

Elections in Karnataka

The Bogus of Democracy

The competition and gamble for power among the parties of ruling classes that assumed most emotional and dramatic form and twists and turns has, at least, come to an end.

The Congress and JDS combine, has emerged victorious in this game. It has hailed it as a great victory for justice, democracy and Constitution. It showered praise profusely on the Supreme Court for its timely and helpful intervention in Karnataka crisis.

The BJP leadership has persisted in the claim that, as a single largest party in Karnataka Assembly, it alone had the moral right to form the Government. It called the Congress – JDS combine as immoral.

The people and democratic forces in our country have witnessed the entire disgusting drama from the day of election results in Karnataka to the enactment of its last scene.

After the elections, the BJP was faced with only one problem: How to hike 104 to 111? To realise this, it must rob 7 MLAs from Congress and JDS. There is no method that BJP leadership has not used. It offered bulky allurements; used pressures and threats; spread rumours; attempted to steal the MLAs and contemplated plans to prevent some from reaching the Assembly. The irrepressible hunger for power and hypertension it experienced till the last moment must be seen but cannot be depicted in words.

The leaders of Congress – JDS combine too cannot be said to have enjoyed peace. They had to hide the 'majority' outside the reach of the enemy; they were not 100 per cent sure that all goes well till the end. No doubt, they moved with exceptional fastness and plan. But the last minute changes in the arithmetic can land them in a disastrous defeat.

The formation of a government under the Indian Constitution and democracy had turned into a big farce. The fact that parties competing for power dealt the elected members as goods which can be bought or sold and which can be kept in lockers and taken when needed provide a glimpse of the kind of democracy we have. The elections in our country for legislative bodies are providing the occasions and platforms for the parties of the ruling classes to decide which of them can climb the seat of power. All these parties are committed to serve the comprador bourgeois – landlord classes and imperialism. But they don't spell out this fact to the people. During the elections, they engage the people with the talk about development and welfare, etc. They compete in showering immediate benefits and promises to the people. They use caste, religion and region, etc. to rouse emotions, prejudices as well as to divert the people from the real issues and to reap votes. They seek to corrupt the people by throwing money and gifts. These parties competing for power assure the imperialists and their compradors that their interests are served uninterruptedly notwithstanding the defeat or victory of one of them in the elections.

In Karnataka, BJP and JDS have competed for power. BJP, in power at the centre, is committed to serve imperialism, comprador bourgeois-landlord classes. It is aggressively pursuing Hindu communalism as a mask to these policies and also as a tool to divert and divide the people. In Karnataka BJP had proved itself as another name for corruption. It is a force behind those who are responsible for the brutal murder of democratic intellectuals like Kalburgi and Lankesh. It took the victory in Karnataka as a challenge and hoped that it may halt its declining influence at the all India level. So, Narendra Modi and other central leaders had spent best of their energies and used lowest possible techniques of propaganda to influence the voters. On its part, the Congress took the victory in Karnataka elections as a step towards recovery at an all India level. It freely used the casteist and religious feelings and promises to influence the voters. Its move to accord Lingayats a status of separate religion was a part of its moves to utilise the religion to reap the votes. Its talk that Congress is opposed to BJP's Hindu communalism and at the same time, claim for an 'appropriate share' of

Hindu votes as an adherent and protector of Hindu religion is also a part of it. The JDS is based on certain castes and religious communities. As a Party that was in power in Karnataka at one time, it is known for its corrupt and anti-people policies.

Sooner the election results were announced the Congress and JDS have entered into an alliance and pushed the BJP into a disadvantageous position.

BJP suffering a defeat in its dirty tactics in Karnataka had, no doubt, inflicted a setback to BJP's drive for power at all India level. Many of those in the country who oppose Hindu communalism and anti-democratic policies aggressively pursued by the BJP, its Sangh Parivar and BJP-led regimes in the country must be feeling satisfied to an extent by it. But they also have many questions to ponder over. Are the victories or defeats in elections in India being decided by democratic methods? Are the people utilising their democratic rights freely and consciously? Are those competing for power allowing the people to utilise their rights? Are these victories or defeats putting an end to the policies of sell out to imperialism and the policies of exploitation? Has the corruption which had grown into a monstrous demon with all the backing and collusion of the parties of ruling classes and their regimes received a powerful blow? Any attempt on the part of democratic forces to play down or evade these questions will only seriously harm the urges and aspirations of the exploited and oppressed masses of our people for an independent and democratic India. It is our task to see that our people are not allowed to be used by the exploiting classes and their parties as sacrificial goats in the competition and gamble for power by the exploiting ruling classes and their parties. Guiding, organising and leading the people along a correct path are need of the hour. This is what Karnataka teaches us.
