

# Barack Obama and India

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After moving into the twenty-first century, humanity got stuck with the American War in Iraq, genocide in Darfur, Palestinian clashes, and the like. Barack Obama is now seen as the silver lining amidst the dark clouds in the sky, offering hope and faith to change the world, moving it towards justice, peace and progress, asking American citizens to believe in their ability to change the course of world politics. Dalits in India look up to him as a committed civil rights leader, balanced in his perspectives to bring change by non-violence, as the conscience keeper of a just world and the voice of the oppressed.

During the past two decades I have been looking for an African American who can transcend the barriers of his own national interest and embrace the world with compassion and justice for the deprived. I studied the speeches and words of Barack Obama, a prophet of our times. I believe he should become President of America to provide needed change in American politics. Hillary Clinton was in the White House for eight years while her husband was president. She has now had to gracefully withdraw from the race to support Obama's campaign for the White House. Once he is there, he will be able to

show the world that America's cherished values of equal opportunity, freedom, and human rights are practical and achievable.

The aspirations of Dalits to achieve equal opportunities for the oppressed can become real only when they have the power to change India's unjust and unequal social structure. Unless Obama is given the opportunity to move into the White House and bring much needed change to the world, we are deluding ourselves with falsity and hypocrisy.



*Dalit Community*

\*Henry Thiagaraj is Managing Trustee of the Dalit Liberation Education Trust, which he established in Madras (Chennai), India, in 1985. India's Dalits number some 150 million persons and are commonly known as "untouchables" in the West. They suffer extreme caste-based discrimination and violence that in many ways resemble racial discrimination in the West.