

**Monograph 02/2005**

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## SOCIO-ECONOMIC BASE OF POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN BIHAR AND MADHYA PRADESH : A HISTORICAL EVALUATION

### Introduction

From the meeting to elect the leader of the Congress Legislative Party immediately after the resounding victory in the assembly election in 1993, the strongman of Madhya Pradesh Congress Party, Arjun Singh had walked out in protest, when his political protégée, Digvijay Singh, the then President of the state party got elected instead of Subhash Yadav <sup>1</sup>, the emerging middle caste leader of the province, whose name he had proposed for the leadership. His much publicized dramatic walkout had then become part of the folklore of socio-electoral engineering in one the major states of the Indian union. Arjun's detractors believed that his action was no more than symbolic; it was really a display of an ingenuine desire to supposedly forge inclusion of the backwards in his strategic political game. How can he jettison his own protégée and blue-blooded relation from his own clan? After all, he was a product of Sanjay Gandhi's politics <sup>2</sup> which pitchforked him into the center stage of Madhya Pradesh politics, as a strategy to broaden the coalition of *Brahmin, Muslim* and Dalit by including the *Rajputs* in the Congress fold. On the other hand, some other group of detractors believed that Arjun's action was a 'cloak and dagger' policy, in the expected line of court intrigues, to fetter a fellow *Rajput* who could emerge as an alternative centre of political power in the state.

It will be better to leave in the realm of speculation, whether Arjun's move was nauseating narrow factional action or political statesmanship for social inclusion. Nevertheless, if he had opted for the latter strategy, it could not have indicated only his personal predilection. Possibly, Congress Party was taking belated cognizance of the upward mobility of the politically deprived, after the rise of Laloo Prasad in Bihar and emergence of Mulayam Singh Yadav <sup>3</sup> and Mayawati <sup>4</sup> Uttar Pradesh, the neighbouring states of the Hindi Heartland. Any form of social churning there had its direct effect on the Madhya Pradesh. The social exclusion and consequent political decline of Congress Party could be revealed by the fact that, if Rajiv Gandhi <sup>5</sup> were not assassinated in the midway of the parliamentary poll, the electoral victory of the Party would have eluded even in 1991. Congress Party, to compensate for its depleting social base, could not have replicated BJP though it was not totally averse to promote 'soft' communalism. In its effort to steal opportunistically the communal thunder, after the 'Operation – Blue Star' <sup>6</sup>, the Congress Party further alienated the minority religions and secular constituency. Indira Gandhi's <sup>7</sup> assassination gave plebiscitary twist to the 1984 parliamentary election; in the process many of the emerging ground realities were papered over. For the first time since its establishment, Congress Party had to cope with the twin absence of a charismatic leader and a cohesive social agenda to deal with electoral compulsions in nineties. Possibly Arjun Singh's strategy to bring Subhash Yadav was a counter move of real politic to resurrect the depleting base of the Congress in the Hindi Heartland. Gone were those days when the inclusion of the backward classes (OBC) could be ensured by merely waiving user charges for state services, on a variety of items including electricity.<sup>8</sup> The OBCs constitute the largest and one among the best-organized voting constituency in most states. In the post 'green revolution' period, the Indian state only took cognizance of adverse terms of trade between industry and agriculture and not the political trade off with the emerging classes. The former cognizance would have involved financial profligacy and the later would have involved sharing the political power. The Indian state opted for the former.<sup>9</sup> In Madhya Pradesh, with low water table the power subsidy was considerable. After continuation of this policy for almost two decades, the state subsidy was not sufficient sop to barter OBC votes. They possibly wanted to be in the centre stage of power. Arjun's strategy signaled the cognizance of the OBC reality, which Digvijay Singh failed to realize. His pre-election sop of free electricity, in the current state election of 2003, failed to ensure their bulk support. Digvijay Singh, once

groomed in the ideology-free school of Rajiv Gandhi and Sam Pitroda <sup>10</sup>, substituted hard political strategy with a ‘techno-bureaucratic’ <sup>11</sup> mission mode alternative with handful of trusted civil servants <sup>12</sup>. In fact, the brilliant iconization of Digvijay Singh by his civil servant confidants as a “Reform Messiah” proved to be his electoral Achilles hill. On the other hand, in the absence of authentic democratization of the polity and non-inclusion of the backwards, with Uma Bharti <sup>13</sup> at the helm, BJP ensured an ‘organic’ leader of OBC for the state, which proved to be more palatable electoral proposition. Guided by same consideration, after the last assembly election in 1998, the Congress Party in Rajasthan ignored the entrenched feudal interest and opted for a backward caste leader as the Chief Minister of the state, and a tribal <sup>14</sup> was elected as a leader in Chhattisgarh, overlooking the more high profile upper caste claim of Shukla <sup>15</sup> brothers. Unfortunately for the Congress, this strategy was not extended in other states of the Hindi Heartland. After the social paradigm shift in Bihar, Congress Party has never seriously attempted to reach the backward constituency and by appointing upper caste leader both for the Congress Legislative Party and the organization, it seems encroaching this space is not in its present scheme of things <sup>16</sup>. Same electoral suicidal policy was followed in Uttar Pradesh, by appointing high caste persons in both the crucial offices <sup>17</sup>.

Upsurge of backward classes, however, was not the only critical factor informing the electoral vicissitudes in India; the economic reforms, introduced in the eighties but much expansive thereafter, was yet another powerful determinant. In the absence of adequate ‘financial’ subsidy of the state and the ‘moral’ subsidy of the leader, Congress Party was voted out of power in the center in 1989. The two successive non-Congress governments that followed further messed up the economy. India had then serious problems of depleted foreign currency, external debt and massive balance of payment problem. There was a national flutter on the question of pawning of country’s gold and silver. There was a possibility of bartering India’s sovereignty to foreign taskmasters. If one prepares an epistemology of ‘crisis’ in India in the time series scale, its morphology has taken various shapes over the period. Essentially, this ‘crisis’ was around economic issues. In Indian public discussion the word ‘crisis’ is a cliché. <sup>18</sup> We are always seemed to be lurching from one crisis to another. Over and above, the Damocles sword of inflation was hanging with the possibility to shake the roots of political legitimacy of the rulers. But all these things appear to be in the distant past. With the Congress back in power in the center in 1991, the reform process was initiated in the country. Unlike the Nehruvian dream of the state directing from commanding heights <sup>19</sup>, Manmohan Singh <sup>20</sup>, the then Finance Minister, sought to redefine the relationship between the state and the market. The Indian state needed to be modernized for ‘enhanced governance capacity’. Accordingly, “there is need for a reorientation of the role of the state to enhance its capacity for governance and thereby to maximize its development impact” <sup>21</sup>. When BJP came to power in the center, it reiterated the agenda of dismantling of the state. It believed that “ability of the state to deliver results has been seriously compromised by its sheer size and innate inefficiency. India is over governed without being effectively governed. The state is doing too much of what it should not be doing and doing too little in what it should be doing” <sup>22</sup>. Economy started responding to the reform even during Congress Party’s reign. India appeared to be a happening state. Suddenly Indian economy was on the global center stage. While economy performed well according to all indicators, there was steady decline of Congress in the electoral front. Its economic and social policy led to electoral exclusion rather than inclusion. The electoral impact of BJP’s reform is yet to be tested at the macro level. Its earlier electoral rout in the state assembly election in 1998 could not be attributed to the reform strategy. Earlier ‘Kargil’ <sup>23</sup> war and later communal conflagrations, helped BJP in winning national election in 1999 and state elections in Gujarat and Goa in 2003. Both these elections had issues other than reform as dominant plebiscitary component. Thus there is growing disjunction between electoral outcome and economic policies, because of various extraneous factors.

If one goes by the macro-economic indicators<sup>24</sup>, the reform process in India has succeeded in its stated objectives. There is now prognostication about Indian economy overtaking much fancied China<sup>25</sup>. If the national economy has functioned better, what has been its implication at the spatial level? “Balanced regional development has always been one of the declared objectives of the national policy in India, and it is relevant to ask whether economic reforms have promoted this objective. India’s federal democracy is increasingly characterized by regionalisation of politics, with politics of the state level being driven by state rather than national issues, and this makes the economic performance of individual states an issue of potential electoral importance. This is particularly so because liberalization has eliminated many of the controls earlier exercised by the central governments and thereby increased the role of the state governments in many areas that are critical for economic development.”<sup>26</sup> According to Ahluwalia, the State level performance shows considerable variation in the post reform period. However, BIMARU states (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh) of the Hindi Heartland, reveals two contrasting results in the post reform period. “Bihar and Uttar Pradesh performed very poorly, growing much more slowly than the average, but the other two members of this group, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, have performed reasonably well. Rajasthan shows a deceleration in growth of GSDP compared with the 1980s, but it remained a good performer in the 1990s, growing at about the average for all states. Madhya Pradesh, on the other hand, which had grown more slowly than the average in the 1980s, accelerated significantly in the 1990s”<sup>27</sup>.

It is necessary to understand, in the backdrop of reform, the nature and content of political contest in India, and how the political parties find themselves having to cope with the new demands that are being made over the collective resources, in the name of globalisation and liberalization. The party system in India has traditionally been called upon to “generate and sustain democratic legitimacy for the governing arrangement of the state order. This the political parties do by initiating a public discourse that taps the society’s traditional concerns and values in the aid of the government arrangement; this means claiming and cranking up acceptability, respect, consent and agreement for the leaders and their policies; ... To provide governmental elite(s) at various levels, in the context of parliamentary democracy in a federal level, this means essentially putting up candidates in the electoral arena, and working for their victory; ... To calibrate and modulate the inevitable competition over allocation of societal resources — social prestige, economic gains and opportunities, political office and influence; and ... To provide reasonable hope about individual and group mobility, from fringe to centre, from the periphery to the Centre. This means ensuring credible rules of games — formal and informal — in which dissent, dissatisfaction, disputes, distrust, disagreements and differences would get addressed.”<sup>28</sup> Earlier state centric development and electoral populism could go together but now with stated dismantling of the commanding height, the political parties in India have found themselves constrained to rework these functions in the context of the demands imposed on the state order in the era of economic liberalization. This is the principal crisis the state and its political conduit, the party system are confronting now. At the pan Indian level, there are groups, outside the formal political domain, who are ready to own the reform — specially the new breed of entrepreneurs, who had not benefited from the earlier days of the ‘License – Permit Raj’ It is not always possible to put the burden of strategic economic change on the shoulder of the political executives or party machine.<sup>29</sup> While it is easy to identify the natural owner of the reform agenda at the national level, it will be difficult to find a commensurate group at the state level. Ultimately it is they who would give societal legitimacy, not only to work out regional economic strategy but also to work out an electoral winning combination. There are very few states that have pursued ‘reform’ and yet could win assembly elections. In this respect, Chandra Babu Naidu in Andhra Pradesh and S.M. Krishna of Karnataka not only showcased their reform achievement but also displayed their dexterity in winning elections. The Outlook, a national fortnightly, captured this twin achievement with the following: “Watch out, Naidu and Krishna is winning both panchayat polls and investors.”<sup>30</sup> In both the states, a social base exists to own the reform. Even

before the initiation of the Central Government initiated reform, these powerful regional economic groups were clamoring for federal market structure autonomy, to give space to the regional bourgeoisie. And in case of entrepreneurial bottlenecks, the State Government resorted to 'stealth' in the words of Rob Jenkins to ensure economic sovereignty and decentralising<sup>31</sup>. In Madhya Pradesh, the absence of a far reaching incentive structure or a powerful group of regional capitalist could not act as a shock absorber of reform or electoral lubricant in the assembly election. In Bihar, the reform has been attempted inadvertently. While the polity has been democratized, the state structure itself is getting collapsed. Over and above, the historical absence of an incentive structure has failed to create a social base for reform that is so expected in the modern construction of the state. Incidentally, the regional enclaves in both the states where some state initiated incentive structure was developed, were carved out — Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand from Bihar the area of our study. The most negative economic trend in India has been the persistence of poverty creating a great social divide on the one hand, and slower growth of poorer regions of the country creating a geographical divide on the other. This trend, as might be expected, has led the state governments in the poorer regions of the country to experience the worst manifestations of the national crisis. Of the eighteen major Indian states, six are generally classified as low income ones — Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (all part of the Hindi-speaking belt) along with Orissa and Assam (both in the east). Incidentally, the four former states are derisively referred as BIMARU (collecting the initial letters of the names of those states, which, by a coincidence means 'sick' in Hindi). In terms of both natural endowments and socio-political history, these states are substantially dissimilar and so have been the responses of the corresponding state governments to their own economic malaise. Together, however, they provide a coherent canvas for studying the tendencies and performances of (near) crisis-ridden states.

It would certainly have been rewarding to analyse the economic (non-)developments in each one of these states, but two of them, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, present a sharp contrast that cannot escape the attention of any inquisitive mind. Bihar stands at one end of the spectrum where the development process has been most tardy and getting to be increasingly so in recent years; whereas Madhya Pradesh, after moving equally slowly during the initial years like Bihar, has at least shown some social and economic buoyancy in the last decade or so. A comparative study of these two states is, therefore, quite convenient. Among other perspectives that reinforce the rationale for such a study is that both of them are from the Hindi-heartland region which, for historical reasons, displays certain common socio-political characteristics, particularly the absence of a sub-national identity. One should also remember that, in terms of political trends, the two states have distinct patterns, which stretch back to distant as well as the recent past. In the pre-independence era, Madhya Pradesh was not even a single political entity, and a large part of it was composed of semi-sovereign princely states; in contrast, Bihar had a vibrant political life, pulsating around the freedom struggle. After independence, the political trends in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh were much the same during the Pre-sixties (when the hegemony of the Congress was a national phenomenon). Since then, after a fairly long period of fluid political situations, the earlier hegemony of the Congress has been replaced by varying political parties and coalitions in different states of India, mainly dictated by their respective political histories. By the end of the eighties, therefore, while the political field in Bihar came to be dominated by a completely new social group, the so called backward castes, replacing the upper castes, Congress had adequately reorganised its social base in Madhya Pradesh so as to retain the upper caste dominance but this time with a coalition embracing some social groups or castes excluded earlier. In both the states, the emerging political power was undoubtedly more democratic than before, but the process and the reach of democratisation were dissimilar. Hopefully, these contrasting political developments provide an opportunity to study the intertwining of political and economic trends in a crisis situation.

The crisis in India in general, and that in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh in particular, has two important dimensions — first, the absence of economic development and the resultant poverty; and second, a yet to be completed process of nation formation as indicated by various social antagonisms, particularly the emergence of a strong religion-politics nexus. Surprisingly, India has landed herself in this position in spite of reasonably fulfilling the condition of development as prescribed by liberals or neo-liberals — active political process accompanied by parliamentary democracy, social movements that generate countervailing forces to the dismay of the existing elites and a reasonable amount of social, economic and human capital. These conditions are reasonably met not only in the wider context of India, but even in the two relatively backward states — Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. So to explain the inadequate response of the Indian state to a situation of crisis or even varying responses of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, one has to move beyond the concept of liberalism and identify additional conditions that ensure appropriate and adequate response of the state in a crisis situation. One of the important objectives of the present study is to identify those additional conditions in the specific context of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.<sup>32</sup>

### **Social Determinants of Backwardness**

The neo-classical economics and rational choice theory assume that each individual is a rationally self-interested utility maximizing agent<sup>33</sup>. In this way, individual is supported in pursuing private profits and the collection of individual good in turn contribute to public or societal good. The society oscillates around the individual, and the notion of individual action (i.e. private profit seeking) in the neo-classical backdrop yields a fairly complete formula for government economic policies. This formula, then, provides a basis for assessing the quality of governance for the management of any particular economy and for nurturing the economy for affecting long term changes. In the context of Bihar, it is the absence of such an incentive (profit) structure, either individual or societal, that is proving to be detrimental for development, if not a complete waterloo for government policies. In Madhya Pradesh too, the incentive structure is not at all pervading and it is further complicated by the lack of geographical homogeneity. Normally, the incentive structure in the society is scripted through either social reform or renaissance movement, which in turn trigger agricultural or industrial revolution. After all, ‘Spinning Jenny’<sup>34</sup> was invented almost century ago before the society with ‘an adequate incentive structure’ could actually utilize this revolutionary invention for spinning, leading to industrial revolution in England. Accumulation in a society will take place in any case, as long as it is producing surplus. But the nature and character of this accumulation, whether buccaneering or legitimate, is decided by the incentive structure. The foundation of the incentive structure in turn is dependent on who exercises the intellectual, moral and societal legitimacy and entrepreneurship. They in turn will own the responsibility of economic paradigm shift either of reform or of development.

