



Caste Politics and Emergence of Regional Political Parties in Bihar

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ABSTRACT

This paper mainly highlights the emergence of regional forces in the state of Bihar. India has experienced a rise in the number of political parties competing for power at the federal, state, and local levels over the years. Parties in India have played a vital role in carrying out tasks including political aggregation, articulation, socialization, and participation; as a result, they have been crucial elements of the Indian political system. Political parties have a significant role in shaping political culture in any nation. Regional parties' rise in India is noteworthy since it profoundly altered the group of parties in charge of the largest democracy in the world. Regional parties now occupy key leadership positions and are responsible for both toppling and upholding national governments. Regional parties in terms of incentives to politicians in the era of coalition politics. Instead, the early 1990s saw a significant shift in the political landscape that led to many politicians choosing regional parties. On the other hand the role of caste based parties and their role in the construction of Government. Also, the role of existing national parties and state parties and their impact on state politics.



1. Introduction: -

In the Indian system, caste provides a foundation for the creation of various interest groups, each of which strives for power with every other group. It can sometimes lead to an unhealthy power struggle and operate as a polarizing force. The concept of ethnic or sectarian fracture structures' impact on democracy obviously applies to India (Varshney, 2013). Caste has remained a prominent element in Indian politics. Caste-based relationships have a long history in Indian society, and many of them have evolved as electoral democracy has expanded. Most politically significant caste associations represent jati-clusters and work in that arena (Manor, 2012).

Political parties, whether they have a national or regional focus, are a crucial tool for organising and expressing the diverse political forces vying for dominance and power (Bhatnagar and Kumar, 1988:69). A regional party is one that often articulates and attempts to defend an ethnic or religio-cultural identity centered in the region. Regional parties have sparked a realignment of political forces, and they have had a wide-ranging, multi-directional impact on both the structure and practice of politics. Individual parties play or have played a significant role in shaping policy in a number of Asian nations, although when doing so, they have behaved more like administrative hierarchies in the spirit of imperial monopolistic politics than as an association of political parties that contribute to a political system. Party aggregation or linking refers to the degree of convergence between the number of parties at the national and sub-national levels in a democracy (Diwakar, 2010). A contemporary representational democracy cannot exist without political parties. Only the parties make sure that people can always participate in politics. They express and incorporate various passions, philosophies, and viewpoints. Party systems can be classified using a variety of characteristics. The number of parties vying for influence is the most popular criterion for categorizing party systems. This allows one to distinguish between one-, two-, and multi-party systems. How a party manages its relationships with its supporters and voters, as well as how it supports its activities, is greatly impacted by the need to respond to a vast electorate. Because the distribution of social divisions, cultural practices, and political institutions varies so much, different combinations of these components lead to somewhat varied outcomes in terms of party change (Ware, 1987).

Parties can be categorized according to a number of criteria, such as their level of organization, their socio-political goals, the socioeconomic strata they wish to represent and interact with, or their attitude towards the political system (Hofmeister, Grabow, 2011). Following the implementation of the Mandal Commission's recommendations regarding the backward classes,



power shifted from the top castes to the lower castes. Following this, parties turned their attention from social to political mobilization in an effort to increase the influence of the backward vote, highlighting how important it is to eradicate subcaste boundaries. How a party manages its relationships with its supporters and voters, as well as how it supports its activities, is greatly impacted by the need to respond to a vast electorate. Because the distribution of social divisions, cultural practices, and political institutions varies so much, different combinations of these components lead to somewhat varied outcomes in terms of party change. Indian party system has also been shaped by its distinct political and social features. The parties that have emerged in any state are concentrated or limited to a state and deep rooted in regional ambitions. Instead of a system of alternating parties representing competing interests and providing the electorate with alternative choices, the political process that institutionalized such a flexible and constantly changing structure of political organization was one of reaching compromises between competing groups (Kothari, 1970). Meanwhile, regional parties are described as parties that compete and win votes in only one region of a country. Regional political parties may run in national or regional elections. so long as they only compete at one level of government in one part of a country. Regional parties, in addition to competing in only one region of a country, tend to focus their agendas on issues affecting only these regions (Brancati, 2008,p.138). Regional parties typically operate in a particular state or area. It only has one region covered by its electoral base. It identifies with a specific cultural, religious, linguistic, or ethnic community and articulates regional interests. It is mostly focused on maintaining a variety of irrational demands based on language, caste, group, or location, or using the local resources of discontent. It concentrates on neighborhood or local issues and seeks to gain control of state politics.

