

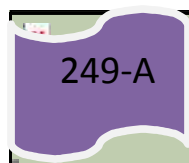
# **ISSUES IN INDIAN POLITICS**

**Core Course of BA Political Science**

***(IV Semester 2013 Admission onwards)***



**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**  
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**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

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**Core Course of BA Political Science**

**IV Semester 2013 Admission**

**ISSUES IN INDIAN POLITICS**

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<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE No</b>
<b>Module - I</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Module - II</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Module - III</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Module - IV</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Module - V</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Module - V</b>	<b>66</b>

## **ISSUES IN INDIAN POLITICS**

**Module I: Socio economic factors (Caste & Class) determining political process in India**

**Module II: Party system and Electoral Politics**

Nature of Party System

National Political Parties – Policies and Programmes

Regional Political Parties – An overview.

**Module III: Secularism and Indian Democracy** –Theory and Practice

Challenges to Secularism and Democratic Polity – Communalism, Religious fundamentalism, Terrorism and Money Power.

**Module IV: Marginalised Sections** – Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes, Women and Children; Linguistic and Ethnic Movements.

**Module V. Major issues in Indian Democracy.** Regionalism, Communalism, Religious, Fundamentalism, Criminalisation of Politics, Reservation issues and Globalisation.

**Module VI: Nature of State Politics in Kerala:**

Party system and Electoral behaviour; Coalition Politics in Kerala

**MODULE 1**  
**SOCIO ECONOMIC FACTORS OF CASTE AND CLASS:**  
**DETERMINING POLITICAL PROCESS IN INDIA**

**CASTE**

The system of caste has come to haunt both Indian Politics and Indian Political analysis. State Politics in India has been particularly the hot bed of Political casteism. In Kerala caste considerations have played an important role in state politics. Caste in our society refers to a social group where membership is largely decided on the basis of birth. This caste comprises a local group whose members do not enter into marital relationship with outsiders. Originally this group was associated with a specific profession. The word 'caste' is derived from the Portuguese word 'Casta' meaning family, race, or lineage.

According to Prof. Blunt, a caste is "an endogamous group, or collection of endogamous groups, bearing a common name, membership of which is hereditary; imposing on its members certain restrictions in matters of social intercourse; either following a common traditional occupation or claiming a common origin, and generally regarded as forming a single homogeneous community." Mac Iver observed that the feudal order came to a close, paving the way for a caste system. When the status is wholly pre-determined, so that men are born to their lot in life without any hope of changing it, the class takes the extreme form of caste. Caste always rests on differences determined at birth. These differences cannot be changed by individual achievements in the various fields like economic, professional or political.

Caste always rests on differences determined at birth. These differences cannot be changed by individual achievements in the various fields like economic, professional or political. Scholars have different opinion about caste. Some have argued that the caste system is to be defined in terms of its Hindu attributes and rational and therefore, is unique to India. There are others opine that the caste system has to be defined in terms of structural features, which are found not only in Hindu India but in a number of other societies as well. The caste system very deeply entrenched in Indian society.

**CASTE DEFINED**

A.L. Kroeber defines caste as "an endogamous and hereditary subdivision of an ethnic unit occupying a position of superior or inferior rank or social esteem in comparison with other such sub-discussions".

F.G. Bailey says "A caste is a group of structural or potential kinsmen"

M.N. Srinivas defines caste "as a hereditary endogamous, usually localised group, having a traditional association with an occupation and particular position in the hierarchy of castes. Relations between castes are governed, among other things, by concepts of pollution and purity and generally maximum commensality occurs within the caste.

**CASTE AND SOCIETY**

The groups constituting the caste system are differentiated, interacting and interdependent parts of a larger society. They are economically interdependent and occupationally specialized. In a caste system everyone belongs to a particular caste and no one belongs to a particular caste and no one belongs to more than one caste. A caste may comprise of people who follow different pursuits. The caste is always a purely social and possibly occupational association which forms part of a social community. The members of the caste view themselves and are viewed by others, as relatively homogeneous elements in a system of

differentially ranked component parts rather than independent and mutually unranked and self-contained system.

### **CASTE AND GROUP**

The members of caste usually share a group norm. They interact with one another in characteristic ways. There are identifiable symbols of group membership. These symbols range from skin colour to cultural features such as language, occupation, dress and place of residence. Only the members of the group are treated as peers. It is to be noted that where group affiliation is relevant, individual attributes are irrelevant.

### **CASTE AND STATUS GROUP**

Membership in caste is determined by birth. An individual is assigned his lifelong and unalterable status according to his parentage. Status is shared by an individual with others of similar birth as per the status assigned to a particular caste.

### **CASTE AND CLAN**

Caste resembles the clan in being a social unit within a larger political or cultural whole. Both are marriage regulated and hereditary from the point of view of the individual. It, however, differs from the clan, as it is endogamous, whereas the clan is exogamous. The castes by very nature are ranked or rated, whereas clans are essentially equal in status within the society. The caste and clan represent the horizontal and vertical divisions of population, respectively.

### **CASTE AND HIERARCHY**

The caste system is hierarchical in nature. It implies a system of differentiated evaluation and enjoyment of differential power and rewards. It is, therefore, a system of institutionalized inequality. Castes are ranked in terms of the shared "intrinsic worth", which is ascribed by birth to the individuals who constitute them. This criterion of rank may be defined in many different idioms, such as purity, honour or genetically demanded capabilities. Those who are higher in the hierarchy regarded themselves as more worthy than those who in the lower ladder, does not ordinarily take place. If a system provides little or no opportunity for one to improve his position, it is called a caste or caste like system.

### **CASTE AND SUB-CASTE**

The 'sub-caste' is the predominantly endogamous unit. In some castes there are several hundred sub-castes. The sub-castes are either purely local castes or they constitute associations which are delimited and especially designated according to actual or alleged descent, former or present kind of occupational pursuit or other differences in style of life. They consider themselves as parts of the caste and, in addition to their own names, carry the name of the caste. These units are based on the local population within which there is an effective implementation of the rules of the caste behaviour.

### **ORIGIN OF CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA**

It is believed that the caste system in India originated about 2,500 hundred years ago. It is prevalent not only among Hindus but also among Sikhs, Christians, and Muslims. While it has many aspects, here we are concerned with the aspect of hierarchy of high and low, of touchable and untouchable, which has provided legitimation for the unequal access to resources, and to the exploitation and oppression of lower castes, besides the discrimination against lower caste by higher castes.

The most crucial part of the caste system was that it designated certain groups as untouchables and out castes, and then used this to deny them ownership of land, entry into temples, access to common resources such as water from the village tank or well. Non-

untouchable castes do not have any physical contact with untouchables. They could not accept water or food from their hands.

The classical example of the caste system is found in the ancient system of Hindu India. Scholars have assigned various origins to it. Some say it is the product of the culture conflict between the Aryans of the north and the people of south, whom they invaded thousands years ago. To others, it was due to the differences in colour between the 'lighter' invaders and the 'darker' native population. One Hindu sociologist has rejected both these arguments pertaining to the origin of the caste. He claimed that the division of labour was the basis of origin of the Indian caste system.

The Indian caste system presents an extra ordinarily complex social phenomenon. Many of the social scientists have been interested in the caste system as a type of social stratification. It is in India that caste has its complete development. Indian caste system accordingly forms the most integrated as well as the most self- conscious system that has grown up anywhere in the world. By Budha's time, it was already fairly prevalent and the Greeks reported its existence a few centuries later. The Aryans a light skinned people, conquered the dark skinned Dravidians and imposed an unequal form of accommodation on them. Only the invaders monopolized to become priests, warriors and craftsmen, forcing the Dravidians into laboring jobs. It was this decision along racial lines that marked the beginning of the caste system. In fact, the Hindu word for caste, 'Varna means 'Colour'. Dark skinned people always pushed back to the bottom of society. They are treated very badly. Religion seems to have deeply influenced Hindu caste structure. Members of higher caste exploiting the lower caste peoples, they are known as untouchables. The caste factor dominates Indian social and political life since earliest times caste has been one of the basic features of the structure of Indian society. So caste influence is fairly strong in our country. M N Srinivas has rightly pointed out the development of telecommunication, spread of education, introduction of democratic institutions led not to the disintegration of caste system, but to its strengthening,

### **STRATIFICATION BASED ON CASTE**

Caste in our society refers to a social group where membership is largely decided on the basis of birth in India, caste is the central fact of social structure. It originally referred to the distinction between Arya and Das (Slave). The division in Indian society refers to the distinction between the original inhabitants (Dasa) and immigrant Arya population. At a later period there was the three fold and four fold division of society. The social stratification in Indian society commenced with this four- fold divisions. The names of those four are given there as Brahmin, Rajanya (Kshatriya), Vaishya and shudra, who are said to have come from the mouth, the arms, the thighs, and the feet of creator. The four Varnas in which the Aryans divided the caste system-Brahmin (priest), Kshatriya(Warrior), Vaishya (Merchant) and Shudra (Peasants), did correspond to the four functions of knowledge , defense, wealth and labour. This Varna scheme refers at the broad categories of the Hindu Society.

M.N. Srinivas writes "This Varna- scheme refers at the best only to the particular categories of the society and not to its real and affective units". Each Varna includes within it several castes. There are hundreds of caste groups in India and they are further subdivided. In 1901 about 800 castes and sub castes were listed. Later it was estimated that nearly 5000 castes and sub- castes could be distinguished.

Accordingly, there are not four but thousands of castes of 'Jatis' in which the social system is organized. The upper caste Brahmins, whose duty was to taught other castes. Next came the Kshatriyas who were protecting the society. They were followed by the Vaishyas, the merchants, the craftsman and farmers. The hydra's were the hiredlabourers. Beneath them were the out castes or untouchables, who were not members of any of the four caste divisions

and were outside the Hindu religion. They were assigned low occupations in the society. These people were forced to live on the outskirts of towns and villages. They were viewed as polluting food and water by their touch and who in some regions were not even permitted to approach the neighborhood of the high caste Hindus. The higher caste people dominated every sphere of society. There was also a deep rooted belief that the lower castes 'contaminate' the upper caste simply by touch or coming closer.

### **NEW SOCIO REFORM MOVEMENTS AND THEIR IMPACT**

The caste system in India experienced many changes because of the changing socio-economic forces. In the caste system each caste was assigned one occupation. To perpetuate both the caste system and the economy in fact each caste would have to maintain itself in each generation through exact reproduction, and no more. But the birth rate in each caste and the demand for occupational skills of each caste never remained in perfect balance. The birth rate of various castes fluctuated from time to time and so did their occupational skills. Hence it paved the way for greater mobility in the context of social stratification. As a result of this various castes and sub-castes were grouped and regrouped.

Caste is a social custom, which all our great preachers and reformers have tried to abolish. From Buddhism, downwards, every religious sect has preached against the caste system. There were several socio-religious movements, which brought about many changes in the outlook towards a caste ridden society. The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission movement and the Theosophical society etc, contributed towards this end. There were also protest movements led by Jyoti Rao Phule of Poona, the non-Brahmin movement in Madras led by EVR and the movement led by Sri Narayana Guru in Kerala and the movement led by Ambedkar to remove untouchability.

The movement, which was started by Mahatma Gandhi was not only against the removal of untouchability but also against the caste system itself. From 1920 onwards, Gandhiji integrated the issue of abolition of untouchability into the national movement and major campaigns and struggles; such as the Vaikom (1924-25) and Guruvayur Satyagraha (1931-32) were original in the post-independence period there have been many attempts to break the hold of the caste system. The forces of urbanization and industrialization have also contributed substantially to undermine the caste system by facilitating closer contact and collaboration between different castes.

### **ROLE OF CASTE IN INDIAN POLITICS**

The relation between caste and politics may be analyzed at two levels: (i) how caste affects politics, and (ii) how politics influences caste. The first aspect may be further examined at various levels in terms of interest of caste in politics; political knowledge and political awareness of castes; identification of castes with political parties; influence of castes on political affairs; actual participation of castes in politics, particularly with reference to effect of castes on voting behavior, emergence of elite on caste basis; and type of changes in political system as a result of involvement of caste organization, that is, how leadership gets a structural and ideological base for mobilization of masses and how concessions to local opinion are made. On the other hand, the effect of politics on caste may be perceived as to how politics is used by a caste in rising social scale or achieving its goal. This has been described as the processes of politicization of caste. Several castes have used politics in their attempt to better their condition or to achieve their goals. Use of politics or political means, according to Eleanor Zelliot, covers securing governmental benefits and representation on legislative and political bodies. Some examples which may be given in this connection are; Mahars of Maharashtra, Kshatriyas of Gujarat, Nadars of Tamil Nadu, and Reddys and Kammas of Andhra Pradesh and Ezhavas in the erst-while Travancore princely state in India.



Caste is a peculiarly Indian institution which has no counterpart elsewhere. Whether it had its beginning with Aryan invasions or earlier, caste has existed in India for centuries. M.N Srinivas has listed nine main features of the caste system; hierarchy, endogamy, and hypergamy, occupational associations, restrictions on food, drink and smoking, distinction in custom dress and speech, pollution, ritual and other privileges and disabilities, caste organizations and caste mobility.

In the Hindu social system roles are ascribed and resistance to them was somewhat forbidden. As a result of this the state had a minimum role to play in the social sphere. In the course of time the traditional role experienced a change. In the changed scenario the caste came to play a different role. This had its manifestations in the information of pressure groups and political parties in India. New forms of caste groups have a new dimension. They have become highly competitive. This has resulted in a steady politicization of caste groups. According to Rajini Kothari" caste has been politicized but in the process it has provided to Indian political process and symbols of political articulation. The new situation arising out of caste conflict was the outcome of a power game in which ascending social groups, the shudras or backward caste groups sought to capture the lever of power through the political process. The earlier belief that political power was the preserve of the upper castes received a severe jolt. The broad political scenario remains basically dominated by the numerically weaker upper caste groups because of their superior ritual status.

Under the impact of modern politics, associations of caste have become the hall- mark of political mobilization. They have emerged with the object, of pursuing political power, social status and economic interest. Members of certain caste groups, who were considered low or the lowest in socio economic hierarchy a few decades ago, now federate together into a common organization and then press for their demands. They have gained new confidence and status. They not only actively participate in the political process but also assert their identity and even strive for positions. Thus politics become important for the caste and caste for politics.

Most of the people of India are illiterates. As these people could not understand politics in terms of class interests, they were wooed in the name of caste sentiments by various political parties. Caste considerations were given prime importance. The relationship between caste and politics has been of a dynamic type. It has by and large, been determined by the factor of expediency and pragmatism. In other words, it changes with the rise and fall of new entrepreneurs and innovators of politics.

To sum up, caste occupies a very important place in the politics of our country at local and regional levels. It is traceable in various important events like situation of candidates for elective officers, formation of groups and factions. Canvassing campaigns, exercise of franchise, making of ministers, securing government favours and the like. It may now be concluded that in the present times, not only caste affects politics but by achieving the political power and caste solidarity, a caste succeeds in achieving a high social, economic and political position in the society. On the one hand, the involvement of caste organizations brings changes in the political system and on the other hand, the castes-even low in status-are enabled in pursuing their collective interests.

#### ROLE OF CASTE IN ELECTIONS

- During elections the role of caste becomes very important.
- The selection of a candidate from a particular constituency is done keeping in view the caste considerations.
- The candidate should belong to the dominant caste or should be able to get support from a particular caste or castes.

- A candidate belongs to a caste, which has the majority in the area, has a fair chance of getting elected.
- People, also generally, tend to support the candidate of their respective caste.
- As a result, the caste association plays a major role during the elections.
- The political parties are caste-ridden.
- Within a political party, alliances are formed on the basis of caste.
- There has also been a case of one particular caste aligning with one party and other to other party.
- For example, in Andhra Pradesh, there have been constant struggle between dominant castes of Kammas and Reddys. Both have been rival to each other.

## **CLASS**

The term class is an ambiguous term. It has been used very loosely in everyday parlance. In recent times there have been many new concepts introduced to social sciences. The concept of class is one of them. Karl Marx used this concept in his analysis of social relations. After him it becomes almost a fashion in contemporary thinking about society to think in terms of class and not in terms of the individuals. The economist has also been inclined to analyze in terms of classes. Psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists have frequently used the concept of class in the field of social differentiation of groups. In ancient times social differentiation was not based on class but on status or rank. The differentiation according to status was fixed. An individual was born into a certain status; his or her membership in it was determined by law and custom. A change of status was practically out of question.

In common use the term 'class' is used in a varied sense. People are usually classified into upper, middle, and lower classes. Classes may be decided in terms of property and non-property or producing and non-producing classes. In a general sense, therefore, the term class refers to a group of people living certain characteristics in common. Communities are socially stratified in various ways, but the main type of social stratification, especially in the more developed societies is based on class. A 'class' may mean any category or type within which individuals, as units are included. The various occupations make vertical divisions of the community. The division that reflects the principle of social class exists whenever social interaction is limited by consideration of status i.e., in terms of distinction between "higher" or "lower".

### **DEFINITION OF CLASS**

Different authors in various ways have defined the term 'classes. Class has been defined as 'a number of people having in common a specific causal component of their life chances, in so far as this component is represented by economic interest in the possession of goods and opportunities for income and is represented under the conditions of the commodity or labour markets'.

Max Weber defined class 'as aggregates of individuals who have the same opportunities of acquiring goods, the same exhibited standard of living.

Morris Ginsberg says, 'Class in modern society may be described as groups of individuals who, through common descent, similarity of occupation, wealth and education, have come to have a similar mode of life, a similar stock of ideas, feelings, attitudes and forms of behavior and who, on any or all these grounds, meet one another on equal terms and regard themselves, although with varying degrees of explicitness, as belong to one group.'

The Marxist definition of class refers to 'any aggregate of persons who play the same part in the production mechanism.'

### **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Various theorists have analysed the essential nature of class and its attitudes, keeping in mind the different periods in history. In its historical perspective, essential changes have taken

place in the very nature of classes. In the communities, which are not closed societies with caste system, certain individuals were often exempted from the bounds of community because of acquisition of wealth. The display of craftsmanship, hereditary autocracies and priesthood, were also factors, which contributed to distinguish these categories from others in the community. Social mobility, however, was limited in these communities.

There are some scholars who believed that the transition from a society of status to one of class occurred in Greece during the 7<sup>th</sup> and sixth century B.C. and in Rome somewhat later. The first class conflict in Greece arose from opposition to the landed aristocracy. The peasantry, heavily in debt during the autocracy, brought about colonial legislation for the extension of political rights to citizens. Formal freedom and equality allowed genuine classes to be formed through operation of economic factors.

It was at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that changes in distribution of wealth exercised considerable influence upon social stratification and social mobility. The development of capitalism, the growth of large scale industry and advance in science and technology contributed significantly in determining the class composition the possession of property was the main yardstick to determine the class. The advent of socialism, however, was a source of encouragement to the working class to assert itself in the social hierarchy

#### **APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF CLASS**

There are many approaches pertaining to the study of class. In the first place, when history has been written in terms of the rise and fall of social classes, class has been viewed in strictly economic terms. Karl Marx is associated with this approach. Secondly, social class has also been analyzed utilizing the statistical index. Income levels and occupational classification have been frequently used to distinguish the classes thirdly; the criteria of social acceptance and the number of local social classes have been taken into consideration while distinguishing classes. A number of sociologists has described class structures of local community primarily by securing the opinions of local residents. The views of different sociologists are in be examined to bring out the meaning of class and its different dimensions

The writers, on the question of what is the concept of social class, fall broadly in to two groups. There are some who subscribe to the view that objective factors must have to be emphasized. They include the ownership or non- ownership of means of production- a concept, which is essentially Marxian. There are others who have emphasized upon the general standard of living, holding the view that in modern society it is a basis of vital importance on which a class is built. Weber for example, builds his analysis on the possession of economic means, eternal standard of living and cultural and recreational possibilities.

#### **MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE ON CLASS**

It was Karl Marx who carried the scientific perspective into the study of social class. He derived his ideas of class from what he called the scientific laws of history. He made an attempt to discover the underlying forces behind the origin of class. He is acknowledged as the pioneer of the study of social class. He made class as the central aspect of his analysis of society

The Marxist formulation as laid down in the chapter 'Social classes' in 'Capital', includes three major economic classes in modern society: land lords receiving rent, capitalist receiving profits and workers receiving wages. Economist like Ricardo influenced this analysis. The Marxist Sociology starts from the premise that the primary function of social organization is the satisfaction of the basic human needs. Marx considered distribution as a dependent function of production. Hence, primacy of production is the basic assumption in the Marxist definition of class. The three classes were differentiated in accordance with their relation to the means of production

1. Capitalist, or owners of means of production
2. Workers, or all those who employed by others
3. Landlords, who differ from the capitalist and they are regarded as survivors of feudalism

He further elaborated the differentiation within each of these basic categories. The three great social groups lived on profit, wages, and rent through utilization of their capital and their private land respectively. Marx perceived the small businessman, or petty bourgeoisie as a transitional class. He made an objective analysis of different classes.

The primary interest of Karl Marx was to understand and facilitate the emergence of class consciousness among the depressed people. He was optimistic about the emergence of a sense of identical class interest as a basis for conflict with the dominant class. Marx recognized the difference between class and class-consciousness, but thought that one would inevitably come to reflect the other. The history of mankind has been a continuous struggle of classes. The modern capitalist system does not abolish the class struggle, it nearly creates new classes and simplifies and intensifies the struggle between them. Under capitalism the people are divided into hostile camps, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. While the bourgeoisie concentrates on converting surplus value into profit, the proletariat tries to resist this attempt. In this struggle the workers realize that the power of the bourgeoisie rest upon the ownership of means of production. They also realize that the economic exploitation can be ended only through the establishment of a socialist society based on collective ownership. The Communist Manifesto Jointly written by Marx and Engles asserted that “The history of hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles”. The materialistic interpretation of history and the theory of class struggle are significant contributions of Karl Marx to Sociological analysis.

There are many critics who oppose the Marxian approach. Many Sociologists did not agree with the emphasis on production. They, on the other hand, gave more stress on the distribution system. Sociologist have pointed out that Marxian analysis of class is sociologically inadequate.

#### **MAX WEBER’S CLASS MODEL**

Max Weber, a German sociologist had somewhat different definition of class, though it was not a complete departure from the Marxian approach. While Marx placed exclusive emphasis on economic factors as determinants of social class, Weber suggested that economic interest should be seen as a special case of the larger categories of ‘values’. These values included many things that are neither economic nor interests in the ordinary sense of the term. Though Weber considered the Marxist model as a source of meaningful hypothesis, he viewed it as too simple to handle the complex problem of social analysis. Weber held that class could be defined on exclusively economic or market terms. Here there is no disagreement between his approach and that of the Marxian approach. Weber, however, carefully distinguished class defined in terms of economic factors and other related factors.

The term class refers to any group of people that is found in the same class situation. Weber reserved the concept of class for economically determined stratification of the society. He defined a class as being composed of people who have life chances in common, as determined by their power to dispose of goods and skills for the sake of income. He considered property as class assets, but did not consider it as the only criterion of class. Weber argued that the social and economic order is merely the way in which economic goods and services are distributed and used. The social order is of course conditioned by the economic order to a greater extent, and in its turn reacts upon it.

The other dimension, which Weber did emphasize, was ‘status’. It refers to the quality of perceived interaction. Weber defines it as the positive or negative estimation of honour, or

prestige, received by individuals. Status involves perception of how an individual is valued by others. Men, therefore, give more values to status than to economic gain. Weber regarded economic class as important primarily because it is perceived as a cause of status. Status refers to factors such as family origin, manners, education and the like.

Marxian analysis sees power as being derived from class position. The phenomenon of power in Weberian model is a complex one. Weber defined power as the chance of a man and or group to realize their will even against the opposition of others. He saw the key source of power in modern society not in the ownership of means of production but in the vast bureaucracies. An analysis of Weberian model suggests that he raised the Marxian ideas about the nature and consequences of social stratification, to a higher degree of generalization. While Marx mainly concentrated his study of social relations under capitalism and derived conclusions based on that, Weber characterized every complex society according to the distribution of economic and honorific life chances in it.