In case of Bihar, the incentive structure that had existed before got nearly eclipsed with the advent of England based East India Company creating Bengal Presidency in 1786 of which Bihar was a part. Being the first seat of British colonialism, it had to face no hold bare exploitation, which led to primitive accumulation. The Gangetic belt of India, which formed substantial part of the Bengal Presidency, witnessed one of the worst forms of de-industrialisation<sup>35</sup>. Not only the flourishing industries like textile, saltpeter etc., were destroyed, even the artisans and traders were exterminated. The surplus of this area, appropriated by the Company, was used not only for war of expedition, but in later years, the budget deficits of Madras and Bombay Presidency were also met from this area. By the time the Company expanded to South and Western India, there was no need for them to destroy the incentive structure that existed in those regions at that time. Thus the main actors of the indigenous incentive structure, like artisans or traders, survived the Company onslaught there. In fact, those areas had already developed incentive structure. It is believed by the nationalist historians that the textile manufacturers of Gujarat (Surat) were on the threshold of an industrial revolution<sup>36</sup>. But colonialism intervened to halt the process. So it



is not uncommon in Western and South India to see industrial houses with a few centuries of uninterrupted business. On the contrary, in Eastern India, the trading house of *Subarnabanik* based in Calcutta, in spite of their widespread network of trade in East and Far East, went into oblivion due to Company machinations. In the South again, the Madras based *Chettiar*, who functioned almost in the same geographical domain went from strength to strength with British benevolence. After independence, they controlled substantial financial resources and exercised considerable political clout. Their moment of glory could be visible when Mr. Chidambaram, from their rank, rose to become the Finance Minister of India. Eclipse of powerful trading community in Calcutta, who could compete nationally and internationally, had powerful impact in the suburbs of Eastern India. Unlike in Western India, the local trading castes in eastern India (the *Teli* and *Bania*) not only felt handicapped in functioning, particularly in Bihar, but a stigma got associated with their profession, with reinforcement of feudalism. In Gujarat and in many other Southern states, trading castes are held in reverence equally with the Brahmins.

The central India, its modern incarnation Madhya Pradesh, was last to be subordinated by the Britishers after vanquishing the squabbling Marathas in the early part of the nineteenth century. Their incursion there was delayed because of absence of developed enclave of productive forces, unlike in Eastern, Western and Southern India. In any case, militarily it would not have been prudent policy to make foray into relatively uncharted terrain. However, the vast forest resources of the Central India held promise of massive commercial exploitation, which they started with gusto. Its forest amount to 20 percent of the entire forest covers of India. This exploitation increased with the laying of railway lines, which began in Western India in the 1850s. The extraction of timber reached altogether new levels requiring deep inroads into the densely forested tribal territory. To fund this entire operation and to meet its administrative cost, they resorted to commercialization of agriculture to ensure enhanced land revenue. And in the absence of indigenous incentive structure, which could provide augmented revenue, they displaced the shifting agriculture practicing tribals and replacing them with more settled agricultural castes. "In the Western region, the British followed the policy of the Marathas and brought in Kunbi Patidars and Jat farmers from Gujarat and Rajasthan respectively and settled them on the tribal land."<sup>37</sup>

### **Tenorial System and Economic Incentive**

The second factor, which played pivotal role in developing incentive structure in the society, is the land tenorial system. Essentially, this system determines the right of collection of land rent, which constituted the most important source of revenue for the state's coffer before independence. There were several types of land revenue systems, which were made operational by the alien ruler. But broadly, two categories of tenorial system determined the incentive structure — one with intermediaries between the tenant and the state, and other operated directly between the state and the tenant. The tenorial structures had far reaching consequences, in the respective areas in the matter of surplus generation and capital accumulation. In the Bengal Presidency, the then Governor General Lord Cornwallis settled intermediaries permanently in 1793, known as Zamindars, between the state and the tenant. In the process, the incentive structure for 'production' for the tenant, the main generator of wealth, was aborted; on the contrary, an incentive structure for exploitation by the Zamindars got institutionalised which became part of the folklore of permanent settled area. A Report of Bihar Kishan Sabha<sup>38</sup>, a premier organization of the peasants, had identified 44 types of awabs and 'maltreatment' by the Zamindars in the Southern plain of Bihar way back in 1935 in the pre-independence period. Thus the soil of Bengal Presidency with best natural endowments (abundant ground and river water with alluvial soil) could not become the center of green revolution. In contrast, in the Ryotwari and Mahalwari area, absence of intermediaries to poach the surplus, ensured massive accumulation, in spite of relatively less fertile land. The rise of a rich peasant class at least in Ryotwari areas has probably something to do with the lack of a stratum of pure rentiers lording over them. The tenants were further protected in large part of the Ryotwari area with

legislation against transfer of land to non-agriculturist, which further tended to limit the power of the pure moneylenders over cultivators. This resulted into some rich peasants gradually entering the industrial sector at a later stage. However, their success depended on several factors — the degree of dominance of the region by the European businessman, the integration of the Indian economy in the international industrial grid, the strength of the competing indigenous capitalist groups in a particular region, the size of the internal market as determined by productivity of the land, the degree of colonial exploitation and the degree of poverty or degradation of the lower income groups. In the permanent settled area, the peasant proprietor class could not emerge strongly to enter into business; here the moneylenders and Zamindars would generally skim off surplus of the peasantry to increase their wealth. Moreover, entering into business was difficult as the Europeans were already entrenched there<sup>39</sup>.

Further, the incentive structure of a given area is sutured by the investment pattern, which in turn further develops the productive forces in a given area. The British Government felt that there is no need for investment in the Permanent Settled area, as the land revenue there did not depend directly or indirectly on the prosperity of the peasant. The Zamindars, therefore, became completely divorced from any interest in the improvement of agricultural productivity or of the condition of the peasantry in their region. This resulted into decay of minor irrigation and flood control works. The unplanned construction of railway lines for ferrying mineral and human resources created swamps and water logging. This contributed to further soil erosion, which brought down the productivity of the land. In contrast, the agriculture was strengthened in the Ryotwari and Mahalwari area by introduction of large-scale irrigation, and agricultural production was further reinforced by civil society organizations that organized rural co-operative movement for providing agricultural credit and input. In Maharashtra, this group was to play a decisive role after independence in sugar co-operative movement, and politics of the state. Even after independence, the 'Green Revolution' could trigger only in those areas, which had assured irrigation. Even in Bihar, the catchments area of Sone Canal which was constructed by the British in 1875, are still the most prosperous agricultural tract of the state and the home of limited 'Green Revolution' in this part of the country.

### **Evolution of Agrarian System in Two States**

#### ***Madhya Pradesh***

Because of geographical contiguity to Maharashtra and Gujarat, the western part of Madhya Pradesh has a none-too-small industrial economy. But, except for that, both Bihar and Madhya Pradesh are essentially agrarian economies. The agrarian set up of the two states, in turn, largely guides its incentive structure. The British also introduced the tenurial system in Madhya Pradesh, but unlike in Bihar, it was introduced much later. The tenurial system in the Bihar plain was relatively uncomplicated, in relation to numerous types of tenurial relations in the Madhya Pradesh. In the Mahakoshal region itself, there was a range of tenurial arrangements. The Sagar and Nerbada territories (annexed in 1818 as a part of erstwhile Central Provinces) had "predominantly *mahalbari* system under which the revenue of an estate or groups of land was assessed collectively. Parts of Sagar also had the *khalsa* system wherein collection was entrusted to the highest bidder. Five-yearly settlements with heavy crippling assessment were imposed from 1819 until the colonial masters realised that there was a relationship between secure landownership and revenue."<sup>40</sup> This arrangements were thus altered and the settlement of 1866 "conferred proprietary rights on *malguzars*. West Nimar had *ryotwari* and *izradari* until the 1908 settlement, while Jabalpur practiced *malguzari*. In fact in Nimar, *malik makbrza* rights were prevalent, where the *ryots* were comparatively strong, while the remaining tenant enjoyed occupancy rights. In 1834, proprietary rights were conferred on the *malguzars* and in 1854 *kadin kashtkar* were also given full proprietary rights. In Gwalior, the prevailing *malguzari* and *zamindari* systems were recognised by the settlement from 1853 onwards, but *jagirdari* and

*ryotwari* also remained operative in pockets. Durg had both *khalsa* lands as well as *zamindari* paying *takoli*. The Central India Agency and the Nagpur territories had *zamindari*, *mahalwari*, as well as *malguzari* tenure, until the Temporary Settlement imposed by the British. The Bundelkhand regions practiced the *bhaichara* system wherein every farmer paid the same rates and there were no subordinate tenants.<sup>41</sup>

Ironically, in spite of the different kinds of tenurial arrangements, the basic position of the tenant-cultivator in Madhya Pradesh during the colonial period remained miserable. The severity of demand by the colonial collection left no room for proprietary profits and development of incentive structure. As Madhya Pradesh was thinly populated and unable to generate surplus, and landlords were consequently not interested in the pro-active collection of rents unlike in Bihar. Hence, there was no real basis for rent and there was, in effect, a system of *ryotwari* being practiced with a direct relation prevailing between the state and the peasants. “This explains why there was no massive dislocation on land and it was really indebtedness that lay behind the problems of its alienation and wastage. Thus there is no record of any large-scale peasant movements across the territories of Madhya Pradesh for land reforms. Even after the constitution of a single province with a unified administration, the peasantry does not appear to have been mobilised to struggle for property rights on land. However, there have been a series of minor and scattered skirmishes across the region”.<sup>42</sup>

In the present Madhya Pradesh, Mahakoshal and Madhya Bharat are the most developed agricultural tract with widespread incentive structure. Both sides of the Narmada River (Mahakoshal in North and Madhya Bharat in South) having fertile land were targeted by the colonial rule for annexation and expansion of the wheat-growing areas. It was here that the first settlement of the Central India Agency was experimented with, in order to maximise the revenue. But this was mediated by the earlier manner in which the land was held, water was used, crops grown and transported, and the surpluses accumulated by the administration or by the trader and money-lending community. Further, it is also here that experiments were conducted on how to ameliorate the distress caused by draught and famine in such a manner that production and, therefore, revenue were protected from the vagaries of nature. Through the course of this experimentation in the development of capitalism, there were also series of local protests as the people felt that they were being divested of their source of livelihood. “The Mutiny of 1857 had a locus in this area as several Principalities arose against the colonial power. But the upsurge was not just confined to the native ruling classes. Public dissatisfaction with the revenue administration prompted many other sections of the society to either rebel directly or to support those who rebelled. Thus the *Mawasi* tribes of Pipariya under *Raja* Bhoobhat Singh revolted against the British on the issue of control over forest. The Korkus also similarly revolted in Panchmarhi, the Gonds rebelled in Garha Mandala and the women of Banjari Dhal took up the sickle to oppose the British proposal to acquire their grazing lands”<sup>43</sup>.

In the Vindhya Pradesh area, land issue did not figure prominently on the agenda of reform and “the *jagirdari* and *malguzari* systems remained unchallenged at a popular level. The reason was probably the *bhaichara* practice in the villagers whereby all tenants paid equal revenue. Agriculture was not the principal source of livelihood in a completely rain-fed ecology and the dependence on the forest resource was significant. In the Malwa Plateau (in Madhya Bharat), the agriculture is primitive. On the other hand, there are fertile valleys around Indore and Dhar, which produce intensive cash crops such as soybean. The tribal belt of the plateau witnessed an anti-jagirdari movement led by the socialists in the pre-independence period”<sup>44</sup>.

In the context of Madhya Pradesh, it can, therefore, be said that the actual tenurial relationships did not often determine the extent to which people perceive land reforms to be a major issue. Thus, while *jagirdari* and *zamindari* may have been the formal proprietary

forms, it is also known that they did not yield much profit in a thinly populated rain-dependent region and tenants could be classified as *ryotwar*. This appears to have eroded the material base of any popular agitation for land reforms, though it did not mitigate the material needs of the populace. In the process societal incentive structure could not develop here. In contrast the material base of peasant movement in South Bihar was abundant and so was incentive structure. It continues to remain so even now. On the other hand, in North Bihar where the agriculture productivity was relatively lower and incentive structure was also poor, the peasant movement was limited, except for some even though it witnessed several sharecroppers' movement after independence.

### ***Bihar***

In Bihar, although the Permanent Settlement of 1793 was uniformly imposed on the plains, its consequence on agricultural productivity, peasant organisation and movements varied from place to place depending on the ecological and demographic pressure. For example, the water table of the South Bihar plain is deep, unlike in north Bihar. This deficiency of water is met by the indigenous natural drainage system in the region. The gradient of the region has been utilised to create surface drainage tanks (*ahars*) in strategic positions, which collect much of the drainage water in the plains and reserve those for future use in agriculture.<sup>45</sup> In contrast, though north Bihar has abundance of rains and a high water table, it is regularly afflicted by floods and lack of proper drainage. This results in leaching of the soil, thus eroding its fertility. Leaching is a process, which washes away the basic ingredient depriving the soil of mineral food. Leaching occurs in the case of moderate to high rainfall. Thus the soil of South Bihar is very fertile, as it has escaped the leaching process. Thus there is wide spread development of incentive structure in the South plain of Bihar.

The intensity of exploitation by the landlord, also related to the incentive structure, is much more pronounced in South Bihar because of the nature of agricultural operations. The wet paddy cultivation is very wide here which is far more onerous and arduous than wheat cultivation. "It is no accident, therefore, that in Bihar, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, even small proprietors have their land cultivated by others, whereas in Punjab and Haryana, self-cultivation is the general practice among small cultivators. Thus, in areas of wet paddy cultivation, there has been a marked tendency of women and then men withdrawing from agricultural work as soon as economic circumstances make it possible".<sup>46</sup> Similarly, it is also no accident that most destitute section of the population, known as 'dalits' or 'Harijans', were systematically settled in South Bihar for working as agricultural labourers. Even now South Bihar districts have the highest proportion of 'Harijan' populace. Landlords in this area are thus far more sensitive to any disturbances in the supply of labour, which should not only be large but timely too. Occasional attempts by agricultural labourers to withdraw their labour have thus met with severe resistance. Landlords have not only resorted to coercion and violence to continue agricultural operations, but have also indulged in such repressive acts as rape just to demonstrate their absolute supremacy over the class of agricultural labourers.

The generation of a considerable surplus in agriculture, because of the natural fertility of the soil and assured irrigation, is a distinctive feature of the South Bihar plains. "The major parts of the irrigated areas in Bihar are former South Bihar districts — Shahabad, Gaya and Patna in particular, followed by Bhagalpur and Munger. As far back in 1929-33, these five districts together accounted for 71 per cent of the total area irrigated in the whole state. After independence too, this area has remained the most irrigated. In view of the higher productivity and surplus generation in agriculture, the pattern of appropriation as evolved in the zamindari period was also distinctive in South Bihar. The practice of produce-rent or *bhaoli* was widespread here. *Bhaoli* was connected with the artificial system of irrigation. It was envisaged in the *bhaoli* system that the zamindars would provide necessary capital for the construction and maintenance of reservoirs, water channels, etc. To forestall the possibility of neglect by the zamindar of indigenous irrigation, the tenant would give a fixed

share of the actual produce to the zamindars. Thus, if irrigation works were maintained properly by the zamindars, they got good rent and the tenant got a good harvest".<sup>47</sup> But Zamindars in Bihar did not have entrepreneurship and thus the coverage of the *bhaoli* system has gradually shrunk from 90 percent at the time of introduction of Permanent Settlement to barely 20 percent in 1910. But the shrinkage in the practice of produce-rent was far less in the districts of central south plains, the obvious reasons being that the maintenance of indigenous irrigation system was less expensive there and much more fundamental incentive structure.

