

EDITORIALS

- Beyond Electoral Bonds
- Manufacturing the 'Ideal' Worker
- Declining Female Labour Force Participation

LAW & SOCIETY

- Supreme Court on Rafale Papers and Electoral Bonds

COMMENTARY

- 'Development' and the Mahagathbandhan in UP
- General Elections in Assam
- Unburdening the Child
- State Disaster Response Funds

BOOK REVIEWS

- *A Quantum Leap in the Wrong Direction?*
- *A Difficult Transition: The Nepal Papers*

PERSPECTIVES

- Government as an 'Efficient and Responsible' Litigant

SPECIAL ARTICLES

- Carbon Forestry and Its Challenges in India
- Facilities for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence
- 'Criminal Tribes' and the Mechanism of Power

CURRENT STATISTICS**POSTSCRIPT**

- The Feigned Lives of Facebook; A Festival of Politics; 'I Have an Exam Tomorrow'

More Harm Than Good

The deletion of three chapters from the history textbook of Class 9 in the name of reducing the child's "burden" reveals the parochial attitudes of educationists. **page 17**

Reviewing Carbon Forestry

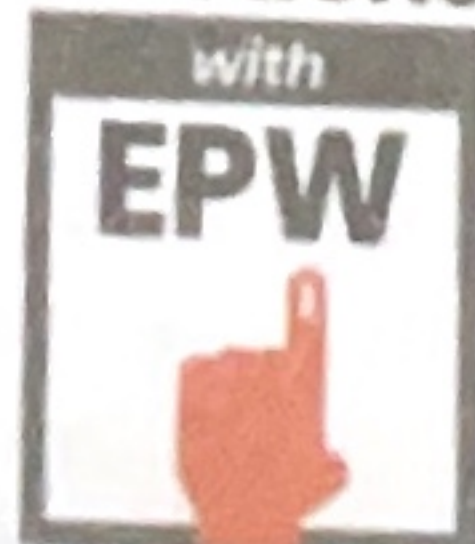
India must reassess its carbon forestry projects so as to ensure that forests are not traded for plantation forests that can have serious social, livelihood, and ecological implications. **page 33**

Marital Violence and Helplines

A study of women who approached government-sponsored helplines after suffering violence and the resulting improvement in their situation shows the importance of such facilities. **page 41**

Disaster Relief Financing

The guidelines of successive finance commissions to the central government on assisting state governments in providing disaster relief have changed, but the method of fund allocation too must be reviewed. **page 20**

Elections

- 'Development' and the Mahagathbandhan in UP **page 12**
- Assam: Persistent Issues and Shifting Alignments **page 14**

Beyond Electoral Bonds

7 Electoral reforms should look beyond "anonymity of donors" to make a real difference.

Manufacturing the 'Ideal' Worker

8 Gendered notions of productivity limit women from self-identifying as equal and worthy workers.

Declining Female Labour Force Participation

9 Demand- as well as supply-side factors constrain the labour force participation of rural women.

One and a Half Cheers for Transparency

10 The Supreme Court's judgments in the Rafale Papers and the Electoral Bonds cases suggest that while it is alive to the need for upholding transparency, this is not its consistent position. — *Alok Prasanna Kumar*

'Development' and the Mahagathbandhan in UP

12 How the dynamics between various stakeholders are playing out in the campaigning and polls in Uttar Pradesh—the focus of political speculation and observation—is examined. — *Manjur Ali*

General Elections in Assam

14 In the 2019 election, the outcome in Assam, which is witnessing realignments and alleged adjustments amongst the key political players, will decide which way the region swings. — *Parvin Sultana*

Unburdening the Child

17 The deletion of three chapters from the history textbook of Class 9, carried out in the name of reducing the burden on children, reflects a myopic view of the problem of academic load and its relationship with textbooks. — *Disha Nawani*

From Margin Money to State Disaster Response Funds

20 The mode of computing the quantum of allocation to State Disaster Response Funds, leading to some states receiving less than their deserved allocations, needs to be revised in the wake of the constitution of the Fifteenth Finance Commission. — *Lenin Babu Kamepalli*

Government as an 'Efficient and Responsible' Litigant

27 The challenges for the government in transforming itself into an efficient and responsible litigant, and the factors responsible for increasing litigation and untenable "causes of action" are examined. — *Indrani Barpujari*

