Responsiveness has become one of the important characteristics of good governance. C.P. Bharathwal points out the characteristics of good governance as, “it is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law.”

In democratic governance, responsiveness gets more significant. A democratic government should respond to, reflect and give expression to the will of the people. In a representative democracy, political parties are the important channels between the interest of people and government. They should give adequate representation to the interest of the people in formulating public policies. However, there is no guarantee that political parties always work in the interest of the people. “In elections, parties or candidates present themselves to voters, informing them about their policy intentions. Specifically, they tell voters which policies they intended to pursue, for what purposes, and with what consequences. Once elected, the victorious candidates choose policies, not necessarily the same as announced.”

be different from those of the citizens. Of course, there should be politicians and civil servants who accept political and administrative responsibility for the conduct of the affairs of government. Since they are supposed to be irresponsive to public opinion and pressure, the ultimate responsibility is that of the citizens.  

4 People are responsible to make political parties responsive towards their needs. Popular responsiveness determines political parties’ responsiveness. Citizens are to be alert and vigilant. Policies formulated by political parties are supposed to give adequate representation to all sections of people. Here, popular responsiveness of the people towards the policies is the feedback available to the political parties to analyze their policies. In the light of the available feedback political parties make necessary changes in their policies. Thus for democratic governance responsiveness of both political parties and people is very crucial. In this regard party politics plays a crucial role.

RESPONSIVENESS OF POLITICAL PARTIES:

The main purpose of democracy is to establish government by representation, is to provide a mechanism of political set-up to make policy decisions for welfare of the people and also to take measures for its implementation.  

5 In other words, democratic government requires institutional mechanisms—established procedures and organizations—to

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translate public opinion into government policy to be responsive.\textsuperscript{6} Elections, political parties, legislatures and interest groups and many others provide such institutional mechanism in politics. Political party is one of the most important institutional mechanisms available for expressing public opinion. Political parties in India are able to exercise this influence because in the absence of associational life they provide a key link between state and society.\textsuperscript{7} Thus, political parties have become the very soul of Indian democracy. They have proved to be bulwark against tyranny of the government. Grievances of the people are easily ventilated when the parties concerned keep their representatives in legislature fully informed of peoples’ problems. As political parties are responsible for the conduct of the public affairs, their responsiveness in terms of representing aspirations of the people is crucial for democratic governance.

Democratic governance is not an independent variable. Political parties determine the extent of democratization of governance. They should be able and willing to chalk out the directions of economic development and translate their policies into action through an accountable, transparent and responsive administration.

How political parties respond to the expectations of the people is crucial. The word responsiveness obviously denotes responding or answering. After articulating and aggregating the interests and aspirations

\textsuperscript{6} Rabin Mukharjee, Democracy- a failure, Shefocracy-the solution, for human welfare, Indian Research Press, New Delhi, 2001, p.44.
\textsuperscript{7} Pradeep K. Chibber, Democracy Without Associations, Transforming of the Party System and Social Cleavages in India, Vistar Publications, New Delhi, 1999, p.177.
of the people, political parties have to respond through working out the
public policies and programmes. Therefore, political parties play a vital role
in formulating and implementing public policies. Governance means the
process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are
implemented (or not implemented). Democratic governance involves the
study of how public policy decision making process takes place. Public
policy has a direct bearing on the life of the people. Public interest is at the
core of public policy. “Public Policy is something which the government
does or chooses not to do. It is the total of all governmental activities that
has an impact on society”. Policy is based on demands made by a large
number of individuals with a common problem that is beyond their ability
to resolve.

The crisis of governance in India can be mainly attributed to lack of
responsiveness of political parties towards the aspirations and needs of the
people. Atul Kohli attributes crisis of governability to the decline of the
Congress party. The Indian model of development did quite well during the
Nehru period, but after him the new operators of the system showed scant
understanding of its nature and began to operate in ways that put the
complex balance of the system out of gear and produced a number of
distortions in its operations. Thus the leadership that immediately
followed Nehru and Shastri (the later did not have enough time to tide over

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8 C.P.Bharthwal, Supra no.1, p.8.
9 Ibid. p.88.
11 The Hindu, May 17, 2004
12 Rajni Kothari, Democratic Polity and Social Change in India, Allied
the transition after Nehru), namely, the agglomerate of state leaders who operated without the presence of a dominant national figure, lost touch with the people, made the party more important than the government (under Nehru there was a fine balance between the two) and simultaneously subjected national politics to the pressure of state politics to such an extent that the power and the position of Prime Minister and the central government began to be undermined.13

The Congress served as a federation of interest groups', allowing it to accommodate the legitimate socio-cultural and regional aspirations of the people within its organizations and in the national policy framework which checked the growth of regional parties.14 In the post Nehru era, the Congress party started getting deinstitutionalized due to a number of factors. The support base of the Congress party considerably declined in the 1980s.

Steady decline in Intra-party democracy tended to lack of responsiveness of political parties. "The contributions of political parties and party system to the public policy and law making primarily depend on the intra-party democracy. The intra-party democracy enables political parties to debate the issue of public policy and law extensively which ultimately contribute to refine the dimensions of public policies and various provisions of law."15 The interaction among political parties presupposes to

13 Ibid. p.13.
15 S.S.Patagundi in, Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.5. p. 154.
contribute to interest articulation and interest aggregation. In this regard organization wing of political party plays a vital role. For, it provides linkage between people and government and works out broad policy guidelines in accordance with the aspirations of the people. They provide the base for formulating public policies and their implementation by governmental wing of the party. "The governmental wing has the responsibility of formulating policies and implementing them based on guidelines of the organizational wing. The guidelines provided by the organizational wing are to be based on the electoral promises made in the election manifesto."  

However, it is unfortunate that most of the political parties in India have no strong organizational wing. Everything within the party is controlled by party high command or leader. "It is generally agreed that powerful leaders are partly responsible for the deinstitutionalization of the Indian party system. Differences with party leader are regarded as anti-party activity and there is no scope for dissent which is an integral part of the democratic process. Therefore, powerful leaders in India have often proved to be enemies of institutions such as political parties." These developments were responsible for the decline of party organization at local level which kept the party close to the people. With the decline of party organization the medium through which the wishes and opinion are transformed into the party was lost. This in turn made the political parties

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17 Ibid. p. 154.
18 Ibid. p. 158.
less responsive to the aspiration of the people. Indifferent performance led to voter dissatisfaction and large scale erosion of electoral support. This type of functioning of parties may not lead to democratic governance.