Rajni Kothari claims that caste and Indian politics are intertwined. In this interplay, caste adopts certain modern traits while shedding some of its more traditional ones. Politics is an effective technique for creating social disparities because it offers members of lower castes the opportunity to use politics to achieve goals they would otherwise not be able to achieve through social methods by creating new criteria for selecting leaders (Sinha,2007). The advanced castes in the Congress controlled Bihar politics in the first couple decades following Independence. After the zamindari system was abolished and as a result of the Green Revolution's successes, an Other Backward Caste (OBC) middle class started to develop in the 1950s. Yadavs, Kurmis, and Koeris made political claims when the power of upper caste landlords wanted. The way that various socio economic groupings have been admitted to and integrated into the political system in Bihar is significantly impacted by the political struggle between the upper castes



(Rajkishor,2016). Even if it was unable to significantly alter the social, political, or economic landscape, the social struggle that took place in the middle of the 1980s and into the 1990s, particularly in central Bihar, undoubtedly instilled a sense of empowerment among the poor people who actively participated in it. Brahmins, Rajputs, Bhumihars, and Kayasthas are the upper castes of Hindus, whereas Yadavs, Kurmi - Koeris, and Baniyas are the lower castes. The SC, also known as the untouchables, is made up of the Chamars, Dusadhs, and Musahars. Untouchability continues to be practiced in some pockets of the state despite Jitan Ram Manjhi – belonging to the Musahar Community taking over as the chief minister of the state (Kumar,2018).

Politics of Bihar - Pre and Post 1990s

Even though the country began to undergo some political change in the middle of the 1960s, as demonstrated by the fact that several non-Congress governments assumed power in various states in 1967 (Bihar being one of them), the Congress Party's monopoly at the center wasn't finally broken and the Janata Party didn't come to power until 1977 (Kumar,1999). After the Janata party won the 1977 elections, the Backward Classes were once again a major political issue. Under Janata leadership, the UP and Bihar governments significantly increased the preferences for Other Backward Classes, which sparked severe unrest in Bihar and forced the Centre to intervene politically (Galanter, 1978).

After Independence and upto 1990s, when we look at the regime of different Chief Minister's dominance of Upper Caste reflected in the politics of Bihar. Bihar's Premier was Shri Krishna singh of the Congress. When we look at Bihar politics after independence, we see that caste group mobilisation was effective until the 1990s. Before 1990, Hindu higher castes including the Kayasthas, Rajputs, Bhumihars, and Brahmans dominated Bihar's social and political sphere (Kumar,2018). Up until the 1990s, the state was completely ruled by the Congress party, with a significant shift in the social base of political power. The influence of these caste groups is significant in the Congress party Sri Krishna Sinha is credited with establishing a Forward Raj in Bihar (Rajkishor, 2016). Shri Krishna Singh and Anugrah Narayan Singh, two eminent leaders of unwavering integrity and remarkable public spirit, led the first governments of Bihar in 1946. The two of them jointly ran the magnificent government. In Bihar politics, caste has historically been a significant factor. The Bhumihars and the Rajputs, the two castes most politically influential at the time, engaged in caste strife during Shri Krishna Singh's rule. The Backward people were ignored at the time, and no political party thought they were important players in



electoral politics or deserving of being elected. At first, both the ruling party and the opposition were represented by higher castes, and the electorate was made up of upper castes active during the independence movement. Between 1952 and 1962, the Scheduled Castes and Muslims were under the influence of the "Brahmins, Rajputs, Bhumihars and Kayasthas," who controlled more than 40% of Congress legislators (Ankit, 2018,p.07). While the Bihar Land Reforms Act of 1950 disrupted the conventional social pyramid by creating a "new class of people" from among "occupancy tenants," it primarily resulted in patronage networks and caste alliances, control of which remained with the "upper" castes. After that the total revolution of Jaya Prakash Narayan was considered as the emergence of OBC politics in Bihar. Jayaprakash Narayan expressed the basic aphorism of Bihar Politics in 1974 when he stated, "Caste is the biggest political party in Bihar" (Ankit,2108) . Jayaprakash Narayan spearheaded an anti-Congress campaign in 1974, in which students demanded the resignation of state legislatures. With enormous protests and strikes, the movement caused numerous interruptions. Jayaprakash Narayan saw his populist movement as a "total revolution" catalyst (Witsoe,2013,p.46). Kayasthas played an important influence in Bihar politics between 1977 and 1980. K B Sahaya, Badrinath Verma, Jagati Narain Lal, Syam Nandan Sahaya, BaldeoShaya, Kamal deo Narain, Anirudha Prasad, and P N Sinha were among the famous legislators who were active, although the kayastha population was relatively small, accounting for only 1% of the overall population (Gautam, 2018).

The findings of the Mungerilal Commission were executed in 1978 by Janata Party member Karpoori Thakur. As chief minister of Bihar following the proclamation of a state of internal emergency, Dr. Jagannath Mishra opposed the implementation of OBC reservation. He disregarded the Mungeri Lal backward classes commission's final report, which was presented in February 1976 and was appointed by his own party. Power transferred from the upper castes to the lower castes once the Mandal Commission's recommendations on the backward classes was put into practise. Later, parties shifted their focus from social to political mobilisation, stressing how crucial it is to get over subcaste barriers in order to boost the influence of the backward vote.This was the first significant effort to comprehend the situation facing Bihar's Backward Classes. The categorization of the backward classes into the most backward classes (MBCs) and other backward classes (OBCs) was suggested by this commission. OBCs are divided into two categories as a result of the Mungerilal Commission's report: Upper Backward Caste and Most Backward Caste.

