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One Day Multidisciplinary International Seminar
On

"ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE"

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Dr. Anuradha M. Naik
Dr. Bharati Dodamani

Prof. Jeevana K. Nayak
Miss.Maheshwari Naik

Dr. L. P. Lamani

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" ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE "

हिन्दी साहित्य में पर्यावरण चिंतन

डॉ. शीला भास्कर
विभागाध्यक्ष, हिंदी विभाग डॉ. बी . आर. अम्बेडकर कॉलेज, हुबली, कर्नाटक.
मो : 9480725154
Sheela.bhaskar121@gmail.com

घृतकुम्भसमा नारी तत्पागारसम पुमान, नारी घी की कुंआ है पुरुष जलता हुआ अंगार, दोनों के संयोग से ज्वाला प्रजवलित हो उठती है, यानी नारी और पुरुष दोनों एक दूसरे के पुरक है।

मानव जीवन एवं पर्यावरण एक दूसरे के पर्याय हैं जहाँ मानव का अस्तित्व पर्यावरण में है वहीं मान दवारा निरंतर किये जा रहे पर्यावरण का विनाश से हमें भविष्य की चिंता सताने लगी है. हमारे प्राचीन वेदों ऋग्वेद, सामवेद, यजुर्वेद एवं अथर्वेद में पर्यावरण के महत्व को दर्शाया गया है।

भक्तिकालीन कवियों की साधना में अध्यात्मिक संयम और निष्ठा का भाव है। कबीर तुलसी सू जायसी की रचनाओं में अनेक स्थानों पर प्रकृति का रहस्य भय वर्णन किया गया है। इसमें वनों, पर्वतें नदियों, पशु-पक्षियों, वनों के साथ साथ प्राकृतिक एवं हर्षोल्लासपूर्ण दृश्यों का भी वर्णन है। तुलसीदास 'रामचरित मानस में लक्ष्मण और सीता को पेड़ लगाते हुए दिखाया है जैसे तुलसी तरुवर विविध सुहाए।

कहुँ कहें सिय, कहुँ लखन लगाए ।

इसी प्रकार सूर मीरा, रसखान आदि भक्त कवियों ने प्रकृति के विशाल मनमोहक चित्र बनाये यद्यपि रीतिकाल के कवियों ने प्रकृति की घटाओं को अधिक अलंकारिक रूप से व्यक्त किया, लेकिन बि पद्याकर, देव, सेनापति ने भी उनके सौन्दर्य को अपनाया मलयनील की शीतलता और सुगंध का वर्णन क हुए बिहारी ने अलंकारिक रूप से वर्णन किया है।

चुवत स्वेद मकरंद कन तरु तरु तर बिरमाय ।
आवत दच्छिन देष ते भवयौं बतोही बाय ॥

आधुनिक हिन्दी कविता का जन्म यूरोप के औद्योगिकरण के समानांतर हुआ जहाँ प्रकृति क्रूर का शिकार होने लगती है केवल सौन्दर्य का स्रोत बनकर रह जाती है। कश्मीर सुषमा, में श्रीधर पाठक प्र की मनमोहक छटा बिखेरते हैं 'हरिऔध में राधिका का हृदय वेदना प्रकृति के तत्वों में व्यक्त होती हैं, भी अपनी पीड़ा की अभिव्यक्ति में प्राकृतिक प्रतीकों का आश्रय लेते हैं:-

उत्कंठा के विषय नभ को, भूमि की पादपों को ।
तारांओं को अनुज मुख को प्रायाप देखता हूँ ॥
प्यारी, ऐसी न ध्वनि मुझको हो कहीं भी सुनाती ।
जो चिंता से चलित-चित की शान्ति का हेतु होवे ॥

छायावादी काव्य शैली में प्रकृति का सूक्ष्म एवं भावुक रूप देखने को मिलता है। पंत प्रसाद और निराला के कविताओं में प्रकृति चित्रण देखने को मिलता है ये कवि प्रकृति की सुंदरता में इतने मुग्ध हैं कि प्रेमिका का प्रेम भी उन्हें महत्वहीन लगता है। पंत के इन पत्तियों में देख सकते हैं।

छोड़ दूमों की मृदु छाया तोड़ प्रकृति से भी माया,
बाले, तो बाल जाल में, कैसे उलझा दूँ लोचन,
भूल अभी से इस जग को

प्रसाद जी की 'कामायनी' महाकाव्य में भी प्रकृति के भयानक रूप से वर्णन है, जिसमें जल प्रलय के पश्चात सर्वस्व नष्ट हो जाता है। अर्थात प्रसाद के यह संकेत उन लोगों के लिए है जो प्रकृति से खेलवाड़ कर रहे हैं. परिणाम स्पष्ट है -