The viable means of making political parties responsive to the peoples' hopes and aspirations and responsive for the objective of providing good governance consists in regrounding them in the associational matrix of active community life. Democratic governance is possible when friendly relationship between people and political parties prevail. In India, personality of leaders gets more prominence than their parties. Party leaders have become so important that political parties are trying to capture votes not on the basis of performance but on their leader's personality. India during the Congress rule dominated by leaders like Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi. In the absence of Nehru and Gandhi family members the Congress party faced many problems until Sonia Gandhi entered politics. "In the thirteenth general election (1999) to the Lok Sabha and some of the State Assemblies, for example, there were hardly any issues of policy or even programmes before the electorate. All the campaigning and the contests were personality and power oriented. Parties were only vaguely talking about development, national pride, security, secularism, etc." But, thanks to the 'feel good' factor and 'India shining campaign' by the BJP, in the 2004 general elections which gave more prominence to performance by political parties. Whether BJP succeeded in

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19 V.A.Paipanandikar and Subhash C. Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.4, p.281.
making people feel good or not, or whether India is shining or not that is a different matter. The positive side of this is that, it made possible a large number of debates on performance of political parties.

A certain degree of resilience and dynamism has entered the political process and determining variable of any party’s fortune in the electoral battle revolves around its performance and sensitivity to the art of governance.\textsuperscript{22} While assessing the performance of parliamentary democracy it needs to be emphasized that its functional validity is dependent to a great extent on the maturity of political parties and the responsible behavior of political leaders.\textsuperscript{23} It is argued that the conditions of political parties’ responsiveness are satisfied when political parties give enough attention to the needs, problems and preferences of citizens. But, there is gradual decline in the capacity of political parties to respond rationally, creatively or even adequately to pressures from society. Political parties have become more concerned about attaining power than to respond to the aspirations of the people. The issue of whether or not the aspirations of the people are satisfied has always been secondary to the leaders. “Leaders have mobilized socio-economic groups more as power resources in inter-elite struggle and less to satisfy group aspirations. Thus, Indira Gandhi discovered India’s poor when she was pressed politically by other members of the Congress


\textsuperscript{23} Ibid. p. 40.
elite. Thus most often populism was used by the political parties to mobilize the support of electorates.

Responsiveness of political parties can be ensured by making politicians responsible for their actions and overall government policies and avoiding to acquire power by narrow interest. Since mid 1980s big scandals like Bofors and the bank and the security scam, touching incumbent Prime Ministers (though not proving charges against them) and involving other ministers have reduced public confidence in political leaders. One can hardly cite an example that a politician is punished for the offence in recent times. The unending series of scams for which not one person has been actually convicted so far, the hawala scandal which effectively removed the thin mask of respectability from the face of any politicians, the fodder scam which proved that the so-called poor and backward classes could also take to looting of public funds with gusto, and, to top them all, the exposure of the criminalization of politics and the nexus between highly placed politicians and ruthless criminals, have all added to the disillusionment of the common man with the general run of politics and politicians in the country. These facts make the people lose confidence in political parties being responsive.

It is only at the time of elections that every party attempts through spending a lot of money on posters and advertisements to attract the voters.

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Catchy slogans and promises confuse the electorates. A number of promises are made by the political parties to win election and a little performance in the government in accordance with the promises. When asked to the people whether they believe that political parties are keen in keeping their promises 67.52 per cent people responded negatively, while only 32.48 per cent people believe that they keep their promises. The table given below confirms this fact.

Table 6.1

Do you agree that political parties are keen in keeping their promises?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>32.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>67.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>314</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table is drawn from the result of sample survey conducted by G. Palanthurai. Source: G. Palanthurai, *Peoples' Participation in Politics: An Indian Perspective*, Kanishka Publishers, Delhi, 1995, p.69.

In order to get more votes the candidates formulate attractive programmes. Most of the time to make the programmes and promises attractive to the voters, in a competitive situation, the feasibility of the programme and the practicability of promises are ignored by the campaigners, reducing quite often, their status to false promises. After coming to power by fair or foul means they are mainly concerned with feathering their own nest. They behave as if they are not at all accountable.

27 Ibid p.37
to the people. If at all accountability exists, it is to the party high command and not to the people.

While assessing the performance of political parties it can be said that its functional validity is mainly dependent to a great extent on the maturity and the responsible behavior of political leaders. The primary goal of elite-led mobilization in India has been power for elite. The issue of whether or not the aspirations of the mobilized groups can be satisfied has always been secondary in the minds of the mobilizers.\textsuperscript{30} India’s democracy has been democracy from above: for most of its existence, it has been more of a gift from the elite to the masses than something the masses have secured for themselves.\textsuperscript{31} In India since from its independence governance is mainly in the hands of elites. This elite class mostly consists of rich class and castes. As a result of this, most of the policy decisions of the government are mainly in favour of these higher class and caste groups. And the interest of the minority groups are neglected. Party tickets are given only to those who can contribute to party fund.

The process of formulating public policy can further be made ineffective by party politics. Evolving consensus on public policies is essential. But the nature of party politics weakens the process of evolving consensus. Emergence of coalition politics further aggravated this problem. Changing nature of party politics has direct bearing on the implementation of economic and social policy in India. With the emergence of unstable

\textsuperscript{30} Atul Kohli. Supra no.24, p.391.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. p. 390.
coalition governments, policy issues are marginalized by most of the parties and their immediate concern is to acquire and maintain power. Several parties came together and formed government. With hung parliaments such alliances have become inevitable. "This alliance brought together under one broad umbrella numerous disparate, ideologically and pragmatically incompatible-frequently unmixable-political parties signifying a marriage of convenience. But no sooner was it formed, it developed cracks under the pressure of contrary demands and expectations of coalition partners and the coalition government fell leaving behind a bitter trail of animosity, bickering and frustration."

