

DOES  
INDIA  
NEED  
DICTATOR

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Vitasta

LET KNOWLEDGE SPREAD

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# Why Dictatorship?

## **Failure of democracy in India**

India claims to be practising a western parliamentary democracy. One can reasonably question if the Indian version of democracy, whatsoever, has been fit for the purpose, considering the various types of the people and the living conditions in the country. India seems to be going nowhere in so far as her dwindling liveability is concerned. People have been breeding to alarming and unsustainable levels. At this rate, it is hard to see her marching confidently into the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. She needs a complete overhaul of her system of governance, or a miracle, sooner than later.

The Indian democracy certainly does not seem to have improved the condition of the Indian cities, which see people

and vehicles everywhere, with breathing and movement of life increasingly becoming more and more difficult. Nor has it looked after the general health and the level of education of the people, in particular, the backward and poorer communities. Nor has it bonded the people as Indians first, then anything else! The national character has not developed in the last 70 years. The country remains divided, lacks true nationalism. Kashmir remains a significant nagging distraction, affecting India's relationship with her neighbours. Regionalism plays a major part in the country's politics with reservations and representation in sports.

The Indian democracy is all about vote-bank. If you form the vote-bank, you are in. You will be wooed and pampered by the politicians. If you are considered not important for vote-bank, you will be left to fend for yourself. The case of Kashmiri Pandits is a classic example to illustrate the vote-bank politics. Indian democracy has not been fair; it has not served the poor well. The socio-economic divide has been widening. Such is the disparity in the distribution of wealth that currently about one per cent Indians disproportionately own about 73 per cent of the country's wealth. India lives in several ages at the same time; a significant portion lives in the bullock-cart age, some in the cycle-rickshaw age, some in the auto-rickshaw age, some in the black & yellow taxi age and some in the current Ola and Uber age. Of course, a small percentage of Indians are jet-fliers and some wealthy Indians take their personal chopper to go to work and move around on a daily basis.

India has been growing economically, as has its population. Due to economic disparity, the lower socio-economic community comprises more than half of its population.

One needs to visualise what it means to add nearly 55,000 people to the population every day and nearly 50,000 vehicles to roads every day. This is a country where about one-third of the population lives on less than a dollar a day. Any person of common sense can say, if things are not turned around soon, some kind of revolution or uprising is not very far away. But that is common sense, which, unfortunately, is not very common.

Materialism has gripped India, accompanied with a rapid erosion of the traditional Indian spiritual mindset. It is taking a massive toll on the country's liveability and traditional values, mental and physical health of the people, and the family life. The definition of 'life' has changed over time. Time is the most precious commodity and the wealth that a living being is gifted with. What is the meaning of life if people have no time to live it? In their endeavour to survive, gain wealth and become richer, most Indians living in the cities are fast becoming extremely *time-poor* despite leading a richer lifestyle than their ancestors.

The industrial development and economic growth in India during the past half a century or so has seen a steady increase in the country's population and clogging of her streets and roads with parked vehicles and mixed traffic on the roads that comprise pedestrians, bullock carts, bicycles, rickshaws and motorised vehicles. The travelling distances, in cities at least, are measured by the time to commute and not by the actual distances. The commuting time over the past quarter of a century or so has increased by 2 to 3 times. For covering a distance of 15 km in an Indian city such as Delhi it normally takes about 1.0 to 1.5 hours to commute in a relatively freer flowing traffic, but sometimes up to 2 hours or more if the traffic worsens.

The present deteriorating conditions especially in the Indian urban areas, which are fast turning into gas chambers, warrant drastic and urgent measures, such as a compulsory population control (eg One-child policy), immediate ban on immigration from rural to urban areas, crackdown on everything that pollutes air and drinking water, compulsory schooling of all children across the country, quick and harsh punitive measures to deal with all lawbreakers. But the existing governing system will not allow any such measures to be undertaken on several grounds, eg human rights and the basic principles of (western) democracy.

