

Volume 2

2021-22

# चक्रviewह



## Democracy

Thought, theory & praxis

**Department of Political Science  
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College**



The Annual Magazine of  
Department of Political Science  
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College  
University of Delhi

Published in New Delhi  
Department of Political Science  
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College  
University of Delhi  
Phase II, Sheikh Sarai  
Delhi - 110017

The moral rights of the contributing authors are reserved. Views represented in this compilation belong to the authors themselves. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior permission in writing from the Department of Political Science, Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, University of Delhi, New Delhi.

Published by  
Magazine Committee  
Department of Political Science  
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College  
University of Delhi

**Convener**

Dr. Rupak Kumar

**Editor-in-Chief**

Ansh Sharma

**Editor-at-Large**

Himanshu Kumar

**Managing Editor**

Dipansh Mandaar

**Associate Editors**

Varsha

Pragya Chabarwal

Shalu

**Assistant Editors**

Rishank Kumar

Yogeshwar Sanjay Patil

Aayan Faiz

Krishna Gopal

Deepak Lakhlan

# Table of Contents

**Principal's Note**

**Teacher-in-Charge's Note**

**Convener's Note**

**Editor's Note**

**Faculty Speaks**

**Guest Entries**

Media as the Fourth Pillar of Democracy *by Reeta*

Wither Indian Democracy? *by Gaurav*

Democracy: Its theory and praxis *by Aishwarya Kothari*

The Pillars, Palaces and Police *by Surabhi Srivastava*

Apolitical Democracy-Paradox *by Surbhi Runiwal*

The Anatomy of Hate (Book Review) *by Noorul Islaml*

उभरते प्रश्नचिह्नों के दौर में लोकतन्त्र *by Abhishek Mishra*

भारतीय लोकतंत्र एवं धर्मनिरपेक्षता की संकल्पना *by Mohd. Ehtesham Anjum*

भारतीय गणतंत्र - चुनौतियाँ और संभावनाएँ *by Umang Singhal*

**A Lifetime in education: In conversation with Dr. Vijaylaxmi Dudeja**

**Editorial Section**

Political Culture, Constitutional Morality & Subversion *by Himanshu Kumar*

संघर्ष जारी है *by Varsha*

A long road ahead *by Dipansh Mandar*

Indian Democracy and its Criticisms *by Rishank Kumar*

How India became democratic *by Rishank Kumar*

## **Expressions**

भेड़िया *by Satyam Tiwari*

जनसेवक *by Satyam Tiwari*

यथास्थिति *by Satyam Tiwari*

I dream of a life *by Pragati Tiwari*

Democracy: A dream for freedom *by Pallavi Singh*

## **Year at Glance**

**Department of Political Science**

**Magazine Committee**

# Principal's Note



I am pleased to introduce the second issue of the 'चक्रViewह'- a magazine by the department of Political Science. To begin something is easier as compared to continuing it over some time. In this case, the department fraternity has succeeded in continuing the legacy of publishing the annual magazine.

This year's theme of 'चक्रViewह' is "Democracy: thought, theory, and praxis." This is of particular importance in completing the 75 years journey of India's Swaraj. The contributors have brought up a plethora of issues- national and international around democracy in their writings ranging

from articles, poetries, illustrations and prose. I congratulate the political science department- students and faculty for completing the task.

My best wishes for the second issue of this magazine. I reiterate and anticipate that the hard work invested by the Department of Political Science and the entire Editorial Team will become a grand success in the academic community.

Stay Blessed

Prof. Arun Kumar Attree  
Principal  
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College  
University of Delhi

# Teacher-in-Charge's Note



I am delighted to present the second edition of the department magazine “Chakravayuh” on Democracy: Thought, Theory and Praxis. This theme has undergone constant scrutiny worldwide, and rightly so, as democracy requires reflexivity to maintain its purposive and substantive essence. The students and faculty of the department have since long engaged in a continuum of dialogue on democracy as a lived experience in both the classroom and outside of it.

Our collective conversations have traversed through the interims of public and private, making ideas, opinions, and praxis of democracy a process in flux. As a result, the department has, over the years, built a sensitive, empathetic, and self-aware space to introspect, reflect, debate, and explore our thoughts and praxis in academics and beyond. The magazine is a love of labour in this journey.

This edition comes in the background of post-Covid recovery when the debate over the nature and value of the state is at an all-time high. State and its functioning have been contested, with concerns of welfare, rights, and ethics on the one hand and surveillance, control, and obligations on the other. Democracy as an operative paradigm continues to provide the strength to test the limits of these seemingly opposing ends of the spectrum.

This edition of the magazine creates a similar co-space for students, researchers, and faculty from different parts of India, bringing to the fore the multitude that makes a democracy. I congratulate the editorial team for building an excellent textual discursive space and wish them a brighter future.

Dr. Rityusha Mani Tiwary  
Teacher-in-Charge  
Department of Political Science

# Former Teacher-in-Charge's Note



It is a moment of rejoicing for the department as our students have once again completed the second issue of the political science annual magazine, 'चक्रViewह' on the theme of "Democracy: thought, theory, and praxis." The budding minds of our department showed remarkable brilliance, zeal and enthusiasm to come up with the consecutive edition of the magazine. The insurmountable patience, energy and consistency of our students have set up a benchmark for the coming cohort in the department. The theme of democracy is relevant in the present context.

The subject matter of the magazine reflects the comprehensive width and breadth of democracy in and across India.

I am proud and honored to write a note for 'चक्रViewह' yet again. I take this opportunity to congratulate each and every student of the department who left no stone unturned to realize the ambitious dream of planning, editing and organizing an excellent array of articles, poetries and reviews.

Dr. Ninad Shanker Nag  
Teacher-in-Charge (2021-22)  
Department of Political Science

# Convener's Note



With great pleasure, the students of the Department of Political Science, SBSC introduce to you the second edition of the magazine “चक्रViewह”. This being the year when India commands the presidency of G20, the theme of this edition could not have been more appropriate at this juncture- ‘Democracy: Thought, theory and Praxis’. This edition of the magazine includes more than a dozen articles. We are honoured to bring to you a detailed interview of one of our retired faculties Dr Vijaylaxmi Dudeja.

The contributions from different colleges and universities are both in English and Hindi. The magazine tries to fill the gap between thought and practice.

**Intellectual churning and reconfiguration are essential to understand the political ideas as illustrated in the magazine. It is here that the vocation of writing configures the academic domain.**

There is absolutely no need to point out the significance of democracy in India. Historiography suggests that democracy turned out to be one of the best and most apt forms of the political system. ‘Democracy’ is as old as antiquity being practised in ancient India, Athens, and Sparta; but the substance and subject matter of the form of democracy has completely changed. The form may sound familiar, but the substance has no commonality from antiquity.

Contemporary democracy is uniquely associated with elections, limited government, representation, and separation of powers. Unlike the ancient form, where it was meant to be associated with the paramount interest of wish, will and direct participation of the people in the decision-making affairs of the state. This distinctiveness of the contemporary vs ancient has to do with the existence of legitimate opposition and constitutional mandate to pose questions to the government and dissent. Democracy in praxis acts as a guardrail between the extremes of autocracy and anarchy.

It is in this context that “चक्रViewह” brings out perspectives from students that keep the tradition of democracy alive through the constant churning of thoughts and re-looking at political ideas. Once again, I commend the students for their collective efforts to come up with this magazine.

Dr. Rupak Kumar  
Convener, Magazine Committee

# Founding Convener's Note



I am pleased to write a note for the second issue of our annual department magazine, चक्रViewह'. It is the sheer perseverance and hard work of our department's students who could maintain the consistency of planning, executing and implementing the second edition of the magazine. A magazine for the students is meant to motivate them to write and expand the horizon of thinking, articulating and writing.

The theme of our second edition is "Democracy: thought, theory, and praxis." The theme of democracy is too vast to capture in one edition. Nevertheless, the students have made a constructive attempt to explore the multifaceted nature of the term democracy and its various connotations in modern parlance. Students from various colleges have enthusiastically contributed to the magazine which gives me solace to start a student-centric magazine in our department.

The completion of the magazine epitomizes the zeal and determination of the students. I congratulate the contributors, editorial team, faculty members, and students of our department for their unwavering support in coming up with an apt and relevant theme of democracy, specifically on the eve of the 75th anniversary of India's independence.

Dr. Saima Iqbal

Founding Convener, Magazine Committee

# Editor's Note

**“If you don't look out for me God,  
Then I should go and seek another god for  
myself.”**

**(English Translation)**

This concluding phrase of Faiz Ahmad Faiz's infamous work “Mori Araj Suno”, opens up for us an immensely potent dialogue on the nature of democracy – which exhumes in itself a dynamic and multi-faros interplay of the material and the metaphysical. One can clearly suggest that Faiz here is trying to democratize the relationship between the devotee and the almighty, by mentioning the existence of ‘alternate gods’ – a suggestion which reflects a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of the devotee-almighty relationship, in South Asia, if not over the world – one can easily imagine the angst (and admiration) Faiz would have received for this suggestion. This ambition of holding God accountable is a quintessential reflection of Faiz's revolutionary politics.

There is much to be learnt about democracy from this phrase. The history of democracy has been a history of revolutions – intellectual revolutions, socio-economic revolutions, and politico-legal revolutions. Even today, many thinkers suggest that democracy is a revolutionary idea – the deeper we go, the more troubled we get. Democratic ideals have also inspired further revolutionary thought and globally, we are witnessing revolutions of varied severity and contexts, to attain these ideals. This dynamic and constantly turbulent juxtaposition of democracy brings forth several questions: How much democracy can we achieve? Can we ever be truly democratic? Is democracy a political system of a way of life? Should democracy pervade into all spheres of human social life?

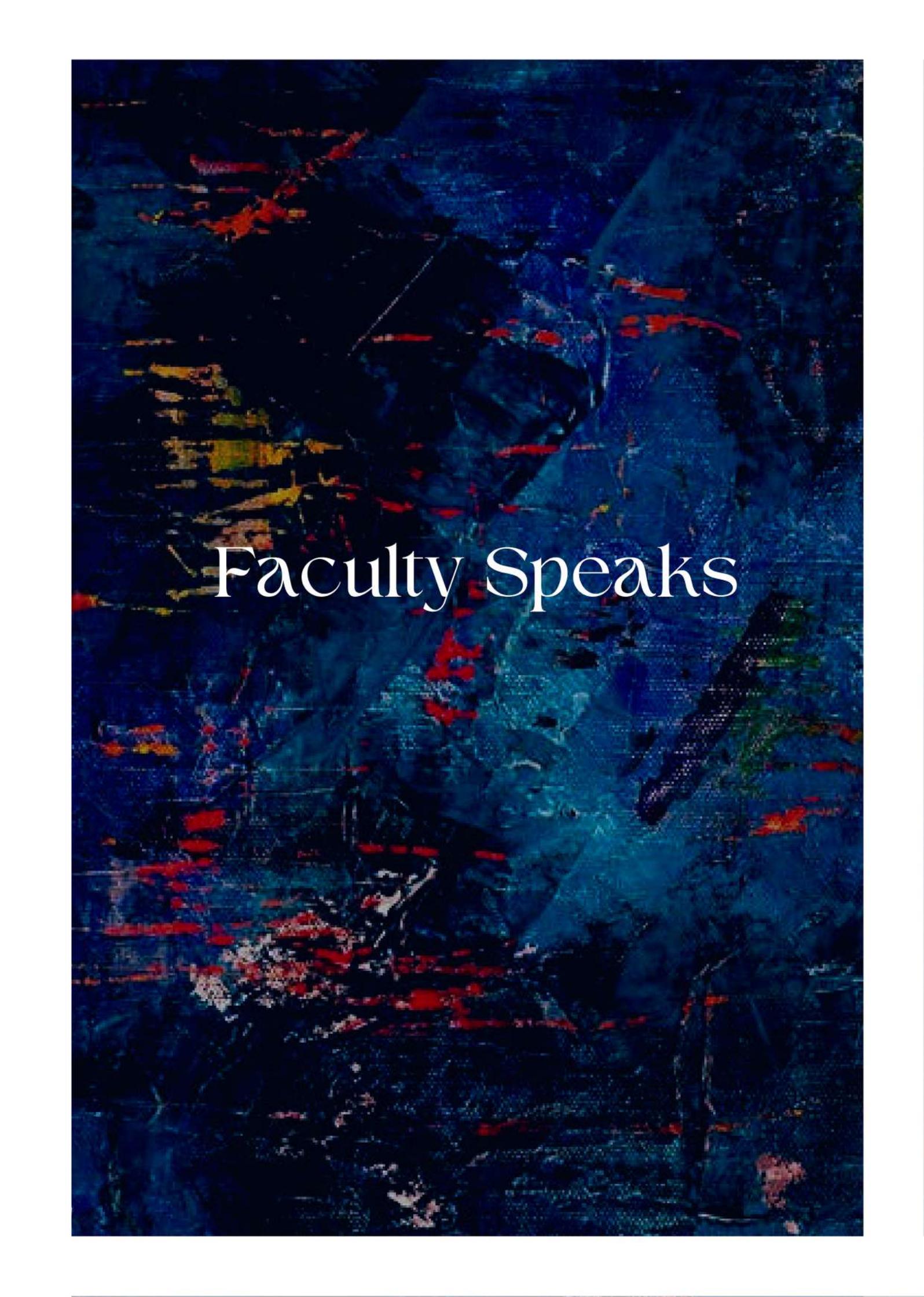
Sitting with these amongst many other questions, this volume was conceptualized to be a platform

for students having diverse (and even opposing) views to share their critical perspectives and evaluations of democracy, with the theme “Democracy: thought, theory, and praxis.” In its present form, it is a compilation of a plethora of nuanced vantage points, taking into account manifold aspects of the concept. The following pages contain a vast dialogue of a myriad of considerations such as media, political inaction, secularism, political culture, and interpretational standpoints including but not limited to feminist, Marxist, and constitutional approaches. These lucidly written pieces put forth timely and topical interventions in the ongoing discourse on democracy.

No work of this kind can be done alone – this compilation is a product of the efforts, dedication, and commitment of our Faculty Convenors, the Magazine Committee, and most importantly, all the contributors who deemed this compilation worthy of their words – to them, I present my utmost gratitude.

The written word is formidable since it brings with it greater possibilities of communication, collaboration, and contemplation – the magazine is an archive – of our perspectives, passions, and ideas. It is also an interface between contributors and readers, allowing for greater dialogue and deliberation. I am certain that the readers of this volume are in for a delightful journey of being exposed to familiar and emerging perspectives, and will be left with many nuances to ideate upon. I hope that readers and contributors continue their pursuit of engaging with varying ideas on questions they feel most passionate about, and in doing so, continue refining and developing existing thought with their imaginative interventions – to revolutionize ourselves and the world around us.

**- Ansh Sharma, Editor-in-Chief**

An abstract, textured background featuring dark blue and black tones with scattered streaks of red and yellow. The overall appearance is that of a heavily layered or distressed surface, possibly a book cover or a digital art piece. The text 'Faculty Speaks' is centered in a white, serif font.

# Faculty Speaks

# Ramblings on Democracy and Freedom

- By Dr. Simple Mohanty

Some time ago, Queen Elizabeth II, the longest reigning monarch of England, breathed her last. The Queen is dead. Long Live the King! Monarchy survives but as a mere Constitutional vestige, a shadow of its former glory as ruler of the seas and hence of the world, beating colonial competitors to forge the bejewelled Crown of the Empire; and what of the jewel in that Crown, India? Much water has flown down the Thames and Yamuna since.

The colonial ship has been rent asunder by storms such as the upsurge for Freedom in colonies, decolonization and successive waves of democratization. India's transition to Self-Rule has not been without its share of pain, it's been messy and complicated, but every crisis has seen India emerge stronger and more sure-footed, whether in the diverse manifestations of Her Selfhood, or her economic and political presence and soft power, in a globalizing, multilateral world.

Democracy is alive and kicking in India, proving the likes of Winston Churchill wrong. That a tribal woman from Rairangpur in the rural hinterland of Odisha can work her way up to be First Citizen of the country is but one example of the resilience of India's democracy. As Smt Draupadi Murmu pays a floral tribute on behalf of the Indian State at her the Queen's funeral on 19th September, (perhaps rubbing shoulders with Rishi Sunak, Indian origin Brit who came close to being British premier) the gesture will symbolize and cement the robust and equal bilateral ties former colony and former imperial power have been enjoying for a while now.

Such is the logic of Freedom. The claim of democracy for us, but not for you cannot hold water, not for long anyways. Hence did the civil liberties movement trump racism and apartheid,

feminism trump patriarchy, Green Movement warn against the threat to our planet from anthropocentrism, Peace movement reassure the world that its heart is in the right place amid Cold War bombings in Vietnam and the queer rights movement demand an equality of human essence despite difference. Not that all these battles have been won.

Yet, as the logic of Freedom unfolds, hurtling it towards its "telos" democracy acquires characteristics of the soil where it has struck roots and resists any attempt to essentialize it along a Western model. What next in this teleological journey? Perhaps a Movement of the Spirit / Consciousness is waiting in the wings, to consolidate earlier gains, end existential suffering and redefine Freedom.

# Democracy: Some Reflections

- By Dr. Lamneivah Sithou

**“True democracy is not inconsistent with a few persons representing the spirit, the hope and the aspirations of those whom they claim to represent. I hold that democracy cannot be evolved by forcible methods. The spirit of democracy cannot be imposed from without. It has to come from within.”**

**- Mahatma Gandhi**

The importance of democracy as a political principle in the modern world is still felt all over the world. Its popularity has increased after the end of the Cold War. Francis Fukuyama, the renowned US political scientist in his famous essay *The End of History?* (1989) and *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) proposed the thesis that human ideological evolution had come to an end with the end of the cold war. The ideological battles between the east and the west on liberal democracy and communism were over with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The western liberal democracy had triumphed that led to the spread of the democratic traditions and democracy as a political system all over the world. Thus, the end of the cold war led to the universalization of western liberal democracy as the final form of human government. Therefore, Fukuyama argues that the disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the failure of communism and resulted in the victory of liberal democracy and capitalism. Therefore, he is of the opinion that there are no more challenges to these ideologies and, as a result, security and freedom have been achieved in the world through liberal democracy. With the acceptance of democracy as the ideal form of governance, it is important to understand the democratic theories. According to Anthony Arblaster, “Democracy: Concepts in the Social Sciences” (1994), it refers to a situation where power and authority ultimately rest with the people.

Democracy ensures the accountability of those holding the power. In this kind of system, the people are the ultimate source of that power. In a democracy it is assumed that there will be a diversity of opinions and interests and this diversity is seen as the main strength of democratic institutions. A democratic society called for an ‘open society’ where there is space for all voices. The common people’s participation in this context is of significant value as it keeps a check on the activities of those in positions of power. Political scientists like John Stuart Mill are known as the best advocates of liberal representative democracy promoting a representative system where it creates maximum space for people to take part in the functioning of the government and not restrict their involvement by merely allowing them to vote. He considered participation important because it develops the confidence of the people in their ability to govern themselves.

In most democratic practices across the world, every government claims to have democratic approach in leading institutions of public importance. In most of these cases, only the privileged few people dominate these institutions. Thereby the majority of the population only serves as a tool for government formation dictated by the constitution in terms of voting rights. Most nations just have a functional democracy to conduct periodic elections and to govern where real power lies in the hands of the elites. This current form of apparent democracy, which is functional in nature, yet is bound by the resources of the few. Thus, the practice of functional democracy is needed to be replaced with substantive and vibrant democracy so that real power lies with the common people.