According to Rajni Kothari, "the country had entered a phase of transition which was full of confusion and instability, out of which had emerged a framework of power but not an alternative framework of governance."

With such coalition governments coming to power, public policy making process becomes ineffective. Every party within and outside the coalitions is after power. Slight difference of opinion among the coalition partners will lead to the downfall of government. And to remain in power the party or group of parties has to satisfy the demands of all its partner and have to act according to their expectation. Bringing consensus among the coalition partners has become a difficult task. The political parties are so preoccupied with the struggle for survival in power that they have no time to pay attention to the problems of the people. If coalition partners have

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12 V.A.Paipanandikar and Subhash C. Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.4, p.272.
agreed on some policy the opposition may disagree on the same. As no single party enjoys majority support in the Lok Sabha, policy making becomes a difficult task. We can quote here the examples of Lokpal and Lokayukta Bill and Women’s Reservation Bill. Since 1968, the Lokpal Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha several times (in 1968, 1971, 1977, 1985, 1989, 1996) but it lapsed as the governments dissolved before it was sanctioned. The Lokpal and Lokayukta Bill was introduced for the first time in 1968 and was passed by the Lok Sabha and sent to the Rajya Sabha. Since, the house was dissolved, the Bill could not be passed. The same bill was introduced in 1971 but remained pending until the house was dissolved. It was again introduced in 1977, 1985, 1989, 1996 and 1998 but again met with the same fate. Very recently in the month February, 2004 Karnataka had the privilege to have Lokayukta. It was mentioned in the Sunday Vjay Times: “The State of Karnataka holds the privilege of having been the first to enact a state legislation enforcing the institution of Lokayukta.”

With regard to Women’s Reservation Bill, it was argued that, “if 50 per cent of the citizens are women and if we have only 10 or 12 per cent women members sitting in the Parliament or less than 10 or 12 per cent sitting in the State Legislature, this is not conducive for the democracy. This is why we shall have to invent some device which will really help a reasonable number, if not 50 per cent to enter Parliament.”34 The table 5.2 highlights on the women members in the Lok Sabha.

The table 5.2 reveals that the percentage of women members in Lok Sabha remains under 10 per cent. In 1962 the percentage of women members in the Lok Sabha was 4.41 while it is 8.09 in 1984 and 9.02 in 1999. In recent parliamentary elections the number of women MPs elected to the Lok Sabha came down from 49 to 44 which is 9.02 per cent in the 13th Lok Sabha to 8.10 per cent in 14th Lok Sabha. Looking at the percentage of women members in the Lok Sabha we can say that our Parliament is more male dominating. While women candidates are being elected more often than their male counterparts, the actual proportion of women candidates nominated by parties and elected remains under 10 per cent.35 What has contributed to the gradual decline in the number of women representatives is not yet clear. Growing criminalization of politics can be one of the major reasons for the decline in the women representatives. Due to growing muscle and mafia power in election the parties are reluctant to give tickets to the women members. For winning election one does need lots of money; that also can be one of the reasons for declining number of women representatives.

Table 6.2

Women Contestants in Loksabha Elections 1952-1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Lok Sabha Women MPs</th>
<th>% of Women MPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 6.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lok Sabha</th>
<th>Women contestants</th>
<th>Elected women MPs</th>
<th>% of representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13th Lok Sabha</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th Lok Sabha</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1996, the Women Reservation Bill was first introduced by the then Deve Gowda ministry. Due to the internal problems of the UF government the Bill could not be passed. It once again was introduced by I.K.Gujral government in 1997. This time the Janata Dal, the Indian Union Muslim League, the Samata Party and some from the Samajwadi Party prevented the Prime Minister from moving the Bill for discussion. They
insisted on a quota for Other Backward Castes within Women’s quota and also insisted on quota for Muslims. In 1998 elections, “almost all the political parties in their respective election manifestos blared loudly on women upliftment by promising to give one-third reservation to them but actual position was horrifying which speaks of hypocrisy that has struck firm roots in Indian politics over the past 50 years.”

Out of 4756 candidates in the election only 267 were women. “Out of 267 women contestants, there were 115 party nominees with Congress heading the list with 39 followed by 30 of BJP The number of women nominees of other parties were JD 11, MCP and SP 8 each, CPI 6, TDP, RJP, SP (Samata Party) 3 each and SAD, AIADMK, HLD (R), TC one each.”

In 1998 once again the issue of women’s reservation was raised. Opposition members and some of BJP’s allies like MDMK’s Vaiko and AIADMK’s S.R.Muthaia opposed the Bill. Though BJP was able to get the support of the Congress, but it failed to pass the Bill. “Bringing legislation for granting 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament and State Legislatures is burning question with the Union Government and all the political parties. Practically, nothing is being done. Surprisingly none of the political parties have cared to grant this reservation to women in their parties.”

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36 Ibid, p.128.
Though 13 urgent Bills were pending before the Lok Sabha during the winter session in 1998, the House could not pass a single one of them. All these clearly indicate how party politics hampers the public policy making which ultimately adversely affects the governance in India.

Policy preferences are not the only things a political party brings to parliament. It also brings a weight, the proportion of seats in parliament it controls. To pass any policy it requires the sanction of majority members. If a single party gets required majority in the Parliament, it becomes easier for the party to get policies passed. With the emergence of small regional parties at the centre political parties have lost their weight in the Parliament. Even the party with the largest number of seats is not having required strength in the parliament and dependents on its allies not only for strength but, for its continuance in the parliament. Any disagreement with its ally may lead to loss of power. If coalition governments succeed in holding on power for considerable time then also there is no guarantee that parties evolve appropriate policies and take effective steps for dealing with emergent difficult socio-economic and political problems. The reason is that owing to the difficult ideological and pragmatic commitments and continuous pressures, it becomes difficult to forge a consensus on what should be the most effective way of handling an emergent situation. When there are too many partners, the personal ambitions, intrigues and bargains

