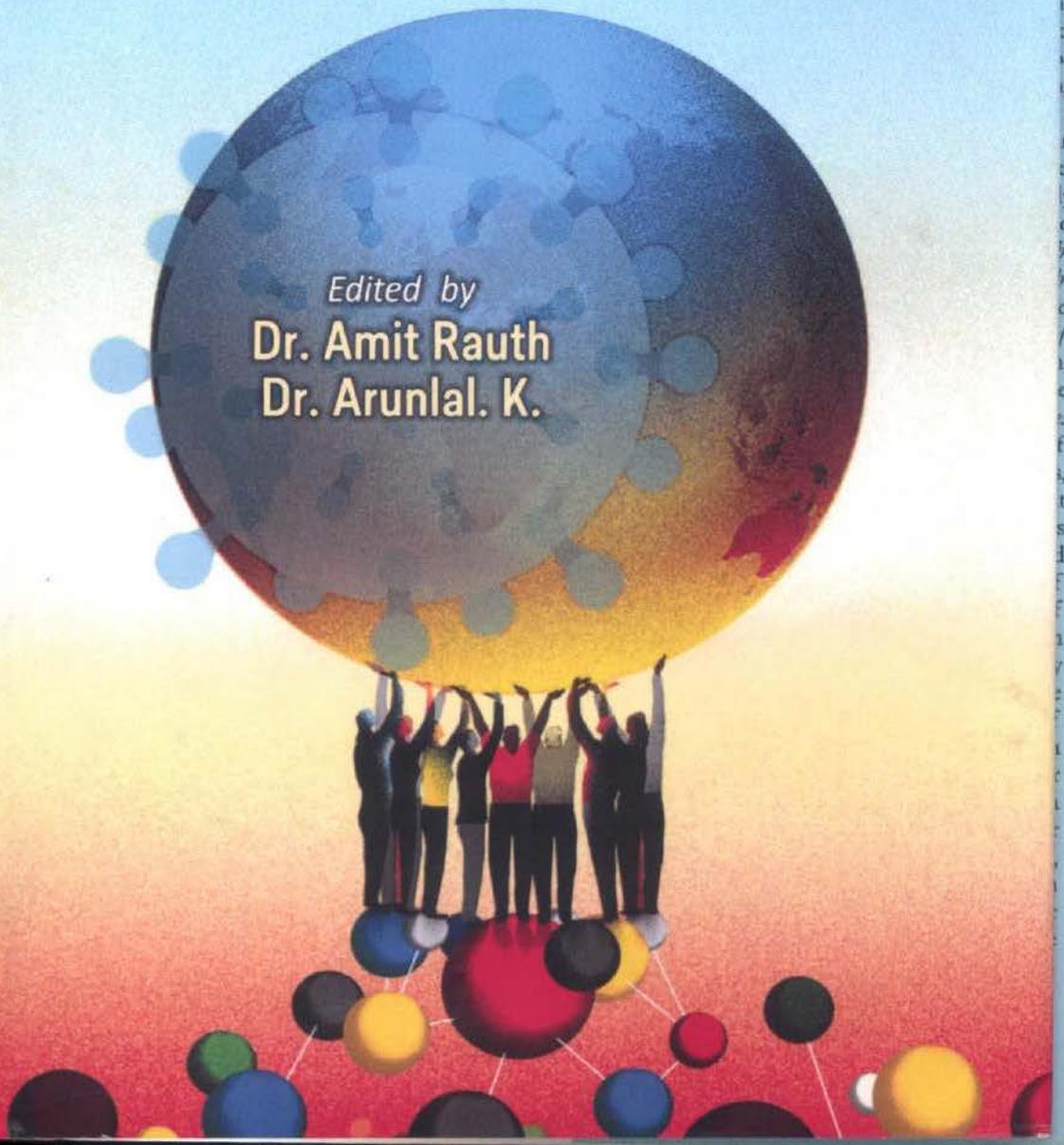




COVID NARRATIVES and Politics of the New Normal

Issues, Challenges and Perspectives

Edited by
Dr. Amit Rauth
Dr. Arunlal. K.