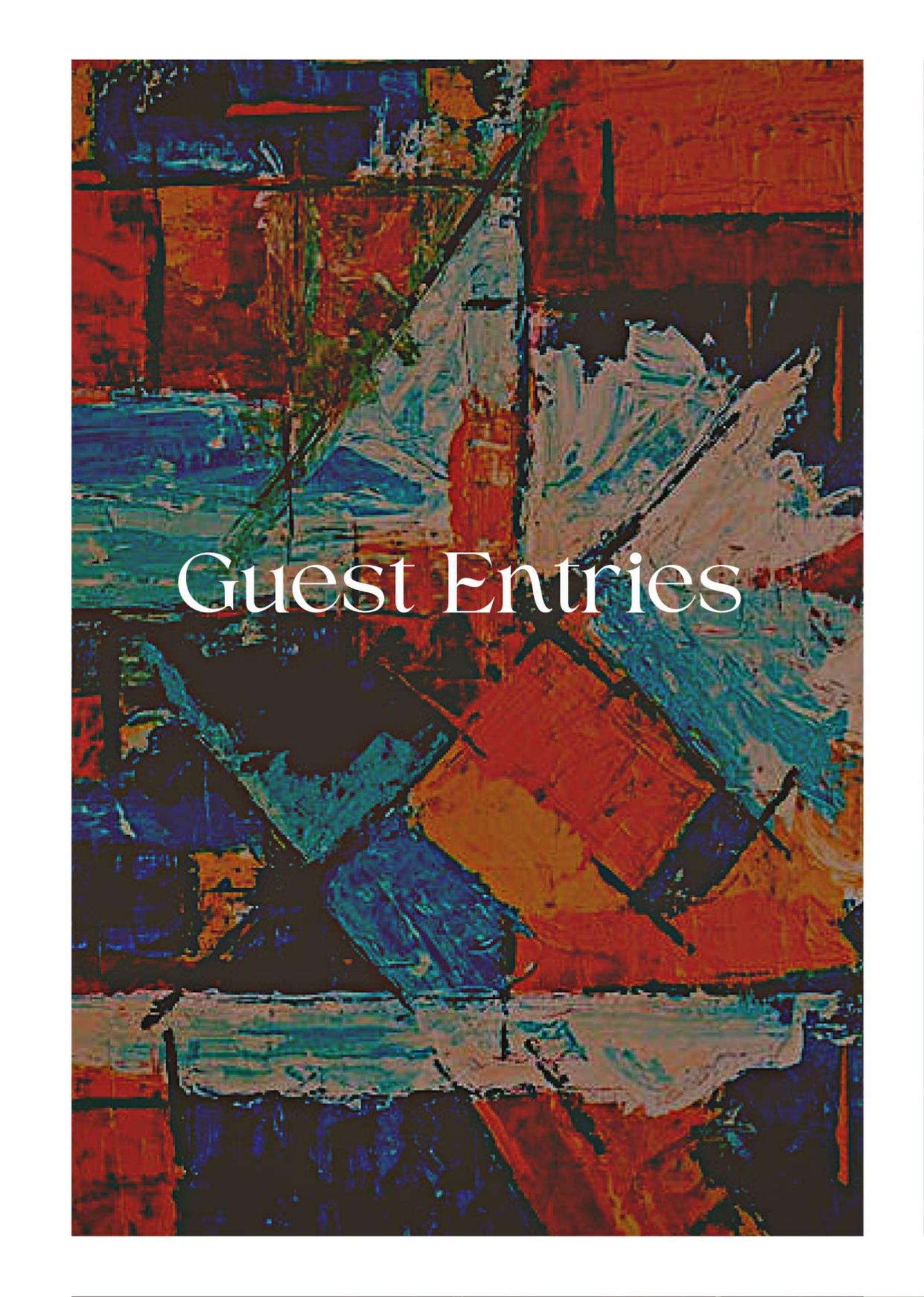
# Democracy

- By Dr. Krishna Murari

My idea of democracy is deeply embedded in the social realities of the nation rather than just plastering or importing the West model. It is in no way advocating a just inward looking idea of democracy, but to situate the democratic principles and ideals amidst the various realities of India. When one tries to resolve certain contradictions and conflicts prevalent in the society, the answer would invariably come from the society itself.

We cannot impose certain mechanisms expecting the ills to go away. It fails. The democratic response has to have come from within the society. However, in that journey we must be reasonable enough to learn from the world. The broader framework should assist and compliment us, not the other way round where our understanding of society, community, equality, Dharma, tolerance, mutual respect becomes completely secondary and succumbs to the transatlantic tradition.

Our idea of democracy must germinate from a socially and historically embedded self, then only we can lead to a democracy which can be called an “evolved” rather than “imported” or a carbon copy of western model. The evolved democracy will have immense possibilities to revisit Indian tradition and at the same time to get rid of various prevalent maladies in this that a society contracts in a long journey. A democracy succeeds if and when there is a seamless commensurability between the state and the society. Therefore, without understanding a society, it is difficult to define and make sense of democracy and the constitution.

An abstract painting featuring a complex composition of vibrant colors including deep reds, blues, yellows, and greys. The brushstrokes are thick and expressive, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is a rich, textured visual experience.

# Guest Entries

# Media as the Fourth Pillar of Democracy

- By Reeta, M.A. Political Science, Kirori Mal College

**"The moment we no longer have a free press, anything can happen. What makes it possible for a totalitarian or any other dictatorship to rule is that people are not informed."**

**- Hannah Arendt**

The media has evolved at a rapid rate throughout the world as democracy has advanced and progressed. Its liberty has become a gauge of society's liberty alongside freedom of speech and expression. The media is an institution that elevates the suppressed voice of the average man and enhances his voice in the democratic process.

The media has been classified as the fourth pillar of democracy, despite the fact that the legislative, executive, and judiciary are the three most important institutions of the state. Such a label did not emerge out of nowhere; rather, it evolved through time as the three pillars of administration in a contemporary democratic state evolved.

Today, the media is seen as an integral aspect of democracy since it serves as an information conduit between the government and general population. In a democracy, the media serves as a watchdog. This is done for the benefit of the people or those governed in a democratic state, as well as to guarantee checks and balances among the other three pillars to promote the true goal of democracy. The media's primary responsibility is to inform the public on activities and acts of the government.

If the government fails to fulfil its responsibilities and commitments, the media is the first critical analyst to assess the situation. As a result it presents the entire narrative to the public in a very comprehensive manner, allowing the people to assess the actions of the government. Furthermore, the media exposes the government's plans and policies to the public, allowing citizens

to assess them and determine if the government is meeting their requirements. The media, as a result of this process, connects the people with the government, thereby, serving as a link between the government and the governed.



Source: Medium.com

In a democracy, the media's fundamental function is the reason for its existence. This is how citizens form a bond with the democratic government and keep it on its toes, preventing the government from abusing its powers and infringing rights of citizens. It is the media that plays a critical role in transforming individuals into operational imperatives, allowing them to become actual players in the democratic process. As a result, the media's existence and activities contribute to catalyse and support democratic governance across the world, including in India. This has also given people more confidence in their ability to govern themselves.

The spread of mass media among the masses has intensified as a result of globalisation. For example, after India's government implemented liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation policies in 1991; private news channels from India and overseas entered the Indian media sector, making it open to international investment. As a result of these entrants, competition rose, and the number of electronic news channels increased. The news stations have also made inroads into the country's native

languages and as their reach and numbers grow, even local news from a tiny location may gain national attention.

As a consequence, the media has bridged the gap between the government and the last man in line, allowing the untouched and far-flung areas to be integrated into the mainstream of the country. Because we live in a democracy, the media has intervened in all domains where it can. It has aided the governmental apparatus in preserving peace and order and, on occasions, in the administration of justice. For instance, there is the case of Jessica Lal, who was fatally shot. The accused walked free from court in this case, but it was only via the media that Jessica Lal's sister Sabrina Lal was able to bring her justice, and the accused was eventually convicted and sentenced to prison.

When Sabrina staged a candlelight vigil for Jessica, the media proved to be a powerful force, so much so that the case was reopened as a result of media's pressure, and the Supreme Court eventually affirmed life sentence to the accused, giving justice to her. In the majority of cases, the media sided with regular inhabitants of this country and assisted them in obtaining justice. Similarly, thanks to the positive impact of the media, Anna Hazare's anti-corruption movement had gotten a lot of traction. The Nirbhaya case is another example of the media's positive influence.



Source: Scroll.in

The media slammed the horrible act committed in this case and the crime received so much attention that the government decided to modify

India's juvenile justice system. Such roles of the media in lifting the voices of the oppressed and providing them with a platform clearly demonstrate that the media is unquestionably the fourth pillar of democracy, since it brings people's and government's attention to significant national concerns. We may also infer that the media has played a significant role in shaping communal consciousness and moulding it whenever the necessity has arisen. This is because national discourses emerge through debates and discussions in electronic and print media.

At the same time, the media has been accused of failing to fulfil its responsibilities. Rather than serving as a neutral source of information, today's news outlets are perceived as dancing to the tunes of corporations and politicians. When we turn on the television and watch any news channel, it is immediately apparent whose ideology any journalist is associated with after only listening to them for a minute or two. Politicians have effectively held Indian news networks captive to their authority. Many stations pay no attention to researching the truth in the hopes of increasing their TRPs and increasing their revenue. The Neera Radia Tape controversy, for example, aroused concerns about the nexus between business, politics and media. The unholy relationship between the corridors of power and media houses was revealed in front of the entire globe in this incident.

The media has grown capital-centric in recent years and as a result, the notion of sponsored news has evolved. This has resulted in the transition of what was formerly supposed to be the society's mirror into the partisans of one group or the other. So, how does the average person determine whom to believe? Although the media enjoys freedom of expression under Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution, it must be exercised for the benefit of the people for whom the media is intended. It should not be

spent for personal gains, but rather for the progress of democracy.

The subject of media would be incomplete without consideration of social media. Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and others have a large user base and influence public opinion. People have turned into journalists and they disseminate news on social media in the same way they conduct their regular tasks. This has resulted in the emergence of a new class of knowledgeable individuals who are well-versed in national and international affairs. Even someone living in a distant village may now post their opinions on Facebook or Twitter. This has also resulted in a social media exchange of ideas.



Source: Newslick.in

People appear to have turned into their own watch dogs, keeping a close eye on any misbehaviour by any government body. The Supreme Court deemed Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 illegal in 2015 because the clause was ambiguous and unclear, allowing authorities to arrest people for their writings and beliefs. However, there have been several flaws in the usage of social media. In the event of riots, the district administration now restricts the internet first and foremost, so that the riot and extreme viewpoints are not propagated through social media platforms. Furthermore, many individuals make obscene and unpleasant comments about political entities, religious symbols, and other topics on social media with unrestrained freedom of expression.

Overall, the media has done a good job of filling in the gaps left by democratic institutions. If a policy fails to meet expectations, the media criticises it and urges the government to improve it, if feasible by replacing it with a better one. The media's function as the fourth pillar of democracy is justified by this gap filling. However, this fourth pillar has to be developed even further in order to call the attention of the government and the governed to any governance failure. The media has the power to shape, influence, and even transform public opinion. As a result, the media bears a significant duty to society and must be aware of and attentive to democratic requirements in order to maintain its legitimacy as the fourth pillar of democracy.

# Whither Indian Democracy?

- By Gaurav, M.A. Political Science, Ramjas College

**"WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN, SOCIALIST, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC, REPUBLIC..."**  
- The Preamble

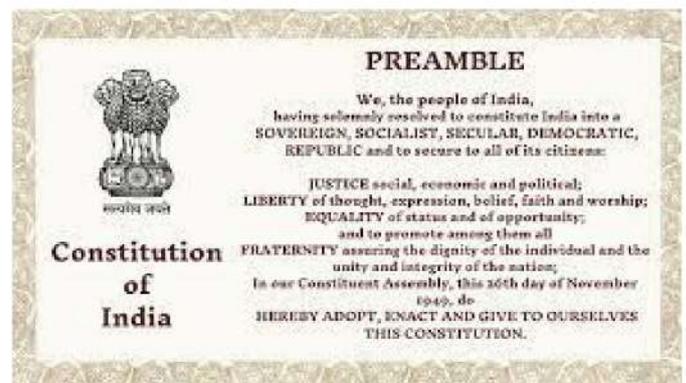
The aforementioned phrases were enshrined in the Indian Constitution by the Constituent Assembly. By embracing political democracy, the Indian Constitution gave the people of India a 'one man, one vote' system. This signalled the beginning of a new era of justice, liberty, and equality. One feature of this system was democracy, which was defined as a way of collective decision-making characterised by a sense of equality among participants, as well as the existence of justice and liberty as inherent rights for everyone.

Indian was introduced to Democracy. The differences may be seen in Dr. Ambedkar's reservations, which he expressed while presenting the draft Constitution. "We are laying the groundwork for a system of 'one man, one vote', but we are still a long way from building a society where we can have 'one man, one value,' with widespread social, political, and economic inequalities," he said.

One of the most important tools for bolstering India's soft power in the international arena is democracy. When we talk about democracy and its successes and failures, we always compare it to the Western model, whether it is in terms of political or social democratisation. Analysts discover evidence to illustrate India's incapacity to keep up with democratic principles based on these factors.

However, there is a systematic difference between the rise of democracy in Western countries and in Third World countries. Democracy arose in the West as a result of the ideas of equality, justice, and brotherhood, which were instilled through

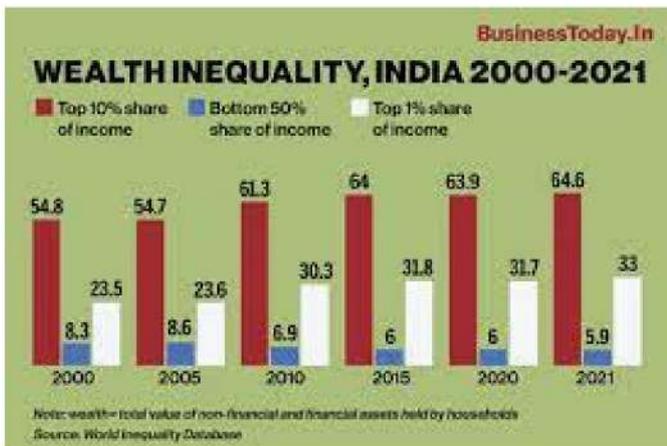
time as a result of the American and French Revolutions. As a result, democracy developed from inside, it was sought and fought for in their situation. In the case of India, democracy was a result of the country's independence from foreign domination. India became a democratic republic on January 26, 1950. With many issues like linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversities, the route to democracy was not simple. Nonetheless, India overcame these differences and the process of democratisation of Indian society began.



Source: Antahkaran.in

Democracy entails much more than voting every five years; it also entails the citizens' ability to exercise a wide range of powers. Though the party system and elections in India represent democracy in action, the internal structures of parties remain hierarchical in nature, despite the fact that the poor and marginalised people make up the majority of the population. In addition, dynastic politics is prevalent, with party leaders, their children and grandchildren occupying the political landscape. Political parties have decayed to the point that they can accept criminals, fundamentalists, and wealthy individuals in Parliament, while ignorant, impoverished, and secularists continue to struggle to enter politics. It is also suggested that as decentralization increases, corruption would become more democratic. Economic disparities exacerbate inequities in decision-making. In India, economic disparities are seen in every region.

It is further complicated by elements such as caste, religion, and location. Not only are there class differences, but the lower classes, urban poor, and others are still unaware of any notion of sectoral inequality.



Source: [Businesstoday.in](https://www.businesstoday.in)

The moral system of families and their process of upbringing go counter to any democratic ideal. From the time they are born, Indian children are educated about their family's hierarchical structure, as well as the consequences of breaching it. This is in addition to the family's hierarchical order between men and women. This order is evident not just in personal decisions such as marriage and motherhood, but also in financial ones. The religious framework reinforces this stratification even further. Religion promotes the existence of a powerful self that is the source of all living things. The entire essence of this connection goes against democratic values.

This manifests itself in inter-religious, inter-caste, and inter-sex disparities resulting from differing readings of religious scriptures. It also shows up in different aspects of social life. Shudras, for example, are considered defiled and kept away from holy rites, which leads to additional caste-based prejudice. Similarly, women have been granted lesser social standing for ages, based on interpretations of religious texts, which continues to this day. When such inequalities become a source of violence and political prejudice, they undermine the democratic concept to its heart. As a result of this belief, the question arises: "Has

Indian democracy made no progress?" Despite the poor state of Indian democracy, it is far better than it was in 1947.

There has been a significant rise in voter turnout, particularly among women, in the political realm. Underprivileged groups have risen to become the political majority. The decrease of dominance of national parties and the rise in strength of state parties have resulted in increased political decentralisation, enhancing the significance of democratic values. In addition, several initiatives have been taken to diminish the influence of muscle and money in politics. For example, the Supreme Court of India has imposed a six-year ban on lawmakers who have served more than two years in prison from participating in elections.

Modernity's impact has left signs of equality, fairness, and fraternity in familial and religious systems. For example, a new style of religion centred on self-spiritualism has emerged, giving people more freedom to experience religion in their own unique way. Women have also been discovered to play a larger part in the family sphere, such as choosing whom to marry, the number of children, and so on. Parents are giving their children greater options in terms of career choices and marriage.

**Untouchability and other associated caste discriminations have also been targeted, albeit not to the extent that they would be eradicated.**

In many situations, the economic realm has also witnessed growing democratisation. Stakeholder ownership economic models, for example, are becoming more popular. People's decision-making power in investments, such as mutual funds, pension funds, is also increasing. Women have become more economically empowered due to greater economic opportunities. As a result, there are remnants of democratic ideas at work, although in a limited number of places.

The degree of democratisation varies according to the urban-rural difference. Rural locations have more evident and significant socio-economic inequities, gender stereotyping, and discrimination than metropolitan ones. Women in cities have greater socio-economic and political influence than women in rural regions. In rural places, caste and religious biases are also more visible. Manual scavenging, child labour, bonded labour, female foeticide, and other inhumane practises are still prevalent. While the political landscape in urban regions is evolving into new fields such as fighting corruption and encouraging economic growth, the political landscape in rural areas is still centred on caste and religious divisions. However, as the process of inclusive growth and urbanisation, as well as westernization of rural life have increased, this barrier has narrowed.



Source: Outlookindia.com

Democracy has developed as a tool to magnify a country's soft power in the international arena as Third World countries emerge as co-leaders in the international world order. These nations express concerns about the democratic processes in UNO, WTO, and other international organisations. For a long time, India has been a key proponent of democratisation of the functioning of these institutions and has emerged as a Third-World leader. In this manner, democracy as a concept transcends national boundaries, tying the globe together in a more cooperative and productive network. India is focusing on capacity building and skill development through programmes such as Skill India, Startup India, Stand Up India,

USTAAD plan, and special provisions for the MSME sector such as MUDRA bank to address societal disparities that fuel these democratic crises.

New e-governance efforts and RTI have aided in enhancing information distribution, since these have become critical for expanding societal engagement in the country's decision-making process. Various legislations, including the SC and ST Act, Supreme Court rulings, and other norms and regulations, help to eliminate caste and religion-based prejudice. As a result, we are changing as a society and giving greater weight to the opinions of civil society and other stakeholders such as women, children, people with disabilities and others.

On the one hand, implementing and succeeding in democracy in a nation like India is a monumental challenge; on the other, few believe that freshly discovered defects in democracy are jeopardising democracy's very survival. Whatever flaws a democracy may have, it will always remain the salvation of human culture. It can be best summarised in the words of Winston Churchill: "Democracy is best of all the worst models of governance that have been tried."

# Democracy: Its theory and praxis

- By Aishwarya Kothari, B.A. (H.) Political Science

The basic understanding of democracy to each and every individual comes from the most famous definition given by Abraham Lincoln, as he defined democracy as the “government of the people, by the people and for the people”. But, the way in which democracy is functioning across nations and particularly in India, we can observe the glimpse of democracy as a “government of the politicians, by the voters, for the elites.”

The term Democracy was first coined in the 5th century BCE in Athens, Greece. From the 5th century BCE to the 21st Century CE, it has witnessed a range of developments and a series of extensions in its definitions and theories. Apart from these extensions in the theory part, it went through a lot more changes with regards to its practice in different countries in the given circumstances, which has made it a complex and most contested concept.

As mentioned earlier the term 'Democracy' was first coined in Athens back in the 5th century BCE and since then, this concept has travelled across the world, taking different forms and making itself broader than ever. Going by the literal meaning of the word democracy; it traces its origin from Greek words, 'Demos', which translates into people and 'Kratia' which means rule. Originally, democracy meant 'rule of people', but historically which section of society were eligible to rule under Democracy was a matter of debate. Even though it originated from Athens, there too, it served a very limited or narrow concept of rule by people, because it didn't allow every section to participate in the electoral process. Still it was an accepted form of Government because as Pericles stated, “It favors many instead of few, this is why it is called democracy.”

Centuries later, when Aristotle gave his theories on democracy, he stated that “the basis of democratic state is liberty.” After that the theories of John Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau, J.S Mill, John Dewey, John Rawls etc. have made the concept of democracy much more broader than it originally was. In the modern era, it means the rule of the government elected by the people either directly or indirectly (at least theoretically). Though all the above mentioned thinkers and philosophers gave different theories of democracy; one thing which was common in all of them was the 'core' based on 'individualism'. They favoured liberty and advocated for liberal form of government for the protection of rights of each and every individual.



Source: Classics.princeton.edu

**In the contemporary world democracy is the most acceptable form of government.**

Across the globe, it basically has two forms: the first one is the direct one, in which the elections are based on plebiscites and the other one is the indirect one having complex forms of elections for the representatives. Different countries follow different types of electoral systems, some of them are republics and some monarchy. Theoretically, democracy is supposed to be a form of government in which each and every individual has the same share of rights; each individual

has the right to freedom, equality and justice, no one would be discriminated against on the basis of religion, race, caste or creed. A government which would be able to secure socio-economic and political equality to every individual. Though the democratic governments of different countries have successfully ensured political equality to a great extent, equality in socio-economic spheres is still a matter of concern, which doesn't seem to find its solution anytime soon in the future.



Source: [news.uchicago.edu](http://news.uchicago.edu)

As with greater liberty, free market and rise of capitalism the gap between the rich and poor is increasing day by day. The rich capitalists hold great power and affect the policies and decisions of the government in their favour. With the rise of corrupt politics to ensure favorable outcomes in the elections and increasing role of money and muscle power, the industrialists and big businessmen, having large capital to donate to party funds during elections, have become important players in the electoral politics.

