

# **Application of the indicators of political development in present scenario of Assam**

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## **Abstract**

Development is a political term. It has a range of meaning that depends on the context in which the term is used and it may also be used to reflect and to justify a variety of different agendas held by different people or organizations . Development is a multidimensional process. It includes political, social, economic, cultural, technological and educational dimensions. So, as a dimension ,as an approach or as a concept, ‘political development’ has a great importance in the scenario of third world politics.

So, in this article , an attempt would be made to applying the indicators of political development in Assam .

**Key words:** Development, Political development, Indicators of political development , Assam.

## **Introduction**

According to Rogers, “Development is a participatory process of directed social change in a society, intended to bring about social and material advancement including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities for the majority of people through their gaining greater control over their environment. Development is fundamentally not about index number of national income and its growth ; it is not saving ratios and co-efficient; it is about by and for human being and the quality of his or her life. Democratization in policy making, equal access to education, greater justice should be taken into account, human rights, equal opportunity for all special programs for the deprived and the marginalized sections of society are today the main agenda of development in the Third world nations.

## **Significance of the study**

Political development is a western concept. After the decolonization process the third world countries are trying to develop themselves through economically and politically. India is one of such country. So it is very much necessary to measure such development. The significance of the study through applying the indicators of political development we would be able to know to what extent it is getting develop.

## **Literature review**

In his paper ‘**What happened to political development?**’ **Vernon W. Ruttan** made an attempt to assess what development economists could learn from theory and research in the field of political development to advance knowledge and policy in the field of economic development. Then he is reviewing the contributions of several development economists who have attempted to give explicit attention to the political preconditions for economic development. This leads him to a discussion of the central problem of the growth of political power and its relationship to economic growth.

In his **paper ‘National Political Development: Measurement and Analysis’**, **Phillip Cutright** develop an index of political development. The index of political development is operationally defined. The concept guided construction of the index can be stated simply a politically developed nation. Degree of political development can be measured and each nation can be placed on a continuum of development, which will allow it to be compared with any other nation in the world. He emphasis on the role played by political parties in national political life in measuring political development.

## **Objectives of the study**

- \*To analyse the concept of political development.
- \*To find out the indicators of political development.
- \*To apply the indicators of political development.

**The concept of political development**

Political development is a more elusive concept than economic development. It is more controversial in normative terms and more difficult to measure in empirical and operational terms. It is used frequently by both normative and non-normative or existential thinkers. Normative theorists stress that a political system develops as it approaches the good political order. The existentialists spend more time on specifying the characteristics of what they regard as politically developed systems and the conditions and processes which give rise to them.

According to **Alfred Diament**, "Political development is a process by which political system acquires an increased capacity to sustain successfully and continuously new type goals and demands and the creation of new types of organizations."

**Lucian Pye**, describe political development as---

1. A prerequisite of economic development
2. Political modernization
3. Operation of a nation state
4. Administrative and legal development
5. Mass mobilization and participation
6. Building up of democracy
7. Stability and orderly change
8. Mobilization and power
9. Multidimensional process of social change

**Historical background**

The term political development entered the lexicon of political science in the 50s, when the newly independent states of Asia and Africa began formulating development plans for the socio-economic wellbeing of their people. Thus, the term 'political development' is a recent origin in the field of politics. The gradual decline of colonialism and imperialism of western powers after second world war resulted in the emergence of a large number of free states in Asia and Africa. These newly emerged and free states were backward in many respects. The process of decolonization liberated these background societies (states) from the western political domination and these states began to take shape as new nations. These states had to face variety of problems that is political, economic and social. Their efforts to establish a new political system suited to their soil attracted many political scientist to study carefully of their process. Thus the concept of political development has its origin in the studies of politics of developing countries.

**Indicators of political development**

World Handbook of political and social indicators has compiled some indicators for over 120 countries of the world and India's ranking under various indicators is as follows:-

1. National integration
2. Voter turnout
3. Popular participation in governmental decision making process
4. Autonomous interest groups
5. Mass media circulation, particularly in regional language
6. Autonomy of local govt. institution
7. Expansion and autonomy of non-bureaucratic sector of the society (for example – educational section)
8. Duration of legislative sessions
9. Political and administrative decentralization
10. Number and effectiveness of 'watchdog' organizations overseeing the government and bureaucracy (e.g. a forum like 'citizens for democracy')
11. Autonomy of quasi-governmental section (like public undertaking, institutions set up by the government but registered under the registration of societies Act etc)
12. Stable party system characterized by inner democratic functioning
13. Political competitiveness
14. Tolerance for dissent and protest
15. Broadening social base of the political elite
16. Openness in public administration
17. Constituency service by legislators
18. Education
19. Urbanization

20. Freedom of press
21. Anomic movements within limits (for political protest)
22. Honest non-partisan election machinery
23. Independence of the judiciary etc.

