

Sociology
Chapter-I
Structural Change

Facts That Matter

Colonial experience for comprehending modern India

- The colonial rule has had a tremendous impact on Indian society in all aspects- railways, industries, postal system (social, cultural, economic, political).
- Understanding of colonial experience while comprehending modern India is of significant importance as many modern ideas and institutions reached India through colonialism.
- It is also because such an exposure to modern ideas was contradictory or paradoxical. For example, Indians in the colonial period read about western liberalism and freedom.
- Yet they lived under a western, colonial rule that denied Indians liberty and freedom. It is contradiction of this kind that shaped many of the structural and cultural change in modern India.

Colonialism

- Colonialism simply means the establishment of rule by one country over another. In the modern period western colonialism has had the greatest impact.
- India's past has been marked by the entry of numerous groups of people at different times who have established their rule over different parts of what constitutes modern India today.
- The impact of colonial rule is distinguishable from all other earlier rules because the changes it brought in were far-reaching and deep.
- History is full of examples of the annexation of foreign territory and the domination of weaker by stronger powers. Nevertheless, there is a vital difference between the empire building of pre-capitalist times and that of capitalist times.
- Apart from outright pillage, the pre-capitalist conquerors benefited from their

domination by exacting a continuous flow of tribute.

- On the whole they did not interfere with the economic base. They simply took the tribute that was skimmed off the economic surplus that was produced traditionally in the subjugated areas.

Use of English

The use of English language as an outcome of changes due to colonialism has many sided impact and yet paradoxical. English is not only widely used in India but we now have an impressive body of literary writings by Indians in English. This knowledge of English has given Indians an edge in the global market.

However, English still continues to be a mark of privilege and not knowing English is considered a disadvantage in the job market. On the other hand, those who were traditionally deprived access to formal education such as the Dalits, knowledge of English may open doors of opportunities that were formally closed.

Colonialism led to considerable movement of people. It led to movement of people from one part to another within India. For instance people from present day Jharkhand moved to Assam to work on the tea plantations.

A newly emerging middle class particularly from the British Presidency regions of Bengal and Madras moved as government employees and professionals like doctors and lawyers moved to different parts of the country.

People were carted in ships from India to work on other colonised lands in distant Asia, Africa and Americas. Many died on their way. Most could never return. Today many of their descendants are known as people of Indian origin.

Capitalism

- Capitalism is an economic system in which the means of production are privately owned and organised to accumulate profits within a market system.
- Capitalism in the west emerged out of a complex process of European exploration of the rest of the world, its plunder of wealth and resources, an unprecedented growth of science and technology, it's harnessing to industries and agriculture.
- Capitalism has global nature with its dynamism, its potential to grow, expand,

Innovate and use technology and labour in a way that best assured to ensure greatest profit.

- Western colonialism was inextricably connected to the growth of western capitalism that became the dominant economic system.

Nation State as dominant political form

- Territory, population, administration, sovereignty. Educated Indians wanted sovereignty (governing their own country), taking own decisions.
- Industrializations require setting of factories and employing labour.
- Manchester: Industrial city in England. Cotton from India was sent to Manchester, processed into silk made cloth and sold in India for cheaper prices.
- Along with Surat and Masulipatnam, Dhaka and Thanjavur were ruled by kings and they too lost their courts.
- Artisans, painters, dancers, singers lost their importance. (working class) had to look for alternative jobs.
- Where there were industries, population increased and people from rural areas migrated to urban areas.
- They realised that life in urban areas and factories was tougher (social and economic reasons).
- All castes were the same, felt their culture was getting encoded.
- Madras (coffee, indigo, spices)
- Bombay (cotton) first established as price capital counter for trading.
- Calcutta (jute)

Role of cities

- Cities had a key role in the economic system of empires. Coastal cities like Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai were favored as from here primary goods could be easily exported and manufactured goods could be cheaply imported.
- Colonial cities were the prime link between the economic or core centre in Britain and periphery or margins in colonized India.
- Cities were the concrete expression of global capitalism. For example, Bombay during British India was planned and re-developed so that by 1900 over three-quarters of India's raw cotton were shipped through the city.