This is a country where the current government is on a campaign to promote the use of closed-door toilets for reasons of hygiene, environment and the security of female defecators against rapes. This is a country where girl children as young as one-year-old get raped.

India, therefore, urgently needs to move completely from the current 'flawed' democracy to a benevolent dictatorship, even a military dictatorship, for at least the next twenty-five years, or a complete change of governance, such as sociocracy or the Chinese form of government for achieving all the above.

Due to the urban sprawl, as the commuting distances have increased, the commuting time has also increased correspondingly which results in:

- Increase in the fuel consumption and the carbon emissions, exacerbating the air pollution;
- Wastage of time, the most precious gift of any human and, therefore, the human resources from an economic point of view;

- Reduced family and social time;
- Increase in the stress level due to ever increasing frustration on the roads due to traffic, leading to chronic impatience, mental anxiety, and road rage, which have the potential to develop into mental illness and suicide; and
- Reduced work efficiency and productivity at the workplace.

The above list illustrates some of the tangible costs but, most importantly, the intangible costs that Indians pay for their uncontrolled population growth, urban migration and industrial development are immensely significant as they potentially erode the basic survival of human life in India.

On average, people may be living a little longer in India and the lifestyle of some of them may have improved over time, but a big question arises, '*Are they also happier and physically healthier and fitter now?*' Based on common observations, most people seem to be rushing, whether on foot, or riding a bicycle, or seated inside a vehicle, with unhappy expressions on their faces. Richer people have generally become overweight and obese, and live with diseases that are commonly associated with an affluent lifestyle, such as diabetes, hypertension etc. Undoubtedly, the current lifestyle has undermined the mental and physical health of many people living in the cities. It is not uncommon to see that many people have simply no time to improve their personal well-being and physical fitness; they are either chasing wealth or trying to survive.

Indian people must individually decide if they want to live a relatively happier, less diseased, contented and simpler life.

Should wealth or attainment of health and contentment be the ultimate target of their lives? The answer to that question is a no brainer!

The country's focus indeed needs a drastic readjustment—a shift from the material development to the human development—with emphasis on clean air, clean drinking water, authentic food and medicines, honour, dignity and safety of all people, good quality—free but compulsory—school education for all young citizens with the provision of the necessary educational infrastructure; compulsory national service for all students for national character building, and drastic measures for population control.

With the current 'Indian democracy', it is inconceivable that in the face of the following, the country will ever come out of her chronic issues within one generation or even a few generations, if at all:

- A fast growing population
- Rampant corruption at all levels
- The Kashmir issue
- Unfriendly neighbours

All above issues will continue to keep the administrators embroiled in distractions without maintaining any focus on the improvement of the basic liveability in the country. It will not be wrong to doubt if, in the face of the above factors, the country will ever come out of poverty—material and character both. The disease of capitalism has truly gripped the country and the exploitation of the poor and backward by the rich and the politicians will continue unabated.

It will be eventually up to the people of India to decide

how they would like to be governed. They will have to decide if they would like to continue with the current system of governance—a system that has seen a significant number of people with criminal background, some very serious, to represent them in the Parliament—a system where the people's votes are auctioned by their village chief, a system where the parliamentarians are constantly busy with mudslinging on each other, a system which has allowed the population to grow mindlessly and where one-third of the population lives on less than a dollar per day and a significant number of children don't have access to good or any school education, a system in which all Indians have not been looked after well, a system where the poor continue to remain poor and illiterate, only to be exploited by politicians, the rich and affluent.

In the engineering world, if a structure is too dilapidated, too unsafe for use, or too inadequate, and can't be practically repaired and made habitable or functional, it is razed to the ground and the site is cleared. Thereafter, new foundations are laid which are fit for the purpose—adequate and deep enough—and a new structure is constructed to meet its objectives and the future demands. In my reasonable opinion, like a dilapidated unsafe structure, Indian governance system also needs a complete overhaul, as it is not serving the country well and is grossly inadequate to meet her future demands.

