POLITICAL SYSTEM IN INDIA

India with a population of around a billion and an electorate of over 700 million -is the world's largest democracy and, for all its faults and flaws, this democratic system stands in marked contrast to the democratic failures of Pakistan and Bangladesh which were part of India until 1947. Unlike the American political system and the British political system which essentially have existed in their current form for centuries, the Indian political system is a much more recent construct dating from India's independence from Britain in 1947. India's lower house, the Lok Sabha, is modelled on the British House of Commons, but its federal system of government borrows from the experience of the United States, Canada and Australia.

- The Constitution was framed keeping in mind the socioeconomic progress of the country. India follows a parliamentary form of democracy and the government is federal in structure. In Indian political system, the President is the constitutional head of the executive of the Union of India.
- The real executive power is with the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. According to the Article 74(1) of the constitution, the Council of Ministers under the leadership of the Prime Minister is responsible to aid and assist the President in exercising the Presidents function. The Council of ministers is responsible to the Lok Sabha, the House of People.
- In states the Governor is the representative of the President, though the real executive power is with the Chief Minister along with his Council of Ministers. For a given state the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible for the elected legislative assembly of the state. The Constitution administrates the sharing of legislative power between Parliament and the State Legislatures.

  The Parliament has the power to amend the Constitution.
- Politics of India take place in a framework of a federal parliamentary multi-party representative democratic republic modeled after the

British West minster System. The Prime Minister of India is the head of government, while the President of India is the formal head of state and holds substantial reserve powers, placing him or her in approximately the same position as the British monarch.

- Executive power is exercised by the government. Federal legislative power is vested in both the government and the two chambers of the Parliament of India. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature.

(i) Multi-party System

- A multi-party system is a system in which three or more political parties have the capacity to gain control of government separately or in coalition. Unlike a single party system (or a nonpartisan democracy), it encouraged the general constituency to form multiple distinct, officially recognized groups, generally called political parties.
- Each party competes for votes from the enfranchised constituents (those allowed to vote). A multiparty system is essential for representative democracies, because it prevents the leadership of a single party from setting policy without challenge.
- If the government includes an elected Congress or Parliament the parties may share power according to Proportional Representation or the First-past-the-post system.
- In Proportional Representation, each party wins a number of seats proportional to the number of votes it receives. In first-past-the-post, the electorate is divided into a number of districts, each of which selects one person to fill one seat by a plurality of the vote.
- First-past-the-post is not conducive to a proliferation of parties, and naturally gravitates toward a two party system, in which only two parties have a real chance of electing their candidates to office. This gravitation is known as Duverger's law. Proportional Repres-entation, on the other hand, does not have this tendency, and allows multiple major parties to arise.
- This difference is not without implications. A two party, system requires voters to align themselves in large blocs, sometimes so large that they cannot agree on any overarching principles. Along this line of thought, some theories argue that this allows centrists to gain control. On the other hand, if there are multiple major parties, each with less than a majority of the vote, the parties are forced to work together to form working governments.
- Taiwan, Germany, Denmark, India, Indonesia, France, Kosovo, Israel and the United Kingdom are examples of nations that have used a multi-

party system effectively in their democracies. In these nations, except the United Kingdom, multiple political parties have often formed coalitions for the purpose of developing power blocs for governing.

- India has a federal form of government, however, the central government in India has greater power in relation to its states, and its central government is patterned after the British parliamentary system. Regarding the former, "the Centre", the national government, can and has dis missed state governments if no majority party or coalition is able to form a government or under specific Constitutional clauses, and can impose direct federal rule known as President's rule.
- India's political system is now 60 years old. For most of these 60 yrs.

  India have had Congress ruling at the centre. Later in the mid 70's we saw the launch of the Janata Party.
- Today India have several regional parties, each pandering to their own regional constituencies. This has completely changed the face of electoral politics in India.
- For most of the years since independence, the federal government has been led by the Indian National Congress (INC), Politics in the states have been dominated by several national parties including the INC, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) and various regional parties. From 1950 to 1990, barring two brief periods, the INC enjoyed a parliamentary majority. The INC was out of power between 1977 and 1980, when the Janata Party won the election owing to public discontent with the corruption of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhiz

(ii) National Parties

- Indian National Congress (INC, led by Party President Sonia Gandhi)
- Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, led by Party President Nitin Gadkari)
- Bahujan Samai Party (BSP, led by Party President Mayawati)
- Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM, led by Party General Secretary Prakash Karat)
- Nationalist Congress Party (NCP, led by Party President Sharad Pawar)
- Communist Party of India (CPI, led by Party General Secretary AB Bardhan)
- Jagdeep Coalition (JDC, led by Party President Kirik Vedprakash)

