



Elites and Development

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ABSTRACT

Development being a composite activity of economy in a society involving political and cultural institutions, is often described as a holistic process of changes, which is both qualitative and quantitative. Drewnowski defines development in economics as the per capita income that helps one to assess growth. Boundeville describes development as a holistic process of change, which is both qualitative and quantitative. Elites are looked upon for advice and direction in any society, which is all set to progress. Being the prime movers of a society, elites in a developing country as that of ours, by virtue of their position in the society and polity, play vital role in their various capacity as planners and decision-makers and contribute their might to the process of development.

KEYWORDS

Elites, Development, Area Development, Regionalism, Region,

In India, regional feelings have created considerable impact on the political system. Regionalism means love for a particular region or area or state in preference to the nation as whole. Regionalism occurs due to continuous neglect of a particular area or region by the ruling authorities, or it may spring as a result of increasing political awareness among the backward area people who lately realize the importance of development and they begin demanding forcefully for the justice. Parochialism and regionalism is a conspicuous phenomenon of India's political life. Feelings of regionalism grow due to the problem of uneven socio economic development. After independence, India lacked a balanced economic growth of all parts and regions. Instead of caring for the overall development the political leadership and the policy measures concentrated their attention towards the development of some regions. Thus one of the most critical problems facing India's economy is the sharp and growing regional imbalance or variations among India's different states and territories in terms of per capita income, poverty, availability of infrastructure and socio economic development.

Developing countries in general, such as India have been experiencing the impact of modern technology. In the accelerated tempo of urbanization, concentration of non-primary activities relatively in a few cities has accentuated Regional Disparity in development within and between the States. Problems of development, so much so, of that, spatial organization of the economy today looks to be serious than the one, that had prevailed under the colonial rule. In some cases in locating large industries have led to comparable disparity between regions, which have taken the advantages. Area approach plan to planning is the result of these cognizable disparities. From Third Five Year Plan onwards, this strategy of area development plan was to overcome persisting Regional Disparity in India. However, this has not always been an answer to the problems of imbalanced growth/development. This is so because, many a times disparity and underdevelopment are caused not only because of state's ill-planning, but also because of the geographical and historical reasons. The backwardness of an area apart from these could also result due to lack of proper socio-political structures that could mobilize the human resources in the region. As an important factor in economic development, human resources in terms of its scientific explanation covers the relationship that may exist between the human beings living in the area and

the geographical location of the place in focus, coupled with its historical context. In this paper an attempt is made in this direction to explicitly bring out this relationship and to link it to the question of the elites in the region, who for all practical purposes are supposed to be influential in the society and are capable of lobbying for bargain in the political decision-making. Keeping this in view and focusing the study in North Karnataka to an examination of their role in mobilizing human resources is taken up, hence, in its relation to development. Elites, are looked upon for advice and direction in any society, which is all set to progress. Being the prime movers of a society, elites in a developing country as that of ours, by virtue of their position in the society and polity, play vital role in their various capacity as planners and decision-makers and contribute their might to the process of development. Development being a composite activity of economy in a society involving political and cultural institutions, is often described as a holistic process of changes, which is both qualitative and quantitative. Drewnowski defines development in economics as the per capita income that helps one to assess growth. Boundeville describes development as a holistic process of change, which is both qualitative and quantitative. Drewnowski defines development growth plus favourable change in production techniques as in consumer behaviour. Barkin defines development as a dual process of enrichment and structural change recognising the human component in it. It is one thing to argue that development is a process of change, as forced upon from extraneous sources, while it is important to note that failure of development may be the result of failure to exploit the opportunities provided by the process of change keeping this in view, Rostow observes that nations having frontier technology, high industrialization, resourceful in raw materials and services are identified as developed nations. While, according to him, availability of infrastructure, industrialization, modernization, technological advancement are the standards of measurements to identify development. Therefore, if a complex definition of development is to be offered, then it would include among other things improving the well being of the people, raising the standard of living, their levels of literacy, improving health conditions and also opening out to them new avenues of equal opportunity for a richer and more varied life.

