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Source: *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 31, No. 2/3 (Jan. 13-20, 1996), pp. 149-152

Published by: [Economic and Political Weekly](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4403682>

Accessed: 29-05-2015 05:52 UTC

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A Democratic Verdict?

Peter Ronald deSouza

Goan society is undergoing a subtle process of alignments and realignments which is reflected in its politics. Analysing the 1994 assembly elections in Goa in terms of democratic theory, this paper underlines certain important factors which characterise and shape current Goan politics: an intense competition between communities for spoils of politics, dissidence among party leaders, and a calculating voter.

WHILE evaluating election results in India in terms of the historical project of democracy, one is often left with a feeling of ambivalence. On the one hand, one cannot help but admire the proficiency with which the mammoth exercise is conducted – of inviting and recording the choice of a few hundred million citizens on who is to represent them. On the other hand, one can only despair at the fact that the government that emerges, and the way it works, is a far cry from the promises of 'representative government'.¹ The problem seems to be at the fundamental level of design and hence to regard it merely as an anomaly of a correct design seems unconvincing.² Herein lies the uncertainty of evaluation. Should one, for example, expect of the process a higher level not just of 'representativeness' but also of 'representative good government', or should one instead be realistic and shift from a Rousseauian to a Schumpeterian model of democracy? Should one, to explain this paradox, look at the terrain between 'individual preference' and 'collective choice'? Is there a 'hidden hand' working in reverse? Reflecting on the 1994 elections in Goa, questions such as these need to be asked.

2 SORDID STORY

The preceding assembly in the state set a record of sorts with splits and defections, first, from the ruling Congress to the opposition Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP), and later from the ruling MGP coalition to the opposition Congress. This floor-crossing resulted in several changes of government during the five year term of the assembly. There were, during the period seven chief ministers,³ two deputy chief ministers, three speakers,⁴ one acting speaker, 6-14 cabinet ministers,⁵ depending upon the particular government in power, and, even, two governors, one of whom had to resign because of his partisan involvement.⁶ And all this in a house of just 40 MLAs. This rather bland rendering of the happenings in the 7th assembly, if embellished with an examination of the decisions made by the various ministers and others on issues such as land conversions, Konkan railway, urban development, public transport, government employment, etc, would produce a picture at considerable variance with the promises of democracy. A cursory study of the letters

to the editor, or a casual recording of conversations in taverns, would reveal a deep sense of cynicism, that has crept into the body politics.

The above sordid story took place in a state that, at least minimally, satisfies the 'necessary conditions' for a democracy. Goa ranks among the top three states in terms of per capita income. It has the second highest literacy in the country. It boasts of eight daily newspapers in three languages for a population of less than 14 lakhs. It has schools and colleges in every taluka. It is a small state with a surface areas of about 3,200 sq km which is criss-crossed with good roads and a good public transport system, both of course in relative terms. These factors should constitute, as per the literature on democracy, the appropriate conditions for a vibrant vigilant citizen and the conscious voter who will not just strive to maintain his/her democratic patrimony but also to extend it.

The above, in a sense, constitutes the pre-history of the 1994 assembly elections. In such a context one is naturally curious about how the voter will respond. Will she protest, or endorse, or be indifferent to the happenings of the 7th assembly? Since elections are "complex events involving individual and collective decisions which directly affect and are affected by the total political and social process" and since "they open up channels between the polity and society, between elites and masses, and between the individual and his government",⁷ a study of the 1994 election in Goa will require us to ask questions at three levels: in terms of (i) the nature and features of the vote, (ii) the impact on local institutions, and (iii) the significance of (i) and (ii) for democracy.⁸

First, however, some basic data on the elections to the 8th assembly. Since the attainment of full fledged statehood on May 30, 1987, this is only the second assembly comprising 40 members, the first being a result of the elections held in 1989. The number of eligible voters in 1994 was 8,22,830 – up from 7,34,317 in 1989, a growth of approx 12 per cent. Of these the number of male voters was 4,16,280 and of female voters 4,06,473 with 77 being service voters. The number of candidates for 40 seats (19 north and 21 south) was 311 of which 154 were independents. The main

contesting groups were the Congress (40 seats), MGP-BJP-SS alliance (25-12-2 seats), the UGDP (20 seats) and independents, many of whom were dissident Congressmen. There was more dissidence in the Congress camp than in the alliance camp among both official and rebel candidates.⁹ The date of polling was November 16, 1994 and the counting was to be done on December 9 and 10, 1994. The basic data on votes polled partywise and constituencywise in the 94 elections can be found in the Appendix.¹⁰

