

**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL**

**MASTER OF ARTS-POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**SEMESTER -I**

**MAJOR ISSUES IN INDIAN POLITICS**

**SOFT CORE-103**

**BLOCK-2**

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First Published in 2019



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## **FOREWORD**

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavours.

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# MAJOR ISSUES IN INDIAN POLITICS

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## BLOCK- 1

Unit 1 Nature of Indian State

Unit 2 Globalization and the Indian State

Unit 3 Caste and Politics In India

Unit 4 Religion In Indian Politics

Unit 5 Regionalism In India

Unit 6 Development In Indian Politics

Unit 7 Migration and the Problems Of Displacement In India

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## **BLOCK-2 – MAJOR ISSUES IN INDIAN POLITICS**

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### **Introduction to the Block**

In this block we will go through parliamentary democracy in India , coalition politics, illiteracy in India, women's safety

Unit 8 focuses on parliamentary democracy

Unit 9 focuses on electoral process.

Unit 10 focuses on coalition politics

Unit 11 focuses on left radicalism in India

Unit 12 deals with on illiteracy

Unit 13 focuses on healthcare system

Unit 14 deals with on women's safety.

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# **UNIT- 8 PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN INDIA**

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## **STRUCTURE:**

8.0 Objectives

8.1 Introduction

8.2 Concept of Parliamentary Democracy in India

8.3 History of Parliamentary Democracy

8.4 Characteristics

8.5 Roll of opposition parties in a Democracy in India

8.6 Working of Parliamentary Democracy in India

8.7 Major obstacles in the smooth functioning of Parliamentary Democracy in India

8.7.1 India Parliamentary Democracy is just in name?

8.8 Let us sum up

8.9 Key words

8.10 Questions for review

8.11 Suggested readings and references

8.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

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## **8.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the concept of Parliamentary Democracy
- Learn about the characteristics of Parliamentary Democracy

- Learn about the Advantages and Disadvantages of Parliamentary Democracy

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## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

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**Parliamentary system**, democratic form of government in which the party (or a coalition of parties) with the greatest representation in the parliament (legislature) forms the government, its leader becoming prime minister or chancellor. Executive functions are exercised by members of the parliament appointed by the prime minister to the cabinet. The parties in the minority serve in opposition to the majority and have the duty to challenge it regularly. Prime ministers may be removed from power whenever they lose the confidence of a majority of the ruling party or of the parliament. The parliamentary system originated in Britain (Parliament) and was adopted in several of its former colonies.

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## 8.2 CONCEPT OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

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A **parliamentary system** or **parliamentary democracy** is a system of democratic governance of a state (or subordinate entity) where the executive derives its democratic legitimacy from its ability to command the confidence of the legislature, typically a parliament, and is also held accountable to that parliament. In a parliamentary system, the head of state is usually a person distinct from the head of government. This is in contrast to a presidential system, where the head of state often is also the head of government and, most importantly, the executive does not derive its democratic legitimacy from the legislature.

Countries with parliamentary democracies may be constitutional monarchies, where a monarch is the head of state while the head of government is almost always a member of parliament (such as the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, and Japan), or parliamentary republics, where a mostly ceremonial president is the head of state while the head of government is regularly from the legislature (such as Ireland, Germany, India, and Italy). In a few parliamentary republics, such as



Botswana, South Africa, and Suriname, among some others, the head of government is also head of state, but is elected by and is answerable to parliament. In bicameral parliaments, the head of government is generally, though not always, a member of the lower house.

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## **8.3 HISTORY OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY**

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Parliamentary democracy in India has become a farce. For the proper working of parliamentary democracy many pre-requisites are needed; till the leaders are responsible and conscious of their duties and responsive to the public opinion. Democracy itself will not be stable. But it is more so in the case of parliamentary democracy because the Council of Ministers should be responsible to the Parliament and should also take into consideration the voice of the people. If they start ignoring what the people want the Government will become dictatorial in its behaviour.

Moreover, Parliamentary democracy also demands that there should be two-party system. If there are many political parties they can join hands and be in the majority to form their own Government, after sometime, there may be some new alignment and some other coalition Government may be formed. In other words, there are certain norms of Parliamentary democracy.

Unfortunately, in India Parliamentary democracy seems to be; just in name the Ruling Party has so much majority that it can get anything done so there is no check upon the Ruling Party. If the members of the opposition ask questions and try to embarrass the people in power by bringing some or the other facts to light they are ignored because their numerical strength is negligible. Moreover, opposition parties have no prominent leader who may be acceptable as an alternative to the leader of the majority party. The recent alignment of the different opposition parties has started showing, some serious cracks in it. Such an Opposition makes Parliamentary democracy just a farce.

The party whip is used so effectively because the leader of the majority party reduces other leaders to unimportant place. As a result of it they are

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dominated by one group of men. Such an organization is bound to become dictatorial and decision will be taken at the higher level. The virtual working of the ruling party becomes monolithic. This contrary to the spirit of parliamentary democracy, because the decisions should be broad based.

One of the saving graces is that many a time the Prime Minister calls a meeting of the opposition parties in order to take some important decisions. This helps the ruling party to know the different shades of opinions of the different classes of people and different regions. In fact important decisions in a democratic set-up and particularly so when it is parliamentary democracy should be taken by taking all the parties into confidence.

Another point which makes our parliamentary democracy somewhat chaste is that the ruling party is not prepared to dictate its terms to the opposition and other sections of the people. The spirit of democracy demands that there should be 'give and take'. The Assam problem has been solved through negotiations so is the case with Tripura problem. The Prime Minister has also withdrawn the Defamation Bill because only the public opinion was against it. Similarly he has recently revealed that he is going to call an all party meeting in order to resolve the Punjab problem. In parliamentary democracy it is more important because in the Presidential type many a time the President can have his own say by one or the other method. It is wrong to think that our Parliamentary democracy is a farce.

In fact the political consciousness among the people has not gone deep and so opposition party has not been able to become strong in the Parliament. We are hero-worshippers by nature and so they respect the time-honoured walls. This conservative nature has made them to elect the same political party to power. When the people become politically awake and organize themselves this will not happen. So we can say that at present parliamentary democracy has not acquired its true character. It will take some time more for it to become proper type of parliamentary, democracy.

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## 8.4 CHARACTERISTICS

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The essence of Parliamentary democracy is party government. And a party government cannot succeed without an organised party system. To maintain the democratic character of a party government, there should be continuous and responsible criticism both within the legislature and elsewhere.

In the absence of such criticism, the Government would soon become an autocracy and later, a tyranny. But criticism cannot be effective if it is only sporadic, and it becomes even useless when it is only casual. To make it sustained and effective, it should be organised.

Hence the necessity for deliberately organised political parties whose business it is to oppose the Government, to expose its defects and depose it when the time is ripe.

It is true that the Constitution does not give expression to parties except in an oblique manner. The only provision which has anything directly to do with this is Article 75(3) which ensures the collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers to the House of the People.

But the spirit that underlies the fundamentals of the Constitution envisages a party system which implies all the above principles. To a great extent, even legal sanction has been given to them, by the Election Commission of India officially recognising political parties in India on an all-India or regional basis for the purposes of conducting elections.

The Commission had in 1962 given recognition of an all-India status to five parties, the Indian National Congress, the Praja Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Swatantra Party and the All India Jan Sangh.

In 1977 by the time the Sixth General Elections took place, the number of recognised all-India parties came down to four because of the emergence of the Janata Party consisting of the Socialist Party, the Jan Sangh, the B.L.D. and the Old Congress. The four all-India parties so recognised were: Indian National Congress, Janata Party, Communist Party of India and Communist Party (Marxist).

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With the elections to the Seventh Lok Sabha in 1980 the party picture had again undergone considerable change mainly because of the split in the Janata Party. In the 1989 General Elections, according to the Election Commission of India, 117 political parties participated. Of these, eight were National Parties; twenty were State Parties and 89 unrecognised registered parties.

The same position continued to exist in 1991 when the country went to polls in a mid-term election to elect the tenth Lok Sabha and at the end of the General Elections of 1996 which elected the eleventh Lok Sabha.

The leading national parties at the Tenth Lok Sabha Elections were: Indian National Congress, Janata Dal, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party Marxist (CPM).

### Check Your Progress-1

1. Discuss the concept of Parliamentary Democracy.

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2. Discuss the characteristics of Parliamentary Democracy .

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## **8.5 ROLE OF OPPOSITION PARTIES IN A DEMOCRACY IN INDIA**

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In India, there is a parliamentary system of government, according to which the party with the highest majority through a general election is entitled to form the government and its leader becomes the Prime Minister of the country.

The second largest party becomes the opposition party and its leader enjoys the status of the leader of opposition. The ruling party (the government) during its tenure is free to determine the policies and programmes and make decisions for the welfare of the common people.

The opposition parties have a very significant role in a democracy, because they are the representatives of the people to safeguard their interests. Time to time, they criticize the government in case it fails to keep its promises.

The opposition parties also warn the government if they think it necessary. Sometimes they show their protest too against the government. Thus they try to keep the government aware of all the issues so that everything may be on the right path and all round development may be seen in the country.

The most dominant role of the opposition in a democracy is that of a 'watch dog' of the system. In a country where there is a two party system, the opposition party forms a 'shadow cabinet' and remains vigilant over the performance of the government. This is truer when we talk of United Kingdom.

But in a country like India where there is a multi-party system of governance, the very purpose of the opposition is marred. No doubt the opposition parties try to co-operate among themselves over particular issues but most of the time they waste their time in blaming each other instead of playing the role of check and balance to correct democratic practices in the interest of the entire public.

In India there are many parties and the sad truth is that nearly every party is built not around ideology but around the personality of a single leader or a family dynasty. One party hates another and criticizes its activities. As a result they fail to raise such issues that are more relevant to the cause of public. They fail to compel the government to do welfare works. And thus the government very easily overlooks them and conceals the facts related to them.

In a democratic set of a country the Prime Minister has been invested with so many powers that he/she can easily become a dictator. India has

already witnessed such an incident when in 1975 the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, after the defeat at Allahabad High Court, declared the state of Emergency in India and turned to be a dictator.

It was unconstitutional, still she did it. In such a moment the vote of opposition becomes more prominent, because only a responsible opposition party can spread a mass consciousness against such unconstitutional move of the ruling party. Unfortunately, in our country the opposition parties have completely forgotten their positive contribution and responsibility to the nation.

They never try to extend their support to the ruling party in their welfare measures. Instead they only oppose the government, which is in no way a healthy atmosphere for the progress of the country. All the parties think only for the next election not for the next generation. The opposition must realise their responsibility and work for the country. Only a responsible opposition party can bring success to the ideals of our constitution.

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## **8.6 WORKING OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN INDIA**

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The Parliament of India (commonly referred to as the Indian Parliament) is the supreme legislative body in India. The Parliament alone possesses legislative supremacy and thereby ultimate power over all political bodies in India. The Parliament of India consists of the two houses and the President of India.

The parliament is bicameral, with an upper house called as Rajya Sabha, and a lower house called as Lok Sabha. The two Houses meet in separate chambers in the Sansad Bhawan (commonly known as- the Sansad Marg), in New Delhi. The Members of either house are commonly referred to as Member of Parliament or MP.

The MPs of Lok Sabha are elected by direct election and the MPs of Rajya Sabha are elected by the members of the State Legislative Assemblies in accordance with proportional voting. The Parliament is composed of 802 MPs, who serve the largest democratic electorate in the

world and the largest trans-national democratic electorate in the world (714 million eligible voters in 2009)

Of the 552 members of the House of People, 530 members represent the territorial Constituencies in the States, 20 represent the Union territories, chosen in such manner as Parliament may by law provide. These members serve a 5 year term until the next General Election is held. 2 members are chosen by the president. House seats are apportioned among the states by population in such a manner that the ratio between that number and the population of the State is, so far as practicable, the same for all States.

The 250 Members of the Council of States serve a staggered six-year term. 12 of these members are nominated by the President and shall consist of persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as the following, namely literature, science, art and social service. The 238 members are representatives of the States shall be elected by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of the State in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. Every two years, approximately one-third of the Council is elected at a time.

The Indian Parliament consists of two houses called as Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha respectively and the President of India. Concurrence of all the three is required to pass any legislative business.

**Lok Sabha :** Lok Sabha (in Hindi) is also known as the “House of the People” or the lower house. Almost all of its members are directly elected by citizens of India. Every citizen who is over 18 years of age, irrespective of gender, caste, religion or race, who is otherwise not disqualified, is eligible to vote. The Lok Sabha can have up to 552 members as envisaged in the Constitution of India. It has a term of five years. To be eligible for membership in the Lok Sabha, a person must be a citizen of India and must be 25 years of age or older, mentally sound, should not be bankrupt and has no criminal procedures against him/her. Up to 530 members can be elected from the states in single member districts, up to 20 members from the Union territories and no more than two members from the community can be nominated by the

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President of India if the president feels that the Anglo-Indian community is not adequately represented. The Lok Sabha has 545 members; some seats are reserved for representatives of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Rajya Sabha: The Rajya Sabha is also known as “Council of States” or the upper house. Its members are indirectly elected by members of legislative bodies of the States. The Rajya Sabha has 250 members in all. Elections to it are scheduled and the chamber cannot be dissolved. Each member has a term of 6 years and elections are held for one-third of the seats after every 2 years.

- i. Representatives of States are elected by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of the State in accordance with system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote.
- ii. Representatives of Union Territories are indirectly elected by members of an electoral college for that territory in accordance with system of proportional representation.

The Council of States is designed to maintain the federal character of the country. The number of members from a state depends on the population of the state (e.g. 31 from Uttar Pradesh and one from Nagaland).

The minimum age for a person to become a member of Rajya Sabha is 30 years. President of India

The President is elected, from a group of nominees, by the elected members of the Parliament of India (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) as well as of the state legislatures (Vidhan Sabhas), and serves for a term of five years. Historically, ruling party (majority in the Lok Sabha) nominees have been elected and run largely uncontested.

Incumbents are permitted to stand for re-election. A formula is used to allocate votes so there is a balance between the population of each state and the number of votes assembly members from a state can cast, and to give an equal balance between State Assembly members and National Parliament members. If no candidate receives a majority of votes there is



a system by which losing candidates are eliminated from the contest and votes for them transferred to other candidates, until one gains a majority.

**Working, Procedures and Committees:**The Parliament consists of the President of Republic of India and both the Chambers. The House and the Council are equal partners in the legislative process; however, the Constitution grants the House of People some unique powers. Revenue-raising or “Money” bills must originate in the House of People. The Council of States can only make recommendations suggestions over these bills to the House, within a period of fourteen days-lapse of which the bill is assumed to have been passed by both the Chambers.

**Lawmaking Procedures:** Lawmaking procedures in India are modeled after, and are thus very similar to, those followed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

**Parliamentary Committees :** Parliamentary committees play a vital role in the Parliamentary System. They are a vibrant link between the Parliament, the Executive and the general public. The need for Committees arises out of two factors, the first one being the need for vigilance on the part of the Legislature over the actions of the Executive, while the second one is that the modern Legislature these days is overburdened with heavy volume of work with limited time at its disposal. It thus becomes impossible that every matter should be thoroughly and systematically scrutinised and considered on the floor of the House. If the work is to be done with reasonable care, naturally some Parliamentary responsibility has to be entrusted to an agency in which the whole House has confidence. Entrusting certain functions of the House to the Committees has, therefore, become a normal practice. This has become all the more necessary as a Committee provides the expertise on a matter which is referred to it. In a Committee, the matter is deliberated at length, views are expressed freely, and the matter is considered in depth, in a business-like manner and in a calmer atmosphere. In most of the Committees, public is directly or indirectly associated when memoranda containing suggestions are received, on-the-spot studies are conducted and oral evidence is taken which helps the Committees in arriving at the conclusions. Parliamentary Committees are of two kinds: Ad hoc

Committees and the Standing Committees most powerful of all is public accounts committee which is headed by the leader of the opposition.

**Standing Committees** :Each House of Parliament has standing committees like the Business Advisory Committee, the Committee on Petitions, the Committee of Privileges and the Rules Committee, etc. Standing committees are permanent and regular committees which are constituted from time-to-time in pursuance of the provisions of an Act of Parliament or Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Parliament. The work of these committees is on continuous nature. The Financial Committees, DRSCs and some other Committees come under the category of Standing Committees. These are the Committees on Subordinate Legislation, the Committee on Government Assurances, the Committee on Estimates, the Committee on Public Accounts and the Committee on Public Undertaking and Departmentally Related Standing Committees (DRSCs). Ad hoc committees are appointed for a specific purpose and they cease to exist when they finish the task assigned to them and submit a report. The principal ad hoc committees are the Select and Joint Committees on Bills. Others like the Railway Convention Committee, the Committees on the Draft Five Year Plans and the Hindi Equivalents Committee were appointed for specific purposes. Joint Committee on Food Management in Parliament House Complex etc. also comes under the category of ad hoc committees.

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## **8.7 MAJOR OBSTACLES IN THE SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN INDIA**

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Many political thinkers and observers believe that without social and economic prerequisites, the smooth functioning of parliamentary democracy in India cannot be achieved. They suggest that before a society or state decides to be governed democratically, it is essential for it to have a minimum level of social and economic development. Many others, however, believe that democracy itself provides a better and

successful means for attainment of social and economic development. The framers of Indian Constitution were fully committed to this view. However, Indian democracy is flawed in many respects. India has not been able to acquire a stable national unity and the political system has not been able to fulfil the aspirations of all groups, sections and classes. A vast majority of the Indian people are caught in the situation of abject poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment. More than 60 per cent of the Indian population does not have access to basic sanitation. There is almost a collapse of public health. The population has increased more than three times since independence. Of course, the Gross National Products (GNP) has increased fourfold and in the last decade alone per capita GDP has doubled. But in view of increase in population and concentration of benefits in few hands this increase remains insufficient. Result is about 50 per cent of all children below 5 years of age are under weight and malnourished. Another obstacle of parliamentary democracy has been the practice of discrimination based on exploitation. Politicians wanting their votes have played up this feeling but have taken no concrete caution to see that the weaker sections were given a participatory and effective role in the socio-economic development of the country. Consequently, people are getting alienated from the system and losing faith in the electoral system. To keep them in the game of elections, ambitious individuals have started counting on caste base, communal, linguistic and regional loyalties. Elections, as such, have become ends in themselves, instruments of the status quo and of self promotion rather than change. With this another serious factor has emerged; it is politicisation of crime and criminalisation of politics. During the last 58 years of India's independence, India has witnessed failures in running the democratic processes.

### **8.7.1 India Parliamentary Democracy Is Just In Name?**

Arguments for :One of the basic principles of Parliamentary democracy is that the Council of Ministers should be properly bridled by the Parliament because they are responsible to the latter. But in India the ruling party has so overwhelming majority that the council of Ministers

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can get anything approved by the Parliament. In this manner Parliament is indirectly subordinated to the council of ministers and the Government has become dictatorship of the majority. In parliamentary democracy there must be a very healthy opposition so that they may be able to keep the ruling party on their heels. The opposition should be led by some popular leader. It should be numerically strong and able to replace the party in power. In India the opposition party is conspicuous by its absence in the parliament : it is so weak that its voice is drowned in the decisions of the majority. In parliamentary democracy the Prime-minister is one who is like an elder brother among the council of ministers, he is the first among equals. So he should listen to the dissenting opinions of the other members patiently and try to prevail upon them with arguments. But in India the Prime-minister has been shuffling his ministry from time to time : upgrading some, pulling down others and dropping out the rest. In this manner he has been dominating the members of council of ministers which is contrary to concept the parliamentary system.

Arguments against :

1. If the ruling party has overwhelming majority it does not make a Government different from the parliamentary type. In all the countries where parliamentary democracy exists the ruling party tries to win over the maximum number of members of the parliament so that vote of no-confidence may not be passed against them. In that case also it would mean dictatorship of the majority.
2. It is the prerogative of the Prime-minister to take any person who is the member of the parliament into his ministry and to drop anyone. So shuffling of the ministry is not contrary to parliamentary democracy.
3. The council of ministers not only bows to the wishes of the people. Prime-minister Rajiv Gandhi withdrew the Defamation Bill because the people, the opposition parties and the press wanted it. Similarly, he has been able to solve the problems of Assam, Tripura and Gorkhaland by acceding to the demands of the people. This is one of the essential features of parliamentary democracy.

**Check Your Progress-2**

3. Discuss the roll of opposition parties in a democracy in India.

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4. Discuss the major obstacles of parliamentary democracy in India.

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## **8.8 LET S SUM UP**

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A **parliamentary system** or **parliamentary democracy** is a system of democratic governance of a state (or subordinate entity) where the executive derives its democratic legitimacy from its ability to command the confidence of the legislature, typically a parliament, and is also held accountable to that parliament. In a parliamentary system, the head of state is usually a person distinct from the head of government. The essence of Parliamentary democracy is party government. And a party government cannot succeed without an organised party system. To maintain the democratic character of a party government, there should be continuous and responsible criticism both within the legislature and elsewhere. The Parliament of India (commonly referred to as the Indian Parliament) is the supreme legislative body in India. The Parliament alone possesses legislative supremacy and thereby ultimate power over all political bodies in India. The Parliament of India consists of the two houses and the President of India. Many political thinkers and observers believe that without social and economic prerequisites, the smooth functioning of parliamentary democracy in India cannot be achieved. They suggest that before a society or state decides to be governed democratically, it is essential for it to have a minimum level of social and economic development. Many others, however, believe that democracy itself provides a better and successful

means for attainment of social and economic development. The framers of Indian Constitution were fully committed to this view.

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### 8.9 KEYWORDS

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- **Parliamentary Democracy:** A **parliamentary system** or **parliamentary democracy** is a system of democratic governance of a state (or subordinate entity) where the executive derives its democratic legitimacy from its ability to command the confidence of the legislature, typically a parliament, and is also held accountable to that parliament.
- **Opposition Parties:** The opposition parties have a very significant role in a democracy, because they are the representatives of the people to safeguard their interests. Time to time, they criticize the government in case it fails to keep its promises.
- **Major obstacles:** Many political thinkers and observers believe that without social and economic prerequisites, the smooth functioning of parliamentary democracy in India cannot be achieved.

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### 8.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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1. Discuss the concept of Parliamentary Democracy.
2. Discuss the characteristics of Parliamentary Democracy .
3. Discuss the roll of opposition parties in a democracy in India.
4. Discuss the major obstacles of parliamentary democracy in India.

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### 8.11 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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## 8.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. A **parliamentary system** or **parliamentary democracy** is a system of democratic governance of a state (or subordinate entity) where the executive derives its democratic legitimacy from its ability to command the confidence of the legislature, typically a parliament, and is also held accountable to that parliament. In a parliamentary system, the head of state is usually a person distinct from the head of government. This is in contrast to a presidential system, where the head of state often is also the head of government and, most importantly, the executive does not derive its democratic legitimacy from the legislature.

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2. The essence of Parliamentary democracy is party government. And a party government cannot succeed without an organised party system. To maintain the democratic character of a party government, there should be

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continuous and responsible criticism both within the legislature and elsewhere.

In the absence of such criticism, the Government would soon become an autocracy and later, a tyranny. But criticism cannot be effective if it is only sporadic, and it becomes even useless when it is only casual. To make it sustained and effective, it should be organised.

Hence the necessity for deliberately organised political parties whose business it is to oppose the Government, to expose its defects and depose it when the time is ripe.

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But the spirit that underlies the fundamentals of the Constitution envisages a party system which implies all the above principles. To a great extent, even legal sanction has been given to them, by the Election Commission of India officially recognising political parties in India on an all-India or regional basis for the purposes of conducting elections.

The Commission had in 1962 given recognition of an all-India status to five parties, the Indian National Congress, the Praja Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Swatantra Party and the All India Jan Sangh.

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With the elections to the Seventh Lok Sabha in 1980 the party picture had again undergone considerable change mainly because of the split in the Janata Party. In the 1989 General Elections, according to the Election Commission of India, 117 political parties participated. Of these, eight



were National Parties; twenty were State Parties and 89 unrecognised registered parties.

The same position continued to exist in 1991 when the country went to polls in a mid-term election to elect the tenth Lok Sabha and at the end of the General Elections of 1996 which elected the eleventh Lok Sabha.

The leading national parties at the Tenth Lok Sabha Elections were: Indian National Congress, Janata Dal, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party Marxist (CPM).

3. The essence of Parliamentary democracy is party government. And a party government cannot succeed without an organised party system. To maintain the democratic character of a party government, there should be continuous and responsible criticism both within the legislature and elsewhere.

In the absence of such criticism, the Government would soon become an autocracy and later, a tyranny. But criticism cannot be effective if it is only sporadic, and it becomes even useless when it is only casual. To make it sustained and effective, it should be organised.

Hence the necessity for deliberately organised political parties whose business it is to oppose the Government, to expose its defects and depose it when the time is ripe.

It is true that the Constitution does not give expression to parties except in an oblique manner. The only provision which has anything directly to do with this is Article 75(3) which ensures the collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers to the House of the People.

But the spirit that underlies the fundamentals of the Constitution envisages a party system which implies all the above principles. To a great extent, even legal sanction has been given to them, by the Election Commission of India officially recognising political parties in India on an all-India or regional basis for the purposes of conducting elections.

The Commission had in 1962 given recognition of an all-India status to five parties, the Indian National Congress, the Praja Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Swatantra Party and the All India Jan Sangh.

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In 1977 by the time the Sixth General Elections took place, the number of recognised all-India parties came down to four because of the emergence of the Janata Party consisting of the Socialist Party, the Jan Sangh, the B.L.D. and the Old Congress. The four all-India parties so recognised were: Indian National Congress, Janata Party, Communist Party of India and Communist Party (Marxist).