हिमगिरि के उतुंग शिखर पर
बैठ शिला की शीतल छांह ।
एक पुरुष भीगें नयनों से,
देख रहा था प्रलय प्रवाह ॥

मनुष्य की इसी भोग बादी दृष्टिकोण ने जीवन को खतरे में डाल दिया है. परिणामत अकाल, बाद, आदि प्राकृतिक त्रासदियों से हमें सामना करना पड़ता है। नागार्जुन की कविता बगांला का अकाल में प्राकृतिक विनाश का एक दुखान्तकारी घटना देखने को मिलता है-

कई दिनों तक चूल्हा रोया, चक्की रही उदास ।
कई दिनों तक कानी कुतिया, सोई उनके पास ॥
कई दिनों तक लगी भीत पर छिपकलियों की गश्त ।
कई दिनों तक चूहों की भी हालत रही शिकस्त ॥

भोगवादी दृष्टि के साथ वैज्ञानिक प्रयोगों ने भी प्रकृति को नष्ट करने का सुमित प्रयास किया है, युद्धों की विभीषिका में जब परमाणु त्रासदी के बाद मनुष्य नहीं बच पाता तो प्रकृति का क्या हाल होगा? अज्ञेय ने कहा कि 'मानव का रचा हुआ सूरज मानव को भाप बनकर सोख गया। उसी प्रकार दिनकर ने लिखा-

बुद्धि के पवमान में उड़ता हुआ महाय
जा रहा तू किस दिशा की ओर को निरुपाय ?

लक्ष्य क्या? उद्देश्य क्या? क्या अर्थ?
यह नही ज्ञात, तो विज्ञान का श्रम व्यर्थ।

अभी मानवता उससे उबर ही नहीं पाया था कि पूरे विश्व आर्थिक उदारीकरन के नाम पर बाजार का विकास हुआ, भूमण्डलीकरण के दौर में बाजारवाद को त्रासदी का सबसे पहले शिकार बना पर्यावरण, इक्कीसवीं सदी का आरंभ पर्यावरण संकट के साथ उदित होता है। ऐसी परिस्थिति में रचनाकार सजग हो उठता है। 'पानी की प्रार्थना में केदार सिंह ने भीषण संकट की ओर अगाह करता है -

अंत में प्रभु अंतिम । लेकिन सबसे जरूरी बात
वहाँ होंगे मेरे भाई बन्धु। मंगल यह या चाँद पर
पर यहाँ पृथ्वी पर मैं। यानी आपका मुँह लगा यह पानी
अब दुर्लभ होने के कगर तक। पहुँच चुका हूँ ।

अंत में यह स्पष्ट करना जरूरी है कि भारतीय साहित्य में जहाँ प्रकृति का प्रत्येक उपादान वृक्ष, नदी, फल, फूल, अनाज आदि को पूजनीय स्थलों का अधिकार बनाया वहीं आज का यह पदार्थवादी इंसान अपने जीवन रस को ही लुटने चला है। ऐसे स्यिति में साहित्यकार मौन कैसे रह सकता है अपनी रचनाधर्मिता से मानवता को बचाने का सार्थक प्रयास करता है-

खेतों की मेड़ों की ओस नमी मिट्टी,
जितनी देर मेरे इन पावों में लगी रही,
उतनी देर जैसे मेरे सूब अपने रहे.
उतनी देर सारी दुनिया सगी रही.
किन्तु जैसे मैंने ज्योंही मौजे जूते पहन लिए।
जेब के पर्स का ख्याल आने लगा ॥

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THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

*Praveen Chapparamani, Research Scholar, Dept. of Political Science, Karnatak University, Dharwad.

**Dr.N.M.Sali, Professor, Dept. of Political Science, Karnatak University, Dharwad.

Abstract:

