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INDIAN POLITICAL DEMOCRACY: A STUDY

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Abstract:

Democracy means the prearrangement of governance in which people can enjoy the greatest means of life. It depends on the larger participation of people regardless of caste, gender, creed, men, and women. So far, the constitution of India shaped a democratic state and ensured the right to liberty, equal rights, the notion of justice, and fraternity for all its citizens in society. The political enterprisers who uphold the various ethno-religious characteristics, mainly the Hindu nationalist beliefs and opinions, have shaped a lot of confusion and bewilderment about the conceptual ideas of secularism. The Liberal democracy still continues as an arrangement of human governance and structure of values that keep on unwavering for millions of people. At the lower stages, the judicial organization took a large-scale initiative in some debatable and controversial occurrences.

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1.0 Introduction:

Democracy had been considered as an arrangement of governance in which people can enjoy the best *'way of life'* (Hook, 1939: 31-46). It depends on the greater participation of people irrespective of caste, gender, creed, men, and women. India, a sovereign state, accomplished the essential form of democracy which is based on the rule of law comprised with the rule of governance. It had been operating its functions in the face of prominent ethnonational, linguistic, and religious variety since its independence. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India and Indian National Congress developed and tried to extend the broader perspective of the Indian brand of secularism which was designed to accumulate the nation's incongruent and heterogeneous communities and groups together under one roof (Roychowdhury, 2017). In fact, Jawaharlal Nehru frequently proclaimed that the amalgamated cultural values of India were one of its most extraordinary strengths. The Hindu nationalist supporters who later turned up to populate the political party Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and it is several ideological asserts have constantly protected blatantly several viewpoints; they think about India as a majoritarian democratic state, not a multiethnic or multireligious one (Jaffrelot, 2019: 51). The antagonistic conflicts inherent in these opposing concepts of Indian nationhood have come to the forefront in contemporary times, particularly since the BJP's milestone polling triumph in 2014 (Jeffrelot, 2019).

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It is necessary to understand these changing aspects and define the basic notions of Indian democracy and review the significant history of politics of democracy in the post-independence of India. This is for the reason that political enterprisers who prop up the diverse ethno-religious identities, particularly the Hindu nationalist dogmas and views have formed a lot of perplexity and mystification about the conceptual ideas of secularism, demanding that its supporters have been trying to form the state antagonistic or unresponsive to religious-conviction (Jaffrelot, 2019). That was definitely not the intention of the founder of the modern state of India, whose enemy was not religion or religious devotees, but architects of communalism, particularly communalism.

Apart from the Nationalist power, the citizens of India are not substantially comfortable with Indian secularism. With little help from the opposition, constitutional secularism has engulfed the 'party-political secularism' (Bhargava, 2020). Even before *Hindutva* powers started challenging the practices of Indian secularism, the Congress political Party, a dominant political party in India, had already begun to adopt the way of secularism to get support from the various sections of the voting blocs and by strengthening divisive identity problems in society (Bhargava, 1988). In similar, the judicial system particularly at the lower stages took a large-scale initiative in some debatable and controversial occurrences. In this regard, Jaffrelot's illuminating observation in his article 'The Fate of Secularism in India, in Milan Vaishnav' (2019) seems to be pertinent here. Jaffrelot argued that (Jaffrelot, 2019: 51): 'Whether secularism can maintain its hold as a defining ideology for the country will depend in part on a combination of political forces — namely the BJP's electoral success and the strategies the opposition adopts to counter the ruling party'. In this context, Stanley Kochanek (1984) has practically classified four broad trends in Indian political democracy that amalgamate certain aspects of society around particular sets of thoughts. These are (Manor, 1997: 109): (i) a communist tendency; (ii) a socialist tendency; (iii) a non-confessional rightist tendency; (iv) a confessional rightist tendency.

