BPSC-132
INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

PREAMBLE

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INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

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Course Contents

COURSE INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this course is to introduce students to some basic features of government and politics in India. The course has fifteen units which have been grouped into six blocks based on thematic unity. The course starts with first block which has units on approaches to understand politics in India. Block 2 has units on basic features of Indian Constitution, Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties. Block 3 has units on separation of powers – on legislature, executive and judiciary. Units in Block 4 discuss relationships among identities, classes and politics. Block 5 has units which explain relationships between religion and politics. Block 6 is about parties and party system in India.

The unit-wise description in each block is like this. Block 1 consists of three units: Units 1, 2 and 3 on Liberal, Marxist and Gandhian approaches respectively to study Indian politics. Three units in block 2 are about Indian Constitution: unit 4 Basic Features, unit 5 Fundamental Rights, and unit 6 Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties. The Units in block 3 are on the institutions of separation of power in India: unit 7 Legislature, unit 8 Executive and unit 9 Judiciary. Three units in Block 4 discuss some aspects of relationships of State and Society: unit 10 Caste, Class and tribe; unit 11 Gender, and unit 12 Workers and Farmers. Two units in block 5 deal with two different kinds of relationship between religion and politics: unit 13 Secularism and unit 14 Communalism. Block 6 has only one unit: unit 15 Parties and Party Systems.

Each unit has inbuilt *Check Your Progress Exercises.* After having read the units, you can try to answer the questions given in these exercises. At the end of each unit, there are answers to the questions mentioned in the *Check Your Progress Exercises.* You can match your answers with the answers given in the unit. But be careful to write answers in your own words. The course ends with a list of *references*. You are advised to go through them.

BLOCK 1
APPROACHES TO STUDY INDIAN POLITICS

BLOCK 1 INTRODUCTION

Indian politics is a vast subject. It is difficult to understand it without some ways or methods. Such ways are known as approaches or frameworks. There are various approaches.This block deals with three of such approaches. Unit 1 Liberal approach explains how different components of a political system seek to build consensus, and how its scope changed over the time. Unit 2 Marxist approach explains how principle of dialectical materialism has been used to explain some features of Indian politics such as class formations, class mobilization and nature of Indian state. Unit 3 Gandhian approach discusses application of Gandhian principles such as *satyagrah, ahinsa* and ethics to understand Indian politics.

UNIT 1   LIBERAL*

1.0   OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Define core elements of liberal approach to study Indian politics;

- Understand liberal approach to study Indian Political system;

- And define different perspectives of liberal approach

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Politics is about political institutions, processes and issues concerning sections of society. Indeed, politics involves relationships among people with themselves, state and non-state groups or organisations. Such relationships consist of competition, conflict and cooperation among people or their organisations and response of the state and institutions to different sections of society and their concerns. Scholars have explained politics in different ways. These ways are known as approaches or perspectives. There are different approaches to study Indian politics: liberal, Marxist and Gandhian. In this unit you will read about liberal approach; in unit 2 and unit 3, you will read about Marxist and Gandhian approaches respectively. As you will read in unit 2, the Marxist approach views politics in terms of class relations and the state as a representative of different class interests; in unit 2 you will read that Gandhian perspective which views politics in ethical and moral terms. In liberal perspective, which is discussed in

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this unit, politics is viewed in terms of political structures and political processes or political system. Its prime concern is to study consensus or conflict management within a political system. Unlike the Marxist perspective which you will read in unit 2, liberal perspective does not focus on class relations. Nor does it use the concept of state. Rather, the liberal perspective prefers to use political system in place of the state, and prefers to focus on consensus building rather than class relations or class conflict within a political system; it prefers to use the term political system and to explain how a system maintains itself by management of conflict or reaching consensus. In fact, liberal perspective to study politics is a non-Marxist perspective. It should not be confused with liberalism. Liberal perspective to Indian politics is a variant of structural-functional or systemic approach. When we use the term liberal according to liberalism, it mainly denotes to freedom whether it is freedom of individual, community or group. Liberalism is based on a commitment to individual freedom, tolerance and consent. The liberalism came into existence as an outcome of protest against the hierarchical and privileged authority and monarchy in England and Europe. The main purpose of this protest was to achieve liberty of the individual and to challenge the authority of the state.

1.2 CORE ELEMENTS OF LIBERAL APPROACH

As liberal approach to Indian politics is a variant of the non-Marxist structural-function or systematic approach. Its core elements are borrowed from the latter. Following are these core elements:

1.2.1 Institutions: Political System, Not the State

Until Theda Sckocpol underlined the need for "bringing the state back in" in the mid-1980s, under the influence of liberal approach as a variant of structural-functional approach the liberal approach preferred to use the term political system rather than the state for polity of a country. The system consists of certain institutions or structures such as political parties, interests-groups or civil society organizations. They interact with social structures such as caste, language, religion, region, tribe, etc. While interacting with each other, they perform certain functions. Or due to their interaction certain processes occur where different components of an organization conflict and cooperate and reach a consensus. Consequently, a system or institution maintains itself. Political institutions generally include political parties, pressure group legislature and executive. Indeed, this approach dominated the study of Indian politics for around four decades from the 1950s.

1.2.2 Processes

Among the processes which this approach studies are the functions which are performed by different institutions and organizations. These are conceptualised as political mobilization, interest articulation and interest aggregation. With reference to progress of democracy, the processes are also referred to as democratization, deepening and consolidation of democracy. The liberal approach views politicization of people as democratization through electoral mobilization and political participation. By the late 1960s, the process of democratization had begun to affect the lower social orders and has been continuing since then. Consequently, India's traditional and semi-feudal society moved toward liberty

and equality. Furthermore, different social and political movements of 1970s and 1980s, emergence of institutions of civil society and multiculturalism have promoted democratization of country and different institutions in India.

