



Nehru with Nkrumah from Ghana, Nasser from Egypt, Sukarno from Indonesia and Tito from Yugoslavia at a meeting of non-aligned nations, New York, October 1960. These five comprised the core leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

In this chapter...

Thus far we have focused in this book on the developments within the country and on domestic challenges. We now turn to the external challenges. Here too our leaders faced the challenge with an innovative response by way of the policy of non-alignment. But they also found themselves in conflict with neighbours. This led to three wars in 1962, 1965 and 1971. These wars, and the external relations in general, were shaped by and had their impact on the politics in the country.

In this chapter we study the story of this relationship between the external and the internal politics by focussing on

- the international context that shaped India's external relations;
- the operational principles that informed the country's foreign policy;
- the history of India's relations with China and Pakistan; and
- the evolution of India's nuclear policy.

INDIA'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS

International context

India was born in a very trying and challenging international context. The world had witnessed a devastating war and was grappling with issues of reconstruction; yet another attempt to establish an international body was underway; many new countries were emerging as a result of the collapse of colonialism; and most new nations were trying to come to terms with the twin challenges of welfare and democracy. Free India's foreign policy reflected all these concerns in the period immediately after Independence. Apart from these factors at the global level, India had its own share of concerns. The British government left behind the legacy of many international disputes; Partition created its own pressures, and the task of poverty alleviation was already waiting for fulfilment. This was the overall context in which India started participating in the world affairs as an independent nation-state.

As a nation born in the backdrop of the world war, India decided to conduct its foreign relations with an aim to respect the sovereignty of all other nations and to achieve security through the maintenance of peace. This aim finds an echo in the Directive Principles of State Policy.

Just as both internal and external factors guide the behaviour of an individual or a family, both domestic and international environment influence the foreign policy of a nation. The developing countries lack the required resources to effectively advocate their concerns in the international system. So they pursue more modest goals than the advanced states. They focus more on peace and development in their own neighbourhood. Moreover, their economic and security dependence on the more powerful states occasionally influences their foreign policy. In the period immediately after the Second World War, many developing nations chose to support the foreign policy preferences of the powerful countries who were giving them aid or credits. This resulted in the division of countries of the world into two clear camps. One was under the influence of the United States and its western allies and the other was under the influence of the then Soviet Union. You have read about this in the book on *Contemporary World Politics*. You have read there about the experiment called the Non-Aligned Movement. As you also read there, the end of the Cold War changed the context of international relations entirely. But when India achieved its freedom and started framing its foreign policy, the

“What does independence consist of? It consists fundamentally and basically of foreign relations. That is the test of independence. All else is local autonomy. Once foreign relations go out of your hands into the charge of somebody else, to that extent and in that measure you are not independent.”

Jawaharlal Nehru
during a debate in the
Constituent Assembly in
March 1949.

The Constitutional principles

Article 51 of the Indian Constitution lays down some Directive Principles of State Policy on 'Promotion of international peace and security'.

"The State shall endeavour to –

- (a) Promote international peace and security
- (b) Maintain just and honourable relations between nations
- (c) Foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in the dealings of organised people with one another; and
- (d) Encourage settlement of international disputes by arbitration."

How well did the Indian state live up to these principles in the first two decades after Independence? You may come back to this question after reading the chapter.

Cold War was just beginning and the world was getting divided into these two camps. Did India belong to any of these two camps in global politics of the fifties and the sixties? Was it successful in conducting its foreign policy peacefully and avoiding international conflicts?

The Policy of non-alignment

The Indian national movement was not an isolated process. It was a part of the worldwide struggle against colonialism and imperialism. It influenced the liberation movements of many Asian and African countries. Prior to India's Independence, there were contacts between the nationalist leaders of India and those of other colonies, united as they were in their common struggle against colonialism and imperialism. The creation of the Indian National Army (INA) by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose during the Second World War was the clearest manifestation of the linkages established between India and overseas Indians during the freedom struggle.



It's the fourth chapter and it's Nehru once again! Was he a superman or what? Or has his role been glorified?

The foreign policy of a nation reflects the interplay of domestic and external factors. Therefore, the noble ideals that inspired India's struggle for freedom influenced the making of its foreign policy. But India's attainment of independence coincided with the beginning of the Cold War era. As you read in the first chapter of the book, *Contemporary World Politics*, this period was marked by the political, economic, and military confrontation at the global level between the two blocs led by the superpowers, the US and the USSR. The same period also witnessed developments like the establishment of the UN, the creation of nuclear weapons, the emergence of Communist

China, and the beginning of decolonisation. So India's leadership had to pursue its national interests within the prevailing international context.

Nehru's role

The first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru played a crucial role in setting the national agenda. He was his own foreign minister. Thus both as the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, he exercised profound influence in the formulation and implementation of India's foreign policy from 1946 to 1964. The three major objectives of Nehru's foreign policy were to preserve the hard-earned sovereignty, protect territorial integrity, and promote rapid economic development. Nehru wished to achieve these objectives through the strategy of non-alignment. There were, of course, parties and groups in the country that believed that India should be more friendly with the bloc led by the US because that bloc claimed to be pro-democracy. Among those who thought on these lines were leaders like Dr Ambedkar. Some political parties, which were opposed to communism, also wanted India to follow a pro-US foreign policy. These included the Bharatiya Jan Sangh and later the Swatantra Party. But Nehru possessed considerable leeway in formulating foreign policy.

Distance from two camps

The foreign policy of independent India vigorously pursued the dream of a peaceful world by advocating the policy of non-alignment, by reducing Cold War tensions and by contributing human resources to the UN peacekeeping operations. You might ask why India did not join either of the two camps during the Cold War era. India wanted to keep away from the military alliances led by US and Soviet Union against each other. As you read in the book, *Contemporary World Politics*, during the Cold War, the US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact came into existence. India advocated non-alignment as the ideal foreign policy approach. This was a difficult balancing act and sometimes the balance did not appear perfect. In 1956 when Britain attacked Egypt over the Suez Canal issue, India led the world protest against this neo-colonial invasion. But in the same year when the USSR invaded Hungary, India did not join its public condemnation. Despite such a situation, by and large India did take an independent stand on various international issues and could get aid and assistance from members of both the blocs.

While India was trying to convince the other developing countries about the policy of non-alignment, Pakistan joined the US-led military alliances. The US was not happy about India's independent initiatives and the policy of non-alignment. Therefore, there was a considerable

“ Our general policy is to avoid entanglement in power politics and not to join any group of powers as against any other group. The two leading groups today are the Russian bloc and the Anglo-American bloc. We must be friendly to both and yet not join either. Both America and Russia are extraordinarily suspicious of each other as well as of other countries. This makes our path difficult and we may well be suspected by each of leaning towards the other. This cannot be helped.”

Jawaharlal Nehru
Letter to K .P. S.
Menon, January
1947.



Did we have more recognition and power in the world when we were younger, poorer and more vulnerable than now? Isn't that strange?

“ a country without material, men or money – the three means of power – is now fast coming to be recognised as the biggest moral power in the civilised world ... her word listened to with respect in the councils of the great. ”

C. Rajagopalachari
Letter to Edwina
Mountbatten, 1950.

unease in Indo-US relations during the 1950s. The US also resented India's growing partnership with the Soviet Union.