In practice, the democratically elected representatives first identify themselves as self-interested politicians, who want to satisfy their greed first, then as a tool in the hands of the capitalists who had funded them during the elections, then as a party worker whose each and every step should be based on its effect on the party to which they belong. After fulfilling all these roles they have very little time to make people oriented policies for the deprived and marginalized communities and even more little time to ensure if policies are getting implemented rightfully or not.

In some way or the other, we all have some basic ideas about the basic problems associated with democracy, ranging from instability of government, short-term policies, time taken to implement the policies, increasing gap between the rich and the poor, increasing corruption in politics, increasing role of money and muscle power in the electoral politics, lack of intra-party democracy etc. All these problems of course couldn't find place in the theories of the great thinkers and philosophers, because at that time, when they were writing, democracy as a concept was fresh and not practised on a much larger scale as it is now.

Despite all the problems, none of the thinkers or political scientists could find any other alternative system of government better than democracy, as all the thinkers have agreed that no actual system is likely to attain, to the fullest extent possible, all the features of its corresponding ideals.

# The Pillars, Palaces and Police

- By Surabhi Srivastava, Satyawati College

**There is a dreamland within us, critics call it a delusional utopia**

**Peace and prosperity; medics ask if I'm diagnosed for myopia**

**I stroll by the lush greens of systemic bias, birds sing victory**

**I further to the open palace alone, others have their own misery.**

Democracy is a grand palace of political institutions. The 'rule of people' and not 'rule on people' flips the status of sovereignty, and establishes it as popular. The inception of democracy as a political culture and legitimate institution in the modern world originates from the liberalisation movement during the Enlightenment era with the onset of the capitalist world. The rapid industrialization and urbanisation, created a new middle class of workers and traders along with the decline in Church's influence. The right for representation and parliamentary rights were fought and won. The history of modern democracy happens to be a subset of capitalism and liberalism. Capitalism is a notorious non-intervention that favours inequality. The elite become further powerful and build palaces. Ironically, democracy is also a palace.

Marxian theory realises the class conflict of societies. It recognizes how the economic elite is the political elite and materialistic endeavours drove history. In practice, the socialist states eroded democracy in lieu of class and state, division and subjugation.

Plato and Aristotle viewed democracy as a degradation of state. To Plato, the rule of illiterate masses would lead to anarchy and tyranny where freedom would supersede virtue. To Aristotle, public deliberation is the telos of

nature, for man to be a zoon politikon. However, to him, public participation was for them who're worthy of it, had leisure of it which excluded women and slaves. He considered aristocracy as the best form of state.

In today's context, where people are the source of the state's sovereignty, and the foundations of the political order; it becomes critical to analyse the state's misplaced priorities in the interests of corporations rather than welfare. The multinational corporations are emerging as big as states as the non-state actors in the integrated world order in the era of globalization. The people's issues are managed through established mechanisms in a democratic setup- which consists of the pillars over the democratic foundation. These are the four pillars of democracy- legislature, executive, judiciary and the press, which maintain independence, interdependence, checks and balances and division of power in different capacities to ensure the best of means to popular ends.

The pillars support the beautiful elite palace of democracy. It is elite because democracy is yet to bring equity and equality of opportunities to one and all. These pillars however are crumbling in time and the walls are plastered over as a romantic patchwork. Press and journalistic freedoms have been declining against political intimidation. They have become a channel of manipulation, propaganda narratives and brainwashing. The watchdog and whistle-blower has selected masters and sponsors. The media's influence, specifically in spreading fake news and manufacturing content during elections- Brexit can be an example- and shaping and manipulating people's political values is concerning. Press was supposed to question and watch out for the failures of other three pillars but has failed per se.

Legislature in a representative democracy is tasked with making laws for the people catering to their needs. However, it has succumbed to crony-capitalism. The annual budget has witnessed a decline in priority for public welfare, healthcare and education, MSMEs but at the same time grants big loans to defaulter big capitalists, who directly and indirectly fund the politicians and political parties. The electoral bond system of India has extraordinarily obtained opacity in election funding. The arrogance among politicians of viewing themselves above the public is disheartening as if they're entitled to power and not accountable to the source of power. The abuse of the corrupting nature of power has led to subjugation of public discourses. The entry of legislators with criminal records is also a big concern for proper functioning of the law making bodies.

Executives and the ever triggering, never resolving corrupt ethics of bureaucracy which is the permanent structure of executive, has posed serious questions of whom do the permanent executives work for. The submission of bureaucrats to political power and dereliction of duty on their part is a serious concern. Judiciary, the last hope, has in its judgments many a time missed chances of delivering justice, submitting to majoritarian trends, misusing their power and discretion at most, delaying the justice at least. The pending cases in the judiciary are both pathetic for the system and people.

Only democracy can solve the problems of democracy. Those failing democracy cannot be Plato's philosopher kings - the centre of power who's a saint. It has to be the creatives and the critiques.

**'Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely'. Plato is right that tyranny emerges from democracy. Nazi regime originated in democracy.**

However, the artists, critiques, academicians and creative enterprises always have brought back the public discourses. Charlie Chaplin could criticise Hitler who was a failed artist and killed Jews in the Holocaust. Volodymyr Zelensky is an artist, descending from the survivor of holocaust, stood up to the dictatorial Russian invasion. Every time the pens ran out of ink, pencils had a political cartoon for us to laugh at. Every time the system ran out of soul, literature attempted to invoke the true spirit into societies. Every time the plates ran out of food, they reminded us that our people suffer in hunger while the elite would consider it polite to waste food in a five-star diner.

It is the power of protest, free speech and expression that is the essence of democracy. It is the creative enterprise that is the inalienable right of human identity, free thought and expression and thus even though states may progress in conflict of materialism, civilizations depend on the dialectics and ideas. Democracy is the rule of people upon themselves and has the ideas of human identity and individual sovereignty at its core.

# The Anatomy of hate (Book Review)

- By Noorul Islam , IK Gujral Punjab Technical University

Revati Laul departs from the beaten track in this book and looks at it through the eyes of the perpetrators. As the title indicates, it clearly is an exploration into the anatomy of hatred - how can one hate one's fellow man to such an extent that such unspeakable acts can be performed? Out of the multitude of people she interviewed, the author has taken three people from different backgrounds, and provided us with their stories.

They are:

- (1) Suresh Langdo, member of a traditional "thieving" tribe and a habitual criminal;
- (2) Dungar, a Bhil tribal and a BJP functionary; and
- (3) Pranav, an upper-caste Hindu rebel student.

Let's take them, one by one:

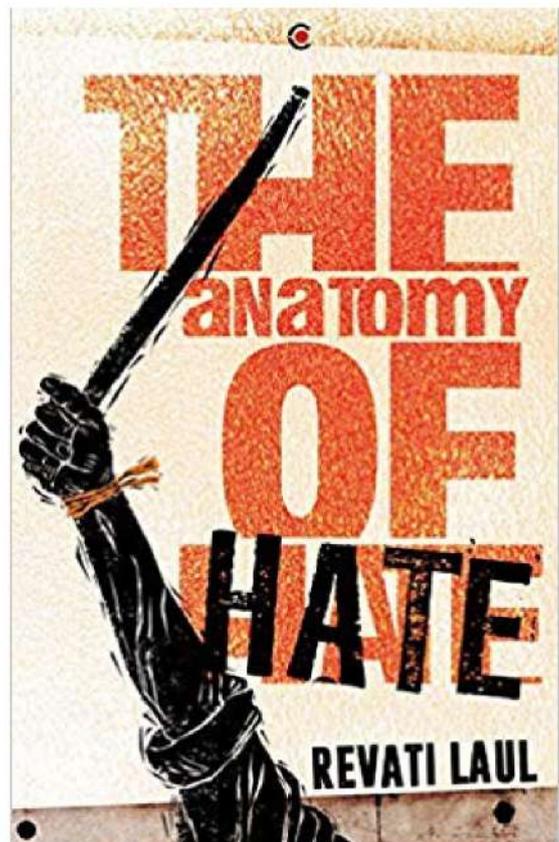
## Suresh

Suresh Langdo is a criminal. Born into a tribe of traditional thieves and he was constantly mocked for his limp, the result of childhood polio (hence the "langdo" - limpy). Expelled from school while in second grade for attacking a teacher, he eventually took on his family trade of larceny. Many a time, he and his cronies carried off girls and gang-raped them over a period of days at their leisure. Initially he was not anti-Muslim; he instinctively distrusted them, but that was all. But then, his sister married a Muslim, and it was a great blow to his ego. He vowed revenge on the community by promising to marry a Muslim girl - which he eventually did, when he seduced the under-aged Farzana. Their marriage was one long episode of gruesome domestic violence, relieved by period bursts of affection from the part of Suresh. When the riots broke out, it was a natural outlet for Suresh and people of his ilk to vent out their hatred.

But in the end, destiny caught up with him. Suresh bragged about his exploits to a reporter who had come under the guise of a member of a Hindu organization. The resulting expose succeeded in putting not only him, but many others including Maya Kodnani, a state minister, behind bars (she came out later, however, absolved of all charges - once the BJP came to power in India).

## Dungar

Dungar was also from an underprivileged caste- a Bhil tribal. But his father was adamant that he should not remain underprivileged; so he was sent to school regularly. Filled with self-loathing for being a 'low-caste', Dungar found refuge in the fold. The television serial based on the Hindu epic Ramayana, being aired on the national TV channel Doordarshan at that time, completed his "conversion".



Source: Maulimuses

When the riots broke out, Dungar was the perfect person to take charge. That he did by burning down the houses of wealthy Muslims he has already been envious of. Thankfully, there were no murders to his account. And as time progressed, Dungar became more and more of a shrewd and duplicitous politician. He took the initiative to rebuild the houses that he himself had burned down! As the story closes, we find him, unethical and corrupt, having switched alliances to the Congress party as a more fertile hunting ground. Yet, something is missing...

It was all there, right in front of him, whether he liked it or not—the life his father had forced on him. The life he was born into. Where he was still the slightly apologetic boy hiding in the body of a strong and confident man. Perhaps he would always have to be a bit of a juggler, balancing his old life with the new. Pieces of him split many ways, like his tribal-ness. Now Hindu, now not. Now Muslim baiter, now peacemaker. Always in the twilight zone, searching for one place to be.

### **Pranav**

Pranav's story is different from these two. Born in an upper-caste liberal Hindu family, he had privileges the other two could never dream of. There were certain inbuilt prejudices; and Muslims were still considered very much 'the other'- but the freedom to choose one's life was available. So Pranav became a rebel, took arts stream when his father wanted him to do science, and started living away from home in the college hostel. Pranav's participation in the riots was incidental, more in the form of a boyish prank, as he joined a gang of kids looting a store. As the riots died down, he thought no more about it—except for a nagging sense of disquiet, of something wrong, at the back of his mind.

Life changed for him when he took up work with an NGO, helping out riot victims. He did it as rebellion, but it ended up transforming him.

In the midst of the refugee camp, Pranav understood that life did not fit neatly into the boxes he thought it did. The book is a decent character study that takes quite some pains to paint the nuances in each of the protagonists' lives. The characters are real and so are the stories that are based on meticulous research. The narration is fluid and the reader can visualize each event that is so vividly outlined. Each story is relevant in the context of understanding the anatomy of hate but the one relating to Suresh and Farzana is the most poignant one. It will always be there to a certain extent; removing anger totally from human minds is an utopian idea. But it can be controlled, transformed, channelised and even made positive- but we can't do that by the carrot or stick. What is needed is change at the fundamental level, through social justice and education.

# Apolitical Democracy-Paradox

- By Surbhi Runiwal, Lady Shri Ram College for Women

Peter Watson has written in his book, 'Ideas: A History of Thought and Invention, from Fire to Freud' that it is not the ideas that are evolving, it is the people who are evolving and they are the ones who have these ideas, utilising them to fight their battles.

So, it's very obvious that it's the people who are of utmost importance and not the ideas. Democracy as an idea is secondary, the people who are utilising the idea of democracy to fight their battles are of primary importance. It becomes self-assertive that active involvement of people is the defining feature of a democratic society. Many theorists who have written on democracy emphasise this aspect.

Imagine a nation where the prime leader and his team are demonising the minorities, the disabled and the people of colour; persecuting the journalists, trade unionists, the critics and opposition leaders; have taken control of the media, disseminating misinformations and spreading propaganda and subsequently killing those who are different from them & those who are against them. And simultaneously imagine those unaffected people who are indifferent and acting as mute spectators in this scenario. It would be atrocious but we've witnessed this in history- during Nazism in Germany.

Obviously, nobody would like to face those episodes of history again but unfortunately we're witnessing those episodes even today and it's getting worse by the day. Many reports on the state of Democracy show that more and more countries are moving towards authoritarianism, whether it be reports from the Freedom House, V-Dem institute, IDEA, EIU or any other. The level of Democracy enjoyed by the average

global citizen in 2021 is down to 1989 levels, V-Dem institute reported. Minorities are being slandered, demonised, stereotyped and persecuted in many countries. Minorities are being slandered, demonised, stereotyped and persecuted in many countries. Independent media is being censored using state machinery, journalists are persecuted and intellectuals targeted. Along with all these, tools of democratic expressions like protests and dissents are being suppressed using violence. Sedition law which is a colonial-era law is being used by the states against their own people. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the like have written a lot on these issues and highlighted the growing xenophobia, authoritarianism, polarisation, radicalization and their repercussions on the people.

**Martin Niemoller's poignant poetry, "First they came for the socialists and I did not speak out-because I was not a socialist....Then they came for me- and there was no one left to speak for me" repudiates neutrality in politics, he tried to show the repercussions of being passive citizens.**



Source: National Herald

It's an undeniable fact that it's the people who are being affected directly. We're not living on an isolated island, unconnected with each other or

any system or political processes rather we're part of it. We've seen it during the Pandemic how much we're dependent on each other. We're like a team where victory or defeat affects everyone. The pandemic has also highlighted our vulnerabilities, We've no value until and unless we're living collectively and responsibly. We have our parts to play in society.

So it would be nonsensical to call oneself 'apolitical' in a democracy where people's participation, political awareness and dissents are the wheels of social welfare and development. Indeed, it would be paradoxical to perceive democracy without dissent. Democracy demands active participation. We're not living in the mediaeval age when the internet was unavailable. Today we're living in the internet age, it's very easy to participate in decision-making- only a click can do the job. Even in the absence of internet and communication technologies, people used to participate actively and they usurped many monarchies, many sacrificed their lives for the sake of democracy and in this way, we got our rights which we suppose as guaranteed but they're not.

Antonio Gramsci wrote very aptly about indifference. He wrote, "I hate the indifferent. I believe that living means taking sides. Indifference and apathy are parasitism, perversion, not life...indifference is the deadweight of history. Indifference operates with great power in history...it twists programs and ruins the best-conceived plans. It is the raw material that ruins intelligence. He further wrote, "I am a partisan, I am alive, I feel the pulse of the activity of the future city that those on my side are building is alive in their conscience." So, one must have perspectives- the right lens. What's the right stand, should be judged based on two parameters: Rationality and Impartiality.

1) Any stand one takes must be reasonable. How can we tell if any perspective is really reasonable?

- First of all, factual knowledge should be known(get your facts straight/right), because little knowledge or misinformations will lead to disastrous conclusions. Many scholars have written on the relationship between education and Democracy, Noam Chomsky has also highlighted the same fact.
- Bring moral principles into play. Ask if they are justified and are they being correctly applied?

2) The requirement of impartiality- one's view must also include a commitment to impartiality. To be impartial is to be unbiased towards everyone or to treat everyone alike. No one should get special treatment, each individual's interest is equally important. If there is no good reason for treating people differently, then discrimination is arbitrary and thus is unacceptable.

These parameters fulfil the minimum criteria for any stand to be considered as a good stand so while taking sides, one should always apply the litmus test of REASONABLENESS AND IMPARTIALITY . So, it can be inferred that taking sides doesn't mean favouritism or being partial, rather it's reflective judgement, the only way to make democracy vibrant, robust and deliberative. We can't be postmodernist, undecided about what to do. Any problems which are in front of us are because of our indifference, inactivity, and carelessness. Problems we're facing shouldn't be deemed as a function of fate, wrote Gramsci, it's a function of our silence, conformity, reflexive judgement and indifference. Lastly, it can be said that being apolitical is unaffordable, at least for the majority among the masses. It has repercussions which have been elaborated in detail many times before. Silence is a privilege only few can afford. As the citizens of a democratic country we can't afford it. We've to speak lest democracy be dead and so will be our fate. So Educate, Educate and Educate the masses!

# उभरते प्रश्नचिह्नों के दौर में लोकतन्त्र

- अभिषेक मिश्रा, भारतीय जनसंचार संस्थान

लोकतंत्र के मूल सिद्धांत पर उठते प्रश्न चिह्नों के दौर में लोकतंत्र का महत्व एवं इसकी मांग उन देशों में स्पष्टतः दृष्टिगामी है जहां लोकतंत्र नहीं है। परंतु लोकतंत्र को भीड़ तंत्र मानने वाले लोग मानते हैं कि लोकतंत्र को मूल स्वरूप में स्वीकार कर पाना किसी भी देश के लिए संभव नहीं है। तथापि यहां तक टिप्पणियां की जाती हैं कि लोकतांत्रिक ढांचा किसी देश को खेल का मैदान बना देता है और जीत निर्धारित करती है कि लोकतंत्र का अधिकारवादी आयाम किसके पक्ष में है।

उदारवादी लोकतंत्र विश्व के सबसे ज्यादा देशों द्वारा स्वीकार किया गया है। 'उदारवादी' अपने नाम के बिल्कुल विपरीत जटिलता की श्रृंखलाओं का समुच्चय है। इसका आशय यह है कि आसानी से स्वीकार कर लेने वाला उदारवादी लोकतंत्र अपने आप में बहुत जटिल है। प्रक्रियाएं सिद्धांत से बिल्कुल परे होती हैं। यह लोकतंत्र के लिहाज से भी बिल्कुल सटीक है कि 'जनता द्वारा जनता के लिए शासन' सिद्धांत अपनी प्रक्रियाओं में बिल्कुल जटिल है हालांकि इससे सामान्य और सुलभ शासन पद्धति अभी तक संभव नहीं हो पाई है।

उदारवादी लोकतंत्र विश्व के सबसे ज्यादा देशों द्वारा स्वीकार किया गया है। 'उदारवादी' अपने नाम के बिल्कुल विपरीत जटिलता की श्रृंखलाओं का समुच्चय है। इसका आशय यह है कि आसानी से स्वीकार कर लेने वाला उदारवादी लोकतंत्र अपने आप में बहुत जटिल है। प्रक्रियाएं सिद्धांत से बिल्कुल परे होती हैं। यह लोकतंत्र के लिहाज से भी बिल्कुल सटीक है कि 'जनता द्वारा जनता के लिए शासन' सिद्धांत अपनी प्रक्रियाओं में बिल्कुल जटिल है हालांकि इससे सामान्य और सुलभ शासन पद्धति अभी तक संभव नहीं हो पाई है।

उपभोक्तावादी देशों की दौड़ में भारत भी अब धीरे-धीरे सम्मिलित हो रहा है। दुनिया के लगभग सबसे बड़े बाजार के रूप में भारत का विश्व पटल पर उभर कर सामने आना लोकतांत्रिक लिहाज से इसके मानकों के लिए कितना चुनौतीपूर्ण है, यह भविष्यभावी असर अभी से ही स्पष्ट हो रहा है। यह देखना दिलचस्प होगा कि आधुनिक तकनीकी और प्रौद्योगिकी विकास के काल में लोकतांत्रिक शासन व्यवस्था किस तरह रुख करेगी।

'ग्लोबल गांव' के उभार से लोकतंत्र का सिद्धांत और क्रियान्वयन बिल्कुल बदल गया है और बहुआयामी परिवर्तन

का सामना कर रहा है। विश्व के किसी भी कोने में घटित होने वाली किसी घटना का कितना असर यहां तक कि दूसरे महाद्वीप के किसी देश में पड़ता है यह बताने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। सामरिक मामलों का वैश्विक असर लोकतंत्र पर किस स्तर तक पड़ता है यह रूस- यूक्रेन के हालिया युद्ध संकट से काफी स्पष्ट है।

