MAPOLS-407

Dynamics of Indian Politics -II

MA POLITICAL SCIENCE
2ND SEMESTER

Rajiv Gandhi University
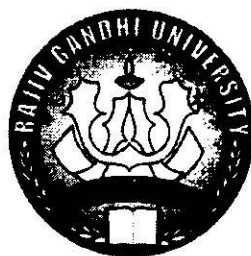ww.ide.rgu.ac.in

DYNAMICS OF INDIAN POLITICS - II

MA [Political Science]

Second Semester

MAPOLS -407

RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Arunachal Pradesh, INDIA - 791 112

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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE
Dynamics of Indian Politics - II

Syllabi	Mapping in Book
UNIT 1: Cleavages of the Political System – Castism, Communalism and Regionalism	UNIT 1: Cleavages of the Political System
UNIT 2: Threats and Challenges to the Indian Political System – Corruption and Criminalization – Environmental Movements (Chipko and Narmada Bachao Andolon)	UNIT 2: Threats and Challenges to the Indian Political System
UNIT 3: Judicial Processes in India – Judicial Review' – Judicial Activism – The Concept of Legal Aid	UNIT 3: Judicial Processes in India
UNIT 4: Regional Political Parties – Role and Importance (AGP, Shiromani Akali Dal and DMK)	UNIT 4: Regional Political Parties
UNIT 5: Coalition Politics – Meaning, Advantages, disadvantages – Recent Trend–Politics of Defection	UNIT 5: Coalition Politics

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The book, *Dynamics of Indian Politics* deals with the nuances of Indian administration. It traces the historical perspective of the framing of the Indian Constitution; the working of the government through separate Executive, Judiciary, and Legislative activities. It broadly observes the basis of the Indian Constitution from its historical perspective and describes the study of constitutional progress and the role played by ideologies in the making of our Constitution. The book outlines the working of the government by the principle of separation of powers between Executive, Legislative and Judiciary. The working of the bureaucracy has also been discussed in detail. The Constitution of India lays down the framework defining fundamental political principles, establishes the structure, procedures, powers and duties, of the government and spells out the Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles and Duties of citizens. The Parliamentary form of Government was established by the Constitution in 1950 and the working of the Government is divided into Executive, Legislative and Judiciary.

The book highlights the institutional arrangements of urban and local self-governments for the discharge of basic responsibilities of public service. In India, the concept of urban governance is intricately linked with the constitutional and legislative provisions under which the urban local bodies are to function as institutions of self-government. Indian federalism and the relationship between the Union and the States have been discussed from a comparative perspective. Furthermore, the idiosyncrasies and limitations of the federal arrangement of India, and the emergence of autonomy movement in India as a repercussion have also been dealt with. Finally, the book concludes with a discussion on the nature and pattern of coalition politics in India.

This book – *Dynamics of Indian Politics* - has been designed keeping in mind the self-instruction mode (SIM) format and follows a simple pattern, wherein each unit of the book begins with the **Introduction** followed by the **Unit Objectives** for the topic. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with **Check Your Progress** questions to reinforce the student's understanding of the topic. A list of **Questions and Exercises** is also provided at the end of each unit. The **Summary, Key Terms** and **Activity** further act as useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

Unit 1: Explores the cleavages of the Indian political system in terms of casteism, communalism and regionalism.

Unit 2: Familiarizes you with the threats and challenges associated with the Indian political system, thus discussing corruption and criminalization in detail.

Unit 3: Discusses the Judicial process in India from the perspectives of judicial review and judicial activism.

Unit 4: Describes the emergence of regional political parties and their role and importance in Indian politics.

Unit 5: Covers the concept of coalition politics along with its advantages and disadvantages.

UNIT 1   CLEAVAGES OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Structure

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about the Indian political systems major cleavages or divisive forces, such as casteism, communalism and regionalism. Caste is an imported part of our social fabric. It developed in ancient time on the basis of division of labour in the society. However, today casteism has disintegrated our political and social systems. In a caste ridden society like ours, unity and integrity has become a dream. The feeling of socially neglected scheduled castes under the suppression of upper caste has weakened the sense of brotherhood and unity. It has proved to be a great obstacle in achieving national integration.

India was born in the aftermath of a communal massacre that claimed the lives of thousands of Hindus and Muslims. Even though secularism is one of the most cherished goals of our Constitution, the Indian history has been marked with several incidents of communal wars and violence. We can no longer afford to be either naïve or staunch about issues such as communalism and cases of ethnic cleansing, religious fundamentalism and religious hatred. Philosophical approaches towards this social problem have remained ineffective and we need to adopt a more sociological approach towards the same. This is so because philosophical approaches reinforce the dominant aspects of majority religious groups. We all know that communal feelings and prejudices are wrong, but does that stop us from nurturing them?

Regionalism is another big problem of India. Our country is divided into several regions, each having its unique traditions, food habits, dress and languages. Regions differ from one another in one or other ways, leading to disintegration of the country. People of one region try to compete with those of other regions, which often leads to regional conflicts and riots.

1.1   UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the issue of casteism in Indian society
- Explain the meaning and effects of communalism
- Describe the various aspects of regionalism in India

1.2 CASTEISM

The caste system in India has a complex nature. Many scholars, namely Ghurye, Hutton and Ketkar, have pointed out the characteristics of caste. Ketkar describes two characteristics of caste, namely, (i) that membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born, (ii) the membership is forbidden by an inexorable social law to men outside the group. From this, it can be said that if a man should be banned from his caste for some reason, he would be without any group, since no other group, lower or higher could accept him into its membership. Moreover, it also limits the choice of marriage partners. G.S. Ghurye, in his book *Caste and Race in India*, has identified six characteristics of the caste system.

(a) Segmental division of society

The caste system exhibits a segmental division which shows that the groups are divided into various groups called castes. Each caste is a well-defined social group, where membership is assured at birth, making transferring from one caste to another unfeasible. Each caste has its individual social position, professions, traditions, rules and regulations. Every group has their own its own ruling body called the caste or *jati panchayat* which ensures that the rules of that particular caste are being adhered to. Such panchayats make decisions not only about matters pertaining to castes but other offences as well, offences that legitimately fall within the judicial process. These include matters like eating, drinking, matters related to marriage, non-payment of debts, breach of customs peculiar to a caste, and petty assaults. Caste was thus a group as Ghurye rightly points out, 'with a separate arrangement for meting out justice to its members apart from that of the community as a whole, within which caste was included as only one of the groups. Hence the members of a caste ceased to be members of a community as a whole, as far as that part of their morals which is regulated by law'. In other words, it can be said that 'each caste is its own ruler'. The citizens owe their moral allegiance to the caste first, rather than to the community as a whole.

(b) Hierarchy

Each caste is positioned hierarchically in society. The divisions of caste can be noted by watching the actions of higher castes. Castes are never equal in status and one caste has either higher or lower in status compared to another. Ghurye pointed out that 'there are as many as two hundred castes which can be grouped in classes whose gradation is largely acknowledged by all. But order of social precedence among the individual castes of any class, cannot be made definite, because not only is there no ungrudging acceptance of such ranks but also the ideas of the people on this point are very nebulous and uncertain'. For instance, rank of certain castes can be determined by finding out from whom a designated caste takes water. One may take water from his equals or superiors, but not from his inferiors unless it is served in a brass pot.

(c) Restrictions on commensality and social intercourse

Every caste imposes restrictions on its members with regard to food, drink and social intercourse. Food is another rank indicator. Indian food is placed into two groups, *pakka khana* and *kachcha khana*. *Pakka khana* is made with clarified butter from flour, sugar and sweetmeats, while *kuchcha khana* is cooked with water or salt. *Pakka khana* is taken from most inferiors, but *kachcha khana* is taken with discrimination. Roughly, a

man will take *kachcha khana* from the same people from whom he will take water (Zinkin, 1962). In practice most castes seem to have no objection on taking *kachcha* food from the hands of a Brahmin. A Brahmin, on the other hand, does not accept *kachcha* food from the hands of any other caste. As far as *pakka* food or *pakka khana* is concerned, a Brahmin can take from the hands of a few castes only. According to Ghurye, thirty-six out of seventy-six UP castes take *kachcha* food from their own members only.

Besides food, there are widespread beliefs of pollution by touch which require the members of different castes to maintain social distances from one another. Theoretically, the touch of a member of any caste lower than one's own defiles a person of a higher caste. The rigidity of this rule however varies from caste to caste and place to place; e.g., it is prevalent in U.P. and Gujarat. As per the classification given by Ghurye, the Shannar, a toddy-tapper of Tamil Nadu, contaminates a Brahmin if he approaches the latter within twenty-four paces. In Kerala, a Nayyar would approach a Namboodri Brahmin but may not touch him. In fact so much rigidity was attached to pollution that a Brahmin would not even perform his ablution within the precincts of a Shudra's habitation.

(d) Endogamy

The caste system also imposes restrictions on marriage. Castes are divided into sub-castes and each sub-caste is an endogamous group. The principle of endogamy was so prominent that Westermark, an eminent sociologist, said, 'It is the essence of caste system.' Every caste or sub-caste insists that members should marry within the group. Any breach of this rule is viewed as a serious offence, the punishment for which often amounts to being ostracized from one's own community or caste. However there are few exceptions to this rule in the form of hypergamy (marriage of a man of a higher caste with a woman from a lower caste). Except in cases of hypergamy, each caste had to adhere strictly to the rules with regard to matrimonial alliances. For instance, the younger son of a Namboodri Brahmin of Kerala can only marry a Nayyar woman.

(e) Lack of unrestricted choice of occupation

In caste-based society, there are restrictions on choosing one's own vocation. Each caste group is traditionally associated with a caste occupation which is hereditary. Abandoning one's hereditary occupation was looked down upon, so people strictly followed their caste occupation even if it was not lucrative. Thus, a Brahmin would consider it his rightful duty to become a priest while a shoemaker would consider it his duty to make shoes. No caste would allow its members to take on any profession which was either degrading or impure. There are however occupations like trading, agriculture, military service and working in the fields, which were considered as being open to all.

(f) Civil and religious disabilities

Social segregation is another aspect of caste differentiation. Ghurye remarked, 'Segregation of individual castes or of groups of castes in a village is the most obvious mark of civil privileges and disabilities and it has prevailed in a more or less definte form all over India.' In a village or a town various castes were segregated on the basis of residence. Segregation has been more severe in South than in North India. In the South, as referred to by Ghurye, parts of the town or village are inaccessible to certain castes. The agitation by the impure castes to gain free access to streets in Vaikam in

Travancore brought into clear relief some of the disabilities of these castes. 'All over India,' Ghurye points out, 'the impure castes are debarred from drawing water from the village well, which is used by members of other castes.' A Mahar in Maharashtra, for example, was forbidden from spitting on the road lest a pure caste gets polluted if his foot happens to touch it. Besides these, there were restrictions on Shudras to enter temples and participating in the performance of certain rituals. They were prohibited from reciting Vedic Mantras and performing Vedic rituals. They had to satisfy themselves with Puranic rituals. A Brahmin was not expected to bow to anyone while members of other castes were required to bow to him.

Recent Changes in the Caste System

The Indian caste system has undergone tremendous transformation in modern times. The caste system has undergone and is still undergoing adaptive changes. M.N. Srinivas quite aptly referred to the changes brought about in independent India as the erecting of constitutional defences for the protection of the backward sections of the population, especially the scheduled castes and tribes. This has provided a new lease of life to the people. Many factors are responsible for the transformation in caste system.

Srinivas draws a distinction between the traditional and modern caste system which roughly coincides with the distinction between pre-British and post-British period. It was indeed a matter of great significance to learn about the nature of rendering political power to Indians by the British. This was an important step in the various castes assuming political functions. There were territorial boundaries in the pre-British period which separated the castes by limiting their mobility. However, later on, the interdependence of castes upon each other for economic and other functions somehow became instrumental in liberating castes from territorial filiations.

Srinivas also refers to the building of roads all over India, and how the introduction of postage, telegraph, cheap paper and printing, especially in regional languages, enabled castes to organize themselves as they had never done before (Srinivas, 1962). However, Prof. G.S. Ghurye has also reflected upon the impact of British rule on the Indian caste system. The civil and penal codes introduced by the British over the subcontinent of India took away much of the power previously exercised by caste panchayats (Srinivas, 1962). However, the process of Sanskritization has also been instrumental in bringing about social mobility leading to fluidity in the caste structure.

Other factors like Western education, urbanization, industrialization and the new legal system also contributed a lot in bringing about changes in the caste system. The growth of industries and the service sectors have also led to the expansion of occupational opportunities for many castes. So, in spite of the ascribed status assigned to castes, people focused on achieved status. Such occupational spaces have led to the abandonment of the principles of pollution and purity. Moreover, democratic decentralization of power right down to the grassroots level has led to an increased participation in the political process and besides economic success, access to political power has become another means of status enhancement.

Some of the prominent changes identified in the caste system are as follows:

1. There has been a decline in the supremacy of Brahmins. The Brahmins who used to occupy the topmost position in the stratification system of India are no longer considered most superior. Modern occupations and urbanization have

led to increased occupational mobility among other castes, which has enhanced the status of castes lower than the Brahmins in the hierarchy. In the present-day context, the Weberian notion of one's class position gains ascendancy over one's caste position.

2. The *jajmani* system has also weakened. The economic context of inter-caste relations which is termed as the *jajmani* system has lost its significance. The monetization of economy and expansion of the market system in rural areas had severe impact on the economic functions of castes.

3. The second important change is that the position of castes came about due to processes like Sanskritization. Initially, it was observed that the caste system had a rigid structure which strictly prohibited social mobility. But with occupational interdependence and opening of greater avenues for employment, the lower castes had an opportunity to pursue an occupation according to their choice. This led to fluidity in the caste structure and considerable positional changes were observed.

4. The Protective Discrimination Policy of the Government further led to the enhancement of status of many of the subjugated castes. Such policies also led to the improvement in the socio-economic conditions of various castes.

5. The enforcement of the Special Marriage Act of 1954 further brought about many changes in improving the marital alliances among the castes. Initially endogamy was strictly observed as an attribute of caste and people violating it were ostracized from the village. But the Special Marriage Act legalized inter-caste marriages, which is a significant change in the entire system.

6. The notion of pollution and purity and restrictions on feeding and intercourse are no longer valid. The enactment of the Untouchability Offences Act, 1956 was an important milestone in this direction. Untouchability was made a punishable offence and a person found practising it is severely punished either in terms of being fined or sentenced to imprisonment.

7. With industrialization, new occupational structures have developed in urban areas. These new occupations are not dependent on the caste of a person. Recruitments to these occupations are solely based upon technical skills which can be acquired through modern education. Thus, the traditional concept of caste occupation has lost its significance.

8. Contemporary society is undergoing massive transformation due to technological breakthroughs and is witnessing many cultural changes. A new class of lower caste urban youth, whom some scholars have termed as the 'breakthrough generation', are playing a significant role in bringing about a sea-change by breaking the boundaries that had kept the Shudras in conditions of extreme poverty. This new generation of educated Shudras are positioning themselves for modern urban jobs.

Thus, the caste system has undergone many changes in recent years. It is, however, difficult to predict the complete disappearance of such a system. It can be said that though there has been enough fluidity in the system due to various forces, the system still persists in India. The practice of politics through caste (casteism), the entire reservation issue and the recent debate about calculation of caste census further stirred the caste sentiments.

Check Your Progress

1. Castes are divided into sub-castes and each sub-caste is an _____ group.
2. Identify one prominent change in the caste system.

1.3 COMMUNALISM

The term 'communalism' has its roots in the word 'community'. Communalism refers to the politics of conflict between the members of different communities. It is a derogatory perception of communities other than one's own and in it one community is instigated against the other in the name of religion. This evil restricts one's sympathy to the community of one's birth. It is opposed to secularism as it has a pattern of socio-cultural coexistence and of political integration. Communalism has a two-fold negative effect, which is as follows:

- In it, individuals consider their own religion to be superior to that of others
- It promotes hatred and intolerance against people of other communities

  India is a land of diverse regions and cultures and our strength lies in the acceptance and understanding of cultures and religions, other than our own. It is believed that our unity lies in our diversity. Therefore, communalism leads to ill feelings within the members of a nation and is a threat to national unity.

Exceptions to Communalism

The following features do not come under the category of communalism:

- Adherence to religion and religious system
- Personal attachment to a religious community
- Affiliation to any social, cultural and service section of a religious community
- Attachment to ritualism, superstition, obscurantism, magic charm and occult practices like astrology

Commitment to conservative values in social life and conservative orientation in politics is not communalism. This can be called social backwardness and political reaction. However, it should be recognized that all these aspects can work as inputs for the development of communal consciousness and indeed communalists in various permutations and combinations have utilized most of these aspects in order to build their communally political base. But communalism, as a specific phenomenon in the Indian polity is something different and more specific.

Communal Ideology

Communalism is an ideology based on the belief that the Indian society is divided into various religious communities with diverse economic, political, social and cultural interests. They are even hostile to one another due to their religious differences. Communalism is a belief system through which a society, economy and polity are viewed and explained and around which an effort is made to organize politics.

According to communal ideology, people who follow the same religion usually have common secular interests, i.e., people who belong to the same religion not only have common religious beliefs or interests but they also have common political, economic, social and cultural interests. This rule is the first bedrock of communal ideology. From this arises the notion of a religious community, functioning as a community for secular purposes. Any person who discusses about Hindu community or Sikh community or about the interests of the Sikh or the Muslim or the Hindu community is already taking the initial step towards communalism whether he knows

it or not and however secular he might be feeling privately or genuinely at heart, unless the concept of community is used for religious purposes only.

Communalism is opposed to the rational civic basis of party formations and minorities, segments and division within a polity and political system. Communalism perceives majorities and minorities, segments and divisions within the polity and the nation. These are based essentially on religious communities and not even on other inscriptive bases (like that of family, clan, tribe, *jati*, language region or domicile) and certainly not on the basis of political, ideological, party, class, interests or strata considerations, which are the hallmarks of a modern political system. Communalism is the single largest subversive ideology in contemporary India.

Pakistan and Communal Ideology

The ideology of Pakistan took shape through an evolutionary process. Historical experience provided the base; Allama Iqbal gave it a philosophical explanation; Quaid-i-Azam (Muhammad Ali Jinnah) translated it into a political reality; and the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, by passing Objectives Resolution in March 1949, gave it legal sanction. It was due to the realization of the Muslims of South Asia that they are different from the Hindus that they demanded separate electorates. However when they realized that their future in a 'Democratic India' dominated by Hindu majority was not safe, they changed their demand to a separate state. The ideology of Pakistan stemmed from the instinct of the Muslim community of South Asia to maintain their individuality in Hindu society. The Muslims believed that Islam and Hinduism are not only two religions, but are two social orders that produced two distinct cultures. There is no compatibility between the two.

Communal Violence and Communal Politics

Communal violence (or communal riots) is a particular approach to politics, which is practised at a sustained level. Communal violence involves incidents of violence between two religious communities. It can be sporadic in nature and mainly forms a law and order issue to be handled on the spot for restoring peace and calm. Though communal politics does not need immediate police intervention, it has much more damaging implications in future. It breeds feelings of suspicion between religious communities and also gives rise to frequencies of violence, which in turn sustain communal politics.

Communal Politics

Communal politics is a South-Asian expression for ethnic or sectarian politics. Such politics is based on a belief that religion forms the basis of a common identity; that members of a particular religious community have the same economic, political and social interests. In the other words, communal politics works on the belief that each religious community is distinct from the others in its religious and cultural practices, lifestyles and value systems, which become the basis of differences in the socioeconomic interests of these communities. In the absence of shared interests, it is only distrust and suspicion that tends to define the relationship between different communities. Communal politics generates mutual distrust between religious communities. This feeling of distrust often leads to violence, which is a very important factor in communal politics. Communal politics deepens mutual suspicion and hatred, which fuels violence in the first place. Communal violence leads to communal polarization of the society and hence helps in the expansion of communal politics.

Communal politics in this sense is primarily a form of politics, which mobilizes a particular religious community for political power. It is the exploitation of religious differences for political gains. Communal politics may also take the form of highlighting the communitarian interests of a religious group, without necessarily generating hatred towards any other community. Most importantly, communal politics is not driven by any religious or spiritual issue, but by secular interests, which can range from bargaining for jobs, educational concessions, political patronage, separate representation or control over institutions of governance.

Source of Communal Conflict

The sources that lead to communal conflict are as follows:
- Struggle for property.
- Sexual offences
- Urge for economic domination among the elite Hindus and the elite of other communities
- Political interests and communal behaviour to capture political power
- Scramble for jobs, clashes of economic interests and personal animosities
- Cow-slaughter and religious processions of one community passing through the areas of majority of the other

Secularism

Pt. Nehru's definition of secularism consisted of the following four points:

1. Separation of religion from political, economic, social and cultural aspects of life
2. Dissociation of the state from religion
3. Full freedom to all religions and tolerance of all religions
4. Equal opportunities for followers of all religions and no discrimination and partiality on grounds of religion

Secularism refers to firm opposition against communalism. Pt. Nehru saw secularism as a gift of freedom struggle and heritage of India's ancient and medieval past. Secularism basically means separation of religion from the state and politics and it is treated as a private and personal affair. It also requires that the state should not discriminate against a citizen on grounds of his or her religion or caste.

1.4 REGIONALISM

Regionalism refers to the idea or practice of dividing a country into small units for political, economic, social and cultural purposes. Politically, regionalism is connected with decentralized or federalist governments. Regionalism is both cultural and political, as its political success is associated with the development of a regional culture.

Regionalism has negative as well as positive connotations:
- From the negative perspective, it means being obsessed with the place where one hails from.
- From the positive aspect, it is a political characteristic associated with people's love for their region, culture, language and other aspects where the objective lies in maintaining an independent identity.

While positive regionalism is encourages a sense of brotherhood and fraternal feeling evoked by common language, religion or historical background, regionalism in the negative sense acts as a menace as it hampers the integrity and solidarity binding the people of a country.

The feeling of regionalism might be triggered either by continuous negligence of a particular area or region by the ruling authorities, or because of rising political consciousness of people considered backward people and have faced discrimination. Generally, there are political leaders who encourage the feeling of regionalism to control a particular area or cluster of people.

Regionalism in India exists in various forms, some of which are as follows:

- **Demand for state autonomy**: Regionalism has demanded greater independence from the Centre. The Centre's increasing intervention in the matters concerning respective states has yielded regional sentiments. Regions within few states of the Indian federation have also claimed autonomy.

- **Secession from the union:** The states' demand for autonomy and independence from the Centre can be a hazardous affair.

For instance, disputes among states with regard to the sharing of river water, and importance associated with the language to be used in a state as per majority have led to regionalism. Immigrants from a backward state have often been victims to hostility by the people of the places where they have migrated for job opportunities, for example, in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra that are developed states in terms of infrastructure and industrial advancement.

Regionalism has existed since a very long time in the Indian political system. Prior to India's independence, the British imperialists promoted regionalism and on purpose they supported people belonging to different regions to be concerned only about their regions instead of the entire nation, so as to sustain their control over India during the national movement. After independence, the leaders tried cultivating a feeling of national solidarity in the people. The framers of the Constitution aimed at achieving this through the introduction of the concept of single citizenship for everyone. Keeping the objective the same, a unified judiciary, all Indian services and a strong Central government were established. However, soon, on account of the enormity of the country and cultural diversity, regionalism came to be highlighted in India.

The linguistics aspect was responsible for the initial manifestation of regionalism for reorganization of states, but the conquest of the DMK against Congress in Tamil Nadu in the 1960s was the most efficient play of regionalism. Initially, the central leadership felt that regionalism was a marginal political factor confined to Tamil Nadu and so did not pose any threat towards national unity. However, this was an ill-founded assessment. Soon after that, the Akali movement in Punjab gained impetus, whereas in Jammu and Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah invigorated the National Conference. During these years, all Indian political parties continued to maintain strong relations with these regional forces.

In India, several factors have contributed to the growth of regionalism. These are as follows:

- Regionalism acted as a reaction in opposition to the efforts of the National Government for imposing a particular ideology, language or cultural pattern on all people and groups. So the southern states have resisted the imposition of Hindi as an official language due to the fear of being dominated by the North.

Similarly, an anti-foreign movement was launched by the Assamese for preservation of the uniqueness of their culture.

- The Indian federal system is sub-divided into various units that desire greater autonomy to sustain their respective cultures.

- Constant avoidance of an area or region by the ruling parties and concentration of administrative and political have led to a demand for decentralization of the authority and bifurcation of unilingual states.

- The desire of regional elites to become powerful also triggered regionalism. In order to become vested with power, political parties such as DMK, AIADMK, Akali Dal, Telugu Desam and Asom Gana Parishad have been in favour of regionalism.

- The interplay between the forces of modernization and mass participation has also been a major contributory factor in the growth of regionalism in India. India is still far from realizing its objective of being a nation state, since various groups have only emphasized on their own interests rather than national interest.

- The increasing awareness of discrimination faced by people of backward classes has also enhanced the feeling of regionalism, which local political leaders have completely exploited and tried infusing the idea that the Central Government was deliberately trying to uphold regional disparities by avoiding social and economic development of certain places.

Violence

As the performance of the political systems is falling short of expectations, the Third World countries are witnessing more and more violence in their politics. Over the last two decades, it has become increasingly difficult for India to simultaneously accommodate conflicting interests and to promote social and economic development. Governments elected with large majorities have repeatedly failed to translate popular support into effective policies and the role of violence in politics has been growing in the land of Gandhi.

The Indian democratic system started with high hopes in 1950. It was believed that the native government would end all the evils generated by colonial rulers. However, economic development and the consequent prosperity have not been able to match the expectations of the masses. In fact, some scholars feel that the economic disparities have widened in India after independence. Decisions taken at the seat of the power and enforced by its agents have come *fait accompli* to the people. With accumulating grievances, a psychological case is slowly built up in the minds of the people who are affected by such decisions. The normal channels provided for removing the accumulated grievances prove to be ineffective when there is a serious disagreement. Thus, the stage gets set for direct action. While the direct action may be nonviolent, it can also be violent.

Violence and its Patterns in India

Although the phenomenon of violence has been with us for a long time, the last two decades have been quite dismal. The incidents of collective violence included not only three major arenas of violence namely, inter-caste, inter-communal and inter-linguistic violence, but also many other forms of violence. These other forms of violence were those associated with demands for separate states, reorganization of states,

industrial strikes leading to violence against rich landlords in the rural areas, student agitations leading to violence, tribal revolts and terrorist activities in North-East, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. Widespread civil disobedience resulting in violence organized for and against certain political parties is also a form of violence in Indian political system.

The different kinds of problems, which are expressions of violence in Indian politics are as follows:

1. Agrarian violence

In rural India, where the majority of Indian population lives, agrarian relations are marked by widespread economic disparities and poverty. The aggrieved frequently resort to violence. When the country became independent in 1947, the Tebhaga movement in West Bengal was continuing under the leadership of Communist Party of India (CPI) whose ideology sanctions violence in order to attain the objective. Later on, Naxalbari movement developed, which led to many killings of zamindars, peasants, political workers and innocent people. The Naxali movement is still strong in West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh and violence has now become a part of life in these states.

2. Caste violence

Caste-based violence has been growing in Indian politics. The oppressed classes, the Dalits have been discriminated against by the high-caste Hindus from time immemorial. Due to the spread of education, impact of media and increasing politicization of the lower castes, the last two decades have witnessed upsurge of the dalits. They have started asserting their rights and as a result thereof, the traditional social order is under attack which is not liked by the higher communities. Thus, there is violence between upper castes and lower castes, especially in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra. This type of violence gets full support from political parties like Shiv Sena, Hindu Mahasabha, and Bajrang Dal, which have a Hindu-elite base.

3. Left-extremist violence

The overall incidents of Left-extremist violence in the country have registered a slight increase, as compared to the previous years. The various Left-extremist groups have been responsible for terror in many states like Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. In 1977, Tripura witnessed large-scale incidents of violence and arson by the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) and the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT). Some of the notable Left-extremist groups are: the Naxalites, who have formed different groups like Maoist Communist Centre (MCC), Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), Indian People Front, and Bhartiya Jan Morcha. These Naxal outfits believe in violent class struggle and forcible occupation of land to be distributed among the dalits. Their main targets have been the upper-caste landlords.

4. Violence between different linguistic communities

After independence, linguistic reorganization of states became a major problematic issue for political leaders. Also, many states of India refused to accept Hindi as the national language. The Union Government had to submit to the agitation which was fast turning into a violent movement in the South, as a result of which Andhra Pradesh was created. The creation of Andhra Pradesh opened the gates to linguistic movements.

Thus, the State of Bombay was bifurcated into two states—Maharashtra and Gujarat in 1960. Punjab was divided into two separate states of Punjab and Haryana in 1966. A few years back, after much agitation, three new states were carved out of the existing states—Jharkhand out of Bihar, Uttarakhand out of Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh out of Madhya Pradesh.

Recently in West Bengal, the Gorkhaland National Liberation (GNLF) has demanded, occasionally by violent means, a separate state of Gorkhaland in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Violent demands for separate statehoods have also been made in the North-East states of India, like the demand of Bodoland.

Another aspect of linguistic violence is the 'son of the soil theory' advocated by political parties like Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. Advocates of this theory attack and terrorize people who speak languages other than the local language and try to force them to leave the state. South Indians and North Indians in Bombay, Marwaris in West Bengal, Bengalis in Assam and Tamils in Karnataka have been subjected to such violent activities. Unfortunately, such violence gets direct or indirect support from regional political parties.

5. Communal violence

India has experienced the problem of communalism since its pre-independence days. Communal riots and violence are caused by a multiplicity of factors. Ancient and recent hatred blend together when religion becomes a big factor in the dynamics of electoral politics. Since the late 1980s and through the 1990s, the emergence of pro-Hindutva inclinations as a political wave has aggravated the communal factor. The combined toll in Ayodhya in December 1992 and in Bombay in January 1993 surpassed the casualties and property losses of any of the previous clashes. In 2002, large–scale communal violence took place in Gujarat. In all these riots, some political parties helped in instigating the public fury but they always remained behind the scenes.

6. Violence by political parties

Killing of political persons for the achievement of certain goals also constitutes political violence. Such political violence is committed for specific political objectives, by organized gangs or by ad hoc groups. Their purpose is to influence governmental decisions, to punish political opponents, to ventilate deep-seated grievances, or to intimidate a locality or an electoral constituency. The assassinations of Indira Gandhi in 1984, Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and Beant Singh, the Chief Minister of Punjab in 1995 are some examples of violence in political circles, which have far-reaching political consequences.

7. Poll violence

Poll violence in India has grown with the passing of every general election. Violence related to elections can be broadly divided into the following three categories: pre-election violence, violence on the election-day and post-election violence. Violence in the form of booth capturing, snatching of ballot boxes, attacks on poll officials and clashes between the supporters of political parties have become common sights during the elections. However, the Lok Sabha elections of 2009 were conducted, by and large, peacefully.

In conclusion, one can say that unfortunately, violence has become the part and parcel of the Indian political life and it constitutes danger not only to democratic

institutions, which stand for a peaceful solution to every problem, but also to the national unity of the country. Government and citizens of the nation should find ways to resolve root causes lead to violence.

1.4.1 Linguistic Regionalism: Assam and Dravidian Movement (Telengana Movement)

A more serious manifestation of regionalism appeared in Assam, a state of the north-east region. The Assamese organized the *Lachit Sena* on the pattern of *Shiv Sena* of Maharashtra, and in the summer of 1967, that Sena launched an agitation against the immigrants from other states of the Indian Union, particularly against the Rajasthanis who owned much of the industry in the state. First, the agitation took the form of posters and leaflets asking the non-Assamese to leave the state. Then, the *Lachit Sena* worked up the sentiments of students and on the Republic Day, 26 January 1968, they called for the boycott of the celebrations as a protest against the Centre's unwillingness to concede their demands and they attacked the shops and industrial establishments of the non-Assamese. Justice K.C. Sen, who had been appointed by the Central Government to inquire into the situation, reported that the Assam Government was absolutely 'indifferent' to the agitation against the non-Assamese, and that the anti-social elements had been encouraged by that indifference. On instructions from New Delhi the Assam Government took stern action against the *Lachit Sena* volunteers, and the situation came under control.

In the later months of 1979, an agitation against the inclusion of 'foreigners' in the electoral rolls developed in Assam under the leadership of two organizations called the *All-Assam Gana Sangram Porishad* and the All-Assam Students Union. Between 1964 and 1971, about 1,000,000 people had entered into Assam from what then was East Pakistan prior to the creation of Bangladesh, and about 2,00,000 of them had been, allegedly, registered as voters. The Central Government declared these 'refugees' as entitled to Indian citizenship. The above two organizations demanded the detection, disenfranchisement and deportation of these 'aliens'. The tripartite talks carried on between the AASU and the AAGSP on the one side and the Central Government and Opposition parties on the other proved abortive. In February 1983, elections were held for the Legislative Assembly of Assam, but these were opposed and boycotted by the nationalist and student groups who considered them as 'illegal'. Only 10 per cent voters cast their votes, and the violence that occurred during the voting resulted in the massacre of several thousand people. The Congress (1) got 90 of the 108 seats that were filled and its leader, Hiteswar Saika, was sworn in as the Chief Minister on 17 February. On the same day, President's rule was formally revoked. The AASU and the AAGSP decided to topple the 'illegally' elected Ministry of Saika, because the electoral rolls —contained the names of 'a large number of foreigners'.

Although the Assam agitation was initially launched on the 'foreigners' issue, the extremist groups took advantage and started intimidating the non-Assamese–speaking people on the one side and accusing the Centre of neglecting Assam on the other. Towards the end of December 1979, posters exhorting the people of the north-east to unite and recreate a 'golden Assam' appeared in the Sibsagar district of Upper Assam. These posters urged the people to disrupt transport links with the rest of the country, so that tea and oil were not supplied to areas outside the region. One pamphlet said: 'Bye bye India', and it alleged that the Centre was adopting a 'colonial policy' towards Assam. The posters spoke of 'United States of Asom'. Since the Bengalis living in Assam were subjected to intimidation a counter agitation against Assam was

launched in West Bengal by the Youth Congress (I) and the *Chhatra Parishad,* the party's students organization, to make the Assam students realize the 'folly' of their ways and to 'restore good sense' to them.' The agitation in Bengal also became increasingly violent, and for a moment the two states appeared to be on a war path. In the summer of 1985, Assam became involved in a border dispute with Nagaland and this led to the exchange of fire, the displacement of some 31,000 persons in Assam and the stoppage of traffic on the Assam–Nagaland border. An accord was, however, soon reached on the intervention of the Central authorities.