1.2.3 Values

The third core element of liberal approach includes values i.e. liberty, human rights and equalities. It is more about individual or community rights. It is the duty of state to provide protection to the vulnerable sections, ethnic groups, scheduled tribes and minorities. However, liberal approach advocates individual rights and freedom, but it also advocates protection of communities, especially their language, culture and script. Democratic rights cannot be saved without safeguarding these values in a nation like India.

1.3 LIBERAL APPROACH TO STUDY POLITICS

As mentioned earlier, liberal approach to study Indian politics is a varient of systemic or structural functional approach . Thus, liberal approach when applied to study Indian politics can also be called Systemic approach. System approach emerged out of a broad movement in social sciences known as behavioural movement. It was introduced by David Easton and James S. Colman to study political systems in the developing countries in the 1950s-1960s. This framework also came to be known as modernization or development framework. Its mains purpose was to study development of modern political institutions in developing societies. The notion of development according to this perspective was different from economist's notion of development. According to the economists development generally means growth rate or development of infrastructure; for political scientist influenced by behavioural movement it meant development of modern political institutions. Its main focus has been to see political institutions or organizations development, maintain themselves by reaching consensus within the factions of organization.

In this approach, the political system comprises of political institutions, structures and processes and these three attributes keep interacting, conflicting and adjusting with each other, balancing and counter balancing to themselves. In such a situation the political system maintains, it does not break down. During the initial period of Independence, many political scientists have followed this approach to study Indian politics. Rajni Kothari's *Politics in India* is one of the most important examples to study politics at India level. He advocates that the political system is resilient, and it survives and his book was mainly followed structural functional approach. Using this approach, Rajni Kothari categorised Congress party of the 1950s-1960s as Congress System. And the 1950s-1960s was called as the era of Congress dominance. C.B. Bhambhri (1974) critiqued Rajni Kothari's approach to study Indian politics in a review of Kothari's book *Politics in India*. According to Bhambhri, Kothari's framework prohibits raising basic questions in Indian politics such as the class character of the state, location and distribution of political power, and the role of imperialism. In this framework economic aspects are also missing: Indian politics has been studied without the reference of role of trade unions, big industrial houses, lobbies of the rich farmers and landless peasants. He further adds that Kothari's model of Indian democracy is similar to that of Dahl which says society is plural and democratic government operates like a market and this market is subject to all sorts of pulls and pressures. Bhambhri

underlines that this limitation in Kothari's analysis is due to the limitation or systemic or liberal approach. This approach does not look at the class conflict as a process of social change. Rather it focuses on how a system maintains itself or a consensus within its conflicting units. In response of Bhambhri's critique, Kothari suggests that his book is not based on Marxist approach to politics or American brand of Functionalist approach. He has used Indian model which is different from both the Marxist and Capitalist. He also emphasised that there are two styles of theoretical analysis: polar and pluralistic. He has used pluralistic analysis to study state politics.

During the 1970s, several individual scholars in case of studies of individual state or a group of states used the systemic framework, and they also included sub-system of state politics such as political parties, caste, religion, language, leadership, election and pressure groups. Study of the Congress party presented the most relevant example of applying liberal approach to study party as a system. Richard Sisson and Paul R. Brass studied Congress in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh respectively. However, by the end of the 1970s transformation of the society changed the character and nature of the state. Land reforms, green revolutions and welfare policies were largely responsible for such changes. But the liberal approach was unable to reflect these changes in study of Indian politics. Iqbal Narain (1976) applied this framework to analyse state politics in India.

The liberal approach has undergone transformation after the 1970s. It is no longer averse to using the concept of the state instead of political system. Following "the return of state" in the 1980s as Zoya Hasan observes that a section of literature focused on the study of the state. In this literature, unlike the classical Marxian perspective (you will read in unit 2) which views the state as an agent of the propertied classes, the state has been viewed as an autonomous institution. State was not an agent of classes or groups; rather it functions independently of and in the interest of all groups and classes. This approach is called Statist approach. But there are limitations of statist approach because it gives insufficient importance to the role of diverse groups in Indian society.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1) What are the core elements of liberal approach?

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2) Briefly explain how liberal approach is related to structural -functional, Systemic or Development perspective to study politics.

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1.4 CHANGING SCOPE OF LIBERAL APPROACH

Since the 1950s the liberal approach has changed in the following ways: there has been a convergence between its elements of the 1950s-1960s and some elements of Marxian approach it is no longer averse to using the concept of state; and it studies the activities which aim to achieve social change or are concerned with basic democratic values, people's mobilization through civil society organisations, multiculturism, social capital or in electoral politics.

1.4.1 Civil Society

The core element of the liberal approach is individual freedom, but when we talk about a nation or state, it also includes community, ethnic group, marginalized sections and protection of their rights. In a democratic country like India, we have Fundamental Rights that safeguard the basic rights and provide protection to the citizen and community. However, there are many cases where states have failed to provide or protect their citizens or institutions. The liberal approach views the role of civil society organizations in relation to democratic rights of individuals. Civil society organizations are different from civil society. As Neera Chandhoke (1995) explains, civil society is a space that exists between the family and the state. In this space civil society organizations operate. The liberal approach can help to explain the role of these organizations in democratization of the society or protection of the rights of individuals and groups in the society: rights of free expression, freedom to form associations, freedom to dissent, freedom to generate and disseminate public opinion. It helps us to explain the relationship between state and society.

