Concerns with Intraparty democracy

What is the issue?

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- In India most of the political parties are unwilling to institutionalise procedures for the selection of office-bearers.
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- This raises the concerns of lack of internal democracy within the parties.
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What are the concerns?

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- **Electing the chiefs -** Many political parties in India has charges of dynastic politics and the lack of internal democracy in the party.
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- Although election of the party president cannot be the sole criteria for judging intraparty democracy, political parties view the matter only through the procedure of electing the chiefs.
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- **Nominating the presidents -** Most of the presidents of the political parties in India have come through the selection or nomination route.
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- The nominations are mostly influenced by some external forces which have larger say in finance and caste (or) religion.
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- This is in contrast to the rise of its party workers to top echelons to project itself as a party with a difference.
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- **Centralised power -**Most parties are subservient to one supreme leader who can impose his/her offspring on the party.
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- And even electoral defeat does not loosen their control or hold over the party.
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- Such leaders are valued for their capacity to attract crowds and raise funds

as elections become more and more expensive.
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- **Lack of institutionalisation -**Most of the political parties still refuse to lay down settled and predictable procedures for almost everything they do, from the selection of candidates to the framing of a manifesto.
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What are its impacts on true democracy?

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- Selection of candidates, Chief Ministers and office-bearers of party units are usually left to the discretion of few leaders who take decisions behind closed doors.
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- This has proved detrimental to the political system.
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- This is because it impedes the growth of broad-based non-sectarian parties which can effectively articulate and aggregate a variety of interests.
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- Also party funds being raised and controlled centrally, weakens the State units and rank and file vis-à-vis the central leadership.
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- This control has an impact on a range of issues including leadership selection and nominations for elections.
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Source: The Hindu

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