




A New and Divided Nation

Though independence promised a bright future there were several issues which came as very great challenges before the nation. Soon after the declaration of partition, India saw the worst ever communal riots with indescribable brutalities which took more than a million lives.

Immediate Problems

As a result of partition, 8 million refugees had come into India from Pakistan. These people had to be found homes and jobs. They came with little belongings. Resettlement of those people was a major challenge for the newly independent country. New townships and colonies were developed, to settle them. Then there was the problem of the princely states, almost 500 of them each ruled by a maharaja or a nawab, each of whom had to be persuaded to join the new nation. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 gave them the right to decide their own future. Fortunately, under the able stewardship of Sardar Patel (India's first Home Minister) almost all states (529) acceded to India except Kashmir, Junagarh and Hyderabad. After the invasion by Pakistani raiders, the Maharaja of Kashmir and Sheikh Abdullah, the leader of the National Conference, which was leading the popular struggle in Kashmir, requested India for the accession on 26 October 1947. Then the Indian army drove away the Pakistani raiders from certain parts of Jammu and Kashmir. They were still holding some parts of Jammu and Kashmir when the matter was taken up at the United Nations. A cease fire was ordered with effect from January 1, 1949. (Although India and Pakistan since then fought two wars, Pakistan continued to occupy some territories of Jammu and Kashmir. The rest of Jammu and Kashmir has now become a part of India). In February 1948, the people of Junagadh whose Nawab had fled to Pakistan voted for accession to India. Hyderabad acceded to India in November 1949.

Pondicherry, Karakal, Yanam, Mahe and Chandernagore in south were under the French rule. Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Daman and Diu



were under the Portuguese. These territories were also liberated between 1954 and 1961.

Passing Away of Mahatma Gandhi : On 30 January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was shot dead by Nathuram Godse who disagreed with Gandhiji's views. It was a big shock to every one. The country had to survive without the Father of the Nation.

Problems of Unity and Development

The 345 million people of India (in 1947) were divided into different castes, professions, languages, religions and cultures. The partition created many economic problems. Large parts of the wheat and rice growing areas were now parts of Pakistan. Proportionate to the population, a large part of the irrigated area also went to Pakistan. Because of this, there was a shortage of foodgrains in India for some time. Most of the jute and cotton-producing areas went to Pakistan. There was a shortage of raw materials for jute and cotton textile mills, many of which had to be closed down. Farmers depended on the monsoon for their survival. If the crops failed, service groups of the rural areas would not get paid for their services. In the cities, factory workers lived in crowded slums with little access to health care or education. Thus, the new nation had to increase the productivity of agriculture and promote new, job-creating industries.

Preparation of New Constitution

The Constituent Assembly superseded the Indian Independence Act, 1947 without further legislation on the part of the British Parliament.

Between December 1946 and November 1949 the new Constitution was framed. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was the chairman of the drafting committee. Over three hundred members of the Constituent Assembly, from all political parties and from all over India, discussed and finalised it. It was adopted on 26 January 1950. On this day, India became a republic. The day is celebrated as Republic Day.

Main Features of the Constitution

1. Universal adult franchise (the right to vote) for all Indians above the age of 21 in state and national elections. (Later it was reduced to 18).
2. Equality before the law and equality of opportunity in government employment to all citizens regardless of their caste or religious affiliation—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis, etc.
3. A certain percentage Reservation in seats in Legislatures and government jobs to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
4. Powers of the Central government and State governments were balanced— a Union List of subjects such as defence, foreign

affairs; a State list of subjects such as education and health; a Concurrent list of subjects such as forest and agriculture, joint responsibility of the centre and the state.

5. Hindi (khari boli written in Devnagari Script) would be the official language (common national language) of India. English would be used in the courts, the services, and communication between one state and another (Later regional languages were recognised as national languages with the formation of linguistic states).
6. Untouchability was abolished and its practice in any form was forbidden.
7. The constitution guaranteed all Indian citizens Fundamental Rights like freedom of speech and expression, freedom to assemble peacefully, freedom of religion, etc.

The Great Challenge

With the new constitution, India is going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognising the principle of one man one vote and one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value.

Political democracy has to be accompanied by economic and social democracy.

— Dr. B.R. Ambedkar



Indian Provinces and Princely states before 14 August 1947

Formation of Linguistic States

The Partition of India on the basis of religion led to killing of more than a million people in riots. Could the country afford further division of states on the basis of languages? Nehru and Patel were both against the creation of linguistic states. But a Gandhian named Potti Sriramulu went on a hunger fast in October 1952 demanding the formation of Andhra State for Telugu speakers. It was supported by public protests. He died after 58 days into his fast. Now the protests became so widespread and intense that the central government formed the new state of Andhra Pradesh on 1 October 1953.

