

# The Heartbeat of Indian Democracy: Mechanisms of Institutions, Elections and Representation

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## Abstract:

This study discusses how democracy in India has changed and the problems it faces and also stresses how important institutions like the Election Commission, Lokpal, and media are keeping for democracy strong. Further, it discusses how important the Goods and Services Tax (GST) is as a way to bring the economy together, comparing its implementation to important events in India's history. The idea of "Constitutional Morality" is put up, saying that majority opinions should not be able to override constitutional rights. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the need to defend the rights of minorities and the conversation about how important the media is for protecting free speech in the face of growing threats of censorship. The paper also discusses the NITI Aayog's "Strategy for New India @75," which aims to promote growth and inclusion by meeting the demands of all groups in society. It ends by saying that for social programs to work, the national and state governments need to work together. It also warns against divisive populism and too many reservations.

**Keywords:** Democratic Institutions, Goods and Services Tax, State Government, Constitutional Morality, Elections etc.

## Introduction:

Since India became independent, the ruling political parties have protected democracy, and the opposition has utilized Parliament to hold the government responsible. People want the government to answer such questions in a certain way. This is an essential step to make sure that democracy is forceful. But we need to talk about these problems in more depth. The focus should be on how those in power make democracy stronger. The growth of several democratic institutions, particularly the Election Commission, is limited by a system of checks and balances in our Constitution. But if essential groups like the Election Commission become unimportant because of too much politics, it is bad for democracy because the leaders would have as well to a large extent authority.

## United States of India: Taxes

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) will finally bring the country together, creating what may be called a "United States of India." Just like Jawaharlal Nehru's stirring "tryst with destiny" speech helped India gain independence from British rule, the same central Hall of Parliament will echo what Prime Minister Narendra Modi called the "historic" lunch of the Goods and Services Tax on June 30, 2017, at midnight. The excitement and ceremony surrounding the rollout won't just be for show; it will also show how the country is becoming more economically integrated. In a manner, it will also be a continuation of the unification of its post-princely republics that happened 70 years ago. We hope that GST would help make the "One country, One Tax, One Market" system a reality. This event is truly historic, as it solidifies "the edifice of a consolidated India." This is a great achievement of India's famous iron man, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who, with his clear vision, sharp mind, administrative wisdom, and unbreakable will, once brought together more than 540 princely states, big and small, making up two-fifths of the country. Sardar Patel said "The great ideal of geographical, political, and economic unification of India had remained a distant dream for centuries".

Article 301 of the Constitution said that India should work as one economic entity without obstacles, making it easier for trade and commerce to move freely within the country. But for 70 years, the union of states was not unified. Each of India's 29 states taxed commodities that crossed their borders at various rates (Bansal, 2017). The union excise, import duty, and service tax were all indirect taxes that the central government collected. The sales tax, VAT, motor

vehicles tax, and passenger and goods tax were all levies that the state governments collected. India spent 60 years to migrate from single-point to multi-point taxes. Now, in 10 years, it will switch from VAT to GST. This is only conceivable because the Indian parliament wants it to happen.

### **Societal and Constitutional Morality:**

Dr. Ambedkar said that Grote meant "a paramount reverence for the forms of the constitution, enforcing obedience to authority and acting under and within these forms, yet combined with the habit of open speech, of action subject only to definite legal control, and unrestrained censure of those very authorities as to all their public acts combined, too with a perfect confidence in the bosom of every citizen amidst the bitterness of party contest that the forms of constitution will not be less sacred in the eyes of his opponents than his own" (Rowe, 2024). The three parts of Constitutional Morality are: (i) being free and self-reliant, (ii) recognizing that there are many different views, and (iii) being suspicious of anybody who says they can speak for the people. The Supreme Court recently gave a landmark ruling on decriminalizing Section 377. It declared that it will support "Constitutional Morality" and not "majoritarian morality" (Mustafa, 2023). The Court ruled that the majority's opinion could not take away the rights of a small group to choose their own sexual orientation, and that societal morality could not be used to take away basic rights. Former Chief Justice Dipak Misra said that Constitutional Morality won and that it includes certain qualities, the most important of which is accepting a society that is diverse and open to everyone. The idea of Constitutional Morality tells the government to protect the diversity of society and stop the majority from taking away the rights and freedoms of a smaller or minority group in the country. He added, "Constitutional Morality cannot be sacrificed for the sake of social Morality; only Constitutional Morality should be permitted to influence the rule of law." The veil of social morality cannot be utilized to infringe upon basic rights, as the essence of Constitutional Morality is predicated on the acknowledgment of the variety that exists within society (Johar et al., 2018). The measure of public acceptability was not a solid ground to disregard rights invested with the sanctity of Constitutional protection. It is constitutional morality, not the driving force that decides whether related parts and decisions are lawful (Rajagopal, 2017).

