

## 3.2 A Caste of All The Castes: The Economic, Social and Cultural Situation of Sarbariya

### Background

There were no written laws during Rana regime. Whatever the Ranas said would be regarded as law. The young men and women used to do love marriage (inter-caste marriage) even in such an environment. As a consequence, the Rana time law and society would ostracize that couple socially, economically, politically and legally.

Because of this, they would be forced to live a life of slaves and would be expelled from the society and would be regarded as untouchables. Later, those inter-caste couples started to unite, regardless of their caste. Those united like that formed a community, which was known as Sarbariya caste. But it is found that the society has named this population as Bilatau. Although this group's real surname was Sarbariya, they were called Bilatau as a way of humiliating them.

### Objective of Study

- a) To know about the origin, economic, social, political, educational and cultural situation of Sarbariya community.
- b) To find out the real identity of Sarbariya community.
- c) To help to bring them in mainstream of the state.

- d) To draw attention of concerned authorities in improving their economic, social and educational status.
- e) To try to change the perspective of humiliation from so-called upper caste people towards this community.
- f) To find out the real data of this community.

### Rationale of Study

There is a mixed settlement of Bahun, Kshetri, Yadav, Teli, Rauniyar, Kayastha, Dalit, Kumhar, Muslim and Danuwar etc., in Raghunathpur village of Dhanusha Sabaila municipality -12. There are however around one hundred families of Sarbariya. This caste falls under minority and Dalit community. Their economic condition is poor due to poverty and lack of education. Additionally, there is practice of untouchability against them in the village. They are looked down upon as Bilatau. Traditional harmful practices are still there due to lack of awareness and education.

The minority Sarbariya community face problems of poverty and landlessness. Being a very backward community, there is child marriage, veil, and dowry practice in this community. This study is important to make the state and the

stakeholders aware about their situation and make the state provided services accessible to this community. So, the origin, and economic, social and cultural condition of this community has been studied in this article. This study will help in highlighting the special identity of Sarbariya caste group and the state's obligations towards them.

### Methodology

For this study, the leader of Sarbariya community was met individually and a group discussion was held with the people of this community in Raghunathpur of Dhanusha. The local civil society leaders and representatives of different service providing organizations were also met. Similarly, books, articles and research/studies on this community were used as secondary source of information. The following methods were used for the study:

- Field observation
- Discussion
- Interview
- Explanations
- Study of secondary sources

### Limitations

This study focuses on minority Sarbariya community living in Raghunathpur of past Raghunathpur VCD (now Sabaila Municipality-12). The community's general introduction, situation of their economic, social and cultural rights and their culture, language and special features have been analyzed from the rights perspective. This study does not cover Sarbariya community living in all parts, as mentioned above.

### Who are Sarbariya?

According to Nepali dictionary, the word *Sarobar* means ocean. Like water from many places is collected in an ocean, people originating from different class, community and caste are found in Sarbariya, like Yadav, Kayastha, Sah, Kur-

mi, Magar, Das, Paswan, Sada, Chamar, Rajput, Mali etc.

So, it can simply be said that "Sarbariya is a garden of different castes". The basis of origin of this caste is marital relation. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the number of Sarbariyas is very low despite it being a caste made up of many castes. Their settlement is also scattered. They are settled in Dhanusha, Mahottari, Sarlahi, Siraha, Saptari, Sunsari, Morang and Jhapa districts. Their professions are also different in different places. Their practices, art, culture, language and religion however are similar to other castes, especially with the Hindu culture. Excluded and marginalized due to social pressure from the past, this community is still backward economically, socially, educationally, politically and legally.

In the proposed annex of National Dalit Commission, Sarbariya is listed as a separate Dalit caste. According to latest census data, there are 4 thousand 9 hundred and 6 Sarbariyas. According to Samata Foundation's publication Dhami, Sarvor, Sarbhang and Nat are Sarbariya caste's surnames and Baantar is another Sarbariya surname, whereas Baantar is a separate Madhesi Dalit caste. We hope the Commission will clarify on this. Out of total population of Sarbariyas, 100 households are in Raghunathpur of Dhanusha.