Analysing Carbon Forestry and Its Challenges in India

33 Carbon forestry projects such as REDD+, A/R CDM and the Green India Mission are based on the neo-liberal principles promoting plantations of fast-growing species, and undermining local knowledge and institutions. — *Ashish Aggarwal*

Access to Facilities for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence

41 A study of 200 women who approached the government-sponsored helplines shows how physical and sexual violence perpetrated by husbands and/or family members fell significantly in the inter-survey period, underscoring the importance of such facilities for women. — *Shireen J Jejeebhoy, K G Santhya*

'Criminal Tribes' and the Mechanism of Powers

49 A close examination of ancient Indian scriptures and colonial archival texts reveals how different views about the so-called "criminal tribes" affected the ways in which power hierarchies were constructed and maintained. — *Poulami Sarkar*

Postscript

61 *Suyash Saxena* on how social media needs to learn from art and philosophy about the projection of one's true self; *Ranabir Samaddar* on plurality and populism in West Bengal; *Snehashish Mitra* on the citizenship and identity of Bihari settlers in Guwahati; and Last Lines by *Ponnappa*.

EDITORIALS

Beyond Electoral Bonds 7

Manufacturing the 'Ideal' Worker 8

Declining Female Labour Force Participation 9

FROM 50 YEARS AGO 9

LAW & SOCIETY

Supreme Court on Rafale Papers and Electoral Bonds: One and a Half Cheers for Transparency — *Alok Prasanna Kumar* 10

COMMENTARY

'Development' and the Mahagathbandhan in UP — *Manjur Ali* 12

General Elections in Assam: Persistent Issues and Shifting Alignments — *Parvin Sultana* 14

Unburdening the Child — *Disha Nawani* 17

Disaster Relief Financing: A Journey from Margin Money to State Disaster Response Funds — *Lenin Babu Kamepalli* 20

BOOK REVIEWS

A Quantum Leap in the Wrong Direction?—The True State of Development — *Rahul Menon* 23

A Difficult Transition: The Nepal Papers—Decoding the Silence: Violence against Women and Impunity — *Kavita Raturi* 25

PERSPECTIVES

Government as an 'Efficient and Responsible' Litigant: Challenges and the Way Forward — *Indrani Barpujari* 27

SPECIAL ARTICLES

Neo-liberal Conservation: Analysing Carbon Forestry and Its Challenges in India — *Ashish Aggarwal* 33

Access to Facilities for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence: Impact on Well-being and Experience of Further Violence — *Shireen J Jejeebhoy, K G Santhya* 41

'Criminal Tribes' and the Mechanism of Power: Probing into Historical Perspectives — *Poulami Sarkar* 49

CURRENT STATISTICS 58

POSTSCRIPT

The Feigned Lives of Facebook — *Suyash Saxena* 61

A Festival of Politics—*Ranabir Samaddar* 62

'I Have an Exam Tomorrow' — *Snehashish Mitra* 64

Last Lines 64

APPOINTMENTS/PROGRAMMES

ANNOUNCEMENTS 65

LETTERS 4

Many important leaders from the SP and the BSP have found the Congress a better platform. Kausar Jahan, Naseemuddin Siddiqui, Rakesh Sachan, Mohammad Jasmir Ansari, Kunwar Chand Vakil, Bal Kunwar Patel are among those who have joined the Congress. A resurgent Congress party is neither in favour of the SP or the BSP.

Looking at Table 2 (p 13), it is clear that the SP-BSP understanding to leave just two seats for the Congress party is

rather unfair. In six seats, the Congress has a clear edge and would like to repeat its past performance. In these Lok Sabha seats, the Muslims have been Congress supporters. This means the BJP has a chance in the triangular fight, except in Raebareli and Amethi. On the other hand, the Congress has also fielded six Muslim candidates in Muslim-dominated seats of Badaun, Bijnor, Khiri, Sant Kabir Nagar, Sitapur, and Saharanpur. Given the overall

situation in the state the impression is that the Muslims are overburdened with the responsibility to protect democracy and the Constitution.

NOTE

1 The hegemony in the rural hinterland is reflected in middle and lower castes addressing upper castes as *babu sahib*, *sarkar*, *mai-baap*, *husur*, *maalik*, etc.