### CLASS AND CASTE

Class refers to a hierarchical position in the social order and differential distribution of prestige based on that position. It refers to one form of stratification by contrast to another major form, usually referred to as 'caste'. In a class system, several social classes are present in the society. A social class consists of a category of people who share similar opportunities, similar economic and vocational positions, similar life styles and similar behavior. A class system usually results from industrialization and is present in all industrial societies. Class implies mobility ie the possibility of movement up and down the social scale. Caste implies a hereditary relationship. There is a rigid form of social stratification based on ascribed characteristics. People are born into and spend their entire lives in a caste with little chance of leaving it. There is ample display of superior inferior status of participants.

### Comparison of Caste and Class

CASTE	CLASS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The caste system is an Indian peculiarity and uniqueness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The class system is prevalent in all modern societies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collectivity is taken as a unit in the caste system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals are taken as units in the class system</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provision of caste councils or panchayaths is found in the caste system for regulating the caste affairs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The class system does not provide a council to regulate affairs pertaining to a class.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rules regarding commensality are strictly enforced in the caste system.</li> </ul>	<p>The class system has no rules regarding commensality.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are a number of castes and sub castes. There are also regional variations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The class division is a simple phenomenon and it is widely held that there are only three classes, the higher, the middle and the lower.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is based on the religious order and people accept their fate due to their belief in the doctrine of Varna</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The class system cuts across the religious barriers and can embrace members from all faith.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caste is a very parochial concept and it is difficult to leave one's own caste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class is a broad concept and one changes his class at birth.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mutual cooperation, interdependence and collective sentiments from the basis of the caste system</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The class system is marked by individualism and competitive outlook of the members.</li></ul>
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In the Indian context, the two terms, caste and class, become very confusing and sometimes, their use overlaps each other.

## **MODULE : II**

### **PARTY SYSTEM AND ELECTORAL POLITICS**

#### **PARTY SYSTEM IN INDIA**

Political scientists throughout the world are divided in their opinions on the importance of parties in a democracy, but the fact remains that the parties do exist and play vital roles in all modern democratic states and indeed in most states, whatever their ideological orientation. If India is to survive as a moving generally in the democratic direction, it must evolve a healthier party system or develop some effective alternatives to parties.

Almost all modern societies, democratic or totalitarian, developed or modernizing, large or small have some sort of party system. Though the written constitution of India, like many other written constitutions of the world, does not acknowledge the existence of political parties, yet they are central to our political process. They are both inevitable and necessary. They are inevitable because they are the only means whereby power can be obtained and exercised in an organized way. They are necessary because they form a bridge between the government and the governed which gives meaning to representative system.

Political parties are indispensable link between society and the government. In all modern democratic systems, political parties play a decisive role. However, in the third world countries, except India, free competition for popular support between different parties is rare. In India, after six decades of representative government and general elections, it has maintained a parliamentary system based on competitive and free elections. In a political system, parties act as the carrier of ideas, opinions and approaches to social needs and national goals. Parties provide a link between the citizens and the government, between the electorate and the representative institutions. In fact a successful democracy requires a healthy party-system for its existence. Political parties are instruments through which citizens choose those who constitute the government. They explain merits and dangers of alternate policies and provide political education to the citizens. Political parties are extra constitutional institutions which are crucial in running democratic government of a country. They are essential for the proper functioning of different types of democratic government. The successful democratic functioning of any government depends upon the healthy political party system.

According to Finer, political parties are “organised bodies with voluntary membership, their concentrated energy being employed in the pursuit of political power”. In a democratic political system the most important institution is the political party. Between the social and political systems a sub-system is being provided by political parties. The strength of political party cannot be determined by its electoral performance alone. The status of members, the assimilative capacity of its ideology, its strength in the trade union field, the capacity for propaganda, influence over the key centers of the economy, the capacity for neutralizing the electoral strength of the other parties, etc. may be reckoned as the potential though not manifest strength of a political party.

#### **MEANING AND ROIE OF POITICAI PARTIES**

Human beings have always organised themselves in groups and larger formations. Political parties have emerged as one of these human organisations. In modern age the ideal form of government is run through one or the other method of representative institutions. All representative governments and representative institutions require the existence of political parties. A political party is an organised body of people who share certain common principles and goals regarding the political system of a country. The main purpose of political parties is

to acquire and retain political power. Political parties which run the government are called the ruling party. In a coalition government, there may be more than one ruling party. Those who sit in the opposition and criticize and analyse the performance of the ruling party/parties generally or on specific issues are called opposition parties. A political party as such should have the following essential features:

- i) It must be an organised body of people with a formal membership;
- ii) It must have clearly spelt out policies and programmes;
- iii) Its members should agree with its ideology, policies and programmes;
- iv) It must aim at getting power through the democratic process;
- v) It must have a clear and acceptable leadership; and
- vi) It must focus on broad issues and major areas of government policies

### **EVOLUTION AND NATURE OF INDIAN PARTY SYSTEM**

In every state, party system is the product of its historical evolution, civic tradition, cultural orientation and economy. In India the nature of party system is based on the nature of state diversities of regional cultures, wide geographic area demands of social change and economic development.

In India party system originated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a response to the British colonial rule. During this period the party system represented an assertion of national solidarity for national liberation and a vision for new India. The beginning of the Indian party system can be traced to the formation of the Indian National Congress as a political platform in 1885. Later various other parties were formed. The policy of divide and rule and the introduction of separate communal electorate led to the formation of the communal and caste based parties like Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League, Akali Dal, etc.

The political parties everywhere endeavor to replace the traditional power structure. In Kerala and, as a matter of fact in the whole of India, the traditional power structure was threatened with demolition by five factors- the nationalist movement, adult franchise, land reforms, trade unionism and political parties. The nationalist movement sought to unify society and promised the introduction of adult franchise at the dawn of independence. Land reforms and trade unionism radically altered the relations between individuals, groups and more than anything between the owner of the means of production and the worker. The political parties by the maintenance of discipline and the possession of the capacity for the distribution of favour made onslaughts on the traditional power structure.

The successful democratic functioning of any government depends upon the healthy political party system. Bryce has remarked that “political parties are inevitable” for the successful working of democracy.

### **MAIN FEATURES OF INDIAN PARTY SYSTEM**

Indian party system is different from the party system in the western democracies. Some critics say that India has parties, but no party system. They argued that there are many political parties, big and small in the country. At the same time there is nothing like emotional or psychological attachment of the people to a particular party or parties. Main features of the Indian party system are the following:

#### **1. One Dominant Party System :**

India in the words of Morris Jones, is not a ‘one party state’ but it is a ‘one dominant party system’, since independence a large number of parties came into being, but the Congress has managed to retain a dominant position. The Indian National Congress enjoyed wide popular support all over the country till 1967 election. It was the ruling party at the Centre between



1947 and 1977, 1980-1989, and 1991-1996. Towards the last decade of both centuries, Indian party system took a new turn with a multi-party system dominated by the regional parties. Even after the split of 1969, the Congress under the leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, managed to maintain its dominant position at the Centre as well as in most of the states. In the 1971 election to the Lok Sabha Mrs. Gandhi swept the polls and the Congress returned to power with a three-fourth majority. An extra constitutional centre of power was created under the leadership of her younger son, Sanjay Gandhi. This character of the Congress party led to the declaration of internal emergency in 1975.

Another election was held in March 1977, which led to the defeat of the Congress. With the disintegration of the Janata Party in 1979, Mrs. Indira Gandhi again came to power in the 1980 Lok Sabha elections. In 1984 Rajiv Gandhi came to power as a result of the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi. In the 1989 election, the National Front under the prime minister ship of Sri.V.P. Singh came to power by defeating the Congress under Rajiv Gandhi. The Congress under the leadership of Prime Minister P.V Narasinha Rao came to power as a result of 1991 elections. In 1996 election United Front under the leadership of Deva Gowda and later I .K Gujral came into power at the Centre. The eleventh Lok Sabha came to an end in December 1997. In the 1998 and 1999 Lok Sabha elections no single party got majority. A United Front under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee formed the government with the support of number of parties. Since 1998 Indian party system became a multi-party system with coalition government

## **2. Mushroom growth of political parties.**

There has been a mushroom growth of national, regional, communal and personalist political parties in India. No other democratic country has such a multiplicity of parties. Most of them came into existence after the disintegration of the Janata Party in 1979. Today the Congress [I], The Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India [Marxist], The Bharatiya Janata Party and the Janata Dal, Bahujan Samaj Party and National Congress Party are the only parties of national significance. In India, the law does not regulate the formation and functioning of political parties most of the political parties have no mass base.

## **3. Regional political parties**

Another feature of the Indian party system is that each state has its own political parties. Most of these regional parties have no ideological commitments. They represent the interest of particular linguistic, religious, regional, and ethnic, caste or cultural groups. Some of them are communal in character, others are openly separatist.

Most important regional parties are National Conference in Jammu & Kashmir, DMK and AIADMK in Tamil Nadu, Akali Dal in Punjab, Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala Congress and Muslim League in Kerala etc.

## **4. Role of caste and communal parties.**

Caste and community play an important role in the working of the Indian party system. Some parties are openly communal in character. The other parties which claim to be secular are not free from caste and communal considerations. Every party chooses its candidates according to the caste and communal composition of the constituency. Every appeal to the voters as well as selection of ministers is on caste or communal basis.

## **5. Lack of ideological commitment.**

Ideology is considered to be the core of a political party. It is necessary for mobilizing its organization and to motivate its members. Despite functioning on the basis of ideological commitment, almost all political parties in India have stood to capture power to get power; the parties are ready even to sacrifice their ideology. Every party swears by Gandhism, democracy, socialism and secularism. Every so called secular party join hands with

communal or caste parties in the formation of governments. In 1977, Jana Sangh was a constituent of the Janata party supported by communist parties, Muslim League and so on.

#### **6. Role of individuals.**

Certain individuals of personalities dominated Indian parties. The leader of the party is often elected by its members but once elected the party functions according to the wishes and fancies of the leader. Some of the parties bear the name of their leader. For example, Congress [I], Congress [S], Lok Dal[A], Lok Dal[B], Kerala Congress[M][J] and so on.

#### **7. Defection.**

Defection is a pervasive feature of Indian Party System. When India became independent there were two major parties only, Indian National Congress and the Communist Party of India. They were organizationally well built and commanded loyalty of their members. Today there is no such thing as party loyalty. Political defection has ruined the Congress and all other party that came into existence after independence. This epidemic led to the passing of the anti-defection Act 1985.

#### **8. Organisational drawbacks.**

Except the communist parties and the BJP no party in India can claim some sort of party organization. Other parties are mere crowds without definite membership, organization or discipline. Most parties maintain no membership registers, keep no accounts and hold no organizational elections. The office bearers of these parties are either self-appointed or nominated by top leaders.

#### **9. Fragmented opposition.**

The opposition in India is unable to constitute an alternative to the ruling party. They have neither been able to a strong opposition nor have they succeeded in creating a United Front in 1977, for the first time the Janata constituted by a member of parties came to power but within two years it failed and disintegrated. Even today the opposition is not in a position to form a United Front because of the selfish style and interest of some leaders.

### **NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES**

In India political parties are broadly divided into All India parties and Regional parties. All India parties are national parties. National parties receive their support from various segments of society. They put up their candidates for the Lok Sabha election across state lines. After the 1999 General elections, there were seven National Parties and 48 State Parties, recognised by the Election Commission. The Congress (I), the Janata Dal (United), the Communist Party of India (CPI), The Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Bharatiya Janata Party, Bahujan Samaj Party and National Congress Party were major recognised national parties.

### **INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

**INC**, also commonly called the **Congress** is one of the two major contemporary political parties in India, the other being the Bharatiya Janata Party. It is one of the largest and oldest democratically-operating political parties in the world. The Organisation was founded during the British Colonial times in 1885.

The founders included a prominent member of the Theosophical Society, Allan Octavian Hume, Dadabhai Naoroji and Dinshaw Wacha. In the following decades, the Indian National Congress became a pivotal participant in the Indian Independence Movement, with over 15 million members and over 70 million participants in its struggle against British colonial rule in India. After independence in 1947, it became the nation's dominant political party; in the 15 general elections since independence, the Congress has won an outright majority on six occasions, and has led the ruling coalition a further four times, heading the central government for a total of 49 years. There have been seven Congress Prime Ministers, the first being Jawaharlal Nehru, serving from 1947–64 and the most recent being Manmohan

Singh, serving from 2004-14. The party's social liberal platform is largely considered to be on the centre-left of the Indian political spectrum.

The Indian National Congress was established on 27th December 1885 in Bombay. The party has succeeded in creating a broad and powerful anti-imperialist movement consisting of different classes of people. The Indian National Congress, which led the freedom struggle, was more in the nature of a mass movement than a political party. The Congress represents all classes and communities in our society. It also represents different ideological viewpoints.

Indian National Congress was elitist in character. The Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji was converted into a mass movement from an elite party. Under Gandhiji the Congress acquired an organizational structure, which reflects the village society of India. The Congress acquired experience in running provincial governments under the scheme of provincial autonomy during 1937-1939. This experience enabled the party to handle political power, as a ruling party, in the Independent India. After Independence, the Indian National Congress as the ruling party, further consolidated and expanded its support base. It increased its support from the rural people and among peasants.

After the death of Pandit Nehru in 1964 until the split in 1969, the Congress was in a crisis in both ideological and organisational terms. This was due to the failure of the Congress in the 1967 General Elections. In the 1967 election the Congress returned to power at the centre at the same time it lost control over six states.

The split of 1969 resulted in the formation of two parties, the Congress (1) and Congress (0). In the 1971 General Election the Congress (I), under the leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi swept the Loksabha elections. In 1972 Assembly Election, the Congress (I) captured most of the states. This revealed that the Congress (I) led by Mrs. Gandhi was the successor of the Indian National Congress. The election results of 1971 and 72 made Mrs. Gandhi arch leader of the Congress (I) and gradually the party was converted into a political organisation of the Supreme Leader. This was followed by the growth of some extra-constitutional centre of power created by Sanjay Gandhi. Centralisation of power and self-style leadership of the Congress led to declaration of Internal Emergency in 1975. During the period of emergency the Congress became highly unpopular.

In the 1977 election to the Loksabha the Congress for the first time in history, was defeated and Janata Party came to power. In 1977 Lok Sabha elections even Indira Gandhi lost her seat in her home constituency. This resulted in a split within the party, leading to the emergence of the Congress (1). Many of the old and experienced leaders left the party, blaming her for its humiliating defeat in the elections. As a result the new party-Congress (Indira) became completely identified with her personality. Many of the party's top decision-making agencies, such as the Congress Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee lost their powers. Similarly, state party organisations were also brought under her direct control. She built a pyramid like organization that was run by her or her henchmen. Under Indira's leadership the Congress Party simply became an instrument of personal power. She also sought to use the organisation for dynastic succession. First she groomed Sanjay, her younger son, to take over the leadership of the party, but after his accidental death in June 1980, she brought in her elder son, Rajiv.

## **IDEOLOGY AND POLICY POSITIONS**

Since the 1950s, the INC has favoured liberal positions (the term "liberal" in this sense describes modern liberalism, not classical liberalism) with support for social justice and a mixed. INC strongly supports Liberal nationalism, a kind of nationalism compatible with values of freedom, tolerance, equality, and individual rights. Historically, the party has favoured farmers, labourers, labour unions, and religious and ethnic minorities; it has opposed unregulated business and finance. In recent decades, the party has adopted a centrist economic and socially progressive agenda and has begun to advocate for more social justice, affirmative action, a balanced budget, and a market. The economic policy adopted by the modern INC is free market policies, though at the same time it is in favour of taking a cautious approach when it comes to liberalising the economy claiming it is to help ensure that the weaker sectors are not affected too hard by the changes that come with liberalisation. In the 1990s, however, it endorsed market reforms, including privatisation and the deregulation of the economy. It also has supported secular policies that encourage equal rights for all citizens, including those in lower castes. The party supports the somewhat controversial concept of family planning with birth control. Throughout much of the Cold War period, the Congress Party championed a foreign policy of nonalignment, which called for India to form ties with both the West and communist countries but to avoid formal alliances with either. Nonetheless, American support for Pakistan led the party to endorse a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union in 1971. In recent decades, the party began advocating welfare spending programs targeted at the poor.

In 2004, when the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) came to power, its chairperson Sonia Gandhi unexpectedly relinquished the premiership to Manmohan Singh. This Singh-led "UPA I" government executed several key legislations and projects, including the Rural Health Mission, Unique Identification Authority, the Rural Employment Guarantee scheme and The Right to Information Act.

## **THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (CPI)**

The Communist Party of India (CPI) was formed in December 26, 1926. It remained an illegal organisation until 1942 when the British accepted its support for the Allied War effort. After 1947 there were a number of changes in the party tactics and the period was marked by the splits. The first split in 1964 coincided with the schism in international communism and the new party came into being namely Communist Party of India (Marxist). The Party again subjected to a split and Maoist Communist Party was formed on April 22, 1969, which was Lenin's 100th birthday. It styled itself as the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) and claimed Mao as its guide.

In 1949 the Party turned to terrorism, sabotage and strikes. In 1948, P.C. Joshi was replaced as general secretary by B.T. Ranadive, with the advancement of more militant 'left' line. Ranadive emphasised the working class as the instrument of revolution and discounted the peasant uprising in the Telengana region of Hyderabad. During this period Nehru was denounced as a 'running dog of imperialism' and the Congress, in both its foreign and its domestic policy, as the reactionary captive of capitalist and landlord elements. But with the new political leadership in the Soviet Union and the ongoing process of de-Stalinization under Khrushchev, the Soviets decided to befriend the Nehru government.

This change in Soviet foreign policy forced the CPI to alter its course of action. The CPI was officially advised to abandon its adventurist tactics. The policy shift was welcomed by those

within the party notably PC. Joshi, S.A. Dange and Ajoy Ghosh, who favoured participation in the forthcoming elections. In 1951, the revisionist line won out, with the selection of Ajoy Ghosh as General Secretary of the Party. Ghosh, from a centrist position, led the party toward 'constitutional communism'. The CPI supported Indian foreign policy and extended its full support to all progressive policies and measures of the government. In 1958, the CPI adopted the Amritsar Resolution and pledged to seek power and social change through parliamentary means. The dominant faction within the party supported Nehru's 'progressive' policies, especially his foreign policy. During the 1969 split in the Congress Party, and later during the national emergency, the CPI consistently supported Indira Gandhi and her government.

The CPI membership is concentrated in four States: Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal. Three other States have significant enrolments: Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Punjab. In the CPI, the workers and wage-earners constituted 17 per cent of the Party membership. The 1982 report of the Party says that agricultural workers constitute a sizeable section of the Party membership and in some States account for more than 50 per cent of the membership. The Party is also entrusted with the task of building mass organisations, particularly trade unions, Kisan Sabhas and agricultural worker's associations.

### **Electoral Performance**

In the first general election, next to the Congress the CPI secured the largest number of Assembly seats winning 198 seats of the 587 it contested. The Party had notable success in Travancore-Cochin, Madras, Hyderabad, Tripura and West Bengal. The Party was itself more than satisfied. The results of the second general election were even more encouraging to the Party. In these elections it emerged as the second largest party in the country, not merely in terms of seats won but also in terms of votes polled. The party captured majority in Kerala in 1957 and formed the first-democratically elected Communist government under E.M.S. Namboodiripad. The Party became the main opposition group in both houses of Parliament with 27 seats in the Lok Sabha. In the words of Professor Rasheeduddin Khan, "The communists were the main opposition in the Lok Sabha throughout the Nehru era. In the first Lok Sabha with 16 members, in the second and the third Lok Sabha with 27 and 29 members respectively. A turning point in the history of the CPI came when in 1957 they won an absolute majority in the Kerala Assembly and formed the first communist government in India." The party retained the position as the largest opposition group in the Lok Sabha after fourth general elections in 1967. In 1971 it secured 23 seats. In 1977 it secured only 7 seats. In 1980, the CPI could manage to increase its winning tally to 11 seats. In 1984, the CPI has won only 6 seats of the Lok Sabha. In the 1989 Lok Sabha elections the party won 12 seats, while in tenth Lok Sabha elections (1991) the Party won 14 seats. In 1996 elections for 11th Lok Sabha the Party has a share of 12 seats, in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, the CPI obtained 9 seats and 4 seats in the 1999 Lok Sabha elections.

### **Ideology and Programme**

Trough now critical of the Congress policies, the CPI has lost its racial credibility after its slavish support of the emergency. It is committed to moderate programme of parliamentary socialism and to responsive co-operation with the Congress. Its leadership aims at building a 'national democratic state' in which the political power is wielded by a coalition of progressive democratic forces including Communists. The party stands to ending indifference to the welfare of the working class, agricultural labour, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes. It aims at generating

more jobs, implementing radical land reforms, reducing foreign debt by restricting imports, reversing the trend of handing over public sector units to private industrialists and above all, arresting the steep rise in prices.

The CPI favours co-operation with all democratic and progressive forces including 'the centre' and 'the left' of the Congress Party. They hope to enlarge the party's parliamentary strength through electoral Pacts with the like-minded parties like BSP, SP, RJD and Congress.

### **THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)**

A split in the Communist Party of India in 1964, led to the formation of India's second Communist Party called the Communist Party of India (Marxist). In early 1962, in the wake of the Chinese invasion of Indian territory, as criticism of the CPI mounted, the National Council resolved to condemn the Chinese action as 'aggression' and to call upon the Indian people to 'unite in defence of the motherland'. In protest the leftists resigned from the party secretariat and even Namboodiripad submitted his resignation as general secretary of the party. At the National Council meeting in 1964 the left attempted, without success, to oust party chairman Dange. They came armed with a letter written by Dange in 1964, in which he had offered to co-operate with the British in exchange for his release from jail. Denouncing the letter as a forgery the Council refused to consider the charges. The left and centre, led by Namboodiripad and Jyoti Basu, staged a walk-out and appealed to the party to repudiate Dange and the 'reformist line'. The split became final when all signatories to the appeals were suspended from the party. The left, organised as the Communist Party of India (Marxist), claimed to be the legitimate communist party of India.

The CPI (M) was born into a hostile political climate. At the time of the holding of its Calcutta Congress, large sections of its leaders and cadres were jailed without trial. Again on 29–30 December, over a thousand CPI (M) cadres were arrested and detained, and held in jail without trial. In 1965 new waves of arrests of CPI(M) cadres took place in West Bengal, as the party launched agitations against the rise in fares in the Calcutta Tramways and against the then prevailing food crisis. State-wide general strikes and hartals were observed on 5 August 1965, 10–11 March 1966 and 6 April 1966. The March 1966 general strike results in several deaths in confrontations with police forces.

Also in Kerala, mass arrests of CPI(M) cadres were carried out during 1965. In Bihar, the party called for a *Bandh* (general strike) in Patna on 9 August 1965 in protest against the Congress state government. During the strike, police resorted to violent actions against the organisers of the strike. The strike was followed by agitations in other parts of the state.

### **Ideology and Programme**

The CPM is inspired by an ideology which having shifted from a revolutionary to a reformist orientation, is committed to development with redistribution. It is characterized as a 'developmental and democratic socialist ideology'. Its emphasis is on the preservation of democratic institutions on the one hand and the 'use of state power for facilitating development with redistribution' on the other.

The CPM favored a tactic of united front from below, of alliance with peasants and workers to defeat the Congress, which it regarded as a party of the bourgeoisie and landlord classes. Elections were to be used as a means to mobilise the masses; the Constitution was to be used as 'an instrument of struggle'. The Marxists sought to 'break the constitution from within'. Today the CPM is characterised as a radical-democratic party. Its emphasis is on the preservation of

democratic institutions. It lays emphasis on the unity and integrity of India and favours the restructuring of Centre-State relations.

