

# **BULLETIN**

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CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES  
(*GAYATRI VIDYA PARISHAD*)

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## **THE 2009 EDITION**

It is customary to describe every General Election as crucial for the survival and stability of our democracy. Right from the first in 1952 every general election has generated keen political rivalry and considerable public excitement over the outcome though the Congress was for a long period the dominant party in national politics. The 1977 election was the first to upset electoral calculations and predictions of pollsters and psephologists. The last two decades have witnessed a paradigm shift in India's electoral politics characterized by the rise of regional parties and a significant power-shift from the centre to the states. The formation of government at the centre and the enunciation of public policy had been the prerogative of the Congress party for over four decades, except for a brief break during 1977-80. When the BJP led NDA government came to power in 1999 followed by the Congress led UPA government in 2004 expectations have been aroused about the possibility of the emergence of a bipolar constellation in India's electoral politics, though the total vote share of the two major parties, the Congress and the BJP, put together, did not cross the 50% mark of the votes polled in the 2004 elections.

The elections to the 15th Lok Sabha are, however, crucial in more ways than one. The uncertainty about the poll outcome is worrisome because of the likelihood of a severely fractured verdict in the 2009 election. Pollsters predict less number of seats in the Lok Sabha for the two main national parties, the Congress and the BJP, and more number of seats to regional and small parties. That might lead to a weak coalition government at the centre with the small parties calling the shots. There is no denying the fact that coalition governments provide for wider representation and more active participation of people at all levels, accommodating the interests and demands of hitherto neglected sections of the society. But when political parties are small and weak, allied to narrow sectarian interests they would adversely affect political stability and the larger national interests. A weak government will be a national liability in times of grave economic crisis or serious threats to national security such as recession and terrorist

attacks. Coalition politics of today are like a political game of musical chair. It is politics without principles, parties without an ideology and leaders without scruples- all engaged in a desperate, if not shameful, chase for power driven on the engines of money, liquor, caste and religion. Sops and subsidies are publicly offered without any sense or substance. Does it not amount to legitimizing corruption when for a vote is cast something is promised in return as quid pro quo? Are the leaders not trying to cheat the voters by anaesthetizing them with all sorts of promises?

Let us bear in mind that the 2009 election to the 15th Lok Sabha is the biggest democratic exercise in human history. From 176 million voters in 1952 the electorate has grown to a massive 713 million strong body today. With all its faults and limitations India is the world's largest democracy, having survived several assaults from within and from outside. The credit for the survival of Indian democracy goes mainly to all those who have voted in elections and to the hard working and dedicated governmental and non-official personnel responsible for the successful conduct of elections. As Rajni Kothari, the doyen among Indian political scientists wrote "The poor and suffering classes have kept the democratic process alive far more than the elite and affluent middle classes." The message is clear and loud. Every eligible voter must vote and vote with conscience. As many people as were there when India became free in August 1947 are still living below the poverty line. They need to be freed from want just as those living in fear must be liberated from insecurity. Women who constitute 50% of the population have never had double digit percentage representation of the total number of members of Lok Sabha—an average of less than 7% from 1952 to 2009!

Politics is too serious a matter to be left entirely to the so-called politicians whose profession is pursuit of power for selfish ends. It will remain dirty if we don't pick up courage to try to cleanse it of the dirt and disease accumulated over the years.

- The Editor

*"India is a reality that is far easier to delineate than to define". - OCTAVIO PAZ*

## WORLD DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS-7

- Prof. M.N.Sastri

### *Migration*

Migration has been an integral part of history. Political, economic and technological developments during this age of globalization have accelerated migration in response to demands for skilled personnel.