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The global pandemic has redefined the very nature of humanistic narratives and in the process also called into existence a host of new normal discursive areas. This edited book seeks to place new thoughts on trauma, isolation and displacement in the new normal context and also address the contestations regarding state and forms of power. The book also seeks to look at how the works of major theorists, contexts of philosophy have changed to eventuate in the new normal. This book cuts across all disciplines including literature, linguistics, sociology, psychology, education, anthropology, history, political science, economics, gender studies and religion studies among others. It seeks to investigate all the current issues at stake and come up with possible ways and strategies to combat this kind of problem in the near future.

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To the individuals and the humanity stricken by Covid-19...

Political Trust, Democracy and the Pandemic: The Indian Scenario

Ranjita Chakraborty

Abstract

Since the last fifteen years there has been a vigorous debate on the nature of democracy in the entire world. Academic debates have focused on questions ranging from the trends seen, emergence of authoritarianism coupled with decline in popular sovereignty and thereby leading to the question of "political trust". In fact, the very idea of democracy has come under the scanner. Amidst this, the pandemic has not only renewed our interest in democracy but we have also witnessed a decline in respect to the values of democracy by the governments in the name of managing the crisis along with strong dictatorial tendencies and usurpation of freedom. It is against this backdrop that the paper seeks to reflect upon the nature of democracy worldwide and in India in particular. It would also focus on the trends related to political trust in India.

As the pandemic unfolded, a range of not so happy pictures passed by in front of our eyes, ranging from the utter desperation and helplessness of individuals, the marginalisation of the poor to the sheer mismanagement and apathy of the government towards the millions of poor people of India. This denial of rights obviously would mean popular anger and its diverse manifestations. However, a different picture unfolded as the two surveys on popular mood and political trust emerged. The Mood of the Nation Survey and the CSDS & Gaon connection survey threw up a startling perspective. In spite of sheer governmental apathy, majority of people despite unemployment and hunger still considered or reposed their trust on the government. The paper would thereby try to understand this paradox and attempt to decipher the reasons behind such tendencies.

Finally, the paper would attempt to comprehend and emphasise on the future trends in the new normal and post pandemic situation. The most significant question that the paper reflects on would be whether the political trust shall still be retained by the government or is it time that we in the context of these new realities and trends

- (i) making the business of government more resource intensive (Fukuyama 1995);
- (ii) eroding civic engagement and conventional forms of political participation (Franklin 2004) such as voter registration or turnout;
- (iii) lowering public confidence in government, reducing support for progressive public policies and promoting risk aversion and short-termism in government (Diamond & Plattner, eds. 2015);
- (iv) it potentially creates the space for the rise of authoritarian-populist forces at a time when social cohesion is at a premium (Norris and Inglehart, 2019); and
- (v) There may also be implications for long-term democratic stability as liberal democratic regimes are thought most durable when built upon popular legitimacy (Stoker et al., 2018).

Trust in politics matters, it is argued, because governments need the trust of citizens to tackle challenging issues and problems confronting society. People need to trust the government to support more government intervention that makes a difference in managing the virus. Public trust as a political resource is important since without it the changes to public behaviour necessary to contain and ultimately prevent the spread of infection are slower and more resource intensive.

Without trust no institution can perform but as Giddens says trust is based on half knowledge or past performance. Trust is built on the evidence of past success, and the expectation of future performance. It is to be noted however, that trust is voluntary and that the loss of trust is not accompanied by sanctions or fear. This expectation is the pragmatic aspect of trust but trust also has a normative dimension. (Weinert 2018) It can be said then that mistrust is the expectation that the continuity of the services may be interrupted with difficult consequences. This characterisation of mistrust points to a further important feature of trust – we trust persons and institutions because their services have beneficial consequences for our well-being. Luhmann (1979, 2017) regards confidence as one of the 'essential conditions of trust'. However, confidence can be lost when risk increases the expectation of disappointment and trust in reliable institutions is not necessarily linked to risks. Political scientists tend to draw a distinction between social trust and political trust. (Newton 2001) Social trust is invested in social institutions – for instance voluntary organisations; political trust affects political institutions. Political science has long stressed the importance of citizens trusting in government for states to effectively operate (Hetherington 1998; Norris 2011). Political trust has a significant bearing on how citizens form preferences over policy, what determines the choice to participate in democracy, which they select for office, and, critically, compliance with the law.

