

Specialisation: Indian Government And Politics: A Review

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Abstract

The dominion of India was reborn on January 26, 1950, as a sovereign democratic republic and a union of states. With universal adult franchise, India's electorate was the world's largest, but the traditional feudal roots of most of its illiterate populace were deep, just as their religious caste beliefs were to remain far more powerful than more recent exotic ideas, such as secular statehood. Elections were to be held, however, at least every five years, and the major model of government followed by India's constitution was that of British parliamentary rule, with a lower House of the People (Lok Sabha), in which an elected prime minister and a cabinet sat, and an upper Council of States (Rajya Sabha). Nehru led his ruling Congress Party from New Delhi's Lok Sabha until his death in 1964. The nominal head of India's republic, however, was a president, who was indirectly elected. India's first two presidents were Hindu Brahmans, Rajendra Prasad and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the latter a distinguished Sanskrit scholar who had lectured at the University of Oxford. Presidential powers were mostly ceremonial, except for brief periods of "emergency" rule, when the nation's security was believed to be in great danger and normal constitutional procedures and civil rights were feared to be too cumbersome or threatening.

Key words: India, government, and politics etc.

Introduction

India's federation divided powers between the central government in New Delhi and a number of state governments (crafted from former British provinces and princely states), each of which also had a nominal governor at its head and an elected chief minister with a cabinet to rule its legislative assembly. One of the Congress Party's long-standing resolutions had called for the reorganization of British provincial borders into linguistic states, where each of India's major regional languages would find its administrative reflection, while English and Hindi would remain joint national languages for purposes of legislation, law, and service examinations. Pressure for such reorganization increased in 1953, after the former British province of Madras was divided into Tamil Nadu ("Land of the Tamils") and Andhra (from 1956 Andhra Pradesh), where Telugu, another Dravidian tongue, was spoken by the

vast majority. (Andhra Pradesh itself was divided in 2014, with the northern, Telugu-speaking portion being split off to become the new state of Telangana. Hyderabad [in Telangana] served as the capital of each state.) Nehru thus appointed the States Reorganisation Commission to redesign India's internal map, which led to a major redrawing of administrative boundaries, especially in southern India, by the States Reorganization Act, passed in 1956. Four years later, in 1960, the enlarged state of Bombay was divided into Marathi-speaking Maharashtra and Gujarati-speaking Gujarat. Despite those changes, the difficult process of reorganization continued and demanded attention in many regions of the subcontinent, whose truly "continental" character was perhaps best seen in this ongoing linguistic agitation. Among the most difficult problems was a demand by Sikhs that their language, Punjabi, with its sacred Gurmukhi script, be made the official tongue of Punjab, but in that state many Hindus, fearing that they would find themselves disadvantaged, insisted that as Hindi speakers they too deserved a state of their own, if indeed the Sikhs were to be granted the Punjabi suba (state) for which so many Sikhs agitated. Nehru, however, refused to agree to a separate Sikh state, as he feared that such a concession to the Sikhs, who were both a religious and a linguistic group, might open the door to further "Pakistan-style" fragmentation.

Salient features of the Indian constitution

The Constitution of India is remarkable for many outstanding features which will distinguish it from other constitutions. The most important features of the constitution are:

1. An elaborately written document: Brevity has been a normal feature of most of the constitutions of the world and it is thought, as K.C. Wheare observes that "one essential characteristic of the ideally best form of the constitution, is that it should be as short as possible". Contrary to this the Indian constitution is the lengthiest constitution in the world this is due to the reason that the framers of the constitution included all the accumulated experiences gathered from the working of all the constitutions in the world

2. Combination of rigidity and flexibility: Lord Bryce said that that "procedure of Amendment makes the constitution the flexible or rigid. Dynamism of human Society necessitates an evolving constitution. This evolution can be brought about by a formal change or Amendments Article 4, 169, 368 deals with the Indian constitution. Our constitution can be amended in three ways (1) By simple majority of both houses of parliament (2) By 2/3

majority of both houses of parliament (3) By 2\3 majority of both houses of parliament with ratification by half of the state legislation. In the first procedure it is flexible and in the 3rd category it is rigid. So our constitution is a combination of rigidity and flexibility.

3. Parliamentary form of government: The constitution of India is said to be parliamentary form of Government in the India soil .The Preamble to the constitution. Provides that India will be a “Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Republic. Thus the Preamble provided that India shall be a democracy, but the pattern of government as out lined in the constitution indicates that Indian shall be having a Parliamentary form of government.

4. A Federal system with Unitary Bias: Perhaps the most remarkable achievement of the Indian constitution is to confer up on a federal system the strength of a unitary government. Though normally the system of government is federal, the constitution enables the federation to transform itself into a unitary state. Such a combination of federal and unitary system is the constitution it is unique in the world..