Unfortunately in both the states of our enquiry, there has not been state sponsored effort to implement tenurial reform. "Transfer of land from one hand to another not only entails transfer of power but also development of the productive forces, both agricultural and industrial".<sup>48</sup> In a way it can be said to be the development of a state sponsored incentive structure, in the absence of an already existing one. Even in Permanent Settled area of Bengal, 'Operation Barga' has brought about dramatic spurt in agricultural production and productivity. This has not only created a indigenous model of incentive structure but also millions of local agro-entrepreneurs, who own the political agenda of rural reform of CPI (M). In Madhya Pradesh, which is touted for 'good governance' has not attempted land distribution and consolidation, which is the principal reasons for the rural poverty. The Madhya Pradesh Agricultural Land Cultivation Act, 1960, Madhya Pradesh Land Cultivation Act, 1974 and M.P. Consolidation of Holding Rules, 1959 have not been decisively implemented. "Though, comprehensive studies to the effect are lacking, it is widely held that the forward caste (the Thakurs and the Brahmins) together with few other castes, like Yadav control a large share of the land holding and a large share of irrigated land holdings."<sup>49</sup> In case of Bihar, "we can safely conclude that that politically land reform in Bihar is more or less over."<sup>50</sup> With the decline of the upper caste gentry, "land and political power have passed into the hands of upper caste raiyats/ under-raiyats and intermediate cultivating castes..... In place of traditional upper caste landlords, kurmi-yadav-koeri kisan proprietors along with the similar sections of the upper castes, whose zamindars and prosperous occupancy raiyats enjoyed power in the earlier period also, have acquired dominant status in the political affairs of the state notwithstanding their inner squabbles and skirmishes."<sup>51</sup>

### **Social Movements**

The incentive structure of the society further gets consolidated with the pattern and character of the social movements. Most of the social movements in South and Western India had initially started with the agenda of dismantling the Brahmanical social hierarchy. As these movements had started much before the independence, they didn't have to contend with the competitive electoral populism. Secondly, the state was yet to develop its agenda as an institution at the 'commanding height' of the economy. In the absence of rigorous implementation of the directive principles of Indian Constitution, positive discrimination for the socially deprived was not in the offing. There was no need for major tenurial reform, agrarian relations there being intermediary-free; the incentive structure in the society was embedded in the production and productivity<sup>52</sup>. Subsequently, social movements there traveled from anti-Brahmanism to development, while imbibing the subnational and regional identity agenda. In the process, it resulted into industrialization in Madras Presidency, and in Bombay Presidency, it ushered into movement for sugar co-operatives. The subnationalism further ensured regional ownership. It was this strong combination of regional ownership (subnationalism) by the elite and the incentive for production that together accelerated economic development. In the Ryotwari areas, the leaders, the opinion makers, intellectuals have often engaged themselves with the operational aspects of development. In those areas, political leaders like Kamraj or social reformers like Sahuji Maharaj (King of Kolhapur) or economist like Gadgil had encouraged entrepreneurship and capitalist transformation in agriculture. Even the Communist and the peasant movement in

Andhra Pradesh had later transcended beyond tenurial question. The massive generation of surplus in agriculture laid the foundation for industrial accumulation there.

In contrast, there was no social movement of consequence in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The unit of movement, in the Hindi Heartland, was caste and thus there was no multi-caste or region specific movement. In fact, it was the intermediaries in Bihar who determined the social and economic profile. The group, which ranged against the authority of intermediaries, did not occupy themselves with the incentive structure of production and productivity. Intermediaries had larger than life presence in the social spectrum of Bihar, and affected society in a more fundamental way. Intermediaries were considered to be the main obstacle to progress in agriculture. Instead of productive accumulation, the intermediaries were indulging in extravagant habits. "They vied with each other in the matter of ostentations, so much so that, on one occasion, an intermediary purchased a new car to attend the marriage of another intermediary to make sure that he did not 'feel' small by the side of his host".<sup>53</sup> They were never parsimonious. Large sums of money were spent on social occasions, like birth or marriage. Thus a leisured class developed in the permanent settled areas with no responsibility in the productive process or work. In fact, they became a societal role model who may be envied but not emulated. Apart from archaic agrarian relation, the failure of Sepoy Mutiny in 1857<sup>54</sup> further reinforced ideological conservatism in Hindi Heartland, encompassing both Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. This area was subjected to extreme repression after the failure of the revolt, and it thus developed an insularity and resistance to ideas relating to science, education, culture and modernity.

In Bihar, the tenurial relation and social conservatism conditioned the character of the social movement. In spite of the absence of incentive structure and the agenda of development, politics as profession acquired a high priority and legitimacy. "The political system, at least theoretically, grants political equality to all, irrespective of caste, wealth, privileges etc., which was to be exercised through voting, contesting elections and other forms of participations. Political equality, as opposed to social and economic equality, opens up, in principle, opportunities to utilize political democracy for sharing the power and material benefits accruing from it. However, social and economic inequality is an impediment in the way of taking advantage of equal political opportunities".<sup>55</sup> Ironically, a society, which is more unequal and lacks economic incentive structure, has high legitimacy of the political system. The high legitimacy of the system is acquired through high credibility of the election. That is the only way of social mobility and political empowerment. In most of the South and Western states, effective paradigm shift in the social realm had taken place before independence. In Bihar, tenurial reform and social empowerment was a post-independent phenomenon. Thus election and electoral issues always acquired a larger than life issues, because all the patronage structure was embedded in the state.

As discussed earlier, the multiplicity of tenurial arrangements or geographical agglomerations in Madhya Pradesh came in the way of presence or absence of social movement and concomitant pattern of incentive structure. Amongst the four region of Madhya Pradesh, there was relatively more intense peasant movement in Chhattisgarh (not a part of our study) than in rest of Madhya Pradesh. The peasant movement in Chhattisgarh was very much related to nature of tenurial system and generation of relatively more surplus in agriculture. "The Triennial Settlement was initiated in 1853 in order that rights may be given to the landlords so as to induce savings, promote investment in improving the fertility of the land, and accessing *taccavi* loan for irrigation. The focus was on extending the land under agriculture so as to enhance revenue. While agriculture registered growth, the resulting trading involving the produce, was soon taken over by the Brahmins, a new social trading group, under the patronage of the Britishers. Their upper ritual position in the society helped them easy entry into the village. Apart from trading, they entered into money-leading business too. The severe draught of 1856 helped them further in accumulation by speculation. Their atrocities were first met by Dalit (*Chamar malguzars*) sponsored anti-Brahmin movement, led by Guru Ghasidas known as *Satnami* movement. And later a tribal *Zamindar* of Sonakhan, named Narayan Singh, led the movement against

the Brahmin moneylenders. Both movements ultimately turned anti-colonial; while the former Dalit *malguzars* was deposed, the latter tribal *Zamindar* was hanged in 1857. Almost 120 Years later, Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha resurrected the martyr Narayan Singh who became the icon for social justice movement in the region”<sup>56</sup>. The incentive structure had, thereafter, started unfolding even in a place like Chhattisgarh.<sup>57</sup>

### **Absence of Regional Cohesion**

One of the common factors for both the state, in acquiring homogeneous political and cultural identity, is absence of regional cohesion. And this absence also leads to absence of regional ownership so necessary for the success of any programme. The sprawling state of Madhya Pradesh came into being in 1956, on the basis of the recommendation of the States Reorganisation Commission Report, as mentioned earlier. The formation of the state had a chequered history. In 1918 the province comprised three territories brought together with little regard for their social and economic affinities.<sup>58</sup> The annexation and separations were done by the Britishers, as if one is transferring some fund from one head to another. The revolt of 1857 was so intense that it was no longer advisable to have a contiguous and homogenous territory, which could develop as a major force of mutiny. But later on both Nagpur and Berar were taken out from the Central Provinces. The present constituent part of Madhya Pradesh are (1) Madhya Bharat, a union of states in the Malwa Plateau region, (2) Vindhya Pradesh, a union of states in the Vindhya mountain region, (3) Bhopal, a centrally administered princely state, and (4) Hindi-speaking portion of the Central Provinces plus the previously amalgamated Hindi speaking states of Chhattisgarh.<sup>59</sup> “In reorganising what is now Madhya Pradesh”, a political commentator maintains, “all administrative, financial and political principles were ignored .... In short, Madhya Pradesh today is a collection of left-out portion of different states combined into one heterogeneous unit”<sup>60</sup>. Thus in both the states, when certain parts of their territory were taken out in 2000, Jharkhand in Bihar and Chhattisgarh in Madhya Pradesh, there was no clamour of protest.

Arjun Singh, after he became Chief Minister, however, was the first leader to realise that there was little sense of 'Madhya Pradesh' identity and also that regional variations across the state are even more than in other Indian states. This is partly because of the varying legacies of 'progressive' and 'non-progressive' princely states. The state is subject to centripetal tendencies too, different parts of it being oriented variously towards Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. In the above light, the institution of 'Bharat Bhawan', started during the regime of Arjun Singh, can be seen as the first major organised effort for bringing cultural unity in a region which otherwise had hardly any symbol or sense of Madhya Pradesh identity. Perhaps sensing this 'absence of a common past', Arjun Singh tried to blur the distinctions between several layers of micro-identities by injecting a sense of competition with national identities, hoping that a provincial identity would emerge in the process overcoming the significant differences that exist within the state. Further, much before this in 1973, as the then Education Minister, Arjun Singh had initiated a process of cultural promotion in Madhya Pradesh. Later, he was responsible (as Chief Minister holding the portfolio of culture) of establishing the various national awards, including the prestigious *Kalidas Samman*.

This well thought out mixture of provincial cultural symbols with those of the national cultural scene and the subsequent cultural upheaval created by Bharat Bhawan provided sufficient ground for the 'packaging' and 'selling' of indigenous cultural traditions of Madhya Pradesh. In spite of attempt of construction of subnational identity, a elite could not develop who would take up the ownership of the region. However, a section of pan Indian elite, compromising of cultural and professional background, started making Madhya Pradesh their destination and home. Atleast some cultural incentive was created, which could be later extended to economic sphere also.

Like Madhya Pradesh, Bihar was also not very geographically cohesive entity either, till its recent partition. Politically, Bihar was tagged to Bengal even during the pre-British days

leading to her economic backwardness. On the other hand, culturally and linguistically being a part of the Hindi Heartland, she could not develop its own identity. Against the background of the Bihar's economic backwardness, she developed a fragmented personality having a number of territorial entities with definite dialects like *Bhojpuri*, *Magahi* and *Maithili*, superimposed over a formidable hierarchy of caste system. Linguistically those dialects could be put into a common group known as '*Bihari languages*'. One can contest this classification but they are definitely distinct from *Hindi* and more related to *Bengali*, *Assameese* and *Oriya*, as all these dialects were derivatives of *Uttar Magadhi Prarit*. 'Like *Bengali* or *Oriya*, no common '*Bihari* language has ever emerged.'<sup>61</sup> Even though this state was subjected to four major division, at different moment of history, an incentive structure could not be created for economic or cultural cohesion. Thus absence of 'owner' in both states failed to create a constituency who would be natural owner of any critical transition of the state.

To understand the social profile of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, it is important to understand its relation with the cultural and spiritual capital of the Hindi Heartland, Varanasi. It was also the ultimate celestial and social anchor for the rentier class of the 'permanent settled' area and the Hindu Princes. Even Bengal Zamindars or socially ostracized widows trekked to Varanasi for their ultimate enjoyment or salvation. It was a center of leisure, pleasure and scholarship. For Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, the cultural and academic center of gravity shifted from Calcutta and Nagpur to Varanasi. In addition to the effort of the British Raj, the Arya Samaj, one of the few revivalist movements, too reinforced the *varna* system. Subsequently, Varanasi based Bharatendu Harischandra, the father of modern Hindi literature, added to the appeal and credibility of caste orthodoxy. He was strongly backed by the authority of the holy city (traditional base of Sanskrit learning and Brahmin 'punditry'), the powerful new merchant aristocracy (the price of transaction of trade in India was determined by the merchants of the town) to which he belonged, the Maharaja of Varanasi. Bharatendu coined an apparently paradoxical 'new traditional idiom' and effectively heralded the use of modern print media to initiate and direct change<sup>62</sup>. The catchment area of the Hindu orthodoxy of Varanasi was mainly limited to the Hindi heartland and some section of the rentier class of the country. In the absence of the liberating influence of the Bengal renaissance, caste in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh was further reinforced and communalism gained ideological legitimacy.

### **Social Base of Governance : National Scenario**

Even during the British period, the hold of the Raj in Bihar remained limited.<sup>63</sup> Post-independence India too could not ensure that the all-pervasive might of the state could control Bihar. The Nehruvian model of civil society essentially subsumed the epic of 'western modernity'<sup>64</sup> and was inextricably linked to the incentive structure of productive base of capitalist society. Despite Gandhian influence, Nehruvian 'hegemony' was fully accepted by a small section of the western educated elite. But despite the aura of the national movement and the electoral triumph of the first general election, the social base and reach of these elite remained limited. In fact, as James Manor opined, the last two decades "have made India a more genuine democracy than it was in the first phase after Independence."<sup>65</sup>

The democratization of the polity resulted in a 'large-scale entry of agrarian group into state and national level politics during the 1980s.' The concomitant political impact, according to Sunil Khilnani, was 'chasm between the elite and vernacular universe of discourse'. This resulted into 'massive and disrupting impact on the parliamentary politics in India' and ultimately 'undermined the possibility of creating Indian civil society.'<sup>66</sup>

In some parts of India, this large scale entry of agrarian group into state and national level politics did not start in the 1980s. Their entry into politics in the respective states depended



on the extent of the development or underdevelopment of agro-capitalism. In state like Punjab, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the entry of agrarian interest in electoral politics, preceded by the twin process of capitalist transformation of agriculture and social movements, resulted in the formation and consolidation of the 'intermediate subnational identity' of Punjabi, Marathi, Telugu, Dravidian and Kanadiga.<sup>67</sup>

This process of transition and transformation continued through the '50s and '60s.

The new agrarian interest group at the regional level effortlessly inveigled itself into the Congress party's political fold. Leaders like Pratap S. Kairon (former Chief Minister of Punjab), Y.B. Chavan (former Chief Minister of Maharashtra and Deputy Prime Minister of India), K. Kamaraj (former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu and President, Indian National Congress), S. Nijalingappa (former Chief Minister of Karnataka) and Sanjeeva Reddy (former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and President of India) formed a solid base of regional Congress leadership. In fact, some of them exercised decisive influence on the national politics and even occupied important offices.

But the grammar of Nehruvian discourse changed with the emergence of the agrarian interest groups from the states of the Hindi heartland, especially UP and Bihar. The region, as mentioned earlier, did not experience any social movement nor emergence of an effective incentive structure. In the absence of an intermediate identity of regional sub-nationalism, the limited capitalist transformation in agriculture in the region only resulted in a further consolidation of either caste or religious (Hindu) identity, further strengthened by the tendency for sanskritisation. These changes in the electoral and social composition had direct consequences on the power configuration in the state.

Had the emergence of the agrarian interest group been limited to the folds of the Congress, the chasm between the traditional and the vernacular elite may have been bridged. The situation was aggravated because the agrarian parties outside the Congress ideological fold (like the Akali Dal) were not handled properly. Even Charan Singh was allowed to 'rise' within the Congress ranks with extreme reluctance. Even when he was 'installed' as Prime Minister, the Congress could have cemented its relationship with agrarian interests in the Hindi Heartland by allowing Charan Singh to continue a little longer. Similarly, in Panjab, the Congress promoted Bhindranwale (storming of the Golden Temple) to upstage the Akalis. Thus the Congress failed either to incorporate the new agrarian interest groups within its sphere, or engage them in dialogue from the outside.<sup>68</sup>

Not that the appearance of homogeneity of the agrarian interest groups and its vernacular discourse is always real. The emergences of a Karpoori Thakur and, subsequently, a Laloo Prasad are not necessarily a replication of the phenomenon of a Charan Singh<sup>69</sup> in Bihar. Despite commonality and convergence in many respects, they belong to different agrarian interest group. Non-cognisance of this divergence may lead us into erroneous conclusions about the character and composition of the agrarian interest groups, and also wrong strategies to build an incentive structure in the vast geographical expanse of the Hindi heartland.

### **Social Base of Governance in Bihar**

In Bihar, 'uncivil' entities like 'bandit gangs' along with 'primordial' or ethnic organizations' exercise greater sway than do modern entities such as trade unions, chambers of commerce and professional organizations.<sup>70</sup> Further, the 'civility' of these uncivil entities depends on who sponsors these respective groups. A schedule caste or landless led bandit gang may help the process of democratization by ensuring safe passage to fellow caste members and preventing the capture of polling booths by the feudal gangs. Alternatively, an apparently civil entity like a trade union may be led by a ruthless feudal mafia, which fetters the aspirations of the workers and retards the democratization process.

In a fluid agrarian economy, especially in India, the role of the respective organizations also changes from time to time. In the absence of a strong state, mere proximity of an organization to the state or its distance from the state is rarely a true indicator of its

autonomy. Nevertheless, the state does play an important role in mediating caste, class and incentive interests groups. Two streams of politics evolved against the above backdrop – elite and subaltern. Both streams revolved around agrarian questions, either reinforcing or changing them. While the landlord section of the upper caste stood in favour of the status quo in the agrarian realm, the tenant section from their rank mostly middle castes, along with vast bulk of the backward and the Dalit (untouchable caste), wanted an end of the intermediaries. Though the landowners were ‘permanently unsettled’ in 1948, it took several years before government could legally banish the intermediaries. Even after that, it took almost another decade to legislate against land concentration. While there was a broadest possible coalition against intermediaries, irrespective of caste and class, the unity could not be continued to break the land concentration. Nevertheless, the caste driven society could have still graduated into a class driven one, provided there was an embedded incentive structure. But the shadow of state structure and the incentive to enter its corridors of power were much more irresistible and enchanting, than the agriculture of Bihar.