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40 Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes and Bernard Menin, Supra no.3, p.284.
abound; even combinations are secretly and suddenly formed, successive ministers are overturned, with injury to the progress of legislation and to the continuity at national policy.\footnote{L.S.Lathore, \textit{Major Trends in Indian Politics}, C.P.Bharthwal (ed.), \textit{Indian Administration Since Independence}, Bharat Book Centre, Lucknow, 2003, p.13.}

Both intra and inter-party politics will affect the public policy making process. Opposition parties are always searching for the opportunity to bring down the government. The role of opposition is crucial in making the government responsive to meet the aspirations of people. "The opposition is an agent of citizens because it wants to win office and, in order to win office, it must also anticipate the retrospective judgments that the voters will make about the incumbents at election time. Anticipating these judgments, the opposition has incentives to monitor the government and to inform (truthfully or not) voters about the performance of the incumbents."\footnote{H.A.Gani, \textit{Political Parties and Degeneration of Democratic and Moral Values}, \textit{The Radical Humanist}, 62(2), May 1998, pp.27-28.} It was generally found that opposition parties oppose the actions of the ruling parties. As a result they cannot contribute to public policy making in terms of policy alternatives.

In the parliamentary democracy the usual practice is discussion, argument, persuasion and ultimate decision and acceptance of that decision. Thus it means tolerance and signifies the willingness to recognize the existence of different points of view and to allow the strongest view to prevail.\footnote{P.I.Devraj, \textit{Party System-The Bedrock of Indian Democracy}, \textit{The Radical Humanist}, 62(2), May 1998, p.43.} However, it is sad to record that the tolerance, logical argument and creative thought is disappearing or sinking fast in our deliberative
The lack of interest, poor attendance, floor crossing, obstructive methods, waste of time, ignorance of technicalities and procedures, are commonly found in the working of parliament. Decline of legislature is serious threat to democracy. S.K. Jain observes that, “the malaise of non-functioning of legislatures as exemplified by parliament the state legislatures are indeed a matter of grave concern for it affects the very foundations of democracy and the credibility of democratic institutions as the custodian and guardian of the trust of the people.”

The behaviour of legislatures makes speaker to direct to switch off the TV reporting. Too common nowadays are stallings of the proceedings, motion of pandemonium, shouting over a fellow M.P. when the speaker is asked to speak, rushing into the well of the House, sitting in a ‘dharna’—some members even snatch away papers from the hands of the speaker—all these practically making the speaker to adjourn, so frequently.

One of the important responsibilities of leaders is to reflect public opinion in the deliberations of Parliament. They are supposed to debate the matters of vital public importance. It is deplorable to note that serious debate usually does not take place in the legislature. Thus, resulting in waste of time. “Over 10.5 per cent of the time of the Tenth Lok Sabha was wasted in such hold-ups of business. Full eight days time of both houses of Parliament was mostly wasted, except for the presentation of the Railway

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45 L.S. Lathore, Major Trends in Indian Politics, C.P. Bharthwaed., Supra no.42, pp.9-10.
46 Sisir K. Dhar, Demoralized Politics Feudalising Democracy in India, Janata, 56(26), September 9, 2001, p.29.
and General Budget, in the budget session of 2000 on the issue of the Gujrat Government permitting its employees to become members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. From 1992 onwards, the Lok Sabha has been adjourned for 111 hours on Ayodhya controversy (excluding the number of hours lost in December 2001), while only about 40 hours have been utilized for discussion on the issue. In 2001, the working of Parliament has been similarly disrupted for days together.\(^48\) The same story was repeated in the budget and monsoon session of 2002. A Code of Conduct was adopted on 25 November 2001 on discipline and decorum in Parliament and state legislatures but it has not made any difference to the functioning of these bodies even thereafter.\(^49\) Little effort has been made to improve qualities of discipline, character, high sense of public morality and willingness of hear and accommodate minority views, which are the essential prerequisites for the success of parliamentary democracy.

One should not neglect the money spent on such proceedings. Time management is the biggest problem facing the Parliament. For the conduct of parliamentary proceedings elaborate rules and procedures are laid down, but, politicians rarely observe these rules. Unless all parties agree to obey the rules of the parliament no change can be expected. Some solution to this crucial problem has to be identified otherwise the responsiveness of political parties is likely to become totally ineffective. "The budgetary allocation for Parliament has gone up steeply from Rs.12.49 crore in 1983-

\(^{48}\) Ajay K. Mehra and Gert W. Kueck(ed.), Supra no.39, p.139.
\(^{49}\) Ibid. p.140.
84 to Rs.173.09 crore in 2000-01. It is estimated that each minute that Parliament fails to conduct business costs the exchequer Rs. 17,000; a full day Rs.55 lakh.50

The essential pre-requisites for quality governance are that the system should be good and suited to the needs, aspirations, back-ground and ethos of the people concerned and that those selected for operating the system should be endowed with character and competence and motivated by the spirit of service.51 In recent times the acts of omissions and commissions by the legislatures are hurting the interest of the people. The government that has to run through discussion and debate in democracy is subjected to the influence of powerful drive to maintain power at the centre.

A large number of criminals and mafia powers have entered the Parliament. The criminals have started entering the Parliament in recent times. The scenes inside Assemblies are hardly conducive for an efficient working of parliamentary democracy.52 Criminalization of politics adversely affects the responsiveness of the political parties. Some times criminals are selected as party candidates. They also get elected as they have money power. Hence, they do not give much importance to their accountability to the people. Accountability is a prerequisite for ensuring responsiveness. Unless political parties are accountable to the people they cannot be responsive. Lack of accountability affects political parties.