This being the scenario of India and the world at large, Karnataka state is not an exceptional to this acute problem of

Regional Disparity. It is noticed during the recent years that the development process is not at all percolated uniformly throughout the state. There are certain glaring differences in socio-economic, politico-cultural issues between the erstwhile princely state of Mysore and the North Karnataka. It is noticed during recent years that the North Karnataka is neglected by the policy makers since the reorganization of states in the year 1956. The development experiences of North Karnataka is one of the painful process

In the backdrop of this let's try to know the relation between Elites and Development. In our opinion the elites of the society have a major role to play as to bring about the changes in the society. They must mediate between the state and the people at large. Eliteship is reward of the society and they must act to the aspirations of the society as a whole. Though Karnataka is a progressive and accommodative state the development is not uniform throughout the state. Various popular governments ruled this state but were unable to provide the suitable mechanism to address the regional disparity issue. The linguistic state of Mysore created in 1956 could not satisfy the hopes and aspirations of people of Northern Karnataka. Although the state of Karnataka is considered to be the one whole unit of administration, since the days of reorganization of states in 1956, there are certain inherent problems that have been cropping up, pushing the notion of unified Karnataka to the mark of suspicion. The merger of Bombay Karnataka and Hyderabad Karnataka with the erstwhile princely state of Mysore failed to show the signs of harmonious fusion as these areas were considered as backward and had distinct history which is visibly different from the experiences of southern Karnataka. Right from food habits, culture and religious faith there was anything beyond language that could be identified as strong reason intensifying the needed merger of this north Karnataka with the erstwhile princely state of Mysore. The regional imbalances have grown over the period, leading to unequal levels of development. With this input we shall now move on to understand how the problem in focus, i.e., the problem of Regional Disparity has led to the belief that the North Karnataka is experiencing a step motherly treatment from the state of Karnataka and what has been the role of elites in the region to cure this problem and to overcome the possible disparity that exist in this region.

Lack of strong leadership, the bane of north Karnataka. Said veteran journalist Shri. Madan Mohan while writing on the precarious conditions of North Karnataka. Another set of scholars and general public has established a direct co-relation between the ruling elite and the persistent uneven social development in the state of Karnataka. To a considerable extent, it seems true that the failure of political leadership of the backward regions and successive state governments in the state to understand the problem of backwardness in the Hyderabad-Karnataka region and to take timely remedial measures to contain the growing unevenness. Politicians from the North Karnataka have always had their share in the state's power structure. In the 60 years old history of Karnataka after its reorganization, there were many chief ministers from North Karnataka and there were many Central Cabinet ministers who were at the helm of affairs but the efforts were not been made to develop this much neglected area in the state of Karnataka. Elites, however, have failed to know people's emotions and requirements in the region. They also agreed that they have failed to see the development of infrastructure or capital inflow and even in mirroring the people's aspirations before the state.

Of the 224 seats in the State Legislative Assembly, 12 districts of North Karnataka accounts for 97 seats (43 per cent of seats). The representation of North Karnataka MLAs in the ministries, no doubt, has more or less been proportionate to their numbers. Dharam Singh led coalition government had 14 out of 32 ministers from North Karnataka. Out of 14 ministers from north Karnataka 7 are from the Hyderabad-Karnataka region. During S.M. Krishna-led ministry, for example, ministers from North Karnataka constitute 41.8 percent. Of

the 42 ministers, 18 of them including second-in-command, Mr. Mallikarjun Kharge, was from the Hyderabad-Karnataka region. In the J. H. Patel-led ministry, for example, 38 per cent of the ministers were from the north. When S. Nijalingappa government was in power, there was even a feeling in the South that the politicians from North Karnataka were all powerful in the Government with Ramakrishna Hegde as Finance Minister and Veerendra Patil as PWD Minister.

Political parties stand on regional Disparity issue in Karnataka is quite interesting. The growing separatist movements within northern region of the state have not received open support from any of the major political parties in Karnataka. In fact, no single political party has supported the demand for separate statehood for Uttara Karnataka region.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been very careful in the case of Karnataka and chooses not to support the demand for creation of separate Uttara Karnataka state. This may be due to its strong support base among the socio-economically and politically dominant communities such as Lingayats and Brahmins in both the Hyderabad-Karnataka and southern region of the state. The BJP seems to have had apprehensions of losing its support base in North Karnataka if they take their stand of separate state. The core consideration for the BJP to take such a position is not ideological but purely based on its electoral prospects.