**Table 1 : Major Caste and Ethnic Groups of Bihar**

Category	Caste/ Group	Per Cent of Total Population	
		*A	*B
Upper Castes	Brahmin	4.7	4.6
	Bhumihar	2.9	2.8
	Rajput	4.2	4.1
	Kayastha	1.2	1.2
	<b>Total Upper Castes</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>12.7</b>
Upper Backwards	Bania	0.6	0.6
	Yadav	11.0	10.7
	Kurmi	3.6	3.5
	Koiri	4.1	4.0
	<b>Total Upper Backwards</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>18.8</b>
Lower Backwards	Barhi	1.0	
	Dhanuk	1.8	
	Hajjam	1.4	
	Kahar	1.7	
	Kandu	1.6	
	Kumhar	1.3	
	Lohar	1.3	
	Mallah	1.5	
	Tatwa	1.6	
	Teli	2.8	
	Other lower backward	16.0	15.6
	<b>Total Lower Backwards</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>31.2</b>
	<b>Total Backwards</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>50.0</b>
	Muslims		12.5
Bengalis		—	2.4
Scheduled Castes		14.4	13.8
Scheduled Tribes		9.1	8.9
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Column A does not include Bengali speakers as a separate group, while column B does include them, with the enlarged total (100.0 per cent of population +2.5 per cent Bengali speakers) revised to 100 per cent.

**Source of data :** For specific Hindu castes, 1931 Census; for all others, 1961 Census. Earlier data have been revised to reflect boundary changes since 1931. This table reflects figures of united Bihar, prior to division of Jharkhand as a separate state.

Till the mid sixties, the agricultural growth was based on increase in the area of cultivation. With very high density of population in Bihar, agriculture could not hold promise for future accumulation and route to prosperity. With the burgeoning state sector and a friendly recruitment centre (Bihar Public Service commission), the traditional elite got easy access to the corridors of civil service power. With the strong man from the Hindi Heartland, Govind Ballabh Pant as the Home Minister of India, the recruitment in the Indian Administrative Service from these states got facilitated. Large section from the traditional elite mostly constituted by the upper caste (Table 1) with their strong academic background got into the bureaucratic structure. They, in turn, recruited large numbers from their own social stock in the subordinate position of the state government. Social inclusiveness of a Chief Minister is reflected in the choice of persons at the apex organizations, which handled recruitment. It would, invariably be from his own caste stock. By the time Laloo Prasad came to power, there was hardly any scope for recruitment in the state service from his rank. The state structure was already over-burdened, yet his promise for positive discrimination in the service galvanized the backward and the deprived in an unprecedented manner. Even though limited people from upper and lower backward did enter service and made substantial difference to their empowerment. This has created a complete disjuncture between the legislature and bureaucracy in terms of the social base of the two institutions. There is generally a dialogue of the deaf between these two down the line. It is no surprise then till now there is no single direct IAS or IPS recruit in Bihar from the caste of the Chief Minister. With the onset of the Green Revolution in Bihar, mainly scripted by the former tenant of the intermediary system, the theatre of incentive structure transcended beyond the bureaucracy. It now appeared that it is possible to accumulate even with limited land. The battle to control the state was necessary not only for its resources only, but also for providing agricultural subsidy. But in the process, the possibility of any class formation got eclipsed. By 1967, the success of Green Revolution was apparent. The new tenants turned agro-capitalist from both upper and backward castes, tried now to enter political as well as administrative corridors of power in hurry. While the upper caste tenants tried to forge opportunistic link with its feudal rank, the upper backward tenant used its preeminent position in Legislative Assembly and positive discrimination in the recruitment in its favour. In recent period, with the depletion of public finance and decreasing rate of return in agriculture, the evolution of the incentive structure in Bihar got a severe setback. This has also led to migration of not only of the landless labourer but also of the elite. However, the two streams of Bihar mentioned earlier — the elite and the subaltern — are often intertwined<sup>71</sup>. Several leaders of elite origin like Swami Sahajanand, upper caste by birth, took to subaltern politics and led the peasant movement. But while radicalizing the peasant movement which concerned the backward caste tenants in his ranks, he neglected social issues. Consequently, while the backward caste tenants fought alongside Swami Sahajanand on the question of abolition of intermediaries, on the social front they came under the canopy of the Triveni Sangh — an organization spearheaded by the Yadavs, Koeris and Kurmis — the leading intermediate castes. This combination could have continued on the agenda of agricultural capitalism from below with proper incentive structure.

On the other hand, Jagjivan Ram<sup>72</sup> a Dalit leader, graduated from subaltern politics to become completely enmeshed into elite politics. He was considered to be a very good administrator and rose to become the Deputy Prime Minister of the country. Karpoori Thakur, another subaltern leader from lower backward (Annexure-I), also succeeded in elite politics, but refused to get incorporated in it. In fact, he unsuccessfully tried to change the discourse of elite politics. Nevertheless, he could be bracketed with the 'vernacular' elite in other Indian states like Charan Singh from western Uttar Pradesh (an organic intellectual of

agro-capitalist backward) who rose to become Prime Minister, or Devraj Urs (leader of lower backwards) who rose to become Chief Minister of Karnataka. These leaders from the Ryotwari area, expanded their social base among the middle or upper backward castes by reinforcing the intensive structure of the tenant who had turned agro-capitalist after the Green Revolution and by introducing positive discrimination in public jobs and educational institutions.

Unlike Karpoori Thakur, Laloo Prasad Yadav (upper backward) was not a product of organized ideological politics. He was essentially a progeny of Bihar's unfinished and retarded social movement. Unlike the anti-Brahmin movement of South Indian, the backward class upsurge in Bihar which he led, did not succeed in creating either a counter-culture or counter-elite or counter incentive structure. Laloo entered politics from below but did not get fully incorporated into elite politics. His impact is more on the style of politics in the state, not its substance.

As elaborated earlier, presence of intermediaries in the tenurial system in Bihar came in the way of developing an incentive structure for its agriculture in particular, and its economy in general. The rent seeking behaviour was way of life in the permanent settlement areas, including Bihar. Even when that settlement was abolished, rent seeking continued to be the norm, though the actors and the constituency changed. For example, with developmental expenditure increasing rapidly, the rent seeking was in the form of outright leakage in the matter of purchase. Most of the Commission of Enquiries concerned itself with matters related to purchases. Aiyer Commission constituted by the United Front Government in 1967 against Congress Ministers revealed dishonesty related to purchase with public funds. Subsequently, the Cooperative mafia, which could make and break governments during Congress rule, was taken over. Essentially, the villains of Aiyer Commission or mafias of cooperative movement limited its scams to acquisition and purchases. But a new innovation was scripted in the Animal Husbandry scams. Here, the treasuries were emptied with impunity and the Animal Husbandry Mafia exercised enormous political power within the state. This new innovation was started during the regime of Jagannath Mishra, one of the former living Chief Minister of Bihar. It started with trickle, but within short time it assumed the proportion of deluge during the Chief Ministership of Laloo Prasad. Many contradictory versions circulate about how aware was Laloo about the quantum of leakage; but it is generally believed that even he was cheated, in the absence of correct knowledge about the quantum of leakage and its distribution among various beneficiaries. Jagannath Mishra had innovated another scam, which was related to recruitment. The number of government employees in undivided Bihar increased from 1.79 lakh in 1961 to 2.75 lakh in 1972. But thereafter the number doubled from 2.75 lakh to 5.48 lakh by 1981. In comparison, the increase in number of government employees between 1981 to 1997 was a modest 30.5 thousand only. Even here, most of the recruitments were done before the present regime took over. During different tenure of Jagannath Mishra as a Chief Minister, thousands of schools and colleges were taken over by the state government. All the lower and upper primary schools, which were functioning under Municipality, Corporation or District Board, were taken over by the government. Even some colleges, which were functioning spuriously, were taken over by the Government. In 1978, when Karpoori Thakur became the Chief Minister of the state he made the Headmaster of a Upper Primary School as 'drawing and disbursing' authority of their salary. His jurisdiction was extended to five more lower primary schools. After the takeover of the government schools, it had three categories of teachers: one who would never go to school, the second who would go occasionally but not teach the student and the last category would go regularly but had pay to some amount for protection. The quantum of rent in these categories varied from 10 to 50 percent. The destination of such rent, in the absence of major corporate player in the state, was the personal coffer of the Chief Minister of the state. This transaction used to take place via Block Education Officer, Area Officer (Head of Subdivision), District Superintendent of Education, and Education Minister. In the present regime, the Block Education Officers and

Education Ministers are ignored in transferring the rent. Earlier Chief Ministers were known for better governance because they protected the officers and proportionately shared the rent. In the process, the chain of command also did not get eroded. This form of rent seeking was better because it protected the highest authority from committing any irregularity on the file. With the annual disbursement of salary to the tune Rs.2027 crore for the Primary teacher, recurring rent seeking of about Rs.200 crore (minimum 10 percent) from them gets ensured. Here even Teacher's Union are hand in glove with the authorities. In the purchase or contract related rent, it is a one shot affair. For the present regime, even the onus of recruitment is also not with them, because most of them were appointed in the earlier period. The present regime is more concerned about the process rather than about the outcome.

In matter of rent seeking and quality of governance, there has not been much difference during the regime of the different government. A preliminary study, by a scholar indicates, "before supersession, the cooperative movement was effectively controlled by a handful of upper caste Congress leaders and their caste-based networks of support and patronage. These networks connected cooperative leaders with officials, employees, and members at the village level. Besides facilitating corruption, these caste-based networks acted to systematically exclude potential members from the lower castes from receiving much-needed loans for increasing agricultural output. This exclusion has been compounded by the requirement of land ownership in order to be eligible to receive loans (although this land is not used as collateral). Lower caste farmers who either rent land or enter into rotating sharecropping arrangements are doing most agricultural production in Bihar. They have little access to credit to increase their productive capacity"<sup>73</sup>.

After supersession in 1988, the condition of the cooperatives worsened. These caste-based networks continued at the lower levels of the cooperatives while inexperienced Chairmen were appointed at the higher levels. This generated a great deal of tension, mismanagement, and increased the already prevailing corruption to unsustainable levels. During this period, a number of district cooperative banks were forced to close and, with the exception of three or four, most others are now on the verge of bankruptcy.

In this context, the cooperative elections were held in 2003 after a gap of fifteen years. "The elections witnessed the repeated attempts by the RJD government to influence the results and the almost total failure of these attempts. In the end, one Rajput family (of one of the powerful early cooperative leaders) gained almost total control over the apex institutions. The previous upper caste hegemony was easily re-established. As one cooperative official put it, 'their networks are too tight, there is no chance of anyone else entering in'"<sup>74</sup>.

The rent seeking has entered so much into the fiber of our society that in the matrimonial negotiations too, the stock of a government-employed groom depends on his capacity to rent seeking. So it is no coincidence that in the Hindi Heartland and the former areas of the permanent settlement, there is craze amongst the youth to compete in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), who commands highest dowry payment; the service opens door for rent seeking.

### **Social Trigger for Change in Bihar**

In contrast to Madhya Pradesh, the political process in Bihar has always been vibrant reflecting the long drawn efforts of various castes and classes in asserting their voice. Thus, with the lowest per capita income and the highest poverty in the country, the state never displayed a state of political stagnation. Bihar has displayed that, either in the realm of empowerment or in the social consciousness, it is also not burdened by its lowest literacy rate. Unlike in other states of the Hindi Heartland, the society and the polity in Bihar have always been vibrant and in fact in tremor. It can be said figuratively that 'million mutinies' are taking place in Bihar. These 'mutinies' literally ranged from micro to mega struggles.

And this phenomenon has historical antecedents. Apart from the stellar role of Bihar in the independence struggle, there have been several movements which had a local character. Some of the mega class movement like that of peasants against the intermediaries (Zamindars) or social stirring by the intermediate caste (involving the Koeri, Kurmi and Yadavs) had happened in recent past and they left a powerful imprint in the political and social firmament of the state. Their ideological progenies, the communist and the socialist movement, were also most powerful in Bihar in comparison to elsewhere in the Hindi Heartland. In this process, the traditional elites, mainly from upper castes, were replaced by the vernacular elites or upwardly mobile agro-capitalists mainly from the tenant section of upper caste and upper backwards. The process of democratization had not indeed stopped there, and Bihar is witnessing now the emergence of more marginalised social segments on the basis of electoral empowerment who, in the absence of a proper terminology, can be referred as 'cockneys', marginally better off upper and lower backwards. Their emergence is not due to economic leap like that of Kammas in Andhra Pradesh or Jats in north-west India; they are on the fringe of the market or outside it and their preeminent position is because of their electoral empowerment. The political developments in Bihar since nineties, therefore, actually indicates how social issues combined with electoral empowerment can create unprecedented political realities. Nowhere in the country, other than Bihar, this new social segment could be imagined to be on the helm of power vis-à-vis democracy. The threat of a crisis or the problem of governance here seems to be that this new political mobilization has not transcended into a multi-class/caste sub-national agenda of economic development.

The second necessary factor for economic development, amongst the trio of democracy-market-civil society, is market around which the entire economic edifice revolves. The globalisation would essentially entail integration of the market. But a large part of Bihar's economy is still based on self-consumption or petty production. Production for the market is still a limited phenomenon, though the labour who are working in it may not be totally free. We must remember that limited marketisation of Bihar's economy is not because of tariff barriers, but the duality between its rural and urban economy. This divide could be banished only through institutional interventions; then only we can hope to develop a meaningful integration. Even the limited market that Bihar has developed is captive and its product hardly gets national and international buyers.

The third leg of the tripod is the existence of a vibrant civil society and, on that counts again, the ideological orientation of the state cannot possibly falter, except that here the concern of the civil society, irrespective of its caste hues, has been different. The anti-Brahmin movement in the southern and western states had got converted into an agenda for subnational identity, which in turn developed its economic agenda. This helped in building bridges with those social sections, who felt marginalized earlier (mainly the upper castes), due to the plebian character of the social movement. This strategic policy of a leap from 'anti-Brahminism' to 'subnationalism' triggered economic and industrial development in those states. Leave alone creating such new economic opportunities, the civil society in Bihar in the absence of incentive structure could not even protect its existing opportunities like its high mineral endowment which now, of course, has gone to Jharkhand. The freight equalization policy was one of the consequences of such indifference of the civil society, which in fact had harmed most the mineral rich eastern states of the county, including the then undivided Bihar. Bihar has always been used as an experimental laboratory for testing various political strategies, which is to be replicated later at the national level. For example, Mahatma Gandhi, before launching his political agenda, fine tuned his political strategies in the fields of Champaran and in recent past, J P Narain had also led his 'Total Revolution' movement from Bihar. Both these, movements had actually brought about paradigm shift in politics in India.

