

Caste in Indian Politics

Introduction:

State politics in Republic of India has been significantly the new bed of political castes. Caste enters rather more directly into the composition of political elites at the state level. As an example the geographic region cupboard by Marathas and a few have brought up the Madras cupboard as a federation of dominant backward castes. And though the Indian constitution has illicit caste-based discrimination, the class structure, in numerous forms will still play a serious role in Indian society and politics. A placing feature of the Indian democratic experiment has been the increasing use of reservations to attain bigger social justice and equality of chance. Abundant of this has occurred attributable to the shifting balance of power across demographics.

Since the Nineteen Fifties, political power has been shifting far from higher caste Hindus to the remainder, who way more varied. From a society wherever politics once control a marginal public role, Republic of India has become an intensely political society. By the Seventies, for example, several Shudra castes—located on top of the outcastes—had gained enough economic and political clout to become a strong ‘vote bank’. They currently aspired to a bigger share of body and academic opportunities, wherever they were underrepresented. a number of the most important and best-organized Shudra castes were the ‘Yadavs in province and province, Jats in Haryana and geographical area, Marathas in geographic region, Vokkaligas in Karnataka, and Gounders in province.’ Most important aspects of caste that influenced to Indian politics as follows:

Political Socialisation and Leadership Recruitment:

Different caste teams have their loyalties behind completely different political parties and their ideologies. Right from his birth, Associate in Nursing Indian subject inherits a caste and grows up as a member of a specific caste cluster. He belongs either to 1 of the High Castes or to regular Castes. Within the method of learning his political orientations, perspective and beliefs, he naturally comes below the influence of caste teams and casteism. ‘Caste values’ and caste interests influence his socialisation and

consequently his political thinking, awareness and participation. He banks upon caste commonality for occupying and playacting a leadership role.

Caste influences the method of leadership accomplishment. This is often significantly true of extremely 'caste conscious' individuals of some states like Haryana, Bihar, UP, province and Andhra Pradesh. In Haryana, the leadership comes either from the Jats or from the Bishnois or Brahmins. In Andhra Pradesh, the Reddys, Kammas and Valamas offer state leaders.

Party Politics:

Caste issue could be a constituent of the Indian party system. Some political parties have an immediate caste basis whereas others indirectly bank upon explicit caste teams. Above all, the regional political parties stand preponderantly influenced by the caste issue. The DMK and AIADMK are non-Brahmin rather anti-Brahmin political parties of province. In Punjab, Akali decalitre features a community panthic identity however stands influenced by the problem of Jats vs. non-Jats. All political parties in Republic of India use caste as a method for securing votes in elections.

While the BSP banks upon the support of the regular Castes, the BJP mostly banks upon its quality among the high caste Hindus and therefore the commercialism community. In fact, whereas formulating its policies and choices every organisation of India in India nearly always keeps in vision the 'Caste Angle'.

Elections:

The caste issue is a crucial issue of electoral politics in Republic of India. All political parties offer nice weightage to the caste think about choosing their candidates, in allocating constituencies to their candidates and in suasion support for his or her nominees within the election. In constituencies predominated by Muslims, Muslim candidates are fielded and in areas predominated by Jats, human candidates are fielded. Even avowedly advocator parties just like the Congress, the Janata decalitre, the CPI and therefore the CPM take into thought the caste think about choosing their candidates.

In the election campaigns, votes are demanded within the name of caste. Caste teams are broach for committed support. Nobody will pain N.D. Palmer once he observes that "Caste concerns are given nice weight within

the choice of candidates and within the appeals to voters throughout election campaigns.” In elections, caste acts because the most significant organisation.

Divisive and Cohesive issue

Caste acts each as a factious and cohesive force in Indian politics. It provides a basis for the emergence of many interest teams within the Indian system every of that competes with each different cluster within the struggle for power. Now and then it results in unhealthy struggle for power and acts as a factious force. However, it's a supply of unity among the members of varied teams and acts as a cohesive force. In rural Republic of India, wherever the social universe of the agricultural power is restricted to a locality of fifteen to twenty clicks, caste acts as a unifying force.

