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#### About Delhi Metropolitan Education

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Contemporary India

Dr. Susmita Bala  
 Dr. Iram Rizvi



# Contemporary India

## Socio-Political Issues and Reforms

Editors  
**Dr. Susmita Bala**  
**Dr. Iram Rizvi**

The textual matter of this book has been organised as per the prescribed syllabus of Contemporary India for undergraduate students pursuing a Bachelor of Journalism and Mass Communication. The entire book has been divided into twelve chapters. The book is aimed at creating awareness amongst the readers about history, culture, issues, policies, and economic issues and reforms.

Chapters 1 and 2 describe Indian history and culture and then describe the art forms, including music (classic and Carnatic), drama, and other art forms that originated in India. Then Chapter 3 focuses on the modern history of India and its struggle to achieve independence. Students pursuing their careers in media need to be open-minded and aware of the issues that India is still struggling with; thus, Chapter 4 identifies various issues like the caste system, illiteracy, superstition, regional disparities, and undiscovered tribal and agricultural concerns.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 describe the Indian government, Indian Federalism, the Indian Constitution, and elections in India.

To understand the concepts related to the Indian economy, the authors have written chapters 8 and 9. These chapters provide a historical account of the Indian economy after independence, five-year plans to improve the economic status of India, and new economic initiatives introduced after 2014.

Every effort has been made to sensitise the students through chapters 10, 11, and 12 about the various issues like gender disparity, economic inequality, women's issues, health, and hygiene, and the role of the judiciary in addressing these issues by citizens of India through public interest litigation.

**CONTEMPORARY INDIA**  
**Socio-political Issues**  
**and**  
**Reforms**

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*Editors*

**Dr. Susmita Bala**

**Dr. Iram Rizvi**

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## Foreword

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When people generally take on the journey of understanding ‘Contemporary India’, they do not take much time to realise the challenges that lie ahead. It is a subject as complex as the country itself, encompassing a diverse range of topics that delve into every bit of Indian society. The contributors of these chapters understood the magnitude of the task and sought to create a comprehensive one-stop solution for all the students facing the daunting task of exploring the complexities of our nation. The students finding this subject for many years find the vast amount of information and its processing overwhelming. Therefore, it gives me immense pleasure to introduce this amazing piece of work that aims to alleviate the difficulties faced by students.

The tone and style of this book are methodically designed to not only enhance knowledge levels but also spark curiosity and inspire further exploration. The information presented within these pages is carefully curated to be easily digested, ensuring better assimilation and retention of knowledge.

Having gone through the chapters of this book, I can confidently proclaim that it will become an invaluable resource for students. Its broad appeal makes it suitable for individuals from various disciplines and age groups. Whether you are seeking to ignite an

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interest in the socio-political economics of India or already possess a fascination with the subject, this book will provide you with a holistic perspective of our beloved country.

This book goes beyond the title of the subject by not only talking about the contemporary India. It further delves into the rich heritage of India's culture and democracy offering a deep exploration of the hidden treasures that lie within our nation, which is sure to make the chests swell with pride within every reader.

It is with great pleasure and conviction that I recommend this book to all those who are ready to board the journey of discovery and unravel the complexities of Contemporary India. May it light your path and enrich your understanding of our great nation.

**Aman Sahni**

Vice-Chairman

DME

(M.Sc. Global Politics, London School of Economics)

## Preface

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Academicians as well as students continuously confront the challenge of identifying the major incidents that have shaped present-day India as a country, its society, and its policies. Which may in turn raise a question while writing a book on the same topic for undergraduate students: "What might a course on India responsibly omit or include?" For example, if the focus is on political and economic challenges, to what extent should the teacher prioritise the modern versus ancient history of India? How are economic trade patterns shaping regional diplomacy? Should the focus be more on the arts or local culture? Every aspect of India merits examination in its full complexity. This book is an attempt to address some of the basic concepts that undergraduate students should know.

My interest in contemporary India was sparked when I realised that students pursuing bachelor's degrees in mass communication and journalism not only need to be aware of the achievements that India has made in the fields of technology, science, and media but also need to study the sociocultural composition as well as the glorious past that makes this country unique. India is a country of diverse cultures, languages, and religions, and its rich history has influenced its present in many ways. As a result, understanding the complexities of Indian society is essential for anyone wishing to communicate effectively about the country. Therefore, I am motivated to study

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and write about contemporary India to gain a deeper understanding of its past, present, and future and to share my insights with others.

