



## MODERN DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN INDIA

## Political Science

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## ABSTRACT

India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic with a Parliamentary form of government which is federal in structure with unitary features. There is a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister as its head to advise the President who is the constitutional head of the country. Similarly in states there is a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister as its head, who advises the Governor. This section provides insight of Indian governance and administration at the Central, state as well as local level. Information about the Constitution of India, Parliament and Legislature, Union administration, state, district and local administration is given. The write-up is based on the introduction about democracy, and then comes the body of the write-up that includes an explanation of democracy in India and the beginning of the democratic system in India, followed by features of democratic government in India, a conclusion, and some FAQs. Democracy is defined as a form of government in which the citizens of that country have direct power to participate in the election and elect the representatives for forming a government body called a parliament. A democratic form of government is based on the majority's rule i.e. a government can be formed by a party when they have the majority number of votes with them and the process is similar in the case of choosing representatives. The power of a democratic form of government cannot be inherited.

## KEYWORDS

## DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

The democratic government in India is the largest one. The beginning of the democratic system in India was when the Constitution of India came into effect on 26th January 1950. Democratic India reveals that for choosing representatives through the election, every citizen of India has the right to vote without any discrimination irrespective of any creed, caste, religion, region, and sex. The principles on which the democratic government of India is based are liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice. In India, there is a state government and a central government which means it is a federal form of government. The government i.e. at the center and the state follows the democratically elected government respectively and the parliament's two houses – Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. The country's president (the official head) is chosen by the two governments i.e., the central and the state. The beginning of the democratic system was put a way forward when the election was held for the first time, to say more prominently when the first government was created by the people's vote. The election in India for the first time was noticed to be one of the biggest experiments in the world's democracy. Based on the universal adult franchise the elections were conducted, according to the universal adult franchise, the citizens of India who are 18 years or above 18 years have the right to vote and form government irrespective of their religion, culture, creed, sex, region, and caste. As this was the beginning of the democratic system in India, the procedure of the election was new to the citizens as well as those who are conducting it. The election procedure occurred for about four months which was from October 25, 1951, to February 21, 1952. The election was contested by 14 national parties along with regional parties (63) and several candidates were independent. By getting the majority of votes and majority of the seats, the National Congress party won the election for the first time in India.

**Politics of India:** works within the framework of the country's Constitution. India is a parliamentary secular democratic republic in which the president of India is the head of state & first citizen of India and the Prime Minister of India is the head of government. It is based on the federal structure of government, although the word is not used in the Constitution itself. India follows the dual polity system, i.e. federal in nature, that consists of the central authority at the center and states at the periphery. The Constitution defines the organizational powers and limitations of both central and state governments; it is well recognised, fluid (Preamble of the Constitution being rigid and to dictate further amendments to the Constitution) and considered supreme, i.e. the laws of the nation must conform to it.

There is a provision for a bicameral legislature consisting of an upper house, the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), which represents the states of the Indian federation, and a lower house, the Lok Sabha (House of the People), which represents the people of India as a whole. The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, which is headed by the Supreme Court. The court's mandate is to protect the Constitution, to settle disputes between the central government and the states, to

settle inter-state disputes, to nullify any central or state laws that go against the Constitution and to protect the fundamental rights of citizens, issuing writs for their enforcement in cases of violation.

There are 543 members in the Lok Sabha, who are elected using plurality voting (first past the post) system from 543 Single-member district. There are 245 members in the Rajya Sabha, out of which 233 are elected through indirect elections by single transferable vote by the members of the state legislative assemblies; 12 other members are elected/nominated by the President of India. Governments are formed through elections held every five years (unless otherwise specified), by parties that secure a majority of members in their respective lower houses (Lok Sabha in the central government and Vidhan Sabha in states). India had its first general election in 1951, which was won by the Indian National Congress, a political party that went on to dominate subsequent elections until 1977, when a non-Congress government was formed for the first time in independent India. The 1990s saw the end of single-party domination and the rise of coalition governments. The latest 17th Lok Sabha elections was conducted in seven phases from 11 April 2019 to 19 May 2019 by the Election commission of India. That elections once again brought back single-party rule in the country, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) being able to claim a majority in the Lok Sabha.