It is the sole grouping they perceive. However, the existence of 2 or 3 huge caste teams additionally results in factionalism. Caste intrinsically could be a sturdy think about Indian politics and it acts as a cohesive moreover as a factious issue.

Vote bank:

Since caste could be a major feature of the Indian society and acts as a crucial think about numerous processes of politics, it additionally plays a giant role within the decision-making method. Even the problem of re-organisation of states is handled with an eye fixed upon the interference of undue predominance of a caste cluster in a very explicit territory. Caste issue influences the policies and choices of the state governments. The party in power continuously tries to use its decision-making power to win the favor of major caste teams. The Congress has continuously tried to nurture individuals' happiness to the regular Castes as its vote bank.

Regional political parties, whenever they get the chance to rule their respective states, always use political power for furthering the interests of the caste groups which support or can support their regimes. Recruitment to political offices is mostly done with due consideration to the caste of the persons. Caste factor influences the process of ministry making and the allocation of portfolios. Each big caste group always tries to secure ministerial berths for such elected representatives as belong to their caste.

Local Politics:

The role of caste in the working of the Panchayati Raj and other institutions of local self-government has been a recognised reality. We can go to the extent of recording that caste based factionalism in the rural areas of India has been one of the biggest hindering factors in the organisation and effective working of the Panchayati Raj. In the Indian rural context, caste has been a plank of mobilization, a channel of communication, representation and leadership and a linkage between the electorate and the political process.

Constitution:

Though the spirit of secularism stands clearly affirmed in the Constitution, yet in a limited and indirect way, it recognizes the caste system in the form of providing for caste based reservations. Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Union Parliament and the state legislative assemblies as well as in public services reflects this feature. Even the 'Other Backward Classes—OBC's—stand determined on caste basis. The Constitution of India also provides for the office of the commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with the responsibility to investigate matters relating to the various safeguards provided by the Constitution to these castes and tribes.

The provision for the appointment of a minister-in-charge for looking after the welfare of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes in the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa also reflects indirect recognition of the caste factor.

The emergence of strong pro-reservation and anti-reservation groups in India has been the direct consequence of such provisions of the Constitution. The repeated tenures for the continuation of the policy of reservations (now the provision stands extended up to the year 2020) for the SCs, STs and OBCs, too has been a major controversial political issue.

The reservation policy clearly reflects the role of caste factor in politics even the other backward classes (OBCs) are basically caste based classes. Now, reservation in private sector has been getting implemented and the quantum of reservation is going to be quite high.

Violence:

Caste based violence very often finds its way into politics. The traditional differences between the higher and lower castes have acquired a new vigour and have turned, at times, into a violent and fierce struggle for power in society. The growing terrorisation of the lower castes by the higher or even intermediary castes has been becoming a sad part of India's political reality.

In states like Maharashtra, Bihar, and Gujarat and UP, caste violence has raised its head even in some urban areas. Existence of caste sena's in Bihar has been an unfortunate reality of state politics. Caste violence has been a source of big strain on social and political life of Bihar.

Leadership:

Caste has been emerging as a factor in the process of leadership recruitment. The leadership of Sh. Kanshi Ram and Ms. Mayawati is caste based. So was the leadership of Ch. Charan Singh in UP, Karpoori Thakur in Bihar and Dev Raj Urs in Karanataka. The leadership of Sh. Laloo Prasad Yadav in Bihar is again an example of caste based leadership.

Conclusion

This obviously raises doubt about the democratizing potential of caste as a sphere. The caste-region nexus meant that just as domination of a caste or caste group would get established, it will be challenged by rival groups or by newly emerging lower sections. However, if our assessment that caste alliances are ad hoc and less mobilization is correct, then the arena of caste politics is likely to lose the potential to democratize Indian polity.

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