The States Reorganization Commission had recommended in its report in 1955 that, the multi-lingual state of Hyderabad should be broken up, and the Kannada-speaking areas thereof should be merged with the state of Mysore and the Marathi-speaking areas with the state of Bombay. The Commission had also recognized that there were strong arguments in favour of the union of the Telugu-speaking area of Hyderabad state (known as Telengana) with Andhra in a single Telugu-speaking state, but it did not suggest that step immediately because of the existence of a feeling among the people of Telengana that they might be 'swamped and exploited' by the highly educated people of Andhra. The Commission, therefore, had recommended, that Telengana should be a separate state, but that a provision should be made for its union with Andhra affter the third General Election 'if a two-thirds majority of the legislature of Telengana expressed itself in favour.' But the Union Government decided to unite Telengana with Andhra, on grounds that the resultant uncertainty would retard Telegana's economic development. As a condition for union the Congress Party leaders of Andhra and Telengana concluded in 1956 the following accord: (i) all members of the state Assembly from Telengana region would form a Regional Committee to deal with matters relating to that region; (ii) the entire revenue from Telengana would be spent on the development of that region, of course after meeting its proportionate share of common expenditure of the state of Andhra Pradesh; (iii) the recruitment to government posts in the Telengana region carrying a salary of up to ₹ 500 a month would be made for five years only from among the persons who had lived in Telengana for at least fifteen years; and (iv) when the Chief Minister of the state came from Andhra the deputy Chief Minister would be drawn from Telengana and *vice versa.*

On the basis of this agreement, the state of Andhra Pradesh was reformed on 1 November 1956.

But the agreement did not work well, and the people of Telengana began to express their dissatisfaction and resentment. Voices were raised throughout the 1960s that they should be separated from Andhra Pradesh, and a separate state of Telengana should be created. The students of Osmania University coming from the Telengana region developed an apprehension that they would not be able to complete successfully with Andhra students, and that their future employment opportunities would be jeopardized. In early January 1969, they launched an agitation demanding that the agreement of 1956 should be implemented 'fully and sincerely.' At first, the agitation was generally peaceful, but later on it became violent. The then Chief Minister, Brahmanand Reddy and 44 MLAs announced that all Andhras appointed to posts reserved for the people of Telengana would be immediately transferred to Andhra region, and all the vacancies thereby occurring would be filled by qualified candidates from Telengana, and that the revenue surplus from Telengana would be utilized only for the development of that region. Following this announcement, the agitation for a separate state of Telengana was called off.

When the families of Andhra civil servants returned from Telengana the students of Andhra launched a counter agitation. With this, the Telengana agitation also revived. The Telengana leaders formed a *Praja Samiti* to press their demand for a separate state. The situation became so tense and menacing that troops had to be called in to maintain peace and order. An announcement by the Prime Minister, on 26 March 1969, that steps would soon be taken to redress the grievances of the Telengana people, had no effect, and the movement for the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh became violent, leading to the destruction of government property, firing by the police on unruly mobs and the arrest of hundreds of people including the *Telengana Praja Samiti* (TPS) Chairman, Madan Mohan. A number of prominent Congressmen announced their support for the separatist movement. On 11 April, the Prime Minister announced an eight-point programme to assure that the pace of development and expansion of employment opportunities would be accelerated, but this had no effect, and the TPS leader, Mrs T.N. Sadalakshmi, declared that the agitation for a separate state would continue. On 26 May, the TPS launched a non-violent civil disobedience campaign. The Congressmen of Telengani held a convention on 1 June, supported separation from the Andhra, seceded from the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee, and formed an independent Telengana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), with Konda Lakshman Bapuji as its President Mr M. Chenna Reddy assumed the chairmanship of the TPS. The *Bhartiya Kranti Dal* and the *Swatantra Party* extended moral support to the demand for a separate state of Telengana and the local units of the SSP, PSP and the Republican Party took active part in the agitation. The Communist Party of India and the CPM opposed the demand. Some university professors, retired civil servants, a former Chief Justice of the Hyderabad High Court and some businessmen 'submitted,' to the Governor a memorandum protesting against 'the repressive measure of the state Government to crush the Telengana movement' and emphasizing that 'neither separation nor a united Andhra Pradesh', should be imposed on an unwilling people. They demanded that President's rule should be promulgated in Andhra Pradesh and thereafter, the peoples' wish — whether they wanted separation from or unity with Andhra — should be ascertained.

Eight Ministers in Brahmanand Reddy's Government, who came from the Telengana region, resigned, and said that they would work among the people 'in order to create a psychological climate conducive to achieving full integration of the two regions of Andhra Pradesh.' The Chief Minister also placed his resignation in the hands of the Congress Parliamentary Board, so that the whole issue could be examined dispassionately and freely. In the meantime, the agitation — closure of business, demonstrations, strike, destruction of property and police firing continued unabated.

On 6 August 1969, Home Minister Chavan reiterated the Government's intention not to split Andhra Pradesh to create a separate stale of Telengana. Shortly after this, Brahmanand Reddy withdrew his resignation from the Chief Ministership.

These two developments cast gloom in the TPCC circles, and it directed its thirty-five MLAs and twelve MLCs to withdraw their support from Reddy's Government. Union Defence Minister, M.R. Krishna, Parliament member Akbar Ali Khan, and a labour leader, G. Sanjiva Reddy, sought to bring about a rapprochement between the TPCC/TPS and Andhra Pradesh Government leaders, but both sides stuck to their positions.

In mid-November 1970, a TPS candidate, Madan Mohan, defeated a Congress Party candidate, V.P Rejeshwar Rao, in the Siddipet by election. The candidate of the

Communist Party of India that stood for a united Andhra Pradesh gave a very poor account. In the wake of this victory, TPS leader M. Chenna Reddy urged the Union and state Government leaders 'to read the writing on the wall and to concede the demand for a separate state of Telengana.'

In late December 1970, President Giri dissolved the Lok Sabha and ordered fresh elections. Apprehending that the indignant TPS might tilt the balance in favour of the opposition parties Indira Gandhi offered new proposals to it, and invited Brahmanand Reddy and TPS leader Mr M. Chenna Reddy for talks on the basis of her proposals. While TPS leader insisted on a firm assurance on the future status of Telengana and demanded that Congress should nominate all the 14 Lok Sabha candidates from Telengana. On the advice of the TPS, the Chief Minister told the Prime Minister that the 'separatists' should be given no quarter, and that the Congress should fight them in the election. The talks ended in fiasco. The TPS contested the election on the basis of a separatist programme and won ten seats.

Thereafter followed tortuous negotiations between Mrs Gandhi and TPS leader Chenna Reddy, and eventually a 'six-point' agreement was reached. The TPS agreed to merge itself with the Congress. The Prime Minister was authorized to review the situation after three years and to decide conclusively whether there should be a separate Telengana. The other provisions of the agreement provided that the Telengana Regional Committee would be accorded statutory status that the constitutional validity of the 'Mulki Rules' on employment opportunities for the Telengana people would not be challenged, that separate five-year plans for the Telengana region would be drawn up, and that a person from Telengana would become the Chief Minister. According to this agreement, Brahmanand Reddy resigned from Chief Ministership and P.V. Narasimha Rao occupied this office.

Many in the Telengana region apprehended in the wake of this agreement that TPS led by Chenna Reddy might sabotage their fight for a separate state of Telengana. On 10 January 1971, they formed a rival TPS with Satyanarayan Reddy of the Samyukta Socialist Party as their leader. While the former TPS came to terms with the reality of the post-election situation, the latter TPS continued its fight, though on a low key. It was lent support by the Organizational Congress, the SSP, the Swatantra Party. On the eve of the fifth General Election to state Assemblies in March 1972, the rival TPS passed a resolution stating that nothing short of separate statehood for Telengana would satisfy the people there.

When in 1956, Telengana region of Hyderabad was united with Andhra to form Andra Pradesh the 'Mulki Rules' were retained, though in a modified form, to ensure that the higher educational standards prevailing in Andhra did not place Telenganas at disadvantage in competing for employment These 'Rules' had been introduced in 1919 by the Nizam of Hyderabad, and government posts and admission to educational institutions were reserved exclusively for persons who had been born in the state or who had lived there for 15 years.

Although 85 per cent population of the state of Hyderabad was Hindu, all important posts were held by the Muslims. The original purpose of the 'Mulki Rules' was to discourage Muslims of other areas from moving into Hyderabad state to take advantage of that situation.

Violating the 'six-point' agreement, some people from the Andhra region challenged the 'constitutional validity of the 'Mulki Rules', and the Andhra Pradesh

High Court held' that the 'Mulki Rules' were unconstitutional, as they violated Article 16(2) of the Constitution which stated that no *citizen* shall be ineligible for any public employment on grounds of, *inter alia,* residence. On appeal, the Supreme Court held, on 3 October 1972, that the 'Mulki Rules' were covered by Article 35(b) (which laid down that any law in force immediately before the commencement of the Constitution relating to, inter alia, any requirement as a residence within a state as a condition for employment by that state continued in force until altered, replaced or amended by Parliament) and, therefore, demanded valid even after the formation of Andhra Pradesh.

As Hyderabad city, the capital of Andhra Pradesh, was in Telengana the Supreme Court ruling implied that all the posts in the state secretariat, including those of Judges, might be held only by people born in Telengana or who had lived, there for 15 years.

In November 1972, an agitation for the abolition of 'Mulki Rules' commenced in Andhra, and the students took the leading part. They demanded that Andhra should be made a separate state. The situation became very grave and the army had to be called in to assist the civil authorities in maintaining order.

On 27 November, Mrs Gandhi put forward a compromise plan whereby— (a) the 'Mulki Rules' would apply only to non-gazetted and junior posts; (b) in the secretariat and the office of heads of department of the state Government the Rules would apply for filling the second vacancy in every unit of three vacancies in non-gazetted posts; and (c) they (Rules) would cease to operate in Hyderabad after 1977, and in the rest of Telengana, after 1980. The 'Mulki Rules' Bill, incorporating these provisions received President's assent on 30 December 1982.

This Act evoked strong opposition in both Andhra and Telengana, the people in Andhra demanding the abolition of 'Mulki Rules' and those in Telengana insisting on their enforcement. Seventy three of the 141 Congress MLAs from Andhra demanded the separation of Andhra from Telengana, and they, as well as 11 Congress MPs from Andhra, called on the people to paralyse the government by refusing to pay taxes. They launched a violent agitation, and the state administration virtually collapsed.

In view of this situation Chief Minister Narasimha Rao submitted, on 17 January 1973, the resignation of his Ministry on the advice of the Central leaders. On the following day, President's rule was promulgated in the state in a bid to prevent bifurcation of the state and to restore law and order. The Assembly was suspended and not dissolved. This was done in the hope that agitation and violence would end, and it would become possible to revive the popular rule. Rao's exit did not stem the agitation. On 21 January, Congress leaders of Andhra decided to resign from the party, and declared that if by 5 February, a separate Andhra state was not formed 'a revolution unprecedented in history' would take place. On the same day, the Congress leaders of Telengana formed the *Congress Forum for Separate Telengana* to work for immediate separation from Andhra. The agitation in both the regions became widespread and violent.

In order to suppress these activities the Union Government deployed a battalion of Central Reserve Police, and according to the -- allegation of G. Larchanna, Chairman of the Praja Parishad and a member of the Central Action Council which was spearheading the separate Andhra agitation, about 300 persons were shot dead.

Although violence subsided the separatist movement continued. On 1 February 1973, Larchanna warned the Centre that if a separate state of Andhra was not formed 'the mass upsurge would snowball into a larger movement in Andhra seeking separation from the Indian Union.' He also declared that the issue of separation was 'not negotiable.'

Apprehending lest the situation should deteriorate beyond control the Central Government began to work for a negotiated settlement. After protracted talks spreading over a period of six months a six–point formula was devised. This was as under: (1) 'Mulki Rules' and Telengana Regional Committee will go (2) Local candidates will be given preference for direct recruitment to non-gazetted posts, and the same course will be followed for the posts of *tehsildars* junior, engineers and civil assistant surgeons and jobs under the local bodies. (3) A high-powered tribunal will be constituted to deal with services' grievances. (4) A state-level planning board with sub-committees for different backward areas will be constituted. (5) A new Central university will be established in Hyderabad to augment existing educational facilities, and preference will be given to local candidates for admission to educational institutions. (6) The Constitution will be amended to the extent necessary for implementing the above points.

Both sides did not change their basic stand, namely the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh, but they considered the formula as the best 'under the circumstance.' Leaders from both sides endorsed the formula and a climate for the restoration of popular rule was created. Since Narasimha Rao was not able to end violence and the state had to be brought under President's rule it was thought necessary to replace him by another more widely acceptable Chief Minister. But the Congress Legislature Party was not able to agree upon the issue of leadership. On 1 December 1973, it adopted a resolution, unanimously authorising the Prime Minister to select a leader. Her choice fell upon J.Vengal. Rao who had been the Home Minister in the Brahmanand Reddy's Cabinet and Industries Minister in the Government of Narasimha Rao. On 10 December 1973, he and a 15-member Council of Ministers were sworn in, and the 11-month old President's rule in Andhra Pradesh ended.

Shortly thereafter, the Union Government introduced in Parliament the Constitution (Thirty-third) Amendment Bill to give constitutional authority to the six-point formula. It was passed by the Lok Sabha on 18 December. The House also passed the Bill to provide for the repeal of the 'Mulki Rules.' The problem appeared to have been resolved. But the six-point formula did not work to the satisfaction of the separatists in Telengana. They formed the Telengana Rights Protection Committee for the purpose of restarting a campaign for the creation of a separate state of Telengana. This Committee was held on 21 July 1974, a one-day convention which adopted a number of resolutions. The main' resolution said that the convention believed that the future of Telengana lay in the realization of its demand for a separate identity. It also said that while the government and politicians might 'indulge in unscrupulous political games' the public would continue to strive for a separate state. It warned the Central Government that if early steps were not taken to fulfil the aspirations of the Telengana people they would be 'constrained and forced to take steps to usher in Telengana' state' and the Centre would be responsible for the consequences. Although no such steps were initiated the separatists in Andhra Pradesh continued to give vent to their feelings of unhappiness and dissatisfaction.

Separate Statehood Demands in Other Parts of India

A new form of regionalism which came to the fore in the 1970s was the demand for separate statehood in several states of the Indian Union. The Assam Plains Tribals demanded a separate Union Territory for themselves. The told the Prime Minister, on 20 December 1973, that the Assam state Government was persistently oppressing the tribals, and that it was impossible for them to live under the Assamese. The people of the former princely state of Mysore demanded separation from the Karnataka districts. The hilly region of Kumaon and Tehri-Garhwal in Uttar Pradesh aspired for a state of their own. 'BKU-leaders Charan Singh and the Jan Singh leaders demanded, from time to time, the bifurcation of UP in three states. Such a step alone, they said, would lead to the development of the people inhabiting the largest state in the country. On the eve of General Election for the Legislative Assembly of UP in February 1974, eight hill districts Uttar Kashi, Tehri-Garhwal, Chamoli, Pithoragar, Almora, Nainital and Dehradun—in a communication to the chairman, Delimitation Committee, demanded more seats. It was argued that the UP hill people had suffered from chronic maladies due to inadequate representation in law-making bodies.

The ascension of Janata Party into power in March 1977 revived the demand of these districts for Uttarakhand, on grounds that the development of their region had been neglected. The 'westerners' wanted an 'Agra' or a 'Meerut' state, with claims to Dehradun or a 'Braj' state with parts of Rajasthan; the mid-westerners clamoured for Rohilakhand; the south westerners said they must have a Bundelkhand with some districts of Madhya Pradesh; the south-easterners demanded a trans-Vindhya state; and finally the easterners agitated for a 'Bhojpur' state consisting of parts of Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar, with Varanasi as its capital.

Insurgencies in the North-East: Assam (ULFA, Bodo, Karbi and Dimasa Outfits)

ULFA

ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam) was established on 7 April 1979 by Bhimakanta Buragohain, Rajiv Rajkonwar alias Arabinda Rajkhowa, Golap Baruah alias Anup Chetia, Samiran Gogoi alias Pradip Gogoi, Bhadreshwar Gohain and Paresh Baruah at the Rang Ghar in Sibsagar. The aim of ULFA was to convert Assam into a sovereign socialist state through violent aggression. ULFA was formed as a separatist group from Assam, in addition to several other similar groups in North-East India. The Indian government imposed a total ban on the organization, under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, in 1990 and classified it as a terrorist organization. On the other hand, the US State Department has listed it in the category of 'other groups of concern'.

It began a large number of violent operations in 1990. The Indian army also initiated military operations against it in 1990, which still continue. Since the last two decades around 18,000 people have been killed in clashes between the rebels and Government of India. On 5 December 2009, the Indian authorities captured the Chairman and deputy commander-in-chief of ULFA.

Lately, there has been a concentrated onslaught on ULFA in Bangladesh, which has been of significant assistance to the Indian government in bringing ULFA leaders

across the negotiation table. In January 2010, ULFA adopted a moderate stance and abandoned its demand for an independent state, as a precondition for talks with the Indian government.

Bodo

Demand for Bodoland

An All India Union of Students and the Bodoland People's Union demanded the creation of a separate state of Bodoland. At times the agitation became violent and aggressive, but neither the Government of India nor that of Assam was willing to concede their demand. On 20 February 1993, the three sides signed an agreement (the Tripartite Agreement) and it provided for the creation of an autonomous council within the boundaries of Assam. This council was to comprise 2,000 villages of and 38 vital departments of the state government.

Bodoland Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF)

Formation

The BLT (also known as the Bodo Liberation Tiger Force or BLTF) was established on 18 June 1996, under the leadership of Prem Singh Brahma. The main objectives were to fulfil economic, educational and linguistic aspirations, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the Bodos. The group is active in six districts of Assam, namely Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari and Darrang.

Objectives

- To create a new state—Bodoland in the north bank of the Brahmaputra
- To create an autonomous district council in the south bank of the Brahmaputra
- To implement the inclusion of the Bodos of Karbi Anglong district in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution

Present status

On December 6, 2003, 2641 cadres of the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) renounced violence and surrendered along with arms and ammunition at Kokrajhar, marking an end to seven years of insurgency. On the following day, an interim 12-member executive council of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was formed in Kokrajhar.

A Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) for the creation of the BTC was agreed upon at a tripartite meeting held in New Delhi on 10 February 2003, between the representatives of Union Government, Assam Government and a delegation of BLT. The BTC would comprise 3,082 villages in four districts—Kokrajhar, Chirang, Udalguri and Baska. The BTC would have 40 elected representatives and the Assam Government would nominate six more. Of the elected representatives, 30 seats would be reserved for tribals, five for non-tribals and the remaining five would be open for general contest.

National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)

Formation

The National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) was formed on 3 October 1986 with the objective of creating an independent Bodoland. The outfit was originally established

as the Bodo Security Force (BSF) and from 25 November 1994, it is known as the NDFB. The majority of their operations were targeted in areas in the north and north-west of the river Brahmaputra.

Members of the outfit targeted seven districts in Assam—Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, Darrang, Barpeta, Dhubri, Nalbari and Sonitpur districts.

The NDFB acts in collaboration with the ULFA and have access to sophisticated arms and ammunition such as the AK Series rifles, light machine guns, M-16 rifles and rocket propelled grenades. Other outfits are also associated with the NDFB. Some of these are the Kamatapur Liberation Organization (**KLO**), the Achik National Volunteers Council (ANVC) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K). They also source arms and ammunition from Bhutan.

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the outfit:

- To create a new Bodoland and thereby liberate it from the Indian mainland
- To free the Bodo nation from the colonialist exploitation, oppression and domination
- To promote liberty, equality and fraternity by establishing a Democratic socialist party
- To uphold the integrity and sovereignty of Bodoland
- To introduce the Roman script in the Bodo language rather than the Devnagri script

Present status

Following the tripartite agreement in May 2005, the NDFB cadres are located within the three designated camps set up in Assam. Most members of the outfit prefer to live in their native villages as there are inadequate facilities within the camps. The six-month unilateral ceasefire announced by it on 8 October 2004 was ignored by the Union government. Following the ceasefire period, several rounds of talks were held between members of the outfit and representatives from both the state and Union government resulting in the signing of a tripartite ceasefire agreement on 25 May 2005, at New Delhi. Since then, the ceasefire agreement has been periodically extended, although formal peace talks are yet to begin.

Karbi

Karbi are tribes which primarily dominate the Karbi Anglong district of Assam. A few of these tribes are also scattered in North Cachar Hills, Nagaon, Golaghat, Kamrup, Jorhat, Sonipur and Lakhimpur districts of Assam and in bordering states of Nagaland and Meghalaya. Karbi tribes have a rich traditional heritage and a different style of living. They have a unique beliefs, ethnicity, language, individuality and environmental status. Their lifestyle is very simple. Individual members of the tribe often address themselves as *Arleng* which literally means 'a man' in Karbi language.

United People's Democratic Society (UPDS)

Formation

In March 1999, members of two terrorist outfits—Karbi People's Front (KPF) and the Karbi National Volunteers (**KNV**) came together to form what is called the United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS). Members of UPDS carry out their activities mainly in Karbi Anglong district of Assam and sometimes in North Cachar district also. Arms and ammunition for their operations are sourced mainly from Bangladesh and Bhutan. The outfit also owes their growth and proliferation to the active assistance provided by the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah (**NSCN-IM**). It also shares a 'working relationship' with the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (**NDFB**) and the United Liberation Front of Asom (**ULFA**).

The outfit signed a ceasefire agreement for one year with the Union Government on 23 May 23 2002, resulting in the break-up of the outfit into two factions—the pro-tasks and the anti-tasks. Since 16 May 2004 the anti-tasks faction is known under the name of the Karbi Longri North Cachar Hills Liberation Front (**KLNLF**) and its armed wing as the Karbi Longri North Cachar Hills Resistance Force (KNPR).

Present status

Since 2002, six rounds of peace talks were held between members of the outfits and representatives from both the state and Union governments. After the talks held on 26 July 2006 the outfit ceased to cooperate with the government officials citing differences on the part of the government in fulfilling its demands.

On 5 May 2010, the Centre extended the SoO agreement (Statement of Objectives) with the UPDS for a period of six months. The UPDS released a statement that through a mutual agreement with the Government of India and Government of Assam the SoO agreement was extended.

Dimasa

People of the Dimasa tribe (also known as Dima-basa and Dimasa-Kachari) belong to Assam, in north-eastern India. Most of the people of Dimasa tribes reside in the Jatinga Valley, North Cachar Hills of Assam.

Dima Halim Daogah (DHD)

Formation

Dima Halim Daogah (DHD) was formed in 1995 as an offshoot of the erstwhile Dimasa National Security Force (DNSF), which had surrendered en masse. The members of the outfit carry out their activities mainly in the following four areas Cachar, North Cachar Hills, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon districts of Assam. It also has a strong presence in the Dimasa dominated Dhansiri area of Karbi Anglong district.

The DHD has reportedly forged links with the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), Pakistan's external intelligence agency. The DHD is also reported to have linkages with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah (**NSCN-IM**) and the national Democratic Front of Bodoland (**NDFB**).

Objectives

The following are the objectives declared by the outfit:

To form a separate state 'Dimaraji' for the Dimasa tribe populating the areas of North Cachar Hills, Karbi Anglong as well as parts if Dimapur district in Nagaland

Present status:

The outfit is currently observing 'ceasefire' with the government.

On 1 January 2003, leaders of the DHD and representatives of the Union Government consented for a ceasefire, which was later extended till 31 December 2004. On 23 September 2004, members of the outfit presented a memorandum to the Union Home Minister demanding a separate homeland for the people belonging to Dimasa tribes. The outcome of the meeting was not in favour of the outfit and they termed it as 'intentional procrastination' by the Union government.

On 3 July 2011, the Central Government formally announced an extension of ceasefire with DHD for a period of six months. The Suspension of Operation would continue up to 31 December and tripartite talks on the demands of DHD are continuing.

Naga and Mizo Insurgencies

Another area of the country where secessionist movements were launched was the north-east region comprising Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Meghalaya Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, jointly known as the 'seven sisters.' Let us first take up Mizoram. The people of the Mizo Hill district of Assam with an area of 8,200 square miles and population of about 200,000 demanded secession not only from Assam but from the Indian Union itself. They demanded the formation of an 'independent Mizo state' comprising also the Mizos of the contiguous areas of East Pakistan and Burma. They formed the Mizo National Front (MNF) to press their demand. The Union Government, naturally turned down their demand, and took to repression. The Mizos organized armed agitation and commenced guerrilla warfare. In the wake of the Chinese aggression in October 1962, the MNF was banned, and all its operations were declared illegal under the Defence of India Rules. But their activities continued and spread to the Cachar Hills of Assam and the then Union Territory of Tripura. Civil administration in the Mizo Hill broke down almost completely.

On 2 May 1968, the Union Government alleged that the Mizos were in league with the Nagas and the Chinese who were arming and training them. It also alleged that Pakistan was assisting the rebel Mizos — an allegation described by Rawalpindi as 'totally false'. The Union Government detained hundreds of Mizos under the Preventive Detention Act. When on 31 December 1969, that Act expired, the Government of Assam issued an ordinance providing for preventive detention, and the Mizos continued to be held. Their operations, however, continued. In January 1971, a three-member delegation of the MNF led by its President, Criunga, met the Prime Minister and other Union Government leaders in New Delhi, and submitted a memorandum that stating the Mizos were frustrated because of the injustice done to them by dividing their homeland during British rule, the political instability brought about by the Assam Government, and the economic instability and hardships as a result of mismanagement by the Assam Government.

Instead of talking about secession from India and forming an 'independent Mizo state, they demanded in 1971 a referendum over the question of statehood for

the Mizos. In order to satisfy their political aspirations, the Union Government made the Mizo Hills a Union Territory on 21 January 1972. It was named Mizoram. The Union Government spent crores of rupees to bring the people into the mainstream of India, but the success achieved was only limited. Many extremists who would be content only with an independent state outside the Indian Union continued their violent and terrorist activities under the leadership of Laldenga. Quite a few of them sneaked to China to obtain arms and training in guerrilla tactics of warfare so as to face the Indian Border Security Force.

In February 1973, and again in February 1974, the Government authorities held informal discussions with some of the underground leaders, but there was no result. The hard core among them took, as the then Union Home Minister, Uma Shanker Dixit, put it, a 'very unreasonable attitude.' The situation deteriorated considerably. On 1 December 1974, the 'Mizo National Army' issued notice to the effect that 'all Indian nationals now in Mizoram are hereby ordered to leave Mizoram before 1 January 1975. The responsibility for violation of this order shall lie upon the defaulters.' The ultimatum having expired, the MNF whipped up its terrorist activities. On 13 January, two gunmen, wearing uniforms of sub-inspectors of police, walked into the conference room of the Inspector General of Police at Aizawl and shot him dead along with the Deputy Inspector General and the Superintendent of Police. This ghastly crime caused serious uneasiness in New Delhi, and the authorities launched Army operations in a big way to suppress the rebels. They also decided to hold no talks with the underground Mizo leaders unless they ended their violence.

It was pointed out by the Development Minister of Mizoram, R. Thagliana, on 26 April 1975, that the atrocities being inflicted upon the youth of the Union Territory by the security forces were sending more and more of them into the ranks of the underground secessionists. It was, of course, a widely known fact that Communist China was helping the Mizo hostiles with money and arms with the ultimate objective of creating lawlessness and anarchy in the north-east region of India. The Pakistani collusion with the Chinese authorities was another factor behind the activities of the Mizo rebels. In order to deal with the grave situation the Union Government authorities devised more stringent measures, one of them being a move, in early May 1975, to make the provisions of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) more rigorous. But these too had limited effect. On 3 June, Chief Minister Chunga said that the rebel elements 'are very active' and the situation 'is not under control yet.' However, about a year later, the MNF decided to give up arms and secessionist plea and acknowledged that all problems between the rebel Mizos and the Union Government would be resolved within the framework of the Constitution. After long deliberations and secret discussions a peace accord was signed at New Delhi on 11 July 1976 between him and the authorities of the Central Government. Laldenga acknowledged Mizoram to be an integral part of India, agreed to find a solution of all problems peaceably, undertook to abjure violence and to suspend all activities and finally to bring into camps all his followers and to deposit their weapons.

The ink on the Delhi accord had hardly dried up that Laldenga himself incited his followers to scuttle its implementation. The MNF launched, in March–April 1977, a massive drive for enrolling fresh volunteers to its depleted ranks and arranging their training in guerrilla warfare in China.

On 9 May 1977, the Congress Ministry of Mizoram headed by Chhunga resigned, following the expiry of the five-year term of the Assembly, and two days later the Union Territory was placed under President's rule. The 30-member Assembly

was dissolved. The Union authorities took to suppression of rebels again. Hundreds of them surrendered, but the secessionists were not wholly wiped out.

For about one year there was neither war nor peace in Mizoram. There was no war because after 12-year-old warfare there was lull in war-like operations on the part of Mizo insurgents, and there was no peace, became thousands of them were getting training in the use of more sophisticated arms across the border in Bangladesh and Burma. On 2 July 1979 the MNF insurgents struck again and attacked with automatic weapons at the transmission centre of All India Radio, Aizawl and the Mizoram police complex. Towards the end of that month, a plot came to light that the outlawed MNF had planned to carry out a blitzkrieg on Aizawl and liquidate some VIPs, including the Lt. Governor, the Chief Minister and senior civil and police officers. It had also planned to blow up the AIR transmitter, cut off water supply to the capital and to disrupt all communications between Mizoram and the rest of the country. Military operations were launched with full force, and the Janata Party Government took the position that unless the MNF abjured violence and the path of confrontation, there could be no talks. Its leader, Laldenga, was told that the Centre would grant the status of statehood to Mizoram, but the rebels would have, first, to lay down arms.

On 9 November 1979, Laldenga spelt out the terms on which his followers would lay down arms and negotiate for a political solution of the Mizoram problem. He said that Mizoram should be accorded a protected constitutional status similar to Kashmir and Nagaland, that an interim government headed by an 'underground' man should be constituted to enable the underground elements to be 'psychologically and materially rehabilitated,' and that the charge of treason — 'and-offence punishable by hanging' — against him must be withdrawn before the 'quit Mizoram' movement (that was launched by other leaders of the MNF when he was under detention in New Delhi) could be terminated. The Union Government authorities refused to consider Laldenga's offer, and took the position that it would give no quarter to insurgency as a means of sorting out political differences, and that a policy that gave the impression that 'insurgency pays' would be strictly avoided.

The underground members of the MNF took to violence again and posed a serious threat to law and order in the Union Territory. Joining hands with others in the North-Eastern region, they raised the demand that the non-Mizos should quit Mizoram. A notice to this effect was served upon them in June 1979. From then on, the outlawed MNF sought to discredit the People's Conference Ministry headed by Brigadier Sailo in order to capture power. When Mrs Gandhi again came into power at the Centre in, January 1980, the Mizo leadership opened negotiations with her Government in order to bring peace to the Union territory after 14 years of insurgency. In the third week of July, Laldenga discussed with the Prime Minister a 'plan of action' for finding out a permanent political solution to the Mizo insurgency, and the parleys resulted in a 'cease-fire' agreement between the two leaders. This' provided that with effect from the midnight of 31 July, the Mizo insurgents would stop all rebel activities, including fresh recruitment and collection of taxes and the revocation of the 'quit Mizoram' notice to non-Mizos, and the Government, on its part, would suspend all operations by its security forces against hostile activities. With the enforcement of the 'cease-fire', the two sides, it was agreed, would confer about how to solve the Mizo problem within the framework of the Constitution. The cease-fire accordingly came into force, and the Mizos were jubiliant that peace had returned to their strife-torn homeland.

But the calm that prevailed in the Union Territory proved to be deceptive. Laldenga adopted a contradictory posture. On the one side he sought to convince his erstwhile colleagues that Mizoram's future lay with India, and he told the Government of India that he was sincerely trying to find a solution to the vexed problem within the framework of the Indian Constitution. And, on the other hand, he directed the commanders of the Mizo National Army, the armed wing of the MNF, to keep their powder dry. Accordingly, those commanders took full advantage of the suspension of military operations to regroup their forces, to restore their communication links, to re-establish their ideological cells in remote hamlets, to raise funds, to collect rations, to build up stocks of medicines, to establish fresh arms and ammunition dumps and to take refresher course in guerrilla warfare for their men. Thus, while there was talk of peace the MNF and the Mizo National Army prepared for war.

In early March 1981, Laldenga put before Mrs Gandhi a five-point plan to solve the Mizo problem, and the Prime Minister allowed him to visit the MNF headquarters in the Arakan Hills in Burma to discuss the situation with other leaders of the MNF. On his return from there, he stated on 5 April that the MNF wanted a greater Mizoram state which should include large parts of Tripura, Manipur and Assam. He also said his followers wanted 'some sort of autonomy' for Mizoram guarded by a constitutional amendment. He stressed that the Mizos were, different, that they were ethnically and culturally Mongolian and Christian by religion, and that the majority of others were Indo-Aryan, governed by Hindu ethics and philosophy. The hawks within the MNF leadership, thus, sought to continue to struggle rather than agree to a solution within the Indian Union.

The MNF carried on secessionist activities and the Mizo National Army continued to attack the security forces, civilian and government employees and the citizens. Laldenga demanded the dismissal of the Mizoram Chief Minister Brig. T. Sailo and his own appointment in his place as a precondition to resume the talks. The Government of India did not accept it and on 20 January 1982, imposed a ban on the MNF under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 for carrying on secessionist activities.

The outlawed MNF then demanded that the Mizoram administration be carried on by the Lt. Governor with the help of a council of advisers headed by itself. This proposal too was turned down by the Central authorities, and Laldenga who had been staying on in New Delhi as the guest of the Government of India to carry on the talks was told that he was free to leave the country. Thereafter, the MNF volunteers took to guerrilla activities and served upon the non-Mizos a notice to leave the Union Territory by 21 June 1982.

The Central authorities continued to send 'peace feelers' to the underground headquarters to resume the negotiations, but the MNF took the position that it would not talk without Laldenga who lived in the United Kingdom and was reluctant to come to New Delhi for this purpose. For about two years the issue remained frozen, though the insurgent activities continued.