Keeping aside the fact that the 'faithful' will 'trust' the dictator to guarantee their well-being, which may be based on a blind faith in the abilities of the leader to do

good for all or on fear of sanctions and punishment in the case of non-compliance. There can also be trust invested by the dissenters on the political regime of using every form of surveillance and political mechanisms to silence them.

Despite the existence of a variety of approaches and the complexity of the subject, we can find uniformity across the literature on trust in at least two key respects. First, the literature highlights two different but complementary components: i) competence – responsiveness and reliability are the two subcomponents; and ii) values – integrity, openness and fairness. are the three critical dimensions of trustworthiness. Trust therefore understood from the competence-values framework provides a more practical and actionable way of understanding trust and especially political trust. Therefore, basing on this framework political trust can be defined as a citizen's belief that the institutions of government and the political leadership, will fulfil their mandates with competence and integrity, acting purely in pursuit of the broader benefit of society.

Global Status of Democracy

The world has been in a mild but protracted democratic recession since about 2006. Beyond the lack of improvement or modest erosion of global levels of democracy and freedom, there have been several other causes for concern. First, there has been a significant and, in fact, accelerating rate of democratic breakdown. Second, the quality or stability of democracy has been declining in a number of large and strategically important emerging-market countries, which I call "swing states." Third, authoritarianism has been deepening, including in big and strategically important countries. And fourth, the established democracies, beginning with the United States, increasingly seem to be performing poorly and to lack the will and self-confidence to promote democracy effectively abroad. (Diamond 2015)

Over the years especially since 2006 the faith in democracy as a form of regime is dwindling as it has been found to perform poorly in terms of governance as compared to authoritarian regimes. As Plattner (2016) has pointed out, it is rising doubt about the legitimacy and the desirability of democracy that is at the root of the sense of democratic decline. There are three chief reasons for this shift: (1) the growing sense that the advanced democracies are in trouble in terms of their economic and political performance at home; (2) the new self-confidence and seeming vitality of some authoritarian countries; and (3) the shifting geopolitical balance between the democracies and their rivals. Moreover, as Diamond (2015) has pointed out that there is a class of regimes that in the last decade or so have experienced significant erosion in electoral fairness, political pluralism, and civic space for opposition and dissent, typically as a result of abusive executives' intent upon concentrating their personal power and entrenching ruling-party hegemony.

It has been noticed that prior to the pandemic, as has been the trend for several years, authoritarian regimes are increasingly deploying disinformation across borders

by using both state media and social media platforms. Typically, the goal of such disinformation campaigns is to exploit the open information environment in democracies in order to weaken their perceived adversaries from within by sowing discord and strife among the population. They do this by advancing conspiracy theories, amplifying hateful and divisive rhetoric, and interfering in elections. In fact, a good number of reports on democracy and the trends globally have hinted at the growing tendencies of authoritarianism. The following are few highlights of the trend of democracy throughout the world as deduced from the various reports on the status of democracy across the world.

Democracy Report 2020 – Excerpts from the report goes such – Major G20 nations and all regions of the world are experiencing the “third wave of autocratisation”. Autocratisation (i.e., the decline of democratic traits) has accelerated in the world. For the first time since 2001, autocracies are in the majority (92 countries, home to 54% of the world’s population. This has been coupled with the emergence of ‘toxic polarisation’. Autocratisation has moved beyond formal political institutions and has dealt a double blow to the whole society. First, autocratising governments have reduced the scope for civil society, protest and academia. Second, various governmental and societal actors are more likely to become polarising, use political violence, and mobilise the masses in favor of an illiberal agenda. Autocratisation is affecting Brazil, India, the United States of America, and Turkey, which are major economies with sizeable populations, exercising substantial global military, economic, and political influence. India is on the verge of losing its status as a democracy due to a severe curtailment of scope for the media, civil society, and the opposition. The report has issued an autocratisation alert. The report also indicated a new record in the ‘rate of democratic breakdowns’ and a decline in liberal democracy. The share of countries with substantial pro-democracy mass protests surged from 27% in 2009 to 44% in 2019. Citizens have taken to the streets in order to defend civil liberties, the rule of law and fight for clean elections and political freedom. The unprecedented degree of mobilisation for democracy in light of deepening autocratisation is a sign of hope. While pro-autocracy rulers attempt to constrain the scope for civil society, millions of citizens demonstrate their commitment to democracy. The countries that have autocratised the most over the last 10 years are Hungary, Turkey, Poland, Serbia, Brazil and India. The autocratising governments in these countries first restricted the scope for media and civil society. Once they had gained sufficient control over the “watchdogs” in the media and civil society, they dared to begin eroding the quality of elections.