1.4.2 Multiculturalism

Liberal approach recognises the rights of not only individuals but also groups. In a diverse society, recognition of rights of diverse groups – right to representation and distributive justice, is indicative of multiculturalism. As Parekh (2006) explains no multicultural society can or should ignore the demands of diversity. Multiculturalism goes beyond the abstracted liberal individualism and assumes that human beings are culturally embedded. It means that they grow up and live within a culturally structured world. They organize their lives and social relations in terms of a culturally derived system of meaning and significance. These cultural communities generally demand various kinds of rights to maintain their collective identity. Such rights called group, collective or communal rights. Mahajan (2002) states that multiculturalism is concerned with the issue of equality. It is concerned with the question if different communities are living peacefully together as equals in the public arena. She states that multiculturism is different from pluralism or

diversity. While pluralism or diversity denotes just coexistence of different groups in the society, but not whether they related to democratic pursuits or not. Multiculturism is necessarily associated with democracy. It either guarantees or attempts to provide cultural rights of religious and linguistic minority communities to preserve their culture, language, and script, and other rights

1.4.3 Social Capital

Since the 1990s, the concept of social capital has been used to explain nature of relations among communities. It is indicative of the existence of civil society and democracy. The concept is taken from the Tocquevillian notion of associations, and Italian political scientist Robert Putnam used this in his book *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Social capital denotes existence of networking among people in a group or community, who share common values and trust each other. The rise of new social movements, civil societies and realisation of the importance of study substantive democracy has added to the significance to this perspective. Ashutosh Varshney's book *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India,* in the study of ethnic riots in six cities of India has been influenced by Tocqwevillian tradition.

1.5 CONVERGENCE OF APPROACHES

Study of politics in India in post Independent India has been basically studied by two opposite approaches: non-Marxist and Marxist. You have read above about the features of liberal approach. You will read about the Marxist approach in unit 2. These two approaches have traditionally been exclusive to each other. However, both these frameworks are not as rigid since the 1980s as they were earlier. There is convergence between them in terms: they use terms such as state, political system or state interchangeably, and address similar kinds of issues. Since the 1980s, there has been a convergence of liberal and Marxist approach. Such convergence is visible in the writings of scholars such as Francine Frankel, Lloyd Rudolph and Sussane Rudolph and Pranab Bardhan. Francine Frankel looks at the historical contradictions between the transformative goals of development planning and the conservative forces of institutional democratic politics. She makes a distinction between political and social issues. Bardhan, a neo-Marxist scholar, contends that in India state is an autonomous actor, which plays an important role in shaping and moulding power relations among classes. According to Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph, Indian state is a centerist state, and Indian politics is devoid of class politics. It functions as a third actor between capital and labour. The Indian state functions between 'demand polity' and 'command polity'. In the 'demand politics', the state has to deal with the pressure of various demand groups such as students and farmers.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i)   Use the space below for your answers.

ii)   Check your answers with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1)   Briefly describe the changes in the scope of liberal approach.

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2) Briefly explain the convergence of liberal and Marxist approach to study Indian politics.

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1.6 LET US SUM UP

Politics in India or the state politics in India has been broadly studied in two frameworks: Marxist and Non-Marxist (mainly liberal-institutional). The liberal approach about which You have read in this unit was dominant approach to study Indian politics between the 1950s-1960s. Its focus was to study how institutions maintained themselves by maintaining consensus among their constituent units. It had preferred to use political system rather than the state to designate a polity. In the post-colonial period, it was a product of behavioural movement in social sciences. It was also known as systemic, modernization or development framework. It ran as an alternative to the Marxist approach. From the 1980s, the liberal approach had undergone changes. It has become flexible in using certain concepts such as the state or political economy. Its scope has expanded to include study of civil society, social capital and multiculturism. The broad concern of the liberal approach has been to address issues concerning democracy.

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1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Institutions, structure and values are the core elements of liberal approach.

2) Liberal approach basically focuses on the individual's democratic rights and political institutions and democratic processes. It was influenced by the behavioural movement in the 1950s-1960s, during the post-colonial period in most parts of the world. Behavioural movement in social sciences, especially in Political Science underlined the need to study political system or structural-functional approach. Liberal approach, actually, is a variant of system, structural-functional or development approach to study politics.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Since the 1980s, the scope liberal approach has widened. Unlike in the 1950s-1960s, now it is not averse to using the concept of state or political economy in place of political system. It also includes the study of social change, not only consensus within an institution. Liberal approach's expanded scope includes study of civil society, civil society movements and community relations.

2) The dilution of rigidity to use concepts and priority of analysis in both approaches — the liberal and the Marxist has resulted in convergence between them. Both use concepts of state, political economy, institutions, political processes and change interchangeably.

UNIT 2   MARXIST*

Structure

2.0   OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able:

- To explain the Marxist perspective to interpret Indian political processes;

- To underline the differences between classical and Neo-Marxist approach;

- To identify the issues which have been focus of study in Marxist approach; and

- To explain the differences between liberal approach which have read in unit 1 and the Marxist approach.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Marxist approach is a way of studying society. It is influenced by Marxism. Generally, after the disintegration of Soviet Union in the 1980s, and after the rise of non-communist parties in different parts of the world, the question is often asked whether Marxism is relevant now. This question can be addressed in two ways: One, Marxism as philosophy to change the world, and Marxism as a perspective to explain the change in society or evolution of history. Nothing can be definitely said about the change in society or revolution as envisaged by Marxism. But Marxism as a tool or perspective to explain politics or changes in society is being used by several scholars. This is known as Marxist or Marxian approach or perspective. This unit will discuss how Marxist approach has been used to explain politics in India.