With the elections to the Seventh Lok Sabha in 1980 the party picture had again undergone considerable change mainly because of the split in the Janata Party. In the 1989 General Elections, according to the Election Commission of India, 117 political parties participated. Of these, eight were National Parties; twenty were State Parties and 89 unrecognised registered parties.

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The leading national parties at the Tenth Lok Sabha Elections were: Indian National Congress, Janata Dal, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party Marxist (CPM).

3. In India, there is a parliamentary system of government, according to which the party with the highest majority through a general election is entitled to form the government and its leader becomes the Prime Minister of the country.

The second largest party becomes the opposition party and its leader enjoys the status of the leader of opposition. The ruling party (the government) during its tenure is free to determine the policies and programmes and make decisions for the welfare of the common people.

The opposition parties have a very significant role in a democracy, because they are the representatives of the people to safeguard their interests. Time to time, they criticize the government in case it fails to keep its promises.

The opposition parties also warn the government if they think it necessary. Sometimes they show their protest too against the

government. Thus they try to keep the government aware of all the issues so that everything may be on the right path and all round development may be seen in the country.

The most dominant role of the opposition in a democracy is that of a 'watch dog' of the system. In a country where there is a two party system, the opposition party forms a 'shadow cabinet' and remains vigilant over the performance of the government. This is truer when we talk of United Kingdom.

But in a country like India where there is a multi-party system of governance, the very purpose of the opposition is marred. No doubt the opposition parties try to co-operate among themselves over particular issues but most of the time they waste their time in blaming each other instead of playing the role of check and balance to correct democratic practices in the interest of the entire public.

4. Many political thinkers and observers believe that without social and economic prerequisites, the smooth functioning of parliamentary democracy in India cannot be achieved. They suggest that before a society or state decides to be governed democratically, it is essential for it to have a minimum level of social and economic development. Many others, however, believe that democracy itself provides a better and successful means for attainment of social and economic development. The framers of Indian Constitution were fully committed to this view. However, Indian democracy is flawed in many respects. India has not been able to acquire a stable national unity and the political system has not been able to fulfil the aspirations of all groups, sections and classes. A vast majority of the Indian people are caught in the situation of abject poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment. More than 60 per cent of the Indian population does not have access to basic sanitation. There is almost a collapse of public health. The population has increased more than three times since independence. Of course, the Gross National Products (GNP) has increased fourfold and in the last decade alone per capita GDP has doubled. But in view of increase in population and concentration of benefits in few hands this increase remains insufficient. Result is about 50 per cent of all children below 5 years of

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age are under weight and malnourished. Another obstacle of parliamentary democracy has been the practice of discrimination based on exploitation. Politicians wanting their votes have played up this feeling but have taken no concrete caution to see that the weaker sections were given a participatory and effective role in the socio-economic development of the country. Consequently, people are getting alienated from the system and losing faith in the electoral system. To keep them in the game of elections, ambitious individuals have started counting on caste base, communal, linguistic and regional loyalties. Elections, as such, have become ends in themselves, instruments of the status quo and of self promotion rather than change. With this another serious factor has emerged; it is politicisation of crime and criminalisation of politics. During the last 58 years of India's independence, India has witnessed failures in running the democratic processes.

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# **UNIT-9: RECENT TRENDS IN ELECTORAL PROCESS**

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## **STRUCTURE**

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 meaning and requirements
- 9.3 electoral reforms in India
- 9.4 defects of Indian electoral process
- 9.5 reforms made in the Indian electoral system
- 9.6 Tarkunda goswami and Indrajit gupta reports
- 9.7 Recent trends in electoral process
- 9.8 Let us sum up
- 9.9 Keywords
- 9.10 Questions For Review
- 9.11 Suggested Readings And References
- 9.12 Answers To Check Your Progress

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## **9.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the Electoral reforms in India
- Learn about the defects of Indian electoral process
- Learn about recent trends in electoral process

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## **9.1 INTRODUCTION**

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India is the largest democracy in the world. Elections are the most integral and important part of politics in a democratic system of governance. True democracy can function only when elections to the offices of power are held in a free and fair manner.

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It is generally accepted that while the first three general elections were held in a free and fair manner, a plummeting of standards started during the fourth general elections in 1967. Many consider the electoral system in the country as the basis of political corruption. In the next sections, we will talk about the challenges in this regard, and some of the previous attempts at electoral reform.

There are multiple issues plaguing the electoral process in India. Some of the most prominent ones are mentioned below.

### **Money Power**

In every constituency, candidates have to spend crores of rupees for campaigning, publicity, etc. Most candidates far exceed the permissible limit of expenses.

### **Muscle Power**

In certain parts of the country, there are widespread reports of illegal and untoward incidents during polling such as the use of violence, intimidation, booth capturing, etc.

### **Criminalisation of Politics and Politicization of Criminals**

Criminals enter into politics and ensure that money and muscle power wins them elections, so that the cases against them are not proceeded with. Political parties are also happy as long as they have winnable candidates. Political parties field criminals in elections for funds and in return provide them with political patronage and protection.

### **Misuse of Government Machinery**

There is a general opinion that the party in power uses government machinery such as using government vehicles for canvassing, advertisements at the cost of the exchequer, disbursements out of the discretionary funds at the disposal of the ministers, and other such means to improve the chances of their candidates winning.

### **Non-serious Independent candidates**

Serious candidates float non-serious candidates in elections to cut a good portion of the votes that would otherwise have gone to rival candidates.

**Casteism**

There are cases of certain caste groups lending strong support to particular political parties. Thus, political parties make offers to win over different caste groups, and caste groups also try to pressurize parties to offer tickets for their members' elections. Voting on caste lines is prevalent in the country and this is a serious blotch on democracy and equality. This also creates rifts in the country.

**Communalism**

Communal polarization poses a serious threat to the Indian political ethos of pluralism, parliamentarianism, secularism and federalism.

**Lack of Moral Values in Politics**

The political corruption in India has led to politics becoming a business. People enter the political arena for making money and retaining their money and power. There are very few leaders who enter politics to make a difference in the lives of their people. The Gandhian values of service and sacrifice are missing from the Indian political scene.

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**9.2 MEANING AND REQUIREMENTS**

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Electoral reforms refer to the development and benign change in election processes in India in order to facilitate better democracy, clean politics, ideal members of legislative houses, equality of representation and so on. Articles 324-329 deal with elections and electoral reforms. Electoral reforms are required to uphold the aspiration of our ancestors, to accomplish the ideals of our constitution and to have a true democracy in letter as well as in spirit by conducting fair elections.

The process of electoral reforms focus mainly on broadening the core meaning of democracy, making it more citizen friendly, implementation of adult suffrage in letter as well as spirit.

**Following are the Constitutional articles related to electoral reforms:**

1. Article 324-329 deals with elections and electoral reforms.

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2. Article 324 deals with the Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.
3. Article 325 states that no person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
4. Article 326 deals with the Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the basis of adult suffrage.
5. Article 327 provides power to the Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.
6. Article 328 provides power to Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.
7. Article 329 provides to create a bar on court to make any interference by courts relating to electoral matters.

### **Aspects of Electoral Reforms:**

#### **The Electoral reforms contain the following aspects:**

1. Transparency about the background of the candidates
2. Freeing the election processes from muscle and money power
3. Prohibiting the nexus between business and politics
4. Availing all the citizens, eligible to vote a comfortable, friendly and assured facilitation of vote casting
5. Upholding the secrecy of voters
6. Fair registration and recognition of the political parties and without any kind of influence
7. Solution of delisting of illiterate voters
8. Non-partisan role of media
9. Applying the model code of conduct efficiently
10. Streamlining the preparation of electoral rolls



11. Expediting the election processes

12. Rationalising electoral processes

**Requirement of Electoral Reforms:**

The need for electoral reforms has also been felt mainly due to shun the malicious people and malevolent activities they are involved into. Their requirement can further be elaborated as follows

1. Election process should reflect the situation of the day and should not be imposed on contemporary society
2. To prohibit the criminalisation of politics
3. To stop the misuse of government machineries.
4. To discourage money and muscle power to contribute in election processes
5. To dismay non-serious candidates to contest in election
6. Election processes should be neutral, free from any biasness for any political parties
7. To enhance the trust in the eyes of citizens towards electoral processes
8. To employ the use of technology to further the election processes and be in synch with modern days methods.
9. Some candidates fight election from two seats so it is the need of the hour that make it compulsory for the candidates to pay the expenses occurred on the election of their second constituency.

In the conclusion it can be said that the Election Commission of India need to be stricter regarding the implementation of the election reforms. It is observed that Election Commission is working on a “**Chaltahai Attitude**” which is not good for the development of the healthy democracy in the country.

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## 9.3 ELECTORAL REFORMS IN INDIA

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**Electoral reform** is change in electoral systems to improve how public desires are expressed in election results. That can include reforms of:

- Voting systems, such as proportional representation, a two-round system (runoff voting), instant-runoff voting, Instant Round Robin Voting called Condorcet Voting, range voting, approval voting, citizen initiatives and referendums and recall elections.
- Vote-counting procedures
- Rules about political parties, typically changes to election laws
- Eligibility to vote
- How candidates and political parties are able to stand (nomination rules) and how they are able to get their names onto ballots (ballot access)
- Electoral constituencies and election district borders
- Ballot design and voting equipment
- Scrutineering (election monitoring by candidates, political parties, etc.)
- Safety of voters and election workers
- Measures against bribery, coercion, and conflicts of interest
- Financing of candidates' and referendum campaigns
- Factors which affect the rate of voter participation (voter turnout)

In less democratic countries, elections are often demanded by dissidents; therefore the most basic electoral-reform project in such countries is to achieve a transfer of power to a democratically elected government with a minimum of bloodshed, e.g. in South Africa in 1994. This case highlights the complexity of such reform: such projects tend to require changes to national or other constitutions, and to alter balances of power. Electoral reforms are often politically painful.

## Role of United Nations

The United Nations Fair Elections Commission provides international observers to national elections that are likely to face challenges by the international community of nations, e.g., in 2001 in Yugoslavia, in 2002 in Zimbabwe.

The United Nations standards address safety of citizens, coercion, scrutiny, and eligibility to vote. They do not impose ballot styles, party diversity, or borders on electoral constituencies. Various global political movements, e.g., labour movements, the Green party, Islamism, Zionism, advocate various cultural, social, ecological means of setting borders that they consider "objective" or "blessed" in some other way. Contention over Electoral constituency borders within or between nations and definitions of "refugee", "citizen", and "right of return" mark various global conflicts, including those in Israel/Palestine, the Congo, and Rwanda.

## Electoral borders

Redrawing of electoral constituency (or "riding" or "district") borders should be conducted at regular intervals, or by statutory rules and definitions, if for no other reason than to eliminate malapportionment attributable to population movements. Some electoral reforms seek to fix these borders according to some cultural or ecological criterion, e.g., bioregional democracy – which sets borders to fit exactly to ecoregions – to avoid the obvious abuse of "gerrymandering" in which constituency borders are set deliberately to favour one party over another, or to improve authority of the public's commonly owned property.

Electoral borders and their manipulation have been a major issue in the United States in particular. However the ability to respect 'natural' borders (meaning municipal or community or infrastructure or natural areas) has been cited often in criticisms of particular reforms, e.g. the Alternative Vote Plus system suggested for the UK by Jenkins Commission.

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## 9.4 DEFEVTS OF INDIAN ELECTORAL PROCESS

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Since the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950, 14 general elections and many elections of various State Legislative Assemblies have been held. Although these elections were generally free and fair, yet some weaknesses of our election system have been noticed. Some of these weaknesses (challenges) are as under:

**(a) Expensive elections:** In India, elections are very expensive and a common man, however, intelligent and honest he may be, cannot fight elections. As a result only the rich people can fight elections and they make use of political power first to serve their own interests. They also try to make more money through illegal methods.

**(b) Misuse of official machinery:**

Though some steps have been taken by the Election Commission and the election laws to check the misuse of official machinery during the elections, yet the ruling party makes use of government servants, vehicles and discretionary grants to win the voters in their favour.

**(c) Use of caste and religion in election:** In India, a large number of votes are cast on the basis of caste and religion. As a result people get divided on the basis of caste, religion and community which is very harmful for national unity.

**(d) Rigging of election and booth capturing:**

With the connivance of the government officials, the ruling party tries to rig the elections. Some candidates also capture the polling booths and make use of their muscle powers to do it. It is alleged that in J&K Assembly elections held in 1987, many candidates of the opposition front were declared losers even though they had got maximum number of votes.

**(e) Misuse of mass media:** During elections the ruling party uses various means of mass media-Radios, Television and Newspapers etc.-to propagate their policies and programmes.

**(f) Low polling percentage:**

In India, many voters do not cast their votes. The voting percentage generally is almost 50 to 60 percent. Therefore, the representative bodies are not truly representative.

**(g) Delay in the disposal of election petitions:** In India, it takes a long time in the disposal of election petitions and sometimes the very purpose of election petition gets defeated.

**Remedies:**

(a) To minimise the role of money in election, provisions should be made for state funding of elections.

(b) Misuse of official machinery should be checked strictly.

(c) Candidates making use of caste or religions during elections should be debarred from contesting elections.

(d) Rigging of elections by the use of muscle power and booth capturing should be strongly checked.

(e) Every party or candidate should be given a chance to make use of mass media.

(f) Voting should be made compulsory.

(g) Election petitions should be disposed off without any delay.

The above issues should be a matter of concern to all those who believe in democracy. Many citizens, political leaders and organisations are trying to curb such tendencies by launching agitations against these malpractices. Besides voters need to become more aware of the value of their right to vote.

**Check your Progress-1**

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answer

ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit

## Notes

1. Discuss the meaning of electoral process.

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2. Discuss the electoral reforms in India.

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3. Discuss the defects of the electoral process.

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## **9.5 REFORMS MADE IN THE INDIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM**

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A major defect of the present electoral system is that there is remarkably little relationship between the votes secured by a party and its strength in the Assembly or the Parliament. The numbers of seats won by particular parties are not proportionate to the voters polled in their favour. The high cost of electioneering may lead to corrupt practices and the government. The funds are raised from various sources: donations, purses and fund-drives have been the main sources of income of all political parties in India. It has been suggested by some that the system of proportional representation should be introduced to secure representation to the various divisions in the electorate. The opponents of this system argue that it leads to multiplicity of parties and accentuates splits. Some people are of the opinion that the Election Commission should not be a one-man body.

The committee appointed by Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, on behalf of 'Citizens for Democracy' under V.M. Tarakunde, M.R. Samani, P.G. Mavalankar, A.G. Noorani, R.D. Desai and EPW Decosta opined that the Election Commission is becoming less and less independent of the Executive and it suggested reforms on the following points;

- (1) The use of money power in Indian elections.
- (2) The misuse of official authority and machinery.
- (3) Other forms of corrupt practices.
- (4) The disparity between the popular vote secured and the number of seats obtained under the present system of election
- (5) Defects in the disposal of election petitions.

Objections have also been raised on the procedure of preparation of electoral rolls. Different political parties have neglected the registration of all eligible voters. Most of the time the electorates come to know of their exclusion from the rolls after reaching the polling booth.

On the other hand, the electoral lists are full of bogus entries. An additional recommendation has been that every voter should be issued an identity slip bearing his photo. The issue of identity cards with the photos of voters may eliminate bogus voting to some extent.

The use of electronic voting machines may speed up the voting process and early announcement of the results can be made. This should be taken up by the Government and the slip issued by the parties should be cancelled.

Similarly, the election material can also be printed by the Government for the recognised political parties, and mail them free to the voter through the postal department.

Reforms have also been suggested in the poll petition rules. The existing law prescribes that the petitioner should prove that either the candidate or his agent has approved the electoral

manipulation. In reality it is difficult to prove whether the candidate himself has indulged in a corrupt practice, such as using official machinery for election and raising the communal hatred during elections.

It is, therefore, necessary to keep the actions of his close associates also in view to determine the corrupt practice. Similarly, one has to wait considerably both before and after filling the poll petitions. The arrangement should be made for an immediate complaint to be lodged before the Magistrate and cases decided within six months.

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### **9.6 TARKUNDE GOSWAMI AND INDRAJIT GUPTA REPORTS**

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In order to restore the confidence of the public in the democratic electoral system, many electoral reforms have been recommended from time to time. Tarkunde Committee and Goswami Committee were particularly appointed to study and report on the scheme for Electoral Reforms in the year 1974 and 1990 respectively. The Election Commission's recommendations in 1998 and the Indrajit Gupta Committee Report of 1998 also produced a comprehensive set of proposals regarding electoral reforms. Out of these recommendations some have been implemented. However, in view of the increasing role of money and muscle power, criminalization of politics and misuse of Government machinery more stringent changes and reforms are necessary to neutralize these disturbing distortions in the electoral system accompanied by honest and strict enforcement of the rules in a time bound manner. Following reforms are proposed to address these problems some of which have been proposed by others in the past.

- A candidate must have filed his income tax return for the previous two years from the constituency which he/she wants to represent.
- No change of party or change of status to independent be permitted till the announcement of the next elections.
- All personnel involved in the conduct of election by virtue of being on election duty including police and security personnel



and their voting age family members must be able to cast their vote just as easily as a citizen not on election duty.

- The total expenditure permissible by a candidate should be related to the minimum daily wages prevalent at that time in that state/area. The maximum total expenditure should be set as a percentage, say, 5%, per registered voter of the constituency.
- All candidates must be required to submit audited accounts with receipts of poll expenditure and the EC must have adequate auditing manpower to have them checked within 30 days. Over expenditure by 5% or more or discrepancies in the accounts amounting to over 5% be grounds for disqualification.
- The security deposit should be equal to 10% of the expenditure limit set by the EC and be counted in the total poll expenditure of the candidate.
- Do not allow candidates to contest from more than one constituency in an election: This is necessary to curtail the unnecessary expenditure that election commission has to make for holding bye-election when a candidate contests election from more than one constituency and wins from all or more than one of the constituencies he has contested from.
- A political party must be allowed to be formed only by a person who has at least been once elected to a house through direct elections and not by nomination. Other guidelines must also apply.
- Each candidate must be able to correctly speak, write and read in the official language of the state (from where he/she is contesting the election) or in Hindi.
- The upper age limit to contest an election should be set as the retirement age for the central govt. employees plus two years.
- The candidate must be found medically and mentally fit, to discharge the normal duties of a legislator, by a team of doctors appointed by the EC, to be allowed to contest.

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- All candidates and their close relatives must declare their total assets before and after, if elected (each year), to the public.
- The size of the Council of Ministers must be limited to 10% of the legislators in larger houses (over 120) members and to 15% in smaller ones (less than 100). A minimum of 12 ministers be permitted for even the smallest house.
- The donation by an individual or company to a candidate must not exceed 5% of the total expenditure permissible. The total donation made by an individual or company to all candidates in an election must not exceed 50% of the total permissible expenditure by one candidate. All donations given and received must be in public knowledge.
- Make false declarations in election affidavits by a candidate a criminal offense.
- Ban publication of exit/opinion polls results till voting is over for all phases at all the places where elections are to take place as per the EC's notification.
- Abolish the first-past-the-post system. The winning candidate must be required to secure 50%+1 vote. This may require a second round of election to be held if none of the candidates in the fray is able to get 50%+1 of the total number of votes polled in the first round. All major national political parties need to agree to this change.
- Use common electoral rolls in the union and state elections.
- The electronic voting machines must be made temper proof and hacking proof and must be proven to be so to the satisfaction of the experts and the political parties. As a safeguard, paper back-up may be provided for cross verification.

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## 9.7 RECENT TRENDS IN ELECTORAL PROCESS

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The paradox of Indian democracy is that enlightened middle class has shown indifferent attitude towards electoral process. In the era of globalization, he is so deeply involved to fulfil his unending quench for attaining material pleasure that he fails to realize his larger national responsibility. This raises the question that when the most educated and enlightened group will fail to fulfil their national obligation then how can we expect our political system to improve automatically.

In western democracy, highly educated and successful groups not only take part in electoral process but also put pressure on government through various pressure groups and also by forming civil society groups on a large scale, whereas in India, people belonging to middle and upper class maintain indifferent attitude and people belonging to lower social, economic, educational background register their participation in large number. For the success of democracy, the participation of have and have not is equally required.

If we analyze the prevailing trend in Indian democracy, we find that on the one hand electoral process has raised the level of political awareness and on the other hand it has also increased the misuse of electoral process by political parties for their narrow ends. Winning election has become the sole criteria for political parties. In order to win election, political parties compromise with values, ethics and morality which used to be associated with it. It has further consolidated primordial values. In this process, they fail to realize that they have larger national responsibility as well. The kind of tactics applied by political parties for winning election has promoted casteism, communalism, regionalism, sectarianism and above all use of money, muscle power and criminalization of politics.

It has weakened the base of Indian politics. In fact, this has become an accepted feature of Indian politics. No political party is ready to discuss this issue that what should be done to do away with such malpractices. Even, Indian public too cannot escape from its responsibility as they are

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electing people who are of dubious credentials. Quest for power has laid to the erosion of values from Indian politics.

Conducting free and fair election is the responsibility of the Election Commission and it has been working hard to live up to its constitutional obligation. Due to the effort of the commission, electoral violence, misuse of money, bogus voting have been substantially reduced. The oppressed and deprived section of our population who could not even dare to go to polling booth, are electing their representative without any fear. However, it would be too early to say that in India, free and fair election has been totally established.

Coming to the second theme of the present paper, i.e. party system. It is closely associated with electoral politics. Maurice Duverger aptly defined that electoral system leaves its impression on the political life of the country through political parties only. In Indian competitive party system, political party's gains power through competitive electoral battle. In order to win election, political parties, indulge in all sorts of manoeverality like arousing passion in the name of caste, region, religion etc. In fact, political parties have compromised with ideology in order to gain power. Over the years, one finds a marked change in the way party system operates in India.

The party system is now said to be moving from a one party dominance system to a multi-party competition, from social cohesion to fragmentation, from a stable pattern to fluidity, from order to chaos as the principle of party competition. One party dominance has been replaced by coalition government. It has led to the emergence of regional centers of power. Regional political parties are playing very crucial role in the national politics. Initially, Congress party played a very vital role in shaping Indian party system. However, it cannot escape from the responsibility of decay that has set in Indian party system as it is the oldest political party in India. The 'catch- all' character of the Congress party won helped it to win election, without forcing any change in its policies or leadership pattern. The Congress party was supported by masses from diverse background

but as pointed out by Yogendra Yadav, the party's upper class- upper caste leadership remained the legitimate representative of the masses.

Congress system was not open to vulnerable section and this may be due to the background of the political class. Charismatic personality of Nehru helped it to remain in power till the end of the decade of sixties. In 1967, serious challenge to Congress dominance emerged and its hegemony as a dominant party was challenged. Its ability to accommodate dissent got challenged forcing many groups to break away.

When Mrs. Gandhi came in power and started facing challenge, in order to consolidate her position she decided to centralize the power. Mrs. Gandhi's slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' won her vote as well as support. However, her style of functioning and dependence on 'Kitchen Cabinet' alienated her from other party leaders. It laid to revolt by many national leaders including regional leadership. Rajiv Gandhi's appearance on the political map of India was under extraordinary circumstances. It re-established one- party dominance. However; his support base started dwindling once his name appeared in Bofors deal.

Congress to post- Congress transformation was never an easy process. However, it led to the establishment of coalition government. The emergence of NDA followed by UPA led to the changed pattern of representation. Those regions/ communities which were feeling deprived, their sentiment was used by regional leaders to form regional parties. These regional parties now have become so strong that they are playing deciding role in the formation of central government.

The most important factor responsible for the change in federal political arrangement is nationalization of regional issues and regionalization of national issues and it is largely because modernization, politicization and economic development and on the other hand because of mandal-mandir controversy. In post 1989 period we observe a new trend towards regionalization of Indian politics and it reflects the representative character of Indian polity. It has also brought those into the center stage of Indian politics who were left on the margins.

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In fact, regional parties have mushroomed in Indian politics in large numbers in recent years. However barring few states, they have not brought about substantial change and in many states, state governments were replaced by national parties. However some regional governments like the one in Bihar and Orissa have shown the path.

In India, party system has covered a long journey from one party dominance to coalition government. And in this process democracy has further got consolidated. Coalition governments, which are generally associated with instability, inordinate delay are after initial hiccup running successfully. Change is imminent in party system and Indian democracy is no exception to this. However the question arises as to whether it has consolidated democratic roots or it reflects the misuse of political system for narrow selfish purpose.

### **Emerging Trends:**

Democracy has deepened further in last sixty years in India and its credibility has vindicated itself. Participation of weaker section especially S.C. and S.T. has increased manifold thereby consolidating democratic process. The pattern of representation to Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha reflects that every segment of the population is getting represented.

Earlier, only educated middle class used to get chance to be elected as people's representative. However, in recent years, the trend has changed and women, S.C., S.T. and farmers too, are getting chance to contest and win election. Political participation of minorities, Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes have increased. One party dominance and its ill-effects are things of the past. Regional parties are ruling in many states and also part of ruling alliance at the central government. Defection, President rule, election related violence etc. have become a rarity. Right to information, Right to education, Panchyati Raj act have really empowered and enlightened the common public.

However it does not mean that all the changes had positive impact only. If we minutely analyze Indian electoral politics as well as party system, we find that along with some positive changes there is some negative

development as well. The vote bank politics has laid to the decline of moral values from our politics. Caste, region, religion still plays decisive role in electoral politics.