(iii) Regional Parties

- All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK, "All India Anna Federation for Progress of Dravidians") (Tamil Nadu, Puducherry)
- Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (" Federation for Progress of Dravidians") (Tamil Nadu, Puducherry)
- Indian National Lok Dal ("Indian National People's Party") (Haryana)
- Maharashtra Navnirman Sena, Maharashtra
- Indian Union Muslim League (Kerala, registered as 'Muslim League Kerala State Committee')
- Indigenous Nationalist Party of Tripra (Tripura)
- Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (Jammu and Kashmir)
- Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party (Jammu and Kashmir)
- Jammu and Kashmir People's Democratic Party (Jammu and Kashmir)
- Janata Dal (Secular) ("People's Party (Secular)") (Karnataka, Kerala)
- Janathipathiya Samrakshana Samithy ("Association for Defence of Democracy") (Kerala)
- Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) ("Jharkhand Liberation Front") (Jharkhand, Orissa)
- Kerala Congress (Mani) (Kerala)
- Kerala Congress (Kerala)
- Lok Jan Shakti Party (Bihar)
- Lok Satta Party (Andhra pradesh)
- Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (Goa)
- Manipur People's Party (Manipur)
- Maraland Democratic Front (Mizoram)
- Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (Tamil Nadu)
- Meghalaya Democratic Party (Meghalaya)
- Mizo National Front (Mizoram)
- Mizoram People's Conference (Mizoram)
- Nagaland Peoples Front (Nagaland)
- Pattali Makkal Katchi (Tamil Nadu, Puducherry)
- Pragatisheel Indira Congress (PIC) , West Bengal)
- Praja Rajyam Party ("People's Rule Party") (Andhra pradesh)
- Rashtriya Lok Dal ("National People's Party") (Uttar Pradesh)
- Republican Party of India (Athvale)
- Republican Party of India (Gavai)
- Revolutionary Socialist Party (West Bengal)
- Shiromani Akali Dal (Party of Akal -Authority for the Political matters of Sikhs) (Punjab)
- Shiv Sena ("Army of Shivaji") (Maharashtra)
- Sikkim Democratic Front (Sikkim)
- Telangana Rashtra Samithi ("Telengana National Association") (Andhra Pradesh)

- Telugu Desam Party ("Telugu Nation Party") (Andhra Pradesh)
- Trinamool Congress ("TMC") (West Bengal)
- United Democratic Party (Meghalaya)
- United Goans Democratic Party (Goa)
- Uttarakhand Kranti Dal ("Uttarakhand Revolution Party") (Uttarakhand)
- Swadharm Parti ("A Indian Party") (All People Party) (India)
- Zoram Nationalist Party (Mizoram)

COALITION POLITICS

- A coalition government is one in which several political parties must cooperate in order to run a country or region. A coalition government is often times considered a very weak form of government because there is no majority party. In such cases, the only way policy gets approved is by making concessions, hence the forming of a coalition.
- A coalition government, also known as a coalition cabinet, can be one of the most entertaining, and volatile, forms of government. Often, it may be hard to know how an issue is going to turn out, unlike countries where there are only two major political parties. In these cases, it is rare that a majority party does not have its way.
- Well-known countries run by coalition governments include Germany, Italy, India, Ireland, and Israel , among others. Once a parliament is seated in these countries, the difficult work of bridging gaps begins. In some cases, these gaps are bridged easier than others, as multiple parties may be in agreement on some issues. In other cases, where there is little agreement, building such a coalition government takes time.
- Some time a coalition government is a very inefficient way to govern. Also, it may, in some cases, increase the risk of underhanded deals and increase corruption, as more politicians are willing to make deals in order to get things accomplished. A coalition government can also have members that are very argumentative, even more so than other forms of government, simply because so much is at stake.
- However, despite the concerns, some feel that a coalition government has the best opportunity to promote real issues and solve everyday problems. This is because the coalition government is seen by some as the most accurate representation of the people's will. Also, proponents believe a coalition government can actually lead to greater unity because members of varying backgrounds and ideologies must come together and agree to create policy in the best interest of all.
- In addition to the regular, longstanding coalitions, a coalition government can also be created at times of national transition or crisis. In Iraq, for example, a coalition government was created in 2004 in an effort to

bring the country together after the fall of Saddam Hussein s government. In this example, various leaders from different religious sects and regions of the country were brought together in an attempt to form policy that would be regarded as a benefit to the Iraqi people as a whole, not just one particular group.

- In India one party rule came to an end after 1967. Even in states also their was a change in political scenario. The dominance of congress came to an end. For the first time Janata Party came to power during the same period. The 1980's is a time where one can see the history of coalition politics. Coalition politics came to seen because of growth of many small regional parties. Slowly these regional parties started playing influential role in the national politics.
- No single party is getting majority to form a government in recent elections.

