



The Indian Journal for Research in Law and Management

Open Access Law Journal – Copyright © 2024

Editor-in-Chief – Prof. (Dr.) Muktai Deb Chavan; Publisher – Alden Vas; ISSN: 2583-9896

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 International (CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0) License, which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium provided the original work is properly cited.

Decrepit Secularism and The Rise of Communalism in India

Introduction:-

India is one of the world's largest democracy in the world. According to the 2011 census India is home to 1.21 billion people and secularism is a phenomenon which is often attached to the identity of India since historical times. The phenomenon of secularism is also enshrined in our Constitution. Secularism in common sense means that the state has no religion of its own. The Constitution of India gives all religions equal status and respects all of them and ensures the peaceful coexistence of all the religious sects in India but in today's time we are witnessing a rise in communalism in India and it is endangering the very phenomenon of secularism in India. In this blog, we will try to study the problems faced by secularism in India and the trends of growth of communalism in a secular country like India.

What is Secularism?

The word "Secularism" has been taken from "Saeculum" of Latin meaning ; the spirit of the age or age and it is translated as a state being neutral or not linked to the religion. It simply means that there is a separation between the state and the religion. India follows positive secularism. The Constitution of India accepts all the religions and promotes the growth of all religions .The concept of secularism was present in India since historical times. Since age's all religions are peacefully coexisting with each other in India. Preservation of secularism in India is very much necessary to protect the essence of "Unity in Diversity in India". The preamble of India says that India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic and it is based on the guiding principles of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. From this we can derive that the Constitution of India declares that India is a secular state.

What is communalism?

Communalism in a general sense can be called as a sturdy devotion to one's very own community; in a country like India it can be said as a maddening attachment to one own community and religion. Religious fundamentalism and dogmatism can be connected to communalism. Communalism tries to control distinctions within the community and promotes the unity of religion, sect, or community against others. It promotes conservative belief and orthodox principles. Even after so many years of independence India is struggling to tackle with the problem of communalism. Communalism fires clashes and tensions between different religious communities.

Origin and Rise of communalism in India

The roots of communalism in India can be found during the British Raj in India, to establish their full control in India , British launched various policies to divide Hindus and the Muslims. Some of the policies which were adopted by them to divide Hindus and Muslims are ; policy of divide and rule, introduction of separate electorates for Hindus and the Muslims, partition of Bengal on communal basis etc. The partition of India was a turning point, it sowed the seeds of communalism in the Indian subcontinent. The fire of communalism which was lit by British for their own favour is still burning the India. India is still struggling to extinguish the fire of communalism.

Present Causes which are intensifying communalism in India

There are various underlying causes which are fuelling communalism in present day India but some of the most prominent factors which are causing widespread communalism in India are usage of religion by politicians for their political gains, they use the religious sentiments of people to increase their vote bank, usage of social media to spread fake news and misinformation, manipulation of communities which are not doing so well economically by the group of people who spread communalism etc.

Incidents like communal riots and violence get triggered due to communalism. India has faced many communal riots like Anti Sikh riots 1984, Bhagalpur riots, Ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits 1989, Babri Masjid demolition 1992, Muzaffarpur violence 2013 and many more.

Communalism ; A threat to Secularism

Communalism , poses as a very big danger to Secularism. Prevalent communalism can affect the policies that are formulated in the country. Communalism can fade away the secularism in

the country means it can disrupt the separation between the religions and the state. The rights of the minority community come under threat. There can be discrimination with the minority community on the basis of their religion, their origin and caste. Communalism can pose as a threat to democracy as well since communalism interferes with the principles of the democracy i.e. justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.

How Communalism can be curbed?

Communalism is one of those problems which India is fighting with since its Independence in 1947. It can be curbed by promoting education so that the orthodox beliefs can be set aside, political campaign asking votes in the name of religion must be prohibited, sense of brotherhood must be instilled in the citizens, formulation of policies promoting equality and freedom of religion, media should refrain from spreading misinformation and fake news, politicians should promote interfaith dialogues to curb communalism. Many more such steps should be taken.

Conclusion

Constitution of India declares India as a secular country. Communalism poses as a danger to secularism. The government should take stringent steps to stop the forces who spread communalism. All Indians should take part in the eradication of communalism so that rich cultural heritage of India can be protected which respects all the religions. The phenomenon of “Unity and Diversity” should be popularized and patriotism towards the motherland must be preached. Communalism also hampers the growth of the country so a phenomenon like communalism must be eliminated.

References

- Das, D. (2022). Secularism and communalism in India : Role of the state and citizens.
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND GOVERNANCE, 6.