The implementation of the Mandal Commission signals a significant shift in Bihar politics.



Backward caste groups were mobilized in Bihar to confront anti-Mandal protests. This sparked a street battle between anti-reservations and pro-reservations activists (Kumar, 1999,p.2479).Then the politics of Backward began. Through his quota politics, Karpoori Thakur also contributed significantly to the union of various segments of the underprivileged. the growth of the OBCs and then middle caste peasants in North Indian politics. When they entered the Bihar and Uttar Pradesh legislative assemblies in large numbers in the 1960s under the sponsorship of the socialist parties and Charan Singh, the first notable changes happened (Jafferlot, 2000,p.87). When we examine the historical setting that led to the development of backward caste politics after the 1990s. The Janata government's action sparked contradictory caste-based claims and social mobilisation in Bihar, which would later affect state politics for decades. It also saw the rise of Lalu Prasad Yadav, Nitish Kumar, Sushil Modi, Sharad Yadav, Ravi Shankar Prasad, Lalan Singh, Ram Vilash Paswan in state politics. Nearly 80% of the people of Bihar depend on agriculture for a living, and it is the backbone of the state's economy. In the ten years prior to the Bihar movement, political militancy increased among the agricultural castes, particularly the Koeris and Yadavs. Leaders like Jagdev Prasad played a significant role in Bihar politics. He is regarded as the top leader among the underdeveloped people. Regional identity was eventually supplanted by caste-based politics, which first put Brahmins, Bhumihars, and Rajputs in positions of power. However, higher castes (Brahmins, Bhumihars, and Rajputs) were displaced in the 1990s by backward castes including Yadav, Koeri, and Kurmi.

Backward castes felt empowered as early as the mid-1970s, a sense that blossomed fully in the early 1990s when Lalu Yadav became Bihar's chief minister (Kumar,1999). Lalu Prasad Yadav led the first OBC majority government to power in the 1990s. This election effectively eliminated upper caste rule in Bihar. The dictatorship of Lalu Prasad Yadav and Rabri Devi has a bad track record in governance. The state's development spending has decreased both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the overall budget. Bihar's per capita income fell as the rest of the country gained the benefits of economic freedom. However, this period was revolutionary for the empowerment of the lower caste. The state assembly debated social justice for the first time. Lalu Prasad loomed enormous because he emerged at a critical juncture in history. The 'backwards among the backwards' also emerged with his arrival. The exploitative order's caste system has undergone just one significant adjustment (Ankit, 2018,p.18). Lalu Prasad Yadav and Rabri Devi ruled in Bihar for 15 years, from 1990 to 2005. Bihar was under president rule twice from 1990 and 2005. Laloo's contribution in Bihar politics can never be underestimated. Nitish Kumar served as Chief Minister for seven days before resigning because he was unable to



demonstrate a majority on the floor of the House. Changes occurring throughout the world reflect the leaders' strategies. After the 1990s, Bihar's politics revolved around two leaders: Lalu Prasad Yadav and Nitish Kumar.

Nitish Kumar's politics are still based on caste, but neoliberalism has provided him with an opportunity to refocus his agenda on development (Kumar, 2013). Nitish's ability to reach out to the backward among the backward, the dalit among the dalits, as well as women and Muslims, propelled him to victory not only within the state but also on the national stage. Nitish Kumar represents Lohia and Karpoori Thakur politics, which has long been opposed to upper caste supremacy. In the post-mandal scenario, the contradictions inherent in the agrarian structure and between backward castes and Dalits in north India were developing at a rapid pace, especially after certain backward castes with a clear historical advantage took advantage of new opportunities in land and agriculture (Kumar, 2013).

Janata Dal : An overview :-

The growth of regional parties in India can be traced to a variety of factors. Here are a few of them: The diversity of cultures and ethnicities in Indian society. Economic inequalities and regional development imbalances. Certain sections' want to keep their own identities owing to historical causes. National politics' failure to fulfill regional goals Language-based state reorganization. The charismatic nature of regional leaders Conflicts between factions within the larger parties The influence of caste and religion on politics In various states, regional parties' trajectories have varied. In the middle of the 1960s, the Southern states experienced a powerful surge of regionalism that later evolved into the foundation of numerous political parties.

The Janata Party was established in 1977 following the declaration of the Lok Sabha election and the lifting of the state of emergency. With a two-thirds majority, the Janata Party suddenly took over as the center's ruling party. They also controlled two-thirds of the majorities in the legislatures of ten states (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, and Odisha) after the June 1977 election.

