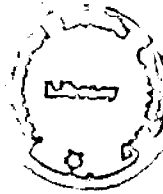


PARTIES AND POLITICS: JANATA DAL IN BIHAR (1989-95)



*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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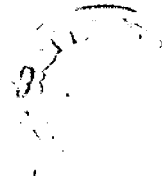
Certified that the dissertation **PARTIES AND POLITICS : JANATA DAL IN BIHAR (1989-95)** submitted by Mr. **Sujit Kumar** in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of **Master of Philosophy** has not been previously submitted in any other University.

This is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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(Chairperson)



*Dedicated to Fifty Years of
Indian Independence*

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Sujit Kumar

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INTRODUCTION

The Primary task of the political parties is to organise the chaotic public will. Lord Bryce said: "They bring order out of the chaos of a multitude of voters". They are 'brokers of ideas', constantly clarifying, systematising and expounding the party's doctrine. They are not the only reflections of social cleavages but also representatives of social interest groups, bridging the distance between the individual and the great community. They maximize the voter's education in the competitive scheme of at least a two-party system and sharpen their free choice.

In fact, the basic assumption of democracy is the multiplicity of ideas/opinions and inevitability of differing views and the free operation of conflicting opinions. "The true democrat has a suspicion that he may not always be right", as Ivor Jennings remarked. Thus the opposition becomes the most important part of the parliament; its members are "critics by profession".

Political parties make the voters choose at least the lesser of two evils, thus forcing political differentiation into few major channels. Parties perform the private citizen himself. They make him a 'zoon politikon', they integrate him into the group. Every party has to present to the individual voter and to this powerful special interest

groups a picture of the community as an entity. It must constantly remind the citizen of this collective whole, adjust his want to the needs of the community, and, if necessary, even ask sacrifices from him in the name of the community. This function differentiates a political party from a pressure group. Its specific interests must be fitted into the framework of the national collective.

Political parties also represent the connecting link between the government and the public opinion. Since democracies are pyramids built from below, the connection between the leaders and the followers become a necessity in the two-way traffic of democracy. They are a link between the state and the civil society, continuously articulating and aggregating the interests of the civil society and putting it before the state. There is an inverse relationship between the autonomy of the civil society and function of the political parties. The more autonomous the civil society is, the less is the role (function) of the political parties. In a country like India where the state is the 'mai-baap' of the people, growth of the civil society is stunted, and hence, more functions for the political parties.

Marx believed that 'base' determines the 'superstructure'. In Indian conditions, it is the politics that determines the economics of the society. Politics is not only autonomous, it is the prime mover of everything else. The more 'overdeveloped' the state structure is, the more important political parties become. "Post

colonial states are overdeveloped". In this situation, political parties become the most important political channel in the country. So, it needs to be studied, understood, examined and then future trends for parties and system be formulated. This is precisely the point, why the research on party politics has been taken up.

II

The development of the representative institutions and expansion of suffrage gave rise to the political parties. Until 1902, when Ostrogerskii came up with the studies on political parties in USA, and UK, no theoretical work on party system had been done. It was followed by Robert Michels and around the same time in Russia by V.I. Lenin. But the most important contribution to the development of political parties was by Maurice Duverger in 1951. Later on, in 1976, Giovanni Sartori made a few significant changes to the theory of the party system.

Lenin in What is to be done? (1902) and One step Forward, Two Steps Back (1904) developed his views on the party. He envisaged it to be the main organising, leading and guiding force of the revolutionary working class movement. The main aim of the political parties was to bring about a proletarian revolution. For this purpose, it would consist of trained and professional revolutionaries in its fold. Political party was to follow the 'law of dialectics'.

'Democratic Centralism' and rigid discipline would be the main feature of the party.

Robert Michaels developed his theory of the party system in his book Political Parties : A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of a Modern Democracy (1911). He laid emphasis on the party structure and tried to explain the triumph of the leader's ambitions for the office over the revolutionary goals with the help of the 'iron law of oligarchy'. The party is created as a means to secure an end but in course of time becomes an end in itself, having its own aims and interests. Michaels says that the party is nothing but an organisation of the minority which tries to impose on the majority a legal order which aims at exploitation of the masses, and is never truly representative of the majority. Thus it gets detached from the class which it represents because the interests of the masses do not coincide with the interests of the bureaucracy with which the party gets personified. He asserted that every party organisation represents an oligarchical power grounded upon democratic basis. "The majority of human beings in a condition of eternal tutelage are predestined by tragic necessity to submit to the domination of the small minority and be content to constitute the pedestal of an oligarchy." Political parties are thus an "organisation which gives birth to a dominion of the elected over the electors, of the mandatories over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators". He says organisation is an oligarchy.

Thus the notion of the representation of popular interest is in fact a mirage.

Maurice Duverger developed his theory of party in his study "Political Parties : Their Organisation and Activities in Modern State" (1951). He devoted half of the book to the study of the political units and half to the party system. Thus, he made an explicit distinction between the Party units and the Party systems. Party system is the pattern of interaction between various units i.e. the political parties. He says that the organisation of the political parties is not in conformity with orthodox notions of democracy. Their internal structure is essentially autocratic and oligarchic. Their leaders are not really appointed by the members but co-opted or nominated by the central body. These leaders tend to form a ruling class. In so far as the leaders are elected, the party oligarchy is widened without becoming democratic. Even the parliamentary representatives are increasingly subjected to the authority of the party's inner circle. Due to the centralisation of the authority in the party organisation, the influence of the members over the leaders continue to decline. The growing rigidity of the discipline among the party members leads them to venerate the party and its leadership. They cease to be critical of the leaders and adopt an attitude of adoration. As a result, says Duverger, "there arise closed, disciplined, mechanised bodies, monolithic parties, whose organisation outwardly resembles that of an

army, but whose methods of regimentation are infinitely more adaptable and efficient, being based on the training of the mind rather than of the bodies. Their hold over men is strengthened, parties become totalitarian....Zeal, faith, enthusiasm and intolerance are the rule in these modern churches; party struggles turn into religious wars." He further maintains that it would be wrong to assume that the people govern themselves. It is always a small oligarchy which rules over the many.

Duverger is of the view that the number of political parties in a system are the result of the system of representation a system adopts. On the basis of the membership and organisation of the political party, Duverger has classified them into four types, viz., Caucus, branch, cell and militia.

Hatchek deals with the process of disintegration of the political parties. He says that a political party comes with particular programmes and principles. But in due course of time, particular interests dominate over the programmes of the party. Within the party there is polarisation around various leaders and the process of disintegration starts. New parties have programmes similar to the parent party. When in opposition, the party is quite cohesive, but when it is a ruling party, then the interests dominate over the programme and then the process of disintegration starts.

III

Bihar, the most populous state of India (comprising a little more than 10 per cent of the country's population), is economically the most backward. The percentage of persons below poverty line is 40.7 (1987-88) and per capita income of Rs. 2,904 as against Rs. 5,781 for India (net GDP at factor cost at current prices) according to CMIE, 1994 data. As against the national average of 52 per cent, the literacy rate is 38.5 per cent in Bihar.

With about 87 per cent of the population in the rural areas, it is the most rural state in the country, next only to Assam. About 46 per cent of the state income is derived from agriculture. Due to both institutional and technological factors, there is an extreme backwardness in agriculture. The sluggish rate of growth in agriculture do not produce the spread effects of the key Public Sector Undertakings located in Bihar. Hence, industrially the state continues to be backward even though it possesses about one-fourth of the mineral resources of the country. In view of this generous natural resource endowment, it seems that the state's backwardness is probably more related to its socio-economic-political structures and unresponsive political leadership.

The social and agrarian structure is highly exploitative. The state is experiencing an acute crisis of political leadership,

bureaucratic inefficiency, rampant corruption at all levels and social disorder. There has been no panchayat election for more than two decades. The division of society into various castes has penetrated not only into politics but also into bureaucracy, academics and other sectors. The serious breakdown of the law and order machinery and the scenario of crime, tension and violence have prompted people to sarcastically remark that the 'state has withered away' in Bihar.

The social composition of Bihar is as follows (from India Today, 15 May 1976):

Brahmins	4.1 per cent
Bhumihars	2.1 per cent
Rajputs	4.0 per cent
Kayastha	1.0 per cent
Banias	3.1 per cent
Yadavs	11.1 per cent
Kurmis	3.1 per cent
Koeris	4.0 per cent
Other Backward Castes (Teli, Dhanuk etc.)	29.5 per cent
Scheduled Castes	14.6 per cent
Scheduled Tribes	7.6 per cent
Muslims	14.8 per cent
Others	1.0 per cent

The social stratification of Bihar is very rigid. There is very little scope for upward social mobility. Although the ideology of Brahmanical social order is on the decline, forward castes are trying

hard to maintain their dominance over other castes and Muslims. Bihar has witnessed some of the worst communal flare-ups of independent India. In terms of 'Social capital' ("the component of human capital that allows the members of a given society to trust one another and cooperate in the formation of new groups and association" - James Coleman), Bihar could be termed as a low trust society. Understanding politics, mainly democratic, in an underdeveloped and low 'trust' society has to be very interesting. It also gives an insight into the dynamics of the Indian politics. This factor, along with the fact that the researcher is familiar with Bihar, prompted to choose Bihar as the area of study.

IV

Janata Dal came on the political scenario after four parties merged to form it. The party came to power in the Centre in the ninth general elections. V.P. Singh became the Prime Minister and Devi Lal, the Deputy Prime Minister. Three months after this victory, the party won assembly elections in Bihar too. While the Party at the centre lost powers due to split, the government in Bihar survived the split. Against all political prophecies, the party ruled for five full years and in the elections for the Eleventh Assembly, the Janata Dal was returned to power with even greater number of seats. Defections and

splits, which are common phenomena of Indian parties, took place in the Bihar Janata Dal also. But, this did not affect the life of the government. While Janata Dal lost the Lok Sabha elections in 1991, the maximum number of Janata Dal Members of Parliament came from Bihar. Constant electoral victories of the Janata Dal from Bihar, while it was losing in other states, encouraged me to undertake this research on 'Janata Dal in Bihar' (1989-95).

The present study seeks to underscore the nature of the Janata Dal in Bihar, and what were the factors that led to its electoral victory. By understanding the nature of a victorious party in a backward state of Bihar, an attempt has been made to derive certain conclusions about the party system in India.

The present study is divided into three chapters.