50 Ibid. pp.140-141.
responsiveness. In 1996, Lok Sabha elections (the situation was no better in 1998 and 1999), in U.P. there was as many as 35 “history sheeters” against whom dozen of cases of murder, arson, loot and rape were pending in courts. BJP had 9 such history sheeter candidates, the Congress (Tiwari) had 3, Bhahujan Samaj Party had 6, Samajwadi Party had 10. One candidate was a convicted person. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in a murder case by the Supreme Court, but was given the Presidential Pardon under political pressure.”53 When such persons enter Parliament it will affect the quality of debate. In 1997, the then Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Mr. P.A. Sagma had got a resolution passed in the House in which genuine concern was expressed about the criminalization of politics.54 It was hoped that political parties would take some steps to reduce the criminal elements in the elections and parliament but, unfortunately not much was achieved in this direction. Criminalization of politics is growing in India. “Earlier, the criminal sought the protection of the politician, now it is the politician who needs the protection of the dadas or the two have become one and the same person. Governments have lost their credibility, legitimacy and even their representative credentials.”55

Some people do believe and protagonists of democracy make it a strategy to make people believe that all powers of formation of government are in the hands of voters. But the above example and reality are that they

54 G.S. Rajhans in Subhash C. Kashyap (ed.), Supra no. 5, p. 228.
are made to behave as puppets in the hands of such manipulators. The biggest damage to good governance today has been caused by the leaders, who have lost credibility by their moral misdemeanor, particularly theft of public property by corrupt practice.

Defections have further put a question on the responsiveness of the political parties. If the voters succeeded in voting without any fear and favor to the person of their choice after analyzing their proposed policies there is no guarantee that the chosen representative will work for the fulfillment of the same policies. There is always a danger of defection and the candidate may change his party, he also changes his policy position. Presently it is seen that one who is elected on the ticket of say party ‘A’ is able to change over to party ‘B’ on promises like a ministerial berth or other temptations. Laws have been passed to arrest defections. The enactment of the anti-defection law or the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution greatly conditioned and changed the behaviour of the legislators and the legislators and the functioning of the opposition but failed to control the evil of unprincipled defections. Anti-defection law is not so effective in preventing defections. According to this law, if 1/3rd members of the party agree to quite the party, it is not considered as defections but a split in the party. For small parties it is not a difficult task to get the support of 1/3rd members of the party. Some times taking advantage of the defects in the provision of act the art of

56 Rabin Mukharji, Supra no.6, pp. 45-46.
58 U.C.Agarwal in, Subhash C. Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.5, p.85.
59 V.A.Paipanandikar and Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.4, p.25.
pulling down the governments by encouraging defections has been practiced. With such practices the representatives character of legislatures loses its significance.

It was considered that democratic way of governance was best suited for contemporary world. Indian democracy is lacking in basic requirement of real representation of the people. Most of the parties who get elected do not have majority support. Obviously by majority we mean fifty plus one. Even the ruling parties failed to get the support of the majority. With such parties forming the government how can we expect democratic governance? Always governance to be responsive should be in the interest of the majority of people. With parties not having majority support in terms of percentage of votes secured how can we expect that they are able to represent the interest of all section in the society. “The largest party often needs only 30-40 per cent of the votes polled to obtain a majority of seats in the legislature under our present system. Considering that only about 60 per cent of the votes are polled, the actual voter support to obtain a majority of seats could be as low as 20 per cent.”60 Thus the will of 70 per cent of the electorate remains unrepresented. That is the main reason for all-round dissatisfaction about Government performance prevailing amongst the people as a whole.61

The winning candidate becomes still less representative of the area if account is taken of those citizens who did not or could not vote due to the

60 Jayaprakash Narayan, Supra no.35. p.50.
61 S.D.Bali in, Subhash C. Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.5, p.185
inaccuracy of the electoral rolls or due to their own indifferences.\textsuperscript{62} False voting is rampant and one is likely to see that his vote has already been cast and many a time the genuine voter is taken to the prison for insisting that he has right to vote.\textsuperscript{63} Voters list are incomplete and most of the voters do not find their names in the voters list. In recent elections most of the important and well known persons do not find their names in the voters list. Many such persons have protested for demanding proper voters list.

Since democracy is about expressing views and willingness of the majority to accommodate minority requirements, the fact that the problems and views of smaller groups are vocalized and brought on record, seems a good reason that every identifiable segment of society should find representation in the Parliament.\textsuperscript{64} Indian society is stratified into number of castes, classes, creeds, religions, education, etc. It also consists of large segments of tribal population and many backward regions in the country. In this background, the electoral mechanism has to be so designed that it takes care of the needs and aspirations of all the segments of the society.\textsuperscript{65}

It is a general belief that the policies and decisions are the outcome of the articulation of legislators. In reality it is not so.\textsuperscript{66} Most of the time representative is not aware of some of the pressing problems of his/her constituency. The tables given below highlight on this fact.

\textsuperscript{62} U.C. Agarwal in Subhsh C. Kashyap (ed.), Supra no.5, p.85.
\textsuperscript{63} Rabin Mukharjee, Supra no.6, p.46.
\textsuperscript{64} P.A. Sagma in Subhsh C. Kashyap (ed.), Supra no.5, p.20.
\textsuperscript{65} P.A. Sagma in Subhsh C. Kashyap (ed.), Supra no.5, p.19.
\textsuperscript{66} G. Palanthurai, Supra n.28, p.80.
Table 6.4*
Do you agree that legislators knows more about the problems and priorities than the people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>33.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>66.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>314</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table is the result of sample survey conducted by G. Palanthurai.

Table 6.5*
Is the legislator aware of your constituency’s problems?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>23.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>76.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>314</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table is the result of sample survey conducted by G. Palanthurai.

Common welfare which should be one of the important duties of political parties is being replaced by personal welfare. When asked to the respondents about- “Can you state a single problem repeatedly highlighted by your representative? And can you state a single step taken by your representative for your common welfare? Answers are not affirmative”. They openly answer that representatives never had the habit of registering their mark by doing services to the public. The table given below reveals the response of the people towards the performance of their representative.

67 Ibid. p.81.
68 Ibid. p.81.
Table 6.6*

Is their (legislator) success decided by their performance?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>24.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>75.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>314</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table is the result of sample survey conducted by G. Palanthurai. Source: G.Palanthurai, *People's Perception of Politics: An Indian Perspective*, Kanishka Publishers, Delhi, 1995, p.81.

