

Nepal: Class notes on major political developments.

It is very important to understand the history of Nepal to understand the politics.

- From the 7th or 8th Century B.C. the Kirantis are said to have ruled Nepal. Their famous King Yalumber is even mentioned in the epic, 'Mahabharat'.
- Around 300 A.D. the Lichhavis arrived from northern India and overthrew the Kirantis.
- During their 550 year rule, the Mallas built numerous temples and splendid palaces with picturesque squares. It was also during their rule that society and the cities became well organized; religious festivals were introduced and literature, music and art were encouraged.
- An ambitious Gorkha King named Prithvi Narayan Shah embarked on a conquering mission that led to the defeat of all the kingdoms in the valley by 1769. Prithvi Narayan decided to move his capital to Kathmandu establishing the Shah dynasty which ruled unified Nepal from 1769 to 2008.
- The history of the Gorkha state goes back to 1559 when Dravya Shah established a kingdom in an area chiefly inhabited by Magars. During the 17th and early 18th centuries,
- During the mid-19th Century Jung Bahadur Rana became Nepal's first prime minister to wield absolute power relegating the Shah king to mere figureheads. He started a hereditary reign of the Rana Prime Ministers that lasted for 104 years.
- The Ranas were overthrown in a democracy movement of the early 1950s with support from the-then monarch of Nepal, King Tribhuvan. Soon after the overthrow of the Ranas, King Tribhuvan was reinstated as the Head of the State.
- In 1959, Tribhuvan's son King Mahendra issued a new constitution, and the first democratic elections for a national assembly were held. The Nepali Congress Party was victorious and their leader, Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala formed a government and served as prime minister.

- After a People's Movement in 1990. Paving way for democracy, the then-King Birendra accepted constitutional reforms and established a multiparty parliament with King as the Head of State and an executive Prime Minister. In May 1991, Nepal held its first parliamentary elections.
- In February 1996, the Maoist parties declared People's War against monarchy and the elected government.
- On 1st June 2001, a horrific tragedy wiped out the entire royal family including King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya with many of their closest relatives.
- In April 2006, another People's Movement was launched jointly by the democratic parties focusing most energy in Kathmandu which led to a 19-day curfew. Eventually, King Gyanendra relinquished his power and reinstated the Parliament.
- On November 21, 2006, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and Maoist chairman Prachanda signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) 2006, committing to democracy and peace for the progress of the country and people.
- A Constituent Assembly election was held on April 10, 2008. On May 28, 2008, the newly elected Constituent Assembly declared Nepal a Federal Democratic Republic, abolishing the 240 year-old monarchy. Nepal today has a President as Head of State and a Prime Minister heading the Government.
- The Constituent Assembly made significant progress to accomplish the mandate of writing a new democratic constitution of Nepal during its first 4 years term. However, due to political disagreements on some of the contentious issues like federal provinces and form of government, the first CA could not accomplish the historic task and there was natural termination of its mandate in 2012.
- The election of CA II was held in November 2013 and in its first meeting, leaders of political parties set the timeline of 1 year to complete the task of writing the new constitution.
- Devastating earthquake of 7.8 magnitude hit Nepal in April 2015 followed by several powerful aftershocks causing loss of life, infrastructure and property in an unimaginable scale.

- The new constitution of Nepal was promulgated through an overwhelming majority of the votes of CA members on September 20, 2015. With this historic achievement, the decades-long dream of Nepali people to have a constitution made through an elected representative body has now been realized.