This book is written in a student-friendly manner and with relevant matter as per the guidelines provided in the syllabus. Therefore, no effort has been spared to make the subject matter as per the current data and concisely supported with relevant examples. This book has been supplemented with illustrations and informative data within the chapters. Every effort has been made to use simple and lucid language so that students belonging to various regional and educational streams can comprehend the subject matter without any difficulty.

The author expresses their gratitude towards Prof. (Dr.) Ambrish Saxena, Dean of DME Media School, Delhi Metropolitan Education, and Prof. (Dr.) Susmita Bala, HOD, DME Media School, Delhi Metropolitan Education, Noida, for their guidance and encouragement while writing this book. The author is also grateful to the publishers for their interest in the subject and for publishing this book. Suggestions from its users and experts to improve the book are welcome.

**Dr. Susmita Bala**  
**Dr. Iram Rizvi**



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**Unit-I**  
**Indian History & Culture**

**1**

**Indian History & Culture**

*Dr. Ambrish Saxena*

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India is an incredibly captivating country, known for its diverse cultures, languages, rich history, and range of religions and ethnicities. Studying India is both exciting and challenging due to its multidimensional aspects and unique diversity. India has been home to one of the ancient civilizations, 'The Harappa Civilization', and since then, it has evolved and merged with other cultures, resulting in even more diversity and uniqueness. Over time, many communities have settled in India, including those who arrived before the Europeans and Mughals and discovered their future prospects in this country. India has welcomed, assimilated, and provided refuge to people with open arms and is currently home to 138 crore people.

As history was being recorded in a more advanced manner, it became increasingly challenging to compare and analyse the latent and manifest changes in India. It is difficult to encapsulate the essence of India, considering its rich historical past and vibrant contemporary realities. India is home to a total of 121 languages and 270 mother tongues, along with numerous ethnicities, tribes, and religions. Additionally, India is a land of festivals, celebrated by its citizens, which are part of its cultural diversity and are even appreciated abroad. There are 32 million NRIs and OCIs residing

## 2

# Indian Art Forms

*Dr. Ambrish Saxena*

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### **Introduction**

Art is a diverse range of human activities in creating visual, auditory or performing artworks, expressing the author's imaginative or technical skill, intended to be appreciated for their beauty or emotional power. In their most general form these activities include the production of art work, the criticism of art, and the aesthetic dissemination of art. Art referred to any skill or mastery. Art is a creative way of expression, communication of emotions or other qualities. Art can be seen as "a special faculty of the human mind to be classified with religion and science". The general description of Art can be a mentioning an idea of imaginative or technical skill stemming from human beings and creation. The nature of art, and related concepts such as creativity and interpretation, are explored in a branch of philosophy known as aesthetics.

### ***Indian Art***

From ancient Indian artworks to thriving contemporary Indian art, India's vibrant visual legacy is the result of a varied spectrum of cultural influences. The vibrant, complex, and enthralling motifs depicting many different civilizations reflect the diversity of Indian art forms from this region. Because several of the world's major

## Indian Independence Movement

*Dr. Ambrish Saxena*

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### **Introduction**

The term Indian Freedom movement incorporates various national and regional campaigns, agitations and efforts of both Nonviolent and Militant philosophy. The term encompasses a wide spectrum of political organisations, philosophies, and movements which had the common aim of ending the British Colonial Authority as well as other colonial administrations in South Asia. The initial resistance to the movement can be traced back to the very beginnings of Colonial Expansion in Karnataka by the Portuguese in the 16th century and by the British East India Company in Bengal, in the middle and late 1700s. By the beginning of the 19th Century, the Company regime was firmly entrenched in India. Governor General, Wellesley's Forward Policy and Subsidiary Alliances and Lord Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse and Annexations and the introduction of greased Cartridges which hurt the sentiments of the Hindu soldiers all precipitated into "The Great Mutiny of 1857" called the First War of Independence. The first organised militant movement was in Bengal, but it later took political stage in the form of a mainstream movement in the then newly formed Indian National Congress, with prominent moderate leaders seeking only their basic rights to appear for civil services examinations and more rights,

## Contemporary Issues and Need for Scientific Temper

*Dr. Iram Rizvi*

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### 4.1 Contemporary Issues

India achieved its independence from British colonial rule on August 15, 1947, following a protracted battle. The nation is a parliamentary republic that is sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic. Even though India has made great strides in many areas of national life since gaining independence, the country still faces several issues that are frequently tied to one another. In actuality, each civilization in the globe has specific social problems. Indian society is decaying. Indian civilization is deeply steeped in religion; there are adherents of many different faiths, including Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs, and Parsis, among others. All of these increase the sociocultural diversity of the nation.