In April 1984, Mrs Gandhi said, in the course of a visit to Aizawl, that the Union Government would be prepared to hold talks with the MNF provided the rebels renounced violence and agreed to settling the dispute within the framework of the Constitution. The Mizos were losing zeal for a state of continuous insurgency and had begun to yearn for peace and normal democratic politics. The successful general election in Mizoram testified to this. The Church leaders made renewed efforts to get the rebels and the Government talk again. In view of these developments, Laldenga

made a conciliatory statement in London in May, and in July he wrote to the Prime Minister that as solution of the Mizo problem within the framework of the Constitution would be acceptable to the MNF, provided special protection was accorded to the Mizos in the matter of trade and commerce and also provided Mizoram was made the seat of High Court. The Union Government authorities considered these demands as unconstitutional. The talks between them and MNF chief Laldenga, however, continued, and on 30 October 1985 a breakthrough was reached. Accord was reached on modalities for laying down arms by the rebels and in the wake of this a coalition government was formed by the MNF and Congress (I) with Laldenga as the Chief Minister. In the third week of February 1987, general election for the 40-member Assembly was held, and the MNF got 25 seats, whereas Congress (I) could secure only 12. On 20 February, a new Ministry with Laldenga as the Chief Minister, was sworn in, and on the same day Mizoram was made the 23rd state of the Indian Union. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi assured full support to the MNF Government), and Laldenga assured full cooperation to the Centre.

Nagaland

Another area of the North-East region where secessionist movement and an agitation for an independent sovereign state took place was the Nagaland. Numbering about 400,000 divided into over twenty tribes differing widely in language and customs, the Nagas lived in the Naga Hill districts and in the Tuengsang division on the Indo-Burmese frontier. There was a Naga minority in northern Manipur and about 100,000 in the adjoining areas of Burma, but neither of these two groups gave active support to the separatist movement. The Nagas of the Naga Hill district were more advanced, and they were in the forefront of the movement. Zapo Phizo was their leader, and they had formed the Naga National Council to, carry on the agitation. In February 1950, Phizo held a plebiscite on the issue of Naga independence, and 99 per cent of the Nagas were proclaimed to be in favour of a sovereign independent state. In 1952, he organized a boycott of the first General Election and this was 'a great success.' In April of the same year, he said that the Naga's case would be submitted to the United Nations if difficulties arose. In the spring of 1955, the Naga National Council organized serious disorders and violence, and the Army had to be called in to suppress their onslaughts. Nearly 300 Nagas were killed, and the area in which they operated was declared a 'disturbed area.'

Six Naga leaders repudiated Phizo's violent methods and separatist movement. In September 1956, they met Prime Minister Nehru, and put forward proposals for the unification of all Naga areas under a single administration. Nehru assured them that as soon as peace was restored the Government would consider any change in the present set-up and consult with the Naga people 'subject to the unity, integrity and security of the Indian Union.' The Assam Government announced a reward of ₹ 5,000 for the arrest of Phizo and 37 of his accomplices and charged them of a number of crimes punishable with death. It convened, on 22–26 August 1957, a convention of loyal Naga leaders in Kohima. This convention adopted, unanimously, a resolution demanding the integration of the Naga areas as a single administrative unit under the Indian External Affairs Ministry to be administered by the Government of Assam on behalf of the President of India.

This proposal meant the abandonment of the demand for an independent Naga state and was envisaged as an 'interim arrangement,' pending a permanent political

settlement within the Indian Union. Another resolution of the convention appealed to the Naga rebels still in arms to 'give up the cult of violence' and to 'cooperate for the good of our land and the free development of our people according to our traditions.' The Government of India welcomed both the resolutions, and in July 1960, an agreement was reached between the Indian Union and the Naga Peoples' Convention.

On 24 January 1961, President S. Radhakrishnan promulgated the Nagaland (Transitional Provisions) Regulations which made the following provisions for the administration of Nagaland during the transitional period before the attainment of full statehood: (i) an Interim Body of 45 elected representatives of the Naga tribes would act for three years as an advisory council to the Governor who, in its recommendation, would appoint not more than five of its members to serve as an Executive Council; (ii) the Interim Body would be empowered to discuss and recommend on matters of administration involving general policy and development schemes, etc; and (iii) the Executive Council would assist and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions. The Interim Body was sworn in on 18 February 1961 in the presence of General S.M. Srinagesh, Governor of Assam, who acted concurrently as Governor of Nagaland. Imakongliba Ao was elected Speaker of the Interim Body, and Dr Shilu Ao as Chairman of the Executive Council.

On 21 August 1962, Nehru introduced in the Lok Sabha the state of Nagaland Bill and the Thirteenth Constitution (Amendment) Bill, and after easy passage, both the Bills received the President's assent. On 4 September 1962, Nagaland became the sixteenth state of the Indian Union. It comprised the Naga Hill districts and the Tuengsang Tribal Area. The new state was inaugurated by the President on 1 December 1963. The first General Election for the Interim Body (Assembly) was held on 10–16 January 1964, and Naga Nationalist Party leader, Dr Shilu Ao, was sworn in as Chief Minister.

Although the Indian Army broke up large rebel concentrations and destroyed their hide-outs, the rebel Nagas numbering about 1,500 regrouped themselves and adopted 'hit and run' tactics in small groups. The hard core of hostile leadership in the Naga Hills with a fairly large following and stocks of arms and ammunition remained intact. Most of them operated in the Burmese frontier area. After the formation of the state of Nagaland these rebels became desperate and resorted to more severe violence and acts of arson. They assassinated, the Chief Minister, Shilu Ao, and formed the 'Naga Revolutionary Government.' Phizo fled to London to canvass support for an independent state of Nagaland from the Western countries. He and his London host, Rev. Michael Scott, went to New York to table the Naga case in the United Nations, but they could not enlist much support there. Then, Phizo turned towards Communist China and Pakistan — the two grievous enemies of India — and obtained large quantities of arms and ammunition. These countries also provided political support and facilities for training the Nagas in the art and technique of guerrilla warfare. Equipped with these, the followers of Phizo whipped up their drive for more terror, ambushes and assassinations. Hundreds of their political opponents were done to death. One 7 August 1972, even the Chief Minister of Nagaland, Hokishe Sema, was made the object of attack, though he escaped death. The guerrilla activities of the Naga hostiles reached an all time' high in the first half of 1973.

The Union Government adopted a stern attitude, announced that greater autonomy for Nagaland was out of question, and declared 'the 'Naga National Council,' the 'Naga Revolutionary Government,' and the 'Naga Revolutionary Army' as illegal bodies. The

Army operations, suspended eight years earlier, were resumed, and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 was rigorously enforced. As a result, most of the hostile Nagas gave up violence and came out into the open. The 'Prime Minister' of the Naga Revolutionary Government, Scato Wsu, and former 'General' Zuharto surrendered, and they offered to cooperate with the rest of the country. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the state of Nagaland (1 December 1973), Mrs Gandhi visited Kohima and exhorted the Nagas to join the task of building the state as a prosperous unit of the Indian Union. She served a warning upon Phaizo and a few of his accomplices that no talks would be held with them for any settlement outside the, constitutional provisions. On 2 September 1974, the underground Naga National Council and its allied organizations were banned. The ban also applied to the so-called Federal Government of Nagaland, Naga Army, Kimhao (upper house), Tarar Hoho (assembly of representatives) and the Federal Supreme Court.

All these measures of repression and suppression failed to wipe out the Naga insurgency. News continued to appear in the Indian newspapers in the early months of 1975 that the Nagas were sneaking into China and Burma to obtain arms and training there with the object of making yet another effort to secede from the Indian Union and form an independent sovereign state of their own.

On 11 November 1975, the Governor of Nagaland, L.P. Singh, entered, on behalf of the Government of India, into an agreement with the 'known real representatives' of the underground Naga organizations at Shillong. On their part, the rebel Nagas accepted the Constitution 'unconditionally,' abjured violence and agreed to surrender all arms and ammunition and to give up the demand for independent Nagaland. The Union Government agreed to suspend the operation of the MISA, to release gradually the 200 Nagas in detention and to condone the acts of violence and other offences committed by the underground Nagas during the period of insurgency. This agreement was welcomed by the NNO General Secretary, J.B. Jasokie, who thought, it would bring 'permanent peace' in the state.

But some hard liners among the rebel Nagas made frantic efforts to scuttle the 'Shillong Peace Accord,' as it came to be known. They recruited fresh volunteers, established contact with the rebel gangs across the border in Burma and resumed China traffic for training and arms.

During his visit to London in the second week of June 1977 to attend the conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, Morarji Desai conferred with Phizo to explore the possibility of permanent ease and harmony between the Centre and the Nagas, but nothing tangible emerged out of their deliberations. Phizo showed his unwillingness to accept that Nagaland was one of the 22 states of the Indian Union. A few months later, a Janata Party leader, S.M. Joshi, talked to Phizo to discuss ways of ending the secessionist insurgency in Nagaland, but nothing came out of these, talks either. Several erstwhile rebel leaders met, as emissaries of Phizo, Charan Singh and Y.B. Chavan, Prime Minister and Home Minister respectively of the caretaker government, to reopen the dialogue with the Centre to arrive at a solution, but these parleys also produced no result.

In the third week of May 1980, the Nagaland Peace Council, an organization of those who wanted to resolve the Nagaland problems within the framework of the Constitution, convened in Kohima the All-Naga People's Conference, and about 500 representatives of the 14 major tribes of Nagaland participated. A consensus was reached that the 'Shillong accord' was a fait accompli and had to be the basis for sorting out the

remaining problems confronting Nagaland. None of the top underground leaders of the secessionist movement took part in the conference, and in July, two of them, T.H. Muivah and Isak Chihi Swu, called upon their followers to get ready for a protracted war for 'the liberation of Nagaland'. A manifesto circulated among the people said: 'We rule out the illusion of saving Nagaland through peaceful means. It is arms and arms again that will save our nation and ensure freedom to the people'. This manifesto was circulated by the National Socialist Council of Nagaland led by Muivah and Swu, operating in close league with the Chinese.

In the meantime, the United Democratic Party led by Vizol and the Naga National Party led by J.B. Jasokie sought to run the Nagaland politics through parliamentary means. Both of these parties merged into one and created the Nagaland National Democratic Party (NNDP). This party came into power in November 1980, with Jasokie as the leader. The Congress (I) endeavoured to entrench itself into Nagaland politics. It contested the election for the state Assembly in November 1982, and in a House of 60 members secured 24 seats, the same number as won by the NNDP. The Congress (I) Central leaders descended on Kohima with carrots in hand and won over eight independents into their fold. S.C. Jamir, the Congress (I) leader, was sworn in as Chief Minister, and Mrs Gandhis party, thus, emerged as the dominant political culture in the north-east. The process of normalisation and constitutionalism, it appeared, began to take roots in the state, though the secessionist elements had not been wholly wiped off. State Assembly elections were held in February 1993 and Congress emerged as the largest single party. Its government was formed on 25 February 1993.

ACTIVITY

Write a report on two major instances of communal violence in India.

Did You Know

Linguistic Conflict in Communalism

The conflict over Hindi and Urdu was not a legitimation of any popular language but a struggle with regard to vocabulary and script. It was a symbol of intra-class rivalry—among rural and urban gentry.

Check Your Progress

6. _____ refers to the idea or practice of dividing a country into small units for political, economic, social and cultural purposes.

7. Mention two expressions of violence in India.

1.5 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

• The caste system in India has a complex nature. Many scholars, namely Ghurye, Hutton and Ketkar, have pointed out the characteristics of caste. Ketkar describes two characteristics of caste, namely, (i) that membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born,

(ii) the membership is forbidden by an inexorable social law to men outside the group. From this, it can be said that if a man should be banned from his caste for some reason, he would be without any group, since no other group, lower or higher could accept him into its membership. Moreover it also limits the choice of marriage partners.

- The term 'communalism' has its roots in the word 'community'. Communalism refers to the politics of conflict between the members of different communities. It is a derogatory perception of communities other than one's own and in it one community is instigated against the other in the name of religion. This evil restricts one's sympathy to the community of one's birth. It is opposed to secularism as it has a pattern of socio-cultural coexistence and of political integration.

- Communalism is an ideology based on the belief that Indian society is divided into various religious communities with diverse economic, political, social and cultural interests. They are even hostile to one another due to their religious differences. Communalism is a belief system through which a society, economy and polity are viewed and explained and around which an effort is made to organize politics.

- Communal violence (or communal riots) is a particular approach to politics, which is practised at a sustained level. Communal violence involves incidents of violence between two religious communities. It can be sporadic in nature and mainly forms a law and order issue to be handled on the spot for restoring peace and calm.

- Communal politics is a South Asian expression for ethnic or sectarian politics. Such politics is based on a belief that religion forms the basis of a common identity; that members of a particular religious community have the same economic, political and social interests.

- Regionalism refers to the idea or practice of dividing a country into small units for political, economic, social and cultural purposes. Politically, regionalism is connected with decentralized or federalist governments. Regionalism is both cultural and political, as its political success is associated with the development of a regional culture.

- Although the phenomenon of violence has been with us for a long time, the last two decades have been quite dismal. The incidents of collective violence included not only three major arenas of violence namely, inter-caste, inter-communal and inter-linguistic violence, but also many other forms of violence. These other forms of violence were those associated with demands for separate states, reorganization of states, industrial strikes leading to violence against rich landlords in the rural areas, student agitations leading to violence, tribal revolts and terrorist activities in North East, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. Widespread civil disobedience resulting in violence organized for and against certain political parties is also a form of violence in the Indian political system.

1.6   KEY TERMS

- **Casteism:** Prejudice or antagonism directed against a person of a different caste.
- **Communalism:** The principle or practice of living together and sharing possessions and responsibilities.
- **Regionalism:** The theory or practice of regional rather than central systems of administration or economic, cultural, or political affiliation.
- **Violence:** Behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.

1.7   ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Endogamous
2. There has been a decline in the supremacy of Brahmins.
3. Communalism refers to the politics of conflict between the members of different communities.
4. Adherence to religion and religious system.
5. Communal politics
6. Regionalism
7. Agrarian violence. communal violence

1.8   QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. How does Ketkar describe the characteristics of caste?
2. What are the features of endogamy?
3. State the two-fold negative effects of communalism.
4. What are the various sources of communal conflict?
5. What are the positive and negative connotations of regionalism?
6. What is the pattern of violence in India?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the various characteristics of the caste system.
2. Explain the recent changes that have taken place in the caste system.
3. Write a note on Communal ideology. How is this ideology affecting Indian polity?
4. Identify and explain the forms in which regionalism has assumed itself in India.
5. Describe in detail the forms of violence associated with Indian politics.

1.9 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 THREATS AND CHALLENGES TO THE INDIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

Structure

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about corruption and criminalization, which are amongst the major threats and challenges to the Indian political system. The prevalence of corruption in civic life is a universal experience, but recently, it has assumed alarming proportions in India. It has spread to each part of the governmental bodies, and a more speedy growth of corruption has been observed among the politicians, the political workers at all stages and even in the uppermost ranks of political leadership, both at the levels of the state and the Centre. There persists a massive public skepticism towards corruption, and there is a general feeling of acceptance of corruption in civic life by people. It is felt that people indicted of political corruption always go guiltless, and thus, accumulate more power, status and wealth. All this has resulted in a state of affairs, where even the most resolute efforts to fight the evil of corruption have failed dejectedly. It seems that the government is already aware of its existence, and also knows the likely manner in which it can be controlled, but is lacking the will required to implement such measures successfully. One of the most distinctive features of corruption is that it is immune to all measures that are undertaken to contain it, especially because it prevails at all levels of our administration and society. In December 2012, Transparency International ranked India 94th out of 176 countries in the Corruption Perception Index ratings. Anna Hazare's crusade against corruption has failed to live up to its hype, and the political conditions of our country seem to be going nowhere.

The process of politicization and criminalization of politics adds to the political corruption in the country. Democracy is threatened due to the politicization of the police. Politicians use most pernicious methods such as the use of the services of the anti-social elements during elections. There is a close nexus between criminal elements and mafia leaders and the politicians. Practices such as booth-capturing, violence, threats and victimization of voters in the electoral process are quite prevalent. These practices ruin the weaker sections of our electorate. Today, it is extremely hard to affect the conviction of culprits, who are guilty of crimes such as murder, grievous hurt, intimidation and rape.

This unit will also introduce you to the features of environmental movements in India. The environmental movement, a term that includes conservation and green politics, is a diverse scientific, social, and political movement for addressing environmental issues. Environmentalists advocate the sustainable management of resources and stewardship of the environment through changes in public policy and individual behaviour. In its recognition of humanity as a participant in (not enemy of) ecosystems, the movement is centered on ecology, health, and human rights. Chipko Movement and Narmada Bachao Andolan are two popular environmental movements in India.

2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss corruption and criminalization in the Indian political system
- Describe environmental movements in India such as the Chipko Movement and Narmada Bachao Andolan

2.2 CORRUPTION AND CRIMINALIZATION

Criminalization

In the present political scenario, criminalization of politics has become a very common occurrence in almost every country of the world. The concept of politics has in its offering, techniques and rules of governing a state and a nation. Its fundamental approach is to provide good governance.

People who are part of the discipline of politics are known as politicians. Ideally, they are supposed to be individuals who have all the qualities that are needed for good governance. However, the present scenario has completely changed. In the current scenario, most of the people who are into politics appear to be criminals.

They have a number of criminal cases against them. In spite of this, they are ruling states and the country. They are being elected as public representatives for Assembly and Parliament. No one can be sure whether they secure victory in elections by fair means or by foul ways. As it appears now, politics has become synonym for crime.

Criminalization is a term that has originated from the word 'crime'. This appears to be very unpleasant and has been devouring politics in the guise of an art of governance. While on one hand, crime is an unlawful act of handling anything, politics is the legal way of tackling or dealing with anything socially.

Thus, these two terms are in contract to each other, but in the present scenario they appear to be synonymous to each other, particularly in India.

Criminalization of politics means moulding politics to a criminal shape. This trend has been growing fast since a few decades in our country. Our Constitution provides that the representatives elected by the citizens of our country will govern it.

The representatives should be ideal and they should have the qualities of a social servant. They must think and work for the welfare of the people at large, in the interest of the nation. Our constitution ensures a socialist, secular state and equality,

fraternity among its citizens. Our country has a democratic setup, which is by the people, for the people and of the people. It means that the peoples' representatives should always be conscious of good governance so that the ideals of the Constitution must be achieved.

For a few decades there have been many changes in our politics. Good governance is not the prime concern of the governing people. They are guided by their own interests and whims. Persons belonging to criminal background are becoming our representatives. A new trend of giving tickets to confirmed criminals, or even to persons behind bars has grown very rapidly. More than that, the situation appears to be more alarming when we find such people being elected for the State Assembly or Parliament. Elections are won not by right, but by might.

Though democracy implies 'rule of law' and the holding of free election to ascertain the will of the people but it has been much vitiated. Criminalization of Indian politics and consequent cult of the gun have created a great threat to the life of the common people. Some great leaders of all political parties and intellectuals deliver eloquent speeches expressing their abhorrence at the infiltration of criminals into the electoral area. Stress is laid on eliminating the use of muscle power in the electoral process. Yet, majority of the parties limit themselves only to expressing such pious sentiments. No one is seriously concerned to check this process of criminalization. The House of State Assemblies and the Parliament always witness abuses and quarrels among its members.

This criminalization has damaged all the ideals of democracy. No one can predict the end of this alarming situation. It becomes the duty of genuine minds, in this critical situation, to make efforts to save our democracy from this menace. If criminals continue to flourish in this way, nothing will remain intact. No one will be spared, even the creators of this situation. Hence, this situation must be taken seriously.

Corruption

Recently, the cases of corruption and public grievances have been on the rise in the departments of civil servants. In this section, we discuss these important topics.

Governmental Corruption

Governmental corruption is a complex phenomenon, which is prevalent in all forms of government and for which various sociological, economic, administrative factors are responsible. Simple avarice may appear to be generally the motive; but it is by no means the only motive. Poverty, power, wealth and status are all involved in these transactions and there is not always a clear dividing line between them.

This is the general picture and it would not be wrong to say that in the developing countries of Asia and Africa, public administration is seething with bribery and corruption. This situation may be compared to bushes and weeds that are flourishing luxuriantly, taking the good elements from the soil and suffocating those plants which have been carefully and expensively tended.

The following causes appear to have largely contributed to the prevailing widespread bribery and corruption, in public administration in India:

1. Legacy from the past
2. Wartime scarcities and controls

Before the advent of the Second World War, corruption did exist to some extent amongst lower-grade officials, particularly of revenue–earning departments like income tax, customs and central excise, railways, and forests. It also spread to departments like the public works department, police, health, etc. However, the higher ranks were comparatively free from this evil. The lack of fluid resources resulting from the 'great depression' which afflicted the nation after the First World War and also the limited compass of state activities afforded fewer opportunities and limited capacity to corrupt and be corrupted. This situation, however, changed during the course of the Second World War. The immense war efforts involving expenditure of thousands of crores of rupees over various kinds of war supplies and contracts created unprecedented opportunities for amassing wealth by dubious means and methods. Later, wartime scarcities and controls provided opportunities for bribery, corruption and favouritism, as governments subordinated all other considerations to that of making the war effort a success. Propriety of means was never considered, if it hampered the war effort. It was during this period that corruption reached the high watermark in India.

2G Spectrum Scam: An Example of Governmental Corruption

We have had a number of scams in India; but none bigger than the 2G spectrum scam involving the process of allocating unified access service licenses. The scandal involved officials in the government of India illegally undercharging mobile telephony companies for frequency allocation licenses, which they would use to create 2G subscriptions for cell phones. The shortfall between the money collected and the money which the law mandated to be collected is estimated to be ₹176,645 crore as valued by Comptroller and Auditor General of India based on 3G and broadband wireless access (BWA) auction prices which was held in 2010. The issuing of licenses occurred in 2008, but the scam came to public notice when the Indian Income Tax Department was investigating political lobbyist Nira Radia. A. Raja, an Indian politician from the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) political party and former Telecom minister at the Centre, is the main accused in the 2G scam case. It has been observed by the Supreme Court that Mr Raja 'wanted to favour some companies at the cost of the public exchequer' and 'virtually gifted away important national asset'.

Post-War Inflation

The climate for integrity which had been rendered unhealthy by wartime controls and scarcities was further aggravated by the post-war flush of money and the consequent inflation.

Post-Independence Atmosphere and Problems

The administrative machinery inherited by independent India had been considerably weakened by (i) wartime neglect and (ii) the sudden departure of a large number of British and Muslim officers, which necessitated rapid promotions including those of some unproven men and recruitment of a large number of officers in various grades. This inevitably caused a dilution of experience and ability. These officers could not gain familiarity with the traditions of service.

Conflict of Values in Our Expanding Economy

Earlier, a moral code prescribing simple living and high thinking profoundly influenced the mechanism of social control and social responses. But in the emerging society,

with its emphasis on purposively initiated process of urbanization and industrialization, there has come about a steady weakening of the old system of values without it being replaced by an effective system of new values. Corruption thrives in such a conflict of values simply because there is no agreement on the definition of corruption. Consequently, honesty and integrity have become extremely scarce and malpractices have come to be regarded as something inevitable and inescapable in administration, business, politics, trade unions, and education. These have spread to, in fact, practically every sphere of public activity in India. Following are the common examples of corruption:

- The warden of a hostel, using the hostel peons for running his domestic errands
- An officer making the department's peon drive his car for personal use
- A doctor issuing false medical certificates
- A official using the staff car for his personal purposes
- An official undertaking needless travels at official expenses

What is striking is that these activities are considered legitimate. Some minor examples of modes of corruption, which are very much prevalent in the government and quasi-government offices are, the use of government vehicles for private purposes and taking of government stationery, by government servants for their personal use.

Acute Poverty

The coexistence of acute poverty and confounding prosperity has also eroded the integrity of the people. The Railway Corruption Enquiry Committee (1953–1955), which was presided over by Acharya J. B. Kripalani, observed:

> While in most modern countries the difference between highest and lowest incomes is about ten times or even less, in India it is much more. This is out of all proportion to the difference in educational qualifications and ability. High salaries generally lead to luxurious living. The standard of living of high paid officials becomes the norm to be aspired to. Every subordinate tries to emulate his superior. If his salary does not warrant it, he gets money through dubious means. True, these high incomes are the privilege of the few, yet their demoralizing effect is out of all proportion to their number. We believe that, so far as the disparity in emoluments of the lowest and the highest paid government employees is conceded, it should be narrowed down. It is argued that as long as the disparity between the lowest and highest paid employees in trade and industry remains high, the Government, if it tried to reduce high emoluments of its executive, will not get the requisite talent for public service. This has not happened in other democratic countries, because of the power, prestige, fixity of service and other advantages enjoyed by government servants. All these advantages exist in India to a greater degree than in other countries where democratic traditions have been established for centuries. We believe that if the Government takes the initiative in reducing disparity of emoluments of its high paid and low paid employees, it will progressively reduce as we march towards socialism, which has been declared to be the goal of government policy.

Lack of Strong Public Opinion against the Evil of Corruption

Corruption is a consequence of the way of life of our acquisitive society, where people are judged by what they have rather than by what they are. The possession of material goods seems to have become the *sine qua non* of life. Thus, materialism, importance of status resulting from the possession of money and economic power, group loyalties

and parochial affinities seem to be on the rise. This is because of the general apathy or inability of all sections of the society to appreciate in full, the need of strict observance of a high standard of behaviour. This has resulted in the emergence and growth of white-collared and economic crimes and rendered the enforcement of laws themselves, not sufficiently deterrent, but even more difficult.

As a result of lack of a strong public opinion in India, there are many instances of bribes being paid in the country for ration cards, passports, building permits, and for doing even normal business. Street vendors and rickshaw pullers are forced to pay bribes for exercising their fundamental rights. Villagers across the country are forced to pay bribes for getting their wages under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) or for any other entitlements in other schemes. A government-sponsored recent study on the efficacy of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) found corruption in program implementation where workers worked for one day and were paid wages for one day; however, records showed them as having worked for 33 days, with the wages for the remaining 32 days being misappropriated. On closer study, job cards, which all workers are issued under the programme, were found to have counterfeit entries, and often in the possession of the local *panchayat* members. According to the study, workers were threatened not to complain about the fake entries lest they lose even the few days of work and wages that trickled down to them.

Economic Necessity

Inadequate remuneration or salary scales and rising cost of living is probably one of the important causes of corruption. In recent years, the ever-rising cost of living has brought down the real income of various sections of the community, particularly, that of the salaried classes. It is, therefore, inevitable that government servants are the worst hit and have had to face an appreciable fall in the standard of living. Though this cannot be placed in extenuation of the fall in the standard of integrity, the fact remains that the economics necessity has encouraged those who had the opportunities to succumb to temptations.

The Structure or System of Government Induces Corruption to Influence Peddlers

The assumption of new responsibilities by the Government has resulted in highly complicated administrative procedures. Administrative powers and discretions are vested at different levels of the executive, all members of which are not endowed with the same level of understanding and strength of character. Where there is power and discretion, there is always the possibility of abuse and the administrative authority may act outside the strict scope of law and propriety without the injured citizen being in a position to obtain effective redressal, in the absence of the machinery for appeals. This has given rise to the impression of arbitrariness on the part of the executive. Consequently, there has been phenomenal growth of influence, peddlers operating for various individuals or groups of commercial organizations. They are ostensibly designated as liaison officers, public relations officers, officers on special duty, or alternatively work independently as 'contact men', on a commission basis. They are generally influential people who are either related, or otherwise closely connected with ministers and senior bureaucrats, or retired high government officers who are in a position to influence or bring pressure upon the concerned officers. These concerned officers are likely to be their erstwhile colleagues or subordinates.

Complicated and Cumbersome Working of Government Offices

It is alleged that the working of certain government departments, e.g., the customs and central excise, imports and exports, railways supplies and disposals, etc., is complicated, cumbersome and dilatory. This has encouraged the growth of dishonest practices like the system of 'speed money'. In these cases, the bribe giver generally does not wish to get anything done unlawfully but only wants to expedite the process of movement of files and communications, relating to decisions. Apart from being the most objectionable corrupt practice, this custom of 'speed money' has become one of the most serious causes of delay and inefficiency.

Collusion of Commercial and Industrial Magnates to Serve their Individual Interests

It is not always a government servant who initiates corruption. Corruption can exist only if there is someone willing to corrupt and is capable of corrupting. Both willingness and capacity to corrupt are found in ample measure in the industrial and commercial classes. The speculators and war-period adventures further swell their ranks. For them, corruption is an easy way to secure large unearned profits by various devices, also the necessary means to enable them to pursue their vocations or retain their position among their own competitors. It is these people, who have control over large funds and are in a position to spend considerable sums of money on entertainment. It is they, who maintain an army of 'liaison men and contact men'. Further, there is another class of dishonest merchants, 'suppliers and contractors', who have perfected the art of getting government businesses and contracts by undercutting and making good their loss by supplying inferior goods, by sharing a portion of their ill-earned profit with the government servants who would be prepared to oblige them in their nefarious activities.

Non-cooperation of Trade Associations and Chamber of Commerce

Unscrupulous and dishonest members of industrial and commercial classes are major impediments in the purification of public life. It is as important to fight these unscrupulous agents of corruption to eliminate corruption in public services. In fact, they go together. The Trade Association, the State Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce could lend powerful support to the fight against corruption. However, unfortunately, they generally do not cooperate.

Protection Given to the Public Services in India

As the law exists at present, the giver as well as the receiver of bribes are held guilty. The result, therefore, is that evidence against the offenders is very difficult to procure, for not only there is collusion in the commission of crime, but also collusion in the suppression of evidence. The heads of departments are unable to do anything against a subordinate official, even though they are aware that the subordinate is corrupt, because of the difficulties in obtaining formal proofs for conviction. The heads of departments are even unwilling to make adverse entries in the confidential rolls unless they are in a position to justify such entries with proof, when challenged by the subordinates concerned. Article 311 of the Constitution, as interpreted by our courts, made it very difficult to deal effectively with corrupt public servants. Reluctance of higher officials to exercise the disciplinary powers they possess may sometimes be due to their own incompetence, indifference or even downright collusion in corruption

with the subordinates concerned. Indeed, many heads of organizations are themselves corrupt and a corrupt officer will never combat corruption in his organization for fear of exposure by his subordinates.

There is too much security of tenure accorded to the bureaucracy by requiring that no public servant shall be dismissed or removed by an authority, subordinate to that by which he was appointed and further no such person shall be dismissed, or removed, or reduced in rank until he has been given a reasonable opportunity of showing cause against the action proposed to be taken in regard to him. The fifteenth amendment of the Constitution (October 1963) softens some of the rigidities by expediting the conduct of disciplinary proceedings against public servants. The effect of the amendment is that an accused government servant gets two chances to defend himself. His first chance to defend himself is at the time when charges are framed against him and his second chance is when penalties are proposed to be imposed. This is based on the evidence already adduced during enquiry of the charges against him, without bringing in any fresh evidence or other extraneous matters. The intention is to expedite the conduct of disciplinary proceedings.

2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS (CHIPKO AND NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN)

The United Nations Conference on Human Environment, Stockholm, 1972 paved the way for a number of studies and reports on the condition of the environment and its effect on the present and future generations. It expressed concern to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations. The development of 'green politics' or 'eco-greens' or the 'green movement' in Germany and North America in the early 1980s boosted the formation of the 'green network' and the 'green movement' throughout the world, including India.

A number of action groups, research institutes, documentation centres have been established to study and mobilize public opinion on environmental issues. By now, the material on the environmental situation in general and in certain sectors such as air, land, forest, water, and marine resources have proliferated in different forms from popular literature to 'scientific' studies. The reports on India's environment published by the Centre for Science and Environment provide valuable material not only on various aspects of the environment but also people's resistance and struggles. The media also frequently reports on struggles of the people at the local level on the issues of land, water, marine resources, and forest products. However, systematic analytical research-based monographs on environmental movements are few and far between.

More often than not, the struggles of the people on the issues of their livelihood and access to forest and other natural resources are coined as 'environmental movements'. Historical studies on peasant movements mainly focus on the agrarian relationship between different classes of landowners. Studies on the struggles over forest resources are treated as tribal movements. Guha and Gadgil rightly observe, 'The agrarian history of British India has focused almost exclusively on social relations around land and conflicts over distribution of its produce, to the neglect of the ecological context of agriculture for example, fishing, forests, grazing land and irrigation and of state intervention in these spheres'.

Among the few important studies focusing on one of the important themes of the movements are those on the Chipko movement by Ramachandra Guha and Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) by Amita Baviskar. Both the authors, however, do not want their studies to be treated as mainly on environmental movements. Guha calls his study on peasant resistance focusing on the ecological dimension. It is a study on the ecological history of the region linking 'environmental changes with changing and competing human perceptions of the "uses" of nature'. The study is focused on the structures of dominance and the idioms of social protest. He analyses ecological changes and peasant resistance in the Himalayas in the wider comparative framework. Baviskar studied the tribals of Madhya Pradesh, focusing on their relationship with nature and their conflicts over state-sponsored 'development'. She interrogated the theoretical positions of the environmental movements which assert that the 'development' paradigm of the dominant elite, followed by the Indian state, is environmentally destructive. These movements claim that their critique 'is writ large in the actions of those marginalized by development-indigenous people who have, in the past, lived in harmony with nature, combining reverence for nature with sustainable management of resources. Because of their cultural ties with nature, indigenous people are exemplary stewards of the land'. She analysed the socio-cultural life of the tribals and their resistance to 'development'. She also probed into the question: Given the problematic nature of tribal resource use, how accurately are the lives of tribal people represented by intellectuals in the environmental movement who speak on their behalf?

Guha and Gadgil provide a very valuable overview delineating conflict over forest produce, forest land and pasture land in different parts of colonial India. They discuss the resistance of hunt-gatherers and shifting or *jhum* cultivators to the state intervention in settled cultivation. Forest dwellers launched *satyagrahas* during the 1930s against the forest departments on the issue of encroachment of land. Similar confrontations increased during the post-independence period. Shiva and Bandopadhyaya inform us that about three centuries back the Vishnois of Khejri village in Rajasthan sacrificed more than 200 lives in a passive resistance to the felling of green trees by the royal forces from Jodhpur. There were similar instances in which farmers and forest-dwelling communities resisted the destruction of forest resources. These evidences show a wide range of conflict between the authorities, particularly the forest department and the communities residing in the forests. Shiva and Bandopadhyaya argue that 'these conflicts may not always take the form of people's ecology movements that hold the possibility of resolving these conflicts in just manner. They may also get distorted to take the form of other social conflicts like communal politics, which may not hold the possibility of resolution of the material conflicts'.