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2.2   MEANING AND SCOPE OF MARXIST APPROACH

Marxist approach to Indian politics is guided by basic tenets of Marxism. These tenets attempt to interpret society in such a way that it helps to change the society. To put it differently Marxist approach implies application of principle of dialectical materialism or historical materialism and explain the nature of class struggle and suggest ways to end class exploitation. According to dialectical materialism, there are classes in a society. The relations between classes can be viewed in terms of social relations of production and forces of production. The social relations of production and forces of production together are known as mode of production. Forces of production include the classes and resources and instruments or means which are involved in production of goods. Social relations of production denote patterns of ownership of means of production – land, industries or any other unit of production, and patterns of working or larbour relations. Change in means of production or in the forces of production lead to transformation of society from one stage of development to the next. The Marxist perspective underlines the relationship between class and other aspects of society – the state, politics, culture, religion, etc. Class in known as base and the other aspects – the state, culture, religion, etc, are known as superstructure. The core of Marxist approach is to explain the relationship between base and superstructure. There are broadly two groups of Marxist approach. One, suggests that base or class determines the superstructure. The other, contends that class does not determine the non-class aspects, or the base does not determine the superstructure: the superstructure enjoys its relative autonomy. The former is known as classical or mechanical Marxist approach, and the latter is known as neo-Marxist approach. Neo-Marxist approach has been influenced by Gramsci, Frankfurt School (consisting thinkers such as Kolakowski, Althusser, Paulantzas) and Ralph Miliband. The Marxist approach views internal politics of county in relation to international politics. It seeks to analyse the relationship between national politics and imperialism or in relation to the role of international financial organisations such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

2.3   MARXIST APPROACH AND POLITICAL SCIENCE IN INDIA

Both types of Marxist approaches – classical and neo-Marxist have been applied by to study Indian politics. The Marxist approach to explain Indian politics has been used by professional academics as well as by the Marxist political activists, politician or political parties. In unit 1, you have read about liberal approach. In comparison to Marxist approach, the liberal approach has been applied more to study Indian politics. Since the principal concern of the Marxist approach is to explain class relations and role of the state, principal issues addressed in this approach include changing class relations, movements of peasants and working classes, role and nature of the state including the relationship between the state and various classes. It is important to note that Marxist approach is used to address similar issues by academicians across disciplines in social sciences.

Since the 1980s, a new strand of Neo-Marxist approach was added by historian Ranajit Guha, influenced by Gramsci through series of books known as Subaltern Studies. The scholars influenced by Subaltern approach argue that the subalterns,

i.e. ordinary people develop their consciousness. They take decisions according to their consciousness without being affected by external forces. Marxist scholars, who follow classical Marxist approach have criticised Subaltern approach as non-Marxist.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1) What is the meaning of Marxist approach?

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2) What is the difference between classical Marxist and neo-Marxist approaches?

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3) What is the difference between liberal and Marxist approaches?

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2.4 CLASS RELATIONS

Class relations is the most important aspect of study in Marxist perspective. As mentioned above, class relations are social relations of production. They indicate the patterns of means of production, patterns of doing work to produce something, their distribution: the means include land, natural resources, technology and inputs used for producing something; working relations means process of producing something by doing labour; distribution of produce means distribution of wages. In an economy, three broad sectors can be identified: agriculture associated with land and natural resources such as forest and natural resources, industry, service sector, and informal or footloose economy. On the basis of the extent of ownership of means of production and distribution of produce, different classes can be

identified in different fields of economy. Marxist approach in India, has most prominently been used to analyse the class formation and class relations in agriculture and industry. However, some attempts have also been made to view the class formation in a transition economy (Jan Breman 1996; Carol Upadhya 2016). But these are not exclusively done in typical classical Marxist approach: they give space the non-economic aspects also.

2.4.1 Marxist Perspectives and Classes in Rural Areas

According to Marxist approach, the classes in agriculture in India have been identified in the following ways: who owns the land and other resources such as tools and instruments to cultivate land, who works in the land, and what is the nature of relationship among those who work in land, land and other resources, wage distribution. Using such perspective, Utsa Patnaik in *Peasant Class Differentiation* (1986) identifies following classes in agrarian sector in Haryana in India: The rural rich – landlords, rich peasants and middle peasants; and rural poor – small and poor peasants and landless proletariat. The rural rich own land and other resources, they generally do not work in the land but get the work done by wage labourers. However, the family members of the middle peasants work on land but like the landlords and rich peasants they do not work on anybody else's land. The rural poor either own no land or own land and other resources which are insufficient to meet family needs. They have to work in others' land or at any other places. Patnaik applies Marxist approach to identify classes in agriculture which has seen green revolution, or which have seen development of capitalism to a significant extent. But where elements of capitalism have not developed, the Marxist approach broadly identifies following classes: feudal landlords who get the land cultivated by tenants through share cropping, and whose position is impacted by economic exploitation and non-economic dominance. In such areas the technology of development is traditional in comparison to the areas which have seen development of capitalism or where class formation is more crystallised. The Marxist perspective generally undermines the role of caste in identifying classes. Moving away from this trend, a Marxist scholar, Gail Omvedt (ed.) in *Land, Caste and Politics in Indian States,* observed that class divisions in rural society are intertwined in castes hierarchies. This is true in both areas where capitalism in agriculture has developed such as Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat and as well as in "feudal" and "backward" states such as Bihar.

2.5 MOVEMENTS

Since Marxism is sympathetic to lower classes – agricultural, labourers, working classes or peasantry, it aims to end class exploitation. Marxist approach emphasises in studying material conditions of classes, their social relations and attempt by them to improve their conditions. Their attempts include collective action or movements of different classes. Although Marxist perspective has been used to study movements of several sections of society in India, it has been used most prominently to study peasants' and farmers' movements, agricultural labourers' and workers' movements. The movements which have been studied include both which happened in colonial and post-colonial periods. Here are some examples of how Marxist approach is used to study these examples.