Human migration denotes any movement by people from one locality to another, sometimes over long distances or in large groups. Extensive human migration has been occurring at several stages since prehistory times. Homo sapiens moved out of Africa about 70,000 years ago. Migration to the Americas took place 20-25 thousand years ago. Indo Aryan migration to and within North India took place about 2,500 years ago. The age of exploration and European colonization led to an acceleration of migration with about 250,000 Europeans entering and settling in the Americas. The movement of populations continued under the form of voluntary migration within one region or beyond the nations, involuntary migration (e.g. slave trade of human beings, migration of Jews), ethnic cleansing (e.g. Holocaust during World war II). In the wake of partition of India in 1947 massive population exchange occurred between India and Pakistan. About 14.5 million people crossed the borders to what they hoped was the country of relative safety of the religious majority. About 7.2 million Muslims moved to Pakistan from India and 7.2 million Hindus and Sikhs moved to India. The newly formed governments were completely unequipped to deal with the migration of such staggering magnitude. Massive violence and slaughter occurred on both sides of the border resulting in the death of people estimated between 200,000 and 100,000. Some other recent examples of large-scale migration are the movement of Chinese into Tibet, ethnic Arabs into Iraqi Kurdistan, Israelis into the Gaza Strip, and Javanese into western New Guinea. People who migrate are called migrants, or more specifically emigrants, immigrants or settlers depending on historical settings, circumstances.

Slavery, defined as systematic exploitation of labour without consent and/ or the possession of human beings as property, can be traced back as an institution to ca 1760 BC. But the 15th Century saw this institution become an instrument of international commerce.

Expanding European empires in the New World (the Americas) lacked a reliable workforce. Europeans were unsuited to the climate and suffered from tropical diseases. Africans were found to be excellent workers with experience in agriculture and animal husbandry. They were used to the tropical climate, showed resistance to tropical diseases and were useful to work in plantations and mines. This need for workforce spawned a widespread and organized slave trade over a period of 450 years from the middle of the 15th century. The transatlantic slave trade in which British, European and African traders were involved led to the transportation of an estimated 11 million West African people, five times as many as the European migrants, across the Atlantic to the Americas. A similar slave trade conducted by the Arab and African traders over roughly the same period from the African continent's east coast enslaved an estimated 9.4-14 million people in the Arab world. New industries were created for processing the raw materials harvested or extracted by slaves in the Americas. Plantation owners profited from the free labour force provided by the slaves. The slave trade contributed significantly to the commercial and industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries.

With increasing opposition to slavery leading to the abolition of slave trade in the British Empire in 1807, the colonial powers (Britain, Holland, France, Portugal, and Spain) looked for alternate sources of cheap labour. India then under British subjugation became the source for cheap labour. Indians were taken as indentured labour over far-flung parts of the British Empire in the 19th century. The countries where Indians settled and worked include Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam, Burma (Myanmar), Malaysia, Kenya, South Africa, and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and other countries. Many Gujarati traders moved to East Africa and built flourishing trades. In the post World War II period, Indian labour and professionals helped reconstruction of the war-torn Europe while unskilled labour force helped the transformation of the landscape of the Middle East. Indians also had their presence felt in the US, Canada, UK and Australia.

Among all the countries in the world the US, with its rich tradition of immigrants looking for employment opportunities, is called the "melting pot" of Diasporas. According to the data for 2005, the 296.1 million US population comprises Hispanic (42.4 million), African

*"The progress we have made is substantial. It has laid the foundations for future advance, and it has done so on a democratic basis. The future should be more rapid than the past has been"* - JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

American (38 million), Asian American (13.2 million), Native American (2.9 million) and the rest (199.6 million). The US Census Bureau projects a significant demographic shift by 2050, the whites becoming a minority with the Hispanic, Black, Asian American Indian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander with higher birth rates and greater immigration outnumbering whites nationwide. Both the number and proportion of whites, which currently account for 66% of US population, are projected to dip to 46% by 2050. At the same time the Hispanic population will rise from 15% to 30%, Blacks from 13% to 15% and Asians from 5% to 9%.

