India is one of a handful of postcolonial countries that could be regarded as having in a way stable democratic regime. In most postcolonial regimes, political participation is restricted and leaders are not held accountable; in some cases, governments are tyrannical.

India accepted democracy as the system to build up her resources and to eradicate her poverty and ignorance, safeguarding the freedom of the individual, which is the basis of all human developments. This fact of India’s acceptance of democracy is writ large in the chapters of Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles and other vital provisions of the Constitution, which the Indian people as a whole have given unto themselves.

In Indian democracy, generally, the press is free, often critical of the government. The Judiciary though sometimes complaint has nonetheless taken positions that have constrained both Central and State Governments. And, most importantly, there is freedom against arbitrary arrest. However, at the same time the record is not unblemished one. India did experience a period of emergency from 1975 to 1977 when democratic rights were suspended, opposition leaders were jailed, the press was censored, and there were no elections.

It has been seen that for over five decades the country has been torn by violent social conflicts like conflicts among religious, caste, tribal and linguistic communities. The country got its independence in bloodshed. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs engaged in brutal killings in 1947, a war not of States but of peoples against one another. In the mid 1950’s, violent
conflicts erupted in several States as a number of linguistic groups demanded their own independent states. This process of conflicts has not ended but still it continues. These social conflicts have led to the killings of not only political leaders but religious leaders also.

Besides facing the social cleavages, India is also facing the political crisis. Three times in four years, we had polls. Each time, the outcome was a fractured verdict and the Government elected was incapable of withstanding political upheavals and rendered unable to govern for a full term. We are always looked upon as political ideal, the world’s largest democracy, but we are again in the throes of a systematic failure deliberately brought about by our own elected leaders. Of late, we have witnessed a political earthquake that has eaten its vitals and democracy. The study is very significant and interesting, as Gandhi does not make any distinction between morality and politics and ethics and economics. He does not want only to raise the standard of democracy but the quality of democracy and the quality of living in such a system. In the light of these issues, Gandhian alternatives have been studied, discussed, examined and analysed keeping in view the contemporary problems in Indian democracy.

The study is based on primary and the secondary sources. The data from the original writings of Gandhi, such as The Story of My Experiments with Truth, Hind Swaraj, Constructive Programme, Young India, Harijan and 100 Volumes of Collected Works have been analysed thoroughly and systematically.

The important information regarding the concept of democracy and problems of democracy has been extracted from both the primary and secondary sources. The collected data has been thoroughly investigated, critically analyzed and presented accordingly.
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