REFERENCE

Dixit, Neha (2018): "NSA Is the Latest Weapon against Muslim in UP," *Wire*, 10 September, New Delhi.

General Elections in Assam Persistent Issues and Shifting Alignments

PARVIN SULTANA

In the 2019 election, Assam will see a direct fight between the Congress and the Asom Gana Parishad-Bharatiya Janata Party alliance in almost all its constituencies. This election witnessed realignments and alleged adjustments amongst the key political players. It also saw new entrants like the National People's Party. Every constituency will respond to these varied factors. The outcome of Assam's 14 constituencies is crucial as it will decide which way the region swings.

The three phase polls of Assam started on 11 April and the remaining polls will be held on 18 and 23 April. The outcome of its 14 constituencies will decide which way the region will swing. Assam has largely voted for Congress in the parliamentary elections and it was only in 2016 that the Grand Old Party was decimated and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power. Since then BJP has succeeded in making inroads in all the other north-eastern states. It has its own chief minister in Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura and is a part of the governments in Meghalaya and Nagaland.

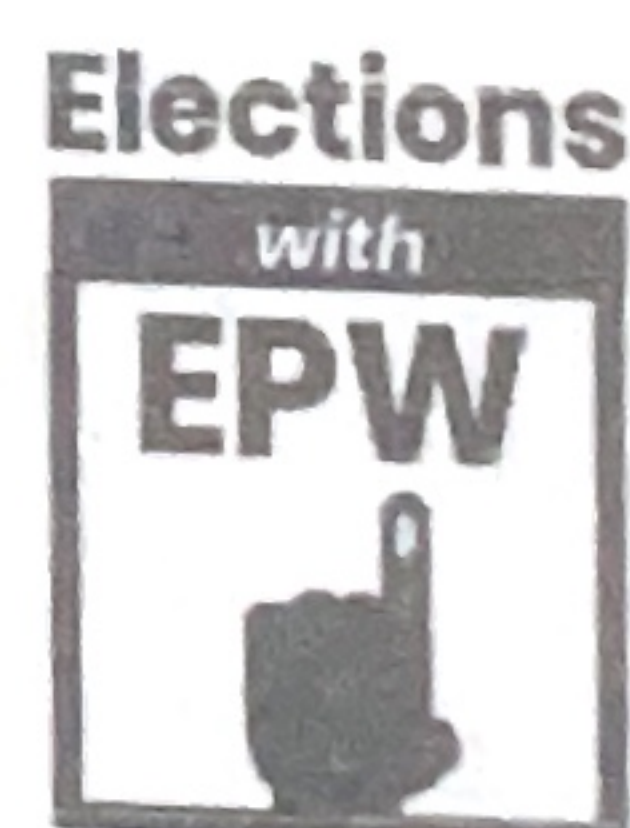
The BJP did well in the Assam in the 2014 elections, the winning seven out of the 14 constituencies. The Congress and the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) were reduced to three seats each while the Kokrajhar constituency in the Bodoland Territorial Administrative Districts (BTAD) went to an independent candidate, Naba Kumar Sarania. While the party is confident of repeating its earlier performance if not improving upon it, there are some new factors which are at play in this election.

The state has usually voted for Congress both in parliamentary and assembly elections. The party was voted out for just a year in 1978 when the Janata Party led by Golap Borbora took over at the helm. The party was again ousted by the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) which formed the government in 1985 and 1996. The Congress party has however performed well in parliamentary elections.

In the 1991 parliamentary elections, the Congress won eight seats with a vote share of 28.5%. In 1996, the Congress and AGP won five seats each. In 1999, Congress won 10 seats and its vote share rose to 38.4%. Congress won nine and seven seats in the 2004 and 2009 elections respectively. In the 2014 elections, the party's seat share and vote share both came drastically down. Congress managed to win only three seats and its vote share dwindled to 29.6%.¹

Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019

Like in every elections, electoral politics and campaigns in this election are revolving to an extent around the immigrant question. The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill will be an issue even though many are downplaying its importance. This bill aims at eventually granting citizenship to Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist migrants from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who have entered India till 31 December 2014. The bill saw a massive backlash in the entire region of the North East. Indigenous communities from across the region feel that Hindu Bangladeshis might enter the states in a large number and endanger their identities.



Parvin Sultana (parvin.jnu@gmail.com) teaches at Pramathesh Barua College, Dhubri, Assam.