Once the Mandal Commission's recommendations for the backward classes were put into action, power shifted from the top castes to the lower castes. Then, in order to boost the influence of the backward vote, parties shifted their focus from social to political agitation, emphasizing the importance of removing the sub caste barrier. Power was transferred when the recommendations of the Mandal Commission for the lower classes became reality. Any non-



upper caste group can be affected by it, but the other backward classes (OBC), a category that encompasses castes thought to occupy a socioeconomic space between the SCs and upper castes, are particularly at risk (Witsoe, 2013,p.44).

The Janata Dal, which was formed in October 1988, was made up of different political factions. When we are looking at the factions, they are classified into mainly three parts:

1. One side of Chandra Shekhar and a split of Morarji Desai's old Congress party.
2. One side, led by Charan Singh, was composed of medium peasants and Backward castes of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.
3. The third side was made up of Congress dissidents, for instance, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, who defected from the Congress party in 1987 over corruption issues.

Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh took the brave step on August 7, 1990, to direct the execution of the Mandal Commission Report's proposal that 27% of government positions be reserved for so-called "backward castes" (Fickett, 1993). After this decision, the collapse and split in the Janata Dal started.

The Electoral performance of Janata Dal, and after 1998 general election party disintegrated.

Table :- 01

Year	Seats Won
1989 General Election	143
1991 General Election	59
1996 General Election	46
1998 General Election	06

(Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi)

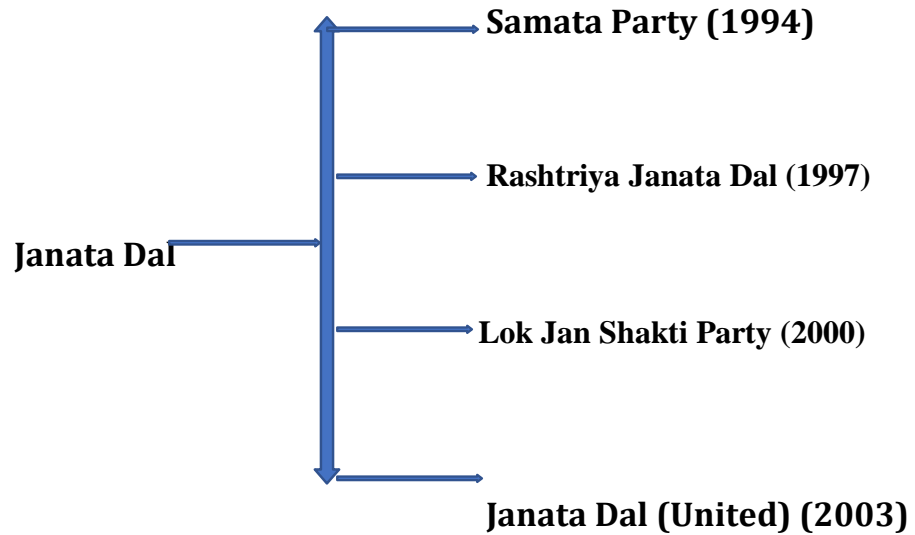
It originally came to power in 1989, following the defeat of Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) in elections due to allegations of corruption known as the Bofors scandal. The Janata Dal and a few other parties in the administration created the National Front alliance, which received outside support from the Left Front and the Bharatiya Janata Party. The prime minister was V. P. Singh. This coalition fell apart in November 1990, and a new administration led by Chandra Shekhar of



the Samajwadi Janata Party (Rashtriya) with the assistance of the Congress came to power for a brief time. The Janata Dal changed its focus from caste to positive discrimination as its main social reform. Caste was given less priority than class. The party will adhere to the recommendations of the Mandal Commission in accordance with the programme it agreed to at its first meeting while taking into account the particular requirements of the socially and educationally impoverished strata (Jaffrelot, 2003,p.337).

The list of factions in Janata Dal is as follows. Here, only a few major regional parties are mentioned.

- Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) led by Ajay Singh Chautala.
- Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party led by Pashupati Kumar Paras.
- Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) led by Jitan Ram Manjhi.
- Janata Dal (United) led by Nitish Kumar.
- Rashtriya Janata Dal led by Lalu Prasad Yadav.
- Biju Janata Dal led by Naveen Patnaik.
- Janata Dal (Secular) led by H. D. Deve Gowda.
- Samajwadi Party of Late Mulayam Singh Yadav and now led by Akhilesh Yadav.
- Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) led by Chirag Paswan.
- Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) led by Om Prakash Chautala.
- Rashtriya Lok Dal of Late Ajit Singh and now led by Jayant Chaudhary.
- Jan Adhikar Party Loktantrik led by Pappu Yadav.
- Garib Janta Dal (Secular) led by Sadhu Yadav.
- Loktantrik Samajwadi Party led by Raghu Thakur.
- Samajwadi Jan Parishad of Late Kishen Pattanayak and now led by Kamal Banerjee.



A flashback to the past. By the middle of the 1990s, Mandal politics in Bihar had split into two rival political parties: Nitish Kumar's Samata party (later the JD(U)) and Lalu Prasad Yadav's Janata Dal (after the RJD). Both parties have their origins in a prominent backward caste, the Kurmis and the Yadavs, respectively (Ali, 2022).