Global Satisfaction with Democracy, 2020

The Centre for the Future of Democracy based at The Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, report on Global Satisfaction with Democracy, 2020 has pointed out the following: In the West, growing political polarisation, economic frustration, and the rise of populist parties, have eroded the

promise of democratic institutions. In developing democracies the euphoria of the transition years has faded and democracy is ‘in a state of malaise’. 2019 represents the highest level of discontent on record. Deterioration particularly stark in high-income ‘consolidated’ democracies. ‘Though majorities in India have consistently expressed satisfaction with the country’s institutions, the data is sparse and there have been fluctuations over time. On two occasions – in 2013, a year before the landslide election of the BJP under Narendra Modi, and several years later, following a botched currency reform – dissatisfaction spiked at close to half of all respondents. Nor do we yet have data on public opinion during the current period of protests and instability, which may prove to be a fresh dip of confidence in India’s democratic process. Why are Indians satisfied? As for India, scholars have long asked why the country’s experience of democracy has been so stable relative to that of other former colonies. These explanations range from a deferential political culture rooted in the caste system, (Barrington Moore (1966) *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*) colonial-era socialisation of democratic norms, (Steven Wilkinson & Massimiliano Onorato (2010) “Colonial Democratic Legacies”, APSA Annual Conference) and the dominance of the Congress Party – a dominance, however, that has recently come to an end. (Ashutosh Varshney (1998), “Why Democracy Survives”, *Journal of Democracy*)

The rising levels of dissatisfaction reflect higher civic standards, as better educated and informed citizens “raise the bar” on their expectations regarding the probity and integrity of public officials? It is possible, though also, unlikely: where it true, we would expect high quality of government and critical citizenship to go hand in hand, when in reality the most politically satisfied societies are those in which institutions are transparent, responsive, and free of corruption, while societies where satisfaction with democracy is at its lowest are uniformly characterised by political instability and conflict. That means that if satisfaction with democracy is now falling across many of the world’s largest mature and emerging democracies – including the United States, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and South Africa – it is not because citizens’ expectations are excessive or unrealistic, but because democratic institutions are falling short of the outcomes that matter most for their legitimacy, including probity in office, upholding the rule of law, responsiveness to public concerns, ensuring economic and financial security, and raising living standards for the larger majority of society. (Global Satisfaction with Democracy Report, 2020)

Global Findings Democracy 2020 – Three main characteristics can be used to sketch the last decade’s trends in the area of political transformation. First, democracies face growing challenges from within. The purposeful undermining of democratic oversight bodies and the curtailment of political-participation rights by democratically elected governments (“democratic backsliding”) can be seen in a growing number of countries. Second, autocracies have evolved in recent years and adapted their survival strategies. And third, international developments, especially the growing assertiveness of influential countries such as China and Russia, have

created conditions conducive to the spread of autocracy.(Global Findings Democracy 2020)

Seven countries that had been categorised in this group in the BTI 2010 have since fallen to the level of defective democracies (Brazil, Bulgaria, Ghana, Hungary, India, Poland and Romania). Due to growing political polarisation and ethno-nationalist mobilisation. The growing sense among many citizens that an economic and political elite is increasingly committed to its own vested interests, and is increasingly less accountable to the people.

The Global State of Democracy 2019 – ‘Democracy is ill and its promise needs revival...While the idea of democracy continues to mobilise people around the world, the practice of existing democracies has disappointed and disillusioned many citizens and democracy advocates’. There is a rejection of the ‘reverse’ third-wave theory and a strong emphasis on ‘democratic backsliding’. The report focuses on citizens’ expectations relating to democratic, social and economic performance. The democracies that have seen the most widespread democratic erosion in the past five years, judging by the number of democratic sub-attributes declines, are six third-wave democracies (Brazil, Hungary, Kenya, Poland, Romania and Turkey) and two older Democracies: India and the United States. Checks on Government and Civil Liberties scores during their episode of backsliding (e.g. India) are listed as cases of moderate backsliding. The shrinking of civic space has taken several forms, including changes to legislative and regulatory frameworks, funding cuts, and laws that regulate public protest and online engagement. In the most severe cases, restrictions on civic space have taken the form of harassment (and in some cases killings) of human rights activists. Media integrity as the report points out has also been in a questionable position.