Rajendra Mahato of Dhanusha is the first researcher on Sarbariya. Mahato did his study on Sarbariya in 2011 through Social Inclusion Research Fund (SIRF). Mahato has mentioned few things regarding the origin of Sarbariya caste. In the past, if a girl and a boy belonging to different caste having different social identities have a love marriage, that couple would not be accepted by the society. So, they were forced to live in a new place. It used to happen everywhere. Their children are known as Sarbariya. In Sunsari, Sarbariyas are also known as Mandal.

## Profession

It is difficult to pin down one profession of Sarbariya since they are a mix of different communities, class and caste. However, they have adopted different profession according to their place of residence. For example, labor work, farming, Haliya (farm labor), traders and earning livelihood by working in other's home, etc. The Sarbariya of Dhanusha were palanquin bearers, but that profession is slowly becoming extinct.

Palanquin means- a means/carrier for carrying a bride/groom from one place to another. In other words, the palanquin bearers carry a groom to the bride's house and vice versa. They used to get wages for that work. There is an incident related to Sarbariya of Dhanusha district taking up this profession:

There was rich man named Sonelal Sah in the village, around 50 years ago. His neighbor Srawan Dulal was getting married in Siraha but there was no means of transportation for the groom. It was not easy financially and technically to bring any means of transport from somewhere else. But he had to go to the bride's house anyway. Everyone was thinking what to do. In the meantime, the Sarbariya were excluded from the society. Sonelal sent for Panche Sarbariya and Bauka Sarbariya and told them the problem. He gave them bamboos and asked them to make two palanquins. The Sarbariyas made the bamboo palanquins. After that, they started to transport the bride/groom, elderly, children and women of so-called upper-class families from one place to another place. They used to get certain wages for this work. So, palanquin carrying became the profession of Sarbariyas. This way, the socially excluded Sarbariyas got an opportunity to mix with the society, and a means of income. But nowadays, this profession is rarely found. They are mostly involved in farming, labor work, trading and foreign employment.

## Language and Culture

Sarbariyas are found to be using different languages as their mother tongue according to their place of residence. The Sarbariyas of Raghunathpur of Dhanusha speak Maithili as their mother tongue. They are found to speak the language spoken by majority of the population in the place they live. But being primarily the residents in Terai, they are mostly found to be speaking those languages which are spoken in Terai, like Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi. They all use Nepali as their national language.

Culture is an important part of Sarbariya community. Culture is a very personal property of any community. Like others, the Saraabariya are also trying to keep their religion and culture alive. Religion and language are those aspects or mediums of a society, which balance and maintain the social activities. But Sarbariyas don't have their separate religion. They follow Hindu religion.

## Tradition and Practices

Being a Hindu community, Sarbariya follow hindu traditions for their birth, marriage and death rites and rituals. They particularly adopt nwaran (naming ceremony), paasni (rice feeding ceremony), mundane (shaving of head of a boy child), marriage and death rituals.

## Birth

When two different man and woman marry according to the social norms and rules, the relationships develop there. When the relationship develops, changes in social relationships, behavior, ways of communication and support are inevitable. The married couple give birth to their children and take their lineage and social life forward. If a son is born, the grandfather or the father of that child throws a bahiyaa (a bamboo carrier) from one end of the front yard to the other end and that bahiyaa is brought back and a leather shoe is hung in it in the house

where the new mother lives. They also burn dried dung-cakes. They believe that doing this will keep away the witches and evil spirits.

### **Chathihaar (Naming Ceremony)**

This ritual is done on the sixth day after a child is born. With the belief that hindu god Bramha writes the fate of the child on this day, the mother and child take bath. The house and front yard is cleaned and mopped as cleansing. The mother and child's nails are clipped and they wear new clothes. This ceremony is concluded with a feast in the evening. They have barbers and priest from their own caste for performing pooja in Chathihaar. According to their tradition, they put seven kinds of grains (called "satanjha" in Maithili language) in a corner of the house along with the child. After that, tika of kohl and vermilion is put in ten places. In all the ten places, rice grains and turmeric are also put. After this, the priest names the child according to the child's zodiac sign. A pen and notebook is kept above the child's bed at night, because they believe that Bramha will come and write the child's fate that night.