2.0 Democratic tendencies in India:

In 1951, Nehru was applauded vociferously as he acknowledged (Sharma, 2019): 'If any person raises his hand to strike down another on the grounds of religion, I shall fight him till the last breath of my life, both at the head of the Government and from outside'. From the perspective of the extensive historical background of India, the origin and the development of the sovereign state of Indian political democracy was an exceptional and typical nature in the world. Political democracy precedes capitalist industrialization and business progress. The sovereign state of India did not follow democratic governance either as a reaction to an absolute nation-state or as the understanding of an individualist perception of social framework or liberal individualism (Nayyar, 1998). In point of fact, it was not even an apparent result of the freedom struggle. In this context, the freedom struggle in India put emphasis much more on the sovereignty and the independent space for the nation-state than on the liberty for the people in the society. Also, the endowment of nationalism was much that the downfall of colonialism may create a sense of satisfaction and expectation to the people, but independence denoted the liberty and autonomy or self-governance for the state as well as the entire people rather than for individuals who formed the whole population of the state. So far, the constitution of India shaped a democratic state and ensured the right to liberty, equal rights, the notion of justice, and fraternity for all its citizens in the society (Nayyar, 2012: 370). The Indian democratic republic recognized the universal adult franchise. It is important to state that India had perhaps followed the pattern of western republicanism as well as a liberal democracy which was developed by the enlightened elite with regard to its notion of a modern nation-state (Nayyar, 2012: 370).

Rajani Kothari, renowned writer of Indian politics argued that (Kothari, 2012: 101): 'the liberal conception of democracy contained in it a certain view of the relationship between state power and society.'

*It was a view based on moderation and restraint in the use and abuse of power, its wide diffusion across various segments and interests and its balancing through a negotiated settlement of conflicts and cleavages'. The legal and political rules, settlements, and 'rules of the game' had been formulated in the democratic system that was validated and legitimized in the society. As an outcome of this social validity and authority of the organizations, the play power was generated and its overindulgences and attentiveness verified (Kothari, 2012: 101). The political behavior, as an institutional pattern, turned out to be the crucial function and performed an important role in comprising and bringing the different major integrations and assimilation of the modern state. The actual developments that brought to an end to the *ancient rule* in different areas of the world also had risen the moderate perception of the state as a social organization. In this regard, the state maintained the different aspects of social functions like (Kothari, 2012: 102): (a) the state extended its functions in the areas of economic tasks that were so far carried out by different estates; (b) the state was developed as a mediator and negotiator in the social interaction; (c) it can be definitely considered as an arbitrator; (d) the state was authorized to resolute the conflicts developed from the divisions of classes, ethnonational issues, and the questions of nationalities in society.*

Under this new conceptual framework of the state, there have been three significant modifications and changes which were found in the structural relations between power, society, and state in the contemporary times:

First, the national identities were formed within every major jurisprudential political entity which was considered as the territorial center. In this regard, the territorial centers were divided into several peripheries and sub-centers on the basis of political affiliations which turned out to be the primary cause of legitimacy;

Secondly, the growing political arrangements were considered sovereign nation-states. It was universally recognized in defining its supremacy in both the internal and external boundaries;

Thirdly, the state as the political entity intensified and expanded its power to govern the peripheries and attempted to cope with the socio-economic lives and activities of the people and tried resolute the various form of contradictions in society. In this regard, the state played a significant role to develop the social interactions and the phenomenon with its intrinsic propensity regarding to the homogenization and calibrations.

As a result, these trends exaggerated the powers and the functions of the state and covered the system for its progressively growing executive and administrative bureaucracy as well as a mercantile system and welfare attitudes. The national states had momentarily accentuated three significant tendencies (Kothari: 103): (i) of centralizing as integration; (ii) of nationalizing; (iii) the straitjacketing of social differences into mass society. These tendencies had been the external functional role of nations state in the mass society. The Liberal democracy still survives as a system of human governance and system of values that remain unwavering for millions of people. Actually, it carries on to achieve the new followers in all regions of India. Since the emergence of the modern nation-state, the impending conflict for a long period of time occurred between the authoritarian/dictatorial propensities inherent in the statist driving force of a mass-based democracy and the liberal consciousness inherent in the same democratic political orientation. In this regard, Rajani Kothari correctly pointed out that (Kothari: 105): *It is a struggle that is now entering its most critical period with the elites of most democratic societies losing their original impulse towards moderation in the use and dispersal of power and faced by the challenge of unprecedented politicization of the masses, succumbing to the temptation of using populist postures as a means of political survival.*