Democracy and Contemporary Politics in India

Politics in contemporary India can come across as baffling to those who are unfamiliar with its distinctive style. Its noisy, effective and resilient democracy is a puzzle. The co-existence of modernity and tradition is equally puzzling. (Mitra 2017) The above reports indicate a decline of democracy in India if one goes by the indicators and the comments of the global reports. Therefore, it can be assumed that this would be reflected in the level of political trust on the political leadership and more so if one observes the events unfolding due to the pandemic. As the country just like the world was caught unaware by the pandemic due to Covid 19 virus outbreak, a glaring dismal picture emerged of the public health care system. The governments both the centre and the state were unprepared and with a teeming population, the populous states had a difficult time. The central government quickly declared lockdown without giving much time to the people to prepare. The government servants didn’t really feel the brunt cocooned at home in safety. The brunt was felt in a hard way by the poor people who worked in unorganised sectors

and the small-time business owners. Suddenly a large segment of population with little money in hand and lack of state support became migrants in their own country, looked at with suspicion as they walked back to their villages, as the human carriers of the virus. The invisible virus now had a visible body, a body to be shunned and kept at a distance. The lack of knowledge coupled with the fear of the unknown as images of truckloads of dead bodies being taken in Italy to be dumped as dangerous bodies also engulfed the minds of the people glued to their mobile sets and television sets for information and knowledge about any medical breakthrough. This came at a time when protests related to CAA was going on in India. As protests were mounting this came in as a major issue that demanded our attention. Economic slowdown, political issues went to the backburner as we were more interested about the unknown virus which was quickly followed by the news of a small time star of the film industry committing suicide that got linked to the substance abuse in the film industry. The painful images of people walking back to uncertainty was soon replaced by the more important according to the people, as the TRP ratings indicate the everyday bantering of the media houses pro and against the girlfriend of the dead filmstar caught our attention.

As these events were unfolding India Today and CSDS conducted two surveys in order to find out the impact of the pandemic and the level of political trust on the political leadership in India.

Mood of the Nation Survey 2020

A reading of these reports as indicated reflects crisis of democracy worldwide. India is not an exception either. The failure in governance as reflected through the great human misery due to the sudden lockdown, the loss of jobs, the downsliding of economy, breakdown of health care facilities, to name a few of the fall out of the crisis. Against these realities how does democracy fare? How does political trust fare?

The recent survey conducted by Karvy Insights biannual Mood of the Nation survey shows that the prime minister’s popularity has soared to an unprecedented level. A phenomenal 78 per cent of those polled have rated his performance as good to outstanding as compared. The results are a boost for Modi because in the MOTN poll of January 2020, the BJP tally had fallen to 271 – one short of a simple majority on its own in the Lok Sabha. The NDA’s projected tally too has gone up from 303 to 316 but it is still far short of the 353 it won in the general election, with several allies, particularly the Shiv Sena, leaving its fold. The numbers of both the BJP and NDA had fallen in January 2020 mainly because of the steep downturn in economic growth. However, in the current poll, despite the triple whammy of crises, the BJP, and by default the NDA, is seeing a revival in its political fortunes. The gap between Modi and his nearest rival, Rahul Gandhi, in response to the question – ‘Who is best-suited to be India’s next prime minister’ – has widened to 58 percentage points

compared to 12 a year and a half ago. The perception that he is the best prime minister India has had so far has also increased significantly.

The interview was conducted between July 15 and July 27, 2020. 12,021 interviews were conducted – 67 per cent in rural and 33 per cent in urban areas – across 97 parliamentary constituencies and 194 assembly constituencies in 19 states – Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. 78 per cent of those polled have rated his performance as good to outstanding. MOTN poll of January 2020, the BJP tally had fallen to 271 – one short of a simple majority on its own in the Lok Sabha. The NDA's projected tally too has gone up from 303 to 316.

