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Common Man's Plight

The common man, hailing from all genders, has always been on the forefront of regime changes, revolutions, social movements and electoral campaigns and his wretched plight has been passed on from posterity to posterity despite tall promises. He has always been used as a scapegoat by the vested interests of the society for grinding their axe and thrown out like a tissue paper. The annals of the history of almost all civilizations across the spectrum are replete with plentiful tales of woeful plight of the common man. The term common man has come a long way since its inception. In olden times, it referred to a man who was not of a royal descent and who toiled in the fields and factories. Now-a-days the term is commonly referred to the blue-collared middle class, pen-pushing, desk job holding salaried masses. However, viewed in broad perspective, daily wage earners, labourers, vendors and others engaged in work in unorganized sector also fall in this category. The common man has always been the vital part of any society and, his plight and his story is unheard and for most part, uninteresting to the rest of the world. The plight of the common man is miserable. He has multiple responsibilities to shoulder and least resources to make his both ends meet. He has a family to feed, to nurture and to take care of.

His efforts to climb up the social ladder are met with disdain, disgust and uncertainty. The man himself is wary of taking risks, because too much is at stake. What if he fails? What if he gets broke? Where will he go? Who will take care of his family? He is worried, sick, tense and stressed beyond belief. The common man's plight is unheard, his tale unread, his problems unsolved and death unmourned. He dreams of a better life, a life without worry, secured livelihood along with basic amenities like shelter, healthcare and proper education and employment opportunities for his children. The common man has historically been at the hub of almost all popular struggles and movements and ultimately finding himself at the receiving end for exploitation and dejection. The leaders of Czarist Russia encouraged peasants to blame their problems on the Jews thereby deflecting blame off themselves. The hyper-nationalists in ancient Athens rather than accepting responsibility for their own errors blamed the very people who warned against their excesses. The Stalinist era Soviet Union blamed a fanciful mix of people for the problems caused by Joseph Stalin and tragedy befell many ethnic groups such as the Tatars who were deported *en masse*.

The present era characterized by globalization and increased penchant for democracy has been unable to ameliorate the plight of common man irrespective of tall promises and populist slogans. Rather the chasm between the rich and the poor has been widened giving rise to inequalities and diminution of opportunities, especially for the common man. The democratic system with its characteristic trademark of electoral process has seemingly emerged as the greatest and the largest exploiter of the gullibility of the common man. This analogy is aptly applicable in India which prides itself as the world's largest democracy. Elections to the Parliament and state legislative assemblies is a ritual that takes place every five years and sometimes mid-term polls do take place. Common man gets easily hoodwinked by populist slogans of *Achche Din/Garibi Hatao* and when the ground reality stares at him, he is left with no option but to reconcile to his woeful plight by falling back on bad days and dark nights. The common thread is people suffering and leaders evading responsibility based on creating fears of others rather than solving the problems of those on the bottom.

Is this going to be the permanent destiny of a common man? The answer lies with him alone and let the common men across the spectrum unite. As Paul R. Mott says:

The world all together relies on us all to give out our hand and make our brothers stand tall.

So don't wait any longer for a celeb to rise up. It's these people below them who'll fill up the cup.

Never before has it felt so right to be the common man, helping a peer in his plight.