



V.N. SHUKLA'S CONSTITUTION OF INDIA (11<sup>th</sup> Ed., 2008). By Mahendra P. Singh. Eastern Book Company, 34 Lalbagh, Lucknow – 226 001. Pp. CII + A-66 + 1160, Price Rs. 590/- (Paperback) & Rs. 880/- (Hardbound).

WRITING A book on Constitution of India, which in itself a voluminous text and keeping it abreast with the time by incorporating all the developments in the field is a laborious task, which can only be accomplished by persons with highest degree of commitment. The frequency in which various provisions of the Constitution come to be interpreted by high courts and Supreme Court of India, number of amendments brought to it by Parliament and judicial review thereon clearly manifest that the Constitution making, as Subash C. Kashyap said, “did not come to an end when ‘we the people of India’ were said to have decided in our constituent assembly to ‘adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution’. Constitution is always in the making. It keeps constantly growing, evolving.”<sup>1</sup> Comprehending all the important developments in the ever-growing field of law and encapsulating the same in a very articulate and tremendously reader friendly manner, thus, command an appreciation at the very outset.

V.N. Shukla's Constitution of India needs no introduction to the members of legal fraternity. First published in the year 1950, the very year the Constitution of India brought into force, the book has seen 11 editions and many reprints till date. Quality and lucidity are the distinguished traits of the book, which the authors have maintained so commendably. It is and has always been (various editions of the book) very lucid and reader friendly for the students to read, very insightful and resourceful for the lawyers, law teachers and researchers to refer to and precise, accurate and authoritative for the judges to rely on.

Mahendra P. Singh, one of the eminent professors of constitutional law, has incorporated all the recent developments in the most readable and comprehensible form in the eleventh edition of the book, which is under review. All most all the important decisions of the apex court and of the high courts including the three landmark decisions of the constitutional bench of the Supreme Court of India, viz., *Raja Ram Pal v.*

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1. Subash C. Kashyap, *Constitution Making Since 1950: An Overview* 3 (2004).



*Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha*,<sup>2</sup> *I.R. Coelho v. State of Tamil Nadu*<sup>3</sup> and *Ashoka Kumar Thakur v. Union of India*<sup>4</sup> rendered in the recent past have been incorporated very succinctly. Though from a reader's point of view, more detailed discussion of these cases would have been more helpful, it is unreasonable to expect from the author to include everything in single volume written on a vast subject like Constitution. No doubt, the discussions, however concise, provide great insights into the recent developments in the field of constitutional law.

The book also includes all the amendments brought till date. One of the unique features of the book is that it provides accurate details relating to amendments in precise form. Wherever the new amendments have been incorporated, the book provides, in the footnote, details of the amendment, text of the provision prior to the amendment etc., which is very useful for the readers since the same is not found in most of the textbooks on Constitution of India. Such an accurate reproduction of the text of each provision of the Constitution clearly brings home the point that in understanding the Constitution, text is more important than the case laws. Unfortunately in the recent days, over emphasis is given to the case laws rather than to the text of the Constitution in understanding it. Such an approach is adopted even by some of the textbook writers who have written books on Constitution without reference to the text of the Constitution as if it had no relevance. Such a realist approach in the study of Constitution does not go well with the democratic creed of our Constitution. The authors of the book under review never overlooked the importance of the text of the Constitution.

The comparative perspective given in some places provides motivation for the readers to know about other systems as well. It is a book, each edition of which is worth keeping in any library. Eastern Book Company also needs to be appreciated for moderately fixing the price of such a high quality book.

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2. (2007) 3 SCC 184.

3. (2007) 2 SCC 1.

4. (2008) 6 SCC 1.

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