It is predicted that by 2060 UK would be EU's largest country with a population of 77 million, compared to 61 million today. Germany the current top nation will see 82 million citizens dwindle to 71 million over the same period. Britain's boom is fueled by a run of immigration and a comparatively high birth rate, partly a consequence of higher fertility rate among its immigrant population.

The Indians are the largest ethnic group in UK, while they outnumber the Chinese in Australia. People of Indian Origin in US number about 1.7 million and represent the second largest Asian group next to the Chinese (2.76 million). More than 20 million persons of Indian origin and some six million Non Resident Indians are currently spread over 136 countries making the Indian Diaspora the most widespread in the world. The Indian Diaspora is more varied than any other Diaspora with about half-dozen religions and sub-ethnic identities. It also reflects a wide variety of occupational and income patterns from the highest to the lowest in the world. It has also suffered more than any other Diaspora (e.g. in East Africa, Fiji, Malaysia and Sri Lanka) except the Jewish Diaspora. It was also segregated for many decades until 1950s, with very little contact with India.

Since the 12th century Chinese from mainly southern China migrated to SE Asia. The 20 million Chinese settled in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines and Myanmar constitute almost 80 percent of the overseas Chinese. The 19th century, when the age of colonialism was at its height, saw the beginning of the great Chinese Diaspora. America and Australia needed great numbers of labourers for the dangerous tasks of gold mining, and railroad construction. The Chinese workforce that emigrated in large numbers met this demand. At the end of 1999, there were over 34 million

Chinese overseas constituting one of the largest Diasporas in the world. The people of Chinese origin represent the largest immigrant population entering the US, Canada and Australia. Chinese presence is currently rising significantly in Europe, Russia and Africa.

There is an important difference between the Chinese and Indian Diaspora. The Chinese Diaspora has helped change the face of homeland China. The Overseas Chinese community built up powerful business networks that control significant sectors of the Tiger economies of SE and S Asia (Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) and have also made a tremendous contribution to the economic development of their homeland China. The Indian Diaspora, while succeeding brilliantly in the US and UK on individual merit, have yet to play a major role in the development of Indian economy to levels comparable to China.

Illegal immigration has also been on the rise in recent times. Some causes that force people to resort to illegal immigration are: Escaping war or repression, Family reunification, and Poverty in search of destinations that offer wages higher than those achievable in their home countries. At the end of the Vietnam War in 1970 large numbers of boat people arrived in several countries en masse in old and crudely made boats seeking asylum. Recent years have witnessed significant illegal immigration to Europe and US spawning an underground smuggling network through clandestine and dangerous routes, mainly Thailand, outlying territories of Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico, where it is easier to circumvent immigration controls. Immigrants are smuggled in suitcases and ship containers. There are several incidents where people moving in containers were found dead due to suffocation. Hundreds of Indians, victims of well-organized underground networks and their agents, are reported to have been trapped in Syria, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Russia, places mainly used as transits for smuggling illegal immigrants for North American and European destinations. In Russian Far East, large numbers of Chinese live and work illegally as traders and labourers. The illegal immigration of Hispanic population across the Mexico-US border provides huge manpower to the US. The large-scale illegal immigration of tens of thousands of Bangladeshis through the porous borders with India in search of jobs in the non-formal sector has become a matter of security concern to India.

These illegal immigrants have settled down in several Indian states, including West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Tripura and even Delhi and Mumbai. This illegal immigration has even significantly altered the demographic complexion of the border states of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura.