It is evident from the above table that the respondents have a very poor opinion about the functioning of their representatives in the political process. What we need first of all is to get the basic needs of our people. How can we talk about good governance if we cannot produce the needs of life- drinking water, adequate nutrition, adequate energy, adequate clothing, adequate housing, health and education facilities. What is actually happening is not only wants are shaped by the government but they are satisfied by their very expression. Thus as one writer puts it, "responsiveness to the will of the people means rather less than meets the eye". When asked to the people about whether they feel that the politicians are responsible, for the socio-economic crisis? "63.06 per cent of the respondents have confusion in locating the segment which is responsible for the ills in the society. But, 36.94 per cent of them categorically said that the politicians are responsible"70 The verdict of 2004 election is very crucial in this regard. It makes out that no amount of reform can be tolerated unless it

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70 G.Palanthurai, Supra no.28, p.86.
addresses basic issues such as employment, reduction of poverty and provision of basic services.71 The verdict also supports the contention that, irrespective of the performance of the economy, the crucial concerns today are the above mentioned basic issues rather than the much hyped "would be India" factor.72

Some parties have strong support base in a few large states, in that case how they can represent the entire country. It is enough if it captures a few large states, and certain small states remain unrepresented in terms of power configuration.73 The table given below will highlight on this fact.

| Table 6.7 |
| All India Seats 543 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The North 126 Seats</th>
<th>The South 132 Seats</th>
<th>The East 142 Seats</th>
<th>The West 142 Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haryana 10</td>
<td>Andhra 42</td>
<td>Arunachal 2</td>
<td>Daman Diu 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal 4</td>
<td>Karnataka 28</td>
<td>Assam 14</td>
<td>Goa 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir 6</td>
<td>Kerala 20</td>
<td>Bihar 37*</td>
<td>Gujarat 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab 13</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu 39</td>
<td>Manipur 2</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttarakhand 5*</td>
<td>A.N.Islands 1</td>
<td>Meghalaya 2</td>
<td>Maharashtra 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandigarh 1</td>
<td>Ladakh 1</td>
<td>Mizoram 1</td>
<td>Rajasthan 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi 7</td>
<td>Pondichery 1</td>
<td>Nagaland 1</td>
<td>Dadar &amp; Nagar Haveli 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttaranchal 5*</td>
<td>Orissa 21</td>
<td>Chatisgarh* 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sikkim 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tripura 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Bengal 42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zarkhand 17*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*After the creation of Uttaranchal, Zarakhand and Chatisgarh the seats were divided between Uttar Pradesh(80) and Uttaranchal(5), Bihar(37) and Zarakhand(17) and Madya Pradesh(29) and Chatisgarh(11).


The political parties try to attract the voters of large states which have more number of seats and most of the policies were directed in their interest. This may lead to the neglect of the aspiration of smaller states. Politics is a number game. Political parties try to get majority seats enough to form comfortable government. In India a party which secured 272 seats can form the government, political parties calculations are mainly directed towards securing 272 seats and not towards 300 or 350 seats. In the wake of coalition government, attaining 272 mark itself has become difficult. National parties have to ally themselves with regional parties to win 272 seats. In this number game sufferers were the small states with only 1 or 2 seats. In order to draw the attention of the government about the interests of small states their representatives should have to work hard.

India needs to define a national vision including the right of the populace relating in the first place to the human development index delineating the minimum basic needs of the people and at the second level it needs to inject public accountability into the political and administrative spheres leading to a largely transparent and honest administration.\(^{74}\) With respect to policy reform, accountability refers to the design of development – enhancing reform programmes, making these congruent with their implementation and enforcement and eventually ensuring an efficient use, stewardship and allocation of resources. This requires, on the one hand, competent policy making, that is adequate government capacities and

\(^{74}\) S.K.Chopra(ed.), Supra no.22, P.33.
capabilities to take and implement decisions at the right time and to manage public service delivery, and on the other hand the establishment of agencies of restraint (such as anti-corruption offices and ombudsmen) and monitoring devices both for overall economic policies as well as public procurement and investment.75

Thus, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the organizational vacuum in Indian politics is the root cause of the growing gap in that country between how power is won and how power is used, or between personalization of power, on the one hand, and the inability to use that power to solve pressing problems, on the other.76 Today, most parties are identified in terms of style of functioning, marked with manipulation, personal ambition, corruption, populism etc. A former CPI(M). M.P., A.K.Roy, pointed out that “The differences between the parties have decreased and those between the parties and the people have increased.”77 As explained by Hugh Gaitskell, “The differences between the parties must not be so great that one party prefer to destroy democracy rather than allow the other party to come to power. Nor must they be so slight as to make nonsense of the idea of free choice for the electorate.”78 Political parties are not expected to be always busy with power struggle. They should provide proper channel between the people and the government. Unless they provide this channel they cannot come close to the people. For ensuring

76 Rabin Mukharjee, Supra no.6, p.48.
77 Sisir K.Dhar, Supra no.46, p.37.
78 Ibid. p.38.
this, effective control of the people over the political parties is essential. Thus the basic question is how to establish peoples’ control over the government in true sense.

POPULAR RESPONSIVENESS:

Popular responsiveness is crucial for democratic governance. People in democratic government not only enjoy rights but they also have certain duties. In the unforgettable words of Felix Frankfurter, “democracy involves hardship—the hardship of the unceasing responsibility of every citizen. Where the entire people do not take a continuous and considered part in public life there can be no democracy in any meaningful sense of the term.”79 Some democratic thinkers, particularly in United States, inclined to believe that the destiny of any given society depends on the “will of the people” or, to put it in current American idiom, on “group thinking” or “group dynamics”.80

Responsiveness of people plays a significant role in democracy. In modern democracy people are not directly taking part in the public policy making. They “participate in government by electing officials to make government decisions for them.”81 The representatives of the people are the agents of the people, who are expected to represent voters’ interests. “---i does not suffice for the government as a whole to be accountable to the

electedorat; but rather the voter should be able to identify the responsible authorities and hold them accountable as a group for their deed and misdeeds. Each generation will have to defend it and fight for it- then alone will it survived to be passed on to the next. For this citizens have to be alert, active, vigilant and well informed. For most of the citizens democracy means voting in elections. They think “politics in terms of “we” who are governed and “they” who govern.” But who have given them the right to govern? It is the people who are the makers of the government. If they wish they can call back the government. Most of the time people are reluctant to accept their responsibilities as a citizens. One of the greatest problem of democratic governance is to ensure continuous participation of the people in the political process. Democracy as a method of government is not whatever the people at a given moment may happen to decide, but a set of arrangements for securing their control over the public decision-making process on an ongoing basis. Participation of the people therefore, “will increase the extent to which a nation is a democratic only insofar as such participation involves at some point influence by the participant over governmental decisions.”

