

# A vote for Ambedkarite politics is a vote for democracy

All other ideologies, barring the Left, are ill-equipped to take on the cultural monster that the BJP has created

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The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) is the mighty force that braves against both tides of sensationalism and provocation. (File Photo)

The election season is on, and we are watching intensity being played out in the fray. The voters are told to choose between the obvious two camps. However, there have always been ideologies and parties that have stood apart from the twosomeness of Indian polity. The Third Front, for example, which was led by the CPI(M) in the 2009 elections, brought together non-Congress and BJP parties. It also invited smaller state parties to the coalition. The Third Front, though, was not successful; it indeed helped the Communists in India and other parties establish a statement. As it happens with every election, once the show is done, the parties wind up their houses and return to their constituencies. The parties without firm ideology side with the ruling ones, attempting to get a sprinkle of share in whatever quantity they can.

We also see now regional parties ally with either bloc to retain their agency and have a say in the alliances.

This election, like every election we are told, is a Mahabharat for our country. We have to protect democracy and secure the rights of the poor. With every election, there are hints of anti-incumbency charges against the government. In this election, we are also told about similar and frightening episodes.

The voter is given a variety of options. The election mandate is diverse, and the voter is begged to vote for their future. American psychologist Abraham Maslow's idea of the second rate of demand after the immediate needs, i.e. physiological needs such as food, housing, and clothing, are taken care of, turns to ideas surrounding identity and belonging around safety, love, esteem, and self-actualisation at the top. This tells us two things: either the Indian voter is well-[fed](#) or is still yearning for the dignity in life that it hoops through the immediacy and demands identitarian fodder.

The right-wing has its festival to go wild. The right-wing fanatics will prove their Brahminical agenda by scapegoating the Muslims to consolidate the non-Muslim groups by isolating the Muslim groups. [BJP](#) has been successful in othering Muslims, which was often the case, but BJP has done it exceptionally. They have demonstrated the sigma rule of covertly identifying the non-Muslims with an opposite Muslim base.

Democracy is a playground for those with immediate needs. The rule of people's power cannot be ignored. However, they can be bought at a price when their guts are empty and emotional affliction over religion is pregnant with reaction. The fanatics of the BJP are so strong that the Congress' duplicity cannot win over the direct affront of the Brahminical wave.

In the cataclysmic drought of our times, in India and the world, we need the politics of democracy without majoritarian impulse – a coalition of diverse needs led by the marginalised. The factory of identity politics has received renewed attention.

The political organising in India and the world is still happening around the lines of the old borders of religion, though they may not call it such. It takes the form of refugee, immigrant, caste, colour, nativity and so on. This politics appeals to the conscience of the majority. The majority of India, as Dr Ambedkar so sagaciously put it, was communal. This communal impulse of the majority was not for group consolidation but organised together almost randomly against an entity—the outcaste, the Muslim, the other state person, the elite liberal and so on.

The protest against the majoritarian has been caught up in the policy of liberal values that one pretends to offer as a political option to the BJP. The opposition so far seems to have not found a way to react to the majoritarian impulses of the murderous mass that is out to buy for the blood of the minority. Ironically, the majority in India is a collection of minorities. There isn't any single group majority. That is how broader, unhelpful consolidations are created based on the histories of medieval northern Indian and the Deccan. The histories are contemporary for those whose lives are removed from the stories that are 600 old.

The Dalit is standing guard for the Constitution and the forces that challenge the sanctity of the rule of non-Constitutionalism, i.e., Manuvaad. In this situation, it is incumbent upon the voter to choose a party with Ambedkar as their central hero. Ambedkarite politics is currently the only one with the potential to push back against the old agenda played out on the chest of voters. This is best represented in the formula of poverty and progress on the one hand and religion and economy on the other.

All other ideologies, barring the Left, are ill-equipped to take on the cultural monster that the BJP has created. Because they, too, are subscribers to the values but pretend to stand apart. The voter is unable to distinguish between the colours and flavours. The [Bahujan Samaj Party](#) (BSP) is the mighty force that braves against both tides of sensationalism and provocation. It followed the mantra advised by Ambedkar, which was to capture political power by making inroads and alliances with the communities. To do this, the communities need to be empowered. They invest in nurturing the communities and strengthening them from the bottom up. Their

politics is away from the anarchic processes that create fears among the electorates. Likewise, VCK, Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA), Bhartiya Tribal Party and many caste-based parties consolidate a multi-caste polity with a social distribution of goods and economic agenda that have sprung out of the politics of Bahujan-ism.

***Suraj Yengde, author of 'Caste Matters', curates Dalitality, has returned to Harvard University***

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