You have studied in the last chapter, the strategy of planned economic development adopted by India. This policy emphasised import-substitution. The emphasis on developing a resource base also meant that export oriented growth was limited. This development strategy limited India's economic interaction with the outside world.

Afro-Asian unity

Yet, given its size, location and power potential, Nehru envisaged a major role for India in world affairs and especially in Asian affairs. His era was marked by the establishment of contacts between India and other newly independent states in Asia and Africa. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Nehru had been an ardent advocate of Asian unity. Under his leadership, India convened the Asian Relations Conference in March 1947, five months ahead of attaining its independence. India made earnest efforts for the early realisation of freedom of Indonesia from the Dutch colonial regime by convening an international conference in 1949 to support its freedom struggle. India was a staunch supporter of the decolonisation process and firmly opposed racism, especially apartheid in South Africa. The Afro-Asian conference held in the Indonesian city of Bandung in 1955, commonly known as the Bandung Conference, marked the zenith of India's engagement with the newly independent Asian and African nations. The Bandung Conference later led to the establishment of the NAM. The First Summit of the NAM was held in Belgrade in September 1961. Nehru was a co-founder of the NAM (See Chapter 1 of *Contemporary World Politics*).

Peace and conflict with China

Unlike its relationship with Pakistan, free India began its relationship with China on a very friendly note. After the Chinese revolution in 1949, India was one of the first countries to recognise the communist government. Nehru felt strongly for this neighbour that was coming out of the shadow of western domination and helped the new government in international fora. Some of his colleagues, like Vallabhbhai Patel, were worried about a possible Chinese aggression in future. But Nehru thought it was 'exceedingly unlikely' that India will face an attack from China. For a very long time, the Chinese border was guarded by para-military forces, not the army.

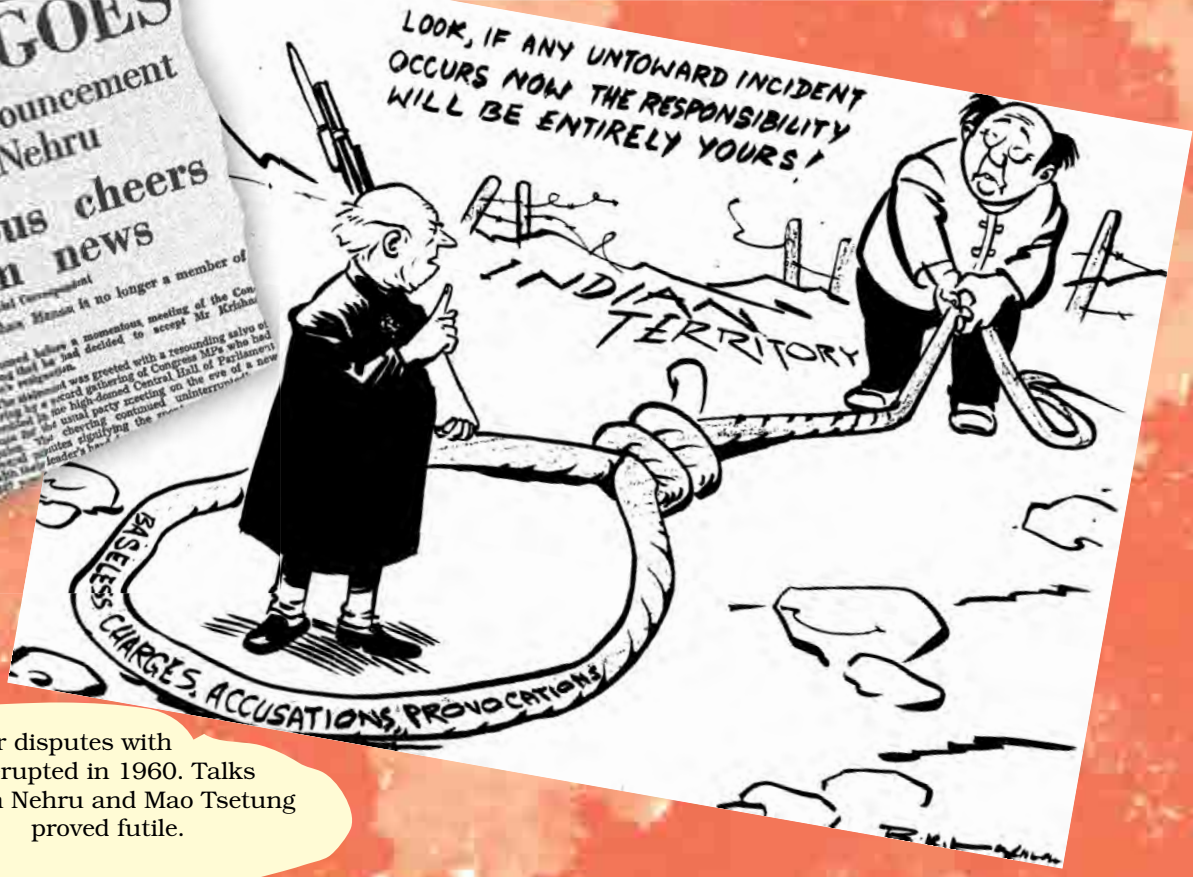
The joint enunciation of Panchsheel, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, by the Indian Prime Minister Nehru and the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai on 29 April 1954 was a step in the direction of stronger relationship between the two countries. Indian and Chinese leaders visited each other's country and were greeted by large and friendly crowds.

TIBET

The plateau of the central Asian region called Tibet is one of the major issues that historically caused tension between India and China. From time to time in history, China had claimed administrative control over Tibet. And from time to time, Tibet was independent too. In 1950, China took over control of Tibet. Large sections of the Tibetan population opposed this takeover. India tried to persuade China to recognise Tibet's claims for independence. When the Panchsheel agreement was signed between India and China in 1954, through one of its clauses about respecting each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, India conceded China's claim over Tibet. The Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama accompanied the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai during the official Chinese visit to India in 1956. He informed Nehru about the worsening situation in Tibet. But China had already assured India that Tibet will be given greater autonomy than enjoyed by any other region of China. In 1958, there was armed uprising in Tibet against China's occupation. This was suppressed by the Chinese forces. Sensing that the situation had become worse, in 1959, the Dalai Lama crossed over into the Indian border and sought asylum which was granted. The Chinese government strongly protested against this. Over the last half century, a large number of Tibetans have also sought refuge in India and many other countries of the world. In India, particularly in Delhi, there are large settlements of Tibetan refugees. Dharmashala in Himachal Pradesh is perhaps the largest refuge settlement of Tibetans in India. The Dalai Lama has also made Dharmashala his home in India. In the 1950s and 1960s many political leaders and parties in India including the Socialist Party and the Jan Sangh supported the cause of Tibet's independence.

China has created the Tibet autonomous region, which is an integral part of China. Tibetans oppose the Chinese claim that Tibet is part of Chinese territory. They also oppose the policy of bringing into Tibet more and more Chinese settlers. Tibetans dispute China's claim that autonomy is granted to the region. They think that China wants to undermine the traditional religion and culture of Tibet.

Note: This illustration is not a map drawn to scale and should not be taken to be an authentic depiction of India's external boundaries.