Forest struggles may be divided into two: those that were a reprise to direct commercial exploitation and those that were a response to commercial exploitation legitimized as 'scientific forestry'. The dominant strata use scientific forestry as a political weapon to legitimize overexploitation of resources for profit. There is conflict between the profitability and survival imperatives. The latter is being challenged by the action groups supporting the poor by reinterpreting science for public interest.

Baviskar analyses the development policy and performance of the Indian state. She finds that poor people's ability to control and gainfully use natural resources has declined in the last five decades of the development policies. She argues that the model of development, established since independence, has fundamentally altered the way in which different social groups use and have access to natural resources. The changes wrought by the independent state have created conflicts over competing

claims to the environment. These conflicts range from the incessant battle between the forest department and local communities, to the war, raging between mechanized trawls and traditional fishing boats in India's coastal waters, to the controversy over the Dunkel Draft and rights to genetic resources. These claims are not merely for a greater share of the goods, but involve different ways of valuing and using nature for profit or survival, or some combination of the two. They also involve different world views one driven by the desire to dominate and exploit nature and humanity, the other moved by empathy, and respect, sometimes reverence, for the two.

Broadly speaking, the theme of the man–nature relationship is central to environmental movements. Guha and Gadgil define the environmental movement 'as organized social activity consciously directed towards promoting sustainable use of natural resources, halting environmental degradation or bringing about environmental restoration'. In the west, environmental movements focus on consumption, productive use of natural resources and conservation or protection of natural resources. In India, the movements are based on use and alternative use of, as well as control over natural resources. Jayanta Bandopadhyaya and Vandana Shiva observe that ecology movements in independent India have increased against 'predatory exploitation of natural resources to feed the process development' which is dominated by market forces.

Such a process has threatened the survival of the poor and powerless. They argue that 'the ecology movements in India are the expression of protests against the destruction of the two vital economics of natural processes and survival from the anarchy of development based on market economy. These movements have unfolded the contradictions between India and its three economies: those revolving around the market, the household, and nature'.

Harsh Sethi classifies the struggles into three categories broadly and their ideological approach to the issue of environment. One, the struggles which operate in the domain of political economy, raises the issue of rights and distribution of resources. Second, the movements confined to a response to environmental problems and seeking solutions within existing socio-economic frameworks and technological innovations. They seek legal and policy-based shifts in the pattern of resource use. Third, some environmental movements reject the dominant development paradigm and 'seek to alter the very classification of both man and nature relationship'.

Guha and Gadgil classify movements on the basis of the participants. According to them there are three categories of members: 'omnivores, ecosystem people and ecological refugees'. In this multiplicity of movements, one may discern seven major strands. Two of these are exclusively focused on nature conservation, one on aesthetic/recreational/scientific grounds and the others on the basis of cultural or religious traditions.

A third strand confines itself to the technological perspective focusing on the efficiency of resource use. According to them the question of equity is the dominant concern of the environmental movements in present -day India. They are concerned with 'environmentalism' related to the poor. In terms of their ideology there are four strands within these movements. They are: 'crusading Gandhians, ecological Marxists, appropriate technologists, scientific conservation and wilderness enthusiasts'. According to the crusading Gandhians, eastern society, unlike the west, is primarily

non-materialist. They are against industrial growth brought by the colonial rule. They frequently cite Hindu scriptures as exemplifying a 'traditional' reverence for nature and life forms.

Harsh Sethi divides the environmental struggles into five categories:

1. **Rest-based:** forest policy and use of forest resources.

2. **Land use:** industrialization and loss of agriculture land, indiscriminate popularization chemical inputs resulting in degradation of land and water logging, exploitation of mineral resources;

   (i) Against big dams involving the problem of involuntary displacement of tribals and non-tribals, residing in the upstream of the river, environmental degradation, including destruction of forests;

   (ii) Against pollution created by industries and

   (iii) Against overexploitation of marine resources.

Andharia and Sengupta divide the contemporary environmental movements into five categories. They identify the issues around which these movements are launched. They also give a few examples of the groups involved in the struggles. According to them, environmental issues are related with the nature of development. And the development agenda in India is closely related to international political economy. Therefore, both cannot be studied separately. Environmental movements raise a variety of issues both in rural and urban areas related to forest, agriculture, industrial pollution, nuclear tests, and tourism. There are a number of non-government organizations (NGOs) who protest against environmental degradation and hazards. Besides pressurizing the political authorities and dominant groups such as industrialists and planners, they also campaign for creating awareness among people on the issues of environment. Organizations like the Kerala People's Science Movement (KPSM) try to demystify the science created by a dominant group of scientists. It advocates sustainable development. The KPSM organizes *padyatras* to develop consciousness for a people-oriented environment. Several other groups also follow the same strategy. They disseminate literature related to pollution, land degradation and loss of natural resources. Occasionally, some groups resort to public interest litigation in the courts to stop certain government and private projects which adversely affect not only the health and other aspects of the people but also the livelihood of the marginalized groups.

In struggles around the issues of forest resources and their use, the main participants have been the tribals and other peasant communities depending on forest resources for their survival. They resist state intervention which impinges on their rights and control over resources. The forms of resistance and occasional confrontations vary from out migration to evasion of responsibilities, robberies to murders. According to Guha, in the traditional system considered that it was the responsibility of the rulers to protect the customary rights and interests of his subjects. When the ruler fails to do so or impinges on the rights of the people, the resistance and revolt are 'traditionally sanctioned by custom'. In Tehri Garhwal, the mechanism of social protest 'drew heavily on the indigenous tradition of resistance known as *dhandak*. Yet, for all its distinctiveness, the *dhandak* is a representative of a type of rebellion that was widely prevalent in pre-industrial and pre-capitalist monarchies'. When the traditional custom of resistance does not remain effective with the changed reality, people resort to confrontation.

Popular Movements in India

Some of the popular movements in India are:

- **Chipko Movement**

This has been discussed in detail, in this unit.

- **Save Silent Valley**

Save Silent Valley was a social movement the purpose of which was to safeguard the Silent valley, an evergreen, hot and humid forest in the Palakkad district of Kerala. This movement began in 1973 with the purpose of protecting the Silent Valley Reserve Forest from being destroyed by a hydroelectric project. This valley was officially named as Silent Valley National Park in 1985.

- **Narmada Bachao Andolan**

This has been discussed in detail, in this unit.

- **Koel Karo**

South Koel River flows across the states of Jharkhand and Odisha, in India. It has its source on the Ranchi plateau, a few miles east of Ranchi and is adjacent to the Belsiangar and Singbum Rivers. The Koel is gets its water from three streams in Jharkhand, namely the North Karo, South Karo and Koina. The South Koel enters Odisha and merges with the Sankh River at Vedavyas near Rourkela. Here it is called Brahmani.

- **Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha**

Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha (Chhattisgarh Liberation Front) is a political party in the state of Chhattisgarh. On the 3 March 1977, the Chhattisgarh Mines Shramik Sangh (Chhattisgarh Mines Workers' Union) was established by Shankar Guha Niyogi. In 1982, CMSS formed CMM as their political front. CMM was created to struggle for establishing the cultural identity of the province and for supporting workers and farmers. CMM called for social campaigns, for instance, in protest of excessive use of alcohol and organized social missions, such as a workers' sponsored hospital.

- **Jhola Andolan (Fighting Polythene)**

This is a movement that was started to protect the nature, save water, create greenery, reduce the use of polythene and promote eco-friendly products.

- **Appiko Movement**

The Appiko movement was an activist movement that was aimed at environmental conservation in India. The Chipko movement (Hug-the-Trees Movement) in Uttarakhand, in the Himalayas, was an inspiration for the villagers of the Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka state in southern India. This motivated them to begin a similar movement to conserve their forests. In September 1983, Panduranga Hegde headed a movement comprising men, women and children of Salkani who embraced the trees of the Kalase forest. The regional expression for 'hugging' in Kannada is *appiko*. Appiko movement brought about a new consciousness throughout southern India.

- **Lok Satta Movement**

Lok Satta is an impartial movement for self-governing transformations in India. This movement was headed by Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan, an ex I. A. S. officer and a distinguished campaigner from Andhra Pradesh. The movement began in 1996 with the setting up of Lok Satta, a non-governmental association. In 2006, the movement changed into Lok Satta Party.

- **Swadhyay Movement**

This was a movement that was started singlehandedly by Pandurang Shastri Athavle, a young scholar in his early twenties. This movement aimed at spreading a silent revolution that was focused on transforming mankind as well as culturally socially.

- **Karnataka Rajya Rayot Sangha**

Karnataka Rajya Rayot Sangha, also referred to as KRRS or the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, is a peasant's movement. M. D. Nanjundaswamy was the president of the movement. This movement hit the headlines for its resistance against KFC outlets in Bangalore, in the 1990s. They are the vanguards in the fight against multinational companies that try to sell seeds, for instance, Monsanto Company.

These movements, for the most part, dissociated themselves from political parties, or tried to blend with the philosophies of political parties. Still, a large number of them embedded or got inspired by the principles of Mahatma Gandhi, a range of shades of environmentalism or gender politics, or socialism.

The latest of social movements is 'Campaign against corruption', April 2011, headed by a group of social activists—Anna Hazare, Arvind Kejriwal, Swami Agnivesh, Kiran Bedi and Baba Ramdev. Some days ago, Anna Hazare, a Gandhian began a fast till death at Jantar Mantar, the heart of New Delhi. He demanded endorsement and implementation of the long awaited Jan Lokpal Bill. This movement was supported by the common people and media. This created a buzz when political leaders were not allowed to share the platform with social activists. This movement is a milestone in the history of the Constitution of independent India. It has forced the government to take in five non-official members in the Jan Lokpal Bill design committee. Generally, only ministers are given the membership of any legislation design committee. Even as passing of the law and its activation by Lokpals and **Lokayuktas** (ombudsmen) will take some more time to be actually functional, this movement has definitely highlighted corruption as a key social issue in India.

Few of the leaders who have gained popularity in these types of movements are Sunderlal Bahuguna, Medha Patkar, Baba Amte, Vandana Shiva, and Vijaypal Baghel.

Chipko Movement

In many ways, the Chipko movement has and will sustain the iconic status that it had acquired for mainly two reasons. First was its grassroots approach and second, the links that it was able to establish between the local environmental concerns of the villagers with the larger environmental discourse.

Chipko, although referred to as a movement, is actually a collective of several smaller movements that took place in the early 1970s against commercial forestry. Chipko did not begin as a conservation movement but primarily as an economic

struggle, the roots of which lay in rural and peasant protests against commercial forestry during the British Raj. Post Independence, a network of roads snaked into the hill areas of Uttarakhand, in the name of 'development'. These roads, armies of labourers, forest officials and contractors from outside are those whose work led to the methodical denudation of the region's forest.

The unusually heavy rains of 1970 had precipitated one of the most devastating floods in the country. In the Alakananda valley, water flooded nearly 100 square kilometres of land, washed away 6 metal bridges, 10 kilometres of motor roads, 24 buses and several other vehicles. Apart from this, houses collapsed, paddy crops were destroyed. The huge loss of life and property in this flood marked a turning point in the understanding of ecology in the region. The relationship between deforestation, landslides and floods were being explored in the region. It was observed that some of the villages most affected by the floods were directly below forests where felling operations had taken place. This cause was subsequently taken up by the Dashauli Gram Swarajya Sangh, a cooperative Sangh set up in Chamoli District and Chandi Prasad Bhatt, a prominent local activist. On 27 March 1973, Bhatt vowed to 'hug the trees' to stop the felling, which was followed by a huge protest gathering in April the same year at Mandal, forcing the Symonds Company contractor to beat a hasty retreat. In 1974, the State forest movement marked trees for felling at Peng-Murrenda forest, near Reni Village in Joshimath. In a singular display of courage and determination, hundreds of women in Reni, led by 50-year-old Gauri Devi, drove out the labourers of the contractor.

Chipko was largely a series of protests in the region by different groups and villages. Its significance lay in the fact that it was the case of poor and deprived villagers fighting the might of industry as well as the government through non-violent means. The movement received good media coverage, though erratic and stereotype. In fact, the media's coverage of the andolan is a sore point with the people in the region.

In one of the articles on Chipko in the environmental magazine, *Down to Earth*, Shamsher Singh Bhisht, a Chipko activist is quoted as saying that the main reason for the failure of the movement is the role that the media played. Most of the reports on Chipko missed out on the real concerns and demands of the local people. The media resorted to artificial dramatization of Chipko's image. The locals were trying to point out that their lives were so intertwined with the forests that they alone should have the right to manage the forest resources and products. Bhatt's idea of hugging trees to protect them was a powerful concept and it translated into an easily identifiable icon of protest to save the earth. The actual act of hugging came to be a media-propagated myth through media-primed shots of women embracing trees. The concept and the icon were lapped up by the media, especially the international media. Globally, the concern for and the understanding of the environment was growing around the time Chipko happened. The global concern and understanding was mostly related to the idea of conservation than rights of communities. It influenced the transformation of Chipko from a struggle to control local resource use to a national movement with a conservationist and economic bearing.

Concurrently, the national and international media too gave greater emphasis on to the conservationist element in Chipko and the local reality receded to the background. Further, the national media gave more importance to the conservationist strand in the movement by focusing on the conservationist, Sunderlal Bahuguna and

gave him a legendary status, than on the movement as such. There were though a few journalists, like Anil Agarwal, then a science correspondent with the Indian Express, who went beyond the concept and icon and focused on the appalling tales of these villages and astutely introduced all the larger issues Chipko stood for economics of environment and the nature of development in India's hilly regions.

Narmada Bachao Andolan

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is a grass-root level movement that celebrated 21 years of existence in November 2006. It was formed to fight against the environmental, social and cultural damage that the Narmada Valley Developmental Project (NVDP) has caused. The NVDP proposal consists of 30 large dams, 135 medium dams, 3,000 small dams on the river Narmada and its over four tributaries and threatens the life and livelihood of the 22 million inhabitants of the Narmada basin. The Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP), the largest dam, alone will submerge 245 villages, 19 in Gujarat, 33 in Maharashtra and 193 in Madhya Pradesh. According to NBA, 250,000 people will be affected by the SSP.

Fig. 7.1 Narmada Bachao Andolan

The government sources claim that the SSP would irrigate more than 1.8 million hectares of land and solve the water crisis in the drought-prone areas of Kutch and Saurashtra. The NBA responds by saying that these are exaggerated and the actual benefits are much less than what is projected. The NBA also argued that in the whole process of the NVDP, the riparian rights of the people who live in the valley, including the tribals and peasants were not taken into consideration. In addition to this are the woes of those who have been displaced by the dam construction that has been resumed by the court order in the year 2000. The projected figure of 15,000 affected families in Maharashtra, though promised rehabilitation, is yet to materialize.

The NBA has taken up a lot of issues related to the riparian rights of the people. NBA implies a complex articulation of land rights, environmental degradation, economies of large dams and also the effects of these on the local communities. The fact that the process of development right from its origin, plan and management of resources is seen as a prerogative of the state is the basic point of opposition for the movement. The movement emphasizes that the people have the right to control their own forest, land, water and other natural resources. The movement thus is a deep-rooted critique of the development paradigm. NBA is committed to non-violent means of protest and believes that non-violence is the only path for social movement.

NBA has relied heavily on the media to popularize their struggles and issues and the mainstream national media has been an important part of their campaigns. Leaders and activists of the movement often write in various newspapers and publications. NBA also communicates through frequent press releases giving the status of the struggle from time to time. The media is also informed about the several mass agitations and other programmes and activities.

For communicating with the people of the valley, the NBA depends on other forms of media like songs, leaflets, posters, and audio cassettes. Though the NBA and the NVDP have been discussed quite widely in national and regional newspapers and the visual media, many of the issues discussed earlier with environmental reporting are relevant here too. The media's interest in events rather than processes has seriously affected the NBA reporting in various ways. A movement like NBA, with its issues of displacement and the development paradigm that caused this, are equally important. But the media generally does not sustain its focus on long-term processes and gives space only when there are mass actions such as rallies or a Dharna in the national capital. Of the 435 stories on the Sardar Sarovar Project in 2006, including those in English dailies, TV, periodicals and Internet news sites, more than 75 per cent of the stories are when devastating events like floods happen. The rest happen to be around mass actions like rallies and Dharnas. The handful of well-researched writings is either specialist columns in newspapers or Internet news sites.

The media often links issues and movements to the leaders and activists who are involved in them. One reason could be that these leaders are the ones who become the most visible while bringing to the notice of the world the needs and problems affecting the struggle. The media finds a face for the movement in Medha Patkar, making the NBA look like a single-handed task, whereas in reality, it is a multi-tiered movement, consisting of adivasis, Dalits, Hindu peasants and also various middle-class activists and supporters. The movement is influenced by both community and activists. The decision-making body has two main groups: the full-time activists as well as community representatives from every village. In terms of projecting the leaders, the media often makes movements seem like individual struggles. On the flip side, often protests and rallies that do not include the respective leaders are not given adequate coverage. For instance, on 17 December 2005, the police *lathicharged* hundreds of protestors in Badhwani, Madhya Pradesh outside the collector's office. This got little coverage, none in the mainstream national media. During the satyagraha staged by NBA in April 2006, the event got covered extensively when film actor Aamir Khan visited the pandal to express his solidarity with the displaced people of the valley.

In the 1980s, voices were raised by the Narmada Bachao Andolan activists against the Sardar Sarovar dam construction on the Narmada River. This led to large-scale displacement of adivasis who were neither relocated to a proper area nor granted proper compensation. Besides, the dam was causing serious environmental hazards. In the 1980s itself, we saw women from various strata of society raising their voices against violence perpetrated against them.

Democracy is largely understood as popular sovereignty where people have control over the decisions made by the State. Since it is not practically possible for the people in the modern democratic societies to participate in the decision-making process

of the State directly, they do so through representatives. This representation gets its institutional form in political parties and it is through political parties that the people wish to articulate and represent their demands. But when political parties become ineffective in representing the interests of the people, we see the emergence of social movements (SMS).

ACTIVITY

Research on the internet and find a case study associated with criminalization of politics in the Indian scenario. Give your views on it as well.

EXHIBIT

Indian corruption and theft are the main winners of British aid

Cornwall, Wednesday, 8 February 2012

By the end of this year our Government will have shelled out £1.5 billion since 2009 to pay for solar energy and other grand schemes to combat climate change in foreign countries, including India.

The huge sum, spent at a time when our economy is in the doldrums, is bound to raise eyebrows.

And now we know that in India, at least, the aid money given by Britain for climate change initiatives (and a lot more besides) isn't welcomed anyway.

I was told exactly the same dispiriting thing when I visited India last year to investigate our aid spending. Barun Mitra, director of a New Delhi-based political think-tank, the Liberty Institute, explained: 'The truth is that the government of India no longer wants or needs your aid. I am really surprised that your aid officials endeavour so hard to continue their presence in India. Is it really to help Indians, or is it to justify their own existence?'

It is a pertinent question for a country racing up the league of rich nations. By 2022, India's soaring economy will have outstripped that of the UK. According to financial advisers Merrill Lynch, India already has 153,000 dollar-millionaires – a 20 per cent rise in the past year alone. Indians have hidden away more money in Swiss bank accounts (a total of £900 billion since independence from Britain in 1947) than the rest of the world combined.

And when Indians were asked by their government to exchange for paper money the gold bars and jewellery they had stashed in their homes (to pump cash into the national economy) a hoard worth £160 billion was offered up. India is so wealthy that it now gives out more foreign aid than it receives. In recent years it has handed over £3.5 billion to impoverished African nations.

Meanwhile, it is investing in ambitious projects: a £2 billion space programme will put the first Indian astronauts into orbit by 2016, and the annual defence budget tops £32 billion. A third aircraft carrier is now being constructed for their navy. Further evidence of the garish spending in newly

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Check Your Progress

3. Name three popular movements in India.

4. _____ is an impartial movement for self-governing transformations in India.

rich India is provided by the £18 million now being asked (and met) for two-bedroom flats in the poshest parts of Mumbai. There, a £2 billion, 27-storey skyscraper dominates the skyline. It has been built by a local industrialist as a home for his wife and three children and is the most expensive house to be built anywhere in the world. No wonder there is controversy over aid to India. But what happens to the money when it gets there?

Corruption, as the Indian prime minister said last year, is as much a national sport as cricket. Rajiv Gandhi, India's former prime minister, estimated a few years ago that only 15 per cent of aid reaches the poor it is meant to help. In India I saw how the money is squandered. The very first primary school I visited – opened last summer in Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh state, with the help of British aid – was half empty because parents say the conditions are not good enough for their children. It had not one desk or chair because they were stolen on the way from the factory. The children sat on a floor riddled with holes because the builders had diluted the concrete mix with sand – so they could sell the spare cement.

Indian officials admit that £70 million of the £388 million given by Britain to fund an education programme offering free classes for every child from the age of six to 14 in Indian's poorest states, has disappeared through corruption and theft. So why don't we do what the Indians (and many Britons) plainly want and pull the plug on overseas aid? Indian politicians suspect that the money they get from their former colonial masters is an attempt to influence events in their country, particularly trade deals. If it is, it doesn't seem to be working terribly well given that Britain last week appeared to have lost out to the French on a multi-billion-pound order for jet fighters.

But is there another reason for the huge handout, which is so unpopular both here in Britain and in India itself? A London-based expert on global wealth and the impact of overseas aid in India put it like this to me. 'Government aid-giving is an industry, a self-serving lobby of Westerners jetting from one country to another, enjoying relatively high salaries and numerous perks', he said.

'Unlike every other area of Government or business, these people are judged on how much money they spend and not on what they achieve.' And that is a recipe for disaster. Certainly, at the air-conditioned offices of DFID's India headquarters in a well-heeled part of New Delhi there is no indication that British economic woes are being felt. There are already 90 staff. And only last month our government advertised for more experts to work for DFID in India – to help avert climate change.

Source: Adapted from http://www.thisiscornwall.co.uk/Indian-corruption-theft-main-winners-British-aid/story-15166551-detail/story.html

(Accessed on 8 February 2012)

2.4 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- Criminalization is a term which has originated from the word 'crime'. This appears to be very unpleasant and has been devouring politics in the guise of an art of governance. While on one hand, crime is an unlawful act of handling anything, politics is the legal way of tackling or dealing with anything socially.

- Though democracy implies 'rule of law' and the holding of free election to ascertain the will of the people but it has been much vitiated. Criminalization of Indian politics and consequent cult of the gun have caused great threat to the life of the common people.

- Governmental corruption is a complex phenomenon, which is prevalent in all forms of government and for which various sociological, economic, administrative factors are responsible. Simple avarice may appear to be generally the motive; but it is by no means the only motive. Poverty, power, wealth and status are all involved in these transactions and there is not always a clear dividing line between them.

- The following causes appear to have largely contributed to the prevailing widespread bribery and corruption, in public administration in India:
  o Legacy from the past
  o Wartime scarcities and controls

- The climate for integrity which had been rendered unhealthy by wartime controls and scarcities was further aggravated by the post-war flush of money and the consequent inflation.

- The United Nations Conference on Human Environment, Stockholm, 1972 paved the way for a number of studies and reports on the condition of the environment and its effect on the present and future generations. It expressed concern to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations.

- The development of 'green politics' or 'eco-greens' or the 'green movement' in Germany and North America in the early 1980s boosted the formation of the 'green network' and the 'green movement' throughout the world, including India.

- The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is a grassroot level movement that celebrated 21 years of existence in November 2006. It was formed to fight against the environmental, social and cultural damage that the Narmada Valley Developmental Project (NVDP) has caused.

- The NVDP proposal consists of 30 large dams, 135 medium dams, 3,000 small dams on the river Narmada and its over four tributaries and threatens the life and livelihood of the 22 million inhabitants of the Narmada basin. The Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP), the largest dam, alone will submerge 245 villages, 19 in Gujarat, 33 in Maharashtra and 193 in Madhya Pradesh. According to NBA, 250,000 people will be affected by the SSP.

2.5 KEY TERMS

- **Corruption:** Dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery.
- **Criminal:** A person who has committed a crime.
- **Inflation:** A general increase in prices and fall in the purchasing value of money.
- **Magnate:** A wealthy and influential person, especially in business.

2.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Criminalization of politics means moulding politics to a criminal shape.
2. A doctor issuing false medical certificates.
3. Chipko movement, Save Silent Valley, Narmada Bachao Andolan.
4. Lok Satta Movement.

2.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the causes behind governmental corruption in India?
2. What was the 2G Spectrum Scam?
3. How does economic necessity give rise to corruption?
4. What is the 'Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha'? What are its objectives?
5. What is the 'Lok Satta' Movement? What are its objectives?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the impact of criminalization and corruption on Indian polity.
2. Critically evaluate the evolution and achievements of the Chipko Movement.
3. Examine the nature and scope of the 'Narmada Bachao Andolan'.

2.8 FURTHER READING

Gowda, M.V. Rajeev and Sridharan, E.; *Parties and the Party System, 1947–2006*, (ed.) *States of India's Democracy,* John Hopkins University Press: Maryland, 2007, p.7.

Limaye, M.; *Contemporary Indian Politics*, Radient Publisher, New Delhi, 1988, p.194.

Fadia, B.L.; *Indian Government and Politics*, Satya Bhawan Publications, Agra, 2009, p.633.

UNIT 3 JUDICIAL PROCESSES IN INDIA

Structure

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about judicial processes, such as judicial review and judicial activism, in India. Judicial review is the doctrine under which legislative and executive actions are subject to review (and possible invalidation) by the judiciary. In post-independence India, the inclusion of explicit provisions for 'judicial review' was necessary in order to give effect to the individual and group rights guaranteed in the text of the Constitution. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who chaired the drafting committee of our Constituent Assembly, had described the provision related to the same as the 'heart of the Constitution'. Article 13(2) of the Constitution of India prescribes that the Union or the States shall not make any law that takes away or abridges any of the Fundamental Rights, and any law made in contravention of the aforementioned mandate shall, to the extent of the contravention, be void. The Supreme Court of India and the various High Courts have been given the power to rule on the constitutionality of legislative as well as administrative actions. In most cases, the power of judicial review is exercised to protect and enforce the Fundamental Rights guaranteed in Part III of the Constitution. The scope of judicial review before Indian courts has evolved in three dimensions -- firstly, to ensure fairness in administrative action; secondly, to protect the constitutionally guaranteed Fundamental Rights of citizens; and thirdly, to rule on questions of legislative competence between the centre and the states.

The judicial activism is use of judicial power to articulate and enforce what is beneficial for the society in general and people at large. Judicial activism describes judicial rulings suspected of being based on personal or political considerations rather than on existing law. The question of judicial activism is closely related to constitutional interpretation, statutory construction, and separation of powers.

more states would have requested the Parliament to make laws; Articles 251 and 254 declare that in case of inconsistency between Union and state laws, the state law shall be void. The constitutional validity of a law can be challenged in India on the ground that the subject matter of the legislation: (a) is not within the competence of the Legislature, which has passed it; (b) is repugnant to the provisions of the Constitution; or (c) it infringes one of the Fundamental Rights.

- In view of Article 372 (1), no pre-constitutional law, which is inconsistent with it, can continue to be valid after commencement of the Constitution.

The power of judicial review, in general, flows from the powers of the courts to interpret the Constitution. Since the Judiciary is the final interpreter of the Constitution and the Constitution regulates the exercise of political power, which, in general is considered to be the main domain of the Legislature and the Executive. Moreover, the judicial process determines the jurisdictional frontiers of the other branches of government. As a result of this, it constantly interacts with the Legislature, the Executive and other institutions of government, which are vested with political power.

8.3 JUDICIAL ACTIVISM

The term 'judicial activism' is explained in *Black's Law Dictionary*, Sixtieth Edition, [Centennial Edition (1891–1991)]. Therefore, judicial philosophy motivates judges to be flexible about judicial precedent and accommodate progressive and new social policies, which are not always in consistency with the control appellate judges are expected to show. It includes decisions calling for social engineering, which sometimes are representative of intrusion in to matters concerning the Legislative and the Executive.

The Judiciary is undisputedly required to play a significant role in interpreting and enforcing human rights as per the fundamental law of the country. Thus, the Judiciary's approach with regard to constitutional interpretation ought to be considered. An approach needs to be creative and ought to have a purpose in interpreting various rights mentioned in the Constitution, with the objective of advancing human rights jurisprudence and social justice.

Honourable Chief Justice. Dr A.S. Anand, while delivering the Justice Krishna Rao memorial lecture at the National Law School at Bangalore has said, 'The courts must not shy away from discharging their constitutional obligations to protect and enforce human rights'. He further added, 'While acting within the limits of law, they must always rise to occasions as guardians of the Constitution, notwithstanding the criticism of judicial activism '.

Judicial activism has emerged as the thematic thread running through the diverse areas of law that are represented in this comprehensive review of the Indian Supreme Court's jurisprudence. Subjects (to name just a few) ranging across areas as distinctive as Fundamental Rights, matrimonial adjudication, mercantile law, environmental justice, agrarian reforms, industrial jurisprudence and election laws, are all viewed through the approving lens of 'proactive adjudication'.

During the last five decades, the Judiciary has emerged as the most powerful institution of the State. It has assumed the power to strike down amendments to the Constitution on the basis of the innovative theory of basic structure. The area of judicial

Check Your Progress

1. What is judicial review?
2. The Constitution of India is more akin to the

   _____
   Constitution.
3. The Indian Constitution divides the legislative powers between the Union and states. (True/False)

intervention has been steadily expanding through the device of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and enforcement of human rights. Problems relating to environment pollution and natural resources of the nation, which ought to have been tackled on priority by the Executive and the Legislature are brought up through PIL, to be handled by the Supreme Court and the high courts. Lack of proper governance, non-governance and misgovernance are, probably, more responsible for increasing judicial activism. Speaking at Dr Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture in 1997, A.M. Ahmedi (former Chief Justice) asserted that judicial activism might be seen as a transient phase responding to peculiar needs of the nation. Shedding its pro-status quo approach, the Judiciary has taken upon itself the duty to enforce the basic rights of poor and vulnerable sections of the society. Apart from its traditional limited role of administration of justice, it has also vowed to actively participate in the socio-economic reconstruction of society, by progressive interpretation and affirmative action.

Public Interest Litigation

A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) is a claim that can be lodged in any high court or directly in the Supreme Court. It is not mandatory for the petitioner to suffer an injury or have a personal grievance for filing the litigation. PIL can be referred to as the right that every socially aware member or public-supportive NGO has, to support a public cause by seeking judicial redressal of a public grievance. Such a grievance may arise as an outcome of a breach of public duty or due to some provision of the Constitution that has been violated. Public Interest Litigation is the mechanism by which public participation in judicial review of administrative action can be assured. It works to increase the democracy of the judicial process. Public Interest Litigation cannot be referred to as any statute or act. Judges have interpreted it for considering the overall objective of the public. Therefore, public interest is the prime and sole focus of such litigation.

Provision of Legal Aid

Several substantial assurances have been made for defending human rights in Section 39 of the Indian Constitution. In spite of this, there are a large number of challenges faced by India, pertaining to the implementation of domestic laws for the protection of due process rights like piling of cases which are likely to go on for decades, in addition to 70 per cent of prisoners who have been detained without trials. Nevertheless, law has been a tradition in India since ages and even judicial activism in Asia, was born in India. It has the required legal infrastructure. In the domain of legal aid and legal services, establishments have been set up at the national, state and district levels. This endorses sound capability to provide quality criminal defense to every accused citizen, more importantly belonging to the underprivileged groups. It is the need of the moment to provide quality and prompt legal aid to every citizen of India. This will protect all their due process rights beginning from the time they are arrested by the police for an alleged crime.

Amicus Curiae

Amicus Curiae or *Amicus Curiæ* (plural *Amici Curiae*) is a legal phrase in Latin. It is literally translated as 'friend of the court'. Friend of the court means any person who is not a participant in a case, but offers to provide information on a legal aspect or any other aspect, to help a court in ruling over a matter before it.

The mode of information may be a legal opinion in the form of a brief, a testimony that none of the parties have solicited, or a learned treatise on any aspect of the case that has a bearing on it. It is for the court to judge if the information can be considered.

The term *Amicus Curiae* should not be confused with someone who is involved in a case just because his direct interest lies in the result. Salmon L J (also addressed as Lord Salmon) defines *Amicus Curiae* as follows: 'I had always understood that the role of an *Amicus Curiae* was to help the court by expounding the law impartially, or if one of the parties were unrepresented, by advancing the legal argument on his behalf.'

The courts in India have repeatedly advocated the concept of allowing *Amicus Curiae* to connect themselves with trials that usually involve public interest. In the process, a court is directed not only by the intellectual viewpoint required in a particular case, but it also gets to understand which viewpoint would allow it to deliver total justice. Those who are allowed by the courts to function as *Amicus Curiae* are ones who represent the impartial will and belief of society.

In a large number of cases in India, the courts have provided for, or, on their own activity, have summoned several people to play the role of *Amicus Curiae* in their proceedings. An ideal instance of this is the well-known, or rather notorious *BMW* case. This case has again featured in the news recently due to the fact that the Delhi High Court has suspended both the defense and the prosecution lawyers. The charge was that they were instrumental in turning the witnesses hostile. In the corresponding case, the Delhi High Court had appointed Advocate Arvind Nigam to act as *Amicus Curiae*. His role was critical in securing justice.

Hence, in India, thus, if a petition comes from jail or is related to any other criminal matter where there is no one to represent the accused, the corresponding court appoints a lawyer as *Amicus Curiae*. He defends the accused and fights his case. Even in civil matters, the process followed by the court is the same. The court also has the discretion to assign *Amicus Curiae* in any matter pertaining to general public importance or where the interest of the public is involved.

Judicial Reforms

Judicial reforms should take place on an integrated basis. The police, prosecution, lawyers and courts, must act in solidarity. Judicial reform has recently become a very important issue because of the public's loss of faith in the political system. Judicial accountability is linked to the larger area of judicial reform. The infinite delay in the clearance of cases is a matter of serious concern. Judicial reforms first ought to deal with this backlog. We have seen many Law Commission Reports and various suggestions, one of which is the formation of tribunals to take away some of the workload of High Courts, but still, High Courts are burdened with a large number of cases. The strength of the judiciary in terms of manpower is urgent. Scientific data pertaining to cases that clog the dockets can resolve the problems faced by the judiciary.