- Urbanisation in the colonial period led to decline of some earlier urban centres and the emergence of new colonial cities. Kolkata was one of the first of such cities.
- Cities were also important as a trading post, for defensive purposes and for military engagements

Urbanisation and Industrialization

Tea Plantations

- Tea grows in hilly areas and requires rain, hence, Assam was ideal for tea plantation.
- Disadvantage of Assam ~ low population, therefore people had to be moved from Bihar, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

Life of Labourers

- Harsh weather conditions caused diseases.
- Moved away from hence culture shock (adjustment).
- Living and working conditions were poor.

Low wages

Penal laws made by the British to punish the offender or workers if they did not report on time, try to run away or went against them.

- But their laws were in favour of the plantation owners.
- Industry was privately and publicly owned.
- Either plantation owners or planters and management was done by employing managers.
- Had a luxurious life and large bungalows with gardens which were maintained by the labourers.
- Industrialisation and urbanisation in independent India.
- Nehru and ministers felt a 'drain of wealth' as Britishers left us in a difficult position.
- Had to recognise the economy and led to develop industries.
- Nehru called 'dams' the temples of modern India as they provide employment, control floods and hydro electricity.

Urban-Rural Areas Impact

People move from rural to urban areas in search of jobs, better standard of living, sense of

anonymity.

1. Migration

- Social reason sense of anonymity, ability to choose one's own job.

- Economic reason, better job opportunities, standard of living.

2. Classes between immigrants and residents; where immigrants move to urban areas, the residents resist this because they feel that they have to show housing facilities, job opportunities.

3. Metropolis: city + suburbs, suburbs because part of city e.g. Chennai, Bangalore, Suburb areas had to reach because they were far away.

4. Megapolis: Suburbs of city because part of the city and also belong to other states e.g., NCR-Delhi, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Noida, Bombay, Calcutta Megapoliss.

Sociology
Chapter-2
Cultural Change

Facts that Matter

- Cultural change refers to the change in customs, traditions, beliefs, lifestyle, behaviour etc. (We got inspired by the British clothes, etc).
- Impact of British on our culture, values, norms, basically any impact or change on the cultural side.
- Change in aspects of daily life.

Social Reformers

- During British rule, social reformers wanted to change the social system, in India.
- Changing life of women and Dalits, ridding of social evils, ensuring education for women etc.
 1. Raja Ram Mohun Roy-started Brahrno Samaj and abolished Sati Pratha.
 2. Dayanand Saraswati started Arya Samaj.
- Social reformers came during British rule and not Mughal rule because the British tried to change/shape the social system.

Modern Communication and Transport

- British brought in railways and postal system, also they made improvement in the roads.
- Postal system and railways benefit both, because the British used this to transport goods and facilitate easy movement and the Indians benefited from this as through easy transport, they could facilitate, the freedom struggle.
- Though easy travel one would move from one place to another and one would also know what was happening all over the country.

New Organisation

- Social reformers would hold debates and talk about important issues.
- Associations were set up all over the nation.
- Social reformers set up their own association in their respective states, e.g., Raja Ram Mohun Roy's Brahmo Sarna] in West Bengal.
- Reformers would write in journals and newspapers.
- Reformers were well educated.

New Ideas

- When Colonial rule started we were influenced in all aspects of life.
- This changed the relationships between mothers and daughters because liberalism and freedom of thought came into being. This changed the outlook of life, relationships.
- Furniture and interior design of their houses changed with the use of sofa and dining set - and crockery.
- Social reformers debated whether women should be educated, this led to formation of associations writing in journalism, newspapers etc. e.g. Jyotiba Phule.
- There was a difference in interpretation, growth of ideas and gave them a better outlook of life.
- Ranade and Ishwar Chandra Vidayasagar focused on widow remarriage, but they had different approaches to it.
- Ranade - widow remarriage, we must treat the differences accepted to Vedas. Ishwar asked men to obey them).
- Many social reformers believed on similar issues and aspects of life but they had different approaches to it.