### **The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)**

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was formed in 1980. Since then it has extended its influence in the Hindi belt, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Since 1989, it has been trying to extend its base in South India also. Since its formation in 1980, the BJP has been increasing its number of seats in the Lok Sabha gradually. In 1984, general elections it secured only two seats. In 1989 the number of seats increased to 88. In 1991 general elections BJP's strength in the Lok Sabha increased to 122 which rose to 161 in the 1996 elections. In 1998 it won 180 seats and in 1999 its number in Lok Sabha increased to 182. In the 1999 general elections, BJP contested as an alliance partner in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). In the 2004 general elections BJP as an alliance of NDA could not get the required majority. It is playing the role of the opposition party. The BJP has emerged as a significant national party but its support base as yet is limited to certain areas, rather than spread all over India. Today it occupies a dominant position in every state in India.

### **Ideology and Programme**

The BJP believes in Gandhian socialism. The party says that its socialism is inspired not only by Gandhi and JP but also by Deendayal Upadhyaya. It stands for positive secularism and clean government. While laying emphasis on the 'Hindu idiom' in its poll manifesto, the party stands for justice for all and appeasement of none.

It has accepted the principle of reservation on caste basis, of course leaving apart the creamy sections. Party promises 33 per cent reservation of seats in Parliament and State Legislatures for women. The party continues with ideal of nationalism based on "Hindutva". The party lays emphasis on "Swadeshi" to encourage Indian industry and production as against multi-nationals or foreign companies. The party also favours smaller and stronger states, desires to abolish Article 370, favours uniform civil code and would like to establish Human Rights Commission.

### **JANATA DAL**

The Janata Dal as a new political party emerged in October 1988 with the merger of the Janata Party, Lok Dal (B), Jana Morcha and the Congress(S). Like the Congress party, the Janata Dal is an umbrella organisation; it contained many anti-Congress groups. It has tried to project itself as the national alternative and took the initiative in forming a broad all-India coalition of opposition parties under the umbrella of the National Front. The strategy of Janata Dal has paid rich dividends on the eve of the ninth Lok Sabha elections and the National Front came to power at the centre with the Janata Dal as its principal component. The implication of this strategy is quite simple. Since the Janata Dal is party of the National Front alliance, it follows that the JD will not try to confront or build up its independent political base in those States where NF partners are in power.

The Janata Dal is essentially building up to meet the demands of the people living in rural areas. It therefore inherits the same social base of the Lok Dal that is of agricultural class. The inclusion of Janata Party has considerably enlarged its regional and community base. It now had the

support of middle castes as well. The Janata Dal is clear about its caste base and its leaders have categorically upheld the AJGAR (Ahir, JatGujar-Rajput) combination as the backbone of the Dal's political success. In this context JD represents rich peasants and big land owners and in caste terms of; Rajputs and Jats, particularly north India. It also sought to mobilise Other Backward Castes (OBC's) by identifying the Congress rule with the government that served exclusively the interests of industrial capitalists and in caste terms, of Brahmins. The promise of implementing the Mandal Commission's recommendations, which came for a reservation of a further 27 per cent of government jobs for OBCs, is aimed at precisely this segment of the electorate. This is probably the most important policy plank of the Janata Dal, for its implementation could create a new and altogether unpredictable socio-political polarisation. V.P. Singh's leadership is almost certain to galvanise the Rajputs into backing the JD. Taken together, a Rajput OBC electoral alliance poses a formidable base to the traditional Congress phalanx of Brahmins, Harijans and Muslims.

### **Ideology and Programme**

The policies of the JD are opposition to large scale industrialisation and revitalisation of the countryside following Gandhian principles. It advocates of decentralisation of both the economy and political power, so as to meet the demands of the people living in rural areas. The Janata Dal stands for secularism and social justice.

The JD has promised to incorporate the right to work as a fundamental right in the constitution. There will be rural bias in planning, decentralization of decision making and to curb corruption in all forms. The JD manifesto also promises to put down communal riots firmly, work for communal harmony and improve the lot of the minorities. Special courts would be set up to try cases of atrocities against the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes.

## **REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES: AN OVERVIEW**

One of the notable features of the Indian Party System is the presence of a large number of regional parties. By regional party we mean a party which generally operates within a limited geographical area and its activities are confined only to a single or handful of states. Further as compared to the broad ranging diverse interests of national parties, the regional parties represent the interest of a particular area. In simple words, regional parties differ from All India parties both in terms of their outlook as well as the interests they pursue. Their activities are focused on specific issues concerning the region and they operate within the limited area. They merely seek to capture power at the state or regional level and do not aspire to control the national government. It is noteworthy that in India, the number of regional parties is much larger than the national parties and some of the States are being ruled by the regional parties, viz., Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir etc.

It is suggested that a regional political party must satisfy three specific criteria. The first criterion must, naturally be the territorial differential. By its very nature, regional parties restrict its area of action to a single region or a state. The second criterion of a regional political party is that, topically, it articulates and seeks to defend a regionally based ethnic or religious-cultural identity. Thus DMK and AIDMK act as the voice and champions of Tamil cultural nationalism against the inroads of what is perceived as the Aryan imperialism of the north. In the third place, it is in the very nature of a regional party to be "primarily concerned with exploiting local sources of discontent or pressing a variety of primordial demands based on language, caste,



community or religion". This is so because the electoral destiny of these parties is inescapably linked with their respective regions.

The emergence of regional parties in India has a geo-political rationale. India is a continental polity with a wide range of socio-cultural and ethnic diversities. Under condition of democratic culture, these diversities are bound to and indeed did aspire for political autonomy. One way of expression of political autonomy in a federation is the formation of regional parties and groups, in order to bargain with the center for a better regional development.

### **ROLE OF REGIONAL AND STATE PARTIES.**

In India, each state has its own political parties. Most of these regional parties have no ideological commitments. They represent the interest of particular linguistic, religious, regional, and ethnic, caste or cultural groups. Generally they stand for greater autonomy for the states. Some of them are communal in character, others are openly separatist.

The most important of the state parties are the DravidaMunnetraKazhagam [DMK], All India Anna DravidaMunnetraKazhagam [AIADMK], Telugu Desam, Assam Gana Parishad, Akali Dal, Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Janata Dal [RJD], Trinamul Congress, Tamil Nadu Congress [TMC] and National Conference. Some of these are of great significance in their localities, and can give the Congress stiff competition in these areas. They usually are built around a few leading personalities and emphasize communal, caste or sectional interests and loyalties.

In their own localities a number of local parties or groupings have scored impressive victories. Notable among these were the GantantraParished and Utkal Congress in Orissa, the Jharkand party in Bihar, SamyuktaMaharashtraSamiti and the Maha Gujarat JanataParishad in Maharashtra and Gujarat sections of Mumbai state, Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, Akali Dal in Punjab, DMK and ANNA-DMK in Tamil Nadu, National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir, the Muslim League in Kerala and SP in Uttar Pradesh.

The Akali Dal in Punjab, the National Conference in Jammu Kashmir, and the AIDMK and DMK in Tamil Nadu have become a powerful political force in their respective states. Barely, six months after coming into existence, Telugu Desam successfully stormed the Congress stronghold in Andhra Pradesh. The Assam GanaParishad was formed in the fall of 1985, and was swept to power by the year end. For some years, Congress has had an informal alliance with the AIDMK in Tamil Nadu and it joined Farooq Abdullah's coalition government in Jammu and Kashmir. The All Party Hill Leaders Conference [APHLC], which was mainly responsible for the creation in 1970 of an autonomous tribal state of Meghalaya within the state of Assam and the Nagaland nationalist organization, which had been continuously in power since the state of Nagaland was formed in 1963, are parties of regional outlook. In West Bengal, the Bangla Congress, Forward Block and Socialist Unity Centre, the Bangla Congress and the Trinamul Congress in west Bengal, the Kerala Congress in Kerala and Tamil Nadu Congress [TMC] in Tamil Nadu were outstanding examples of political groups that were formed almost exclusively by dissident Congressman. An outstanding example was the BharatiyaKranti Dal [BKD] which won 98 seats in the U.P Assembly in the mid-term elections in 1969.

Regional parties in state politics are a greater force and they have captured the governmental power from the hands of All- India Parties in states like Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland, Goa, Orissa, Meghalaya, Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir. In Indian politics they are gradually emerging as a powerful force. For example, in the 1977 and 1980 Lok Sabha elections, regional parties won 52 and 35 seats respectively. After the Congress split of 1969, Mrs. Gandhi's government at the centre had depended on the support of regional parties like DMK. In the 8<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, Telugu Desam, a

regional party had the largest number of MPs from the opposition bench. After the verdict of the ninth Lok Sabha elections, regional parties like DMK and TDP, as a partner of National Front swept to power at the Centre.

The outcome of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections [1998 and 1999] brings home the truth that the path to power in this society lies in the creation of political, regional and social alliances. The BJP with its allies has emerged as the largest vote getter in the country. The BJP led coalition embraces the entire gamut of Indian politics- from Akali Dal to AIADMK or DMK and from Samata to Trinamul.

C.P Bhambhri has very lightly observed “The Lok Sabha elections of 1989, 1998 and 1999 provided an opportunity to major regional parties to play an important role in mainstream politics”

### **The Major Regional Political Parties**

They are number of regional parties exist here, mostly short lived and often ad hoc purpose as a bargaining century. We will now discuss in somewhat more details those regional parties which are showing some stable characteristics. A brief sketch of the ideologies of some such parties is given below.

#### **1) Akali Dal**

It is the oldest and the most powerful party in Punjab. For more than 80 years it is spearheading the cause of Sikhs. The party membership is confined to Sikhs. Though of late some non-sikh members are given the party symbol to contest elections it is very rare. There is a social component involved in the structure of the party. This party is supported by rich Jat Sikh peasantry. The Scheduled Castes among the Sikhs do not find any place in the party's high ranks. The major interest of the party lies in increasing the prosperity of the Sikh peasantry.

Historically the Akali movement started around 1920's. To begin with it was a socio-religious reform movement but soon got converted into a political one. Around 1940, it demanded an independent state for Sikhs. But after partition the demand was abandoned and instead the party insisted for forming a separate state for Punjabi speaking people. For the first time in 1950's the Akali Dal started an agitation for carving out a separate state. It was in 1966, that demand got fulfilled. It is both a religious and political party. Religiously, it wants the protection of Sikh Panth. Any interference with the affairs of Gurudwaras is treated as an attack on their Panth. The bitterness after “operation blue star” is the example of Sikh sentiments. The sentiment might be shared by all the sikh people cutting across the political lines but it is the Akali Dal and such other Sikh political organizations who articulate the sentiments in a more politically profound manner. Apart from protecting the sanctity of Sikh panth the Akali Dal also has certain definite views on constitutional provisions regarding Federal Structure. It stands for the state's autonomy. In a resolution the party demanded “centre's sphere should be limited to foreign affairs, defence and communication”. In October 1973, the Akali Dal passed a resolution which comes to be known as “Anandapur Sahib Resolution”. This resolution gave a clear picture of the goals for which the party stands. Some of the points in the resolution are controversial as for instance treating Sikhs as a separate qaum-nation.

The main points are as under: 1) The Akali Dal is the very embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of the sikh nation (qaum). It is fully entitled to its representation. 2) The concept of a distinct and independent identity of Panth should be recognized. 3) The political goal is the pre-eminence of the Khalsa. 4) Restrict the centre's authority to defence, foreign relations, currency and communication only. It recently welcomed F.D.I.'s in retail trade although its partner B.J.P. is opposed to that move,

**ii) The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (D.M.K.)**

In the Tamil speaking areas of south India, a movement to stress the separate identity of Dravidians started around 20's. It was basically a revolt against Brahminical domination. E.V.R. who was with Congress left the party on ideological ground – that the party is dominated by North Indians. The party named DravidaKazhagam (D.K.) was formed in 1945. It developed a thesis that the South Indians – Dravidians are original inhabitants. The Aryans came from outside India, They drove the Dravidians down to south and established their imperialism. The North-South division is clear and candid. So the traditional Hindu religion which is based on Vedas, Sanskrit literature is denounced as cultural imperialism of Aryans. The Brahmins were accused of helping to spread Aryan culture down the south. The animosity against Brahmins made E.V.R. to deny the existence of God. The copies of Ramayana the holy book of Hindus were burnt to protest the Aryan expansion. For D.K. Ravana is a Dravidian hero. Such type of fanatical ideologies permeated around 40's and 50's. There was a time when Dravidian parties wanted to form a separate independent state out of India. However, with the formation of Indian constitution the earlier demand for secession was given up. Now the demand is more for state autonomy. The D.K. was split and a new party the D.M.K. was formed. It faced many political upheavals. It partly moderated its demands. But the two main planks of ideology remain intact. It is totally opposed to Hindi as the national language. Its opposition to Hindi is rather based on illogical foundation. Because Hindi is supposed to be closer to Sanskrit and since Sanskrit represents Brahminical culture, the acceptance of that language would amount to enslavement to Aryan culture. Its fanatical approach to language issue remains intact. In its new demand for greater state autonomy the party wants the constitution to be amended to secure “Utmost autonomy to the states”. A constitutional amendment to provide English to be continued as an official language and to delete the provision empowering Hindi as national language is demanded. In social field the party stands for reservation in Jobs and such pro-active measures. It is being recognized as champion of Backward Castes because to opposition to Brahmins. Though critics say the party is dominated of certain specific castes like Nadars, Mudliars and Scheduled Castes have no place in important positions in the party. D.M.K. wants the article 356 to be removed. It opposes the power of centre to impose the President's rule in states. While agreeing on almost all issues on foreign policy of Indian govt., it strongly feels for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. It is opposed to Sri- Lanka govt's policy towards the Tamils and had lent support to Tamil's right in Sri Lanka. Recently it forced the central govt. to abandon its proclaimed policy of non-interference in other countries affairs by international organization and made the govt. to vote in favour of a U.N. resolution condemning Sri Lanka army excesses on Tamil civilians and calling for international observations. This is clearly a pressure tacticks and D.M.K. uses it very calculatedly. For the party Tamils interests predominants the other. Whether it is inter-state water dispute like Cauvery or the height ofMuIIaperiyar dam in Kerala D.M.K. never looks beyond the narrow Tamil internets. The party split in 1972 and a new party by the name AIADMK (All INDIA Anna DravidaMunnetraKajagam) was formed by M.G. Ramachandran who fell from D.M.K. chief Karunanidhi. The party faced many ups and downs after the demise of the founder M.G.R. but under the charismatic leadership of Jayalalita the party has become very strong and currently ruling Tamil Nadu. The party accepted “Annaism” as the basis of its ideology. It is a combination of self respect of Tamils, Parliamentary Democracy, rationalism and Democracy. In economics it stands for socialism and public sector. Creation of casteless society is another ideal of the party. Basically there is no difference in ideology between D.M.K. and AIADMK. But the attitude of AIADMK towards issues like culture, language, Indian religious sentiments is more

tolerable and flexible. It did not subscribe to the view of north vs south. Nor it is opposed to Hindu religion and customs. In fact Jayalalita is chief minister advised the central govt. to allow Hindus to construct Ram temple at Aayodhya. The concepts of anti-Hindi, anti-north do not find much space in party's ideology. On economic issues, the party is opposed to FDI in retail trade and criticized the fresh liberalization measures undertaken by govt. When the central govt. wanted to form a body to fight terrorist activities Jayalalita took the lead in opposing that move, as she argued it would encroach upon the powers of state. In this endeavour she joined hands with Narendra Modi, the C.M. of Gujrat. So basically a federalist party AIDMK leader wants the states to have greater say on public policy measures.

**iii) Shivsena:** -The party was formed by Bal Thackeray around 1967. It stands for Justice for Marathi people. Its argument is local Maharashtra Youth are denied Job opportunities because of influx of outsiders. It stands for 'sons of soil' theory which proclaims 80% jobs be reserved for local youth. Originally the party started as the anti-communist party, but later made alliances with many parties. The party takes inspirations from historical figures like Shivaji who is credited to be the pride of Marathi culture. It wants Marathi should be used in all official correspondence. It had strong views on inter-state boundary disputes. The border dispute with Karnataka is very emotional significance to the party. It had resorted to violent demonstrations seeking the merger of Marathi speaking areas like Belgam into Maharashtra. It stands for the unity of Maharashtra and is opposed to formation of Vidharbha as a separate state. The party also exhibited fervent nationalism and has openly spoken against Muslim communalism. It was once anti-south but of late it has become anti-Muslim. The party prides itself in "Hindutva" philosophy and has alliance with the BJP. Though many time it takes a different stand from the BJP on issues concerning Marathi interest. The party basically revivalist in nature is also trying to expand the base by forging alliance with one of the splinter group of the Republican Party of India. (Aathwale faction) The party faced split when a new faction in the name of Maharashtra NavNirmanSamiti was formed.

**iv) TeluguDesam :-**

This is a comparatively new political phenomenon in Andhra politics which had a strong Congress foot hold, started in 1982 by the film star N. R. Rama Rao. As mentioned earlier, the party originated as a reaction to Indira Gandhi's policy of frequently changing unpopular chief ministers and imposing them on the Andhra Pradesh. The party emphasizes the Telugu people's self-respect and pride. Delhi's intervention meant the Telugu people are incapable of self-government. This had caught up with regional pride. Basically the party follows populist policies. N.T.R. started 2 Rs. Rice scheme, for poor people and was very popular despite heavy losses to public exchequer, similarly the reservation of lower castes, old age pensioners, were announced. Telugu Desam like all regional parties stands for greater state autonomy. But there is no animosity against other states, nor did the party ever speak of secession. The party took a lead in forming National Front and installed a non-congress govt. at Centre. The party faced internal revolt and with the death of N.T. Rama Rao, his son-in-law who managed the revolt took the reins of the party. The new ideology of Telugu Desam is rather vague. To begin with it pleaded for technological revolution and computer knowledge for all social evils, did not give importance to agriculture and faithfully implemented the World Bank programme. After losing power the party is trying to win back popular support by announcement of populist schemes like free power supply to farmers, writing off loans to farmers and increase in reservation to the O.B.C. Recently the party wants legislative seats to be reserved to the O.B.C.s. To prove its secular image it got itself distanced from its onetime ally B.J.P. and announcing reservation for Muslims. Opposing

liberalization, reformation measures the party is befriending with leftist forces at state and national level.

v) **National Conference:** -The party is confined to Jammu and Kashmir. It wants the separate status of J& K to remain intact. It prepared a report called National Conferences' Autonomy Report (1999). Following are the main points of the report. 1) Grant permanent status to Article 370, the existing provision is deemed to be a temporary measure. 2) Put J& K out of the ambit of the Supreme Court and the Election commission. 3) Reserve all subjects except Defense, External affairs and Communication for the state. 4) Change the nomenclature of J & k Governor to Sadar e- Riyasat and chief minister to Prime Minister. 5) Review Centre – state financial relations. Comptroller and Auditor General's, Scrutiny should not apply to J & K of course, this autonomy plan was rejected by various political parties. But the spirit behind the resolution shows the N.C. is not still prepared to accept the truth that J & K is a part of Indian Union. Though not openly advocating secession it is aiming to weaken the centre power as much as possible and wants to carve out a separate political entity for itself. There was also demand for withdrawing the army from disturbed areas and removing the Army Special Power Act. All these developments are a challenge to Union govt. How it can win the confidence of local people and keep the unity of country intact is the crucial issue.

### **MODULE III: SECULARISM AND INDIAN DEMOCRACY THEORY AND PRACTICE**

The term 'secular' is derived from the Latin word 'Saeculum' which means 'age' or 'the present age'. It indicates a state of being not connected with and separated from religion. This concept had its origin in a particular western milieu, but in terms of its applicability, it has a universal appeal. It was first of all a Christian phenomenon developed in western Europe after the break-up of the medieval republics of Christendom (the Christian Commonwealth) into different national and territorial states. "It was only after the prolonged and devastating territorial wars of religion had exhausted Continental Europe, that the Western Europe accepted this notion of peaceful co-existence of states subscribing to different religious creed. However this process has been an all-time gradual one and the conditions and events that contributed to this process differ from country to country.

A secular India, Nehru explained at the outset, did not mean a country without religion. It only ensured the institutional separation of the state from religion and a balanced approach to all faiths.

#### **SECULARISM IN INDIA**

A state is characterised as "secular" when it has no official established religion and it does not discriminate among its citizens on the basis of religion. There is general argument over this characteristic of secular state. However with regard to the purpose and object of a "secular state" there is hardly any unanimity among the scholars and practitioners of secularism. A secular state as defined scientifically means a state, which recognises every citizen as equal and does not recognise any social or religious stratification as vehicles for exercising political rights, which is tolerant towards all religions with special emphasis on the protection of minorities and preservation of communal harmony. The essence of secularism however, rests on two basic principles.

- (a) Separation of religion from politics
- (b) Acceptance of religion as purely and strictly private affair of individuals having nothing to do with the state.

#### **Meaning of Secularism**

Secularism as a concept has its origin in western countries and relates to the separation of the church from the state, giving the state a position of neutrality between different religions, amounting to even indifference of state towards religion, while the same time guaranteeing all citizens the right to profess any religion. In some ways the word 'secular' was used as a contrast to the word 'religious', which sometimes led people to believe that secularism is opposed to religion. But broadly speaking it was used not as opposed to religion but as divorced from all religion or religion having nothing to do with the conduct of state affairs. Still a new "English Dictionary on historical principles" defines secularism as: The doctrine that morality should be based solely on regard to the well-being of mankind in the present life, to the exclusion of all considerations drawn from belief in God or in a future state.

The same idea is also followed by the "Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church", which explains secularism as denoting a system which seeks to interpret and order life on principles

taken solely from this world without recourse to belief in God and a future life.

In India the concept has been used not as state's indifference meaning towards religion(s) but as treatment of all religions in an equal fashion and ruling out discrimination of any Indian on the ground of his religion. Use of 'secularism' in this sense has been characterised by Ashish Nandi as "Indianism" which has no place in Oxford English Dictionary or in the Webster Dictionary. The long practice and peculiar conditions have given a distinct meaning to secularism in Indian context. It has come to be interpreted in a positive sense, unlike its negative connotation in the western world. The state is indifference but equal respect and distance towards all religions.

Technically, the secular state is not a state which guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion, deals with individual as a citizen irrespective of his religion is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion nor does it seek either to promote or interfere with religion. Upon closer examination it will be seen that the conception of a secular state involves three distinct but inter-related sets of relationships concerning the state, religion and individual-the three sets of relations are:

1. Religion and the individual (freedom of religion).
2. The state and the individual (citizenship).
3. The state and religion (separation of state and religion).

The western concept of secularism implying anti-religious ideology cannot be applied to India, which is not only a multi-religious but highly religious society. As rightly observed by late Smt. Indira Gandhi "Secularism is neither a religion nor indifference to religion but equal respect for all religions", not mere tolerance but positive respect- without it, there is no future for the nation", Even Western writers have supported this view, for instance, Harvey Cox has stressed that secularism does not exclude religion; on the contrary, it breeds religious peaceful, co-existence.

There have been two variants of secularism the Gandhian version and the Nehruvian version. Gandhi believed Hinduism and other religion being tolerant and secular could not make state non-secular. Therefore, there was no need for separation between state and religion. He believed that state while giving fair treatment to all religions, could still maintain equal distance from all religions as well as religious communities. Nehru held that whatever the characteristics of the various religions may have been, it did not matter because economic development and scientific culture would provide a sufficient basis for secular tolerance. Nehru was an agnostic and his view was that of neutrality of the state in matters of religion i.e. state would have nothing to do with religion. Thus his concept of secularisms was negative mould of equal distance from all religions.

Jawaharlal Nehru has been a leading champion of the concept of the secular state. Indeed the creation of India as a secular state may be accepted as 'one of his greatest achievements', to use the words of Chester Bowles. Nehru had a great aversion to the intrusion of religious factors into politics, he was especially concerned with transforming India from a 'caste-ridden society' in which communalism constituted a major threat to all the values that he cherished to a nation state which included people of all religions and shades of opinion and was essentially secular as a state. Religion is all right he said, "when applied to ethics and morals, but it is not good mixed up with politics".

Nehru insisted that free India should be a non-communal, secular state. "The government of a country like India". Nehru declared "with many religions that have secured great and develop followings for generations can never function satisfactorily in the modern age except on a secular basis." He boasts of the fact that our constitution is based on secular conception and gives freedom to all religions.