### **Mundan (Head shaving ceremony)**

Sarbariyas in many places are found to follow mundane rituals. The people of this community usually make promise to their family gods and other gods and goddesses. For this ceremony, the child's head is kept without shaving. They do their child's first head shaving after doing the worship of the god to whom they had made a promise of that ritual worship. While shaving the head like that, the hair is collected on the mother's saree, without letting it fall on the floor. This hair is discarded in a river or is kept in a purified place. As a promise to the god, they sacrifice virgin she-goat, goat, pigeon, etc. The animals sacrificed like that are taken as an offering and is served in the feast.

### **Marriage**

Marriage is a relation established between usually a man and a woman in a social, religious or legal way, to live their life together<sup>1</sup>. Marriage is an old and very important tradition as well. Marriage can be considered as a social institution to organize the society, giving it a stability. It can be seen from the time the tradition of marriage started, the human society has become organized and disciplined. Since marriage is a tradition with a specified objective, the man and women fulfil those rights and duties remaining within the rules and cultural practices of the society. Some fundamental and important objectives like having sexual relationship, having children and raising them can be fulfilled after getting married.

There are specific social values related to building relationship and asking hand in marriage between the families of the bride and groom side. First of all, four to five people from girl's family go to see the boy (groom) in his house. If they like the boy, people from boy's side also follow the same practice of coming to the girl's house to see her. If they find the boy and girl agreeable for marriage, they move forward the process of marriage. After fixing the date of marriage, singing starts in groom's house from 10 days before the marriage and 5 days before in the bride's house.

On the first day, only the songs of their family deity and Kumari are sung. The singing goes on until the wedding day. After that, they offer worship to their family deity, which is called "matkor" in Maithili. This day is also called "beran". The family deity is worshipped by following all the rituals on this day. While worshipping the family deity (on matkor), banana trunks, bamboo kachari, stove and clay pots are used in the ritual. Two clay pots for groom and one clay pot and one stove is used for the bride. That same

1. <https://ne.wikipedia.org/wiki/marriage>

night, the bride and groom are applied *apatan* (mixture of turmeric, fenugreek, grass, mustard oil) on their body by five women. The bride and groom are taken to a nearby pond in the village for bathing and cleansing, after which they participate in the worshipping of their family deity. On the day of *matkor*, the family deity is offered rice pudding cooked with molasses, fried wheat bread and fruits inside the house (prayer corner) and outside the house (at doorstep). On the night of *matkor*, rice grains are roasted for taking to the bride's house. 10 fistfuls in groom's house and 5 fistfuls in bride's house is roasted on that night.

After this, next phase starts. The wedding procession starts from the groom's house. According to hindu tradition, the people from the bride's side welcome the procession and take them to the *swayambar* (wedding ceremony) site. The bride and groom put garland on each other. After this, they have a feast.

On the third phase, there is *tilak* offering. In this, the bride is given gifts of clothes and jewelry brought from the groom's side. At the fourth stage, the wedding ceremony is concluded. The wedding site (*jagge*) which is made of clay and called *marawa* if it is bigger in size and is called *bedi* if it is smaller in size. The bride and groom circle around this. The fifth step is of giving away of the bride (*kanyadaan*). The giving away is usually done by the bride's maternal uncle and aunt. If she doesn't have a maternal uncle or aunt, then it is done by her parents. No one is forced during the giving away of the bride. Anyone willing to participate in the giving away can do so. After the giving away of bride, the roasted rice grains brought from groom's house is mixed with that of the bride's house and is scattered around the wedding site. This ritual is done by the bride and groom while the priest chants the holy scripts, while the women also join in singing tra-

ditional songs. The sixth step is of giving vermilion. For this ritual, the bride wears clothes brought from the groom's house. The bride's hair is combed properly by applying ghee and oil, and the groom put 5 pinches of vermilion on the bride's hair partition five times. At the end, after *ko-habar* of the bride and groom, the wedding concludes. The next morning, the bride, groom and the wedding procession is bade farewell.

