

I-POLITICAL ISSUES
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Every political party in India - whether a national or regional/state party - must have a symbol and must be registered with the Election Commission of India. Symbols are used in the Indian political system to identify political parties in part so that illiterate people can vote by recognizing the party symbols.

In the current amendment to the Symbols Order, the commission has asserted the following five principles:

1. A party, National or State, must have a legislative presence.
2. A National party's legislative presence must be in the Lok Sabha. A State party's legislative presence must be in the State Assembly.
3. A party can set up a candidate only from amongst its own members.
4. A party that loses its recognition shall not lose its symbol immediately but shall be allowed to use that symbol for some time to try and retrieve its status. (However, the grant of such facility to the party will not mean the extension of other facilities to it, as are available to recognized parties, such as free time on Doordarshan or AIR, free supply of copies of electoral rolls, etc.)
5. Recognition should be given to a party only on the basis of its own performance in elections and not because it is a splinter group of some other recognized party.

Criteria

- A political party shall be eligible to be recognized as a *National* party if:
 1. it secures at least **six percent (6%)** of the valid votes polled in any four or more states, at a general election to the Lok Sabha or, to the State Legislative Assembly; and
 2. in addition, it wins at least **four** seats in the House of the People from any State or States.

OR

it wins at least **two percent (2%)** seats in the House of the People (i.e., 11 seats in the existing House having 543 members), and these members are elected from at least **three** different States.

- Likewise, a political party shall be entitled to be recognized as a *State* party, if:
 1. it secures at least **six percent (6%)** of the valid votes polled in the State at a general election, either to the House of the People or to the Legislative Assembly of the State concerned; and
 2. in addition, it wins at least **two** seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State concerned.

OR

it wins at least **three percent (3%)** of the total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State, or at least **three** seats in the Assembly, whichever is more.

Party proliferation

Although a strict anti-defection law had been passed in 1984, there has been a continued tendency amongst the politicians to float their own parties rather than join a broad based party such as the Congress or the BJP. For example, between the 1984 and 1989 elections, the number of parties contesting elections increased from 33 to 113. In the decades since, this fragmentation has continued.

Role of Political Parties

As with any other democracy, political parties represent different sections among the Indian society and regions, and their core values play a major role in the politics of India. Both the executive branch and the legislative branch of the government are run by the representatives of the political parties who have been elected through the elections. Through the electoral process, the people of India choose which representative and which political party should run the government. Through the elections any party may gain simple majority in the lower house. Coalitions are formed by the political parties, in case no single party gains a simple majority in the lower house. Unless a party or a coalition have a majority in the lower house, a government cannot be formed by that party or the coalition.

India has a multi-party system, where there are a number of national as well as regional parties. A regional party may gain a majority and rule a particular state. If a party is represented in more than 4 states, it would be labelled a national party. Out of the 72 years of India's independence, India has been ruled by the Indian National Congress (INC) for 53 of those years, as of January 2020.

The party enjoyed a parliamentary majority save for two brief periods during the 1970s and late 1980s. This rule was interrupted between 1977 and 1980, when the Janata Party coalition won the election owing to public discontent with the controversial state of emergency declared by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The Janata Dal won elections in 1989, but its government managed to hold on to power for only two years.

Between 1996 and 1998, there was a period of political flux with the government being formed first by the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) followed by a left-leaning United Front coalition. In 1998, the BJP formed the National Democratic Alliance with smaller regional parties, and became the first non-INC and coalition government to complete a full five-year term. The 2004 Indian elections saw the INC winning the largest number of seats to form a government leading the United Progressive Alliance, and supported by left-parties and those opposed to the BJP.

On 22 May 2004, Manmohan Singh was appointed the Prime Minister of India following the victory of the INC & the left front in the 2004 Lok Sabha election. The UPA ruled India without the support of the left front. Previously, Atal Bihari Vajpayee had taken office in October 1999 after a general election in which a BJP-led coalition of 13 parties called the National Democratic Alliance emerged with a majority. In May 2014, Narendra Modi of BJP was elected as Prime Minister of India.

Formation of coalition governments reflects the transition in Indian politics away from the national parties toward smaller, more narrowly based regional parties. Some regional parties, especially in South India, are deeply aligned to the ideologies of the region unlike the national parties and thus the relationship between the central government and the state government in various states has not always been free of rancor. Disparity between the ideologies of the political parties ruling the centre and the state leads to severely skewed allocation of resources between the states.