Chapter I deals with the rise of the Janata Dal. The hypothesis is that the process of mobilisation that was going on in the Indian society since long. There were both political and economic factors that necessitated the mobilisation of various social groups. The newly mobilised groups, when could not find a place in the dominant party, i.e., the Congress formed a new party. Congress was basically an umbrella coalition of forward castes, Muslims and Harijans. Backward Castes generally supported non-Congress parties. Lohia's thesis on non-Congressism emphasised the

recruitment of backward castes with the socialist fold and an electoral alliance with non-Congress, non-communist parties. This strategy of Lohia clicked electorally. The present Janata Dal is nothing but one of such coalitions of various parties that splintered from the Congress and the socialist. The rise of the Janata Dal is linked with the decline of the Congress. Breaking up of the Congress coalition and rise of the opposition is an interlinked phenomena. Many segments of the society, that hitherto had been Congress supporters, in later years, started supporting the opposition

In the chapter though the rise of the Janata Dal has been traced on a national level, examples and evidences have been taken from Bihar to show that the real impetus for the formation of the Janata Dal came from Bihar. Bihar provided an ideal ground for the rise of an opposition party like the Janata Dal.

Chapter II deals with the leadership aspect of the Janata Dal in Bihar. In the first part of the chapter, a theoretical analysis of leadership has been done in order to provide the conceptual basis of leadership. In the second part of the chapter, an analysis of the legislative leaders of the party has been done. It is based on the profile of Members of Legislative Assembly and Members of Parliament released by the respective secretariats of the legislative assembly and the Lok Sabha. An M.Phil dissertation has to be based on secondary sources. Hence, there was no scope for the field survey

for the purpose of finding out the profile of local organisational leaders of the party. It would be an independent subject for the research altogether. In the 'short-biographical sketch' of the MLAs released by the Bihar Assembly Secretariat, the profile of as many as 51 members of Janata Dal do not find a mention. The data would have been more accurate and probably a more clear picture would have been before us had all the members sent their profile to the assembly secretariat.

The profile of members of the Eleventh Assembly has not been published till date. Hence, analysis of only the Ninth Lok Sabha, Tenth Lok Sabha and Tenthth Assembly Members of the Janata Dal from Bihar has been done. Caste and community wise break-up of some 245 members in the Eleventh Assembly came out in The Hindustan Times of the Patna edition. This has been included in the chapter.

Figures have been rounded off as per the mathematical rules.

In the third part of the chapter, the profile of the two important leaders of the Janata Dal from Bihar, Laloo Prasad Yadav and Ram Vilas Paswan has been given to get an insight into the leadership aspect of the party.

Chapter III deals with the Janata Dal at the elections. In the elections for the Lok Sabha, it is the national issue that dominates while in the assembly elections, local issues dominate. Lok Sabha constituencies are very large, both in terms of area and population. The minutes of politics are not revealed in large constituency. Moreover, the social coalitions are quite weak for large constituencies. But this is not the case with relatively smaller assembly constituencies. Hence the Janata Dal's politics during the election for 10th and 11th Assembly has been analysed.

What were the issues for the elections? What was the electoral strategy of the Janata Dal for the elections? What were the reasons for the electoral victory? Which sections of the society voted for the Janata Dal? are some of the questions, answers to which has been probed in the chapter.

CHAPTER I

RISE OF ~~THE~~ JANATA DAL

Given the structural condition of one-party dominance in India, the evolution of oppositional parties, presents an interesting case, where the contours of opposition politics have been largely determined by the dominant party, namely the Congress Party. Nevertheless, the decline of the dominant party after the late sixties has witnessed a parallel rise of oppositional consolidation characteristically around "non-Congressism" or "anti-Congressism". Based on the Lohiate strategy of mobilisation of backward and lower castes and alliance of non-Congress, non-Communist parties, the oppositional politics has however travelled a long journey from late sixties to mid nineties. The Janata Dal traces its pedigree from this Lohiate strategy to put an alternative to the Congress Party.

The Hypothesis

There were a number of factors that necessitated the formation of Janata Dal. The mobilisation process of the masses had been going on since long. But mobilisation for the sake of capturing governmental power through democratic means was new to Indian politics. Modern politics is competition among various groups¹ of the

society. Caste provided a ready made societal structure around which mobilisation could take place.² The importance of caste has been there in almost all parts of India, but it becomes very important in a highly stratified society of Bihar. Caste factor comes into play in almost all aspects of polity, economy and society of Bihar. But it would be worthwhile mentioning that caste, although an autonomous unit, is used for some or the other end which is secular. In all modern democracies groups are used to gain secular ends. This is the essence of modern politics.

Mobilisation in independent India has taken place both within the Congress fold and outside it. Many of the newly mobilised groups tried to gain a control over the Congress organisation. Some of them were coopted in its fold while many others were not. Those who were not coopted by the Congress went on to form other political groupings and parties or joined the already formed groupings and parties. The process of mobilisation was also being undertaken by other parties that contested elections to capture power.

The universal adult franchise that we adopted was the motor of the mobilisation process. It was the dynamics of electoral politics, and that too the adoption of 'single member electoral constituencies', that accelerated the process of mobilisation of various caste groupings in Indian society.

While the above mentioned process was undertaken by political parties and leaders, the dynamics of economic system also necessitated the process of mobilisation. Thus both state institutions and the civil society were instrumental in the mobilisation process.

The Explanation

The Congress Party has been characterised as a conglomerate of various caste factions.³ The model supposes that there is inherent competition between various factions to control the organisation. Even before independence, the Congress was faction ridden.⁴ The powerful factions were led by upper caste politicians⁵ like S.K. Sinha, A.N. Sinha and K.B. Sahay. In their endeavour to gain control over the organisation, they frequently made coalitions with various other factions.

Factional competition had the effect of enlarging the political circle initiating the process of cooption of persons lower down the caste hierarchy by the already 'politically arrived' upper caste groups. These coopted leaders emerged later as caste leaders in their own right. Thus through this process Brahmins, OBCs and other caste groups came to be politically mobilised and became foci of political mobilisation and interest articulation in their own castes and communities.⁶

But upper castes were still able to close ranks in preventing internal rivalries from resulting in the rise of a low caste chief minister. In 1963 when B.N. Jha was 'kamarised', he sponsored Bir Chand Patil, a Kurmi, for the post. Since it seemed almost unpalatable to forward castes, the Bhumihars, the Rajputs and the Kayasthas suddenly combined to support the candidature of K.B. Sahay, a Kayastha, who formed the government.⁷

The Congress, which till date is perceived as a party of forward castes, was unable (or unwilling) to coopt the newly mobilised backward castes fully within its fold. Powerful factions (especially of backward castes) leaders were reluctant to leave the Congress because of its invincibility at the polls. Apart from strong base among the upper castes, it enjoyed a virtual monopoly over two important 'vote banks', that of the Scheduled Castes and the Muslims.⁸

In the parliamentary politics of Bihar, socialists and communists have had deep influence.⁹ It was quite natural in a society where there still continues exploitation of the toiling masses. There were various brands of socialist parties in Bihar. They were a divided lot. But in the 1952 Assembly elections the socialist party got 20.4% votes while the Congress got 42.1% of votes.¹⁰ Excepting the 1972 Assembly elections, socialist parties have always got more than 20% votes in Bihar Assembly elections.¹¹ Hence it could well be

inferred that socialists were always a strong force in Bihar and had a strong mass base. It may be presumed that those sections of the Society that were not with either the Congress or the communists, supported the socialists. Other backward castes (esp. Yadavs, Kurmis and Koeries) in order to gain control over the state apparatus first wanted to capture Congress organisation, but when they failed in this attempt, they started supporting non-Congress and non-Communist parties.¹²

Ever since independence, the backward castes had been aspiring for more than they were getting at the hands of the Congress.¹³ R.L. Chandpuri tried his best to convince the backward castes to have a separate political party of their own.¹⁴ Lohia broke away from the Praja Socialist Party in 1956 and formed the Socialist Party. Those leaders from Bihar who sided with Lohia accepted his thesis on non-Congressism and caste.¹⁵ He "recognised that the backward classes could provide an important source of support in the struggle to unseat Congress. After Bihar State Backward Classes Federation merged with the Socialist Party, it committed itself in reserving 60 per cent of its leadership posts for non-upper caste males. Lohia brought lower castes into politics in a big way and gave them a clear direction. It was largely due to his efforts that they came out of the confines of caste Sabhas and left their attempts at

sanskritisation.¹⁶ Lohia made them conscious of the power which they possessed after the grant of adult franchise and the abolition of the Zamindari.¹⁷ The neo-rich among the backwards (especially Ahir, Koeri and Kurmi) were attracted towards Lohia. They joined and remained in the Samyukta Socialist Party which came into existence in June 1964 while Basawan Singh and others belonging to upper castes walked out in 1965 to revive the PSP.¹⁸

A study of policies and actions of the SSP in Bihar reveals that it wanted to end the domination of Bhumihars and Rajputs with the casteism of lower castes. It did not put forth any programme of rapid socio-economic transformation of the state. Due to Lohia's efforts lower castes got united and emerged as a big factor in Bihar politics.¹⁹

The socialists won the 1967 elections and formed coalition government along with some other non-Congress and non-communist parties. Most of the leaders were defectors. The period from 1967-71 witnessed seven chief ministers from backward and scheduled castes out of nine. The socialists in 1977 merged in the Janata Party. One of the most important leaders of the Socialist Party in Bihar was Sri Karpoori Thakur who was from a backward caste. He later on became one of the architects of Janata victory and served two terms as the chief minister one in 1970-71 and the other in 77-79.

After the Janata Party broke up, he joined the Lok Dal of Charan Singh and was its main leader in Bihar. Later on the Lok Dal merged with other parties to form the Janata Dal. Paul Brass writes: "In 1974, the largest section of the radical socialists in both U.P. and Bihar, consisting primarily of those leaders whose support bases came from the backward classes in those states, joined forces with Charan Singh's BKD, which was thereafter called the Bhartiya Lok Dal. In 1977, the BLD in turn merged into the Janata coalition, when that coalition itself fell apart,...the old BLD remerged as the Lok Dal. After the death of Charan Singh in 1987, the Lok Dal split....Both segments merged into the Janata Dal of V.P. Singh in 1989...."²⁰ Similarly, Professor C.P. Bhambhri writes that "The BLD was mobilising 'middle caste' peasant proprietors in North India...."²¹ Baxter describes BKD as the phenomena of the 'flash' party.²²

Some of the old socialist followers of Lohia like George Fernandes and some others like Chandrasekhar, Krishna Kant and Mohan Dharia remained in the Janata Party after the split of 1979. They were socialist in outlook and had support basis among the same social classes and groups that hitherto had been with the socialists. They in 1989 merged with the Janata Dal.