The first shift in social paradigm was witnessed in Bihar with the Panchayat Election of 1978,<sup>75</sup> held almost a quarter century ago. Since then there has been steady shift in the political centre of gravity. Karpoori Thakur, the then Chief Minister, had implemented the Mungeri Lall Commission Report, which entailed reservation in the state government jobs, for the lower backwards (Annexure I castes) and the upper backwards (Annexure II castes) in Bihar. After the implementation of the Report, the whole state got engulfed into agitation either in favour or against the reservation. This measure of Karpoori Thakur completely changed the political and social discourse in Bihar. There were two immediate fall-outs of Karpoori Thakur's measure. First, the lower backwards, distributed amongst 108 castes and who constitute about 33 percent of the population in Bihar, were brought into the centre stage for the first time and thus they got a distinct identity. Following this, most of the homogenous political formations based on ideological moorings, got split vertically on the basis of caste divide. The second fall-out was the holding of Panchayat Elections which, together with the strategy of reservation, was the stroke of a political genius that Karpoori Thakur was. In the absence of full consolidation of his political support at the state level and possibility of legislative coup, with a powerful adversary lurking around, Karpoori Thakur opted for decentralization by democratization of the polity. The mix of 'Panchayat' and 'Mungeri Lall' was answer to this strategy. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) followed this strategy of decentralization in West Bengal. Having been ousted several times earlier, either through legislative coup or through President's rule, CPI(M) wanted to ensure substantial transfer of resources from the state level to Panchayats when they once again came to power in late seventies. They felt that in case of legislative destabilisation in future, they could hold on to the lower power centres. Interestingly, the process of decentralization was introduced both in Bihar and West Bengal in 1978, when the Congress Party was briefly eclipsed from power in New Delhi. Even after the fall of the Janta Party Government in centre, the CPI(M) continued to rule in West Bengal, and the process of decentralization was strengthened; whereas in Bihar, it had relapsed back to the old power configuration. West Bengal in recent years have witnessed the highest growth in agricultural production and substantial reduction in rural poverty, which is being attributed to decentralization. Fortunately, even in the absence of decentralization, the process of democratization could not be stopped in Bihar. After all, the efforts of Karpoori Thakur did not go totally in vain. The Congress in eighties again came back to power in Bihar with the help of the old social and political network. However, in spite of its conservatism, it had to give space and take cognizance of the reality of the new social stirrings and many had to be co-opted into the power structure from the backward caste segment from below and above. But these efforts remained more as a token rather than a substantive effort. As a result, the Congress could not build valid inroads into these social groups.<sup>76</sup>

By the time Laloo Prasad came to power, with the dexterous social engineering in the wake of the Mandal Commission, the electoral empowerment of the backward segment was final and complete. While legislative uncertainty of Karpoori Thakur hastened the process of decentralization, Laloo Prasad could afford to ignore it because of the relative stability of his social and political base. Class limitation of Laloo Prasad also came in the way of decentralization. Coming from the 'cockney' segment of the local elite, he could never understand that decentralization could develop provincial market and thus trigger development. He was politically more engaged about the implications of collapse of the upper caste citadel in 1990 Assembly Election in Bihar, rather than consolidating this gain through development. The subsequent elections of 1995 and 2000 in the last decade, further strengthened the backward caste group, specially its upper segment. This put the question of 'development' in the backburner. Thus the political purpose of decentralization, like the land reform, was over for the upper backwards in Bihar. In case of the Panchayat Election, it was feared that the backward coalition which was built so assiduously over the years will be fractured at the grassroot level, specially in the absence of an organised and disciplined party structure. It was probably in the mind of the Laloo Prasad that a strategic and stable coalition was threatened to collapse if Yadavs, the preminent caste of the backward caste,

jockeys for power with the Muslims at the local centres. Further, with the meagre resources at the command of the state government, the decentralization will aggravate the financial crisis. Lastly, with the possibility of increased transparency, Panchayat Election was not a palatable proposition for the political managers, Cabinet Ministers and apex civil servants of the state. However, the Panchayat Election could not be avoided thanks to the intervention of the judiciary. The broad results of the election largely conform to the above social and political trends in Bihar since the last Panchayat Elections in 1978, which had gradually strengthened the hold of the upper backward castes in the political power structure of Bihar.<sup>77</sup>

To begin with, one should first note that the 2001 Panchayat Election will go down in the history of Bihar as a turning point for the electoral empowerment of the lower backwards (the castes listed in Annexure I). With about 108 castes in their rank, no individual segment had a overwhelming presence as is the case with the Yadavas. And in spite of being socially and economically almost as marginalized as the Dalits, they were not given any special attention like the latter. They thus felt quiet deprived for being denied discriminatory protection. Further, in the absence of a pan-backward class movement like that in South or Western India, the possibility of any social mobilization exclusively for them was forestalled. This was not the case with people from upper backward castes, at least a fraction of whom had started experiencing social and economic mobility even during pre-independence days. It had started with the 'Triveni Sangh' movement of the thirties (responding to the aspirations of Koeri, Kurmi and Yadavs, three most numerous upper backward castes) and, in the post-independence period, they have also benefited from Zamindari abolition and leading the Green Revolution in Bihar along with tenants from upper castes.

The status of lower backward castes, however, had remained unaltered both during pre-and post-independence period. While economic empowerment had touched a fraction of the upper backward castes, the large segments of the lower backward castes remained economically disadvantaged. Politically also they were marginalized. Karpoori Thakur brought them to the centre stage by implementing Mugerl Lall Commission, which ensured separate reservation for them. They also had to bear the brunt of the anti-reservation agitation along with the upper backward castes. During the early part of the tenure of Laloo Prasad's Chief Ministership, he found them to be his natural ally, especially during his conflict with the other segments of the upper backwards. Laloo Prasad had outmaneuvered many of his powerful opponents by promoting several lower backward caste leaders.<sup>78</sup> Whereas Karpoori Thakur had reserved only 10 percent of the government jobs for them, Laloo Prasad first increased it to 14 percent, and after the vivisection of the state, to 18 percent later. Thus, while even after the rise of Karpoori Thakur or Dhanik Lall Mandal, both reputed leaders of the socialist movement, the lower backwards did not acquire a separate identity, it was Laloo Prasad who, through his deft political management, converted the support of lower backward castes into a bedrock of backward caste upsurge. In fact, they could vote freely for the first time in the 1995 General Election, as a result of their heightened motivation as well as better security provided by the then Election Commissioner of India. Over and above, during the last two decades, reservation resulting from Mungerl Lall Commission Report has ensured substantial presence of the lower backward castes in the state civil service, albeit at middle and lower levels. In the Panchayat Election, however, they have decisively established their identity. This election has thus revealed that they no longer want to remain as a electoral fodder of the upper backward castes, and would like to be at the helm of different power centres. For the first time, they have tried to forge a pan-lower-backward alliance at different levels. Their success in the Panchayat Election is certainly not spectacular, but their presence in the power structure has at least become noticeable and it indicates a promise of new equation in the provincial politics and social alliances.<sup>79</sup> The 'traditional elites' were relegated into the background in Bihar long back. The results of the Panchayati Elections probably indicate that even the



'vernacular' elites, who had spearheaded the Green Revolution' are now abdicating in favour of the 'cockney' elites. The emergence of the latter section is the result of an 'electoral' rather than an 'economic' empowerment. By virtue of their social background, they are not wedded to any Euro-centric model. Their world view does not extend beyond Panchayats and their parlance is in local dialect. Intellectually and through their class disposition, they are equipped to manage just the Panchayats, not anything beyond.<sup>80</sup> The relatively poor performance of Bihar as compared to Madhya Pradesh can be attributed to the fact that new political formations, like those headed by Laloo Prasad, Mulayam Singh Yadav (Chief Minister of UP), Kanshi Ram (Leader of the Dalit) or Mayawati (former Chief Minister of UP) are still new to the world of civil society or incentive discourse; although they may be catapulted to the center of the national scene but it remains to be seen whether they dismantle or democratize our civil society. While they swear by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, they will not engage themselves over the question of incentive structure or agricultural productivity in the way their mentor did.

Amongst the trio, Bihar is thus endowed with an authentic democracy, albeit of a different character, and a vibrant civil society, albeit with a different agenda. And the market, as mentioned before, is yet to reach the production units. Under the circumstances, we need to redefine the trio in a way that meets the peculiarities of this region. This involves identifying some additionalities that the standard discourse on development has not cared to ponder. Our enquiry will be looking forward to those conditionalities and additionalities which will make Bihar viable and knowledge-driven in the twentyfirst century.

### **Social Base of Governance in Madhya Pradesh**

Like in most other Indian states, the social base of the ruling parties and governance in Madhya Pradesh comprised mostly the upper caste Hindus until at least the sixties. During the seventies, limitations of such a narrow social base for maintaining political hegemony became very apparent. A process of democratisation was thus attempted in the ranks of the elite in late seventies when Arjun Singh was pitchforked into the Chief Ministership. Arjun Singh's base within the Congress was limited and so he tried to build bridges with the 'other backward castes' (OBCs) of the state. In 1981, he appointed a commission with Ramji Mahajan, a former State Minister and himself an OBC ('mali' by caste) as its Chairman, to establish a list of OBCs and to identify their needs in the state. The Mahajan Commission Report was submitted in late 1983 and it identified 80 OBC categories which represented 48.08 percent of the state's population (including 2.08 percent Muslims). It recommended 25 percent reservation for the backward classes in all government, semi-government and public sector services, in both appointments and promotions. It was also extended to admission in educational colleges including technical institutions. Mahajan Commission Report, even though progressive, could not create a social stir in the way similar Commissions (Mandal and Mungeri Lall) did in Bihar. Arjun Singh's strategy to install Subhash Yadav as a Chief Minister in 1993 instead of Digvijay Singh also could not succeed as mentioned earlier. But all these did help in "stoking the political consciousness of the OBCs"<sup>81</sup>. Thus when Digvijay Singh was appointed Chief Minister, he appointed Ramji Mahajan as the Minister in charge of 'Backward classes welfare' in December, 1993 to implement the 14 percent reservation for OBC's in government departments, public undertakings and local bodies that the Mahajan Commission had recommended earlier. This quota was extended to 27 percent in September 1995 through the Madhya Pradesh Public Service Reservation for Schedule Castes, Scheduled Tribe and other Backward Class (Amendment) Act (1995) in which reservations for the ST's and OBC's were increased from 18 and 14 percent to 23 and 27 percent in the two upper classes of the administration, and from 20 and 14 percent to 27 percent in two remaining lower category of jobs. It was difficult to go beyond 27 percent for the OBC's since the total amount of reservations had already reached 69 percent in class I and II (where 15 percent of the post are reserved for SCs) and 70 percent in classes III & IV (where 16 percent are reserved for SCs). To take sting out of the criticism of the upper castes, 4 percent of the posts were reserved as a

'general quota' for other under privileged<sup>82</sup>. Till 1993, upper caste dominated the electoral scenario in Madhya Pradesh. Their representation fell from about 50 percent in 1990-91 to 33 percent in 1993. Digvijay Singh was eager to curb the influence of the upper castes but through a new version of the traditional 'coalition of extremes'. He offered an interesting variant of this pattern since the component of this vertical arrangements are not so much the Brahmins and the Schedule Castes as used to be the case during the heyday of the 'Congress System', but the Rajputs and the Tribals. By advocating for reservation, Congress Party of Madhya Pradesh has been more inclined than most other state units in the Hindi belt to project a non-elite image in response to Mandal. It was a strategy that did not rely only on rhetoric, since Digvijay Singh actually implemented these policies. This probably explains the electoral success of Digvijay Singh in the 1998 assembly elections, when he was the only Chief Minister to overcome the anti-incumbency tendency that the India voter has developed since the 1980's. Digvijay Singh further extended the principle of reservation to the local market committees (Mandi Samiti)<sup>83</sup> for regulating trade in agricultural produce. But the High Court stayed its implementation. However, introduction of such quota in the market committees was an important reform since they are often controlled by upper caste Baniyas and/ or rich farmers who partially controlled agricultural prices to be in their favour. He also tried to introduce incentive structure for the Dalit entrepreneurs by ensuring certain items of state government purchase from them. Even before the current assembly election of 2003, he further extended to positive discriminatory quota of the background. Even with BSP<sup>84</sup> support he could not make a decisive impact in the election.

The other important breakthrough that the state administration had attempted was related to decentralisation. The decentralisation was an important instrument in Madhya Pradesh to reach out to the remotest corner. One of the few truly significant innovations indigenous to Madhya Pradesh was the *Janapada*<sup>85</sup> system of rural politics, developed by D.P. Mishra. It was introduced way back in July 1, 1948. It combined the representation of urban and rural areas and aimed at supervision of local administration. These developments were elaborated in the growth of the Panchayati Raj pattern throughout India. Madhya Pradesh was the first state to introduce the new Panchayati Raj system by implementing the provisions of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments. Digvijay Singh admitted that this pioneering move was due to the fact that a severe resource crunch<sup>86</sup> at the state level had made such a devolution of power necessary. But he converted the financial limitations of the state into political gains for his own party by introducing Panchayat Raj and reaped electoral dividend by extending reservations to the local bodies in the state assembly election of 1998.

With the establishment of Madhya Pradesh in 1956, one of the most difficult tasks that confronted the new Government was the political integration of its diverse components. Sir John Malcolm first initiated In fact, the political integration in central India in 1818. After the breakup of the Mughal empire and the destruction of the Maratha power by the British, Sir Malcolm decided to legitimise the role of 73 semi-sovereign princes and to place a major part of the southern zone of the state under the direct British administration.<sup>87</sup> The Thakurs and Jagirdars remained an important force in regional politics. This curious condition prevailed until Sardar Ballab Bhai Patel, then Home Minister of India and his successors enforced a high degree of administrative unity on grudging princes and politicians in the period from 1947 to 1956. In fact no state in India has fewer border underlying its unity, and it can with truth be argued that parts of Madhya Pradesh are greater than their sum. The traditional upper caste dominated to socio-political firmament of Madhya Pradesh (Table 2).

**Table 2 : Distribution of Castes, Tribes and Religious Communities in Madhya Pradesh, 1931**

Category	Madhya Bharat	Vindhya Pradesh	Mahakoshal	Chhattisgarh	Madhya Pradesh
<i>Upper Castes</i>					
Brahmin	6.5	13.3	4.6	1.7	5.7
Rajput	9	4.5	5.6	0.9	5.3
Banya	2.2	2.1	1	0.5	1.4
Kayasth	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>12.9</b>
<i>Middle castes</i>					
Maratha	0.42		0.57	0.1	0.31
Kumbi	0.45	0.34	2.39	0.06	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>2.96</b>	<b>0.17</b>	<b>1.11</b>
<i>Backward castes</i>					
Ahir	2.6	6	4.8	8.4	5.3
Dhimar	1.14	2.92	2.64	0.8	1.65
Gujar	2.9	0.04	1.1	0.02	1.23
Kachhi	3.25	6	—	—	1.9
Kumhar	1.6	1.7	0.9	0.8	1.2
Kirar	2.1	0.09	—	—	—
Kurmi	1.6	4.7	2.6	2.9	2.6
Lodhi	2	2.7	4.4	0.9	2.25
Lohar	0.8	1.5	1.3	1	1.1
Mali	1	0.1	2.3	2.9	1.7
Nai	1.4	1.8	1.2	0.8	1.2
Teli	1.6	2.9	2.3	9.3	4.2
Others	15.28	11.8	15.75	22.3	16.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>42.25</b>	<b>39.29</b>	<b>50.13</b>	<b>40.67</b>
<i>Scheduled castes</i>	16.7 (17.3)	14.7 (15)	11.9 (13.7)	12.5 (11.5)	14.05 (14.1)
<i>Scheduled tribes</i>	13 (14.7)	14.5 (20.2)	25 (27.1)	31.7 (33.1)	21.62 (22.97)
<i>Muslims</i>	7 (7.8)	2.7 (3)	4.4 (5.2)	1.1 (1.7)	3.85 (4.8)
<i>Jains</i>	1.2 (1.3)	0.4 (0.4)	0.8 (1.1)	0.1 (0.3)	0.7 (0.85)
<i>Other religions</i>	0.7	0.03	0.5	1.1	1 (1.09)
<i>Other</i>	4.73	4.48	3.45	—	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Census report 1931 for Gwalior State, Central India Agency and Central Provinces and Berar.

**Note :** The figures in parentheses are drawn from the 1981 census.

Integrating so many powerful and diverse princely and feudatory states and subordinating them under the parliamentary structure was a herculean task.<sup>88</sup> The most difficult problem, which confronted the state, apart from political integration was related to administration. On three levels the state bureaucracy faced problems: (1) creation of a state cadre from the various amalgamated units of Madhya Pradesh, Vindhya Pradesh, Bhopal and Madhya Bharat, (2) expansion of traditions of orderly rural administration in princely and tribal areas, and (3) creation of a new administrative forum to match programmes of decentralisation and development.<sup>89</sup> These problems were complicated because of underdeveloped state of administration and the absence of trained local administrators in Central India. The officials who were available were not from the local origin, they mainly consisted of “Punjabis, Parsees, Goans, South Indians and Bengalis.”<sup>90</sup> The primary load on the administration since the creation of the state has, therefore, been the transformation of the administration and its development as an instrument of the state. This is not unlike requirements faced by other states and the central government, but it was much more difficult in states like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh than in Bengal or Madras. Even in Bihar, though the reach of the state was limited, the problem of the administration was far less demanding. One of the most troublesome aspects of the amalgamation of dissimilar political units was the meshing of existing cadres of civil servants sharing little in training, outlook or even salary. The adjustments of salary and seniority “has left behind it a trail of bitterness that” hampered work in the secretariat. In Madhya Pradesh, the largest number of trained administrators was to be found in Mahakoshal, particularly those men who had previously served the former Madhya Pradesh in Nagpur<sup>91</sup>. Bhopal, the newly created capital of the state, presented few problems in administrative integration, having been a British Chief Commissioner’s charge since independence. “With few political restrictions, the government in power weeded out incompetents, rationalized administrative practice and established strong administrative discipline. In the state unions of Vindhya Pradesh and Madhya Bharat, however, administrative reform was, at least in part, subjected to political control. During the British rule, overwhelming power lay with the central services, but after independence and with the rise of democratic government, especially in the provinces, the authority within the services began shifting. Moreover, the state cadres recognized that their future might well depend upon cooperation with state politicians quite as much as upon technical competence within the service. This in turn facilitated contact between the regional politicians and the regional peer in the bureaucracy for support and information when regions were integrated, and patron-client relationships between civil servants and politicians were set in a larger political community, resulting into factional cells. These factions were then faced with adjusting their inner administrative position with ‘alien’ supervisory personnel. The senior officials were charged with ensuring efficiency and morale as well as discipline, and with being concurrently active as responsive tools in the implementation of public policy as enunciated by the popular ministers.”<sup>92</sup>

The second important task of the administration was to extend orderly public authority into the less developed former princely states in Madhya Pradesh. While order could be achieved over the years, the state could not develop as a social enabler. In spite of feudal order, the integration of the state remained on the highest agenda rather than becoming a social enabler by implementing the land reforms regulations.<sup>93</sup>

### **Functioning of the Bureaucracy**

In the fluid political situation of the country, the state governments in Madhya Pradesh, till its assembly election and Bihar both appear to be stable and firmly in saddle. But the political stability and electoral gain may not necessarily translate into good governance. The quality of governance is related to an agenda — that agenda can be related to either

pursuing one's own class or social interest, or maintaining the status quo or as a response to a crisis. On the first count, the apparent lack of vision or an agenda is very much related to the class that are at helm of affairs in the government, certainly in Bihar and even in Madhya Pradesh where there is a problem of inconsistency. Unlike in the initial years of capitalism in Western Europe, the class agenda of a state government in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh is to contend with electoral demand. This may run counter to the economic interest and incentive structure of the class. Populism and innovation do not run side by side, but unfortunately, politics cannot be fully freed of populism since it is an art of popular mobilisation. Illusions fed to the public over decades have acquired momentum of their own. The rise of the 'cockney' class in Bihar politically does not necessarily mean that they also have an innovative economic vision; indeed, they lack it so thoroughly that it is the real tragedy. The rise of new political forces does not always run concurrently with the economic renewal of society, particularly when we talk in terms of a few decades and not of centuries. It, of course, does not mean that these new social forces will never acquire the necessary economic vision in coming years; but such a vision is certainly lacking at present.

