

What is important for the voters of India? Do they get carried away by propaganda?

The first voting privilege India got is under the British rule through The Indian Council Act 1901 also known as Minto-Morley Reforms. Only certain sects of people were privileged enough to vote, but large sect of people were deprived of this opportunity. However, when India got independence in 1947 and adopted the constitution in 1950, India was ready for its first general election. **As mentioned in Article 326, Universal adult Franchise became our basis for the election and selection of voters.**

From the time Indians were introduced to voting system, their main aim was development, before 1947 it was in the form of becoming independent, though it was not fully realised and after the independence most of the people were eager for the development of the country and be globally stable in economy. Separate electoral system were discussed and finally got rejected and reservation system in the seat allocation of members of Lok Sabha and state assemblies were introduced to address the question whether all the sects of peoples are represented equally or not. In the same time many political party emerged in the independent India with their own collective idea for developments and promises that they were going to full fill if came to power. This is the basic idea of “manifestos” of the parties, came into existence.

Now the people were able to distinguish as to which party is relatively good in collective idea of development, **they started to vote for the party which seemed to be relevant to their idea of development.** Seeing this trend the political parties started to add or “promise” the subject which people were more attracted, though the main basic idea was the development of the country, now it started a bit to deviate more like in marketing, “demand and supply” looking at what people are attracted in, political parties started to promise the same thing irrespective of the demand is in sync with the national interest or not. To further increase the reach of their party, parties started to advertise their view of development in newspaper and other social media platforms. **We all know people get influenced by the media, this is where the problem started.** To always remain appealing to the

peoples, political parties started to partly own the media or started to own their media itself.

The people who are educated enough to see the irregularities in the media are generally very low in numbers. Uneducated people become easy target for the media advertising or the “propaganda” of the political parties.

Propaganda itself is the enemy of development. It is the desire of the parties to always remain in the power bases the pillar of propaganda. Generally when the elections are nearing, we may see this spreading propaganda phenomenon more. At the time of first general elections there were not enough media and the morale of the political parties were also good and most of parties were equally engaged in the development process. As the time of propaganda started **now most of the people are polarised to certain views only.**

Propaganda, nowadays has its own ways in influencing the mind of the people than it was before. Social media like twitter, Facebook have made the political parties reach out to more number of people and in very short time. Fake news are always up in the social media stream. For a beginner in these media, it may badly influence the person and he may restrict the idea of the development as the interest of the political party which he is influenced by. This becomes more serious when the communalism is interlinked with one certain political parties.

As we have a large ocean of information available in our mobile phones and TVs, we need to have a fact-check and then agree attitude. Fact-checking becomes very important tool in handling the fake propaganda in national interest. As the people are already polarised now, they even have a selective way of fact-checking sources which again are in the control of the political parties.

Now it has become a serious issue in the view of national interest. Development gets hindered if people start to get polarised by the propagandas of political parties. **A “counterpropaganda” is a must to curb this issue.** We should educate the masses about the ill effects of the propaganda. They have to be assured of getting facts and information by the government itself rather than relying on any media. **Right to Information Act 2005 helps the citizens to get the information about their concerns.** Counterpropaganda methods have to be implemented by

government in order to have a **development driven elections rather than propaganda driven elections.**

Anirudh Padki

ajay.r.padki@gmail.com