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IDEAS

A Journal of Multidisciplinary Thoughts

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Editorial—

The Department of Political Science is one of the oldest departments of Sipajhar College which opened Major in 1985-86. As one of the remarkable products, the Department has made a great endeavour to publish this annual journal named 'IDEAS: A Journal of Multidisciplinary Thoughts' which is expected to focus on different ideas and concept of the political events concerning primarily with different aspects of the society. It carries out analytical views on several facts regarding principles of Government as well as the new ideas incorporating the matters-political and non-political; government and non-governmental and thus resolves to come forward for action, reaction and interaction.

Women Enfranchisement and Democracy

Women enfranchisement is an inevitable part of liberal democracy. India as a democratic country has come to own all the procedural perspective viz. periodical election, Free press and democratic participation. From the point of democratic motto, coming from the term isonomia, all irrespective of caste, creed, sex are equal in all aspects of social privileges especially the rights: social, economic, political and so on. It therefore reveals that the women community under the principle i.e. Universal Adult Suffrage indicating to a certain age is allowed to participate in the political affairs casting their respective votes. To speak the truth, etymologically democracy means the rule of the people and by the people irrespective of especially sex. Democracy always utters one thing i.e. one person one vote. It does not matter whether the voter is male or female. In democracy, rationality is the base which leads one a way of becoming a part of political administration.

Enfranchisement is a political right which permits the citizens to participate in the decision making process or governance of a democratic country at all levels. Democratic country is usually open, accountable and participatory and it makes an individual responsible to his or her country. It gives him or her sense of responsibility. Citizen's participation irrespective of sex in the decision making process particularly at the grass root level without any discrimination is one the main pillar of democratic decentralization. Hence it is the duty of every modern democratic state to provide elimination of discrimination against the women of rural areas and to ensure such women to participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels

Democracy in real sense cannot attain its apparition in India although it claims to be a democratic country at large. As equality is one of the four pillars of democracy, it should exist among the people belonging to both male and female in so far as political rights are concerned. The amount of participation in direct political affairs especially in the legislative bodies of a state can well be understood when the members of all the state assemblies are analyzed. It is found that women constitute the half of the total population of the world and they have got unique position in a number of informal as well as disguised domestic affairs in every society. Experiences reveal the fact that unless and until the women cooperate, neither social nor economic purposes can be served. If so, why is it not in political affairs? Let us observe the existing members of various state assemblies of India which is regarded as the mostly populated democratic country. The minimum

percentage of existing women participation in law-making bodies i.e. state assemblies is found to be 5% while maximum is 14%. Andhra Pradesh state assemblies have 36 women members out of 294. Likewise, 13 women members in 126 seated Assam assembly; in Bihar it is 26 out of 246 members. Similarly, 9 women members in Haryana out of 90; only 10 women members in Maharashtra State Assembly out of 288. Only one in Goa out of 40; in Chhatisgarh state assembly it is 10 out of 90. It is only 5 members in Karnataka out of 225 members. There are at present 34 women members in West Bengal state assembly out of 294. In Rajasthan state assembly, 29 women members have been able to occupy the seats out of 200. It is really unfortunate to think about women enfranchisement that there are only 7 women members out of 140 in Kerala state assembly; 26 women members in Madhya Pradesh 26 out of 231. In 117 seated Punjab State Assembly, it is only 8 out of 117 and in Jharkhand also there are only 8 women members out of 81 members. The above account certainly gives a gloomy picture of the participation of women members in various state assemblies in Indian democratic country wherein only 5 to 14 percentage of women participation in direct law-making bodies are prevalent. If such meager participation of women continues, it is futile to claim for India to be a democracy which etymologically means equal share and participation of the people irrespective of gender.

Dibakar Ch. Das