

DEVARAJ URS: A GREAT CHAMPION OF POLITICAL REFORMATION

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Received: 24 Jan 2019

Accepted: 30 Jan 2019

Published: 28 Feb 2019

ABSTRACT

Devaraj Urs gave a new political alignment to such aspirations by splitting the non-Brahmins into Backward Classes and forward castes when he became the Chief Minister in 1972. He had created new political space and fought against the dominance of two communities Lingayaths and Vokkaligas in Karnataka state. He succeeded considerably as the champion of social justice and economic development of the weaker sections. Urs also promoted a good number of leaders representing the oppressed sections of society in the political sector. The social dynamics among backward classes in the region had brought to the fore new political equations. Urs consciously carried out social engineering and political organization of the oppressed sections of society. He initiated a process of broadening and deepening democracy in the state. He succeeded in achieving the paradigm shift in Karnataka state despite stiff resistance from the dominant powers. Urs argued that the disadvantaged groups within religious groupings and minorities need to be brought within the net of affirmative action. He remains in the history of Karnataka politics as the patron of the voiceless, penniless and powerless sections of society through his historical contributions for social justice-centered politics. Devaraj Urs pursued the processes of enablement and democratic inclusion of backward sections of the society in Karnataka state. He achieved commendable success in social mobilization, political organization, inclusive politics and political empowerment of the neglected and disadvantaged sections.

KEYWORDS: *Champion of Social Justice and Economic Development, Backward Classes and Forward Castes, Processes of Enablement and Democratic Inclusion of Backward Sections*