Democracy not only ensures adult franchise but also ensures participation in political process. The question is whether Indian democracy has truly ensured the participation of every segment of the population in electoral process. Unless the fruits of democratic success are not shared with deprived and poorer section of the population, the goal of democracy cannot be said to be realized. In Indian context, the worrying aspect is that pace of development is very slow.

Institutions which are considered essential for its successful functioning have declined over the years. For example, electoral system, despite serious effort has failed to invent any device to check the entry of anti-social elements in entering into electoral process which questions its legitimacy. Political parties still involve themselves in immoral practices in order to win election which goes against the democratic spirit. In order to gain political power, they always make use of primordial loyalties like caste, religion, region etc. The basic livelihood issues like unemployment, poverty eradication and other such issues have gone to the backburner.

Normally in a healthy democratic setup, elections are contested on issues relating to problems affecting people. However, in Indian democracy, it seems as a chimera. On the whole, Indian democracy is passing through a transitional phase and the pace of change is very fast. On the one hand many issues have been addressed, some new issues have cropped up and some old issues remain to be resolved. The need of the hour is that divisive tendencies are closely monitored and evaluated and long term and lasting strategy should be devised to address the socio-economic problem then only we would be able to establish a successful, egalitarian republic. Finally, in the words of eminent historian, Ramchandra Guha, it can be said, that Indian democracy is a work in progress and therefore we will have to wait and watch for new developments especially in the field of party system and electoral politics in India.

**Check your Progress-2**

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answer

ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit

4. Discuss the recent trends in electoral process.

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5. Discuss the reforms made in the electoral system.

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**9.8 LET US SUM UP**

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Electoral reforms refer to the development and benign change in election processes in India in order to facilitate better democracy, clean politics, ideal members of legislative houses, equality of representation and so on. Articles 324-329 deal with elections and electoral reforms. Electoral reforms are required to uphold the aspiration of our ancestors, to accomplish the ideals of our constitution and to have a true democracy in letter as well as in spirit by conducting fair elections. **Electoral Reform** is change in electoral systems to improve how public desires are expressed in election results. That can include reforms of:

- Voting systems, such as proportional representation, a two-round system (runoff voting), instant-runoff voting, Instant Round Robin Voting called Condorcet Voting, range voting, approval voting, citizen initiatives and referendums and recall elections.
- Vote-counting procedures

Since the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950, 14 general elections and many elections of various State Legislative Assemblies have been held. Although these elections were generally free and fair, yet some weaknesses of our election system have been noticed. Majority of the nations and their governments strive for the Development and



welfare of its people. In a democratic setup such as ours. It is our politicians- the representatives- the law makers, and the people who lay foundation for the development. And it is the Election Commission which is vested under Article 324 of Indian Constitution with the duty of conducting free and fair elections in the country. A major defect of the present electoral system is that there is remarkably little relationship between the votes secured by a party and its strength in the Assembly or the Parliament. The numbers of seats won by particular parties are not proportionate to the voters polled in their favour. The high cost of electioneering may lead to corrupt practices and the government.

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## 9.9 KEYWORDS

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- Electoral reforms: **Electoral Reform** is change in electoral systems to improve how public desires are expressed in election results.
- Electoral defects: Since the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950, 14 general elections and many elections of various State Legislative Assemblies have been held.
- Electoral system in India: Majority of the nations and their governments strive for the Development and welfare of its people.

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## 9.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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1. Discuss the meaning of electoral process.
2. Discuss the electoral reforms in India.
3. Discuss the defects of the electoral process.
4. Discuss the recent trends in electoral process.
5. Discuss the reforms made in the electoral system.

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## 9.11 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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## 9.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. Electoral reforms refer to the development and benign change in election processes in India in order to facilitate better democracy, clean politics, ideal members of legislative houses, equality of representation and so on. Articles 324-329 deal with elections and electoral reforms. Electoral reforms are required to uphold the aspiration of our ancestors, to accomplish the ideals of our constitution and to have a true democracy in letter as well as in spirit by conducting fair elections.

The process of electoral reforms focus mainly on broadening the core meaning of democracy, making it more citizen friendly, implementation of adult suffrage in letter as well as spirit.

2. **Electoral Reform** is change in electoral systems to improve how public desires are expressed in election results. That can include reforms of:

- Voting systems, such as proportional representation, a two-round system (runoff voting), instant-runoff voting, Instant Round Robin Voting called Condorcet Voting, range voting, approval voting, citizen initiatives and referendums and recall elections.
- Vote-counting procedures
- Rules about political parties, typically changes to election laws
- Eligibility to vote
- How candidates and political parties are able to stand (nomination rules) and how they are able to get their names onto ballots (ballot access)
- Electoral constituencies and election district borders
- Ballot design and voting equipment
- Scrutineering (election monitoring by candidates, political parties, etc.)
- Safety of voters and election workers
- Measures against bribery, coercion, and conflicts of interest
- Financing of candidates' and referendum campaigns

Factors which affect the rate of voter participation.

3. Since the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950, 14 general elections and many elections of various State Legislative Assemblies have been held. Although these elections were generally free and fair, yet some weaknesses of our election system have been noticed. Some of these weaknesses (challenges) are as under:

**(a) Use of caste and religion in election:** In India, a large number of votes are cast on the basis of caste and religion. As a result people get divided on the basis of caste, religion and community which is very harmful for national unity.

**(b) Rigging of election and booth capturing:**

## Notes

With the connivance of the government officials, the ruling party tries to rig the elections. Some candidates also capture the polling booths and make use of their muscle powers to do it. It is alleged that in J&K Assembly elections held in 1987, many candidates of the opposition front were declared losers even though they had got maximum number of votes.

**(c) Misuse of mass media:** During elections the ruling party uses various means of mass media-Radios, Television and Newspapers etc.-to propagate their policies and programmes.

**(d) Low polling percentage:**

In India, many voters do not cast their votes. The voting percentage generally is almost 50 to 60 percent. Therefore, the representative bodies are not truly representative.

**(e) Delay in the disposal of election petitions:** In India, it takes a long time in the disposal of election petitions and sometimes the very purpose of election petition gets defeated.

4. Democracy has deepened further in last sixty years in India and its credibility has vindicated itself. Participation of weaker section especially S.C. and S.T. has increased manifold thereby consolidating democratic process. The pattern of representation to Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha reflects that every segment of the population is getting represented.

Earlier, only educated middle class used to get chance to be elected as people's representative. However, in recent years, the trend has changed and women, S.C., S.T. and farmers too, are getting chance to contest and win election. Political participation of minorities, Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes have increased. One party dominance and its ill-effects are things of the past. Regional parties are ruling in many states and also part of ruling alliance at the central government. Defection, President rule, election related violence etc. have become a rarity. Right to information, Right to education, Panchyati Raj act have really empowered and enlightened the common public.

However it does not mean that all the changes had positive impact only. If we minutely analyze Indian electoral politics as well as party system, we find that along with some positive changes there is some negative development as well. The vote bank politics has laid to the decline of moral values from our politics. Caste, region, religion still plays decisive role in electoral politics.

Democracy not only ensures adult franchise but also ensures participation in political process. The question is whether Indian democracy has truly ensured the participation of every segment of the population in electoral process. Unless the fruits of democratic success are not shared with deprived and poorer section of the population, the goal of democracy cannot be said to be realized. In Indian context, the worrying aspect is that pace of development is very slow.

Institutions which are considered essential for its successful functioning have declined over the years. For example, electoral system, despite serious effort has failed to invent any device to check the entry of anti-social elements in entering into electoral process which questions its legitimacy. Political parties still involve themselves in immoral practices in order to win election which goes against the democratic spirit. In order to gain political power, they always make use of primordial loyalties like caste, religion, region etc. The basic livelihood issues like unemployment, poverty eradication and other such issues have gone to the backburner.

Normally in a healthy democratic setup, elections are contested on issues relating to problems affecting people. However, in Indian democracy, it seems as a chimera. On the whole, Indian democracy is passing through a transitional phase and the pace of change is very fast. On the one hand many issues have been addressed, some new issues have cropped up and some old issues remain to be resolved. The need of the hour is that divisive tendencies are closely monitored and evaluated and long term and lasting strategy should be devised to address the socio-economic problem then only we would be able to establish a successful, egalitarian republic. Finally, in the words of eminent historian, Ramchandra Guha, it can be said, that Indian democracy is a work in progress and therefore we

## Notes

will have to wait and watch for new developments especially in the field of party system and electoral politics in India.

5. A major defect of the present electoral system is that there is remarkably little relationship between the votes secured by a party and its strength in the Assembly or the Parliament. The numbers of seats won by particular parties are not proportionate to the voters polled in their favour. The high cost of electioneering may lead to corrupt practices and the government. The funds are raised from various sources: donations, purses and fund-drives have been the main sources of income of all political parties in India. It has been suggested by some that the system of proportional representation should be introduced to secure representation to the various divisions in the electorate. The opponents of this system argue that it leads to multiplicity of parties and accentuates splits. Some people are of the opinion that the Election Commission should not be a one-man body.

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# UNIT 10: COALITION POLITICS

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## STRUCTURE

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Meaning of coalition
- 10.3 Coalition politics in the states
- 10.4 Party alliances
  - 10.4.1. Seven party alliances
- 10.5 Government formation
  - 10.5.1. Delays or failures in forming a government
- 10.6 The positive side of having coalition politics
- 10.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.8 Keywords
- 10.9 Questions For Review
- 10.10 Suggested Readings And References
- 10.11 Answers To Check Your Progress

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## 10.0 OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand what is the meaning of coalition
- Coalition politics in the states
- Learn about party alliances
- Learn about government formation

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## 10.1 INTRODUCTION

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After the disappearance of Muslim League from the political scene of India in 1947, Indian National Congress was the only national party which commanded popularity and respect of the people. This party undoubtedly had mass base and worked at the grassroots in India.

Therefore, the power was ultimately transferred to this party, when British left India. The party had in its fold galaxy of all national leaders of those days. It was liberal in its approach to every national problem and flexible enough to absorb very divergent views.

It remained in power both at the centre as well as in the states right from 1947 to 1967, when its hold weakened due to several reasons. Important among these being death of Nehruji , India's defeat at the hands of China and inflationary trends in Indian economy. Since Indian National Congress was the only important political party on Indian scene, therefore, it had monolithic character.

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## 10.2 MEANING OF COALITION

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It was only after 1967 elections that coalition experiment in India started. But, before discussing this, it will be interesting to study, as to what is coalition system. Broadly speaking, coalition means uniting and coming together into one body for a particular purpose, which in other words means pooling of resources for achieving a particular purpose. It also means joint use of resources and an alliance for joint action of various groups or organisations into a single government of distinct parties. In the word of Ogg, **“Coalition, as employed in political sense, commonly denotes a co-operative arrangement under which distinct political parties, or at all events members of such parties unite to form a government or Ministry.”**

Coalitions obviously come into existence to have some gains and rewards of both material and psychical nature and for this partners must be two or more. These come together under the force of certain circumstances. In every coalition joining partners are supposed to give up their rigid stand and follow the principle of give and take. More elasticity in approach, more lasting shall be the coalition.

The parties joining coalition agree to a minimum programme, but before reaching that there is always some bargaining by each partner to have



maximum advantage. That programme becomes goal for all political parties to achieve during their partnership period.

But it does not mean that once the parties form a coalition they completely merge their identity. All the parties continue to maintain their identity. As soon as any of the coalition partner finds it difficult to pull on well with other partner(s) that leaves the coalition. In the process another party which higher to was not a coalition partner might join that and thus lend support to the coalition.

It is also just possible that some political party or parties might face break up due to internal feuds and one of the breakaway groups might decide to join the coalition as partner and the other might keep off from it.

When all the parties which agree to work together for implementing a particular common programme, but do not merge themselves to form a new party, is called a coalition. But as soon as they decide to merge themselves to form a new party then that no longer remains a coalition.

This is what happened when Janata party was formed and again the same can be said about the formation of Lok Dal. In some cases a political party may not like to join the coalition but may support it from outside. In 1979, a section of Congress party extended its support to Choudhury Charan Singh government from outside. Similarly government of V.P. Singh in 1989 was extended support by B.J.P. from outside.

In 1995, B.J.P. extended support from outside to Ms Mayawati government in U.P. In that case it can be called as indirect coalition partner. It is, however, left to every political party to withdraw such a support at any time. Thus, coalition system is a continuing process in which political parties come and go and new ones join and also withdraw and so on.

A coalition can have members belonging to any profession or field of activity. Needless to say that in political field the parties and organisations, join efforts to share power and have the best possible

## Notes

advantages and make every effort to win political arena in the face of all odds.

Each party goes to the farthest end to avoid defeat and for the purpose it uses all means and methods. The main aim of coalition is to capture power immediately or in the near future.

A coalition can work both in a tactic or formal form. In the former sense it means the role of single party in power but working with the indirect support of other political parties, whereas in the latter case parties which decide to come together join openly and share power.

This is what happened in 1979, when Charan Singh formed care-taker government. Congress (I) then with Y.B. Chavan as leader of the parliamentary party in the Lok Sabha and AIADMK joined the coalition government, but Congress (I) with C.M. Stephen as leader of the party in the Lok Sabha, decided to give its support to the government from outside, but decided not to join the government headed by Charan Singh.

In 1989, when National Front formed government both BJP and leftist parties decided to extend support from outside and did not join the government. Coalition can also be formed for constructive as well as destructive purposes.

When a coalition is formed with the object of pulling down political party in power and also that of providing an alternative government, it can be called positive coalition.

But when parties join and come together, just with the object of pulling down the government already in power and not taking the burden of forming a new government, or providing no other better alternative, then such a coalition can be called negative coalition.

The coalition partners perhaps never think in terms of permanent friendship. All of them realise that it is only a short term arrangement to achieve a particular end and nothing beyond that. In politics it means capturing political power from the opponent and retaining that for a maximum period.

It is all temporary arrangement and a compromise with selfish motives. In it the conflicts do not end but are just kept aside for the time being but these come to surface as soon as there are tension among coalition partners.

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### **10.3 COALITION POLITICS IN THE STATES**

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As long as monolithic character of the party continued and Congress party remained in power, both at the centre as well as in the states, there was no question of any coalition government. But experiment in coalitions started really after the 1967 elections, when Congress lost heavily in some of the states and opposition parties came to power.

It was after this year that in several Indian states 'Aya Ram and Gaya Ram' process started. Party position in each state as on 1.4.1968 was as shown on pages 149-150.

From the foregoing it will be seen that Congress party was in majority in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, J and K, Mysore, Maharashtra and M.P., whereas it was in minority in Bihar, Kerala, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, U.P. and West Bengal.

It is an interesting study to be undertaken as to how each of the state where Congress could not form a government and Non-Congress parties formed a government functioned and under what circumstances did these break out.

#### **Kerala:**

In Kerala, a United Front coalition consisting of CPM, CPI, SSP, RSP, KTP and KPS formed government on 5th March, 1967, with E.M.S. Namboodripad, as Chief Minister. But soon the coalition came under strains because coalition partners charged the Chief Minister of protecting his own party people.

## Notes

There was also no improvement in food, as well as law and order situation. CPM also organised Gopal Sena which murdered those who worked for the landlords and began searches of food grains hoarders, etc.

In turn Congress and Kerala Congress founded Citizen's Council. In November, 1967 activities of CPM workers became more violent in some areas of the state under the leadership of Narayana and his daughter Ajitha.

Some of the constituents units demanded that judicial enquiries should be held against the Marxists, who were attacking even police stations. The constituents of UF government also began to charge each other of corruption and bribery.

The Chief Minister ordered an enquiry into corruption charges against CPI and ISP Ministers but refused to order enquiry against Marxist Ministers, five MLAs of die parties against whom enquiries were ordered resigned on 17th October, 1969.

On October 24, 1967 House passed a resolution by which it resolved that corruption charges against all other Ministers should also be investigated. As a protest the Chief Minister resigned.

On November 1, 1966, a new coalition Ministry headed by C. Achuta Menon (CPI) was formed with the support of Congress. The coalition partners now were CPI, ISP, RSP and Kerala Congress. This was intolerable for CPM, and the party started violent activities in the state. The workers began to forcibly capture private land and adopted obstructionist activities inside the Assembly.

They did not allow the Governor to read his Address. It was also propagated that the new government was not interested in implementing land reform policies. But the government survived all these shocks and it became clear that it enjoyed comfortable majority, when a vote of thanks to the Governor, for his Address to the House was passed by 73 to 55 votes.

This still more baffled the CPM and the party followed obstructionist policies in the Assembly. They did not allow the government to function and the House was dissolved on 26th June, 1970 and the state was put under President's rule on 4th August, 1970. Thus, ended first experiment of coalition governments in the state.

In September 1970 elections were again held in the state. This time one Front was dominated by CPM, the other by CPI, and still other by Congress (O). CPM front had its allies SSP, KSP and KIP, whereas CPI had among its supporters RSP, PSP and Muslim League. Congress (O) had its allies in Kerala Congress, Jan Sangh, Swatantra Party, DMK and ISP.

As a result of elections Congress party won 32, CPM 26, SSP 6, KIP 2, KSP 2, CPI 16, Muslim League 11, RSP 6, PSP 3, Kerala Congress 12, ISP 3 and independents 12. CPM was definite loser as its strength in the Assembly which was 52 in 1967 came down to 37 in 1970, whereas that of Kerala Congress improved and its strength increased from 5 to 13. Congress party emerged as the single largest party in the Assembly.

In the new Assembly one important reason for the downfall of the CPM was popularity of Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi and her appeal to young voters to vote for her party. In October 1970, Achuta Menon formed coalition government with the support of the Congress from outside. Normal term of the Assembly was to expire in July 1975, but that was extended by another 6 months.

In 1977, elections were held for the state assembly and Kerala again carried on coalition experiment.

This time the Ministry was headed by K. Karunakaran but it survived only for 3 months. In April 1977 he was succeeded by A. K. Anthony as State Chief Minister. In 1980 elections CPM captured two-thirds majority in the Assembly and a new Ministry headed by E. K. Nayanar was formed in January of that year.

## Notes

The Ministry remained in office for about 2 years which was made to resign. New government was headed by K. Karuna karan but there were internal conflicts and it resigned. Due to political instability in the State President's rule was imposed.

In May 1982 elections for the state Assembly were again held and this time United Democratic Front headed by Congress (I) was returned to power. It captured 77 seats as against 63 captured by Left Democratic Front led by CPM. Accordingly a United Democratic Front formed government with K. Karuna karan as its Chief Minister.

In 1987 elections were again held for State Assembly. Left Democratic Front led by CPI won 76 seats in the House of 138 and thus threw United Democratic Front out of power.

Election for the Kerala Assembly were again held in 1991 in which Congress(I) led United Democratic Front captured majority of the seats in a House of 140 whereas Left Democratic Front got the second position. UDF formed the government under the leadership of K. Karuna karan.

But after some time some parties in the government demanded change in state leadership and threatened that in case their demand was not accepted they would leave the front. Accordingly in Mid 1995 K. Karuna karan resigned as State Chief Minister and was replaced by A.K. Anthony. The former joined the Central government as Cabinet Minister.

Thus the state had to work under coalition system, as in the past. Whereas before these elections U.D.F. was in majority, now L.D.F has come to power.

In the state there is hold of the leftist parties, who among themselves form Fronts and join together. Janata Party which swept the polls in North India, did not fair well in the state. Congress (I) is playing a significant role in state politics. The state so far has not attained political stability.

**Uttar Pradesh:**

U.P. is one of such states, which was traditionally considered a strong hold of the Congress party. It was this state which so far has given several Prime Ministers to the country. In the central cabinet U.P. always got and continues to get very good representation and moulds national politics.

In 1967 elections out of 425 seats of Legislative Assembly Congress party got only 195 seats and no political party got absolute majority, and coalition governments had to be formed.

The opposition parties joined together to form United Front Government and elected Ram Chandra Vikal as their leader. But an old Congress stalwart C.B. Gupta could form government in the state. But on the allocation of portfolios, Chief Minister developed differences with Charan Singh, another prominent state leader.

There were elections and C.B. Gupta government suffered a defeat on 1st April, on the motion of vote of thanks to the Governor for his address. Chief Minister then resigned. United Front now elected Charan Singh as its leader, who took over as State Chief Minister on 3rd April, 1967.

But after few months differences in the SVD (SamyuktaVidhayah Dal) came on the surface. In June 1967 some Swatantra ML As and a Minister of that party resigned from the government. On October 6, the party declared withdrawal of support from the government. On October 15 of the same year seven SSP and CPI Ministers resigned on the issue of release of political prisoners arrested in connection with 1966 agitation.

On 5th January, 1968 three SSP Ministers decided to leave and Jan Sangh, a constituent of the government and party badly criticised the Chief Minister. Since criticism from all corners was mounting Charan Singh tendered his resignation to the Governor on 17th February 1968 and thus ended the experiment of coalition government.

## Notes

On 25th February, 1968 state was placed under President rule and Assembly was kept in a state of suspension. It was dissolved on 15th April, 1968.

Fresh elections to the state Assembly were held on February 9, 1969 and this time Congress improved its position. It won 211 seats, as against 195 captured by it in 1967. BKD of Charan Singh captured 99 seats but Jan Sangh suffered a set back when it captured 49 seats only as against 98 in 1967.

Similarly SSP which had 44 seats in 1967 had to satisfy itself with only 33 now. Swatantra party lost 7 seats and now had 5 only. As compared with 14 seats in 1967, now CPI had 4 and PSP 3 as compared with 11 in 1967. Republican party still more suffered. It had 9 seats in 1967, but got only 1 now and conditions of independents was in no way better, as against 37 seats in 1967 they now had 18 only.

Though Congress party had no absolute majority yet with the help of few independents party leader C.B.Gupta could form Congress government on 25th February, 1969. But in 1969 there was split in the party resulting in instability. Kamalapati Tripathi and his supporters who sided with the Prime Minister, decided not to support C.B. Gupta government, as the Chief Minister was with Congress .

They started negotiations with B.K.D. leader Charan Singh, for the formation of a coalition government. Meanwhile in order to save his position C.B. Gupta also started negotiations with Charan Singh. On 10th February, 1970 C.B. Gupta tendered his resignation as Chief Minister and suggested the Governor to invite Charan Singh to form government.

He assured his support and support of SSP and Jan Sangh to him. But soon after differences between BKD and other parties developed and Charan Singh decided to form government with co-operation of Congress . He was sworn-in as Chief Minister on February 17, 1970.

But it did not take long when differences between BKD and Congress (N) developed on taking over of private mills and abolition of



compulsory membership of students unions on the one hand and merger of Congress and BKD on the other. These widened when BKD group in Parliament voted against abolition of Privy Purses.

Finding that Tripathi group might withdraw its support from the government Chief Minister negotiated with Congress (O), Jan Sangh and Swatantra parties.

On 24th September Charan Singh asked for the resignation of the Congress Ministers and immediately Congress decided to withdraw its support from the government. Tripathi wrote to Governor that since Chief Minister was leader of only a minority in the Assembly, therefore, his advice about dissolution of Assembly may not be accepted. Congress (O), Jan Sangh, SSP and Swatantra parties immediately intimated the Governor that they had decided to extend their support to the Chief Minister. Since Governor was in a fix he called for the advice of Attorney General Niren De and State Advocate General K.L. Mishra.

The opinion of the two about the dismissal of Chief Minister differed and Governor acting on the advice of De recommended to the President to place State under President rule. A special courier was sent to Russia, on October 1, 1970, where President was away on tour and after getting his approval state was placed under President rule on October 2, 1970.

The action of the President was much criticised by opposition parties, both in the Parliament and outside.

Few days later, BKD, Jan Sangh, Swatantra and SSP formed SVD and elected T.N. Singh as their leader. Tripathi staked his claim to form the government but Singh was invited to form new government. He was sworn in as Chief Minister on October 17, 1970.

Since T. N. Singh was not a member of the Assembly he contested by-election on January 5, 1971 but was defeated and offered to resign. He was, however, asked to continue till March 1971, when Lok Sabha elections were due. As a result of these elections Congress won 73 out of 85 Lok Sabha seats.

## Notes

This influenced state politics and many SVD members left the party and joined Congress reducing it to minority position, T. N. Singh government was defeated in the Assembly on 30th March, 1971. Tripathi took over as new Chief Minister of the state on 14th April, 1971.

Tripathi government, however, faced serious crisis in summer 1973 due to student agitation and in order to improve the image of the party Chief Minister recommended the Governor to bring the state under President rule and this was done on 12th June, 1973. This action of the Governor was much criticised by opposition parties. President rule continued till 27th October.

The party by now felt that in order to be on an advantageous position it should again hold reign of office in the state and on 27th October Governor was requested to lift President rule from the state as situation had already much improved. On 6th November, 1973, H. N. Bahuguna was sworn in as U.P.'s new Chief Minister.

In 1977, Janata Party came to power at the centre and it decided that since Congress party had lost contacts with the people, therefore, fresh elections should be held in the state. As a result of these elections, Janata Party came to power with absolute majority in the State Assembly.

Since Janata Party was in absolute majority, therefore, there was no question of formation of a coalition government.

In 1980 Congress (I) came to power at the centre and decided that election to the state Assembly should be held afresh, as the Janata Party had lost contacts with the people. As a result of these elections Congress (I) was returned to power with absolute majority.

Therefore, there was no question of formation of coalition government with any other political party in the state and Congress formed the government by itself. In a House of 425, it had a strength of 306.

**West Bengal:**

Bengal also saw an interesting drama of coalition politics. Ajay Kumar Mukerjee, one time Congress Party President, left the party and formed a new party with the help of left wing parties. In the elections which were held in 1967, though Congress emerged as the single largest party with 127 seats in a House of 280, yet all its efforts to form the government were frustrated when all opposition parties combined together were against it.

