. Event like lamination of untouchability and social transformation are hardly reported by media because of non-representation of Dalits in concerned media.

Dalit communities have been demanding for special reservation as compensation of discrimination which was one of the demands of Dalits movement. Regarding the demands, parliamentary team finalized and proposed for equal representation and participation in bureaucracy. The news reported on topic "Periodic Promotions, trade Union proposed" which writes in detailed:

A task force of the Administration Reform Monitoring Committee of the parliament has finalized the much awaited and controversial New Civil Service Bill proposing 45% reservation for women, Madhesis, Janajatis and Aadhibus, Dalits, backward regions, and physically challenged people (disabled). (31 July, 2007)

Five percent reservation in accordance with the 13% populated Dalit community is not really proper justice. Dalits participation is not satisfactory proposed by the sub-committee in bureaucracy because Dalits were demanding at least 13% reservation in state every spheres including bureaucracy.

"Ramrati Devi receives Prakash Human Rights Award" news reported in *The Kathmandu Post* on 2 August, 2007. The news writes further: "Ramrati, a resident of Padhariya VDC of Siraha district and a member of the Dalit community, was selected for the award for her "arduous struggle for human rights of backward communities" (2 August, 2007). The award was one of her greatest achievements in the long struggle for the rights of suppressed communities but providing honours and award is not great thing rather than the rights and social transformation. Ramrati was once forced to walk naked around the village by people from the so-called upper caste but she struggled much. Did she get justice from

administration, or other concerned places during that time? These types of issues are never reported by media like *The Kithmandu Post*. Many Ramralti Devis of our society are suffered from social discrimination, untouchability and domestic violence. So, if they are helped to provide justice and encourage them to fight against the discrimination, which will be great honour for them.

The whole community was on movement for rights, in this three weeks long Dalits' Movement, main stream English national dailies did not reported once, given coverage once rather than other trifle news. "Hubby transmits HIV, wife stigmatize" related to lack of awareness of health of Dalit community was published which news story further writes:

Maya BK got married to a widower who used to work in Mumbai before she tied knot with her husband. By the time she turned 16, she was already mother of a baby girl...at the age of 20 she became a widow as her husband did due to HIV. Her ordeal, however, did not end there. Accompanied by a seven year-old-son, the twenty-seven-years widowed mother of two recently walked for day from Singada in Bajura district to Hasti in Achham for health check up. (3 August, 2007)

Dalits are victims of many dangerous diseases because of carelessness and unawareness. But main cause behind it is lack of education and poverty. The disease victim reveals the news further writes that "After the blood test, when doctors told me that I was diagnosed with HIV positive, I felt my world crumble beneath my feet (3 August, 2007). These are the problems and miserable condition of Dalit community, she is only an example of HIV victims; there are hundreds of Maya who are living waiting the death without any rejection and mistakes.

On the other hand, lack of knowledge, awareness and traditional concepts and superstition, our society has been suffered. "Single Women still mistreated" goes:

Single women in Salyan district said that they had been mistreated by their neighbours and own families, accusing them of practicing witchcraft ... Devi Sunar, a widow of Dandagaon VDC-5 said, her father in -law Man Bahadur beat her up saying that she was a witch. (6 August, 2007)

These types of news come in media generally, which happen in Dalit community and socially backward community. After husband's death, the family blames bringing bad omens in the family to women. Widowers asked the authorities to punish people who were involved in mistreating them but government showed indifference to them.

In the very moment of CA poll, most of the marginalized groups including Janajatis and Dalits were in movement with certain demands. Government invited for negotiation for Janajatis but Dalits movement was still ignored. "Janajatis on board for Polls" published in the Kathmandu post on 8 August, 2007. Government-Eight parties and Indigenous Nationalities Joint Struggle Committee (INJSC) sat for negotiation and agreed for 20-point agenda. Dalits were treated as Dalits so that govt. showed disinterestedness to Dalits' Movement for one and half month. Dalits were still arrested and released by police force. The news topic "Dalits, Limbuwans activists arrested, freed" and the further news story writes:

Police arrested at least 30 Dalits and 27 Limbuwans activists from a sit in organized at the Southern Gate of Singha Durbar, the principal government secretariat while the two separate groups were staging sit into exert pressure on the govt. to meet their demands...at least 10 Dalits activists were injured when

police intervened in a sit in organized by Dalit Civil Movement (DCM) in front of Singha Durbar Gate this morning. DCM has been demanding federal republic State structure and proportional representation of backward communities, castes and region upcoming CA Poll (8 July, 2007)

Instead of calling for negotiation government showed its true face to Dalit. *The Kathmandu Post* also published the feature photo of "Police-Dalit Protestors" struggle in the front page where police force arrested Dalit leaders. They were freed/ released later in the afternoon. Dalits' appropriate demands were denied, unheard and neglected by State or Govt. "Police intervened in the protest and arrested scores of Dalits after entering the prohibited area" police accused.