For historical and political reasons many countries are made up of a diverse range of cultures and identities. An ideal multicultural society consists of a diverse range of cultures and identities where individuals are neither subjected to tyrannies of compulsive traditions, nor cultural groups subjected to the tyranny of a dominant group within. Administering multicultural societies is proving more and more difficult with external and internal factors contributing to their destabilization. There are instances when the migrant populations suffer from the aggressive acts of the local population. Indo-Fijians, mostly descendents of people who had migrated from India in the 19th and early 20th centuries and comprising about 44 percent of the country's population in Fiji were often made the targets of arson and looting. In 1972 the Asian migrant population in Uganda, consisting predominantly of Indian business community had to leave the country en masse in the wake of repressive measures of the government headed by Idi Amin. But in 1980's the exiled returned to their business empires that once again dominate the country's economy. The pent up frustration over inequality between Uganda's Asian communities and the blacks is again leading to ethnic violence. Currently the settlers in South Africa who came from Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Asian countries are the targets of xenophobic violence. The eight million Indian populations in Malaysia representing 8 percent of the country's population feel alienated. The Indian Tamils comprising 12.6 percent of Srilanka's population represent the descendents of the labour force that moved into the island during the 19th and 20th centuries. The Sinhalese majority considers them as an alien group. This has led to an ongoing war between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers crippling not only the economy of the island state but also causing serious political repercussions in the Indian continent.

The rise in immigration in the wake of globalization is contributing to the growth of multicultural societies in several countries. While some countries provide reasonably good examples of more or less well-managed

multicultural societies, there are some countries in which the societies remain fractious and deeply divided.

For historical reasons India is the most culturally and linguistically diverse geographical entity, only next to the African continent. As a result, the polity faces several challenges of meeting the increasing demands for preferential treatments to local ethnic groups in diverse fields and at the same time maintaining the development tempo to transform the country into a major economic power.

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## **"KEEP REGIONAL PARTIES AT BAY, SAY LEGAL LUMINARIES"**

*A strong unitary government at the Centre  
need of the hour, they say*

Strongly advocating a central government of national parties that could deliver and that would not succumb to the pressure of regional parties and satraps, speakers, mostly legal luminaries, at a seminar on 'Significance of 2009 Elections' organized by the Centre for Policy Studies at the civic library on 4th March 2009 Wednesday, said failure to have such a Government would result in uncertainty, instability and insecurity.

Initiating the debate, former Mayor and former Chairman of Bar Council of India, D.V.Subba Rao, pointed out to the disturbing state of affairs in surrounding countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and China to stress the importance of a strong unitary government at the centre. He had also recalled the divisive roles played by regional parties which had made the Prime Minister to bemoan that he was made a 'slave'. The UPA Government had been hijacked by regional parties. A Government that could carry on its own was of paramount importance, Mr. Subba Rao said.

M. Ramakoti, senior advocate, wondered whether free and fair elections would be possible under a person like Navin Chawla, who had played a 'dirty and nasty role during emergency' and who would take over as the Chief Election Commissioner after April 20.

"We need a unitary Government at the centre but not a despot," Mr. Ramakoti said, adding that the youth in the country, who had not been polluted, was the only silver lining.

According to retired IAS officer E.A.S.Sarma, regional parties would call the shots in the 2009 elections. 'The OBC section is competing for power. There is the Maya-Obama effect. Corruption is ubiquitous. The enormity of numbers is another factor. The voter is at the cross roads. But the voter would solve the puzzle,' Mr. Sarma said.

Vice-Chancellor of AP. Law University Y. Satyanarayana referred to coalitions which would lead instability and absolute majority which would lead to autocracy. According to Prof. Satyanarayana instability was better than autocracy.

Explaining the ironies and anomalies in our democracy, the Director of Centre for Policy Studies A.Prasanna Kumar, in his welcome address, recalled how during the 2004 general election, the UPA with 35.19 percent of votes came to power and the NDA which had polled 35.30 percent of votes was defeated.

Charging the electronic media and political parties with making election explosive, Mr. Prasanna Kumar, said "because of electronic media we were passing through a disturbing phase." He wanted the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Committee, like imprisonment of criminals ceiling on expenses, setting up of special courts etc. to be implemented. The Dean, Faculty of Law, AU, R.Venkat Rao spoke.