Major Cultural Changes In India

I. Sanskritisation

- Coined by M.N. Srinivas.
- The process by which a 'low' caste or tribe or other group takes over the customs, ritual, beliefs, ideology and style of life of a high and, in particular, a 'twice-born (dwija) caste'.

Impact of sanskritisation

The impact of Sanskritisation is many-sided. Its influence can be seen in language, literature, ideology, music, dance, drama, style of life and ritual.

It is primarily a process that takes place within the Hindu space though Srinivas argued that it was visible even in sects and religious groups outside Hinduism. Studies of different areas, however, show that it operated differently in different parts of the country.

In those areas where a highly Sanskritised caste was dominant, the culture of the entire region underwent a certain amount of Sanskritisation.

In regions where the non-Sanskritic castes were dominant, it was their influence that was stronger. This can be termed the process of 'de-Sanskritisation'.

There were other regional variations too. In Punjab culturally Sanskritic influence was never very strong. For many centuries until the third quarter of the 19th century the Persian influence was the dominant one.

Sanskritisation and groups social position

Srinivas argued that, "the Sanskritisation of a group has usually the effect of improving its position in the local caste hierarchy.

It normally presupposes either an improvement in the economic or political position of the group concerned or a higher group self-consciousness resulting from its contact with a source of the 'Great Tradition' of Hinduism such as a pilgrim centre or a monastery or a proselytising sect."

But in a highly unequal society such as India there were and still are obstacles to any easy taking over of the customs of the higher castes by the lower.

Indeed, traditionally, the dominant caste punished those low castes, which were audacious enough to attempt it. The story below captures the problem."

Criticism

Sanskritisation as a concept has been criticised at different levels.

1. One, it has been criticised for exaggerating social mobility or the scope of 'lower castes' to move up the social ladder. For it leads to no structural change but only positional change of some individuals.
2. it has been pointed out that the ideology of sanskritisation accepts the ways of the 'upper caste' as superior and that of the 'lower caste' as inferior. Therefore, the desire to imitate the 'upper caste' is seen as natural and desirable.
3. 'Sanskritisation' seems to justify a model that rests on inequality and exclusion. It appears to suggest that to believe in pollution and purity of groups of people is justifiable or all right.
4. Since sanskritisation results in the adoption of upper caste rites and rituals it leads to practices of secluding girls and women, adopting dowry practices instead of bride-price and practising caste discrimination against other groups, etc.
5. The effect of such a trend is that the key characteristics of dalit culture and society are eroded. For example the very worth of labour which 'lower castes' do is degraded and rendered 'shameful'.

II. Westernisation

M.N. Srinivas defines westernisation as "the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule, the term subsuming changes occurring at different levels...technology, institutions, ideology and values.

Different kinds of westernisation

- One kind refers to the emergence of a westernised sub-cultural pattern through a minority section of Indians who first came in contact with Western culture.
- This included the sub culture of Indian intellectuals who not only adopted many cognitive patterns, or ways of thinking, and styles of life, but supported its expansion. Many of the early 19th century reformers were of this kind.
- There were, therefore, small sections of people who adopted western life styles or were affected by western ways of thinking.
- There has been also the general spread of Western cultural traits, such as the use of new technology, dress, food, and changes in the habits and styles of people in general.
- Across the country a very wide section of middle class homes have a television set, a fridge, some kind of sofa set, a dining table and chair in the living room.

- Westernisation does involve the imitation of external forms of culture. It does not necessarily mean that people adopt modern values of democracy and equality.

Westernisation in the contemporary context

Conflicts between generations are seen as cultural conflicts resulting from westernisation.