लोकतंत्र आर्थिकी के सहारे ही चलता है। अर्थव्यवस्था की हालात लोकतंत्र की दिशा तय करती हैं और ऐसे में वैश्विक मुद्दे लोकतंत्र की दिशा और दशा के लिहाज से महत्वपूर्ण हो जाते हैं। वैश्वीकरण के समर्थकों में से प्रमुख फ्रांसिस फुकुयामा कहते हैं: "वैश्वीकरण राष्ट्र की अवधारणा और लोकतंत्र को चुनौती दे रहा है।" वही संशयवादी दृष्टिकोण रखने वाले इस तथ्य से इनकार करते हैं परंतु यह विचारणीय है कि जब विदेशी निवेश, बहुराष्ट्रीय निगम का वैश्विक प्रसार बढ़ रहा है, लोकतंत्र के सबसे बड़े पर्व कहे जाने वाले चुनाव बड़ी कंपनियों के फंड के सहारे ही लड़े जाते हैं। तो फिर लोकतंत्र और राष्ट्र की अवधारणा का संरक्षण कैसे संभव है? या यूं कहें तो लोकतंत्र का क्रियान्वयन प्रभावित होता है और सैद्धांतिक अतिक्रमण होता है। साथ ही साथ एक नई वैश्विक लोकतंत्र की अवधारणा का अभ्युदय हो रहा है। ऐसे में उदारवादी वैश्विक लोकतंत्र के समर्थक इस बात पर बल देते हैं कि पूर्व में आधारित लोकतंत्र के सिद्धांत अब और व्यापक हो रहे हैं। इस संदर्भ में सॉफ्ट पावर का लोकतंत्र से संबंध स्थापित करने का उनका प्रयास सर्वथा सफल साबित हुआ है। लोकतंत्र नवीनतम रूप में परिभाषित किया जा रहा है और इससे आने वाले समय में इसके बहुआयामी होने के असर स्पष्ट हो जाएंगे।

भारत ने आजादी के बाद लोकतांत्रिक शासन पद्धति को चुना। लोकतंत्र की विधियां और क्रियान्वयन भले ही अलग-अलग थे परंतु यह तथ्य है कि प्राचीन काल से ही लोकतंत्र भारत में मौजूद रहा है और संहिताएँ, वैदिक स्रोतों, पौराणिक शिलालेख व अन्य साक्ष्यों से यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है।

आजादी के बाद से भारत ने अब तक 75 वर्षों की दीर्घकालिक लोकतांत्रिक यात्रा का सफर तय किया। समकालीन पश्चिमी राजनैतिक चिंतकों के यूरोप केंद्रित बयानों को तर्कहीन सिद्ध करते हुए भारतीय लोकतंत्र सफलता के मार्ग पर अग्रसर है।

यद्यपि इस तथ्य से इनकार नहीं किया जा सकता कि लोकतंत्र इन 75 वर्षों में कभी-कभी अपने संक्रमण काल से गुजरा है। भारतीय उपमहाद्वीप के अन्य देशों सहित तत्कालीन नवोदित देशों में उपजी लोकतांत्रिक विफलता का संकट भारत से टला रहा इसके पीछे के कारणों में भारतीयता के मूल में लोकतंत्र के सिद्धांतों का पूर्व से ही होना भी मुख्य है। वैश्वीकरण के दौर में भी भारतीय लोकतंत्र वैश्विक कंपनियों और अंतरराष्ट्रीय संगठनों से ज्यादा प्रभावित नहीं हुआ है। इसीलिए भारतीय लोकतंत्र का क्रियान्वयन अभी तक उस स्तर तक वैश्वीकरण एवं निजीकरण से प्रभावित नहीं हुआ है कि लोकतांत्रिक प्रक्रियाओं का अतिक्रमण संभव हो सके।

लोकतंत्र अपने सिद्धांत एवं क्रियान्वयन के अनुरूप अब तक वैश्विक स्तर पर सबसे सफल शासन व्यवस्था है। यद्यपि इसकी कुछ कमियों को अस्वीकार नहीं किया जा सकता। प्रासंगिकता के स्तर पर जब तक किसी उपलब्ध व्यवस्था से बेहतर व्यवस्था उभर कर नहीं आती है पूर्ववर्ती व्यवस्था श्रेष्ठ स्वीकृति पाती रहती है।

लोकतंत्र सिर्फ एक शासन पद्धति ही नहीं अपितु एक सामाजिक व्यवस्था के रूप में भी स्वीकृति प्राप्त कर चुका है। सैद्धांतिक एवं क्रियान्वयन के स्तर पर लोकतंत्र वर्तमान में उत्तरोत्तर विकासशील है। वैश्विक संदर्भ में लोकतंत्र एक ऐसी व्यवस्था है जिसके समर्थक देशों की एक लंबी कतार है और इनमें विकसित एवं विकासशील देश दोनों ही शामिल हैं।

# भारतीय गणतंत्र - चुनौतियाँ और संभावनाएँ

- उमंग सिंघल, इंदिरा गाँधी ओपन नेशनल यूनिवर्सिटी

**महान व प्राचीन तंत्र, नाम है उसका भारतीय गणतंत्र।**

भारत को गणतंत्र की संज्ञा प्राप्त करने के लिए निश्चित ही कड़े परिश्रम का सामना करना पड़ा। इस गणतंत्र को स्वतंत्रता का सूर्य देखने के लिए लगभग दो सौ वर्षों का लंबा इंतजार करना पड़ा | स्वतंत्रता के पश्चात् 26 जनवरी 1950 में इसे गणतंत्र कहलाने का गौरव प्राप्त हुआ। असल में क्रांतिकारी नेताओं ने भारत को यह संज्ञा देने का 1929 के लाहौर अधिवेशन में ही ठाना था, किंतु इसके भाग्य में यह होने में वक्त था। 15 अगस्त 1947 में राष्ट्र ने उन्मुक्त सूर्य देखा और 26 जनवरी 1950 को राष्ट्र को एक हस्तलिखित संविधान मिला जिसने इसे गणतंत्र कहलाने का मान दिया।

**सालों से बेड़ियों से जकड़ा था जो,  
एक दिन,  
सबसे प्राचीन गणतंत्र कहलाया वो।  
लोगों की भागीदारी का यह तंत्र है,  
नाम इसका भारतीय गणतंत्र है।।**

एक राष्ट्र जिसमें हर थोड़ी दूरी पर भाषा, वेशभूषा, संस्कृति आदि में बदलाव देखा जा सकता है, ऐसे राष्ट्र को गणतंत्र नामक सूत्र में बाँधने में चुनौतियाँ तो आती ही हैं। भारत को गणतंत्र हुए 72 वर्ष हो चुके हैं किंतु यह आज भी अखंड खड़ा है। इस सफर में कुछ ऐसे भी मुद्दे रहे जिन्होंने भारत को हमेशा चुनौतीपूर्ण वातावरण में रखा है।

गहराता धार्मिक विभाजन एक ऐसा संकट है जिसने कई बार इसकी एकजुटता पर प्रहार करना चाहा है। कुछ असमाजिक तत्वों ने अक्सर धर्म विरोधी अग्नि प्रज्वलित करने का प्रयास किया है। समाजिक व आर्थिक असमानता आज भी देश के कुछ हिस्सों में देखी जा सकती है। जो कि लोकतंत्र की जड़ों में एक कीड़े का काम कर रही है और लोकतंत्र रूपी पेड़ की वृद्धि में अवरोध पैदा कर रही है।

संविधान ने तो ये बेड़ियाँ वर्षों पूर्व काँट दी हैं किंतु समाज की आंतरिक जड़ों से इनका कटना शेष है। केवल छोटे गाँवों व कस्बों में ही नहीं, अपने मोहल्ले में ही आप इसे कई बार महसूस कर सकते हैं। अनुसूचित जातियों के लोगों को एक भिन्न नज़र से देखना इसी का जीता जागता उदाहरण है। पर्यावरण की बदतर होती स्थिति भी हमारे लिए एक बड़ी चुनौती के रूप में उभर रही है। वनों का विनाश, मिट्टी व

वातावरण का प्रदूषित होना आदि भारत के आर्थिक विकास के भविष्य की संभावनाओं को कम करता है व उन पर एक जटिल प्रश्न खड़ा करता है। इन सभी के बीच एक ऐसी दरार है जो कि बहुत ही दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण है। ऊँचे व ताकतवर पद पर बैठे नेता, राजनीतिक दलों व अपनी ताकत के इस्तेमाल से सार्वजनिक संस्थानों का क्षरण करते हैं। वह अपने हित के लिए इनका प्रयोग करते हैं जो अवश्य ही लोगों के समक्ष नकारात्मक उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करता है व इस गणतंत्र की ऊँचाइयों पर कलंक लगाता है।

**चुनौतियाँ लाख आंगी,  
बहुत सी रुकावटें साथ लाएंगी।  
हमें भरोसा है, गणतंत्र में,  
बहारे भी जरूर आंगी,  
नए विश्वास व उमंग की भोरे जरूर आंगी।।**

भारत बढ़ रहा है, अपने गर्भ में बहुत सी संभावनाओं के साथ यह राष्ट्र आगे बढ़ रहा है। चुनौतियों का सामना कर यह उभर रहा है। चलते वक्त के साथ भारत ने कई सारी संभावनाओं को साबित किया है और इसके नागरिक भी शेष विश्व के साथ कंधे से कंधा मिला कर चल सके हैं। भविष्य में निश्चित रूप से भारत के पास संभावनाओं का पिटारा है क्योंकि इसके पास सबसे बड़ी युवा शक्ति है जो इसे गगनचुंबी ऊँचाइयों तक ले जा सकती है। आवश्यकता है तो केवल युवाओं को एक सुरक्षित व रचनात्मक वातावरण की। आज अंतरिक्ष में भी यह गणतंत्र अपनी छाप छोड़ रहा है। तकनीकी रूप से भी हम सक्षम हैं। कोरोना महामारी के काल में जहां महाशक्तियों के स्वास्थ्य के ढाँचे चरमरा उठे, वहाँ भारत डट कर खड़ा रहा। निवेश में भी भारत अपने पाँव बखूबी जमा रहा है। आज हर देश यहाँ के युवाओं का लोहा मानता है। दुनिया के हर कोने में इन प्रतिभाशाली युवाओं के योगदान को देखा जा सकता है। देश के राजनेताओं को भी हर नीहित संभावनाओं को प्रत्यक्ष रूप से जनता के समक्ष लाना होगा। तभी यह गणतंत्र मजबूत हो सकेगा।

**हजारों चुनौतियों, लाखों संभावनाओं का यह तंत्र है,  
यह भारतीय गणतंत्र है।  
नागरिकों की भागीदारी का यह तंत्र,  
नीहित हैं इसमें सफलता का मंत्र,  
है यह, अपना महान भारतीय गणतंत्र।।**

चुनौतियाँ आएंगी व जाएंगी। परंतु संभावनाएँ सदैव रहेंगी।  
आवश्यकता है तो केवल यह कि यह गणतंत्र  
सदैव इसी प्रकार प्रगति के पथ पर अग्रसर रहे। इसका मूल  
आधार, इसके नागरिक, सदैव एकजुट रहे।

राह में काँटें भी होंगे,  
समुद्र में ज्वार-भाटे भी होंगे।  
घबराना मत, रुकावटों को रौंदने वाले,  
नागरिक एक साथ खड़े भी होंगे ॥  
गणतंत्र पर सवाल उठाने वाले हैं,  
तो सटीक जवाब देने वाले भी।  
इसके रक्षक आज भी हैं और कल भी होंगे।  
अनेकता में एकता का जो तंत्र है,  
नाम उसका भारतीय गणतंत्र है ।

यह देश सदैव ही महान कवि अटल वाजपेयी जी की उन  
पंक्तियों को स्मरण करता रहेगा जिसमें उन्होंने मजबूती से  
कहा था, "यह देश रहना चाहिए" ।

# भारतीय लोकतंत्र एवं धर्मनिरपेक्षता की संकल्पना

- एम. ई. अंजुम, बी. ए. होन्स. राजनीतिक विज्ञान

14 अगस्त 1947 ई० के मध्य रात्रि को भारत के प्रथम प्रधानमंत्री श्री जवाहरलाल नेहरू द्वारा दिए गए अपने प्रसिद्ध भाषण 'भाग्य वधू से चिर परिचित भेंट' (Tryst With Destiny) में उन्होंने कहा था, "आज रात्रि 12:00 बजे जब समस्त विश्व चिर निद्रा में डूबा होगा, भारत को एक नया जीवन मिलेगा एवं भारत स्वाधीनता का नवल सूर्य देखेगा। इस पुनीत अवसर पर जब हम स्वतंत्र हो रहे हैं हमें भारत और उसकी जनता की सेवा के प्रति समर्पित होने का संकल्प करना चाहिए। हमें एक साथ मिलकर लगातार प्रयास करने होंगे ताकि जिन संकल्पों को हम पूरा करने का वादा करते आए हैं उन्हें पूर्ण किया जा सके।"

श्री नेहरू के इस भाषण से शासक वर्ग तथा जनता के मध्य एक घनिष्ठ संबंध दृष्टिगोचर होता है तथा ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि यह भारत का लोकतंत्र की ओर पहला कदम है। लोकतांत्रिक समायोजन की परिकल्पना राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन के समय से ही अभिप्रेरित होती रही थी। स्वतंत्रता के पश्चात भी इन (लोकतांत्रिक) मूल्यों की अवस्थिति बनाए रखने पर बल दिया गया तथा इन मूल्यों के माध्यम से राजनीतिक, सामाजिक तथा आर्थिक संवृद्धि प्राप्त करने की परिकल्पना की गई। परंतु, नवोदित राष्ट्र के नवल लोकतंत्र के समक्ष धार्मिक अस्मिता सबसे विराट चुनौती बनकर पटल पर अवतरित हुआ। साथ ही धर्म के आधार पर भारत के विभाजन ने इस चुनौती को और भी अधिक गहरा कर दिया।

संविधान सभा के समक्ष यह चुनौती बनी हुई थी कि भारत को किस प्रकार के धार्मिक प्रारूप को अपनाना चाहिए। धर्मनिरपेक्षता का आशय व्यक्ति, समाज तथा राज्य के स्तर पर अलग-अलग हो सकता है। यदि व्यक्ति के स्तर पर देखें तो एक व्यक्ति धार्मिक अथवा नास्तिक हो सकता है। मनोवैज्ञानिक रूप से, धार्मिक व्यक्ति के भी दो दृष्टिकोण हो सकते हैं- प्रथम, कोई व्यक्ति अपने धर्म के प्रति गहरी संवेदना व प्रतिबद्धता रखता हो तथा अन्य धर्मों का भी आदर व सम्मान करता हो, तथा दूसरी स्थिति यह भी हो सकती है कि कोई व्यक्ति अपने धर्म के प्रति अत्यधिक संवेदनशील हो किंतु दूसरे धर्मों के प्रति उपेक्षा एवं घृणा का भाव रखता हो। इस मनोवैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण से देखा जाए तो भारत के समक्ष धर्मनिरपेक्षता के चार प्रारूप थे- धर्मतंत्र, धर्म प्रभावित राज्य, धर्मनिरपेक्ष राज्य तथा धर्म विरोधी राज्य। जनसंघ के नेता

श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी एक धार्मिक हिंदू राष्ट्र की परिकल्पना से ओतप्रोत थे। भारत को किस प्रकार का धर्मनिरपेक्ष होना चाहिए यह प्रश्न स्वयं में अतिविवादास्पद था।

इसके अतिरिक्त संविधान निर्माण के पश्चात एक अन्य वाद निकल कर सामने आया- भारत धर्मनिरपेक्ष है या पंथनिरपेक्ष। 'सेक्युलरिज्म' पश्चिम से उदित हुई एक अवधारणा है जिसका हिंदी अनुवाद धर्मनिरपेक्षता एवं पंथनिरपेक्षता दोनों हो सकता है। यद्यपि धर्मनिरपेक्षता एवं पंथनिरपेक्षता का वाद अत्यधिक स्पष्ट नहीं है परंतु इसे क्रमशः नाकारात्मक एवं साकारात्मक रूप में देखा जाता रहा है। 'धर्म' शब्द का अंग्रेजी अनुवाद 'रिलीजन' दो मूल शब्दों 're' तथा 'ligare' से मिलकर बना है जिसका अर्थ होता है- ईश्वर तथा मनुष्य का पुनः एक हो जाना। इस प्रकार यदि हम धर्मनिरपेक्षता का अर्थ स्पष्ट करें तो इसका अर्थ होगा- धर्म अथवा ईश्वर से निरपेक्ष (अलग) हो जाना, परंतु इसमें हिंदी के शब्द 'धर्म' का अर्थ केवल वह नहीं है जो 'रिलीजन' का है अपितु इसका एक अर्थ कर्तव्य भी है। इसे मनुस्मृति के निम्न श्लोक से भली-भांति समझा जा सकता है-

**धृतिः क्षमा दमो ऽस्तेयम् शौचम् इंद्रियनिग्रहः।  
धीर्विद्या सत्यम् अक्रोधो दशकम् धर्मलक्षणम्॥**

कहने का आशय यह है कि यदि हम धर्मनिरपेक्ष हैं तो कर्तव्यों से परे हैं। अंततोगत्वा हम कह सकते हैं कि भारतीय सेक्युलरिज्म की निकटता पंथनिरपेक्षता से अधिक है अर्थात् सभी धर्मों से समान निकटता एवं समान व्यवहार। यदि हम भारतीय संविधान पर दृष्टिपात करें तो इनके प्रावधान भी पंथनिरपेक्षता के निकट जान पड़ते हैं। उदाहरण के लिए, अनुच्छेद 25-28 के अंतर्गत धार्मिक स्वतंत्रता का अधिकार अत्यंत व्यापक रूप में दिया गया है जो स्पष्ट करता है कि भारत के प्रत्येक नागरिक को अपने धर्म के अनुसार जीवन यापन करने की पूर्ण स्वतंत्रता होगी और उसे केवल युक्तियुक्त आधारों पर ही सीमित किया जा सकेगा। इसी प्रकार अनुच्छेद 44 जिसमें समान नागरिक संहिता लागू करने के निर्देश दिए गए हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त जनप्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1951 की धारा 123(3) स्पष्ट करती है कि चुनाव के दौरान किसी भी प्रत्याशी द्वारा धर्म के आधार पर वोट देने या ना देने की अपील करना अवैध होगा।

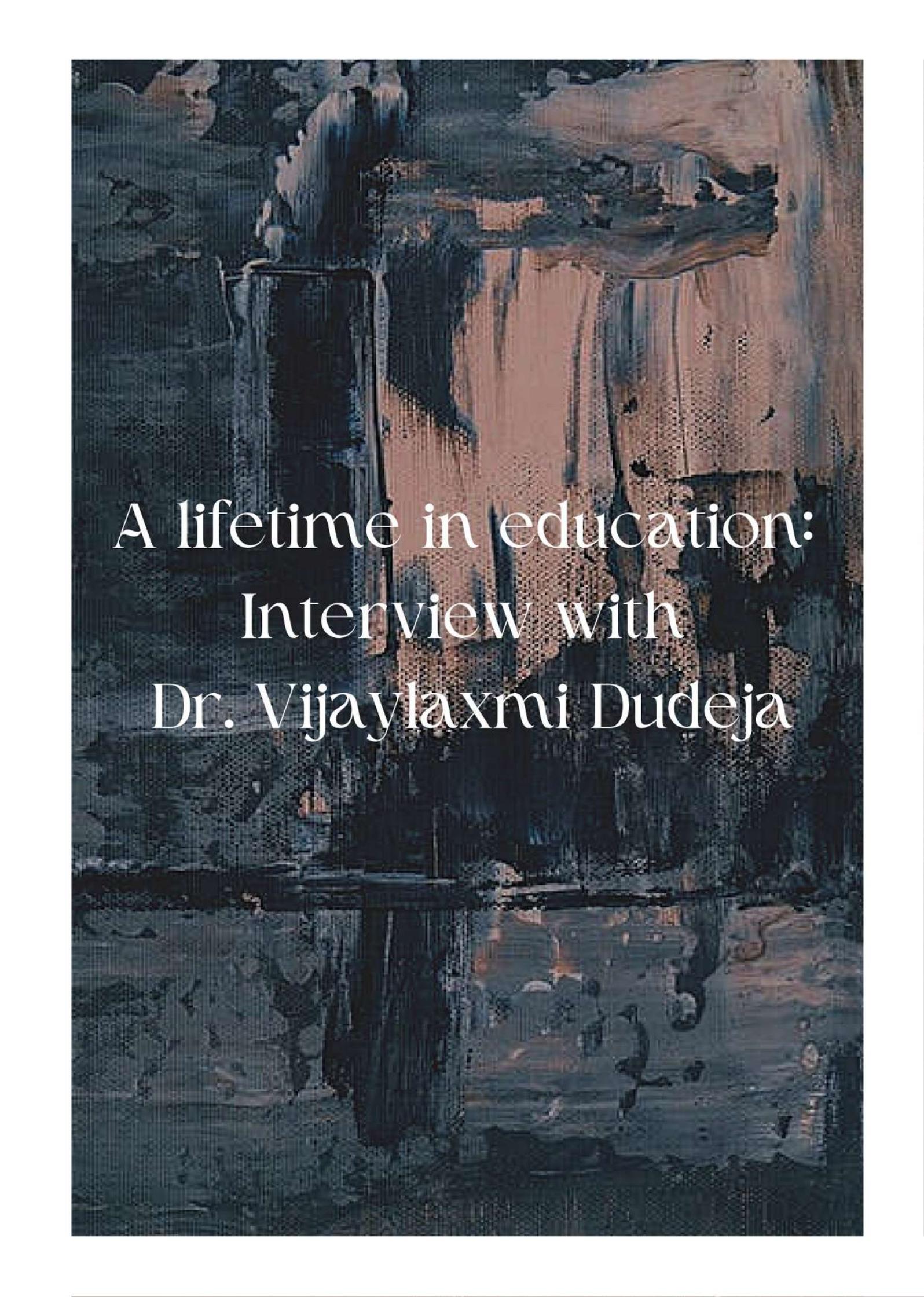
वहीं सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के 9 सदस्यीय संविधान पीठ ने 'एस. आर. बोम्मई बनाम भारत संघ' मामले में सेक्युलरिज्म को भारतीय संविधान के मूलभूत संरचना के रूप में सम्मिलित किया जिसे संसद भी संविधान संशोधन की शक्ति के माध्यम से परिवर्तित नहीं कर सकती। सेंट जेवियर्स मामला, एथिस्ट सोसायटी मामला, संतोष कुमार मामला, अरुणा रॉय मामला जैसे महत्वपूर्ण न्यायिक मामलों में सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने स्पष्ट किया है कि भारत का सेकुलरिज्म सकारात्मक है अर्थात् भारत पंथनिरपेक्षता की अवधारणा से प्रेरित है ना कि धर्मनिरपेक्षता की।