Border disputes with China erupted in 1960. Talks between Nehru and Mao Tsetung proved futile.

The Hindustan Times Weekly

71

WEDDING SARRIES
of your beauty &
demeanor
USHNAKMAALS
ESRANNE CHOWK
BAGAT FORTIFICATION
Pillar Street

Largest Circulation in Northern and Central India
New Delhi, Sunday, October 21, 1962

Indian troops fall back in NEFA and Ladakh

Dhola, Khinzemane posts abandoned Chinese advance pushed at heavy cost

By our Special Correspondent
Oct. 20—Hard-pressed Indian troops battling Chinese invaders reformed on the NEFA tonight.

We will not live

1962

China has numerical and logistic edge

Nehru says



Hindi Chini Bye Bye?



China roller evidence under construction.



V.K. Krishna Menon (1897-1974): Diplomat and minister; active in the Labour Party in UK between 1934-1947; Indian High

Commissioner in UK and later head of India's delegation to UN; Rajya Sabha MP and later Lok Sabha MP; member of the Union Cabinet from 1956; Defence Minister since 1957; considered very close to Nehru; resigned after the India-China war in 1962.

नई दुनिया

नि द्वारा नेफा व लद्दाख क्षेत्र में एक साथ भीषण आक्रमण

दो भारतीय चौकियों का पतन

एक भारतीय हेलिकॉप्टर को मार गिराया

चीनियों से अंत तक

“ Frankly ...my impression (of Zhou Enlai) was very favourable.the Chinese premier is, I believe a good type of man and trustworthy. ”

C. Rajagopalachari

In a letter, December 1956

The Chinese invasion, 1962

Two developments strained this relationship. China annexed Tibet in 1950 and thus removed a historical buffer between the two countries. Initially, the government of India did not oppose this openly. But as more information came in about the suppression of Tibetan culture, the Indian government grew uneasy. The Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, sought and obtained political asylum in India in 1959. China alleged that the government of India was allowing anti-China activities to take place from within India.

A little earlier, a boundary dispute had surfaced between India and China. India claimed that the boundary was a matter settled in colonial time, but China said that any colonial decision did not apply. The main dispute was about the western and the eastern end of the long border. China claimed two areas within the Indian territory: Aksai-chin area in the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir and much of the state of Arunachal Pradesh in what was then called NEFA (North Eastern Frontier Agency). Between 1957 and 1959, the Chinese occupied the Aksai-chin area and built a strategic road there. Despite a very long correspondence and discussion among top leaders, these differences could not be resolved. Several small border skirmishes between the armies of the two countries took place.

Do you remember the Cuban Missile Crisis in Chapter One of the *Contemporary World Politics*? While the entire world's attention was on this crisis involving the two superpowers, China launched a swift and massive invasion in October 1962 on both the disputed regions. The first attack lasted one week and Chinese forces captured some key areas in Arunachal Pradesh. The second wave of attack came next month. While the Indian forces could block the Chinese advances on the western front in Ladakh, in the east the Chinese managed to advance nearly to the entry point of Assam plains. Finally, China declared a unilateral ceasefire and its troops withdrew to where they were before the invasion began.

The China war dented India's image at home and abroad. India had to approach the Americans and the British for military assistance to tide over the crisis. The Soviet Union remained neutral during the conflict. It induced a sense of national humiliation and at the same time strengthened a spirit of nationalism. Some of the top army commanders either resigned or were retired. Nehru's close associate and the then Defence Minister, V. Krishna Menon, had to leave the cabinet. Nehru's own stature suffered as he was severely criticised for his naïve assessment of the Chinese intentions and the lack of military preparedness. For the first time, a no-confidence motion against his government was moved and debated in the Lok Sabha. Soon thereafter, the Congress lost some key by-elections to Lok Sabha. The political mood of the country had begun to change.

I heard it from my grandfather. Nehru Ji cried in public when Lata Mangeshkar sang "Ai mere watan ke logo..." after the 1962 war.



Fast Forward**Sino-Indian relations since 1962**

It took more than a decade for India and China to resume normal relations. It was in 1976 that full diplomatic relations were restored between the two countries. Atal Behari Vajpayee was the first top level leader (he was then External Affairs Minister) to visit China in 1979. Later, Rajiv Gandhi became the first Prime Minister after Nehru to visit China. Since then, the emphasis is more on trade relations between the two countries. In the book, *Contemporary World Politics*, you have already read about these developments.

The Sino-Indian conflict affected the opposition as well. This and the growing rift between China and the Soviet Union created irreconcilable differences within the Communist Party of India (CPI). The pro-USSR faction remained within the CPI and moved towards closer ties with the Congress. The other faction was for sometime closer to China and was against any ties with the Congress. The party split in 1964 and the leaders of the latter faction formed the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M). In the wake of the China war, many leaders of what became CPI (M) were arrested for being pro-China.

The war with China alerted the Indian leadership to the volatile situation in the Northeast region. Apart from being isolated and extremely underdeveloped, this region also presented India with the challenge of national integration and political unity. The process of its reorganisation began soon after the China war. Nagaland was granted statehood; Manipur and Tripura, though Union Territories, were given the right to elect their own legislative assemblies.

Let's watch a Film**HAQEEQAT**

A small platoon of Indian army is rescued by the gypsies in Ladakh region. The enemy has surrounded their post. Capt. Bahadur Singh and his gypsy girlfriend Kammo help the *jawans* vacate their posts. Both Bahadur Singh and Kammo die while resisting the Chinese but the *jawans* too, are overpowered by the enemy and lay down their lives for the country.

Set in the backdrop of the China war of 1962, this film portrays the soldier and his travails as its central theme. It pays tribute to the soldiers while depicting their plight, and the political frustration over the betrayal by the Chinese. The film uses documentary footage of war scenes and is considered as one of the early war films made in Hindi.

Year: 1964
 Director: Chetan Anand
 Actors: Dharmendra, Priya Rajvansh, Balraj Sahni, Jayant, Sudhir, Sanjay Khan, Vijay Anand

Wars and Peace with Pakistan

In the case of Pakistan, the conflict started just after Partition over the dispute on Kashmir. You will read more about the dispute in Chapter 8. A proxy war broke out between the Indian and Pakistani armies in Kashmir during 1947 itself. But this did not turn into a full war. The issue was then referred to the UN. Pakistan soon emerged as a critical factor in India's relations with the US and subsequently with China.

The Kashmir conflict did not prevent cooperation between the governments of India and Pakistan. Both the governments worked together to restore the women abducted during Partition to their original families. A long-term dispute about the sharing of river waters was resolved through mediation by the World Bank. The India-Pakistan Indus Waters Treaty was signed by Nehru and General Ayub Khan in 1960. Despite all ups and downs in the Indo-Pak relations, this treaty has worked well.

A more serious armed conflict between the two countries began in 1965. As you would read in the next chapter, by then Lal Bahadur Shastri had taken over as the Prime Minister. In April 1965 Pakistan launched armed attacks in the Rann of Kutch area of Gujarat. This was followed by a bigger offensive in Jammu and Kashmir in August-September. Pakistani rulers were hoping to get support from the local population there, but it did not happen. In order to ease the pressure on the Kashmir front, Shastri ordered Indian troops to launch a counter-offensive on the Punjab border. In a fierce battle, the Indian army reached close to Lahore.