In this context, there has been a question of impecuniousness and economic development in the social articulations. According to the liberal development theory, a beanbag is provided for

marginal societies which dearth sufficient generation of surplus from the inside. And afterward, the preferential business and trade and exchange of modern technology helped to mobilize the outside capitals. But it has not turned up that these exchanges of capitals have only aggravated the issues of internal inequalities and discriminations and of internal exploitation with regard to the regional, ethnonational and class margins (Bhargava, 1988).

But the Cultural and ethnonationalism have not been a serious issue for the liberal democracy. In this way, democracy implies a politics of adaption and mutual understanding of cooperation. The class and Ethno-nationalism, as well as Hindutva and non-Hindutva, have become the important issue of democratic governance in India. It is important to state that when politics changes into a mass-age, while, shortly, ethnonational variations acquire a class or neo-class aspects, that the problem turns out to be serious (Vaishnav, 2019). Against this context, the leftist parties including radical political parties that have either disappeared or become part of the dominant political organization, and the great changes have to be observed at the radicalization at the bottom and dictatorship at the top.

On the other hand, there was a conversion from the inter-elite political group to the mass society which additionally accentuates the dynamic or interchanging nature of caste (Kothari: 105). It is important to state that the inter-elite political community has been circumscribed within the upper and middle social classes in society. The Democratic political system mobilizes the extension mechanism in a transformation from an inflexible caste structure to a competitive system of rivalry alliances. This political system has been politicizing a large section of the social structure. The whole series of acclimatization was intensified on the basis of political development (Manor, 1980). If this activity does not provide institutional networks for confronting the elite dominations through, for example, an extensive procedure of compensatory legislation and redistributive politics on the basis of caste- contradictions and movements entrenched in caste and communal identities set out to function outside the institutional area and turn out to be immediate, direct and ferocious or aggressive.

In the face of these countless cultural spreads of political development, the political elites and dominant political leaders pay close attention to the populist and plebiscitary political beliefs. Subsequently, both institutional arbitrates and the federal system of the regime or administrative management and communication have gradually been weakened. Afterward that all that lingers is magnetism and its absolute entreaty to the common people. Herewith, the social community or common people as a whole turn out to be the gossipmonger and source of totalitarianism politics and enslaved state system or organization. The choice to populist politics and coextensive functioning manner of the dominant elite as well intensifies strains and dreadful concerns in the different areas – in minority politics particularly but also in several fields, like the language politics and the politics of regionalism. In this regard, Rajani Kothari's illuminating observation seems to be relevant here. He argued that (Kothari: 105): *'The temptation to play loyalty games with these most sensitive of all peripheries grows and this disrupts the long-term process of working out a multi-religious and multi-racial polity through the normal expansion of opportunities and resources.'* Furthermore, it aggravates tensions and anxieties of the local community and weakens those issues which have been designed for consolidation and social solidarity.

Chronologically, these several types of tensions and anxieties-generation and the failure of the role of mediator in politics propagate kernels of alienation, provincial autonomy, and eventual fragmentation in the society. It can merely be stopped by a course of action to a great extend suppression, by changing problems of social management into complications of law enforcement for the security and by growing the occurrence of violent behavior in the inter-community and state and people in the society. Yet all of this happens in the contradiction of the backdrop of the

increased awareness and politicization of lower sections and marginal groups. This national politics of populist hypocrisy also puts down inter-elite sensibilities as well as consciousness and the political course of action and policy which is based on a particular minimum regulatory policy of the game. Society cannot be able to survive and live to tell the tale without a dominant elite who shares such minimum standard of values and objectives (Kothari, 2012). In this context, the notion and gradually amplified Populism in the democratic governance or regime eradicates both the functional role of the people and management elite's performance in the society.