"Flogging the bureaucracy for the failure of any government programme is a favourite pastime. Bureaucracy, like all such institutions, has its distortions, but any other institution cannot certainly replace it. Therefore, instead of just decrying its performance, it is more imperative to explain its specific vis-à-vis development programmes"<sup>94</sup>. Towards that, one may first note that the social outlook of the bureaucracy is different from that of the ruling political elite in Bihar. So there is an absence of commitment on the part of bureaucracy to translate the agenda of the ruling party. The abrasive demeanor of ruling elite vis-a-vis bureaucracy is a result of that. On the other hand, bureaucracy's response to this chasm is delay tactics or sometime even outright sabotage. "A committed bureaucrat is naturally tempted to become an activist; although such a change of function can hardly help, since bureaucracy shall still remain in its place. So instead of bureaucrats turning into activists, it is more important that activists should turn entrepreneurs. The new economic initiatives in rural areas demand not only grass-roots level democracy, but a group of *grass-roots technobureaucrat too*"<sup>95</sup>.

But unlike Bihar, the bureaucracy in Madhya Pradesh is committed. The class and caste division in the rank of the ruling elite has not taken place. It is a different matter that the coalition and contradiction between the trinity of ruling elite — Brahmin, Bania and Rajput — depends on national and provincial political compulsions. Their success and failure to establish political hegemony depend on the co-option strategy of the ruling elite. Earlier electoral victory through political manipulation was easier. Co-opting a new prince or banishing another, or installing an altogether new face in the seat of Chief Minister even from another state (Kailash Nath Katju from UP was appointed Chief Minister), were the ploys adopted by the Congress. But since 1967 and even more after the first major electoral debacle of Congress in 1977, the ruling elite started taking cognizance of the constituency of 'other backward castes'. Arjun Singh's Mahajan Commission or elevation of Uma Bharati (Lodh by caste) by BJP on the national stage was a strategy in that direction and her subsequent projection as a possible Chief Minister. But democratisation and social enabling from above has its own limitations. A study<sup>96</sup> related to Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and Area Development Scheme (ADS) revealed that "caste, class and influence determines distribution of funds .... While a forward or middle caste identity accompanied with an upper class position make a good case for inclusion among the beneficiaries, a scheduled caste identity is often an enough of a case for exclusion. If the Scheduled Caste sarpanch is at loggerheads with the village dominants, exclusion is a strong possibility, irrespective of his party affiliations." The leading individuals in all the institutions, without exception, belong to an economic elite. In fact, it can roughly be argued that the poorer a member, the less his/her participation and voice in the body. These structural constraints, built in to the fabric of society, provide a highly impenetrable barrier to upward political

mobility, and to the reach of lower caste and class groups. While party or faction allegiance can be switched relatively easily between elections, the same cannot be said about caste, class and family connections. This affects entry into politics and also the available rewards from politically distributed funds. In rare cases, trusted networks of political clients and patrons can be built-up, but influential family connections, powerful economic associates and high caste pedigree make a phenomenal difference in a highly competitive, expensive and sometimes violent politics. Lower castes can vote in numbers and sometime even access significant funds, but their low influence in other political spheres reduces their political bargaining power”<sup>97</sup>

That the cosmetic inclusion in the power hierarchy will not be authentic, is apparent by the functioning of the reserved seats in the Madhya Pradesh. The study elaborates that “lower caste reserved seats can mean little when members are dominated by much more powerful politicians and interests in the panchayat body — working from within or outside it — particularly at block level. This does, however, negate the widely known arguments for positive discrimination. And while reservation does not seem to be opening up real political opportunity at the district and block levels, it does create new political spaces within village politics.”<sup>98</sup> The study further concludes that “If the objective of routing development funds through elected representatives is to ensure better targeting of the needs of the people, especially of the poor, then these two schemes do not present a success story. The needs that are targeted are those of the politicians who wish to ensure election or re-election to high, usually MLA, political positions. As ‘planning’ simply does not take place, the argument for decentralised planning, at the district and block level, is redundant. Further, because caste, contacts, capital and crime are the primary factors in determining political influence and voting behaviour, such democratisation becomes more of a politicization that works to exclude the poor.”<sup>99</sup> Unlike the general impression, bureaucracy in Madhya Pradesh, which is the instrument of implementation of public policy, has two sides. “On one end of the spectrum is the image of a body working hard to infuse discipline into the working of institutions dominated by self-seeking politicians. On the other, it is a body novel in finding ways of corruption in spite of new constraints and devolution to politicians of many of the powers it enjoyed. The bureaucracy does carry out the role of regulator with which it has been ascribed, but it is costly mechanism. Rough estimates suggest it takes about 15 percent of the total funds. These rents, combined with the shares that other fixers demand and the need to pay some shares in advance, can be enough to make a project infeasible.”<sup>100</sup>

In Bihar, bureaucracy had a great glamour and aura. And their aura stemmed from the myth that is woven round the presumption of political neutrality.<sup>101</sup> During the British period, India’s bureaucracy developed on the pattern of its colonial masters and thus soaked in the tradition of general adherence to the political interests of rulers. Under the post-independence government, however, the bureaucracy had to work within the framework of the Constitution – to which it takes oath and thereby subserve and cherish the goal laid down rather than fulfill the political needs of the rulers of the day. The main responsibility of the administrators was to deal with and prevent any resistance to firm authority of the government<sup>102</sup>. Their track record in this sphere has been very dismal. Earlier when traditional elites were in power, the class interest of the bureaucracy generally converged. Otherwise, it could not have taken nearly a decade to make Bihar Zamindar Abolition Bill into a valid law (It was introduced in 1947 and became a valid law only in 1956). It was not a coincidence that some of the luminaries who were guiding the destiny of the bureaucracy in Bihar, were from the topmost landlord family of the state. Earlier they were trained to keep ‘law and order’, later they trained themselves to maintain the status-quo. When the powerful movements against the then regime were going on, the bureaucracy reacted in a very oppressive manner. Police firing against the students or the peasants were random. In the realm of probity also they could not create a niche for themselves. Right from the days

of institution of Aiyar Commission in 1968 (probing omission and commissions of earlier Congress ministers) to fodder scam in 1996, their complicity and conspiracy for accumulation has become the part of the folklore of the Bihar society. Bihar bureaucracy is still a very close social group. In the upper a echelon of the administration, one will hardly find anybody from the backward milieu. If the present Chief Minister of Bihar has to handpick an Indian Administrative Service officer from her caste she will not find any. The social base of 'good governance' in favour of the ruling elite in Bihar is missing unlike in Madhya Pradesh. When the vernacular elite was in power, bureaucracy responded by being non-antagonistic. But with the advent of the cockneys, the attitude of the bureaucracy is close to being hostile. The hostility has increased further because of scarce resources. The importance of civil servant in Bihar is proportional to the availability of public funds. With the depletion of resources and with the new social character of the ruling elite, the civil service is not very civil with the present regime. On the other hand, the ruling elite is also unable to incorporate the bureaucracy in their scheme of things. The experience of cockney governance is first of its kind in India. Earlier the social and intellectual base of the traditional elites and the 'steel frame' of Indian bureaucracy were the same. The vernacular elite and the 'steel frame' gave benefit of doubt to each other. But mutual tolerance between the present cockney and the 'steel frame' is practically impossible.

## Conclusion

This paper is an attempt to present an overview of the evolution of social and economic forces in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, resulting in their present development crisis. The essential root of the crisis is embedded in the lack of incentive structures in these two states. We have dealt here essentially with the social and political basis of public policy of the two states in a historical perspective. And the state of the agrarian movement is also significantly determined by the material basis of surplus generation and production relation. Absence of peasant movement, as well as agrarian atrocities is significantly determined by it. While dealing with the agrarian relation in south Bihar plain, we have dealt the ecology and topography. The peasant movements and atrocities in south Bihar were very much related to agrarian accumulation, earlier by the intermediaries under the permanent settlement and later by the agro-capitalist, who ushered the so called 'Green Revolution' in the state. In Madhya Pradesh in spite of feudal structure and the absence of even a modicum of democracy, the Princeses were generally not object of derision or revulsion, as intermediaries were in Bihar.<sup>103</sup> In Bihar, they were known widely for their atrocities. Thus, it was not surprising that after the introduction of the parliamentary democracy, Princeses in Madhya Pradesh could win many elections, but in contrast, Zamindars in the Bihar plain were routed in the elections whenever they tried to face it.

The paper has also dealt in detail the historical genesis of formation of Madhya Pradesh and the problems related to its integration. Possibly no state of the Indian union has been subjected to integration and vivisection so many times. Earlier, it was done by the alien ruler, later by our national government in the centre. It can be said that Madhya Pradesh is a 'geographical expression'. The integration got further complicated because of various types of Princely states, directly governed territories and then linguistic conglomerations. On the contrary, Bihar was subjected to division several times since its establishment in 1912. However, since the latest division of the state in 2000, Bihar gives an appearance of social and cultural homogeneity in contrast to Madhya Pradesh. In fact Madhya Pradesh could not achieve homogeneity in spite of its division. We have also dealt on the question of identity and the factors hampering it. We felt that the presence of ownership of region is a necessary precondition for incentive of social trigger for development, as most the developed economic enclaves were also centres of subnational assertions, just as underdeveloped regions of the Hindi Heartland were marked as much by absence of subnationalism as the economic incentive structure. In a society or a state where elites are not identified in a clear class term, the incentive for regional development is often guided by the subnational

considerations. In a protected market, that too in a situation where all conceivable decision of financial devolution are with the central government, any favour for the regional government depends on the respective regional and social base of the reform.

We have also tried to understand the response pattern of the respective elites to earn electoral legitimacy from time to time. Unlike in the initial years after independence when politics used to be around economic development and developing the democratic edifice was the prime motive, electoral populism in recent years is the sole criterion for deciding the agenda. Since the eighties, mobilisation on the reservation agenda or the ethno-religious issues has decided the public policies. Both in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, this strategy of positive discrimination has played a decisive role. The competition here involves raising the reservation quota by certain percentage to include or to exclude certain social group from the state patronage. This dexterous manipulation has ensured electoral dividend to the ruling elite in both the states earlier. While in Bihar, the backward class social assertion is the result of protracted movement, the inclusion of the deprived in Madhya Pradesh was being attempted from above for electoral considerations. This had ensured certain level of participation of the deprived, but it is far from the social paradigm shift that Bihar has witnessed. Even earlier, when a myriad of Hindu revivalist organisations<sup>104</sup> were threatening to storm the Congress bastion in Madhya Pradesh immediately after independence, the Kisan Sabha and powerful Communist/Socialist movement were threatening to script a new electoral history in Bihar. Thus inclusion or exclusion strategy depends on the array of social or political forces, which are ranged against the entrenched power. Thus the strategy of inclusion is dependent on Hinduism even if soft in Madhya Pradesh,<sup>105</sup> whereas it is dependent on social assertion of the deprived in Bihar.

If the trinity of democracy, market and civil society are preconditions for economic development, both states have advantage on some counts. While democracy and civil society are much more vibrant in Bihar, the market is much more developed in Madhya Pradesh. The markets of Malwa region are integrated with developed economic centres of West Indian states of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Indore, the economic, industrial and financial capital of Madhya Pradesh is economically integrated to Nagpur-Bombay route. Unlike Bombay-Ahmedabad or Bombay-Poona, the economic/ industrial development has not reached plateau through any third route. The economic buoyancy in this region can be explained by the contiguity of the developed state, rather than substantial internal factor, although the two principal Princely states of Madhya Pradesh have also played significant role in this area. In the political context also, market is a powerful institutions in Madhya Pradesh, unlike in Bihar. The traders are politically very powerful in Madhya Pradesh and the entry into this coveted domain is not limited to the traditional Bania caste alone; Brahmans are equally powerful in this domain. Correspondingly, Brahmans and Banias are in strong competition for sharing political power. But the process of democracy and civil society, other two ingredients of economic development, are not very authentic in Madhya Pradesh. However, the quality of governance is much better in Madhya Pradesh — even though it has been electorally routed on that question in the present election to the state assembly — as compared to Bihar, as far as its track record on soft infrastructure; like literacy and health is concerned. Even the track record of the princely states as provider was good. Most of them were generally progressive and rulers enjoyed prestige within their order unlike the Zamindars of Bihar. In Madhya Pradesh, most of the Chief Ministers' record as administrator was good because each of them had to compete with his predecessors in regard to quality of governance. With several former Princesses as a formidable political adversary, they could not afford to loose their guard. On the other hand, Bihar, could not go far in spite of its authentic democracy. While its market is limited, the orientation of civil society is essentially towards the issue of social emancipation. Civil society is yet to acquire entrepreneurial qualities, either in the grassroot or in the apex.



The central question with which we have tried to grapple with in our historical overview are why Digvijay Singh (coalition of extremes between Rajput and tribals),<sup>106</sup> could not expand his electoral base in Madhya Pradesh to create an incentive structure; similarly why in Bihar, in spite of a wide social base, Laloo Prasad (Yadav-Muslim axis) does not seem to be even making attempts for economic reforms and development? It remains to be seen whether such an endeavour will be undertaken by the present ruling elites of Bihar in future. At the moment, however, they have taken recourse to an alternative political agenda, to choose to further expand their social base by opting for coalition partners who will best defend them since failure on the development front is near certain. In the state-centric development model of earlier days, one could only afford to be a good provider, but in the market-centric model, a good provider will actually come in the way of accumulation. Will this strategy forestall the impending catastrophe due to lack of development? Is crisis imbedded in the democratic populism? The political challenge in states like Bihar and Madhya Pradesh is how can a state combine the strategy of provider/enabler with a market friendly economic strategy and yet retain electoral stability.<sup>107</sup>

## References

1. Subhash Yadav's political career epitomises the rise of the middle farmers as the dominant class in the region superseding the moneylenders and the erstwhile princes and thus getting precedence in the misuse of state privileges which has been the hallmark of democratic politics in this country. Beginning with being elected to the *mandi samitis* and the cooperative societies, Yadav soon graduated to the *Vidhan Sabha* and *Lok Sabha*. He simultaneously progressed up in the setup of the *mandis* and cooperative societies. When the Congress Party came to power in Madhya Pradesh in 1993 he became the deputy chief minister and also the chairman of the Madhya Pradesh Mandi Board. To buttress his position in Nimar, his home district, Yadav made a series of illegal recruitments in the Mandi Board to accommodate his apparatchiks which were challenged by his opponents and led to an enquiry by the Lok Ayukt in which he was indicted and on the latter's recommendation he was removed from the Chairmanship of the Board. He then became the Chairman of the State Cooperative Bank of Madhya Pradesh. Here too he indulged in similar malpractices that caused a loss of about Rs. 3.5 crores to the Bank and was once again indicted by the Lok Ayukt. After the reelection of the Congress Party to power in 1998 Yadav was initially not given a ministership and excluded from the cabinet. He immediately launched a campaign against the government regarding the malfunctioning of the mandis. This campaign gathered considerable momentum because the farmers are indeed dissatisfied with the way the traders manipulate the working of the mandis to their advantage. So that chief minister was forced to reinduct him once again as the deputy chief minister in 1999 and immediately he stopped his campaign for the reform of mandi administration.
2. The deinstitutionalization of the Congress Party was accelerated and deepened during the meteoric rise of Sanjay Gandhi, the younger of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's two sons. During the emergency regime (1975-77), whose imposition Sanjay is said to have advised, Mrs. Gandhi collaborated in her son's efforts to establish a leadership position in the party and the nation. Many informed observers viewed such efforts as an attempt by Mrs. Gandhi to position him as her successor. In an effort to supply Sanjay with a power base, and in the name of rejuvenating the party, Mrs. Gandhi not only endorsed his "Five-Point Program" but also supported him in supplanting the party's regular organization by the Youth Congress committees in each of six thousand blocs and in promoting Youth Congress – sponsored associations for physical training, sports, and so forth. When Youth Congress president Ambika Soni told congressmen assembled for the party's 1976 annual session that the parent organization had lost its vitality and asked it, for the sake of the party's future, to subordinate itself to the more vigorous Youth Congress, Mrs. Gandhi supported the suggestion. In fact she said, that the Youth Congress has stolen the thunder of the Congress Party. The "new blood" that Sanjay tried to introduce were often young men on the make, of dubious provenance, some with criminal records, whose loyalty was to Sanjay and the Nehru dynastic idea rather than to Congress as the party of secularism, socialism, and democracy. The prospect of Sanjay's ascendancy in the party triggered a second Congress split on the eve of the 1977 election and contributed to its defeat. Jagjivan Ram, the seniormost minister in Mrs. Gandhi's cabinet, and other party stalwarts resigned to contest the election with the newly formed Janata party.
3. Presently Chief Minister of the largest State of the Indian Union, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and a preeminent leader of the middle caste and the Socialist movement,
4. Former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, political heir of Kashi Ram, the foremost living Dalit leader of India.