Pendency

Pendency is a normal feature of any system but assumes significant proportions in courts. It necessitates courts to stipulate time-limits for all cases. For this, cases need to be identified, classified and prioritized according to their kind and thus the time for

their disposal varies. Deadlines ought to be set on an essential basis. Not only do they vary with regard to different cases but also vary with regard to different courts. Their disposal capacity would serve as a determining factor to assess the performance of the courts and judicial accountability.

Example: According to a *Times of India* report published in December 2011, around 3.2 crore cases were pending in high courts and subordinate courts across the country, while 56,383 cases were pending in the Supreme Court. The report also said 74 per cent of the total 3.2 crore cases were less than five years old. Similarly, 20,334 out of the 56,383 pending cases in the apex court were less than one year old.

Technology

Modern technology enables us to collect volumes of information and make it available to the Chief Justice, so that he can efficiently allocate manpower. We have digital techniques and tools at our disposal, to collect information from a complete database, from the time a case is instituted in a court of law, to the final stages of appeal. Developing a judicial database will facilitate us with the scope to in turn assess the performance of courts as institutions and this assessment can be used by the Chief Justice to assess the individual performance of judges. This will go a long way in identifying the backlog, the types of pending cases and so on. Digital resource management includes home pages and websites, where judgments of courts can be uploaded instantly. As a result, the process of judgement can be expedited. Digital technology offers us new packages like database, ERP tools, and court management practices which will help in increasing the productivity of courts; video-conferencing is a technique through which evidence can be recorded.

Example: Computerization of lower courts

The government has proposed to computerize the lower courts in future. A plan for computing all the 13,000 district and subordinate courts, prepared in accordance with the National Policy and Action Plan, has been approved by the government on 8 February 2007, with National Informatics Centre (NIC) as the implementing agency. The project includes Information and Communication Technology (ICT), enablement of all district and subordinate courts and upgrading of the ICT infrastructure of the Supreme Court and all the High Courts. The first phase of the project is being implemented in all states and union territories at an estimated cost of 442 crores. All the lower courts in the country, including the courts in the States of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh have been taken up for computerization in the first phase. Digitization of court records can improve the productivity and efficiency of courts. Computerization of the registry of the Supreme Court has been effective in reducing errors and facilitating scientific docket management. E-filing and video-conferencing economize on time and resources and makes justice more easily accessible and less expensive.

Review: A review of the computerization projects undertaken in the Indian courts during the last fifteen years mostly at the High Court levels and in 1997 at District Court level reveal that unless the court functionaries like the Judges and the Court staff show a personal initiative and involvement for bringing about a change in its work culture by use of technology, the efforts can hardly succeed at the touchstone of speed and quality. Till recently, the scope and purpose of using computers/ICT were not very clearly perceived or appreciated by the policy makers in the judiciary. By and

large, the internal users felt satisfied with the automation of cause list preparation, digital transcription of orders and judgments and of late, their publication on the Internet. These exercises though had the effect of enhancing the court services to a certain degrees but in the real sense, had hardly in any way advanced the cause of achieving the basis objectives of providing speedy, qualitative and cost-effective justice, reducing harassments and corruption or enhancing transparency and accountability.

Accountability

In terms of accountability, like any institution, the judiciary is not devoid of vices, but still they are akin to temples of justice. But still, corruption cannot be acceptable. How does one deal with corruption? Impeachment was thought to be the remedy to deal with errant judges, but we found that it is not working well; we have to find some internal institutional mechanism, a sort of peer committee, enabling judges to deal with such issues. We are not very sure that increasing number of courts and judges will ameliorate the situation, unless there is a simultaneous productivity increase in courts. Judicial reform, is being looked at, as essential for the country's overall development, not just economic development; in India, the problem is more human than economic. Ninety per cent of the litigation is by rural people; parties are fighting for even half an acre of land; families are being ruined. Therefore, there has to be an overall solution.

Judiciary in India is very unaccountable: Transparency International (TI) report

The report, based on a countrywide survey of 'public perceptions and experiences of corruption in the lower judiciary,' conducted by the Centre for Media Studies in 2011, finds that 77 per cent of respondents believe the Indian judiciary is corrupt. It says that 'bribes seem to be solicited as the price of getting things done". The estimated amount paid in bribes in a 12-month period it found was around 580 million dollars. 'Money was paid to the officials in the following proportions: 61 per cent to lawyers; 29 per cent to court officials; 5 per cent to middlemen.'

Fast Track Courts

The government has already taken several initiatives for judicial reforms. Fast track courts have been set up, which have disposed more than 18 lakh cases transferred to them. For example, In September 2011, the Tamil Nadu government infused a fresh lease of life into the 49 fast-track courts, for which the central funds were stopped in March 2011. All these courts have now been converted into regular courts. With this, Tamil Nadu became the first state in the country to prevent abolition of fast-track courts and instead convert them into regular courts. Family courts, established in various parts of the country, have speedily settled matrimonial disputes through reconciliation.

Reforms in Villages

The Gram Nyayalayas Bill has been passed to set up more trial courts at the intermediate Panchayat level. A feature that has been welcomed is that the procedures have been kept simple and flexible so that cases can be heard and disposed of within six months. It is also envisaged that these courts will be mobile, to achieve the goal of bringing justice to people's doorsteps. Training and orientation of the judiciary,

especially in frontier areas of knowledge, like bio-genetics, IPR and cyber laws, needs attention. The constitutional promise of securing justice for all citizens, social, economic and political, as promised in the Preamble of the Constitution, cannot be realized, unless the three organs of the State i.e., Legislature, Executive and Judiciary, join together to find ways and means for providing the poor people of India, equal access to the justice system.

Example: A Gram Nyayalaya (village court), aiming to provide legal assistance to the rural folks at the doorstep, was inaugurated at Puri in Orissa on Gandhi Jayanti in October 2009. With it, Puri acquired the distinction of having the first Gram Nyayalaya in the state. Soon such village courts would come up in different blocks of various districts across the state. The village court would deal with both civil and criminal cases of people living in Puri Sadar block. The Gram Nyayalaya Act, 2008, provides for First Class Judicial Magistrate dispensing justice in a village court. Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) will be posted at the rural court and will be called Nyaya Adhikari. The court will sit at the district headquarters. The judge will go to villages and dispose of the cases. The Nyaya Adhikari would handle both civil and criminal cases but not those cases where pronouncement of punishment would exceed over two years

Miscellaneous Reforms

However, unless advocates work according to the responsibility entrusted to them by the Constitution, no change can take place. Every lawyer has the responsibility to promote the rule of law and dominance of the Constitution. Thus, economic development and law need not necessarily be complementary to each other. Economic progress cannot be conceived unless appropriate law supports the changing needs of society. We need:

- Speedy justice
- Reduction in costs of litigation
- Systematic running of the courts
- Faith in the judicial system

A sound system of checks and balances under articles 124(2) and 217(1) is provided in the Indian Constitution for the appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court and high courts, where the executive as well as the judiciary are assigned a balanced role. This delicate balance has been upset by the 2nd Judges' case (*Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association v. Union of India*), according to the opinion of the Supreme Court in the Presidential Reference (*Special Reference No.1 of 1998*)3. The original balance of power needs to be restored. As a result, the Law Commission has given recommendations in its 214th report (2008). The recommendation for the need for an urgent and immediate review of the present procedure for appointment of judges is further fortified by the forthright views expressed by Shri Justice J. S. Verma, a former Chief Justice of India, who had written the *Lead Judgment in the 2nd Judges' Case*. The views of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on law and justice, which has recommended scrapping of the present procedure for appointments and transfers of Supreme Court and high court judges, are of great relevance in this context.

Recommendations

Honourable Shri Justice Asok Kumar Ganguly, a Supreme Court Judge, in his article titled 'Judicial Reforms', published in Halsbury's Law Monthly of November 2008 has suggested a few norms, which the judges and lawyers must agree to follow very rigorously, in order to liquidate the huge backlog. The suggestions are as follows:

1. There must be full utilization of the courts' working hours. The judges must be punctual and lawyers must not ask for adjournments, unless it is absolutely necessary.

   Grant of adjournment must be guided strictly by the provisions of Order 17 of the Civil Procedure Code.

2. Many cases are filed on similar points and one judgment can decide a large number of cases. Such cases should be clubbed with the help of technology and used to dispose other similar cases, on a priority basis. This will substantially reduce arrears. Similarly, many of the old cases, which can be separated and listed for hearing can be disposed quickly. The same is true for many interlocutory applications filed even after the main cases are disposed off. Such cases can be traced with the use of technology and disposed very quickly.

3. Judges must deliver judgments within a reasonable time and in that matter, guidelines given by the apex court in the case of Anil Rai vs the State of Bihar, (2001) 7 SCC 318 must be scrupulously observed, both in civil and criminal cases.

4. Considering the staggering arrears, vacations in the higher judiciary must be curtailed by at least 10 to 15 days and the courts' working hours should be extended by at least half an hour.

5. Lawyers must curtail prolix and repetitive arguments and should supplement it by written notes. The length of the oral argument in any case should not exceed one hour and thirty minutes, unless the case involves complicated questions of law or interpretation of the Constitution.

6. Judgments must be clear and decisive and free from ambiguity and should not generate further litigation. We must remember Lord Macaulay's statement made about 150 years ago:

   Our principle is simply this –

   Uniformity when you can have it,

   Diversity when you must have it,

   In all cases, Certainty

7. Lawyers must not resort to strike under any circumstances and must follow the decision of the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court.

ACTIVITY

Prepare a news report on a criminal case that has recently taken place in India and stirred the nation.

Check Your Progress

4. What is PIL?
5. What does *Amicus Curiae* mean?
6. What is understood by 'pendency'?

EXHIBIT

Strengthening the judiciary is essential for establishing constitutional democracy

Tehelka, 6 February 2012

After the pronouncement of the landmark 2G verdict, newly-retired Justice A.K. Ganguly talks to Abhishek Bhalla about playing his 'innings' with a straight bat.

Justice Asok Kumar Ganguly had a busy day in office on 2 February. That was the last time he was wearing his robes and holding court. That was also the day when he, along with Justice G S Singhvi, delivered a historic judgment. The two Supreme Court judges cancelled 122 licenses for 2G spectrum granted by former telecom minister A Raja. It was only when the two judges pulled up Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for inaction in the 2G probe did Raja and others face criminal charges.

In October 2010, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) that was thrown out by Delhi High Court came up for hearing before the bench of Justice Singhvi and Justice Ganguly. Their court, number 11 got a new name—the 2G bench as they took it upon themselves to monitor the investigation closely. As the two judges issued notices to A Raja and the Central government, it marked the beginning of a landmark judicial intervention in India's political history.

Known for his bold views, Justice Ganguly never shied away from making strong observations— be it calling "the Prevention of Corruption Act turning into Preservation of Corruption Act," at a book launch last year, or making an observation in open court while hearing a case on Noida land acquisition by the UP government that— "the Land Acquisition Act has become a tool to grab land by the state."

Justice Ganguly, who started his career as a teacher in the same school he was once a student at, served the judiciary for 18 years. He has also served as a judge of the Calcutta High. Today, he has retired a content man. An ardent cricket fan, Justice Ganguly in his farewell speech in a function held at the Supreme Court lawns last week said: "It is the end of my innings as a judge. I don't know how I played my innings but I always tried to play with a straight bat. It is for you to judge how I have played it," referring to former English captain David Crompton's book End of An Innings. In an exclusive interview to Tehelka, Justice Ganguly spoke to Abhishek Bhalla about his judgments, their ramifications, the role of judiciary and his life. Ironically, even after the pronouncement of the 2G verdict where the apex court took on the government, Justice Ganguly feels there is more scope for strengthening the judiciary.

The Supreme Court judgment in the 2G case cancelling 122 licences has huge economic and political ramifications. Was this the most challenging case in your career as a judge?

Every case is challenging for a judge. I wouldn't call this the most challenging. In every case a judge has to do justice and that is what we have tried to do in this case as well. A judge is also on trial while discharging his duties. Everything he does is under scrutiny. There is immense pressure of work on a judge of the Supreme Court and one has to put in long hours of work to cope with it.

The 2G judgment questions the first-come first-serve policy. Do you think this judgment will lead to more litigation not only in the telecom sector but also other sectors where the policy is being followed for a very long time now?

I don't want to get into these details. We have decided on whatever was brought before us. I don't want to comment on the judgment and embarrass the institution. Whatever had to be said is there in the judgment.

The judgment has no mention of Attorney General Ghoolam Vahanavati the then Solicitor General who gave a favourable legal opinion to A Raja on the issue of first-come first-served policy and advancement of cut off date arbitrarily. Would you like to comment?

No.

The verdict has also appreciated vigilant citizens who pursued the matter. Do you think this judgment will encourage common citizens to approach courts even in matters relating to government policy?

Vigilance is the requirement of democracy and it can certainly be achieved through vigilant citizens. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. Judiciary is playing an important role in our society today. People have renewed interest in the judiciary. People are now more conscious of their rights and they are asserting it. In the process if there is any resistance by any individual or authority for resolving these disputes, citizens would come to court.

Prior to the 2G judgment you had given another landmark judgment setting a deadline for prosecution sanctions from the government in graft cases where public servants are involved by amending the Prevention of Corruption Act. This was also part of the guidelines in an earlier Supreme Court judgment in the Vineet Narain case, but that has still not been put into practice even after 14 years. Is there a political will to follow this?

I cannot comment on the political will. We can give recommendations to the government to follow the guidelines and that is what my judgment does. There is nothing personal about it. I cannot ensure whether it will be followed or not. That is not my job.

In another landmark judgement while quashing land acquisition by UP government you made an observation that the land acquisition act has become a tool to grab land by the State. Do you think the law for acquiring land has been misused?

Well, in that particular case the facts and circumstances certainly pointed that it was used as a tool to grab land. But I don't want to comment any further because I believe the land acquisition act is being re-looked into. This is what I read in newspapers.

With more executive decisions being challenged in courts and the Supreme Court having stepped in during the last few years, is there a danger of a face off between the judiciary and the executive?

The government is making laws that are affecting lives of common man in an extensive way. Here also disputes arise between common people. It is only a court that can decide such disputes. Under article 13 (2), chapter III of our Constitution—the chapter on Fundamental Rights there is a mandate that says the State cannot make any law that violates fundamental rights. If the State does so then the law can be declared void. It is only the judiciary that can declare a law void. Executive has no such power nor can the legislature declare void the law enacted by it. Judicial review is inherent in our Constitution, which is a unique feature.

However, not all is well with the judiciary. There are cases of corruption and the collegium system of appointment of judges is said to be opaque. What is the way out?

I cannot comment on the collegium system. It's being followed according to a Supreme Court judgment. The corruption in judiciary is still marginal but whatever is there, it should be dealt with. But judiciary, as an institution, has to be protected by ensuring its independence. It's not that it is lacking in independence but I think judiciary must be strengthened in our country in several ways. This will enable the establishment of constitutional democracy in the real sense of the term.

Now that you have retired, what are your plans?

I have not decided anything till now. I will go back to Kolkata, my hometown, and relax. I will be with my family, which I have missed all these years. Retirement is a part of life and one has to accept it. On my last day, I had mixed feelings. Soon I will realize that life does not come to an end with retirement. Life has many facets, many opportunities, which I think will be open to me with retirement.

Source: Adapted from http://www.tehelka.com/story_main51.asp?filename=Ws 060212Interview.asp

(Accessed on 7 February 2012)

3.4 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- Judicial review means review by the courts to investigate the constitutional validity of the legislative enactments or executive actions. The power of judicial review in India stands between the American and British practices.
- The term judicial activism is explained in *Black's Law Dictionary*, Sixtieth Edition, [Centennial Edition (1891–1991)]. Thus, judicial philosophy motives judges to depart from strict adherence to judicial precedent in favour of progressive and new social policies, which are not always consistent with the restraint expected of appellate judges.

- Judicial activism has emerged as the thematic thread running through the diverse areas of law that are represented in this comprehensive review of the Indian Supreme Court's jurisprudence. Subjects (to name just a few) ranging across areas as distinctive as fundamental rights, matrimonial adjudication, mercantile law, environmental justice, agrarian reforms, industrial jurisprudence and election laws, are all viewed through the approving lens of 'proactive adjudication'.

- During the last five decades, the Judiciary has emerged as the most powerful institution of the State. It has assumed the power to strike down amendments to the Constitution on the basis of the innovative theory of basic structure. The area of judicial intervention has been steadily expanding through the device of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and enforcement of human rights.

- A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) is a claim that can be lodged in any high court or directly in the Supreme Court. It is not mandatory for the petitioner to suffer an injury or have a personal grievance for filing the litigation.

- Several substantial assurances have been made for defending human rights in Section 39 of the Indian Constitution. In spite of this, there are a large number of challenges faced by India, pertaining to the implementation of domestic laws for the protection of due process rights like piling of cases which are likely to go on for decades, in addition to 70 per cent of prisoners who have been detained without trials.

- *Amicus Curiae* or *Amicus Curiæ* (plural *Amici Curiae*) is a legal phrase in Latin language. It is literally translated as 'friend of the court'. Friend of the court means any person who is not a participant in a case, but offers to provide information on a legal aspect or any other aspect, to help a court in ruling over a matter before it.

- Judicial reforms need to take place in an integrated manner. The police, prosecution, lawyers and courts, must be thought of as being cohesive.

- Pendency is a normal feature of any system but it assumes significant proportions in courts. This will necessitate courts to prescribe time-limits for all cases.

- The government has already taken several initiatives for judicial reforms. Fast-track courts have been set up, which have disposed more than 18 lakh cases transferred to them.

3.5 KEY TERMS

- **Accountability:** Responsibility to someone or for some activity.
- **Activism:** The policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change.
- **Adjudication:** The final judgment in a legal proceeding; the act of pronouncing judgment based on the evidence presented.
- **Litigation:** A legal proceeding in a court; a judicial contest to determine and enforce legal rights.
- **Review:** A formal assessment or examination of something.

3.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Judicial review means review by courts to investigate the constitutional validity of the legislative enactments or executive actions.

2. American

3. True

4. Public Interest Litigation (PIL) is a claim that can be lodged in any high court or directly in the Supreme Court.

5. 'Friend of the court'

6. Pendency is a feature that necessitates courts to prescribe time-limits for all cases.

3.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. List the provisions in the Indian Constitution that imbibe the power of judicial review.

2. What do you understand by judicial activism?

3. What are the features of fast tract courts?

4. Write a note on computerization of lower courts in India.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Examine the scope of judicial review in India.

2. Explain how legal aid is provided in India.

3. Explain the phrase *Amicus Curiae*. How do judicial reforms take place?

4. 'Judiciary in India is very unaccountable'. Explain.

3.8 FURTHER READING

Gowda, M.V. Rajeev and Sridharan, E.; *Parties and the Party System, 1947-2006*, (ed.) *States of India's Democracy*, John Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2007, p.7.

Limaye, M.; *Contemporary Indian Politics*, Radient Publisher, New Delhi, 1988, p.194.

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UNIT 4 REGIONAL POLITICAL
PARTIES

Structure

4.0 INTRODUCTION

India is a multi-party democracy. Political parties are such organizations which intermediate between citizens of a nation and the state. They are organized groups, whose members share common policy preferences and programmes. Political parties constitute an integral part of the Indian political system which is marked by the functioning of a variety of political parties. Regional political parties are parties whose main holds are in one certain state and mostly they participate in the elections only within that state. Most regional parties have agenda fitting certain culture dominant within that state. Some regional parties also participate in neighbouring states, which have constituencies with culture similar to the first state. Different state parties were established at different periods because of different reasons. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazagham (AIADMK) and Dravida Munnetra Kazagham (DMK), Shiromani Akali Dal and Asom Gana Parishad are the important regional political parties in India.

AIADMK and DMK are the political parties of Tamil Nadu. Of these two parties, the DMK is the veteran party. The origins of these parties are prior to India's independence. The main ideology of this party is Tamil national pride. The Shiromani Akali Dal has its main hold in Punjab. This party is considered a state party, but actually it is a religion-oriented party whose followers are the Sikhs. This party also has its origin prior to India's independence. Before independence this party demanded from the British a separate entity for the Sikhs in Punjab. Asom Gana Parishad is a state political party in Assam. The AGP was formed after the historic Assam Accord of 1985 when Prafulla Kumar Mahanta was elected as the youngest chief minister of the country.

4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:
- Discuss the role and importance of political parties
- Describe the nature and ideologies of different regional political parties

4.2 ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

In the post-Independence era, the political parties came to be recognized as instruments of prime importance through which democracy could be operationalized, as India adopted a parliamentary democratic system of governance. Ideologically, in the pre-Independence era, the colonial state was marked by the presence of the Indian National Congress (INC) as a safety valve-cum-umbrella organization. The INC represented predominantly the voices of the upper and middle classes, and primarily waging the freedom struggle for achieving political independence in the country. The insistence was more on agitation politics and not on institutional politics.

After Independence, the role and importance of political parties have grown substantially and rather proportionately in accordance with the growing franchise. As political suffrage gradually became universal, parties became the means through which politicians are seeking to acquire mass electoral support. Political parties can be defined as organizational groups that seek control of the personnel and policies of the government. They mobilize and compete for popular support. In doing so, they tend to represent products of historical roots, civic traditions, cultural orientations and economy.

Evolution of the Indian Party System in the Pre-Independence Period

The origin of the Indian party system can be traced to the formation of the INC in 1885. Various other parties emerged later. Party formation during the period 1885–1947 occurred in the context of British Raj, and its policy of divide and rule, pursued by encouraging separate electorates, led to the formation of the Muslim League, the Akali Dal and the Hindu Mahasabha. As a multi-class organization, Congress was able to draw the support of peasants, land-owners, businessmen and workers. At the time of Independence, Mahatma Gandhi asserted that Congress must transform itself into a Sewa Dal (a forum of public-workers), but instead, Congress changed into a distinct political party and remained the dominant ruling party for three decades.

Fundamental Features

To understand the Indian party system, it is essential to first understand the fundamental features that appear vital in determining the nature of the Indian party system. These are as follows:

(i) The struggle for freedom and framework of parliamentary government along with politics of national reconstruction, modernization, integration and development has collectively contributed to the evolution of the Indian party system.

(ii) The national heritage of national movement formed the dimensions of national interest, national unity, political integration and national defence.

(iii) The ideological orientation with coexistence of radical 'left' to traditional 'right' during the national movement laid down a practice of toleration and accommodation of different points of view.

(iv) Moreover, the continental size of the country, comprising well-defined and distinct socio-cultural regions; with linguistic, ethnic and religious diversities;

and specific patterns of castes, communities and tribes provided conditions for the rise of regional parties and groups.

(v) The task to ensure social equality to remove the inequalities perpetuated by centuries of caste oppression gave birth to political parties and groups who strove to use these castes as perpetual vote-banks.

(vi) On economic fronts, it was a mixture of feudal but emerging developed agricultural and developing industrial economy. Economic development for raising standards of living in an under-developed and poverty-ridden society followed by the problems of Centre-state relations, allocation of resources and resulted imbalances paved the way for the emergence of such parties and groups whose approach was regional instead of national.

(vii) Lack of politically conscious middle class along with regional, sectarian and personal imbalances played a vital role in the evolution of the party system in India.

Evolution of the Party System in India in the Post-Independence Era

The evolution of Indian party system has been from 'one-party dominance' to 'multi-party coalition system'. For the purposes of better understanding, it calls for analysis of various stages of growth.

Phase I (1947–1967): The Era of One-Party Dominance

India had a party system characterized by dominance of the Congress and the existence of smaller opposition parties, which could not provide an alternative either at the Central or state level. In other words, opposition parties had little hope of obtaining sizeable majorities in the legislatures, despite the fact that on most occasions, the Congress did not gain a majority of the valid votes cast. The Congress votes varied from 49.17 per cent to 40.7 per cent. The socialists and the communists, during this period, were able to score around 10 per cent votes each. During this period, groups within the Congress in conjunction with opposition parties, assumed the role of opposition often reflecting the ideologies and interests of the other parties.

An important feature of this era was that the Congress occupied not only the broad centre of the political spectrum, but also dominated the 'left' and 'right' tendencies.

Phase II (1967–1971): The Period of Transition to a Multi-Party System

The second phase extended from 1967 to the fifth general elections. In the 1967 Assembly elections, Congress lost majority in eight states and was reduced to 54 per cent of Lok Sabha seats. This brought a number of opposition parties to the forefront, which intensified inter-party conflict. Competition and conflict increased as opposition parties formed coalition governments in several states.

The 1967 elections had created a situation in which the dominance of the Congress was strikingly reduced. Parties to the 'right' and 'left' of the Congress, the Jana Sangh (now called the Bhartiya Janata Party) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), popularly known as CPI (M), grew stronger. The possibility that opposition parties might assume power quite substantially made the Centre–state relations an important feature of inter-party competition. The 1967 elections created conditions which led to serious Centre–state conflicts.

Phase III (1971–1975): The Period of Consensus vs. Inter-party Conflict

The fifth Lok Sabha elections marked the beginning of yet another stage in the evolution of the Indian party system, and the trend continued till the imposition of the Internal Emergency in 1975. The Congress controlled by Indira Gandhi faced a large united opposition party in the General Elections of 1971. Despite the strong opposition, Congress won with a thumping majority. It won 346 out of 510 seats with 43.5 per cent of the popular vote. A significant aspect of the election was the elimination of Congress (O) and the defeat of other political parties. The mid-term polls, thus, pre-empted the development of a multi-party system. It also prevented the politics of coalition building at the national level. It was followed by a strategy to establish hegemony of the Congress at the Centre backed on populist and plebiscitary elections.

The major reason for victory was the de-linking of the Lok Sabha elections from the state assembly elections. The Parliamentary election campaign was de-linked from state-level politics and the state leaders could not exercise the same influence as they had done in the past. Indira Gandhi's campaign injected a powerful element of ideology by raising the slogan of social change and by calling upon the electorate to support her endeavour to initiate new government policies for the benefit of the poor, resulting in a new consensus in political arena. The dominant party model had given way to the differentiated structure of party competition. The process gained momentum as parties aligned to form coalition governments. For its part, the Congress accepted a confrontationist posture, both towards the opposition parties at the national and the opposition-controlled governments at the state level.

Indira Gandhi's conflict with state leadership of the Congress party as well as that of the opposition parties created a style of politics, which laid great stress on centralization in decision making. The new system entailed the abandonment of intra-party democracy. Positions in the Congress organization at all levels were invariably filled by nomination rather than election. Above all, institutional decline accompanied by decline of the state-based leaders and the replacements of regional structure of support by the central leadership adversely affected the federal scheme of Indian politics. After the 1969 split, the Congress followed a broad-based strategy consisting of re-distributive policies, such as nationalization of banks, abolition of privy purses and *Garibi Hatao*, all geared towards widening its support.

Phase IV (1975–1977): The Emergency Period

The imposition of an authoritarian Emergency in 1975 signalled the erosion of the popular support of the Congress party, the institutional decline and the weakening of the party system by suspending civil liberties, particularly freedom of the press and representative government. Opposition leaders and activists faced imprisonment, while concentration of power in the party, the government and in the office of the Prime Minister was the striking feature of the party system during this phase. Strict discipline was imposed on the Congress party. No criticism of the government was tolerated. Any attack on the Prime Minister's authority was considered to be an attack on the party's as well as the nation's unity.

The 1971–75 period, thus, marked the decline of the party system, making parties rely more on make-shift electoral arrangements, populist symbols and rhetoric for gaining support. Personality, charisma and image have acquired greater salience than party identification and party loyalties. But this trend withered away in the post-1977 period.

Phase V (1977-1980): The Janata Phase of Coalition Politics

The next phase in the evolution of India's party system may be considered from the defeat of the Congress in 1977 elections to the restoration of its rule in 1980. The 1977 elections provided a major step towards party institutionalization and possibilities of the emergence of a two-party system. By and large, independent candidates were rejected and 75.8 per cent votes were cast in favour of only two parties, viz., the Janata party and the Congress.

The defeat of the Congress and the victory of the Janata Party, made up of a coalition of parties, is a significant change in the Indian politics. The Janata Party government attempted to redirect emphasis away from the industrially oriented strategy associated with the Congress rule to rural development and small-scale industries. In general, it made attempts to decentralize the state and the economy. The government invested in programmes that created employment and generated income by relying on labour-intensive technology and distribution of productive assets. Though the Janata government's ideology and programmes were not entirely new, it had taken certain ideological and programmatic themes of rural development from the Congress' broad-based strategy and made it more pronounced.

However, the Janata Party could not achieve its goals. Rural development did not benefit the rural poor because the policy was not specifically directed to this end. Most of the policies benefited the rural rich. Moreover, the Janata Government disintegrated in mid-1979, and many of the constituents that had formed it broke away from the party. Meanwhile, the Congress split for the second time in 1978. The result was an array of fragmented parties. In this context, the Indira Gandhi-led Congress, i.e., Congress (I), appeared to be the only coherent party. This image helped the party to take advantage of the strong popular reaction against frictions and disunity of the Janata government and win 1980 General Elections.

Phase VI (1980–1989): Era of Conflict between Congress and the Regional Parties

The 1980 Lok Sabha election was a verdict on the Janata Party's failure to consolidate the electoral alignments. Thus, in 1980s, the success of Congress (I) was mainly due to the failure of national-level non-Congress parties. The Communist parties and the Jana Sangh retained the support of important groups. They also possessed effective organizations and ideologies. Bhartiya Lok Dal had displayed its presence in the Hindi-speaking states. The 1980 elections reflected these trends. The Congress won 353 seats with almost 43 per cent of the popular vote. Janata Party was the second largest party in nine states. Lok Dal was second largest party in Haryana, UP and Orissa; CPI (M) was the largest party in West Bengal, Tripura and the second largest party in Kerala. Though support for the Congress (I) was still widespread as compared to other parties, class, community and region-wise support was on its decline. The Congress had begun to lose its base in the Hindi heartland, which makes 42 per cent of the Parliamentary seats, and its support in the Muslim-dominated constituencies was also reduced. These trends indicated an erosion of Congress' regional and minority support base.

The assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 and the landslide victory of the Congress (I) due to the resultant sympathy wave made opposition in Lok Sabha irrelevant in 1984 elections. During Rajiv Gandhi's regime from 1984 to 1989, there

was complete absence of dialectical interaction between the government and the opposition. The new political situation that emerged from 1984 election was the one in which the Congress was dominant at the Centre, but not in most of the states.

Phase VII (1989–2004): Multi-Party System and Decline of the Congress Party

The 1989 elections transformed the scene at the Centre by establishing a non-Congress coalition government with a true multi-party character. People displayed a greater inclination to their caste-based parties which represented their interests. These elections recorded the decline of the Congress vote share, and the rise of BJP and the 'third front' of marginalized social group. The United Front, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), the BSP and the Samajwadi Party (SP) became key players.

The 1996 elections marked a decline in the position of national parties and growth of regional parties, which started playing significant role in the Central politics. This era marked increasing political awareness of people living in remote areas; assessment of national policies in terms of their local impact; mass preference for local politicians and greater demand for state autonomy within the limits of the existing federal structure. In social terms, the election results suggested a greater and more polarized role of caste in politics. Success of BSP among Dalits, consolidation of other backward classes (OBCs) in Bihar and UP, post-mandalization resulting in politics of reservation on caste basis and mushroom growth of various types of caste associations mostly in North India, indicated a positive correlation with election outcome.

Phase VIII (2004 onwards): Coalition System and Revival of the Congress

End of single-party coalition dominance was the message of 2004 elections. The elections rejected all the claims of the ruling NDA coalition and provided an opportunity to all non-NDA political parties led by Congress, named as UPA (United Progressive Alliance), to evolve an alternative political coalition. These elections also reflected significant increase in the weight of Left parties in national politics, with sixty seats in their favour.

Signifying the role of regional political parties, the outcome at the national level, to a great extent, became the sum total of the state-level verdicts. It appeared that any party wishing to win a national mandate has to weave its way through the different states and secure a verdict in each of these. The Congress' key alliances that clicked in the election were with regional parties of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Maharashtra.

This, however, gave yet another message that the Congress party is not dead and if it could successfully lead the country and meticulously manage 'the rainbow coalition' in the coming years, it could well return to power circles. Comprehensive common agendas (Minimum Common Programme in case of UPA and National Agenda in case of NDA) became the guidelines of these alliances. The experiment was repeated in 2009.

Coalition Government at the Centre and States

In India, the subject of coalition governments has acquired great relevance in the context of current political trends and developments. The days of politics as a grand narrative dominated by a single party seems to be over in India. The General Elections

in 2009 confirmed this trend that first became visible on the Indian political scene in 1989. The old system which was earlier called the 'Congress System' by Rajni Kothari, and 'a one-party dominant system' by W.H. Morris Jones is no longer in existence. The intensification of competitive politics has changed the party system from being a rivalry between national parties into the one between alliances and coalitions of national and state parties.

Meaning of Coalition

1. The term 'coalition' has been derived from the Latin word *coalition* which is the verbal substantive of *coalescere* - '*Co*', which means together and '*alescere*', which means to go or to grow together. According to the dictionary meaning, coalition means an act of coalescing, or uniting into one body, union of persons, states or an alliance. It is a combination of a body or parts into one whole. In the strict political sense, the term coalition stands for an alliance or temporary union for joint action of various distinct political parties at the state or the Union level to form a single government by members of distinct parties.

Prof. Ogg defines coalition in the *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, as 'a cooperative arrangement under which distinct political parties, or at all events, members of such parties unite to form a government or a ministry'. Thus, coalitions signify a parliamentary or political grouping of different parties, interest groups or factions formed for making or influencing policy decisions or securing power.

The system of coalition has certain characteristics. First, coalitions are formed for the sake of some reward, material or psychic. Second, the underlying principle of a coalition system is temporary conjunction of specific interest. Third, coalition politics is not a static but a dynamic affair as coalition players and groups dissolve, and form new one. The parties to the coalition do not lose their identity and can withdraw from the coalition as and when they find it difficult to continue as partners. As a result of such a withdrawal, the coalition may break up or some other group may join the coalition or lend support to another party, it then ceases to be a coalition. Fourth, the keynote of coalition politics is compromise and a rigid dogma has no place in it. While entering into coalition, the partners are expected to give up their rigid stand and make compromises in the spirit of give and take. Fifth, a coalition government works on the basis of a minimum programme, which may not be ideal for each partner of the coalition. Sixth, pragmatism and not ideology is the hallmark of coalition politics. In making political adjustments, principles may have to be set aside and in this process ideology is the first casualty. Seventh, the purpose of a coalition adjustment is to seize power; it may seek to stake its claim for the formation of a ministry or for pulling a ministry down.

