



Letters 23 August 2021

Ethnocracy: A darker state

22 Aug 2021

Ethnodemocracy is an interesting concept, and its application to describe India's evolving polity raises some interesting issues ([India: From the World's Largest Democracy to an Ethnocracy](#)).

First, it suggests that the persecution of minorities has the popular sanction of the majority. Hence there is no felt need to do away with electoral democracy.

Second, by implication it also points to the inconvenient fact that for all its barbarism, the Nazi persecution of Jews never had popular sanction because Hitler needed to do away with electoral democracy to stay in power.

Third, as a corollary of the second issue, the lack of popular sanction is the reason why after the Nazi interlude, German civilisation was back to where it was frozen at the end of the Weimar Republic.

Fourth, ethnic democracies are in a sense more dark than fascist dictatorships as they are likely to persist even after the current incumbent loses power through the ballot box as there is a basic consensus on ethnic domination cutting across political divides. The Congress's history of soft Hindutva is well known.

Fifth, and last, I wonder whether the ethnodemocracy analysis is relevant only to northern and western India, or whether it extends to the south and east as well.

--Alok Sheel, New Delhi

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