In this part, the major political parties in Bihar are divided into National and Regional parties. In Bihar, basically two national parties are, i.e., BJP and INC. Whereas, in terms of regional parties there are numerous parties, each party targeting some particular caste group. The regional parties are follows :-

- Janata Dal (United) (JDU)
- Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)
- Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) (HAM – SE)
- Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP)
- Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) (LJP Ram Vilas)
- Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP)
- Rashtriya Lok Janata Dal (RLJD)
- Jan Adhikar Party (JAP)



Profile of National Parties in Bihar :-

01. INC (Congress)

The Indian National Congress (INC), sometimes known as the Congress Party or just the Congress, It was the first contemporary nationalist movement to arise throughout the British Empire in Asia and Africa when it was founded in 1885. Political parties have not always been a joyful aspect of Indian politics, but they have been and continue to be important elements of Indian politics. The Indian National Congress (INC) is perhaps the oldest party in Asia, if it can be said to have existed as a political organisation before 1947 (Palmer, 1971). Under Mahatma Gandhi's direction, the Congress took the lead in the Indian independence struggle, starting in the late 19th century and notably after 1920. The Congress played a vital role in the British Empire's various anti-colonial nationalist movements as well as in the independence of India from the United Kingdom. The Congress controlled Indian politics from Independence until 1967, to the point where the country was frequently referred to as having a single dominant party.

Power transferred from the upper castes to the lower castes once the Mandal Commission's recommendations addressing the backward classes were put into practise. In an effort to boost the influence of the backward vote, parties then shifted their focus from social to political mobilization while emphasizing the necessity of eradicating subcaste borders. The Mandal Commission's suggestions for the lower classes were implemented, which reduced their power. When the Mandal Commission's recommendations regarding the impoverished classes were put into practise. Once the Mandal Commission's recommendations on the transfer of power from the higher castes to the lower castes were implemented, In Bihar, the party held power for numerous years, and 16 chief ministers of the state have been congressmen (Kumar, 2018). INC ruled for almost two decades after Independence, and from 1980 to 1990, it also ruled in Bihar. We can't ignore the dominance of Congress in the politics of Bihar. The party has suffered a severe fall in the state since 1990, and is now only a small player. When it ran alone in the state elections, it hardly ever succeeded in winning seats. As a result, it has allied with the RJD (a regional party) to run in multiple Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in recent years (Kumar,2018).



The dominance of Congress and the decline of Congress through electoral performance can be seen in the Table :- 02

Year	Election	No. of Winning Seats
1951	1 st Assembly	Total :- 276 ; INC – 239
1957	2 nd Assembly	Total :- 318 ; INC – 210
1962	3 rd Assembly	Total :- 318 ; INC – 185
1967	4 th Assembly	Total :- 318 ; INC – 128
1969	5 th Assembly	Total :- 318 ; INC – 118
1972	6 th Assembly	Total :- 318 ; INC – 167
1977	7 th Assembly	Total :- 318 ; INC – 57
1980	8 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; INC – 169
1985	9 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; INC – 196
1990	10 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; INC – 71
1995	11 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; INC – 29
2000	12 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; INC – 23
Feb 2005	13 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; INC – 10
Oct 2005	14 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; INC – 10
2010	15 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; INC – 04
2015	16 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; INC – 27
2020	17 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; INC – 19

(Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi)

02. BJP (Bhartiya Janata Party)

One of the two main political parties in India, along with the Indian National Congress, is the Bharatiya Janata Party. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh, established in 1951 by Indian politician Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, is where the party's roots may be discovered (Swain, 2001).

The Jana Sangh joined forces with a number of other political organisations following The



Emergency of 1975–1977 to establish the Janata Party, which went on to beat the incumbent Congress in the 1977 general election. After three years in government, the Janata Party disbanded in 1980, and the former Jana Sangh members reorganised to become the current BJP.

The BJP's official ideology is integrated humanism, which was initially articulated by Deendayal Upadhyaya in 1965. The BJP is considered a right wing political party. The party has only ever been a junior partner in ruling coalitions with the JD (U) and has never been the head of a government in the state (Kumar, 2018:24). The BJP and Samat Party (later JD(U)) formed an alliance in 1996. The alliance of the BJP and JD(U) stood for 17 years, and in 2013, it ended. From 2005 to 2013, the alliance of JD(U) and BJP ruled in Bihar, and during that period, Sushil Kumar Modi served as the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar under Nitish Kumar.