The gap between Modi and his nearest rival, Rahul Gandhi, in response to the question – 'Who is best-suited to be India's next prime minister' – has widened to 58 percentage points compared to 12 a year and a half ago. Regarding Aatmanirbhar Bharat campaign, 53 per cent – of those polled said that it is a timely campaign, with 38 per cent of the opinion that India does not have the capability to become self-reliant yet.

Urban respondents considered handling of economy dismal by the regime whereas for the rural respondents' unemployment was a bigger problem. Whereas 48 per cent felt India's response to Covid was at par with other countries, 43 per cent considered it better than the rest of the world. 72% felt despite hardships lockdown was better – Jaan hai to Jahan Hai.

Gaon Connection-CSDS Survey 2020

The pandemic has had a hard-hitting impact in the rural region. Therefore, in order to find out the impact, CSDS has recently conducted a study on rural India with 25,300 respondents, 179 districts, 23 states and Uts. Of the total respondents interviewed 84.9% were Hindus. The rest belonged to other religious categories.

Harvard Business Review: Findings

It would be worthwhile at this juncture to refer to the Harvard Business Review findings which Harvard Business Review (HBR) on April 2020, carried out a study by the management consultants Chris Nichols, Shoma Chatterjee Hayden and Chris Tendler who outlined in their study four behaviours that help leaders manage a big crisis like Covid-19

1. Decide with speed over precision;
2. Adapt boldly;
3. Deliver reliably; and
4. Engage for impact.

Modi not only seems to have fulfilled these criteria but has also gone on to add more, making his leadership style worthy of an HBR study by itself. The present regime's popularity has soared to 71 per cent in the MOTN survey of August 2019. (This was soon after he was re-elected a second time with a handsome majority in the May 2019 general election.) In fact, in the past five years, Modi's personal popularity in the MOTN polls has never been as high as it is now despite the serious woes the country faces. One could explain it as emerging out of a crisis when people tend to rally around the flag. The visualisation attached to Corona as an enemy and the imagery of a war where the health workers were the warriors played into the imagination of the people.

Reflecting on this trend, it could be understood as a rallying around the Flag in times of crisis syndrome. National leaders are, the theory suggests, viewed as almost the embodiment of national unity fighting the crisis for the public good, which is especially significant when the leader is both head of state and head of government.

The rallying effect occurs due to more institutional reasons and particularly due to the opposition's general reluctance to openly attack the government during a clear crisis. A reduction in 'attack politics' by opposition parties leads to less conflict being reported in the media and so, this approach suggests, the public assumes the government must be performing better than normal... Moreover, the visualisation attached to Corona as an enemy and the imagery of a war where the health workers were the warriors played into the imagination of the people.

The Survey threw out Certain Findings

68% of rural Indians were in a monetary crisis. 78% found work coming to a standstill. 23% had to borrow money to support their household. 8% had to sell their valuable possession. Around 1/4th of the people reported they had to walk back home. 28% said they were not paid for the work they had done in the cities. 1/5th found work under 100 days scheme. 71% of the households reported a drop in the income. Of the 17% of the economically poor households who didn't have ration cards, 27% said they received wheat or rice from the government. 35% families went without food sometimes/many times the entire day. 38% skipped an entire meal. 46% reduced a few items in their meal.

Despite this a sizeable 74% of respondents felt satisfied with the steps taken to control the pandemic. 51.4% of the respondents felt that if there was a return of the virus then another lockdown was agreeable to them. 54.6% of the respondents had the total household income of less than Rs.5000. It is to be noted that only 36.2 % of the respondents had a total household income less than Rs.5000 before lockdown.

To Conclude...or Rather to Engage in Debate and Discussion....

Once the pandemic is over, are we going to find the same level of political trust or there would be situations of political chaos as those questions related to economic slump, access to better health care system, the polarisation on the basis of economic

conditions, etc. would emerge and occupy the public mind? Or would we see no reaction at all, as the reactions would be well managed and there would be other issues larger than such 'petty issues' that would catch the public imagination.