Western Way of Thinking

- **Freedom of thought:** Social reformers tried to uplift status of dalit, women.
- **Liberty:** Individualism became Important.
- Besides change in behaviour patterns and customs etc, there was a change in art and architecture.
e.g., Raja Ravi Varma-first to paint a nuclear family. Earlier they would paint only joint families.
- Architecture-parliament buildings, houses, railway stations.

Two ways of thought

1. Western thinkers started thinking like them e.g. the way they treated women.
2. Western practices were influenced by their beliefs, food, customs, way of speaking; etc

General Conflicts between generations were always prevalent in society.

II. Modernisation

Moderns thinking and ideas influence. Change in mind sets, life changes for better features:

1. Due to globalization and broader outlook, universal/ cosmopolitan attitudes are replacing local ones.
2. Science and technology has replaced non-rational, emotional thinking, anything connected to religion.
3. Workplace and family were mixed together, but now work and personal life are separate. (Before entire family would work together)
4. Individual is given more importance than group. Now individuals don't want any institution and want freedom of thought, ideas etc. Nuclear family is more important and preferable than joint.
5. Achieved/ Acquired status is more important than ascribed status.
6. When people pick up work and communicate with people, they associate with those who

are, associated with their achieved status (colleagues, boss etc) than with those from ascribed status.

7. Attitude of people towards the human environment and natural environment has, changed for the better as the circumstances have changed. We don't associate nature with religion. We are actually concurred with the environment.

Modernisation and Secularisation

- Our attitude towards religion has changed with modernisation. One does not attribute everything to religion.
- Modernity and Secularism (tradition) are the two sides of a coin. They go hand in hand.
- If we don't keep up all traditions we can't be part of the global village and if we don't modernise them we can't develop and grow.
- With modern ideas and thinking, the religious aspects are not given the same importance.
- Due to Sanskritisation, the tribes feel that their culture is being eroded and in order to prevent that from happening, they have community celebrations.
- To retain and maintain their identity they try to show the others not to forget it and show unity.
- The local calendar has been replaced by the English calendar. Now we are part of the global village and we have sedateness.
- Ceremonies, rituals etc have changed. Now it is community over private.
- "Village display of wealth" now that is a want for materialistic goods and so traditions have changed from what they used to be.
- It is now a status symbol and celebrations are more elaborate.
- Coming in of modern thinking and ideas by (British, modern inform movements started coming up.
- Instead of the old ideas (child marriage etc). We now have new ideas (education of girl child, etc). Now it is more towards improving status of women and dalits and not only the traditional practices.
- Now rituals and customs are less important and materialistic things are more important (celebrities dance, sing, designer clothes, catering etc).
- We take it for granted that as we are modernising we are becoming more secular.

- Religion can usually disappear from one life. As we are becoming more modern, we assume that the importance of religion will deteriorate. This is not true as practicing dowry, honour killings still exist.

Rituals-Secular Dimension is different from Secular Goal

- Today ceremonies, celebrations are given more importance than the actual rituals.
- Materialistic goods are more important.
- Marriage ceremonies, the actual rituals are not given importance.
- Secular dimension-when you don't give importance to religion, but while doing religious practice people get to show off opportunity to socialise, communicate etc and show off.
- Secular goal social-economic aspects are given more importance than rituals (when dancing, food etc is more important)
- Now what matters most is what happened in the wedding and not the rituals.

Secularisation of Caste

- Once upon a time caste was referred to with pollution purity and the practices were important.
- Now politicians use caste for vote banks.
- Power and Authority are important for politicians and they use religion, region, caste, language, etc to get these.
- They make full use of the law for religion and caste to Indians.
- Caste system is the weakness of the Indian society.
- Caste identities have political backing .

Sociology
Chapter-3
The Story Indian Democracy

Facts that Matter

Democracy

- Democracy is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.
- Democracies fall into two basic categories, direct and representative.