Gandhiji was the most powerful impulse of secularism in our country. He was of the view that the religiosity of our society was its great strength, which should be utilised at the political platform. Religion in the best sense of the term was the strongest part of the value system of our society. In 1928 Gandhiji declared: After long study and experience I have come to these conclusions that (i) all religions are true (ii) all religions have some error in them (iii) all religions are almost as dear to me as my own Hinduism. My veneration for other faiths is the same as for my own faith.

Gandhi was of the view that there should not be any state religion. "Even if the whole community had one religion, state interference would probably always be unwelcome". His view was that the state should be secular in the sense that everyone living in it should be entitled to profess his religion without let or hindrance so long as the citizens obeyed the law of the land. There should be no interference with missionary effort but no mission could enjoy the patronage of the state.

Nehru also described Mahatma Gandhi as "essentially a man of religion, a Hindu to the innermost depths of his being". In a famous passage in his Autobiography Gandhi wrote, "I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means. Gandhi and Nehru, the master and disciple approached the problem of the relation between religion and politics from very different angles, but essentially their positions were not so far apart as far as the nature of the Indian state as concerned. Gandhi, a deeply religious man saw merit and truth in all religions and he "felt that any form of political association based exclusively on adherence to a particular religion was worse than undemocratic".

### **Constitutional Provisions of Secularism**

The Constitution of India stands for a secular state. The state has no official religion, secularism pervades its provisions, which give full opportunity to all persons to profess, practice and propagate any religion of their choice. The Constitution not only guarantees a person's freedom of religion and conscience but also ensures freedom for one who has no religion, and it scrupulously restrains the state from making any discrimination on ground of religion. A single citizenship is assured to all persons irrespective of their religion.

By the Constitution (Forty second Amendment) Act, 1976, the Preamble was amended for the words 'sovereign democratic Republic' by the words 'Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic'. Explaining the secular character of the Indian Constitution the Supreme Court said, "there is no mysticism in the secular character of the state". Secularism is neither anti God nor pro God; it treats alike the devout, the antagonistic and the atheist. It eliminates God from the matters of the state and ensures that no one shall be discriminated on the ground of the religion.



Article 14 grants equality before the law and equal protection of the laws to all. Article 15 enlarges the concept of secularism to the widest possible extent prohibiting discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters of public employment and reiterates that there would be no discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth and residence.

Under Articles 29 and 30 certain cultural and educational rights are guaranteed to minorities. Article 29 guarantees the right to any section of the citizen's residing in any part of the country having a distinct language script or culture of its own to conserve the same. Article 30 provides that "All minorities whether based on religion or language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice".

In *M. Ismail Faruqui vs. Union of India (Ayodhya case)* the Supreme Court has summarised the true concept of secularism under the Constitution as follows:

"It is clear from the constitutional scheme that it guarantees equality in the matter of all individuals and groups irrespective of their emphasising that there is no religion of the state itself. The Preamble of the Constitution in Articles 25 to 28 emphasises this aspect and indicates that it is in this manner the concept of secularism is embodied in the constitutional scheme as a creed adopted by the Indian people has to be understood while examining the constitutional validity of any legislation. The concept of secularism is one facet of the right to equality as the central golden thread in a fabric depicting the pattern of the scheme in our Constitution".

### **Threat to Secularism**

India professes to be a secular state. It is beyond dispute that India is a true Secular state in the real sense of the term. However, very often we find traces of communal elements which pose serious threat to the secular fabric of Indian society and polity. Every now and then we witness communal disturbances and riots in one state or the other. Recently the Supreme Court judgement in the *Shah Bano Case* and the *Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill, 1986* raised a nation-wide controversy between secularism on the one hand and fundamentalism on the other. Secularism and communalism seemed to be opposed to each other. Why it happened? Is India not secular or has Indian secularism failed to foster unity among different religious groups? Are communal forces stronger than the secular ones? To answer these questions it is important to understand the circumstances under which the concept of secularism were adopted in India and its working since independence. India is, considered to be a "confederation of religious communities, the combination of politics and religion, resulting in communal politics is the most dangerous combination and must be put to an end. It is harmful to the country as a whole; it is harmful to the majority, but probably it is most harmful to any minority that seeks to name some advantage from it.

While Communalism and Fascism are tightening their hold on the life of nation, no organized, dedicated and determined effort is being made to loosen that hold and to nourish and strengthen secularism. There are Hindus who identify secularism with Muslim appeasement and Muslim who dismiss secularism as anti-Islamic.

The calculated rise of the BJP took place on a fundamentalist Hindu platform to gain dividends in states in principally North India and Maharashtra as well as at national level. India was portrayed as a Hindu nation. The BJP and the SanghParivar use Ayodhya and other Hindu images continuously for the protection of their narrow political gains. Despite the electoral dividends, the Hindu appeal spun out of control. Both the slogan and its message were albumenized. A nation that watched the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992 was dismayed to see wanton destruction of books at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Pune. Even the BJP's Hindu supporters are uncomfortable with such ravages in the name of Hinduism.

### **Suggestions**

Each community must respect the sentiments of the other. Concerted efforts must therefore, be made to promote a secular way of life and shed the communal hangover of the British Raj. We must undoubtedly ensure that there is no oppression of the minorities. At the same time, we must remove all grounds which generate ill will in the minds of majority against minority and which pamper Hindu fundamentalism. Another obstacle in way of secularism in India is that politics in recent years has taken a regional character and irresponsible regional language newspapers, which deliberately fan the flames of communalism, have vitiated the atmosphere. Interested people who have local community interests control these newspapers. The national interest is therefore subordinated to petty personal or group end. Although most of the national newspapers are maintaining a commendable standard of objective reporting, the radio being government controlled could also be made a powerful means of propagating secularism. The vast majority of people uncritically digest whatever they are told in print. The news media can be a potent force for good or evil. Some structural safeguards are needed to be introduced to prevent the use of media for wrong ends, which of course is a challenging and complicated task. However, the greater responsibility lies with the media itself.

Cultural identity is another aspect of the communal problem. This crisis largely arose because history was taught with a bias. The Hindus had one set of heroes and the Muslims another. A Janata leader has said that the distortions of history should be removed from the textbooks, which should be rewritten with a correct balanced perspective.

Casteism may also be considered an impediment to secularism. Dr. K. N. Katju, the Minister of Home, once declared (1953) that "without a Hindu majority, India could not have adopted a secular Constitution". His point was that the religious tolerance fostered by Hindu catholic outlook was the foundation of the secular state.

Economic growth and structural differentiation are extremely necessary for the development of secularism. It is also essential that we overcome the religion-phobia in our educational system.

We leave religious education entirely in the hands of bodies, which are seldom adequately equipped to undertake the task and usually offer narrow, and obscurantist interpretations of the living truths that permeate religious traditions. The new education policy formulated by the present government talks only of value education, this can only be done if our educational system accepts the multiplicity of our religious traditions. The Inculcation of loyalty to the Indian nation irrespective of any other grouping or sub-identity would ensure the development of

healthy secularism.

The nationalist concept of secularism may not be relevant to the Indian situation because of the strong emotional attachment of Indians to religion; it is rather difficult to replace religious loyalties by national loyalties. There is the likelihood also that a religious man may not accept his duty to strive for the good of a non-religious group or choose national goals in preference to religious ones. M. N. Roy held that India was not a secular state as the preconditions necessary to it were absent. A theocratic society -one imbued with religious superstition and blind faith can hardly be the soil of a secular state. Roy's concept of Secularism may be unacceptable to some, nevertheless, his analysis of Indian society as being tradition-bound and pervaded by religion does point to the principal challenges to the secular state in India.

Secularism is not feasible in India without social and religious reforms. The important thing is that social and religious activities ought to be extracted from the sphere of the religious authorities and taken over by the state as other secular. Institutions, social custom and laws, which are irrational, have to be changed. In fact, the message of all religions is that all men are children of God. In India we have to bring home to all concerned this essential message of religion.

### **COMMUNALISM: DIFFERENT CANNOTATIONS**

Communalism, as we understand it in our country is blind loyalty to one's own religious group. It is described as a tool to mobilize people for or against by raising an appeal on communal lines. Communalism is associated with religious fundamentalism and dogmatism.

Abdul Ahmed says, "Communalism is a social phenomenon characterized by the religion of two communities, often leading to acrimony, tension and even rioting between them". Prabha Dixit writes, "Communalism is a political doctrine which makes use of religious and cultural differences to achieve political ends.

According to Asqhar Ali Engineer, MoinShakir and Abdul Ahmed, "it is an instrument in the hands of to upper Class to concentrate power by dividing people". The elites strive to maintain a status quo against transformation by dividing people on communal and religious lines. Communalism may be perceived as a total commitment to a set of beliefs and it is far from rationality.

Communalism emphasises the separate identity of a religious group in relation to other groups. It is based on the belief that religious distinction is most important and fundamental distinction, and this overrides all other distinctions. Communalism believes that the interests of a community can be best promoted by maintaining its separate identity and organising it separately for the promotion of these interests. In its extreme form communalism claims nationhood for the community concerned and seek to raise it to the status of a sovereign state.

Communalism in India has originated during the colonial period. Communal politics claims to derive its ideology, base and support from religion and tradition. It interprets history in a way, which suits its purpose of political mobilisation. A close study of the ideologies of communal organisation reveals that all of them share similar view on important socio-economic and political issues.

Communalism has been explained mainly in two ways: (1) as an ideology or a belief system and (2) as a social phenomenon. Communalism arises out of a belief system. That is, people who follow a particular religion, have, as a result of common social, political and economic interests.

The Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs are different and distinct communities, which are exclusively and separately structured or consolidated in terms of their social identity and economic interests. The assertion of communal identity formed by a feeling of unity among its followers transform communalism from an ideology into a social process.

Today, the issue of communalism has taken such an acute form that this had overtaken other issues like poverty and unemployment. The frequency of communal violence has increased. The strategies adopted by communal forces to mobilise the masses have been largely in terms of appeal to religious sentiments. This strategy seems to have worked well in the Babri Masjid - Ram JanmaBhoomi issue, which has engulfed the whole country.

The problem of communalism, thus, has began to appear in a form of a clear ideology and organisation. The ideology and politics of communalism in India are no longer in the fringes of the state process. Several political parties made it a part in their electoral strategy during the recent 1989 elections. It is also became a major threat to national unity and harmony of society.

### **Growth of Communalism in India (Pre-independent period)**

During the freedom struggle two kinds of ideologies emerged: (1) That tried to unite Indian people as a nation irrespective of their regional, religious, caste, and class differences and (2) That tried to divide Indian people along the traditional lines of cleavages and diversities. The emergence of organisation like Muslim league, Jamate-Islami, Hindu Maha Sabha, RSS, is part of this trend, Moreover, the colonial power, through their policy of divide and rule, contributed further the growth of communalism in India, which ultimately led to the partition of the country. The colonial rules exploited the rival social, economic and political claims of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, tribal and untouchables. The communal award and separate electorates etc. are example of the policy in this direction.

The growth of Indian nationalism gradually acquired a historical dimension from a reformulated view of the Hindu tradition. Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lalajpat Rai identifying themselves with heroes like Maharana Pratab and Shivaji. They were also opponents of the Mughal rulers. Thus heroes became Hindus and oppressors became the Muslims. The Ganapathi festival and Shivaji Festival organised by Tilak mobilised the masses against the colonial rule, but unfortunately this created, at the same time, suspicion amongst the Muslims. This suspicion ultimately led to the concept of two nation theory and the establishment of the Muslim league.

In order to combat communalism, the leaders of the national movement adopted a policy of unity from above'. Whenever communal crises emerged, only the top leaders of the different communities were consulted in order to bring about communal harmony. The masses were never taken into confidence. Such a strategy helped the community influentials to become leaders. These leaders, through their various roles of conflicts and resolution, helped to a convenient mixing of religion and politics.

### **Causes for the growth of Communalism in the post independent period**

Communalism is basically a political problem. Political opportunities of major political parties help the growth of communalism in India. Despite the well-known commitment to secularism, the Congress (I) leadership has often made alliances with communal parties like Muslim league and the Akali Dai, thus giving political respectability to communalism. The Muslims have successfully opposed the move to enact a uniform civil code which every modern state possesses. Instead of combating communalism and persuade the people to accept an egalitarian, just and enlightened way of life, the congress leadership has often set wrong tradition and

practices. The latest example of this kind was in 1984, when the Parliament passed special legislation to overcome the judgement in the Shahbano case.

The way in which the political leadership has been fraternizing Jagatguru, Shahi Imam and Sikh Priests has proved unfortunate. What has the country gained by the Congress move to bring Sant Bhindran Wale in politics. For years Punjab has been a tragedy without mitigation. The operation Blue Star, Mrs. Gandhi's assassination, Delhi killings, Kanpur riots, and the ongoing wave of tension, all cast sad reflection on the self-seeking leadership. As Rajani Kothari said, "the ruling party and the state itself is playing a direct role in communalising the political process. The development in Bihar, Biwandi, Punjab, Meerut, Delhi and elsewhere, following the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi have highlighted the role of the government and the ruling party in spreading tension inciting and even engineering communalism.

Since communalism has social appeal, the non-congress parties including even communists adopt strategies, which have a communal content. The CPI (M) made relations with the Muslim League in Kerala from 1967-69, with All India Muslim League from 1974-86, and with Jana Sangh at the centre between 1977-79, the opportunistic compromises with communal parties and groups for electoral purposes done a great dis-service to the cause of secularism.

Absence of radical programmes is also a cause for the growth of communalism. Communalisation of history favour communalism. In independent India, a communal historical approach is the main ideology of communalism. And a history, through which the past glory of a community is sought to be reflected, is keenly sought for by the communalists. One of India's most distinguished historian, Irfan Habib says "we want that every teacher of Aligarh Muslim University should be loyal to the Islamic faith and community" Similar reaction is also made by the Sikh intellectuals.

The role of the priestly class, religious places and festivals has also help the growth of communalism in India. In some states slogan of separatism are heard at large congregation and meetings and places of worship remain centres of armed militants. The religious festivals of Bisakhi, Diwali and Holi are often used to promote communal solidarity. The unusual increase in religious ceremonies and processions such as Bhagawathi Jagaran, Durga Puja, Rath Yatra etc. has increased opportunities for political leaders to impart communal colour to religious ceremonies.

Today communalism, in its various shapes, has acquired a very dangerous form and alarming proportions in India. It disrupts the pattern of co-existence in our multi religious fraternity. It is a threat to India's nationalist identity, and a tragic set back to our evolving secular culture. It is subversive of our democratic political stability. By killing each other in mindless communal strife, we are in effect killing ourselves, killing the Indian nation, killing our glorious heritage of humanism and composite culture. Therefore communalism should be recognised as enemy number one of our secular democratic polity.

#### **Preventives for the Eradication of Communalism:**

The following measures may be taken for the eradication of communalism.

##### **1. Abolition of Communal Parties:**

All the political parties which thrive on religious loyalties should be banned or abolished by the government. Even non-political cultural organizations should always be kept under constant vigil so that they cannot preach communalism.

##### **2. Transmission of the Past Heritage:**

Feelings of nationalism should be inculcated in the minds of people by reminding them about the glorious moments of history in Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were combined to safeguard the interest of the country.

**3. Public Opinion:**

Efforts should be made through mass media for changing the attitude of people towards other communities. People must be aware of the evils of the communalism.

**4. Inter-caste and Marriages:**

Youth organizations and other types of associations should be formed in every locality to give opportunity to people of different communities to come closer and know each other. This may help them to practice inter-caste and marriages which will lessen the social distance among the members of different religious groups.

Both the Government and people should make efforts for eradication of communal tension and conflict

**RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM**

**Fundamentalism** has been defined by Marsden as the demand for a strict adherence to certain theological doctrines, in reaction against Modernist theology. The term was originally coined by its supporters to describe what they claimed were five specific classic theological beliefs of Christianity, and that developed into a Christian fundamentalist movement within the Protestant community of the United States in the early part of the 20th century. The term usually has a religious connotation indicating unwavering attachment to a set of irreducible beliefs, but fundamentalism has come to be applied to a broad tendency among certain groups, mainly, although not exclusively, in religion. This tendency is most often characterized by a markedly strict literalism as applied to certain specific scriptures, dogmas, or ideologies, and a strong sense of the importance of maintaining ingroup and outgroup distinctions, leading to an emphasis on purity and the desire to return to a previous ideal from which it is believed that members have begun to stray. Rejection of diversity of opinion as applied to these established "fundamentals" and their accepted interpretation within the group is often the result of this tendency.

There has been a tremendous upsurge in religion all over the world. All Religions are interacting with modernity which is enshrined in human freedom, market freedom and value freedom as encapsulated or manifested in secularism and democracy. In this march they are positioned differently: Christianity was the first one to negotiate, confront, contain and come to terms with modernity. It has been in the tip of the arrow in this march. The Christian fundamentalism or Christian right assit is known is a reaction or a result of the interaction between modernity and Christianity. Islam and Hinduism, the other major world religions, are way behind in this march. But they are reacting violently through Islamic and Hindu fundamentalism to the onslaught of modernity, secularism and democracy. The character of these religions itself is changing swiftly laced with politics. Religion has become a tiger. Those who ignore this tiger are likely to be swallowed up by it. All fundamentalisms aim at triumphalism, establishing a global church, nation to reclaim the moral high ground lost to modernity by influencing political agenda of their governments, largely through the media. There is an unholy nexus between religion and politics whose main agenda is to batter secularism and democracy. Christians in India are subjected to atrocities of Hindutva or Hindu cultural nationalism and Islamic terrorism. There is also the "symbolic violence" of Christian fundamentalism.

Revivalism of religious fundamentalism has pitted followers of different religions against each other. In Kashmir ,it is Islam against Hindu hegemony; in Gujarat ,it is Hindutva forces against

Muslims and in Punjab it is Sikhs against Hindus. These tensions are not conflicts of divergent cultures; each one of them is potentially and actually a political movement aiming at realizing not a mere cultural or religious objective. The objective is open or camouflaged, political.

### **Terrorism and Money power**

Terrorism is perhaps the most ruthless challenge threatening international peace in the contemporary world and the worst thing is that it is spreading in different parts of the globe with alarming rapidity. At the conclusion of the World War II, the statesmen of the world had created the United Nations with International Court of Justice as its judicial organ to resolve the serious conflicts peacefully and thus avoided the possibility of a third world war. Nevertheless, the International Court can resolve a dispute only if it falls within the parameters of International Law. Terrorism unfortunately does not have an internationally acceptable definition that could have assisted the peace loving populace of the world to fasten this scourge to the structure of international criminal law. It is obvious that terrorism thrives on violence and for that reason the scholars and the activists engaged in either studying or confronting the menace make attempts to define it as deliberate and well-planned violent exploits of a distinct group or community to generate an environment of fear in the setting of its real or perceived enemy and thus seek out its ideological purpose. Though this seemingly value-free definition relies majority on the connotation of the word 'terror' which plainly means fear or fright, it may still get embroiled in controversies if applied to an actual act of violence. The passionate ideological conflicts that are innately entrenched in the word 'terrorism' make it a thoroughly complex notion that defies conceptualization in absolute terms. Tempers run high and passions get generated when a particular side labels its adversaries as terrorists because there is no consensus on the issue of use of legitimate violence for a just cause by an organised group; also the controversial subject of state terrorism makes it a thorny issue. Quite often the so-called security agencies of a state brand their political and ideological adversaries as terrorists to delegitimize their activities even if they are just.

### **DEFINITION OF TERRORISM**

Terrorism as a rule is classified into two categories. One is usually called political terrorism that aims at achieving political objectives by generating an atmosphere of terror with the unbridled use of violence. The other type is usually labeled as criminal terrorism which also produces a reign of terror by excessive violent means but its objectives are criminal like drug peddling, kidnapping, looting, arson, extortion etc mostly for monetary gains. The second kind of terrorism in reality belongs to criminology and, therefore, is beyond the purview of present discussion. It is terrorism that seeks to achieve political aims by indiscriminate use of violence that has emerged as a daunting challenge to the civilized world in recent times and it is this phenomenon with which we are concerned. Terrorism, according to Oxford University Dictionary, "is the unofficial or unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuits of political aims." Let us analyze this purportedly unbiased definition. The keyword violence is very much there which emphasizes that terrorist acts are in reality violent acts but they are known as acts of terrorism for two reasons—one, the use of violence is unofficial or unauthorized and two, the use of violence is a strategy to achieve political aims. The second implication is universally accepted. However, there appears a serious problem regarding the first inference that draws attention to the 'unofficial' or 'unauthorized' use of violence. Who decides the legitimacy of violence? Should we condone the horrifying acts of violence of some dictators, monarchs, military junta and even the elected rulers against their own people to remain in power? Since these rulers are 'the

governments' their use of violence against their people can legally be interpreted as 'official' and 'authorized'. Though there are myriad examples that can be cited in the context, it is enough to make a mention of what is currently happening in Syria. The overwhelming majority of the Syrian is opposed to the despotic and tyrannical rule of Basharul Assad and they are agitating for a free, fair and democratic polity. In response to people's just agitation, Assad has unleashed a series of terrorist actions against the agitators. The troops loyal to him are bombing cities, firing indiscriminately on unarmed people including women and children, maiming and ultimately killing the political opponents by torturing them and showing absolute contempt to the prevailing world opinion that has censured his violent actions on account of absolute violation of human rights. Should we then call Assad's horrendous use of violence 'non-terrorist actions' because he being the government, the use of violence is official and authorized? Obviously, no sane person would agree to that. The definition of the Oxford English Dictionary is, therefore, not a comprehensive one because it does not include 'state terrorism' in its ambit

### **FEATURES OF TERRORISM AND ITS CAUSES**

It is also necessary to make a distinction between terrorism and other violent crimes. In order to do so we must keep in mind certain characteristics of terrorism.

Firstly, terrorism is essentially a political act. An organised group committed to an ideology adopts it as a strategy to accomplish its objective. It must be pointed out that beside politicized religious groups the Rightists and the Leftists have resorted to terrorism at different points of time in world history,

Secondly, the terrorist acts are planned in such manner that they should create a long-lasting impact both in political and psychological terms. For this the terrorists attempt to cause the maximum damage to human lives and properties so that the people are traumatised and the targeted group or the state is forced to make a retreat.

Thirdly, a terrorist group has a hierarchal structure and resembles any normal organisation with its chain of command from the chief to the foot soldiers.

Fourthly, Terrorists don't always attack their real or perceived adversaries. In most cases their victims happen to be innocent people who might not have any specific stance either in favour or against the terrorists. The indiscriminate killings of innocent people obviously instill fear in the hearts of common people and that is one of the objectives of the terrorists.

Fifthly, though terrorist acts are believed to be performed mostly by non-state actors, the state actors too occasionally resort to terrorism.

Lastly, a significant feature of state terrorism is to make a dubious distinction between an act of terror carried out by non-state actors and the one executed by the state agencies.

The former is treated as unlawful and therefore terrorist act while the latter is considered legitimate even if it unabashedly violates all civil liberties, human rights and norms of a civilised polity. For instance bombing cities, torturing and maiming people are acts of barbarism and prohibited by international and domestic laws. The state-sponsored terrorism, however, legitimises such heinous acts. In the context the observation of the former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan is significant. He said, "...regardless of the differences between governments on the question of definition of terrorism, what is clear and what we can all agree on is any deliberate attack on innocent civilians, regardless of one's cause, is unacceptable and fits into the definition of terrorism."

One of the most controversial aspects of terrorism relates to its causes. The states that are guilty of committing terrorist acts vehemently denounce any attempt by anyone to address the causes of different hues of terrorism. The champions of civil liberties and human rights, on the hand, argue



that unless the genuine grievances of the insurgents are given a serious consideration the terrorist violence will not subside. Theoretically speaking there are quite a few causes of terrorism that may be enlisted.

First, in the contemporary scenario religious fanaticism is the most talked about cause of terrorism. The prominent example is of course Islamic fanaticism to which I shall return in a short while.