In a vast and diverse country like India, coalitions may be a necessary stage in the evolution of democracy. A vast country like India, with people of various levels of culture and social traditions, is naturally inclined to be pluralistic and to be under a multiparty system. Generally speaking, coalition and alliances in government are an essential feature of a multi-party system where there is absence of a majority or potential majority party and where no single opposition party is regarded as an alternative government. Thus, it can be inferred that coalition government is the effect of which multi-partyism is the cause.

In multi-party countries, coalition governments often serve as stop-gaps. Sometimes, such arrangements take place between parties owing allegiance to similar

ideologies. However, if parties follow different ideologies, there may be political compromises and mutual concessions. Although these do not conduce to stability, such arrangements have been observed to 'tend to curb radicalism and likewise to liberalize conservatism'.

Types of Coalition

Coalitions have been categorized in different ways. For instance,

1. **Executive coalition:** They are definitionally coterminus with the parties formally joining the cabinet, and with their members becoming ministers at various levels of the Council of Ministers.

2. **Legislative coalition:** They are wider than cabinet coalitions, including parties that extend support to the government from the parliamentary floor without formally joining the cabinet.

3. **Federal coalition:** They are defined as a group of parties that are part of the cabinet or legislative coalitions at the centre as well as in some states.

The Indian Experience

By now there is growing realization that coalition governments are perhaps an inevitable outcome in a multi-cultural and federal polity like India, where the homogenizing effects of political institution may often be insufficient to organize social pluralities into two major parties in electoral and legislative arenas like those in Anglo-American democracies and Australia (except for Canada since 1993).

Coalition Politics at the Centre

In its initial years, with an exception or two, India has enjoyed a single-party government at the centre. The Ninth Lok Sabha elections (1989) proved to be a decisive turning point, thus initiating an era of coalition and minority governments in New Delhi.

1. National Front/United Front Coalition Experiment

The National Front experiment, which was a federation of national and regional parties formed under the leadership of the Janata Party in 1988, provides the best example of the fragmentation and re-alignment within the party system along regional lines. Even though the Congress emerged as the largest single party, it did not have a clear majority in the Parliament. As a result, the National Front was invited to form the government with the Leftist Parties and BJP agreeing to support the government from outside. The National Front consisted of the Janata Dal (JD), Telegu Desam Party (TDP), DMK, Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and other small groupings. The objective of keeping the Congress at bay brought two diametrically opposite political forces: the BJP and the Left under a broad coalition. The National Front (NF) government lasted barely 11 months in power, from December 1989 to November 1990. Weak coordination and fragmented collective responsibility of the Cabinet marked the end of the National Front Coalition.

The Chandra Shekhar government which succeeded National Front Government was virtually a government of splinter groups of Janata Party, which remained in office with the support of Congress (I) for barely four months. Chandra Shekhar belonged to Janata Dal (Secular), a splinter group of Janata Dal.

The mid-term elections of 1991 once again saw a hung Parliament. The Congress was invited to form a minority government. The government depended for its existence on the support of BJP and Leftist Parties. P.V. Narsimha Rao became the Prime Minister of India. This minority government of Congress (I) was converted into a majority government in December when Ajit Singh with ten members of Janata Dal (A) merged with the Congress.

Meanwhile, from September 1995 onwards, efforts were made to revive the National Front by the TDP, Janata Dal and the ruling Left Front in West Bengal, encouraged by the poor performance of the Congress party in the 1994–95 State Assembly elections. By including many regional groups, an idea of a 'Third Front' was mooted.

The Lok Sabha elections of 1996 produced a hung parliament again, with none of the political party or political groups able to secure majority. As the leader of the largest single party in the Lok Sabha, Atal Bihari Vajpayee was invited to form the government. But after 13 days, the Vajpayee government fell as it could not garner enough support.

Thereafter, the 'Third Front' got the opportunity to form the government. On 1 June 1996, H.D. Deve Gowda, leader of the United Front, in coalition of thirteen parties, was sworn in as the Prime Minister. Congress and CPI (M), two bitter rivals, agreed to support the United Front from outside. The coalition government which thus came to power at the Centre was not the result of an alliance forged before the elections but the result of compromises and bargains entered into after the elections to capture power and keep BJP out of power. The other important features of this coalition were preponderance of the regional political parties and the entry of CPI for the first time in a coalition at the centre.

This experiment of coalition government at the centre suffered a setback following the withdrawal of support by the Congress. Thereafter, United Front elected I.K. Gujral as its new leader. He was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India on 21 April 1997. The Congress supported this government from outside. However, the Gujral government also proved short-lived because on 28 November 1997 the Congress (I) withdrew its support. The basic constraint of the United Front was its dependence on the Congress support to remain in power. It had to look over its shoulders all the time to ensure that this support was not withdrawn. Ultimately, it collapsed because of the withdrawal of Congress support.

Despite its eclipse as a substantial political force in Parliament, especially after the 1997 national elections, the Third Front as a model continues to remain viable simply because the political space structured around the opposition to the BJP and the Congress exists. Despite its short tenure at the national level, its achievement cannot be undermined. In fact, it was the acceptance of the Mandal Commission's suggestions under the V.P. Singh-led National Front government that brought about radical changes in India's social fabric.

2. BJP and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)

In 1999, elections were held for the Lok Sabha. NDA led by BJP, formed before the elections, secured a comfortable majority. The Alliance, comprising twenty-four parties, elected Atal Bihari Vajpayee as its leader who became the Prime Minister on 19 March 1998. NDA government remained in power for five years.

3. United Progressive Alliance (UPA)

The NDA's 'India Shining' Campaign did not go down too well with the masses and the NDA got defeated in both 2004 and 2009 Lok Sabha elections. The UPA led by Congress (I) and consisting of Lok Jantantrik Party, and RJD defeated NDA. Both times, Manmohan Singh became the Prime Minister of India.

Also, now the Congress seems to have finally jettisoned its dearly held belief that it could defeat the BJP-led alliance on its own. This is evident from the game-plan that features topmost in its election strategy, which is 'to dislodge the NDA at all costs even if the party's interest has to take a back seat in the coalition politics in various states'.

Coalition Politics in States

Here, we are taking the example of the state of Bihar. Bihar is one of the States in India, which has experienced coalition politics for some time. In Bihar, the coalition politics made its beginning after the fourth General Election. Till 1972, the state of Bihar saw the coming and going of a number of coalition governments. In 1972, the Congress won a clear-cut majority and formed the government.

After having majority governments for a few years, Bihar again witnessed an era of coalition governments. In February 1990, no single party was able to get clear majority. The Rashtriya Janata Party (RJD), which emerged as the largest party in the Assembly, formed the government with the support of its allies, particularly the Leftist parties, under Laloo Prasad Yadav.

In the Assembly elections of February 2000, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Laloo Prasad Yadav could manage to capture only 124 of the 324 seats. He tried to form the government in Bihar by securing support of the Congress and other groups but could not muster the necessary majority. On the other hand, Nitish Kumar, of Janata Dal (U), with the support of BJP and Samata Party, staked his claim to form the government. He was sworn in as the Chief Minister on 3 March, 2000. However, he could not prove his majority and therefore he resigned. Thereupon, Rabri Devi was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Bihar for the third time. Later on, Congress decided to join the government and all its members were sworn in as ministers in Bihar. At present, Nitish Kumar is the Chief Minister of Bihar and is representing the NDA at the state level.

Politics of Coalition (post-1989): An Overview

In a rather short span of over a decade, India has witnessed coalition governments of four major types:

(a) The centrist Congress minority government of P.V. Narsimha Rao initiated new-liberal economic reforms in 1991

(b) Three Left-supported governments formed by the Janata Dal-led National/ United Front

(c) Two right-led coalition governments formed by the BJP-led NDA under Vajpayee, a votary of secular version of Hindu nationalism

(d) Centrist Congress again coming to power in the form of UPA

With the decline of Congress as a dominant party, the national party system seems more fragmented and mushrooming of regional level parties which have the appearance of chequered chessboard of rival and allied parties. The past and the present

trends of coalition governments in New Delhi suggest three possible models of power-sharing:

(a) Coalition of more or less equal partners, e.g., the National front and the United Front

(b) Coalition of relatively smaller parties led by a major party, e.g., NDA

(c) Coalition of relatively smaller parties facilitated but not necessarily led by a Prime Minister from the major party, e.g. the coalition of parties formed in 2004 and 2009 around the Congress avowing secular Indian nationalism

It is important to note that in the era of coalition, governance at the centre is not possible without the active participation of important regional parties. The main thrust of the argument is that a faceless and shapeless conglomerate of disparate coalitional partners is not able to provide leadership in a federal system and the political capacity of the Central government to arbitrate in inter-state disputes has gradually weakened. For example, the central government's Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies made a proposal that the power of the centre to procure food should be 'transferred' to the state governments, but this suggestion for 'decentralization' was not accepted by the chief ministers of the states that were producing surplus food grains. The critics of centralization such as Akali Dal and Indian National Lok Dal of Haryana (INLD) vetoed the attempt of the Central government (NDA government). Incidentally, both these parties were partners in the coalition government of Vajpayee.

If the centralized federal system of the Congress party dominance phase was criticized for 'pushing policies' on unwilling states, extremely weak coalition governments at the Centre have not been able to even 'persuade' state governments to amend out-of-date and obsolete public policies. Further, many a times, regional parties as partners of the Central coalitional government have 'particularistic interests'. Inter-water disputes have also not been dealt with properly.

Thus, coalition governments in India at the centre do not have the ability to provide leadership to the whole country in dealing with federal constitutional and political issues because coalitions at the Centre are themselves dependent on the fragile and shifting support of the regional parties and leaders. The Centre should have a pre-eminent position in the Centre–state relations, otherwise it cannot act as a referee or an umpire between Centre–state disputes.

Problems of coalition politics in India

Apart from lack of cohesiveness and stability of the coalition governments and the inability of Centre to take decision on time, a number of other problems beset the coalition politics in India.

1. Collective responsibility requires that ministers should be able to express their views frankly in the expectation that they can argue freely in private while maintaining a united front when decisions have been reached. This, in turn, requires that the privacy of opinions expressed in Cabinet and ministerial committees should be maintained. It is precisely this frank expression of views and free private argument which are often not obtainable in coalition settings.

2. Ideally, the confluence of interests for coalitions must be dictated by coherent and principled political beliefs and not opportunism alone. However, the purpose of coalition governments in India so far has merely represented a translation of anti-Congressism or anti-BJP–ism into a tactic for power sharing.

3. The experience of coordination committees has also not been very impressive. The culture of coalitions is in its essence the culture of compromise. It is based, to a large extent, on the sharing of elective and non-elective offices. A coalition government, in a system like ours, cannot be effectively managed by the cabinet alone. To keep the coalition united, the Prime Minister and his colleagues must learn to promote reconciliation of conflicting policies and ambitions in two forums, one outside Parliament and the other inside.

Given the multi-layered nature of Indian coalitions, with some parties joining the cabinet while others extending support only from the parliamentary floor, the Parliamentary Committees may be used as additional foci of sharing power. The Coordination Committee also needs to be strengthened by imparting greater seriousness and regularity as a sounding board for policies in broad terms to be worked out in detail by the cabinet. This will avoid the embarrassment of the rolling back of the cabinet/ministerial decisions, notorious for its frequency during the BJP-led coalition government.

Prospects of Coalition Politics in India

Coalition governments in India, in spite of problems, have been successful in retaining democratic legitimacy and national unity. Major policy shifts like liberalization, economic reforms, grassroots decentralization, federal decentralization, in theory or practice can be largely attributed to the onset of coalition governance. Coalition governments in states and at the Centre are compelled to depart from the rigid Congress-centred and the Hindu-right orientations and accommodate people with other orientations. This led to the integration of the party system as well as the nation. The national parties which once rejected the idea of coalition politics, have today accepted coalition politics as an indispensable exercise.

To conclude, coalition politics in India is now inevitable. It is unavoidable because the social, economic and political order in the country has changed beyond recognition since Independence. Coalitions will remain because the Indian polity does not hesitate any more to exercise its franchise. Coalitions will thrive because India now knows that extracting good governance is important for the self-interest of all sections of its society.

Pressure Groups in Indian Politics

Pressure groups operate actively especially in a representative government committed to the realization of the ideal of social service state. The state also makes itself increasingly dependent on them while handling its sphere of planning and social service. However, the number of groups and the intensity with which they are able to pursue their objectives depend upon the social legitimization of group activity and the prospects of fulfilling group demands in a given political system.

The genesis of the pressure groups may be traced back to the pre-independence days when a large number of pressure groups existed to put forth their reasoning and argument before the British government in order to pressurize it and to seek concessions and privileges for the members of the pressure groups. In fact, the Indian National Congress in 1885 was more like a pressure group to plead for reforms and to articulate the interests of the educated middle class. As the Congress donned the mantle of a political party gradually, various pressure groups began to mushroom to safeguard the interests of other sections. Most remarkable was the formation of the All India Trade

Union Congress in 1920 and the All India Kisan Sabha in 1936 that opened new chapters in the book of pressure groups.

In the post-independence scenario, the processes of democracy and development provided a fertile ground for a huge number of pressure groups to come into existence. Various sections of society began to create their own interest groups to make their voices heard in policy formulation and the ever-increasing state activities. In the wake of planned economic development, even the polity inspires the creation of pressure groups for their contribution to developmental activities. Moreover, the consolidation of the party system has also contributed to the expansion in the base and scope of activities of pressure groups in certain defined sectors of economy, society and polity. For example, with an eye on inculcating the voters for their parties on a long-term basis, almost all major political parties in the country have floated various frontal organizations in the areas of trade union activities, farmers' fronts, women morchas and students' wings. There also exist politically neutral pressure groups like the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). All these pressure groups ensure safeguards from adverse policy initiatives of the government.

4.3 REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

4.3.1 Asom Gana Parishad (AGP)

Asom Gana Parishad (Assam Peoples Association) is a political party in Assam, India that came into existence after the historic Assam Accord of 1985 when Prafulla Kumar Mahanta was elected as the youngest chief minister in the country. The AGP formed government twice from 1985 to 1989 and from 1996 to 2001. The party came apart, with former Chief Minister, Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, forming the Asom Gana Parishad (Progressive) but regrouped on 14th October 2008 at Golaghat.

The party comprises two MPs in the Lok Sabha and two MPs in the Rajya Sabha. AGP came into being after the six-year-long Assam Agitation against Illegal Infiltration of Foreigners from Bangladesh into Assam, led by All Assam Students Union (AASU). For a long time, the Assamese have been complaining against infiltration of illegal migrants from Bangladesh. They feared that it is changing the demographic, social and economic constitution of the state.

In 1979, AASU began peaceful democratic movement that demanded that all illegal migrants in the state should be identified, followed by removing their names from the country's electoral rolls and deporting them on grounds of illegal occupation of land. This movement lasted for long, amidst which the Assembly Election was held in 1983, which the people protested again. AASU then constituted the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) comprising representatives of different organizations including the Asom Sahitya Sabha, two regional political parties – Asom Jatiyabadi Dal and Purbanchaliya Loka Parishad, the Sadau Asom Karmachari Parishad, Asom Jatiyabadi Yuva-Chatra Parishad, Asom Yuvak Samaj, All Assam Central and semi-Central Employees' Association and others.

Successive discussions with consecutive governments in New Delhi resulted in signing of the Assam Accord on August 15, 1985 between the AASU and the government, with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi being a witness. The movement, referred to as Assam Agitation, is remembered as the one of the longest peaceful movements that the world

Check Your Progress

1. The Indian National Congress primarily represented the voices of the upper and middle classes in the country. (True/False)

2. Mention any one fundamental feature of the Indian party system.

had seen following the freedom movement of India. Thereafter, the State Assembly was dissolved and the Congress government headed by Hiteswar Saikia, which gained power in February 1983, was dismissed.

According to a national convention of the people of Assam, organized at Golaghat on October 13-14, 1985 a regional political party under the name and style of Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) was to be established, and the Asom Gana Parishad was eventually launched at Golaghat on October 14, 1985. By then, the earlier central executive committee of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) was dissolved at a convention in Lakhimpur in September, and Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, the president of the AASU during the period of the peaceful democratic movement, was elected the president of the presidium of the new political party. Asom Jatiyabadi Dal and the Purbanchaliya Loka Parishad amalgamated with AGP as well. Members from other organizations also joined. The AGP contested the State Assembly elections held in December 1985 and swept the polls by winning 67 of the 126 seats apart from capturing seven of the 14 Lok Sabha (Parliament) seats, and formed the Government of Assam.

4.3.2 Shiromani Akali Dal

Party Policy

At the national level, while remaining in the forefront of national mainstream, the Shiromani Akali Dal has consistently maintained its commitment to a grand privilege for Punjabis in general and particularly the Sikhs, constantly striving to protect their political, economic, social and cultural rights. The Shiromani Akali Dal party is committed to the highest ideals of peace, communal harmony, universal brotherhood and welfare of humanity (Sarbat Da Bhala).

Federal Structure

The need for cooperative federalism based on political and fiscal autonomy was for the first time advocated by Shiromani Akali Dal, a concept that was opposed initially but later accepted and adopted by almost every regional and national political party. According to SAD, setting up a real federal structure is the only way to strengthen the objectives of national unity and prosperity. Obstacles in the path of such a national system by the Congress party caused considerable harm to the interests of development and prosperity in the States and deferred India's emergence as a global leader for more than six decades.

Opposes Unitarian Mindset

The Shiromani Akali Dal is strongly against the unitarian mindset. The latest indicator of the Congress' anti-federal mindset is provided by a statement by the present Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in which he has described regional parties as an obstacle in the way of national development. This mindset is causes political rage in a country which holds pride in giving predominance to the will of the people, and is also insulting to the combined wisdom of the people who have on a repeated basis expressed complete confidence in the ability of regional parties to manage affairs at the national level.

Chandigarh and the Punjabi-Speaking Areas

The Shiromani Akali Dal has battled for including Chandigarh and other Punjabi-Speaking areas in Punjab. However, unfortunately, Congress governments, one after the other, at the Centre have always tried ignoring this demand. However, the peaceful and democratic

struggle of Shiromani Akali Dal will continue in order to fulfil Punjab's genuine claim for making Chandigarh and other Punjabi-speaking areas a part of Punjab.

River Waters Issue

As far as the river waters issue is concerned, the SAD has always demanded implementation of the Riparian Principle, nationally and internationally accepted by the Supreme Court and applied by it in every river water dispute, such as the Narmada River Water Dispute. The Constitution holds that river water is a state subject and non-Riparian states cannot be a part of any dispute arising out of sharing of the river waters.

Besides the question of the constitutional authority of Punjab's demand, Punjab's river waters must be protected because the state is already gripped by severe crisis and could be reduced to a desert in a few more years on account of the shocking decline in the level of sub-soil water due to substantial diminution by means of tube well irrigation. Unfortunately, consecutive Congress governments at the Centre and in the states have violated the Riparian Principle.

Minorities Issue

The Shiromani Akali Dal has always respected and looked up to India's rich linguistic, cultural and religious miscellany. The Congress has, however, steadily functioned in undermining the interests of the minorities in the country. It advocates cultural and political consistency, as opposed to emotional and cultural amalgamation.

The Shiromani Akali Dal aims at protecting and promoting the interests of the minorities in the country so as to enable them to play a significantly constructive role in the progress of the people of our country. The party symbolizes a powerful India that is capable of being a global leader. The party also believes that intensifying its constituents ascertains achieving its objective. The blend of strong, prosperous and confident minorities on the one hand and politically and economically strong states on the contrary ensures a prosperous future for India.

Vision

Our goal: Changing the way the world conceives of Punjab and the way Punjabis consider themselves. The aim lies in ensuring self-esteem and self-respect of every Punjabi whether urban or rural. We are completely aware of the large expectations that people have of us and consider it our obligation to fulfil these expectations.

Other components of our vision include:

- Bridging the gap between the people and their government through extensive reforms concerned with governance by transforming the approach to administration.
- Improving education and health, with more teachers and more doctors, supported by state-of-the-art amenities in schools and hospitals. Also completely changing higher education by establishing centres of excellence, such as world-class university and ISB.
- Increasing agricultural and industrial growth by developing world class infrastructure, road network and air connectivity apart from making Punjab a power-surplus state and ensuring 24-hour power supply to the commercial, industrial and farm sectors as well as to the domestic consumers.

Political Mission

The political mission of the party lies in strengthening Shiromani Akali Dal at the grass root level and result in complete internal democracy within the party, so that the party is able to sustain the confidence of the people of the state on a long-term basis and make sure that the tasks initiated reach their hilt.

The party has its objective in establishing a link between the youth force with the Taksali cadre within the party. The youth would provide the necessary enthusiasm, whereas the Taksali Akalis would carry on providing guidance and ideological strength and transparency to the party. The SAD gains inspiration from the righteous ideals put forward by our great Gurus, saints and seers which focuses on respecting every religion, human brotherhood and Sarbat da Bhala are the means to our approach to life. The party's commitment lies in maintaining peace and communal harmony.

With our political ally Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), we are on a mission for the overall welfare and development of the state. As a part of this mission Punjab, the SAD-BJP government has already emerged as a pioneer in the country by launching reforms in governance.

4.3.3 Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

Conjeevaram Natarajan Annadurai was popularly called *anna* or elder brother. He was also known as Arignar Anna meaning Anna, the scholar. He rose to fame for his literary and cultural achievements and successfully introduced Tamil Cinema for Political propaganda. Annadurai's journalistic past helped him to establish his political acumen and later to become the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. His untimely death after two years in power brought an end to an illustrious career. He was a member of the Dravidar Kazhagam and also editor of several political journals. He rose to prominence in the party under the guidance of Periyar.

Annadurai's Childhood

Annadurai was born to Natarajan and Bangaru Ammal of the dominant Sengunta Mudaliar caste in Kancheepuram on 15 September 1909. His sister Rajamani Ammal raised him. Rani became his wife while he was still a student at the age of 21. As they did not have children of their own, they later adopted and raised Rajamani's grandchildren. Anna studied in Pachaiyappa's High School, but left school to work as a clerk in the town's municipal office to assist with the family finances.

He completed his graduation and post-graduation from Pachaiyappa's college in Chennai. He worked for a short while as an English teacher in Pachaiyappa High School. He began involving himself in journalism and politics after leaving his teaching job.

Annadurai's Hindu faith made him affirm his belief in 'Onrae Kulam, Oruvane Thevan' or, one God and one humanity. Those who followed used his slogan, 'One race, One god'. He was against superstitions and oppressive practices of religion, but never did he disregard the spiritual values of society and religion.

Beginning of Annadurai's Political Journey

As he was interested in politics, Annadurai joined the Justice Party in 1935. The Justice Party originated when non-Brahmins organized a work group that later transformed into

a political party under the guidance of Dr T. M. Nair and Sir Pitti Theagaroya Chetty. The official name of the Party was South Indian Liberal Federation; however, it was generally known as the Justice Party. Periyar was the President of the Party when Annadurai became a member of the Party. Due to his literary prowess, he was promoted to the position of an editor of the magazine *Vidhuthalai* and the Justice Party. He later became a part of the editorial in *Kudi Arasu*. Periyar renamed the Party in 1944 as Dravidar Kazhagam and decided not to contest political elections anymore.

Birth of DMK

The Indian National Congress was dominated by Brahmin members though it had an agenda of fighting the British for Indian independence. Periyar decided not to celebrate 15 August 1947 as the Independence Day as he felt that this independence would bring the non-Brahmins under Brahmin domination throughout the country. Annadurai disagreed with Periyar as he felt that the Indian independence was too precious to be mourned. He saw this as the sole victory not only for the Congress, but also for all people throughout the country. He was also disgruntled with Periyar when he married Maniammai.

Annadurai opposed the idea of Periyar to stay away from politics.

He strongly believed that political power certainly helps to bring about change in the society and it is only when leaders are armed with political power that they can introduce and implement policies of social reforms as it gives them a legal edge. As a reaction to Periyar's move to remain apolitical he moved out. Periyar believed strongly that through education and canvassing the masses, social reformation can be achieved better and outside politics, rather than staying within the government.

After becoming disgruntled with Periyar, Annadurai decided to launch his own party. He teamed with E.V.K. Sampath (Periyar's nephew and until then considered his political heir) and took those who too wanted to drift. The newly formed party was named Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. Though Annadurai belonged to the upper Mudaliar caste, he fought for social justice for the lower castes and thus rapidly gained popular support. As a member of Dravidar Kazhagam, Annadurai had supported Periyar when he had called for a separate Tamil land. However, once the DMK was formed, Sampath started feeling that the demand for a separate land for the Tamils was not justified. He left DMK and formed the Tamil Nationalist Party in 1961.

In 1962, Annadurai advocated the right of self-determination by the Dravidians in the Rajya Sabha. He also asserted that Dravidians should have a right to establish their own state. However, when states were formed based on the linguistic preference of the people, wherein Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam-speaking areas were removed from the Madras Presidency, DMK realized that the call for Dravida Nadu needs to be changed to a call for Tamil Nadu, land of the Tamils.

The Indian Constitution was amended due to the Chinese aggression in 1953. The Anti-Secessionist Amendment Act or the 16th Amendment Act banned parties with sectarian interests from participating in elections. Annadurai tried to stop this Bill in the Parliament as an MP. However, he had to drop his demands for a separate state for the Dravidians once the Bill became an Act. The Party later aimed at better cooperation between the southern states.

In 1953, Annadurai called for three protests. The first was against Jawaharlal Nehru who had used derogatory language against the leaders of the South. The second

was directed against the Chief Minister of Madras, C. Rajagopalachari, opposing the introduction of vocational education. The third protest challenged renaming Kallakkudi as Dalmiyapuram as the latter symbolized domination of North India. These protests ended with Annadurai being imprisoned for three months.

Annadurai's Role in anti-Hindi Agitations

In 1928, Motilal Nehru proposed that Hindi be used as the official language of the nation. However, Tamil leaders felt that this would always make non-Hindi–speaking population second-grade citizens. They thus started anti-Hindi agitations. Since the state government in Tamil Nadu was headed by the Congress, C. Rajagopalachari, the then Chief Minister accepted Motilal's proposal. These further intensified the protests. Annadurai took the help of some famous poets like Bharathidasan in protesting against the Chief Minister on this account. In 1938, he participated in the first Anti-Hindi conference held in Kanchipuram. The government withdrew Hindi as the official language in 1940 after a few years of intense protests by Tamil intelligentsia and the resultant self-immolation by young students.

Hindi was provided a special status by the Constitution and gained undue importance in 1965 where it was again declared as an official language throughout the country. Annadurai strongly opposed this move as Hindi was not the language spoken by majority of people in south India. In 1960, the DMK held an open-air conference against this move in Madras. Annadurai presided over this meeting and distributed black flags to other leaders to be shown to the President of India during his visit to the state. However, sensing an unpleasant scenario, Nehru mentioned in the Parliament that English would remain the official language till the time the southern states accepted the new proposition. DMK thus gave up its plan to show the President its black flags. The Party also appealed to the Centre to bring about a constitutional amendment in this regard. However, the Central government did not really undertake any constitutional amendment in favour of English. On the other hand, it actually went ahead and declared Hindi as the official language. When the state saw massive riots, the state government blamed the DMK of instigating people. However, modern political researchers are of the opinion that these riots were not masterminded by the DMK. They portrayed the genuine frustrations and disgust of the common man over such shameless act. Annadurai requested all students to cease protests of any kinds with immediate effect and was arrested on charges of anti-state activities. In 1967, Annadurai became the Chief Minister of the state.

As a Statesman

When Nedunchezhian was elected as the general Secretary of DMK, Annadurai stepped down from the post at the Tiruchirappalli conference in May 1956. In this conference the Party also decided to contest the next election to be held in 1957. DMK became the opposition party after winning fifteen Assembly and two parliamentary seats. In 1962, DMK emerged as a major political party, next only to the Congress by winning fifty Assembly seats though Annadurai had lost the election. He was nominated as a Member of Parliament this year.

Chief Minister Annadurai

The elections of 1967 saw the Congress emerge as a winner in Madras. They had lost the election in nine other states. For the first time in India's political history, the non-Congress parties formed a coalition to form the opposition. Though Annadurai served as the Chief Minister of Madras for a short tenure of 1967–1969, he was the change that people wished to see. He introduced a number of welfare schemes for the uplift of the poor and the needy. He renamed Madras state as Tamil Nadu, the abode of the Tamils. He gained more power from the Centre and championed the cause of autonomy for states.

Death and Legacy

Annadurai passed away on 3 February 1969 from cancer. His funeral saw the highest number of people gathering to get a glimpse of their leader. About 15 million people gathered to attend his last rites held on the northern end of the Marina beach in Madras which has since been named Anna Square. Annadurai's government was the first non-Congress government to have achieved power of the state since independence. When MGR named his new party once DMK split, he used the named Anna DMK (ADMK) as a mark of respect for the political leader who emerged as a great social reformer and a friend of the poor and needy.

Anti-Hindi Agitation

The term 'Anti-Hindi Agitation' is used in short for 'Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation'. Tamil Nadu did not have anything against the Hindi language. However, popular sentiment in the state has been against this forcible imposition right from the beginning and perhaps it still lurks beneath the calm in many pockets of Tamil Nadu. Tamils feel that Hindi is alien to them as they cannot identify with it and most importantly Hindi carries the burden of being pro-Brahmin and pro-Sanskrit which the Dravidians vociferously opposed.

The anti-Hindi agitation leaders maintained:

> …let that language live and flourish where it belongs; in Hindi lands and wherever else people want it as official language or link language or national language or lingua franca. People of Tamil Nadu do not want it that way and are opposed to its imposition on them. Forcing Indian Government employees from Tamil Nadu to learn and work in Hindi (in non-Hindi areas) is Hindi imposition…

According to prominent historians, the reasons for the south to have resisted the acceptance of Hindi as a compulsory language at the school level and as the official language for the state administration are many. Ethnic communities like the Tamils have preserved their traditions and heredity for ages. Language had been a vital part of this tradition and accepting Hindi would defeat the preservation of traditions. In fact, all aspects of their socio-cultural life, like literature, religion, archaeology and were all language dependent. In case Hindi was accepted as a major language by the region, it would prove to be catastrophic for these aspects of their socio-political life.

Anti-Hindi Agitation in the Pre-Independence Period (1938–1947)

Anti-Hindi agitations started even before the British rule ended in India. In 1937, the Congress Party won the general elections in the Madras Presidency and C. Rajagopalachari became the Chief Minister. He was the first to introduce Hindi as a compulsory language in schools and colleges. Tamil inhabitants of the Madras Presidency immediately started protesting against the imposition. Protestors gathered outside Rajaji's house as the news of making Hindi compulsory started spreading. About a thousand people including seventy-three women were arrested during these protests. The first Anti-Hindi Conference was held at Kanchipuram under the leadership of Periyar, and Annadurai.

However, despite these protests, Hindi was made a compulsory language in schools in 1938. An Anti-Hindi Command was formed by Tamil patriots and Viswanatham was elected the Secretary while Somasundara was made the President of the society. Periyar joined the group and turned it into a political agenda of the Self-Respect Movement. Due to mass protests that would often turn violent and the cognizable frustration of common people, the state government decided to remove Hindi from being a compulsory language.

However, when Hindi was made compulsory in 1942 and 1946, again the anti-Hindi movement gained momentum. Periyar made this his primary agenda again and entrusted Annadurai, his top lieutenant, to carry on the protests.

Anti-Hindi Agitations in the Post-Independence Period

After gaining independence, the Congress Party came to power at the Centre as well as in the Madras Presidency in 1947. It immediately introduced Hindi as the national language and as a compulsory language at the school level. On 17 July, 1947, Periyar convened an anti-Hindi conference in Madras with Adigalar as the President. Anti-Hindi demonstrations were carried out by dravidar Kazhagam where thousands courted arrest.

Dravidar Kazhagam (DK) organized many anti-Hindi demonstrations in front of schools and thousand of demonstrators were arrested and jailed. All these acts were however not sporadic, but didn't have the strength to sustain and Hindi was still taught as a compulsory subject in schools. When the Indian Constitution came into effect in 1950, Hindi was made the official language of India despite intense protests from the southern states. After thirteen long years of anti-Hindi struggle, Annadurai expressed his concern with the following words: 'Making a language (Hindi) that is the mother tongue of a region of India the official language for all the people of India is tyranny. We believe that it will give benefits and superiority to one region (the Hindi-speaking region). If Hindi were to become the official language of India, Hindi-speaking people will govern us. We will be treated like third rate citizens. Hindi would become the sole official language on January 26, 1965. English would also be used as an official language during the interim 15 year period.'

The Madras government made Hindi compulsory for sixth to eleventh grades. The Dravidar Kazhagam and the newly formed Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam protested against this order and gathered common people for demonstrations and meetings. The government was once again forced to remove the order.

Students' Involvement in Anti-Hindi Agitations

Tamil Nadu's students organized an Anti-Hindi conference in Thiruchirapalli (Thiruchi or Trichy). Such a gathering happened for the first time where students were to play a major role. DMK too organized Anti-Hindi Protest Conference that was held On 13 October 1963 in Madras, where the students were asked to burn the 17th Part of the Indian Constitution as a mark of protest. Later, DMK leaders and cadres burnt the Constitution all over Tamil Nadu as a mark of protest, and were arrested and jailed.

People volunteered to burn themselves as a mark of ultimate sacrifice. It was a situation straight out of any emotional drama but it was real. People actually poured gasoline and lit their bodies for the cause of Tamil identity and their language. Self-immolation anywhere as a mark of protest in the world had never been seen other than in Vietnam that winessed similar immolation bids by Buddhist monks as protests against the dictatorial rule. Veerappan, Chinnaswami, Muthu, Sivalingam, Sarangapani are the names people take with reverence, because they laid down their lives for the cause of Tamil language. Students from University of Madras went on a one-day strike on 25 January, because 26 January was a holiday. It was a mark of protest. During these protests, schools, colleges, shops and stores were kept closed with the help of university students. There was a tremendous change in mass psyche—from complacency to active support. The scale of the protests was unprecedented and massive. In India nothing of this intensity had happened in the post-independence period. More than 50,000 people participated in the protest marches that were organized in most towns and cities in Tamil Nadu. The protestors included students and common man who joined the march. People initially protested peacefully with colourful placards and banners consisting of anti-Hindi slogans. In some cities, students were seen beating drums and playing bugles while they marched in protests. Pall bearers in Coimbatore carried the dead body of the Hindi demon as they marched down the main streets of the city. It was a symbolic gesture but sent out a clear message for the state authorities that Hindi cannot be forced.