Direct democracy

- All citizens, without the intermediary of elected or appointed officials, can participate in making public decisions.
- Such a system is clearly only practical with relatively small numbers of people – in a community organization or tribal council, for example, the local unit of a trade union, where members can meet in a single room to discuss issues and arrive at decisions by consensus or majority vote.

Representative democracy

- Citizens elect officials to make political decisions, formulate laws, and administer programmes for the public good.
- Every citizen has the important right to vote her/his representative. People elect their representatives to all levels from Panchayats, Municipal Boards, State Assemblies and Parliament.
- Participatory democracy is a system of democracy in which the members of a group or community participate collectively in the taking of major decisions.
- Decentralised governance/ democratic decentralisation system of governance: Where power is divided among levels and each level has its own powers and authority (duties, responsibilities) e.g Panchayati Raj.

Core Values of Democracy

- Democracy is not a modern term; it has been there for a long long ago.
- Example of democratic behavior has been shown in traditional plays and stories and in the epics, folklores.
- It is a combination of modern and traditional ideas. Modern ideas taken from the colonial rule and traditional ideas taken from folklores and epics.
- Western ideas-» Taken from books and other country's example.
- Indian National Congress-e-Most powerful party had sessions in various places. Karachi Session 1931 was crucial because the concept of Pooma Swaraj came into being.
- Also known as Karachi Resolution in which ideas were put together and later put into the constitution, fundamental rights were taken from these ideas.

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Fundamental Rights

1. All religions are equal: Everyone has the right to choose his/her religion.
2. Everyone should be free to elect, and vote for his/her representatives. Women can also work and can exercise their rights.
3. Right to Freedoms- Justice to all.

Constituent Assembly and Drafting of Constitution

- Constituent Assembly formed to draft constitution, had members from all walks of life.
- 1945-46 Constituent Assembly was formed, people from all sections, religions, castes, language, element group, region were part of it.
- B R Ambedkar was the head of assembly.
- There were a lot of debates on various issues e.g. When Panchayati Raj was suggested BR Ambedkar was against it because there would be more divisions among castes.
- But Panchayati Raj was formed in 1992.

Constitution and social change

- The multi-religious and multicultural composition of the population with distinct streams of tribal culture is one aspect of the plurality. Many divides classify the Indian people.
- The impact that culture, religion, and caste have on the urban-rural divide, rich-poor divide and the literate-illiterate divide is varied. Deeply stratified by caste and

poverty, there are groupings and sub-groupings among the rural poor.

- The urban working class comprises a very wide range. Then, there is the well-organised domestic business class as also the professional and commercial class. The urban professional class is highly vocal.
- Competing interests operate on the Indian social scene and clamour for control of the State's resources.

Basic objectives laid down by the Constitution

- Empowerment of the poor and marginalized, poverty alleviation, ending of caste and positive steps to treat all groups equally.

Competing interest

- Competing interests do not always reflect a clear class divide.
- Take the issue of the close down of a factory because it emits toxic waste and affects the health of those around. This is a matter of life, which the Constitution protects. The flipside is that the
- closure will render people jobless. Livelihood again, is a matter of life that the Constitution protects.
- It is interesting that at the time of drawing up the Constitution, the Constituent Assembly was fully aware of this complexity and plurality but was intent on securing social justice as a guarantee.

Law and justice

- The essence of law is its force. Law is law because it carries the means to coerce or force obedience. The power of the state is behind it.
- The essence of justice is fairness. Any system of laws functions through a hierarchy of authorities.
- The basic norm from which all other rules and authorities flow is called the Constitution. It is the document that constitutes a nation's tenets.
- The Indian Constitution is India's basic norm. All other laws are made as per the procedures the Constitution prescribes. These laws are made and implemented by the authorities specified by the Constitution.
- A hierarchy of courts (which too are authorities created by the Constitution) interpret the laws when there is a dispute. The Supreme Court is the highest court and the

Ultimate interpreter of the Constitution.

- The Supreme Court has enhanced the substance of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution in many important ways.