The hostilities came to an end with the UN intervention. Later, Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistan's General Ayub Khan signed the Tashkent Agreement, brokered by the Soviet Union, in January 1966. Though India could inflict considerable military loss on Pakistan, the 1965 war added to India's already difficult economic situation.

Why do we say India and Pakistan had a war? Leaders quarrel and armies fight wars. Most ordinary citizens have nothing to do with these.



Bangladesh war, 1971

Beginning in 1970, Pakistan faced its biggest internal crisis. The country's first general election produced a split verdict – Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's party emerged a winner in West Pakistan, while the Awami League led by Sheikh Mujib-ur Rahman swept through East Pakistan. The Bengali population of East Pakistan had voted to protest against years of being treated as second class citizens by the rulers based in West Pakistan. The Pakistani rulers were not willing to accept the democratic verdict. Nor were they ready to accept the Awami League's demand for a federation.

Instead, in early 1971, the Pakistani army arrested Sheikh Mujib and unleashed a reign of terror on the people of East Pakistan. In



The Times of India

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75

NO. 316. VOL. CXXVII. * BOMBAY: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1965 16 PAISE



OUR TROOPS ON OUTSKIRTS OF LAHORE IAF Planes Blast Military Installations PAK FORCES ON THE RUN IN CHHAMB AREA

Jaurian In Flames: Success In Uri Sector Too

"The Times of India" News Service

BLACK-OUT IS ORDERED IN GREATER BOMBAY

By A Staff Reporter
BLACK-OUT has been ordered in Greater Bombay with immediate effect by the Commissioner of Police under the Defence of India Act. The black-out will be during the hours between half an hour after sunset and half an hour before sunrise, according to the Commissioner's order. All public lighting and street lights should be reduced to a minimum during this time.

Indo-Pak Flights Cancelled

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES MALKOT-PASRUR RAILWAY TAKEN IAF pounds Sargodha, Chak Jhumra airports

withdrawing in
thwal sector

1965



The Hindustan Times

Largest Circulation in Northern and Central India
No. 316. Volume CXXVII. September 7, 1965

TROOPS MARCH INTO PAKISTAN

PERMANENT PRESS
DRYCLEANED AT
PAULSONS

This sounds like joining the Soviet bloc. Can we say that we were non-aligned even after signing this treaty with the Soviet Union?



Refugee influx threatens peace, India warns Pak

By P. N. Chatterjee
New Delhi, July 26 (AP) — India's foreign minister today warned Pakistan that the massive influx of refugees from East Pakistan could threaten peace in the region.



response to this, the people started a struggle to liberate 'Bangladesh' from Pakistan. Throughout 1971, India had to bear the burden of about 80 lakh refugees who fled East Pakistan and took shelter in the neighbouring areas in India. India extended moral and material support to the freedom struggle in Bangladesh. Pakistan accused India of a conspiracy to break it up.

Support for Pakistan came from the US and China. The US-China rapprochement that began in the late 1960s resulted in a realignment of forces in Asia. Henry Kissinger, the adviser to the US President Richard Nixon, made a secret visit to China via Pakistan in July 1971. In order to counter the US-Pakistan-China axis, India signed a 20-year Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Soviet Union in August 1971. This treaty assured India of Soviet support if the country faced any attack.

After months of diplomatic tension and military build-up, a full-scale war between India and Pakistan broke out in December 1971. Pakistani aircrafts attacked Punjab and Rajasthan, while the army moved on the Jammu and Kashmir front. India retaliated with an attack involving the air force, navy and the army on both the Western and the Eastern front. Welcomed and supported by the local population, the Indian army made rapid progress in East Pakistan. Within ten days the Indian army had surrounded Dhaka from three sides and the Pakistani army of about 90,000 had to surrender. With Bangladesh as a free country, India declared a unilateral ceasefire. Later, the signing of the Shimla Agreement between Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on 3 July 1972 formalised the return of peace.

A decisive victory in the war led to national jubilation. Most people in India saw this as a moment of glory and a clear sign of India's growing military prowess. As you would read in the next chapter, Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister at this time. She had already won the Lok Sabha elections in 1971. Her personal popularity soared

Fast Forward Kargil Confrontation



In the early part of 1999 several points on the Indian side of the LoC in the Mashkoh, Dras, Kaksar and Batalik areas were occupied by forces claiming to be Mujahideens. Suspecting involvement of the Pakistan Army, Indian forces started reacting to this occupation. This led to a confrontation between the two countries. This is known as the Kargil conflict. This conflict went on during May and June 1999. By 26 July 1999, India had recovered control of many of the lost points. The Kargil conflict drew attention worldwide for the reason that only one year prior to that, both India and Pakistan had attained nuclear capability. However, this conflict remained confined only to the Kargil region. In Pakistan, this conflict has been the source of a major controversy as it was alleged later that the Prime Minister of Pakistan was kept in the dark by the Army Chief. Soon after the conflict, the government of Pakistan was taken over by the Pakistan Army led by the Army Chief, General Pervez Musharraf.

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YAHYA YIELDS TO INDIRA, ENDS WAR

Somersault by General as he hails Delhi

... keeps out

1971



Gen. A. A. K. Niazi signing the surrender document in Dhaka on Thursday. Left to right are Vice Admiral Krishna, Air Marshal H. C. Devesh, Lt. Gen. Sagar...

Remain alert, war...

APPENDIX 2
TREATY OF SURRENDER SIGNED AT DHAKA AT 16.30 HOURS (IST)
ON 16 DEC 1971

The PAKISTAN Eastern Command agree to surrender all PAKISTAN armed forces in BANGLA DESH to Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA, General Officer Commanding in Chief of the Indian and BANGLA DESH forces in the Eastern Theatre. This surrender includes all PAKISTAN land, air and naval forces as also all para-military forces and civil armed forces. The forces will lay down their arms and surrender at the places where they are currently located to the nearest regular troops under the command of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA.

The PAKISTAN Eastern Command shall come under the orders of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA as soon as this instrument has been signed. Disobedience of orders will be regarded as a breach of the surrender terms and will be dealt with in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war. The decision of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA will be final, should any doubt arise as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA gives a solemn assurance that personnel who surrender shall be treated with dignity and respect in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention and guarantee the safety and well-being of all BANGLA DESH military and para-military forces who surrender. Protection will be provided to foreign nationals, ethnic minorities and personnel of WEST PAKISTAN who are in the forces under the command of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA.

Jagjit Singh
JAGJIT SINGH AURORA
Lieutenant-General
General Officer Commanding in Chief
BANGLA DESH Forces in the Eastern Theatre
1971.

AAK Niazi dt g.
[AMIR ABUJELAN KHAN NIAZI]
Lieutenant-General
Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh
16 December 1971.



THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUJIB TAKES OVER 'BANGLA DESH'

PAK PLANES BOMB BANGLA DESH

Baluchistan, NWFP are also free?

Freedom fighters blow up bridges



Cong(N) majority in UP now

further after the 1971 war. After the war, assembly elections in most States took place, bringing large majorities for the Congress party in many states.