These elected Ajay Kumar Mukerjee as their leader, who was sworn-in as state Chief Minister in February, 1967. But soon differences developed in the government over the implementation of party programme. But on November 2, Dr. P.C. Ghosh an independent Minister resigned from the government, and intimated the Governor that 17 other members had also withdrawn their support from the government.

Subsequently 15 of them confirmed this. Congress party which had by then 130 members also informed the Governor that it would extend its support to Ghosh government.

The Governor then asked Chief Minister to convene a session of the Assembly at a very early date, but when he found that the latter was in no mood to do so, he dismissed Mukerjee government on 21st November and invited P. C. Ghosh to form the government. As a protest against the decision of the Governor there were violent demonstrations in the state.

Assembly session was called on 29th November and when the House met Speaker Bijoy Kumar Bannerjee adjourned the House sine die declaring that dismissal of Mukerjee government was unconstitutional and thereafter there were violent demonstrations in the state.

On 15th January, 1968 some MLAs who were so far supporting the government from outside, joined the government and announced the formation of Indian National Democratic Front (INDF), UF group decided to extend its support to INDF and their leader staked his claim to form government.

## Notes

On 14th February Assembly met for its budget session but UF MLAs blockaded the doors when Governor came to deliver his address. He was made to enter from the back door, but could not read his Address. There were all chaos and finding that it was impossible to run the government Dr.Sen resigned and state was placed under President rule on 20th February, 1968.

Election to the state Assembly were held on 9th February, 1969. But after elections in the Assembly party position was such that no party was in absolute majority and coalition experiment and politics had to be carried on.

In a House of 280, UF had voting strength of 156, but differences developed over the leadership of the party. Jyoti Basu staked his claim as leader of the party, being the leader of largest constituent unit. But this was not accepted by others. Ultimately after prolonged negotiations it was agreed that Ajay kumar Mukerjee shall be the Chief Minister, and Basu will join cabinet as Home Minister with police department.

On 25th February the new government came to power. But soon thereafter, CPM workers created law and order situation, looted properties of the people, instigated labourers to capture surplus land.

The situation became so worse that Chief Minister himself had to go on fast with thousand workers against high handedness of CPM workers. But Basu and Police Department did nothing to check the situation. The conditions so much worsened that at one point of time CPM students man-handled Chief Minister, but police present at that time did nothing to save the situation.

Finding that the situation was absolutely out of control, the Chief Minister tendered his resignation on 16th March and state was brought under President rule on 19th March, 1970. Finally, the Assembly was dissolved on 30th July and elections were held on March 10, 1971. Again no political party won absolute majority.

This again led to the problem of formation of government. After prolonged negotiations Congress decided to support Ajay kumar Mukerjee and on April 2, he formed his government. But after 2 months there were differences in Bangla Congress itself.

There would have been realignments but meantime Bangladesh crisis took place and Chief Minister recommended dissolution of the Assembly and this was done on 25th June and President rule was imposed on 28th June of the same year.

In 1972, elections to the state Assembly were again held but now there was no need for the formation coalition government because this time Congress party was returned with absolute majority.

**Check your Progress-1**

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer

ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit

1. Discuss the meaning of coalition.

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2. Discuss the West Bengal coalition politics in the states.

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**10.4 PARTY ALLIANCES**

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A **political alliance**, also known as a **coalition** or **bloc**, is cooperation by members of different political parties, in countries with a parliamentary system, on a common agenda of some kind. This usually involves formal agreements between two or more entire parties, and often takes place mainly for the purpose of contesting an election. An alliance is usually especially beneficial to the parties concerned during and immediately after elections – due to characteristics of the electoral systems concerned (e.g. allowing each party to clear election thresholds) and/or allowing parties to participate in formation of a government after elections. These may break up quickly, or hold together for decades becoming the de facto norm, operating almost as a single unit.

Coalition governments are formed when a political alliance comes to power, or when only a plurality (not a majority) has not been reached and several parties must work together to govern. One of the peculiarities of such a method of governance results in minister without portfolio. There are several reasons as to why the Alliance government system is getting special significance at present.

1. Due to increase in the number of political parties.
2. Due to decrease in the significance of a single political parties.
3. After spending so many thousands of cores of public money in holding an election if no stable government can be formed due to the complexities that arise for not getting the absolute majority by any of the parties taking a part in the election, in such a circumstances forming of the alliance or coalition government is the only alternative left to avoid spending of public money again by holding another election.

### **10.4.1. Seven Party Alliances**

**The Seven Party Alliance** was a coalition of seven Nepali political parties seeking to end autocratic rule in the country. They spearheaded the Loktantra Andolan.

The alliance was made up of the following parties:

- Nepali Congress

- Nepali Congress (Democratic)
- Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (Withdrew from government, Sunday May 3, 2009) [1]
- Nepal Workers and Peasants Party
- Nepal Goodwill Party (Anandi Devi)
- United Left Front
- People's Front

These seven parties made up 194 of the 205 seats allocated in the 1999 Nepalese legislative elections, the only significant exception being the Monarchist RashtriyaPrajatantra Party. The RPP split into three factions, with one faction openly supporting the royal take-over and the two others maintaining criticism towards it.

The name "Seven Party Alliance" has always been a misnomer, since one of its members (ULF) is an alliance in itself, consisting of three parties. Moreover, the two largest members, Congress and the CPN(UML) are each much larger than the rest of the members put together.

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## 10.5 GOVERNMENT FORMATION

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**Government formation** is the process in a parliamentary system of selecting a prime minister and cabinet members. If no party controls a majority of seats, it can also involve deciding which parties will be part of a coalition government. It usually occurs after an election, but can also occur after a vote of no confidence in an existing government.

### 10.5.1 Delays Or Failures In Forming A Government

A failure to form a government is a type of cabinet crisis where a coalition controlling a majority of seats cannot be agreed upon.

The process of government formation can sometimes be lengthy. For example, following the 2013 German federal election, Germany engaged in 85 days of government formation negotiations, the longest in the

nation's post-war history. The outcome was the third Merkel cabinet, another grand coalition led by Angela Merkel.

### **Belgium**

Belgian governments are typically coalition governments due to the split between the Flemish and French parts of the country. On occasion, this has led to a situation where no party is able to form a government but the Parliament does not vote to return to the polls. This occurred most notably in 2010–11, when Belgium operated without a government for 541 days. Though there were calls for drastic measures to resolve the issue, including via a partition of Belgium, government services were not disrupted due to the implementation of a caretaker government and the devolution of most key functions.

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## **10.6 THE POSITIVE SIDE OF HAVING COALITION POLITICS**

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Multiparty governance may stall reforms but also prevent bad ideas from being rammed down by a strong executive. Conventional wisdom in India supports a single party emerging as the victor in elections, and a large party as opposition for the optimal functioning of Parliament and the government. A single-party government reduces the need to make political deals with coalition partners, and the legislative agenda of the government can be passed without any hold-outs. With an imminent general election, it is time to re-evaluate these long held ‘truths’. Given perverse incentives created by the anti-defection law, and in the absence of a proper check from the legislature, I argue that India needs coalition governments to check executive overreach.

The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government had trouble from Left parties who held out on key legislative issues. The single-rate Good and Services Tax (GST) reform conceptualized by the UPA never found enough support to get off the ground. Worse still was the problem of political deals required to keep the coalition together, and the corruption among coalition partners.



So, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) managed to get a majority in the Lok Sabha in 2014, Indians rejoiced. They anticipated a slew of reforms, without the usual political holdouts, and a strong leader taking India onto the next stage of development.

Unfortunately, things did not quite work out that way. India got its strong leader, but instead of reforms, it got policies that were supported by few, with little or no debate, that harmed most Indians. The most obvious of these was demonetization, but the list also includes a host of other policies, including the botched GST classification system, the Aadhar overreach by circumventing the Rajya Sabha and budgets full of loan waivers and freebies.

Part of the problem is Narendra Modi's personality. He operates as a lone wolf, powering ahead without building allies or consulting coalition partners, or his party members. But the other problem is institutional. The Indian parliamentary system has not done well in checking the power of the Prime Minister. In theory, in our parliamentary system, the legislature holds the executive accountable by asking specific questions in parliament, debating motions, and fine-tuning legislation through committees. In reality, the government, especially a single-party government, wins the vote on every motion because of strong anti-defection laws.

To resolve the problem of legislators switching parties for political gains, the parliament passed the 52nd Amendment in 1985, laying down the process by which legislators may be disqualified on grounds of defection. If a legislator voluntarily gives up the membership of their party, or disobeys the directives of the party leadership on a legislative vote, it is defection. While this was meant to prevent the practice of 'horse-trading', i.e. legislators switching political loyalty for money or political reward, on a day-to-day basis it prevented legislators from voting against their party's official position.

Every party has a whip, which is used interchangeably for both the office and the order. Usually a senior member of the party is appointed whip to hold legislators to the party line. And the party's

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whip issues a whip: the official position of the party on any particular legislative matter.

A legislator cannot disobey the whip without the fear of sanction under the anti-defection law. The result is that legislators always fall in line and vote the party position without opposition. At best, they may abstain from voting.

This problem is made worse because it is not mandatory in parliament or a legislative assembly to record each legislator's vote on a particular motion, and most motions are carried by a voice vote. Votes of individual members are only recorded if any member asks for a division, i.e. asks the speaker to record the individual Ayes and Noes on a motion.

The consequence is that constituents of a legislator cannot easily find the voting record of their elected representatives to hold them accountable. The absence of voting records and the presence of an official whip create perverse incentives.

This has encouraged a centralized and anti-democratic culture in our parliament and legislative assemblies, and within individual parties. The whips of major parties are the most politically influential people in India.

Yet, no one asks a whip for a press conference or for an explanation of how the whip arrived at a particular position. The whip serves the leader of the party, and in the case of a single party government, the prime minister. While one hears reports of opposition within the BJP on demonetization and GST, there is no official record of this dissent, and there is no debate within the party on the floor of the house.

The purpose of the anti-defection law is to provide a stable government by preventing horse-trading. But in the process, it has suppressed parliamentary speech, debate and dissent, and severely restricted legislators from voting in line with their constituents.

In an ideal world, the 52nd amendment would be deleted, and parliamentary freedom reinstated. However, the political incentives to do so are extremely weak. No party whip would allow members to vote for a repeal. Every party hopes to form the government and,

when it does, the constitutionally mandated whip helps pass the legislative agenda.

So, our next best hope is coalition governments. Coalition partners can prevent surprise moves like demonetization, which hurt most Indians. Coalition governments may prevent good reform, but, by the same principle, also prevent badly crafted ideas rammed down by a strong executive.

To rein in the next set of policy disasters, we must hope that no single party gets a majority.

**Check your Progress-2**

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer

ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit

3. Discuss why the Alliance government system is getting special significance at present.

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4. Discuss the meaning of government formation.

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**10.7 LET US SUM UP**

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It was only after 1967 elections that coalition experiment in India started. But, before discussing this, it will be interesting to study, as to what is coalition system. Broadly speaking, coalition means uniting and coming together into one body for a particular purpose, which in other words means pooling of resources for achieving a particular purpose. It also

means joint use of resources and an alliance for joint action of various groups or organisations into a single government of distinct parties. In the word of Ogg, **“Coalition, as employed in political sense, commonly denotes a co-operative arrangement under which distinct political parties, or at all events members of such parties unite to form a government or Ministry.”** As long as monolithic character of the party continued and Congress party remained in power, both at the centre as well as in the states, there was no question of any coalition government. But experiment in coalitions started really after the 1967 elections, when Congress lost heavily in some of the states and opposition parties came to power. A **political alliance**, also known as a **coalition** or **bloc**, is cooperation by members of different political parties, in countries with a parliamentary system, on a common agenda of some kind. This usually involves formal agreements between two or more entire parties, and often takes place mainly for the purpose of contesting an election. **Government formation** is the process in a parliamentary system of selecting a prime minister and cabinet members. If no party controls a majority of seats, it can also involve deciding which parties will be part of a coalition government. It usually happens after an election, but can also occur after a vote of no confidence in an existing government. The consequence is that constituents of a legislator cannot easily find the voting record of their elected representatives to hold them accountable. The absence of voting records and the presence of an official whip create perverse incentives.

This has encouraged a centralized and anti-democratic culture in our parliament and legislative assemblies, and within individual parties. The whips of major parties are the most politically influential people in India. Yet, no one asks a whip for a press conference or for an explanation of how the whip arrived at a particular position. The whip serves the leader of the party, and in the case of a single party government, the prime minister. While one hears reports of opposition within the BJP on demonetization and GST, there is no official record of this dissent, and there is no debate within the party on the floor of the house. The purpose of the anti-defection law is to provide a stable

government by preventing horse-trading. But in the process, it has suppressed parliamentary speech, debate and dissent, and severely restricted legislators from voting in line with their constituents.

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## 10.8 KEYWORDS

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- Coalition politics: As long as monolithic character of the party continued and Congress party remained in power, both at the centre as well as in the states, there was no question of any coalition government.
- Party alliances: A **political alliance**, also known as a **coalition** or **bloc**, is cooperation by members of different political parties, in countries with a parliamentary system, on a common agenda of some kind.
- Government formation: **Government formation** is the process in a parliamentary system of selecting a prime minister and cabinet members.

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## 10.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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1. Discuss the meaning of coalition.
2. Discuss the West Bengal coalition politics in the states.
3. Discuss why the Alliance government system is getting special significance at present.
4. Discuss the meaning of government formation.

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## 10.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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4. Menon, Nirmala (2008-12-02). "Coalition Set To Topple Canada PM". Wall Street Journal. Retrieved 2008-12-02.

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## 10.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. It was only after 1967 elections that coalition experiment in India started. But, before discussing this, it will be interesting to study, as to what is coalition system. Broadly speaking, coalition means uniting and coming together into one body for a particular purpose, which in other words means pooling of resources for achieving a particular purpose. It also means joint use of resources and an alliance for joint action of various groups or organisations into a single government of distinct parties. In the word of Ogg, "Coalition, as employed in political sense, commonly denotes a co-operative arrangement under which distinct political parties, or at all events members of such parties unite to form a government or Ministry." Coalitions obviously come into existence to have some gains and rewards of both material and psychological nature and for this partners must be two or more. These come together under the force of certain circumstances and part of the company as soon as those circumstances cease to exist.
2. Bengal also saw an interesting drama of coalition politics. Ajay Kumar Mukerjee, one time Congress Party President, left the party and formed a new party with the help of left wing parties. In the elections which were held in 1967, though Congress emerged as the single largest party with 127 seats in a House of 280, yet all its

efforts to form the government were frustrated when all opposition parties combined together were against it. These elected Ajay Kumar Mukerjee as their leader, who was sworn-in as state Chief Minister in February, 1967. But soon differences developed in the government over the implementation of party programme. But on November 2, Dr. P.C. Ghosh an independent Minister resigned from the government, and intimated the Governor that 17 other members had also withdrawn their support from the government.

3. Alliance government system is getting special significance at present.

Due to increase in the number of political parties.

Due to decrease in the significance of a single political parties.

After spending so many thousands of cores of public money in holding an election if no stable government can be formed due to the complexities that arise for not getting the absolute majority by any of the parties taking a part in the election, in such a circumstances forming of the alliance or coalition government is the only alternative left to avoid spending of public money again by holding another election.

4. Government formation is the process in a parliamentary system of selecting a prime minister and cabinet members. If no party controls a majority of seats, it can also involve deciding which parties will be part of a coalition government. It usually occurs after an election, but can also occur after a vote of no confidence in an existing government.

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# **UNIT- 11 LEFT RADICALISM IN INDIA**

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## **STRUCTURE:**

11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.2 concept of Radicalism

11.3 History of Radicalism

11.3.1 Radicalism and liberalism

11.4 Ultra leftism

11.4.1 The historical ultra-left

11.5 Factors and forms of radicalism in India

11.5.1 Steps to Tackle Radicalism

11.6 Understanding the future, Arundhati Roy urges left radicalism

11.7 Left Radicalism in India

11.8 Let us sum up

11.9 Key words

11.10 Questions for review

11.11 Suggested readings and references

11.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

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## **11.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After studying this unit, you should be able to:



- Learn about the concept of Radicalism
- Learn about the Ultra leftism
- Learn about the factors and forms of radicalism in India

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## 11.1 INTRODUCTION

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Left radicalism in India was rooted in the nationalist movement and was set in motion in the 1920s with the formation of the communist party. The communist movement manifested itself differently in each phase of India's political history and Communism continues to remain a meaningful alternative ideological discourse in India.

This book examines left politics in India focusing on its rise, consolidation and relative decline in the present century. Left radicalism in India is a distinct ideological phenomenon which is articulated in two complementary ways: while the parliamentary left remains social democratic in character, its *bête noire*, the left wing extremists, continue to uphold the classical Marxist, Leninist and Maoist notion of violent revolution. By concentrating on the nature and also activities of these two versions of left radicalism, this book is a thorough study of the phenomenon. The author analyses the states of Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura and presents a variety of case studies of communist movements. He argues that the political power of the left parties depends on the degree to which they have built organizational strength, political hegemony and a broad social base through legal and extra-parliamentary struggles.

An in-depth study of socio-economic circumstances that remain critical in conceptualizing radical extremism, Left Radicalism in India will be of interest to those studying Indian Politics, South Asian History, Development Studies and Global Politics.

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## 11.2 CONCEPT OF RADICALISM

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The term **political radicalism** (in political science known as radicalism) denotes political principles focused on altering social

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structures through revolutionary or other means and changing value systems in fundamental ways.

Derived from the Latin *radix* ("root"), the denotation of radical has changed since its eighteenth-century coinage to comprehend the entire political spectrum—yet it retains the "change at the root" connotation fundamental to revolutionary societal change. Historically, radicalism has referred exclusively to the radical left (under the single category of far-left politics) and rarely incorporating far-right politics—though these may have revolutionary elements. The prominent exception is in the United States, where some consider radicalism to include both political extremes of the radical left and the radical right. In traditional labels of the spectrum of political thought, the opposite of radical – on the "right" of the political spectrum – is termed "reactionary".

The nineteenth-century *Cyclopædia of Political Science* (1881, 1889) reports that "radicalism is characterized less by its principles than by the manner of their application". Conservatives often used the term "radical" pejoratively whereas contemporary left radicals used the term "conservative" derogatorily, thus contemporary denotations of "radical", "radicalism" and "political radicalism" comprise far-left (hard left, radical left) and far-right (hard right, radical right).

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* records the first political usage of "radical" as ascribed to the British Whig Party parliamentarian Charles James Fox, who in 1797 proposed a "radical reform" of the electoral system, franchise to provide universal manhood suffrage, thereby idiomatically establishing "radical" to denote supporters of the reformation of the British Parliament. Throughout the nineteenth century, the term was combined with political notions and doctrines, thus producing the concepts of working class radicalism, middle class-, philosophic-, democratic- bourgeois-, Tory- and plebeian radicalism. In the event, politically influential radical leaders give rise to their own trend of political radicalism. Philosophically, the French political scientist Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) is the principal theoretician proposing "political radicalism" as feasible in republican political

philosophy, the French Revolution (1789–1799) and other modern revolutions—the antithesis to the liberalism of John Locke (1632–1704).

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## 11.3 HISTORY OF RADICALISM

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The term "**Radical**" (from the Latin *radix* meaning root), during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, identified proponents of democratic reform, in what subsequently became the parliamentary Radical Movement.

During the 19th century in the United Kingdom, continental Europe and Latin America, the term "Radical" came to denote a progressive liberal ideology inspired by the French Revolution. Historically, Radicalism emerged in an early form with the French Revolution and the similar movements it inspired in other countries. It grew prominent during the 1830s in the United Kingdom (the Chartists) and Belgium (see the Revolution of 1830), then across Europe in the 1840s–50s (see the Revolutions of 1848). In contrast to the social conservatism of existing liberal politics, Radicalism sought political support for a "radical reform" of the electoral system to widen the franchise. It was also associated with republicanism; civic nationalism; abolition of titles; rationalism and the resistance to a single established state religion; redistribution of property; and freedom of the press.

In nineteenth-century France, Radicalism had emerged as a minor political force by the 1840s, as the extreme left of the day (in contrast to the socially conservative liberalism of the Moderate Republicans and Orléanists monarchists, and the anti-parliamentarianism of the Legitimist monarchists and Bonapartists). By the 1890s the French Radicals were not organised under a single nationwide structure, but had become a significant political force in parliament; in 1901 they consolidated their efforts by forming the country's first major extra-parliamentary political party, the Republican, Radical and Radical-Socialist Party, which became the most important party of government during the second half (1899 to 1940) of the Third Republic. The success of the French PRRRS encouraged Radicals elsewhere to organise themselves into formal parties in a range of other countries in the late

nineteenth and early twentieth century, with Radicals holding significant political office in Switzerland, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Russia. During the interwar, European Radical parties organised their own international, the Radical Entente.

As social democracy emerged as a distinct political force in its own right, the differences that once existed between left-wing radicalism and conservative liberalism diminished, and between 1940 and 1973 Radicalism became defunct in most of its European heartlands, its role and philosophy taken on by social democratic and conservative-liberal parties.

### **11.3.1 Radicalism And Liberalism**

The two Enlightenment philosophies of Liberalism and Radicalism both shared the goal of liberating humanity from traditionalism. But Liberals regarded it as sufficient to establish individual rights that would protect the individual. Radicals, however, sought institutional, social/economic, and especially cultural/educational reform to allow every citizen to put those rights into practice. For this reason we could say that Radicalism went beyond the demand for liberty, by seeking also equality, that is, universality.

In some countries, Radicalism represented a minor wing within the Liberal political family, as in the case of England's Radical Whigs. Sometimes the Radical wing of the Liberals were hardline or doctrinaire, and in other cases more moderate and pragmatic.

In other countries, Radicalism had had enough electoral support on its own, or a favourable electoral system or coalition partners, to maintain distinct Radical parties: Switzerland and Germany Bulgaria, Denmark, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands, but also Argentina (Radical Civic Union), Chile and Paraguay.

Victorian era Britain possessed both trends: In England the Radicals were simply the left wing of the Liberal coalition, though they often

rebelled when the coalition's socially conservative Whigs resisted democratic reforms, whereas in Ireland Radicals lost faith in the ability of parliamentary gradualism to deliver egalitarian and democratic reform and, breaking away from the main body of liberals, pursued a radical-democratic parliamentary republic through separatism and insurrection.

This does not mean that all radical parties were formed by left-wing liberals. In French political literature, it is normal to make a clear separation between Radicalism as a distinct political force to the left of Liberalism but to the right of Socialism. Over time, as new left-wing parties formed to address the new social issues, the right wing of the Radicals would splinter off in disagreement with the main Radical family and became absorbed as the left wing of the Liberal family—rather than the other way around, as in Britain and Belgium.

However, the distinction between Radicals and Liberals was made clear by the two mid-20th-century attempts to create an international for centrist democratic parties. In 1923-4, the French Radicals created an *Entente Internationale des Partis Radicaux et des Partis Démocratiques similaires*: it was joined by the centre-left Radical parties of Europe, and in the democracies where no equivalent existed—Britain and Belgium—the liberal party was to allowed attend instead. After the Second World War the Radical International was not reformed; instead, a centre-right Liberal International was established, closer to the conservative-liberalism of the British and Belgian Liberal parties. This marked the end of Radicalism as an independent political force in Europe, though some countries such as France and Switzerland retained politically-important Radical parties well into the 1950s–1960s.

Thus, many European parties that are nowadays categorised in the group of social-liberal parties have a historical affinity with radicalism and may therefore be called "liberal-radical"

### Check Your Progress-1

5. Discuss the concept of Radicalism.

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6. Discuss the history of Radicalism.

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## 11.4 ULTRA LEFTISM

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The term **ultra-leftism** has two overlapping uses. A usage common among Marxist activist groups is as a generally pejorative term for certain types of positions on the far-left that are extreme or intransigent. Another definition historically refers to a particular current of Marxist communism, in which the Communist International repudiated social democratic parties (and all other progressive groupings outside of the Communist Party). Pejoratively, *ultra-left* is often used by Marxists against other socialists, communists, and anarchists within far-left parties who advocate strategies which some Marxists may consider to be without regard of the current political consciousness or of the long-term consequences that would result from following a proposed course.

Ultra-leftism within and outside the Communist International was evident in periods when political groupings pursued council communism and left communism.

### 11.4.1 The Historical Ultra-Left

The term *ultra left* is rarely used in English. Instead, people tend to speak broadly of left communism as a variant of traditional Marxism. The French equivalent, *ultra-gauche*, has a stronger meaning in that language and is used to define a movement that still exists today: a branch of left communism developed by theorists such as Amadeo Bordiga, Anton Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, and Paul Mattick, and continuing with more recent writers, such as Jacques Camatte and Gilles Dauvé. This

standpoint includes two main traditions, a Dutch-German tradition including Rühle, Pannekoek, Gorter and Mattick, and an Italian tradition following Bordiga. These traditions came together in the 1960s French ultra-gauche. The political theorist Nicholas Thoburn refers to these traditions as the "actuality of... the historical ultra-left".

The term originated in the 1920s in the German and Dutch workers movements, originally referring to a Marxist group opposed to both Bolshevism and social democracy, and with some affinities with anarchism. The ultra-left is defined particularly by its breed of anti-authoritarian Marxism, which generally involves an opposition to the state and to state socialism, as well as to parliamentary democracy and wage labour. In opposition to Bolshevism, the ultra left generally places heavy emphasis upon the autonomy and self-organisation of the proletariat. As Dauvé put it:

The ultra-left was born and grew in opposition to Social Democracy and Leninism—which had become Stalinism. Against them it affirmed the revolutionary spontaneity of the proletariat. The German communist left (in fact German-Dutch), and its derivatives, maintained that the only human solution lay in proletarians' own activity, without it being necessary to educate or to organize them. Inheriting the mantle of the ultra-left after the war, the magazine *Socialisme ou Barbarie* appeared in France between 1949 and 1965.