  Depending on the pre poll or post poll agreement between different parties, government can be formed. In this coalition politics these regional parties are playing very influential role. They are also influencing the policy making of the government.
- A coalition government is a cabinet of a parliamentary government in which several parties cooperate. The usual reason given for this arrangement is that no party on its own can achieve a majority in the parliament. However, a coalition government may also be created in a time of national difficulty or crisis. If a coalition collapses, a confidence vote is held or a motion of no confidence is taken.
- Since India is a diverse country with different ethnic, linguistic and religious communities, it also has diverse ideologies. Due to this, the benefit that a coalition has is that it leads to more consensus based politics and reflects the popular opinion of the electorate.
- In order to have stable coalitions, it is necessary that political parties mode rate their ideologies and programmes. They should be more open to take others' point of view as well. They must accommodate each other's interests and concerns.
- But this is not what is happening in India. In India, parties do not always agree on the correct path for governmental policy. Different parties have different interests and beliefs and it is difficult to sustain a consensus on issues when disagreements arise. They often fail to see eye to eye with the government on many public policies. It makes decision making process slow.
- One way coalition politics is good and other way it is creating problem. Because of coalition politics stability is threatened and elections are held before five years only. But in other way it helps to bring all streams

of people in the national politics. National policies will be influenced by regional ideas. Not only in the centre but also in states there is no stability of the government.

- With the replacement of the Dominant Party System of India, minority and/ or coalition governments in union level, have become the order of the day. Except for the Congress Minority Government of P.V. Narsimha Rao and National Democratic Alliance Government of Atal Behari Vajpayee, all such governments since 1989 have been unstable.
- Yet instability a part, coalition governments have been effective in enhancing democratic legitimacy, representativeness and national unity. Major policy shifts like neo-l iberal economic reforms, federal decentring, and grass roots decentralization, in theory or practice, are largely attributable to the on set of federal coalitional governance.
- Coalition governments in states and at the centre have also facilitated gradual transition of the Marxist-left and the Hindu-right into the political establishment, and thus contributed to the integration of the party system as well as the nation. The same major national parties which initially rejected the idea of coalition politics have to day accepted it and are maturing into skilled and virtuoso performers at the game.
- In a rather short span of over a decade, India has witnessed coalition governments of three major muted hues:
  (a) middle-of-the-road Centrist Congress Minority Government of P.V. Narsimha Rao, going against its Left Centre of reputation, initiated neo-liberal economic reforms in 1991;
  (b) three Left-of-centre governments formed by the Janata - Dal - led National/United Front; and
  (c) two Right - of- Centre. coalition governments formed by the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance under Atal Behari Vajpayee, a votary of secular version of Hindu nationalism.
- In the wake of the decline of Congress Dominance, the fragmentation of the National Party System and the emergence of party systems at the regional level have turned India into a various patterns of coalition governments in the union as well as state level collation governments. State level coalition government had better edge over union level in India. The states like Kerala shows its firmness on collation governments.
- A coalition government is a cabinet of a parliamentary government in which several parties cooperate. Coalition governments are usually formed as no party can individually achieve a majority in the parliament. However, a coalition government may also be created in a

time of national difficulty or crisis. If a coalition collapse s, a confidence vote is held or a motion of no confidence is taken.

- India has had coalition governments at the Centre as well as in individual states since the last two decades. Since India is a diverse country with different ethnic, linguistic and religious communities, it also has diverse ideologies. Due to this, the benefit that a coalition has is that it leads to more consensus based politics and reflects the popular opinion of the electorate. The current UPA- Left arrangement had been formed after parliamentary elections in 2004. Though they have main adversaries in three states, this government was still a stable one till Left withdrew support on matters of nuclear deal.
- In order to have stable coalitions, it is necessary that political parties mode rate the irideologies and programmes. They should be more open to take others' point of view as well. They must accommodate each other's interests and concerns. But this is not what is happening in India.
- In India, parties do not always agree on the correct path for governmental policy. Different parties have different interests and beliefs and it is difficult to sustain a consensus on issues when disagreements arise. They often fail to see eye to eye with the government on many public policies. However, this is not to say that we have never had successful coalitions. Governments in Kerela and West Bengal and NDA at the Centre have been sucessful coalitions.

- **(i) Criteria for Recognition of a Party**

  A political party shall be treated as a recognised political party in a State, if and only if either the conditions specified in Clause (A) are, or the condition specified in Clause (B) is, fulfilled by that party and not otherwise, that is to say:

  - has been engaged in political activity for a continuous period of five years; and
  - has, at the last general election in that State to the House of the People, or, as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, returned:
  - At least one member to the House of the People for every twenty-five members of that House or any fraction of that number from that State;
  - At least one member to the Legislative Assembly of that State for every thirty members of that Assembly or any fraction of that number;

- That the total number of valid votes polled by all the contesting candidates set up by such party at the last general election in the State to the House of the People, or as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, is not less than six percent of the total number of valid votes polled by all the contesting candidates at such general election in the State.
- If a political party is treated as a recognised political party in four or more States, it shall be known as a 'National Party' throughout the whole of India, but only so long as that political party continues to fulfill there after the conditions for recognition in four or more States on the results of any subsequent general election either to the House of the People or to the Legislative Assembly of any State.
- If a political party is treated as a recognised political party in less than four States, it should be known as a 'State Party' in the State or States in which it is so recognised, but only so long as that political party continues to fulfill there after the conditions for recognition on there sults of any subsequent general election to the House of the People or, as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, in the said State or States.