### Death Ritual

The death ritual in Sarbariya community is observed according to hindu practice. When a person dies, the dead body is washed and cremated in the riverbank. 30 percent of this community bury the dead body while 70 percent of them do cremation. But in recent times, more and more of them are adopting cremation. For the death ritual, the dead body is wrapped in a cloth and is tied around a ladder-like bamboo structure. A mattress is also put in that bamboo ladder for the dead body to lie down and it is tied with a raw hand-made rope. If burying, the grave is dug with the dead body facing either north or south. The relatives and neighbors also participate in the funeral. Mainly it's the relatives who carry the dead body from the home along with the sons of the demised. Igniting of funeral pyre is done by the son. The person setting fire on the funeral pyre carries a clay pot with five conches, sesame seeds, barley and holy basil in it. The ritual observer does not eat salt, meat or fish for 12 days. They eat fruits, milk and yogurt. The ritual ends on the 13<sup>th</sup> day.

**Fourth Day:** The ritual on this day is called *chaurjhapi*. On this day, the funeral site or the cremation site is cleaned, mopped and a holy basil plant is planted there.

**Seventh Day:** This day is called *satdhan*. On this day, rice grains are

roasted, and the priest makes the ritual observer do worshipping.

**Tenth Day:** This day is called *naiukes*. On this day, the core family members and relatives of the demised shave their head and clip their nails. They also organize a feast for their community on this day.

**Twelfth Day:** This day is called *shraddha*. Things are donated to the priest with the belief that the dead person will also be able to use all those things which have been donated to the priest.

**Thirteenth Day:** This day is called *pitripakshya*. On this day, 22 pin-da (dough of barley and sesame seeds) is offered in the name of the dead person. Worshipping is done in the cowshed and grass is covered with a shawl and circled around.

### **Economic, Social and Cultural Status**

From the perspective of economic, social and cultural rights, the Sarbariya community is deprived of the rights provided by the state. Although they live very close to the Province 2 headquarters, no activities have been done for their development or upliftment. According to Biru Sarbariya, although Nepal's constitution and laws guarantee education, health and food rights as fundamental rights, but this community has not been able to exercise them sufficiently.

### **Social Status**

While talking to the target group and non-Dalit groups in group discussions, they say that although the Sarbariya community is disrespected and looked down upon in the society, the so-called upper-caste people claim that they treat them respectfully. But the elderly people (old people) of the so-called upper caste still discriminate and practice untouchability. According to them, Sarbariya

are untouchables, they are not clean and that is why they practice untouchability. But Sarbariyas tell that the youth of new generation do not practice untouchability and do not discriminate in any way. The Sarbariyas however claim that they are upper in status compared to other Dalits.

### **Educational Status**

According to Manusmriti, if shudra reads or writes, their tongue should be cut off and if they listen to others reading their ear should be burned with hot oil or molten glass<sup>2</sup>. The Rana prime minister Jung Bahadur Rana established few educational institutions in Nepal after his return from Europe tour, but those institutions were used solely to produce the administrative staff required for their regime. As a result, 98 percent of total population of Nepal was illiterate until 1950.

Compared to other villages, the village where Sarbariya live has better educational status from the past. There is Fakirchandra Gami Higher Secondary School established in 2016 BS. Similarly, there is Dwarka Primary School within the settlement of the Sarbariya. But still the educational status of Sarbariya is poor. Only few children of this community go to school. Rather than going to school, the children of this community are involved in shepherding the cattle and livestock. The well-off people in this community send their children to private school whereas the children of the poorer families go to community schools.

Only 23 people in almost 100 households of Raghunathpur have completed their SLC, while only 6 have completed their high school (10+2). Only one has completed bachelor's degree. One is employed in government job in Nepal Electrical Authority and one is employed in an NGO. There is no special service provided by the government for the education of this Sarbariya community.

### Scene 1

Raghunathpur of Dhanusa in past Raghunathpur VDC (now Sabaila Municipality-12) lies 6 km south from Portaha Godar of Mahendra Highway. It is Kamala river in the east and is about 4 hundred 15 km from Kathmandu in road travel. It is located 24 km north-east of Janakpur. Raghunathpur is 5km west from tourist site Dhanushadham. South to Raghunathpur is Fakirchandra Gami Higher Secondary School Barkurwa. To the south is Sabaila village and to the north is Barmajhiya village. The Sarbariya community known as minority Dalit community is found in hundred households in Raghunathpur village.