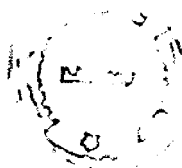
Hence it would be inferred that the Janata Dal was more or less the combination of old socialist parties. Its leaders still claim

themselves to be true representative of socialist traditions of Lohia and JP.²³ The process of mobilising the backward castes that was undertaken by socialists and Lok Dal gave it a solid support base among these castes and when these parties merged in 1989 as Janata Dal, their support base were also merged with it.

It was the formation of the Janata Dal, and its two electoral victories in Bihar, that marked the full success of the Lohiate strategy of non-Congressism. Whenever non-Congress opposition came together, it was able to throw away the Congress. The reason was simple. Most of the opposition parties were fighting against each other for the same social constituency.

After independence, the government started modernising society, polity and economy through economic planning and social legislation. And "one of the essential goals of planning is that deprived strata of society should be brought in the social mainstream."²⁴ Undertaking land reforms was one of such attempts.

Most of the big landowners are from the forward castes and most of the scheduled castes are poor, landless labourers. However, a number of historical trends have made the picture in the middle a lot less neat.²⁵ The Zamindari Abolition Act of the 1950s had led to some transfers from the forward castes to their tenants, many of whom were backward castes.²⁶ Two other historical facts increased



that tendency. The flight of Muslim zamindars from Central Bihar to Pakistan at the time of the partition resulted in some backward caste tenants becoming de facto landowners.²⁷ After independence, 'land ceiling legislation' led to pressure on traditional landowners to sell their excess lands to new groups who could afford to buy, many of whom, especially in central Bihar, belonged to the backward castes.²⁸ Thus, backward castes also became part of the landed class. In some pockets these were landlords from kurmi, yadav and koeri castes.

The middle peasantry became a class of small capitalist farmers, producing grains and other commodities for market. The minimal commercial impulse that existed in the state agriculture had been generated by the backward castes. Commercial interests of backward castes led them into a political struggle with the forward castes, and the Congress party that represented them.²⁹ When the Congress could not satisfy the demands of the backward castes, they started looking for other options (parties).

The Green revolution had its impact in Bihar too though not with the same intensity as it was in Punjab. Haryana and U.P. The Green revolution had benefitted only the landed class. S. Singh's study on the impact of the Green revolution in Purnea district of Bihar shows that the economic condition of the landless labourers has

remained more or less unchanged.³⁰ Sachidanand's study has also arrived at similar conclusions.³¹ His three important conclusions are: (a) people with higher socio-economic status or larger landholdings have made maximum use of improved practices, seeds, fertilisers etc., (b) caste norms have remained intact and lower castes have been discriminated against, and (c) the condition of tenants is worse than ever before. The landowners wanted to have agricultural supplies at low costs and a higher agricultural procurement price that would ensure them maximum profit on their investment. Because everything needed in agriculture-credit, fuel, seed, fertiliser, machinery etc. involved dealings with the government and quasi-governmental institutions, an elaborate system of state patronage developed. The middle peasants were dissatisfied with the Congress government, which did not pay enough attention to their interests, as it was dominated by the forward castes who controlled much of the patronage.³² The stake in controlling government thus increased and this gave rise to intense competition among the rich of all castes (especially between the forward and backward castes) to capture power.

Communists have had strong influence in Bihar. They mobilised the poorest of the poor against the landed class. But they have not been able to convert their support into votes. This is evident

from the fact that from communist dominated constituencies, other centrist parties win. A possible explanation may be that caste loyalty is stronger than the class loyalty in Bihar. The group of people who have been mobilised against the existing state system, which is identified with the existing party in government i.e. the Congress, tend to vote against the party in power. The social constituency of communists in their endeavour to defeat Congress, voted for party that seemed in a strongest position to defeat the Congress.

All these processes that had been going on in society had at least two political implications, viz., one, weakening of the Congress and two, more people supporting the opposition parties.

The only thing was that the opposition was not united. Whenever they united, they defeated the Congress, because almost all opposition parties were fighting for the same social constituency: that which was not with the Congress. When they united, they defeated the mammoth Indian national Congress in 1990.

The Process of Formation of the Janata Dal

The Janata Dal is essentially a regrouping of old Janata Party splinters along with some Congress (I) rebels.³³ The Janata Fragments which had been virtually swept aside soon realised the suicidal step they took in outwitting each other and betraying in the

process the confidence that the people had placed in them. It is from this retrospection on the part of the leaders of the Janata Party and the Lok Dal that the Janata Dal was born. A critical role in their process was played by the CPM, which increased the number of its seats in the Lok Sabha from 22 in 1977 to 36 in 1980 by remaining steadfast to its ideology.³⁴ In other words, there was no cause for despair: the Indira wave could be counteracted. The situation became more optimistic with the coming to power of TDP and Janata Party in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka respectively. The architect of victory in Karnataka was R.K. Hedge who won on the issue of "value-based politics", and thus emerged as potential alternative to Indira Gandhi at the national level.³⁵ Of course, the only way to replace Congress (I) at the centre was to form a national level coalition. Thus, consultation and discussion started among the non-Congress chief ministers, who now ruled several states, including J&K.

In 1983, the Janata Party president, Chandrasekhar, undertook a 'Bharat Padyatra' which took him from Kanyakumari to Delhi. It was perceived that Chandrasekhar was projecting himself as a national political leader, around whom the various non-Congress parties and leaders could unite, but he denied it. However, there is no doubt that it did prove an important turning point in the formation of an alternative to the Congress(I).

The main component of the opposition was the Janata Party at that time. On the other side was the Lok Dal, founded by Charan Singh, which at its National Executive meeting in October 1981, passed a resolution for opposition unity.³⁶ The Janata Party at its General Council meeting in December 1981, reciprocated the sentiment.³⁷ "The main stumbling block in the way of unification was the question of leadership of the (united) party", according to George Fernandes report.

Karpoori Thakur faction of the Lok Dal, Mrs. Mrinal Gore of the Samajwadi Manch of Maharashtra and the Democratic Socialist Party of Raj Narain, joined Janata Party in 1982. In the meantime Charan Singh was sidelined after a split in the party.

The attempts of the non-Congress parties and their leaders were overshadowed by the 1984 General elections, due to the sympathy wave created in favour of Congress(I), after the death of Mrs Gandhi. The efforts to form a national alternative got revived after Janata Party's victory in Karnataka Assembly elections.

However, the biggest fillip to the formation of the Janata Dal was given by the series of blunders committed by the government of Rajiv Gandhi, which prompted many important Congress (I) leaders to leave the party and join the opposition ranks. After the controversy on Muslim women's (protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill, 1986, Arif

Mohammed Khan had resigned from Central Cabinet. Later on Arun Nehru fell out with Rajiv Gandhi and he too resigned. The same path was followed by V.P. Singh because of his activities as finance minister and defence minister. These three leaders came together to form the 'Jan Morcha', which acted as a catalyst in opposition unity efforts. Another shot in the arm for opposition unity took place after Devi Lal won a thumping majority in the Assembly election in Haryana.

In the meantime Rajiv Gandhi's prestige was sinking because of the Bofors Scandal and other blunders committed by his government. On 5 March 1988, a meeting of opposition leaders was held in Delhi and participants included Devi Lal, R.K. Hedge, Biju Patnaik and V.P. Singh. It was decided at the meeting to form a new united political organisation called the National People's Party. But Chandrasekhar, Deve Gowda and Subramaniam Swamy opposed this.³⁸

In June 1988, V.P. Singh won the Allahabad Lok Sabha bye-election as an independent candidate supported by the entire opposition and shot into the national limelight. Because of his background as an incorruptible leader, he emerged as a potential contender for the Prime Minister's office. On 19 July 1988, a seven party convention was held which was attended by four national and three regional parties. The national parties were the Lok Dal (both

Bahuguna and Ajit faction), the Congress (S), the Janata Party and the Jan Morcha. The regional parties were the TDP, the DMK and the AGP.³⁹ After preliminary discussions, the four national parties met again on 26 July and decided to merge themselves into the Samajwadi Janata Dal, which de facto came to be known as the Janata Dal. The Congress (S) however stayed out and did not merge immediately. The foundation convention of the Janata Dal was held in Bangalore on 11 October 1988.

N.T.R. suggested three ring formula for capturing power at the centre. The Janata Dal joined by the Congress(S) provided the core. The second ring consisted of an arrangement between the Janata Dal and three regional parties - the TDP, the AGP and the DMK. They constituted the National Front. The third ring was based on an electoral understanding of the National Front with Left Front and also the BJP.

With this strategy the Janata Dal was able to form the government in New Delhi with V.P. Singh as the Prime Minister. Bihar gave 31 members to the Lok Sabha in the general elections.

NOTES

1. A.F. Bentley in his The Process of Government (Chicago, 1908), de-emphasised the institutional approach and re-emphasised the process approach to politics and gave the group theory. This theory has been supported by D. Truman, The Government Process (New York, 1964); and Latham, The Group Basis of the Politics (New York, 1952).
2. Rajni Kothari, Politics in India (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1969).
3. For study in factional terms, following studies can be mentioned:
Paul Brass, "Factional Politics in an Indian State : The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh" (California: University of California Press, 1964); Paul R. Brass, "Factionalism and the Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh", Asian Survey vol. 4, no. 9, September 1964, pp. 1037-47; Paul R. Brass, "Caste, Faction and Party in Indian Politics", vols. I and II, 1985; Ramashray Roy, "Dynamics of One Party Dominance in an Indian State", Asian Survey, vol. 8, no. 7, July 1968; Ramashray Roy, "Intra-Party Conflict in the Bihar Congress", Asian Survey, vol. 6, no. 12, December 1966; Rajni Kothari, "Party System", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 13, no. 22, 3 June 1961, pp.

847-54 [Here Kothari deals with role of factions in

Congress Party in "modifying the operation of law of oligarchy" (p, 852)].