यदि भारत राज्य के चरित्र पर दृष्टिपात किया जाए तो यह पाते हैं कि श्री नेहरू के शासनकाल में राज्य ने धर्म से प्रायः दूरी बनाए रखा। श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी के काल में भी लगभग ऐसा ही प्रतीत होता है, संभवतः यही कारण था कि श्रीमती गांधी द्वारा पंजाब के मुद्दे पर स्वर्ण मंदिर में भारतीय सेना को भेजने जैसा कठोर निर्णय भी लिया गया। परंतु, श्रीमती गांधी के समय से ही फ़तवा पॉलिटिक्स की राजनीति भी आरंभ हो गई थी। राजीव गांधी की सरकार ने एक धर्म विशेष के दबाव में शाहबानो मामले में सर्वोच्च न्यायालय द्वारा दिए गए प्रगतिशील निर्णय को पलट दिया तथा दूसरी ओर अन्य धार्मिक समूह के दबाव में आकर अयोध्या में राम जन्मभूमि-बाबरी मस्जिद का ताला खुलवा कर धार्मिक अतिवाद को बल प्रदान किया। वर्तमान में भी विभिन्न राजनीतिक दलों को वोट बैंक के लिए धार्मिक टिप्पणियां करते हुए देखा जा सकता है।

अंततः निष्कर्ष के रूप में कहा जा सकता है कि भारतीय पंथनिरपेक्षता के चरित्र में कुछ त्रुटियां अवश्य रही हैं परंतु फिर भी भारत को एक पंथनिरपेक्ष राज्य की संज्ञा देना अतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगा। धरातल पर संप्रदायिकता भी दिखी है तथा विगत कुछ वर्षों में यह प्रवृत्तियां बढ़ी हैं साथ ही अफवाहों के नाम पर ही कुछ अल्पसंख्यकों की हत्या भी हुई है। ऐसे मामलों में अपना पंथनिरपेक्ष चरित्र को बनाए रखने के लिए आवश्यक है कि सरकार कठोर कदम उठाए। उर्दू साहित्य के प्रसिद्ध कवि श्री इक़बाल की ये पंक्तियां पंथनिरपेक्ष चरित्र को बनाए रखने के लिए अत्यंत प्रासंगिक जान पड़ती हैं-

**मज़हब नहीं सिखाता आपस में बैर रखना ।**

**हिंदी हैं हम, वतन है हिंदोस्तां हमारा।।**

An abstract painting with a complex, layered texture. The color palette is dominated by dark, muted blues and greys, contrasted with warm, earthy tones of brown, tan, and ochre. The brushstrokes are thick and expressive, creating a sense of depth and movement. A prominent vertical structure, possibly a column or a doorway, is visible in the center, with a horizontal line intersecting it. The overall composition is dense and textured, with a focus on light and shadow.

*A lifetime in education:  
Interview with  
Dr. Vijaylaxmi Dudeja*

*After a career spanning over four decades, Dr. Vijaylaxmi Dudeja retired from the Department of Political Science of Shaheed Bhagat Singh College in January, 2022. In a conversation with Ansh Sharma, she recounts her journey from a student to a teacher, her pedagogical thought, and the importance of inculcating values as a part of higher education.*

**Thank you for agreeing to do this interview Dr. Dudeja. Congratulations are very much in order on your retirement as a senior faculty from the Political Science department of Shaheed Bhagat Singh College. How has retirement been for you?**

Thank you for your wishes. Retirement has been good to me. I spend most of my time meditating, reading, and playing with my grandchildren. I am also focusing on my health more and I plan to travel soon.

**That is lovely to know. Is there anything you miss about work?**

My students! I have been fortunate enough to come across extremely brilliant, loving, and supportive students. My colleagues have given me immense love too. If I was to define my career in one word, I think the best word would be 'gratitude'. Words cannot describe the love and support I have received, and I am immensely grateful for it. I am still in touch with Vidya Bhushan, who was my first student in this college. Bhanu, an old student of mine, still comes to visit.

And our students have gone on to achieve great heights of success in their respective careers. Our students have become bishops, civil servants, lawyers, photographers, models, artists, teachers, etc. Rishad Jalali went on to work in the United Nations. Linda Sircar went on to become a journalist. Many of our students went abroad for their higher education and joined academia. Some have even taught in our own college. A student, who was from Bhutan, is a Buddhist monk now and he presented me with a book recently. I have been blessed to have taught such wonderful students who have always treated me with respect

and compassion. Moreover, they have also taught me a lot. I always used to say that the activity of teaching is never unidirectional, it is a two-way traffic.

**I am certain that our readers will get to learn greatly about the department and the college from this interview. But before going down memory lane, let us start with telling our readers a bit about you. How would you describe yourself?**

Ha-ha! That is certainly an interesting task. I would describe myself as a very simple person. This is something that my students and colleagues will also tell you. And I cherish values greatly – I think our values, the understanding we have of our inner self, our conception of 'oneness' – all these things define who we are. Even as a teacher, alongside imparting knowledge to my students, I always tried my best to inculcate values in them. Humanity, kindness, compassion – these are extremely important for everyone, especially in these times when there is so much violence and instability all around. We must constantly remind ourselves that we are all connected and that we should be kind to each other. I believe that students should particularly try to inculcate these values besides their curricular training.

**I could not agree more. Who do you think motivated you to carve this path out in your pedagogy? Who were your influences as a teacher?**

I would say Shirdi Sai Baba, Mother Teresa, and Acharya Ekkirala Bhardwaj. I remember that I was the Convenor of the Women's Development Cell in my initial years, and I thought that the best woman in this world was Mother Teresa.

I had been in touch with her since my school days. I used to write letters to her frequently. Even during my LSR days, I often used to write to her. So, I decided to go and meet her. I took a few of my students also to get her blessings, she gave a great response as expected and blessed us all. It was she who encouraged me to focus on inculcating love and compassion in my students besides teaching them our academic discipline.

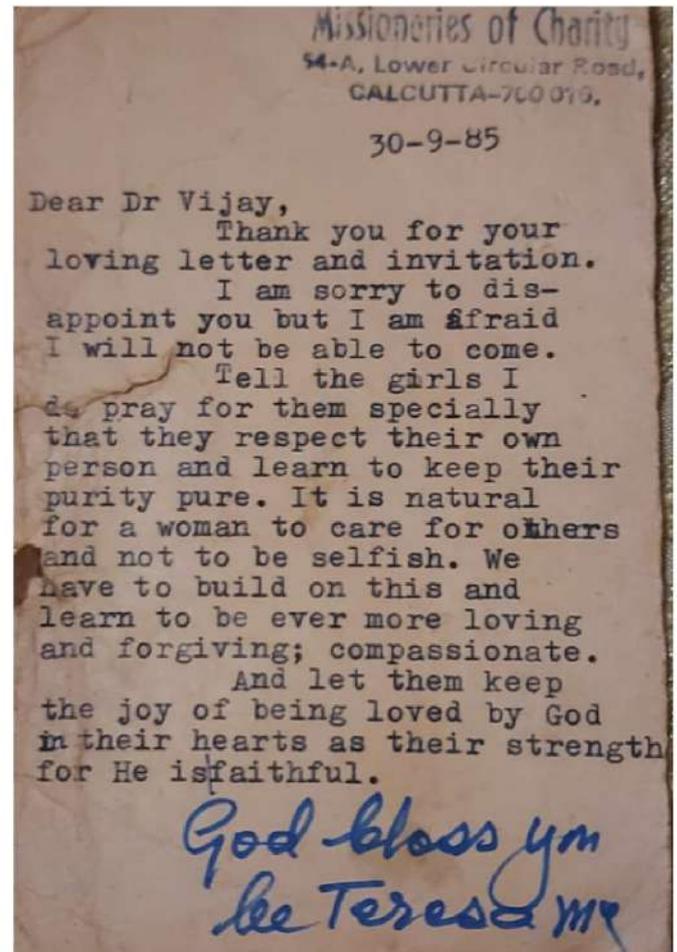
This also garnered me some criticism as many people thought that I am not progressive enough however that was never true. I always ensured that I encouraged scientific and critical thinking in my students and used to reward them with books. I firmly believe that progressive ideals and humanistic values can go hand-in-hand.

As a teacher I believe we should try to impart values of oneness in our students, connect them to life, to each other – without propagating any religion or caste. We are forgetting our oneness nowadays, there is so much violence, hatred, atrocities to women, environment and animals. I am very grateful to these two people – Mother Teresa and Acharya Ekkirala Bhardwaj. Their ideas, views, teachings have motivated me to constantly try to impart the value of oneness in my students.

**That is such a beautiful story. Let us talk about the college now. You joined in 1979, what was the college like back then?**

Yes, I joined in 1979 and I was teaching public administration to the first batch of political science students when they were in their final year. We only had 6 students at that time. In those years, during admissions, political science was not a common choice amongst students. Very few students opted for this discipline. Like now you see even the toppers opt for this subject. Our senior students used to act as touts to attract students back then, and most of the students were second divisional. A first division student was a rare occurrence back then and we used to party

whenever that happened. This has changed a lot over the years; demand for the discipline has grown. Cut-off differentials have come to points now.



Source: From Dr Dudeja's collection of old letters

I remember Dr. Verma, who was a senior teacher in the department at that time, Dr. Prakash Chandra, Dr. Bharat Kumar, Mishra Ji, who later joined the civil services. All of them are no more, however, I am immensely grateful to each one of them. We had wonderful teachers back then, Mrs. Bali, who still comes to visit, Dr Dolly Arora, and Dr Anil Kharbanda who retired last year. It was an immensely dedicated group and we all used to work as a team. We used to work hard and conducted a lot of activities, as a result of which, our output, our results were extremely good as compared to the kind of in-take we had.

Credit for this goes to the hard work of all faculty members and our wonderful students. Slowly and gradually students started getting attracted to the department, this is a major achievement of the department.

**That is greatly inspiring. You have talked a lot about your students. I am sure our readers would want to know what your days as a student were like. What do you think has changed for students now?**

My student days were filled with enthusiasm and learning. I completed my undergraduate degree from Lady Shri Ram College and postgraduate from Indraprastha College for Women. I was the South Campus topper. I pursued my PhD from Jamia Millia Islamia. I had a wonderful time in both Delhi University and Jamia Millia Islamia. Originally, I had decided to join Delhi University for my PhD. However, Jamia's direct PhD seemed to be a more attractive option as compared to DU's MPhil-PhD trajectory. Moreover, Jamia was close by to our college where I worked. So, I decided to join Jamia.

I think a lot has changed in terms of students. Students are much more brilliant nowadays in my opinion. Even my younger colleagues I believe are much more vocal than we were. There are so many opportunities which provide great exposure to students now. Access to technology and information has increased greatly and as a result, students are all the more brilliant. The number of seminars, talks and workshops organized in the college has also significantly increased. Extra-curricular activities have increased. All of these are great for the intellectual and academic growth of students. However, I do feel that our focus on values has decreased a bit. I think there is a need for platforms for students to understand themselves. Something like a meditation room per se. Amidst all this hustle for success, I genuinely believe that we need to focus on the mental and emotional health of our students.

'The Chanakya', our department's annual festival, is a great platform in my opinion. Credit for this goes to my wonderful colleagues, Prof. Praveen Jha, Prof. Sangeeta Rai, Dr. Manjesh Kumar, Dr. Dina Mani. In the beginning we didn't have any such festivals.

Once or twice a year, we used to invite someone to give a talk. I distinctly remember how overcrowded the campus was when we invited T.N. Sheshan, India's Chief Election Commissioner of that time. We also hosted Margaret Alva. Many professors of our university and other universities used to come and give lectures occasionally. However, such instances were rare, usually twice a year.

That has completely changed. Both students and teachers have become so active in ensuring a vibrant academic environment in the campus. Even during the pandemic when classes were online, guest lectures were being organized. Students handle a plethora of events during the annual festival. And now you even have this magazine. These are extremely healthy. However, I do sometimes feel that there is a need for greater balance between these activities and academics. Students often tend to divert their entire focus towards these programs. That I feel should be an informed choice by our students, as classroom discussions can be intellectually stimulating and thought-provoking too.

**I could not agree more. You have spent 42 years teaching in this college. What were the motivations behind becoming a teacher and after spending such a long time in this profession, what role do you think a teacher plays in the life of a student?**

Ah! This is an interesting bit. You would be surprised to hear this perhaps but I did not really want to become a professor. Coming from a family of lawyers and having studied this discipline, I wanted to enter the judiciary and become a judge. I was somewhat pushed in this profession. On July 14, 1979, the M.A. results were declared. At that time, the department was looking for ad hoc teachers. So, my professors chose me and I was given a choice between Shaheed Bhagat Singh College and Deshbandhu College. Initially, I was not very keen. I was also a bit nervous since I was a really young teacher

with an almost non-existing age gap between me and my students, I was 22 and my students were 20-21. However, looking back, I am really grateful to the almighty that I became a teacher. My students played a great role in this. They were always so compassionate and loving. I got to grow with them. I remember how when I used to take extra classes for Hindi-medium students, after an hour or so of the lecture, my students would usually bring tea and biscuits for me. This kind of affection and care is precious and it motivates you to keep on doing your job well. There is actually an interesting story in my family. When I was a child, I used to draw on the wall – I always used to draw a portrait of Bhagat Singh and myself. And I ended up working in an institution named after him for so many decades. Every day I used to see his bust when I entered college. I still don't know the reason behind this. Perhaps some questions are best left unanswered.

As for the role of a teacher in the life of their students, I think one can do a lot. A student of mine, Ramakant Singh, had vision impairment. So, I helped him procure material in braille and would take extra classes. I had a student who got into drug addiction. He was unable to focus on his studies due to some family issues. One day, he was alone in the class and I went to talk to him. While talking to me he started crying. I patiently listened to him and guided him, and eventually, through his own efforts, he became an excellent student. There was this student of mine who told me that she is unable to pursue her education further as her family has denied financial support for her education. For her also we handled the situation. Such small interventions can make a lot of difference. A teacher can be someone who is there for a student, as a support system, as a guide, as someone who would listen to and understand them.

However, I would like to point out the role students play in their teacher's life. My students

My students had a great impact on me. Over the years, I have seen myself become more patient. As a young teacher, as I told you, I had my apprehensions with the profession. Especially when the campus was in Govindpuri, wherein we used to have some anti-social elements in our classes. Prof. Thakore was the principal back then. I was an ad hoc for six months and wasn't sure if I would continue. However, eventually, over the course of two years, I adjusted to the space. My students helped me greatly in this. Badal, Ramesh, Vidya Bhushan, all of them. I definitely believe that the relationship between a teacher and a student is a two-way relationship, and wonders can happen if both cooperate with each other. My students made me feel comfortable with the space, similar to how friends would have.

**You mentioned that earlier, Political Science was not a popular subject among students. What do you think has changed about the discipline over the years?**

Yes, there have been remarkable developments in the discipline. When we were students, we used to have a traditional curriculum. Comparative politics as a subject was not as developed. Now, sub-disciplines have developed greatly. The curriculum is much better. Interdisciplinarity has been an incredible development. Now you are also studying super specialisations, that was not the case earlier. Moreover, due to access to information technology, knowledge has become easier to access for students.

**Having spent nearly 50 years with Delhi University, what changes have you seen here and what are the changes you would want to see?**

The University has grown drastically. We have many more colleges and a great number of disciplines now. Interdisciplinarity has increased which is great from an academic standpoint. I do strongly feel the need for greater focus on values

and the mental health of our students. Competition between students has increased greatly due to academic pressure. Students should be encouraged to focus on their values and try to understand themselves. Oneness is greatly important and the purpose of life is in the end to find oneself and one's own path. The university, as an institution, can be the space for students to delve into this journey.

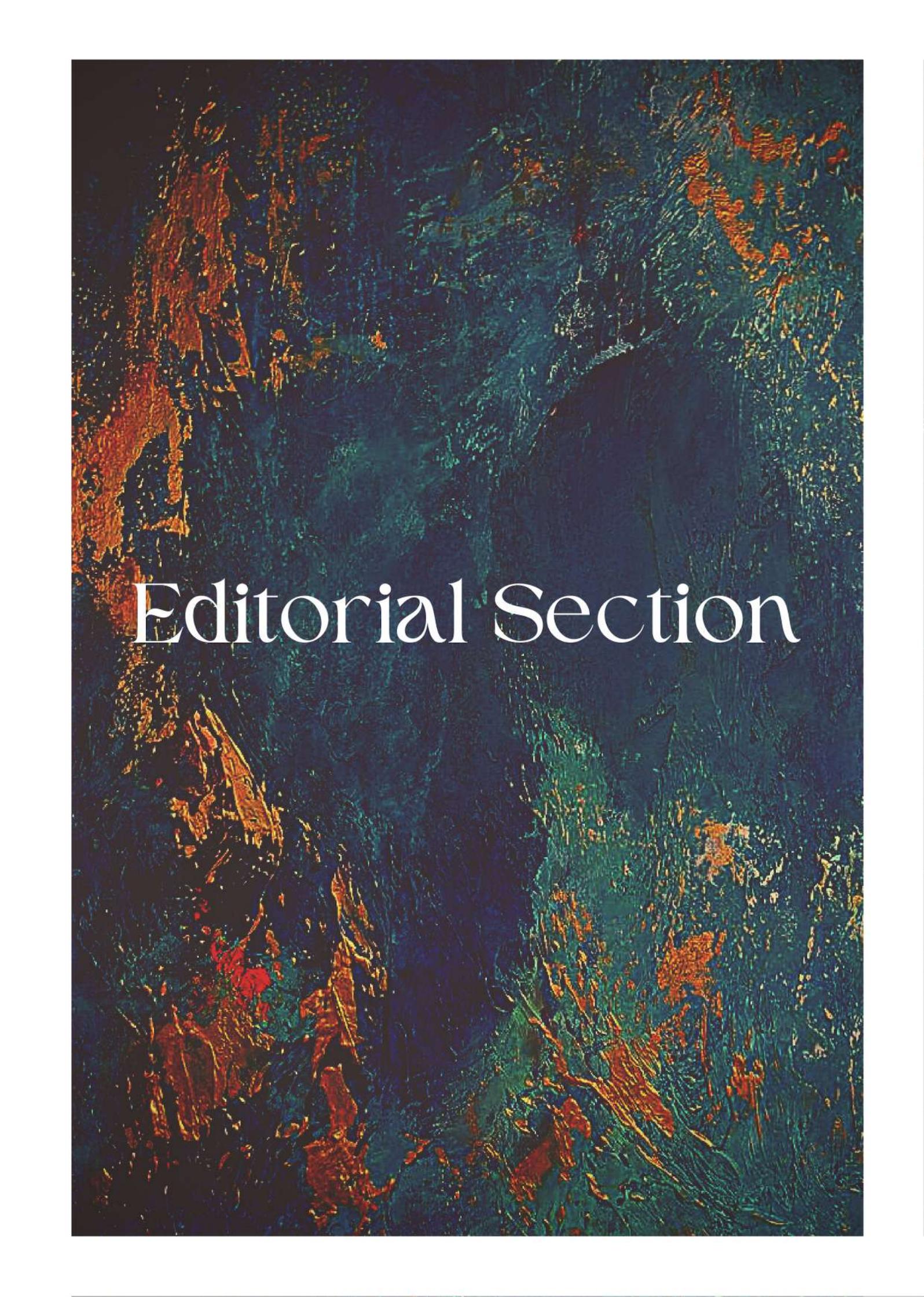
**Agreed. Our own department has changed so much over the years. We have full faculty strength now and are always over-admitting students. What has this journey been like?**

Life is a rollercoaster where you have to see ups and downs. The department has also been through a similar journey. Most of my senior faculty members retired early on in my career. There was a time when the university was not appointing new faculty members. So, for a long time, we had many ad hoc and guest faculty members. While they helped us a lot, the administrative burden of the department largely fell on me and Dr. Anil Kharbanda. For several years, we handled everything in the department. This also took a toll on my health. Admissions, orientations, seminars, faculty appointments, timetables, student grievances, and workload division, everything was handled by us.