India, with its limited resources, had initiated development planning. However, conflicts with neighbours derailed the five-year plans. The scarce resources were diverted to the defence sector especially after 1962, as India had to embark on a military modernisation drive. The Department of Defence Production was established in November 1962 and the Department of Defence Supplies in November 1965. The Third Plan (1961-66) was affected and it was followed by three Annual Plans and the Fourth Plan could be initiated only in 1969. India's defence expenditure increased enormously after the wars.

India's nuclear policy

Another crucial development of this period was the first nuclear explosion undertaken by India in May 1974. Nehru had always put his faith in science and technology for rapidly building a modern India. A significant component of his industrialisation plans was the nuclear programme initiated in the late 1940s under the guidance of Homi J. Bhabha. India wanted to generate atomic energy for peaceful purposes. Nehru was against nuclear weapons. So he pleaded with the superpowers for comprehensive nuclear disarmament. However, the nuclear arsenal kept rising. When Communist China conducted nuclear tests in October 1964, the five nuclear weapon powers, the US, USSR, UK, France, and China (Taiwan then represented China) – also the five Permanent Members of the UN Security Council – tried to impose the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968 on the rest of the world. India always considered the NPT as discriminatory and had refused to sign it. When India conducted its first nuclear test, it was termed as peaceful explosion. India argued that it was committed to the policy of using nuclear power only for peaceful purposes.

I am confused! Isn't it all about atom bombs? Why don't we say so?



The period when the nuclear test was conducted was a difficult period in domestic politics. Following the Arab-Israel War of 1973, the entire world was affected by the Oil Shock due to the massive hike in the oil prices by the Arab nations. It led to economic turmoil in India resulting in high inflation. As you will read in Chapter Six, many agitations were going on in the country around this time, including a nationwide railway strike.

Although there are minor differences among political parties about how to conduct external relations, Indian politics is generally marked by a broad agreement among the parties on national integration, protection of international boundaries, and on questions of national interest. Therefore, we find that in the course of the decade of 1962-1971, when India faced three wars, or even later, when different parties came to power from time to time, foreign policy has played only a limited role in party politics.

Fast Forward India's Nuclear Programme

India has opposed the international treaties aimed at non-proliferation since they were selectively applicable to the non-nuclear powers and legitimised the monopoly of the five nuclear weapons powers. Thus, India opposed the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 and also refused to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

India conducted a series of nuclear tests in May 1998, demonstrating its capacity to use nuclear energy for military purposes. Pakistan soon followed, thereby increasing the vulnerability of the region to a nuclear exchange. The international community was extremely critical of the nuclear tests in the subcontinent and sanctions were imposed on both India and Pakistan, which were subsequently waived. India's nuclear doctrine of credible minimum nuclear deterrence professes "no first use" and reiterates India's commitment to global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament leading to a nuclear weapons free world.

Shifting alliances in world politics

As you will read in Chapter Six and also in Chapter Nine, many non-Congress governments came to power in the period starting 1977. This was also the time when world politics was changing dramatically. What did it mean for India's external relations?

The Janata Party government that came to power in 1977 announced that it would follow genuine non-alignment. This implied that the pro-Soviet tilt in the foreign policy will be corrected. Since then, all governments (Congress or non-Congress) have taken initiatives for restoring better relations with China and entering into close ties with US. In Indian politics and in popular mind, India's foreign policy is always very closely linked to two questions. One is India's stand vis-à-vis Pakistan and the other is Indo-US relations. In the post-1990 period the ruling parties have often been criticised for their pro-US foreign policy.

Foreign policy is always dictated by ideas of national interest. In the period after 1990, Russia, though it continues to be an important friend of India, has lost its global pre-eminence. Therefore, India's foreign policy has shifted to a more pro-US strategy. Besides, the contemporary international situation is more influenced by economic interests than by military interests. This has also made an impact on India's foreign policy choices. At the same time, Indo-Pakistan relations have witnessed many new developments during this period. While Kashmir continues to be the main issue between the two countries, there have been many efforts to restore normal relations. This means that cultural exchanges, movement of citizens and economic cooperation would be encouraged by both countries. Do you know that a train and a bus service operate between these two countries? This has been a major achievement of the recent times. But that could not avoid the near-war situation from emerging in 1999. Even after this setback to the peace process, efforts at negotiating durable peace have been going on.

EXERCISES

1. Write 'true' or 'false' against each of these statements.
 - (a) Non-alignment allowed India to gain assistance both from USA and USSR.
 - (b) India's relationship with her neighbours has been strained from the beginning.
 - (c) The cold war has affected the relationship between India and Pakistan.
 - (d) The treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1971 was the result of India's closeness to USA.

2. Match the following

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The goal of India's foreign policy in the period 1950-1964 (b) Panchsheel (c) Bandung Conference (d) Dalai Lama 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Tibetan spiritual leader who crossed over to India ii. Preservation of territorial integrity, sovereignty and economic development iii. Five principles of peaceful coexistence iv. Led to the establishment of NAM
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3. Why did Nehru regard conduct of foreign relations as an essential indicator of independence? State any two reasons with examples to support your reading.

4. "The conduct of foreign affairs is an outcome of a two-way interaction between domestic compulsions and prevailing international climate". Take one example from India's external relations in the 1960s to substantiate your answer.

5. Identify any two aspects of India's foreign policy that you would like to retain and two that you would like to change, if you were to become a decision maker. Give reasons to support your position.