- 4 Ramashray Roy, "Bihar Politics", Indian Journal of Political Science vol. 55, no. 3, July-September 1994, pp. 225-26.
- 5 Atul Kohli, Democracy and Discontent : India's Growing Crisis of Governability (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991). He says that "The political elite of Bihar were always factionalised, even within the Congress Party, and even though they all belonged to forward castes". pp. 206.
- 6 Ramashray Roy, op. cit., pp. 226.
7. Francine R. Frankel, "Caste, Land and Dominance in Bihar : Breakdown of the Brahmanical Social Order", in M.S.A. Rao, and Francine R. Frankel, eds., Dominance and State Power in Modern India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 47-129.
8. Ibid., p. 83.
9. Srikant, Bihar Mein Chunau : Jati, Booth loot aur Hinsha, (Patna: Sikha Pub., 1995), p. 88.
10. Ibid., p. 89.
11. Ibid., p. 90.
12. They could not support communist because CPI and CPM were also against the OBCs. They had their sympathy with the SCs

and STs who were exploited by both forward castes and upper strata of OBCs.

13. For detail see Francine R. Frankel, op. cit., pp. 84-88.
14. Mishra and Pandey, Sociology and Economies of Casteism in India : A Study of Bihar (Delhi, Pragati, 1996), p. 330.
15. Ibid., p. 330.
16. Ibid., p. 331.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., p. 332.
20. Paul Brass, The Politics of India Since Independence, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 83.
21. C.P. Bhambhri, The Janata Party : A Profile (National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1980), p. 8.
22. Craig Baxter, "The Rise and Fall of the Bhartiya Kranti Dal in Uttar Pradesh", in Myron Weiner and John Osgoodfield, eds., Studies in Electoral Politics in the Indian States, vol. IV (Delhi: Manohar Book Company, 1975), pp. 113-42.
23. Dr Mahabair Prasad in a private interview to the researcher on 14 June 1997.

- 24 C.P. Bhambhri, Indian Politics since Independence (Delhi: Shipra, 1994), p. 309.
- 25 Atul Kohli, op. cit., p. 209.
- 26 A.N. Das, Agrarian Unrest and Socio-economic Change in Bihar, 1990-1980 (Manohar, New Delhi, 1983), and T.F. Januzzi, Agrarian Crisis in India : The Case of Bihar (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973).
- 27 A.N. Das, op. cit., ch. 8.
- 28 Pradhan H. Prasad, "Caste and Class in Bihar", Economic and Political Weekly, February 1979, p. 483.
- 29 Atul Kohli, 1991, op. cit., p. 206.
- 30 S. Singh, Income, Saving and Investment of Landless Agricultural Labourers in an Agriculturally Prosperous Area : A Case Study of Purnea District, Bihar 1970-71 (Allahabad, 1973).
- 31 Sachidananda, Social Dimensions of Agricultural Development (Delhi, 1972), pp. 154-71. He brands rich kulaks as "progressive farmers" with socially conservative ideas.
- 32 Ashutosh Varshney (ed), The Indian Paradox " Essay in Indian Politics by Myron Weiner, (New Delhi: Sage, 1989), p. 214.
- 33 Surindar Suri, The Rise of V.P. Singh and the 1989 and 1990 Elections, (Delhi: Konark, 1990), p. 54.

- 34 Maya, October 1989.
- 35 Indian Express (Delhi), 30 September 1983.
- 36 The Times of India (Delhi), 27 October 1981.
- 37 The Hindi (Delhi), 7 August 1982.
- 38 The India Today, 13 March 1988.
- 39 The Hindu, 21 July 1988.

CHAPTER II

LEADERSHIP OF JANATA DAL IN BIHAR

In any society, the leaders play a very important role. In democratic societies, their role is to mobilise the people for the national goals which has been set by the leaders. There are various interests in the society. It is up to the leaders to bring order in the society through conflict management and resolution.

I

Leadership - A Theoretical Framework

A leader's nature, attitude and skill are important elements in conflict management. The elitist school advocates that masses cannot control the organizations and the conflicting bodies cannot resolve conflicts themselves.¹ As such leadership is a function of acceptance by followers. In other words, a leader is a leader by virtue of his acceptance or recognition by his followers.

But why is the leader accepted? What kinds of persons are acceptable as leaders? These questions are related to tensions, patterns and values of a particular environment. Leadership is the capacity to influence the groups through such means as organizational skill, superior knowledge and expertise, the power of a personality and

in general, the ability to evoke the cooperation and commitment of others.²

Leadership signifies the role of providing guidance, direction and coordination to a group, organization or a country. It also refers to the capacity to inspire confidence in the rightness of one's purpose and courage in their execution. Leadership is also the question of degree determined by the extent to which a single person can build control on the basis of influence. Thus, leaders are defined as the influentials - those who exercise great causal impact on social events.³ It is the leader who makes things happen that would not happen otherwise.

Dahl set before himself the task of explaining leadership and influence in his book *Who Governs?* exclusively in terms of observable political behaviour. Dahl's assertion that much of the influence of leaders derives from the fact that "most citizens use their political resources scarcely at all"⁴ has gone on to become a hallmark of behavioral theory. But this theory is suited only to the liberal societies and those regimes espousing a democratic creed. Historically, the concept of leadership highlights the shifting focus in theoretical orientation.

Early leadership studies and research focused on the leader himself⁵ to the virtual exclusion of other variables. It was

assumed that the leadership effectiveness would be explained by isolating psychological and physical characteristics or traits, which were presumed to differentiate the leader from other members of his group. Studies generally guided by this assumption proved not so fruitful. Almost without universal traits it proved elusive and there was little agreement as to the most useful traits. This approach soon proved rather sterile. Leaders do not emerge or function in isolation; they deal with followers within a cultural, social and psychological context.

After the trait approach, the emphasis swung away from the leader as an entity to the situationist approach. The situationist do not necessarily abandon the search for significant leadership characteristics but they attempt to look for them in situations containing common elements. Stogdill, after examining a large number of leadership studies aimed at isolating the traits of effective leaders came to the conclusion that "the qualities, characteristics and skills required in a leader are determined to a large extent by the demands of the situation in which he is to function as leader".⁶ Stogdill's analysis of leadership in various segments of population (student, military personnel and businessman) has been heavily researched, while that in others (politicians, labour leaders and criminal leaders) has been relatively neglected.⁷ It covers the entire range of elements that can be associated with a person and, in

particular, objective, social and demographic elements as well as pure psychological traits. The power of leadership is the direction⁸ in which it ultimately strives at action. Tucker analytically puts three elements in successive order for the evaluation of leadership.

- (a) *Diagnosis*: A leader grasps the situation intellectually i.e. surveying the environment and assessing what is wrong in his opinion and therefore what is to be addressed.
- (b) *Prescription*: It helps a leader to devise a course of action to meet these grievances and redressals. Instruments at the disposal of the leaders are essential in implementation of decisions.
- (c) *Mobilization*: Conceived broadly, the leader tries to ensure that an action takes place in a specific context which can be: (i) mobilization of subordinates; (ii) immediate or distant mobilization (within bureaucracy); and (iii) mobilization of population as a whole.

Tucker described leadership not in power terms but in terms of action.⁹ Ideally, leadership implies a combination of diagnosis, prescription and mobilization, though the form of this combination varies from one situation to another.

Burns' book on leadership analyses two types of leadership: (i) Transforming, and (ii) Transactional leadership. It is not

clear whether there is a further residual category ('mere' power holders). Having a vision of society, the transforming group of leaders set about doing something to implement that vision. On the contrary, the transactional leaders merely operate trade or exchange one advantage for another. They act in here-and-now and focus on details, without any perspective as to how society should be ultimately.

The analysis by Burns examines the characteristics and consequences as he looks at various groups in the society in which one or the other type of leader emerges. Accordingly, leadership arising out of party political activity, in normal circumstances at least, will be transactional;¹⁰ and the leadership arising out of revolutions, on the other hand will have a transforming character.¹¹ It can be said that transforming leadership of Burns bears many similarities with the characteristics of leaders in a charismatic context (Weber). The case of traditional leaders remain uncovered in the leadership analysis of Burns.

Paige lists several elements while defining political leadership i.e., "the intersection of personality, role, organization, task, values and setting".¹² If one examines these aspects, however, one finds that they come under two broad categories: Personal Attributes and Regimes Attributes while the environment constitutes the third element.

Personality is significant and meaningful because personality appears to have an impact on the goals and policy initiatives of the leader. It also applies to other aspects of leadership. Paige, for instance, refers to 'role' and 'organization' as an important component in a broad definition of leadership. Indeed, both have traditionally been regarded as essential. Though personality and institutional arrangements affect the character of the leadership itself, the environment is the substance, the raw material and also the framework for the goals and policy initiatives; it is, to use another image, the chessboard on which leaders have to play.

One point of certainty about charismatic authority is that it is based on the direct relationship between followers and leaders. Charismatic authority is lodged neither in office nor in status but derives from the capacity of a particular person to arouse and maintain belief in himself or herself as the source of legitimacy.¹³ Weber explicitly states that charisma is a "certain quality of an individual's personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or exceptional forces or qualities".¹⁴ Charismatic authority rests on "devotion to the specific sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person and of normative patterns or orders revealed or ordained by

Table II reveals that the largest age group consists of people, who are between 46 and 65 years. Young members who are between 35 and 45 years of age consist of 34.4 per cent while the former consist of 56.3 per cent. The people in the age group above 65 years consist of 9.3 per cent.

The educational background of the members shows that the majority are educated and possess higher qualification. The majority of the members, i.e. more than 50 per cent of them, possess qualifications which are above graduation level. Our B.A.+ category includes LL.B. and post-graduate qualifications.

Table II

Educational background of Janata Dal Members from Bihar in ninth Lok Sabha

	Percentage	N = 32 Figures
Less than B.A.	7	21.9
B.A.	7	21.9
B.A.+	16	50.0
Not mentioned	2	6.2
Total	32	100.0

Table II reveals that members with Graduate qualifications or less than that constitute 43.8 per cent. Those with qualifications above graduation level constitute half. Thus

the party's leadership is highly educated and probably this enables them to comprehend the social realities.

Though the majority of the people are engaged in agriculture,²⁵ their representation is half than those in modern professions. Janata Dal has negligible representation of members who are involved in industry and business. Lawyers, journalists, teachers, doctors, engineers etc. have been included as members of modern professions. But some of the members who are in modern profession also practice agriculture. Some members who have studied Law reveal that they practice agriculture. For purpose of clarity, they have been included as members of modern profession. Full time politicians who are in to social service, have also been included in modern profession.

Table III

Profession of the Janata Dal members from Bihar in ninth Lok Sabha

	Figure N = 32	Percentage
Agriculture	10	31.35
Modern professions	20	62.5
Industrialists and business	1	3.1
Agri-business	1	3.1
Total ³²	32	100

The Janata Dal which claims to represent agrarian interests had only 31.3 per cent of representation from this sector in the 9th Lok Sabha. But those included in the modern profession had 62.5 per cent representation.