Second, imposition of a particular form of political order is loosely related to religious fanaticism particularly in case of Islamic terrorism. The well-known examples are Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Third, separatist tendencies that instigate a distinct group to employ terrorist strategies and secede a territory to form an independent sovereign state fall in the category of terrorism.

The major examples from India are Jammu and Kashmir and the North East that consists of 7 states also known as seven sisters viz. Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland. The relations between these states and the Centre are far from friendly. Ill feelings between the native tribal people and migrant people from different parts of India constantly pose serious threats to law and order in the area. Earlier Khalistan movement was also a noteworthy example. From abroad, the recently crushed movement of the LTTE of Sri Lanka, Chechnya, and IRA are relevant cases of the contemporary world. Fourth, resistance to the existing governments primarily dominated or run by the occupying armed forces might motivate the politically active segments of the local population to get drawn to terrorism. The noteworthy examples are Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan. Fifth, economic deprivation of an overwhelmingly large population might stir up the natives of a region to opt for violent means that may be construed as terrorism. The most significant example is the Maoist-Naxalite resistance mostly in parts of the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh and now in Kerala and Karnataka.

## **SUMMARY**

Terrorism is without doubt a serious and sinister threat to world peace. In the contemporary world it has emerged as a global threat that has challenged the survival of humanity. Despite the current concerns about terrorism, the menace does not have a solitary definition that can be universally acceptable to all. The US military forces have pointed out that there exists more than a hundred definitions of terrorism. In spite of this, most countries subscribe to the definition of terrorism stated in a United Nations report entitled *Larger Freedom* that was released on March 17, 2005. It defines terrorism as “(any action) intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians and non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or international organization to do or abstain from doing any act.” It is also necessary to make a distinction between terrorism and other violent crimes. In order to do so we must keep in mind certain characteristics of terrorism. There are certain features of terrorism which distinguish this menace from other crimes. They are: firstly, terrorism is essentially a political act; secondly, terrorist actions are always well planned to create maximum political and psychological impact; thirdly, terrorist groups are hierarchal; fourthly, terrorists do not always attack their adversaries and lastly, there are state actors involved in terrorism. Some causes of terrorism can be identified as religious fanaticism, imposition of a particular type of political order, separatist politics, resistance against foreign occupation, economic deprivation etc. Historically speaking, terrorism is a very old phenomenon. In India the acts of terrorism are usually reported from Kashmir, Punjab, the Northeast, Maharashtra and many of the states where

Naxalites are active. Indian government usually favours repressive measures with special power laws to deal with terrorism. However, an approach of repression combined with negotiation can yield better results.

## MODULE: IV

### MARGINALISED SECTIONS

Social inequality is a product of Hindu caste ridden society. Two third of India's population are socially, economically and educationally backward. The social hierarchy of the Indian society operating through several centuries imposed a number of burdens on the so called lower classes including the untouchables and other so called Shudras. As a result certain classes advanced socially, economically, educationally at a direct and demonstrable cost of the lower classes that, on the other hand, went on becoming more and more backward. A Commission for Backward Classes was appointed in 1953 to make recommendations as to the steps that should be taken by the Union Government or the state government to remove such difficulties and improve their condition. The backward classes as the genus can be divided into three categories, such as the (a) Scheduled caste (b) the Scheduled tribes and (c) Other backward classes.

#### SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

Elaborate arrangements have been made for protecting the interests of the people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Part XVI of the Constitution. The definitions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, including Anglo-Indians, are given in Part XIX of the Constitution. Thus, Art. 366(24) defines Scheduled Castes as "such castes, races or tribes or parts of groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Art.341 to be the Scheduled Castes for the purposes of this Constitution." Literally speaking, Scheduled Castes or Depressed Classes belong to the low castes, which are also treated as untouchables by virtue of belonging to the *Sudra* segment of the Hindu society. That is, they cannot claim the privileges of the people belonging to the upper castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas) known as *savarnar* what the English rulers wrongly called the 'Caste Hindus'. Dr. Hutton, the Census Commissioner in his Report (1931), acted on the basis of some assumptions and held the view that a person could be included in the category of Scheduled Castes or Depressed Classes if he/ she.

1. could not serve clean Brahmins;
2. was a water-carrier, barber, tailor, etc., and could not serve Caste Hindus;
3. polluted a high caste Hindu by contact or by proximity;
4. from whose hands a Caste Hindu would not take water;
5. was debarred from using public conveniences as ferries, roads, wells, schools, etc.;
6. was debarred from entry into Hindu temples;
7. even after receiving education, in ordinary special intercourse was not treated as equal by the high caste persons;
8. was merely depressed on account of his own ignorance, illiteracy and poverty and but for that remained subject to social disability; and
9. was depressed on account of the occupation followed and but for that occupation would be subject to social disability.

The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes constitute about 25% of the total population of our country. They have to face social disparities and economic backwardness. The framers of the Indian constitution were fully aware of their poor socio-economic conditions. Therefore, they have been given special privileges by the Indian constitution Scheduled Castes referring to the lower castes of Hindu society who suffer from the problem of untouchability. The constitution of India incorporates certain provisions and safeguards for the protection and upliftment of Scheduled Castes. A tribe is an anthropological concept. It is defined as a social group usually with a definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unified social organization. In the recent

times the term 'Adivasi' is used to refer to the tribe. There are a number of tribes in India, spread over different parts, at different levels of socio-economic development.

L.P Vidyarthi has made a four-fold classification of Indian tribes such as (i) The Himalayan (ii) Middle Indian (iii) Western Indian and (iv) Southern Indian regions. In spite of their cultural and economic differences, the tribal's are economically, educationally and politically backward, compared to the non – tribal group.

### **CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS**

Our constitution contains a number of provisions providing special programmes for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes,

In the first place, the constitution has abolished untouchability . No person can be deprived of the use of shops, hotels, and places of public entertainment, ponds and wells on grounds only of religion, caste, creed and place of birth or any of them. Secondly, the religious institutions of the Hindus have been thrown open to all sections of the Hindu society. Thirdly, the constitution prohibits the denial of admission to educational institutions maintained by the state or receiving grants from the state funds to any citizen on grounds of caste or sex. Fourthly, there is a reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies of the states for Scheduled Caste and Tribes. Some government posts are kept reserved for them and other backward classes. To facilitate their adequate representation in public offices, concessions are given, such as relaxation of age limit, relaxation in standard of suitability, relaxation of qualification regarding experience in the case of direct recruitment etc.

Fifthly, for the safety and security of the tribal communities some restrictions have been imposed, so that non-tribals cannot purchase any property in the tribal belt.

### **Reservations seats in the Legislatures**

Reservations have been made in favour of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so as to secure their seats in the Lok Sabha, the Vidhan Sabhas of the States and posts in public services. Thus, Art. 330 says that seats shall be reserved in the House of People for (a) the Scheduled Castes, (b) the Scheduled Tribes except the Scheduled Tribes in the autonomous districts of Assam, and (c) the Scheduled Tribes in the autonomous districts of Assam. The number of seats reserved in any State or Union Territory for the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats allotted to the State or the Union Territory in the Lok Sabha as the population of the Scheduled Castes in the States or Union Territory or of the Scheduled Tribes in the State or Union Territory or part of the State or Union Territory, as the case may be, in respect of which seats are so reserved, bears to the total population of the State or Union Territory. It may, however, be pointed out that while reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population in the State or Union Territory is clearly provided; a person belonging to this category may also contest election in a non-reserved constituency. Obviously, this provision gives weightage to the people belonging to these categories.

Then, Art. 332 make a similar provision for the reservation of seats in the Legislative Assemblies of the States. It lays down:

1. Seats shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes except the Scheduled Tribes in the autonomous districts of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya, in the Legislative Assembly of every State.
2. Seats shall be reserved also for the autonomous districts in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Assam.
3. The number of seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in the

Legislative Assembly of any State under clause (1) shall bear as nearly as may be the same proportion to the total number of seats in the Assembly as the population of the Scheduled Castes in the State or of the Scheduled Tribes in the State or part of the State, as the case may be, in respect of which seats are reserved, bears to the total population of the State.

3A. notwithstanding anything contained in clause (3), until the taking effect, under Art. 170, of the readjustment on the basis of the first census after the year 2000 of the total number of seats in the Legislative Assemblies of the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, the seats which shall be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of any such State, shall be”

(a) if all the seats in the Legislative Assembly of such State in existence on the date of coming into force of the Constitution (Fifty-seventh Amendment) Act, 1987 (hereafter in this clause referred to as the existing Assembly) are held by members of the Scheduled Tribes, all the seats except one;

(b) in any other case, such number of seats as bears to the total number of seats, a proportion not less than the number (as on the said date) of members belonging to the Scheduled Tribes in the existing Assembly bears to the total number of seats in the existing Assembly. .

4. The number of seats reserved for an autonomous district in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Assam shall bear to the total number of seats in the Assembly a proportion not less than the population of the district bears to the total population of the State.

5. The constituencies for the seats reserved for any autonomous districts of Assam shall not comprise any area outside the district.

6. No person who is not a member of a Scheduled Tribe of any autonomous district of the State of Assam shall be eligible for election to the Legislative Assembly of the State for any constituency of that district."

**An important provision is contained in Art. 338 that provides for the setting up of a National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, It lays down:**

I. There shall be a Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to be known as the National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

2. Subject to the provision of any law made in this behalf by the Parliament, the Commission shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and five other members so appointed shall be such as the President may by rule determine.

3. The Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and other members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.

4. The Commission shall have the power to regulate its own procedure.

5. It shall be the duty of the Commission:

(a) to investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under this Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any order of the government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards;

(b) to inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

(c) to participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State;

(d) to participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State;

(e) to present to the President annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards;

(f) to make in such reports recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes; and

(g) to discharge such other functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes as the President may, subject, to the provisions of any law made by Parliament, by rule specify. .

6. The President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament along with a memorandum explaining the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations relating to the Union and the reasons for the non-acceptance, if any, of any of such recommendations.

7. Where any such report, or any part thereof relates to any matter with which any State Government is concerned, a copy of such report shall be forwarded to the Governor of the State who shall cause it to be laid before the Legislature of the State along with a memorandum explaining the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations, relating to the State and the reasons for the non-acceptance, if any, of any of such recommendations.

8. The Commission shall, while investigating any matter referred to in sub-clause (a) or inquiring into any complaint referred to in sub-clause (b) of clause (5) have all the powers of a civil court trying a suit and, in particular in respect of the following matters, namely:

"(a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath;

(b) Requiring the discovery and protection of any document;

(c) Receiving evidence on affidavits;

(d) Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;

(e) Issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses and documents;

(f) Any other matter which the President may, by rule, determine.

9. "The Union and every State Government shall consult the Commission on all major policy matters affecting Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

10. "In this article, reference to the Scheduled Castes shall be construed as including reference to such other backward classes as the President may, on the receipt of the report of a commission appointed under clause (1) of article 340, by order specify and also to the Anglo-Indian community."

The setting up of such a high-powered commission vide the Sixty-fifth Constitution Amendment Act of 1990 is regarded as a distinct improvement upon the earlier arrangement of a Special Officer for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

## **STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIETY**

One significant section of society that has been denied justice in India is that of women. For centuries they have received unequal treatment in almost all spheres of life. During British colonial period there sprang up many reformist movement in India to advance the cause of women and to fight against injustice done to them. The early reformist like Raja Ram Mohan Roy denounced child marriage and Sati and worked for the emancipation of women in general. The 19<sup>th</sup> century also saw for the first time the enactment of social legislation by the government

which included abolition of Sati (1829), Widow Remarriage Act (1856). All India women's Conference was formed in 1927 for the welfare and development of women.

As a result of social reforms, there emerged awareness about women's plight and consciousness for the upliftment. In general there was not much change in the social attitude towards women. The study reveals that the Hindu women enjoyed a fairly high status in the beginning, but their status gradually declined in the medieval period. The paradoxical situation was such that she was sometimes considered as a Goddess and at other times merely a slave.

According to one view, women during the Vedic period occupied an exalted position and they enjoyed a fair amount of personal freedom and equal rights with men. But another view holds that birth of a girl was not a welcome event. However, she did not suffer due to that reason. She was given all privileges entitled to a son. Women, in the Vedic era, so excelled in the sphere of education that even the deity of learning was conceived of as a female popularly known as 'Saraswathi'. The wife held an honorable position in the house hold. The status of women gradually declined during post – Vedic period. Most probably, the women status deteriorated due to the introduction of non-Aryan wife. The non-Aryanwife's did not have any knowledge of Vedic rituals. They could not associate themselves with their Aryan husbands in various religious performances. The girls were denied of formal education. The marriageable age of girls came down to 8 or 10 years. Jajnavalkya declared that women should follow the words of their husbands. A position of widow was not miserable during the post – Vedic period, but widow remarriage was not usually favored.

The status of women was raised during the Buddhist period. Women regained a part of their lost freedom during the rule of Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka and other emperors. This was possible due to the broad – minded Bhuddist philosophy. Kalidasa and other poets belonging to the golden Age of the Guptas enhanced the prestige of women in their classical writings. In this period girls married in their youthful years. Love marriages were very common during those days. During the reign of Mauryas and Guptas, women took a leading role in Bhuddist monastic life. The position of women declined in medieval or Muslim period. The Muslim period witnessed several indicators of low status of women, particularly Hindu women, Hindu girls were denied education polygamy and 'Purdah' system were practiced during the Muslim period. The Hindu widow spent her days in the most pathetic condition. The practice of 'Sati' has encouraged and the widows who did not perform 'Sati' were looked down upon the society.

The status of women, at the down of the British rule in India, reached the lowest level in the society. The rate of literacy was so low and not able to read or write. Many social evils exist during that period as Sati, Devadasi, purdah, dowry ... etc. Many social reformers made serious efforts to improve the conditions of women. Public opinion was aroused against these social evils. Thus during the British reign, with the help of several social legislations the Indian women's position which had taken a chequered course was sought to be balanced. People became conscious of the social disabilities.

### **WOMENS WELFARE IN INDEPENDENT INDIA**

The constitution of India contains several provisions aiming at the welfare and development of women. Most of these provisions are contained in Part III dealing with Fundamental Rights and Part IV containing Directive Principles of State Policy. Article 14 guarantees to all people's equality before law and equal protection of the laws within the territory of India. This means that laws cannot be discriminatory against women. Article 15 not only prohibits any discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste sex or place of birth but

also empowers the state to make any special provision for women and children, similarly, Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity in matters relating to public employment. The fundamental Rights, thus make women like man and other sections of society equal and free in all walks of life. Fundamental Right gives power to the state to make special provisions for women and children. Besides, special provisions are given in the form of directives to the state in the Directive Principles of state policy. They are (i) Men and women equally have the right to an adequate means of livelihood (Article 39) (ii) There is equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

To protect the rights of women, the Indian parliament in 1990 passed a law to establish the National Commission for Women. The commission came into existence on 31 January, 1992: The functions assigned to it are wide and varied covering almost all facts of issues relating to safeguarding women's rights and promotion.

At present, legally and constitutionally, women in India are given a status of equality with men.

### **CHILDREN**

India has made some significant commitments towards ensuring the basic rights of children. There has been progress in overall indicators: infant mortality rates are down, child survival is up, literacy rates have improved and school dropout rates have fallen. But the issue of child rights in India is still caught between legal and policy commitments to children on the one hand, and the fallout of the process of globalization on the other.

Over the last decade, countries across the world have been changing their existing economic models in favour of one driven by the free market, incorporating processes of liberalization, privatization and globalization. The direct impact of free trade on children may not leap to the eye, but we do know that globalised India is witnessing worsening levels of basic health, nutrition and shelter. Children are suffering as a result of social sector cutbacks/policies and programmes and development initiatives that deprive communities and families of access to and control over land, forest and water resources they have traditionally depended on.

The negative fallout is visible: children are being deprived of even the scarce social benefits once available; they are displaced by forced and economic migration, increasing the number of children subsisting on the streets; more and more children are being trafficked within and across borders; and rising numbers of children are engaged in part- or full-time labour. (1)

### **Ground realities**

- With more than one-third of its population below 18 years, India has the largest young population in the world.
- Only 35% of births are registered, impacting name and nationality.
- One out of 16 children die before they attain the age of 1, and one out of 11 die before they are 5 years old.
- 35% of the developing world's low-birth-weight babies are born in India.
- 40% of child malnutrition in the developing world is in India.
- Of every 100 children who drop out of school, 66 are girls.
- 65% of girls in India are married by the age of 18 and become mothers soon after.
- India is home to the highest number of child labourers in the world.
- India has the world's largest number of sexually abused children, with a child below 16 raped every 155th minute, a child below 10 every 13th hour, and at least one in every 10 children sexually abused at any point in time.



## GOVERNMENT POLICY ON CHILDREN

On November 20, 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). On January 26, 1990, the opening day of the session, 61 countries signed it. The CRC covers all children under the age of 18 years, regardless of sex, colour, language, religion or race. India ratified the CRC in 1992.

Several constitutional provisions protect children in India. Among them:

- Article 15 affirms the right of the State to make special provision for women and children.
- Article 24 provides that no child below the age of 14 shall be employed to work... in any hazardous employment.
- Article 39 (e) of the Directive Principles of State Policy provides that children of tender age should not be abused and that they should not be forced by economic necessity to enter vocations unsuited to their age or strength.
  - Article 39 (f) requires children to be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity, and that childhood and youth be protected against exploitation and moral and material abandonment.
- Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy provides for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14.

Prior to the Fifth Five-Year Plan, the government's focus was on child welfare through the promotion of basic minimum services for children. This culminated in the adoption of the National Policy for Children, in 1974.

The Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-79) saw a shift of focus from welfare to development and the integration and co-ordination of services after the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) 1975.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan strengthened child welfare and development. It led to the spatial expansion and enrichment of child development services through a variety of programmes.

The focus of the Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-97) shifted to human development through advocacy, mobilisation and community empowerment.

The Government of India declared its commitment to every child in the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002).

The Tenth Five-Year Plan advocated a convergent/integrated rights-based approach to ensure the survival, development, protection and participation of children.

The draft approach paper of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-2012) prepared by the Planning Commission emphatically stated that 'Development of the child is at the centre of the Eleventh Plan'.

Despite these laws, policies and commitments, however, what is the actual situation for India's children vis-à-vis health, education, early childhood care and protection?

### Elementary education

While enrolment levels propelled by the flagship Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan show an increase, levels of retention in schools remain a matter of concern. There has been a marginal improvement in the percentage of students who stay in school until Class 5 -- from 61.2% to 62% -- but this is way below the global average of 83.3% (10). There is a sharp decline in the enrolment ratio at the upper primary level. Also, the dropout rate increases cumulatively as it proceeds towards higher levels. Although showing improvement, the enrolment of girls is still below that of boys. The dropout rate for girls too is higher. Children belonging to Scheduled

Castes and Scheduled Tribes continue to face discrimination in schools and have lower enrolment and higher dropout rates. Despite the promise of education for all, 46% of children from Scheduled Tribes and 38% from Scheduled Castes continue to be out of school, as against 34% in the case of others. (11) This is not surprising considering the discrimination that these children face at school. The same can be said of the discrimination faced by disabled children.

The Constitution of India fails to even recognise education as a 'right' for those aged 15-18 years. Many children drop out after the elementary level. Indeed, the system is designed to *push* children out of education -- there is a lack of adequate school infrastructure, the quality of education is poor, the educational system is gender-unfriendly, disabled-unfriendly, caste-discriminatory and violent because of a high degree of corporal punishment.

A Model Education Bill has been developed and circulated to the states for adoption into state law. There will thus be no central legislation on education, only state legislation since education is a state subject. If states decide to adopt the Model Education Bill as it is, they will be eligible for 75% assistance from the Centre for education programmes. But if they modify the Model Bill in their formulation of the state education law, they will only be eligible for 50% of central government assistance. The Model Education Bill is not available for public scrutiny, posing serious questions about the government's accountability and transparency.

### **Child labour and Right to Education: A contradiction**

India has the highest number of child labourers in the world.

- Census reports clearly point to an increase in the number of child labourers in the country, from 11.28 million in 1991 to 12.59 million in 2001.
- Reports from the M V Foundation in Andhra Pradesh reveal that nearly 400,000 children, mostly girls between 7 and 14 years of age, toil for 14-16 hours a day in cotton seed production across the country. Ninety percent of them are employed in Andhra Pradesh alone.
- Rescue operations in Mumbai and Delhi in 2005-2006 highlight the employment of children in zari and embroidery units.

The existing law on child labour that allows children to work in occupations that are not part of the schedule of occupations that are considered harmful to children contradicts the right of every child to free and compulsory education. And yet no attempt is made to resolve this contradiction. How can children be at work and at school at the same time? Surely this means that any attempt to give them access to education will be second-rate, parallel non-formal education?

The Social Jurist, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights and M V Foundation have filed a joint PIL with the Supreme Court of India challenging the validity of the Child Labour Act in the wake of the constitutional guarantee to right to education for children in the 6-14 age-group. In the meantime, vide a notification in the official gazette dated October 10, 2006, the Centre has expanded the list of hazardous occupations banning employment of children under 14 years as domestic help or in restaurants and the entertainment industry.

### **Government Action: An Analysis**

Over the last few years, the government has taken a number of measures related to children. The most important has been the setting up of a full-fledged Ministry of Women and Child Development as against the Department of Women and Development that used to function as part of the Human Resource Development Ministry. Among the policy and law initiatives that were undertaken was the formulation of the National Charter for Children 2003, the National Plan of Action for Children 2005, and enforcement of the National Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act 2006. However, the National Policy for Children 1974 has not been repealed, nor does the charter override it. Thus, the status of the charter is not very clear. The

government announced the much-discussed and long-delayed National Plan of Action 2005 only in August 2005. Led by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the government has completed a study on child abuse in India and is in the process of drafting a law on Offences against Children. It has also initiated the process of amending the present law on child marriage. Parliament has recently passed the Prohibition of Child Marriage Bill 2006, which enhances punishment for those involved in these practices, and people abetting or attending child marriages. It also declares all child marriages null and void. This is also the main criticism against the legislation that will come into force as a law applicable retrospectively – ie, all child marriages that have taken place in the past will be declared null and void and the status of children born out of such marriages will come under question.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2000 was amended in 2006 and the Central Model Rules in this regard are being formulated.

The Model Right to Education Bill is not available for public scrutiny/comment, as is also the case with the Offences against Children Bill. The Offences against Children Bill has drawn criticism based on drafts available through various sources. The first is that it is too vast in terms of the kind of offences it seeks to address under one umbrella legislation. The second is that, unlike the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act (ITPA) that extends to the whole of India, the proposed legislation keeps the State of Jammu and Kashmir out of its scope. The third, and most important, criticism is that since many of the offences dealt with under the proposed Bill are of a very serious nature, the criminality of those offences should be established through the main criminal law of the land, ie the Indian Penal Code and not through a social legislation. India already has a strong juvenile justice law to deal with social and reformatory aspects of a crime; that law could be strengthened further to ensure that human rights standards of child protection are met whilst rehabilitating a child victim. Moreover, both the Home Ministry and the Law Ministry are working on amendments in the Criminal Procedure Code, and many activists feel that this is the right time to seek appropriate amendments to ensure child-friendly legal procedures within the CRPC and the Indian Evidence Act.

## **ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC MOVEMENTS**

### **Movement in Tamil Nadu**

The regional movement in Tamilnadu can be understood by the analysis of its socio-cultural and historical dimensions. The movement in Tamil Nadu has been generally looked upon as a socio-religious revolt against the domination of the Aryan culture. In fact, this movement was projected as a conflict between two ethnic groups, the Aryans of the North and the Dravidians of the South. This two-race theory, if it can be called that, has resulted in the Tamilisation of politics (in Tamil Nadu). The supporters of the Dravidian movement consider Hinduism as foreign to their way of life. This definition of Hinduism has far-reaching political implications. This has certainly affected the foundations of political unity in India. The socio-cultural domination of the Brahmins has contributed to quite an extent to the growth of this separate identity consciousness.