Electoral performance of BJP in Bihar in Table :- 03

Year	Election	No. of Winning Seats
1980	8 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; BJP – 21
1985	9 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; BJP – 16
1990	10 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; BJP – 39
1995	11 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; BJP – 41
2000	12 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; BJP – 67
Feb 2005	13 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; BJP – 37
Oct 2005	14 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; BJP – 55
2010	15 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; BJP – 91
2015	16 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; BJP – 53
2020	17 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; BJP – 74

(Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi)

Profile of Regional Parties in Bihar :-

01. RJD (Rashtriya Janata Dal)

The Rashtriya Janata Dal is an Indian political party with headquarters in Bihar and Jharkhand. Lalu Prasad Yadav founded the party in 1997. The RJD was formed on July 5, 1997 , after a formal vertical split in the JD (Janata Dal) (Kumar, 2018). The creation of a society based on social justice and secularism was the RJD's stated objective. Lower castes have historically made up the majority of the party's supporters, and the party is seen as an advocate for lower caste



politics. The party's particular logo, "Lalten Chhap," conveyed a message of optimism for light in the sense of development. The party is seen as a political ally of the lower castes because it has historically drawn support from Muslims, Dalits, and Other Backward Classes (Witsoe, 2013). In 1997, Lalu Yadav's name cropped up in the fodder scam, followed by demands within the party and outside the party for his resignation. Lalu Yadav had become the unquestioned leader of the lower backwards as well as the Yadavs and Muslims. (Kumar,2018,p.81). Then, he resigned from the post of national president of the Janata Dal and formed his own party, named "Rashtriya Janata Dal" (RJD). In Bihar, Lalu Yadav preserved his political legacy. On July 25, 1997, he resigned as Chief Minister, and his wife Rabri Devi took his place (Kumar, 2018).

In 2013, JD(U), a regional party, broke alliance with the BJP; then, in the 2015 legislative assembly election, RJD made an alliance with JD(U) as part of Mahagathbandhan, which means Grand Alliance. In this election, RJD emerged as the single largest party in election 2015, and after a long time, Lalu Yadav and RJD have again come back in the politics of Bihar. After this election, two sons of Llau Prasad Yadav entered politics in Bihar. His younger son, Tejasvi Yadav, became Deputy Chief Minister, and his elder son, Tej Pratap Yadav, became Minister under Nitish Kumar. Tejashwi Yadav was charged with corruption in July 2017, and Nitish Kumar requested that Yadav step down from the cabinet. The RJD rejected this request. On July 26, 2017, Nitish Kumar resigned, terminating the RJD's involvement in the Bihar administration in order to maintain his reputation as being anti-corruption.

In 2022, conflict arose between JD(U) and BJP; again, RJD made an alliance with JD(U) and formed a government.

After formation of RJD , electoral performance in Table :- 04



Year	Election	No. of Winning Seats
2000	12 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; RJD – 124



Feb 2005	13 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; RJD – 75
Oct 2005	14 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; RJD – 54
2010	15 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; RJD – 22
2015	16 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; RJD – 80
2020	17 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; RJD – 75

(Source :- *Election Commission of India, New Delhi*)

02. JD (U) (Janata Dal (United))

The political party known as Janata Dal (United), or JD (U), is mainly present in eastern and north-eastern India. On October 30, 2003, the Janata Dal (United) was founded by the merging of the Janata Dal's Sharad Yadav faction, the Lok Shakti Party, and the Samata Party. The formation of the JD (U) is through the Samata Party. In the 1995 legislative assembly election, Samata Party won 7 seats, and in the 2000 assembly election, Samata Party won 34 seats. Following his assumption of power as chief minister of Bihar, Yadav's assertion occurred under the direction of Lalu Prasad Yadav in the JD, and in 1994, the Kurmi-Koeri combination broke away from the upper backward leadership of the party. The battle lines between these two factions were established after Nitish Kumar founded the Samata Party, with the Yadavs on the one hand and the Kurmi-Koeris on the other (Kumar, 2018,p.69). Later on, the Samata Party merged and the JD (U) formed.

The ideology of JD (U) is Secularism and socialism. In November 2005, the BJP and its alliance partner, the JD (U), overthrew the RJD-led UPA government in Bihar. Nitish Kumar, the leader of the JD (U), presided over the new administration, and the NDA continued to rule the state. In Bihar, the JD (U) ended a 17-year alliance with the BJP in protest over Narendra Modi's elevation to head the party's election campaign committee for the 2014 general election in India. In the 2015 assembly election, JD (U) made alliances with RJD and Congress. After some conflict with RJD, break alliance with RJD and again form an alliance with the BJP. After the 2020 assembly election, to blame the BJP, they are trying to weaken JD(U), again break alliance, and in the present time, JD(U) is in alliance



with RJD and other communist parties.