2.5.1 Peasants' and Farmers' Movements

Although generally peasants and farmers are generally used interchangeably, there is a difference between them. Peasant is a generic category; farmer is used for agriculturists who use modern technology and are more resourceful than the peasants. The prime focus in peasant studies has been to identify classes in agriculture, process of class formation, social and economic relations in terms of rent collection, indebtedness, nature of social oppression and economic exploitation; to study the resistance of peasants to the exploitation – the demands and patterns of mobilisation; and to study the response of the exploiting classes and the state. In the studies of peasant movements during the colonial period in India, the Marxist approach identified broadly following classes: peasants working as tenants on the lands owned by landlords, landlords, moneylenders and officials of the colonial government. It also explained the ways tenants were exploited – eviction from land for being unable to pay rent and debt, physical coercion and caste-based humiliation, and how the exploiting classes – the landlords, moneylenders, colonial authorities allied with each other. In the post-Independence period, the focus of Marxist approach shifted to study the politics of land reforms, movements for implementation of land reforms and impact of land reforms. In studying land reforms, it attempted to analyse the impact of land reforms in terms of granting ownership of land to tenants, abolition of landlordism and consolidation of land holdings. It also sought to assess the extent of success of land reforms. The examples of using Marxist approach to study peasant movements include: Dhanagre, Sunil Sen Majid Siddiqui, Girish Mishra for the colonial period; *Tom Brass's Peasants' Populism and Postmodernism* for the post-colonial period. In *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, using Subaltern variant of Marxist approach, Ranajit Guha argues that during the colonial period, the peasants did not rebel against the landlords and the British oppressors blindly. They did so with consciousness. Using "history from below" perspective, which also focuses the underprivileged classes, Kapil Kumar in *Peasants in Revolt* studied peasant movement during the colonial period in Oudh region of Uttar Pradesh. He situated the peasant movement in context of class relations and social and economic conditions of peasants in the Oudh region.

During the 1980s, different regions in India witnessed a spate of farmers movements, which have been different from the peasant movements. Unlike the peasants, they did not demand land reforms or end of oppression by landlords. In fact, these have been beneficiaries of land reforms and other state policies such as subsides and debt abolition. Their movements emerged in those regions which have witnessed green revolution – Punjab, Haryana, western UP, Maharasthra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Kerala. Their demands are generally related to capitalist economy, i.e, subsidised inputs, better remunerative price of agricultural produce, increase in time of availability of electricity, problem of getting labourers to work on their field, etc. Scholars using Marxist approach have attempted to study class character of these movements and link them with political economy of capitalism in agriculture: for them, they are movements of the rural rich who have are embedded in agrarian capitalism.

2.5.2 Working Class Movements

For studying working class or trade union movements Marxist perspectives addresses the following issues: growth of working class; their social and economic conditions; fulfilment of their basic needs – food, housing, education, health,

etc.; payment of wages, bonus; right to organise and set up their organisations; facilities for creches of workers children; the factors that lead to workers movements; influence of ideological and political movements on workers organisations; response of the state and owners of the firms where striking workers are engaged. Ranajit Das Gupta (1996) points out that Marxist writings of working class have not dealt with some relevant aspects such as labour and labour forms, control over and subordination of labour, class formation, leadership patterns, relationship between workplace and community life outside the workplace. He also underlines that the Marxist scholars have neglected issues of culture and gender. Studies of Jan Breman show that a huge working class is engaged in any kind of work available has grown in India, which he terms as "footloose labour". This class has also not been adequately addressed by Marxist approach in India.

2.6 THE INDIAN STATE

State is a sovereign political institution in a country. You have read in unit 1, liberal approach influenced by the behavioural movement in social sciences, has preferred to use political system for sovereign political body over the state. But in Marxist approach, the state is a crucial institution to study politics of country. The Marxists view the state as an "executive of the bourgeoisie" or of the propertied classes. It is different from the way the political system, as the term is used for the state, is seen in the liberal approach. The liberal approach views the political system in which consensus between differences is reached, and political system remains resilient and maintains itself. Unlike the liberal approach, Marxist approach analyses the state by using following parameters: (i) It views state as representative of class interests and seeks to find the how different classes are related to the state in terms of controlling it and influencing the state policies; (ii) It attempts to see how state formulates its policies about the propertied and poor classes; (iii) It seeks to trace the development of the state; (iv) to see the ideological influences or orientation of the state; (v) and it attempts to link the policies of a state with international political economy, especially financial institutions such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). On the basis of these parameters, the Marxist perspective is used to explain what Marxists call, the nature state of a country or nature of Indian state with reference to India. Marxist perspective has been used by Marxist political parties and by professional academics. There are broadly three kinds of communist parties following Marxian ideology, the Communist Party of India (CPI), the Communist Party of India, Marxist CPI(M), and several Naxalite parties, who define Indian state according to Marxist approach. Though there are differences among them, the common feature of their approach is to analyse Indian state by seeking to establish relationship of state classes within the country as well with the foreign capital or imperialism which are generally represented by international financial institutions. According to CPI(M), the Indian state is bourgeoisie- landlord (capitalists and the landlords) which collaborates with the foreign capital; according to the CPI, it is a national bourgeoisie (capitalists which represent national interests) state which collaborates with the foreign capital. Different kinds of Naxalites generally view the state as representatives of comprador bourgeoisie or the propertied classes which represent the interests of the foreign capital. Using Marxist perspective, political scientist C.P. Bhambhri (1989) analyses the Indian state in relation to development capitalism in India, class contradictions and conflicts in the society. During the conflict situation, Indian state shows authoritarian

tendencies. The state shows weakness in dealing with contradictory pressures from different classes in society. This weakness of the state makes it liable to the pressure of imperialist forces. The imperialist forces have supporters within the state. The Indian state faces challenge of traditionally social structure such as caste and religious groups. Vivek Chibber in his book *Locked in Place: State-Building and Late Industrialization in India* discusses the attitude of Indian industrialists about industrial policies of Indian state during Nehruvian period. Contrary to a prominent argument that they favoured state-led development, Chibber argues that Indian capitalists were not in favour of state-led development: they wanted the private sector, capitalists or market to lead development. The prominence of class politics as envisaged by Marxist perspectives and its influence on the nature of state has been discounted by the non-Marist scholars. For instance, Rudolph and Rudolph, in the book *In Pursuit of Lakshmi: The Political Economy of Indian State,* argue that India lacks class politics because the organised labour forms a small fragment of India economy. The state in India works as "third actor", the other two being private capital and organised labour. The state plays a centrist role in India. You can notice, it is just contrary to the view of Marxist approach – Indian state is an ally of the propertied classes.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i)   Use the space below for your answers.

ii)   Check your answers with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1)   How do you study class relations according to Marxist approach?

