

Lesson 20

Regionalism and Regional Parties

Summary –

Regionalism means strong attachment to a particular region or a state as against the country. This feeling arises either due to the continuous neglect of a particular area or because the people of a particular region become politically aware and seek to fight perceived discrimination.



What is Regionalism –

The term 'regionalism' has two connotations :

- 1) In the negative sense it implies excessive state.
- 2) In the positive sense it is a political attribute associated with people's love for their region, culture, language, etc. with a view to maintain their independent identity.

Different Forms of Regionalism –

Demand for State Autonomy:

Regionalism has often led to the demand by states for greater autonomy from the centre.

Secession from the Union: This is a dangerous form of regionalism. It emerges when states demand separation from the Centre and try to establish an independent identity of their own.

Development of Regionalism in India –

- ✚ Regionalism is not a new phenomenon in the Indian political system.
- ✚ In the pre-independence days, it was promoted by the British imperialists, and they deliberately encouraged the people of various regions to think in terms of their region.
- ✚ After Independence, the leaders tried to foster a feeling among the people that they belonged to one single nation.

- The framers of the constitution sought to achieve this by introducing single citizenship for all.
- With the same objective a unified judiciary all Indian services and a strong Central government was provided.

Causes for Growth of Regionalism –

1. Regionalism made its appearance as a reaction against the efforts of the national government to impose a particular ideology, language or cultural pattern on all people and groups.
2. Continuous neglect of an area or region by the ruling parties & concentration of administrative and political power has given rise to demand for decentralization of authority and bifurcate of unilingual states.

3. The desire of the various units of the Indian federal system to maintain their sub cultural regions and greater degree of self-government has promoted regionalism and given rise to demand for greater autonomy.
4. The desire of regional elites to capture power has also led to rise of regionalism.
5. The interaction between the forces of modernisation and mass participation have also largely contributed to the growth of regionalism in India.
6. The growing awareness among the people of backward areas that they are being discriminated against has also promoted feeling of regionalism.

Role of the Regional Parties -

The regional parties operate within very limited area and pursue only limited objective



They have played significant role both in the State as well as national politics



Regional political parties have focused the attention of the people in remote areas on various political & economic issues and contributed to their political awakening



The regional political parties formed governments in several states and tried to give concrete shape to their policies and programmes

Measures for Correcting Regional Imbalances -

Regionalism has been an important aspect of Indian politics. Sometimes it has posed threat to the unity of the country. it is necessary to take steps to reduce such tendencies.

Some such measures can be:

- (a) To promote the development of the hitherto neglected areas so that they feel a part of the national mainstream.
- (b) The central government must not interfere in the affairs of the State unless it is unavoidable for national interest.

(c) Problems of people must be solved in a peaceful and constitutional manner. Politicians must not be allowed to misuse the issue of regional demands.

(c) Except for issues of national importance, the states should be given freedom to run their own affairs.

(d) Changes are necessary in the Central-State relations in favour of the states, and for introducing a system of national education that would help people to overcome regional feelings and develop an attachment towards the nation.

Evaluate yourself –

1. Describe the role of regional parties in your own words.
2. Write down the causes behind the problem of the regionalism and suggest the solutions for the same in your words.
3. List down the development has been done by the regional party of your area.



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