The Dravidian movement could be traced to the formation of the Dravidian Association in 1915. Subsequently, this Association was changed into the South Indian Peoples Association, which demanded the creation of a Dravidian State. In 1917, this association was again changed into South Indian Liberal Federation and came to be popularly known as 'Justice Party'. The Justice Party was in favour of continuation of the British rule in India for it viewed it as a divine dispensation. In 1937, a Congress government was formed in Madras under the leadership of C. Rajagopalachari. His government's introduction of Hindi as a compulsory subject was opposed

by the supporters of the Dravidian movement. The movement took such a violent turn that the government was forced to revise its decision and Hindi was made an optional subject. E.V. Ramaswami Naicker was elected as the President of the Justice Party. This party demanded a separate Dravidian state 'directly under the Secretary of State for India'. Justice Party even supported the Muslim League's demand for the creation of Pakistan. In 1944, the party became the Dravida Kazhagam. Naicker declared, 'a Hindu in the present concept may be a Dravidian, but a Dravidian in the real sense of the term cannot and shall not be a Hindu'.

With the formation of the Andhra Pradesh in 1956, the name of Madras was changed to Tamil Nadu. In 1967, the DMK secured absolute majority in the state assembly. Since then, it has been consistently opposing the imposition of Hindi and alternately, the retention of English as the official language indefinitely. It has also been demanding more autonomy for the state and limitation of the role of the Planning Commission.

The Tamil Nadu government appointed the Raja Mannar Committee in 1971 to suggest improvements in the centre-state relations. The Committee's recommendations for the reorganisation of the Planning Commission, 'barest minimum' of the Concurrent List and removal of the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, except in cases involving interpretation of the Constitution, was understandably not accepted by the Government of India. In 1972, the DMK was divided into two factions, the DMK and the AIADMK. The Dravidian movement is now more concerned with maintenance and continuation of what is normally referred to as the Tamil identity. Some critics are of the opinion that 'It is a revolt against the centre and the sum total of centre's policies which seek to perpetuate the midland's domination of the coastlands'.

### **Telengana Movement**

Regarding the political and other problems of the Telengana region, the States Reorganisation Commission was of the opinion that it will be in the interest of both Andhra and Telengana, if Telengana is carved out as a separate state. However, a 'Gentleman's Agreement' reached between the leaders of Andhra and Telengana made the latter a part of Andhra Pradesh. Under this agreement, the people of Telengana region in the state Assembly were to form a Regional Committee to deal with matters concerning their region. The entire revenue from this region was to be spent for the development of the area concerned and recruitments to certain posts were to be made from among Telengana people only. Besides either a Chief Minister or a Deputy Chief Minister was to be made from among the Telengana inhabitants.

Several factors have contributed to the development of a feeling of sub-regionalism in the Telengana region. Factors such as cultural, historical and economic ones have added a new dimension to what should be called politics of the language. Different 'attitudinal sub cultures' between the people of Andhra and Telengana are a result of these factors. Forrester says, "Historical and economic factors produce sub-regional problems and encourage the growth of compelling political sub-cultures".

The Telengana agitation of 1969 was against economic exploitation and political domination of the people of Andhra over that of Telengana. The agitation was more aggravated by the intra-Congress politics of the state. The dissident Congress leaders under the leadership of Chenna Reddy converted the Telengana Praja Samithi into a mass movement.

The judgement of the Supreme Court in 1972 upholding the Mulki rules for the Telengana region sparked off an agitation in the Andhra region. Andhra wanted 'the elimination of all concessions, root and branch' while the Telengana NGOs demanded full implementation of the Mulki rules. The resignation of the ministers from the Andhra region resulted in the proclamation of the

President's rule in the state. Ultimately, a six-point formula was arrived at to please both the factions of the state. Thus, it is seen that the acceptance of the principle of linguistic states has led to a situation that has often been considered as detrimental to the growth of national economic planning.

### **Maharashtra Movement**

The Shiv Sena under the leadership of Bal Thackeray has been behind the movement of Maharashtra for the Maharashtrians since 1966. This movement is often described by some commentators as the 'crystallisation of a sub-nationalism forged by the primordial sentiments of language and religion'. As a militant pressure group, the Shiv Sena has been quite successful in appealing to the regional consciousness among the Maharashtrians. It is demanding a programme of social and economic transformation for the people of Maharashtra. Unless the 'Sons of the Soil Theory' is successfully met by economic programmes and political and social movements, this theory might create a situation where ethnocentric feelings might ultimately result in the fragmentation of the very framework of national integration. Myron Weiner observes, 'inter-state migration in India has created a new tension in the complex relationship that exists between modernisation and integration. So long as the sense of regional identity was not well articulated, Indians were generally disposed to be tolerant towards, or more often indifferent to those individuals speaking other languages and subscribing to other cultural traditions who entered their states to work and settle'.

The MahaVidarbha Movement in Maharashtra is demanding a separate state for the Vidarbha region. They are protesting against the step-motherly treatment to their region by the Maharashtra state. In fact, their demand for a separate state has arisen from the economic backwardness of this region. In 1968, fortyfive members of parliament belonging to the various political parties submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister demanding a referendum for a separate Vidarbha state.

### **Jharkhand Movement**

The demand for a Jharkhand state consisting of tribal dominated areas of Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh was put before the States Reorganisation Commission. The Commission while conceding the setting up of a Special Development Board for the districts of Chhotanagpur and Santhal Parganas, rejected the demand for a separate statehood. The Jharkhand state was to consist of seven districts of south Bihar, three districts of northern Orissa, two districts of Madhya Pradesh and some areas of West Bengal. The supporters of this movement argue that the people belonging to this area have not only cultural, geographical and historical linkages, they also consist of one-fourth of the total tribal population of India.

This movement could be traced back to the Birsa Munda Movement of the late 1890s. Three factors such as administrative unity of the region, exploitation of the resources and the people of this region by the outsiders, and the ethnic differences between the people of Jharkhand and the other areas have contributed to the success of the movement. The non induction of the tribal population into the regional development programmes has also aggravated the situation. A number of organisations such as Birsa Seva Dal, Jharkhand Morcha and Jharkhand MuktiAndolan have injected a new spirit into the Jharkhand Movement. The differences between non-Christian tribals and Christian tribals, micro-identification of the leaders with their own tribe and administrative, economic and political opposition to the movement notwithstanding, the Jharkhand movement even now poses a serious threat to the development of an integrated political culture of the region.

### **The Assamese Movement**

The linguistic movements in Assam became prominent in the 1960s and then in 1972. The introduction of Assamese as the official language of the state sparked off anti-Bengali riots throughout the Brahmaputra valley. This movement was led by the All Assam Students Union when the Assam Assembly unanimously passed a resolution to establish a separate university for the Bengali-speaking Cachar district in 1972, it was opposed by the AASU. They criticised the Assam Assembly for 'failing to give due recognition to the Assamese language'. They declared that this resolution would 'endanger' the existence of Assam and the Assamese people. The Assamese Government's policy of conceding to the demands of the AASU was opposed by the Bengali population of the state. It was also criticised by the Bodo agitationists.

Since mid-seventies, the Bodo agitation has taken a serious turn. The Bodos opposed the policy of Assamisation. Since 1979, the AASU has been more concerned about the migrants from other Indian states and from outside the country.

An official report of the Government of India for 1980-81 acknowledged the serious apprehensions of the people of Assam. The Assamese have been assured that 'their social, cultural and linguistic identity shall be preserved'.

Various sub-national groups have raised their heads against the Assamisation policy. No solution has, as yet, been found for resolving the Bodo agitation aimed at a separate state. It could be safely argued that most of the problems in Assam, like other regional movements, are there because of wrong administrative and economic policies of the government.

### **Punjab Movement**

The demand for a Sikh state was officially adopted by the Akali Dal in 1946. Its resolution demanded 'the preservation and protection of the religious, cultural and economic and political rights of the Sikh nation and the creation of a Sikh State'. The Cabinet Mission rejected all proposals aimed at the division of India. It, however, suggested a confederation type of constitutional system. The Viceroy was not prepared to accept the demand for an independent Sikh state within the Commonwealth.

The Sikh leaders demanded a province to safeguard their cultural and social traditions within the framework of the Indian federation. Punjab was declared a bilingual state under the Sachar formula. This formula emphasised both Punjabi and Hindi as medium of instruction. This was also appreciated by the Sikh community. The role of the Hindu communal organisations, at this stage, was mainly responsible for aggravating the demands for the Punjabi Suba. These organisations asked the Hindus of Punjab to declare Hindi as their mother tongue, although at home, they converse in Punjabi.

The Akalis put their demand for a Punjabi Suba before the States Reorganisation Commission. During the fifties, there were confrontations between the Akalis and the various Hindu organisations demanding Punjabi Suba and Maha Punjab respectively. It was the only state where the demand for a Punjabi speaking state was opposed by large sections of the population, which spoke the Punjabi language. According to the Commission, 'The problem of language in the Punjab is primarily one of the scripts and in this battle of scripts, sentiment is arrayed against sentiment'. The SRC ultimately rejected the demand for a Punjabi Suba. This report was considered as a 'decree of Sikh annihilation'. Sardar Hukam Singh, who later became the speaker of the Lok Sabha, observed on 17 December 1955 in the Lok Sabha 'Our case has never been considered on merit. There was always that lurking suspicion in the minds of our leaders and subsequently, in the minds of our countrymen also that perhaps we are not loyal to this country. We have some evil designs and we have some truck with some foreign power'.

Reacting to the demand for the Punjabi Suba, the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declared on the floor of the Lok Sabha that such a demand, even if made on the language basis, would be a communal demand.

Reacting to the demands of the Akali Dal in 1965, a few days before the Indo-Pak war, the Government of India appointed a cabinet Sub-committee to consider the question of Punjabi Saba. The Sub-committee was in favour of a change of boundary in Punjab on a linguistic basis. The Congress Working Committee passed a resolution in support of a Punjabi speaking state in 1966. Accordingly, the state was reorganised on 1st November 1966. However, the exclusion of Chandigarh and certain other Punjabi speaking areas of the state became the bone of contention in the post-1966 period.

After the death of Master Tara Singh, a small faction of the Akali Dal demanded a sovereign independent state. Throughout 1970s, Punjab was comparatively free from any language agitation. The present phase of the Sikh agitation is linked with the Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973. This was endorsed by the Akali Dal in 1978. This resolution emphasised that besides Defence, Foreign Affairs, Communications and Currency, the power to legislate vis-a-vis rest of the subjects (departments) should rest exclusively with Punjab. It should have right to frame its own constitution. It revived the separate nation theory. The other aspects of the resolution were regarding centre-state relations, transfer of Chandigarh, allotment of river waters of Punjab and enactment of an All India Gurudwara Act.

The situation in Punjab still continues to be highly fluid and volatile.

**Module: V**  
**MAJOR ISSUES IN INDIAN DEMOCRACY**

The Indian democracy has faced the challenges of Communalism, regionalism, religious fundamentalism, criminalization of politics, reservation issues and globalisation etc. since the introduction of the democratic constitution 1950. The chief problem confronting a democratic system is its maintenance and continuance. Caste and communalism are the two facts of this challenge. Linguism and regionalism are another one, each one effect sometimes very badly in Indian condition. These have created problems for the maintenance of law and order in the country.

**Communalism**

India is a land of diverse religions and cultures. Some of the prominent religions which include Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism, etc. While the Hindus constitute the majority; the members of all other religions constitute the minority with the Muslims being the largest minority. Unfortunately a proper adjustment has not taken place between the Hindus and the Muslims which has often resulted in violent outbursts and communal riots. It has asserted by some scholar's that communalism is not a new phenomenon and has been in existence since the times of the Muslim rule during the medieval period.

The animosity between the Hindus and the Muslims was largely the creation of the British rulers. It created a feeling of hostility among members of these two communities. They introduced separate electorates for the Muslims and patronized Muslim leaders. A large number of Muslims migrated to Pakistan while a sizeable number of them were persuaded to stay on in India with an assurance of security of life, the religion and property. On the other hand, millions of Hindus were forced to leave the territories constituting Pakistan and migrated to India. All these created a serious problem of communal harmony.

Communalism is a very serious problem looming large over India today. Even though it has been an integral part of socio-political life in India for a very long time, the colonial period is widely considered to be responsible for the large-scale communalisation of India. However, its replacement by an independent secular state which was preceded by the partition of the country on communal lines, was expected to lay the foundation for a steady decline of the communalisation of Indian society. But this expectation seems to be progressively belied in recent times. There appears to be now an unparalleled growth of communalism and, consequently, communal tensions in India. It is a fact that communalism has crept into all levels of Indian polity and that there is today a complimentary relationship between politics and communalism. Hence it may be asked if the present problem is a continuation of the same in its colonial mode or is it an altogether discontinuous development. It is this growth and spread of communalism, in the recent periods, that is proposed to be analysed in this study.

Ironically, most of the analyses of this problem attempts only to trace out the historical roots of this situation, that too, the colonial roots. Results of such an analysis are bound to be ambiguous. In fact, to be concluding that the communal tensions in India, even in the most recent of its political history, are of colonial construction, would amount to casting serious doubt on the nature and the role of our independent secular state during the last fifty years. In this study, it is argued that the roots of this problem of increasing communalism in the present day India are to be searched in the nature of the modern state itself and in its various policies and programmes of secularisation. In other words, the post-colonial secular state is largely responsible for this development; more specifically, it was the nature of the relationship between the secular and communal politics that actually brought about this rise of communalism. The foundation of the



argument is that the emerging problem of communalism has its real base in some of the inherent weaknesses of Indian polity after independence. This analysis intends to look at the political structure, more specifically the varied methods of giving effect to the principle of secularism, as guaranteed by the constitution. The various schemes and policies initiated by the secular state is examined and analysed.

### **Regionalism**

Regionalism has been an important feature of Indian politics since the dawn of independence. It has posed a serious threat to the unity of India. Regionalism means love of a particular region. Regionalism refers to sub-nationalism demanding the preference for a region as against the country as a whole.

### **Meaning of Regionalism:**

Regionalism is the extreme loyalty and love shown to a particular region. It expresses itself in such a distorted notions like development of one's own region even at the cost of interests of other regions and people, and unwillingness to allow people from other regions to work and settle in region. Regionalism militates against nationalism and impedes the process national integration. This may be characterized by the commonness of cultural, linguistic or historical and social background.

According to Marachell E. Dimock," regionalism is a clustering of environment, economic, social and governmental factors to such an extent that an identity within the whole, a need for autonomous planning, a manifestation of cultural peculiarities and a desire for administrative freedom, are theoretically recognized and actually put into effect.

Regionalism in India may be viewed from two dimensions – positive and negative. In positive terms regionalism embodies a quest for self-identity and self-fulfillment on the part of to domiciles of a region. In negative terms, regionalism reflects a psyche of relative deprivation on the part of People of an area not always viable in terms of national economic analysis. It implies excessive attachment to one's region is preference to the country or the state. In the positive sense it is a political attribute associated with people's love for their region, culture, language, etc. with a view to maintain their independent identity. While positive regionalism is a welcome thing in so far maintaining as it encourages the people to develop a sense of brotherhood and commonness on the basis of common language, religion or historical background. The negative sense regionalism is a great threat to the unity and integrity of the country. In the Indian context generally the term regionalism has been used in the negative sense.

The feeling of regionalism may arise either due to the continuous neglect of a particular area or region by the ruling authorities or it may spring up as a result of increasing political awareness of backward people that have been discriminated against. Quite often some political leaders encourage the feeling of regionalism to maintain their hold over a particular area or group of people.

### **Causes of Regionalism:**

There are several causes of regionalism in India. These causes are discussed below.

#### **1. Geographical Cause:**

Linguistic distribution along geographical boundaries and isolated settlement pattern induce in people the concept of regionalism. Sometimes people live, in such area which appears as a separate region cut off from the rest of the country and thereby may give rise to feelings of separatism among the inhabitants of the region

#### **2. Historical Causes:**

Due to historical reasons people believe that they are separate from the rest. A feeling of regionalism may develop among the people of a particular region if they believe that they have been politically dominated by the people of other regions.

### **3. Economic factors:**

Uneven development in different parts of the country may be considered as the prime reason for regionalism and separatism. There are certain regions which are economically more developed. But there are certain regions which are economically more backward even after independence. No effort has been made for regional balance in matters of industrial, agricultural and above all, economic development. This disparity has caused the feeling of relative deprivation and thereby the demand for separate states, for example, Bodoland. TeIangana recently State was formed in this principle.

### **4. Political and Administrative Factors:**

Political parties, particularly regional parties and local leaders exploit the regional sentiments to capture power. They give emphasis on regional problems in their election manifesto and promise for regional development. This has resulted in the feeling of regionalism. The regional parties like DMK, AIADMK in Tamil Nadu and Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh were formed in this basis of principle.

Regionalism may be a product of cultural and social differences.

### **Regionalism in India has assumed various forms like:**

(a) Demand for State Autonomy: Regionalism has often led to the demand by states for greater autonomy from the centre. Increasing interference by the Centre in the affairs of the states has led to regional feelings. Demand for autonomy has also been raised by regions within some states of the Indian federation.

(b) Secession from the Union: This is a dangerous form of regionalism. It emerges when states demand separation from the center and try to establish an independent identity of their own.

Disputes between states over the sharing of river water, primacy given by the states to the language of majority and to people of their own states in job opportunities have also given rise to feelings of regionalism. Migration of people from backward state to a developed state for employment opportunities have often resulted in a hostile attitude against the migrants for example, problems going on in Karnataka and A.P.

Regionalism is not a new phenomenon in the Indian political system. In the pre-independence days it was promoted by the British imperialists and they deliberately encouraged the people of various regions to think in terms of their region rather than the nation as a whole, with a view to maintain their hold over India during the national movement. After Independence the leaders tried to foster a feeling among the people that they belonged to one single nation. The framers of the constitution sought to achieve this by introducing single citizenship for all. With the same objective a unified judiciary, all Indian services, and a strong Central government was provided

### **Causes for Growth of Regionalism**

In India a number of factors have contributed to the growth of regionalism.

1. Regionalism made its appearance as a reaction against the efforts of the national government to impose a particular ideology, language or cultural pattern on all people and groups. Thus the States of South have resisted imposition of Hindi as official language because they feared this would lead to dominance of the North. Similarly, in Assam anti-foreigner movement was launched by the Assamese to preserve their own culture.

2. Continuous neglect of an area or region by the ruling parties and concentration of administrative and political power has given rise to demand for decentralization of authority and bifurcate of

unilingual states. On occasions sons of soil theory has been put forth to promote the interests of neglected groups or areas of the state.

3. The desire of the various units of the Indian federal system to maintain their sub cultural regions and greater degree of self-government has promoted regionalism and given rise to demand for greater autonomy.

4. The desire of regional elites to capture power has also led to rise of regionalism. It is well known that political parties like DMK, AIADMK, Akali Dal, Telugu Desam, Assam Gana Parishad etc., have encouraged regionalism to capture and retain power.

5. The interaction between the forces of modernisation and mass participation has also largely contributed to the growth of regionalism in India. As the country is still away from realising the goal of a nation state, the various groups have failed to identify their group interests with national interests; hence the feeling of regionalism has persisted.

6. The growing awareness among the people of backward areas that they are being discriminated against has also promoted feeling of regionalism. The local political leaders have fully exploited this factor and tried to feed the people with the idea that the Central Government was deliberately trying to maintain regional imbalances by neglecting social and economic development of certain areas.

### **CRIMINALIZATION OF POLITICS**

A major issue in contemporary political scenario in India is 'criminalization of politics.' This is comparatively a new phenomenon but it is now all pervading. The political scholars, senior journalists, the civil society activists and the common men—all are truly concerned about this malady of Indian politics. Despite sincere efforts on the parts of quite a few honest public figures to contain and minimize the problem, it is spreading like cancer in the body of Indian polity. The worst part is that no branch of the government is free from the nuisance. Since almost all the political parties seem to be guilty of either harbouring criminals or using them off and on to achieve political ends, it is unlikely that the politicians would initiate the process of cleansing the fabric of Indian politics of the crime of criminalization. The cancerous growth of the phenomenon is hindering the operation of constitutional protections of democracy, blemishing central and state legislatures, eating away at the reputation of ministries, demeaning judicial institutions, enmeshing the bureaucrats at all levels and impeding the independent functioning of the media. If India fails to wipe out or at least minimize the scourge of criminalization of politics at the earliest then the very institution of democracy would be in jeopardy.

### **DEFINITION AND CONSTITUENTS OF CRIMINALIZATION OF POLITICS**

The term criminalization is obviously rooted in the word 'crime', which in simple term means an illegal act. However, in criminology the gravity of a crime depends on how the crime is defined. The Oxford Dictionary defines crime as, "an action which constitutes a serious offence against an individual or the state and is punishable by law." This definition is very comprehensive and relevant for our discussion because it underlines the nature of the offence and also clarifies that it may be committed against an individual or the state. In India, the serious offences are usually identified as murder, rape, fraud, organised crimes, crimes against women, corruption and cyber crimes. These are the broad categories and within each one of them there are various legal terms to connote the severity of that particular crime. For instance 'murder' has sub-categories like homicide (the killing of one person by another regardless of the circumstances), first-degree murder (intentional killing), second- degree murder (unintentional killing), manslaughter (unintentional but reckless conduct of a person that kills another person), and negligent homicide (killing someone by negligence). The term rape is not politically correct in contemporary India. This

offence is part of the crimes against women that include sexual assault, sexual harassment, dowry, child marriage, female infanticide and the widespread crime i.e. domestic violence. Sodomy is also a sex-related crime in India. Then there are offences that are committed by organised cartels (the mafia) that are known as organised crimes. Major among such crimes are drug trafficking, arms trafficking, money laundering, extortion, murder for hire, human trafficking, black-marketing, poaching, political violence and terrorist acts. Property related crimes include burglary, theft, motor-vehicle theft and arson. The category of corruption includes bribery, evasion of taxes embezzlement etc. The ubiquitous presence of computers today has led to a new category that is known as cyber crimes that include spamming, computer hacking, e-mail fraud and so on. The person or persons who are guilty of such serious offences are criminals and if they intervene in politics directly or indirectly then it leads to criminalization of politics. Politics is the other term included in the expression 'criminalization of politics.' in this context politics does not refer to the study of the discipline of political science. It rather refers to the political processes and the persons responsible to conduct those processes. In a democratic polity like India elections are fundamentally important because through them alone the politicians can hope of capturing political power. Thus, if individual politicians or political parties as groups seek support from the criminals or the criminals themselves contest elections then it is a definite indicator of criminalization of politics. Besides, there are various political institutions such as legislature, executive, judiciary, civil services, municipal corporations, municipalities, panchayat institutions, political parties, pressure groups, trade unions etc and there are hundreds of thousands of people to man those institutions. If these people themselves are criminals or they have rapport with criminals, this situation too can only be described as criminalization of politics. In short, the phenomenon of criminalization of politics can be defined in two ways. In the restricted sense it implies the direct participation of the criminals in the electoral process and consequently occupying the seats in Parliament or state legislatures. In the broader sense, the phenomenon connotes the participation of criminals in the political processes of India. It puts forward the involvement of criminals in the functioning of political parties by helping candidates either monetarily or with the help of criminal manpower, ensuring en bloc voting of all the members of the vote banks under their control, booth capturing, disrupting the campaign of rival candidates and in extreme cases killing the rival candidates. It is obvious that after elections, the criminals ask for their pound of flesh, demand various kinds of favours from the legislators and ministers who got elected with their support. It must also be pointed out that there are two major constituents that have their sway in the phenomenon of criminalization of politics. The first one is the muscle power. The involvement of organised criminals, the gangsters and mafia dons is a widespread attribute of India's political culture. No political party or political organization today can claim that it keeps itself aloof from the use of muscle power. The fact is that the so-called popular leaders owe their existence as politicians because of the support of gangsters. DharamVira has made the following observation in a report of the National Police Commission in 1977: "The manner in which different political parties have functioned, particularly on the eve of periodic election, involves the free use of musclemen and 'Dadas' to influence the attitude and conduct of sizable sections of the electorate. The Panchayat elections, like other elections in the recent past, have demonstrated once again that there can be no sanity in India as long as politics continues to be based on caste and muscle power." The second constituent in criminalization of politics is money power. A democratic polity depends on periodic elections and elections involve huge expenditure. It is widely conceded even by the politicians that prohibitive electoral expenses breed corruption in Indian politics.