Political Issues

Social Issues

The lack of homogeneity in the Indian population causes division between different sections of the people based on religion, region, language, caste and ethnicity. This has led to the rise of political parties with agendas catering to one or a mix of these groups. Parties in India also target people who are not in favour of other parties and use them as an asset.

Some parties openly profess their focus on a particular group; for example, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's focus on the Dravidian population and Tamil identity; Biju Janata Dal's championing of Odia culture; the Shiv Sena's pro-Marathi agenda; Naga People's Front's demand for protection of Naga tribal identity; People's Democratic Party ;National Conference's calling for Kashmiri Muslim identity and The Telugu Desam Party was formed in United Andhra Pradesh by late Shri N.T.Rama Rao which demands for rights and needs of people of the state only. Some other parties claim to be universal in nature, but tend to draw support from particular sections of the population. For example, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (translated as National People's Party) has a vote bank among the Yadav and Muslim population of Bihar and the All India Trinamool Congress does not have any significant support outside West Bengal.

The narrow focus and votebank politics of most parties, even in the central government and central legislature, supplements national issues such as economic welfare and national security. Moreover, internal security is also threatened as incidences of political parties instigating and leading violence between two opposing groups of people is a frequent occurrence.

Economic Problems

Economic issues like poverty, unemployment, development are main issues that influence politics. *Garibi Hatao* (eradicate poverty) has been a slogan of the Indian National Congress for a long time. The well known Bharatiya Janata Party encourages a free market economy. The more popular slogan in this field is *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas* (Cooperation with all, progress of all). The Communist Party of India (Marxist) vehemently supports left-wing politics like land-for-all, right to work and strongly opposes neoliberal policies such as globalisation, capitalism and privatisation.

Law and order

Terrorism, Naxalism, religious violence and caste-related violence are important issues that affect the political environment of the Indian nation. Stringent anti-terror legislation such as TADA, POTA and MCOCA have received much political attention, both in favour and opposed and some of these laws were disbanded eventually due to human rights violations, however UAPA was put into force again in 2019 after a new legislation.

Terrorism has affected politics India since its conception, be it the terrorism supported from Pakistan or the internal guerrilla groups such as Naxalites. In 1991 the former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated during an election campaign. The suicide bomber was later linked to the Sri Lankan terrorist group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, as it was later revealed the killing was an act of vengeance for Rajiv Gandhi sending troops in Sri Lanka against them in 1987.

The Godhra Train Killings and the Babri Masjid demolition on 6 December 1992 resulted in nationwide communal riots in two months, with worst occurring in Mumbai with at least 900 dead. The riots were followed by 1993 Mumbai Bomb Blasts, which resulted in more deaths.

Law and order issues, such as action against organised crime are issues which do not affect the outcomes of elections. On the other hand, there is a criminal–politician nexus. Many elected legislators have criminal cases against them. In July 2008, the *Washington Post* reported that nearly a fourth of the 540 Indian Parliament members faced criminal charges, "including human trafficking, child prostitution immigration rackets, embezzlement, rape and even murder"

II-BHOPAL TRAGEDY

Bhopal disaster, chemical leak in 1984 in the city of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh state, India. At the time, it was called the worst industrial accident in history.

On December 3, 1984, about 45 tons of the dangerous gas methyl isocyanate escaped from an insecticide plant that was owned by the Indian subsidiary of the American firm Union Carbide Corporation. The gas drifted over the densely populated neighbourhoods around the plant, killing thousands of people immediately and creating a panic as tens of thousands of others attempted to flee Bhopal. The final death toll was estimated to be between 15,000 and 20,000. Some half a million survivors suffered respiratory problems, eye irritation or blindness, and other maladies resulting from exposure to the toxic gas; many were awarded compensation of a few hundred dollars. Investigations later established that substandard operating and safety procedures at the understaffed plant had led to the catastrophe. In 1998 the former factory site was turned over to the state of Madhya Pradesh.

In the early 21st century more than 400 tons of industrial waste were still present on the site. Despite continued protests and attempts at litigation, neither the Dow Chemical Company, which bought out the Union Carbide Corporation in 2001, nor the Indian government had properly cleaned the site. Soil and water contamination in the area was blamed for chronic health problems and high instances of birth defects in the area's inhabitants. In 2004 the Indian Supreme Court ordered the state to supply clean drinking water to the residents of Bhopal because of groundwater contamination. In 2010 several former executives of Union Carbide's India subsidiary—all Indian citizens—were convicted by a Bhopal court of negligence in the disaster.