Table IV
Social Composition of the members from Bihar in the Ninth Lok Sabha

Party/Caste	JD	Cong(I)	BJP	CPI	JMM	MCC	IPF	CPM	Total	Percentage
Brahmins	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	4	7.40
Bhumihar	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	5.55
Rajput	6	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	8	14.81
Kayastha	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	5.55
Yadav	7	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	10	18.51
Kurmi	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	3	5.55
Koeri	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	4.70
Scheduled Caste	6	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	8	14.81
Scheduled Tribe	-	2	1	-	2	-	-	-	5	9.25
Muslims	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	5.55
Christians	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.85
Bengali	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1.85
Baniyas	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1.85
Total	31	4	9	4	3	1	1	1	54	

Source: Srikant, "Bihar Mein Chunav, Jati, Boothloot Aur Hinsha", Sikha Publication, Patna, 1995, p. 30.

Of the 31 members, eleven each were from Forward and Backward castes each. Among the forward castes, Rajputs had six members. This shows the coalition between the Rajputs and the backwards in order to dislodge the Bhumihar and Brahmins from power. Rajputs also supported the Janata Dal because the chief architect of Janata Dal victory, V.P. Singh, was himself a Rajput. Among the backward castes, Yadavs have a predominant position in Janata Dal. Out of the eleven members from the backward castes, seven are Yadavs.

Janata Dal has given due representation to the Scheduled Castes also. Out of the eight members elected from Bihar, six were from Janata Dal. Similarly, out of the three Muslims elected from Bihar, two were from Janata Dal. But, when compared with the total representatives of Janata Dal, their number is a dismal low, i.e., only 6.45 per cent. Janata Dal had no tribal representative. South Bihar, which is dominated by the tribal population, still has few support from the Janata Dal. This was evident in Assembly elections also.

There was a split in the Janata Dal in 1990. Most of the MPs from upper castes joined Chandrasekhar's JD(S). After the 1991 elections, the picture was different.

Table V²⁶

**Age Composition of the Janata Dal members from Bihar
in the Tenth Lok Sabha**

	Figure N = 31	Per cent
Below 35 years	3	9.7
35-45 years	10	32.2
46-65 years	12	38.7
66 and above	6	19.4
Total	31	100

There were three members below 35 years of age as against one in the ninth Lok Sabha. Although there was preponderance of members in the age group of above 45 years and above, their share nevertheless has declined from 65.6 per cent in the ninth Lok Sabha to 58.1 per cent. Hence there has been a marked shift in the age composition from older members to relatively younger members.

Like the Ninth Lok Sabha, the Tenth Lok Sabha also constituted of the Janata Dal members from Bihar who possessed more than Graduate qualifications. The number of persons having less than Graduate qualifications had declined.

Table VI

**Educational background of the Janata Dal members from Bihar
in the Tenth Lok Sabha**

	Figure N = 31	Per cent
Less than B.A.	4	12.9
B.A.	8	25.8
B.A.+	15	48.4
Not mentioned	4	12.9
Total ²⁷	31	100

The members with qualifications less than Graduation decreased from 21.9 per cent in 1989 to 12.9 per cent in 1991. There was a marginal decline in persons having more than Graduate qualifications from 50 per cent to 48.4 per cent in 1991. The number of persons having graduate qualifications increased from 21.9 per cent to 25.8 per cent.

The profession of members of the Janata Dal from Bihar in 10th Lok Sabha is more or less than same as in the 9th Lok Sabha.

Table VII

**Profession of the Janata Dal members from Bihar
in the Tenth Lok Sabha**

	Figure N = 31	Per cent
Agriculture	9	29.0
Modern Profession	19	61.3
Industrialists & Businessmen	-	-
Agri-business	1	3.2
Non mentioned	2	6.5
Total ²⁷	31	100

The preponderance of the persons included in the modern profession is maintained. The share of those from agricultural profession has declined marginally from 31.3 to 29 per cent in 1991. While in the ninth Lok Sabha there was one person from the business class, there is none in the 10th Lok Sabha.

In the 10th Lok Sabha Janata Dal had more members from the Backward Castes than in the 9th Lok Sabha. The number of forward castes also declined. While the number of Muslims increased, that of SCs and Christians remained the same.

Table VIII

Social Composition of the members from Bihar in the 10th Lok Sabha

	J.D	Cong.	BJP	CPI	JMM	CPM	Total	Percent
Brahmin				1			1	1.88
Bhumihar	1	1		2			4	7.54
Rajput	4						4	7.54
Kayastha			1				1	1.88
Yadav	9			3			12	22.32
Kurmi	2		1	1	2		6	11.32
Koeri	3			1			4	7.54
Harijan	6		1			1	8	15.09
ST			2		3		5	9.62
Muslim	6						6	11.32
Christian	1						1	1.88
Sudhi					1		1	1.88
Total	32	1	5	8	6	1	53	100

Source: Srikant, op. cit., p. 31.

A - Patna by election result included

B - Purnea election results withheld.

An analysis of the Tenth Vidhan Sabha has been made in order to get a clear picture about the leadership the source being the 'Dasam Bihar Vidhan Sabha ke Sadaskyon ka Shankshipt Jeevan Parichay' (Short Biographical sketch of members in Tenth Bihar Legislative Assembly) issued by the Vidhan Sabha Secretariat. It is like 'who's who' released by the Lok Sabha Secretariat. Out of the 129 members of the Janata Dal in the 10th Vidhan Sabha, 51 members had not submitted their biographical sketch. A reliable analysis would have been possible had these 51 members submitted their biographical sketch.

Table IX

**Age Composition of the Janata Dal members
in the Tenth Assembly**

	Figures N = 78	Per cent
Below 35 years	7	9.0
35-45 years	27	34.6
46-65 years	30	38.5
66 and above	3	3.84
Not mentioned	11	14.1

Although maximum number of the people are in the age group of 46 to 65 years, the number of people below 46 years of age are more than above it. This indicates that the leadership lies with relatively younger members. Most of them are first timers in the assembly. As compared with the Lok Sabha, the Janata Dal has relatively young members in the Assembly than in the Lok Sabha.

Table X²⁸

**Educational background of the Janata Dal members
in the Tenth Assembly**

	Figures N = 78	Per cent
Less than B.A.	28	35.9
B.A.	21	26.9
B.A.+	29	37.2

Table X shows that the persons possessing more than Graduate qualifications outnumber any other category, constituting 37.2 per cent. Persons with less than Graduate qualifications are marginally less than the former, i.e., 35.9 per cent while Graduates constitute 26.9 person.

Unlike the representation in the Lok Sabha, the number of people with agriculture and modern profession is equal.

Table XI²⁸

Profession of the Janata Dal members in the Tenth Assembly

	Figures N = 78	Percentage
Agriculture	32	41.00
Modern profession	32	41.00
Industrialist & Businessmen	1	1.3
Agri-business	3	3.9
Not mentioned	10	12.8

Persons with agricultural profession and modern professions constitute 41 per cent each. It has been unable to attract industrialist and business class as they constitute only 1.3 per cent. In the 10th Lok Sabha Agriculturalists constituted 29 per cent but in the 10th Assembly they are 41 per cent.

Table XII
Social Composition of the Tenth Bihar Assembly (1990)

	Cong.	JD	BJP	CPI	CPM	IPF	JMM	Janata Party	MCC	Ind	Socialist (Lohia)	Jharkhand	Total	Percent
Brahmin	14	7	3	3									27	8.36
Bhumihar	13	5	3	5	2					6			34	10.52
Rajput	12	17	3	1		2		1		4	1		41	12.69
Kayastha	2	1											3	0.93
Yadav	8	36	2	5		2		1		9			63	19.50
SC	7	23	9	6		1	1	1		1			48	14.86
ST	8	2	6		1		10			1		1	29	8.98
Muslim	5	11					2			2			20	6.19
Kurmi		6			2		4	1	1	4			18	5.57
Koeri	1	3	3		2	2				1			12	3.71
Sudhi	1	4	1				2			2			10	3.09
Bania		1	2										3	0.93
Mallah		2											1	0.62
Gangauti		1											1	0.31
Bengali			1		1				1				3	0.93
Marwari			3										3	0.93
Noniya		1											1	0.31
Kahar			1										1	0.31
Kharwar				1									1	0.31
Teli		1	1										2	0.62
Punjabi			1										1	0.31
Total	71	121	39	23	6	7	19	3	2	30	1	1	323	

Source: Srikant, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

Table XII reveals that there is a preponderance of the backward castes in the Janata Dal. Unlike the Congress, Janata Dal has only 25 per cent of the members from the forward castes. They are the largest single social group in the assembly. It can be safely inferred that the Janata Dal is basically a party of the backward castes which has formed coalitions with the SCs, Muslims and the Rajputs.

The number of the Scheduled Caste legislators is maximum in the Janata Dal. BJP has around 23 per cent of the SC legislators while JD has around 19 per cent, but the two parties had seat adjustments for the assembly election. Congress has around 10 per cent of the legislators who belong to the scheduled castes.

Muslims have been adequately represented by the Janata Dal. While Congress has 7 per cent, JD has 9 per cent of them.

Table XIII Bihar Vidhan Sabha 1995 : Social Composition

	JD	BJP	Cong	CPI	CPM	CPI (ML)	Samata	JMM(S)	JMM (M)	Ind	BSP	MCC	SP	BPP	Total
Yadav	63	2	5	9		1				4					84
Koeri	15	2		2	3	1	2			1	1			1	28
Kurmi	4	2	2				3		2	1		1			15
Rajput	14	4	1	1		1	1			1					23
Brahmin	3	4	1	1			1			1					11
Bhumihar	4	1	5	5	1			1							17
Kayasth		4	1												5
Muslims	13		5	1				1	1				2		23
Bania	13	8	1												15
Kewat	4	1	1	1											7
Nai	1														1
Gangotta	2	1		1											4
Pasi	1														1
Kahar	1	1													2
Sikh	1														1
Bengali		2		1	1							1			5
Sonar		1													1
Noniya	1					1									2
Total	133	33	22	22	5	4	7	2	3	8	1	2	2	1	245

Source: Hindustan (Patna edition), April 20, 1995.