However, when the pro-government trade unionists beat up students and protestors in Madurai between 27 January and 3 February, the protestors also retaliated with violence. The protestors were arrested by the state police that angered anti-Hindi demonstrators all over the state. This resulted in massive rallies on 27 January in different parts of Tamil Nadu. These rallies were laced with a sentiment of fight for right to freedom. The public supported the students and as a mark of support many stores remained closed. When students were marching through the streets, people stood in silence and supported them. Indefinite strike was announced by Tamil Nadu Students Anti-Hindi Agitation Committee.

The unprecedented extent of public support to the students in the Anti-Hindi Imposition Protests sent a message of alert to the Indian Parliament and Indian Government. Congress leaders like Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, Home Minister Gulzarilal Nanda and the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Bhaktavatsalam decided to stop the anti-Hindi protests with brute force but that badly hurt sentiments and the hatred created by the use of force widened the gulf.

With government orders, Indian Army soldiers, Central Reserve Police and out-of-state police were moved into Tamil Nadu to put down the protest. The result was indiscriminate firing into crowds, manhandling of protestors who were beaten and even

maimed and killed. But the spirit was too high to be put under duress. However, even brute force could not stop the demonstrators. Central minister Subramaniam promised that the Parliament would impose laws so that imposition of Hindi could be prevented. The students called off their strike when assured with such a promise and called off the agitations on 12 February. On 1 August 1968, a Language Act was passed which failed to meet the expectations of the Tamils.

General Elections 1967

The 1967 general lections saw defeat for the Congress Party, which may be directly linked with the imposition of Hindi due to protests by Tamil people. The Party President, the Chief Minister and every minister lost the election. As people identified the DMK with anti-Hindi agitations, they emerged the winners. However, despite a landslide victory, the DMK at the state level could not stop the Centre from imposition of Hindi by the Centre. In 1968, Tamil students agitated for a day against the imposition of Hindi. However, this protest could not be compared in scale and nature with the previous protests that the state underwent in 1965.

Now, public enthusiasm even though not very strong in Tamil Nadu, but that should not be construed as Tamil people have accepted Hindi. It was not a possible way of keeping the issue afloat through demonstrations and protests, but the discontentment certainly continues. When one talks to the Tamil people, one will learn their resentment against Hindi. The government officials detested it when they had to take Hindi classes and clear examinations in order to retain their government jobs.

The resentment of Tamil people continued and a seething grudge against Hindi imposition in their hearts and minds had been maintained in a subtle form. Whether it will one day burst or will die down, no one knows, but certainly an indication of its presence in certain groups who do not agree to accept domination is marked. Several occasions witness people rise with secessionist demands. In 1968, representatives of the Tamil Nadu Students Anti-Hindi Agitation Committee met the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at the Madras airport and handed her a letter that said, 'if Hindi imposition continued, they would have to fight for independence (freedom) for Tamil Nadu'. In Coimbatore, in the same year, students hoisted the 'Independent Tamil Nadu Flag' maintaining that the only way to end Hindi imposition was to gain independence from India. The 1980s saw the rise of the Tamil Nadu Liberation Army which brought as its agenda, an armed struggle for a free Tamil land. The founders cited the imposition of Hindi and economic discrimination as the two basic reasons for launching the Party. Though the common man might not have supported the Party in achieving its aims, they are still fighting for a free Tamil land.

Annadurai as Chief Minister

Annadurai's inherent interest in politics attracted him towards the Justice Party which he joined in 1935. He because the editor of *Vidhuthalai*. The Justice Party was formed by elite non-Brahmins. The Party grew into a political party of repute under leaders like Sir Pitti Theagaroya Chatty and Dr T.M. Nair. Periyar was the President of the Party when Anna had joined. Periyar renamed the Justice party to Dravidar Kazhagam in 1944. Annadurai had already proved his mettle and had become a leader to reckon

with under the able guidance of EVR Naicker. Annadurai's proactive role in organizing anti-Hindi protests gave him fame and he had become popular among the mass but it was also caused by his being a person of literature, culture, and cinema. Annadurai served as the Chief Minister briefly from 1967–69. He was a visionary leader who wished to bring about holistic change in the lives of the underprivileged. He brought regional parties like the DMK to limelight, removing all traces of the Congress government at the state level. He even legalized self-respect weddings in Madras with the youngest cabinet in the country. These marriages denounced the presence of Brahmin priests for performing the rites. Periyar had instituted these marriages to free non-Brahmins from the rituals of dowry and Brahministic dominance. Self-respect weddings encouraged youngsters from different castes to marry. Annadurai also subsidized the price of rice for winning the election; he promised that rice will be made available at ₹ 1 per measure. He also introduced a two-language policy instead of the usual three-language formula was also cited by historians as a winning policy. Under his encouragement, the Second World Tamil Conference was conducted with élam on 3 January, 1968. He also ordered the removal of all photographs of gods and religious symbols from government offices. This, however, was not completely appreciated by all. Annadurai remains the only leader of the time who had not participated in the Indian struggle for Independence. He rose through the ranks only due to his sheer charisma and his empathy for the underprivileged.

Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi

Muthuvel Karunanidhi had been an eminent political figure in Tamil politics for about five decades. He was born to Muthuvelar and Anjugam Ammaiyar in Thirukkuvalai. Inspired by a speech by Alagiriswamii of the Justice Party, he entered politics at the tender age of fourteen. He participated in anti-Hindi agitations wholeheartedly. He started a handwritten newspaper named *Manavar Nesan* along with some local youth. He was the founder of a student organization named Tamil Nadu Tamil Manavar Mandram. It was the first student body within Dravidan Movement. Karunanidhi's own involvement and his efforts to involve the student community in social work helped in his popularity. *Murasoli* that became DMK party's official newspaper was his brainchild. Karunanidhi's active participation in the anti-Hindi protest helped him in gaining ground in Tamil politics. The main event was at Kallakudi an industrial town which was named Dalmiapuram after the name of a North Indian businessman. Karunanidhi along with protestors erased the Hindi name, blocked railway tracks and was arrested. Karunanidhi had close connections with the Tamil film industry like Annadurai and MGR. He started his career there as a scriptwriter and primarily wrote for the stage and later for films. Some of his screenplays include *Manthiri Kumari* with MGR as the hero and *Parasakthi* with Sivaji Ganesan in the lead.

His journey started as a scriptwriter, first for the stage and later for films. Some of Karunanidhi's important screenplays include Parasakthi (starring Sivaji Ganeshan) and Manthiri Kumari (starring MGR). He has to his credit over 70 screenplays.

Both Annadurai as well as Karunanidhi were responsible for the rise of DMK as a national party. When Annadurai left the Davidar Kazhagam, Karunanidhi joined Annadurai. As he was proficient in handling media, he was asked to take responsibility for the propaganda of the party. He won the 1957 elections from the Kulithalai constituency. When Annadurai became the Chief Minister, he made Karunanidhi the minister for

Public Works in 1967. He became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 10 February 1969 after Annadurai's untimely death. He remained in power till 4 January 1971. He became Chief Minister for a second term in 1971 when DMK won the elections. He remained in office till 1976. In 1974, MGR and Karunanidhi parted ways with MGR forming the ADMK. In the same year, MGR told the *New York Times* that the top leaders of DMK, 'have corrupted a party that was once incorruptible.'

Karunanidhi's popularity as a leader declined when MGR rose with the ADMK. In 1977, ADMK won the Legislative Assembly elections and MGR became the Chief Minister. MGR's personality held the Tamil population in absolute awe. So, till the time of MGR's death, Karunanidhi had to remain satisfied with heading the opposition. Karunanidhi came back as the Chief Minister in 1987 after MGR's death. In 1991, he lost the elections to Jayalalitha, MGR's protégé. Though the rise of Jayalalitha in the Tamil political scenario spelled doom for Karunanidhi, he came back again as the Chief Minister in 1996. This was primarily possible as the people were skeptical of jayalalitha. However, she did manage to come back to power in 2001.

In 2006, Karunanidhi managed to come back to power for the fifth time as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu by defeating AIADMK in a landslide victory. In order to win people over, he had promised to provide rice at ₹ 2/kg and distribute free colour television to all households.

However, he had reached the zenith of his political career in 1971 when he had allied with Indira Gandhi's rebel Congress Party and won 184 seats against Kamaraj led traditional Congress Party that managed to win only thirteen seats. After his entry as the most bankable politician, he crossed swords with MGR which ultimately brought about his political demise. It was difficult, at one point, for the Tamils to choose between Jayalalitha and Karunanidhi, as both had been in power almost alternately and had spent their time consolidating their positions with the common people rather than implement developmental programmes for the masses.

ACTIVITY

Prepare a chart containing the constituent members of any six regional political parties at present in India.

EXHIBIT 4.1

The Indian party system is facing a crisis

By CP Bhambhri

The larger issue here is where the Indian party system is headed. A few recent important political happenings have revealed that the party system, which is the mainstay of any parliamentary competitive electoral democracy, is facing a serious internal crisis and that the style of management of inner party challenges has given the impression of either adhocism or crude party bossism.

There is merit in the argument that Indians should be concerned about the deterioration of the health of political parties.

Look at the way parties often discard dissenting members. A party system in a democracy based on a written constitution should have a constitutional and institutional mechanism of admitting and kicking out its dissenting members.

Every 'regional party' whether religion-based or culture-based or caste-based are all based on the principle of a leadership which is authoritarian because all regional parties are personality-based outfits. It is the writ of the leader which runs in the party.

What is the need for a party constitution or inner institutional arrangement for managing a party when it is a private affair of a leader?

Supreme leader-based party system has shown its utter incapacity to take important public decisions and the result is that party pronouncements and announcements have lost any public credibility.

The Congress party and the TDP have completely split in Andhra Pradesh on the Telangana issue. The vertical split within the major political players in Andhra Pradesh makes people believe that these parties are floating many balloons and party leaders are themselves encouraging their own MPs and MLAs to speak in multiple ways on the Telangana issue.

Parties do not seem to have any institutional mechanism of creating a consensus through debate and discussion. Then who decides? Second, every political party is led by a leader who is surrounded by a coterie of favourites.

India is ruled by authoritarian party bosses and coteries of political favourites. Indian democracy is threatened because the completely undemocratic party system cannot be expected to practice democracy in governance.

Source: http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2009-12-18/news/27649074_1 _regional-parties-party-system-telangana-issue

Accessed on 8 February 2012

EXHIBIT 4.2

Central water policy is need of the hour: Experts

Considering that laws dealing with water conflicts do not have a holistic approach but a sectoral one, river boards exist on paper and do not work effectively on the ground and traditional practices of dealing with conflicts are not acknowledged, said experts at the World Water Summit. They called for a conflict resolution committee that would deal with all water-related conflicts.

"Water is different from other natural resources," said KJ Joy, executive director, Soppecom. "Its conflicts and the very nature of water is multi-faceted and one-size-fits-all solution will not work," he added.

Explaining challenges such as increased migration to urban areas and urbanisation of the rural areas, clamour for larger water infrastructure, water quality and environmental issues, reforms, and continued focus on storage rather than equity distribution, he said: "Water cannot be treated as a classical private property."

There isn't a centralised policy nor a framework law or a set of principles that can govern issues with regard to water, he said. S Janakarajan, professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies, too, echoed this thought.

He said: "There are 24 unresolved inter-state disputes despite having a strong water dispute law. The Cauvery issue alone has taken over 21 years of the tribunal."

Source: http://www.dnaindia.com/bangalore/report_central-water-policy-is-need-of-the-hour-experts_1644961-all

Accessed on 8 February 2012

4.4 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- In the post-independence era, the political parties came to be recognized as instruments of prime importance through which democracy could be operationalized, as India adopted a parliamentary democratic system of governance. Ideologically, in the pre-independence era, the colonial state was marked by the presence of the INC as a safety valve-cum-umbrella organization.

- The evolution of Indian party system has been from 'one-party dominance' to 'multi-party coalition system'.

- In India, the subject of coalition governments has acquired great relevance in the context of current political trends and developments. The days of politics as a grand narrative dominated by a single party seem to be over in India. The General Elections in 2009 confirmed this trend that first became visible on the Indian political scene in 1989.

- The term 'coalition' has been derived from the Latin word *coalition* which is the verbal substantive of *coalescere* - '*Co*', which means together and '*alescere*', which means to go or to grow together. According to the dictionary meaning, coalition means an act of coalescing, or uniting into one body, union of persons, states or an alliance. It is a combination of a body or parts into one whole. In the strict political sense, the term coalition stands for an alliance or temporary union for joint action of various distinct political parties at the state or the Union level to form a single government by members of distinct parties.

- In its initial years, with an exception or two, India has enjoyed a single-party government at the centre. The Ninth Lok Sabha elections (1989) proved to be a decisive turning point, thus initiating an era of coalition and minority governments in New Delhi.

- Asom Gana Parishad (Assam Peoples Association) is a political party in Assam, India. The AGP was formed after the historic Assam Accord of 1985 when Prafulla Kumar Mahanta was elected as the youngest chief minister of the country.

- At the national level, while remaining in the vanguard of national mainstream, the Shiromani Akali Dal has always remained committed to a dignified dispensation for Punjabis in general and the Sikhs in particular, always fighting to safeguard their political, economic, social and cultural rights. The Shiromani Akali

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- Asom Gana Parishad (Assam Peoples Association) is a political party in Assam, India. The AGP was formed after the historic Assam Accord of 1985 when Prafulla Kumar Mahanta was elected as the youngest chief minister of the country.

- At the national level, while remaining in the vanguard of national mainstream, the Shiromani Akali Dal has always remained committed to a dignified dispensation for Punjabis in general and the Sikhs in particular, always fighting to safeguard their political, economic, social and cultural rights. The Shiromani Akali

Dal party is committed to the highest ideals of peace, communal harmony, universal brotherhood and the welfare of humanity (Sarbat Da Bhala).

- The Indian National Congress was dominated by Brahmin members though it had an agenda of fighting the British for Indian independence. Periyar decided not to celebrate 15 August 1947 as the Independence Day as he felt that this independence would bring the non-Brahmins under Brahmin domination throughout the country. Annadurai disagreed with Periyar as he felt that the Indian independence was too precious to be mourned. He saw this not only as the sole victory for the Congress, but for all people throughout the country.

4.5 KEY TERMS

- **Coalition:** An alliance for combined action, especially a temporary alliance of political parties forming a government or of states.
- **Political party:** An organization to gain political power.
- **Propaganda:** The dissemination of information as a political strategy.

4.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. True
2. The struggle for freedom and framework of parliamentary government along with politics of national reconstruction, modernization, integration and development has collectively contributed to the evolution of the Indian party system.
3. Asom Gana Parishad
4. Shiromani Akali Dal
5. Annadurai

4.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify the problems associated with coalition politics in India.
2. Write a note the federal structure of Shiromani Akali Dal.
3. What is the political mission of the Shiromani Akali Dal?
4. Explain briefly the anti-Hindi agitation in relation to DMK.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Evaluate the role and importance of political parties.
2. Explain the meaning of coalition politics and the types associated with it.
3. Discuss with the help of suitable examples the coalition politics at the Centre.
4. Examine the evolution of the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and its role in the politics of Assam.
5. Discuss the evolution of DMK and its role in national politics.

4.8 FURTHER READING

Gowda, M.V. Rajeev and Sridharan, E.; *Parties and the Party System, 1947-2006*, (ed.) *States of India's Democracy*, John Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2007, p.7.

Limaye, M.; *Contemporary Indian Politics*, Radient Publisher, New Delhi, 1988, p.194.

Fadia, B.L.; *Indian Government and Politics*, Satya Bhawan Publications, Agra, 2009, p.633.

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UNIT 5 COALITION POLITICS

Structure

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about coalition politics in India, which has become a political reality in the country. The term 'coalition' means temporary combination of groups or individuals formed to pursue specific objectives through joint action. The term coalition is most often used in connection with political parties. Coalition governments, which are frequently found in multiparty countries like India, France, Italy, and many other countries of the world, are formed when no single party is strong enough to obtain an electoral majority. The resulting government usually distributes political posts to representatives of all coalition members.

Coalitions come into existence because they are a political necessity, but different partners may have mutually conflicting interests. There are clear divergences between the interests of smaller and larger parties. The BJP would aspire to a position of dominance much like that enjoyed by the dominant party in the mixed ministries of Kerala, whether by Congress or the CPI (M). Smaller political parties like the Telugu Desam would prefer a United Front type arrangement in which the smaller parties hold the key to power and can command more influence than their numbers might indicate. But there is a further divide at the heart of the party system. Both the Congress and the BJP are more comfortable with a stronger Centre. The former was its chief architect and the latter is its prime ideologue today. Yet this looks a line very difficult to hold in the coming years.

5.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning, advantages and disadvantages of coalition politics
- Analyse the recent trends in the politics of defection

5.2 COALITION POLITICS—MEANING, ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The Indian polity has been through more than fifty coalition governments at the State level between 1966–67 and 2010–2011. Before analysing the nature, patterns and

specifications of coalitional regimes, it would be imperative to have a brief focus on theoretical aspects of coalition regimes. Theories of political coalition are a rather recent development in political science. There are broadly three kinds of coalition theories. First, there are utility maximization theories that postulate the size principle predicting the minimum winning coalition. Proceeding from the axiom of the rationality of political actors, these theories deduce the theorem that in any formal coalition situation with the majority decision rule, the coalition formation would hover around the minimum winning size, typically around fifty percentage points. The smaller the coalition, the larger the quantum of power and patronage that needs to be shared among the winners. Second, there are **ideological and policy compatibility theories**. Proceeding from the assumption that the maximization of utility must contend with ideological concordance among parties, these theories predict a minimum winning coalition among parties whose policy preferences are least discordant. Third, there are theories that treat coalitions as sequential episodes that offer opportunities for redistribution of political resources, determining the relative political influence of coalition partners. The gains and losses in the present round and their implications for the ensuing ones primarily guide the competitive demands and concessions made by parties to each other.

Janata Government (1977)

With its combination of national and State parties the Indian federation has been transformed in the past few decades. Perhaps no single year since 1947 has been so momentous in the political annals of India as 1977. It has been momentous for the unexpected but epoch-making political change that occurred with the fall of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's emergency regime through the ballot box. It has also been momentous for promised qualitative change in the style of politics in the country and the performance of the ruling elite. Finally, the year has been momentous for the disenchantment with which it seemed to end: it appears as if the promise of even the new political dawn (let alone the new socio-economic dawn which was perhaps not even conjured up except by way of political rhetoric) has already turned out to be a mirage. While the withdrawal of the internal emergency promulgated on 25 June 1975, was one of the last acts of the Indira Gandhi government after its defeat at the polls, it was the Janata government which freed the country of the yoke of the external emergency which was declared on 3 December, 1971.

The sixth general election has hardly any parallel in history for the overwhelming surprise that it offered to political analysts both in India and abroad, and to the two main political parties in the field—Janata and the Congress. The election has been variously described and yet it has perhaps eluded proper characterization, perhaps because its political meaning has not yet been stabilized; the meaning has, in fact, shown a tendency to change, shrink and expand with changes in the political scenario of the country. Still one may offer one more characterization for whatever it is worth: the election was a people's poll, retributive in the North and affirmatory in the South. Once Indira Gandhi announced that elections would be held in March 1977, the ball was in the people's court and their determination to play it their own way, particularly to avenge the wrongs done to them during the months of emergency, was never so strong and unwavering as in the wake of the elections. What distinguished the 1977 poll from earlier elections was not merely its pronounced issue-orientation but the congruence in the perception of the issues involved among the urban and rural electorate

on the one hand and the elite and the masses on the other. The 1977 election will go down in history as the most issue-oriented of all the elections held so far. The key issue posed by the opposition political parties and the ruling Congress was dictatorship vs democracy and stability vs. chaos, respectively. What makes the election different from earlier polls is not merely its issue-orientation but also the ascendency of liberal democratic values in the great debate surrounding these issues. The 1977 election remains, primarily, a political battle over issues to which all other considerations of personality, candidate-orientation, caste, creed, and even vote banks seem to have been sub-ordinated, though certainly not eliminated, particularly as inputs into election politics at micro-levels. The failure of the election eve munificence to waver the voter from the self-charted path of driving Indira's Congress out of power in the North is another instance which buttresses the issue-orientation thesis.

The 1977 election struck the final blow to the dominant Congress system, which was already disintegrating under the weight of its internal contradictions. The three major bases of its support – the rural electorate, the Muslims and the Harijans—had become alienated from it in good measure in the wake of emergency excesses in general and the family planning programme in particular. The election left the country poised for significant political change, marking some hope for a transition from a one-party dominant system to a competitive alternative party system. The exact import of the change in qualitative terms would depend on what the change leads to in terms of realignment of political forces and the re-ordering of socio-economic relationships, and how the change is managed. The election results in the ten states and three Union territories were a case of continuity with the parliamentary poll, though with a difference. The Janata party's convincing victories in eight states and the Union territory of Delhi and its miserable performances in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal were a replica of the parliamentary poll verdict.

A mixed sense of relief and apprehension marked the Indian political scene in early 1977 when the continuity of three decades of Congress rule was broken by a stunning electoral verdict. It was a unity of resentment, obviously stronger in intensity and wider in extension in northern India, which transformed disparate opposition parties into a working coalition eager to offer an alternative to the emergency regime of the preceding two years. The primary object of public resentment was the repressive regime, its architects and defenders, represented by the ruling group which controlled the National Congress organization, the government, and the private network of manipulation and control fed by public funds. The central level of the federal polity was based on foundations of variable strength. Since the major issue of the 1977 elections was concerned with how to reverse the authoritarian usurpation of democratic power, the mandate of restoration of the Constitutional regime served as the strongest foundation of support for the Janata coalition was, of course, expected to offer a better programme of government. Political groups that had supported the opposition movements during and before the emergency rule were highly critical of the developmental policies of the Congress Party. The election manifesto of the Janata Party and its allies conveyed the impression that the arrival of national power of a non-Congress coalition would make a difference in the sphere of developmental policies and programmes.

Non-Congressism was especially strong after Indira Gandhi's declaration of Emergency Rule. The left conveniently rationalized this comprehensive non-Congress

combination as being democratic and secular forces. The merger of the BJS in the Janata Party in 1977 heralded the secularization of this main Hindu communal party. The merger of the communist elements within Nehru's and Indira's Congress Party was construed as the political liberalization of Marxists. Despite the largest contingent of MPs from the BJS constituent in the Janata Party in 1977, they contented themselves with under-representation in Morarji Desai's government because they regarded the Janata Party as the means by which they could join the mainstream of Indian politics. As Rajni Kothari observed: 'The real challenge before Janata was to bring the Jana Sangh within the democratic framework, just as the Communists had been under Nehru.' However, when the Janata Party government fell prematurely in 1979, the key precipitating factor, among other background reasons, was the question of double membership of Janata leaders in the party as well as in the Hindu communal organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The BJS constituents in the Janata Party split off and formed the BJP. In turn, a communal Sikh party, the Shiromani Akali Dal, was also catholically accepted as a part of the non-Congress front by its protagonists; it was indeed a coalition partner of the Janata Party government from 1977–1979.

The Janata Party once saw itself as the historic focal point of a non-Congress coalitional alternative at the centre since 1977. At that time, the Congress (Organization), the BJP, the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), the Socialist Party and the Congress for Democracy merged under the shadow of the Emergency Rule. This alliance was able to unseat Indira Gandhi. The Janata Party coalition government started out well and completed nearly half of its five-year term. It dismantled the authoritarian amendments to the Constitution by the Emergency regime. Its economic performance was not unimpressive. However, this regime was marred by the onset of atrocities against Scheduled Caste (SC) agricultural workers by dominant peasant castes in the countryside. The leaders of the Janata Party coalition constantly kept quarrelling among themselves.

These quarrels were typified by the bitter personality clashes between the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, Morarji Desai and Chaudhary Charan Singh, respectively. Both leaders were former members of the Congress Party. Desai represented the Congress (O) and was supposed to be close to the big business lobby and Singh led the BLD, primarily a party of Jat and other middle-caste peasant proprietors. The BJS, controlling the largest number of parliamentary seats and Janata Party State governments, played the role of mediator but failed to keep peace among the coalition partners at the centre. The Janata Party coalition government ultimately fell victimized to factional feuds in July 1979. As was mentioned earlier, the BLD faction of the coalition raised the issue of double membership of the BJS faction with the RSS. A less domineering personality than Desai probably may have provided a more conciliatory setting for a coalition government. However, after the fall of the Janata coalition government, some Janata Party defectors led by Charan Singh of the BLD faction formed a minority government with the legislative support of the Congress Party led by Indira Gandhi. Within three weeks, the Congress Party withdrew support from Singh just before the first vote of confidence in Parliament. The strategy by the Congress Party resulted in Singh's unceremonious resignation. The Janata Party subsequently fell apart and all its major constituents (with the exception of the Congress (O) and the SP) split off to revive themselves.

A rapid reversal of the emergency regime, 'the reinstitution of the rule of law', and the swift dismantling of the structures of authoritarian control established by the Congress Party were probably the most impressive accomplishments of the Janata Party and its allies. Common cause on this front helped create a working system of cooperation internally among the Janata legislators and those of other parties aligned against the emergency regime. In the course of the passage of the 43rd Amendment Bill and the working of the Shah, Reddy, and Gupta Commissions, it became apparent that most political groups and parties were determined to work together to assure themselves and the public that a recurrence of the emergency pattern would be more difficult in the future. The Janata Phase of Indian politics offers an interesting period of exploration of innovative directions within the context of social structural continuity.

Janata party commanded 55.31 per cent of the Lok Sabha seats. In an unprecedented step just before the 1977 election, four national parties, The Indian National Congress (Organization), Bharatiya Lok Dal, Bharatiya Jana Sangh and the Socialist Party, merged informally to form the Janata party. These parties also had an electoral understanding with the Communist party of India (Marxist). This meant that for the first time, the opposition to the Congress party was almost wholly united except for the Communist Party of India which supported the Congress.

National Front Government (1989-90)

The Indian electorate in November 1989 parliamentary elections did something very different. It elected a Parliament in which no single party had a majority. No party even came close to the 263 seats required for a majority, raising the prospect of a formal coalition for the first time. The so-called popular 'waves' triggered by emotive national issues, which characterized national elections since 1971, were not apparent this time. There was no clear mandate for a person or a party. The fragmentation of the vote aroused speculation about the viability of a coalition arrangement in a country accustomed to governing parties with strong majorities and recently to a ruling party with a weak organizational structure.

The National Front emerged with a disappointing 142 seats, only slightly more than half the votes required for a parliamentary majority. In fact, the Front was effectively the Janata Dal, the regional allies winning only three contests. The Janata Dal is essentially a party of the Hindi belt where it picked up two-thirds of its victories (106 of 139); it won only one seat in the four southern States, and in the east, all sixteen of its seats were from the State of Orissa. It also had some support from the Western States of Gujarat (eleven) and Maharashtra (five).

The onset of coalition and minority governments in New Delhi is an important aspect of the paradigmatic shifts in the Indian political system in terms of political federalization and economic liberalization in the 1990s. A political system that had previously functioned as a predominantly parliamentary regime is becoming more federal, and a public (State) sector-dominated planned economy is opening up to market forces both domestically and globally.

The immediate political context of coalition politics is the decline of the once-dominant Congress Party and the continuing failure of any party from the centre, right, or left of the party system to win a working majority of its own to govern India. The recent trends of the metaphors of mandal (affirmative action reservations) and mandir (in essence, communalism) and the issue of State autonomy triggered different strategies of mobilization that significantly transformed the social and psychological

bases of politics in India. Besides, a new pattern of social movements centred on single and region-specific issues relating to quality of life (e.g., ecology, gender, utilities, and services), in addition to the older, comprehensive concerns of economic production and distribution have appeared on the scene. In view of the fact that India in the 1990s seems to have got stuck with the compulsions of coalition and minority-governments, it would appear that the long spell of Congress dominance until 1989 with only occasional or partial breaches in 1967 and 1977, merely served to conceal the essentially fragmented and coalitional nature of the Indian society and culture.

Although coalition governments at the Centre formally began in 1989 and have continued since, the Janata Party government in New Delhi also was a de facto coalition. In the five general elections spanning the decade since 1989, no single party has won a majority of the seats in the Lok Sabha. In these classic coalition contexts, recourse to a coalition or minority government, often both became a necessity. The decade (1989–99) featured a series of unstable coalition and minority governments following each other like a game of musical chairs. Among these governments, the national front government headed by V.P. Singh of Janata Dal was the first coalition government followed by the short-lived Congress-backed Samajwadi Janata party (SJP) and the minority government led by Chandrasekhar. The National Front's cabinet coalition was based on 30.94 per cent of parliamentary support, while its larger legislative coalition enhanced its tally to 55.06 per cent. The Janata Party, de facto coalition government was based on non-Congressional ideological unity. This was also largely true of the National Front government. Both these coalitions were left-of-centre in ideological terms, and were aimed at keeping the Congress Party out of power.

The Janata Dal-led National Front government, which included the Janata Dal, the Congress Party (Socialist), the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the DMK, and the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), was just as fractious as the Janata Party coalition government and even less durable. It lasted barely eleven months in power, from December 1989 to November 1990. Weak coordination and fragmented collective responsibility of the cabinet marked the National Front coalition government. Neither the Prime Minister nor the Coordination Committee of constituent parties of the coalition chaired by N.T. Rama Rao could bridge the tendencies of empire-building by major factions, or divided ministerial responsibilities while overseeing of the State governments. The feud between Prime Minister V.P. Singh, a Congress Party dissenter who resigned from Rajiv Gandhi's cabinet in 1987 and Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal sealed the fate of the National Front coalition government. It was this factional feud that propelled V.P. Singh to suddenly implement the Mandal Commission's recommendation calling for the reservation quota of 27 per cent of Central Government jobs for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in addition to the existing reservations for SCs and Scheduled Tribes (STs). Singh gave his support for the Mandal Commission without making a direct reference to the Coordination Committee or the Cabinet (even though the matter was part of the National Front election manifesto). This triggered a veritable caste war in many North Indian cities and towns. During this period, the immediate reason for the demise of the National Front coalition turned out to be the failure of a legislative coalition between the Leftist parties and the BJP. The Communist parties and BJP were supporting the National Front government from the parliamentary floor without joining the coalition. Eventually, both organized bandhs (closures or strikes) and mass mobilizations turned against the National Front coalition government. The BJP's *rathayatra* from

Somanath to Ayodhya was finally stopped with the arrest of the BJP's president, L.K. Advani. The arrest caused the withdrawal of BJP's parliamentary support. The National Front also suffered from internal divisions within the Janata Dal. Even though the Janata Dal had the largest number of parliamentary seats, it was sharply divided. V.P. Singh was the party's parliamentary leader, but Chandrashekhar, a senior Janata Dal leader opposed his selection as Prime Minister. Chandrashekhar once belonged to the Janata Dal after he had the courage to oppose Indira Gandhi's Emergency from within the ranks of the Congress Party. He was jailed for his opposition. On the other hand, Singh was a loyalist of Indira's son Sanjay during the Emergency. Singh eventually capitalized on the crest of public euphoria that followed the wake of his resignation from Rajiv Gandhi's government. After the fall of the National Front coalition government, the Janata Dal splintered into the SJP led by Chandrashekhar and Devi Lal (the regional leader in the State in Haryana) and SP led by Mulayam Singh Yadav in Uttar Pradesh. The Congress Party once again pretended to support Chandrashekhar's SJP minority government. Chandrashekhar demonstrated a more earthy common sense and earnestness than his predecessor. But the Congress Party only extended parliamentary support to Chandrashekhar for four months, withdrawing its support in protest over the surveillance of Congress President Rajiv Gandhi's residence by two Haryana constables. A more sizable SJP representation in the Parliament probably would have helped develop a more balanced relationship between the party in government and its legislative ally. A joint governmental responsibility undertaken by both would have been even a better recipe for stability. But the imperatives of electoral mobilization overrode those of governance.

The National Front is theoretically a coalition of parties, even though there are only three non-Janata Dal MPs. In selecting his cabinet, Prime Minister Singh chose ministers from these allied parties: Law Minister Dinesh Goswami from the Asom Gana Parishad; Urban Development Minister Murasoli Maran from the DMK; the Minister of Transport K. P. Unnikrishnan from the Congress(S); and the Minister of (both) Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs P. Upendra from the Telugu Desam. The minuscule number of National Front MPs from the regional parties forced the prime minister to look for potential cabinet representatives in the Rajya Sabha (the Upper House of Parliament), and three of the four appointed were from that body. The Janata Dal is itself a coalition of factions and the prime minister carefully balanced the various groups in choosing the sixteen Janata Dal members of his original cabinet – fifteen from the popularly elected Lok Sabha.

United Front (1996–98)

The United Front's cabinet coalition comprised 32.06 per cent of Lok Sabha Members of Parliament (MPs) and its larger legislative coalition together managed to register 57.9 per cent of parliamentary support in the Lok Sabha. The United Front was founded on the basis of non-BJP unity. By 1998, the BJP had become the single largest party superseding the Congress Party. The United Front also sought to block the way to a Congress-led coalition. Lacking coalition partners to make a serious bid for power, even the Congress Party lent outside support to the United Front coalition in order to keep the BJP out of power. Like the National Front, the United Front was also a left-of-centre coalition.

The Janata Dal-led UF government was formed following the 1996 Lok Sabha elections. Being the third party in the Lok Sabha after the BJP and Congress, the Janata Dal got its chance to form a government after the BJP failed to muster a majority in the hung parliament and the President of India declined to invite Congress to try forming a government. None of the coalition formation among the three major party clusters or groupings was mandated to power by the electorate in the election. The result shows the growing regionalization of India's party system. One visible trend was the shrinking of the nationwide spread of the Congress Party. The other visible trend was that the national pretensions of BJP were contradicted by its continued failure to outgrow its base of support, having its strongest electoral showing in Hindi-speaking states plus the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Karnataka.