### Scene 2

Sabnam Sarbariya, wife of Pramod Sarbariya, was sewing clothes in a sewing machine in front of her front door of a small tile-roofed house. One cannot enter her house standing upright. She and Pramod had a love marriage in 2060 BS. She belonged to a Kurmi family and she was threatened from the society for marrying a Sarbariya boy 15 years ago. She faced all those challenges and now is raising her three children. Pramod had gone abroad as migrant worker, but since he did not earn well there, he returned home and is working with an NGO now. He complains that they have been deprived of different opportunities because they are Sarbariya.

### Scene 3

It was during big festival of Nepalis, Dipawali and Chhath. Everyone was busy in cleaning their homes and front yards. Although they were busy, when we told Majjan Baijanath Sarbariya and community leader Biru Sarbariya that we have come to learn about your community, they came and sat near us. They happily asked us to write news about their community. When we told them that we are here for the same reason, they were elated, because it is very rare to find any articles, research and studies on Sarbariya and their origin. Therefore, the Sarbariya leaders think that if people help in creating awareness about this community, then maybe the state will also identify and acknowledge them as a community in Nepal, which might help in establishing their rights.

The minority population in Nepal, the above scene is from Sarbariya settlement in Sabaila Municipality-12 in Raghunathpur. Yes, they are forced to live as untouchables from centuries. When two persons from different castes get married and if their society do not accept that marriage, they are given the identity of Sarbariya. But the society is humiliating them as Dalits. The state has not given any attention to this community. Although some family with migrant worker members are living a comparatively better life, the society still discriminate them. There are ample proofs of people using demeaning word "bittau" for this community. This Sarbariya caste was not formed by any one caste. This is a common garden of many castes.

### Health Status

Most of the Dalits cannot afford private health services due to their poverty. They are deprived of comparatively cheaper government health services as well, due to caste-based discrimination and practice of untouchability. In many places, people of this community are deprived of these services and are suffering from different types of diseases. Binda Sarbariya tells about the disappointment of not being able to get treatment from

private health facilities due to their poor economic conditions. She also tells that there is no special free health service provided by the government for this community. The locals told that they are not able to get good treatment in the village level health posts.

The Sarbariya women do not have much knowledge about reproductive health. Most of the pregnant women give birth in their own house. There is no birthing center in the village. The Janakpur

Zonal Hospital is 30 km away. The people from this village do not go to Janakpur because there is no proper transportation and the roads are also in poor condition. As a result, they have been giving birth at home with the faith on god. But some well to do families and those who can afford in this community have been going to the hospitals for child birth.

## **HYGIENE**

### **Toilet and Use of Drinking Water**

Only 25 percent families out of one hundred Sarbariya families in Raghunathpur have their own toilets. Many use waters from hand pump (bore-well). Only 2-4 families in this community use clean drinking water. Many of them do not know about arsenic.

### **Violence Against Women and Child Labor**

The hindu society is based on patriarchy. Therefore, the Dalit women must perform triple role (reproductive, productive and community) like non-Dalit women. They have been confined within the four walls of the house with responsibilities like giving birth to children, taking care of them and raising them, cooking, washing, cleaning, etc. They are also facing different types of violence. Not only that, they are abused in the name of dowry and veil practice. Due to these reasons, the women are not able to develop their personality, get education, move around freely and participate in public life. There is child labor in this community because of their poor economic status. The children from very early age are compelled to do labor work.

### **Basis of Livelihood**

The main basis of livelihood for the Sarbariya are agriculture, labor work, foreign employment and livestock. The people of this community rear cows, buffaloes, goats, hen, duck and other poultry.

150 youth from this community have gone as migrant workers in countries like Qatar, Malaysia and Dubai. The women and men in the village earn their livelihood mostly from farm labor work. Only few people of this community own land. Those who have land, are doing farming and the rest are doing wage works or labor works.

## **Food**

Main staple food of Sarbariya are rice, lentils, roti and vegetables. Most of the people from this community are non-vegetarians. Because of their poor economic condition, their food habits are not well organized.

## **Land Rights**

Only 10 percent of Sarbariya have constructed their house on their own land, out of one hundred households. Others are living either on unregistered land or on village block land.

