

STATE

A political entity comprising of a population and a fixed territory is called a state. The word state is taken from the Latin word 'status' meaning condition or circumstances.

The concept of state is not modern and dates back to ancient times of the top philosophers, i.e. Plato, Aristotle.

1. Classical Philosophical Perspectives of State

a. State According to Plato

Plato, an eminent philosopher, had during his time the Greek city-states, they were small in area but had a system of democracy within them. The system of Greek city-states was soon corrupted in the sight of Plato and he criticized their system of democracy after the execution of his mentor 'Socrates'.

Plato, being a critique of the Greek system gave his famous writing 'The Republic' in which he gave instructions of how to form an 'Ideal state' ruled by a Philosopher-King.

b. State in views of Aristotle

Aristotle, student of Plato, is another figure popular for his concept of state and classification of government. Aristotle's emphasis was that Plato's ideal state was an utopia and not possible to be achieved but he through his forms or types of governments ruled out that 'monarchy' is the best form of government for a state.

c. Size of State

→ According to Plato, the size of an ideal state was not to be vast enough and its population had to be '5040'.

→ Aristotle believed that, state should not be so big or so small, the people dwelling in state should know each other in his state.

11. Modern Philosophical Concepts of State

a. Max Webber's concept of State

"A human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."

• Weber in his views discusses all the essential components of state, that are Population, Territory, Sovereignty & Government.

b. Machiavelli's Concept of State

Niccolo Machiavelli, a 16th century philosopher, lived in Florence (now Italy), it was a period of renaissance but the Florence was attacked by Medici and Machiavelli was arrested.

During his solitary, Machiavelli produced his well known works, 'Prince' and 'Discourses'. In his philosophical workings he emphasized upon the conduct of ruler (Prince) as to how he has to be cunning like a fox to preserve his state. Machiavelli emphasized that state must be preserved at all costs even if it has to be with use of force or deceitfully.

"For a good state, there should be good laws and strong army."
(Machiavelli)

3. Origin of State

a. Divine Theory

→ The proponents of this theory believe that state is created by 'God' and the ruler is His 'Representative' on Earth.

→ Ancient Egypt and European Monarchies were ~~are~~ examples of these states.

→ These rulers were backed by the church which legitimized their role.

b. Force Theory

→ They believe that states are formed by force or coercion.

→ Groups attack an area and take control of it and form their rule.

C. Social Contract Theory

→ States were formed when there was a social contract.

→ Thomas Hobbes:- He believed that humans lived in 'chaos' and there was a war of all against all.

- Humans felt the need of peace and appointed a sovereign by a social contract who in return protects their life and property.

→ John Locke:- Locke was of the view that human is 'peaceful' in nature but due to uncertainty they fell into chaos.

- He emphasized that there was no legislature, executive or judiciary and the need for it led to a bilateral social contract.

- For protection of their life and liberty.

→ J.J. Rousseau:- Rousseau backed his theory with the idea that it was 'General will' of the people that led to a social contract.

- People contract with each other not with ruler.

d. Evolutionary Theory

- The proponents of this theory believed that humans evolved naturally into families and then large groups.
- Family → Clan → Tribe → Nation → State
- This theory is supported by archeological and sociological evidences.

4. Functions of State

a. Traditional Functions

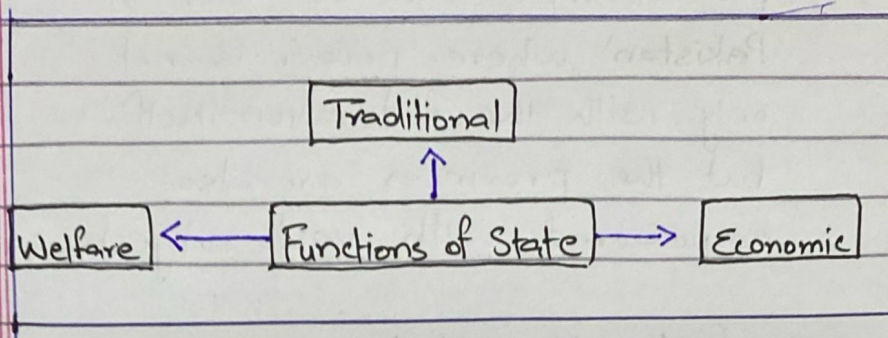
The traditional functions of state include maintenance of law and order, administering justice, protection of rights and defending the country from any threats.

b. Welfare Functions

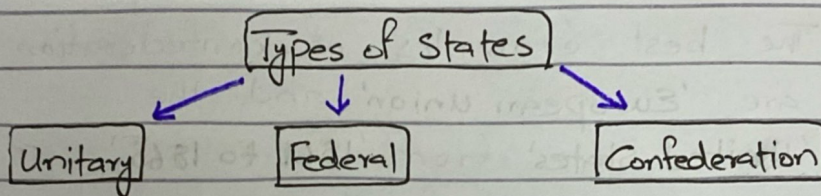
Another function of state is to ensure development and welfare not only of itself but also of its subjects, this includes building hospitals, educational institutes and employment opportunities.

c. Economic Functions

It is responsibility of state to regulate budget and do appropriate spendings on projects of development and defense.



5- Types of States



a. Unitary States

Unitary state is a form of state where the power is centered in only the center and the units are devolved with some authority but it too is devolved from the center.

The best example of Unitary form of state is 'United Kingdom'. In UK, the power is with the Prime Minister and his cabinet and the units have less say in the matters of any relation.

b. Federal States

The type of state where the power is divided among the center and the units.

The example can be taken of 'Pakistan', where power is not only with the federation itself but the provinces are also empowered with vast subjects.

c. Confederation states

A confederation is merely a loose association of states where each state has full authority.

The best examples of confederation are 'European Union' and the 'United States' from '1861 to 1865'.

6. Contemporary Challenges to State

a. Globalization

As the world is developing and moving closer, globalization, poses significant threats to states. The world being more dependent on each other in terms of trade is posing threat to the sovereignty of states.

b. Terrorism

Terrorism is another factor undermining the modern state's working. The surge in terrorism specifically cyber terrorism poses significant risk to the integrity of states where these

illegal violent non state actors use propaganda to manipulate the youth against their own country.

c. Environmental Hazards

Environmental challenges is also a major problem for modern states. The rise in temperature and an increase in disaster has posed vulnerable threats to states and consequently, it leads to mass migration which is a serious threat to a country.

Conclusion

State, a political entity, has evolved over time with different views of its existence, origin and forms. But, state is an essential part of human existence which ensures the protection of rights and liberties.

Even though, modern states are subject to numerous threats, the international community is working together to counter serious issues like terrorism and global warming.

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