5. Former Prime Minister of India and eldest son of Indira Gandhi.
6. Police-Military operation to evict the Sikh terrorist gang of Bhindarwal, from Golden Temple in Amritsar.
7. Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh body guards in the official residence of the Prime Minister on 30th October, 1994.
8. Thus the emergence of OBCs into political power roughly coincides with decline of financial discipline in 1980's. They consumed more and more electricity to irrigate second, third and fourth crops. They used their votes to resist efforts to collect user charge.
9. Rudolph, L.I & Rudolph, S.H, "Iconisation of Chandrababu : Sharing Sovereignty in India's Federal Market economy", *Economic & Political Weekly*, May 5-11, 2001, Vol. XXXVI, No. 18.
10. A brilliant techno-entrepreneur, who inspired Rajiv Gandhi to Set up Central Government sponsored bureaucratic hassle free dedicated Mission on literacy, watershed management, communication, oil seeds etc.
11. **Srivastava, Manoj** — Good Governance matters, but what matters to Good Governance. An ethnographic study of the politics – governance nexus surrounding the reforms in the state of Madhya Pradesh (unpublished).
12. In the last assembly election of 1998, the 'onion' prices had unexpectedly gained plebiscitary importance and, in the process, hard ground realities could not be revealed. In the present election of 2003, Digvijay's strategy to steal the ethno-religious agenda of BJP in the initial months failed. BJP, on the other hand, scripted a strategy to tame the lion in its own den of 'good governance' by raising the question of its record on electricity, roads and water. They were so cocksure about the 'governance' failure in Madhya Pradesh that they did not feel tempted to replicate the Gujarat strategy of ethno-religious mobilization. Ironically, on ethno-religious agenda, Digvijay was on the stronger wickets with his array of cleverly crafted antediluvian thought on Bhojshala or cow slaughter, etc; he did not want to lead the Congress Party from the front on the question of development.
13. Selected by the BJP High Command to lead the party in the Assembly Election of 2003 in Madhya Pradesh.
14. Ajit Jogi, tribal and also a former IAS Officer was appointed as Chief Minister of Chattisgarh. However, his tribal origin is disputed in recent period.
15. Shukla brothers, Shyama Charan and Vidya Charan, are sons of former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Pandit Ravi Shanker Shukla. Both the brothers always held important position in the Government and in different political parties. They have powerful political position in the Chattisgarh region.
16. In Bihar, both the position, leader of Congress Legislative Party and State Congress Party Presidentship is held by Vijay Kumar Dubey and Ramjatan Sinha belonging to Brahmin and Bhumihaar upper caste.
17. In UP, both the position are held by Pramod Tiwary and Arun Kumar Singh, 'Munna', belonging to Brahmin and Rajput upper caste.
18. **Bardhan, Pranab** in "A Political – Economy Perspective on Development" in *The Indian Economy : Problems and Prospects* Edited by Bimal Jalan, Viking, New Delhi, 1992, PP-321.
19. Selected works of Nehru, Vol. 2, Second Series, Volume Sixteen, Part II (Published by Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, Teen Murti Bhavan, New Delhi; distributed by OUP, New Delhi, 1994) PP-13-30.
20. **Singh, Manmohan** – 'India : The Unfinished Agenda of Economic Reforms', 28th Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Lecture (November 13, 1996). Monograph, published by Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, New Delhi, 1996.
21. **Singh, Manmohan** – Ibid, PP-
22. BJP, Chennai Declaration, December, 1999.
23. A brief military skirmishes between Pakistan and India, over former's intrusion in Kargil, which is part of India.
24. The magic of reform is still showing in India. Its macro impact on the economy is unprecedented. According to the Reserve Bank of India for the Indian economy in 2003-04, it has now upgraded its forecast for the gross domestic product growth to 6.5-7 per cent. Its earlier projection was 6 percent. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) projection is 7.2 percent, while the Center For Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) has forecast a growth rate of 7.4 percent, as against 4.3 percent in 2002-03. The International Monetary Fund's *World Economic Outlook* (September 2003) projects India

growing at a rate of 5.6 percent in 2003 and 5.9 percent in 2004. According to the IMF, only two countries (China at 7.5 percent and Vietnam at 6 percent) will have growth rates higher than India. This, at a time when the projected global growth rate is only 3 percent for 2003 and the projected average growth rate for the United States of America, European Union and Japan, together, is only 1.8 percent in 2003 and 2.9 percent in 2004. So, by all reckoning, India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world today. According to the CMIE estimates, growth in agriculture will be 10.7 percent (as against 3.2 percent in 2002-03), whereas growth in industry will be 5 percent (as against 6 percent in 2002-03); services will grow at 7.3 percent (as against 7.1 percent in 2002-03).

Second, even this high growth rate, assuming that it eventually turns out to be the case, is not unprecedented. We have had a more than 7 percent growth rate for the three consecutive years — 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97— and then the growth rate came down. It is true that, in terms of the standard indicators, the Indian economy is in fairly good health. Inflation, in terms of the wholesale price index as well as consumer price index, has been falling over the entire financial year. The RBI projects an inflation rate of 4.5-5 percent for 2003-04. The low inflation rate has helped to keep nominal interest rates and the cost of borrowing, by both government and the privates sector, low. This also ensured that no major pan Indian movement could be built in recent years.

The endemic problem of foreign exchange reserve seems to be over. Foreign exchange reserves are over 90 billion, enough to pay for 16 months of imports as against 15 days' import-over in 1991. Food grain stocks are somewhat down but still quite comfortable (40 million tones in June 2003). Overall food security is no problem. The latest sales and profit figures are above expectations for many companies, ranging from the "old" (such as steel, cement, auto) as well the "new" economy industries (like information technology and pharmaceuticals). The share market is bullish it has now crossed 5000 point. Export growth was fairly high at 10 percent in the first six months of 2003-04, despite the rupee rising against the dollar, though not against all major currencies. The business confidence index—which measures the confidence of businessmen about future business prospects—is going up.

25. A magazine article, 'Can India overtake China' and later a book 'Selling China: Foreign Direct Investment during the reform era' authored by the celebrated Professor of Harvard Business School, Yasheng Huang, along with Tarun Khanna dealt in detail the strength of the Indian economy vis-a-vis its northern neighbour. According to them India is on the stronger wickets, because its world class corporate sector, like Infosys, Wipro, Cipla, Ranbaxy, Bicon and the Tata's are owned and managed by the Indian themselves. In contrast the indigenous Chinese companies like Legend, Wanxiang, Hengdian, Chint, Delixi, Guanghui, Fosun, Xingaochao, China Orient and Tengen are half in terms of turnover. The massive foreign investment in China was attributed to less developed indigenous bourgeoisie there.
26. **Ahluwalia, Montek. Singh**, "State Level Performance under Economic Reforms in India" in Economic Policy Reforms and the Indian Economy, Edited by Anne O. Krueger, OUP, New Delhi, 2002, PP-91
27. **Ahluwalia, Montek. Singh**, Ibid – PP-94.
28. **Khare, Harish** – "Mediating Economic Reforms : Party Politics From Bangalore to Chennai" in Political Parties and Party Systems, Edited by Ajay K. Mehra, D.D. Khanna & Gat W. Kueek, Sage, New Delhi, 2003, PP-366.
29. Ironically the vociferous support for profligate Fifth Pay Revision Commission of 1997 by I.K.Gujral's United Front Government, came from Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce (FICCI), the apex organization of Industrial Houses, founded by G.D. Birla. With the threefold increase in the pay of the Government employees, it was expected to banish recession in the country.
30. **Outlook**, New Delhi, June 25, 2000, PP-16-18.
31. **Jenkins, Robert S.** – Democratic Adjustment : Explaining the Political Sustainability of Economic Reforms in India, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Sussex, 1997.
32. For any study of these two states, the broad geographical contour needs to be understood. Madhya Pradesh even after division is a vast and sprawling state. Madhya Pradesh is essentially left with three regional division. First is the Madhya Bharat, which is geographically more or less coterminous with the Malwa Plateau, in the South. The second major part of the newly formed state was Vindhya Pradesh in the north east, which takes its name from the Vindhya range, overlooking the Gangetic plain of Uttar Pradesh. The third component was the Hindi-speaking part of the Central Provinces and Berar (directly administered by the British in pre-independence period) and is now known as the Mahakoshal region, geographically dominated by the Narmada river valley and upland areas surrounding it. The Marathi-speaking Vidharba region of Central Provinces and Berar (around the city of Nagpur) and the Hindi-speaking part of Chhattisgarh (which now form the newly created state of Chhattisgarh) are no larger parts of Madhya Pradesh. The present districts of Madhya Pradesh relate to those historic divisions :
  - (i) **Madhya Bharat** : Morena, Bhind, Gwalior Datia, Sheopur, Shivpuri, Guna, Vidisha, Rajgarh, Shajapuri, Dewas, Indore, Ujjain, West Nimar (which formerly incorporated Badwani, shown as a

separate district on the current District Map), Dhar, Jhabua, Ratlam, Mandsaur (which formerly incorporated Neemach); together with Bhopal, Sehore and Raisen (which together made up the Bhopal State).

- (ii) **Vindhya Pradesh** : Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Panna, Satna, Rewa, Sidhi and Shahdol (which formerly included Umaria).
- (iii) **Mahakoshal** : Sagar, Damoh, Jabalpur (which formerly included Katni) Mandla (which formerly incorporated Dindori), Balaghat, Seoni, Narasimhapur, Chhindwara, Hoshangabad (which formerly incorporated Harda), Betul and East Nimar.

In case of Bihar, after it was truncated (with the formation of Jharkhand State) the geographical region can be divided into two parts, North and South Bihar plains. The two parts of Bihar are essentially divided between the two sides of Ganges. The present-day districts of Bihar relates to the two geographical divide :

- (i) **North Bihar** : West Champaran, East Champaran, Sheohar, Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Supaul, Araria, Kishanganj, Purnea, Katihar, Madhepura, Saharsa, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj, Siwan, Saran, Vaishali, Samastipur, Begusarai, Khagaria, Bhagalpur, Banka, Munger, Lakhisarai, Sekhpura.
- (ii) **South Bihar** : Nalanda, Patna, Bhojpur, Buxar, Kaimur, Rohtas, Jahanabad, Aurangabad, Gaya, Nawada, Jamui.

The eleven districts of south Bihar are generally better off, both economically and socially, than those in north Bihar. The districts in the south not only have fertile land, but large parts of their crop area enjoy assured irrigation, through either government-owned canals or privately-owned lift irrigation. They are all near to the capital town of Patna (a difference that mattered much earlier because of poor road/ rail links) and secondly, they all fall on the busy railway route connecting Calcutta to Delhi. Since the districts of north Bihar are also part of the Gangetic valley, the soil fertility is also high there, but because of being at the foot of the Himalayas, the region has too many rivers, making it highly flood-prone. Since crossing the Ganges was not easy earlier, north Bihar region has generally been an under-administered area, assuring much authority to the local Zamindars.

- 33. **Clements, Paul** : A Rawlsian Analysis of the Plight of Bihar (un published paper).
- 34. **Bernal, J.D** : Science in History, Penguin Books Ltd., England, 1969, Page-521.
- 35. **Bagchi, A.K.** : “Deindustrialisation in Gangetic Bihar – 1809-1901” in Essays in Honour of Professor S.C. Sarkar – Edited by Barrun De, People’s Publishing House, New Delhi, 1976, Page-499.
- 36. **Gupta, Shaibal** : “Potentialities of Industrial Revolution in Pre-British India”, Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1980.
- 37. **Rahul, Sahulkars** Rule The Roost – Status of Informal Rural Financial Markets in Adibasi Dominated : Dominated Region of Western Madhya Pradesh (unpublished monograph).
- 38. **Gupta Rakesh** : Bihar Peasantry and Kisan Sabha, People’s Publishing House, New Delhi, 1982, Page 185.
- 39. **Bagchi, Amiya K.** : Private Investment in India — 1900-1939, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1972.
- 40. **Das, Arvind N.** : “Agrarian change from above and Below : Bihar 1947 – 78”, in Subaltern Studies – II, Writings on South Asian History and Society, Edited by Ranjeet Guha, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1987, page 180.
- 41. **Roy Duna** : op. cit, page 34.
- 42. **Roy, Duna** : op. cit, page 34 – 35.
- 43. **Roy Duna** : op. cit, page 42
- 44. **Roy Duna** : op. cit, page 47
- 45. **Sengupta, Nirmal** : ‘Tank Irrigation in Gangetic Bihar’, A.N.S. Institute Mimeo (unpublished) 1982, page 8.
- 46. **Beteille, Andre** : Studies in Agrarian Social Structure, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1974, page 29.
- 47. **Choudhary, B. B.** :op. cit, page 310.
- 48. **Choudhary, Prasanna K.** “Land Reforms in Bihar : Need For a Fresh Appraisal” in Land Reforms in India – Bihar – Institutional Constraints – Vol. 1, Edited by B.N. Yugardhar & K. Gopal Iyer, Sage Publication, Delhi, 1993, PP-24.

