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Article For Reading – Sound and fury: On the parliamentary debate on the Constitution.

The parliamentary debate on the Constitution **turned out to be** yet another occasion of intense **diatribe** between the ruling alliance and the Opposition. While both sides agreed on the **supremacy** of the Constitution, now in its 75th year, each accused the other of undermining it. The debate could have been an opportunity to explore a new common ground for a sharply polarised polity, but, unfortunately, that is not how it **played out**. Speakers from parties in power, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Opposition speakers led by the Leader of Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, railed against their political opponents and used the Constitution as a **facade** for their partisan politics. Mr. Gandhi views the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Mr. Modi as disloyal to the Constitution, and **sought** to connect it all to the Hindutva ideology. Mr. Modi singled out Mr. Gandhi's family, starting from his great-grandfather and the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, for a **no-holds-barred** attack — that it has undermined the Constitution through acts of **omission** and commission. Both sides used facts selectively and the statements of past actors to exaggerate the point that their opponents did more harm to the Constitution than they themselves. Such an approach may work as a propaganda strategy but can do little in terms of **constructive engagement on the question**

The Constitution, understood as a **living document**, provides the foundation and the framework for a fairer social, political and economic order for the country. Constitutionalism is an evolving project, and any discussion on it must account for this dynamism. History is a good teacher, but litigating the past endlessly is not a helpful learning technique. There have been many dark moments in the 75-year history of the Constitution, including the imposition of Emergency, but the brighter and bigger picture is that it still offers the strongest possible **ethos** for a **secular**, pluralist and progressive nation. The BJP and the Congress calling each other names is **akin** to the **pot calling the kettle black**. Both sides say they are for strengthening the unity of the country, but accuse each other of dividing the country. What emerges from the debate is that there is a lot of **blame to go around**; what were missing were **introspection** and self-reflection. Mr. Modi is right in saying that the Constitution is a **unifier** of the nation, and cited his government's **push for** a uniform civil code as an example of the commitment to advancing this unity. Uneven demographic and economic trends will require close and unified attention by the political class in the decades ahead to reimagine the constitutional scheme. Sadly, little time was spent on these questions.

Summary –

The parliamentary debate on the Constitution's 75th anniversary devolved into partisan attacks between the ruling BJP, led by PM Modi, and the Opposition, led by Rahul Gandhi. Both accused each other of undermining the Constitution while claiming to uphold it. Instead of fostering constructive dialogue, the debate was dominated by selective blame and historical grievances. The Constitution, as a dynamic framework for a pluralistic nation, remains vital, but the debate lacked introspection and focus on future challenges, such as demographic and economic disparities.

Vocabulary-

1. Unifier (noun) एकीकारक

Meaning- a person or thing that brings others together.

Synonym: Consolidator, integrator

Antonym: Divider, separator

Example: He was regarded as a unifier who could bridge the gap between diverse groups within the party.

2. Diatribe (noun) निंदात्मक भाषण

Meaning = a forceful and bitter verbal attack against someone or something

Synonym: Tirade, rant

Antonym: Praise, compliment

Example: His speech turned into a diatribe against the failures of the previous administration.

3. Supremacy (Noun) प्रभुत्व, श्रेष्ठता, या सर्वश्रेष्ठता।

Meaning - The state or condition of being superior to all others in authority, power, or status.

Synonyms: Dominance, Superiority, Sovereignty

Antonyms: Inferiority, Subordination, Weakness, Submission

Example – The country fought hard to maintain its supremacy in global trade.

4. Facade (noun) मुखौटा

Meaning= an outward appearance that is maintained to conceal a less pleasant reality.

Synonym: Front, guise

Antonym: Reality, authenticity

Example: Behind the facade of a happy marriage was a couple struggling to communicate.

5. Sought (Verb) खोजा, चाहा, तलाशा

Meaning - “Sought” is the past tense and past participle of the verb “seek.” It means to attempt to find, obtain, or achieve something, or to ask for something.

Synonyms – Searched, Pursued, Desired, Requested

Antonyms – Ignored, Neglected, Avoided, Rejected.

Example – The artist sought inspiration from nature for her new painting.

6. Omission (noun) चूक

Meaning= the action of excluding or leaving out someone or something ()

Synonym: Exclusion, neglect

Antonym: Inclusion, incorporation

Example: The omission of her name from the list was a mistake that needed correcting.

7. Ethos (noun) चरित्र

Meaning= the characteristic spirit of a culture, era, or community as seen in its beliefs and aspirations.

Synonym: Spirit, character

Antonym: — (No direct antonym)

Example: The ethos of the school emphasises academic excellence as well as moral values.

8. Secular (Adj, Noun) धर्मनिरपेक्ष

Meaning - Not connected with religious or sacred things; neutral to religion.

Synonyms – Worldly, Temporal, Earthly, Lay, Profane.

Antonyms – Religious, Sacred, Ecclesiastical, Devout.

Example – The country has a secular government, meaning it does not promote any religion.

9. Akin (adj) समान

Meaning= of similar character.

Synonym: Similar, related

Antonym: Unrelated, dissimilar

Example: The two novels are akin in their themes of heroism and adventure.

10. Introspection (Noun) आत्मनिरीक्षण

Meaning- The process of examining one's own thoughts, feelings, and mental state.

Synonyms – Self-examination, Contemplation, Self-analysis.

Antonyms –Extrospection, Indifference, Neglect, Unawareness.

Example – His introspection led him to realize that he had been neglecting his health for too long.

Idioms & Phrases

1. No-holds-barred:

Meaning - Unrestrained, unrestricted, or without any limitations.

2. Living document:

Meaning - Something that evolves and adapts over time.

3. Dark moments:

Meaning - Periods of trouble, difficulty, or hardship.

4. The pot calling the kettle black:

Meaning - Criticizing someone for a fault that you also possess.

5. Blame to go around:

Meaning - Responsibility or fault that is shared by many people.

Phrasal Verbs (Verb + Preposition)

1. Turned out to be: Resulted in or ended up being.

2. Played out: Happened or unfolded in a particular way.

3. Push for: To advocate or strongly promote something.