India's societal issues are also a result of its people's religious practices and beliefs. The religious and cultural practices of the people of India are the root of almost all societal concerns and problems. These societal issues have existed for a long time and are still present now in some way. In addition, India has experienced several major wars; throughout its long history, numerous foreign invaders have attacked the country, but only a few have attempted

# 5

## Concept of Government & Indian Federalism

*Dr. Iram Rizvi*

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### **What is a Government?**

The word “government” comes from the Latin verb “gubernare,” which means “to manage” or “to steer.” As societies got larger and more complicated, it became necessary to build governance systems to handle the group’s concerns. Governments are formed to help regulate collective norms, safeguard individual rights, and provide public goods and services.

In India, the government is founded on democratic ideals, which means that the government’s power and authority are obtained from the people. India’s democratic system is founded on popular sovereignty, which means that the people have the final say over who governs them. The government must operate in the best interests of the people and is accountable to them. The word “government” comes from the Latin verb “gubernare,” which means “to manage” or “to steer.” As societies got larger and more complicated, it became necessary to build governance systems to handle the group’s concerns. Governments are formed to help regulate collective norms, safeguard individual rights, and provide public goods and services.

**Unit-II**  
**India Polity and Constitution**

**6**

**An Introduction to  
Indian Constitution**

*Dr. Iram Rizvi*

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**Introduction**

The Constitution of independent India was framed keeping in mind the background of about 200 years of colonial rule, a mass-based freedom struggle, and the national movement, partition of the country and spread of communal violence. The founding fathers of independent India and those who framed the Constitution were concerned about the aspirations of the people, integrity and unity of the country and establishment of a democratic society. The constitution was framed after much deliberation as there were some members holding different ideological views.

Some of the members were inclined to socialist principles; others held Gandhian thinking but nothing could act as any kind of impediment in the progress of the Assembly's work because all these members were of liberal ideas. Their main aim was to give India a 'Constitution' which will fulfil the cherished ideas and ideals of the people of this country. The Indian Constitution generates the degree of trust and coordination which is needed for different kinds of people living in a country. It specifies how the government will be constituted and who will have the power to take what decisions.



## Election Process in India

*Dr. Pramod Kumar Pandey*

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### **India as a Democratic Country**

In a democratic system it is a basic need of the democratic system that citizen representatives should constitute the legislature system. In India at the frequency of each 5 years the general election. After the completion of the election, which party wins more than 50% or the majority of the total seats of Lok Sabha forms the government. Indian constitution gives the right to one vote each citizen (minimum age of 18 years). But it has been observed that the voting percentage is not growing. Another issue is that the number of elected candidates are coming from criminal backgrounds or not having serious interest in Lok Sabha meetings and they are not fulfilling the basic objectives of general elections. In this chapter we will discuss the procedure of general elections. What are the issues that require electoral reforms? We will also discuss the various national and state level political parties participating in centre and state government formation procedure.

### **7.1 Elections in India**

Elections enable every adult citizen of the country to participate in the process of government formation. You must have observed that elections are held in our country frequently. These include

**Unit-III**  
**Indian Economy**

**8**

**Nature of Indian Economy**

*Dr. Pramod Kumar Pandey*

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**Introduction**

The word 'economy' denotes the operations and management of the economic system, the activities related to production of goods and services, consumption, investment, exchange of goods, services within the geographical territory, and exports and imports with the rest of the world. Economy depends on its nature and ideology of the nation or the society concerned. India economy is considered as a growing economy or in other word it is a developing economy. At the time of Independence the agricultural sector contributed about 50 per cent of the GDP. Over the years its share has decreased to about 22 percent of GDP which means that the share of industrial and service sectors is increasing. India has made radical changes in her economic policies since 1991.