### **Freedom of Speech and Press:**

Media either print or electronic plays a major role in ensuring flow of information to the public. It should function in an environment free of interference from an over approaching state. Also it should not be shunned of its duty of promoting freedom of speech, expression or opinion. To preserve this freedom of press, governments' world over gave protection to press through their constitutions or through legal provisions. Alas, many lives of journalists, the torchbearers of freedom of speech, are lost and the voice of media is being muzzled by both the governments and vested interests over the years. In India, press is called as the fourth pillar of the nation after legislature, Executive and Judiciary (Journal, 2025). It is entrusted with the promotion and propagation of democracy in the country. It has played a vital role in our freedom struggle too. But this fourth pillar is being stifled of its voice by the governments over the years. The same is visible with India being ranked at 136 in the world press Freedom Index released by Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF), a non-governmental body. The parameters of the index include media pluralism and independence, respect for the safety and freedom of journalists, and the legislative, institutional and infrastructural environment in which media operate.

### **The Lokpal is Strengthen of Indian Democracy:**

On 20th March, 2019, former Supreme Court judge Pinaki Chandra Ghosh was appointed as India's first anti-corruption ombudsman, Lokpal (Team, 2024). P.C. Ghosh, who retired as Supreme Court judge in May 2017 was a member of the National Human Rights Commission when he was appointed to the Lokpal's position. Justice Ghosh's name was finalized and recommended by the Selection Committee led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The institution of Lokpal is a statutory body and is a multimember body, made up of one chairperson and maximum of 8 members, of those four needs to be judicial members. Not less than 50% of the members of the Lokpal shall be from amongst the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other backward classes, Minorities and Women. The Chairperson and members shall hold office for a term of five years or till they reach 70 years of age (Press Trust of India, 2019). Former Chief Justices of different High Courts, Justice Dillip B Bhosale Pradip Kumar Mohanty, Abhilasha Kumari, besides sitting Chief Cjustice of Chhatisgarh High Court Ajay Kumar Tripathy were appointed as judicial members in the Lokpal. Former first woman chief of sashtra Seema Bal Archana

Ramasundaram, ex-Maharashtra chief secretary Dinesh Kumar Jain, former IRS officer Mahendra Singh and Gujarat Cadre ex-IAS officer Indrajeet Prasad Gautam are the Lokpal's non-judicial members (Press Trust of India, 2019).

### **Transformation of Election Commission of India:**

India is getting set for its largest holiday, the 17th Lok Sabha Elections, 2019, which is also the world's biggest democracy. Independence, neutrality, and honesty are the foundations of India's democracy. India has elections every five years to keep its democracy going. These elections always develop into a huge celebration that brings people of all castes, colors, languages, and beliefs together. India's democracy is distinct from other democracies throughout the world because diversity is normal here, not an exception. It has its problems and difficulties. It needs an organization that can handle stress and come up with fresh ideas and rapid remedies since the Indian electoral landscape changes all the time, particularly in response to the increasing scrutiny and challenges faced by the Election Commission (EC) regarding its credibility and impartiality.

