

Vikas Sharma's Political Perspective in *Media Revolution 2030*: A Thematic Study.**¹Pushpendra**

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In *Media Revolution 203*, Vikas Sharma exposes political corruption in university campuses as well as in other sectors such as journalism etc. in contemporary society. According to him, campus politics is a direct offshoot of the national politics in a comprehensive political scenario of the country. He presents his political perspective in the novel, by analyzing campus politics and its direct relation with the national political narratives. He condemns the political interference in the appointments of professors and other officials on the university posts. He throws light on the misuse of the advancement in media technologies. He highlights the significant role of media channels in Indian democracy. He investigates the spread of modern political actuality in contemporary society.

Key Words: Interplay, campus politics, perspective, arena, wrongdoing, advancement, investigate.

Introduction:

In *Media Revolution 203*, Vikas Sharma presents his views on politics frankly. Through a critical lens, he scans the political corruption in university campuses as well as in other sectors such as journalism etc. in contemporary society. This novel deals with the campus politics in detail, along with discussions on the influence of media on the society and national politics. According to him, campus politics is a direct offshoot of the national politics in a comprehensive political scenario of the country. He quite successfully highlights the interplay of power-politics and influence, and goes on to discuss the political influence in university campuses. He believes in the preservation of cultural identity along with the acceptance of the new political ideologies being enforced in the country. In this regard, Kamal Kant Sharma observes:

Overall, it can be said that Professor Sharma's political view is ideal and straightforward. He is neither afraid of criticizing nor of praising whenever such sentiments are required. Through his discussion... he presents a vision of India that is deeply rooted in tradition yet forward-looking in its governance and policies. (Vikas Sharma and His Literary Works: Defictionalising the Reality 188)

Vikas Sharma presents his political perspective in *Media Revolution 2030*, by analyzing campus politics and its direct relation with the national political narratives. He believes that university politics is not an out of the way arena but a representation of the comprehensive discussion on national politics. Kamal Kant Sharma remarks:

The politics in university campuses is so deeply entrenched that external forces often dictate major administrative decisions. Most of the recruitments, promotions, and appointments are influenced by political affiliations and external pressures rather than merit or academic excellence. This phenomenon is exemplified in the novel through the recruitment of Dr. Ujjawala. Her appointment is not solely based on her academic credentials but rather on the influence of her mother, who is an IAS officer. Her powerful background ensures her placement, reflecting how bureaucracy and political power override fair selection processes in educational institutions. (189)

Vikas Sharma condemns the political interference in the appointments of professors and other officials on the university posts. Such professors do not fulfill their duties, instead they run their business as well as they use corrupt means to accumulate money. The novelist highlights the political influence in the appointments of the Vice-Chancellors, who indulge in corruption and destroy the piety of the education system. Vikas Sharma writes: Mangesh had been told by uncle Kantyogi that more than twelve U.P. vice chancellors had been suspended on the charges of corruption, bungling of money, unauthorized construction in the university, bribes in appointments of assistant professor, purchase of books, printing of papers, etc. So he was advised to be alert and thoughtful while recommending the names of new vice chancellors to govern even if on a temporary basis.

Dr. Ujjawal told him that the Vice Chancellor is the keystone of the university administration. If he is corrupt, there will be anarchy in the university administration. These days the newspapers were full of corruption cases against the vice chancellors of Agra University and Kanpur University. Kantyogi told him that vice chancellors of Kanpur university and Chaudhary Charan Singh University of Meerut were terminated on account of severe corruption charges. His P.A. told him about the termination of the vice chancellor of Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla. Even the vice chancellor of M.D. University, Ajmer, Dr. R.P. Singh was caught red-handed in a bribery case. Ramesh Chandra and Professor S.P. Ojha are still facing trial in the courts. Even the former lady chancellor of

Jiwaji University Gwalior is under investigation due to corruption charges. (Media Revolution 2030 96)

Vikas Sharma exposes the power-politics of politicians who exercise their influence in the university campus in getting their vested interests fulfilled. Due to political pressures, many scandals are either subdued or twisted in order to save the image of politically backed corrupt professors. Vikas Sharma writes:

Teachers of the university have become cheats themselves. Instead of teaching, they run the business to make money. Madam runs the wholesale trade of iron and manages the newspaper... There are irregularities in the university and teachers are insufficient and incapable. In most of the cases, they are appointed on the recommendation of politicians and promoted with unfair means. Dr. Ujjawala is no scholar and got appointed not on merit but on the recommendation of Professor D.D. Sharma and the same professor has helped her in promotion...