Economic liberalisation has resulted in the setting up of more industries and the level of technology has improved. The annual growth rate of GDP has increased to about 6 per cent; during the liberalisation period. Its export potential also has improved India's Economic Development and foreign exchange reserve.

## Indian Economic Plans

*Dr. Pramod Kumar Pandey*

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### **Introduction**

Liberalisation, Privatization and Globalization have become the buzzwords in the current economic scenario. The concepts of Liberalisation, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) are actually closely related to one another. This LPG phenomenon was first initiated in the Indian Economy in 1990 when the Indian Economy experienced a severe crisis. There was a decline in the country's export earnings, national income and industrial output. The government had to seek aid from the IMF to resolve its debt problem. That is when the government decided to introduce the New Industrial Policy (NIP) in 1991 to start liberalising the Indian economy.

### ***Concept of Liberalisation***

Liberalisation means elimination of state control over economic activities. It implies greater autonomy to the business enterprises in decision-making and removal of government interference. Major aspects of liberalisation in India

1. **Abolition of Licensing:** NIP'1991 abolished licensing for most industries except 6 industries of strategic significance. They include alcohol, cigarettes, industrial explosives, defence

**Unit-IV**  
**Social Movement and Activism**

**10**

**Socio-Economic Inequality**

*Dr. Iram Rizvi*

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**Introduction**

Socioeconomic inequality is one of the most pressing issues that our society is grappling with. How does it play out over generations, and how have those inequalities led to discrepancies in wealth, especially for underprivileged people? Typically to measure socioeconomic status four factors are considered. First is someone's education level; second is their occupation (which can be rank-ordered through a methodology by their prestige); third is their income level; and fourth is their wealth level (accumulated or lack thereof). Those four together represent the resources an individual has to bring to bear in society, and we call that socioeconomic status. There are other dimensions, like political power, which is associated with relative position in society from a socioeconomic perspective.

***The Vicious Loop of Socioeconomic Inequality***

Some scholars argue that it is inherited as it is closely associated with wealth. Wealth is an important component of class, and in some cases, it's literally passed on through inheritance or gifts. What we found was that if you consider all of those dimensions and more, like age, appearance, marital status, race, and so on,

## Judicial Activism

*Dr. Iram Rizvi*

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### **Introduction**

Judicial activism has acquired so many different meanings as to obscure more than it reveals. Judicial activism simply means a proactive judiciary which does not limit itself to the interpretation of law only but also sees if the law affects people adversely. To understand the concept of judicial activism two theories have been expounded. The first theory “Power vacuum filling” theory says if in a system there is a vacuum because of the lack of any particular organ or the inaction of it, then other organs extend their influence to the vacuum created. Nature does not allow the vacuum to remain as such. In the government in certain areas vacuum is created due to the lack of interest in executive or legislative or simply due to the inaction and indifference on their part. This vacuum is filled by a dynamic judiciary. This is called judicial activism. The other theory of “social want” says that people want something which is neither provided by the executive or the legislative. So the judiciary took it upon itself to provide the wants of the people. It became proactive and this proactiveness is called judicial activism.

### **11.1 Judicial Activism**

Judicial activism has its genesis in the American system. The American system of governance has favoured an active judiciary

## Indian Health System

*Dr. Iram Rizvi*

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### **Historical Development of Health Care in India**

Hospitals have been around in India for a very long period. Hospitals to care for the impoverished and the disabled existed even in the 6th century BC, during the time of Buddha. The Ashoka hospitals (273-232 BC) were the finest facilities in India at the time. Around the year 600 AD, books published by Arab and European explorers indicate that India was at the height of its medical knowledge. Lack of encouragement caused the native vaidyas' enthusiasm for studying the Indian flora to wane. Then, in the 10th century AD, traders with Islamic nations took their own physicians, known as Hakims, with them. With the entrance of European missionaries in the 16th century, the Allopathic system of medicine was first used. There was advancement in hospital construction throughout the British era. The nineteenth century saw the beginning of organised medical education.

### ***Ancient Period***

The four Vedas (Rig, Sama, Yajusa, and Atharva Veda) are the primary sources of knowledge for ancient Indian culture, which can be connected to Aryan culture. The Atharva Veda is replete with hymns and prayers that offer guidance on how to shield people