The Congress Party also has not supported the demand for separate statehood for North Karnataka. It is significant to know as to why the Congress Party in Karnataka has not supported the cause of separatism. It may be because of the fact that the Congress Party was in power for quite a long period, i.e., from 1956 to 1983 and from 1989 to 1999 before the separatist tendencies gained momentum in the state. If Congress party supports the cause of separatism and negligence on the part of people's representatives openly, it will be suicidal.

The erstwhile Janata Parivar (the present splinter groups such as JD(U), JD(S), AIPJD etc), which appeared on the political scene of Karnataka in the 1980's as an anti-Congress force. They held the reins of government in two spells i.e., from 1983 to 1989 and from 1994 to 1999. During this period, backward regions expected a lot from this political front. But this Janata Parivar also failed to deliver the expected outcomes. Some of the leaders of these groups have tried to highlight the developmental problems of North Karnataka for their personal gains and attempted to make political in-roads into northern region of the state. It appears to be a political game plan rather than genuine development of the region. In fact, some of the leaders have attempted to put a stop to the direction of developmental process in northern region of the state. The separatist movement in North Karnataka, based on the persistent uneven development and state's failure to address the grievances, could be termed as a bargaining force rather than a separatist movement. The movement clearly lacks the backing of public at large. But despite these negative move there are some good developments took place to address the regional imbalance issue in the state of Karnataka. The then congress party opposition leader Shri. H. K. Patil and a host of others took the lead and it may be recalled that Shri. H.K. Patil brought out a book *Chaluva Kannada Nadu* and had analyzed the discrepancies as far as development works were concerned. These led to the further debates. People began to protest against the governments to correct the injustice caused to them by the subsequent governments.

Promises Made : Unfulfilled : As a remedy against discrimination and imbalance in development, persistently articulated by the North Karnataka region the state government then headed by late Shri J.H. Patel held a cabinet meeting at Hubli, the first ever cabinet meeting held outside Bangalore. The cabinet accepted in principle several of the suggestions made by the party executive to correct the perceived disparity in development and took a decision to set up an official committee

headed by the Chief Secretary to ascertain the validity of the grievances.

The committee gave its interim report in 1999. The recommendations of the committee were not attended due to change in government. The problems remained unattended. In 1999, responding to the cry of continued negligence of the governments towards northern parts of Karnataka Shri. S. M. Krishna took some steps to look into the regional imbalance and constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Y. K. Alagh former Union Minister and the member of Rajya Sabha and Planning commission the situation remained unchanged.

Looking to seriousness of the problem the same government headed by sri. S. M. Krishna appointed a High Power Committee on Redressal of Regional Imbalance (HPCRRRI) under the chairmanship of late Dr. D.M. Nanjundappa. In its interim report (Feb2001) the committee recommended sectoral approach at taluk level instead of district level to set right the imbalance. It suggested that in each sector-education, health, welfare etc special allocation of funds and enhanced targets should be the method to fight backwardness. The committee after touring the region extensively submitted its final report on 27April 2002. Accordingly 114 talukas were identified as backward. It has recommended to spend 31,000 crores in eight years in 114 talukas and also to transfer key offices from Bangalore to Northern parts of Karnataka. Of the 31000 crore to be spent in backward districts the HPCRRRI committee said Rs.15000crore would come from the normal budgetary allocation and the remaining should be spent as additional expenditure of Rs.2000 crore a year. Although these recommendations have serious ramifications for North Karnataka in terms of its development, what seems to fail the attempts is the political will.

The issue of regional disparity therefore is kept alive as a political agenda. Kumarswamy government has made attempts to deal with the issue by holding a full pledged assembly session and laying foundation stone to construct second Vidhan soudha i.e. the Suvarna Soudha in Belgaum. Later, Shri.B.S. Yediyurappa, Shri Sadanand Gowda, Jagadish Shettar and at present Shri. Siddaramaiah who came to power also stressed on Dr. Nanjundappa committee report to address the regional disparity issues.