The process of criminalization of politics in India has had two phases. In the first phase the institutions got corrupted and in the second phase the corruption has been institutionalized. The corruption of institutions resulted in dishonest persons manning the institutions, bending rules, often paying no attention to the established norms and practices and invariably favouring unscrupulous people in return of monetary or other kinds of benefits. Institutionalization of corruption implies that nothing works in India save corrupt practices. Corruption, instead of being an aberration, has become a norm of Indian polity. This led to common people developing disdain for the law. Thus, a great majority of Indians believe that they can get their work only through corrupt practices. The result is India emerging as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The German NGO, Transparency International, in its Corruption Perception Index of 1998, ranked India 66 out of the 85 most corrupt countries.

Thus, while addressing to the issue of reasons of criminalization of Indian politics the first one that could be identified is the entry of post-independence generation into politics. For many of the young entrants, politics is just like a career which one opts for to make substantial material gains and enjoy tremendous prestige and power. As a sizeable number of leaders of today have such a mindset therefore, it is not surprising that political processes across the country have been criminalized. It is a matter of common knowledge that politics in India today is not the preferred area of activity of the bright, intelligent, selfless, committed young people with a burning desire to make their services available for the good of the country and the people. Instead, Indian politics in the present context largely attract the self-seekers, hooligans, thugs, rowdies, rapists and even murderers. It is not proper to single out any one political party or few political parties because all political parties are equally guilty of admitting persons of questionable background as members.

The second reason is to be found in the kind of party system India has opted for. It is technically known as multi-party system. However, in actual practice it seems to be a mockery of democracy. In India practically speaking, every adult citizen is not only guaranteed the right to vote, to contest election and to hold public office but also has the right to float a political party of his own even if he cannot muster the support of five voters. It is true that the Election Commission follow certain guidelines to confer national or regional status on political parties but it has no power to contain or completely stop the mushrooming of political parties. Therefore, if the hardened criminals fail to get entry into mainstream political parties or if they are denied tickets to contest elections, they start their own political parties. As a result, the number of political parties joining the election fray has gone beyond manageable limits.

The government instituted a committee to investigate the nexus between criminals, bureaucracy and politicians. It was known as Vohra Committee. Its Chairman was the Union Home Secretary, N. N. Vohra while other members were the Secretary of RAW, Director of IB and Director of CBI. The Committee was assigned the task of investigating the nefarious activities of the crime syndicates and Mafia organisations and expose the linkages between organised criminals and politicians and civil servants. It was also asked for making recommendation to deal with the menace of criminalization of politics

Another significant measure to make Indian polity corruption free and transparent was taken in the form of Right to Information Act of 2005. According to the Act it is mandatory on the part of government officials to provide the information to a person which he has asked for within a specific timeframe. In case the officials concerned fail to do it, they are in for punishment. This is one concrete measure that the United Progressive Alliance government (UPA-I) has taken to make the governance accountable and transparent. It has proved to be useful in varied ways as nowadays a number of corrupt practices, cases of embezzlement, nepotism, discrimination, major scams

involving senior ministers and government officials are being reported because of RTI. It also serves as a deterrent law because the ministers and bureaucrats are currently wary of misusing their powers and positions for the fear of being exposed.

Criminalization of politics is an all pervading and extremely dangerous phenomenon of contemporary politics in India. If it is not urgently curbed it would permanently damage the institution of democracy. The menace of criminalization of politics can be defined in two ways. One, when the criminals directly participate in the electoral process to become legislators. Two, when the criminals get involved in political processes by helping parties and candidates with their money and muscle power. There are various reasons of criminalization of politics in India. Some of them can be identified as: one, for the post- independence generation politics has become a money making vocation; two, the multi party system that prevails in the country; three, the lure of money that led our politicians to get involved in crime and with criminals; four, transformation of criminals from the supporters of politicians to politicians; five, major problems of India such as poverty, illiteracy, caste-based politics, communalism and so on give a further push to the menace of criminalization of politics; six, absence of ethical values in Indian political system; seven, loopholes in the functioning of investigative and judicial agencies, eighth, the rising trend of coalition politics; and lastly a weak civil society. The government has taken certain measures to curb the phenomenon of criminalization of politics. However, those measure are far from satisfactory. A lot must be done to keep criminals out of the fields of politics and governance.

### **RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM**

Fundamentalism has been defined by Marsden as the demand for a strict adherence to certain theological doctrines, in reaction against Modernist theology. The term was originally coined by its supporters to describe what they claimed were five specific classic theological beliefs of Christianity, and that developed into a Christian fundamentalist movement within the Protestant community of the United States in the early part of the 20th century. The term usually has a religious connotation indicating unwavering attachment to a set of irreducible beliefs, but fundamentalism has come to be applied to a broad tendency among certain groups, mainly, although not exclusively, in religion. This tendency is most often characterized by a markedly strict literalism as applied to certain specific scriptures, dogmas, or ideologies, and a strong sense of the importance of maintaining in group and out group distinctions, leading to an emphasis on purity and the desire to return to a previous ideal from which it is believed that members have begun to stray. Rejection of diversity of opinion as applied to these established "fundamentals" and their accepted interpretation within the group is often the result of this tendency.

There has been a tremendous upsurge in religion all over the world. All Religions are interacting with modernity which is enshrined in human freedom, market freedom and value freedom as encapsulated or manifested in secularism and democracy. In this march they are repositioned differently: Christianity was the first one to negotiate, confront, contain and come to terms with modernity. It has been in the tip of the arrow in this march. The Christian fundamentalism or Christian right as it is known is a reaction or a result of the interaction between modernity and Christianity. Islam and Hinduism, the other major world religions, are way behind in this march. But they are reacting violently through Islamic and Hindu fundamentalism to the onslaught of modernity, secularism and democracy. The character of these religions itself is changing swiftly laced with politics. Religion has become a tiger. Those who ignore this tiger are likely to be swallowed up by it.

All fundamentalisms aim at triumphalism, establishing a global church, nation to reclaim the moral high ground lost to modernity by influencing political agenda of their governments,

largely through the media. There is an unholy nexus between religion and politics whose main agenda is to batter secularism and democracy. Christians in India are subjected to atrocities of Hindutva or Hindu cultural nationalism and Islamic terrorism. There is also the “symbolic violence” of Christian fundamentalism

Revivalism of religious fundamentalism has pitted followers of different religions against each other. In Kashmir ,it is Islam against Hindu hegemony; in Gujarat ,it is Hindutva forces against Muslims and in Punjab it is Sikhs against Hindus .These tensions are not conflicts of divergent cultures; each one of them is potentially and actually a political movement aiming at realizing not a mere cultural or religious objective .The objective is open or camouflaged , political.

### **Reservation issues and Globalization**

#### Historical Background of Reservation in India

“Reservation”, also denoted as “affirmative action” or “positive discrimination”, refers to a policy or program, or giving certain preferences to certain groups (usually under-represented groups) over the others. The policy of reservation, it must be kept in mind, was not a post-constitutional phenomenon but had its antecedents in the colonial times. Caste or communal quotas were in vogue well before the Constitution came into force. “Reservations in favour of the backward classes (BCs) were introduced long before independence in a large area, comprising the presidency areas and the princely states in the south of the Vindhyas. Chatrapati Sahuji Maharaj, Maharaja of Kohlapur in Maharashtra, introduced reservation in favour of backward classes in as early as 1902 to eradicate poverty from amongst them and to give them their due share in the state administration. The notification of 1902 created 50% reservation in services for different communities in the State. This notification was the first government order providing for reservation for the welfare of depressed classes in India (Resham, 2012)”.

In the year 1942, Dr. B.R Ambedkar established the all India depressed classes’ federation to support the advancement of the Scheduled Castes. He demanded reservations for the Scheduled Castes in government services as well as other sectors. However, in the year 1947, India obtained independence and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was appointed chairman of the Drafting Committee for Indian Constitution. The India Constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth. While providing equality of opportunity for all citizens, the Constitution contains special clauses “for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes”. Separate constituencies allocated to Scheduled Castes and Tribes to ensure their political representation for 10 years. It is significant to note that according to “the article 15(4) of constitution of India, which provides a constitutional basis for reservation in education, did not form part of the Constitution as it originally stood in 1950, although there was provision for reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens under article 16(4). However, an equivalent of the current article 15(4) was the subject matter of considerable debate amongst the founding fathers of the constitution.

Reservation policies at all levels of higher education both redistribute SC and ST students upward in the university quality hierarchy and attract into universities significant numbers of SC and ST students who would not otherwise pursue higher education. It is estimated that reservation policies enabled about half of the 7,00,000 SC and ST students attending Indian universities in the late 1990s either to gain access to a relatively desirable institution or programme, rather than settle for a relatively mediocre one, or to enrol in a university at all, rather than abandon any possibility of pursuing higher education. The vast majority of SC and ST beneficiaries of reservation policies

enter university programmes with poorer preparation and lower academic qualifications than their peers and, not surprisingly, they tend not to perform as well in their studies. There is evidence, however, that the entry-test-score gap between SC and ST and other students has been narrowing over the past few decades. There can be little doubt that most of the SC and ST beneficiaries of India's reservation policies in university admissions do indeed come from a 'creamy layer' of the dalit and adivasi population; it could hardly be otherwise, given the immense obstacles faced by the poor in any effort to persist in school, through to higher education. There is also much evidence that beneficiaries tend to come disproportionately from the better off castes and tribes within the SC and ST categories. Thus, in their direct impact, reservation policies have increased inequalities within the SC and ST populations. However, available evidence also suggests that the average socio-economic status of SC and ST students is significantly below that of other students. Thus it is highly unlikely that reservation policies have benefited well-off dalits and adivasis at the expense of less-well-off university applicants from the rest of the population. The average academic performance and graduation rates of SC and ST students is distinctly worse than that of other students. This is hardly surprising, in view of the weaker educational backgrounds of most SC and ST students as well as the variety of obstacles they face in pursuing a degree programme to completion. It appears, however, that the differential in graduation rates between SC and ST and other students is not so great in India's elite higher educational institutions. There is also some evidence from relatively selective institutions that graduation rates for SC and ST students have been improving over time, as their entering qualifications have risen and as the institutions themselves have found ways to improve the learning environment. There have been very few studies attempting to trace the post-university careers of entering cohorts of students at Indian higher educational institutions. The few studies actually done suggest that SC and ST students who graduate from relatively elite institutions tend to end up in responsible and well-paying positions, typically attaining a much higher socio-economic status than their parents – albeit not as high as that of their non-SC and ST peers. The gap in performance between SC and ST and non-SC and ST students appears to be considerably less in post-university career achievements than in conventionally-measured academic performance in university studies. This suggests either: (1) that conventional within-university performance measures understate what these students are actually gaining from higher education or (2) that SC and ST students make further progress in catching up to their peers after university studies. Some critics of positive discrimination policies have claimed that the beneficiaries perform so poorly in the programmes to which they gain preferential admission that they would actually have been better off without such preference. There have been no sophisticated studies of the way in which the career achievements of reservation policy beneficiaries compare with what might have been expected in the absence of such policies. However, the limited available evidence suggests that SC and ST students are graduating at reasonable rates from the more elite higher educational institutions (even though their academic performance tends to be weaker than that of their peers), and that for the most part these graduates are going on to successful careers. This evidence, and the undeniable fact that a degree from an elite institution carries much greater promise of a good career than a degree from a run-of-the-mill school, suggests that it is highly unlikely that SC and ST students at the more elite schools would have been better off without access to reserved seats at such institutions. The fact that reservation policies in admissions to higher educational institutions tend to benefit a creamy layer of SC and ST students is often taken by critics as *prima facie* evidence that these policies are failing to achieve their objective. Such an inference would be warranted, however, only if the primary objective of these policies were to improve the distribution of educational opportunities within the



SC and ST communities. But reservation policies in higher educational institutions are obviously not the right way to promote such an objective; a much more promising way would be to expand SC and ST access to primary and secondary education and to improve the quality of the schools in which SC and ST students are most likely to enroll. Positive discrimination policies in admissions to higher educational institutions should instead be understood as an effort to promote the integration of the upper strata of society – by increasing the access of members of highly disadvantaged and under-represented communities to elite occupations and decision-making positions. Such integration of a society's elite promises a variety of benefits, including: greater legitimacy of the political system, better performance of jobs involving familiarity with and understanding of disadvantaged communities; more equal opportunity for ordinary members of SC and ST communities to resources and jobs; greater motivation of SC and ST youth to work to better their future prospects. From this perspective, what matters most in judging the success of reservation policies in higher educational admissions is whether the beneficiaries in relatively elite institutions succeed in completing their degree programmes and advancing into successful careers. The very limited evidence available on this question suggests that most SC and ST students enrolled in elite higher educational institutions in India do indeed go on to successful careers – certainly much more so than they would have in the absence of reservation policies. The paucity of hard evidence on the post-university careers of reservation policy beneficiaries points to the great need for more research on this topic. What is needed are many more systematic empirical studies of the long-run consequences of reservation policies in higher education – of the kind carried out by Palshikar and Patwardhan (1992). One hopes that many more such studies will be undertaken in the future.

In the present era of globalization, liberalization and privatization (GLP) dimensions with regard to availability and accessibility to educational opportunities particularly for Dalits and poorer sections of our society are changing very rapidly. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has emphatically raised the slogan of 'Educate, Organise and Agitate, 'giving the top most priority to education by giving it first place in his famous slogan. His vision on education has much relevance to the empowerment of Dalits in the postmodern society.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar said, "Education is like the milk of lioness. The one, who consumes it, shall not rest without roaring." The dream of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to uplift the deprived people can be achieved by giving equal opportunity of education and social justice to every citizen of India. It is observed that there is absence of political inclination, negligence on behalf of Government mechanism and violation of Directive Principles. The genuine initiatives are needed to target the root causes of the problem involving the politicians, social activists, judiciary, executive and media in the area of Educational Development of Scheduled Caste. Globalisation meant making the Indian economy an integral part of the World economy by breaking down to the minimum, feasible the barriers to the movement of goods, services, capital and technology between India and the rest of the World economy.

**MODULEVI:  
NATURE OF STATE POLITICS IN KERALA**

The State of Kerala was formed in 1956 based on the States Reorganisation Commission's Report. The State was created out of the princely states of Travancore and Cochin, the Malabar District of the erstwhile Madras province and the Kasaragod District of the erstwhile princely state of Mysore. Kerala has a population of 33 million inhabiting an area of 38,683 sq. kms., with a density of 747 per sq. km. The State has the highest literacy rate (94 per cent) in the country. Kerala scores high on many social indicators and also presents perhaps the best health profile in the country. Malayalam is the State's official language. Malayalis are known for their geographical mobility in search of employment opportunities. Of late, a large number of Muslims and Ezhavas have taken up skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the Gulf countries. Repatriation of their savings has brought about an investment boom, especially in real estate and construction. The per capita income of the State is Rs. 4, 168 (1990-91) as against the national average of Rs. 4,934. The total area under irrigation is 3.57 lakh hectares. The major crops include rice, coconut, rubber, coffee, tea, and spices like cardamom, cloves and pepper. Fishing is a major industry. Kerala has one of the highest rates of educated unemployment among states in India. Social stratification on caste lines in Kerala is similar to what exists elsewhere in the country. In Kerala, the Hindus constitute 58 per cent, Christians - 19 per cent and the Muslims - 23 per cent. It is estimated that the Ezhavas constitute 24 per cent and Nairs- 15per cent. The Scheduled Caste population, under 68 groups, makes up eight per cent while the Scheduled Tribes, scattered in 35 officially identified groups, form 1.5 per cent of the State population. The Namboodiri Brahmins occupy at the apex of the social hierarchy in Kerala society whose share in the states form below 1% of the total population. Their activist's political role is partly facilitated by their structural position in the social hierarchy and land ownership.

The emergence of Nairs on the political horizon of Kerala is often attributed to their numerical strength and their concentration in one major (Travancore) region of the State. Besides, they had access to higher education and economic opportunities thrown up by modernisation. The Nair Service Society, founded in 1914, has contributed immensely to the increasing awareness of the Nair. Ezhavas, though numerically the largest group, did not have the same level of political mobilisation as the others due to their lower position in the social hierarchy, limited ownership of land and restricted access to opportunities for socio-economic mobility. But the efforts of leaders like Dr. Palpu and Sree Narayana Guru and the founding of Sree NarayanaParipalanaYogam have helped improve their lot.

**POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF KERALA: AN ANALYSIS**

When Kerala was formed, the State was under President's rule. The new State went to the polls for the first time in March 1957. There were 126 Assembly and 16 Parliamentary seats. The Communist Party of India emerged as the single largest party in the Assembly with 60 seats. ShriE.M.S.Namboodiripad formed an 11 member ministry on April 5, 1957 with the support of some independents. Political agitation and unrest extending over several months, culminated in the taking over of the administration of the State and the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly, under Article 356 of the Constitution, by the president of India, on July 31, 1959. Mid-term elections followed in February next year.

A three party alliance comprising of the Congress, the Praja Socialist Party and the Muslim League, was returned to power. Shri Pattom A.Thanu Pillai (PSP) took over as the coalition Chief Minister, leading a council of eleven ministers, in February 1960. Shri R. Sankar

(Congress) was designated as the Deputy Chief Minister. Shri. Pattom A. Thanu Pillai however, resigned on September 25, 1962; consequent on an appointment Shri. R. Sankar was appointed Chief Minister the next day. Shri. Sankar continued as Chief Minister for about two years.

A political crisis precipitated in September 1964, when about 15 Congress legislators lent their support to a no-confidence motion against the ministry. The motion was passed. The legislature was dissolved on September 10 and the State thereupon passed under President's rule. Elections were held in March 1965. A fresh delimitation of constituencies had taken place in between. There were 133 Assembly and 19 Parliamentary constituencies. The election proved abortive in the sense that no single party could form a ministry commanding majority support. Once again on 25th March, 1965, Kerala was put under President's administration.

The State went to the polls two year later at the time of the general elections in March 1967. A new polarization of political forces had emerged in the meantime, leading to new electoral alliances. Politically the most potent combination was the new united front of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Communist Party of India, the Muslim League, the Revolutionary Socialist Party, the Karshaka Thozhilali Party and the Kerala Socialist Party. This seven-party combine was voted to power leading to the formation of a ministry headed by Shri. E.M.S. Namboodiripad (CPI-M). The Cabinet consisted of four members of the Marxist Party, two each of the CPI, the Muslim League and the SSP and one each of the RSP, the KTP and the KSP. Shri. Namboodiripad's second ministry had a chequered tenure until one of the ministers of the original SSP constituent, who had inter alia left the party to join the newly formed Indian Socialist Party group, had to resign from the Cabinet to face a judicial enquiry. The ministers belonging to the C.P.I., the Muslim League, the RSP and the KSP tendered their resignation in October 1969. Shri Namboodiripad himself resigned on 24th October, 1969. As distinct from previous crises, the legislature was intact. A fresh alignment of forces with the Assembly initiated the formation of an eight-member cabinet headed by Shri.C. Achutha Menon (CPI) in November 1969. The ruling alliance consisted of the CPI, the KSP, the Muslim League, the R.S.P. and the Kerala Congress. The Assembly was dissolved on 26th June, 1970 on the advice of the Chief Minister who tendered the resignation of his council of ministers on 1st August 1970.

Elections were held in September, 1970. The partners of the ruling front now included the Indian National Congress, the CPI, the RSP, the Muslim League and the Praja Socialist Party and were returned with a considerable majority. Shri.C.Achutha Menon formed his second ministry on 4th October, 1970. The Indian National Congress supported the front Government without joining it. The cabinet was expanded on two occasions, once when the Indian National Congress joined it in September 1971 and for the second time in December, 1975 to accommodate Kerala Congress nominees. The fourth Legislative Assembly was unique in many respects. It emerged as the first Assembly in the chequered post-independence history of the State which completed its normal constitutional term. Moreover, the normal term of the Assembly was extended on three occasions - for a period of six months from 22nd October, 1975, for a second period of six months from 22nd April, 1976 and for yet another six months from 22nd October, 1976.

Elections were then held in March 1977, the sixth to be held since the formation of the State. The ruling front, essentially a continuation of the previous alignment of forces, won a decisive majority. Cabinet leadership now passed on to Shri. K. Karunakaran of the Congress who formed a ministry on March 25, 1977. But this ministry was short-lived. Shri. Karunakaran tendered the resignation of his cabinet on April 25, 1977 following certain reference by the Kerala High Court in what had been known as the Rajan case. Shri. A. K. Antony (Congress) became the next Chief Minister. However, in the wake of differences of opinion of the Congress Working Committee on

the attitude of the Congress vis-a-vis parliamentary by-election at Chikkamagalur in Karnataka, Shri Antony resigned his Chief Minister ship on October 27, 1978. Shri.P.K. Vasudevan Nair (CPI) took over as Chief Minister on October 29, 1978. But his ministry also resigned on October 7, 1979 in order to create a favourable atmosphere for the formation of a Left Democratic Front in Kerala. Shri.C.H. Muhammad Koya was sworn-in as Chief Minister on October 12, 1979, but the four member ministry could continue in office only for a short term. The ministry resigned on December 1, 1979 and the Assembly was dissolved. Again President's rule was invoked in Kerala up to 24th January 1980. Political alignment in Kerala had then undergone a sea change involving a drastic regrouping of major political parties.

The stage was set for the eventual emergence of two political combines - the Left Democratic Front and the United Democratic Front. In the 1980 Assembly polls, out of the 140 elective seats in the Assembly, 13 were reserved for scheduled castes and one for scheduled tribes. The LDF bagged 93 seats. Shri.E.K. Nayanar, leader of the L.D.F. headed a 17 member ministry which assumed office on 25th January, 1980. Despite the thumping majority for the LDF, there arose ideological differences among the ruling partners and it culminated in the withdrawal of support to the ministry by the Congress (S). The curtain fell down on 20th October 1981 when the eight-member Kerala Congress (M) also withdrew support to the Government. Shri.E.K. Nayanar tendered resignation of the ministry and President's rule was introduced on 21st October 1981. Again political realignment took place. The Kerala Congress (M) and the Congress(S) joined the U.D.F. An eight-member U.D.F. ministry was sworn in on 28th December 1981 with Shri.K.Karunakaran (Congress-I) as the leader. It was the twelfth ministry in Kerala since the formation of the State. The Congress (S) broke into two factions. The major group supported the Government. Another split took place in the Janatha Party also and a section lent support to the ministry. A member of the Kerala Congress (M) later withdrew his backing to the Government and it resulted in the resignation of the ministry and dissolution of the Assembly on March 17, 1982. The State fell under President's rule for the seventh time. Mid-term elections to the seventh Kerala Assembly were held on May 19, 1982. The nominees of the UDF and the LDF were the main political contestants. The U.D.F. won 77 seats. The 19 member U.D.F. Ministry with Shri.K.Karunakaran as its leader assumed office on 24th May 1982. During the regime of the U.D.F. Government the major events that took place, were the merger of the INC (I) and INC(A) in November 1982, the merger of the two rival factions of the Muslim League (IUML and AIML) in August 1985 and the splits in the N.D.P., the Janata (J) and the SRP. That ministry could complete the full term of office. The U.D.F. Ministry resigned office soon after the announcement of the election results on March 24, 1987.