Yadavs have been the most dominant caste in the Janata Dal. Out of 133 JD members in the legislative assembly (whose caste came up in the newspapers) 63 members are from this caste. From Muslim community, JD had 13 representatives. As against expectations, due to formation of Samata Party, Koeris have good representation in Janata Dal. There were 15 Koeris from Janata Dal and only two from Samata Party. The figure of Rajput members is also prominent. They have 14 members among 133 of Janata Dal Legislators. In the Congress, on the other hand, there is a dominance of legislators from the upper caste.

III

Laloo Prasad Yadav is the most important leader of the Janata Dal Party in Bihar. Backward Castes, Muslims and Dalits form his social constituency. Ram Vilas Paswan is the second most important leader from Bihar. He belongs to the scheduled caste and so Dalits form his social constituency. In order to understand the Janata Dal in Bihar, a short biographical sketch and social perspectives of Laloo Prasad and Ram Vilas Paswan has been made.

Belonging to the Yadav community, Laloo Prasad was a political activist since his student days. He was associated with the Socialist Party and claims to follow the ideas of Lohia and Karpoori Thakur. After the death of Sri Karpoori Thakur, he became the leader

of the opposition in the Bihar Assembly. Earlier, in 1977, he was elected as a Member of Parliament from the Janata Party. Later he was elected as an MLA on the Lok Dal ticket. He always projected himself as a leader of the poor and the downtrodden.

Laloo Prasad became Chief Minister in 1990 with Devi Lal's support. After becoming the Chief Minister, he started broadening his social base. He got the first opportunity when V.P. Singh implemented the Mandal Commission recommendations which was followed by the widespread agitation by the upper caste youths against the government. He suppressed the movement and became a kind of hero for the backward castes. Kunkum Chadha writes that "in Bihar, the Mandal Caste is identified more with Laloo Yadav than with V.P. Singh".²⁹

L.K. Advani's Rath Yatra in 1990 gave him his next opportunity. He arrested him and was able to endear the Muslims. This act also reinforced his commitment to secularism.³⁰ Except the Sitamarhi Riots, his tenure did not see any communal riots which were frequent in earlier regimes. In the process he was able to break the Congress coalition of the Upper Castes, Scheduled Castes and the Muslims. Muslims became his firm supporters and with their support Laloo was able to win the elections.

He got nightsheds made for the rickshaw pullers who are mostly Harijans; removed toddy tax; allowed fishermen to fish in rivers and government tanks without paying any tax; and initiated measures to get durable houses constructed for harijans under the Indira Awas Yojna. These measures made the Dalits to support him. Moreover, his aggressive posture against the landlords and the forward castes endeared him to the backward castes and the harijans.³¹ Steps taken by him to drive home the point to the upper castes in general and the Bhumihars in particular that the days of their dominance were long past, gave the harijans some sort of vicarious pleasure.³²

It was through these measures that Laloo Prasad was able to consolidate his hold over the harijans. Laloo's attempts at breaking the Congress coalition was almost complete by 1995. Dalits and Muslims were siding with him.

Laloo attempted to build his image as a sort of demi-god. Books were published applauding his achievements, his identification with the common man, his social background, and his commitment to social justice and secularism. He came to be called as the 'incarnation of Lord Krishna' (Krishnavtar).³³

During his regime there was hardly any economic development. After 7 years of his rule Bihar is worse off by almost all standard macro-economic indicators.³⁴ But, the psychological

security of the downtrodden was enough for them to support Laloo Prasad.

Laloo's excessive tilt toward his own community, i.e. the Yadavs, alienated some other backward castes and therefore cracks emerged in his grand Backward-Muslim-SC coalition. It resulted in a split in the Janata Dal, with the Kurmi faction led by Nitish Kumar parting ways with Laloo Prasad.

Laloo Prasad emerged as a charismatic leader of the Janata Dal. Most of the senior national leaders pleased him in order to get elected from Bihar. Weber says that with institutionalisation and formalisation, charisma declines. But this has not been the case with Laloo Prasad.

Ram Vilas Paswan who belongs to the Scheduled Caste from North Bihar is another important leader. He Paswan is the most important Dalit leader from Bihar. He has held responsible positions in both government and party. Starting his political career as a member of Samyukta Socialist Party, he became its joint secretary in 1970. Then he joined the Lok Dal and became its General Secretary in 1974. In 1987 he became the General Secretary of the Janata Party and in 1988, the Secretary of the National Front.

Ram Vilas Paswan earned national fame in 1990, during the agitations against the implementation of the 'Mandal report', as a

firm supporter of reservations for the OBCs. He was then the Union Minister for Welfare.

Ram Vilas Pawan has formed a 'Dalit Sena' in order to project himself as the sole leader of the Dalits. 'Dalit Sena' garners support for him during and after the elections. It works more as a personal army of Paswan. He has projected himself as a national leader with secular credentials.

Paswan holds importance in the Janata Dal as a mobiliser of Dalit votes for the Janata Dal.

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22 F.G. Bailey, Politics and Social Change : Orissa, 1959 (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 146.

23 Based on Ninth Lok Sabha 'Who's Who' published by the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

24 Janata Dal had 31 members from Bihar in the ninth Lok Sabha when Laloo Prasad resigned his seat to become the Chief Minister, it was occupied by another JD member after the by-election. Hence total figure is 32.

25 The percentage of population engaged in agriculture was 80.23% in 1961 and 82.36% in 1991; A.N. Sharma, "Political Economy of Poverty in Bihar", Economic and Political Weekly, 14-21 October 1995, p. 2589.

26 Based on Tenth Lok Sabha, 'Who's Who' published by the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

27 Although Janata Dal had 32 members, profile of only 31 members find mention in the 'who's who' because Patna by-election which was countermanded was held later on. Janata won this election and thus its total tally went to 32.

28 Based on short-biographical sketch of members in Tenth Assembly released by the Assembly Secretariat.

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CHAPTER III

JANATA DAL AND ELECTIONS

Elections have played a revolutionary role in India. An apathetic and relatively apoliticised society has become highly politically conscious and assertive.¹ Voters have become demanding. Their demand is not only economic but also higher social status.

Elections in India, as else where in the world, is fought on a number of issues. Ideology, particular interests, ethnicity-religion-caste etc. policy, welfare and development are some of the major issues that come up during elections.

The voter's choice may be based on a dominant factor like caste, community or class, but the vote is never the result of "any one" 'exclusive' factor. Many considerations operate on a voter's choice.² For the analytical purpose in this chapter, the dominant factor has been analysed for the 10th and 11th Assembly elections of 1990 and 1995.

I

The 1990 Assembly elections were held in the background of the Janata Dal victory in the 1989 elections to the Lok Sabha. It seemed to political observers that the Janata Dal was certain to win the elections.

The major issues of this election were those similar to the Lok Sabha polls. Bofors issue and corruption at high places were still the main issues. Waiving off loans of the farmers was another issue. But these were the issues during Lok Sabha polls too. There was no exclusive issue for this assembly election. Indu Bharti writes in a similar vein that "This was an issueless election, unlike the Lok Sabha polls. It was largely the personal influence of the candidates, caste and communal loyalties and the violence which decided the outcome."³

V.P. Singh was the chief mobiliser for the Janata Dal. Others were Ram Vilas Paswan, Sharad Yadav, Devi Lal, Chandrasekhar, Laloo Prasad and Nitish Kumar. V.P. Singh also campaigned for the CPI & CPM candidates.⁴ The Janata Dal wanted to have an electoral seats adjustment as it had in the Lok Sabha elections. But BJP refused and contested on its own in 240 constituencies. Hence, the Congress(I) was not routed as expected. This was an election where the chief contestants were from either the Congress or the opposition.⁵

The Anti-Congress sentiment was waning after the Lok Sabha elections.⁶ In fact there was an emergence of an anti-JD mood in some sections of the electorate which benefitted the Congress (I). Indu Bharti estimates that the JD had given tickets to around 70

dubious characters, some of whom were known hardened criminals and some retired bureaucrats with cases of corruption pending against them.⁷

The Janata Dal contested on 267 seats and it won on 122 seats. It got 25.71 per cent of the total valid votes polled.⁸ The breaking up of the Congress' Social Coalition and the unity of opposition parties was the deciding factor at the elections. The Congress had its base substantially weakened by the desertion of Muslims, Rajputs, backward castes and a substantial section of Harijans. Its state level leaders proved to be out of touch with ground realities or perhaps their own narrow class interests had blinded them so much that they could not observe them in all their intricacies and grasp their significance and implications. Jagannath Mishra had tried to build his own cult. Mishra had no concrete policies and programmes to tackle the socio-economic realities. An analysis of his own performance as the chief minister and his speeches as the leader of the Jan Vikas Manch testifies the same. The celebration of 'Vidyapati Parva' and the constitution of Chetana Samitis in various parts of the state are viewed by backward castes as an effort to strengthen the cultural dimension of Brahmanical domination.⁹ In this way, the process of alienation of various societal segments had started even during the Congress regime. The Congress, due to its structural

weaknesses, could not cater to the demands of the masses. People were looking for other alternatives to the Congress which could satisfy their needs.

The Muslims, an important segment of the Congress coalition, got alienated from it due to three factors. One was the Congress government allowing the Ramshila Pujan at Ayodhya in 1989. Second, due to the government's stand taken in the Shah Bano case, the section of progressive Muslims questioned the secular credentials of the Congress. They felt that the Congress was yielding to the pressures of the orthodox clerical order of Islam. And third, the history of communal riots in Bihar and the inability of successive Congress governments to stop the carnage. The latest in the series being the Bhagalpur riots of 1989. In this carnage, the hands of many senior Congressmen were suspected. These were enough reasons for the Muslim community to look for other parties that would assure their safety. They, therefore, voted for the JD-Communist alliance.

The Rajputs had hitched their wagon to the Janata Dal because of V.P. Singh. They ditched the Congress(I) notwithstanding Chandrasekhar Singh and Satyendra Narayan Singh remaining in its fold.¹⁰ Seventeen Rajputs won on the JD tickets as against twelve on the Congress(I) tickets.

Similarly, the Harijans also broke off from Congress' Coalition. Twenty three Harijans were elected on the Janata Dal ticket while only seven of them were elected on the Congress' ticket in the Tenth Vidhan Sabha. Moreover, Harijans now came out to vote in the elections as against earlier practice of being prevented from voting.¹¹

Thus, the Backward-Muslim-Rajput-Harijan social coalition along with VP's anti-corruption wave was instrumental in JD's victory.