49. **Madhya Pradesh : State Report** — Panchayati Raj and Natural Resource Management : How to Decentralise Management over Natural Resources (Unpublished), PP – 80-81.
50. **Chowdhary, Prasanna K.** — op. cit. PP-24.
51. **Chowdhary, Prasanna K.** — op. cit. PP-25.
52. This could be reflected by the tenor of the debate there. The debate among the academic circle was not around the surplus distribution or consolidation of land, rather on the size of the economic holding for optimum production. This debate was indeed irrelevant in a permanent settled area. It was felt that consolidation could not obviate the evils of scattered holding, until and unless the consolidated holding was an economic holding, which is essentially an enterprise of production. Way back in 1918, when he was being groomed to takeover as the Finance Minister of Baroda Princely State, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, an economist, Dalit leader and framer of Indian Constitution had advocated for one-man rule of succession, with a survey number, which would be made to cover a piece of land that would be of the size for the ideal economic holding. Thus incentive structure of production and productivity was embedded in the cognitive world of even a Dalit intellectual and economist.
53. **Wadha, D.C.** : “Zamindars in Debt”, in *Zamindars, Mines And Peasants*, Edited by Deitmer Rothermund & D.C. Wadhwa, Manohar, New Delhi, 1978, Page-131.
54. **Gupta, Shaibal** : “Non-Development of Bihar : A case of retarded subnationalism”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Bombay, September, 12, 1981, Page-2142.
55. **Pushendra** : “Dalit Assertion Through Electoral Politics” in *Caste and Democratic Politics in India*, Edited by Ghanshyam Shah, Permanent Black, New Delhi, 2002, Page-360, 380.
56. **Roy, Duna** : op. cit, page 38.
57. As long as Nagpur was the capital of the Central Province and Berar, the social currents of Western India dominated the state. It was In fact in the ideological catchment area of the Bombay Presidency. However, in its cognitive world, the incentive embedded in anti-Brahmin movement, which triggered movement for sugar cooperative, had less sway than the politico-religious revivalism of Nagpur-based RSS. This variant of social upsurge had a natural constituency amongst the traders and moneylenders who ruled the roost. Further, because of the inaccessibility in the difficult terrain of central India and near absence of competition from the European traders, they had a very powerful presence there. “The indigenous trading classes could also count to some extent on the patronage of the native principalities. The merchants of Ahmadabad and Baroda also had a share of the profits of the opium trade, which was known as the Malwa trade, though probably these profits were much smaller than those that were made from the trade that passed through Bombay”. Being very far from the coastal region or anti-Brahmin social enlightenment, and over and above the rate or return in *trade* usury being very high, the incentive for industries did not exit. In any case, the industrial establishments were not isolated profit centers, but a proof of successful conclusion of societal efforts as well, mediated through many social or regional movements. Madhya Pradesh, in its previous incarnation, as Central Province and Berar state, lacked cohesive identifiable social group or regional identity to clamour for industrialization. But in contrast, most of the Princely States, known for better governance, were fulcrums of industrialization. The incentive structure was imbedded in the governance. Unlike the Landlords or the Zamindars of the Permanent Settlement, who were only interested in collection of rents, they had full ownership of the states. This in turn developed an inbuilt incentive structure for the states. In line with the exalted effort of industrialization by Mysore, Travancore – Cochin and Gaekwad states, the Scindias of Gwalior or Holker of Indore, two mega principalities of Madhya Pradesh, also set up state enterprises and helped Indian capitalists to establish factories within their territories. “The effect of rule by the native princes may have been detrimental to ordinary people; but insofar as the native states provided a market and some capital for the development of Indian enterprise, the effect on the Industrial growth was positive. The political separateness of the native states from British India was more important for industrial growth than the semi-feudal structure of administration within many of those states, given the discrimination practiced against Indian business men under the imperial system”. Even Princely state of Bhopal played decisive role in modernization and urbanization. Not only Bhopal was known as ‘Baghdad of India’ because of its rich Muslim culture, its tradition of tolerance and the progressive nature of its institutions had also ensured its distinguished place in the country’s history. In the modern period, the four innovatory female rulers of the Princely state forged the identity of the town. They not only “put an end to the isolation of their state by financing the advent of the railway line with their own funds, they had opened up roads and markets, built cotton mills, handed out vast areas of land to their landless subjects, set up a postal system without an equivalent elsewhere in Asia, and introduced running water to the capital”. Apart from the investment in the ‘hard infrastructure’, they promoted “free primary instruction for everybody”. In spite of their themselves being in *Burkhas* (Veil), they actively promoted “female emancipation by increasing the number of girls’ school.” After independence, Bhopal was one of the few enlightened centers to be promoted as a capital of the sprawling state of Madhya Pradesh. Its historical ambience must have been a good reference point for

- emulating the tradition of 'good governance'. Incidentally most of the developed economic regions of Madhya Pradesh were from the Princely states, rather from the British India. In Bihar, on the other hand, most of the landlords or Zamindars of Bihar were engaged in symbolic and epistemological struggle for recognition as Kings, a process through which they tested the 'Limited Raj'. Instead of creating an economic or industrial incentive structure or history of 'good governance', Darbhanga Raj was more interested in manipulating "local symbols of power, religion, mythologies of kingship and concepts of masculinity to create and define their kingliness. Therefore, the battle of the Maharajas of Darbhanga for legitimacy was a series of missions in self-definition" rather than development. After independence, while most of the Princely States could successfully participate and win parliamentary elections, the landlords were consigned into electoral oblivion.
58. Two territories of Nagpur and Saugor-Nerbudda, united in 1861 to form the Central Provinces; and the division of Berar, leased from the Nizam of Hyderabad and annexed to the province in 1903. The territory of Nagpur was formerly the state of Nagpur, ruled by the Bhonsle kings, but annexed by the colonial administration to augment its economic resources and consolidate colonial power in Central India. On the other hand, the territories of Saugor-Nerbudda also posed problem for the British authorities. The area was formed in 1820 from lands ceded to the East Indian Company by the Peshwa of Pune and the Raja of Nagpur after their defeat in 1818. These were Hindi speaking districts adjacent to the Narmada Valley. Till the mutiny in 1857, the Government placed the territories alternately under an official responsible to it, or to the Government of the North-western Provinces, but in both the cases the supervising authority was remote from the area. The outbreak of mutiny in 1857 compelled the government to make more effective arrangement for its administration. In 1861, for the sake of administrative convenience, the Government of India united the two territories, ignoring their linguistic and other diversity. The annexation of Berar, which strengthened the Marathi component of the Central Provinces, was similarly designed to solve an administrative problem. Berar was a fertile cotton growing area on the boundry of the province, with an annual revenue surplus. The revenue of the Central Provinces, by contrast, was barely enough to cover the cost of the administration and recurrent famines between 1896 and 1900 made governments' financial position even more insecure. The famines thus made it incumbent upon the Government to give the province immediate financial aid, and to provide it with long term source of revenue by leasing Berar from the Nizam of Hyderabad and annexing it to the province in 1903.
  59. Each of the constituent portions of the new state, except Bhopal, were themselves composite entities. The Madhya Bharat union, the Vindhya Pradesh union, and the Mahakoshal region had been created after independence. While the agitation for linguistic states and states reorganisation had been dominated by forces not important in the region (except for Vidarbha Region, the Marathi-speaking zone of the Central Provinces), the central government was forced to change political organisation in central India to conform with national patterns. In no small measure, Madhya Pradesh was formed because there seemed to be nothing else to do with its constituent parts. Many of the princely state unions were financially weak and politically unstable, and the central government thought that safety and stability lay in amalgamation. What is important to note is that the state was not 'created' on the basis of an indigenous demand, and that its constituent units in fact possessed almost no political affinity. Earlier during the British period, in the Hindi speaking region of the state, the competition for resources between different sections of the society was less marked, politicians generally utilized these developments to extend the influence of a single party — the Congress Party. In the Marathi region, where such competitiveness was more prevalent, these developments enabled politicians to form parties representing competing groups, with a result that Congress was only one of a number of political organisations in the region.
  60. **Wilcox, Wayne** : "Madhya Pradesh", In Myron Weiner", State Politics in India, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1968, Page 32.
  61. **Sharma, Ram Bilash** : *Bhasa Aur Samaj*, Rajkamal Prakashan, New Delhi, 1977, page 272.
  62. **Dalmia, Vasudha** : Nationlisation of Hindu Traditions : Bharatendu Harischandra & Nineteenth Century Banaras, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997.
  63. **Anang A. Yang** : The Limited Raj: Agrarian Relations in Colonial Indian, Saran District, 1793-1920. OUP, New Delhi, 1989.
  64. **Sunil Khilnani** : 'The Development of Civil Society', in Civil Society: History and Possibilities', in Civil Society: History and Possibilities. Cambridge University Press (forth coming).
  65. **James Manor** : 'India's Chief Ministers and the Problem of Governability', in Indian Brirfing: Staying the Course, edited by Philip Oldenburg. An East Gate Book, M.E.Sharpe, New York.
  66. **Sunil Khilnani** : op. cit

67. **Gupta, Shaibal** : ‘Emerging Configuration of the Contradiction Between Nationalism and sub-nationalism’, *Journal of Social and Economic Studies*, *Journal of Social and Economic Studies*, (a.s.). 3 (2). April and June 1986, Sage. New Delhi – Special Issue on ‘Regionalism and National Identities.’
68. **Shaibal Gupta** : Ibid.
69. Former Prime-Minister of India. He was powerful *jat* leader from western UP & can be referred as the organic intellectual of the agro-capitalist.
70. **Gordon White** : ‘Civil Society, Democratisation and Development; Clearing the Analytical Ground’, *Democratisation* 1(13), Autumn 1994, Page-377.
71. **Gupta, Shaibal** : “A Messiah for Bihar?”, Seminar, 480, New Delhi, August 1999, Page-36.
72. Former Deputy Prime-Minister of India. A Dalit leader from Bihar. His revolt against Indira Gandhi resulted into electoral rout of Congress Party in 1977.
73. **Witsoe, Jeffery** : “Cooperative Elections in Bihar”, unpublished paper presented in ADRI.
74. Witsoe, Jeffery — Ibid –
75. **Gupta, Shaibal** : ‘Panchayat Elections in Bihar’, LSE-ADRI Monograph – I, 2001, page 10
76. **Gupta, Shaibal** : ‘A Messiah for Bihar?’, Seminar, 480, New Delhi, August 1999, page 36.
77. **Gupta, Shaibal** : Ibid, page 12
78. Like, Rameshwar Rai (Amat), Puncham Mandal (Dhanuk), Rabindra Kumar (Tanti), Ramdev Bhandari (Keot), Ram Karan Pall (Gareri) and Jai Narain Nishad (Mallah) for Annexure - I
79. **Gupta, Shaibal** : ‘Panchayat Election in Bihar’ – op. cit – PP-12
80. **Gupta, Shaibal** : Ibid page 14
81. **Jafforelot, Christophe** : *India’s Silent Revolution : The Rise of the Low Castes in North Indian Politics*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, 2003, Page 435.
82. **Jafforelot, Christophe** : *India’s Silent Revolution*, page 442
83. **Jafforelot, Christophe** : I bid, page – 442.
84. Party of the Dalit, lower backwards & Muslims, mainly concentrated in UP, with powerful presence in MP & Punjab.
85. **Wayne, Wilcox** : op. cit, page 166.
86. **Christophe, Jafforelot** : Ibid, page, 443.
87. The settlement established three categories of semi-sovereign rulers : those who were subordinate to no other prince (such as Gwalior, Indore, Dhar and Dewas); those Rajputs princes who claimed independence from Maratha Courts (the ‘mediatised states’); and smaller Rajput landlords who were given ‘guaranteed estates’ with some governing powers in local affairs. This settlement, largely unchanged until India’s independence, established a semi-feudal order between the cultivator and the intermediary agents of the state. In Madhya Bharat, for example, there were 1329 ‘Jagirs’ distributed among the communities as follows : Maratha – 92, Mahant – 90, Rajput – 720, Brahman – 249, Kayastha – 32, Vaisya– 14, Muslim – 60 others – 72. But while the total area of Madhya Bharat was about 46,166 square miles, only 8,449 square miles were administered by the jagirdars. In a series of acts beginning as early as 1948, the various governments in the region passed legislation eliminating or restricting the power of the rural intermediaries, but with compensation of revenue and abdication of rights.
88. For example, in Malwa Region, a plateau at about 1,500-2,000 feet, three quarters of its territory included domain of either Gwalior or Indore. Gwalior, heir to the Scindia fortune, lay in the north and was the wealthiest state in the British Central India Agency. Indore, founded by the Maratha Holkar family, lay in South, surrounded like Gwalior by its lesser allies. Few rivalries have matched the raging quarrels of the Scindia and Holkar rulers, and Malcolm’s Settlement in 1818 was highly praiseworthy, if only because it ended the open violence of their enmity.
89. **Wilcox, Wayne** : Ibid., page 162.
90. **Wilcox, Wayne** : Ibid., page 162.
91. **Wilcox, Wayne** : op. cit, page 163.
92. **Wilcox, Wayne** : op. cit, page 164
93. In order to bring uniformity in the revenue system (prevalent in the five regions of the state), the state Government promulgated MP Land Revenue Code, 1959, which came into force on October 2, 1959.

Abolition of intermediaries (as per Zamindari Abolition Act and Abolition of Jagirs Act – 1951) had some effect on the distribution of land. However, the major distortions and inequalities in land holding distribution persisted, which necessitated the imposition of ceiling on land holding. Madhya Pradesh enacted two land ceiling legislations to ensure a more equitable land distribution (MP Ceiling on Agricultural Holding Act, 1960 and MP Ceiling on Agricultural Holding Act, 1974). The estimated surplus land in the state was 15.58 lakh hectares in 1970-71, but it came down to 11.48 lakh hectares in 1976-77. However, under the present ceiling, the surplus land is still about 8.02 lakh hectares, which is second highest estimate of surplus land in the country, next only to Rajasthan. Existence of such huge amount of surplus land seemed to be ideal for popular protest against the non-implementation of land reforms, but this did not happen. This may be explained by the heterogeneous nature of the tenure in the region.

94. **Choudhary, Prasanna K.** : op. cit, page 31.
95. **Choudhary, Prasanna K.** : op. cit, page 31.
96. **Singh, Vikash, Gehlot, Bupendra,**  
**Start, Daniel and Johnson, Craig** : Local Politics and The Distribution of Development Funds – Case studies from Madhya Pradesh., Draft ODI, working, paper 2002., page 30.
97. **Singh, Vikash, Gehlot, Bupendra,**  
**Start, Daniel and Johnson, Craig** : Ibid, page 30
98. **Singh, Vikash, Gehlot, Bupendra,**  
**Start, Daniel and Johnson, Craig** : Ibid, page 30
99. **Singh, Vikash, Gehlot, Bupendra,**  
**Start, Daniel and Johnson, Craig** : Ibid, page 31
100. **Singh, Vikash, Gehlot, Bupendra,**  
**Start, Daniel and Johnson, Craig** : Ibid, page 32
101. **Dayal, Lakshmeshwar** : State And The People : Political History and Government in India, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1998, page 170.
102. **Dayal, Lakshmeshwar** : Ibid, page 170
103. (i) **Pouchepadass, Jacques** – Land, Power & Market : A Bihar District under Colonial Rule, 1860-1947, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2000
- (ii) **Hill, Christopher V.** – River of Sorrow : Environment and Social Control in Riparian North India, 1770-1994. Association for Asian Studies, Inc. Monograph & occasional Paper Series, Number 55, 1997
- (iii) **Singer, Wendy** – Creating Histories : Oral Narratives and the Politics of History-Making, Oxford University Press, 1997.
104. **Jaffrelot, Christophe** — The Hindu Nationalist Movement And Indian Politics – 1925 to the 1990s. Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation & Mobilisation (with special reference to Central India), Viking, 1926.
105. (i) Digvijay Singh, in spite of a being master strategist, could not retain the socially excluded or major social segment from his own constituency. Either on the question of astrology or on the question of sanitation he gets inspired by a saint. A Government of Madhya Pradesh site states that the Chief Minister was inspired by Gadge Baba, a popular saint of Maharashtra to launch a sanitation mission in Madhya Pradesh. It is not accident that the Gyandoot, the Purveyor of Knowledge website on the district Dhar, highlights the general superstition there that, “Meeting a ..... a saint is considered a good omen ..... Similarly, a cat crossing one’s path, seeing one-eyed man, a barking dog etc. are considered ominous”. Thus the strategy of inclusion is dependent on Hinduism even if soft in Madhya Pradesh, whereas it is dependent on social assertion of the deprived in Bihar.
- (ii) Digvijay Singh Government sanctioned 429 works involving a cost of Rs. 202 crore for Simhasth Kumbh (mega religious congregation). Allocation of funds for the *Kumbh* were three times compared to the one held under the BJP government in 1992. Major renovation in 79 temples in Ujjain was sanction including expansion of the *Nandi Griha* in *Mahakal* Temple (TOI, December 6, Patna Edition).



106. Digvijay Singh had pinned hopes on *Adivasi* voters sticking with the Congress. But the party suffered serious erosion. One factor may well have been the surge of the *Godwara Gantantra* Party of the numerically significant *Gond* tribe. The party was as many as eight seats, of which Six were general constituencies. In the process, it provided tribal voters with an option to the BJP even as it ate into the Congress vote share.
107. With increasing problem of public finance, will it be possible for the state to be provider and yet win elections. BJP unfolded a clever strategy, to highlight to failure of 'governance', where it was not in the helm, whereas it may opt for Gujarat model of ethno-religious mobilisation, when it has to defend their track record of 'governance'. This double edged sword will be a new political innovation. In any case it will be erroneous to state that ethno-religious mobilisation was not attempted in Madhya Pradesh is BJP. In fact the polarisation was already done through successful road-shows of *Dr. Togadia* led *Vishwa Hindu Parishad*. The polarised community further gave electoral death knell to Congress Party in Madhya Pradesh on the question of 'governance'.



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- ✎ to undertake academic research of direct relevance to development efforts made by an individual or a group or the community itself;
- ✎ to broaden the database of research as also of its end use by involving as many classes of persons and institutions as possible;
- ✎ to offer research results in a more innovative, demystified and useworthy form; and finally
- ✎ to restore man to his central position in social research in totality and with full dignity.