The ideas of the historical ultra-left were widely revived in the New Left of the 1960s, and particularly in the May 1968 moment in libertarian socialist movements such as Big Flame, the Situationist International.

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## **11.5 FACTORS AND FORMS OF RADICALISM IN INDIA**

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The word “radical” refers to change in the fundamental nature of something, thus Radicalism is set of beliefs or actions of people who advocate thorough or complete political or social reform.

Radicalisation refers to the process of an individual's transformation from a moderate, law-abiding citizen into an active, anti-state, violent extremist.

### Factors behind Radicalisation

- **Individual socio-psychological factors**, which include grievances and emotions such as alienation and exclusion, anger and frustration and a strong sense of injustice.
- **Socio-Economic Factors**, which include social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination (real or perceived), limited education or employment etc.
- **Political Factors**, which include weak and non-participatory political systems lacking good governance and regard for civil society.
- **Social media**, which provide connectivity, virtual participation and an echo-chamber for like-minded extremist views, accelerates the process of radicalisation.

### Forms of Radicalism in India

- **Politico-Religious Radicalism:** It is associated with a political interpretation of religion and the defence, by violent means, of a religious identity perceived to be under attack. **Use of Religion by ISIS to spread its influence all over the world is an example.**
- **Right-Wing Radicalism:** It is a form of radicalization associated with fascism, racialism/racism, supremacism and ultranationalism.
- **Left Wing Radicalism:** This form of radicalization focuses primarily on anti-capitalist demands and calls for the transformation of political systems considered responsible for producing social inequalities, and that may ultimately employ violent means to further its cause.



### 11.5.1 Steps to Tackle Radicalism

- A **consistent counter radical strategy** is required to tackle radicalism.
- **Institutions have to be strengthened:** Educational and political institutions should be strengthened at ground level so that people of any state feel empowered. Also, enough number of job opportunities should be provided to people **to decrease their chances of joining any radicalist organization.**
- There should **be sufficient evidence** behind banning any organization. This is necessary to avoid court cases. Also, Intelligence Agencies, Law Enforcement Agencies and Judicial Courts need to act in unison on this matter.
- Once government identifies any radicalist organization, it needs to take **hold of their physical and financial resources.**
- **Countering activities of radicalists.** If hate can be taught, then love and social responsibilities toward people and the nation can also be taught. This is necessary to de-radicalize people.
- It needs to be ensured that people who been de-radicalized feel safe and secure in the country.

ISIS is trying to spread its influence in India. Also, there is a possibility that after U.S. withdraws from Afghanistan; Taliban will also try to spread its reach to India. In these circumstances, avoiding radicalization of people becomes the top priority for India.

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## 11.6 UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE, ARUNDHATI ROY URGES LEFT RADICALISM

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Celebrated writer-activist Arundhati Roy urged the country's Left to understand the future that is set to be controlled by technology and data-gathering.

While the radical Left was still talking about revolution, a revolution has already taken place wherein a former Brahminical elite was replaced by a new elite, which would survive only by manipulating the minds of the next generation, the Booker Prize winner said while delivering her

address at the Civil Liberties Committee's first Telangana State Congress here on Saturday.

Peasants and workers would not find a place in the future as there would not be any work. The future would pivot on technology, artificial intelligence and data-gathering, all of which would be used for surveillance of people.

“And we all know what fascism has done with surplus people,” she said, and warned of impending ‘micro fascism’ which would keep tab on the mass of unemployed people in cities with no access to resources, and who would be controlled using data gathered about them through Aadhaar and such tools.

The same corporation pushing for Aadhaar has set up large foundations to fund intellectuals, so as to buy their silence.

“Each time we agree to divide ourselves along caste, gender, communities, ethnicities, and language, it's a success for the new aggressive capitalism masquerading as benevolent democracy,” Ms. Roy warned.

The complexity with which the future is coming upon us needs to be understood, as it would not be about winning elections, she said. The real danger to the society is not fundamentalism, but ‘cretinism’ and idiocy which seeks to attack every form of intelligence through attacks on universities.

“They have to break every single educational institution. They have to make every single history book, the work of a moron, so that the link between any kind of intelligent and radical politics is broken in the next generation,” she said.

Likening the note ban to “breaking the backs” of citizens, she said people rioted when it was sought to be implemented in other countries such as Venezuela. In India, there was anger, but the move was accepted. Similar situation prevails around Judge Loya's mysterious death. These are tests to see how far people would accept control. “This is how fascism is creeping in on us today,” she said.

Academic-activist Nandini Sundar said the combination of state power and vigilante forces has become the norm across the country, and law itself has become a tool of harassment. Fascism is using technology to promote medievalism, and the fight would not stop with the 2019 elections, but would be continued till the “poison” is removed from minds, she said.

Another academic G. Haragopal observed that the development model of the present dispensation was inhuman, and that was why it needed exercise of power. The destruction which had begun during the Congress regime was continuing now with more viciousness, he said, condemning the arrest of students on false allegations of conspiring to kill the Vice-Chancellor of University of Hyderabad.

Writer and intellectual Katyayani said civil rights were not only about Maoists, but the awareness needs to be created among citizens, especially the middle-class.

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## **11.7 LEFT RADICALISM IN INDIA**

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Left extremism in India developed as a reaction to the age old oppression and exploitation of the agrarian masses by the feudal lords and landowners. India remained largely a feudalistic society during her time of independence and controversially still retains a prominent semi feudal character even in the current 21st century. Though several land reform acts and agricultural laws have been passed over the years, their implementation has been disastrously faulty making the plight of the lower sections of society sink inhumanely low. Also at that particular conjuncture of Indian History, the Partition of the country had led to huge influx of refugees coming from East and West Pakistan. This only complicated the land question. These can be branded as the main reason behind the deprived sections of society being forced to take up arms against the state, first even before independence in the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh in 1946-51, then the Naxalbari Movement in 1967 and Maoist Insurgency movements, which acts as the ‘Mole’ which

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tarnishes India's Image in the world today. The mastermind, pioneer and inspiration behind left radical movement in India-Charu Mazumdar in the wake of the Naxalbari Uprising had remarked Since India was a Semicolonial, semi feudal country, the main force that could change the colonial condition in this country was the peasantry and their anti-feudal struggle. It was the agrarian revolution that proved to be the only path towards liberation of this country." "Few events had generated so much sensation and tension in the post-independence political scenario as the naxalite movement did. The minuscule peasant uprising in Naxalbari in 1967 had been able to exert a far reaching impact on the rural scenario of the country. Imbued with the politics of armed agrarian revolution that guided the uprising, the peasants in different parts of the country resented the age old method of feudal oppression and exploitation'. 'The Naxalbari movement was a short lived 'spring thunder' that helped to reconceptualize political discourses in India. This was primarily an agrarian struggle against Brutal feudal exploitation that led to a massive anti-state confrontation. Hailing the Naxalbari movement, the People's Daily, the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party, thus commented, 'a peal of spring thunder has crashed over the land of India. Revolutionary peasants in the Darjeeling area {in West Bengal} have risen in rebellion. Under the Leadership of a revolutionary group of the Indian Communist Party, a red area of rural revolutionary armed struggle has been established in India. This is a tremendous influence on the Indian People's revolutionary struggle'. It can be seen as multi-dimensional trailblazer in the history of India for many reasons. First it was the most prominent revolutionary movement in India in the post-independence era. The movement is seen by many as the inspirational fuel of the Maoist insurgency movements which continue in eastern central and southern India today. Secondly it highlighted the flaws of the Indian State and exposed the inadequacies of both the central and state governments to effectively implement land reforms, agricultural policies and abolish the feudal structural of the Indian State. Lastly the movement managed to catch international attention (especially from China) and also generated a vast amount of literature and intellectual fervour on this subject especially from the Bengali Middle class and university students.

Many bright and promising students sought to leave their academics and join the left radical movement, often giving up their lives during the ruthless attempts by the state to suppress the movement. The Naxalbari movement was not suddenly created in 1967, nor did it fall from heaven by the grace of god nor was it a sudden outburst. It was the culmination of long drawn anti-feudal struggles in the Indian state of West Bengal that began with movements of illegal extortion of jotedars. The revolutionary movements of Naxalbari in West Bengal, Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh and Bhojpur in Bihar (together termed as the Naxalite movement) were however sudden outbursts of scattered violence. Though the struggles continued for some time, no effective result had yielded in the socio-economic and political conditions of the impoverished masses which constitute the controversial Red Corridor today. The Naxalite movement in the Late 1960's and early 1970's failed to meet its objectives and bring about an equitable and just redistribution of land. Charu Mazumdar's Actions which supporting revolutionary guerilla warfare and class annihilation had been criticized not only within the CPI (M) but also by the other prominent comrades of his own formed party CPI (ML) (1969) like Kanu Sanyal and Ashim Chatterjee. Even the then Chinese premier Chou-En-Lai criticized Mazumdar's policy of class annihilation and pointed out that though the Naxalites were greatly influenced by Mao Zedong, China's leader cannot motivate the people of India in the same way as their leader from their own soil: they needed their own Mao. Later another prominent leader Satyanarayana remarked "We know hold that annihilation of individual enemies is nothing but individual or squad terrorism and has nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism. It turns the Masses into silent spectators and robs the revolution of mass support" Ultimately the Naxalbari movement gradually began to lose its original valor after the capture of Charu Mazumdar and his death in police custody in 1972 and the brutal suppression of the movement by the state. However the Naxalite Movement is still active in the 'Jangal Mahal' of West Bengal even today which resurfaced a few years after the original movement died down. Thus eventually after the first phase of the Naxalite movement, the Indian countryside remained the same as it was during the times of the

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Raj and before the Movement with the same vicious circle of money lenders and landlords and local government officials all working under the protection of corrupt politicians and Bureaucracy. The plight of the poor peasants, tribal and agricultural laborers remained the same or in fact deteriorated with the adoption of the New Economic Policy in 1992 and with the new India's zeal to rapidly industrialize itself. So the earlier one-dimensional exploitation of the feudal lords got transformed into a multidimensional fleecing of the hapless tribal and poor farmers. Thus the Indian state post the Naxalbari uprising continued to remain as 'islands of affluence in the sea of poverty'. Little was done to curb the inhuman exploitation of the adivasis (tribals) and the poor landless peasantry by the moneylenders, landlords and businessmen who had now roped the support of the state into their fold in order to give their exploitation a more legitimate facet. Thus it is safe to say that the 'return of spring thunder' from the late 1970's can be seen as the precarious continuity of the original movement which developed on these objective conditions of poverty and exploitation. The movement resurfaced in Andhra Pradesh's Warangal district under the leadership of Kondapalli Seetharamaiah who was a brilliant strategist. He sought to learn from the mistakes made by Charu Mazumdar and Kanu Sanyal in regard to the failure of the Naxalbari uprising, as well as the simultaneous uprisings which took place in Srikakulam and Bhojpur.

### Check Your Progress-2

7. Discuss the history of leftism.

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8. Discuss the factors and forms of Radicalism.

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## 11.8 LET S SUM UP

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The term **political radicalism** (in political science known as radicalism) denotes political principles focused on altering social structures through revolutionary or other means and changing value systems in fundamental ways. Derived from the Latin *radix* ("root"), the denotation of radical has changed since its eighteenth-century coinage to comprehend the entire political spectrum—yet it retains the "change at the root" connotation fundamental to revolutionary societal change. Historically, radicalism has referred exclusively to the radical left (under the single category of far-left politics) and rarely incorporating far-right politics—though these may have revolutionary elements. The prominent exception is in the United States, where some consider radicalism to include both political extremes of the radical left and the radical right. In traditional labels of the spectrum of political thought, the opposite of radical – on the "right" of the political spectrum – is termed "reactionary". The term **ultra-leftism** has two overlapping uses. A usage common among Marxist activist groups is as a generally pejorative term for certain types of positions on the far-left that are extreme or intransigent. Another definition historically refers to a particular current of Marxist communism, in which the Communist International repudiated social democratic parties (and all other progressive groupings outside of the Communist Party). Pejoratively, *ultra-left* is often used by Marxists against other socialists, communists, and anarchists within far-left parties who advocate strategies which some Marxists may consider to be without regard of the current political consciousness or of the long-term consequences that would result from following a proposed course. The word "radical" refers to change in the fundamental nature of something, thus Radicalism is set of beliefs or actions of people who advocate thorough or complete political or social reform. Radicalisation refers to

the process of an individual's transformation from a moderate, law-abiding citizen into an active, anti-state, violent extremist.

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### 11.9 KEYWORDS

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- Radicalism: The term **political radicalism** (in political science known as radicalism) denotes political principles focused on altering social structures through revolutionary or other means and changing value systems in fundamental ways.
- Ultra Leftism: The term **ultra-leftism** has two overlapping uses. A usage common among Marxist activist groups is as a generally pejorative term for certain types of positions on the far-left that are extreme or intransigent.

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### 11.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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1. Discuss the concept of Radicalism.
2. Discuss the history of Radicalism.
3. Discuss the history of leftism.
4. Discuss the factors and forms of Radicalism.

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### 11.11 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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5. Gilbert Abcarian (1971), *American Political Radicalism: Contemporary Issues and Orientations*.
6. "Radicals/Radicalism - Radical Liberalism". [science.jrank.org](http://science.jrank.org). Retrieved 28 August 2017.

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## 11.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. The term **political radicalism** (in political science known as radicalism) denotes political principles focused on altering social structures through revolutionary or other means and changing value systems in fundamental ways.

Derived from the Latin *radix* ("root"), the denotation of radical has changed since its eighteenth-century coinage to comprehend the entire political spectrum—yet it retains the "change at the root" connotation fundamental to revolutionary societal change. Historically, radicalism has referred exclusively to the radical left (under the single category of far-left politics) and rarely incorporating far-right politics—though these may have revolutionary elements. The prominent exception is in the United States, where some consider radicalism to include both political extremes of the radical left and the radical right. In traditional labels of the spectrum of political thought, the opposite of radical – on the "right" of the political spectrum – is termed "reactionary".

The nineteenth-century *Cyclopaedia of Political Science* (1881, 1889) reports that "radicalism is characterized less by its principles than by the manner of their application". Conservatives often used the term "radical" pejoratively whereas contemporary left radicals used the term

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"conservative" derogatorily, thus contemporary denotations of "radical", "radicalism" and "political radicalism" comprise far-left (hard left, radical left) and far-right (hard right, radical right).

The Encyclopædia Britannica records the first political usage of "radical" as ascribed to the British Whig Party parliamentarian Charles James Fox, who in 1797 proposed a "radical reform" of the electoral system, franchise to provide universal manhood suffrage, thereby idiomatically establishing "radical" to denote supporters of the reformation of the British Parliament. Throughout the nineteenth century, the term was combined with political notions and doctrines, thus producing the concepts of working class radicalism, middle class-, philosophic-, democratic- bourgeois-, Tory- and plebeian radicalism. In the event, politically influential radical leaders give rise to their own trend of political radicalism. Philosophically, the French political scientist Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) is the principal theoretician proposing "political radicalism" as feasible in republican political philosophy, the French Revolution (1789–1799) and other modern revolutions—the antithesis to the liberalism of John Locke (1632–1704).

2. The term "**Radical**" (from the Latin *radix* meaning root), during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, identified proponents of democratic reform, in what subsequently became the parliamentary Radical Movement.

During the 19th century in the United Kingdom, continental Europe and Latin America, the term "Radical" came to denote a progressive liberal ideology inspired by the French Revolution. Historically, Radicalism emerged in an early form with the French Revolution and the similar movements it inspired in other countries. It grew prominent during the 1830s in the United Kingdom (the Chartists) and Belgium (see the Revolution of 1830), then across Europe in the 1840s–50s (see the Revolutions of 1848). In contrast to the social conservatism of existing liberal politics, Radicalism sought political support for a "radical reform" of the electoral system to widen the franchise. It was also associated with republicanism; civic nationalism; abolition of titles; rationalism and

the resistance to a single established state religion; redistribution of property; and freedom of the press.

In nineteenth-century France, Radicalism had emerged as a minor political force by the 1840s, as the extreme left of the day (in contrast to the socially conservative liberalism of the Moderate Republicans and Orléanists monarchists, and the anti-parliamentarianism of the Legitimist monarchists and Bonapartists). By the 1890s the French Radicals were not organised under a single nationwide structure, but had become a significant political force in parliament; in 1901 they consolidated their efforts by forming the country's first major extra-parliamentary political party, the Republican, Radical and Radical-Socialist Party, which became the most important party of government during the second half (1899 to 1940) of the Third Republic. The success of the French PRRRS encouraged Radicals elsewhere to organise themselves into formal parties in a range of other countries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, with Radicals holding significant political office in Switzerland, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Russia. During the interwar, European Radical parties organised their own international, the Radical Entente.

As social democracy emerged as a distinct political force in its own right, the differences that once existed between left-wing radicalism and conservative liberalism diminished, and between 1940 and 1973 Radicalism became defunct in most of its European heartlands, its role and philosophy taken on by social democratic and conservative-liberal parties.

3. The term **ultra-leftism** has two overlapping uses. A usage common among Marxist activist groups is as a generally pejorative term for certain types of positions on the far-left that are extreme or intransigent. Another definition historically refers to a particular current of Marxist communism, in which the Communist International repudiated social democratic parties (and all other progressive groupings outside of the Communist

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Party). Pejoratively, *ultra-left* is often used by Marxists against other socialists, communists, and anarchists within far-left parties who advocate strategies which some Marxists may consider to be without regard of the current political consciousness or of the long-term consequences that would result from following a proposed course.

Ultra-leftism within and outside the Communist International was evident in periods when political groupings pursued council communism and left communism.

The term *ultra left* is rarely used in English. Instead, people tend to speak broadly of left communism as a variant of traditional Marxism. The French equivalent, *ultra-gauche*, has a stronger meaning in that language and is used to define a movement that still exists today: a branch of left communism developed by theorists such as Amadeo Bordiga, Anton Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, and Paul Mattick, and continuing with more recent writers, such as Jacques Camatte and Gilles Dauvé. This standpoint includes two main traditions, a Dutch-German tradition including Rühle, Pannekoek, Gorter and Mattick, and an Italian tradition following Bordiga. These traditions came together in the 1960s French *ultra-gauche*. The political theorist Nicholas Thoburn refers to these traditions as the "actuality of... the historical ultra-left".

The term originated in the 1920s in the German and Dutch workers movements, originally referring to a Marxist group opposed to both Bolshevism and social democracy, and with some affinities with anarchism. The ultra-left is defined particularly by its breed of anti-authoritarian Marxism, which generally involves an opposition to the state and to state socialism, as well as to parliamentary democracy and wage labour.

4. The word "radical" refers to change in the fundamental nature of something, thus Radicalism is set of beliefs or actions of people who advocate thorough or complete political or social reform.

Radicalisation refers to the process of an individual's transformation from a moderate, law-abiding citizen into an active, anti-state, violent extremist.

### Factors behind Radicalisation

- **Individual socio-psychological factors**, which include grievances and emotions such as alienation and exclusion, anger and frustration and a strong sense of injustice.
- **Socio-Economic Factors**, which include social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination (real or perceived), limited education or employment etc.
- **Political Factors**, which include weak and non-participatory political systems lacking good governance and regard for civil society.
- **Social media**, which provide connectivity, virtual participation and an echo-chamber for like-minded extremist views, accelerates the process of radicalisation.

### Forms of Radicalism in India

- **Politico-Religious Radicalism:** It is associated with a political interpretation of religion and the defence, by violent means, of a religious identity perceived to be under attack. **Use of Religion by ISIS to spread its influence all over the world is an example.**
- **Right-Wing Radicalism:** It is a form of radicalization associated with fascism, racialism/racism, supremacism and ultranationalism.
- **Left Wing Radicalism:** This form of radicalization focuses primarily on anti-capitalist demands and calls for the transformation of political systems considered responsible for producing social inequalities, and that may ultimately employ violent means to further its cause.

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# UNIT- 12 ILLITERACY IN INDIA

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## STRUCTURE:

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Causes of Illiteracy

12.2.1 For individuals

12.2.2 For society

12.2.3 For adults

12.3 20 types of Illiteracy

12.4 5 ways to improve illiteracy

12.5 Let us sum up

12.6 Key words

12.7 Questions for review

12.8 Suggested readings and references

12.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

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## 12.0 OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the concept of Illiteracy
- Learn about the causes of Illiteracy
- Learn about the improvement of Illiteracy

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## 12.1 INTRODUCTION

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**ILLITERACY** The inability to read or write, or the actual or perceived state of being uneducated or insufficiently educated. Social judgement is so powerfully built into the term ILLITERATE that scholars now

generally use more neutral terms, such as *non-literate* (for societies and individuals for whom literacy is not a relevant issue) and *pre-literate* (for societies and conditions before LITERACY emerged or was encountered and adopted). Formerly, the term *illiterate* was used to describe someone without book learning or a liberal EDUCATION (especially in classical LATIN and GREEK), even though such a person could read in a vernacular language or handle accounts and correspondence. However, the word also carried the connotation of ‘unpolished’, ‘ignorant’, or ‘inferior’, as in ‘the disadvantage of an illiterate education’ ( Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, volume 2, 1781, p. 75).

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## 12.2 CAUSES OF ILLITERACY IN INDIA

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The consequences of illiteracy are many and harmful in several respects. As well as affecting illiterate individuals themselves in their daily lives and often jeopardizing their future, this scourge has a significant effect on society, both socially and economically.

The consequences of illiteracy on individuals and society include the following:

### 12.2.1 For Individuals

- Limited ability to obtain and understand essential information;
- Unemployment: The unemployment rate is 2–4 times higher among those with little schooling than among those with Bachelor’s degrees;
- Lower income;
- Lower-quality jobs;
- Reduced access to lifelong learning and professional development;
- Precarious financial position;
- Little value is given to education and reading within the family, and this often leads to intergenerational transmission of illiteracy;



- Low self-esteem, which can lead to isolation;
- Impact on health: Illiterate individuals have more workplace accidents, take longer to recover and more often misuse medication through ignorance of health care resources and because they have trouble reading and understanding the relevant information (warnings, dosage, contraindications, etc.).

### **12.2.2 For Society**

- Since literacy is an essential tool for individuals and states to be competitive in the new global knowledge economy, many positions remain vacant for lack of personnel adequately trained to hold them;
- The higher the proportion of adults with low literacy proficiency is, the slower the overall long-term GDP growth rate is;
- The difficulty understanding societal issues lowers the level of community involvement and civic participation.

Without the basic tools necessary for achieving their goals, individuals without an adequate level of literacy cannot be involved fully and on a completely equal basis in social and political discourse.

Illiteracy in individuals stems from different, generally inter-related causes which, together, create a series of often insurmountable barriers for those concerned.

For instance, for someone born into an underprivileged milieu to parents with little formal schooling, the likelihood of being illiterate or experiencing serious learning difficulties will be higher. This is known as intergenerational transmission of illiteracy.

### **12.2.3 For Adults**

- Parents with little schooling;
- Lack of books at home and lack of stimulation as to the importance of reading;

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- Doing badly at or dropping out of school—many have not completed high school;
- Difficult living conditions, including poverty;
- Learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, dysorthographia, etc.

Adults aged 45 and over with low literacy skills have the distinction of belonging to generations for whom there were attractive job opportunities despite a lower level of schooling. A very large number of them have always worked in the same field, founding their families, and thus have never felt the need to go back to school.

Owing to the closing of many companies over the past few years, especially in the manufacturing and primary sectors, these people have found themselves out of work, and are often unable to find a new job, because they have difficulty reading and writing. Also, they lack the necessary skills to meet current market requirements or to register in training that would allow them to requalify.

### Check Your Progress-1

9. Discuss the concept Illiteracy.

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10. Discuss the causes of Illiteracy.

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## 12.3 20 TYPES OF ILLITERACY

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Ensuring a high level of reading literacy has become a priority of many governments around the world. However, what is often forgotten is that there is more than one type of illiteracy, and not all are addressed during

formal education. Many of these can be just as debilitating as an inability to read, but go unnoticed because the wider community is unaware of their existence. A few, such as scientific and functional illiteracy, have even resulted in death for some unfortunate people. These are a global problem because adults generally express some degree of at least one. Work out how many you might have.

➤ Agricultural Illiteracy

This is the ability to understand information regarding agriculture. For those who work as farmers, this is rarely a problem, but to a city-dweller, reading that “90% of farmland was lost due to drought” might not seem a serious problem due to an utter lack of understanding of how farming works. People who are agriculturally illiterate fail to understand how important agriculture is, how dependent we all are on it, and make statements like “lack of farmland never causes famines, it’s just farmers being unreasonable and complaining” or “if they can grow this food overseas, then we can grow it here just as easily.”

➤ Computer Illiteracy

Computer illiteracy is a specific form of technological illiteracy. It is the lack of ability to use computers at a basic level, often despite being shown how to use them. Being unable to turn a computer on, thinking that a mouse needs to be fed, or trying to click by snapping one’s fingers are real examples of computer illiteracy. People who are computer illiterate, an increasingly disabling trait in modern society, say things like “I’ll ring you on your email number” and “I deleted the internet. How do I fix it?”