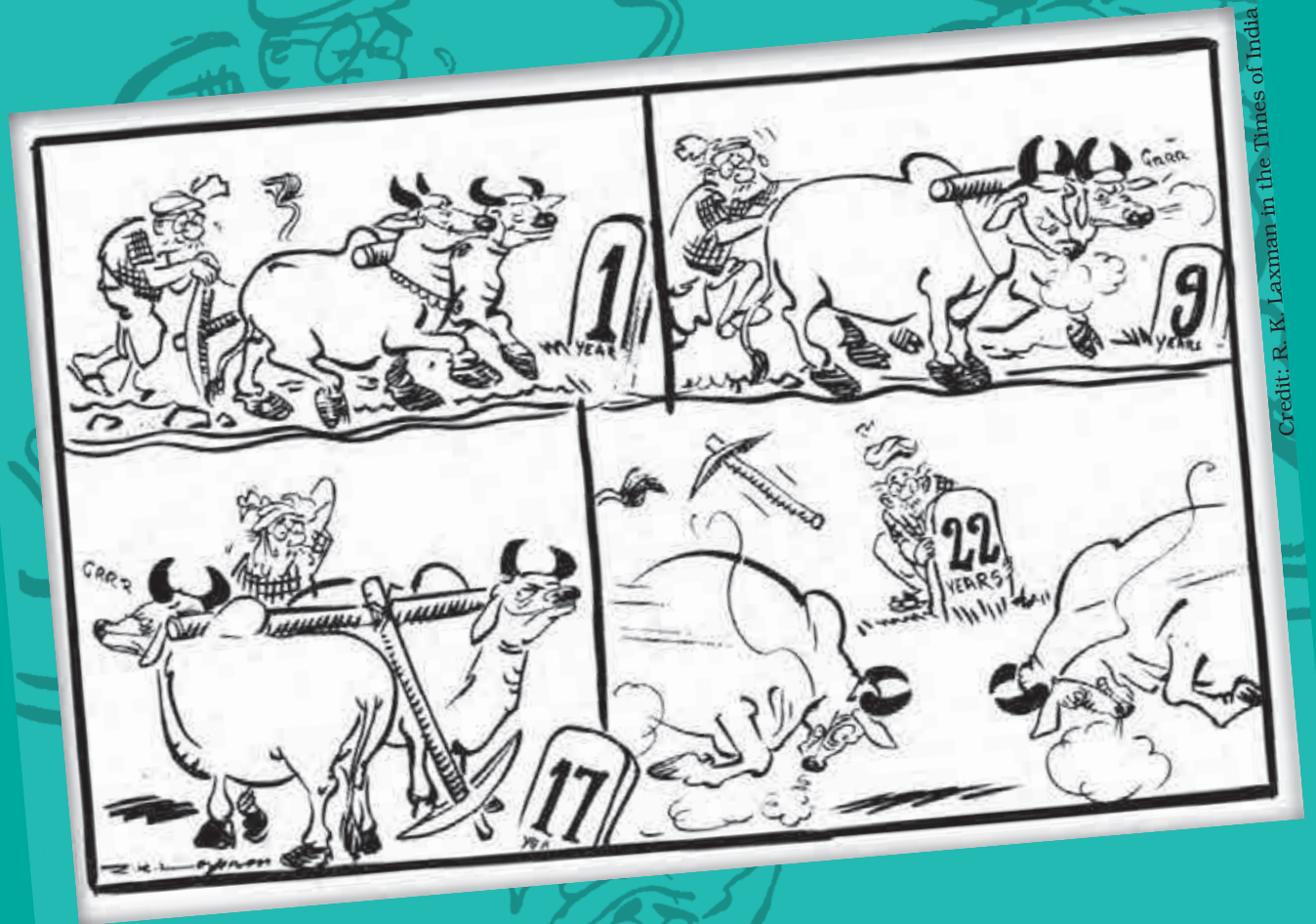
6. Write short notes on the following.
 - (a) India's Nuclear policy
 - (b) Consensus in foreign policy matters

7. India's foreign policy was built around the principles of peace and cooperation. But India fought three wars in a space of ten years between 1962 and 1971. Would you say that this was a failure of the foreign policy? Or would you say that this was a result of international situation? Give reasons to support your answer.

8. Does India's foreign policy reflect her desire to be an important regional power? Argue your case with the Bangladesh war of 1971 as an example.
9. How does political leadership of a nation affect its foreign policy? Explain this with the help of examples from India's foreign policy.
10. Read this passage and answer the questions below:

"Broadly, non-alignment means not tying yourself off with military blocs....It means trying to view things, as far as possible, not from the military point of view, though that has to come in sometimes, but independently, and trying to maintain friendly relations with all countries." — JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

- (a) Why does Nehru want to keep off military blocs?
- (b) Do you think that the Indo-Soviet friendship treaty violated the principle of non-alignment? Give reasons for your answer.
- (c) If there were no military blocs, do you think non-alignment would have been unnecessary?



Credit: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India

Originally the election symbol of the Congress was a pair of bullocks. This famous cartoon depicts the changes within the Congress leading to a head-on confrontation in the 22nd year after Independence.

In this chapter...

In Chapter Two we read about the emergence of the Congress system. This system was first challenged during the 1960s. As political competition became more intense, the Congress found it difficult to retain its dominance. It faced challenges from the opposition that was more powerful and less divided than before. The Congress also faced challenges from within, as the party could no longer accommodate all kinds of differences. In this chapter we pick the story from where we left it in Chapter Two, in order to

- understand how the political transition took place after Nehru;
- describe how the opposition unity and the Congress split posed a challenge to Congress dominance;
- explain how a new Congress led by Indira Gandhi overcame these challenges; and
- analyse how new policies and ideologies facilitated the restoration of the Congress system.

CHALLENGES TO AND RESTORATION OF THE CONGRESS SYSTEM



Challenge of Political Succession

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru passed away in May 1964. He had been unwell for more than a year. This had generated a lot of speculation about the usual question of succession: after Nehru, who? But in a newly independent country like India, this situation gave rise to a more serious question: after Nehru, what?

The second question arose from the serious doubts that many outsiders had about whether India's democratic experiment will survive after Nehru. It was feared that like so many other newly independent countries, India too would not be able to manage a democratic succession. A failure to do so, it was feared, could lead to a political role for the army. Besides, there were doubts if the new leadership would be able to handle the multiple crises that awaited a solution. The 1960s were labelled as the 'dangerous decade' when



When France or Canada have similar problems, no one talks about failure or disintegration. Why are we under this constant suspicion?



Lal Bahadur Shastri

(1904-1966):

Prime Minister of India; participated in the freedom movement since 1930; minister in UP cabinet; General Secretary of Congress; Minister in Union Cabinet from 1951 to 1956 when he resigned taking responsibility for the railway accident and later from 1957 to 1964; coined the famous slogan 'Jai Jawan-Jai Kisan'.

unresolved problems like poverty, inequality, communal and regional divisions etc. could lead to a failure of the democratic project or even the disintegration of the country.

From Nehru to Shastri

The ease with which the succession after Nehru took place proved all the critics wrong. When Nehru passed away, K. Kamraj, the president of the Congress party consulted party leaders and Congress members of Parliament and found that there was a consensus in favour of Lal Bahadur Shastri. He was unanimously chosen as the leader of the Congress parliamentary party and thus became the country's next Prime Minister. Shastri was a non-controversial leader from Uttar Pradesh who had been a Minister in Nehru's cabinet for many years. Nehru had come to depend a lot on him in his last year. He was known for his simplicity and his commitment to principles. Earlier he had resigned from the position of Railway Minister accepting moral responsibility for a major railway accident.

Shastri was the country's Prime Minister from 1964 to 1966. During Shastri's brief Prime Ministership, the country faced two major challenges. While India was still recovering from the economic implications of the war with China, failed monsoons, drought and serious food crisis presented a grave challenge. As discussed in the previous chapter, the country also faced a war with Pakistan in 1965. Shastri's famous slogan 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan', symbolised the country's resolve to face both these challenges.

Shastri's Prime Ministership came to an abrupt end on 10 January 1966, when he suddenly expired in Tashkent, then in USSR and currently the capital of Uzbekistan. He was there to discuss and sign an agreement with Muhammad Ayub Khan, the then President of Pakistan, to end the war.

From Shastri to Indira Gandhi

Thus the Congress faced the challenge of political succession for the second time in two years. This time there was an intense competition between Morarji Desai and Indira Gandhi. Morarji Desai had earlier served as Chief Minister of Bombay state (today's Maharashtra and Gujarat) and also as a Minister at the centre. Indira Gandhi, the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, had been Congress President in the past and had also been Union Minister for Information in the Shastri cabinet. This time the senior leaders in the party decided to back Indira Gandhi, but the decision was not unanimous. The contest was resolved through a secret ballot among Congress MPs. Indira Gandhi defeated Morarji Desai by securing the support of more than two-thirds of the party's MPs. A peaceful transition of power, despite intense competition for leadership, was seen as a sign of maturity of India's democracy.

“...new Prime Minister of India, in spite of all forebodings, had been named with more dispatch, and much more dignity, than was the new Prime Minister of Britain.”