News analysis, issue analysis and researchable articles based on Dalit issues are hardly published, that reported and written by non-Dalits. Some articles are published written by Dalit intellectuals. "Social Inclusion and Poverty" by Hira Bishwakarma published in *The Kathmandu Post* on 20 August, 2007. It has tried to show the real condition of Dalits in the socio-economic scenario of Nepal. In this context he writes that inclusion, which involves the approaches to work with the people and institution that controls power, property and prestige necessarily of make a good life. In response to the articles many "letters to the editors" also published like "Social Inclusion Approach" that talks about the Dalit issues in New Nepal and relates to NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies and political parties for benefits of marginalized castes.

After long period's protest and movement, government called the Dalits for negotiation "Table Talk". *The Kathmandu Post* published the news "Govt, Dalits start talks, agree to Continue" writes the further story of "Table Talk" between government (State) and Dalit:

Talks between the government and Joint Dalit Struggle Committee JDSC) that began on Friday evening at Singha Durbar, wrapped up after over three hours with an agreement to sit the next time with selective and managed dialogue teams...JDSC has been demanding that 20% seats in CA in both the proportional as well as first past the post electoral systems be reserved for Dalits (Oppressed) communities. (20 August, 2007)

Dalits' Movement agenda were not discussed in the very first "Table Talk". JDSC tabled the demands and without entering into the main issues, the talks postponed for next time. Maoist parliamentarian Padma Lal Bishwakarma, a member of the JDSC talks team, "We will discuss the issues in the next time. But we found the government team has not taken our demands seriously nor have members of the team studied them thoroughly" (20 August, 2007). Government invited for talk very late even though did not show interest to fulfill the demands. Ram Chandra Poudel, Minister for Peace and Reconstruction and Coordinator of the Government Talks Team said, " we concluded today's meet with an agreement to sit for the next round of dialogue with more selective talks teams in a more managed way" (20 August, 2007). Traditional concept and perspectives to see to the Dalits community, has not changed that's why burning issues of Dalits and State were not addressed. Next meet was not cleared and fixed that became first and last meet in this context. However, some more demands were partially addressed before CA election. Dalits movements news are hardly given coverage in English National Dailies like The Kathmandu Post, but some volumes sufficiently supported that can be taken as the positive aspect for the movement.

On the other hand, Badi women's movement was also going on, that was highly covered by media because of unique style. Badi are also Dalits, However, their demands, agenda and issues are different from the Dalits. Their issues were just related to their own

social problems which can be generalized to the whole Dalits issues. On 21 August, 2007, "Badis Continue Protest" and feature photo was published in *The Kathmandu Post*. Badi women movement and protest was adequately covered in media but how it was covered should be analyzed and investigated well. Their movement continued for long and govt. compelled to address the demands, and returned with partial success of movement.

State always want to impose State-Ideology and the ideology is applied every where through media and government's organs. Media don't talk about the news of Subaltern, marginalized people or Dalits because each every sector runs under power. Power is central for all which rules everything.

Media Watch during the Dalits' Movement in Shrawan and Bhadra (July-Aug.-Sept.)

While Dalits' Movement was going on with certain agenda related to the burning issues and problems of Dalits and national agenda. Main stream print media gave coverage in their paper in the following way:

S.N.	Name of paper	Shrawan 2064	Bhadra 2064
1	Kantipur Daily	20	36
2	Gorkhapatra Daily	24	34
3	The Kathmandu Post	6	22
4	The Rising Nepal	2	12
5	The Himalayan Times	8	24

Source: Jagaran Media Center, Kathmandu, 2064

From the given data, it can be analyzed that in comparison to Shrawan, news coverage of Bhadra is seen increased in its quantity. It is analyzed in three categories on basis of types news published in main stream national dailies.

S. N.	Name of Paper	General news		News analysis		Research-based articles	
		Shrawan	Bhadra	Shrawan	Bhadra	Shrawan	Bhadra
1	Kantipur daily	18	19	1	8	1	9

2	Gorkhapatra daily	22	29	0	2	2	3
3	The Kathmandu Post	4	17	0	2	2	0
4	The Rising Nepal	2	12	0	0	0	0
5	The Himalayan Times	8	24	0	0	0	0
	Total	54	101	1	12	5	12

Source: Jagaran Media Center, Kathmandu, 2064

In the data presented above, can be analyzed that general news or common news related to daily trifle events, activities and programs are highly covered in main stream print media. In comparison to Nepali Daily newspapers, English Daily Newspapers like *The Rising Nepal* and *The Kathmandu Post* cover very few news. The news which spread awareness in Dalit communities are rarely published. According to Jagaran Media Center data, there are published very few news about the Dalits social activities in major news paper of state. Even the common news are not sufficiently published, which generally do not support the Dalit social awareness, then it can not be expected for the quality, research based articles and news. News analyzed and research based articles have long term effect to social transformation but condition of these types of news in National English Dailies is cleared from the data. State and elites can not represent the backward communities, Dalits and subaltern truly. They are treated bias from each and every sector of State.