➤ Critical Illiteracy

This form of illiteracy is where someone is able read text and to understand its overall meaning, but lacks the ability to think about it critically and consider the possibility of unreliable or biased information. Gullible people often have critical illiteracy. The statement “all people who were democratic in the nineteenth century are now dead, so democracy kills people!” is taken as fact, and the underlying political

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agenda or the actuality that the data does not support said agenda is missed. Critical illiteracy is taken advantage of by many forms of media to present opinions as fact.

### ➤ Cultural Illiteracy

Everyone belongs to a culture of some sort. Cultural illiteracy is a lack of familiarity with one's culture. This often becomes apparent when common sayings are misunderstood, or when references to folklore are completely missed. Although we are all culturally illiterate to many other cultures, those who are illiterate of their own culture lack a feeling of comfort when surrounded by what should be familiar memes. A British person thinking that "porky-pies" require pastry, an Australian thinking that "bogans" are from Bougainville, or a Chinese thinking that "Buddha jumps over the wall" actually involves Buddha are strong examples.

### ➤ Ecological Illiteracy

No matter how far we try to remove ourselves from the natural world, we are still dependent on the Earth's resources. Ensuring that environments are maintained in turn helps us maintain our own way of living. Ecological illiteracy is the inability to understand this, and the belief that we are not actually dependent on the Earth. People who feel this way are quick to damage the environment for pleasure, and make statements like "the Earth can support as many humans as we want; population control is unnecessary" and "recycling is a waste of time."

### ➤ Emotional Illiteracy

People who are emotionally illiterate are unable to properly understand the emotions of themselves and of others. They often do not realize when they are behaving erratically due to anger or stress, and thus are less likely to recognize and stop destructive behaviours. They are poor at interpreting the emotions of others and often attribute laughing or crying as deliberate attempts to annoy. These people often have trouble expressing themselves and seem to respond oddly or even inappropriately in some situations. A person who laughs hysterically

when they hear a friend has died, despite feeling sad, may be emotionally illiterate.

➤ **Financial Illiteracy**

People who feel overwhelmed when the topic of budgets comes up may suffer from some degree of financial illiteracy. These include people who spend money irresponsibly, such as using a week's pay to buy a video game when bills are due, or not saving money for future hardships. Frighteningly, many adults when surveyed state that they are financially literate, yet are unable to solve simple finance problems, showing that many suffer from a false sense of security. Although the level varies between countries, between 30% and 50% of adults are financially illiterate, and is a strong predictor of future poverty.

➤ **Functional Illiteracy**

Conservative estimates state that 20% of all adults are functionally illiterate. This means that they can read or hear words and understand their meanings, but cannot properly comprehend the meaning of a sentence as a whole, and are unaware that they lack this perception. At an extreme level, the words in "beware of the dog" are individually understood, but the meaning of required cautiousness is lost. At a more common level, a statement like "genetics is bad" shows that someone lacks a basic understanding of what genetics is yet thinks their knowledge comprehensive enough to make decisive statements.

➤ **Health Illiteracy**

Health illiteracy is the inability to understand basic healthcare facts, causing an inability to make good health decisions. In developed countries about 10% of adults have health illiteracy. These people are eager to believe audacious health claims, despite a massive amount of evidence to the contrary, and will undergo dramatic and often dangerous lifestyle changes as a result. Unfortunately this often affects their trusting children. Beliefs such as "doctors are paid by corporations to kill patients," "immunizations do more harm than good," and "vegan diets

are healthy for newborns” have lead and continue to cause poor health and even death.

### ➤ Information Illiteracy

Information illiteracy is the inability to realize when one’s own knowledge or understanding has reached its limit. The information illiterate is the person who argues despite having been proven wrong, or the person who does not realize they are making a fool of themselves when speaking to a room of experts about a topic they themselves know little about. Information illiterate people are unable to see their own intellectual faults. It has been said that a truly educated person is aware of the limits of their knowledge, and, sadly, over 60% of adults have some degree of information illiteracy.

### ➤ Media Illiteracy

We rely on a variety of media to provide us with useful information about the wider world. Unfortunately, in order to maximize profits, or to simply stay in business, many media companies sensationalize situations to attract a larger audience. As a result, much of what we hear has been skewed a certain amount. A specific type of critical illiteracy, media illiteracy causes people to interpret everything heard in the media as fact. Statements like “I heard it on TV, it must be true!” and “the news would never lie” are signs of media illiteracy.

### ➤ Mental Health Illiteracy

Mental health illiteracy is a type of health illiteracy. It is an unawareness or misunderstanding of mental disorders, making problems difficult to recognize or treat. This is the husband who interprets his wife’s talk of suicide as meaningless, or the mother who thinks her son’s eating disorder is merely a phase. Negative and incorrect media portrayals of mental disorders and psychiatric care make this illiteracy common. A widespread but much milder expression of mental health illiteracy is the belief that “shyness isn’t a normal mental state, and if you overcome it you’ll be happier.”

➤ Numerical Illiteracy

Numerical illiteracy, or a lack of numeracy, is a lack of the basic arithmetic skills that are required in day-to-day life. Simple tasks, like calculating 50% off a price, are very difficult for numerically illiterate people. Although related to statistical illiteracy, numerical illiteracy includes not noticing anything amiss when a merely buying a liter of juice is charged at over one hundred dollars due to a machine error, and may find themselves the victims of extortion without ever realizing it. Although this extreme version of the illiteracy is rare, over half of all adults suffer from mild numerical illiteracy.

➤ Racial Illiteracy

Racial illiteracy is the inability to understand issues connected with race and racism. A student claiming that a teacher failed him purposely “because he’s black” may be suffering from racial illiteracy. Similarly, people who hold incorrect or generalizing beliefs about races also suffer from racial illiteracy. The damaging stereotypical views that “all Asians are smart” or “all white people are rich” are both expressions of not only prejudice and ignorance, but of racial illiteracy.

➤ Reading and Writing Illiteracy

This is what most people think of when they hear the word “illiteracy.” This is the basic inability to understand or produce written information. There are several degrees of illiteracy, such as understanding individual letters but not whole words, understanding some words but not enough to understand a sentence, and not recognizing letters or words at all. Through more widely-available education, world illiteracy has more than halved in the last fifty years. This means that even people living in the poorest countries enjoy better lives as they are able to read medicine instructions or avoid drinking water signposted as “poisonous.”

➤ Scientific Illiteracy

Science is a carefully built framework of all known truths to humanity. If a scientific hypothesis is disproved, it is either altered or discarded, and thus up-to-date science is never wrong. Science is self-correcting and

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reflects the culmination of all knowledge at any point in time. Sadly, 75% of adults are scientifically illiterate. These people make statements like “people who drive expensive cars live longer, so if I buy a nice car I’ll live longer too,” even though the car does not cause a long life span but rather both are probably caused by a higher socioeconomic status. Other illiterate statements include “science has proven it to be good for you” and “it’s only a scientific theory, it might not be true.”

### ➤ Statistical Illiteracy

People who are statistically illiterate fail to grasp that statistics can be presented in ways to mislead. These people feel that if numbers or data support a particular idea, then it must have merit. Closely linked to critical and numerical illiteracy, a person who is statistically illiterate will interpret the statements “10% of people are allergic to peanuts” and “90% of people are not allergic to peanuts” differently, despite the fact that they say the same thing. Believing that gambling is financially beneficial in the long term is unfortunately common for those with statistical illiteracy.

### ➤ Technological Illiteracy

A person who is technologically illiterate has trouble learning to use new technologies as they become available. Learning new things, especially as an adult, can be slow, but these people find themselves baffled by relatively simple items like binoculars despite being patiently taught to use them hundreds of times. Not understanding a technology because of a lack of contact with it is normal, but not understanding it when exposed to it and when taught several times is illiteracy. These people can experience great trouble in keeping up with modern society.

### ➤ Trans-Illiteracy

A trans-illiterate person is unable to transfer information from one form of media to another. For example, they may be able to understand a picture, but have trouble describing it or writing about it. Trans-illiterate people have trouble applying the information they gather from various sources to their daily lives, such as a person who reads that junk food is



bad but never thinks to limit their own consumption of junk food. In a society where we are constantly fed information from all kinds of sources, the ability to apply what we know easily and smoothly is becoming increasingly useful.

➤ Visual Illiteracy

Visual illiteracy is the inability to understand or process information in visual form. These people struggle to read graphs and info graphics. Specific types of brain damage can cause an innate inability to understand and recognize faces or vision entirely, but most people with visual illiteracy have no such underlying cause. A form of visual illiteracy that all people have at one point but most grow out of is seen in young toddlers. They will tend to think that when a single biscuit is broken in half, the two pieces represent more food than the original biscuit. Similarly, four grapes close together are seen as “more grapes” than the same four grapes spaced far apart.

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## **12.4 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE ILLITERAC**

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Adult literacy is a global problem. In September of 2015, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) reported that 85% of the world's adults age 15 and older lack basic reading and writing skills. That's 757 million adults, and two-thirds of them are women.

For passionate readers, this is unimaginable. UNESCO had a goal to reduce illiteracy rates by 50% in 15 years compared to 2000 levels. The organization reports that only 39% of countries will reach that goal. In some countries, illiteracy has actually increased. The new literacy target? "By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy."

What can you do to help? Here are five ways you can help improve adult literacy in your own community.

### **Educate Yourself**

## Notes

Start by researching some of the online resources available to you and then share them on social media or anywhere else you think they will help. Some are comprehensive directories that can guide you in finding help in your own community.

Three good options include:

- The Office of Vocational and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education
- The National Institute for Literacy
- Pro Literacy

### **Volunteer at Your Local Literacy Council**

Even some of the smallest communities are served by a county literacy council. Get out the phone book or check at your local library. Your local literacy council is there to help adults learn to read, do math, or learn a new language, anything literacy and numeracy related. They can also help children keep up with reading in school. Staff members are trained and reliable. Participate by becoming a volunteer or by explaining the services to someone you know who might benefit from them.

### **Find Your Local Adult Education Classes for Someone Who Needs Them**

Your literacy council will have information about adult education classes in your area. If they don't, or you don't have a literacy council, search online or ask at your library. If your own county doesn't offer adult education classes, which would be surprising, check the next closest county, or contact your state education department. Every state has one.

### **Ask for Reading Primers at Your Local Library**

Never underestimate the power of your local county library to help you accomplish just about anything. They love books. They adore reading. They will do their best to spread the joy of picking up a book. They also know that people cannot be productive employees if they don't know how to read. They've got resources available and can recommend special

books to help you help a friend learn to read. Books on beginning readers are sometimes called primers (pronounced primmer). Some are designed especially for adults to avoid the embarrassment of having to learn by reading children's books. Learn about all of the resources available to you. The library is an excellent place to start.

**Hire a Private Tutor**

It can be very embarrassing for an adult to admit that he or she cannot read or work simple calculations. If the thought of attending adult education classes freaks someone out, private tutors are always available. Your literacy council or library are probably your best places to find a trained tutor who will respect the student's privacy and anonymity. What a wonderful gift to give someone who won't otherwise seek help.

**Check Your Progress-2**

11. Discuss 10 types of adult Illiteracy.

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12. Discuss the 5 ways to improve Illiteracy.

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**12.5 LET US SUM UP**

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**ILLITERACY** the inability to read or write, or the actual or perceived state of being uneducated or insufficiently educated. The consequences of illiteracy are many and harmful in several respects. As well as affecting illiterate individuals themselves in their daily lives and often jeopardizing their future, this scourge has a significant effect on society, both socially and economically. Without the basic tools necessary for

achieving their goals, individuals without an adequate level of literacy cannot be involved fully and on a completely equal basis in social and political discourse. Illiteracy in individuals stems from different, generally inter-related causes which, together, create a series of often insurmountable barriers for those concerned. For instance, for someone born into an underprivileged milieu to parents with little formal schooling, the likelihood of being illiterate or experiencing serious learning difficulties will be higher. This is known as intergenerational transmission of illiteracy. Adult literacy is a global problem. In September of 2015, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) reported that 85% of the world's adults age 15 and older lack basic reading and writing skills. That's 757 million adults, and two-thirds of them are women. For passionate readers, this is unimaginable. UNESCO had a goal to reduce illiteracy rates by 50% in 15 years compared to 2000 levels. The organization reports that only 39% of countries will reach that goal. In some countries, illiteracy has actually increased. The new literacy target? "By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy."

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## 12.6 KEYWORDS

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- Illiteracy: ILLITERACY the inability to read or write, or the actual or perceived state of being uneducated or insufficiently educated.
- Types of illiteracy: Ensuring a high level of reading literacy has become a priority of many governments around the world.
- Improvement of illiteracy: "By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy."

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## 12.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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1. Discuss the concept Illiteracy.
2. Discuss the causes of Illiteracy.

3. Discuss 10 types of adult Illiteracy.
4. Discuss the 5 ways to improve Illiteracy.

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## 12.8 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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7. *Kirsty Scott. "Sounds incredible". Education.guardian.co.uk. Retrieved 2014-06-10.*

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## 12.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. **ILLITERACY** The inability to read or write, or the actual or perceived state of being uneducated or insufficiently educated. Social judgement is so powerfully built into the term ILLITERATE that scholars now generally use more neutral terms, such as *non-literate* (for societies and individuals for whom literacy is not a relevant issue) and *pre-literate* (for societies and conditions before LITERACY emerged or was encountered and adopted). Formerly, the term *illiterate* was used to describe someone without book learning

or a liberal EDUCATION (especially in classical LATIN and GREEK), even though such a person could read in a vernacular language or handle accounts and correspondence. However, the word also carried the connotation of ‘unpolished’, ‘ignorant’, or ‘inferior’, as in ‘the disadvantage of an illiterate education’ ( Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, volume 2, 1781, p. 75).

2. The consequences of illiteracy are many and harmful in several respects. As well as affecting illiterate individuals themselves in their daily lives and often jeopardizing their future, this scourge has a significant effect on society, both socially and economically.

The consequences of illiteracy on individuals and society include the following:

### **12.2.1 For Individuals**

- Limited ability to obtain and understand essential information;
- Unemployment: The unemployment rate is 2–4 times higher among those with little schooling than among those with Bachelor’s degrees;
- Lower income;
- Lower-quality jobs;
- Reduced access to lifelong learning and professional development;
- Precarious financial position;
- Little value is given to education and reading within the family, and this often leads to intergenerational transmission of illiteracy;
- Low self-esteem, which can lead to isolation;
- Impact on health: Illiterate individuals have more workplace accidents, take longer to recover and more often misuse medication through ignorance of health care resources and because they have trouble reading and understanding the relevant information (warnings, dosage, contraindications, etc.).

## 12.2.2 For Society

- Since literacy is an essential tool for individuals and states to be competitive in the new global knowledge economy, many positions remain vacant for lack of personnel adequately trained to hold them;
- The higher the proportion of adults with low literacy proficiency is, the slower the overall long-term GDP growth rate is;
- The difficulty understanding societal issues lowers the level of community involvement and civic participation.

Without the basic tools necessary for achieving their goals, individuals without an adequate level of literacy cannot be involved fully and on a completely equal basis in social and political discourse.

Illiteracy in individuals stems from different, generally inter-related causes which, together, create a series of often insurmountable barriers for those concerned.

For instance, for someone born into an underprivileged milieu to parents with little formal schooling, the likelihood of being illiterate or experiencing serious learning difficulties will be higher. This is known as intergenerational transmission of illiteracy.

## 12.2.3 For Adults

- Parents with little schooling;
- Lack of books at home and lack of stimulation as to the importance of reading;
- Doing badly at or dropping out of school—many have not completed high school;
- Difficult living conditions, including poverty;
- Learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, dysorthographia, etc.

3. Ensuring a high level of reading literacy has become a priority of many governments around the world. However, what is often forgotten is

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that there is more than one type of illiteracy, and not all are addressed during formal education. Many of these can be just as debilitating as an inability to read, but go unnoticed because the wider community is unaware of their existence. A few, such as scientific and functional illiteracy, have even resulted in death for some unfortunate people. These are a global problem because adults generally express some degree of at least one. Work out how many you might have.

### ➤ Agricultural Illiteracy

This is the ability to understand information regarding agriculture. For those who work as farmers, this is rarely a problem, but to a city-dweller, reading that “90% of farmland was lost due to drought” might not seem a serious problem due to an utter lack of understanding of how farming works. People who are agriculturally illiterate fail to understand how important agriculture is, how dependent we all are on it, and make statements like “lack of farmland never causes famines, it’s just farmers being unreasonable and complaining” or “if they can grow this food overseas, then we can grow it here just as easily.”

### ➤ Computer Illiteracy

Computer illiteracy is a specific form of technological illiteracy. It is the lack of ability to use computers at a basic level, often despite being shown how to use them. Being unable to turn a computer on, thinking that a mouse needs to be fed, or trying to click by snapping one’s fingers are real examples of computer illiteracy. People who are computer illiterate, an increasingly disabling trait in modern society, say things like “I’ll ring you on your email number” and “I deleted the internet. How do I fix it?”

### ➤ Critical Illiteracy

This form of illiteracy is where someone is able read text and to understand its overall meaning, but lacks the ability to think about it critically and consider the possibility of unreliable or biased information. Gullible people often have critical illiteracy. The statement “all people who were democratic in the nineteenth century are now dead, so



democracy kills people!” is taken as fact, and the underlying political agenda or the actuality that the data does not support said agenda is missed. Critical illiteracy is taken advantage of by many forms of media to present opinions as fact.

➤ Cultural Illiteracy

Everyone belongs to a culture of some sort. Cultural illiteracy is a lack of familiarity with one’s culture. This often becomes apparent when common sayings are misunderstood, or when references to folklore are completely missed. Although we are all culturally illiterate to many other cultures, those who are illiterate of their own culture lack a feeling of comfort when surrounded by what should be familiar memes. A British person thinking that “porky-pies” require pastry, an Australian thinking that “bogans” are from Bougainville, or a Chinese thinking that “Buddha jumps over the wall” actually involves Buddha are strong examples.

➤ Ecological Illiteracy

No matter how far we try to remove ourselves from the natural world, we are still dependent on the Earth’s resources. Ensuring that environments are maintained in turn helps us maintain our own way of living. Ecological illiteracy is the inability to understand this, and the belief that we are not actually dependent on the Earth. People who feel this way are quick to damage the environment for pleasure, and make statements like “the Earth can support as many humans as we want; population control is unnecessary” and “recycling is a waste of time.”

➤ Emotional Illiteracy

People who are emotionally illiterate are unable to properly understand the emotions of themselves and of others. They often do not realize when they are behaving erratically due to anger or stress, and thus are less likely to recognize and stop destructive behaviours. They are poor at interpreting the emotions of others and often attribute laughing or crying as deliberate attempts to annoy. These people often have trouble expressing themselves and seem to respond oddly or even inappropriately in some situations. A person who laughs hysterically

when they hear a friend has died, despite feeling sad, may be emotionally illiterate.

### ➤ Financial Illiteracy

People who feel overwhelmed when the topic of budgets comes up may suffer from some degree of financial illiteracy. These include people who spend money irresponsibly, such as using a week's pay to buy a video game when bills are due, or not saving money for future hardships. Frighteningly, many adults when surveyed state that they are financially literate, yet are unable to solve simple finance problems, showing that many suffer from a false sense of security. Although the level varies between countries, between 30% and 50% of adults are financially illiterate, and is a strong predictor of future poverty.

### ➤ Functional Illiteracy

Conservative estimates state that 20% of all adults are functionally illiterate. This means that they can read or hear words and understand their meanings, but cannot properly comprehend the meaning of a sentence as a whole, and are unaware that they lack this perception. At an extreme level, the words in "beware of the dog" are individually understood, but the meaning of required cautiousness is lost. At a more common level, a statement like "genetics is bad" shows that someone lacks a basic understanding of what genetics is yet thinks their knowledge comprehensive enough to make decisive statements.

### ➤ Health Illiteracy

Health illiteracy is the inability to understand basic healthcare facts, causing an inability to make good health decisions. In developed countries about 10% of adults have health illiteracy. These people are eager to believe audacious health claims, despite a massive amount of evidence to the contrary, and will undergo dramatic and often dangerous lifestyle changes as a result. Unfortunately this often affects their trusting children. Beliefs such as "doctors are paid by corporations to kill patients," "immunizations do more harm than good," and "vegan diets

are healthy for newborns” have lead and continue to cause poor health and even death.

➤ **Information Illiteracy**

Information illiteracy is the inability to realize when one’s own knowledge or understanding has reached its limit. The information illiterate is the person who argues despite having been proven wrong, or the person who does not realize they are making a fool of themselves when speaking to a room of experts about a topic they themselves know little about. Information illiterate people are unable to see their own intellectual faults. It has been said that a truly educated person is aware of the limits of their knowledge, and, sadly, over 60% of adults have some degree of information illiteracy.

4. Here are five ways you can help improve adult literacy in your own community.

### **Educate Yourself**

Start by researching some of the online resources available to you and then share them on social media or anywhere else you think they will help. Some are comprehensive directories that can guide you in finding help in your own community.

Three good options include:

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and reliable. Participate by becoming a volunteer or by explaining the services to someone you know who might benefit from them.

### **Find Your Local Adult Education Classes for Someone Who Needs Them**

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### **Ask for Reading Primers at Your Local Library**

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### **Hire a Private Tutor**

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# UNIT- 13 HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IN INDIA

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## STRUCTURE:

13.0 Objectives

13.1 Introduction

13.2 Healthcare system in India

13.2.1 Public healthcare system

13.2.2 Private healthcare system

13.2.3 Medication

13.3 Access to healthcare

13.3.1 Electronic health records

13.3.2 Rural areas

13.3.3 Urban areas

13.3.4 Financing

13.4 Quality of healthcare

13.4.1 South India

13.4.2 North India

13.5 A four level model of the health care system

13.5.1 The individual patient

13.5.2 The care team

13.5.3 The organization

13.5.4 The political and economic environment

13.6 Let us sum up

13.7 Key words

13.8 Questions for review

13.9 Suggested readings and references

13.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

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## 13.0 OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the concept of healthcare system
- Learn about the quality of healthcare system
- Learn about the model of the healthcare system

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## 13.1 INTRODUCTION

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The Indian Constitution makes the provision of healthcare in India the responsibility of the state governments, rather than the central federal government. It makes every state responsible for "raising the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties".

The National Health Policy was endorsed by the Parliament of India in 1983 and updated in 2002, and then again updated in 2017. The recent four main updates in 2017 mentions the need to focus on the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, on the emergence of the robust healthcare industry, on growing incidences of unsustainable expenditure due to health care costs and on rising economic growth enabling enhanced fiscal capacity. In practice however, the private healthcare sector is responsible for the majority of **healthcare in India**, and most healthcare expenses are paid directly out of pocket by patients and their families, rather than through health insurance. Government health policy has thus far largely encouraged private sector expansion in conjunction with well-designed but limited public health programmes.

A government funded health insurance project was launched in 2018 by the Government of India, called Ayushman Bharat.

According to the World Bank, the total expenditure on health care as a proportion of GDP in 2015 was 3.89%. Out of 3.89%, the governmental health expenditure as a proportion of GDP is just 1%, and the out-of-pocket expenditure as a proportion of the current health expenditure was 65.06% in 2015.

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## **13.2 HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN INDIA**

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### **13.2.1 Public Healthcare**

Public healthcare is free and subsidized for those who are below the poverty line. The Indian public health sector encompasses 18% of total outpatient care and 44% of total inpatient care. Middle and upper class individuals living in India tend to use public healthcare less than those with a lower standard of living. Additionally, women and the elderly are more likely to use public services. The public health care system was originally developed in order to provide a means to healthcare access regardless of socioeconomic status or caste. However, reliance on public and private healthcare sectors varies significantly between states. Several reasons are cited for relying on the private rather than public sector; the main reason at the national level is poor quality of care in the public sector, with more than 57% of households pointing to this as the reason for a preference for private health care. Much of the public healthcare sector caters to the rural areas, and the poor quality arises from the reluctance of experienced healthcare providers to visit the rural areas. Consequently, the majority of the public healthcare system catering to the rural and remote areas relies on inexperienced and unmotivated interns who are mandated to spend time in public healthcare clinics as part of their curricular requirement. Other major reasons are long distances between public hospitals and residential areas, long wait times, and inconvenient hours of operation.

Different factors related to public healthcare are divided between the state and national government systems in terms of making decisions, as the national government addresses broadly applicable healthcare issues

such as overall family welfare and prevention of major diseases, while the state governments handle aspects such as local hospitals, public health, promotion and sanitation, which differ from state to state based on the particular communities involved. Interaction between the state and national governments does occur for healthcare issues that require larger scale resources or present a concern to the country as a whole.

Considering the goal of obtaining universal health care as part of Sustainable Development Goals, scholars request policy makers to acknowledge the form of healthcare that many are using. Scholars state that the government has a responsibility to provide health services that are affordable, adequate, new and acceptable for its citizens. Public healthcare is very necessary, especially when considering the costs incurred with private services. Many citizens rely on subsidized healthcare. The national budget, scholars argue, must allocate money to the public health sector to ensure the poor are not left with the stress of meeting private sector payments.

Following the 2014 election which brought Prime Minister Narendra Modi to office, the government unveiled plans for a nationwide universal health care system known as the National Health Assurance Mission, which would provide all citizens with free drugs, diagnostic treatments, and insurance for serious ailments. In 2015, implementation of a universal health care system was delayed due to budgetary concerns. In April 2018 the government announced the Aayushman Bharat scheme that aims to cover up to Rs. 5 lakh to 100,000,000 vulnerable families (approximately 500,000,000 persons – 40% of the country's population). This will cost around \$1.7 billion each year. Provision would be partly through private providers.

### **13.2.2 Private healthcare**

Since 2005, most of the healthcare capacity added has been in the private sector, or in partnership with the private sector. The private sector consists of 58% of the hospitals in the country, 29% of beds in hospitals, and 81% of doctors.