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2)   How can you analyse the nature of Indian state?

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3)   How do you analyse class movements according to Marxist approach?

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2.7 LET US SUM UP

Marxist approach is a way to analyse society, which includes politics also. This approach is based on Marxism. It uses principle of dialectical materialism to explain various issues in society. According to this principle, change in social relations of production, distribution of produce and resources leads to transformation of society. There are two types of Marxist approaches – classical Marxist approach and neo-Marxist approach. Subaltern approach is one of the neo-Marxist approaches. The classical Marxist approach gives priority to class over non-class issues or to the base over superstructure. The neo-Marxist approach gives enough space to the role of non-class factors – such as culture, caste, language, religion, etc. along with class factors: the non-economic factors are considered relatively autonomous of class. The themes which are studied according to Marxist approach cut across disciplinary boundaries. The most common themes which have been studied in India according to this approach are: class formation and class collaboration; movements of peasants, farmers, workers and nature of Indian state.

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2.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Marxist approach means a way to explain the processes in society by looking at the changes in social relations of production among classes, control on means of production or resources and distribution of the produce.

2) The classical Marxist approach gives priority to class over non-class issues such as culture, caste, religion, politics, etc. Neo-Marxist approach considers both the class and non-class issues. It underlines that like class, caste, religion, culture also play important role, some time relatively autonomous of class.

3) Liberal approach prefers to use political system for sovereign political institution. It argues that different factions in a system interact, conflict and adjust in order to reach consensus. Marxist approach prefers to use state instead of political system. According to it, the state is an ally of propertied classes. It takes a partisan role in managing class contradictions.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) By using Marxist approach class relations are studied by addressing the following questions: what the pattern of ownership of resources is – which classes own them, and which is deprived of them; who works in the production process; and how the produce or wages and profits are distributed. It also explains how new classes emerge and old classes change or disappear.

2) Nature of Indian state according to Marxist perspective is analysed by looking at the relationship between classes, Indian state and international capital. In view of these relationships, different communist parties or Marxist scholar describe nature of Indian state as bourgeoisie-landlord, national -bourgeoisies or comprador state, which collaborates with the foreign financial capital.

3) Marxist perspective analyses class movements by linking the issues of class with unequal social relations of production, impact of state policies, pressures which the propertied classes exert on the state, by viewing the role of economic factors on mobilisation of classes, and by explaining to which extent non-class factors impact class movements.

UNIT 3   GANDHIAN*

Structure

3.0   OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able:

- To explain basic tenets of Gandhian approach;

- To use Gandhian approach to interpret Indian politics;

- To identify the issues which have been focus of study by Gandhian approach in India; and

- To compare Gandhian approach with liberal and Marxist approach to explain Indian politics.

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In units 1 and 2 you have read about liberal and Marxist approaches to study politics in India. Gandhian approach is different from the liberal approach in the following way: liberal approach, especially its variant system approach does not emphasises change, it uderlines the resilience of the system and consensus building in it. But it has some similarities and differences with the Marxist approach. Its similarities with the Marxist approach are that both approaches are used as ways to interpret change the society, and as vision for social change. Gandhian approach like the Marxist approach has been used both by politicians, political activists/Gandhian reformers, politicians and intellectual like Charan Singh, Ram Manohar Lohia and scholars: to critique the existing development model and to provide an alternative. There are some basic differences between Gandhian and Marxist approaches: Gandhian approach underlines significance of non-violence, ethics and principles of trusteeship, the Marxist approach seeks to explain nature of class struggles. Gandhism suggests that there should be trust

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among the workers and the propertied classes. The latter should establish trusteeship and share their wealth. It will reduce the gap between rich and the poor.

3.2 MEANING AND SCOPE OF GANDHIAN APPROACH

Gandhian approach denotes using Gandhian tenets or Gandhism to explain the social reality or truth and suggest ways to build new society. These tenets are truth, non-violence, Satyagrah, Swaraj, Sarvodaya, justification of means to achieve goals, ethics/morality, Ram Rajya. Non-violence is more than just avoidance of violence and harming others: it is to harm oneself. To harm oneself through activities such as fasting is to exercise moral authority on those who possess power. Without disobedience a political action cannot be organized; democracy must be structured in as a way that every citizen can question law and institutions (Ramin Jahanbegloo, 2018, *The Disobedient Indian: Towards a Gandhian Philosophy of Dissent*, Speaking Tiger, New Delhi). To use non-violent and moral or ethical tool to achieve goals means to follow a method/strategy which is known as Satyagrah according to Gandhism. The ultimate goal which Gandhian tenets seek to achieve is establish swaraj or self-control or self-realization. This will lead to formation of Ram Rajya or a society where people live in peace and harmony, govern themselves, and enjoy security. In Ram Rajya, an ideal society, people self-regulate, self-govern, through village panchayats/ village republics. It is high civil society; such societies have compassion and fellow feeling. In Ram Rajya, the village panchayats performs the functions which can be performed by the state. Ram Rajya/Swaraj implies minimum role to the state, which is a coercive institution. When a scholar uses concept of Satyagrah, non-violence, truth, etc. to anyalyse role of institutions such as state, sharing of power (decentralization), mobilisation through non-violence and non-cooperation it denotes usage of Gandhian approach. Gandhian approach has been used in different disciplines in social sciences.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

1) What is Gandhian Approach to politics and what are its core elements?

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2) Compare Gandhian approach with liberal and Marxist approaches.