During the Dalits' Movement of July- August, 2007, many pathetic, miserable and important events were not given coverage in print media. Very few news were covered in print media in comparison to activities where they had expected full support from media.

Fabrication of News and Representation/Mis-representation of Dalits issues

Dalits official representation is seen very low. According to a report of Social Development and Investigation Centre, 2002 Dalits official representation only is of 1.19% which indicates Dalits news in media. Only the victimized know the real pain but not

victimizer. Nepalese popular media houses have not represented Dalits. Non-Dalit reporters do not want to report common issues of Dalits. They fabricate and exaggerate the Dalits news, truly saying they mis-represent the Dalits' issues/news. Negative parts of Dalits are highlighted much without knowing the reality and base of matter.

In terms of news making process on Dalits issues media don't follow the common principles of journalism, ABC patterns. "After Fathering 16, Ate BK Wants More" news published in July 24, 2007, tells about the lack of education and awareness of Dalits that causes many children in a family but the news does not talk about spread of awareness, informations of family planning of the concerned parties. Dalits are mis-represented in media. Though, there were many organizations in protest and agitation which are not reported but "Badi protest" naked photos of protest are given in print media and electronic media like TV and internet. Protest being naked is not their interest or they are vulgar; it was their obligation because they have been sexually exploited since long but government does not do anything for their rehabilitation. Their 12-points demands are not sincerely heard/taken which State's miss-vision toward Oppressed community.

Why intellectuals' protest does not get coverage in media comparison of other violence movement? Dalit Civil movement's activities are in shadow but Badi Women's movement is in coverage and media everywhere because of its nature. Press/ print and electronic media have not exposed Dalits' real issues and problems because Dalits representation in their organization is supposed to be zero so there is no probability of policy making place. Dalit journalists say if they report about the Dalit issues editors dismiss the news.

Talking about the coverage of Dalits in print media, quantitative news are found satisfactory but if it is normally difficult to find qualitative news. Events based and

exploitative news in main stream news papers like *The Kathmandu post* and *The Rising Nepal* are given coverage like 'Restriction entering the Temple', 'Exploited at government Office and Training', 'Biasness in political parties', 'Firing and Fighting' etc. And, activities like organizational meetings, convention, Conference, discussion, interaction, movement of organizations, workshop, training, seminar and dissemination are reported adequately. Researchable materials, articles and news like Dalits arts, culture, their real problems, problems of Dalits' women, educational status of Dalits, research base article based on Dalits life styles are rarely published.

Dalits are suppressed by the media, too, because of their mis-representation. They are represented adequately but not truly, they are fabricated and misrepresented. First they are not given coverage, second if they are represented, they are represented wrongly. Does victimizer know the real pain of victimized?

Therefore, Dalits' agenda, demands and issues are to be the subject of movement. It, in real sense, was the need of time. Before CA poll, Janajatis, Madhesis, Marginalized groups, ethnics, and also Dalit community raised the voices for their rights, equality and dignity. They have been exploited, suppressed, oppressed, discriminated since centuries but they were waiting for the right time that causes the great change. The State sincerely addressed the Ethnic groups, Indigenous Nationalities and Madhesis demands and agenda but Dalits agenda and demands were kept in the dust bins. In the real critical time, Dalit waited for the true supports from all like media. Although, media could not provide the enough coverage to Dalits' movement, in comparison to the general news related to room activities like seminars, workshops and trainings. Dalits' protest was at Singha Durbar Southern Gate, Maitighar Mandala, Chitwan and Dalit leaders were on arrest, and media was reporting the common news. So Dalits are still on suppression, oppression, exploitation,

discrimination and on bias. Really, it is not the media's true eyes and common principles of accuracy, balance and credibility. Why Dalit community could not achieve the real goal? Does it get support from all spheres, level and professionals? Dalits' movement is on going process since long which has not achieved the real goal because of its nature and social agenda. Media should also support the marginalized groups and Dalits or backward community because true journalism always writes and reports devoid of prejudice.