The basic fact is that distributive justice must also be recognized and institutionalized. It is important to state that liberal freedoms and notions like equality before the law must be guaranteed by the state. There is nothing automatically about either the organizations of parliamentary democracy or distributive justice based on economic development. It has to be consciously formed on basis of the scheme for nationwide development and also the nature of the state organization. If it fails, the liberal democratic freedoms also would, at any degree, collapse for extensive segments of the people in the state. The notion of equality, at that time, turn out to be a hollow watchword which is used to exclude the freedom of choices that subsist, as an alternative of providing financial supports to the weak sections and the marginal groups in the society, bringing up their expectations and, on that basis, getting their loyalty and their voting supports in the electoral conducts. Then again, the educated and middle-class educated persons, and relatives of several persuasive people greatly influence the system which is based on the notion of justice without its institutionalization. This particular notion stands supported by Rajani Kothari's concept of the nature of the state. He argued that (Kothari: 107): '*These pressures strain the state apparatus well beyond normal bounds of efficiency and draw into it a large lumpen element that then becomes a drag on the exchequer. Thus, arises the parasitism of the urban middle classes.*'

In the institutional positions, the development theory has denoted growth to increasing trust in centralized organizations. After all, both the liberal policy of an open society and the communist principle of an egalitarian society based on the notion of classless have recognized the centralized bureaucracy which can play an influential role for attaining social objectives. Throughout the very periods of time when the participation has turned out to be the influential value with people everywhere, in the functional practice, it does not make much. The development of the technocratic state has harshly restricted citizens' ability to participate in social progress in more advanced countries due to the exclusive degree of monopolization and the centralism of the most institutions of the state. In this context, there is not a far difference between correctly *democratic states* and states that openly have constancy in *democratic centralism*. Atul Kohli, the renowned writer of Indian politics, correctly pointed out the four major factors which have been mobilizing the nature of Indian politics (Kohli, 2012: 133): (i) the deinstitutionalizing role of national and regional leaders; (ii) the impact of weak political parties; (iii) the undisciplined political mobilization of various caste, ethnic, religious, and other types of groups; and (iv) the increasing conflicts between the haves and haves-notes in the civil society.

3.0 Conclusion:

In conclusion, the above discussion reveals that India has been maintaining a unique role in transforming its own form of a post-modern, post-secular social order. Concentrated in the history of social diversity explained in this analysis which has been separated from the political pluralism of Western democracy and in the perception of harmony based on scattered structural features and collective values, recognized the right to religion in the state and articulated its high acceptance of ambiguity and a profoundly entrenched customs of skepticism, India might possibly be well-positioned than various social orders to create a function for itself in a globalized world where the extensive changes are taking place. Its factual assessment lies in its capacity to comprise

the centralizing effects of the contemporary positivist age and particularly control these effects in the political scope where the varieties of populism jeopardizes the actual existence of organizations and moral principles.

In this analysis, the various grounds like centralization and repressive state apparatuses have been significant for the implementation and execution of the authoritative powers in democratic governance. And on the other hand, the protest movement, movement of marginal groups, demand for minority rights, and demand for decentralization of powers on local self-government have been perceived as alternative aspects of Indian democracy. These alternative aspects demonstrate the more complex and the aboriginal cultural aspects and a great multiplicity of Indian politics. There has been an accommodating relationship between the liberal elite and democratic mass in Indian democracy. The overlap of interests between the elite and mass is the key overture of the liberal intellectual, cultural traditions of India. Because each moderate other at different levels in the socio-political sphere. And they together ensure the extensive possible consent for democratic nation-building. In this context, a strong civil society needs to be established for protection and safeguard, which would eradicate and eliminate the authoritative trends of the state.

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