H.D. Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral headed the two United Front governments in the 11th Lok Sabha, respectively. Both prime ministers were from the Janata Dal but with a common Congress past. The UF was essentially an exercise in governance by the third force in Indian politics between the Congress Party and the BJP. The two polar forces represented the two variants of the emergent Right-wing in Indian politics, the Hindu nationalist BJP and the Congress Party moving away from Indian variants of Nehruvian socialism and Indira Gandhi's populism to neo-classical economic liberalization and globalization. As a result of communal or corruption charges, these two largest single parties were hamstrung on the margin. The third force parties managed to put together a heterogeneous coalition composed of the Janata Dal, left wing, and regional parties. All the three categories of parties also happened to be the ruling political forces in some States: the Janata Dal in Bihar and Karnataka, the communists in West Bengal and Kerala, and TDP, AGP, and DMK in Andhra Pradesh, Assam and Tamil Nadu, respectively.

Beyond this assortment of parties in the cabinet coalition, the UF also roped in the support of Congress from the parliamentary floor. Congress Party could tactically help the UF governments cross the threshold of a majority in the Lok Sabha with a veto on government formation and maintenance. Using this veto, the Congress Party forced the UF to change its prime minister from Deve Gowda to Gujral in April 1997. The Congress Party finally doomed the UF government in November the same year when it abandoned supporting the coalition.

The fall of the UF governments was due more to the role of the Congress Party rather than from the parties internal to them. Despite their differences, the UF parties managed to reconcile their heterogeneity with a fair degree of success. This must be considered a remarkable achievement, especially in view of the fact that the coalition included three distinct groupings of parties from the Centrist, Leftist, and regional sectors of India's party system. Moreover, the government had to steer its way through the new terrains that were fast changing in areas of the growing economic liberalization and political federalization of the system of governance. Internal policy and personality differences of the coalition were more or less publicly resolved by a coordination committee of parties in the government.

NDA (1998–1999), (1999–2004)

For the first time in more than fifty years since independence, India was to be led by a Right-wing party with an ideology rooted in Hindu nationalism. When the greatest need of the hour was for a clear electoral result, India was again saddled with a fragmented political verdict, fractured political elite, a deeply divided Parliament, and a hydra-headed government. India's watershed 12th general election was held over thirteen days in four stages, starting on 16 February, 1998.

The election produced three groups in the Lok Sabha (House of the people): the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and allies with 250 seats, the Congress and allies with 148, the United Front (UF) with 97 seats, and 44 others 1. On 11 March 1998, President R.K. Narayanan asked Atal Behari Vajpayee, BJP parliamentary leader, to prove that he was able and willing to form the government. On 15 March, the President asked Vajpayee to form the government, with the swearing-in ceremony held on 19 March.

President Narayanan invited Vajpayee to form the government. The whole episode marked an exceptionally inauspicious start to the 12th Lok Sabha, even by the standards of coalition government in India. The BJP begins government with just 264 seats; the Telugu Desam decision to abstain on confidence votes (and later to supporting of the government), which could earn it expulsion from the United Front, just helps the BJP to attain a majority.

On 18th March, Prime Minister Vajpayee released the National Agenda for Governance negotiated between the BJP and its allies. The three core Hindutva elements — the temple issue, a uniform civil code for all religions, and special status for Kashmir, have been diluted. Neither Article 370 of the Constitution, relating to Kashmir, nor the temple issues is mentioned at all. The paragraph on 'genuine secularism' commits-the government towards 'equal respect for all faiths' but is silent on the favourite BJP charge of 'appeasement of minorities'.

In 1998, India continued to present a paradoxical combination of democratic resilience and ideological centrism on the one hand, and political fragmentation and weak governance on the other. The political scene can be summed up in the story of two important elections held during the year. India's twelfth general elections, conducted in February and March, resulted in a hung Parliament. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the single largest party with 171 seats while Congress's tally remained near its historic low of 141. The fragmentation of the political system was symbolized by the presence of the United Front, a loose coalition of 10 parties that managed 98 seats. Most of these were regional parties that had gained significant voice in the coalition politics that governs the Centre.

This was a landmark election for the BJP. The party had long held pariah status in Indian politics and prior to 1998 had been unable to attract the allies it needed to form an enduring government at the Centre. In 1998, in addition to its hitherto allies, the Akali Dal and the Samata Party, it managed to convince such regional parties as the AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazagham) and BJD (Biju Janata Dal) to join it in forming the government. It also persuaded other regional parties like the Trinamool Congress and Telugu Desam to offer support from the outside. These alliances were made possible in part by the fact that there appeared to be no other party in the position to form a government. Also, the BJP managed to portray itself more credibly as a moderate party of the right that eschewed for the time being at any rate, aspects of its Hindu nationalist agenda that had contributed to its pariah status. It fought the election on the promise of good governance and kept the zealots within the party conspicuously out of sight. It had neither the mandate nor the will to pursue the more controversial planks of its agenda, such as reconsideration of Article 370 of the Constitution dealing with Kashmir or the abolition of Muslim personal law. In office, the BJP made faltering attempts to give the education system a 'Hindu nationalist' hue but was rebuffed by both its allies and the opposition. The resulting government was a somewhat unwieldy alliance of thirteen parties under the banner of NDA (National Democratic Alliance).

The vacillations were most apparent in the Government's handling of the economy, and the political cost was immense. The Indian electorate historically has been sensitive to inflation. The BJP's perceived failure to check a spectacular rise in the price of onions only seemed to symbolize its broader failures. The only sphere where the government appeared to display a sense of decisiveness was nuclear policy, although this did not result in any electoral gains. For the outside world, 1998's most significant event in India was the series of five nuclear tests conducted on 7 and 9 May. While only the BJP had openly declared its intentions to conduct these tests, these were, with the exception of the Left parties, widely supported across the political spectrum and in many ways, keeping in with India's longstanding desire to develop an autonomous foreign policy adequate to its security concerns vis-à-vis China and Pakistan.

On the surface, India's growth rate in 1998 was impressive. At around 5 per cent, it was more than double the global average and second only to China among the larger economies. However, this performance masked two disquieting trends. First, most underlying measures of India's economy continued their decline leading the central bank to conclude that the macroeconomic situation—fiscal inflation, money supply, trade deficit, and growth, was a matter of 'serious concern'.

By the year end, virtually none of the reform initiatives were passed in the Parliament and remained in some cases as ordinances. Severe divisions within the ruling party's own ranks and a vacillating Congress torn between supporting issues that were very much part of its agenda and denying the BJP credit for any major initiative, coupled with dismal legislative management in the Parliament by the ruling party, meant that even the stumbling steps had been effectively stalled. While both sets of 1998 elections underscored the resiliency of the Indian electoral system, especially its capacity to capture voter dissatisfaction, they also underscored the absence of a political configuration adequate to the challenge of governing India.

UPA (2004)

The outstanding event of 2004 in India was the national election. Its unexpected results made for the ouster of the BJP-led government despite the excellent performance of the economy and its replacement by a coalition headed by the Congress Party, oriented towards greater State activism in economic affairs. Political upheaval marked in 2004 in India in the shape of an unexpected electoral defeat in mid-May of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the hands of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA). The result of the largely violence-free 14th general elections came as a shock to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies, leaving them dazed and disoriented. It was a surprise as well for the Congress Party, which had not counted on returning to power until the next elections in 2009, and for almost all analysts and pollsters, who had expected the BJP-led alliance to win. The ensuing peaceful transfer of power from one political coalition to another no doubt represented the consolidation of democracy in India over more than a half-century, but subsequent events revealed some less attractive aspects of India's reputed vibrant democracy, arousing concern over the polity's direction.

The Congress party won only 145 seats out of 541, just seven more than the defeated BJP's 138. Meanwhile, the Congress's percentage of the total vote fell from 28.30 per cent in 1999 to 26.21 per cent, as against the BJP's decline from 23.75 per cent to 21.48 per cent. The victorious alliance had won 219 seats, as against the defeated alliance's 185, but its vote share, at 34.51 per cent, was marginally lower than

the latter's 34.83 per cent. Certainly, the BJP and its allies stood defeated, but the electorate as such gave no party or alliance any mandate. In truth, India is a vast continental polity with diverse regions that are only weakly integrated in terms of social structure. What are seemingly national election results are often no more than a mere summation of regional results, rather than the manifestation of a nationwide trend.

Manmohan Singh was chosen as the Prime Minister of UPA government. Sonia Gandhi was given Cabinet status as Chairperson of the National Advisory Council, established to oversee the government's performance. In addition, she headed the UPA-left Coordination Committee. The selection of the cabinet was less a prerogative of the PM than of the leaders of the coalition partners, each with its quota based on voting strength and with portfolios determined through hard bargaining. As a result, some half-dozen ministers turned out to be of questionable integrity, with criminal cases pending in the courts, and were thus regarded as 'tainted'. Their presence was testimony to the criminalization of politics, increasingly evident over the years with the entry into politics of strongmen with criminal records. National parties, such as the Congress, BJP and CPM may be less prone to the trend, but small regional parties manifest it abundantly.

The Left declined to join the government, principally in view of the prospective electoral competition with the Congress in the states of West Bengal and Kerala, but extended support to it from the outside, thus exercising power without the accompanying responsibility. After considerable bargaining, the coalition partners and the Left also developed an omnibus National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) focused on investment in agriculture and rural employment, as part of 'economic reforms with a human face'. As a bible for governance by the coalition, the NCMP became an instrument for the Left to bend the government to its preferences. The 2004 elections in India made for a dramatic change in the coalition holding power at the Centre, with far greater impact domestically than in foreign affairs.

The 2004 general elections saw, for the first time, a contest at the national level between two serious coalitions, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), though the latter was named only after the elections. The Congress Party for the first time put together a broad pre-election coalition covering several major states to take on the NDA coalition.

On the whole, coalitions (or merger in Himachal Pradesh) were critical for Congress victory in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir. They were critical for Congress reduction of the margin of defeat/improvement of position compared to 1999 in Maharashtra and Goa. The lack of a coalition of opposing forces was critical for the magnitude of the Congress victory and BJP defeat in Assam, Haryana and Jharkhand (where an NDA coalition of not only the BJP and JD (U), but also potentially the JMM, was a possibility). Compared to 1999, the Congress lost only one seat in Assam though its 35.1 per cent vote share is far less than the 50.8 per cent combined vote share of the BJP and the AGP, taken together. In Haryana, the Congress won nine seats compared to none in 1999 with a vote share of 42.1 per cent compared to a combined vote share of the separately contesting BJP and INLD of 39.6 per cent. In Jharkhand, the BJP dropped from 14 to only one seat despite a vote share of 33 per cent compared to a Congress vote share of 21.4 per cent because the Congress-JMM-RJD-CPI alliance had a combined vote share

of 44.5 per cent. Conversely, the lack of a coalition with the JD (S), ironically a post-poll government partner, was critical for Congress defeat in Karnataka. Coalitions were critical for NDA victories in Orissa and Punjab. As for the Left, coalitions were vital in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, and in West Bengal a divided opposition greatly helped. For the Congress and Congress-led coalition, four large states in which coalitions were vital for victory (Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand) contributed 114 out of 219 seats (52 per cent) for the UPA (excluding the Left although the CPM, CPI or both were coalition partners at the State level in some of these States), or forty-eight out of 145 (33 per cent) for the Congress alone. Major states in which coalitions reduced defeat margins/improved positions since 1999 (Maharashtra, Gujarat), contributed thirty-five out of 219 seats (16 per cent) for the Congress-led alliance or seventeen seats more than in 1999 (the Congress-led alliance in 1999 was different; it did not include the NCP). States with allied cooperation through non-contestation (Haryana, Delhi) contributed fifteen seats or fifteen seats more than in 1999. Another way of looking at it is to view the situation in reverse. States in which victory was owed to lack of an opposing coalition due to the BJP deciding to go it alone (Haryana, Assam, Jharkhand) contributed thirty seats, or seventeen seats more than in 1999, to the Congress-led alliance (again different in 1999 in Jharkhand).

Coalitions have played a vital role in the unexpected Congress victory in 2004 in the ways outlined earlier, including in a negative sense, i.e. the lack of coalitions in the BJP's defeat in Haryana, Assam and Jharkhand. Coalitions have also played a vital role for the BJP in states like Orissa, Punjab and Maharashtra, and for the Left in its three traditional strongholds. To what extent have the expectations derived from theory been met, i.e. to what extent has the Election 2004 coalition story been theory-confirming. The coalition experience of Election 2004 has been theory-confirming in the following ways:

(i) Coalitions have been largely opportunistic or office seeking, formed primarily to aggregate votes regardless of programmatic differences, following the imperatives of the SMSP electoral system. The best examples are that of the TRS, which differs on Telangana Statehood, the NCP, which shelved its foreign origin reservations about Sonia Gandhi, the Left parties in various State-level alliances despite historic differences with the Congress primarily on economic policy, and parties like the DMK and its smaller allies, and the JMM, which earlier had alliances with the BJP. Except for the Left parties, none of these would have been averse to doing a deal with the BJP. The BJP/NDA was either not interested or its offer was too niggardly. The last-minute character of most of these alliances reinforces this point.

(ii) At the State level, our prediction that the Congress is 'coalitionable' only when it is either a third or fourth party, or where a third or fourth party emerges where the Congress is locked in competition with a BJP/NDA rival party or alliance, has been borne out. Each State-level Congress coalition in 2004 has been in one or the other of these situations.

In 2009, the INC fared much better in election and came back into power, much to its own surprise. However, even this improved performance was not enough to get a clear majority, and a coalition was formed with various parties. A number of parties agreed to support the government from outside, without expecting any returns informed of cabinet berths, etc. Being free from the leftist yoke, the government has worked quite freely till now.

Both experts and political parties agree that the era of coalition politics has just begun and it's here to stay. Sharad Pawar, Union Agriculture Minister and President of the Nationalist Congress Party says, "At the time when regional political parties are assuming significance and the days of single party rule are over, there is no escape from coalition politics."

Experts say that Coalition Politics is a result of rise of regional parties on agendas of National Importance. One of the reasons for the growing importance of regional parties has been their success in articulating the interests of the assertive backward castes and Dalits or 'untouchables'. These parties remain 'regional' in terms of geographic locations, but are national in terms of issues relevant to the country as a whole. Their role within the national coalition is also indicative of a more competitive and polarised party system.

5.2.1 Advantages of Coalition Politics

Coalition governments in India, in spite of problems, have been successful in retaining democratic legitimacy and national unity. Major policy shifts like liberalization, economic reforms, grassroots decentralization, federal decentralization, in theory or practice can be largely attributed to the onset of coalition governance. Coalition governments in states and at the centre are compelled to depart from the rigid Congress-centred and the Hindu-right orientations and accommodate people with other orientations. This led to the integration of the party system as well as the nation. The national parties which once rejected the idea of coalition politics, have today accepted coalition politics as indispensable exercise.

To conclude, According to the experts, the coalition politics in India is now inevitable. Coalitions in Indian politics are unavoidable, because the social, economic and political order in the country has changed beyond recognition in the past 63 years. Coalitions will remain because the Indian polity does not hesitate any more to exercise its franchise. Coalitions will thrive because India now knows that extracting good governance is important for the self-interest of all sections of its society.

5.2.2 Disadvantages of Coalition Politics

Apart from lack of cohesiveness and stability of the coalition governments and the inability of Centre to take decision on time, a number of other problems beset the coalition politics in India.

1. Collective responsibility requires that ministers should be able to express their views frankly in the expectation that they can argue freely in private while maintaining a united front when decisions have been reached. This, in turn, requires that the privacy of opinions expressed in Cabinet and ministerial committees should be maintained. It is precisely this frank expression of views and free private argument which are often not obtainable in coalition settings.

2. Ideally, the confluence of interests for coalitions must be dictated by coherent and principled political beliefs and not opportunism alone. However, the purpose of coalition governments in India so far has merely represented a translation of anti-Congressism or anti-BJPism into a tactic for power-sharing.

3. The experience of coordination committees has also not been very impressive. The culture of coalitions is in its essence the culture of compromise. It is based, to

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Check Your Progress

1. Mention any one theory of coalition politics.
2. On what basis was the United Front founded?
3. What is the full form of NDA?
4. Mention some policy shifts that have occurred as a result of coalition politics.
5. Coalition governments in India have hampered democratic legitimacy and national unity. (True/False)

Both experts and political parties agree that the era of coalition politics has just begun and it's here to stay. Sharad Pawar, Union Agriculture Minister and President of the Nationalist Congress Party says, "At the time when regional political parties are assuming significance and the days of single party rule are over, there is no escape from coalition politics."

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a large extent, on the sharing of elective and non-elective offices. A coalition government, in a system like ours, cannot be effectively managed by the cabinet alone. To keep the coalition united, the Prime Minister and his colleagues must learn to promote reconciliation of conflicting policies and ambitions in two forums, one outside Parliament and the other inside. These are the all-party Parliamentary Committees on the floors of the Parliamentary chambers and the multi-party coordination committees of the governing coalition and

Given the multi-layered nature of Indian coalitions, with some parties joining the cabinet while others extending support only from the parliamentary floor, the Parliamentary Committees may be used as additional foci of sharing power. The Coordination Committee also needs to be strengthened by imparting greater seriousness and regularity as a sounding board for policies in broad terms to be worked out in detail by the cabinet. This will avoid the embarrassment of the rolling back of the cabinet/ministerial decisions, notorious for its frequency during the BJP-led coalition govt.

5.3 RECENT TREND—POLITICS OF DEFECTION

One of the most significant developments in the post-1967 period has been the formation of numerous coalition governments of widely heterogeneous elements and the continuous process of changing party affiliation by legislators in large numbers. This has affected the fate of ministries and the course of state politics. During 1967–73, about sixteen state governments were toppled in quick succession with as many as over 2700 cases of defection by legislators.

Despite the substantial cleansing of the Indian electoral system over the last three decades, corruption continues to be a major problem in Indian politics. Consequently, the scourge of defections continues to periodically recur, notwithstanding the passage of a sweeping legislation against party-hopping politicians unanimously adopted by Parliament during the very first year of Rajiv Gandhi's reign.

What is Political Defection?

The word 'defection' generally denotes 'abandonment', 'desertion' or running away from duty. However, in politics, its ramifications include many situations like crossing or changing of floors, the politics of opportunism, change of party or group, shifting of loyalty or allegiance from one party or group to another, repudiation of the label under which a legislator successfully contests his election, cross of floor inside the legislative chamber, leaving a party and then coming back to its fold, etc. Broadly speaking, it means leaving one's party or leader, under whose symbol or leadership one has found a berth in legislature, not on grounds of principles or due to split in the party but in quest for individual power or personal disillusionment or disgust.

An act of political defection may be said to signify leaving a party and joining another one; leaving a party joining another, and then returning to the original party; leaving a party to become a non-party man; leaving a party but continuing to support the same as a liberal politician; leaving a party to form another party or group; leaving a party, forming another and then merging it with the original party; and leaving a party, forming another and then merging it with some other party or group.

Check Your Progress

6. Mention one disadvantage of coalition politics.

7. A coalition government in a system like ours cannot be managed by the _____ alone.

Causes of Defections

Defections have become, more or less, a regular feature of state politics. One important cause responsible for defections is allurement for high offices. Some legislators defect when they are offered some high jobs as a price for joining a new party and leaving their own. Another factor is the big difference between the emoluments, status and benefits attached to the office of a minister and that of an ordinary MLA. If and when an MLA is offered, or promised ministership, he does not, generally, hesitate to leave the party on whose ticket and symbol he was elected.

There is also almost complete indifference of the electorate to the acts of defection by their representatives, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Bihar. Time and again the defectors in these states have been re-elected by the public. The personality cult in India is another cause of defection. When individuals so prominently dominate the political scene, their followers defect as soon as their leaders, due to personality clashes, decide to leave the party. Political bosses in India are another reason for defection. Some of the political leaders try to dominate their legislators. They are not prepared to listen to any criticism against themselves and are not even prepared to patiently listen to the other's viewpoint. The result is dissatisfaction amongst those who are not listened to and consequently they leave the party. In some cases, ideological differences also become responsible for defection. Defections also take place when there is no dynamic leadership. Powerful lobbies and pressure groups also play a big role in defection politics. In some cases, business or caste or religion might feel interested to lodge their people in authority. They start lobbying and put pressure on those who are near to them to defect from their party and to associate themselves with those in whom they are interested, so that their group can come to power.

Another cause of defection is the long rule of the Congress Party, both at the Centre and in the states. Even during the heyday of its power and prestige, it did not hesitate in roping in many eminent leaders of various opposition parties and groups to defect and thereby swell its ranks. Men like T. Prakasam, P.T. Pillai and Asoka Mehta of the PSP defected to join the ruling party and thereby gained major 'rewards' in a way tempting many others to follow suit.

Undoubtedly, unenlightened self-interest appears to be the most potent incentive that enthuses the legislators to commit the political sin of defection, re-defection and counter-defection.

Defections in India

Prior to 1967, there was no serious problem of political defections. Defections were at their rampant worst in the aftermath of the shock defeat of the Congress (despite the hopeless disunity in opposition ranks), in most states of north India in 1967. Indira Gandhi systematically destabilized the shaky non-Congress coalitions that emerged in the States after the 1967 poll with Machiavellian precision, taking recourse to open bribery of MLAs of these shaky alignments. The opposition, always adept at picking up amoral cues from the Congress, fast emerged as an equally made a mockery of the people's mandate and reduced legislatures to noisy auction houses. Rules were brazenly flouted and newer loopholes discovered by ambitious and acquisitive politicians to ascend ministerial office and accumulate personal wealth.

Following the promulgation of the Anti-Defection Act in 1985, Governments have been relatively more stable, but in less than a decade, politicians had discovered sufficient loopholes to circumvent the law's stringent provisions. In August 1988, President's rule was imposed in Nagaland because thirteen MLAs, complying strictly with the term of the Constitution, obtained the Speaker's certification to form a new party to stake a claim to form the government. On 30 July 1988, the Speaker accepted that there had been a legitimate split to create a new party. Thus, the next day, Mr Vamuzo claimed the right to form a government backed by thirty-two (out of possible zero) signatures. However, the then Governor of Nagaland, Gen. Krishna Rao, refused to accept this claim and proceeded to declare President's rule in the State.

Fresh elections in 1989 resulted in swearing in the Jamir Ministry, but in May 1990, the Jamir Government fell. The reason was that twelve of the thirty-six Congress (I) legislators supporting the Jamir government had broken away and formed their own party fulfilling the provisions of the anti-defection law that strength of one-third of the membership was needed to justify a split.

In another instance, at the Centre, V.P. Singh became the Prime Minister of India on 2 December 1989. He represented Janata Dal and his government got outside support from the BJP. However, when BJP announced its withdrawal of support to the V.P. Singh government (due to Mandal Report), the Congress (I) began to call the shots immediately. When the congress announced that it was willing to extend its support to the Janata Dal minus V.P. Singh, it was a direct signal to Chandra Shekhar to try and split the Janata Dal.

The magic grouping that was required was sixty. This together with the grouping of 211 consisting of the Congress (I) and its allies would provide not only a total of 271 to constitute a majority in Parliament but would also add up to one-third of the original party's strength. This is the minimum strength required to split a party and escape the punitive sanctions of the Anti-Defection Act.

Thus, in November 1990, there was split in the Janata Dal; 25 members broke away from the V.P. Singh-led party, formed a new political party-Janata Dal (Secular) and elected Chandra Shekhar as their leader. The number later swelled to 38 and after a few days of persistent persuasions (presumably with the lure of office and power) to 62. Chandra Shekhar was invited by the President to form the government. The country, thus, witnessed the curious phenomenon, for the first time in its history, of a small minority of 62 forming the government, with support from outside of the largest 195 strong Congress (I) party.

Critics have pointed out that the ineffectual implementation of the Anti-Defection Act is partly the outcome of the fact that presiding officers (Speakers) of Indian legislatures have never been squeamish about revealing their political partisanship. They look upon the speaker's job as a temporary assignment to be used to further their own interests within their party. Since it is a speaker's prerogative to recognize a split, parties vie with one another to get their man installed to this post. A classic tussle took place in this connection in Uttar Pradesh in 1997 over the post of presiding officer between BSP and BJP. When the BJP entered into an unprecedented rotational power sharing arrangement with the Bahujan Samaj Party in March 1997, it had been agreed that the BJP would be entitled to nominate the Speaker. BJP nominate its party member-Kesari Nath Tripathi as the Speaker of UP Legislative Assembly. BSP was given the first stint of six months and thus, Mayawati became the Chief Minister of U.P. As the day approached for the BSP to relinquish office in the BJP's favour, incumbent Chief

Minister Mayawati developed cold feet, realizing the fragility of the party she headed. Accordingly, the BSP made loud noises about extending the rotational arrangement to include the Speaker's post too. The BJP refused to relent and finally carried the day, successfully retaining its nominee, Kesari Nath Tripathi as speaker and Kalyan Singh becoming the Chief Minister of U.P.

Within weeks seething Mayawati-led BSP, withdrew support from the Kalyan Singh-led BJP Government, thereby reducing the coalition to a minority. Kalyan Singh, who had anticipated this all along, was fully prepared and quickly effected a split in the congress rump. Twenty-two of whose thirty-eight MLAs effortlessly crossed over to the BJP camp. But this still did not give Kalyan Singh the required number of three defectors. Amid wanton violence inside the Assembly, twelve BSP MLAs rose to announce their decision to join BJP. The Speaker K.N. Tripathi promptly recognised this as a split in the BSP and Kalyan Singh convincingly won the vote of confidence. The twelve BSP MLAs who defected to BJP were given ministerial berths in the Kalyan Singh Government.

Implications of Defections

Defections have led to political instability and delays in the decision-making process at state level. Moreover, in case of defections, there is no continuity in policies because each government which came to power follow its own policies, many a times undoing the work of the previous ones. The coalitions which were least viable were formed in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In both the coalitions, discipline, so essential for running a government, was at low ebb. The Chief Ministers were neither feared nor respected. They were incapable of taking any vital decision on their own. In all, the office of the chief ministership was devalued. The politics of defection, in a way, made bureaucracy very strong and powerful.

To summarize, defections have led to (i) political instability; (ii) the emergence of unstable coalitions in the states; (iii) de-valuation of the office of the Chief Minister; (iv) increasing power of the bureaucracy; (v) increasing strength of the state cabinets; (vi) the formation of minority governments in the states; (vii) fragmentation of political parties; and (viii) increase in political corruption and devaluation of moral values.

Anti-Defection Law (Fifty-Second Amendment, 1985)

In 1985, the Rajiv Gandhi Government passed the Anti-Defection Law, which is also known as the Fifty-Second Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985

This Act has added a new Tenth Schedule to the Constitution. This Schedule provides that the seat of a member of Parliament/State Legislatures shall fall vacant:

(a) if he voluntarily gives up his membership of such political party; or

(b) if he votes or abstains from voting in such House contrary to which he belongs without obtaining prior permission of such party, and such act has been condoned by the concerned political party within 15days from the date of such voting; or

(c) If an independent member, after his election joins any political party; or

(d) If a nominated member joins any political party after the expiry of six months from the date he took oath as a member of the House.

The above-mentioned provisions, however, do not apply in the following three cases:

(i) **Party splits:** The disqualification on the ground of defection does not apply when there is a split in the concerned political party. The new faction arising out of such split should consist of not less than one-third members of the party.

(ii) **Party merger:** These provisions also do not apply where two or more political parties decide to merge by a two-thirds majority of the total strength of the party in the legislature.

(iii) **Resignation of speaker/Deputy speaker, Chairman/Deputy Chairman from party membership:** The above-mentioned provisions will not apply when a member of the Lok Sabha/ Vidhan Sabha immediately before his election as a Speaker/Deputy speaker or a member of the Rajya Sabha immediately before his election as a Deputy Chairman or a member of Vidhan Parishad immediately before his election as a Chairman or a Deputy Chairman resigns from the membership of his party to become a non-party man. These provisions will also not apply to them when they rejoin such or any other political party after ceasing to hold such offices.

Decision of disqualification: Any question regarding disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by the Chairman or the Speaker of the House, as the case may be, and his decision shall be final. The courts do not have a jurisdiction in such a matter.

The underlying idea is that if an MP or an MLA seeks to quit the party on whose ticket he was elected, then he will have to resign his seat and recontest. Thus, there will be an effective curb on the propensity of members to change parties with a view to get some immediate political gains.

Criticism

1. The Act did not ban defections arising out of the lust for power. It banned only retail defections, and legalized wholesale defections. Thus, it allows bulk defections while declaring individual defection as illegal.

2. Another objectionable part of the Act is suppression of dissent. Any person defying party whip would be thrown out. Thus, it made the MPs slaves of the dominant leadership. To some critics, this constitutes a mockery of the freedom of dissent.

3. The Act has raised the price of the legislators of dubious fidelity. The Act has proved to be effective only when parties command very substantial strength in a House.

4. The Act has also given rise to the peculiar situation wherein rebel legislators are often merely suspended by the parent party which means they have to vote in accordance with the party whip despite their merry resort to the use of invectives against the leadership in public.

Anti-Defection Act and the Supreme Court Judgement

In 1991, the Supreme Court, by its decisions, removed the finality attached to the Speaker's order under the Tenth Schedule. The Court held that the Speaker, while acting under the

Tenth Schedule, is a tribunal whose decision is subject to Judicia Review. Thus, the implication of the judgment (The case of Kihota Hollohon vs. Zachilhn & others) is that the decisions of the presiding officer can be scrutinized by the Courts.

To conclude, periodic attempts at reforming the existing Anti-Defection Act have come to naught on account of the indifference of parties who all seem to benefit from its existence in the current form. None is eager to rigorously implement the clause which enjoins disqualification of defecting legislators, without which the Act will always be liable to being circumvented. Flouting of its provisions has received a fillip in recent years owing to fractured verdicts by the electorate in many states and even at the Centre.

ACTIVITY

Prepare a news item with a hypothetical case of adverse effects caused by coalition politics.

DID YOU KNOW

Coalitions can come in two forms. The first is produced by two or more parties joining forces after fighting elections separately to form a majority government. However, some coalitions (or alliances) are already decided before elections to give the parties the best chance of immediate government after the election.

5.4 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- There are broadly three kinds of coalition theories.

First, there are utility maximization theories that postulate the size principle predicting the minimum winning coalition. Proceeding from the axiom of the rationality of political actors, these theories deduce the theorem that in any formal coalition situation with the majority decision rule, the coalition formation would hover around the minimum winning size, typically around fifty percentage points. The smaller the coalition, the larger the quantum of power and patronage that needs to be shared among the winners.

Second, there are **ideological and policy compatibility theories**. Proceeding from the assumption that the maximization of utility must contend with ideological concordance among parties, these theories predict a minimum winning coalition among parties whose policy preferences are least discordant.

Third, there are theories that treat coalitions as sequential episodes that offer opportunities for redistribution of political resources, determining the relative political influence of coalition partners. The gains and losses in the present round and their implications for the ensuing ones primarily guide the competitive demands and concessions made by parties to each other.

Check Your Progress

8. State one cause of political defection.

9. In 1985, the Rajiv Gandhi Government passed the

   _____,

   which is also known as the Fifty-Second Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985.

10. Mention one criticism of the Anti-Defection Law.

- With its combination of national and State parties the Indian federation has been transformed in the past few decades. Perhaps no single year since 1947 has been so momentous in the political annals of India as 1977.

- The Janata Party once saw itself as the historic focal point of a non-Congress coalitional alternative at the centre since 1977. At that time, the Congress (Organization), the BJP, the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), the Socialist Party and the Congress for Democracy merged under the shadow of the Emergency Rule. This alliance was able to unseat Indira Gandhi. The Janata Party coalition government started out well and completed nearly half of its five-year term.

- The Janata Dal-led National Front government [which included the Janata Dal, the [Congress Party (Socialist), the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the DMK, and the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP)], was just as fractious as the Janata Party coalition government and even less durable.

- The National Front is theoretically a coalition of parties, even though there are only three non-Janata Dal MPs. In selecting his cabinet, Prime Minister Singh chose ministers from these allied parties: Law Minister Dinesh Goswami from the Asom Gana Parishad; Urban Development Minister Murasoli Maran from the DMK; the Minister of Transport K. P. Unnikrishnan from the Congress(S); and the Minister of (both) Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs P. Upendra from the Telugu Desam.

- The United Front was founded on the basis of non-BJP unity. By 1998, the BJP had become the single largest party superseding the Congress Party. The United Front also sought to block the way to a Congress-led coalition.

- The word 'defection' generally denotes 'abandonment', 'desertion' or running away from duty. However, in politics, its ramifications include many situations like crossing or changing of floors, the politics of opportunism, change of party or group, shifting of loyalty or allegiance from one party or group to another, repudiation of the label under which a legislator successfully contests his election, cross of floor inside the legislative chamber, leaving a party and then coming back to its fold, etc.

- Defections have led to (i) political instability; (ii) the emergence of unstable coalitions in the states; (iii) de-valuation of the office of the Chief Minister; (iv) increasing power of the bureaucracy; (v) increasing strength of the state cabinets; (vi) the formation of minority governments in the states; (vii) fragmentation of political parties; and (viii) increase in political corruption and devaluation of moral values.

5.5 KEY TERMS

- **Alliance:** A union or association formed for mutual benefit, esp. between countries or organizations.

- **Coalition:** An alliance for combined action, especially a temporary alliance of political parties forming a government or of states.

- **Defection:** Withdrawing support or help despite allegiance or responsibility.

- **Democratic:** Favouring or characterized by social equality; egalitarian.

5.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. There are utility maximization theories that postulate the size principle predicting the minimum winning coalition.

2. The United Front was founded on the basis of non-BJP unity.

3. National Democratic Alliance

4. Major policy shifts like liberalization, economic reforms, grassroots decentralization, federal decentralization, in theory or practice can be largely attributed to the onset of coalition governance.

5. False

6. Ideally, the confluence of interests for coalitions must be dictated by coherent and principled political beliefs and not opportunism alone. However, the purpose of coalition governments in India so far has merely represented a translation of anti-Congressism or anti-BJPism into a tactic for power-sharing.

7. Cabinet

8. One important cause responsible for defections is allurement for high offices.

9. Anti-Defection Law

10. The Act did not ban defections arising out of the lust for power. It banned only retail defections, and legalized wholesale defections. Thus, it allows bulk defections while declaring individual defection as illegal.

5.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the various theories of political coalition?
2. State the advantages of coalition politics.
3. State the disadvantages of coalition politics.
4. What have been the results of political defection?
5. What are the provisions of the Anti-Defection Law?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the characteristics of coalition politics in the context of India.
2. Explain in detail the 'recent trends in the politics of defection'.

5.8 FURTHER READING

Gowda, M.V. Rajeev and Sridharan, E.; *Parties and the Party System, 1947-2006,* (ed.) *States of India's Democracy*, John Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2007, p.7.

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