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3.3   IN SEARCH OF HUMAN FACE

One of the most influential political scientists who has used Gandhian approach to Indian politics is Rajni Kothari. He along with some other intellectuals founded Lokayan with a group of intellectuals. According to Gail Omvedt Lokayan (*Reinventing Socialist Revolution*, quoted by Rudolph and Rudolph) was a "Gandhian-Socialist" civil society organization. As a member of Lokayan, Rajni Kothari, has been influenced by Gandhian philosophy. This is reflected in his academic and popular writings since the 1970s. As you read in unit 1, Rajni Kothari used system approach, a variant of liberal approach to explain Indian politics. Usage of Gandhian approach in his later writings emerged out of his critique of the system approach. He rethought some of the premises which were earlier analysed in the system framework. The changes that took place over four decades following Independence could not be explained by the system approach. The changes could be seen in influence of technology and subservience of the state to it, and consequent problems in society (violence, etc.), people's movements, human rights violation, ethnicity (identities), erosion of institutions, rise of individual leaders like Indira Gandhi, populism, personal loyalties. In Kothari's opinion, due to overinfluence of technology Indian state became inhumane; it turned against people. A need for human face of the state was felt. It necessitated rethinking of framework which could help in search of a new India. Alien model of development, which was not pro-people worked under the shadow of world capitalism. And the alternative is available in a human framework, influenced by Gandhian principles. Kothari underlined "an approach that was in many ways different from earlier selections" (Kothari 1989, Vol. I:x); his new writings "contradict" his earlier work. The alternative framework influenced by Gandhain philosophy was supposed to be more democratic than the present one Westminster model. According to this perspective, the Westminster model was implanted in India, from a prosperous milieu to a poor country. It gave more powers to the executive and bureaucracy leading to undue centralization of powers for policy initiative and implementation. There has often been a talk of a "new constitution". According to Rajni Kothari (1988), development model in India where technology dominates the state, there are "two Indians": the state is being manipulated by corporate capitalism, and common people are suffering; on the one hand democracy has been highjacked by the rich, on the other it has become playground for communal, castiest and the corrupt. In this context, when party and institutions are losing credibility, "non-party politics" is happening in every part of the country. Alternative which is emerging – "alternative movement", peoples action.

3.4   GANDIAN APPROACH AND POLITICAL SCIENCE IN INDIA

In Political Science the most common themes which have been studied by Gandhian approach are social movements and usage of Satyagrah in them; critique of Indian state as a coercive institution; the notion of Swaraj, communal and social harmony, and decentralisation (Panchayati Raj Institutions) or the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, and the influence of Gandhism on development debate, and on perspectives, etc. Gandhian way is used to assess the influence of Gandhism on intellectuals such as Charan Singh, Lohia and other socialist leaders. Lohia and Charan Singh attacked industrialization in favour

of small-scale/village industries. Although Charan Singh was influenced by Gandhi, he disagreed with Gandhi on some issues. For instance, he opposed to Gandhi's notion of cooperative farming. He opined Gandhi's views in support of cooperative farming. However, Charan Singh was not opposed to cooperative in service in farming. The tenets of Gandhism/Gandhian philosophy which influenced Lohia included – unsuitability of European model of socialism; he critiqued Nehruvian model of development from the point of view of Nehruvian model of development. He was most influenced by Gandhian ideas of civil disobedience or Satyagrah and economic and political decentralization. As in Gandhian perspective, the state has generally been viewed as a soulless machine which uses coercive methods, Gandhian perspective seeks to explain the extent to which state is required to provide security. Indeed, he is not opposed to state; instead, he supports minimum state. It provides security. The role of the state can be performed by Panchayati Raj Institutions. State should perform minimum functions. Gandhism supports a kind of democracy in which people share power and participate in decision making process through decentration or Panchayati Raj Institutions.

3.4.1 Social and Social Harmony

The question how Gandhism has helped to combat communal polarisation has been used by historians, especially with reference to Noakhali riot (Batbayal 2005): in Noakhali, Gandhi could use religion in politics, and sanctification/ justification of violence by religion, the question which was addressed in Noakhali was if Gandhi's doctrine was failing and how idea was of conversion made to justify violence. In the case of Noakhali riots, the historians have attempted to see the impact of Gandhian method of Satyagrah to achieve communal harmony. It was so despite the fact Gandhi was criticized both by the Hindus and Muslism. Bhikhu Parekh viewed Noakhali riot through the notion of inter-relatedness of personal purity (Personal suffering through hunger strike, etc.) and political success achieved in communal harmony. The Gandhian perspective attempts to analyse how different communities can be brought together in situations of communal strife.

3.4.2 Social Movements

Studying Gujarat movement in Gujarat 1974 against the price rise, Ghanshyam Shah shows the role of Satyagrah in anti-levy. The movement which was launched by the students began against inflated mess bills took up varieties of issues, i.e., corruption, black-marketing, price rise, denationalisation, civil liberties. The agitation forced Gujarat chief minister Chimanbhai Patel to resign. It later got linked with JP movement. It provided a background to imposition of emergency in 1975. Some scholars underline the importance of Satyagrah and non-violence in farmers' movements, and in movements against corruption.

Gandhians like Subba Rao and Rajagopal, P.V. and Jayprakash Narain used Gandhian ways to convince dacoits in Chambal to surrender abjuring violence and follow non-violence, to mobilize of youths in Bihar in the JP movements against corruption and, against emergency. Balagopal founded Ekta Parishad to mobilize tribals against encroachment of their land, and for granting land rights to them. Ekta Parishad is inspired by Gandhian philosophy of non-violence and non-cooperation. It sought to bring the state and society. For this purpose a Joint

Task Force (JTF) was formed in the 1980s. It pressurised the Congress/Digvijay Singh government to introduce land reforms. Over three decades from the 1990s, Ekta Parishad took up various issues – wages, migration, bonded labour, rehabilitation, employment, etc. Ekta Parishad launched an "alternative mobilization"or new social movement in Bundelkhand and Chhattisgarh. It organised long march (pad yatras, dharnas, chakkajams, etc, land satyagrah) of peasants from MP to Delhi passing through different states of India (Pai 2010).