In the meanwhile a Political development took place.Initially the people of North Karnataka comprising the Hyderabad Karnataka and Bombay Karnataka were together in demanding the justice with regard to regional imbalance. But an action committee called Hyderabad Karnatak Abhivridhhi Kriya Samiti which was formed during 2000 began to give a call for black day on the 1st November 2000. (Which is celebrated as Rajyosthava Day- i.e. the Unification of Karnataka Day). From 2000 onwards people of Hyderabad Karnatak were observing this day as black day and had also hoisted separate state flag.

The President of Hyderabad Karnataka Abhivradhi Horata Samiti (HKAHS) had gone to the extent of unveiling the map of the new state comprising Gulburga, Bidar, Bellary Raichur and Koppal. The agitations took place continuously demanding for correcting the injustice. Several leaders supported this cause.

The Hyderabad Karnataka people had hopes on their eminent veteran leaders like Shri Mallikarjun Khage who held several important positions in the state and union government. People of Hyderabad Karnataka were successful in convincing their leader and he responded positively as soon as he became the union minister and consolidated the support across the party line and was successful. The local aspirations were well represented. The result was the Special Status to Hyderabad Karnataka. i.e. Article 371(J).

A three-decade struggle to seek special status for six Karna-

taka districts ended when Lok Sabha passed the Constitution (118th Amendment) Bill, 2012.A special status was granted to "the Karnataka-Hyderabad region comprising Bidar, Bellary, Gulbarga, Koppal, Raichur, Koppal and Yadgir districts. The seven districts in the north-east region of the state were part of the erstwhile Hyderabad state under the Nizams till 1948 and were subsequently merged with the then Mysore state in 1956 under the reorganisation of states on linguistic basis.

The cabinet sub-committee is constituted under the chairmanship of Present Rural Development and Panchayat raj (RDPR) minister H K Patil who fought for the regional development right from early 1990's has already held two meetings last week in this regard and has held marathon discussions with legislators and MPs representing six backward districts that will benefit by the special status -- Bidar, Gulbarga, Koppal, Yadgir, Raichur and Bellary.

This development created a sort of unhappiness among the Bombay Karnataka People and thereby they began the protests for correcting the injustice. At one stage the Bombay Karnataka was neglected by the then British Rulers later by the subsequent popular governments which ruled from time to time irrespective of the political parties. The special status to Hyderabad Karnataka made the leaders of Bombay Karnataka to bring development activities to this neglected area. In the meanwhile a noted political leader of Bombay Karnataka Shri Umesh Katti a former minister of late J.H. Patel and B.S. Yediyurappa cabinet created vibrations in the Socio, Political, Cultural circle by demanding a separate state for Bombay Karnataka for the first time at the end of the joint legislature session held at the newly constructed Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, the second seat of the Karnataka Secretariat here in October 2012 This statement was not well received and was criticized by the various sections of the society.During this time Shri. Prahlad Joshi an popular M.P. from Dharwad Loksabha constituency was the state BJP president. The state unit of the BJP firmly asked former Minister and senior BJP Leader Umesh Katti not to make any statement demanding a separate statehood for North Karnataka since the demand was not in consonance with the party's policy and programmes. President of the state unit of BJP, Prahlad Joshi told that " The BJP is not for the disintegration of the state...Shri. Prahlad Joshi was very keen on developing his constituency and Hubli, Dharwad, Navalgund, Kalaghatagi, Kundgol, Shiggaon talukas are in his Loksabha constituency. Hubli is considered as chota Bombay and is in real sense a commercial gateway of Karnataka. Dharwad is educational center. He brought many more high profile infrastructure facilities to North Karnataka. He took keen interest in developing Hubli Airport as an International airport. The railway station was upgraded to international level. He took initiative in bringing IIT to Dharwad which was considered as a mega boost for the regional development. In order to translate Hubli into a Green City as a part of prime minister's vision of Green India he brought the GAS In Project to Hubli. Shri. Prahlad Joshi has an excellent skill of convincing the people at the top and has kept good rapport with the central power corridors and thus is successful in bring about various development projects for the regional development. He was also instrumental in bring the SMART CITY project to Hubli Dharwad. Such kind of leadership must develop across the parties to bring about the changes over a period of time. The leaders must possess the ground necessities for development and must be visionaries. Feeling of neglect, discrimination and step-motherly treatment must be corrected setting aside the party politics.

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