The present work, attempt to explore the rural bases of power and politics at the three level viz, national, state and at the level of village. This leads us to the analysis of the role of caste, land possession and its relation with rural power structure in general. Emphasis is placed on exploring the social forces as well as the different issues involved in the political mobilisation. The role of caste particularly, at the time of elections is of crucial importance in the state of Bihar.

After the implementation of Mandal commission the different caste alliances has undergone a radical shift in the rural areas of Bihar. These new caste alliances have influenced the traditional caste functioning. Several caste groups which were not prominent in the olden times have now come to the forefront of power politics. Caste in changed political scenario is no more an aspect of ritual purity.

In order to have an overall understanding, the study has made use of both macro and micro approaches. At macro level, the problem has been looked from Socio-Historical angles. The study has been done in such a way as to discover some major trends emerging from the analysis of political and social development before and after the attainment of independence of India.

In order to have authentic, empirical and reliable knowledge about the condition of rural society and particularly the villages, a micro level
study has been conducted by picking up two villages of Buxar district of Bihar. The macro study presented the background, setting and general trends, whereas micro study aimed at checking and verifying them in the context of specific happenings in both the villages.

This study thus, attempts to understand the changed political scenario in rural Bihar. Our aim is to understand caste, class and power and conflict in rural society. Besides the inequality, discrimination and exploitation, our emphasis is on the use of caste identities and caste based mobilisation for economic and political benefits by different political parties and leaders.

Primary data for this study has been obtained through the interview schedule with the villagers of both the villages, and through the various constituency and the district reports. The historical information’s are primarily drawn from the old census reports and gazetteers. Two villages were selected on the basis of size, population and caste composition.

The first chapter, “Village and its Extension” deals with the concepts of village studies and its relevance. It also lays down the broader framework, objective and rationale of the study along with review of literature. Second chapter, “land, caste and power in India” gives a sketch of the general pattern of the all India situation of the land, caste and power. Third chapter “Caste in Bihar: A socio-Historical Profile” traces the historical position of different castes in the polity and society.
of Bihar. It also tries to prove that the caste politics in the state has the historical roots. This chapter proves that the caste and politics has been influencing each other since long back in Bihar. Fourth chapter “Land, Caste and Power in Bihar” analyses the interconnection of land, caste and power in rural Bihar exclusively. The next two chapters are based on the findings of the field work that has been drawn to verify the objectives of the study.