According to National Family Health Survey-3, the private medical sector remains the primary source of health care for 70% of households in urban areas and 63% of households in rural areas. The study conducted by IMS Institute for Healthcare Informatics in 2013, across 12 states in over 14,000 households indicated a steady increase in the usage of private healthcare facilities over the last 25 years for both Out Patient and In Patient services, across rural and urban areas. In terms of healthcare quality in the private sector, a 2012 study by Sanjay Basu et al., published in *PLOS Medicine*, indicated that health care providers in the private sector were more likely to spend a longer duration with their patients and conduct physical exams as a part of the visit compared to those working in public healthcare. However, the high out of pocket cost from the private healthcare sector has led many households to incur Catastrophic Health Expenditure, which can be defined as health expenditure that threatens a household's capacity to maintain a basic standard of living. Costs of the private sector are only increasing. One study found that over 35% of poor Indian households incur such expenditure and this reflects the detrimental state in which Indian health care system is at the moment. With government expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP falling over the years and the rise of private health care sector, the poor are left with fewer options than before to access health care services. Private insurance is available in India, as are various through government-sponsored health insurance schemes. According to the World Bank, about 25% of India's population had some form of health insurance in 2010. A 2014 Indian government study found this to be an over-estimate, and claimed that only about 17% of India's population was insured. Private healthcare providers in India typically offer high quality treatment at unreasonable costs as there is no regulatory authority or statutory neutral body to check for medical malpractices. In Rajasthan, 40% of practitioners did not have a medical degree and 20% have not completed a secondary education. On 27 May 2012, the popular actor Aamir Khan's program *Satyamev Jayate* did an episode on "Does Healthcare Need Healing?" which highlighted the high costs and other malpractices adopted by private clinics and hospitals. In

response to this, Narayana Health plans to conduct heart operations at a cost of \$800 per patient.

### **13.2.3 Medication**

Indians consumed the most antibiotics per head in the world in 2010. Many antibiotics were on sale in 2018 which had not been approved in India or in the country of origin, although this is prohibited. A survey in 2017 found 3.16% of the medicines sampled were substandard and 0.0245% were fake. Those more commonly prescribed are probably more often faked. Some medications are listed on Schedule H1, which means they should not be sold without a prescription. Pharmacists should keep records of sales with the prescribing doctor and the patient's details.

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## **13.3 ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE**

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There are 1.4 million doctors in India. Yet, India has failed to reach its Millennium Development Goals related to health. The definition of 'access is the ability to receive services of a certain quality at a specific cost and convenience. The healthcare system of India is lacking in three factors related to access to healthcare: provision, utilization, and attainment. Provision, or the supply of healthcare facilities, can lead to utilization, and finally attainment of good health. However, there currently exists a huge gap between these factors, leading to a collapsed system with insufficient access to healthcare. Differential distributions of services, power, and resources have resulted in inequalities in healthcare access. Access and entry into hospitals depends on gender, socioeconomic status, education, wealth, and location of residence (urban versus rural). Furthermore, inequalities in financing healthcare and distance from healthcare facilities are barriers to access. Additionally, there is a lack of sufficient infrastructure in areas with high concentrations of poor individuals. Large numbers of tribes and ex-untouchables that live in isolated and dispersed areas often have low numbers of professionals. Finally, health services may have long wait times or consider ailments as not serious enough to treat. Those with the greatest need often do not have access to healthcare.

### 13.3.1 Electronic Health Records

The Government of India, while unveiling the National Health Portal, has come out with guidelines for Electronic health record standards in India. The document recommends a set of standards to be followed by different healthcare service providers in India, so that medical data becomes portable and easily transferable.

India is considering to set up a National eHealth Authority (NeHA) for standardisation, storage and exchange of electronic health records of patients as part of the government's Digital India programme. The authority, to be set up by an Act of Parliament will work on the integration of multiple health IT systems in a way that ensures security, confidentiality and privacy of patient data. A centralised electronic health record repository of all citizens which is the ultimate goal of the authority will ensure that the health history and status of all patients would always be available to all health institutions. Union Health Ministry has circulated a concept note for the setting up of **NeHa**, inviting comments from stakeholders.

### 13.3.2 Rural Areas

Rural areas in India have a shortage of medical professionals. 74% of doctors are in urban areas that serve the other 28% of the population. This is a major issue for rural access to healthcare. The lack of human resources causes citizens to resort to fraudulent or ignorant providers. Doctors tend not to work in rural areas due to insufficient housing, healthcare, education for children, drinking water, electricity, roads and transportation. Additionally, there exists a shortage of infrastructure for health services in rural areas. In fact, urban public hospitals have twice as many beds as rural hospitals, which are lacking in supplies. Studies have indicated that the mortality risks before the age of five are greater for children living in certain rural areas compared to urban communities. Full immunization coverage also varies between rural and urban India, with 39% completely immunized in rural communities and 58% in urban areas across India. Inequalities in healthcare can result

from factors such as socioeconomic status and caste, with caste serving as a social determinant of healthcare in India.

### **13.3.3 Urban Areas**

The problem of healthcare access arises not only in huge cities but in rapidly growing small urban areas. Here, there are fewer available options for healthcare services and there are less organized governmental bodies. Thus, there is often a lack of accountability and cooperation in healthcare departments in urban areas. It is difficult to pinpoint an establishment responsible for providing urban health services, compared to in rural areas where the responsibility lies with the district administration. Additionally, health inequalities arise in urban areas due to difficulties in residence, socioeconomic status, and discrimination against unlisted slums.

To survive in this environment, urban people use non-governmental, private services which are plentiful. However, these are often understaffed, require three times the payment as a public center, and commonly have bad practice methods. To counter this, there have been efforts to join the public and private sectors in urban areas. An example of this is the Public-Private Partnerships initiative. However, studies show that in contrast to rural areas, qualified physicians tend to reside in urban areas. This can be explained by both urbanization and specialization. Private doctors tend to be specialized in a specific field so they reside in urban areas where there is a higher market and financial ability for those services.

### **13.3.4 Financing**

Despite being one of the most populous countries, India has the most private healthcare in the world. Out-of-pocket private payments make up 75% of the total expenditure on healthcare. Only one fifth of healthcare is financed publicly. This is in stark contrast to most other countries of the world. According to the World Health Organization in 2007, India ranked 184 out of 191 countries in the amount of public

expenditure spent on healthcare out of total GDP. In fact, public spending stagnated from 0.9% to 1.2% of total GDP in 1990 to 2010.

Medical and non-medical out-of-pocket private payments can affect access to healthcare. Poorer populations are more affected by this than the wealthy. The poor pay a disproportionately higher percent of their income towards out-of-pocket expenses than the rich. The Round National Sample Survey of 1955 through 1956 showed that 40% of all people sell or borrow assets to pay for hospitalization. Half of the bottom two quintiles go into debt or sell their assets, but only a third of the top quintiles do. In fact, about half the households that drop into the lower classes do so because of health expenditures. This data shows that financial ability plays a role in determining healthcare access.

In terms of non-medical costs, distance can also prevent access to healthcare. Costs of transportation prevent people from going to health centers. According to scholars, outreach programs are necessary to reach marginalized and isolated groups.

In terms of medical costs, out-of-pocket hospitalization fees prevent access to healthcare. 40% of people that are hospitalized are pushed either into lifelong debt or below the poverty line. Furthermore, over 23% of patients don't have enough money to afford treatment and 63% lack regular access to necessary medications. Healthcare and treatment costs have inflated 10–12% a year and with more advancements in medicine, costs of treatment will continue to rise. Finally, the price of medications rise as they are not controlled.

There is a major gap between outreach, finance and access in India. Without outreach, services cannot be spread to distant locations. Without financial ability, those in distant locations cannot afford to access healthcare. According to scholars, both of these issues are tied together and are pitfalls of the current healthcare system.

**Check Your Progress-1**

- 13. Discuss the private health care system in India.

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14. Discuss the financing in health care system.

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## **13.4 QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

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Non-availability of diagnostic tools and increasing reluctance of qualified and experienced healthcare professionals to practice in rural, under-equipped and financially less lucrative rural areas are becoming big challenges. Rural medical practitioners are highly sought after by residents of rural areas as they are more financially affordable and geographically accessible than practitioners working in the formal public health care sector. But there are incidents where doctors were attacked and even killed in rural India. In 2015 the British Medical Journal published a report by Dr Gadre, from Kolkata, exposed the extent of malpractice in the Indian healthcare system. He interviewed 78 doctors and found that kickbacks for referrals, irrational drug prescribing and unnecessary interventions were commonplace.

According to a study conducted by Martin Patrick, CPPR chief economist released in 2017 has projected people depend more on private sector for healthcare and the amount spent by a household to avail of private services is almost 24 times more than what is spent for public healthcare services.

### **13.4.1 South India**

In many rural communities throughout India, healthcare is provided by what is known as informal providers, who may or may not have proper medical accreditation to diagnose and treat patients, generally offering consults for common ailments. Specifically, in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India, these informal healthcare providers generally practice in the form

of services in the homes of patients and prescribing allopathic drugs. A 2014 study by Meenakshi Gautham et al., published in the journal *Health Policy and Planning*, found that in Guntur, about 71% of patients received injections from informal healthcare providers as a part of illness management strategies. The study also examined the educational background of the informal healthcare providers and found that of those surveyed, 43% had completed 11 or more years of schooling, while 10% had graduated from college.

In general, the perceived quality of healthcare also has implications on patient adherence to treatment. A 2015 study conducted by Nandakumar Mekoth and Vidya Dalvi, published in *Hospital Topics* examined different aspects that contribute to a patient's perception of quality of healthcare in Karnataka, India, and how these factors influenced adherence to treatment. The study incorporated aspects related to quality of healthcare including interactive quality of physicians, base-level expectation about primary health care facilities in the area, and non-medical physical facilities (including drinking water and restroom facilities). In terms of adherence to treatment, two sub-factors were investigated, persistence of treatment and treatment-supporting adherence (changes in health behaviors that supplement the overall treatment plan). The findings indicated that the different quality of healthcare factors surveyed all had a direct influence on both sub-factors of adherence to treatment. Furthermore, the base-level expectation component in quality of healthcare perception, presented the most significant influence on overall adherence to treatment, with the interactive quality of physicians having the least influence on adherence to treatment, of three aspects investigated in this study.

### **13.4.2 North India**

In a particular district of Uttarakhand, India known as Tehri, the educational background of informal healthcare providers indicated that 94% had completed 11 or more years of schooling, while 43% had graduated from college. In terms of the mode of care delivered, 99% of the health services provided in Tehri were through the clinic, whereas in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, 25% of the health care services are delivered

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through the clinic, while 40% of the care provided is mobile (meaning that healthcare providers move from location to location to see patients), and 35% is a combination of clinic and mobile service.

A healthcare worker gives pediatric polio vaccination to a young boy.

In general throughout India, the private healthcare sector does not have a standard of care that is present across all facilities, leading to many variations in the quality of care provided. In particular, a 2011 study by Padma Bhate-Deosthali et al., published in *Reproductive Health Matters*, examined the quality of healthcare particularly in the area of maternal services through different regions in Maharashtra, India. The findings indicated that out of 146 maternity hospitals surveyed, 137 of these did not have a qualified midwife, which is crucial for maternity homes as proper care cannot be delivered without midwives in some cases. In addition, the 2007 study by Ayesha De Costa and Vinod Diwan analyzed the distribution of healthcare providers and systems in Madhya Pradesh, India. The results indicated that among solo practitioners in the private sector for that region, 62% practiced allopathic (Western) medicine, while 38% practiced Indian systems of medicine and traditional systems (including, but not limited to ayurveda, sidhi, unani, and homeopathy).

In certain areas, there are also gaps in the knowledge of healthcare providers about certain ailments that further contribute towards quality of healthcare delivered when treatments are not fully supported with thorough knowledge about the ailment. A 2015 study by Manoj Mohanan et al., published in *JAMA Pediatrics*, investigate the knowledge base of a sample of practitioners (80% without formal medical degrees) in Bihar, India, specifically in the context of childhood diarrhea and pneumonia treatment. The findings indicated that in general, a significant number of practitioners missed asking key diagnostic questions regarding symptoms associated with diarrhea and pneumonia, leading to misjudgments and lack of complete information when prescribing treatments. Among the sample of practitioners studied in rural Bihar, 4% prescribed the correct treatment for the hypothetical diarrhea cases in the study, and 9% gave the correct treatment plan for



the hypothetical pneumonia cases presented. Recent studies have examined the role of educational or training programs for healthcare providers in rural areas of North India as a method to promote higher quality of healthcare, though conclusive results have not yet been attained.

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## **13.5 A FOUR LEVEL MODEL OF THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

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In this model, adapted from Ferlie and Shortell (2001), the health care system is divided into four “nested” levels: (1) the individual patient; (2) the care team, which includes professional care providers (e.g., clinicians, pharmacists, and others), the patient, and family members; (3) the organization (e.g., hospital, clinic, nursing home, etc.) that supports the development and work of care teams by providing infrastructure and complementary resources; and (4) the political and economic environment (e.g., regulatory, financial, payment regimes, and markets), the conditions under which organizations, care teams, individual patients, and individual care providers operate.

### **13.5.1 The Individual Patient**

We begin appropriately with the individual patient, whose needs and preferences should be the defining factors in a patient-centered health care system. Recent changes in health care policy reflect an emphasis on “consumer-driven” health care. The availability of information, the establishment of private health care spending accounts, and other measures reflect an increasing expectation that patients will drive changes in the system for improved quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. Overall, the role of the patient has changed from a passive recipient of care to a more active participant in care delivery.

At the same time, the fragmented delivery system, combined with the growing burden of chronic disease and the need for continuous care, have all but forced many patients to assume an active role in the design, coordination, “production,” and implementation of their care, whether they want to or not. Unfortunately, most people do not have access to the information, tools, and other resources they need to play this new role

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effectively. Considering the roles, needs, and objectives of first-level actors—individual patients—and their interdependencies with actors at other levels of the system, opportunities abound for using information/communications technologies and systems-engineering tools to improve the overall performance of the health care system.

A starting point for increasing the “patient-centeredness” of health care delivery is changing the perspective of clinicians to consider patients and their families as “partners” and to incorporate their values and wishes into care processes. The level of responsibility patients and their families assume differs from patient to patient. Some prefer to delegate some, if not most, of the decision making to a trusted clinician/counselor in the care system; others want to be full partners in decision making. In either case, however, patients need a free exchange of information and communication with physician(s) and other members of the care team, as well as with the organizations that provide the supporting infrastructure for the care teams.

For patients to communicate “informed” needs and preferences, participate effectively in decision making, and coordinate, or at least monitor the coordination, of their care, they must have access to the same information streams—in “patient-accessible” form—as their physician(s) and care team. Information that supports evidence-based, effective, efficient care encompasses the patient's medical record, including real-time physiological data; the most up-to-date medical evidence base; and orders in process concerning the patient's care. The patient and/or his or her clinician/counselor or family member must also have access to educational, decision-support, information-management, and communication tools that can help them integrate critical information from different sources.

From the patient's perspective, improving the timeliness, convenience, effectiveness, and efficiency of care will require that the patient be interconnected to the health care system. Synchronous communication between patient and physician could improve the quality of care in a number of ways. For example, continuous, real-time communication of a patient's physiological data to care providers could accelerate the pace of

diagnosis and treatment, thereby reducing complications and injuries that might result from delays. Remote (e.g., in-the-home, on-the-go) monitoring, diagnosis, and treatment would make care much more convenient for patients, save them time, and conceivably improve compliance with care regimes (see paper by Budinger in this volume). Communication technologies also have the potential to change the nature of the relationship between patient and provider, making it easier for patients to develop and maintain trusting relationships with their clinicians.

Asynchronous communication also has the potential to significantly improve quality of care. The easy accessibility of the Internet and the World Wide Web should enable all but continuous inquiries and feedback between patients and the rest of the health care system (IOM, 2001). The World Wide Web has already changed patients' ability to interact with the system and to self-manage aspects of their care. One of the fastest growing uses of these communication technologies is as a source of medical information from third parties, which has made the consumer (i.e., the patient) both more informed, and, unfortunately, sometimes misinformed.

Some of the improvements just described are available today, some are under study, and some are as much as a decade away from realization. Thus, research is still an essential component in transforming the current system.

### **13.5.2 The Care Team**

The care team, the second level of the health care system, consists of the individual physician and a group of care providers, including health professionals, patients' family members, and others, whose collective efforts result in the delivery of care to a patient or population of patients. The care team is the basic building block of a “clinical microsystem,” defined as “the smallest replicable unit within an organization [or across multiple organizations] that is replicable in the sense that it contains within itself the necessary human, financial, and technological resources to do its work” .

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In addition to the care team, a clinical microsystem includes a defined patient population; an information environment that supports the work of professional and family caregivers and patients; and support staff, equipment, and facilities. Ideally, the role of the microsystem is to “standardize care where possible, based on best current evidence; to stratify patients based on medical need and provide the best evidence-based care within each stratum; and to customize care to meet individual needs for patients with complex health problems”. Most health and medical services today, however, are not delivered by groups or teams.

The role and needs of individual physicians have undergone changes parallel to those of individual patients. The exponential increase in medical knowledge, the proliferation of medical specialties, and the rising burden of providing chronic care have radically undercut the autonomy of individual physicians and required that they learn to work as part of care teams, either in a single institution/organization or across institutional settings. The slow adaptation of individual clinicians to team-based health care has been influenced by several factors, including a lack of formal training in teamwork techniques, a persistent culture of professional autonomy in medicine, and the absence of tools, infrastructure, and incentives to facilitate the change.

To participate in, let alone lead and orchestrate, the work of a care team and maintain the trust of the patient, the physician must have on-demand access to critical clinical and administrative information, as well as information-management, communication, decision-support, and educational tools to synthesize, analyze, and make the best use of that information. Moreover, to deliver patient-centered care (i.e., care based on the patient's needs and preferences), the physician must be equipped and educated to serve as trusted advisor, educator, and counselor, as well as medical expert, and must know how to encourage the patient's participation in the design and delivery of care.

At the present time, precious few care teams or clinical microsystems are the primary agents of patient-centered clinical care. Unwarranted variations in medical practice are common, even for conditions and patient populations for which there are standard, evidence-based, patient-

stratified “best practice” protocols. Even though many clinicians now accept the value of “evidence-based medicine” and recognize that they cannot deliver evidence-based care on their own, there are many barriers to their changing accordingly: the guild structure of the health care professions; the absence of training in teamwork; the strong focus on the needs of individual patients as opposed to the needs of patient populations; and the lack of supporting information tools and infrastructure. All of these can, and do, prevent systems thinking by clinicians, the diffusion of evidence-based medicine, and the clinical microsystems approach to care delivery. Thus, tailoring evidence-based care to meet the needs and preferences of individual patients with complex health problems remains an elusive goal.

For care teams to become truly patient-centered, the rules of engagement between care teams and patients must be changed. Like individual care providers, the care team must become more responsive to the needs and preferences of patients and involve them and their families (to the extent they desire) in the design and implementation of care. Care teams must provide patients with continuous, convenient, timely access to quality care. One member of the care team must be responsible for ensuring effective communication and coordination between the patient and other members of the care team.

### **13.5.3 The Organization**

The third level of the health care system is the organization (e.g., hospital, clinic, nursing home) that provides infrastructure and other complementary resources to support the work and development of care teams and microsystems. The organization is a critical lever of change in the health care system because it can “provide an overall climate and culture for change through its various decision-making systems, operating systems, and human resource practices” (Ferlie and Shortell, 2001). The organization encompasses the decision-making systems, information systems, operating systems, and processes (financial, administrative, human-resource, and clinical) to coordinate the activities of multiple care teams and supporting units and manage the allocation and flow of human, material, and financial resources and information in

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support of care teams. The organization is the business level, the level at which most investments are made in information systems and infrastructure, process-management systems, and systems tools.

Health care organizations face many challenges. In response to the escalating cost of health care, government and industry—the third-party payers for most people—have shifted a growing share of the cost burden back to care providers and patients in recent years. As a result, hospitals and ambulatory care facilities are under great pressure to accomplish more work with fewer people to keep revenues ahead of rising costs.

In certain respects, management of health care organizations is not well positioned to respond to mounting cost and quality crises. Compared to other industries, health care has evolved with little shaping by the visible hands of management. Historically, most leaders of health care organizations were initially trained in medicine or public health. Moreover, except in the relatively few integrated, corporate provider organizations (e.g., Kaiser-Permanente, Mayo Clinic, et al.), the management of most hospitals faces the challenge of “managing” clinicians, the majority of whom function as “independent agents.”

Less than 40 percent of all hospital-based physicians are employed as full-time staff by the hospitals where they practice, a reflection of the deeply ingrained culture of professional autonomy in medicine and the deeply held belief of care professionals that their ultimate responsibility is to individual patients. These circumstances have posed significant challenges to the authority of health care management in many organizations, often creating discord and mistrust between health care professionals and health care management. Other challenges to management include the hierarchical nature of the health professions and inherent resistance to team-based care, significant regulatory and administrative requirements (e.g., controlled substances, biohazardous waste disposal, patient privacy, safety, etc.), and health care payment/reimbursement regimes that provide little, if any, incentives for health care organizations to invest in non-revenue-generating assets, such as information/ communications technologies and process-management tools.

To support patient-centered care delivery by well functioning clinical care teams or microsystems, health organizations must find ways to bridge the health care professional/ delivery system management divide and invest in information/ communications technologies, systems-engineering tools, and associated knowledge. Integrated, patient-centered, team-based care requires material, managerial, logistical, and technical support that can cross organizational/institutional boundaries—support that is very difficult to provide in a highly fragmented, distributed-care delivery system.

Financial investments in information/communications technologies and systems-engineering tools alone will not be enough, however. These investments must be accompanied by an organizational culture that encourages the development of care teams working with semiautonomous agents/ physicians (see paper by Bohmer in this volume). “Developing a culture that emphasizes learning, teamwork, and customer focus may be a ‘core property’ that health care organizations ...will need to adopt if significant progress in quality improvement is to be made” (Ferlie and Shortell, 2001). Finally, health care institutions must become “learning organizations” that are “skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying [their] behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights” (Garvin, 1993).

#### **13.5.4 The Political And Economic Environment**

The fourth and final level of the health care system is the political, economic (or market) environment, which includes regulatory, financial, and payment regimes and entities that influence the structure and performance of health care organizations directly and, through them, all other levels of the system. Many actors influence the political and economic environment for health care. The federal government influences care through the reimbursement practices of Medicare/Medicaid, through regulation of private-payer and provider organizations, and through its support for the development and use of selected diagnostic and therapeutic interventions (e.g., drugs, devices, equipment, and procedures). State governments, which play a major role in the administration of Medicaid, also influence care systems. Private-

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sector purchasers of health care, particularly large corporations that contract directly with health care provider organizations and third-party payers (e.g., health plans and insurance companies), are also important environment-level actors, in some cases reimbursing providers for services not covered by the federal government.

Federal regulations influence the structure, level, and nature of competition among providers and insurers. They can also affect the transparency of the health care system by setting requirements related to patient safety and other aspects of the quality of care. By exercising its responsibility to monitor, protect, and improve public health, the federal government shapes the market environment for health care. Federal agencies, the primary sources of funding for biomedical research, influence the research and technological trajectories of health care, and, with them, the education of health care professionals and professionals in other areas invested in the health care enterprise.

At present, many factors and forces at the environmental level, including reimbursement schemes for health care services and some regulatory policies, do not support the goals and objectives of patient-centered, high-performance health care organizations or the health care delivery system as a whole. Although the federal government, the single largest purchaser of health care services, principal regulator, and major research patron, is, in many ways, best positioned to drive changes in the health care delivery system, some private-sector payer organizations and state governments are better positioned to experiment with new mechanisms and incentives for improving the quality of care and making health care more affordable.

### Check Your Progress-2

14 Discuss the north Indian health care system.

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15 Discuss the organization model of health care system.



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## 13.6 LET US SUM UP

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The Indian Constitution makes the provision of healthcare in India the responsibility of the state governments, rather than the central federal government. It makes every state responsible for "raising the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties". There are 1.4 million doctors in India. Yet, India has failed to reach its Millennium Development Goals related to health. The definition of 'access is the ability to receive services of a certain quality at a specific cost and convenience. The healthcare system of India is lacking in three factors related to access to healthcare: provision, utilization, and attainment. Provision, or the supply of healthcare facilities, can lead to utilization, and finally attainment of good health.

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## 13.7 KEYWORDS

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- Health care system: The Indian Constitution makes the provision of healthcare in India the responsibility of the state governments, rather than the central federal government.
- Access: The healthcare system of India is lacking in three factors related to access to healthcare: provision, utilization, and attainment.
- Four level model: In this model, adapted from Ferlie and Shortell (2001), the health care system is divided into four "nested" levels

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## 13.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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1. Discuss the private health care system in India.
2. Discuss the financing in health care system
3. Discuss the north Indian health care system.

4. Discuss the organization model of health care system.

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## 13.9 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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## 13.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. Since 2005, most of the healthcare capacity added has been in the private sector, or in partnership with the private sector. The private sector consists of 58% of the hospitals in the country, 29% of beds in hospitals, and 81% of doctors.