These elections were conducted under a vigilant election commission. The acceptance of the model code of conduct, and the fact that local election officials and candidates, were fearful of the CEC meant that the voter in 1994 was more strongly empowered than she/he was in previous elections. So were the independent candidates in terms of a more level-playing field *vis-a-vis* the behemoths of the Congress and the MGP-led alliance. The role of the Election Commission in reducing electoral malpractices must hence be recognised as an important factor in this election. Three examples would adequately illustrate this point. The first concerns the prime minister's visit to Goa. Given the culture of sycophancy that pervades our party system, such an event would normally result in banners everywhere, and walls and buildings defaced with slogans. This did not happen, although the road on which he travelled from the Raj Bhavan to the election meeting venue was re-surfaced just within 48 hours before his arrival. Only one building, to my knowledge, the stadium at the election venue, was painted with a 'Welcome to prime-minister Rao' sign, and that too was restored to its original state within 48 hours of the visit. The ban on loudspeakers and on the defacement of public property was strictly observed and this contributed to the sense of empowerment, in addition to a sense of aesthetics.

Second, there were advertisements in local newspapers by candidates asking their supporters not to issue even small advertisements supporting their candidature or, as is often the case, extolling their virtues since this would mean a reduction in their allowable expenditure. This in a state where the birthday of even a small-time local politician is announced in the newspapers with great fanfare. The politician is hailed

in these advertisements as a great 'social worker' and a fearless champion of the people. Further, it was interesting to witness candidates lining up before the office of the Election Commission with their accounts for scrutiny.¹¹ Thus, the role of money power was at least reduced, if not eliminated.

Thirdly, there were restrictions on the use of vehicles for canvassing and for ferrying voters to the voting booths. There was an instance of a car of the deputy speaker, in excess of the allowable number, being confiscated. As a result of these measures, candidates were forced to resort to house to house canvassing rather than rely on indirect methods and this was a humbling exercise for politicians. The role of the Election Commission was thus significant: it instilled fear in candidates who were tempted to indulge in electoral malpractices.

The expectations of a lower turnout, because of the CEC's directives, were, however, belied. As against 68.7 per cent in 1989, there was a 70 per cent turnout in 1994. This higher turnout, in spite of the above constraints, was a pointer to the voter's perception who still appears to value the potential of the vote to make a statement on the 'state of the world'.

The break-up of the vote was as follows. The Congress got 37.5 per cent and 18 seats, alliance 32.1 per cent and 16 seats. UGDP 8.3 per cent and three seats, and independents and others 22.1 per cent, with three seats for independents. Nineteen of the 40 MLAs were new faces. The independents and the UGDP got the second highest number of votes in six (3+3) constituencies. The number of significant dissident candidates, both of the Congress and the MGP, was eight of whom at least three were ex-MLAs (see Note 10). In terms of votes polled, the Congress had an all-Goa character with it getting less than 2,000 votes only in one constituency. The alliance, in contrast, got less than 2,000 votes in eight constituencies.

DEEPER MEANING

For the above basic data (given in more detail in Appendix 1) to yield greater socio-political insights, I have aggregated it into four geo-historical groups which have distinct profiles in terms of demographic, cultural and development indices. These are North New Conquest (NN) 12 seats, North Old Conquest (NO) 11 seats, South Old Conquest (SO) 11 seats, and South New Conquest (SN) six seats. These groups will allow us to determine trends in terms of voting patterns. Table 1 compares the actual results of the 1989 and 1994 elections.

The table shows a decline in the votes for the main actors in the last assembly even though in this case the voters were presented with a clearer choice between the ruling Congress the main culprit of the last assembly, and the opposition MGP-led alliance which offered a clear, if not a credible, alternative. The Congress got 3.23

per cent and the alliance 7.6 per cent less vote than they got in the 1989 election. The vote against the politics represented by either of the established parties grew by a sizeable 10.8 per cent. The magnitude of the protest is clear even though the contest between the Congress and the alliance seemed to offer the voter a two-party alternating system of government. Stable government seems less of an issue than good government.