We were elated when new appointments were made in 2006 and 2015. The department is in great hands now. We have hardworking and highly capable colleagues handling the department now. They are doing great as academicians also. Dr. Rityusha Tiwary, Dr. Anusha, Dr. Simple Mohanty and many more teachers are often invited to give lectures in other universities also. I am certain that the department will keep on growing under them. I am immensely proud of them and wish them best for their future.

**This has been a highly insightful conversation. Is there any advice you would like to give to our readers?**

As I said, I think our students and teachers now are brilliant and I am certain that they will achieve great things. I would urge everyone, especially the students, to always act with kindness, compassion, and respect towards others. It is really important that we inculcate a commitment and the realization of oneness in ourselves. I wish the best to all of my students and colleagues for their future.



# Editorial Section

# Political culture, Constitutional morality & Subversion

- By Himanshu Kumar, Editor-at-Large

India has always earned plaudits for the way it has managed its diversity while simultaneously nurturing democracy and one of the reasons it could do that was because it succeeded in creating a political culture of acceptance of differences. With time the constitutional values transcended all distinctions and seeped deep into Indian consciousness. But lately, a sense of complacency and a cavalier attitude towards the same constitutional values have emerged that have made a large mass of people oblivious to the gross contravention of constitutional norms and morality by a section among the political class. There is an attempt to build a new political culture antithetical to the one based on constitutional principles- an attempt that needs to be resisted. But the behaviour of the citizenry to simply acquiesce and accept a distorted value hierarchy does not bode well.

The year for the celebration of the 75th year of independence of India should have ideally involved reveling, commemorating, and paying homage to our great freedom fighters who struggled and sacrificed their lives for this great land - a year which should have been an opportunity to reflect on what we have accomplished so far and how the future should be shaped- instead holds a sinister air of fear, suspicion, and threat to the same independence and liberty that we ought to be celebrating. It is not that the celebration is not there or that people are all perturbed about the state of affairs in the country.

Everything is not simply murky and gloomy. There are green shoots if someone wishes to see them. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that everything is not hunky-dory and that we are face

to face with a potential democratic debacle or in the words of Amartya Sen, "collapse of the nation". Notwithstanding all the seriousness and perceived threats to the 'nation' as it is, the milestone of maintaining democracy for 75 years is indeed an excellent achievement for a country that was proclaimed unfit for democracy due to its diversity and vastness by political observers in the west.



Source: The Wire

These 75 years must be celebrated with full fervor as we need to celebrate the people and the institutions that kept democracy on track and most importantly, we need to celebrate the constitution that paved the way for the proper unfolding of democracy in a country which had little experience of democratic governance. Nevertheless, why is there disquietude?

**Why is commemoration of our independence followed by the fear of an authoritarian fantasy coming true? Is the thicket of institutions not able to function as a countervailing force? Has constitutional morality declined so much that some fascist force gets a free pass without resistance?**

While introducing the book, *The Oxford Companion to Politics in India* (2010), the authors stated that even though India grapples

with several issues, a slip into an authoritarian system of governance is not high on the list of anxieties about India. They further wrote that India fares well on most measures of success in a democracy that include “voter turnouts, turnover of incumbents, the empowerment of new groups, maintaining a core set of liberal freedoms, civilian control over armed forces and political contestation.”



Source: Scroll.in

There is no disagreement with what the authors have mentioned here. But the downside is that the same authors now paint quite a dark picture of India. They further wrote that democracy in India is “as much of an established fact as its success is a matter of surprise to political scientists.” Again, there is no question of disagreement, we proved the western-Eurocentric assessment of India wrong. It is what India is and should ideally be an inherently democratic country.

However, the point of contention here is romantic idealization - the placing of too much faith in capricious human behavior and the assumption about the permanence of democracy. Democracy is not the natural fate of a country or an entitlement; it has to be established. It is something to struggle for every day. Democracy is a process and this process is not only about the facade of elections and changing governments but rather about the socialization of people and institutions to behave democratically in all circumstances; it is about building a culture of democracy. The people are the representation of their country’s political culture. There is no nation without people therefore, these people

need to be nurtured so that they can foster the nation and its democracy. While assessing a country’s democratic or autocratic nature, one cannot rule out its political culture because most autocracies survive by instilling a sense of acceptance of authoritarianism in the people’s consciousness. The thing about political culture is that it takes years to build one and possesses a transient nature.

**Political culture is about shaping the attitude of the masses that in turn, translates into political behavior.**

If a regime succeeds at altering the political culture, supplanting the political system gets easy. This alteration of political culture can be for the good or bad. And the state has done this, as observed in India after independence. To fully appreciate the political culture of constitutionalism, democratic idealism, secularism, and inclusiveness that was built into Indian consciousness, we will have to look at how several crucial events have unfolded that shaped how this country will look like. Firstly, we will have to commend the earliest political leadership of independent India for their unflinching commitment to building a democratic republic. India did not earn its independence under pleasant circumstances.

The country underwent partition, lakhs of people were killed, maimed and thousands went missing in the biggest transfer of human population in history. Even in such dire circumstances the constituent assembly still worked to fashion out a document that could pave the way for a better future and preclude what all of India went through in those early years of independence. While the creation of Pakistan- an Islamic nation- was a political failure on both sides, it was more of a failure of morality and nationalistic ideals. The idealization of nationalism and natural unity proved inadequate in holding people together.

The Indian National Congress, which was at the helm of the independence struggle, curated a peculiar alteration about Indian nationalism during the independence movement by changing the conventional basic content of nationalism from an identity-based nationalism to a nationalism based on the actual lived experiences of Indian people. This experience was a result of economic pauperization and exploitation of everyone from top to bottom rungs at the hands of the British. Thus, it was not some identity based on religion or language or ethnicity but a genuine ingenious exercise of detaching nationalism from its European tenets and moulding it as per the Indian requirements, where it could be all-inclusive and enable everyone to feel connected to the same struggle. This culture of building values that were all-inclusive and reflected the ethos of the independence struggle continued even after independence.



Source: YouthKiAwaaz

Although people from several religions have lived in India for centuries, the conflicts between the rulers belonging to different religions were more due to political and economic reasons and not communal. So, a syncretic living style was always a part of Indian culture but secularism as a political value, something which was publicly professed, was neither an embedded understanding nor a part of common sense. Secularism was a subjective reflection emanating from the independence struggle that was still not ensconced into the general consciousness but made a part of the subjective self-understanding of people by the consistent efforts of the state in the formative years after independence. While the Partition had ebbed the sense of collective for

many by filling them with biases; for others, it insinuated a sense of loss of the very India if it were ever to become a theocracy.

Hence an effort to bind people started and the state- Nehruvian state- played the main role. This effort was a process of developing a particular political culture which would adopt secularism as a mainstay of politics and people's behaviour. The decision of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to turn the first-ever general elections into a mandate against sectarianism and communal violence and the subsequent victory against the communalist forces did signify the impact of the ethos of the independence struggle and the efforts of the state and more importantly, the acceptance of constitutional values among the citizenry.

The ailing state of Indian democracy today is due to an overambitious and control freak state wanting to police every action, thought and speech and the acceptance and cheering for this state by a large section of the masses is extremely concerning. Moreover, when a constitutionally immoral act of a political party where it exploits a religious issue for political expediency to rise and gain prominence gets public approval then the moot point here is not the rise of a party but the decline of constitutional morality. Moral decadence allows you to accept a distorted version of a nation. It makes you applaud something that ought to be resisted.

The Nehruvian state did succeed in inculcating the constitutional value of secularism, which was at least visible in behavior because the state itself was the staunchest proponent of it. When the state stops nurturing people and instead exploits and panders to their baser instincts, it stops being ideal and creates a political culture antithetical to the ideal. While the people are the same, the state is the same, only the actors running the state have changed thus dissipating the constitutional commitment to secularism. In his book *Secular Common Sense* (2001), Mukul Kesavan while

describing the posturing of people, has aptly captured that the people had adopted secularism as a “style” and not a political position that you fight for, and since it was a style choice, it changed because styles change. an Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic.”

During the independence movement and after that, the kind of nationalism that India chose was a choice made out of prudence and vision. It was not a hasty decision as it was a result of the collective struggle waged against imperialism. Civic nationalism, the nationalism advanced by the Indian state, is about the loyalty of individual citizens to a state based purely on political identity.



Source: Inventiva.co.in

### **The German philosopher Habermas called it ‘constitutional patriotism’.**

It is particularly necessary that people’s connection with constitutional values and institutions is restored. Because indifference hurts, but the willing submission and participation of our own people in the demolition of every democratic structure built over decades is more painful.

As secularism and civic nationalism were made a part of the general consciousness, similarly, constitutional morality also needs to be reignited for the safety of other constitutional values as well, a concern shared by Dr. B.R Ambedkar back in 1948 when he said: “Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realize that our people have yet to learn it. Democracy in India is only a top-dressing on

# संघर्ष जारी है।

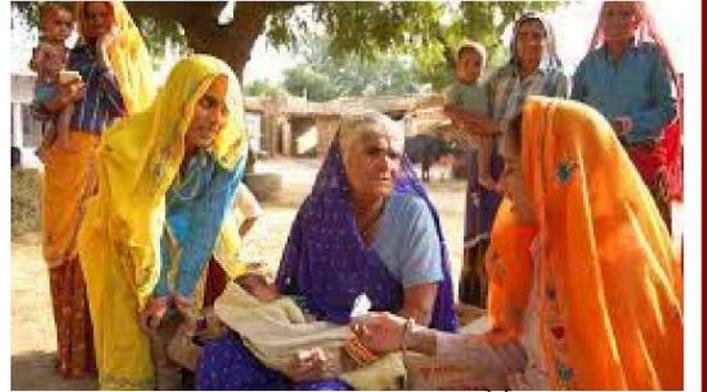
- वर्षा, एसोसिएट एडिटर

संघर्ष जारी है... अपनी प्रतिष्ठा, अधिकार, समानता, न्याय व स्वतंत्रता के लिए। संघर्ष जारी है महिलाओं के राजनीतिक प्रतिनिधित्व के लिए। 'संघर्ष जारी है', इन शब्दों से पूर्व जानने की आवश्यकता है कि संघर्ष क्या है? संघर्ष की आवश्यकता क्यों है और कैसे करना है? संघर्ष का परिणाम क्या निकलेगा? इस गद्यांश में संघर्ष का अभिप्राय दो अर्थों से है। प्रथम, महिला अधिकार आंदोलन से। आंदोलन से अभिप्राय नारीवादी आंदोलन से है जो आर्थिक, सामाजिक, राजनीतिक अधिकारों की असमानता और लैंगिक विभिन्नताओं को चुनौती देता है। यह आंदोलन नारियों को पुरुषों के समान अवसर व प्रतियोगी वातावरण प्रदान करने के ऊपर ध्यान देता है। और दूसरा अभिप्राय महिलाओं के साथ होने वाले अन्याय से है। अन्याय से अभिप्राय समाज की उन क्रूर रीति से है, जिसका महिलाओं को अपने जीवन के हर काल में सामना करना पड़ा है। जैसे कन्याभ्रूण हत्या, दहेज प्रथा, साक्षरता दर में कमी, स्वास्थ्य आधारित समस्याएं, महिलाओं का उत्पीड़न जैसे बलात्कार, घरेलु हिंसा और हत्या आदि। इन अन्यायों का मूल समाज की धारणाओं में स्थापित है जो कि एक मुख्य कारण है महिलाओं के पिछड़ेपन का। जिससे उनकी समाज में स्थिति आज भी खराब है।

अगर हम महिलाओं की स्थिति की प्राचीन काल से लेकर समकालीन समय तक की चर्चा करें तो कई परिवर्तन आए हैं। ग्रीक देश के महान दार्शनिक अरस्तु महिलाओं का राजनीति से कोई संबंध नहीं मानते थे। इसके विपरीत समकालीन समय में बहुत से राष्ट्रों में, जैसे कि भारत, अमेरिका, न्यूजीलैंड, ऑस्ट्रेलिया आदि, जहां महिलाओं को पुरुषों के समान राजनीतिक, सामाजिक और आर्थिक अधिकार प्राप्त हैं। वहीं अफगानिस्तान जैसे देश भी हैं, जहां महिलाएं अत्यधिक दयनीय स्थितियों में रहती हैं।

संघर्ष है महिलाओं का स्वयं से, सर्वप्रथम महिलाओं को यह समझने की आवश्यकता है कि वे पुरुषों के समान हैं। उन्हें रूढ़ीवादी परंपराओं से और सामाजिक भय से बाहर आना है। यह कुछ ऐसी स्थितियां हैं जो महिलाओं के विकास और समाज में उनकी बराबरी के लिए महत्वपूर्ण हैं। वर्तमान समय में महिलाओं को वैधानिक तौर पर राजनीतिक अधिकार, सामाजिक न्याय (जैसे काम के घंटे सुनिश्चित होना, गर्भवती महिलाओं के लिए विशेष योजना,

समान वेतन आदि), समानता व स्वतंत्रता प्राप्त हैं परंतु जैसा कि हम सभी जानते हैं कि धरातल पर परिस्थितियां बिल्कुल भिन्न हैं। महिलाओं की स्थितियों को हम दो भागों में विभाजित करके देख सकते हैं। पहला, शहरी महिलाएं तथा दूसरा, ग्रामीण महिलाएं। शहर में रहने वाली अधिकतर महिलाएं घर के काम के साथ-साथ बाहर के काम, राजनीतिक गतिविधियां और सामाजिक संगठनों में ग्रामीण महिलाओं के मुकाबले अधिक सम्मिलित होती हैं। वहीं अगर हम वैश्विक स्तर पर महिलाओं की राजनीतिक भागीदारी या प्रतिनिधित्व को देखते हैं तो यह बहुत कम है।



सोर्स: India.unfpa.org

लोकतंत्र को समकालीन समय की सबसे श्रेष्ठ शासन व्यवस्था माना जाता है। अन्य के मुकाबले ये महिलाओं को राजनीतिक अधिकार, सामाजिक न्याय, समानता और स्वतंत्रता प्रदान करता है। परंतु इसमें भी महिलाओं को मत के अधिकार के लिए संघर्ष करना पड़ा। विकसित देश जैसे कि अमेरिका, नॉर्वे, ऑस्ट्रेलिया और फिनलैंड की महिलाओं द्वारा मत अधिकार की मांग उठी और आंदोलन भी हुए। इसके अलावा कुछ राज्य ऐसे भी हैं जिन्होंने लोकतंत्र अपनाते के साथ ही सभी को समान नागरिकता और राजनीतिक अधिकार दिए जैसे कि भारत।

सवाल अब यह उत्पन्न होता है कि महिलाओं की राजनीतिक भागीदारी को, नीति निर्णयन में हिस्सेदारी को और राजनीतिक एवं सामाजिक प्रतिनिधित्व को राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर और अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर कैसे बढ़ाया जाए। भारत में महिलाओं की भागीदारी को बढ़ाने के लिए स्थानीय स्वशासन में आरक्षण सुनिश्चित किया गया है। जिससे महिलाओं की राजनीतिक गतिविधियों में भागीदारी स्थानीय स्तर पर बढ़ी है।

केंद्र व राज्य स्तर पर इस प्रकार के आरक्षण की बातें दो दशकों से होती आ रही हैं। केंद्र व राज्य स्तर पर आरक्षण सुरक्षित ना होने का मुख्य कारण है पुरुषों का संसद में बहुमत होना जो इस प्रकार के बदलाव नहीं चाहते। तभी हम कहते हैं कि संघर्ष जारी है।

शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य दो महत्वपूर्ण हथियार हैं। शिक्षा मनुष्य को आत्मविश्वास, ज्ञान तथा तार्किकता की समझ प्रदान करती है। महिलाओं को सर्वप्रथम शिक्षित होना है, और अधिकारों व अन्याय की प्रकृति की पहचान करनी है तब सही मायने में संघर्ष को उसके परिणाम तक पुहचाया जा सकेगा। संघर्ष करने और इसके उद्देश्य को समझने के लिए महिलाओं को शिक्षित होना होगा। एक शिक्षित व्यक्ति ही रूढ़ीवादी परंपराओं से बाहर निकलकर समाज में नए परिवर्तन ला सकता है और सामाजिक परंपराओं को चुनौती दे सकता है। इसके अलावा स्वास्थ्य भी एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू है। स्वास्थ्य मनुष्य के जीवन की बहुमूल्य निधि है। स्वस्थ मनुष्य पूरे समाज को प्रभावित करता है। स्वस्थ मनुष्य सामाजिक उत्तरदायित्व का निर्वहन कुशलतापूर्वक करता है। अतः संघर्ष एवं आंदोलन में भाग लेने के लिए महिलाओं का स्वस्थ होना आवश्यक है ताकि वे उन नीतियों और रूढ़ीवादी परंपराओं को प्रभावित कर सकें। महिलाएं एवं पुरुषों के बीच की शारीरिक और मानसिक भिन्नता को राजनैतिक भिन्नता से अलग करना है। समाज में राजनीतिक और सामाजिक समानता ही समस्याओं का हल है। शिक्षा समाज में जागरूकता लाएगी और स्वास्थ्य परिवर्तन लाने की क्षमता देगी।

**प्रश्न अब यह है कि क्या लोकतांत्रिक शासन प्रणाली ने महिलाओं के लिए आदर्श परिस्थितियों का निर्माण किया है?**

इस प्रश्न का उत्तर जटिल भी है और सरल भी। सरल इस प्रकार है कि अन्य शासन प्रणालियों के मुकाबले लोकतंत्र ने महिलाओं को समान वेतन, गर्भपात का अधिकार, चयन की स्वतंत्रता, शिक्षा का अधिकार आदि दिए हैं, जो लोकतंत्र को एक श्रेष्ठ शासन व्यवस्था साबित करती है। अगर इसके जटिल होने की बात करें तो देखा जा सकता है की समानता, स्वतंत्रता, न्याय और अधिकार लोकतंत्र के केंद्रीय गुण हैं परंतु यह नीति निर्णयन, नीति निर्माण और राजनीतिक फैसलों में देखने को नहीं मिलता। महिलाओं की राजनीतिक भागीदारी में असमानता लोकतंत्र के श्रेष्ठ होने पर प्रश्न खड़ा करती है। परन्तु कालांतर में कई परिवर्तन हुए हैं, कई राज्यों का नेतृत्व आज महिलाएं कर रही हैं। न्यूजीलैंड, बांग्लादेश आदि जैसे कई देश हैं

जिनका नेतृत्व महिलाओं द्वारा किया जा रहा है। अंततः महिलाओं का प्रतिनिधित्व राजनीति में इसलिए और अधिक आवश्यक है क्योंकि दुनिया की आधी जनसंख्या महिलाओं की है। इस प्रकार शासन, सत्ता, नीति निर्माण, नीति निर्णयन में महिलाओं का उचित प्रतिनिधित्व ज़रूरी है। संघर्ष जारी रहेगा कई अंतर्राष्ट्रीय महिला संगठनों, राष्ट्रीय महिला संगठनों, सरकारी व गैर-सरकारी संगठनों के द्वारा जब तक की महिलाओं को बराबरी का अधिकार ना मिल जाए और एक वैध समानता की स्थिति ना आ जाए।



सोर्स: Borgenproject.org

# A long road ahead

- By Dipansh Mandaar, Managing Editor

The will of the people (fabricated or genuine) provides political legitimacy in the contemporary world rather than the divine theory of kingship of earlier times. Leaders emphasize their rhetoric, claiming that the thought of serving the people rather than lust for power, fame, or money has inspired them to enter public life. This people-centric approach in politics has penetrated the entire political world. The votaries of the idea of democracy have proposed that democracy, the rule of people and the rule of law will create a just society with equality, liberty and fraternity at its core. But, is all this really true? Are democratic regimes really functioning in the way political theorists had thought they would? Let's find out!

Democracy seeks to provide a rosy picture of society that treats all its members fairly, that rewards the deserving and punishes the undeserving, that distributes valued goods in a just and equitable manner, that respects the will of the people and works solely for their interest. But in reality, this doesn't seem to be the case. Poverty, hunger and destitution are not problems of the past. Democratic regimes claim that they work for the people but people still seem to suffer. Governments are not spending enough on human resource development. In India, for example, the combined expenditure of the union and state governments on education is just about 3.3 percent of GDP, while that on the health sector is even lower at 1.3 percent of GDP (Reserve Bank Of India). This lack of expenditure in crucial sectors like education and health which are basic necessities and tools for eradicating human sufferings, manifests the callousness of democratically chosen regimes towards people. This does not mean that we have not ameliorated from our previous conditions.