Other linguistic groups also demanded their own separate states. A States Reorganisation Commission was set up which submitted its report in 1956. It

recommended the redrawing of district and provincial boundaries to form compact provinces of Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu speakers respectively. The large Hindi-speaking region of north India was broken up into several states. In 1960, the state of Bombay was divided into separate states for Marathi and Gujarati speakers. In 1966, the state of Punjab was also divided into Punjab and Haryana, — Punjab for the Punjabi speakers and Haryana who spoke versions of Haryanvi or Hindi.

Contrary to the fears of Nehru and Patel, linguistic states have not threatened the unity of India. Rather they have deepened this unity. India has managed to survive as a single nation, in part because the many regional languages were given freedom to flourish. Once the fear of one's language being suppressed has gone, the different linguistic groups have been content to live as part of the larger nation called India.

Planning for Development

Indian leaders realised that without economic freedom, political freedom had no meaning. So systematic planning was necessary to raise the standard of living of the people. In 1950, the government set up a Planning Commission to help design and execute suitable policies for economic development. A 'mixed economy model' was introduced in which both the public sector, established by the government and private sector will work to increase production and generate jobs. The major objective was to build a modern technical and industrial base. The Planning Commission will define the roles of the state and the market—which industries should be initiated by whom and to achieve a balance between the different regions and states. This was to be done by adopting Five Year Plans, beginning from 1951. The first plan of 1951 concentrated developing



Indian States before 1 November 1956



Indian States in 1975

areas such as irrigation, energy, agriculture, industry and land rehabilitation. Bridges and dams became the symbol of development in independent India. A bridge on Mahanadi river was constructed to control the flow of water.. Dams such as Bhakra Dam in northern India on the river Satluj, Gandhi Sagar dam on the river Chambal in Madhya Pradesh were built for irrigation and hydroelectricity.



Jawaharlal Nehru on the Bhilai Steel Plant

The second Five Year Plan of 1956 focussed strongly on the development of heavy industries such as steel and on the building of large dams. These sectors would be under the control of the government. The Bhilai Steel Plant was set up with the help of the former Soviet Union in 1959. Located in the backward rural area of Chhattisgarh; it is an important sign of the development of modern India after independence.

While establishing heavy industries and big dams, however, the Nature's balance should not be neglected for the mankind to survive.

An Independent Foreign Policy



The bridge on the Mahanadi river constructed to control flow of water

The basis of India's foreign policy has been peaceful coexistence. The 1950s and 1960s were the years of the emergence of Cold War between the USA and the formerly USSR. The ideological conflicts and power rivalry between them created this situation. They were creating military alliances with other countries. This was the time when many countries were attaining independence from the colonial rules. In this context Jawahar Lal Nehru, Prime Minister and foreign minister of the newly independent India adopted the foreign policy of non-alignment with any of the super powers, USA or USSR. Krishna Menon led the Indian delegation to the UN between 1952 and 1962 and argued for a policy of non-alignment. India, along with 29 newly independent countries met at Bandung, Indonesia in 1955 and passed a resolution of five principles of coexistence called the Panchsheel. Panchsheel became the basis of NAM. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was founded in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia in 1961. It included Egypt, Yugoslavia, Indonesia, Ghana and India. At its second summit at Cairo in 1964, its membership rose from 24 to 47 countries of the world. 118 countries of the world were its members in 2007.



Work going on at the Gandhi Sagar bandh (completed in 1960)

Sixty Years of Independence

India celebrated sixty years of its existence as a free nation on 15 August 2007. The country has progressed much. Recently it has sent space ship to the Moon. There is a long list of its achievements in every field—irrigation, heavy and light industries, energy, infrastructure, missiles, satellites, atomic power and of course, information technology. Moreover, it has survived to its ideals of democracy. It is united till now. As many as thirteen general elections have been held since independence as well as hundreds of state and local elections. There is a free media—press and television. It has not come under military rule since independence. It has an independent judiciary. A population three times than in 1947, practicing different faiths and

speaking different languages is united as a single nation.

The children from all castes and religions go to the same schools. But, however, everyone cannot go to some of the very expensive schools. The communal hatred still persists though mostly in hearts. Prejudices, poverty and population growth are still prevalent. India literacy rate was 65 per cent as on July 2007. A large section of Indian population specially women are still illiterate. Women in every caste and religious group are not treated respectfully. Child labour and malnourishment persists. Housing and pure water facilities are not available to millions. In the 21st century terrorism is a new major challenge.

Thus, the Republic of India has not been a failure, it need to continue efforts for more equality in economic and social fields.

In Other Parts of the World

In countries, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, the right to vote to choose their own leaders for forming the government had been granted in stages. First only men of property had the voting right. Then men who were educated were also added on. Working-class men got the voting right only after a long struggle. Finally, after a bitter struggle of their own, American and British women were granted the voting right. On the other hand, soon after Independence, India chose to grant this right to all its adult citizens regardless of gender, class or education.