The 'vote against', when read along with (i) the number of new MLAs, (ii) the number of independents, (iii) the growth in the vote for UGDP and independents, (iv) the number of prominent defeated MLAs,¹² and (v) the growth in the voter turnout by 1.4 per cent leads to one major conclusion: The 1994 vote was a protest vote. The protest seems to be against the venality of the members in the last assembly.¹³ Other issues may also have been a part of the calculus but this seems to be the most important.

The protest, however, is not so straightforward. If, as democratic theory argues, the citizen tries to promote his/her interest through voting then the pattern of the 1994 election shows that the protest, although distinct across Goa, is more muted in certain areas and more pronounced in others. The protest seems to be tempered by some other factor that also has an important place in the voter's calculus. The regional variation brings this out. The Congress gains 4.1 per cent of the vote in NO and loses 14.2 per cent in SO with no significant changes in NN and SN. The Alliance loses 6.9 per cent in NN, 8.7 per cent in NO, 21.8 per cent in SO, and remains the same in SO. The Congress seems to lose less of its vote bank than the MGP. In fact, it gains in NO.

The reasons for the consolidation and fragmentation of the Congress and the MGP vote are perhaps the following. Firstly, the fear among the minorities, Catholics and Muslims, of the coming together of Hindu parties – the MGP, BJP and SS. The recent involvement of the Shiv Sena in the Bombay riots and the aggression that accompanied the visit of Bal Thackeray to Goa during the election campaign frightened the minorities and perhaps also some members of the majority community. The BJP's hindutva politics also contributed to this consolidation of the minority vote.¹⁴ In areas where the minorities did not feel so threatened, such as SO, a Catholic dominated area, the Congress gets a punishing and votes go to regional outfit with a largely Catholic base,

the UGDP. Significantly, the MGP vote in SO remains the same. Secondly, there were new caste coalitions the Congress was able to form through its politics of defections, the emergence of the Bhandari Samaj of the middle castes is an illustration of this.¹⁵ Thirdly, coupled with these caste coalitions is the question of 'land to the tenant' which has benefited certain lower and middle castes. The land question is an important factor in Goan politics.¹⁶ Fourthly, the disaffection among traditional MGP-supporters with the alliance which they felt would weaken their own hold on the regional party because of the accommodations the latter had to make for the national party, the BJP, to whom 12 seats were conceded. There was thus a temporary migration away from the MGP to teach the party leaders a lesson. Fifthly, there was a more materialist perception of the political choices by the Hindu voter as against the more ideological perception by the Catholic voter. These are some tentative hypotheses that seem to be present in the data, but they would need further empirical confirmation.

RELIGIOUS FACTOR

I shall attempt to develop just one of these hypotheses, that concerning the nature and features of the community vote. Religion is one of the important fault-lines in society, which influences the calculus of voting, the others being language, caste, region and class. I have chosen it because the alliance projected itself as bringing together the split Hindu vote. The argument given was in the terms of majority-minority behaviour and interests. The arithmetic of the majority, according to this hypothesis, would automatically sweep it to power. Community perception played a major role in this election. To elaborate the thesis on community voting patterns, I shall rely on ethnographic data generated by a survey conducted by the Social Science Research Association between November, 18 and 25, 1994.¹⁷ The survey results came very close to the actual results in terms of the

TABLE 2: RELIGIOUS PROFILES OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION

Religion	NN	NO	SO	SN
Hindu	93.1	65.1	34.8	67.7
Catholic	3.5	25.8	58.3	32.4
Muslim	3.5	8.3	6.9	0.0
Others	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0

TABLE 1: REGIONWISE VOTE PREFERENCES IN 1989 AND 1994 ELECTIONS

Region	Congress		Alliance		Others	
	1989	1994	1989	1994	1989	1994
NN	34.4	32.2	53.7	46.8	11.8	20.9
NO	40.6	44.7	43.3	34.6	19.1	20.7
SO	50.1	35.9	13.3	13.3	36.6	50.8
SN	38.2	37.3	54.5	32.8	7.3	30.0
GOA	40.4	37.5	39.7	32.1	19.5	30.4

break-up of votes partywise. I shall discuss these survey results in terms of four tables: (i) the community profile of the sample (Table 2); (ii) the community distribution of the vote partywise (Table 3); (iii) the Hindu vote (Table 4); and (iv) the Catholic vote (Table 5).

The religious profile of the sample is 64.97 per cent Hindus 29.47 per cent Catholics, 5.34 per cent Muslims, and 0.23 per cent others. This approximately corresponds to the religious profile of the state. The demographic spread of these religious groups varies with regions as per the table above with NN having an overwhelming majority of Hindus and SO having a majority of Catholics. The above is merely to establish the representativeness of the sample in community terms. It is important to note that these are survey – not actual – results.

