



BAL BHARATI PUBLIC SCHOOL, PITAMPURA, DELHI-110034

CLASS –IX
ASSIGNMENT - 5

NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION

Dear Students,

- Reading newspaper makes you well informed. It enables you to take part in every discussion pertaining to the world's current events.
- Reading newspapers will improve your knowledge in general and it will be easy for you to relate to other people who often talk about current events and politics.
- Through newspapers, you will have a clear idea and understanding of what is happening in your country and the whole world .

Please read the following article published on ndtv.com on 30th November 2021 and answer the Questions that follow

Why BJP Stronghold Agra Is Having Second Thoughts - by Saba Naqvi

Discontent against the BJP is now openly expressed in the city of the Taj Mahal. In the last state election in 2017, all nine seats in Agra were won by the BJP, an extra-ordinary result given that the city was hit hard by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's shock demonetization move announced on November 8, 2016, just months before it voted on 11 February 2017. Apart from tourism, much of Agra has traditionally been employed in the unorganized sector, producing leather and shoes - an industry that worked on cash transactions - so voting for the BJP in 2017 was an act of faith. In the 2019 national election, the two Lok Sabha seats of Agra and Fatehpur Sikri were also taken by the BJP.

But the allegiance to the ruling party appears significantly weaker now, particularly in the Dalit community. Dheeraj Kumar runs several shoe factories in the city that he calls "Dalit ki Rajdhani" (Capital of Dalits). He is from the dominant Jatav sub-caste, that according to the 2011 census comprise 54 per cent of the state's Dalit population. (Dalits are estimated to make up 21 percent of Uttar Pradesh's population). Most of the labour Dheeraj Kumar employs are Jatavs apart from a few Muslims. He says that several unregistered factories have shut down since demonetization and his workers are now paid per pair of shoes that they manufacture and are not employed on a salary. "I am still lucky as we supply to brands like Bata and Paragon and could last out the months after note-bandi...and then the lockdowns and Covid."

I walk up a creaky winding staircase to a small shoe factory in the Idgah Katghar locality where 15 workers are making shiny black synthetic shoes (sourcing leather became problematic after a severe raw hide shortage following the closing of many abattoirs that were deemed illegal by the government of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, so artificial materials are common now). The workers are first evasive about their voting preferences, but with persuasion from the man-in-charge they open up. Yes, many of them had voted BJP in 2017 because of the "lehar" (wave), but are returning to Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party because it is "our party". (Mayawati is a Jatav Dalit and her voter bloc were instrumental to her four separate terms as Chief Minister). But in 2014 a small section of Jatavs also supported Narendra Modi in his bid to become Prime Minister of India and continued to do so in the 2017 state polls and 2019 national election. That the BJP still has some Jatav support was born out on that factory floor where two stood apart and said they will be voting for the party - each got ₹ 2.5 lakh for building houses as part of a government scheme and said they were helped by ration supplies during the lockdown. Others, however, butted in to say what is the point of ration when we can't find work easily and live with dignity.

Most Jatavs now reveal a distinct anti-BJP mood. Even more significant is the disillusionment of the smaller Dalit sub-caste of Valmikis who had become loyal Hindutva foot soldiers in the years since 2014. Gaurav Valmiki is the spokesperson of the Agra Valmiki Mahapanchayat, the main platform representing the community in Agra. He tells me that in the past few elections, starting from the 2014 and 2019 national polls as also the 2017 state election, 90 per cent of his caste voted BJP. What he goes on to say should worry the BJP/RSS - and not just from an electoral perspective. Valmikis stand fifth in the UP list of Scheduled Castes but are often present in large pockets within urban constituencies where they work as safai karamcharis and sweepers. Resentful of Jatavs getting most of the reservation quota jobs, in many parts of West UP, Valmikis had thrown in their lot with the BJP/RSS project. Now Gaurav Valmiki says they supported Hindutva because they believed they would get justice and respect. None of that happened, he says, adding, "they wanted to use us against Muslims and we were used but we realise now that Muslims don't disrespect us but are ready to break bread with us". He adds that "the upper caste Hindus get us to do their dirty work in their homes and in politics also but have given us no respect or justice."

The political benefit seems to be going to Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party that is seen by most political observers as the rising force in the state. Gaurav says that a mahapanchayat of the Valmikis of Agra will take place on December 15, where the community is likely to decide that it will vote for Akhilesh Yadav and the SP.

The SP has traditionally not been as strong as the BJP and BSP in Agra. But alliances that the party is forging could give it a new momentum. A Jatav shoe factory-owner highlights the growing interest in Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad "Ravan" who recently drew large crowds in Agra and has a strong following among younger Dalits looking for an option to a weakening BSP. "If Ravan ties up with the SP, some of us will consider shifting to that front," he says. There were unconfirmed reports of Ravan meeting the SP chief Akhilesh

Yadav on November 28 but there is no confirmation if a deal will be struck. But were that to happen, the Jatavs could view with new interest Akhilesh Yadav, who headed the state between 2012 and 2017. This is linked to the SP already having tied up with Jayant Choudhary's RLD, which has strong support among Jat farmers in rural Agra angry with the farm laws that the Centre had introduced. The SP has also held talks with Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party or AAP, which, in caste-conscious UP is seen as a "baniya" party that delivers on urban promises.

This potentially helps Akhilesh Yadav because in Agra, there is great disenchantment among some traders and shopkeepers who have been the most loyal bloc of BJP voters. Most say they will still end up voting BJP, but a section say they may not vote at all as there has been no forum for redressal in a government they helped elect. Hiren Aggarwal, one of the biggest hosiery traders in Sanjay Place, the market hub of Agra, says he will abstain because for him, "BJP is family and family is misbehaving". He had briefly joined AAP but left and describes himself as a disgruntled BJP/RSS member. Ashok Jain, who runs a large electrical store in the same market, says there is talk about Hindu-Muslim issues coming up before the polls, "but 70 per cent of my workers are Muslims and we can't take any more disruption to our business". He too claims he is a lapsed BJP voter.

The BJP is reportedly also relying on Opposition votes being divided, and on a consolidation of the Hindu vote - hence, Yogi Adityanath's many remarks about Akhilesh Yadav's "Muslim appeasement". As the sun sets on the Taj Mahal, casting light and shadows, a small hotelier from a trading caste who too was once enthusiastic about the BJP says there has been too much financial and personal loss for him to keep the faith.

Question:

Q1. "The allegiance to the ruling party i.e BJP appears weaker in Agra, particularly in the Dalit Community." Justify the statement giving two reasons

Q2 Enlist the reasons for the Jatav Yadavs returning to Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party.

Q3. State the reasons for the disillusionment of the smaller Dalit sub-caste of Valmikis who had become loyal Hindutva foot soldiers in the years since 2014.(Atleast 3 reasons)

Q4. Which is the third party other than BJP and BSP that is forging alliances in UP to win elections? What are its chances of forging alliances and forming a formidable opposition? Comment.

MENTAL AGILITY

TOPIC – SUDOKU PUZZLE

LEVEL 2

SERIAL NO:5

ANSWER KEY



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4	1	5	9	8	3	7	6	2
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