*(Courtesy: The Hindu, March 5, 2009)*

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## **NEED FOR ELECTORAL REFORMS**

- Sri C.Subrahmanyam

1. THE HINDU had a misleading headline stating that the speakers at the seminar had advised the voters to vote only for national parties to enable installation of a strong Govt. at the Centre. As rightly pointed out by Mr Sarma, national parties like Congress, BJP, Communists and Janata Dal have only a nominal presence in some states unlike the stalwarts of the past, most leaders of national parties cater to sectional interests – BJP – Hindutva, Congress and Lohia Socialists – Hindi belt.

2. Bad governance coupled with a sense of helplessness has unfortunately made the educated classes apathetic to the electoral process. There is hardly any

difference in the behaviour and performance of the ruling elite. Hence people do vote so on the basis of caste considerations or the lure of beer, biryani and bank notes.

3. The acrimonious relations between political parties and leaders are caused by the craze for unbridled power. People in power indulge in rampant corruption. Institutions provided in the Constitution, for checks, have been subverted and made ineffective.

4. Proportional representation with a list system may have some good effect in the present scenario. Different views and opinions would be well represented in the legislature. The list system may induce parties to nominate better types of principled and articulate candidates. Parties need not depend upon lumpen elements and money bags for winning elections. Such elements may not be interested in such electoral process.

5. Coalition politics is necessary as there are too many contradictions and disparities in our society. Brute majority obtained in the Assemblies (often less than 40% of the electorate) has a tendency to ride roughshod with their views and narrow objectives- Coalitions would check such tendencies.

6. It is hoped that society would draw appropriate lessons from events in Pakistan and neighbouring countries. Political parties and leaders should not become apologists for elements like Shiv Sena, SIMI, Bajrang Dal, and Maoists. Else the brute majority would be able to mow down moderate / liberal elements in our civil society, leading to sectarian dictatorship.

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## **SRI KRISHNA CHAITANYA (1486-1533) - V**

- Sri Challa Sivasankaram

It is perfect celestial joy that springs out of union and communion of innocent hearts. Joy is the Sutra on which the beads of innocent hearts form into a friendly garland. Goloka was bound to step down to Bhooloka. God as husband forms part of worship to God in the Chaitanya form of worship. Its sonorous echo reverberates in Meera Bhajan. Swami Vivekananda becomes rapt with emotion while he dwells on Chaitanya. Chaitanya was the kind of god-man and religious acrobat to be competent to fill the void and bridge the chasm that exists between man

*"There is a point when a ripple turns into a tidal wave, a wind into a blizzard and a movement into a revolution". - NANDAN NILEKANI*

and man. Sri Chaitanya developed a sort of devotion hitherto unheard of. The personality of Chaitanya befriended all. Caste logically lost its grip upon man. His language, unlike that of the earlier preachers of devotion, was the language of the common people, the salt of the soil. They toed the same attitude the great Buddha adopted to entice people into his fold. It was the attitude of transparent love. Then Pali was the language of the people of the country while Sanskrit was the language of the highbrow. The neglect of Sanskrit, adopting Pali had its disadvantageous effect. If we tend to trace cause of decline of Buddhism in its mother country it is no exaggeration if we impute it to the neglect of Sanskrit as the medium of teaching of the gospel. Omission of men versed in Sanskrit as it was the chosen language of Bharatiya Scripture and epic the damage inflicted on Buddhism had been irreparable. The commonalty were and still are accustomed to the mentality of the sheep. In the same devastating manner the Krishna Chaitanya mode of Bhakti lost its unprecedented dynamism and devotional fervour as time coursed forward. After all he lived on earth for 47 years. 3 years short of the span of Ramakrishna's life. If the erudite kept afar and their participation in the movement was not forthcoming the exit of the propounder leaves the arena void and the fate of the movement would be like that of the boat without helmsman. Sanskrit is not a dead language though it was included in the list of dead languages. As long as people are not vexed with religion and temple-going, Sanskrit flourishes not only as a language but as a dynamic power which will repair hope to men afflicted with a host of nefarious human weaknesses associated with hypothetical fears. As he was mellowing a deep honorific aura a settled on him redoubling his original charm. Like Sri Ramakrishna and other Avadhootas depicted in Srimad Bhagavatam innumerable times Sri Chaitanya passed through matchless trance and frenzied ecstasy for a good number of hours. At such periods he seemed lost in Krishna consciousness and remained indifferent to surroundings. Centuries before Bengal was going to reform or annul the caste system and its horrid effect on the trend of human relations Chaitanya waged intrepid war on the system as a whole not by violent means but by moral, humane and devotional means. The system with its allied evils must go. All men must live alike as they possess a seat for God. He espoused the cause in his own singular manner punctuated with religions fraternity. He saw success garlanding him as a token of