There may also be negative indicators of political development such as—

1. Riots
2. Number of political prisoners in jails
3. Political assassinations
4. Manipulated defection of legislators from one party to another etc.

### **Applying the indicators of political development in the context of Assam**

**1. National integration:**—National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizen of country. It is an indicator of political development of a country. To create national integration for our country India, Assam as a part of India has been taking some steps. For example—The Red Horns Division (the oldest division of Indian Army) has started a national integration tour. It chooses some students from different districts of Assam for a tour. The tour aimed at exposing the youth of Assam to the various facets of life and give them a glimpse of various opportunities. The idea behind the tour is to educate, motivate and empower the youth to make informed decisions in life and consequently take a small but concrete step towards social empowerment.

**2. Autonomy of quasi-judicial bodies of Assam:**— As an indicator of ‘political development’, the role of the autonomy of quasi-judicial bodies can be explained from the viewpoint of issue of NRC. More than 1.9 million people have been left out from the final list of the National Register of citizens. Amnesty International India expressed its deep concerns about the functioning of the 100 and more Foreigners Tribunals, which would decide whether those excluded from the NRC list are Indian citizens or not. The Foreigners Tribunals, which will decide the Indian citizenship of million of people are quasi-judicial bodies, where persons claimed to be foreigners have the responsibility to prove that they are Indian citizens. Several reports have demonstrated how the proceedings before Foreigners Tribunals are arbitrary while their orders are biased and discriminatory. So, we can see, sometimes there are some issue within the issue of autonomy of this kind of quasi-judicial bodies of course, they should get autonomy to do their duty, but it should be also noticed that their work or orders should not be biased.

**3. Voter turnout:**— Voter turnout is the percentage of eligible voters who cast a ballot in an election. Low turnout is a threat for democracy as well as for political development of a country or state. In Assam, there are some evil forces that force the citizen to not to vote. Even after that, in recent Lok Sabha election (2019), it is a good sign for political development of Assam that the percentage of voter turnout isn't low. The percentage of voter turnout Assam can be shown as—

1. The first phase (polling on April 11)—78.27%
2. The second phase (polling on April 18)—81.20%
3. The third phase (polling on 23 April)—74.05%

**4. Autonomy of local govt. institution:**— Assam has a three tier system of panchayati Raj. The three tiers are – Zilla parishad at the district level, Anchalik Panchayat at village level. In Assam a total of 23 subjects related to 17 different departments are assigned to panchayat. Apart from this, the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule of the constitution of India allows for the formulation of Autonomous district council to administer areas which have been given autonomy within their states. In Assam, there are autonomous council under 6<sup>th</sup> schedule of the Indian constitution.

**5. Effectiveness of bureaucracy:**— Effectiveness of bureaucracy is one of the most important indicators of political development. But the sad reality is in Assam bureaucracy has some issues which impacts badly on the administrative system and people of the state. The bureaucracy of Assam is less effective compare to other states of India. It is well known that the Assam's bureaucracy has been, along with the politicians, closely involved in the settlement of migrants before independence as well as of the infiltrators after independence. The recent divide within the bureaucracy of Assam is neither a sign nor conducive to efficient administration, through most observers would concede that such ‘caste systems’ are inevitable where there are two different sect of bureaucrats obliged to work within the same framework of the administrative system. Much of the present conflict within the administration in Assam stems from the fact the administration has officers both from the IAS as well as the ACS.

Much of the trouble arises from the fact that the IAS officers (through much fewer in number) regard themselves as a class apart and much superior to the ACS officers. Other drawbacks of Assam's bureaucracy is involvement of officers in corruption.

- a. Stable party system:- It is the sad reality of Assam that after the stage of 'Aaya ram gaya ram' of Indian politics, defection is still present in Assam's party system. For example we can say about defection of Himanta Biswa Sharma former education and health minister of congress. In 2014, he joined BJP. Another undemocratic practice of Assam's political party system hereditary politics. These are the great hindrances of party system of Assam which become a wall to block the political development of this state.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this article , we have discussed some important indicators of political development in the context of Assam. From this discussion, we can conclude that, of course Assam's has the framework or structure or indicators of political development. But in reality all these indicators have some problems. Some of have corruption issue, some of have functional issue. There is need to reform its functions, otherwise , these indicators can become a drawback of democracy.

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