II

When Laloo Prasad became the chief minister, there were doubts from almost all quarters that he would not complete his five year term. But not only did the Janata Dal government of Laloo Prasad complete its full term, it again bounced back to power with even greater majority which he had in the Tenth Assembly. The 1995 Assembly elections were clearly between pro and anti-Laloo Prasad fronts.¹²

The pattern of ticket distribution in Janata Dal reveals that it was heavily weighted in favour of the backward castes. In order to keep its eleven per per cent Yadav votes intact, it fielded 72 Yadav candidates in the electoral fray. It also fielded 12 Kurmi, 19 Koeri, 11 Vaishya, 22 Rajputs, 10 Bhumihars, 33 Scheduled Castes and 26

Scheduled tribe candidates. Among the candidates are 33 Muslims and six women.¹³

As against this, the Samata Party fielded 42 Kurmis, 34 Koeris, 26 Rajputs, 22 Bhumihar s, 15 Brahmins, 11 Yadavs, five Kayasthas, 15 Vaishya and 38 OBCs, 39 Muslims and 10 women candidates.¹⁴ The Congress (I) fielded 39 Brahmins, 44 Bhumihars, 43 Rajputs, 35 Yadavs, 77 other and most backward castes, 41 Muslims and 16 women candidates. The BJP had only three Muslims and 14 women candidates in the electoral fray. The Congress' and the BJP's list shows heavy representation of upper castes.¹⁵

The Janata Dal was thus banking on the Muslim-Yadav-Dalit combination for electoral victory. Certain other most backward castes were also with it. Among the forward castes, the Rajputs were with the Janata Dal.

Though Janata Dal claims to be a party of the poor and the downtrodden, the issue of land reforms did not figure in its manifesto. Following the populist line of NTR's Rs. 2 per kg. rice for the poor, which saw him in the saddle of the government, the Janata Dal promised two saris and two dhotis for each family on a subsidised rate of

Rs. 15 each, blankets and woollens to families below the poverty line and to turn every hut into a brick-house over the next five years. For

women, the party promised free education, employment for rural women and the dismissal of government servants who torture women for dowry. To Muslims, the Janata Dal promised employment to one member from each family. Every secondary school was to have provision for Urdu teaching and a branch of the Urdu Academy to be set up at Ranchi. It also promised Urdu tele-printer services to all registered Urdu newspapers at government's expense. The party promised pension and housing facility for journalists as well as berths in the legislative council for some of them. For businessmen, the Janata Dal promised to dilute the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and the formation of a special cell to look into the grievances of the business classes. The slogan of the party for the elections was "Roti-Kapada aur Makan/Sabko Shiksha, Sabko Samman".¹⁶

As the manifesto of all parties in India at the time of election promises everything under the sun, the JD manifesto was also no different. There has been a lot many number of populist pronouncements. But on the vital questions of state's politics like land reforms, Panchayati Raj, right to work, right to information, corruption at high places, worsening law and order situation etc., the manifesto is silent. This shows the dubious intentions of the party.

Farmers, women, Muslims and poor and downtrodden have been the main target of the Janata Dal manifesto.

For the elections, the Janata Dal reached an electoral understanding with the CPI, the CPM and the MCC. The CPI(M-L) and the JMM(S) had an agreement with the newly formed Samata Party. The Janata Dal contested 258 seats, leaving 52 for CPI, 13 for CPM and six for MCC. But the CPM contesting 16 seats had 'friendly contest' with JD in three assembly constituencies - Baghmara, Gomiao and Jugsalai.

In Bihar, communists have a strong support base among the Scheduled Castes, most of whom are landless labourers. They constitute 14.6 per cent of the total population of Bihar.¹⁷ Janata Dal also wanted to have a base among this social constituency. In 1990 assembly elections, both the Communists and the Janata Dal had an electoral understanding. In the five years of the Janata Dal rule, it was able to make inroads into this social constituency. Hence, it was in the interest of both the Communists and the Janata Dal to reach an electoral understanding so that both of them could gain at the elections.¹⁸

Chief Minister Laloo Prasad was the chief mobiliser for the party at the elections. He staked his personal charisma at the elections. The election was a veritable referendum for his

government.¹⁹ The opposition's strategy was to concentrate its fire against the chief minister. It suited the game plan of a man (Laloo Prasad) who ran high in image building and low in performance. The targeting of an individual enemy was in a way a grudging recognition on their part of the pre-eminent role of Laloo Prasad in Bihar politics. A number of consequences followed from such a strategy. First, the voters looked around to see whether a more charismatic leader than Laloo Prasad was on the horizon. They found none. Secondly, it robbed the opposition parties of their distinct colour and all of them got clubbed together in the public mind as just 'anti-Laloo forces'. And above all, it allowed the chief minister to distract the voter's attention from crucial issues and turn the election into a referendum for judging his personal popularity.²⁰

The opposition's strategy failed in a big way. Laloo's game plan had worked. Laloo had made it a point to communicate with the poorest of the masses in the native language. His principal focus was on Muslims, Yadavs, most backward castes and scheduled castes. It was certain that Kurmis and Koeris would vote for the Samata Party. Tribals and upper castes would not vote for the Janata Dal. Laloo tried to galvanise all castes with anti-upper caste bias on a single platform. In a number of cases anti-JD caste candidates were put up to divide the upper caste votes. The anti-Laloo forces were fragmented while the pro-Laloo forces were highly polarised. He was

able to put forth the hypothesis that he symbolised anti-establishment - the high castes representing the establishment even though out of political power.²¹

The Janata Dal won the elections and it got 166 seats and 27.98 per cent of valid votes polled.²² The success was spectacular considering the non-performance of the government during its five year tenure.

There were many reasons for the victory of the Janata Dal in Bihar elections. Support of most of the backward castes and scheduled castes along with Muslims was instrumental in JD's victory. Ever since the elections were announced, it was almost certain that Yadavs and Muslims would be largely with the Janata Dal, Kurmis and Koeris with the Samata Party and that the majority of the upper castes would act tactically, according to the local situation, opting either for the Congress, BJP, BPP or whosoever was in a position to defeat the Janata Dal.²³

Ever since Laloo Prasad came to power in 1990, he started playing the Muslim-Yadav (M-Y) card to perfection. These together constitute around 25 per cent of the population of Bihar. Yadavs, the neo-rich caste voted for Laloo because of, one, caste affinity to the chief minister; two, it was this caste that had the largest share in the governance under Janata Dal regime; and three, key

positions were held by members of this caste during the 1990-1995 period.

The presence of Abdul Gafoor, Yunus Salim and Syed Shahabuddin in the Samata Party gave an indication that Muslims vote would get divided. But a pro-BJP trend in the election results of Gujarat and Maharashtra forced many voters to reconsider their choices. Muslims voted for Laloo's party for other reasons also. During his regime, there were no communal riots, except the Sitamarhi riots, in the state. Muslims felt safe during his regime. And second, it was Laloo who dared to stop the Rath Yatra undertaken by L.K. Advani. CSDS election survey reveals that the Janata Dal and its allies got 57.3 per cent of Muslim votes while the Congress, the BJP and the Samata Party could get 21.9, 3.1 and 4.4 per cent of Muslim votes respectively.²⁴

Among the backward castes, Janata Dal got 49.8 per cent votes.²⁵ Earlier writing about the elections, Sanjay Kumar wrote that "Earlier the axis of struggle used to be between forward and backward caste, but this election will witness a struggle among themselves, besides the struggle between forward and backward castes."²⁶ This does not seem to be true as only a section of the backward castes went away with the Samata Party. The CSDS data

shows that they could get only 12.5 per cent of the backward caste votes.²⁷ In fact extremely backward castes voted for the Janata Dal.

The decisive factor in the JD's victory was the overwhelming support of the rural poor. Laloo Prasad projected himself as a man rising from humble origins who could be identified by the common masses as one among themselves. An able communicator in local language, he in fact, relentlessly sought to establish his pro-poor credentials in hundreds of mass meetings across the state in the last few years. And the people, oppressed by a suffocating semi-feudal order, trusted (one) who spit venom against upper caste landed gentry. It is an altogether different matter that this 'garib' rhetoric of Laloo Prasad is mostly an eyewash and he remains a shrewd representative of the neo-rich among the backward caste. What was electorally significant is that the toiling masses in the Bihar villages for the time being accepted this man as a messiah of the poor and voted for him.²⁸

There has been a significant change in the villages in Bihar. There has been increase in human dignity for the rural poor.²⁹ In fact 'samman' (dignity) for the poor was one of the major electoral issue of the Janata Dal. Unnerved by the garib rhetoric of the chief minister the landed gentry has been forced to give up practising some of the more naked forms of semi-feudal oppression. And the resultant

sense of acquired *`ijjat* felt by the poor inspired them to throw their weight behind the chief minister.³⁰ CSDS data show that 43.8 per cent of landless labourers, 37.0 per cent of marginal farmers and 41.7 per cent of workers voted for the Janata Dal and its allies.³¹

Apart from the above mentioned reasons there were certain other factors also that ensured Janata Dal's victory. Due to constant postponement of elections, Laloo got longer spell of campaign period during which he exposed the weakness of opposition parties to provide an effective leadership and an alternative to the Janata Dal.³²

Seshan's whimsical actions apart, the election in Bihar, this time was certainly more free, fair and orderly and many voters, particularly from the weaker sections, were able to cast their votes. Since the Janata Dal had greater support base among the people of this section, a larger turn over figures from amongst the poorest sections of the society automatically went in Janata Dal's favour.³³

All these factors combined to help in the victory of the Janata Dal at the 1995 Assembly elections.

NOTES

1. C.P. Bhambhri, Indian Politics since Independence (New Delhi: Shipra, 1994), p. 57

2Ibid., p. 65

3Indu Bharti, "Bihar Ballot : Expected outcome" in EPW, 24 March 1990, p. 597.

4Ibid.

5Mishra and Pandey, 1996, op. cit., p. 378.

6Maya (Allahabad), March 1997.

7Indu Bharti, 1990, op. cit., p. 595.

8Election Commission data book, 1992.

9Mishra and Pandey, 1996; op. cit., pp. 378-9.

10 Ibid., p. 378.

11 Writing about 1989 Lok Sabha elections, Indu Bharti reports from Bihar: "But more than the seats won or the votes polled, what is important is that hundreds of thousands of Dalits were able to cast their votes for the first time, resisting all threats to their lives. This has given them a new izzat and, in the process, the already declining feudal order in Bihar has been given another severe jolt." Indu Bharti, "Bihar : Dalits Gain New Izzat" (dignity), EPW, VOL. 25, Nos. 18-19, 5-12 May 1990, p. 981.