After formation of JD(U) , electoral performance in Table :- 05

Ye ar	Election	No. of Winning Seats
Feb 2005	13 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; JD(U) – 55
Oct 2005	14 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; JD(U) – 88
2010	15 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; JD(U) – 115
2015	16 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; JD(U) – 71
2020	17 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; JD(U) – 43

(*Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi*)

03. HAM - SE (Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular))

Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) is a secular Indian political party based in Bihar. After losing a lengthy power struggle with Nitish, who appointed Manjhi as CM following his party's humiliating defeat in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. After being ousted from the role of Chief Minister in 2015, Jitan Ram Manjhi left the JD (U) and founded the HAM (Kumar, 2018:27). The party entered the NDA in July 2015 and contested for 21 seats, with some more members contesting in Bihar on the BJP ticket. The Mahagathbandhan government was overthrown in 2017 after the Janata Dal (United) switched alliances, ushering in the National Democratic Alliance as the next ruling party. Hindustani Awam Morcha exited the coalition in 2018.

The alliance was re-joined by the National Democratic Alliance during the campaigning period in August 2020. In the 2020 Bihar Assembly elections, the party received four seats, and Santosh Suman Manjhi from the Manjhi family became a minister in Nitish Kumar's government.

After formation of HAM - SE , electoral performance in Table :- 06



Year	Election	Contested Seats	No. of Winning Seats
2015	16 th Assembly	21	Total :- 243 ; HAM – 01
2020	17 th Assembly	07	Total :- 243 ; HAM – 04

(Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi)

04. LJSP (Lok Jan Shakti Party)

The Lok Janshakti Party was a state-level political organisation with a major base in the Indian state of Bihar. In 2000, Ram Vilas Paswan left the Janata Dal, and this led to the formation of the party. In Bihar, the party had a sizable Dalit support base. Its president, Ram Vilas Pawan, belongs to the Pasi caste, a subcaste within the dalits (Kumar, 2018). Dalits make up 16.5% of the state's population. Although Dalits are distributed throughout the state, some places have a concentration of them, and their support for a party might affect the results of an election in those areas (Kumar, Ranjan, 2009). A substantial portion of Dalit voters supported Ram Vilas Paswan, the leader of the LJP, who was regarded as the Dalit community's most adored leader.

The LNJP is noted for switching allegiances between alliances while playing a minor role in the state with a strong support base among a portion of dalits and Muslims (Kumar, 2018).

After the Gujarat riots, Ram Vilas Paswan resigned as Union Minister, and his party also came out of the NDA. Later on, LJSP joined the UPA and again became an Union cabinet Minister. This party crisis happened in 2021, after the Bihar Assembly election of 2020. Five renegade MPs were expelled by Chirag Paswan. He was fired as party leader by the Paras-led camp. Five MPs led by Pasupati Paras asserted on Tuesday that they had ousted Chirag Paswan as party national president, leaving the Lok Janshakti Party divide wide open. Paswan, however, claimed that the LJP convened a national executive meeting and expelled the five renegade MPs from the party's core membership.

The party has two factions: the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) and the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party, led by Chirag Paswan, and the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party, led by Cabinet Minister Pashupati Kumar Paras.



After formation of LJSP , electoral performance in Table :- 07

Ye ar	Election	No. of Winning Seats
Feb 2005	13 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; LJSP – 29
Oct 2005	14 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; LJSP – 10
2010	15 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; LJSP – 03
2015	16 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; LJSP – 02
2020	17 th Assembly	Total :- 243 ; LJSP – 01

(*Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi*)

05. RLSP (Rashtriya Lok Samata Party)

Upendra Kushwaha led the Rashtriya Lok Samta Party, an Indian political party. Senior Koeri leader Upendra Kushwaha resigned from the JD(U) in 2013 because of escalating conflicts with Chief Minister and JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar (Kumar, 2018). In 2007, Upendra Kushwaha was expelled from the Janata Dal (United). In February 2009, Kushwaha established the Rashtriya Samata Party. The Nitish Kumar government's allegedly dictatorial leadership in Bihar and marginalisation of the Koeri caste were factors in the formation of the party. With the repair of the relationship between Kushwaha and Kumar, the party was incorporated into the Janata Dal (United) in November 2009. After the party's poor performance in the 2020 Bihar assembly elections, rumors of a merger with the JD (U) resurfaced. The party eventually merged into the JDU, which was founded as a result of a schism in 2013, and Kushwaha was appointed president of the JD (U)'s parliamentary board. The merger and the warm reception given to Upendra Kushwaha were interpreted as an attempt to resurrect the JD (U)'s old social alliance of Kurmi-Koeri castes, which Nitish Kumar used to depose the Rashtriya Janata Dal from office after the



1990s. After that, Kushwaha became more ambitious and resigned from JD (U) again in 2023 and formed a new party, i.e., the Rashtriya Lok Janata Dal.

After formation of RLSP , electoral performance in Table :- 08

Year	Election	Contested Seats	No. of Winning Seats
2015	16 th Assembly	23	Total :- 243 ; RLSP – 02
2020	17 th Assembly	99	Total :- 243 ; RLSP – 00

(Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi)

06. VIP (Vikassheel Insaan Party)

Bollywood set designer Mukesh Sahani, who campaigned for the Bharatiya Janata Party during the 2015 Bihar Legislative Assembly election, formed the Vikassheel Insaan Party on November 4, 2018. The Nishad community, which consists of 20 subcastes of fishermen and boatmen, serves as the party's major base of support. In 2019, the VIP Party contested three seats but didn't win any of them. In 2020, the VIP Party joined the NDA led by Nitish Kumar and contested 11 seats The party was successful, and though Sahani himself lost the election, his party won four seats. But the NDA made Sahni a member of the legislative council and then a minister in government. On March 23, 2022, all four MLAs of the party defected to the BJP, leaving the party with no MLAs.