3.4.3   Party System

Revising his views on revisiting the Congress system in an article in *Asian Survey* December 1974, 14 (2), Rajni Kothari states that a government will not be able to deliver without grass-root organisation. In the post-Nehruvian period, the Congress was lacking it. Even conflict which assumes the form of mass agitation grows outside the legislature and electoral channels. It develops rapport with the people. In the absence of organization, police and hirelings from outside make up for the gap in organizational structure. If the Congress fails in building grass-root cadres, it can be filled up by the opposition. Without bring back the party structure, elections will lose credibility.

3.4.4   Impact of Gandhian Philosophy on Public Policies

The Janata government's policies attempted to replace Nehruvian model of development: investment priorities and plan allocation in favour of agriculture rather than industry; employment through investment in agriculture and small scale industry, and "appropriate" policy. Through such policies India was supposed to become a nation more of farmers than of bureaucrats. These are some examples of impact of Gandhism on state policies. Such issues have been influenced by Gandhian perspectives Charan Singh's attack on Nehruvian model, and his views on alternative model of development giving priority to agriculture, village community and small scale industries can be viewed to be cast in Gandhian framework. He accused Nehru of having "de-industrialized" India. Using Gandhian approach, Rahul Ramagundam (2008) underlines role of material and ethics in sustenance of life. The material aspect was influenced by Nehrurian philosophy and ethical by the Gandhian. However there has been lack of adequate policy-oriented assessment of Gandhian socio-economic practices.

3.5   GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE AND POSTMODERNISM

In their book *Postmodern Gandhi and Other Essays*, Lyod I. Rudolph and Susannae H. Rudolph liken Gandhi to a postmodern thinker. They challenge the general notion about Gandhi that he was a traditional leader. In their opinion, Gandhi was a post-modernist. For understanding as to why Rudolph and Rudolph consider Gandhi as postmodern thinker, it is relevant to identify some core features of postmodernism. These features are as follows: primacy to the segment of a whole or its fragments, truth as a contested reality and significance of the context. In relation to these features, Rudolph and Rudolph also categorise Gandhi as a postmodernist thinker. Quoting Gandhi's book *Hind Swaraj* (1909) and *My Experiment with Truth*, they argue that for Gandhi the authenticity of truth is contextual and experimental. Gandhi's emphasis on the need for decentralisation of social and political power also qualifies him to be designated as postmodern thinker.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

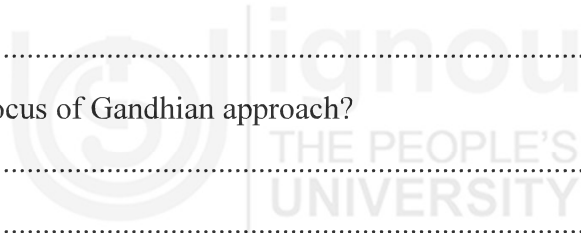1) Discuss the impact of Gandhian approach on the approach of Rajni Kothari.

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2) How is Gandhian approach used to explain Indian politics?

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3) Which major issues are focus of Gandhian approach?

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3.6   LET US SUM UP

Gandhian approach is a way to explain and vision to affect change in society. It has been followed by three kinds of persons such as professional academicians, activists and politicians inspired by Gandhian philosophy. The followers of this approach try to see as to how basic tenets of Gandhism such as truth, non-violence, Satyagrah, Swaraj, Ram Rajya, Sarvodaya, etc., can be applied to explain issues in Indian politics. The issues which have received the most attention of political scientists include decentration, dissent in democracy, social harmony, importance rural society, place of agriculture and small-scale industries as alternative to heavy industry-based development. They have also used Gandhian perspective to critique Nehruvian model of development. Gandhian activists and politicians, in addition, have used Gandhian tactics such as satyagrah, hunger strike to mobilise popular support.

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3.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Answers to Exercise 1

1) Gandhian approach is a way to interpret politics. Its core elements are truth, styagrah, non-violence, swaraj, Ram Rajya, ethics, decentralization of power, social harmony, trusteeship, etc.

2) Gandhian approach is a vision for social change and a methodology to explain politics. The liberal approach, especially its variant, system approach focuses on resilience and consensus building of political system. Gandhian approach has similarities with the Marxist approach: both are ways to explain politics and vision for change in the society. They are different in the sense that Marxist approach looks at the class struggle, the Gandhian approach looks at social harmony and morality.

Answers to Exercise 2

1) For a few years of his intellectual careers, Rajni Kothari followed system approach to explain Indian politics. But he did not find system approach

adequate to explain several political and social change. This resulted in change in his approach. The change was influenced by Gandhian philosophy. Along with a group of intellectuals, Rajni Kothari founded Lokayan, which according to Gail Omvedt was a "Gandhian-Socialist" civil society organisation.

2) Gandhian approach is used to critique the development model which gives priority to heavy industries. It underlines the significance of alternative model of development which underlines the significance of small-scale industries, cottage industries, village society, decentralization of power. It seeks to study the role of Gandhian tools such as Satyagrah, morality, self-sacrifice in popular mobilization. It also attempts to explain the extent to changes meet the requirement of Gandhian principles – social harmony, decentralizations, self-control, finally reflecting achievement of Ram Rajya.

3) The most common issues studied under Gandhian approach include decentralization or Panchayati Raj Institutions, role of Satyagrah, non-violence in mass movements; social or communal harmony, critiquing development model and providing an alternative model; and influence of Gandhi on some intellectuals, politicians and socialism in India.