The standards of living, freedom, equality, literacy and many other parameters through which we can gauge a society have exponentially improved. But there still is a long road ahead that no matter what, we have to tread slowly and carefully to maximize the happiness of the people and minimize the sufferings that our society is witnessing.



Source: DUBeat

The hindrance is realizing that potential exists not in the system per se but the way in which the system is brought into practice. Democratic regimes are legitimized because they are chosen by the people; hence, the fundamental essence of democracy lies in the right to choose but when this right is exercised the results do not manifest in ways they ought to. At face value, this right seems to be fulfilled but when we dig deeper and analyze the current trends the story seems different. The right to choose for most people is not real because the basis on which they choose is being decided by others.

Millions of rupees are spent for manufacturing public opinion. More than Rs 6,500 crores were spent on elections by 18 political parties, including seven national parties and 11 regional parties, between 2015 and 2020, according to an analysis of the annual audit reports of the political parties submitted to the Election Commission of India. This is the official figure while the actual numbers may be way higher.

The media houses are being paid millions of rupees to favor parties and their ideologies.

According to the officials of a 16-member team which was keeping a tab on the paid news content in the run-up to the general elections, they have identified around 70 contents broadcasted in the electronic media which were 'favorable' to either a political leader or a party', since March 19 (The Hindu). Through all these efforts political parties have become successful in hijacking the minds of individuals. Voters are not choosing for themselves or their benefit, although they are concerned about their interest and the interest of the nation as a whole, still, they are not able to identify what actually is in their advantage and don't vote for issues that pertain to them. The construction of these false public opinions have made the voters vote on emotions rather than performance of governments in sectors like education, health and infrastructure, nation building etc. which can be claimed evidently since most of the political parties directly or indirectly try to appeal on emotional issues like caste and religion especially in Indian politics.



Source: Economist.com

The magic bullet for this predicament can be found in the modified version of the Athenian democracy where only those people who choose the leaders rationally are allowed to vote, but, this bullet like any other magic does not work in the real world. The necessary question that makes this idea obsolete is how to identify who would choose among the millions of citizens, the ones rational enough to vote.

## What then is the way ahead on this road to prosperity?

The answer is simple enough to understand but extremely arduous and time taking to implement. We need to augment the basic education level of the general population to a satisfactory level. The countries like Norway, New Zealand and Finland where the level of education is higher than the rest of the world provide evident examples that focusing on education can actually lead to a better democracy. The level of education here not only means the number of fancy degree holders but individuals who develop the ability to think and can choose rationally between the right and wrong. But with the attitude that many leaders have, doing this is difficult for any nation.

To actualize these ideas, the learned and educated class has to rise up and work as pressure groups to make the governments change their attitude towards policy making and work for long term goals rather than short-term gains. There is indeed a long road ahead for actualizing these ideas but with good intentions and collective actions anything is possible. We just need to realize that the journey is arduous and we need to carve out our way with patience. Most of the suggestions given here are not entirely new ideas but still we don't seem to act upon them, which can be explained by the statement of the great Benjamin Franklin: "You will observe with concern how long a useful truth may be known, and exist, before it is generally received and practiced on."

# Indian democracy and its criticisms

- By Rishank Kumar, Assistant Editor

Since it gained independence in 1947, India has claimed to be the world's largest democracy. However, in recent times, a somewhat different line of criticism is developing, it argues that India's democracy is becoming mostly or only 'electoral democracy'.

Democracy is not a new concept of this modern era. In Indian context it was discussed in different forms during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. India has had a long history of conversations in the language of democracy, starting from the nationalist movement– in demand for political representation and self rule (Swaraj). In the nineteenth century, people like Jyotiba Phule did not directly use the term representative democracy but his attack on caste and his appeal to adopt equality were part of democracy. Early voices of Naoroji and Tilak demanded for complete independence and a constitution prepared by Indians themselves.

During the colonial period, three terrains of politics arose – firstly, politics around institutions which focused on the fact that during the time of colonialism in India, the politics started within the institutions and also new political parties came into the anti-colonial movements. Then came the politics around formal governmental power which can also be known as electoral politics which basically focused on the electorates to gain power after independence. Now, the politics around socio-political transformation also known as the politics of movements came which focused on carrying out different kinds of movements to get freedom from the British government. Many parties came into it and the most famous and important one was the Indian National Congress.

The early stage of democratization in Indian society was partly occasioned by colonial encounters but more substantively by historic interference between traditions and modernity. Two key features began to shape through the late nineteenth century- the first one was contestations over ideas and power sharing, according to which the idea of freedom started more effectively and aggressively. Then the second one was the popular mobilization of the people of India through which masses came together against the British Government and started demanding an independent India. The popular mobilization helped the leaders who were contesting over their ideas and power sharing with the British government. After so many movements and agitations the demand for an independent democratic India was fulfilled. It took a lot of years and sacrifices.



Source: Kashmirlife.net

Modern democracy in India contested the prevailing ideas and arguments of power and fought to mobilize public opinion. As institutional policies matured apart from known many other institutions entered the arena of democratic contestations and plunged itself into electoral politics where both parties and voters increased and Valerian Rodrigues, in 1990s, called it as democratization of the politics and

further, another political scientist Kanchan Chandra said that the fragmentation and competition deepened the democracy, vote share increased from about 45% to 60% but the state was unable to accommodate the new people coming into politics. Rajni Kothari, another Indian political scientist said that with the increase of serious contenders, India moved from one party dominance to multi party system. From one party dominance of the Nehru government to the formation of coalition governments, various parties came into the picture during the 1990s. India grew relatively strong during the period, but the sense that a more authoritative government might deliver more was common.

Democracy is neither all about electing a government nor about freedom from foreign power but is fundamentally about all power relations; the power lying with common people to take part in decision making regarding public goods. Domestically, India's democracy is quite vibrant in terms of diversity of its critical evaluation. The self congratulatory pronouncement of success of world's largest democracy, notwithstanding, there are severe indictments of India's democracy on four grounds: first, there is nothing Indian about it and we have been aping the western model of democracy without much respect for indigenous traditions.

Second, it is argued that the democracy we have adopted does not in reality leave any room for people to decide their fate. Third, critics argue that India's present democracy is nothing but a sham because it perpetuates the power and privileges of the established dominant interest of the landlords and the capitalists. Fourth, India's democracy is faulted for not following the democratic principles as they have evolved in the West mainly in belief of rules and procedure and the sanctity of institutions which resonates the concern and criticism of liberal democratic analysis. Now-a-days, Indian politicians are

focusing only on the electoral benefits and this has become a major criticism of Indian democracy as it is not concerned about its citizens.



Source: JournalofDemocracy.org

As Arvind Subramanian, former Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India who wrote on neo-welfarism said that, now the government is focusing on short-term benefits and ignoring the long-term benefits because there are political benefits behind it. The redistribution of resources is individual-centric.

According to Devesh Kapur, another political scientist, the pre 1990s governments were focusing on primary goods like health network, education network and better infrastructure which was for the long-term but post 1990s governments are focusing on short-term and individual-centric policies like DBT(Direct Benefit Transfers), etc. Hence, through this we can say that now the government is focusing on the policies which give them political benefits to sustain in power for a long time. Now-a-days, the politicians are focusing on patronage democracy in which those who are supporting them and mobilising the masses and convincing the masses to vote for those particular politicians will get the benefits of the government policies after the victory of those particular politicians.

This type of network is really weakening the democracy and along with this the corruption, nepotism, money and muscle powers are another factor which are weakening the Indian democracy and these are becoming the factors for the criticisms of the Indian democracy.

But apart from all the criticisms, the Indian democracy is functioning very well and this is all because of the constitutional setup of the checks and balances in which each organ of the government can have checks and balances over the another organs of the government, and the active participation of the people of the country in decision making makes the Indian democracy more robust and reliable.



Source: id.edu

In spite of somewhat harsh and negative assessments by scholars, experts and activists, people are satisfied with the way in which democracy functions. So, assessments of democracy can not be merely in the form of complacent approval just as they need not be the pronouncement of failure.

# How India became democratic

- By Rishank Kumar, Assistant Editor

## **“Indians became voters before they were citizens.”**

How did democracy capture the political imagination of the diverse people of India?

It was through the implementation of universal adult franchise and through this the electoral democracy came to life in India. And everyone thought that the universal adult franchise and electoral democracy could not survive in India because during the time of partition of India and Pakistan, there were mass killings and displacement of millions of people. But it was the hard work of Indian bureaucrats that not only survived the universal adult franchise in India but also it became successful and India has become the largest democracy in the world. The preparation of the first draft electoral roll on the basis of universal adult franchise was started from November, 1947. And its adoption was agreed at the beginning of constitutional debates in April, 1947. During the time of first general elections which took place between 25 October, 1951 to 21 February, 1952, about 17.3 million people (49% of the country's population) were in the universal adult suffrage list and 85% of whom had never voted earlier and majority of them were poor and illiterate. In the 2019 general elections, around 912 million people were eligible to vote and voter turnout was over 67% - the highest ever as well as it had the highest ever participation by women.

Hence, the increase in percentage from 49% to 67% was the hard work done by the bureaucrats. The whole work of the preparation of the first draft electoral roll on the basis of universal adult franchise was designed and managed by a newly formed interim bureaucratic body: the Constituent Assembly Secretariat (CAS), under

the close guidance of the constitutional advisor, B.N. Rao. The idea of universal adult suffrage took root in India with the Government of India Act, 1935, under which the franchise was extended to over 30 million people, which was only one-fifth of the total population of the country. It provided in the constitution to set the age of voting at 21 years.



Source: Hindustantimes.com

This document is a very important document for the constitution of India as it is also a source from which our constitution has been derived. Now comes the nationalist movement which was started against the British government which was ruling in India at that time, in which the demand for the representation and participation of the people started through the demand for the right to vote. Then the anti-colonial mass movement after the first World War started in India against the British government more aggressively.

## **The people of India started demanding the right to vote more effectively.**

Then comes another important document through which the universal adult franchise took its root and the document was the Nehru Report of 1928 which stated, “any artificial restriction on the right to vote in a democratic constitution is an unwarranted restriction on democracy itself.” Hence, the making of universal adult franchise and making the Indian electorate through the preparation of the first draft electoral roll for the

first general elections under universal franchise was the hard work done by the Indian bureaucrats. Here we can also see the imaginative powers of the Indian bureaucrats to make India the largest and a successful democracy. The process of democratic state building transformed the meaning of social existence in India and became fundamental to the evolution of Indian democratic politics over the next decades. The idea behind implementing the universal franchise and the consequent citizenship making was that the government at the centre was able to assert legitimate authority relatively smoothly over the changing political and territorial landscape of the subcontinent, giving meaning to the new federal structure.

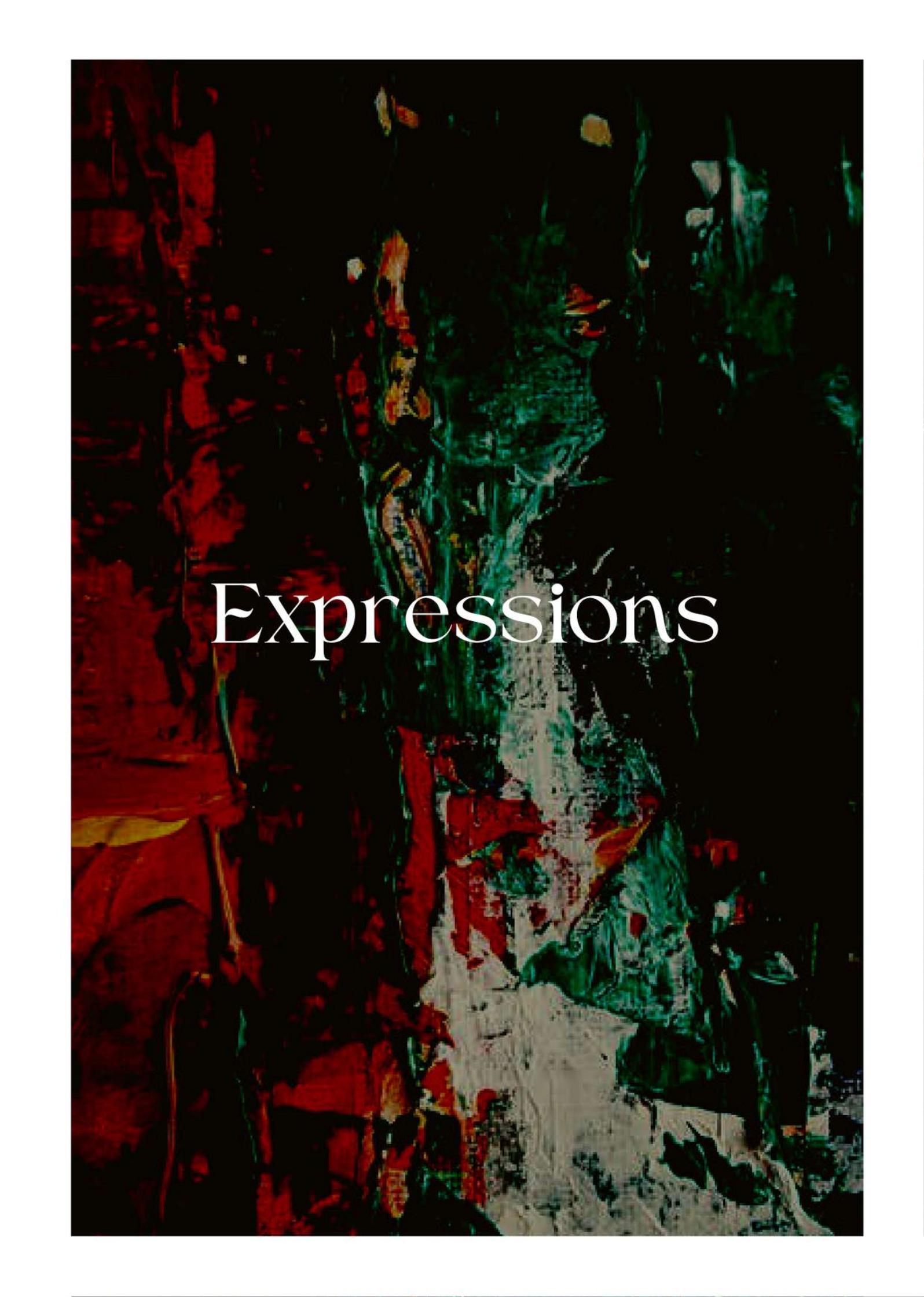
In 1989, the Parliament of India made the sixty-first amendment to the constitution of India, officially known as The Constitution (sixty-first amendment) Act, 1989, which reduced the voting age of the citizens of India in the elections to the Lok Sabha and of the state legislative assemblies from 21 years to 18 years. This was a very important amendment in the constitution of India as it directly affected the lives of the voters of India as it deals directly with who can vote and who cannot. It was also important because now the youth of the country would have a better say in policy making related to employment, development programmes etc.

The representation and participation of the youth increased in the country. This was the most important amendment related to the electorates since the universal adult franchise was adopted in India. This was also done because now the youth of the country had become more politically active, literate and enlightened and reducing the voting age could offer the hitherto unrepresented youth of the country a chance to vent their feelings and help them to become an important component of the political process in India.

So, the adoption of the universal adult franchise also known as universal suffrage which is a very

important term which was incorporated in the constitution of India by our imaginative bureaucrats was not only useful according to the political perspective but also important according to the social and economic perspectives for the upliftment of the women, youth and other backward sections of the country through their representation and participation in the electoral politics of the country to make better policies which was aided by the sixty-first constitutional amendment act, 1989, to reduce the voting age of the voters from 21 years to 18 years.

The perspectives on democracy and modern Indian history and the institutionalization of democracy in India which took place on the ground, was in preparation from November, 1947 with the preliminary electoral roll. Hence, the hard work done by the Indian bureaucrats made Indian democracy more robust from time to time. Hence, this is the way through which democracy captured the political imagination of the diverse people of India. The process of the adoption of the universal adult franchise in India started before the first general elections and even before our Constitution was made, so that's why "Indians became voters before they were citizens."



# Expressions

# भेड़िया

- सत्यम तिवारी

मैं भेड़िए की उस  
कहानी का नायक हूँ,  
जिसमें भेड़िए के आने पर  
कोई नहीं आता।

और भेड़िया जब  
गपागप लील रहा होता है,  
मेरी नन्ही-नन्ही ज़िंदगियाँ,  
असहाय होकर मैं  
उसकी तरफ़ देखता हूँ।

भेड़िए के आने पर  
लोग नहीं आते,  
वे दरअसल, कभी नहीं आते।

इन दिनों या तो  
भीड़ आती है,  
या कोई भी नहीं।

# यथास्थिति

- सत्यम तिवारी

सहिष्णु होने की चाहत में मैं बचा,  
किसी विचार का खंडन करने से बचा।

सच वही था लेकिन  
जो नकार से उपजा था,  
नकारते नहीं बनता था जो।

जहाँ-जहाँ हुई असुविधा,  
वहाँ-वहाँ मैं गिरा  
अपनी सुविधा में गिरा।

इतने रास्ते थे मेरे पास,  
इतनी सहूलियत,  
गिरना मुझे भा गया।

इतनी आज्ञादी थी,  
इतने विकल्प,  
अवसरवादी होना आ गया।

# जनसेवक

- सत्यम तिवारी

अब जबकि समझ लिया है उसने,  
मिमियाने और दहाड़ने का फर्क,  
और नींद और ख़्वाब चुराने के नुस्खे,  
क्या समझते हैं आप  
और कितने दिन शेष हैं,  
मृत्यु के नहीं, जीवन के?

इन दिनों रातों में नींद न आने से अधिक भयावह है,  
दिनदहाड़े सपनों के चोरी होने का डर।

कितनी सावधानी से उसने काटी हैं  
पेड़ों की जड़ें,  
मेरा दावा है, हमारे दौर का हैमलेट  
मारे नहीं मरेगा।

हमारी खिड़कियों से कितने भयानक दिखते हैं,  
हिलते-डुलते हमारी ओर बढ़ते हुए पेड़।

पेड़ों को शायद इसका इल्म नहीं,  
कि चुपचाप तमाशा देखकर घर जाना ही  
लोकतंत्र में एक अच्छे नागरिक की पहचान है,  
कि जीवन में स्थायित्व का कितना महत्व है,  
कि हाथ-पाँव न चलाने से,  
शीघ्र ही मिल सकती है मुक्ति!

तालियों की गड़गड़ाहट के बीच,  
यह याद रखना है कितना महत्वपूर्ण,  
कि विरोध और विद्रोह की अनुपस्थिति से,  
कितनी खूबसूरत हो सकती है यह दुनिया,  
यह दुनिया, जो हमारी नहीं है।।

# I dream of a life

- By Pragati Tiwari

I dream of a life  
where I, a girl  
isn't bound to do anything  
against her wish

Who is not caged but,  
liberated to live her life  
according to her wishes

Who is not tortured but  
honored in every way

Who is not just meant  
to do household chores  
but to fulfill all her desires

Who is not the one to  
compromise always, but  
also hold her self-esteem  
whenever needed

Whose voice isn't suppressed  
but carefully listened to

Whose feet aren't tied  
but give her strength to  
stand on her own

Who is not slacked by people  
but given wings to fly  
higher in the sky!

