

Muslim (who are about 12% of the population), and other minority group voters. Its hold over the Muslim and lower class vote-bank has loosened considerably in the early 1990s. To win the lower class vote, Congress, probably will push for the privatization of state-owned enterprises. The Congress party will continue subsidies that are considered pro-poor.

To keep the middle class vote, the Congress party is certain to continue to sell economic reforms and continued liberalization to attract foreign investment.

- The BJP is a party which appeals the upper class and upper-caste members of the middle class. The BJP has also attracted a segment of the Indian business establishment that stands to lose monopoly rents enjoyed under the license-raj. The BJP also has strong support among the Hindu fundamentalists and nationalists. The BJP thinks that it has used the Enron case to show that it can stand up to a superpower and defend India's interests.²

The BJP is against the license-raj, favours global tenders for foreign investment more in the capital and service industries than in consumer goods industry. In general, the BJP is not opposed to liberalization of the Indian economy.

- The National Front-Left Front (NF-LF) is a collection of regional parties, which also control a number of state governments. For example, the Communist party (M) runs the province of West Bengal, the Janta Dal governs Karnataka (the province where the silicon and computer city of Bangalore is located), the Telugu Desam party runs Andhra Pradesh and the AIADMK runs the province of Tamil Nadu. The traditional NF-LF vote bank consists of minorities such as the Other Backward Classes, Muslims and Dalits (the untouchables). Like the Congress party, the NF-LF also champions secularism and attacks communalism.

²A Congress government in the industrial province of Maharashtra had agreed to a US\$2.8 billion deal with the U.S.-based Enron Corporation for a power project in Dabhol. The deal was later scrapped in July 1995 by the new BJP-Shiv Sena government on the pretext that the total project cost and the capital cost per MW was too high. However, in the face of a legal action by the Enron Corp., the Hindu-fundamentalist government in Maharashtra, having scored political points against the Congress party, is renegotiating the deal.