III- RAJIV GANDHI- NEW EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Indian politician and government official who rose to become the leader of the Congress (I) Party (a faction of the Indian National Congress [Congress Party] established in 1981) and served as prime minister of India (1984–89) after the assassination of his mother, Indira Gandhi, in 1984. He was himself assassinated in 1991.

Rajiv and his younger brother, Sanjay (1946–80), the sons of Feroze and Indira Gandhi, were educated at the prestigious Doon School in Dehra Dun (now in Uttarakhand state). Rajiv then attended Imperial College, London, and completed an engineering course at the University of Cambridge (1965). He met his future wife, Sonia, during his time in England. After returning to India, he acquired a commercial pilot's license and, beginning in 1968, worked for Indian Airlines.

While his brother was alive, Rajiv largely stayed out of politics; but, after Sanjay, a vigorous political figure, died in an airplane crash on June 23, 1980, Indira Gandhi, then prime minister, drafted Rajiv into a political career. In June 1981 he was elected in a by-election to the Lok Sabha (lower chamber of national parliament) and in the same month became a

member of the national executive of the Indian Youth Congress (the youth wing of the Congress Party).

Whereas Sanjay had been described as politically “ruthless” and “willful” (he was considered a prime mover during the state of emergency his mother decreed in India in 1975–77), Rajiv was regarded as a nonabrasive person who consulted other party members and refrained from hasty decisions. After his mother was killed on October 31, 1984, Rajiv was sworn in as prime minister that same day and was elected leader of the Congress (I) Party a few days later. He led the Congress (I) Party to a landslide victory in elections to the Lok Sabha in December 1984, and his administration took vigorous measures to reform the government bureaucracy and liberalize the country’s economy. Gandhi’s attempts to discourage separatist movements in Punjab state and the Kashmir region backfired, however, and after his government became embroiled in several financial scandals, his leadership became increasingly ineffectual. He resigned his post as prime minister in November 1989 after the Congress (I) Party was defeated in parliamentary elections, though he remained leader of the party.

NEW EDUCATION POLICY-1986

In 1986, the government led by Rajiv Gandhi introduced a new National Policy on Education.

The new policy called for "special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalise educational opportunity," especially for Indian women, Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities.

To achieve such a social integration, the policy called for expanding scholarships, adult education, recruiting more teachers from the SCs, incentives for poor families to send their children to school regularly, development of new institutions and providing housing and services.

The NPE called for a "child-centred approach" in primary education, and launched "Operation Blackboard" to improve primary schools nationwide.

The policy expanded the open university system with the Indira Gandhi National Open University, which had been created in 1985.

The policy also called for the creation of the "rural university" model, based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, to promote economic and social development at the grassroots level in rural India. 1986 education policy expected to spent 6% of GDP on education

IV- IPKF

Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was the Indian military contingent performing a peacekeeping operation in Sri Lanka between 1987 and 1990. It was formed under the mandate of the 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Accord that aimed to end the Sri Lankan Civil War between Sri Lankan Tamil nationalists such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan military.

The main task of the IPKF was to disarm the different militant groups, not just the LTTE. It was to be quickly followed by the formation of an Interim Administrative Council. These were the tasks as per the terms of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord, signed at the behest of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Given the escalation of the conflict in Sri Lanka, and with the pouring of refugees into India, Gandhi took the decisive step to push this accord through. The IPKF was inducted into Sri Lanka on the request of Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayewardene under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord.

The force was initially not expected to be involved in any significant combat by the Indian High Command. However, within a few months, the IPKF became embroiled in

battle with the LTTE to enforce peace. The war erupted following the death of 17 LTTE prisoners, including two areas commanders in the custody of the Sri Lankan Army, which the LTTE blamed the IPKF for allowing to happen. Soon, these differences led to the LTTE attacking the Sinhalese, at which point the IPKF decided to disarm the LTTE militants, by force if required. In the two years it was in northern Sri Lanka, the IPKF launched a number of combat operations aimed at destroying the LTTE-led insurgency. It soon escalated into repeated skirmishes between the IPKF and LTTE. Numerous civilian massacres and rapes were committed by the IPKF during the conflict.

The IPKF began withdrawing from Sri Lanka in 1989, on the orders of the newly elected Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa and following the election of the V. P. Singh government in India. The last IPKF contingents left Sri Lanka in March 1990.

India's battle in Sri Lanka is often compared and called as 'India's Vietnam' by International Media