# Democracy: A dream for freedom

- By Pallavi Singh

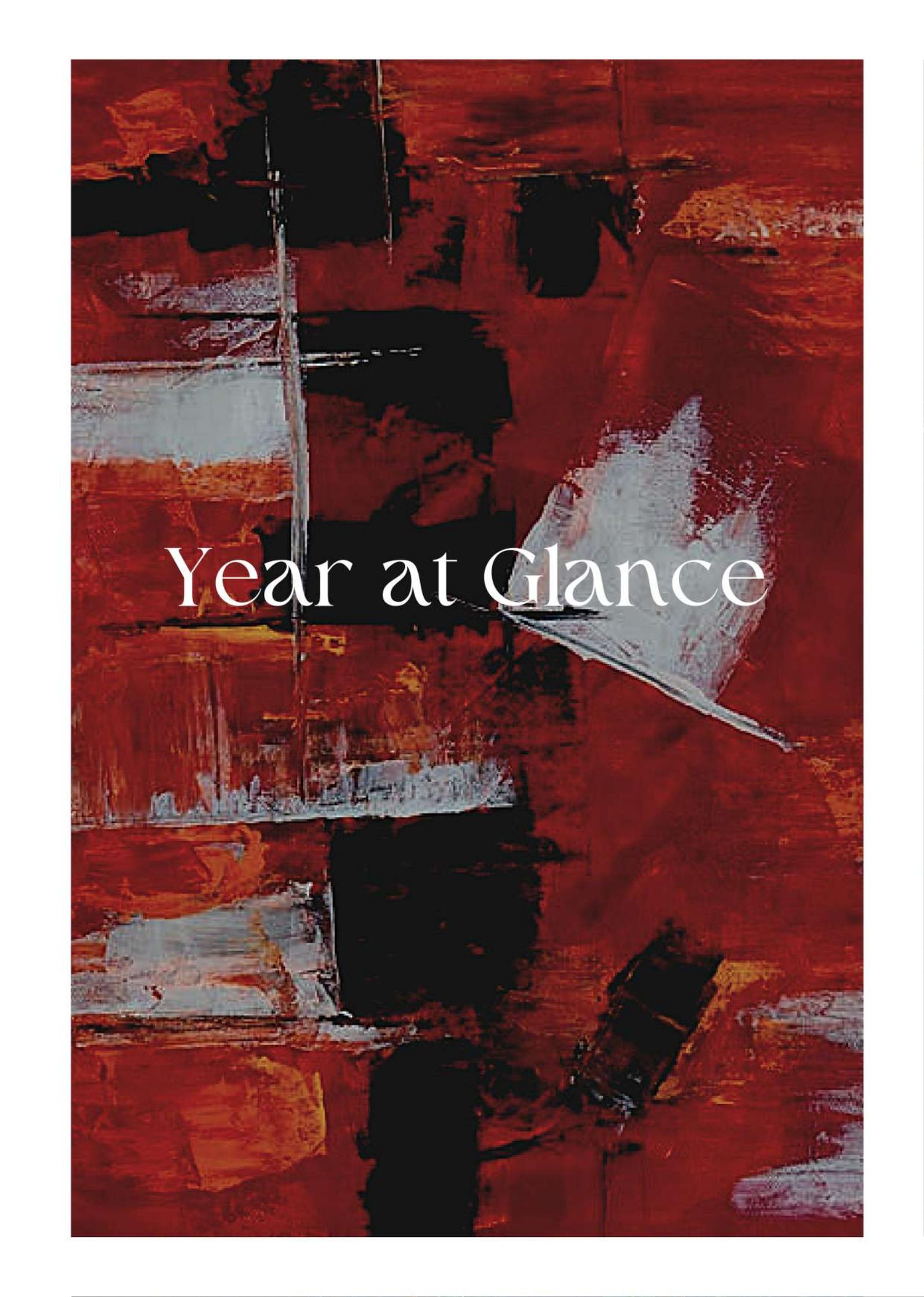
When faith divided a popular nation  
Society became just a caste-card  
People dreamt of their life in motion  
But reality showed their living too hard

Everywhere there is a chaos  
Rulers busy in their own floss  
Scream from every ages could be heard  
Situation could not be described in one word

No discipline and a proper manner  
No morality to practice and share  
To let people be happy and have a way  
To let them decide what they want to say

Fighter came fighting for right  
A never ending war came into light  
Woohoo! This struggle was ending  
Our freedom now they were defending

'This is democracy ' – they said  
No one could stop us was the statement they  
made  
People will come and people will go  
But now their strength will always grow

An aerial photograph of a construction site, heavily processed with a red color filter. The image shows a large, rectangular concrete slab in the center, surrounded by various construction materials and equipment. A dark-colored truck is visible in the lower right quadrant. The overall scene is a busy construction site, possibly for a large-scale infrastructure project.

# Year at Glance

## **Week of Nationalism**

The Political Science Association of Shaheed Bhagat Singh College organized many events as part of the week of nationalism under the banner of "भारत की आज़ादी का अमृत महोत्सव".

First of these was a virtual screening of a short documentary titled 'Shaheed-e-Azam (Azaadi ka Safar) on September 27, 2021. Awe-inspiring words of the honorable nodal officer of 'Aazadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', Dr. Krishna Murari lent a gracious start to the event, followed by the screening of the documentary, which depicted the legend and sacrifice of Shaheed Bhagat Singh. The documentary filled the hearts of the audience with patriotic fervor and spoke volumes on the power of the youth.

The film screening was followed by a Slogan Writing Competition on the theme 'Azaadi ki Udaan' which was conducted on September 28, 2021. Entries were accepted online and all the participants came up with extremely powerful and revolutionary slogans. This event proved to be an engrossing one and garnered active participation.

This was followed by a Poster-Making competition on the topic 'Loktantra' conducted on September 29, 2021. Entries were accepted online. The event went smoothly and thirty students came up with their fabulous posters, out of which top three were selected.

On September 30, 2021, the association organized an Open Mic Competition 'Takreer-e-Aazadi' based on the Freedom struggle of India. The event was graced by poet Priyank Dev and witnessed enthusiastic participation from various students bringing in their perspectives on India's freedom struggle.

On October 1 2021, 'Dastaan-e-Aazadi'- a quiz competition was organized by the association. The event was organized in collaboration with Minerva-the quizzing society of Shaheed Bhagat Singh College.

It was an individual event of two rounds, prelims and final. The competition was successfully organized under the guidance of Quizmaster Ashish, an alumnus of Ramjas College and a seasoned quizzier.

A speech writing competition on the topic 'India's global status after 75 years of independence' was organized by the association on the auspicious occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. Entries were accepted online, each of which tried to capture the reality of India's position at the global stage in a very skillful manner.

With this, the 'Week of Nationalism' came to a successful end.

## **Orientation 2021**

The Political Science Association of Shaheed Bhagat Singh College successfully held an orientation for the Batch of 2024, on November 22, 2021. The event commenced with a warm and enthusiastic welcome for the freshers . With a new zeal to explore, the introduction and working of the PSA, along with the annual departmental fest 'Chanakya' was explained to them.

This was followed by an energetic and motivational virtual message by our esteemed principal Prof. (Dr.) Anil Sardana, following which the department's faculty members were introduced. The new batch was acquainted with all the societies of our college, followed by a virtual tour of the campus.

## **Constitution Day**

On November 26, 2021, the PSA in collaboration with National Cadet Corps of the college organized a pledge ceremony under 'Aazadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' in online mode. To proudly celebrate India's Constitution day, Prof. Anil Sardana graced the event with his presence. All the students sincerely took the pledge to protect the integrity of and to abide by the consecrated words of the Constitution. The ceremony witnessed a beautiful message from the National

Credit Corps accentuating the importance of the sacred Constitution of our country.

## **Chanakya 2022**

Under the ambit of its annual departmental fest Chanakya 2022, the association successfully organized a plethora of events. The theme for this year's festival was 'Drishtikon: Politics through the eyes of youth'.

The first of these was a Poster-plus-Cartoon Making Competition titled 'Create-a-Thon' on the theme of elections, conducted on March 10, 2022 in the campus premises. The event witnessed active participation and was judged by Dr. Simple Mohanty.

On March 11, 2022, 'तर्कVaad' - the annual debate competition was organized by the association on the motion "Has the political class failed to meet the aspirations of India's youth?" This competition was adjudicated by avid debaters of the college: Vibhavesh Mishra, Advaith Sai Nair, and Rohit Modi.

The debate competition was extremely energetic and so were the audience who were enjoying this nail-biting competition. It engaged a huge number of audience with everyone getting to know more and more on the highly engaging motion. Since the competition was bilingual, everyone was adorned by the beauty of both the languages which added further taste to the debate competition. In all, the perspectives of all participants were highly commendable in nature. All the participants had come fully prepared and gave their best in proving their stance on the motion.

Third in line was MEMESABHA: a meme-making competition, conducted on March 11, 2022 on theme 'Indian Elections'. There were many entries and all the participants did exceptionally well. The memes made by them were creative and showed elections through different perspectives. Department Faculty,

Mr. Anant Prakash adjudicated this competition.

Parallel to these, a Treasure Hunt Competition was organized on March 10, 2022. This was a team-based competition, around 25 tasks were given to each team (consisting of four members each). The tasks tested the teams on their entertaining power and presence of mind.

On March 10 and 11, Taab-e-sukhan: a speech competition was organized in the college premises on the topical theme of "New Education Policy 2020" which was adjudicated by Dr. Rupak Kumar. Participants presented their thoughts equivocally and actively on the theme.

On March 11, an Open-Mic competition: Jashn-e-nazm was organized in the college premises where students showcased their riveting poetry. This event was judged by Dr. Rajeev Ranjan Sinha and Dr. Simple Mohanty.

Following the spirit of dialogue amongst the youth, an "All India Political Parties Meet" simulation was organized on March 11. Participants coming from across the country took roles of various eminent Indian politicians and deliberated upon the Uniform Civil Code in this One-day simulation.

On March 10, Snapphactory: a photography competition was organized in campus premises on theme "Campus Life".

On March 11, Quiz-o-Crazy: a Quizzing competition was organized in the college premises. Quizmaster Ashish Singh adjudicated this event, which allowed for single-member and two-members team participation with 30 questions given to each team. Participants actively answered the questions and this event was highly enriching in all its aspects.

Overall, Chanakya 2022 was a success and students got various opportunities to hone their skills and talents.

## **Distinguished Lecture Series**

The Department organized an in-person Distinguished Lecture Series during August, 2022. The first lecture was conducted on August 3, 2022 on the theme 'Gandhi and Education'. Dr. Vikram Singh Amarawat, an eminent Gandhian educationist and Historian, based at Gujarat Vidyapeeth, delivered the special lecture. The event was graced with the presence of Prof. Anil Sardana (Principal and Patron), Dr. Rityusha Mani Tiwary (Teacher-in-Charge), and Dr. Anusha (Convener of the lecture series).

The conversation involved several intriguing tenets at the intersection of Gandhian thought and pedagogical frameworks in contemporary education, alongside the incorporation of Gandhian ideals in education.

Second in line was a special lecture on the theme "Election Studies: Opinion Polls and Survey Methodology" which was conducted on August 24, 2022. This lecture was delivered by Mr. Ashish Ranjan, who is currently a Fellow at the Delhi Assembly Research Centre, Delhi Legislative Assembly. In presence were Dr. Rityusha Mani Tiwary (Teacher-in-Charge) and Dr. Anusha (Convener, Distinguished Lecture Series).

It was an insightful and exciting conversation revolving around the dynamics of survey methodology used in electoral research and psephology, alongside the growing usage of opinion polls.

## **Inaugural Book Discussion**

On September 20, 2022, the department's newly-founded Book Club organized its inaugural Book discussion. The text for this was "ज्ञान की राजनीति: समाज अध्ययन और भारतीय चिंतन" by Prof. Manindra Nath Thakur. The panel consisted of Prof. Manindra Nath Thakur, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Dr. Hilal Ahmed, Centre for the

Study of Developing Societies, and Dr. Rupak Kumar, Department of Political Science, Shaheed Bhagat Singh College. In presence were also, Prof. Anil Sardana (Principal and Patron) and Dr. Rityusha Mani Tiwary (Teacher-in-Charge).

The discussion revolved around various ideas argued by Prof. Thakur in his book such as, the communal-secular binary, passage from Avidya to Vidya, and Purushartha.

## **Extempore Competition**

On October 1, 2022, the Department in collaboration with Sarvagya: the Hindi Debating Society of Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, organized an Extempore Competition, to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri. The event was inaugurated by Teacher-in-Charge Dr. Rityusha Mani Tiwary and her enlightening words on both the thinkers. Judging this competition were Dr. Utsav Kumar Singh, Ashish Yadav, and Anchal Singh. The competition was intense and neck-to-neck with participation of more than 70 students coming from over 40 colleges of University of Delhi. The participants vigorously presented their views on the two freedom fighter, their ideas, and modern Indian history.

## **Mental Health Workshop**

The Department in collaboration with YUVA (Youth United Vision for Action), conducted a Mental Health Workshop by Prof. Navin Kumar, Department of Psychology, Bhim Rao Ambedkar College, on October 10, 2022. In presence were Dr. Rityusha Mani Tiwary (Teacher-in-Charge) and Dr. Krishna Murari (Convener, YUVA). The session was timely and topical, revolving around the need for a positive outlook towards mental health and its importance in today's era. Prof. Kumar gave various insights of ideas such as panopticon, medical gaze, and pedagogy of the oppressed.

## **International Conference**

The Department organised an international conference on “Trends in Federalism: Expanding Horizons, Exploring New Terrains” on 10th December 2022. Through the conference, the department engaged with 17 institutions and four collaborating partners, registering 270 participants. The conference had eight sessions, including the inaugural, six parallel technical, and valedictory sessions. It touched upon various themes, including federalism's administrative, ecological, fiscal and comparative aspects.

## **Welcome program for Batch of 2022-26 and PSA Investiture Ceremony**

The department organised the welcome program for the fresher batch of 2022-26 with a host of activities and games on 31st January 2023. Along with it, the Political Science Association held its investiture ceremony for the year 2022-23.

## **Webinar on 'Working in Challenging Countries**

The Department successfully organised an online webinar on “Working in challenging countries: insights from energy sector” on 31st March 2023 on Google Meet. The speaker for the session was Mr. Bryarlie Dear, who is an international consultant retd. Director of MMO, Division of Saipem (Russia), currently based in Paris. The speaker drew upon his experience of working in the energy sector for 55 years to highlight some of the challenges of working in difficult locations/countries and strategies to address these challenges.







# **Department of Political Science**

## **Shaheed Bhagat Singh College**

The Department of Political Science at Shaheed Bhagat Singh College was established along with its inception in 1967. The Department has fourteen faculty: two Professors, one Associate Professor and eleven Assistant Professors. Each faculty of the Department comes with diverse and crucial research specialisations in comparative politics, political theory, political thought, Indian government and politics, development processes, International Relations, security studies, public policy and administration, peace and conflict resolution and foreign policy. The faculty regularly update their research with academic publications, presentations and research projects. In addition, the faculty members regularly partake in syllabi creation/updating of the university and undertake MA/MPhil/PhD supervision.

The department reflects an ethos that has been nurtured with great commitment and dedication by both faculty and students. The decades since its inception have seen the department emerge as a nodal point of heterogeneous deconstruction and reconstruction of ideas and vibrant debates in the discipline. Apart from providing a stimulating academic environment to the students, the faculty seeks to familiarise students with contemporary academic debates. The department is emerging as a training ground for in-depth research and reference work. In this regard, the department has developed crucial linkages with research institutions, organisations and public institutes in India, opening up interactive platforms for students to develop long-term research interests. The department seeks to be a space for joint exploration in research and academic practices by students and faculty.

The department seeks to develop critical thinking, activism, advocacy, and leadership in Indian Government and Politics, Political Theory, International Studies, Public Policy and Public Administration. The Political Science graduates from the Department have established careers in higher academics, law, bureaucracy, international relations and media, among many other fields. The department's efforts reflect Shaheed Bhagat Singh College's commitment to nurturing and creating cosmopolitan citizens who espouse a democratic celebration of diversity. Within this overarching ideal, the department has been facilitating explorations in knowledge, continuously engaging with humanist concerns by creating a liberating, empathetic, immersive and empowering pedagogy.

Through the last five decades, the Department has continuously endeavoured to contribute to critical and creative thinking, sustaining democratic spaces, broadening access and inclusivity in quality education, and consistently working towards empowering women and men. It has provided a context of learning that enhances professionalism, humanism and social responsibility. The teaching-learning process constantly evolves to impart to the students with best practices in the field, including field visits, research writing, and audio-visual projects. The department alumni make a mark in various fields, including law, civil services, journalism, academics, public policy and development, and entrepreneurial ventures.

The Political Science Association (PSA) comprises the President and the Executive Board (which has Class Representatives from the three years as well as the PSA executive board representative from each class). The PSA, under the guidance of staff advisor, serves as a medium of interaction, participation and learning in the Department. It organises various student-oriented activities including the special lecture by eminent scholars and practitioners from diverse fields. In addition, the association acts as key student body in assisting the department in regularly organising national and international seminars and workshops, book discussions and hosting the annual festival- Chanakya, whereby a plethora of activities like MUN, MIP, inter-college competitions in street theatre, painting, photography, debate and quiz take place.



## Department Faculty

Dr. Praveen Kumar (Professor), Dr. Sangeeta (Professor), Dr. Manjesh Kumar (Associate Professor), Dr. Simple Mohanty (Assistant Professor), Dr. Anusha (Assistant Professor), Dr. Krishna Murari (Assistant Professor), Mr. Ninad Shankar Nag (Assistant Professor), Dr. **Rityusha Mani Tiwary (Teacher-in-charge) (Assistant Professor)**, Dr. Rajeev Ranjan Sinha (Assistant Professor), Dr. Saima Iqbal (Assistant Professor), Mr. Anant Prakash (Assistant Professor), Dr. Rupak Kumar (Assistant Professor), Dr. Lamneivah Sitlhou (Assistant Professor), Dr. Rajesh Kumar (Assistant Professor)

# Magazine Committee

## Department of Political Science



### Upper Row

Rishank Kumar, Deepak Lakhlan, Dr. Rupak Kumar, Aayan Faiz, Dipansh Mandar

### Lower Row

Krishna Gopal, Varsha, Himanshu Kumar, Dr. Saima Iqbal, Shalu, Ansh Sharma

### In Absentia

Pragya Chabarwal, Yogeshwar Sanjay Patil

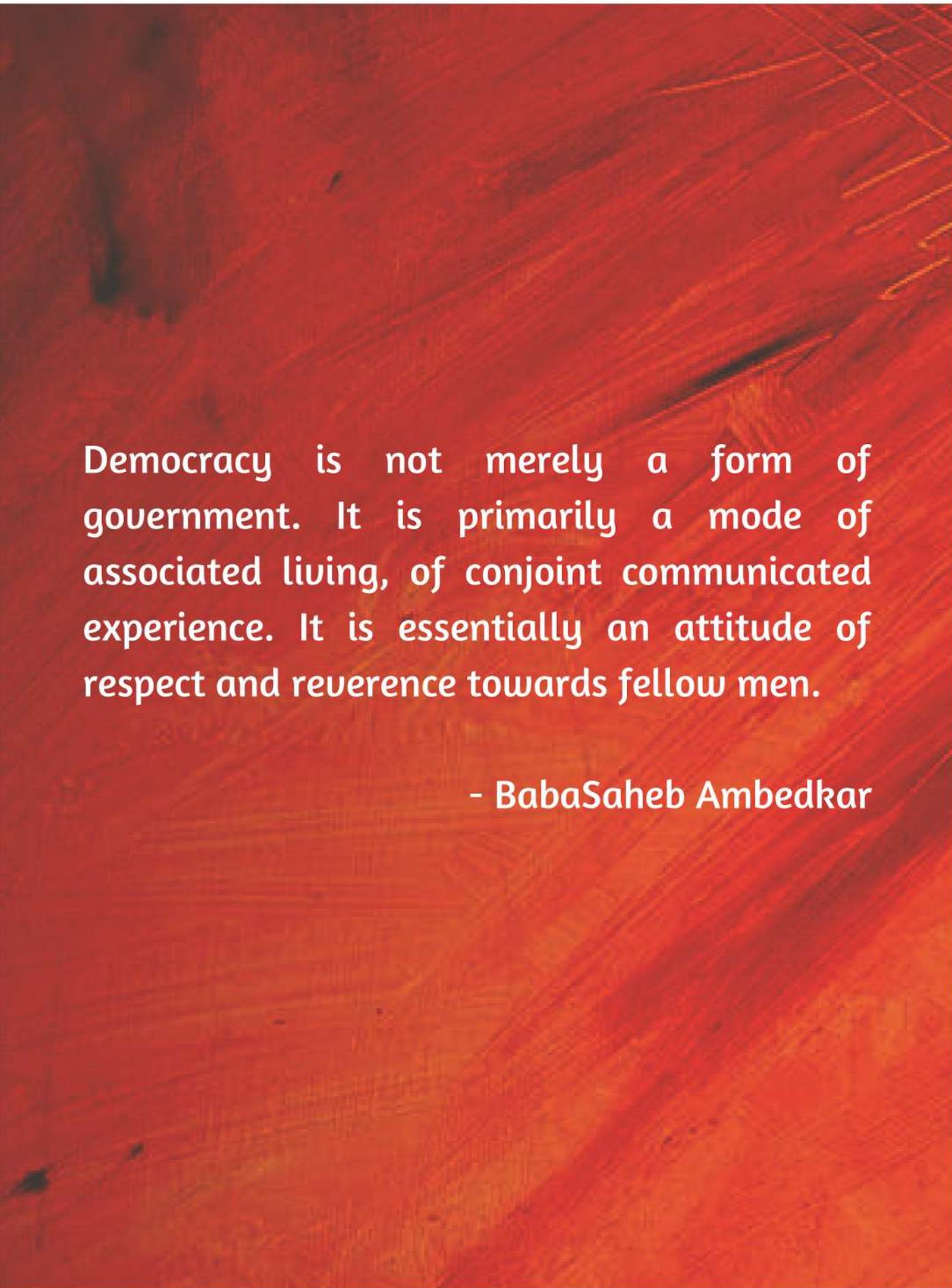


The Annual Magazine of  
Department of Political Science  
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College  
University of Delhi

Published in New Delhi  
Department of Political Science  
Shaheed Bhagat Singh College  
University of Delhi  
Phase II, Sheikh Sarai  
Delhi - 110017

All the artwork used in this issue has been taken from  
**Pexels Pictures** ([www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com))

Designed by **Ansh Sharma**



Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellow men.

- BabaSaheb Ambedkar