IV. Conclusion

This dissertation has taken mainstream English National Dailies like *The Rising Nepal* and *The Kathmandu Post* news coverage of Dalits' Movement and also analyzed news of representation of Dalits' Movement during the period from 11th July to 22nd August, 2007. Actually Dalits Movement refers to the whole Dalit Social Movement which has been continuously going on since 1950 AD. Traditional concept of society and State still has not changed as the Dalit community have been discriminated, exploited, oppressed and subordinated in each and every sphere of social life- socially, economically, educationally, culturally and religiously. The State itself was the main cause of exploitation because many laws, bi-laws, and constitutions were imposed to segregate the Dalit community and also taking the help of Hindu book *Manusmriti* and social structure.

The study has taken the caste system and emergence of untouchability, caste-based discrimination in Nepal, representation of Dalits in all spheres of State, Dalits' Social Movement from past to present, and Dalits' movement of July-August, 2007 and its news coverage in English National Dailies as an area of study in order to show the representation of the Dalits and its ideological formations. Print Media is decoded by dominant ideology of the ruling class. Dalits were represented in media as illiterate, unhealthy, economically poor, socially backward, and politically ignored people. Power holder or State has created discourse about Dalits that they are disable or unable which has been operated through media. The government imposed State ideology through print media.

Media often distorts the news story and gives them its own interpretation in favor of state. During the forty day long Dalits' Movement only few news got coverage in government funded print media like *The Rising Nepal*. During protest and resistance many Dalit rebels were seriously injured, hurt, arrested and beaten by police force but media were

silenced towards Dalits Movement. Media gave coverage neither to the movement's agenda nor the events. Movement was on climax with agenda but media story wrote general news about meetings, seminars, workshops, conferences, and common activities in their general pages.

In Nepali Print media, strikes, agitation, demonstration, protest, resistance, submission of memorandum and negotiation or "Table Talk" conducted by Dalits' Movement, are hardly covered rather the general or common activities of other groups and parties. When did Dalits declare the schedule of movement or when did they submit the memorandum with burning issues of their own? These news were unknown or ignored by main stream News coverage. It was a great and appropriate time for Dalits to ensure and achieve the rights that they were deprived since long without even getting the inborn fundamental rights which became the trifle agenda for media. Who are going on street for protest? Who are sitting for negotiation? What are the agreements between or among the government and revolutionary groups? When is fixed the date for next phase talk? Why are movement and its various parts necessary? Is violence compulsory or common trend of Nepalese? And who broke the agreements? These types of news generally are not highlighted and analyzed.

On the one side, Dalits' voices were ignored by State, and on the other side media were indifferent and disinterested in Dalits Movement, that's why movement's publicity or popularity was very poor. News about suicides, murdered, fighting, looting, social discrimination and social unawareness were highly covered in newspaper but news about social change, awareness, progress and cultural transformation of Dalits were hardly published. Badi women's movement highly or sufficiently got coverage in media, however, it should be analyzed whether they were truly represented or mis-represented? Or they are

fabricated by their unique demonstration and protest? On forty day long movement, only few news were published which is shameful in democratic journalism.

The private media houses run by socially elite class like *The Kathmandu Post* could not truly represent the Dalit and Dalits' movement during this much long period. Only common events or incidents got coverage rather than movement. By chance published news also mis-represented and fabricated the Dalits news; which were far from the reality and truth. They even could not follow the general principles of journalism ABC patterns which is really shameful of liberal press or media. Dalits positive perspectives were hardly covered rather than the negative ones.

In accordance with other rebellions, Dalits' Movement was an intellectual and peaceful so it could not get adequate coverage which became one of the failures of movement. Telling the truth, the movement could not achieve the goal which they dreamed of but few agenda were really addressed by the State or government before Constituent Assembly Election (CA Poll).

According to a report prepared by Jagaran Media Center, Kathmandu news about Dalits was quantitatively satisfactory but qualitatively very miserable. Some issues which are the shortcomings which are found during research that media gives coverage are only common events based news; news related to Dalits Upliftment are hardly published; researchable material are rarely given coverage; serious news, analytical news and analytical material are not found published; Dalits official representation is found zero; effective news are not published and Dalits news during movement are hardly published.

To sum up, mainstream print media news coverage was not liberal, independent, and neutral in their perspectives. It is found that news coverage of Dalits' movement in both *The Rising Nepal* and *The Kathmandu Post* were governed, controlled, and mediated, so they

could not justice the subaltern cause because of the censorship or the State Ideology. Dalits' news coverage in media thus remained miserable, misrepresented, stereotyped, and ideologically contaminated. And, the Dalits' movement with support of wide range of concepts, concerning ideology, power, discourse, politics etc. the study proves that print media simply became an Ideological State Apparatus remained indifferent to the powerless people and community like the Dalits.

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