Editorial in The Guardian, London, 3 June 1964, comparing the political succession after Nehru with the succession drama after Harold Macmillan in Britain.



Credit: R. K. Laxman in The Times of India, 18 January 1966

It took some time before the new Prime Minister could settle down. While Indira Gandhi had been politically active for very long, she had served as a minister under Lal Bahadur Shastri only for a short period. The senior Congress leaders may have supported Indira Gandhi in the belief that her administrative and political inexperience would compel her to be dependent on them for support and guidance. Within a year of becoming Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi had to lead the party in a Lok Sabha election. Around this time, the economic situation in the country had further deteriorated, adding to her problems. Faced with these difficulties, she set out to gain control over the party and to demonstrate her leadership skills.

Indira Gandhi (1917-1984): Prime Minister of India from 1966 to 1977 and 1980 to 1984; daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru; participated in the freedom struggle as a young Congress worker; Congress President in 1958; minister in Shastri's cabinet from 1964-66; led the Congress party to victory in 1967, 1971 and 1980 general elections; credited with the slogan 'garibi hatao', victory in 1971 war and for policy initiatives like abolition of Privy Purse, nationalisation of banks, nuclear test and environmental protection; assassinated on 31 October 1984.





It must have been difficult for her – one woman in a world dominated by men. Why don't we have more women in positions like that?



Credit: Raghu Rai

Fourth General Elections, 1967

The year 1967 is considered a landmark year in India's political and electoral history. In Chapter Two you read about how the Congress party was the dominant political force throughout the country from 1952 onwards. This trend was to undergo significant changes with the 1967 elections.

Context of the elections

In the years leading up to the fourth general elections, the country witnessed major changes. Two Prime Ministers had died in quick succession, and the new Prime Minister, who was being seen as a political novice, had been in office for less than a year. You will recall from the discussion in Chapter Three and in the previous section of this chapter that the period was fraught with grave economic crisis resulting from successive failure of monsoons, widespread drought,

decline in agricultural production, serious food shortage, depletion of foreign exchange reserves, drop in industrial production and exports, combined with a sharp rise in military expenditure and diversion of resources from planning and economic development. One of the first decisions of the Indira Gandhi government was to devalue the Indian rupee, under what was seen to be pressure from the US. Earlier one US dollar could be purchased for less than Rs. 5; after devaluation it cost more than Rs. 7.

The economic situation triggered off price rise. People started protesting against the increase in prices of essential commodities, food scarcity, growing unemployment and the overall economic condition in the country. Bandhs and hartals were called frequently across the country. The government saw the protests as a law and order problem and not as expressions of people's problems. This further increased public bitterness and reinforced popular unrest.

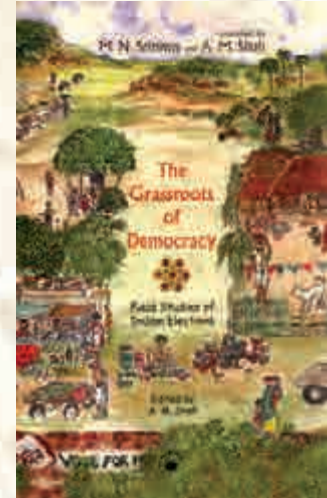
The communist and socialist parties launched struggles for greater equality. You will read in the next chapter about how a group of communists who separated from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to form the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) led armed agrarian struggles and organised peasant agitations. This period also witnessed some of the worst Hindu-Muslim riots since Independence.

Non-Congressism

This situation could not have remained isolated from party politics in the country. Opposition parties were in the forefront of organising public protests and pressurising the

Election in a Rajasthan Village

This is a story about 1967 assembly elections. In the Chomu constituency, the main parties in the fray were Congress and the Swatantra party. But village Devisar had its own local political dynamics and it got mixed up with the competition between the two parties. Sher Singh, traditionally dominated village politics, but gradually his nephew, Bhim Singh was emerging as the more popular leader and rival. Though both were Rajputs, Bhim Singh cultivated the support of many non-Rajputs in the village by attending to their requirements after becoming the panchayat Pradhan. So, he struck a new equation—the alliance of Rajputs and non-Rajputs.



He proved to be more adept in building alliances across the village by supporting candidates in other villages for the posts of village Pradhan. In fact, he took an initiative and took a delegation to the State Chief Minister and Congress leader Mohan Lal Sukhadia for pressing the name of one of his friends from a nearby village as Congress candidate in the Assembly election. When Sukhadia convinced him of some other name, Bhim Singh, in turn, convinced many others that they should work for the party candidate. Bhim Singh knew that if the party candidate won from this constituency, that candidate would become a minister and thus, he would have direct contacts with a minister for the first time!

Sher Singh had no option but to work for the Swatantra candidate, who was a jagirdar. He kept telling people that the jagirdar would help build the village school and use his resources for the development of the locality. At least in Devisar village, the Assembly election had turned into a factional fight between uncle and nephew.

Based on Anand Chakravarti, 'A Village in Chomu Assembly Constituency in Rajasthan.'

“...in India, as present trends continue... maintenance of an ordered structure of society is going to slip out of reach of an ordered structure of civil government and the army will be only alternative source of authority and order. ...the great experiment of developing India within a democratic framework has failed.”

Neville Maxwell

'India's Disintegrating Democracy' an article published in the London Times, 1967.

government. Parties opposed to the Congress realised that the division of their votes kept the Congress in power. Thus parties that were entirely different and disparate in their programmes and ideology got together to form anti-Congress fronts in some states and entered into electoral adjustments of sharing seats in others. They felt that the inexperience of Indira Gandhi and the internal factionalism within the Congress provided them an opportunity to topple the Congress. The socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia gave this strategy the name of 'non-Congressism'. He also produced a theoretical argument in its defence: Congress rule was undemocratic and opposed to the interests of ordinary poor people; therefore, the coming together of the non-Congress parties was necessary for reclaiming democracy for the people.



C. Natarajan Annadurai (1909-1969): Chief Minister of Madras (Tamil Nadu) from 1967; a journalist, popular writer and orator; initially associated with the Justice Party in Madras province; later joined Dravid Kazhagam (1934); formed DMK as a political party in 1949; a proponent of Dravid culture, he was opposed to imposition of Hindi and led the anti-Hindi agitations; supporter of greater autonomy to States.