In recent decades, Indian politics has become a dynastic affair. Possible reasons for this could be the party stability, absence of party organisations, independent civil society associations that mobilise support for the parties and centralised financing of elections. According to the V-Dem Democracy indices India was 2023 the 19th most electoral democratic country in Asia.

From 2006 to 2022 the situation of Indian democracy worsened. Indians lost *state identity* caused by the naxalite rebellion, *little state presence* in tribal areas and tensions between Hindus and minorities. The rebellions are a sign of the governments loss of power. Interreligious riots were observed. *Political freedoms* are limited since funding of NGOs, such as amnesty international, got more difficult due to the "Foreign Contribution Regulatory Act", though the constitution guarantees freedom of association. Hindu-nationalist groups created a climate of intimidation over the country. *Freedom of press* is through the intimidation of journalists by police, criminals and politicians.

In 2023, according to the Freedom in the World report by Freedom House, India was classified as a "partly free" country for the third consecutive year. The V-Dem Democracy Indices by V-Dem Institute classify India as an 'electoral autocracy'. In 2023, it referred to India as "one of the worst autocratisers in the last 10 years". According to the Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit, India is a Defective democracy.

A **parliamentary republic** is a republic that operates under a parliamentary system of government where the executive branch (the government) derives its legitimacy from and is accountable to the legislature (the parliament). There are a number of variations of parliamentary republics. Most have a clear differentiation between the head of government and the head of state, with the head of government holding real power and the head of state being a ceremonial position, similar to constitutional monarchies. In some countries the head of state has reserve powers to use at their discretion as a non-partisan "referee" of the political process. Some have combined the roles of head of state and head of government, much like presidential systems, but with a dependency upon parliamentary confidence.

In some cases, the president can legally have executive powers granted to them to undertake the day-to-day running of government (as in Austria and Iceland) but by convention they either do not use these powers or they use them only to give effect to the advice of the parliament or head of government. Some parliamentary republics could therefore be seen as following the semi-presidential system but operating under a parliamentary system.

### Features of democratic government in India

Features of democratic government in India from the beginning of the democratic system in India are as follows –

- **Collective Responsibility**

In the democratic government in India, both the center and state, the Council of Ministers to their respective legislatures are collectively responsible. For any act by the government, the entire ministers of the council are responsible and not a single minister alone.

- **Majority Rules**

The majority rule is one of the main features of Indian democracy. The party which forms the government needs to get the majority number of votes in the election. This is the majority rule and every citizen of the country must support and accept the government that got the majority number of votes from the citizens.

- **Opinions of the minority are respected**

Though Indian democracy has the feature of majority rules opinions of minorities are also considered. Minorities are also asked to give their opinions on any field. As India is a democratic form of government so both positive and negative criticisms are taken into consideration and minorities' opinions must be tolerated by majorities.

- **Provisions for Rights**

Indian democratic government provides several rights to the individual. These rights include the Right to Education, Freedom of speech and expression, the Right to form a union or association, etc.

- **Government that Compromise**

Indian democracy is a form of government that considers the opinion of the ruling party as well as the other parties. It is a type of government that compromise and adjusts.

- **Independent Judiciary**

The Independent judiciary is another feature of democratic government. Independent judiciary means that in a democratic form of government the judiciary need not depend on the legislature or executive.

- **Political equality**

Indian democracy is based on political equality, which means every citizen of India is equal before the law and has the right for voting irrespective of class, creed, caste, race, sex, and religion.

### CONCLUSION

It is to be concluded that democracy is a form of government where the ruling party is chosen by the people of the country. The party which can form the government must get the majority of the vote in the election and the election occurs every 5 years, so forming a government is not inherited.

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