The responsiveness of people towards governmental decision is crucial for effective functioning of democracy. As democratic government

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83 Navin Chandra Joshi (ed.), Supra no.79,p.22.
84 V.A.Paipanandikar and Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.4, p.6.
presupposes peoples rule, the involvement of people cannot be confined to the elections. Government should be people oriented. In India, “the people who are the true sovereign are mostly forgotten after they have exercised their franchise and regain importance only in next election year. Thereafter once a new government is elected for the next five years is characterized by little regard for the need of the people, particularly the poor.”87 In such a situation it is the responsibility of the citizens to make the representatives responsive towards the needs of people. In this regard Key was motivated by an ethical or at least a practical concern: If politicians “see voters as most certainly responsive to nonsense, they will giver them nonsense. If they see voters susceptible to delusion, they will delude them.”88

“Democracy is thus characterized by the fact that power over significant authoritative decisions in a society is distributed among the population. The ordinary man is expected to take an active part in governmental affairs, to be aware of how decisions are made, and to make his own views known.”89

In a democracy the role of a citizen as respondent is significant. Responsiveness of citizens towards governmental decisions make policies more responsive to the needs of the beneficiaries.

For the individuals or for particular groups of citizens the most important political activities may be those in between-election period, when citizens try to influence government decisions in relation to specific

87 Richard Hofferbert(ed.), Supra no.16, p.13.
problems that concern them. The emergence of coalitions tended to the rise of serious impediments in the process of public policy making. Most of the time political parties are interested in their privileges and means of acquiring power. In the context of such state of affairs, participation of people plays a crucial role in public policy making. "Public policy formulation and law making and their implementation constitute major factor determining the effectiveness of good governance." To influence the policies, people need some strongly organized channels between the people and government. This enables the people to influence the proceedings of the parliament or outcome of the policy in question. In this regard collective efforts of the people to influence government carries more weight. People need some outside support for organizing themselves so that they could also became active participants in good governance. The NGOs, self-help groups, pressure groups and other voluntary organizations are the important means available to the people through which they can influence public policy decisions. Social mobilization, enabling and empowering the people to receive fully and fruitfully what is intended for them, is the central issue in good governance. The NGOs have a crucial role to play in this task. In the governance process the responsibility for development and welfare is shared by government and civil society.

91 S.S.Patagundi in Subhash C.Kashyap (ed.) Supra no.5, p.154.
92 Shivraj Patil in Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.) Supra no.5, p.15.
93 P.A.Sangma in Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.) Supra no.5, p.16.
In the post independent India, dependence of people on government considerably increased. NGO’s, self help groups, etc. contribute to reduce the dependence of people on government. Through these people attempts to influence public policy decisions. The people’s responsiveness towards public policies is considered as an oxygen to democracy.

There should be some mechanism for formal or informal interaction between people and government. “By definition, the “average” man’s influence over the government must be small. Compared with the forces of the government and the state, he is a frail creature indeed, and this would apply to local as well as national government. If the ordinary man is to have any influence vis-à-vis the government, it must be in concert with his fellows”. 94

Civil society is one such group or association which is gaining significant role in government in recent years. “Civil society in the present context is being increasingly relied upon by people for a responsive and performing democratic governance, but it always functions within the state and has a certain degree of outonomy.” 95 Where a citizen or group of citizen is too weak and needs protection, it is the duty of civil society to defend its interests through positive social, political, economic and legal action. 96 Common welfare is the main aim of civil society. In recent years the use of informal groups as a means of influencing the government has become an

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94 Kurt L. Shell, Supra no.86, pp. 68-69.
96 V.A.Paipanandikar and Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.4, P.5
important means of protesting against the government. By and large people
are slowly getting political awareness. Popular awareness enables to exert
pressure on government to promote their interest. Since people are
politically mobilized, for their socio-economic problems, they began to
exert pressure on the government through various organizations to demand
more in the resource allocation of the government. Civil society enables
the people to raise their voice to pressurize the government.

People cannot be responsive unless they are educated. Unfortunately, most of the citizens of India are illiterate, ill-informed, poor
and destitute, and living in areas bereft of all facilities of communication
and interaction. It is the primary responsibility of the political parties to
educate the voters about the policies which they pursue after getting elected. They also have to inform the people about the policies and programmes
discussed and implemented in the Parliament. However, political parties do
not pay adequate attention for educating the people. Perhaps people have
realized their importance in governance. “They may analyze the manifestos
issued by different political parties and help the citizens to make a choice
between them. They may also on behalf of the citizens monitor the
elections, identify malpractices if any and take steps to see that they are
eliminated and those indulging in such malpractices are punished under the
law.”

“This education would be effective to the extent it is imparted in the

97 G. Palanthurai, Supra no.28, p.18.
98 Sumit Bhattacharya, Democracy and Election, The Radical Humanist, 55(2), May
99 P.R. Dubhashi in, Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.5, p.90.
voters' idiom, in the language they easily understand. One of the most important reasons for the fast deteriorating standards of our parliamentary system borrowed from the West is that the masses do not understand the values, rules, operations and purposes that underlie the system precisely because they are not explained to them in the language they understand and linked with the values they cherish.”

“If the electorate tries to select good types, then bad types may moderate their policy choices in the direction of what the electorate wants, as in the classical theory of electoral accountability. But, then insofar as bad types become harder to distinguish from good types, selection is rendered problematic.” People have to be educated in terms of getting information about the functioning of the government. From this perspective peoples’ involvement in the process of governance plays an important role. By involving people in politics, they can respond better.

People play a significant role in making the government accountable and transparent. Transparency basically arises out of the citizens’ right to information-the right to know what decisions public institutions take and for what valid reasons. “--- the greater the transparency, the greater the accountability, the greater the accountability, the greater the responsiveness of government. The need for transparency to ensure more accountable governance is therefore obvious.”