This paper examines the evolving role of political parties within democratic systems, analyzing key trends and challenges that shape their functions and influence. Political parties are essential components of democratic governance, acting as mediators between citizens and the state, facilitating political participation, representation, and policy formulation. One significant trend is the push for greater inclusivity and representation within political parties, driven by a recognition of the importance of diversity in enriching the policy debate and enhancing the legitimacy of democratic institutions. However, structural barriers and entrenched power dynamics hinder efforts to achieve true inclusivity, posing challenges to democratic governance. Another trend is the increasing polarization of political parties, characterized by ideological divisions and a reduced willingness to compromise. This polarization undermines the effectiveness of democratic governance, leading to gridlock and legislative paralysis. The rise of populist movements presents further challenges to democratic governance, as populist leaders often undermine democratic norms and institutions, exacerbating social divisions and eroding trust in political institutions. The digital transformation of political communication and mobilization represents another significant trend, with implications for political engagement and the integrity of electoral processes. While digital technologies enhance political participation, they also raise concerns about privacy violations, misinformation, and the manipulation of public opinion. Moreover, political parties are increasingly influenced by globalization and international actors, which can undermine national sovereignty and democratic decision-making processes. Challenges such as party finance and corruption, as well as declining levels of political participation and engagement, further complicate the role of political parties in democratic governance. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to strengthen democratic institutions, promote transparency and accountability, and foster inclusive political systems that reflect the diverse interests and values of society. Only by confronting these challenges can political parties fulfill their essential role in advancing democratic governance and ensuring the vitality of democratic societies.

Keywords: Role, Political Parties, Democratic Governance, Trends and Challenges.

INTRODUCTION:

* Political parties are pivotal institutions in democratic governance, serving as essential conduits for political participation, representation, and policy formation. They are integral to the functioning of democratic systems, providing citizens with platforms through which they can express their political preferences, engage in collective decision-making, and hold elected officials accountable. Political parties play a central role in organizing and mobilizing voters, shaping public discourse, and translating societal interests into coherent policy agendas. Moreover, they serve as vehicles for political competition and the peaceful transfer of power, ensuring the stability and legitimacy of democratic regimes. However, political parties also face numerous challenges, including declining trust in institutions, increasing polarization, and the rise of populist movements. Despite these challenges, political parties remain indispensable actors in democratic governance, embodying the principle of popular sovereignty and serving as vital mediators between citizens and the state.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

This paper examines the evolving role of political parties within democratic systems, analyzing key trends and challenges that shape their functions and influence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study is based on secondary sources of data such as articles, books, journals, research papers, websites and other sources.

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Political parties serve as fundamental pillars of democratic governance, facilitating political participation, representation, and policy formulation. However, in recent years, they have faced numerous challenges and have been subject to various trends that have shaped their roles and functions within democratic systems.

Representation and Inclusivity

One of the most significant trends in democratic governance is the push for greater representation and inclusivity within political parties. Historically, political parties have often been dominated by certain segments of society, such as wealthy elites or privileged groups, leading to a lack of diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic background. However, in recent years, there has been increasing pressure on parties to reflect the diversity of their societies and to ensure that all citizens' interests and perspectives are represented. This trend towards greater inclusivity is driven by a recognition of the importance of diversity in enriching the policy debate, promoting social cohesion, and enhancing the legitimacy of democratic institutions. In response, many political parties have adopted measures to increase

the representation of underrepresented groups within their ranks, such as implementing gender quotas, establishing outreach programs targeting marginalized communities, and promoting greater diversity in candidate selection processes. Despite these efforts, challenges remain in achieving true inclusivity within political parties. Structural barriers, implicit biases, and entrenched power dynamics can hinder the participation of marginalized groups and perpetuate inequalities within party structures. Moreover, while quotas and affirmative action measures can increase representation, they may also face resistance from those who perceive them as undermining meritocracy or party unity.

Party Polarization

Another significant trend in democratic governance is the increasing polarization of political parties. Polarization refers to the ideological distance between parties and the reduced willingness to compromise or cooperate across party lines. This trend has been fueled by a variety of factors, including socio-economic divisions, cultural differences, and the influence of partisan media. Polarization can have profound implications for democratic governance, as it can lead to gridlock, legislative paralysis, and a breakdown of democratic norms and institutions. When parties are unwilling to engage in meaningful dialogue or compromise, it becomes difficult to address pressing issues and to find common ground on policy solutions. Moreover, polarization can exacerbate social divisions, undermine trust in political institutions, and weaken the legitimacy of democratic governance. Addressing party polarization requires a concerted effort to foster dialogue, promote empathy, and encourage cooperation across ideological divides. Political leaders have a responsibility to set a tone of civility and respect in public discourse, to seek out common ground with their opponents, and to prioritize the national interest over partisan gain. Moreover, structural reforms, such as electoral system changes or campaign finance reforms, may be necessary to reduce the incentives for partisan polarization and to promote greater cooperation among political actors.

