



Facilities, special rights of preference provided  
for Harijans in the Land Reform Laws at my initiative.

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1. Under the ZALR Act as amended at my instance and in teeth of great opposition from Dr. Sampurnanand, Th. Hukum Singh and Th. Har Govind Singh, permanent rights of sirdari or cultivation were conferred on comparatively small and poor farmers also who were entered as sub-tenants, tenants of Sir or trespassers in revenue papers and were known as Adhivasis under the new law. From this amendment, Harijans stood to benefit greatly. Table 395 included in para 12 of the Census of India 1951 Vol. 2, Part I(A), Report of Uttar Pradesh (pages 424-25) will show that about one third of the total number of Adhivasis came from the scheduled castes. Eighty four members of the Scheduled Castes out of every one thousand, were entered as Adhivasis or 'cultivators of land wholly or mainly unowned and their dependents', while of the general population they constituted only 51. According to the ZAC report, the total number of Khatas held by Adhivasis entered in the revenue papers stood at about 3 million. As will appear from a Circular sent by LRC to the Collectors on Oct 10, 1955, at my initiative and after detailed discussion with me, this law was actually implemented in the field. That this is not an idle boast, will be borne out by the report of the Ford Foundation Team.

2. The then Revenue Minister, Th. Hukum Singh had in Sept 1949, sought cancellation of an order staying ejection of these Adhivasis issued in 1948. I opposed his suggestion and the Chief Minister agreed with me (vide my note dt. 21-9-1949).

3. Section 198 of the UP ZALR Act provided that, next to a recognised educational institution imparting instruction in Agriculture, landless labour had the first right to be admitted to land which the Land Management Committee wanted to let out for cultivation under section 195 or s. 197. It was also provided under the Rules that, whereas an agricultural labourer belonging to a caste other than scheduled caste was liable to pay to the Land Management Committee, an amount equal to ten times the rent of the land calculated at the hereditary rates, no such amount was payable by a person belonging to any ~~xxx~~ of the scheduled castes (vide rules no. 174A and ~~19~~ 175).

4. Under the Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, every resident of a village was made owner of his house including the ~~xxx~~ site and appurtenant land, trees that he might have planted and wells that he might have constructed. This provision benefited the Harijans, in particular because formerly they had no such rights at all and could be ejected from their houses etc. at the will of the zamindar (vide Section 9 of the UP ZALR Act 1951).

5. Under Rule 115L and 115M of the ZALR Act Rules preference was to be given by LMC to landless agricultural labourers in the allotment of abadi sites also.

6. Provision was made in the Consolidation of Holdings Act 1953 (vide Section 8A) that, while preparing a Statement of Principles for consolidation of holdings, land will be set apart for Harijans and landless persons in the village for purposes of extension of their abadi.

7. Lastly, I was instrumental in promoting Sirtans -- as the tenants-at-will in Kumaun were called and which came overwhelmingly,

rather almost wholly from the scheduled castes -- to the status of Sirdars in teeth of opposition from Pt. Govind Ballabh Ji Pant, Sri Jagmohan Singh Ji Negi and Sri Narain Dutt Tewary.



8. From November 1954 till March 1959, Sri Charan Singh got several G.Os and circular letters from Board of Revenue issued to the districts to ensure that percentage of Harijans in the service of peons in the Collectorates, and of Lekhpals and Collection Amins was raised to 18 percent. However, there was great resistance at the official level and only partial success was ~~achieved~~ achieved. Also, it may not be irrelevant to point out here that in Decr. 1963, Sri Charan Singh issued an order that all vacancies in class IV services in departments then under his charge, viz., Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forest, shall be filled by scheduled caste candidates till their quota reached 18 percent. A few months after, the Apptt. Deptt. objected that the order was against the Constitution (vide copies of G.Os and Circular Letters placed below).

Charan Singh  
24.11.1965.