

# 1. National Politics: The Theater of Power

National politics is the most visible and consequential form of governance, determining the fate of millions. At this level, the struggle for control over a country's laws, economy, and identity unfolds through elections, legislation, and sometimes revolutions.

## Key Dynamics:

- **Elections & Representation:** In democracies, political parties compete for votes, promising different visions for the nation. Campaigns are battles of narratives—some based on ideology (socialism vs. capitalism), others on identity (nationalism, religion, ethnicity).
- **Governing Institutions:** The executive (president/prime minister), legislature (parliament/congress), and judiciary (supreme courts) constantly negotiate power. A strong leader may centralize authority, while fragmented systems lead to coalition politics.
- **Media & Public Opinion:** News outlets, social media, and propaganda shape what people believe. Politicians manipulate narratives, while investigative journalism holds power accountable.
- **Geopolitics:** No nation exists in isolation. Trade wars, military alliances (NATO), and global institutions (UN, WTO) dictate how countries interact. A single diplomatic misstep can trigger economic collapse or war.

## Real-World Examples:

- **Populism vs. Technocracy:** Leaders like Donald Trump (U.S.) and Narendra Modi (India) use emotional appeals, while others (like Germany's Angela Merkel) govern through pragmatism.
- **Authoritarian Resilience:** China's Communist Party blends capitalism with repression, while Russia's Putin uses oligarchic control and misinformation to stay in power.