The above table shows that the Hindu vote was vertically split between alliance (41.8 per cent), Congress (32.1 per cent), others (8.6 per cent) and no response (16.4 per cent). The Catholic vote, in contrast, is almost nothing for the alliance (3.2 per cent), a significant amount for others (18.1 per cent) and no response (9.5 per cent). This shows that the idea of a common Hindu vote for a common Catholic vote just does not exist with some fracturing taking place within both communities but more so amongst the Hindus. The alliance seems to have had two effects on the Goan voter. It seems to have further fractured, rather than consolidated, the divided Hindu vote and it seems to have consolidated what was perceived by some to be a fractured Catholic vote. Having determined that religion alone does not determine how people vote,¹⁸ and further that people vote on the basis of more than one concern, we need, in the light of the wider debate on the communalisation of the Indian polity, to investigate when religion becomes the determining factor. This will become clearer when I look at the survey results region-wise. Then the pattern of voting along religious lines in the new and old conquests will become clearer.

The split in the Hindu vote suggests that the religious fault line *vis-a-vis* the Catholics is perhaps as important as the jati fault-line. This means either of three things: The existential feeling of 'majorityness' on which the alliance banked, does not, or cannot, exist because of the equality strong jati allegiance which fractures the community internally; (ii) A sense of security of the 'majority' community *vis-a-vis* the 'minority' community which allows it to afford to see its interests largely in material (secular?) terms rather than in ideological (communal?) terms; (iii) The process of political development has meant that new leaders have emerged who are competing for the 'pot of gold' and by doing so have converted the essential social pluralism of the Hindu community into a political pluralism. These leaders choose to join the Congress because

it has the most of the 'disposable income', and has connection with the centre.

The split in the Catholic vote occurs mainly in SO. This is because the Catholic does not feel insecure, as a member of the minority community, in a region dominated by Catholics. She therefore chooses to punish the Congress and vote for the UGDP. The Alemao factor also adds to this because of his appeal to the non-elite (caste and class) sections of the Catholic voters in this region. In areas where the Catholics are in a minority, they support the Congress because of the fear of the Hindu alliance. The alliance gets almost no Catholic votes.

The Goan election-saga ended on an ironical note. In spite of the clear message of protest from the electorate, within two months of the results being declared four members of the MGP group defected to the Congress on the grounds that by doing so they would provide stability to the government. They, of course, got rewarded with either the ministerial posts or chairmanships of corporations. The current chief minister P Rane, who declared before the election that he was opposed to jumbo cabinets, finally succumbed to pressure and constituted a cabinet of 14 ministers. The outgoing chief minister W D'souza, who had led the party to victory, lost his case to continue because he was accused at the CLP meeting of working against the Congress party in certain constituencies. Within three months of the election, the MGP-BJP alliance began to show signs of strain because the MGP fears that it is losing its mass base to the BJP.

ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE

The foregoing brief sketch suggests that a subtle process of alignments and realignments is taking place in Goan society. In terms of democratic theory, the following issues are of significance. The first concerns the intensity of competition between groups for the spoils of politics – in Weberian terms, of class, status and power. This competition causes them to search for alliances which would yield them the majority arithmetic necessary in the 'first past the post system' of elections. These groups have communal as well as secular identities.

The second is the growth and nature of political leaders. The panchayat system seems to have been a successful training ground for aspiring leaders. Since the posts are few and the contenders many, dissidence has grown, particularly in loose organisations such as the Congress which is politically more pragmatic than ideological. As the political competition gets more intense, and

as the stakes get higher, these leaders appear willing to violate not just party loyalty (witness the spate of defections) but even the conventions of democratic constitutional politics.

To compound this further is the third aspect which concerns the party structure and culture. The 'high command' politics of the Congress, and increasingly that of the BJP, restricts the growth of effective local leadership and party managers and breeds instead a culture of sycophancy. The rousing off to Delhi at the slightest pretext is quite offensive to the local citizens since it reduces democratic politics at the state level to a politics by 'remote control'. As a result, pragmatism replaces principle leading to such scenarios where yesterday's ideological foe becomes today's friend (such is the rhetoric) and yesterday's corrupt MLA becomes today's person of 'honour'. The system of 'punishments and rewards' that characterise a healthy democratic politics, hence, gets considerably weakened. The allotment of party tickets to defectors and power brokers illustrates this point. This period of ferment is perhaps expressive of the transformation from an elite to a mass politics where old privileges are being contested and new privileges are being sought. This can be seen either as political decay or as political development depending on the viewpoint and on the issues being considered.