## **Pain related to Citizenship**

Although Sarbariya made a different identity as a community of those who married inter-caste from different communities, some of them are still deprived of getting Nepali citizenship. Many have citizenships based on their birth. Since the citizenship distribution team gave certificates based on their birth, their children are now deprived of citizenship. Nepal's constitution provides that children of Nepali citizens get citizenship by virtue of descent. But the government has been postponing their citizenship issue "until a law is formed".

## **Status of Dalit in Annex of Commission**

According to National Dalit Commission's caste annex report, there are 26 caste in Nepal which fall under Dalits. Amongst them, in Terai community, there are certain caste which are regarded water untouchability or need of purification by sprinkling pure water after touch-

ing them. They are Kalar, Kakaihiya, Kori, Khatik, Khatwe (Mandal Khanga), Chamar (Ram, Mochi, Harijan, Rabidas), Chidimar, Dom (Marik), Tatma (Taanti, Das), Dusadh (Paswan, Hajra), Dhobi (Rajak, Hindu), Paasi, Baatar, Musahar, Mestar (Halkhor), **Sarbhong (Sarbariya)**, Natuwa, Dhandi, Dharikarar, Dhanakar. Similarly, amongst the Dalits in hilly areas, they are Kami, Damai, Sarki, Badi, and Gainey are listed in the annex. So, despite their significant number, the Dalits are continually suffering from social discrimination. Different studies have shown that most of the Dalits are landless and squatters although they comprise 13 percent of Nepal's total population.

The Dalits, who are victims of different harmful practices and traditions, did not become Dalits willingly. Different studies show that the so-called upper caste oppressed and abused them from centuries in the name of religion and tradition.

### Family Structure

The actual family structure of Sarbariya is like the following:

No. 1 : Actual family structure of Pramod Sarbariya

- *First generation:* Marriage of Hatpatiya Danuwar with Champidevi Pasman. They had three sons.
- Gujara, b) Girja, c) Sukana
- *Second generation:* Gujara married Gokhani Danuwar. They had two sons.  
a) Shiwana, b) Diplal
- *Third generation:* Shiwana married Sada Musahar. They had two sons.  
a) Bauyelal, b) Ramlal
- *Fourth generation:* Ramlal married Sagarsingh Rajput. They had two sons and one daughter.  
a) Manoj, b) Pramod, c) Sanju Sarbariya

- *Fifth generation:* Pramod married Sabnam Sah Rauniyar and Sanju married a boy with Sah rname.
- *Sixth generation:* Aakriti (Hybrid child)

No. 2 : Actual family structure of Lalit Sarbariya

- *First generation:* Rangai Rain married Purni Musahar. They had a son Mangala Sarbariya.
- *Second generation:* Mangala Sarbariya married Budhani Damai. They had a son Sonelal.
- *Third generation:* Sonelal married Dulari Dhama Danuwar. They had a son Rajendra Sarbariya.
- *Fourth generation:* Rajendra married Urmila Karn. They had three sons.  
a) Lalit, b) Dinesh, c) Rupesh

This clearly shows that because of inter-caste marriage, Sarbariya became a separate caste.

### Education Rights of Sarbariya Community

In Sarbariya community, children start going to school from the age of five. Although there is high number of children being admitted in the primary level, many drop out before reaching the secondary level. Door to door campaigns result in increased number of student enrollment, but those students again drop out after few days due to poverty and lack of awareness. Local teachers say that the children of this community do not come to school because the government has not paid attention to the education of this community.

### Gender Status

The life of men and women in a society is directly influenced by the roles determined for them in the society. This also determines the opportunities in life and access to facilities.

In overall Madhesi community, there are norms like women are restricted in getting education, going out of the house for work, talking back with a man, etc. This negatively impacts women's capacity, development and social support for their work. As a result, situations are created where women are deprived of opportunities.

There are increased opportunities for job and foreign employment. But due to unequal gender relations in the society, the women are mostly deprived of these opportunities. In Nepal's context, if we want to see the basis of verification of this fact, we can see that there are negligible presence of women in civil service, police, army, teaching profession, NGOs, foreign employment, etc. Because of discriminatory gender socialization, women have not been able to develop their education, skill and courage.

But during group discussions, it was evident that the gender status in Sarbariya community is very flexible. According to survey, foreign employment has played a huge role in bringing equality between men and women. Since men are abroad, women are playing the role of household heads. In most of the house, they said that there is no difference between men and women or between son and daughter, but it was seen that many gave priority to son.