The Constitution and social justice

- The Constitution is not just a ready reference of do's and don'ts for social justice. It has the potential for the meaning of social justice to be extended.
- Social movements have also aided the Courts and authorities to interpret the contents of rights and principles in keeping with the contemporary understanding on social justice.
- Law and Courts are sites where competing views are debated. The Constitution remains a means to channelize and civilize political power towards social welfare. The Constitution has the capacity to help people because it is based on basic norms of social justice. For instance, the Directive Principle on village panchayats was moved as an amendment in the Constituent assembly by K. Santhanam.
- After forty odd years it became a Constitutional imperative after the 73rd Amendment in 1992.

Panchayati Raj

- Panchayati Raj translates literally to 'Governance by five individuals'.
- The idea is to ensure at the village or grass root level a functioning and vibrant democracy.
- While the idea of grassroot democracy is not an alien import to our country, in a society where there are sharp inequalities democratic participation is hindered on grounds of gender, caste and class.
- Traditionally there have been caste panchayats in villages. But they have usually represented dominant groups.
- They often held conservative views and often have, and continue to take decisions that go against both democratic norms and procedures.

Panchyati Raj Institution

- The structure of the three tier system of Panchyati Raj Institution is like a pyramid. At the base of the structure stands the unit of democracy or Gram Sabha followed by the

Panchayat Samiti or Gram Panchayat and then the Zila Parishad.

- This consists of the entire body of citizens in a village or grama. It is this general body that elects the local government and charges it with specific responsibilities.
- The Gram Sabhas ideally ought to provide an open forum for discussions and village-level development activities and play a crucial role in ensuring inclusion of the weaker sections in the decision-making processes.
- The 73rd Amendment provided a three-tier system of Panchayati Raj for all states having a population of over twenty lakhs. It became mandatory that election to these bodies be conducted every five years.
- It provided reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and thirty three percent seats for women.
- It constituted District Planning Committee to prepare drafts and develop plans for the district as a whole.

The 73rd and 74th amendments

- Ensured the reservation of one third of the total seats for women in all elected offices of local bodies in both the rural and urban areas. Out of this, 17 per cent seats are reserved for women belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes.
- This amendment is significant as for the first time it brought women into elected bodies which also bestowed on them decision making powers. One third of the seats in local bodies, gram panchayats, village panchayats, municipalities, city corporations and district boards are reserved for women.
- The 1993-94 elections, soon after the 73rd amendment brought in 800,000 women into the political processes in a single election. That was a big step indeed in enfranchising women.
- A constitutional amendment prescribed a three-tier system of local self-governance for the entire country, effective since 1992-93.

Power and responsibilities of Panchayats

- According to the Constitution, Panchayats should be given powers and authority to function as institutions of self-government. It, thus, requires all state governments to revitalise local representative institutions.
- The following powers and responsibility were delegated to the Panchayats:

- To prepare plans and schemes for economic development to
- promote schemes that will enhance social justice
- To levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees
- Help in the devolution of governmental responsibilities, especially that of finances to local authorities

Social welfare responsibilities

- The maintenance of burning and burial grounds
- Recording statistics of births and deaths, establishment of child welfare and maternity centres
- Control of cattle pounds Propagation of
- family planning Promotion of
- agricultural activities.

Development activities

- The construction of roads, public buildings, wells, tanks and schools.
- They also promote small cottage industries and take care of minor irrigation works. Many
- government schemes like the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) are monitored by members of the panchayat.

Income of the Panchayats

- The main income of the Panchayat is from tax levied on property, profession, animals, vehicles, cess on land revenue and rentals.
- The resources are further increased by the grants received through the Zilla Panchayat.
- It is also considered compulsory for Panchayat offices to put up boards outside their offices, listing the breakup of funds received, and utilization of the financial aid received.
- This exercise was taken up to ensure that people at the grass root level should have the 'right to information' - opening all functioning to the public eye.
- People had the right to scrutinize allocation of money. And ask reasons for decisions that were taken for the welfare and development activities of the village.