her dogged interest in the mission of Sri Chaitanya. Common man who was denuded of the foliage of humanness was raised to his original stature as man. Through devotion and casteless holding of mass Samkirtan and frenzied Bhajans he effected this stupendous metamorphosis. It was not a class war meant to behead a class of people whose crime was accident of birth. Class war was against man and God. Triumph of Chaitanya's endeavor instilled in him and his multitudinous following faith in the mission they undertook to carry on zealously. Chaitanya's mass movement of religious and social emancipation was striving for mergence with Krishna consciousness. They composed hymns on Sri Krishna inextricably associated with Radha as the born emancipator of men under the claws of bondage.

The short tale of Ranti Deva in Srimad Bhagavatam exemplifies the trend of devotion Chaitanya decided to preach and adopt. Ranti Deva was an exemplary Bhagavatottama. Bhagavatottama is one who feels and sees in all himself and himself in all. All are God. Love all; Serve all is his indispensable motto. Ranti Deva captivated the gracious attention of God who migrated to earth to meet him and invite him to enjoy the life in Vaikuntha along with himself. Vishnu Deva expressed his benevolent wish to Ranti Deva. Ranti Deva rejected the offer lest he should forgo the opportunity to serve men in whichever way the occasion demands. He preferred selfless service to humanity, to absorption in Brahman or Salokyam with Vishnu. This large-hearted form of service and creedless devotion unison, and concord Chaitanya fostered in the hearts of devotees. The modern Krishna cult movements gleamed abundantly from the thrilling life and work of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Whether it was Sankara the propounder of Advaita Vedanta or Chaitanya the die-hard dualist renunciation was held high as the sure path to deathlessness. Delight infinite ensues out of renunciation. Shant, chit and ananda are the triune aspects of one changeless and formless. Constant awareness of the triune as jiva or self impersonal leads the aspirant to deathlessness. Hope, desires and aspiration die a natural death in the self-realized soul. Adwaita and dwaita are sister tributaries of the self same and eternally flowing without ebb River Veda. As in Buddhism proselytization is not a taboo so too in the Sri Krishna Chaitanyaism. Conversion and reconversion are Law in Buddhism and Chaitanyaism The universal

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acceptance of the world as the manifestation of one and only Almighty by Sri Chaitanya the uncompromising dualist removes doubts of all hues as to inviolability of the great Upanishadic dictum, Ekaineva Adwiteeyam Brahma. Sri Krishna Chaitanyaism remains as the model form of advanced Krishna worship. Sri Chaitanya's life from birth to death carries a potential lesson to teach men that God loves those who love him.



*“Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people”.* - KARL MARX



*“The Ganga has been a symbol of India’s age-long culture and civilization, ever changing, ever flowing and yet ever the same Ganga”.* - JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

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*“My fellow citizens of the world, ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for we can do for the freedom of man”*. - JOHN FKENNEDY

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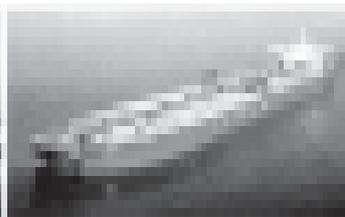
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