According to National Family Health Survey-3, the private medical sector remains the primary source of health care for 70% of households in urban areas and 63% of households in rural areas. The study conducted by IMS Institute for Healthcare Informatics in 2013, across 12 states in over 14,000 households indicated a steady increase in the usage of private healthcare facilities over the last 25 years for both Out Patient and In Patient services, across rural and urban areas. In terms of healthcare quality in the private sector, a 2012 study by Sanjay Basu et al., published in *PLOS Medicine*, indicated that health care providers in the private sector were more likely to spend a longer duration with their patients and conduct physical exams as a part of the visit compared to those working in public healthcare. However, the high out of pocket cost from the private healthcare sector has led many households to incur Catastrophic Health Expenditure, which can be defined as health expenditure that threatens a household's capacity to maintain a basic standard of living. Costs of the private sector are only increasing. One study found that over 35% of poor Indian households incur such expenditure and this reflects the detrimental state in which Indian health care system is at the moment. With government expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP falling over the years and the rise of private health care sector, the poor are left with fewer options than before to access health care services. Private insurance is available in India, as are various through government-sponsored health insurance schemes. According to the World Bank, about 25% of India's population had some form of health insurance in 2010. A 2014 Indian government study found this to be an over-estimate, and claimed that only about 17% of India's population was insured. Private healthcare providers in India typically offer high quality treatment at unreasonable costs as there is no regulatory authority or statutory neutral body to check for medical malpractices. In Rajasthan, 40% of practitioners did not have a medical degree and 20% have not completed a secondary education. On 27 May 2012, the popular actor Aamir Khan's program *Satyamev Jayate* did an episode on "Does Healthcare Need Healing?" which highlighted the high costs and other malpractices adopted by private clinics and hospitals. In

response to this, Narayana Health plans to conduct heart operations at a cost of \$800 per patient.

2. Despite being one of the most populous countries, India has the most private healthcare in the world. Out-of-pocket private payments make up 75% of the total expenditure on healthcare. Only one fifth of healthcare is financed publicly. This is in stark contrast to most other countries of the world. According to the World Health Organization in 2007, India ranked 184 out of 191 countries in the amount of public expenditure spent on healthcare out of total GDP. In fact, public spending stagnated from 0.9% to 1.2% of total GDP in 1990 to 2010.

Medical and non-medical out-of-pocket private payments can affect access to healthcare. Poorer populations are more affected by this than the wealthy. The poor pay a disproportionately higher percent of their income towards out-of-pocket expenses than the rich. The Round National Sample Survey of 1955 through 1956 showed that 40% of all people sell or borrow assets to pay for hospitalization. Half of the bottom two quintiles go into debt or sell their assets, but only a third of the top quintiles do. In fact, about half the households that drop into the lower classes do so because of health expenditures. This data shows that financial ability plays a role in determining healthcare access.

3. In general throughout India, the private healthcare sector does not have a standard of care that is present across all facilities, leading to many variations in the quality of care provided. In particular, a 2011 study by Padma Bhate-Deosthali et al., published in *Reproductive Health Matters*, examined the quality of healthcare particularly in the area of maternal services through different regions in Maharashtra, India. The findings indicated that out of 146 maternity hospitals surveyed, 137 of these did not have a qualified midwife, which is crucial for maternity homes as proper care cannot be delivered without midwives in some cases. In addition, the 2007 study by Ayesha De Costa and Vinod Diwan analyzed the distribution of healthcare providers and systems in Madhya Pradesh, India. The results indicated that among solo practitioners in the private sector for that region, 62% practiced allopathic (Western) medicine, while 38% practiced Indian systems of medicine and

traditional systems (including, but not limited to ayurveda, sidhi, unani, and homeopathy).

In certain areas, there are also gaps in the knowledge of healthcare providers about certain ailments that further contribute towards quality of healthcare delivered when treatments are not fully supported with thorough knowledge about the ailment. A 2015 study by Manoj Mohanan et al., published in *JAMA Pediatrics*, investigate the knowledge base of a sample of practitioners (80% without formal medical degrees) in Bihar, India, specifically in the context of childhood diarrhea and pneumonia treatment.

4. The third level of the health care system is the organization (e.g., hospital, clinic, nursing home) that provides infrastructure and other complementary resources to support the work and development of care teams and microsystems. The organization is a critical lever of change in the health care system because it can “provide an overall climate and culture for change through its various decision-making systems, operating systems, and human resource practices” (Ferlie and Shortell, 2001). The organization encompasses the decision-making systems, information systems, operating systems, and processes (financial, administrative, human-resource, and clinical) to coordinate the activities of multiple care teams and supporting units and manage the allocation and flow of human, material, and financial resources and information in support of care teams. The organization is the business level, the level at which most investments are made in information systems and infrastructure, process-management systems, and systems tools.

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# **UNIT- 14 WOMEN'S SAFETY IN INDIA**

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## **STRUCTURE:**

14.0 Objectives

14.1 Introduction

14.2 Problem faced by women in India

14.3 Women's safety in India

14.3.1 Some tips regarding women safety

14.4 Violence against women in India

14.5 Types of violence against women

14.5.1 Sexual assault

14.5.2 Domestic violence

14.5.3 Honor killing

14.6 Solutions and preventive measures

14.6.1 Increased police vigil

14.6.2 Community initiative

14.6.3 Safe transport

14.7 Current status of women in India

14.8 Let us sum up

14.9 Key words

14.10 Questions for review

14.11 Suggested readings and references

14.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

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## 14.0 OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about women's safety in India
- Learn about the current status of women
- Learn about the solutions and preventive measures

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## 14.1 INTRODUCTION

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In the past few years, the safety of women in India has been down because of some continuous and terrible crimes against women. There has been decline in the women status from ancient to medieval period which is continued in such an advanced era. Women of India have equal rights as like as men of this country as they occupy almost half population of the country and involved in half proportion in the growth and development of the country.

It is true that women in modern India are joining high offices (President, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Union Ministers, Leader of Opposition, Chief Minister, Governor, etc) however on the back of curtain they are being exploited too. According to the Constitution of India, they have equal rights of dignity, equality, and freedom from gender discrimination. Indian women are continuously facing numerous problems such as sexual harassment, violent victimization through rape, acid attack, dowry deaths, forced prostitution, and many more.

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## 14.2 PROBLEM FACED BY WOMEN IN INDIA

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Taking birth as a woman in the Indian society can be said as curse for the women. Women in India face lots of social issues and problems all through the life which are big struggle for them right from their beginning of life. Female infanticide is the most common practice of killing girl child in mother's womb in the Indian society. Women in India are considered as burden for their parents and husbands as they

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think that women are here only to consume money whole life without earning a little bit.

Another common problem for women is sex discrimination which they face from their birth and continues till their death. Illiteracy, lack of proper education, responsible for household works, rape, sexual harassment at workplace, etc are some big issues for the women in India. However, a lot of positive changes has occurred in the women status as the number of educated people is increasing in the country.

Women in the Indian society have been considered as inferior than men for many years. Because of such type of inferiority they have to face various issues and problems in their life. They have to go extra miles than men to prove themselves equivalent to men. People in the middle age were considering women as key to destruction so they never allowed women to go outside and participate in the social activities like men. Still in the modern age, women have to face many more problems in their daily life and struggle a lot to establish their career. Still there are many parents who prefer to have only boy baby and allow education to boys only. Women for them are only medium to keep family happy and healthy.

In the ancient Indian society women were adored and worshiped as goddesses. However in the middle age, the status of women got down to a great extent. Women are considered in the society only to perform duties like bring up children, caring every family member, and other household activities. There are old and traditional faith of people coming out for years that men are for thy field whereas women are only for the home. Now-a-days, women are breaking all the barriers of social issues and problems against them in the society. They are getting ahead and enjoying equality of status in almost all fields because of being financially independent and economically sound.

Earlier to this women were facing a lot of problems because of male dominated, patriarchal society system, practice of old traditional believes, etc. Women were only responsible to the traditional roles like child bearing and child rearing. In the modern world, where women



status has been improved a little while, still they are facing problems. They have to perform both family and professional responsibilities together without the help of their husbands. In some cases, the condition of women become more embarrassed when they get tortured by their family members instead of getting help. Sexual harassment is more common at homes as well as in the offices by the family members, relatives, neighbors, friends, boss, etc. They have to suffer a lot in their daily life to nourish their career as well as saving their family relationships.

There are various issues and problems which women generally face in the society in India. Some of the problems are mentioned and described below:

- Selective abortion and female infanticide: It is the most common practice for years in India in which abortion of female fetus is performed in the womb of mother after the foetal sex determination and sex selective abortion by the medical professionals.
- Sexual harassment: It is the form of sexual exploitation of a girl child at home, streets, public places, transports, offices, etc by the family members, neighbors, friends or relatives.
- Dowry and Bride burning: It is another problem generally faced by women of low or middle class family during or after the marriage. Parents of boys demands a lot of money from the bride's family to be rich in one time. Groom's family perform bride burning in case of lack of fulfilled dowry demand. In 2005, around 6787 dowry death cases was registered in India according to the Indian National Crime Bureau reports.
- Disparity in education: The level of women education is less than men still in the modern age. Female illiteracy is higher in the rural areas. where over 63% or more women remain unlettered.
- Domestic violence: it is like endemic and widespread disease affects almost 70% of Indian women according to the women and child development official. It is performed by the husband, relative or other family member.
- Girls have no property rights like boys forever.

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- **Child Marriages:** Early marriage of the girls by their parents in order to be escaped from dowry. It is highly practiced in the rural India.
- **Inadequate Nutrition:** Inadequate nutrition in the childhood affects women in their later life especially women belonging to the lower middle class and poor families.
- **Domestic violence and status in the family:** It is the abuse or violence against women.
- **Women are considered as inferior to men** so they are not allowed to join military services.
- **Status of widows:** Widows are considered as worthless in the Indian society. They are treated poorly and forced to wear white clothes.

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### **14.3 WOMEN'S SAFETY IN INDIA**

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As we all know that India is a most famous country all over the world for its great tradition and culture where women are given most respected place in the society from the ancient time. It is the country where women are considered as safer and most respected. Women are given the place of Goddess Lakshmi in the Indian society. Indian women are found working in all fields like aeronautics, space, politics, banks, schools, sports, businesses, army, police, and many more. We cannot say that this country has no any women concern however we cannot ignore positive points for women in India. If we remember our history, we found that there was Panchaali Pratha in which a single woman (Draupadi) was allowed to get married to five men (Pandavas). It was all that what we see from our open eyes however if we see behind the curtain we will found all the crimes against women at home, offices, streets, etc. By seeing last few crimes against women in India such as rape cases, acid attacks, etc, the safety of women has been in doubt.

Safety of women matters a lot whether at home, outside the home or working place. Last few crimes against women especially rape cases were very dread and fearful. Because of such crimes, women safety in India has become a doubtful topic. According to the statistics of National Crime Records Bureau, highest rate of crime against women was recorded in the Chennai in 2000 (around 4,037 incidences). Chennai is

the capital of southern state of Tamil Nadu however has been marked as city with high rate of crimes against women. However, it was seen some decrease in the crime rate against women in the subsequent years (around 838 by 2013). It has been recorded as the largest fall in the crime rate than other cities in India. It was just opposite in the capital of India, Delhi. Crime rate against women in Delhi was 17.6/100,000 females in 2000 (2,122 incidents) and 151.13/100,000 females in 2013 (11,449 incidents).

Some of the most common crimes against women are rape, dowry deaths, sexual harassment at home or work place, kidnapping and abduction, cruelty by husband, relatives, assault on a woman, and sex trafficking.

In the last few years, crime against women in Delhi has increased to a great extent. According to the statistics, it is found that every two out of three women have suffered around two to five times sexual harassment in the last year. According to the survey of women, it is found that women are losing their confidence in police. By the survey of Delhi government's Women and Child Development Department, around 80% of the women in national capital have fear regarding their safety.

Women are harassed not only in the night or evening but also in the day time at their home, working places, or other places like street, club, etc. It is found through the survey that the reason of sexual harassment is the lack of gender-friendly environment and improper functional infrastructure such as consumption of alcohol and drugs in open area, lack of adequate lighting, safe public toilets, sidewalks, lack of effective police service, lack of properly working helpline numbers, etc. A huge percentage of women have no faith that police can curb such harassment cases. There is an urgent need to understand and solve this problem of women safety so that they can also grow equally like men in their own country.

It is very true that women in India are given a place of Goddess Lakshmi in the Indian society however we also cannot ignore the negative aspect

of women position in India. Every day and every minute some women of all walks of life (a mother, a sister, a wife, young girls, and girl baby children) are getting harassed, molested, assaulted, and violated at various places all over the country. Areas like streets, public spaces, public transport, etc have been the territory of women hunters. Girl students studying in the schools or colleges have to shield themselves through books or bags or they have to wear clothes which can cover them completely. In some cases a girl child is sale by her parents just to earn some money. Girls generally face acid attacks on the streets and kidnapping for the sex purpose by strangers. According to the statistics, it is found that a woman is raped in India every 20 minutes.

In the rural areas, women are still being raped by a family member, beaten by husbands or parents-in-law, burned for dowry, and so many cases. Nirbhaya gang-rape in the national capital of India was a dreadful event which can never be forgotten. Woman covers almost half population of the country so they are half participants in the growth and development of India. We are running in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an advanced era however it is very shame to say about the doubtful safety of woman in India.

Safety of women in India is a vast topic now-a-days. We cannot say that women are safe in India by seeing the last few year crimes against women especially in the national capital. Women generally feel frightened while going alone outside to the home. It is a very sad reality of the country that its women citizens are living with fear all time. Personal safety of women has been the topic of importance for every Indian citizen. In order to improve the condition regarding women safety in India, following are some points as tips for women safety:

### **14.3.1 Some Tips Regarding Women Safety**

- Self defence techniques are the first and foremost thing to which each and every woman must be aware of and get proper self-defense training for their safety. They must be aware of some effective defence techniques such as kicks to groin, blocking punches, etc.

- Generally most of the women are gifted with sixth sense which they must use whenever they become in some problem. They should at once avoid any situation which they feel bad for them.
- Escape and run is also a good way to reduce some risks of women whenever they become in problem. They should never go with any unknown person alone at some unknown places.
- Women must understand and feel their physical power and use accordingly. They never feel themselves weak than men and take some self defence training.
- They should be careful while communicating with someone on internet in the cyberspace.
- Pepper spray can also be proved as a useful self-defence tool however it has a drawback that some people cannot be harmed through it even after full-face spray. It may not stop the attacker so women should not depend on it completely and use other techniques also.
- They must have all the emergency numbers with them and whats app also if possible so that they can immediately tell to their family members and police.
- Women should be very conscious while driving the car and going to any trip. They must lock all the doors of car while travelling with own or private car.

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## **14.4 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN INDIA**

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Violence against women in India is going side by side to the technological improvement in modern world in the country. Violence to the women is of various types and can happen at any place like home, public place or office. It is the big issue related to the women which cannot be ignored as it is hindering almost one half growth of the country. Women in the Indian society have always been considered as the things of enjoyment from the ancient time. They have been victims of the humiliation, exploitation and torture by the men from the time of social organization and family life.

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From the origin of social life in the country various centuries came and gone, time has changed people's mind and environment a lot, however violence against women is not seems to change a little bit. Time is the real eyewitness of all the sufferings (like sex discrimination, exploitation, oppression, aggression, degradation, humiliation, etc) bear by the helpless women. Women are so helpless in the Indian society where many female goddess are worshiped. In the Vedas, women are glorified as mother means one who can create and nourish a life. On the other hand, they have found themselves suppressed and subjugated by the men in the patriarchal society.

Violence against women can be domestic as well as public, Physical, emotional or mental . Women have fear of violence in their mind which causes the lack of participation in various areas of life. Fear of violence in the women mind has been so deep which cannot be out easily even after complete removal of violence against women in the society.

India is a traditional male-dominated country where women have to face various violence in the society from the ancient time. As the world is leading in the technological improvement, advancement of material prosperity, etc; the rate of unnatural sex and violence with women is also on the way. Rapes and brutal murders have been so common now-a-days. Other violence are like harassment, assault, and chain-snatching, etc have been involved in the daily routine in the modern Indian society. Violence against women has grown to a great extent in the free India. Dowry deaths, murder, bride burning, etc are giving rise to other violence in the society. Simultaneous increase in violence against women is hindering the social, economical, political, and cultural progress in the country.

The continuous practice of dowry system in the society proves that the violence against women can never be end. It is a complex phenomenon covering several dimensions of violence. It has reduces the status of young girls in the society as well as lowers their dignity. At the time of marriage, if a bride do not bring adequate dowry with her, she would really be at high risk of maltreatment after the marriage. Thousands of girls are bring victims of this social devil on daily basis.

There are many violence against women in India because of the male dominated society here. Women generally face various kinds of crime like dowry death, sexual harassment, cheating, murder, girl child abuse, robbery, etc. Violence against women which counted as crimes under the Indian Penal Code are rape, kidnapping and abduction, torture physically and mentally, dowry deaths, wife battering, sexual harassment, molestation, importation of girls, etc. The cases of violence against women is increasing day by day and becoming too broad.

Violence against women in the country is getting more frequent and alarmingly with huge sound. It is creating pressure and and heavy responsibility over the shoulders of social workers. However, there is urgent need for women to be empowered and responsible to themselves in order to understand all the rights and take benefits.

**Check Your Progress-1**

16 Discuss the problem faced by women in India.

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17 Discuss some tips regarding women safety.

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**14.5 TYPES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

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**Types of Violence against Women**

There are many types of crimes that come under the category of violence against women. Some of the most common forms of violence against women committed in India are listed below-

### **14.5.1 Sexual Assault**

Sexual Assault on a woman refers to the situation where a person intentionally makes inappropriate physical contact with a woman without her consent or forces her into a sexual act. It is a sexual violence and includes crimes like – rape, drugs induced sexual assaults, child sexual abuse and groping.

### **14.5.2 Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence against women is carried out in a domestic environment. Many cases of domestic violence in India's patriarchal society go unreported. It includes physical abuse of a woman, by her in laws, husband or relatives. Social evils like dowry system, gender inequality are primarily responsible for domestic violence against women.

### **14.5.3 Honor Killing**

Honor killing refers to the murder of a family members who has supposedly brought shame to the family by going against the family's will on issues like arranged marriage, by choosing a partner from other caste or in some cases by committing adultery.

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## **14.6 SOLUTIONS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES**

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Some of the major solutions to curb violence against women are listed below-

### **14.6.1 Increased Police Vigil**

Police vigil must be increased in all the areas, especially in the secluded areas during night. Police presence significantly reduces the chance of a woman getting assaulted or harassed by others on the road. Police officers must be deployed at crowded places like markets, as the women at these places are more susceptible to crimes like eve teasing or groping.



### **14.6.2 Community Initiative**

Initiatives taken by the community itself towards curbing violence against women, is the best way to counter domestic violence and as well as other crimes against women. The Nari Adalat program introduced in Uttar Pradesh by Department of Education has proved instrumental in reducing domestic violence against women.

### **14.6.3 Safe Transport**

Many acts of sexual violence against women are committed in trains or buses mainly during late hours. Offenders take advantage of the secluded vehicle and absence of police personnel. There is a need to deploy at least one woman police constable in buses or rail coaches during late night hours.

Violence against Indian women is a blot on the nation and the society as well. As long as the Indian women are subjected to violence, the international image of India is also going to suffer. Also, incidents of domestic violence, sexual assaults and other similar crimes on women will continuously damage Indian society and obstructs national progress. Therefore, it is imperative to take stringent counter measures to diminish any kind of violence against Indian women.

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## **14. 7 CURRENT STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA**

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According India's constitution, women are legal citizens of the country and have equal rights with men (Indian Parliament). Because of lack of acceptance from the male dominant society, Indian women suffer immensely. Women are responsible for bearing children, yet they are malnourished and in poor health. Women are also overworked in the field and complete the all of the domestic work. Most Indian women are uneducated. Although the country's constitution says women have equal status to men, women are powerless and are mistreated inside and outside the home.

India is a society where the male is greatly revered. Therefore women, especially the young girls, get very little respect and standing in this

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country. The women of the household are required to prepare the meal for the men, who eat most of the food. Only after the males are finished eating, can the females eat. Typically the leftover food is meager, considering the families are poor and have little to begin with. This creates a major problem with malnutrition, especially for pregnant or nursing women. Very few women seek medical care while pregnant because it is thought of as a temporary condition. This is one main reason why India's maternal and infant mortality rates are so high. Starting from birth, girls do not receive as much care and commitment from their parents and society as a boy would. For example a new baby girl would only be breast fed for a short period of time, barely supplying her with the nutrients she needs. This is so that the mother can get pregnant as soon as possible in hopes of a son the next time .

Because women are not educated and cannot hold a prestigious job, they take on the most physically difficult and undesirable jobs. A typical day for a woman in an agricultural position lasts from 4am to 8pm with only an hour break in the middle. Compared to a man's day, which is from 5am to 10am and then from 3pm to 5pm. Most women are overworked with no maternity leave or special breaks for those who are pregnant. Plus women do the majority of the manual labour that uses a lot of energy compared to the men who do mostly machine operating . Even though women work twice as many hours as men, the men say that "women eat food and do nothing." This is mainly because the work the women perform does not require a lot of skill and are smaller tasks.

### Check Your Progress-2

18 Discuss 3 types of violence against women.

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19 Discuss the solutions and preventive measures of women safety.



women are given most respected place in the society from the ancient time.

- Violence: Violence against women in India is going side by side to the technological improvement in modern world in the country.
- Solutions: Police vigil must be increased in all the areas, especially in the secluded areas during night.

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### 14.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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1. Discuss the problem faced by women in India.
2. Discuss some tips regarding women safety.
3. Discuss 3 types of violence against women.
4. Discuss the solutions and preventive measures of women safety.

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### 14.11 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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## **14.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

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1. Taking birth as a woman in the Indian society can be said as curse for the women. Women in India face lots of social issues and problems all through the life which are big struggle for them right from their beginning of life. Female infanticide is the most common practice of killing girl child in mother's womb in the Indian society. Women in India are considered as burden for their parents and husbands as they think that women are here only to consume money whole life without earning a little bit.

Another common problem for women is sex discrimination which they face from their birth and continues till their death. Illiteracy, lack of proper education, responsible for household works, rape, sexual harassment at workplace, etc are some big issues for the women in India. However, a lot of positive changes has occurred in the women status as the number of educated people is increasing in the country.

Women in the Indian society have been considered as inferior than men for many years. Because of such type of inferiority they have to face various issues and problems in their life. They have to go extra miles than men to prove themselves equivalent to men. People in the middle age were considering women as key to destruction so they never allowed women to go outside and participate in the social activities like men. Still in the modern age, women have to face many more problems in their daily life and struggle a lot to establish their career. Still there are many parents who prefer to have only boy baby and allow education to boys only. Women for them are only medium to keep family happy and healthy.

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Earlier to this women were facing a lot of problems because of male dominated, patriarchal society system, practice of old traditional believes, etc. Women were only responsible to the traditional roles like child bearing and child rearing. In the modern world, where women status has been improved a little while, still they are facing problems. They have to perform both family and professional responsibilities together without the help of their husbands. In some cases, the condition of women become more embarrassed when they get tortured by their family members instead of getting help. Sexual harassment is more common at homes as well as in the offices by the family members, relatives, neighbors, friends, boss, etc. They have to suffer a lot in their daily life to nourish their career as well as saving their family relationships.

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- Sexual harassment: It is the form of sexual exploitation of a girl child at home, streets, public places, transports, offices, etc by the family members, neighbors, friends or relatives.
- Dowry and Bride burning: It is another problem generally faced by women of low or middle class family during or after the marriage. Parents of boys demands a lot of money from the bride's family to be rich in one time. Groom's family perform bride burning in case of lack of fulfilled dowry demand. In 2005, around 6787 dowry death cases was registered in India according to the Indian National Crime Bureau reports.
- Disparity in education: The level of women education is less than men still in the modern age. Female illiteracy id higher in the rural areas. where over 63% or more women remain unlettered.

- Domestic violence: it is like endemic and widespread disease affects almost 70% of Indian women according to the women and child development official. It is performed by the husband, relative or other family member.
- Girls have no property rights like boys forever.
- Child Marriages: Early marriage of the girls by their parents in order to be escaped from dowry. It is highly practiced in the rural India.
- Inadequate Nutrition: Inadequate nutrition in the childhood affects women in their later life especially women belonging to the lower middle class and poor families.
- Domestic violence and status in the family: It is the abuse or violence against women.
- Women are considered as inferior to men so they are not allowed to join military services.
- Status of widows: Widows are considered as worthless in the Indian society. They are treated poorly and forced to wear white clothes.

## **2. Some Tips Regarding Women Safety**

- Self defence techniques are the first and foremost thing to which each and every woman must be aware of and get proper self-defense training for their safety. They must be aware of some effective defence techniques such as kicks to groin, blocking punches, etc.
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### 3. Types of Violence against Women

There are many types of crimes that come under the category of violence against women. Some of the most common forms of violence against women committed in India are listed below-

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#### **Honor Killing**



Honor killing refers to the murder of a family members who has supposedly brought shame to the family by going against the family's will on issues like arranged marriage, by choosing a partner from other caste or in some cases by committing adultery.

4. Some of the major solutions to curb violence against women are listed below-

### **Increased Police Vigil**

Police vigil must be increased in all the areas, especially in the secluded areas during night. Police presence significantly reduces the chance of a woman getting assaulted or harassed by others on the road. Police officers must be deployed at crowded places like markets, as the women at these places are more susceptible to crimes like eve teasing or groping.

### **Community Initiative**

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Violence against Indian women is a blot on the nation and the society as well. As long as the Indian women are subjected to violence, the international image of India is also going to suffer. Also, incidents of domestic violence, sexual assaults and other similar crimes on women will continuously damage Indian society and obstructs national progress. Therefore, it is imperative to take stringent counter measures to diminish any kind of violence against Indian women.