Two perspectives are generally offered by scholars to explain this effect of rallying around the flag. The first of these emphasises on the social psychological dimensions of a crisis and particularly the power of patriotism. In times of crisis national leaders are viewed as almost the embodiment of national unity fighting the crisis for the public good. This is especially significant when the leader is both head of state and head of government as is evident in case of India. The second theory believes that the rallying effect occurs due to more institutional reasons and particularly due to the opposition's general reluctance to openly attack the government during a clear crisis. A reduction in criticism by the opposition of the ruling party leads to less conflict being reported in the media and so, this approach suggests, the public assumes the government must be performing a better job, in fact better than normal. The public may not trust their political leaders but they might view them as competent in terms of governing capacity which leads to a third and final point about rallying around flags – it usually doesn't take long for 'fleeing the flag' to occur.

However, this is a critical point. Most analyses of 'rallying around the flag' effects are concerned with wars, invasions or terrorist effects with a clear enemy, rather than public health pandemics in which the enemy is a new strain of virus. Therefore, it would be right to conclude that the 'rally effect' is usually short-lived. The public are fickle and it may be just one or two months before public opinion returns to pre-crisis levels. The paradox of democracy is democracy includes a healthy distrust of the interests of the powerful, and institutionalises it by providing opportunities for citizens to oversee them. Yet democratic institutions depend on a trust among citizens sufficient for representation, resistance, and alternative forms of governance.

What would we see in India post Pandemic?

As the CSDS survey reveal, 74% feel government handled the covid crisis better. Over a 2/3rds of returned workers did not grudge the handling of the migrant crisis by the government. Urban India that is usually anti-establishment doesn't seem to mind the economic slumps or the crisis in governance. To put it straight we do not see much of an uneasiness or questioning among the public. Is it because the civic space is constricted? Or is it that the 'people' themselves have changed? Debates on public policies relating to Health or Education or Employment and poverty occupied very little media space. Rather other issues especially related to the territorial security or nationalism occupied more space and drove public opinion.

Post pandemic what could be the outcome for the political leadership? Will the people put the blame of the lack of employment or the crisis that raged through their

lives on the government? Will there be a strong debate on issues related to governance? Or, it would be forgotten and forgiven. Or the people wouldn't put a question since they have no faith on the righteousness of the political leadership. In the absence of an efficient and strong united opposition that is ideologically diverse, agenda wise too, the present regime definitely would be able to retain the political trust. And more so when the ruling party enjoys the majority and is the one that sets the agenda and the opposition reacting to it, then the cutting edge is lost by the Opposition. Reactive politics does not have the potential to whip up a strong resistance and therefore the ruling party, BJP that has been able to control most of the state politics will be finding support with people reposing their trust on the existing regime. And that is noticeable in the trends that have evolved in the form of electoral results declared during the period. However, amidst this argumentation, one is reminded of a statement by Ostrom (1997) while answering to the question "Are democratic societies viable?" is: Only under limited conditions. "One person, one vote, majority rule" is an inadequate and superficial formulation for constituting viable democratic societies. The condition of popular election of officials who form governments is necessary but is far from the more fundamental conditions for establishing and maintaining the viability of democratic societies. It is possible to have elections, political parties, and governing coalitions that, under some conditions, tear societies apart and, under other conditions, contribute to the breakdown and collapse of essential institutions. What it means to live in a democratic society is much more demanding than electing representatives who form governments. Not only are democratic societies constructed around the essential place of citizens in those societies, but they cannot be maintained without the knowledge, moral integrity, skill, and intelligibility of citizens in the cultivation of those societies. Calling all persons in all States "citizens" and all States "republics" is a misleading use of language and an erroneous way of conceptualising political "realities."

What is therefore important and is often ignored is 'the people' the most important variable that determines the level of political trust. And the people here are the sovereign people who would determine the success or failure of the government measuring it on the basis of governance. The questionable degree of civic space independence as pointed out by the global democracy reports does not really match with the kind of picture emerging with relation to political trust. Reflecting on the trend it is pertinent to pose here the question, whether the mood of the milieu is one of disinterestedness similar to the case of China. China's leadership enjoys legitimacy based on prosperity. Chinese citizens enjoy economic benefits and, in return, forgo political participation. (Rice 2015) Or it is to be understood that the idea of democracy and fairness has not lost its appeal in India and the earlier values have been replaced by new values. Not just values but a whole new kind of people, 'the people of India' has emerged different from the 'we the people of India' of the Preamble to the Constitution of India.

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