Rise of Populist Movements

In recent years, many democracies have witnessed the rise of populist movements and parties that challenge the political establishment and advocate for policies that appeal to the grievances of the population. Populism is characterized by a distrust of elites, a focus on the will of the people, and a rejection of traditional political norms and institutions. While populism can invigorate political participation and mobilize previously marginalized groups, it also poses significant challenges to democratic governance. Populist leaders often engage in divisive rhetoric, scapegoating minorities or marginalized groups, and promoting simplistic solutions to complex problems. Moreover, populism can undermine the rule of law, weaken democratic institutions, and erode checks and balances on executive power. To address the challenges posed by populism, political parties must address the underlying grievances that fuel populist movements, such as economic inequality, social exclusion, and a perceived lack of political representation. Moreover, parties must reaffirm their commitment to democratic norms and institutions, defending the principles of pluralism, tolerance, and the rule of law against populist attacks. Finally, parties must engage with populist supporters in a constructive dialogue, seeking to address their concerns and offer alternative visions for the future.

Digital Transformation

The digital transformation of political communication and mobilization represents another significant trend in democratic governance. In recent years, political parties have increasingly leveraged digital technologies, such as social media platforms, data analytics, and online fundraising tools, to communicate with voters, mobilize supporters, and coordinate campaign activities. This trend has profound implications for democratic governance, as it can both enhance political engagement and participation and raise concerns about data privacy, misinformation, and the manipulation of public opinion. On the one hand, digital technologies have the potential to lower barriers to entry for political participation, allowing citizens to engage directly with political parties and candidates, mobilize around issues they care about, and hold elected officials accountable. On the other hand, digital technologies can also be exploited to spread misinformation, manipulate public opinion, and undermine the integrity of the electoral process. Foreign actors, partisan groups, and malicious actors can use social media platforms to disseminate false information, sow division, and influence electoral outcomes. Moreover, the use of data analytics and micro-targeting techniques can raise concerns about privacy violations and the manipulation of voter behavior. To address these challenges, political parties must adopt ethical standards for digital campaigning, transparency in the use of data, and measures to combat misinformation and disinformation online. Moreover, policymakers must enact regulations to protect citizens' privacy rights, strengthen cybersecurity measures, and ensure the integrity of electoral processes in the digital age.

Globalization and International Influence

Political parties are increasingly influenced by global trends and international actors, including multinational corporations, foreign governments, and non-governmental organizations. Globalization has facilitated the spread of ideas, resources, and capital across national borders, shaping the policy agendas and priorities of political parties around the world. While globalization can enrich the policy debate and promote international cooperation, it also poses challenges to democratic governance. The influence of foreign actors and transnational interests can undermine national sovereignty and democratic decision-making processes, as parties may prioritize the interests of global elites over those of their own citizens. Moreover, globalization can exacerbate inequalities between countries, as powerful actors exploit asymmetries in wealth, power, and resources to advance their own interests. To address these challenges, political parties must adopt a critical stance towards globalization, ensuring that international cooperation and integration are conducted in a manner that respects democratic principles, promotes social justice, and advances the interests of all citizens. Moreover, parties must engage with civil society organizations, grassroots movements, and other stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of globalization are shared equitably and that the voices of marginalized groups are heard in the policy-making process.

Party Finance and Corruption

Financing political parties remains a significant challenge in many democracies, with concerns about the influence of wealthy donors, corporate interests, and illicit sources of funding. Political parties require financial resources to operate effectively, including funding for campaign activities, organizational expenses, and staff salaries. However, the reliance on private donations can raise concerns about conflicts of interest, undue influence, and the capture of the political process by powerful interests. Corruption within political parties further undermines public trust in democratic institutions and erodes the legitimacy of the political process. Corruption can take many forms, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and cronyism, and can occur at various levels of party organization, from local branches to national leadership. To address these challenges, political parties must adopt measures to enhance transparency and accountability in party finance, such as disclosing the sources of their funding, imposing limits on campaign contributions, and establishing independent oversight mechanisms to monitor compliance with financial regulations. Moreover, parties must promote a culture of integrity and ethical

Participation and Engagement

In many democracies, there is growing concern about declining levels of political participation and engagement, particularly among young people. Traditional forms of political participation, such as voting, party membership, and activism, have been on the decline, as citizens become disillusioned with politics and disengaged from the political process. Political parties must adapt to these changing patterns of political participation and find innovative ways to involve citizens in the political process. This may involve leveraging digital technologies to facilitate online participation, creating opportunities for deliberative democracy and participatory decision-making, and reaching out to marginalized communities and underrepresented groups to ensure their voices are heard.

