

Survival of Semi Utopian Democracy in India

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ABSTRACT

Post colonial era or state of affairs representing repercussion of Western Colonialism. Democracy is a system of government in which citizens exercise power directly or elect representatives from among themselves to from governing body, such as a parliament. Challenges of Indian democracy mean and includes social and economic inequalities, poverty and unemployment, illiteracy and ignorance, casteism, communalism, population, explosion, regionalism, corruption and terrorism, etc. The greatest defect in the working of democracy lies in the fact that masses to whom the power is vested are mostly semi educated or uneducated, in the third world countries. Without a spirit or reasonableness, democracy is bound to degenerate into mob rule. One of the most important challenges of the Indian democracy is dynastic succession. Political leaders see political power as their personal property to be passed on their sons, daughters and close relatives.

Key Words : Democracy, Post colonial era, Parliament, Casteism, Communalism, Population

INTRODUCTION

Most of the countries of the world including India have adopted the democratic set up of Governance. The idea of democracy can be traced to ancient Greece. Democracy existed in ancient Greece prior to its vast exposition and upliftment of the concept of democracy. The 'city state' system that prevailed in ancient Greece between 422 BC and 322 BC was contemplated as an ideal model by western ideologist, political scientists and scholars alike. The word 'democracy' is extracted from the Greek word 'demos' which denote 'people' and 'kratos' which signify 'power'. Hence, democracy connotes the power of the people. Democracy and its dimension put up with changes during the period of evolution from ancient Greece to modern word.

In the post Industrial Revolution period, the spread of colonialism to the far flung lands of Asia, Africa and Oceania had mainly twin intentions of economic exploitation and political domination. After succeed in achieving independence, India became a Democratic

Republic on 26th January, 1950 by introducing her own constitution. It was a major achievement, more particularly when one looks at some of the countries in our neighbourhood and even around the world. It is not exercised with some measure of triumph in ancient India. Some of the modern fundamental principles are practical even in modern times. Meanwhile, the post-Cold-War discourses saw the rise of theories and concepts that explained competition and conflict. Yet it was also began the ground project of understanding the developing order wherein the state of democratic evolution of the post-colonial countries had to undergo the litmus test through established parameters like institutional activism, electoral processes, participatory dynamics, levels of freedom, plurality, accountability, transparency and welfare orientation of the states measuring device through spectrum of good governance.

Democracy in India:

The constitution of India came into force from January 26,1950 declares India a sovereign, socialist and

democratic republic. The constitution sometimes the essentials for cheering up a democratic governmental system. Our constitution contains the following democratic ideals:

- Government system that holds people as the source of sourcing power, with the head of state elected by the people.
- Fully protected fundamental rights.
- Governing process established under the rule of law. These are held as the lifeblood of Democracy in India.
- Special protection for those who are socially and educationally marginalized.
- Directive Principles of State Policy that ensure social and economic equality.
- Transparent and Independent elections.

Types of Democracy:

There are different forms of democracy. The practice of democracy in ancient Greece was known as the 'City state system'. People exercised their power of governance through this system. Democracy was under the control of governance lay the citizens. However, under this system, women, slaves and aliens were not considered as citizens in ancient Greek democracy.

Direct Democracy :

The direct democracy is a system where every member of the society participates directly in the political process. In this system citizens assemble together for the enactment of laws required for governance and they also implement these rules. There was no separate court for imparting justice. Citizens used to participate directly in the process of governance.

Representative Democracy :

The second major type of democracy is referred to as representative democracy. Direct democracy is no more existing in any part of the world. The continuous rise in population, diverse problems of the society, advancement of information technology and vast area of the state leads to emerge the concept of representatives democracy. Under this system citizens choose their representatives and then these chosen representatives further rule and make laws. The elected representatives many hold power to select other representatives, presidents, or the officers of the government or of the legislature, as the Prime Minister.

Presidential Democracy :

Under Presidential democracy, the President is either directly or indirectly elected by citizens of the state. He / She is the head of state and is also the head of the government. Countries like the USA, Argentina and Sudan employ this kind of democracy.

Parliamentary Democracy :

A democracy that gives exclusive power to the legislature is called parliamentary democracy. The head of state is different from the head of government, and both have varying degree of power. However, in most cases, the president is either a weak monarch (e.g. UK) or a ceremonial head (e.g. India).

Authoritarian Democracy :

This a democratic set up where only the ruling elite are part of Parliamentary process and have the right to decide the various interests of the state's population. Modern day Russia under Vladimir Putin is a classic example of this type of democracy and governance.

Participatory Democracy :

This is a type of democracy where all members of a population have an intense feeling of longing to create opportunities for all members and have a meaningful contributions to the decision making process. It prefers to empower community based grassroots politics. The Narmada Bachao Andolan in India is an example of Participatory model of democracy.

Islamic Democracy :

This form of democracy seeks to apply Islamic law to public policies, while simultaneously maintaining a democratic framework. Under this democratic system the everyone you is subject to the Sharia law including the elected leaders and must commit to practicing 'Shura', a special form of consultation practiced by Prophet Mohammad. This type of democracy are fully exercised by Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Social Democracy :

Social democracy is a political, social and economic ideology that supports economic and social interventions to promote social justice within the framework of a liberal democratic Polity and a Capitalist economy.

Pre-Requisites of Democracy :

Here is under some preconditions that are essential to strengthen the democracy.