Nyaya Panchayats

- Nyaya Panchayats have been constituted in some states.
- They possess the authority to hear some petty, civil and criminal cases. They can
- impose fines but cannot award a sentence.
- These village courts have often been successful in bringing about an agreement amongst contending parties. They have been particularly effective in punishing men who harass women for dowry and perpetrate violence against them.

Van Panchayats

- Van-panchayats were set up by women in Uttarakhand in order to stop the problem of deforestation that is a big problem in the mountainous regions.
- Members of the van-panchayats develop nurseries and nurture tree saplings for planting on the hill slopes.
- Members also police nearby forests to keep an eye on illegal felling of trees.
- The Chipko movement – where women hugged trees to prevent them from being cut had its beginnings in this area.

Panchayati Raj training for illiterate women

- The story of two villages, Sukhipur and Dhukipur are unraveled through a cloth 'phad' or a scroll (a traditional folk medium of storytelling).
- Village Dhukipur (sad village) has a corrupt Pradhan (Bimla), who has spent the money received from the panchayat for building a school, on constructing a house for herself and her family. The rest of the villages are sad and poor.
- On the other hand Sukhipur (happy village) has a content populace as the Pradhan (Najma) has invested rural reconstruction money in developing good infrastructure for her village. Here the primary health centre is functioning; it has a 'pucca' building and also has a good road so that buses can reach the village.
- Pictorial pictures on the 'phad', accompanied with folk music were useful tools to

convey the message for able governance and participation.

- This innovative method of storytelling was very affective in bringing awareness to unlettered women. Most importantly the campaign conveyed the message that it was not enough to merely vote, or to stand for election, or to win. But important to know why one is voting for a particular person, what are the traits to look for, and what does he or she stand for.
- The value for integrity is also emphasized through the story and song media of the 'phad'.

Tradition of grassroot democratic functioning in tribal areas

- Tribal areas like Khasis, Jaintias and Garos in Meghalaya have their own traditional political institutions that have existed for hundreds of years.
- These political institutions were fairly well-developed and functioned at various tiers, such as the village level, clan level and state level. For instance, in the traditional political system of the Khasis each clan had its own council known as the 'Durbar Kur' which was presided over by the clan headman.
- Though there is a long tradition of grass root political institutions in Meghalaya, a large chunk of tribal areas lie outside the provisions of the 73rd Amendment. This may be because the concerned policy makers did not wish to interfere with the traditional tribal institutions.
- However, as sociologist Tiplut Nongbri remarks that tribal institutions in themselves need not necessarily be democratic in its structure and functioning. The strong egalitarian ethos characterises tribal societies and thus the element of stratification is not altogether absent.
- Tribal political institutions are not only marked by open intolerance to women but the process of social change has also introduced sharp distortions in the system, making it difficult to identify which is traditional and which is not.

Inequality in democracy

- Democratisation is not easy in a society that has had a long history of inequality based on caste, community and gender.

- Given this unequal and undemocratic social structure, it is not surprising that in many cases, certain members belonging to particular groups, communities, castes of the village are not included or informed about meetings and activities of the village. The Gram Sabha members
- are often controlled by a small coterie of rich landlords usually hailing from the upper castes or landed peasantry.
- They make decisions on development activities; allocate funds, leaving the silent majority as mere onlookers.

Political parties

- A political party may be defined as an organisation oriented towards achieving legitimate control of government through an electoral process.
- Political Party is an organisation established with the aim of achieving governmental power and using that power to pursue a specific programme.
- Political parties are based on certain understanding of society and how it ought to be. In a democratic form of government political parties are key actors.
- In a democratic system the interests of different groups are also represented by political parties, who take up their case.

Pressure groups

- Different interest groups work towards influencing political parties to take up their case.
- When certain groups feel that their interests are not being taken up, they may move to form an alternative party.
- Or they form pressure groups who lobby with the government.