

Subject: Political Science
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Course: 419

What is a soft state? Is India a soft state? If yes, then why?

Marks: 10

The term 'soft state' was introduced by Gunnar Myrdal, while comparing South Asian countries with European countries. According to him, South Asian countries follow the policy of soft state. The policy of 'soft state' means a lenient attitude of state towards social deviance. Soft states do not take hard decisions, even if the situation demands.

This soft state policy weakens the capacity of the state in enforcing rule of law. Not taking hard decisions increases the crime rate, violence, corruption etc. In India, this policy is being followed in the post-independence period. as a result of destruction of strong local powers during the colonial period. Myrdal says that effective governments follow strict enforcement of rule of law.

Is India A Soft State?

India, being a secular state has always faced difficulty in maintaining its integrity every now and then. But still, the unity among people and the prevailing brotherhood in the country have kept us intact despite being the most diversified country. We the people of India are basically very generous. We like our friends and we love our enemies. Call it the teachings of Mahatma Ghandi or the modern form of Gandhigiri, compared to other nations, people in our country are not so rebellious (or are they?). Our Government always extends hands of friendship but never fastens its belt to initiate a war.

So far India has been labeled as a soft state. We have failed to protect our national interests on several occasions. Thanks to the petty politics and indecisiveness of our leadership, time and again our security forces have been the victim of apathy of our leadership. Imagine looking back fearfully each time you enter a temple, looking suspiciously at your fellow passengers while travelling by train. It is this reaction that a terrorist gloats on. To strike fear is the utmost target in his mind. When we succumb to that fear and terror, his goal is achieved. As long as we show compassion for the accused, we will not achieve the goal of ridding our country of terrorism.

That is exactly what our problem is. We don't need to essentially prove that India is soft in combating terrorism. Anybody who reads newspapers will know that we are. Anybody who flies by Indian airways will know. Anybody who thinks that we gave a free ride to three of the worst criminals to a place called Kandahar in the distinguished company of our foreign minister would know that we **are** a soft state.

The Indian police have such a distinguished record of being a terror in UP. Our policemen rub chilli powder into the eyes of prisoners. And if they do not sing as our policemen would want them to, they are hung upside down. Sadly, these brutalities are frequently committed in a country which is proud of its human rights awareness and constitutional guarantees.

It is the softness towards terrorists combined with the brutalities against our own citizen which makes us such a weak state.

It's basically a matter of attitude. Our country's leaders' attitude does not reflect a national resolve to pay the price required to fight terrorism. That's our problem. Be it the Mumbai Attacks, or any other such blows, we have been passive in our approach to fight our

enemies. There is no idea why Kasab still seeks freedom even when video footages prove him guilty, and Indian Government has not taken any firm decision to fight this out.

India even after being counted among one of the richest countries in terms of resources, is still not competent in International Trade. The best brains of the country are outsourced by other developed nations, and the nation lacks people who can change things. US, one of the major importers of India's best brains' is the best economy because those Indians who are instrumental in the multinationals in US are involved. And the irony of fate; India's economy is governed by the whims of US Multinational companies.

We know that poverty in India still dominates prosperity. But the glittery of IT and other prospering industries are praised to an extent that often covers the reality. We are no more in a situation to compare ourselves with China. We Indians still consider think that China is a developing country like India (technically it is), but that is not true. The most powerful nation after US in terms of anything (especially military and defence) is China. Today's world currency markets are governed by China. US federal banks think twice before taking any decision regarding China, as it holds the maximum dollar reserves compared to any other country.

The nation can transcend only if there is peace, and it is the high time to terminate this nuisance of terrorism to their roots. Besides terrorism, India has numerous other problems that make it weak at its foundation. The moment the country thinks of developing something it faces the tough reality. Building infrastructure is of immense importance for India but the pathetic condition of the poor gains priority. It is difficult to turn away from reality, high population, illiteracy, unemployment, social marginalization, poverty, highly appalling condition of public health and much more make our country weak.

We will have to demonstrate the determination to track these problems to their ancestry. Only then there can be a permanent solution. Sooner the headship recognises this; the better it is for the nation.