5. Fundamental Rights: Rights are the conditions given to the individuals for the development of the personality .Part III (Article 12-35) of the constitution provides for 6 Fundamental Rights for the citizens of the country.

6. Directive Principles of State Policy: The Preamble to the constitution provides the operational perspective of constitution whereas the Directive Principles of State Policy highlight the organizational philosophy. Part IV (Art 36-51) of the constitution provides for a set of positive instructions in shape of Directive Principles of State Policy .

The fundamental rights

1. Right to Equality.
2. Right to Freedom.
3. Right against Exploitation.
4. Right to freedom of Religion.
5. Cultural and Educational Rights.
6. Right to Constitutional Remedies.

Politics of India

The politics of India works within the framework of the country's constitution. India is a federal parliamentary democratic republic in which the President of India is the head of state and the Prime Minister of India is the head of government. India follows the dual polity system, i.e. a double government (federal in nature) that consists of the central authority at the centre and states at the periphery. The constitution defines the organisational powers and limitations of both central and state governments, and it is well recognised, rigid and considered supreme; i.e. the laws of the nation must conform to it.

There is a provision for a bicameral legislature consisting of an upper house, the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), which represents the states of the Indian federation, and a lower house, the Lok Sabha (House of the People), which represents the people of India as a whole. The Indian constitution provides for an independent judiciary, which is headed by the Supreme Court. The court's mandate is to protect the constitution, to settle disputes between the central government and the states, to settle inter-state disputes, to nullify any central or state laws that go against the constitution and to protect the fundamental rights of citizens, issuing writs for their enforcement in cases of violation. There are 545 members in the Lok Sabha, out of which 543 are elected from the 543 Indian constituencies and other 2 are from the Anglo-Indian community. There are 245 members in the Rajya Sabha, out of which 233 are elected by indirect elections by single transferable vote and other 12 members are elected/nominated by the President of India. Governments are formed through elections held every five years (unless otherwise specified), by parties that secure a majority of members in their respective lower houses (Lok Sabha in the central government and Vidhan Sabha in states). India had its first general election in 1951, which was won by the Indian National Congress, a political party that went on to dominate subsequent elections until 1977, when a non-Congress government was formed for the first time in independent India. The 1990s saw the end of single-party domination and the rise of coalition governments. The elections for the 16th Lok Sabha, held from April 2014 to May 2014, once again brought back single-party rule in the country, with the Bharatiya Janata Party being able to claim a majority in the Lok Sabha.

Types of political parties

Every political party in India - whether a national or regional/state party - must have a symbol and must be registered with the Election Commission of India. Symbols are used in the

Indian political system to identify political parties in part so that illiterate people can vote by recognizing the party symbols.

In the current amendment to the Symbols Order, the Commission has asserted the following five principles:

- A party, National or State, must have a legislative presence.
- A National party's legislative presence must be in the Lok Sabha. A State party's legislative presence must be in the State Assembly.
- A party can set up a candidate only from amongst its own members.
- A party that loses its recognition shall not lose its symbol immediately but shall be allowed to use that symbol for some time to try and retrieve its status. (However, the grant of such facility to the party will not mean the extension of other facilities to it, as are available to recognized parties, such as free time on Doordarshan or AIR, free supply of copies of electoral rolls, etc.)
- Recognition should be given to a party only on the basis of its own performance in elections and not because it is a splinter group of some other recognized party.

Role of political parties

As with any other democracy, political parties represent different sections among the Indian society and regions, and their core values play a major role in the politics of India. Both the executive branch and the legislative branch of the government are run by the representatives of the political parties who have been elected through the elections. Through the electoral process, the people of India choose which representative and which political party should run the government. Through the elections any party may gain simple majority in the lower house. Coalitions are formed by the political parties, in case no single party gains a simple majority in the lower house. Unless a party or a coalition have a majority in the lower house, a government cannot be formed by that party or the coalition.

Conclusion

India, the land of great civilization, has a history of more than 5000 years with diversity rather than unity in every aspect of human life, strived a lot and attained a proper place among the community of nations. Indian polity started from Manu passed through hundreds of benevolent monarch's and rulers reached the position what we see today. The Arthashastra

of Kautilya was the most important political treatise which India has so far produced. It deals comprehensively every aspect of Indian polity as we do not possess any other period before Akbar the Great. English East India Company constituted to promote trade with India was firmly established its domination in India by 1600 AD when the Mughals were at the height of their power and glory. Within a century the Mughal power became degenerated and disintegrated. The Britishers took advantage of this situation, tightened their grip over India with a series of legislations starting with the Regulation Act of 1773.

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