India's living and political conditions can also be likened to a diseased, cancer stricken person. When a person is diagnosed with cancer, what do doctors do? Depending upon the organ involved and the stage of cancer, as well as the age and general state of health of the patient, together with a range of complexities and parameters known to the medical

sciences, it is generally seen the person may be subject to a range of treatments available, such as chemotherapy, surgery, radiotherapy, immunotherapy etc. In many cases, it may start with chemotherapy to contain the cancer to the affected part of the body, followed by the surgical removal of the cancer-affected part. For precautionary purposes, depending upon the severity of the cancer, the patient may be subject to further rounds of chemotherapy or radiotherapy or both. While that is happening and the person is recuperating, emphasis is laid on the strengthening of the patient's body and mind.

Similar to the above, several drastic measures, including a complete replacement of the current so-called (flawed) democratic system will be required to rid the country of several chronic problems, while the country's poor and backward are taken care of as the country's own children (and not God-forsaken children), in terms of their education, health and overall human development.

Many people may argue that we need patience to deal with the situation and should instead focus on the economic prosperity of the country. It is akin to saying that strengthening of a sick person's body will get rid of the person's cancer. No, it will not. On the contrary the cancer will keep growing. So, a complete change in the system of governance is warranted.

*Democracy is beautiful in theory; in practice it is a fallacy.*

—Benito Mussolini

## **Dictatorship comes naturally to Indians**

Historically, Indians have never seen anything like democracy. Most are blissfully still oblivious to the concept of democracy, which works in favour of corrupt politicians. They are

traditionally used to being lorded over by others. The concept of equality between all humans is an alien concept to most Indians. Most people still don't believe in equality, which is reflected in their actions, behaviour and treatment of the people belonging to lower socio-economy strata. Employees have been, and are still called *naukars* (servants) and employment is called *naukri* (servitude). And women are traditionally marginalised in every community.

In India, parents behave as dictators, so do the teachers with students, employers with employees, and bosses with their subordinates. Respect is generally only the birthright of people in power and with authority.

Before gaining independence on 15 August 1947, in all its history with more than 550 princely states and kingdoms, Indians were used to following the whims and wishes of kings and princes who ruled over them. As per Wikipedia\*: 'At the time of the British withdrawal, 565 princely states were officially recognised in the Indian subcontinent, apart from thousands of *taluqars*, *zamindaris* and *jagirs*...The era of the princely states effectively ended with Indian independence in 1947...The Indian Government formally derecognised the princely families in 1971...'

The following excerpt from Wikipedia illustrates how the present Indian subcontinent was ruled just 70 years ago and how the rulers perceived themselves.

'The Indian rulers bore various titles—including Chhatrapati (emperor), Maharaja or Raja (king), Sultan, Raje,

\* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Princely\\_state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Princely_state)

Nizam, Wadiyar, Agniraj Maharaj, Nawab (governor), Nayak, Wāli, Inamdar, Saranjamdar and many others. Whatever the literal meaning and traditional prestige of the ruler's actual title, the British government translated them all as "prince," to avoid the implication that the native rulers could be "kings" with status equal to that of the British monarch. The most prestigious Hindu rulers usually had the prefix "maha" (great) in their titles, as in Maharaja, Maharana, Maharao, etc....'

Prostrating before deities and symbols and people of power—spiritual, political, wealth, influence, authority is in the DNA of most Indians. They love to follow and bow before power and powerful people in return for favours (blessings and grace) from them. Seventy years after independence from the British, Indians still love to use the titles 'sir' and 'sahib' in most formal and informal introductions. Indians have historically created a deep hierarchal social system, which differentiates people based on their religion, caste and wealth. Nepotism is an acceptable and normal way of life in India, as is seen in the Indian political system and political parties. Princes and kings have been replaced by Ministers.

It is unfortunate that, after the British exit, powerful and wealthy Indians have misused the democratic form of governance to their personal advantage and to further their influence and control of the country's wealth, instead of working for the benefit of the country at large. At micro-level in most Indian societies—homes, schools and workplaces—democracy does not exist. The powerful and the wealthy have the resources and know-how to get any job done, by hook or by crook. Money does talk in India and Goddess Lakshmi, who is worshipped as the goddess of wealth and prosperity, is

very popular with most Indians.

