

POLITICS OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC REFORMS (1991/92 - 2004)

by

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that Mujibur Raheman Shaikh was permitted to work for his Ph.D. degree at IIT Delhi, on the problem entitled,” **Politics of India’s Economic Reforms(1991/92-2004).**”He has faithfully carried on his study under my guidance and supervision and the accompanying thesis is his genuine and original work.

The results contained in this thesis have not been submitted, in part or full, to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diplomas.

Mujibur Raheman Shaikh has completed necessary course work and put in the required attendance in this Department.

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ABSTRACT

This study presents the argument that the pace and content of India's economic reforms/liberalisation/globalization is determined by the politics of the time, and is not driven entirely by vision alone. This study begins in 1991/92, the year India embarked on economic reforms led by finance minister Dr Manmohan Singh and stops in 2004, the year when India had a parliamentary election. Although there are two parliamentary elections, 2004 and 2009, held so far, our research chose to stop the research in 2004 because our study had already begun by then. In addition, 2004 election is an important one because it led to a major regime change bringing United Progressive Alliance(UPA) to power.

We have argued that the politics of resistance and politics of endorsement is dictated more by partisan considerations than any ideological considerations. While it seems there is a consensus about the policy, this so called consensus is more an outcome of ambiguities and confusions among political elites than any substantive understanding of merits and shortcomings of particular policies relating to reform/liberalisation/globalization. A large number of regional parties are mainly non- institutionalized and are mostly inspired by competitive populism. This is also largely true about India's major national parties. That is the reason why partisan considerations play an important role in shaping the politics of resistance and politics of endorsement.

This study is conducted at two levels: national and regional. The study explores three particular states: Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and West Bengal. Each of these states are governed by coalition governments during the period of our study. The major parties such as the Congress(I), Bhartiya Janata Party(BJP), Shiv Sena, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party(BSP), Communist Party of India(Marxist)(CPM) are key players in these states. Each of them have been part of coalition governments directly or indirectly during the period of study. These states gave us the opportunity to explore the ideological dimension of the debate. Some of the parties (for example, Left parties) are opposed to economic reforms / liberalization / globalization owing to the party ideology.

The study is empirical in nature. It has used material coming out of extended interviews with key policy makers such as former Prime Ministers, Ministers, Member of Planning Commission, former Chief Ministers and other key policy makers at the national and regional level, and various reports of national and state governments as primary sources to extend its argument.

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