The ninth election to the eighth Kerala Assembly was held on March 23, 1987, about two months in advance of the due date. The electorate numbered 1,59,94,280 as in the case of the two previous elections, the U.D.F. And the L.D.F. were the contestants. The U.D.F. consisted of INC, IUML, KC(J), KC(M), SRP(S), NDP(P) and RSP(S). It fielded two independent candidates. The KC(J) and the IUML had given one each of their seats-Thaliparamba and Azhikode - to the Communist Marxist Party with which they had electoral adjustments and understanding. The LDF comprised of CPI(M), CPI, RSP, IC(S), Janatha and Lokdal. A third political front had also emerged with the B.J.P. And the Hindu Munnani, as constituents which put up 127 candidates. The presence of 84 candidates fielded by the newly born Communist Marxist Party led by Shri.M.V.Raghavan who was expelled from the CPM, added a new dimension to the poll. In the elections, the LDF came out victorious by securing 78 seats, pushing the UDF to the opposition with 60 seats. An independent and one CMP candidate also won the elections. A five-member

ministry under the Chief Ministership of Shri.E.K.Nayanar assumed charge of office on March 26, 1987. The ministry was expanded on April 3, 1987 by including 14 more members in the Cabinet. Later the Janatha Dal recommended to the Cabinet, the name of Prof. N. M. Joseph in the place of Shri. M. P. Veerendra Kumar. Shri.Varkala Radhakrishnan was elected Speaker and Smt. Bhargavi Thankappan as Deputy Speaker, in the first sitting of the Assembly.

In a move to decentralize power, the L.D.F. Ministry brought in the District council. In the elections to this council held in December 1990, the front came out victorious. Subsequently, early general elections to the assembly were declared and were scheduled for 23rd May 1991, though the tenure of the ministry extended up to March 1992. Consequent to the assassination of Shri. Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister, on 21st May, barely two days before the dates fixed for the polls, the elections were postponed to 12th June, 1991. Elections were held as per the revised schedule in 139 constituencies as polls in the Eattumanoor constituency were countermanded, because of the death of one of the candidates there. The total electorate numbered 1,95,12,248 and the votes polled were 1,43,33,377 (73%).In the elections, the U.D.F. emerged victors with 89 seats, their constituents being INC, ML, KC(M), KC (B), CMP, NDP and independents. The 9th Kerala Assembly was sworn in to power on 24th June 1991, with Shri. K. Karunakaran as the Chief Minister. The ministry comprised of 19 ministers, drawn from INC, ML, NDP, KC(M), KC(B), KC(J) and CMP. Shri. P. P. Thankachan was elected speaker. This ministry completed its full term of five years with a change of Chief Minister and Speaker in between. On 22nd March, 1995, Shri. K. Karunakarana took up a berth in the union cabinet, making way for Shri.A.K. Antony to take up the Chief Ministership. When Shri. P. P. Thankachan became the Agriculture Minister, Shri. Therambil Ramakrishnan was elected as Speaker in his place. As in previous years the L.D.F Were the main contestants in the elections to the 10th Kerala Assembly. The L.D.F. Consisted of CPI (M), CPI, Janatha Dal, Congress (S), Kerala Congress (J), R.S.P. And the U.D.F. Consisted of INC, ML, KC (Jacob), KC (M), KC (B) and CMP. Tilting the balance, the L.D.F. Emerged winners and the 10th Kerala Assembly was sworn in to power on the 20th of May 1996 with Shri. E.K Nayanar as Chief Minister. The cabinet comprised of 14 ministers drawn from CPI (M), CPI, JD, INC(S), K.C.(J) and RSP. Shri. M. Vijaya Kumar was elected as Speaker. Election to the 11th assembly was held on May 10, 2001 in which UDF got 99 seats and the 11th Kerala Assembly was sworn in to power on the 17th of May 2001 with Shri. A. K. Antony as Chief Minister. The cabinet comprised of 20 ministers. Shri. Vakkom Purushothaman was elected as speaker. Shri. SundaramNadar sworn in as Deputy Speaker.

Shri. A. K. Antony rendered the resignation of his cabinet on August 29, 2004. A five member ministry under the chief ministership of Oommen Chandy assumed charge of office on August 31, 2004. Shri.Therambil Ramakrishnan was elected as the Speaker.The ministry was further expanded to a 20 member's cabinet. INC faced a split in 2005, a new party, DIC [K] was formed under the leadership of veteran Congress leader K. Karunakaran on May1st 2005.

Election to the 13 assembly was conducted in three phases on April 22nd, 29th and May 3rd.The LDF won with 98 seats,.The 19 member LDF ministry was sworn into power on 18th May 2006 with Shri.V.S.Achuthanandan as the Chief Minister. Shri. K. Radhakrishnan was elected as the speaker.

The 21st ministry headed by Shri. Oommen Chandy as Chief Minister was sworn in by His Excellency R.S.Gavai, Governor of Kerala at a function organised for the purpose at Kerala Raj Bhavan Thiruvananthapuram at 4pm on 23rd May 2011. The UDF led ministry includes Shri. P. K. Abdu Rabb, Shri. AdoorPrakash, Shri. A. P. Anilkumar, Shri. Aryadan Mohammed, Shri. K.

Babu, Shri. C. N. Balakrishnan, Shri. V. K. EbrahimKunju, Shri. K. B. Ganesh Kumar, Shri. T. M. Jacob, Kumari P. K. Jayalekshmi, Shri. K. C. Joseph, Shri. P. J. Joseph, Shri. P. K. Kunhalikutty, Shri. K. M. Mani, Shri. K. P. Mohanan, Dr. M. K. Muneer, Shri. Shibu Baby John, Shri. V .S. Sivakumar and Shri.ThiruvanchoorRadhakrishnan.

The seat of Shri. T. M. Jacob, in the Legislative Assembly of the Kerala State, elected from 85-Piravom Assembly Constituency has become vacant on 30-10-2011 by reason of his death and a bye- election is held on 17 March 2012 for the purpose of filling the vacancy so caused.

Shri.Manjalankuzhi Ali of Muslim League representing the constituency of Perinthalmanna and Anoop Jacob of the Kerala Congress (Jacob) representing Piravom was sworn in as ministers in 21th ministry on 12.04.2012.

Shri. K. B. Ganesh Kumar, of Kerala Congress (B), a single-MLA constituent of the ruling UDF, resigned from the Council of Ministers on April 1, 2013 on personal issues.

Shri. Ramesh Chennithala representing Haripad Constituency sworn in as Home Minister to the ministry on 1 January 2014 at Kerala Raj Bhavan.

### **Party system in Kerala : An analysis**

Among the modern political forces political parties have a pre-eminent place. Political parties attract more attention than the interest groups and the media since they acquire governmental power when they win the electoral battle a democratic political system the most important institution is the politicalparty. The strength of political party cannot be determined by its electoral performance alone. The social status of the members, the assimilative capacity of its ideology, its strength in the trade union field, the capacity for propaganda, influence over the key centers of the economy, the capacity for neutralizing the electoral strength of the other parties, etc. may be reckoned as the manifest strength of a political party.

The Indian parties are viewed as ‘mobilizing agencies’ and ‘organizational entities’. They, except perhaps the communist parties, are mostlylacking in the local party organization which is essential for mobilizing the masses and articulating their demands. They are generally mass parties with demographic, ideological, regional and communal groups being active and supposed to have more or less autonomous and different levels of power. The political parties everywhere endeavor to replace the traditional power structure. In Kerala and, as a matter of fact, in the whole of India, the traditional power structure was threatened with demolition by five factors-the nationalist movement, adultfranchise, land reforms, trade unionism and political parties. The nationalist movement sought to unify society and promised the introduction of adult franchise at the down of independence. Land reforms and trade unionism radically altered the relation between individuals, groups and more than anything, between the owner of the means of production and the worker. The political parties by the maintenance of discipline and possession of the capacity for the distribution of favour made onslaughts on the traditional power structure. The character of the political parties of Kerala has been largely determined by the different socio-economic structure and political development of the Travancore,Cochin and Malabar regions. The disparity between the three regions has been one of the factors contributing to ‘the decline of the one-party government in Kerala.

**Political activity in Kerala** takes place in a multi-party democratic framework, within the overall context of the National Politics of India. The state holds an invariable position of having the largest politically aware and active population in the Country. The state Legislature is unicameral and has a membership of 141, where 140 are elected and one is nominated from the Anglo-Indian community. It has 20 seats in the LokSabha and 9 seats in the RajyaSabha.

Elections are also held to choose representatives to the civic bodies at various levels within the State. and The State has consistently come out with a voter turnout of 70% or above in almost all elections which was ever held.

Politics in Kerala is dominated by two coalition fronts: the Communist Party of India(Marxist)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Indian National Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) since late 1970s. These two coalitions have been alternatively voted to power since 1982. Most of the major political parties in Kerala, except for BharatiyaJanata Party (BJP), belong to one or the other of these two alliances and have in the past shifting allegiances a number of times. In Kerala, it is difficult for a single party to contest and win seats, because the voter perception is towards voting for a front. The BJP has not been able to register its presence in the assembly in spite of the fact that it is the third largest party in Kerala after Congress and CPM. According to 2011 Kerala Legislative Assembly election results, the UDF has a majority in the State Assembly (72/140).

The political alliances have stabilized strongly in such a manner that, with rare exceptions, most of the coalition partners stick their loyalty to the respective alliances. As a result of this, ever since 1979, the power has been clearly alternating between the two fronts without any exceptions. However, till then the political scenario in Kerala was characterized by continually shifting alliances, party mergers and splits, factionalism within the coalitions and within political parties, and the formation of a numerous splinter groups.

The social thought and behavior of the State in general has a strong inclination towards Leftism and thus the Communist parties have strong inroads in Kerala. The Malabar region, particularly Kannur and Palakkad are considered to heartland of Communist parties. The Kollam and Alapuzha districts, where trade unions have very strong presence, are generally inclined towards the Left parties; though the UDF have won elections from the constituencies of these districts several times. The largest Communist party in terms of membership is CPI(M) and the second is CPI. Kerala was the first Indian state where the communists were voted to power. The Indian National Congress has a very strong presence in Kerala. The party has strong bases in Thrissur, Ernakulam and Kottayam regions. Even though the Congress party at the National level is more inclined towards Centrism, in the State it is also lenient towards Socialism or rather a Socialistic outlook than in the other parts of the Country. Though the BharatiyaJanata Party has no strong presence in Kerala, the party has a very strong base in Thiruvananthapuram. In fact, the party loses here is only by marginal votes as in the case of last lok Sabah election in 2014.

Other popular regional parties are:

- Indian Union Muslim League, is a powerful pro-Muslim community oriented party, which was started as Muslim League prior to partition of India, yet decided to remain their allegiance to India after partition, when the original Muslim League went to Pakistan. The IUML-Kerala unit is the only Muslim League unit, which declared its allegiance and loyalty to India hence became a state party, in post-independent India. The party has strongholds mostly in Muslim dominated districts like Malappuram. and they form the second largest party within UDF. Mass population of Muslims in Malappuram supports the Indian Union Muslim League in most of the elections.
- Kerala Congress, which has more than 4 denominations, after breaking away from original party, has strong influence among settlement populations in hilly regions. The various Kerala Congress denominations are primarily patronized by Syrian Christian community mostly in Central Travancore areas like Kottayam, Idukki, Pathanamthitta and Muvattupuzha region. Today, most of Kerala Congress parties are with UDF.

- Socialist groups, consisting of several small fragmented parties like NCP, SJD-S, JDS, Congress-S, are mainly pro-center left socialist parties having very limited influences in few pocket areas. Most of the socialist groups are with LDF, though at few instances, some of them changed their loyalties to UDF.

- Communist parties, consists of various communist parties, which have broken away from CPIM which mostly are Center left parties and few are extreme left. While a few centre left parties like RSP have joined with LDF, those broken away from CPI[M], like CMP, JSS etc., led by erstwhile CPI[M] veterans who were expelled from CPI[M] have joined with UDF.

The two main political coalitions in Kerala are the Left Democratic Front, led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Centrist United Democratic Front, led by the Indian National Congress. Since the early 1980s these two coalitions have alternated in government with neither Front able to gain re-election for a second term. Clashes between supporters of the two coalitions have occurred periodically. Both the INC and the CPI (M) have accused the other of corruption, promoting or condoning political violence, and "the general breakdown of law and order" during their periods in government.

The Student Federation of India (SFI) is the student arm of the CPI(M), while the Kerala Student Union (KSU) is a pioneer of the students' movement of the INC. The two major parties and their student wings have a long history of enmity in Kerala.

### **Coalition Politics**

The term 'coalition' as employed in the political sense commonly demotes a cooperative arrangement under which two or more political parties unite to form a government or ministry. It is a combination of political parties none of which has an absolute majority in the legislature and which put aside their political differences to form a government with a minimum programme acceptable to all partners.

A coalition is in essence a system of government in which actual policies are the result of an attempt to synthesise the conflicting views of different political parties.

No other State in India has experimented coalition government in its different shapes and different forms with all sorts of permutations and combinations in successive periods as it was done in Kerala. A retrospective analysis of the working of coalition governments in Kerala will throw a good deal of light on the practical problems associated with the working of coalition governments. Such an analysis will be relevant in the present context in which coalition governments have come into being not only in other States but also at the Centre

As has already been mentioned the root causes for the formation of coalition governments in Kerala can be traced to some of the sociological and historical factors that dominated the society and politics in Kerala. In the pre-independent period the native States of Travancore and Cochin had their political groups mainly based on caste and religious communities. Kerala is an example of a plural society in which no religious or caste group is in a dominant position. In such a situation various groups represent communal interests the dominance of a majority party is always taken to mean the predominant influence of a particular regional or communal group. Therefore the majority party system has never worked in the socio-political milieu of Kerala.

Communalism as it finds expression in casteism, regionalism, the small size of the State and the system of education is factors contributing to multiplicity of parties and instability of government which ultimately result in coalition governments in Kerala. Each small group, communal or regional, based on some other interest gains undue importance in the context of multiplicity of parties.



### **Coalition Politics in Kerala : A brief analysis**

With the fluid political climate that prevails in Kerala with a proliferation of political parties, coalition politics has become inevitable. In the Kerala situation coalitions are not characterized so much by ideological affinities as by narrow partisan interests. The making and breaking of coalitions was a regular feature of Kerala politics since mid 60<sup>s</sup> onwards. Thereafter they have become more or less stable in the some exceptions.

Coalition politics made its beginning in 1960 with the victory of the non-communist alliance of Congress, the Praja Socialist Party(PSP) and the Muslim League. This alliance collapsed within two years. In the 1965 elections no party or a group of parties could manage a majority. A long spell of President's rule was an inevitable consequence.

In the 1967 elections the seven-party United Front comprising Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI M), Communist Party of India CPI), Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP), Muslim League (ML), Kerala Socialist Party (KSP) and Karshaka Thozhilali Party (KTP) swept the polls securing majority of seats in a House of 131 A United Front Ministry under E.M.S. Namboodiripad assumed office in March 1967. Consequent upon the infighting among the coalition partners, the ministry bowed out of office in October 1969. A mini front under the leadership of the CPI leader, Achutha Menon came to power in 1969. This marked the beginning of the CPI-led coalition in Kerala. The CPI-Congress alliance *came* out victorious in the 1970 elections and remained in power for more than six years -an all-time record in Kerala's coalitional politics. The period, 1977 to 1980 witnessed four coalitions mainly anti-Marxists headed respectively by K. Karunakaran (Congress), A.K. Antony (Congress), P.K. Vasudevan Nair (CPI) and C H Mohammed Koya Muslim League). While Karunakaran's Cabinet lasted for only one month, Mohammed Koya remained in power for 51 days.

The 60s and 70s witnessed splits in almost all political parties as well as the emergence of communal and caste based political parties. In the 1980 elections the Left Democratic Front (LDF) secured a majority and assumed office under the leadership of the CPI (M) leader E.K Nayanar. But within two years it also collapsed as a result of the withdrawal of the Congress A and the Kerala Congress (M) from the LDF Government. The next elections in 1982 went in favour of the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) consisting of Indian National Congress, Muslim League, Kerala Congress (M), and National Democratic Party (NDP). However, the political balance tilted in favour of the LDF in the 1987 elections for the first time since 1970, the LDF formed a government without the support of Kerala Congress and Muslim League thereby creating history in the electoral politics of Kerala. All the regional and communal parties were kept at bay by the LDF. The UDF again came to power in the 1991 elections

K. Karunakaran formed a Government in June 1991 but he had to bowl out of office in May 1994 in deference to the protests by the coalition partners including INC against his arbitrary style of functioning. A. K Antony was brought in as Chief Minister and he reconstituted the Cabinet which continued upto April 1996. In the elections held in April 1996, LDF bagged 80 seats out of 140 and came to power. After the decisive victory of the LDF in the elections the mantle of chief ministership had fallen once again on E.K. Nayanar for the third time. His choice had come as a surprise due to the fact he did not enter the election fray on grounds of health and inability to carry the workload both as the party's State secretary and as a legislator giving the impression that he would prefer to keep the party position. He contested the' by election from Thalasseri and his astounding victory has indicated his popularity as a leader.

Thus, in all, Kerala witnessed 16 coalition governments since 1960 with periods ranging between one month and six years and five months and constituent parties varying between two and seven. Table 7.1 indicates the duration and composition of the 17 coalition governments in Kerala.

Table

Sl. No	NAME OF CHIEF MINISTER	TENURE	No of Ministers	Constituent Parties
1	E.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD	April 5, 1957 - July 31, 1959	11	CPI& Independents
2	SHRI. PATTOM A. THANU PILLAI	February 22, 1960 - September 26, 1962	11	INC and PSP
3	SHRI. R. SANKAR	September 26, 1962 - September 10, 1964	10	INC and PSP
4	SHRI. E.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD	March 6, 1967 - November 1, 1969	13	CPM, CPI, PSP, RSP,ML,KTP and KSP
5	SHRI. C. ACHUTHA MENON	November 1, 1969 - August 1, 1970	8	CPI,INC, PSP, RSP, ML AND KC
6	SHRI. C. ACHUTHA MENON	October 4, 1970 - March 25, 1977	14	CPI,INC, PSP, RSP, ML AND KC
7	SHRI. K. KARUNAKARAN	March 25, 1977 - April 25, 1977	15	INC , CPI, RSP,ML, KC,NDP and SRP
8	SHRI. A.K. ANTONY	April 27, 1977 - October 27, 1978	15	INC,CPI, RSP,ML,KC, AND NDP
9	SHRI. P.K. VASUDEVAN NAIR	October 29, 1978 - October 7, 1979	14	INC,CPI,RSP,ML,AND KC
10	SHRI. C.H. MOHAMMED KOYA	October 12, 1979 - December 1, 1979	6	INC, ML, KC NDP, and PSP
11	SHRI. E.K. NAYANAR	January 25, 1980 - October 20, 1981	17	CPM, INC(A) RSP, CPI, KC (M) KC(P) and AIML
12	SHRI. K. KARUNAKARAN	December 28, 1981 - March 17, 1982	8	INC,(I) INC(A) ML, KC (M) KC(J) NDP AND JP(G)
13	SHRI.K. KARUNAKARAN	May 24, 1982 - March 25, 1987	19	INC, ML, KC(M) NDP,JP(G)KC (J) and SRP

14	SHRI. E.K. NAYANAR	March 26, 1987 - June 17, 1991	19	CPM, CPI, CONG(S) RSP and Janata
15	SHRI. K. KARUNAKARAN	June 24, 1991 - March 16, 1995	19	INC,ML,KC(M) KC, (P). NDP, CMP and KC(J)
16	SHRI. A.K. ANTONY	March 22, 1995 - May 9, 1996	17	INC, ML, KC(M), KC, (J) and CMP
17	SHRI. E.K. NAYANAR	May 20, 1996 - May 13, 2001	14	CPM, CPI, RSP, Cong(S),KC(J) and Janata Dal
18	SHRI. A.K. ANTONY	May 17, 2001 - August 29, 2004		Congress(I),IUM,KeralaCongress, etc.
19	SHRI. OOMMEN CHANDY	August 31, 2004 AN - May 12, 2006		Congress(I),IUM,KeralaCongress, etc.
20	SHRI. V.S. ACHUTHANANDAN	May 18, 2006 - May 14, 2011		CPM,CPI,RSP,Janata Dal
21	SHRI. OOMMEN CHANDY	From May 18, 2011 onwards -		Congress(I),IUML,KeralaCongress, Kerala Congress(M).Janata Dal, RSP etc.

An analysis of the functioning of coalition governments in Kerala since 1960 reveals the following salient features of coalition politics in Kerala.

1. No single party can hope to secure a clear majority in the State Assembly.
2. Even if a party forms a government either by itself (with the support of others) or in coalition with other parties, it can never be certain that the goof will continue till the end of the term.
3. The alignments and realignments among political parties keep on changing before and after every election, be it to the State Assembly or to the Lok Sabha. The two major combinations of political parties in Kerala since the 60's are the United Democratic Front (UDF) under the leadership of the Congress and the Left Democratic Front (LDF) under the leadership of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). In fact political parties in Kerala other than the Congress and the CPI (M) align with the UDF or LDF from time to time and the nature of this alliance determines the power structure in Kerala.
4. More often than not, the United Fronts are formed on a negative platform either anti-Congress or anti-Marxist. Coalitions are often 'marriages of convenience' to be broken on petty issues
5. Socio-economic developments are considerably hampered because of political instability. More time is spent on setting the coalition house in order than towards formulating and implementing peoples' welfare programmes. Administration has come to mean division of spoils among the coalition partners. As a result, the State's common problems like unemployment, slow industrialisation and decay of traditional industries like handloom, coin and cashew remain unattended for most of the time.
6. In the political struggles in Kerala, one finds a strong under-current of ideology but in coalition ministries this is conspicuous by its absence Political expediency has gained acceptance

over all other considerations,

7. Each decade since the 60's had contributed its own share to the destabilisation of Kerala politics, During the 60's splits occurred in the Indian National Congress and the CPI. Kerala Congress was formed by the dissidents of the INC in 1964. The 70s was marked by coalitions based on the plane of anti Marxism. The Marxist party was kept at bay by five coalitions this decade also witnessed the emergence of two communal parties the N and the By the end of the decade, splits took place in almost all political parties. This phenomenon of splits continued unabated in the first half of 80s. There is not a single political party which has not split during this period be it the Cong (I), CPI, Kerala Congress, Muslim League, NDP acid SRP, 'Split within a split' can be appropriately used in the Kerala context. The splinter groups are known after the name of their leaders indicating clearly the basis of the split, These groups get a chance to join the government because- of the coalitional nature of the government

8. The lust for power has done considerable damage to the body politic of Kerala. It has prompted major, political parties to pamper minor parties out of proportion with the result that these minor parties thrive on the shoulders of the major partners in the coalition. The minor parties have always been the beneficiaries of the administration. Hardly a week passes without some political crisis brewing up causing considerable damage to the administration.

9. The political struggle often tends to become a game of numbers that permutations and combinations will, enable a major party to come to power. This seems to be the most important consideration before and after the elections. Kerala has tried all kinds of experiments in running a democratic government, one-party majority rule whether of the Congress or the Communist party, minority government, a coalition government limited to two parties and multi-party coalitions. The only coalition that has not been tried so far is the one between the Congress and the CPI (M)-a difficult but not an impossible proposition.

10. The success of a coalition depends on the presence within it of a central political force, a mature leadership, a common goal, the restraint displayed by the constituent parties in pursuing their own individual policies

Stability of a coalition government by and large depends upon the leadership of the Chief Minister. The policies that are adopted by the coalition government are formulated by the coalition parties and merely finalised by the Chief Minister. Hence the Chief Minister's ability is much counted in the working of a coalition government. The leadership must be able to solve the differences between parties in the coalition considerable amount of time is spent in sorting out inter-party differences.

In spite of various difficulties and problems, Kerala has made headway in making distinctive contributions to coalition politics. It has been able to explore new concepts through parliamentary coalitions. The role of the cabinet has yielded place to co-ordination committee and liaison committee to be prominent in the decision-making process. Inter-party differences are settled in these committees. Kerala's political solution seems to be in coalition government which has sprouted mainly from the stratified social structure. In fact Kerala's experience with coalition politics can serve as a pace-setter for the rest of the country.

In the ultimate analysis, the success of a coalition depends on the commitment of the coalition partners to a pre-election common minimum programme, the self-restraint on the part of the constituent parties in not trying to push their partisan interests at the expense of the common interest and above all the ability of the leader of the coalition in resolving amicably the intra-party and inter-party conflicts.

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