The fourth issue concerns the political calculus of the voter. It is clear that the 'single' factor voting in politically complex societies such as Goa, which the politics of the alliance banked upon, is just not possible because community voting inevitably gets fractured along the lines of jati and class. It is also clear that the voter, at the all-Goa

TABLE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF HINDU VOTE BY REGION AND PARTY

Party	NN	NO	SO	SN
Congress	32.4	31.4	25.0	39.1
UGDP	1.9	0.0	2.5	0.0
Alliance	45.4	47.7	17.5	43.5
Others	2.8	4.7	30.0	10.9
No Response	17.6	16.3	25.0	6.5

TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF CATHOLIC VOTE BY REGION AND PARTY

Party	NN	NO	SO	SN
Congress	50.0	79.4	49.3	40.9
UGDP	0.0	11.8	10.5	27.3
Alliance	25.0	2.9	1.5	4.6
Others	0.0	0.0	25.4	27.3
No Response	25.0	5.9	13.4	0.0

TABLE 3: DISTRIBUTION OF VOTERS BY COMMUNITY AND PARTY

Religion	Congress	UGDP	Alliance	Others	No Response
Hindus	32.1	1.1	41.8	8.6	16.4
Muslims	52.1	4.4	17.4	8.7	17.4
Catholic	55.9	13.4	3.2	18.1	9.5
Total	40.4	4.9	29.0	11.4	14.4

APPENDIX: ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, 1994 - GOA

Name of Constituency	Total Voters	Votes Polled	INC	Alliance	UGDP	Others
Mandrem	18072	13945	6989	6356	0	600
Pernem	16773	12992	3919	8198	98	777
Dargalim (sc)	13882	9522	2569	5915	222	816
Tivim	22804	16128	11299	3672	0	1157
Mapusa	21660	13759	6449	6932	0	378
Siolim	22598	16539	5327	7373	0	3839
Calangute	21768	15258	7716	2592	0	4950
Saligao	18884	14238	6479	5184	0	2575
Aldona	25869	17794	8303	7792	0	1699
Panaji	16881	10305	3534	4600	35	2136
Taleigao	20900	13525	6514	6442	0	569
St Cruz	24315	16695	4665	1766	0	10264
St Andre	20139	14313	6433	4056	2725	1099
Cumbarjua	23495	15694	6738	6428	0	2528
Bicholim	19217	14525	5138	4127	0	5620
Maem	16582	12494	1789	5634	0	5071
Pale	20567	14272	3572	8346	58	2296
Poriem	18043	14071	7628	5840	0	963
Valpoi	14294	11065	3895	4853	0	2317
Ponda	25279	16355	3751	6931	0	5673
Priol	23022	17700	2816	7982	0	6902
Marcaim	21966	17179	7075	9775	0	329
Shiroda	21148	16919	6256	6154	272	4237
Murmugao	30231	17598	5544	3236	0	8818
Vasco-da-Gama	27900	16877	4852	6460	340	5225
Cortalim	24461	16504	6191	2126	3132	5055
Loutolim	17524	12596	6846	110	5177	463
Benalim	18986	13569	4565	0	8587	417
Fatorda	21866	14057	5505	1199	509	6844
Margao	19342	12339	2697	5009	1511	3122
Curtorim	19388	13630	6470	84	6564	512
Navelim	23398	15734	8179	1107	5296	1573
Velim	18213	11620	2932	42	2164	6482
Cuncolim	20109	13287	2909	1620	5294	3464
Sanvordem	22522	15835	5580	7256	0	2999
Sanguem	17214	13159	5727	2969	851	3612
Curchorem	23077	15880	7989	3163	2664	2064
Quepem	21800	16077	2077	7579	1746	4675
Canacona	15503	11749	6178	4881	460	230
Poinguinim	12955	10360	3400	4516	0	2444
Total	822828	576158	216135	185142	47705	127176
Percentage		70.02	37.51	32.13	8.28	22.07

level, wishes to elect a government that is both responsive and responsible. Hence, his/her protest against the 7th assembly. This wish, however, gets undermined by the politics of defection. The last two elections have shown that Goa is moving towards a phase of coalitional politics which, although it makes the results more representative, does not produce 'good' government. This silver lining in the dismal picture, however, is the competitiveness of politics at all levels which, hopefully over time, will produce a system of accountability that is more substantial than one operative today.