When Bihar and Jharkhand are not separated one party majorly influenced the Politics of Bihar i.e., JMM (Jharkhand Mukti Morcha).

JMM (Jharkhand Mukti Morcha)

Jharkhand Binod Bihari Mahato created the Mukti Morcha, also known as the Jharkhand Liberation Front, in the Indian state of Jharkhand. The bow and arrow is used as an election symbol.

On Birsa Munda's birthday, a 19th-century tribal warrior from Jharkhand who



battled against British control in modern-day Jharkhand, the party was formally established. On Birsa Munda's birthday in 2000, the State of Jharkhand was also created.

The 1950s tribal state-separation movement in Jharkhand is where the JMM's roots may be found. In the 1960s and 1970s, the movement underwent an ideological change as demands for tribal sovereignty and development increased. (Rai, Kumar, 2009).

Electoral Performance of JMM in

undivided Bihar . Table :- 09

Year	Election	No. of Winning Seats
1980	8 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; JMM – 11
1985	9 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; JMM – 09
1990	10 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; JMM – 19
1995	11 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; JMM– 10
2000	12 th Assembly	Total :- 324 ; JMM – 12

(Source :- Election Commission of India, New Delhi)

The general election scenario from 2009 demonstrates the existence of caste consciousness among various caste groups; as a result, LJP and RJD formed alliances and linked caste groups to them, and the outcome was in their favour. Yadav and Muslims actively campaigned and voted in favour of the RJD. On the other hand, the JD (U) has a significant base of support from the two major OBC castes, the Kurmis and the Koeris, and its coalition with the BJP did draw in voters from upper castes (Kumar, Ranjan, 2014). People were not only satisfied with the progress being made, but they also had great expectations for the government, as evidenced by the resounding support for the ruling coalition. After the repair of the roads and the state of law and order, people would expect the government to do much more for their welfare.



Conclusion: -

The diversity and socioeconomic division of Indian society have led to a profusion of regional and other political parties, frequently giving each state in the Indian Union its own party system that is only tangentially tied to the national party structure (Brass, 2003,p. 67). Backwards now play a significant role in Bihar politics, as seen by the shifting social makeup of political representation. People are emotionally and socially mobilized by their own caste leader.

The most recent results have demonstrated that parties' shares of political power may alter, but it is difficult to envision a scenario in which the backwards would be denied their share of power in the near future. Representatives are partly attributable to the switch in the ruling party. When the political scenario changed in Bihar, Nitish Kumar started politics to remove Lalu Yadav's rule, but after some time, they were in the same alliance. Politics creates unusual bedfellows in India.

The chance of a regional party dominating in either of these systems, however, depends on the size of the region the party represents. The larger the region, the more likely it is that a regional party representing it will hold office (Brancati, 2008). As a result, the size of an Indian state's party system might vary depending on whether and to what extent voters and parties can coordinate their decisions and goals throughout the state's districts.

India may have received the type of political stability it required in the early years after independence as a result of the Congress party's overwhelming dominance (Palmer,1971).The majority of parties are essentially regional or local groupings made up mostly of a leader's supporters. Leaders of regional parties that participate in national politics benefit more because they are given ministerial positions, greater discretionary funding from the federal government, and more stable state administrations (Ziegfeld, 2012). Both before and after independence, the Congress was clearly the dominant political party. It began in 1885 as a pressure group with an urban intellectual base, but by the late 1930s, it had transformed into a political party representing all socioeconomic groups in Indian society.

Most state regional parties arose with the idea of anti-Congressism, which



shaped their ideological perspective as well as their social base. It also limited their options for forming an electoral alliance. The Mandal Commission made caste politics more visible. Around 75% of the people in Bihar live in rural areas, and due to low literacy rates and a lack of awareness about how to choose their representatives based on development policies rather than caste politics, they are unable to choose the right politicians or political party for them, which is a major contributor to slow development. Rajni Kothari claimed in his seminal article, "The Congress System in India," that the system permitted intra-party conflict but not a transfer of power, and that opposition parties and organizations with ties to the Congress fulfilled the traditional functions of opposition parties in a democracy in India (Mehra, 2013). Politics of populism and symbolism cannot last for very long; it is clear that politics of development must take their place. In Bihar, all of the regional parties are basically leader-based. Bihar exemplifies a complicated social nexus. Caste, class, and land ownership relationships are not always mutually exclusive and offer plenty of room for analysis of each factor's individual consequences (Gupta, 2005).

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