CASE STUDIES:

Case Study 1: Political Parties and Coalition Politics in India

India, the world's largest democracy, is known for its vibrant and complex political landscape, characterized by diverse political parties and coalition governments. One prominent case study in Indian politics is the evolution of coalition politics and its impact on governance. Since gaining independence in 1947, India has seen the emergence of a multi-party system, with numerous regional and national parties vying for power. This fragmentation has often led to the formation of coalition governments at the national and state levels, where multiple parties come together to form a government due to the absence of a single-party majority.

- Coalition Dynamics: The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) are two prominent examples of coalitions in Indian politics. The NDA, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is a center-right coalition, while the UPA, led by the Indian National Congress, is

a center-left coalition. These coalitions comprise a diverse array of parties with varying ideologies, making consensus-building and decision-making complex processes.

- Policy Formulation: In a coalition government, policy formulation often involves intricate negotiations and compromises among coalition partners. While this can lead to inclusive decision-making, it can also result in policy paralysis or diluted policies due to conflicting interests and ideologies. For example, the passage of major reforms such as the Goods and Services Tax (GST) required extensive negotiations and consensus-building among coalition partners.

- Governance Challenges: Coalition governments in India face challenges such as instability, as the withdrawal of support from a key coalition partner can lead to the collapse of the government. Moreover, coalition politics can result in patronage politics and policy gridlock, as parties prioritize parochial interests over the national agenda.

- Regional Parties' Influence: Regional parties play a crucial role in Indian coalition politics, often holding the balance of power in national and state governments. These parties champion regional interests and wield significant influence in coalition negotiations, shaping policy outcomes and government priorities.

- Evolving Dynamics: Over the years, the dynamics of coalition politics in India have evolved, with parties forming pre-poll alliances to maximize electoral gains. Additionally, the emergence of new regional players and the decline of traditional national parties have altered the power dynamics within coalitions, leading to shifting alliances and realignments.

Case Study 2: Money Power and Electoral Politics in India

Another critical aspect of Indian politics is the influence of money power on electoral processes, which has significant implications for democratic governance and political accountability.

India's electoral system is one of the largest and most complex in the world, with millions of voters participating in national and state elections. However, electoral campaigns are often marred by the pervasive influence of money, with candidates and political parties spending exorbitant amounts on campaigning, advertising, and mobilization efforts.

- Role of Money in Elections: Money plays a central role in Indian elections, influencing voter behavior, candidate selection, and electoral outcomes. Candidates and parties spend substantial sums on campaign rallies, advertisements, and voter mobilization initiatives, often resorting to unethical practices such as vote-buying and distribution of cash, liquor, or gifts to sway voters.

- Impact on Political Representation: The dominance of money power in electoral politics can undermine the principles of political equality and fair representation. Wealthy candidates or those backed by affluent donors often have a significant advantage over their less affluent counterparts, leading to the marginalization of candidates from marginalized communities or those with limited financial resources.

- Corruption and Cronyism: The nexus between money power and politics fosters corruption and cronyism, as politicians may prioritize the interests of wealthy donors or business elites over the welfare of the electorate. This can erode public trust in democratic institutions, fuel social unrest, and perpetuate inequalities in access to political power and resources.

- Regulatory Challenges: Despite efforts to regulate campaign finance through electoral laws and regulations, enforcement mechanisms remain weak, allowing candidates and parties to circumvent
- spending limits and engage in illicit practices. Moreover, the lack of transparency in political funding
- and the use of loopholes in campaign finance laws exacerbate the problem of money power in elections.

- Civil Society and Electoral Reforms: Civil society organizations, media, and electoral watchdogs play a crucial role in advocating for electoral reforms and raising awareness about the detrimental effects of money power on democratic governance. Initiatives such as the Right to Information Act and electoral reforms aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability in political funding have been instrumental in combating corruption and promoting electoral integrity.

CONCLUSION:

Political parties play a crucial role in democratic governance, serving as vital intermediaries between citizens and the state. Despite facing numerous challenges, including polarization, the rise of populism, and the influence of global forces, political parties remain indispensable for political participation, representation, and policy formulation. Efforts to promote inclusivity and representation within parties, foster dialogue and cooperation across ideological divides, and combat corruption and misinformation are essential for strengthening democratic governance. The digital transformation presents both opportunities and challenges, requiring ethical standards and regulatory measures to safeguard democratic processes. Moreover, addressing declining levels of political participation and engagement demands innovative approaches to involve citizens in the political process and ensure their voices are heard. The role of political parties in democratic governance is fundamental, embodying the principle of popular sovereignty and facilitating the peaceful resolution of political conflicts. By confronting the trends and challenges outlined in this paper, political parties can contribute to the resilience and vitality of democratic systems, ensuring that they remain responsive to the needs and aspirations of all citizens.

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