Now that the noble objectives of democracy have not been met by Indian democracy, can those objectives be attained through benevolent dictatorship, or sociocracy, or even Chinese form of socialism? The objectives of ‘democracy’ are indeed noble—ensure the well-being of the people—but so are the objectives of ‘sociocracy’ or a ‘benevolent dictatorship’.

It can be concluded that, at the time of her independence from the British monarchy in 1947, India seemingly was not ready to embrace the concept of democracy. The reasons could be:

- Traditional monarchies and religions which have genetically inculcated a characteristic habit in the Indian people of prostrating before authority and powerful people.
- Social hierarchy and a vibrant caste system, which has traditionally promoted deep inequality between people and also exacerbated the prostrating practice. People are treated based on the nature of their jobs and their position in the society.
- Low levels of literacy and education across the country where most people lived and still live, in villages, with very poor educational infrastructure.

Note that the terms ‘literacy’ and ‘education’ don’t carry the same meaning, especially in the Indian context where literacy means just being able to write one’s name in any one Indian language. It is, therefore, hard to imagine if more than 10% Indians even understand the concept and meaning of the word ‘democracy’. For them, the Indian Prime Minister is

like an Emperor. Ministers, bureaucrats and senior government servants are generally addressed as '*mai-baap*' (mother-father) by the people belonging to the lower 50 per cent of the socio-economic strata. Over time, a phenomenal population growth, accompanied by an ever-increasing 'demand to supply' ratio, has steadily eroded the democratic principles in India. People's thinking and their general behaviour has shifted from 'civil, patient and courteous' mode to a more 'aggressive, impatient and discourteous' mode, mainly due to their animal survival instincts taking over, which makes them feel insecure and, in turn, think and behave selfishly and aggressively. So, when the generally behaviour of people shifts from a more 'human' mode to a more 'animal' mode, democracy fails to deliver. People work mainly for themselves. For that very reason, no police or army in the world can afford to practice democracy; it has been an authoritarian chain of command, albeit within the defined rules of engagement.

Democracy is not suitable for societies like India where a predominant section constantly struggles to survive and feed itself, to serve a more privileged section of the society which lords over them, exploits them and uses (rather misuses) them. People in such a populated nation must fear the rule of law, which is not the case presently. The only way they will mind themselves and work for the nation is through dictatorship. And Indians are well suited for dictatorship. This marriage will work.

In practical terms, when the country is taken over by a benevolent dictator, half of the Indian population belonging to the lower socio-economic strata will not notice any difference in terms of any harshness in the governing system. On the

contrary, their lives will improve immediately; they will feel more reassured and looked after. The middle income earners, comprising about 40% of the population, will immediately notice the difference; their lives will be more streamlined and regulated, and they will not feel marginalised or neglected. It will be mainly the upper 10% of the population, and the press, that will not be happy initially—albeit only temporarily. After a while, all people will get used to a new system of governance, feel accountable and responsible towards their country, follow the supreme leader and march in unison in the same direction. Vote bank politics will go out of the window, and so will numerous distractions associated with everyday political gimmicks that slow the country down from moving ahead with the rest of the world.

One must note that, in India, as also in the rest of the world, corruption is driven mainly by the wealthy and powerful, who know how to manipulate the system and exploit the human weakness to their advantage. A benevolent dictatorship will put a full-stop to the common corrupt practices.

The proposed change in the system of governance in India has to be a generational change, perhaps over two generations, as the supreme leader will need to oversee the implementation of his/her vision through to its fruition. Thereafter, unless and until India does not completely get rid of its caste system, gender and social inequality, bring down the 'demand to supply' ratio to more manageable numbers—by a strict state-administrated population control, development and expansion of its infrastructure (civil, educational, health) and increase its resources—and compulsorily educate all its population, democracy must not be allowed to return to India.