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Shakti Utthan Ashram Lakhisarai

Class: Xth            Subject: Political science

Study Material :

Ch. Gender Caste and Religion

Religion, Communalism and Politics

Religion

The division based on religious differences are often expressed in the field of politics. In India, there are followers of different religions. People should be able to express in politics their needs, interests and demands as a member of a religious community.

Communalism

The use of religion in politics is called communal politics:

When beliefs of one religion are presented as superior to those of other religions

When the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another

When state power is used to establish the domination of one religious group over the rest.

Communalism can take various forms in politics as mentioned below:

The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs involves religious prejudices, stereotypes of religious communities and belief in the superiority of one's religion over other religions.

A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community. Political mobilisation on religious lines involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotional appeal and plain fear in order to bring the followers of one religion together in the political arena.

Sometimes communalism takes its most ugly form of communal violence, riots and massacre.

India and Pakistan suffered some of the worst communal riots at the time of the Partition.

Secular State

India is a secular state. Some of the features of India Secular states are:

There is no official religion for the Indian state.

The Constitution provides to all individuals and communities freedom to profess, practice and propagate any religion, or not to follow any.

The Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.

The Constitution allows the state to intervene in the matters of religion in order to ensure equality within religious communities. For example, it bans untouchability.

Caste and Politics

Caste and politics both have some positive and some negative aspects. Let's look at them:

### Caste Inequalities

In most societies, occupations are passed on from one generation to another. Caste system is an extreme form of this. In this system, members of the same caste, the group were supposed to form a social community that practiced the same or similar occupation, married within the caste group and did not eat with members from other caste groups.

With economic development, large scale urbanisation, growth of literacy and education, occupational mobility and the weakening of the position of landlords in the villages, the old notions of Caste Hierarchy are breaking down. Constitution of India prohibited any caste-based discrimination and laid the foundations of policies to reverse the injustices of the caste system.

Read above passage throughly and try to understand and give the answer of the following question :

1. What is communalism?
2. What do you mean by secular state?
3. what do you mean by caste system in India?
4. What do you mean by economic development?
5. what do you mean by Untouchability?

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