12 A.K. Roy, "Election and Bihar's Fractured Polity", EPW, 18-25 February 1995, p. 359.

13 Sanjay Kumar, "Bihar Elections : Confused Scenario", Secular Democracy, March 1995, p. 35.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

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24 V.B. Singh, "Class Action : Bihar Survey reveals a Polarised State", Frontline, 8 June 1995, p. 101.

25 Ibid.

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27 V.B. Singh, op. cit., p. 101.

28 Tilak D. Gupta, op. cit., p. 790.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., p. 790; for more on the support of rural poor for the Laloo Prasad, see India Today, 30 April 1995 issue.

31 V.B. Singh, op. cit., p. 101.

32 V.B. Singh, Support Bases of Political Parties : A Study of Bihar Elections, 1995. The paper was presented at the national seminar on Assembly election and their political implication organised by the ICSSR in May 1995, p. 9.

33 Ibid., p. 8.

CONCLUSIONS

To gain an insight into the nature of a winning party in a backward state, a micro-analysis has been done. By studying Janata Dal, inferences could be drawn not only about the nature of the Janata Dal but also about the future patterns of parties and its interaction with other units of the party system. But first some concluding remarks about the Janata Dal.

I

Janata Dal was formed due to the mobilisation of the backward castes and their social coalition with the Muslims and the Rajputs. Mobilisation of social groups itself was due to contest for power and resources. Like the Congress Party, Janata Dal is also an umbrella party having within its fold many social groups. One of the major reasons for consolidation of the Janata Dal base was the anti-forward caste plank which the party had adopted.

Janata Dal is, more or less, the continuation of old socialist forces. Many leaders of 'Socialist Party', 'Praja Socialist Party' are in the Janata Dal. After the breakup of the Janata Party in 1979, some of the splinter groups of the party formed the Janata Dal in 1989. Janata Dal also had some defectors from the Congress. The presence of recognised leaders in the Janata Dal, which came up on

an alternative to the Congress, gave it immediate acceptance among the public.

The merger of Lok Dal into the Janata Dal signify that the party has a base among the neo-rich peasantry class. Similarly the merger of Janata Party into the Janata Dal shows that the Party has a Socialist outlook of the Lohia and JP type. The presence of leaders like V.P. Singh, Arun Nehru, V.C. Shukla, Arif Mohammad Khan etc. in the Janata Dal made it clear from the very beginning that on the crucial socio-economic issues, the party's stand would be similar to that of the Congress(I).

The Janata Dal leadership analysis shows it has been drawn from among people following modern professions like teaching, practising law, etc. Though its support base consists largely of the peasantry, those involved in agriculture do not have much foothold in the top echelons of the Party.

Relatively younger members in the legislature indicate that the party has replaced the old and entrenched leaders. The party is led by people who are educated and have qualifications more than graduation.

The Janata Dal in Bihar represents a unique case where the collective leadership of the party has been replaced by a charismatic leader. Initially, when Janata Dal came to power in Bihar,

there was collective leadership. But slowly, the Chief Minister Laloo Prasad started taking important both governmental and organisational decisions and developed a personality cult through various populist measures, gestures and rhetorics. With the rise of a charismatic leader, the inner democracy of the party was the first casualty. It has been largely due to the charismatic personality of the chief minister, that the party has won elections in Bihar. He has projected himself as the 'messiah' of the downtrodden.

A deeper analysis of his seven year reign, however, would show that he is a typical representative of the neo-rich Yadavs and is basically a caste leader. In this sense he is not different from the earlier chief ministers of Bihar. He has been successful in carving out a solid support base among the Muslims and Yadavs of Bihar.

The other important Janata Dal leader in Bihar, Ram Vilas Paswan has an independent constituency among the Dalits. But Laloo Prasad has managed to have a sizeable amount of support from this social category. Therefore, the clash between the two leaders is imminent.

An analysis of electoral issues taken up by the Janata Dal during the two assembly elections in 1990 and 1993, shows that the party aims at mobilizing the backward castes, dalits and the Muslims. Election results and election analysis shows that except for

some sections of neo-rich backward castes (i.e. the Kurmis and the Koeris), the targeted group have supported the party during elections. Yadavs and the Muslims are the firm supporters of the Party. Election results also testify the fact that the party is being led by the Yadavs. The social composition of the 10th and 11th assembly aptly proves this point. The Janata Dal has won elections due to the appeal its social policy has on the downtrodden section of the society. The logic of economic performance determining election results does not hold true for both Assembly Elections.

II

The question which arises after the discussion in Chapters I, II and III is which theory of party dealt in the Introduction, fits the Janata Dal. To begin with, Lenin's theory does not fit the Janata Dal. Lenin does not suppose a mass party which Janata Dal is. Lenin's views on professional and committed revolutionaries also do not find favour while analysing the Janata Dal. Lenin's idea that the party is a vanguard of the proletariat, does not apply to the Janata Dal because the Janata Dal, in final analysis, represents the interests of the landed neo-rich kulaks. The decision making process of the Janata Dal, to some extent, follows Lenin's ideas on democratic centralism. In fact, Lenin's views on party applies to some of the

extremist communist organisations in India. No other party of India fits in Lenin's model.

Robert Michaels views that in party bureaucracy, iron law of oligarchy works. But, the presence of so many factions in the Janata Dal, and constant splits and mergers, makes Michael's theory redundant, because oligarchy never fight among themselves to lose power.

Janata Dal fits, in Duverger's categorisation, as branch party. It is leader oriented party, not ideology oriented. The internal structure of the party was initially democratic but later on it turned autocratic. Instead of widening of party oligarchy, which Duverger says, takes place due to election, there has been a narrowing of oligarchy. Election has in fact brought about splits in the party. Duverger's view that parties in due course of time become a very compact and disciplined does not hold true for the Janata Dal.

Janata Dal could be characterised as a charismatic-leader oriented party. Initially, at the national level, V.P. Singh became a rallying point of support and allegiance for a party. There was no such leader at the state level in Bihar. But after about a year, Laloo Prasad emerged as the charismatic leader of the party in Bihar.

The policies adopted by the Janata Dal show that on the ideological spectrum, it lies 'left of the centre'.

III

The mobilisation and the consequent consolidation of backward castes has resulted in a sort of political instability. The SVD and the Janata experiment proves this point. In Uttar Pradesh, the independent mobilisation of the scheduled castes by the BSP has led to a fresh period of political instability. Presently in Bihar, Scheduled Castes are junior partner in the Janata Dal's social coalition. Some degree of independent mobilisation of Scheduled Castes has taken place, on the issue of land distribution, by the communists. But major communist parties in Bihar are aligned with Janata Dal, as its junior electoral alliance partner. Independent mobilisation of scheduled castes, on a large scale (of the type in UP) may unleash a fresh period of political instability in Bihar. That period would be marked by too frequent making and breaking of coalitions unless an equilibrium is reached.

This stage of equilibrium would be marked by, to use Sartori's term, 'bio-polarity'. There would be two dominant parties, and many other smaller partners aligned to the dominant parties, as is the case in Kerala. For coming immediate years, the two dominant parties would be Janata Dal and the BJP. I maintain that, later on, it would be 'left of centre' representing the poor and 'right of centre' representing the rich.

Bihar is going to provide a very interesting pattern of interactions among the political parties. And being the second most populous state, it will have its repercussions if not in the rest of India, then at least in the 'Hindi Heartland'.

Epilogue

The Janata Dal has faced another major split on July 5, 1997. This is the fourth major split in the party since its formation. There have been other minor splits in the party. The latest split is unique in the sense that it has been done by the party president Laloo Prasad himself. He broke off from the party and formed a new outfit, the Rastriya Janata Dal (RJD). Barring a few members, most of the Bihar unit have sided with him.

A question that immediately comes to mind is as to why so many splits take place in the Janata Dal?

The split in Janata Dal follows Hatchek's law. The Janata Dal came with particular principles and programmes. But in due course of time, particular interests dominated over principles. Polarisation with the party along various interests took place and then the party split.

The Janata Dal, like the Congress is also a conglomerate of various factions. But the Congress, has strong 'high command' to resolve the factional conflicts and accommodate the interests of

various factions, similar 'high command' is absent in the Janata Dal. The lack of dispute resolving mechanism in the party organisation forces the internal differences of the party to the breaking point. In fact, 'regional satraps' are more dominant and have greater political clout than the central leaders of the Janata Dal. Most of the central (national) leaders of the Janata Dal are dependent on state party bosses for electoral victory. In Congress, weak 'high command' has resulted in a split. The 'high command' was the 'overarching' leadership of a particular leader.

Janata Dal was formed after the merger of four parties. Instead of acquiring a new identity, all parties tried to retain their old identities which has resulted in lack of unity among the party members and different constituents held different views. Such views, at times, were diametrically opposite. This added to the already brewing dissension in the party.

The Janata Dal is a coalition of various social groups. There is competition among these groups to control the party which is more intense between different upwardly mobile social groups. This competition leads to the split in the party when one group feels that within the Janata Dal its interests could not be served any more.

Most of the leaders in Janata Dal are of almost equal stature having a social constituency of their own and they wanted to maximise their interest. When the leaders felt that their interest could no longer be served within the Janata Dal or when they felt sidelined, split was made along with their followers.

Each faction of the party is representative of a particular social group. Competition arise in the party between factions in order to broaden its social base. When a particular faction feels that by being the party, its social base may erode, it splits from the party.

Factions within the party are also representatives of the various socio-economic interests. The competition for interests leads to both competition and opposition within the party. When a faction feels strong enough, it tries to capture the party organisation. But when it fails in its attempts, it splits the party.

The Janata Dal in Bihar, which has been analysed in the dissertation, is now Rastriya Janata Dal. The social base of Rastriya Janata Dal is same as the Janata Dal. In fact the social groups which supported the Janata Dal in Bihar, have gone with the RJD. It is because of the fact that the support base of Janata Dal in Bihar is almost congruent with the support base of Laloo Prasad. Hence those people who support Laloo Prasad would, support any of the political outfit headed by Laloo Prasad.

Laloo Prasad felt that he was being marginalised in the party by the central leaders due to his alleged role in fodder scam. He sensed that his support base was intact, and would not get eroded due to corruption charges. Therefore, he felt that split would not alter his support base and hence it was in his interest to split from the Janata Dal.

Another factor was the personality clash between various leaders. Laloo could not tolerate Sharad, who till yesterday was his protege, becoming party president after defeating him.

These two reasons were instrumental in the latest split in Janata Dal.

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