100 S.G. Kashikar in Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.5, p.199.
101 Adam Przeworski, Susan C.Stokes and Bernard Menin, Supra no.3, p.57.
102 Jstyanarayana, Supra no.35, p.4.
people not only at the time of election, but they are also answerable to the people for the day to day activities of the government. People can make their representatives accountable only when they are well informed. Peoples right to information also increases transparency. Thus, information can be the main source of peoples' power. Through this power they can ensure the political parties responsiveness. The concern of the representatives for people is primarily by votes. How much well-informed and enlightened they are and how responsibly they vote.104

In turn, citizens do not have sufficient information to evaluate the incumbent governments the threat of not being reelected is insufficient to induce governments to act in the best interest of the public.105 There is also a necessity to inform the people about the criminal record of the candidates. The criminal elements in the Parliament may affect the quality of debate in Parliament. If the people are informed about the criminal records of the candidates, it is hoped that they can elect responsible and efficient person as their representative. As regards criminalization of politics the Delhi High Court in Association of Democratic Reform Vs. Union of India, give the verdict: if voters are made aware of the criminal propensities and activities of a candidate, it will help in eliminating criminalization of politics. Further, the court has also directed that the Election Commission should provide the information to the voters regarding (i) a candidate having been accused of any offence punishable with imprisonment, (ii) assets possessed by a

104 S.G.Kashikar in, Subhsh C. Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.5, p. 199
105 Adam Przeworski, Susan C.Stokes and Bernard Menin, Supra no.3, p.30.
candidate, or his/her spouse and dependent persons, (iii) a candidate's competence, capacity and suitability including educational qualifications and (iv) capacity and ability of the political party fielding the candidate.\textsuperscript{106}

In a major judgment to curb criminalization of politics Supreme Court on May 2002 asked the candidates for Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies to disclose their antecedents, assets and educational qualifications, if any, to help the voters to make the right choice. "The little man may think over before making his choice of electing law-breakers as law-makers," said the Bench.\textsuperscript{107} Such judgments could boost the morale of the public spirited people who can make use of the opportunities given to them and can drive away criminals from the political life of this country. Such actions of the people may pressurize the candidates to live up to the expectations of the people.

For the first time in fourteenth general elections the Election Commission implemented the Supreme Court's directions on affidavits to be submitted by candidates along with their nomination papers. "The affidavits, which will carry information on a candidate's criminal antecedents if any, property, liabilities and educational qualifications. The Election Commission, as per the directive of the Delhi High Court on March 1, will also seek affidavits from candidates regarding their dues to

\textsuperscript{106} Shivraj B. Nakade in Subhash C. Kahyap (ed.), Supra no.5, p.146.
\textsuperscript{107} The Navhind Times, May 2002.
the government in respect of water and electricity consumption, telephone calls and hotel bills, and give them due publicity".108

It is not only the job of Election Commission and Supreme Court to ensure free and fair elections but people can also contribute in this regard. Citizens now have the fundamental right to know the antecedents of the candidates — an important input in the process of making an informed choice.109 The Delhi Watch Groups, a coalition of civil society organizations, committed to the cause of transparency in the electoral system, did a commendable job in compiling and analyzing the affidavits filed by the candidates for the recent Delhi assembly elections.110 There is need for organizing such groups in every state.

‘Peoples’ United for Better Living in Calcutta, popularly known as PUBLIC, mobilized their members to keep watch on whether political parties observe code of conduct required as per Election Commission norms during the 1998 election. The members of PUBLIC also took up the job of removing undesirable and abusive slogans and other political writings from the walls of private and public building."111 Thus people have to come forward and take up their responsibilities, then only democratic governance is ensured. The Maha Gujral and Navnirman Movement in Gujrat are the

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108 V. Venkateshan, Now the Countdown, Frontline, March 26, 2004, p.27.
Making people aware of their duties and responsibilities is very vital in ensuring good governance. The glaring example for this is, “in the winter of 1989 the Citizens’ for Democracy (CFD) and the Sampoorna Kranti Manch (SKM) supported by the Indian Radical Humanist Association (IRHA) and the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) presented to all the contesting political parties a Charter of Peoples’ Demands for acceptance with a promise to implement them within 18 months of their assuming power.” National Front was the only party which had accepted the demands and promised to implement them. But, unfortunately, it did not last long in office to fulfill its promise, primarily due to the kind of party politics.

To give a person a share of the responsibility for governing the society of which he is a part was, Mill argued, the most effective way of contributing to his moral and intellectual development; while on the contrary, to deny a man power over his government was sure of discouraging his interest in it and his concern for it. Of course, there have to be politicians and civil servants who accept political and professional responsibility for the conduct of the affairs of the government. But, since

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112 Ibid. p.104.
114 J. Roland Pennock, Supra no.82, P.443.
they are supposed to be irresponsive to public opinion and pressure, the ultimate responsibility is that of the citizens.\textsuperscript{115}

People should also realize that the way the political parties are collecting their funds, formulate their policies and their internal organization and interactions among them vitally affect the Parliamentary proceeding. Ultimately it affects the people. The people should be vigilant about the party activities and should not hesitate to criticize and oppose their move whenever the parties encroach upon peoples’ rights and liberties. Downs correctly assumes that, “parties formulate policies in order to win elections, rather than win elections in order to formulate policies.”\textsuperscript{116} Thus people have to take the responsibility to make the parties formulate such policies which are in the interest of the people. Much of democratic control rests not only on voters’ ability to make meaningful electoral choices predictive of policy performance, but also on the ability of voters to inflict retrospective electoral punishment for party failure.\textsuperscript{117}

Party politics presupposes to refine the public policy making. This study indicates that the issues influencing the popular and political parties’ responsiveness have adversely affected the party politics. As a result of this, governance becomes less effective in terms of serving the purpose of fulfilling the aspirations of people.

\textsuperscript{115} V.A.Paipandikar and Subhash C.Kashyap(ed.), Supra no.4, pp.6-7.
\textsuperscript{117} Richard Hofferbert(ed.), Supra no.16, p.3.