

Current Affairs and Media Issues

BA(JMC)-MDC-111



Unit 3

- **1. Political Parties: Reach and Challenges**

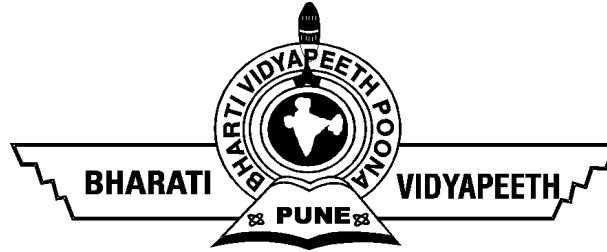
- India's political landscape is characterized by a multi-party system, with a mix of national and regional parties.

- **Reach:**

- **National Parties:**

- **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP):** Currently the ruling party at the Centre, it has expanded its reach significantly across India, particularly in the Hindi heartland and increasingly making inroads into southern and eastern states. Its organizational strength, strong leadership, and effective communication strategies contribute to its wide presence.
- **Indian National Congress (INC):** Historically dominant, the Congress has a pan-India presence but has seen its national footprint shrink significantly over the past decade. It remains a key opposition force, especially in certain states.
- **Other National Parties:** Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), All India Trinamool Congress (AITC), and National People's Party (NPP) also hold national party status but often have concentrated strength in specific regions or states. For example, BSP in Uttar Pradesh, CPI(M) in Kerala and West Bengal, AITC in West Bengal, and NPP in the North East.
- **Aam Aadmi Party (AAP):** Has recently gained national party status, expanding beyond its strongholds in Delhi and Punjab, signaling a growing reach, particularly in urban areas.

- **Regional Parties:** Play a crucial role in Indian politics. Their strength varies from being dominant forces in their respective states (e.g., DMK in Tamil Nadu, BJD in Odisha, YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh, SP in Uttar Pradesh, RJD in Bihar, Shiv Sena in Maharashtra) to being significant coalition partners at the national level. The rise of strong regional parties has led to an era of coalition politics at the Centre for many years, though the recent trend has seen a single party securing a clear majority.



2. Political Leaders

India's political landscape is shaped by several prominent leaders, both at the national and state levels.

•Key National Leaders (as of July 2025):

- Narendra Modi (BJP):** Current Prime Minister, a dominant figure in Indian politics, known for his strong leadership style and focus on development and nationalistic themes.
- Rahul Gandhi (INC):** Prominent leader of the Indian National Congress, often positioned as the main face of the opposition.
- Amit Shah (BJP):** Union Minister of Home Affairs, a key strategist and influential figure within the BJP.
- Mallikarjun Kharge (INC):** President of the Indian National Congress.
- Other influential figures:** Various Union Cabinet Ministers (e.g., S. Jaishankar, Nirmala Sitharaman, Rajnath Singh) and Chief Ministers of major states (e.g., Yogi Adityanath (Uttar Pradesh), M.K. Stalin (Tamil Nadu), Mamata Banerjee (West Bengal), Arvind Kejriwal (Delhi)).
- Droupadi Murmu:** Current President of India.
- Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai:** Current Chief Justice of India.



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3. Media, Public Opinion, and Elections

The media plays a critical role in shaping public opinion and influencing elections in India, though its landscape has undergone significant transformation.

•Role of Media:

- Information Dissemination:** Traditionally, print and electronic media (TV news channels) were primary sources for election news, policy debates, and candidate profiles.
- Agenda Setting:** Media outlets often set the agenda for public discourse, highlighting certain issues and downplaying others, thereby influencing voter priorities.
- Watchdog Function:** Media is expected to act as a watchdog, holding politicians and parties accountable, investigating corruption, and providing unbiased reporting.
- Public Opinion Formation:** Through news coverage, editorials, debates, and opinion polls, media significantly influences how the public perceives parties, leaders, and policies.
- Campaign Tool:** Parties use traditional media for advertisements, interviews, and public appearances.
- Social Media's Rise:**
 - Direct Communication:** Social media platforms (Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube) allow political parties and leaders to directly communicate with voters, bypassing traditional media gatekeepers.
 - Mobilization:** Used extensively for voter mobilization, organizing rallies, and "get out the vote" campaigns.
 - Micro-targeting:** Parties leverage data analytics to micro-target specific voter segments with tailored messages.
 - Real-time Engagement:** Enables real-time interaction, Q&A sessions, and immediate responses to political developments.



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4. News Relating to the Marginalized and Displaced Tribes

Marginalized and displaced tribal communities in India (Scheduled Tribes - STs) continue to face significant challenges despite constitutional safeguards and government schemes.

•Key Issues:

- Land Alienation and Displacement:** Ongoing concerns about tribal communities being displaced from their ancestral lands due to large-scale infrastructure projects (dams, mines, industrial zones), forest land acquisition, and encroachment by non-tribal populations. Often, rehabilitation and compensation are inadequate, leading to loss of traditional livelihoods and cultural disintegration. States like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha are frequently cited in this context due to extensive mining.
- Lack of Access to Basic Services:** Limited access to quality education and healthcare facilities in remote tribal areas. This contributes to high infant mortality rates, malnutrition, and lower literacy levels.
- Economic Exploitation:** Many tribals are forced into low-wage, hazardous jobs with minimal labor rights due to loss of traditional livelihoods.
- Social Discrimination:** Persistent discrimination and marginalization lead to their exclusion from mainstream socio-economic and political processes.
- Implementation Gaps:** Despite laws like the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, aimed at securing land rights for forest dwellers, its implementation remains inconsistent and often faces bureaucratic hurdles.
- Cultural Erosion:** Modernization and displacement threaten traditional knowledge systems, languages, and cultural practices vital to tribal identity.