Since Dr. Ujjawala had published news against the unlawful deeds of two members of the Legislative Assembly, the politicians started striking the iron, finding it hot. Alpa tried her best to hush up the matter but failed. Finally, the Vice Chancellor was ready to compromise on this issue if Dr. Ujjawal resigned her job. (Media Revolution 55-56)

Earlier when Dr. Ujjawala finds that Shyam Mohan is using unfair means, she stops him from doing so. At this, he threatens her with dire consequences if she reports the matter to the officials. He uses his connections with politically powerful friends to hush the matter and escape from the punishment. Vikas Sharma enacts this scene to prove that such use of political influence in university campuses is quite a common feature because persons belonging to political groups use these influences to protect themselves from their wrongdoings. The novelist describes the whole scene in the following words:

Shyam Mohan was caught copying in the question paper of *Principles of Literary Criticism*. Dr. Ujjawala found him cheating and took his answerbook... But then the situation took a serious turn, as Shyam Mohan had been living in the Acharya Narendra Dev Hostel. Almost twenty students reached her residence on ten bikes at 6.30 p.m. and shouted – ‘Down with Ujjawala. Marxism Zindabad. Student’s unity Zindabad. Teachers are no longer teachers. Teachers are steel, made of steel.’

Within minutes, Dr. Ujjawala and Dr. Kantyogi found themselves mentally disturbed and noticed that rioters manhandled the staff of the printing press. The printing press was smashed with iron rods and furniture was set on fire. (54)

Vikas Sharma also raises questions on the political interference through Mangesh, who uses his influence in getting Dr. Kantyogi appointed as the vice-chancellor of the university.. Dr. Ujjawala also gets her appointment as assistant lecturer in Lucknow

University through the influence of her mother Alpa who is an IAS officer. Ms. Alpa assures Ujjawala that she will be appointed as the wife of Professor D.D. Sharma is her friend, and Mr. A.S. Srivastava will surely listen to the wife of Professor D.D. Sharma. Vikas Sharma writes:

Ms. Alpa made a phone call to Mrs. Sharma and sought her help. Mrs. Sharma promised to do her best for Ujjawala and noted her name.

The next day, Professor D.D. Sharma told Professor Srivastava – ‘Please don’t promise anybody for this new post in the department.’

‘Really?’

‘Yes. Actually, I’m interested in being a student at this very university. Quite a deserving case.’

‘Please do what you deem fit.’

In the interview, Professor D.D. Sharma didn’t pass on his authority to Professor A.S. Srivastava as he used to earlier. The Vice Chancellor could easily understand Professor Sharma’s interest in Ujjawala, and as a result, she got appointed. (31)

Vikas Sharma also throws light on misuse of the advancement in media technologies, which have exerted deep influence on the politics of the country. Today the media persons unite with politically powerful elites and control the information to win public opinion in their favour. He admonishes the media persons to be honest in fulfilling their responsibilities in order to curb the misuse of it. Riya Deshwal aptly writes:

Media Revolution 2030 envisions the potential of grassroots media movements empowered by digital platforms to combat corruption. Sharma portrays how citizen journalism and decentralized media networks serve as potent forces for transparency and accountability, challenging traditional power structures. (Unveiling Corruption in Vikas Sharma’s *Media Revolution 2030: A Critical Analysis* 60)

In *Media Revolution 2030*, Vikas Sharma depicts a nuanced image of corruption that proves fatal not only to the campus administration but it also leaves a long range adverse impact on other institutions such as human relationships etc. Through the presentation of the character of Mangesh, Vikas Sharma exposes the politicians who float black money to buy media campaigns in elections. Mangesh is unable to cope with the financial burden in his expenses incurred on him campaigning. Riya Deshwal aptly remarks about the corrupt practices of media persons in *Media Revolution 2030* in the following words:

Through vivid characters, interactions, and dialogues, Sharma exposes the intricate web of influence-peddling, backroom deals, and potential that underpin the electoral process. This portrayal sheds light on the corrosive effects of money in politics, where the quest for power often trumps ethical considerations. (62)

Vikas Sharma feels sad at the negative use of media technology by the politicians for their vested interests. By misusing the media, powerful political persons and government officials hatch plans to accumulate more and more money through corrupt means; their malpractices are concealed by the media under the pressure of power-politics. Thus the media is misused to aggravate the corruption in society by influencing information and manipulating public opinion in favour of powerful politicians and business tycoons. Kamal Kant Sharma aptly observes:

In the novel *Media Revolution 2030*, the narrative explores how the evolution of media reshapes perception, distorting the way individuals understand the world. It discusses the manipulation of news for political gains where truth is tailored to serve agendas, and exposes a grim reality where unqualified leaders craft laws that govern the lives of the qualified. It highlights the grave consequences of such systemic failures. The main theme of this novel is campus politics and Professor Vikas Sharma does not shy away from portraying the corrupted state of the management of Indian universities. (Vikas Sharma and His Literary Works: Defictionalising the Reality 26)

In *Medial Revolution 2030*, Vikas Sharma points out the role of media channels in Indian democracy in getting rid of dirty politics. According to him, corruption in education has entered the media on account of wrong political decisions. While talking to Professor Shivaji D. Sargar and Ms. Riya Deshwal, Vikas Sharma remarks comments on the ugly practices of corruption by media persons in the following words:

In my many years in the education sector in different capacities, I have observed it closely and the relationship of media personnel and their roles in the working as well. I have also been politically active as a university teacher leader and I have first-hand experience of such people in the education sector, sitting on seats they don't deserve, through corruption and corrupt themselves determined to make money and gain position anyhow. Like I said before, I write the ugly truth that I see to uncover it for those who sit at home unaware. (An Insight into the Fictional World of Vikas Sharma 206)

Regarding Vikas Sharma views on the role of media technologies in making the society free from corruption, Riya Deshwal observes:

Sharma's depiction of corruption within *Media Revolution 2030* is multifaceted, reflecting its pervasive nature across various sectors. Through intricate world-building, he illustrates how advancements in media technology exacerbate existing corrupt practices while also providing tools for resistance. The narrative explores the entanglement of media conglomerates with political elites, highlighting how power dynamics influence information dissemination and manipulate public opinion. (Unveiling Corruption in Vikas Sharma's *Media Revolution 2030: A Critical Analysis* 59-60)

Journalism has always played a significant role in the development of a country. Every person who is a part of society is influenced by the media. In India, the role of journalism has been and is very vital in shaping and representing the political point of view. With the help of journalism people always keep themselves in touch with the developments in politics. The press also helps people in reading between the lines, politicians' corrupt practices that often remain hidden and unknown to the people. Thus the role of the press becomes quite significant in the lives of the political corridors of the government as well as politicians. Dr. Iram Rizvi observes:

In India, the role of the press has never been underestimated, because the press is a fundamental institution of society which plays a very vital role in creating, shaping, and reflecting the public opinion in a democratic society. Intimately concerned with the functioning of the state and the policy it follows, its contribution to socio-economic and political development is quite significant (Teaching Political Journalism in India: An Introductory Study Web)

Journalism and literature have been connected with each other in highlighting the political activities of the leaders of any country. In literary journalism, political events are dramatised through narrative techniques of literature. In literary journalism, generally we find an amalgam of fact and fiction through a peculiar narrative style. The writer continuously keeps his focus on accuracy along with the employment of literary devices so that he or she may give the personal touch and meaning to the political events narrated there. Nidhi Sharma writes:

Journalism and literature share a very similar history. Both these fields have always been involved in forms of expression and imparting some sort of information to the public. While literature serves the purpose of providing food to the soul, journalism also plays a very important role in our lives by spreading awareness and attracting people's attention to major contemporary issues that affect us as a society. Journalism serves a very important purpose and journalists have always been a very crucial part of our society. Literary journalism has been one of the most creative intersections and overlapping of disciplines. Journalism and literature have always been connected and many writers have also worked in journalism. (*Media Revolution 2030: Challenges and Ethical Considerations in Journalism* 115)

In *Media Revolution 2030*, Vikas Sharma makes political corruption a central theme dealing with the functioning of the university politics which is intricately weaved into the dynamics of power-politics. The novelist quite successfully creates a complex picture of political corruption in social as well as economic wrongdoing in a campus. In this regard, Riya Deshwal aptly remarks:

Sharma skillfully crafts a multifaceted portrayal of corruption that transcends mere financial malfeasance, delving into its manifestations across various spheres of influence. At

the political level, Sharma illuminates the murky world of elections financing, where candidates like Mangesh grapple with the daunting financial burdens imposed by campaign expenses. (Unveiling Corruption in Vikas Sharma's *Media Revolution 2030: A Critical Study* 62)

In *Media Revolution 2030*, Vikas Sharma also attacks the nexus between political leaders and bureaucrats, who connive together in hatching corrupt policies. The government officials often use the tactics of delaying files from the presentation before the apex court or the concerned authority. By referring to posts of the director or the secretary in higher education offices, Vikas Sharma passes a scathing remark on these officials who misuse their power in attaining personal benefits.

Sharma goes on to present a nuanced critique of the corruption that has become a mandatory part and parcel of the workings in institutions. Riya Deshwal comments on this malpractice by the bureaucratic officials in the following words:

Mangesh encounters bureaucratic hurdles in file approvals within the education sector. The director and secretary's excuses for delays may signal deeper corruption, where officials exploit positions for personal gain or political motives. This reflects systematic issues within bureaucratic systems, such as favouritism and rent-seeking behavior. Soon, Mangesh was advised by the secretary of higher education not to put his signature on every file for approval with the lame excuse. (64)

In the light of the corruption in university politics and journalism, Vikas Sharma points out that corruption in university politics and journalism give rise to ethical dilemmas and difficulties before other honest journalists and sincere students. Journalists face more troubles in keeping themselves away from corruption, and are obliged to follow unethical practices in their job. Nidhi Sharma remarks:

It is hard for journalists and media persons to balance their ethical considerations and the reality of the profession. It is not easy for journalists to remain ethical and stick to their morals and values when they are faced with many internal debates that are a part of the media industry. Journalists often face difficulties when they are trying to balance factual reporting with sensationalism. One cannot ignore or deny the importance and need for the latter in the news industry. It is hard to be noticed by viewers in the absence of sensationalism. A piece of news might be very important but if it is not presented sensationally, there is a very huge possibility that it might go unnoticed, ultimately becoming a problem for the career and livelihood of many journalists and media houses. (*Media Revolution 2030: Challenges and Ethical Considerations in Journalism* 125)

Media persons create sensationalism by following the dictates of high profile persons and politicians, who threaten them if they do not obey them. Here Vikas Sharma asks his readers to think deeply over this corruption in the media, otherwise the future of our country may become bleak. The media is that institution which helps in shaping the future of a country. Kamal Kant Sharma observes:

In the novel *Media Revolution 2030*, the narrative explores how the evolution of media reshapes perception, distorting the way individuals understand the world. It discusses the manipulation of news for political gains where truth is tailored to serve agendas, and exposes a grim reality where unqualified leaders craft laws that govern the lives of the qualified. It highlights the grave consequences of such systemic failures. The main theme of this novel is campus politics and Professor Vikas Sharma does not shy away from portraying the corrupted state of the management of Indian universities. (Vikas Sharma and His Literary Works: Defictionalising the Reality 26)

Thus it can be summed up that *Media Revolution 2030* is a novel which exposes the politics played in the university campus. It also explores the role of media which leaves a deep impact on individuals when it is used as a tool of the dynamics of political life. Vikas Sharma investigates the spread of modern political reality in contemporary society.
The End

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