Political Freedom :

In democracy every citizen has the right to cast his/her vote, right to take part in elections and have to enjoy the right to exercise political power. Political freedom in a democracy delegates the citizens to form associations and to speak about and protest the undemocratic and unparliamentary activities of the ruling government.

Democratic Society :

To implement real democracy in a country it is very much necessary to form a society which favors equal rights, freedom of speech and fair trial and tolerates the views of minorities. In a democratic society, people are able to voice their opinion to government and ultimately play an important role in the makeup and organization of society. A peace-loving liberal democracy is one which has to apply the rule of law to all of its citizens.

Education :

It is an important factor in developing political consciences of the people of a country. Citizens should have adequate education about the ideas and value of democracy. It can enhance the thought process of people and enable them to do constructive criticism so as to help them to arrive at right decision.

Independence of Responsible Media :

Media plays an important role in converting working of the government and democratic ideas to the people and exposes the activities of corruption, nepotism, terrorism etc. Free and impartial media help in forming and expressing public opinion.

Free and Independent Elections :

Free and fair and independent elections and right to cast vote in favour of choicable candidate are important ingredients of democracy. An independent election commission is designed with the constitutional standing for this purpose.

Supreme Court on Democracy in India :

In the case of Kesavananda Bharati Vs State of Kerala, court held the supremacy of the Indian

constitution and prevented the authoritarian rule by a single political party.

On April 24, 1973, the then Chief Justice Sikri and 12 judges of the Supreme court delivered the most important judgment in the judicial history of India. It had been conducted for almost 68 days. The only issue in that case was to observe the response to interrogate whether Parliament can amend the constitution in an infinite process even at the cost of eradicating all the fundamental rights of the citizens of India. Under Article 368(1) "Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, Parliament may in exercise of its constituent power amend by way of addition, variation or repeal any provision of this constitution in accordance with the procedure laid down in this article." However, on the verdict of that historical case was made for the majority (7:2) judges put into effect that the parliament could amend any part of the Constitution subject to unalter the basic structure or essential features of the Constitution. The Judiciary tried to show that there was an inherent and implied restrictions in constitution an amending power of Parliament.

Indian National Congress Party and Dynastic Succession :

One of the most important challenges of the Indian democracy is the dynastic succession of political power. During the first two and half decades of the post independent period preponderant position of the Indian National Congress Party in power and it was inevitable that all-or-most Government decision were the decisions of the congress party. Parliaments instrumentally in decision making as such was restricted. The crucial issues relating to the threat of sovereignty of the country and oppose to the Constitution raised by the opposition party in the floor of the Parliament, the ruling party endorsed those issues to the Special Committees inspite of taking proper care and discussion in the floor in presence of the opposition who raised those issues. Of course through the evolution of various mechanical devices and enforcement rules of procedures, the day-to-day working of Parliament is being better regulated. Another pivot shortcoming of Indian Democracy is that political leaders see political power as their personal property which they pass on to their successors and close relatives. First Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had supported his legal daughter, Indira Pridarshini Nehru in politics. Although she could not much whilst Nehru was alive but managed

to get up the ladder as a throne apparent. After the mysterious death of the Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri at Tashkent, Indira hopped on to the PM chair quick as a buzz. On 23rd June 1980 the unfortunate death of her younger son Sanjoy Gandhi, Indira brought her pilot elder son Rajib Gandhi in politics and he became the Prime Minister in India after the assassination of Indira Gandhi on 31st October, 1984. Same practices are also followed in some federal states in India. In the state of Kashmir Sk. Abdullah was the first Chief Minister, appointed his son Farooq Abdullah as the President of the National Conference in August, 1981 who was a novice in the political arena of Jammu and Kashmir. After his father's death in 1982, Farooq Abdullah becomes the Chief Minister of the state and subsequently Farooq Abdullah was appointed a minister state in 1999 under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee led the National Democratic Alliance. In the year, 2002, Legislative Assembly elections, Omar Abdullah was chosen to lead the Nation Conference, while Farooq Abdullah intended to continue his political career at the centre. The worst family rule was experienced in the state of Bihar in 1997 when Chief Minister, Lalu Prasad Yadav was convicted for his involvement in the fodder scam, he installed his housewife Rabri Devi as Chief Minister instead. His younger son Tejaswari Yadav was the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar in Nitish Kumar government for twenty months. Now he is the sitting opposition leader in Bihar Legislative Assembly and the youngest opposition leader in the country. Similar picture of Indian politics is observed in some other states in India like Odisha, UP, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu etc.

Conclusion :

Considering all these findings it can be concluded that though India is considered as the largest democracy in the world, but in reality there are the various challenges that responsible for creating obstruction in the true functioning of democracy in India. Just like the Early Vedic age the most capable person and muscle power

decides who will rule the state or country for the coming Parliamentary or state legislative assemblies election. It was found in the Later Vedic period supreme power was vested in leader and leadership become hereditary. The status of women and so called lower class people declined inspite of reservation system prevailed in our Constitution and enhanced it from time to time. It is a matter of concern that despite the elapse of many years of independence since 1947, there is lot of illiteracy and corruption in India, Politicians indulge in corrupt practices, do scams, divide the nation on religious grounds for their petty motives of vote banks, which has adversely affected the respect of Indian democracy in the world. There is however, a member of indications to show that Parliament is becoming a more effective instrument for expressing public opinion and voicing public grievances. Through the evolution of various mechanical devices and enforcement of rules of procedure, the day-to-day working of the Parliament is being better regulated.

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