

Section II : Comparative Government and Politics

Introduction

Three Branches of Government

COUNTRY	 LEGISLATURE Makes Laws	 EXECUTIVE Administers Laws (Political Executive and Bureaucracy)	 JUDICIARY Interprets Laws and provides justice
INDIA 	Parliament Lok Sabha Rajya Sabha	Political Executive President (Head of State) Prime Minister (Head of Government) and Council of Ministers Bureaucracy The Administration Machinery	Supreme Court High Court District and other courts
UNITED KINGDOM 	Parliament House of Commons House of Lords	Political Executive Monarch (Head of State) Prime Minister (Head of Government) and the Cabinet Bureaucracy The Administration machinery	Supreme Court and other courts
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 	Congress House of Representatives Senate	Political Executive President (Head of State and Government) and Secretaries Bureaucracy The Administration Machinery	Supreme Court State Supreme Courts Other Courts

Comparative government is concerned with the study of formal political institutions like legislature, executive, judiciary and bureaucracy. It is mainly a study of these political institutions. Comparative politics looks at some other factors that influence

the working of the political institutions. It seeks to analyse how these and other institutions work.

Thus the comparative study of politics and government examines political institutions –like Constitution, Executive,

Legislature and Judiciary, the system of representation, political parties and pressure groups. This section will help the students to do the following:

(i) Identify the important governmental institutions and understand their structure and functions. They can also understand how these institutions were created. They would also be introduced to different political systems in the world. For example the governmental system of India is different from that of the United States or United Kingdom. What would be the similarities or differences between them?

(ii) They can understand how a government is created, how leaders are either elected or selected. What role do the political parties and pressure and interest groups play in the formation of governments?

The three chapters of this section are as follows:

Chapter IV: Constitutional Government: What is a constitution? The Constitution is a set of political principles, according to which a country is governed. It gives the rights and duties of the people and the government. It sets out the structure of the state, the major state institutions, and the principles governing their relations with each other and with the state's citizens. It also talks about the division of power between the centre and the states (Federalism).

Chapter V: The Concept of Representation: You have seen how the people in India elect members of the Parliament or the State Assembly or the Municipal Councillors in the cities or Panchayat Members in rural area. We call them our representatives. We give them the authority to speak on our behalf in the Assembly or the Parliament. It is expected that they protect our interests. They may be part of the ruling party or the opposition,

they are still expected to protect and promote our interests. Since the government is formed by political parties, it is the parties that become important in channeling the representation. Sometimes, it is necessary to bring to the attention of the government, problems faced by some specific groups. Such groups may form pressure groups or interest groups to articulate their problems and then put pressure on the government. All these are means of representation that we would study in this chapter.

Chapter VI: Role of the Judiciary:

Judiciary is the branch of the government that has the power to interpret the constitution. It has the power to decide legal disputes. One of the important characteristics of the Judiciary in democratic societies is that it is an independent and non-political organ of the state. One of the important powers of the Judiciary is that of judicial review. Judicial review is the power that the Supreme Court has to examine the actions of the legislature, executive and the administrative arms of the government to ensure that they do not violate the constitution. You would study this role of the Judiciary in the chapter along with the concept of Judicial Review.



Do you know ?

The United Kingdom comprises four geographic parts - England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Geographically, England, Scotland, Wales are parts of the island of Great Britain. Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are part of a separate island. While Northern Ireland is part of United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland is a separate country.

The name Britain or England is sometimes used to refer to the United Kingdom as a whole.