

## **DIFFERENT STRUCTURES OF GOVERNMENTS**

Different social systems organized the governance of the state in different ways. The capitalist systems chose the democratic way of participation of wider groups in selecting people who would govern their societies. In newer time, two main form of democratic governance developed: one was the presidential system and the other was the parliamentary democracy. They were based on the way the authorities to rule were prescribed on different persons and bodies.

In the presidential system, the highest authority of power was conferred on the president of the nation, who was chosen by direct election by the people. He/she was the head of the executive body of the state implementing laws and policies. In American (US) presidential system, the structure of governance was divided into three different branches: The Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. The legislative branch passed laws and authorized the executive branch to carry out the laws and policies adopted by the law giving body. The executive branch executed the affairs of the state like food, health, security, financial transaction, education, military etc. The judiciary acted as a watch dog. Their role was to see that no one acted outside the laws of the state. People, through direct election, chose the members of the Senate and the Congress, who would authorize the president to carry out the policies. The president nominated the judges in the Supreme Court. The nominations had to be sanctioned by the Senate. So there existed a check and balance of power among different branches, eliminating the possibility of an autocratic rule.

The election in such a system is mostly a show of media and wealth. The most effective way one may bring the messages to the people decides the outcome of such an election. In this competition only people with high-degree of connections to the financial and media world can survive. People with military background, or financial tycoons have often succeeded in such a system. Religious faiths also color the election results.

Such democratic system had grown out of a more traditional system, where religious men, traders and businessmen and kings and feudal lords had played major roles in the socio-political

development of nations.

The other form of democratic political system is the parliamentary system, where the head of the state is either a monarch or a president, who play mostly ceremonial role without any real power in their hands. The power lies in the hands of the members of the parliament, who are directly elected by the people. This form of democracy, which has its strongest roots in the Western Europe, promotes fairer competitions of interests and ideas, which are not overwhelmed by financial and military ties. Such a system stimulates more vigorous participations of parties bearing different ideologies. The elected parties (can be a coalition of several parties) choose a prime minister to run the affairs of the nation. The prime minister chooses a cabinet of ministers, who get executive powers to implement the policies which the parties have advocated during the election. Election commissioner supervises election process, to make sure that elections do not become fraudulent and power is not snatched by any party by illegal means.

In the beginning, this form of parliamentary system was based on elections where the privileged people were mostly allowed to vote. The privileges included the wealth and property one possessed, and the military and religious power one could harness. In India, this parliamentary system was introduced by the British as a method of the British crown to curb the influence of the British traders who had monopoly of power. However, at this time only a handful of people could elect. With the rise of nationalism in India, at the wake of the First World War, the franchises were extended to the rich and powerful people of the country. The universal suffrage was granted only after independence.

However, in a traditional society, where religion and caste played central roles in forming the social-order, the election became a ground to be manipulated by the feudal class. In a society plagued by poverty, illiteracy and inequalities, the methods to mobilize the mass to vote for people enjoying traditional power, followed the behavior of a feudal society, stooped deeply in religious faith.

The other main political systems which took their roots in the twentieth Century were socialism and communism. They refuted the ideas of the Western-led democracies, which became

instruments of the powerful and wealthy to come to power, while the mass lived in insecurities and ignorance. The idea of transferring power to the hands of those who worked in the factories or tilled the lands became central in socialist and communist system. After the Russian Revolution, the workers formed Soviets i.e. units of power at the grass root level that comprised of members elected by the workers and peasants. Only the workers and peasants were allowed to elect the representatives. The others, who were seen as the enemies of the proletariat class, remained disfranchised until very late in the 1970s, when a new constitution allowed the other classes in the society to participate in elections.

The Soviets in the grass root level sent representatives to the higher level, which in turn sent representatives to even higher level, and so on..... finally forming the main legislative and executive power of the nation, dominated by the members of the socialist/communist party. It became a bulldozer system, where the power in the party hierarchy and conformity with the ideologies of the party decided the freedom and possibilities one could enjoy in the social-political arena.

Lenin argued that the workers did not have leisure and opportunities to study and comprehend the complexities of Marxism and the full advantages of the socialist system. They needed guidance by the intellectual elites who wanted to change the social order in favor of the working people. The workers, he said, mostly understood the situation in the immediate working place, and could not bring the vision of the great social change in the national level. The intellectuals guiding the ideologies of the party were supposed to lead the socialist revolution. The involvement in the activities of the party became a way for the intellectuals and middle class to gain political power and assert their interests in the social-order.

The party membership became a way of getting jobs, privileges and access to management in state enterprises. It soon became the corrupt way of using party power to consolidate private interests. Thus the intellectual socialist leaders, in the end, became the cause of downfall of socialism. The workers became passive and were used as tools in the social mobilization.

The story of the communist China followed a different route. Elections were held at the grass

root level, where the candidates to be elected were members of the communist party, or needed support of the party for a successful candidacy. The governance was controlled by the local councils in different levels following the ideology of the communist party. The member of the lower level of the council sent representatives to councils at higher levels. At the top the pyramid was the National Council and the politburo. At every level party loyalty determined the success of election, privileges and opening up of the opportunities.

When communist party liberalized its policies, and opened up private enterprises and global partnership with the capitalist West, the party, instead of being a body serving the interests of the peasants and the workers, became a forum for technocrats, intellectuals, military and businessmen. These party bureaucrats, at all levels, created and broke rules by using their political muscles, and created fortunes for themselves, and the people allied with them. It became a laissez-faire capitalism, whose main aim was to produce, invest and make profit by any convenient means suitable to achieve the goal – law, or no-law meant how successfully one could avoid and implement economic success. Corruption became tantamount to such a system. At present, the remnant of communism is only the organizational structure of the party and way people are elected at different levels of government. Through this political forum different interests of the society take shape – a very different approach than the democratic West.