The people in Sarbariya community said: since we are illiterate and therefore, we have to depend on upper caste educated people to even read a letter that we receive, we don't want our children, regardless of whether it is a son or a daughter, to go through the same problem and therefore we emphasize on their education. But they said that they are not able to give continuity to their children's higher education due to poverty. In reality, compared to other castes, the women, daughters and daughters-in-law are being sent for adult literacy classes, women

empowerment and skills development training in this community. People of this community seem more open than other Madhesi Dalits and non-Dalit castes.

### **Political Participation**

During group discussion, it was found that people of Sarbariya community are politically inactive. Only one or two from this community are politically active. Three from Sarbariya community of Raghunathpur had participated in the ward member elections a few years ago. They were Rajkishor Warti, Rajendra Rambilas and Rajkaliya Sarbariya, who participated in that election from Nepali Congress party. But according to people from Sarbariya community, they lost because of political unrest and caste-based discrimination. According to them, it is not that people from this community never tried to be politically active, but they backed out after facing failure. (Late) Rambilal Sarbariya was elected from this place as ward member in local elections of 2054 BS.

### **Duty of Government Agencies in attaining Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Sarbariya**

Since Sarbariya is not mentioned in the list of castes and it falling under minority and Dalit community, there are no records or articles and literature about this caste and their origin, and histories have also not come out. That is why the government is also not paying attention to them. Therefore, it has already been late for the government to take measures for the scattered Sarbariya.

### **Duties of Non-Government Organizations**

The people of this community complained that the NGOs have not paid adequate attention on the interest and rights of this community. There is a settlement of one hundred families in Raghunath-

pur of Dhanusha. Although local NGOs working in the area are working for the Sarbariya community, the international non-governmental organizations have not paid attention to them.

### Conclusion

Sarbariya and Sarbhang are totally different castes. There is authentic history and origin of Sarbariya community, whereas there is no authentic data regarding Sarchang. In Maithili language, the Sarbhang are addressed as Halkhor. Sarbariya are addressed as *Biltau* with humiliation. This word was formed on the basis of marital relation. When there was inter-caste marriage, they used to say that the couple has become "*bilat gai*" (corrupt). But now they are known as Sarbariya Mandal. It is difficult to mention one profession as the main profession of this community at present, because in many places they are doing daily wage work, farming by those having land, and wholesale and retail business as well. They are adopting the profession according to available opportunities.

Sarbariya is a group of couples who were excluded, marginalized couples who did inter-caste marriage. This group is found from Jhapa in the east to Mahottari in the west. The people of this community are found to have settled in one locality, but although voices are raised for the rights of all the class and communities, everyone seem silent about this community.

New constitution has already been promulgated in Nepal. Voices are being raised on the issues of equality and inclusion. In this context, it is imperative that the state considers about the inclusion of this community. It has already been late to create access to them by their mainstreaming through provision of their political, economic and cultural rights and through their data collection.

### Recommendations

Based on the studies, opinions of responsible and concerned people and from the experience and observation of target group discussion, the social, economic and cultural status of Sarbariya and their inclusion process matches with the goals of new Nepal. It would be appropriate if the government takes following actions to bring this community in the mainstream:

- Provision of free toilets.
- Free health services from time to time.
- Provision of literacy campaign for people between 15 to 35.
- Provision of drinking water and hand pumps as per households.
- Provision of educational materials, especially for children.
- Provision of economic support for higher education for encouraging those who have passed SEE.
- Financial support for women involved in entrepreneurship.
- Provision of housing.
- Involvement of youth in organizations/association and their leadership development through training and capacity enhancement.
- Special employment opportunities for the educated youth.
- Secure actual data of this community in upcoming census.
- Provision of special reservation for this community by local, provincial and federal government.
- Prioritization for this community in policy, plan and development by National Planning Commission.
- Publicity of the information related to this community through information dissemination by media.
- Support from national and international NGOs for identity of this community.

## Glossary

Biltau:	This word means the poor and deprived people who are excluded from the society as a consequence of marrying someone from another caste.
Ghonghat:	veil
Mother's aachal:	the front portion of women's saree.
Kohbar:	The house where the newlywed couple is welcomed.

## References

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