Key Words

- » Franchise : the right to vote.
- » State : concerned with the government; different states found in a country.
- » Linguistic : relating to language.
- » Democracy : a form of government where ultimate authority lies with the people.
- » Panchsheel : five principles of peaceful coexistence which are a major feature of Indian foreign policy.
- » Republic : a country which has an elected head of state, not a hereditary monarch.

SUMMARY

- ▶ Soon after the declaration of partition, the settlement of 8 million refugees and merger of princely states into India were the immediate problems.
- ▶ Unity of 345 million people divided into castes, professions, languages, religions and cultures was another problem.
- ▶ All round development of the country to uplift its people from poverty was the biggest problem.
- ▶ The new nation had to increase the productivity of agriculture and promote new, job-creating industries.
- ▶ The new Constitution was adopted on 26 January 1950. On this day, India became a republic.
- ▶ Main features of the Constitution were universal adult franchise, equality before the law, reservation for the backwards, fundamental rights like freedom of religion, speech and expression etc. Untouchability was abolished.

- ▶ Political democracy has to be accompanied by economic and social democracy.
- ▶ Hindi was given the status of official language (common national language). English would be used in the courts, the services and communication between one state and another.
- ▶ Linguistic states were created in 1956 and later Regional languages were recognised as national languages.
- ▶ In 1950, the government set up a planning commission to help design and execute suitable policies for economic development.
- ▶ The first five year plan of 1951 concentrated on developing areas such as irrigation, energy, agriculture, industry and land rehabilitation.
- ▶ The second five year plan of 1956 focussed strongly on the development of heavy industries such as steel and on the building of large dams.
- ▶ The basis of Indian foreign policy has been peaceful coexistence and non-alignment.
- ▶ There is a long list of achievements in sixty years of independence in every field but communal hatred, prejudices, poverty, child labour and non-respect of women still persists.

Exercise Time

A. Tick (✓) the only correct choice amongst the following :

1. The first Non-alignment Movement summit was held at _____.
 a. France b. Belgrade c. India d. Bandung
2. The population of India in 1947 was _____ million.
 a. 565 b. 345 c. 445 d. 389
3. Goa was under _____ rule in 1947.
 a. French b. Portuguese c. Mughul d. British
4. The Constitution provided _____.
 a. Indians political b. social equality c. Poverty d. religions
5. The right to vote was granted in stages in the _____.
 a. United Kingdom b. France c. India d. Belgrade

B. Fill in the blanks :


1. Subjects on the Concurrent list were _____ and _____.
2. _____ was India's first home minister.
3. India became republic on 26 January _____.
4. The chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution was _____.
5. The right to vote was granted in _____ in the United States.

C. Match the Following :

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Andhra Pradesh | a. Kannada |
| 2. Karnataka | b. Marathi |
| 3. Kerala | c. Telugu |
| 4. Bihar | d. Malayalam |
| 5. Maharashtra | e. Hindi |

D. Write true (T) or False (F) against the following statements in given brackets :

1. Subjects on the State list were health and education. □

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2. The Constituent Assembly was made up of members of the Congress party.
 3. In the first national election, only men were allowed to vote.
 4. Princely states were given the right to decide their own future in the Indian Independence Act of 1947.
 5. The second Five Year Plan focused on the development of heavy industries.

E. Define the terms :

1. Franchise
2. Democracy
3. Republic
4. Linguistic

F. Answer in one word or one phrase :

1. Dadra and Nagar Haveli were under whose control ?
2. Which countries granted right to vote to all its adult citizens in stages ?
3. Defence and foreign affairs are on which list of subjects in Indian Constitution ?
4. Who fasted to death for the formation of a separate state for Telugu speakers ?
5. Which model of economy was introduced by the Planning Commission for the economic development ?

G. Answer these question briefly :

1. Name three problems that the newly independent nation of India faced.
2. How were princely states integrated into India ?
3. Name the territories which were not a part of Indian Union at the time of independence ?
4. Who requested the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India and why ?
5. After Independence, why was there a reluctance to divide the country into linguistic states ?
6. What was the role of the Planning Commission ?
7. For what English continued to be used in India after independence ?
8. Explain briefly the foreign policy of India.

H. Answer these questions in detail :

1. Write a note on 'Planning for Development'.
2. Write the main features of the Indian Constitution.
3. How was the economic development of India visualised in the early decades after Independence ?
4. Why and how were linguistic states formed in India ?
5. Write a note on 'Sixty Years of Independence'.

PROJECT WORK

- Collect pictures of the economic development of India after independence such as dams, bridges, atomic energy; etc.