Notes

- 1 This is akin to Noberto Bobbio's 'unfulfilled promises' of democracy in his book, *The Future of Democracy*, Polity Press, 1990.
- 2 This requires us to address issues relating to the selection mechanism and to examine the relative merits of the different options such as the 'first past the post system', 'proportional representation', etc. It would also require us to examine the paradoxes of democracy such as 'representativeness versus governance', 'stability versus efficiency', etc.

- 3 P Rane, C Alemao, P Barbosa, R Naik, W D'souza, R Naik again (for 2 days) and then W D'souza again.
- 4 Because speakers retain their party affiliation, the speaker enjoys the support of only the majority of the house and not of the whole house and hence when the majority changes, the speaker also changes. The first speaker defected to become the third chief minister. The role of the various speakers from 1989-94 *vis-a-vis* defections and the application of the 52nd amendment, narrates a sordid tale.
- 5 These jumbo-sized cabinets were created to accommodate and reward the defectors with lucrative posts. The recommendation of the Venkatraman committee that the size of the cabinet should not be more than 10 per cent of the assembly was ignored.
- 6 Governor Bhanu Pratap Singh had to resign because of his dismissal of the D'souza government without consulting either the president of the majority group in the legislative assembly thereby violating the letter and spirit of article 16(4) of the constitution and bringing the office of the governor into disrepute.
- 7 Norman D Palmer, *Elections and Political Development: The South Asian Experience*, New Delhi, Vikas, p. 1.
- 8 Studying elections is an important diagnostic device for assessing the status of a democracy

since they "provide the occasions for the widest degree of popular participation. They constitute the most important single arena for genuine competition between groups. They are the principal agency through which recruitment to a significant part of the political elite is effected, and the skills and resources they especially call forth figure prominently in political life in general... Elections in India can be seen as... the events through which the party system and hence in a measure the political system achieve their evolution". Morris-Jones and B Dasgupta.

- 9 This dissidence is perhaps indicative of (i) the decline in the authority of the 'high command' in the Congress party, (ii) the growth of middle level leaders who have come up through the panchayat system, (iii) the high stakes involved, both material and social, (iv) the competitive nature of politics, and (v) the importance of politics in our social life.
- 10 I am grateful to KVRs Chalam and S Shanbag for assisting me in the compilation of this appendix.
- 11 I was present one day at the office and was happy to see the anxiety of party bosses waiting in the queue since one of the officials was on tour and the deadline was approaching.
- 12 The alliance had nominated R Khalap as chief minister-designate. He lost a constituency that was always with the MGP. Similarly the Congress candidates from Curtorim (F Sardinha), and Marcaim (R Naik), both strong candidates and aspirants for chief ministership lost their seats. The MGP candidate from Priol found his vote reduced from 11,765 to 7,982 a loss of 3,783 votes. The last speaker of the assembly lost to an independent. Many more such cases can be found to support the thesis of a protest vote.
- 13 This can be further confirmed from constituency-wise data.
- 14 The role of the Church in mobilising support for the Congress, led by a Catholic chief minister, also needs to be examined. The Church position seems to be illustrative of the biblical saying of the left-hand not knowing what the right-hand is doing. Certain sections favoured making a strong moral statement recommending only those candidates, irrespective of party who were upright and of unblemished character. Others were more pragmatic campaigning for the Congress in spite of its faults.
- 15 According to a sociologist, A Siquiera, the Bhandari Samaj is an illustration of how politics, as the politics of interest, leads to the invention of caste genealogies and histories.
- 16 I am grateful to A Siquiera for alerting me to the significance of this issue.
- 17 The survey was sponsored by the Gomantak group of newspapers. The methodological planning for the survey was done under the guidance of V B Singh and Yogendra Yadav. The random sample method was used in designing the survey. Training was given to the investigators and 431 responses were canvassed out of the planned 600.
- 18 In complex societies voters seem to base their decisions on a multitude of factors ranging from local village concerns to state - and perhaps even national-level concerns. These, in turn, range from the cost of living, to communal insecurity, to a sense of being betrayed by the politicians and hence a desire to mete out punishment, etc - all of which go into the final calculation of the vote.