People have questioned the truthfulness and dependability of the EC recently. Many political analysts and parties have questioned if EC is doing a fair and unbiased job. It is constitutionally responsible for acting as an agent, which makes sure that the electoral process is fair. But recent events have made many questions whether the EC is a fair and unbiased group or whether it has become a tool of the ruling party. In this new age of digital progress, EC faces new problems because of the rise of new media. The Constituent Assembly set the EC's functions and rules, but they didn't think about these kinds of problems. Every time a new regulation comes out, candidates and political parties come up with new ways to get around it. There have been many arguments over appointment, partisanship, paid news, the use of EVM and VVPAT, voter bribery, and hate speech. So, EC needs to be ready to come up with fresh ideas and ways to solve problems. But EC has changed into a trustworthy and responsible organization over the course of the year. It is a testament to how it has been able to stick to its morals and principles. EC has adjusted its operations to keep pace with the changes in society and individual behaviors. It has given us a number of suggestions and recommendations for keeping the political parties in line, such as implementing stricter regulations on campaign financing and promoting transparency in party activities. There is no doubt regarding EC's work ethic or impartiality. Still, it is EC's job to keep its efficiency, integrity, and fairness. Because EC is a constitutional body, it should not be open to public suspicion, like Caesar's wife. From the outside, it shouldn't look like EC is supporting any one candidate or political party (HAITIAN BRIDGE ALLIANCE FILES CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST TRUMP AND VANCE IN SPRINGFIELD, OHIO – the Bridge, 2024). It should act fairly and on its own. The Election Commission must promptly resolve all issues and effectively address public complaints. Each election has its problems and challenges. The Election Commission needs to be ready to deal with these things, and it needs to change to grow and develop.

### **New Indian Strategy of NITI Aayog:**

On December 19, 2018, the NITI Aayog presented its full national plan for India. The plan, called "Strategy for New India @75," is a long-term plan to help India grow. It wants to reach an annual growth rate of 9% by 2022-23. This is necessary to create enough growth and make everyone rich. NITI Aayog's New India @75 plan tries to bring together innovation, technology, business, and good management at the heart of policy making and execution. The 75 targets are: the growth rate upto 9%, employment and labour reforms, technology and innovation, industry, doubling farmers' income through modernizing agriculture, policy and governance, value chain and rural infrastructure, financial inclusion, housing for all, global international travel, tourism and hospitality, development in energy, surface transport, railways, civil aviation, improvement of logistics, digital connectivity, smart cities for urban transformation, swachh bharat mission, enhancement in water resources, sustainable development, school education, higher education, teachers' education and training, skill development, public health management, comprehensive primary health care, nutrition, reduce in gender disparity, respect and social security for senior citizens, persons with disability and transgender persons, SCs, STs, OBCs, proper governance with balanced regional development especially the north-East region,, reforms in legal, judicial and police administration, reforms in civil services, modernizing city governance for urban transformation, optimizing the use of land resources, data led governance etc.

### Role of Democracy in Representation:

The recent debate on whether the RBI should be independent from the government brought up crucial problems of principle. Some commentators stated that the government was elected and the RBI was not. In a democracy, the body that was elected should always be more important than the entity that was not. This is, at best, just partly true, and at worst, a very hazardous argument. Democracies that work well need both elected and unelected institutions (Jha, 2026). What are the most renowned institutions in India? The Supreme Court, the Election Commission, and the Armed Forces. None of them were elected. Some people will also talk about the Comptroller and Auditor General as a fourth (also unelected) body. On the other hand, most people think that elected officials are not very effective. This doesn't mean that elected officials don't have any power. But their legitimacy comes from the reality that people grant them power for a short time and may take it away if they don't do their job. Just because politicians are elected doesn't mean they're above the law, the courts, or the constitution.

Democracy does not just exist in the legislature. In fact, an independent judiciary, an independent media, civil society, and, of course, on paper, the central bank and the CBI all stay an arm's length away from the House. These are all checks and balances that keep our democracy running smoothly. Some of these institutions have started to patrol the perimeter and fight back against outside influence. There are also groups outside of the four pillars that help democracy grow or protect it, like schools and universities, social and cultural groups, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and even individuals and activists who work for the public good. They are not elected. That is not a flaw; it is strength because they are not very impacted by the ups and downs of electoral politics. Trying to make them look bad is like trying to knock down the pillars that hold up Indian democracy and any democracy.

### Conclusion:

If the center and the states worked together instead of competing, social programs would work better together and provide people greater value for their money. This study also need to look at the current welfare programs in a realistic way so that changes can be made where they are needed and programs that aren't working may be cut. In the future, people will say that the competing populism of our Central and State Governments was the main thing that hindered us from reaching our full potential. The crazy haste to establish and accept reservations has already split our country along caste lines. Another type of populism, which is arguably more harmful, is giving out doles, which might upset the delicate balance of our economy.

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