Ram Manohar Lohia (1910-1967):

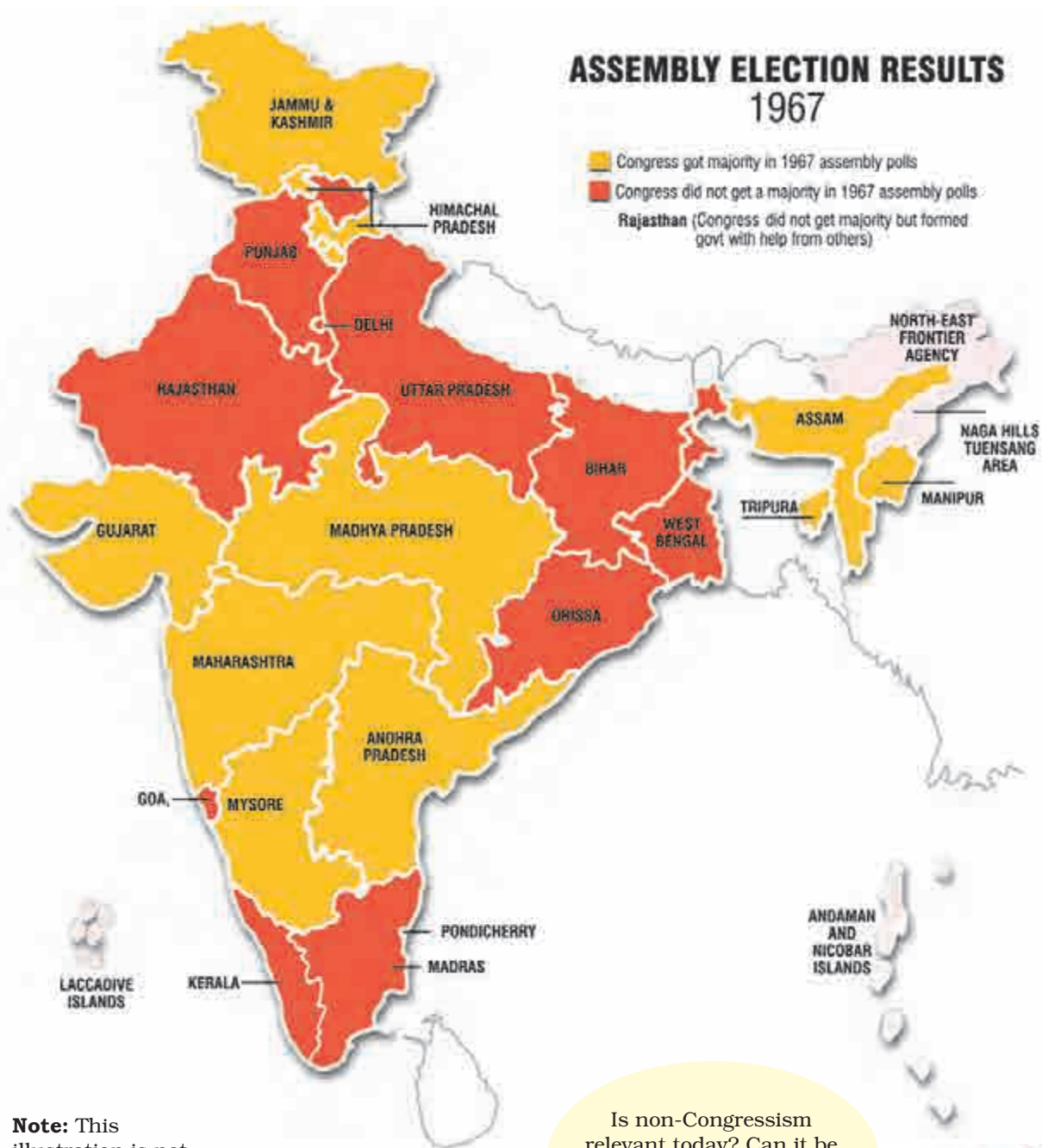
Socialist leader and thinker; freedom fighter and among the founders of the Congress Socialist Party; after the split in the parent

party, the leader of the Socialist Party and later the Samyukta Socialist Party; Member, Lok Sabha, 1963-67; founder editor of Mankind and Jan, known for original contribution to a non-European socialist theory; as political leader, best known for sharp attacks on Nehru, strategy of non-Congressism, advocacy of reservation for backward castes and opposition to English.

Electoral verdict

It was in this context of heightened popular discontent and the polarisation of political forces that the fourth general elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies were held in February 1967. The Congress was facing the electorate for the first time without Nehru.

The results jolted the Congress at both the national and state levels. Many contemporary political observers described the election results as a 'political earthquake'. The Congress did manage to get a majority in the Lok Sabha, but with its lowest tally of seats and share of votes since 1952. Half the ministers in Indira Gandhi's cabinet were defeated. The political stalwarts who lost in their constituencies included Kamaraj in Tamil Nadu, S.K. Patil in Maharashtra, Atulya Ghosh in West Bengal and K. B. Sahay in Bihar.



Note: This illustration is not a map drawn to scale and should not be taken to be an authentic depiction of India's external boundaries.

Is non-Congressism relevant today? Can it be applied against Left Front in today's West Bengal?



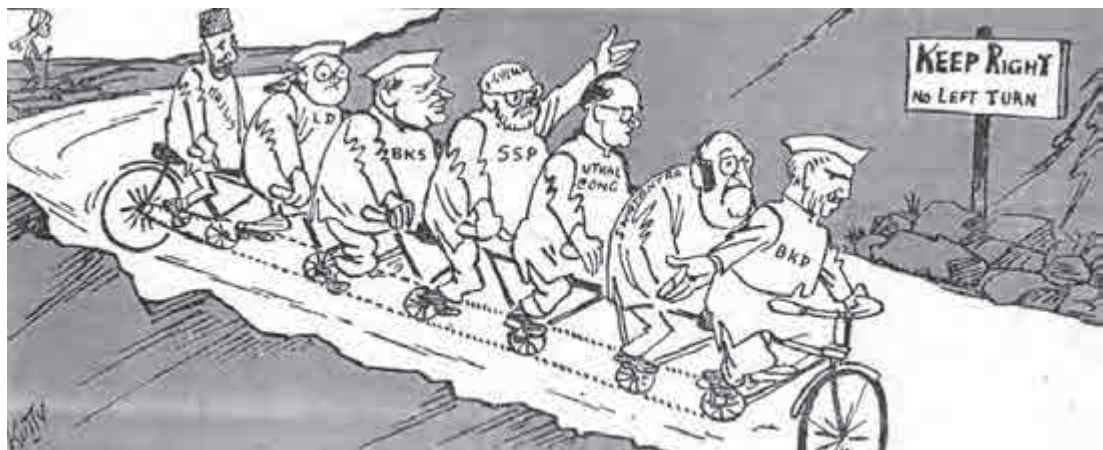
The dramatic nature of the political change would be more apparent to you at the State level. The Congress lost majority in as many as seven States. In two other States defections prevented it from forming a government. These nine States where the Congress lost power were spread across the country – Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, Madras and Kerala. In Madras State (now called Tamil Nadu), a regional party — the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) – came to power by securing a clear majority. The DMK won power after having led a massive anti-Hindi agitation by students against the centre on the issue of imposition of Hindi as the official language. This was the first time any non-Congress party had secured a majority of its own in any State. In the other eight States, coalition governments consisting of different non-Congress parties were formed. A popular saying was that one could take a train from Delhi to Howrah and not pass through a single Congress ruled State. It was a strange feeling for those who were used to seeing the Congress in power. So, was the domination of the Congress over?

What's so unusual in hung assemblies and coalition governments? We see them all the time.



Coalitions

The elections of 1967 brought into picture the phenomenon of coalitions. Since no single party had got majority, various non-Congress parties came together to form joint legislative parties (called Samyukt Vidhayak Dal in Hindi) that supported non-Congress governments. That is why these governments came to be described as SVD governments. In most of these cases the coalition partners were ideologically incongruent. The SVD government in Bihar, for instance, included the two socialist parties – SSP and the PSP – along with the CPI on the left and Jana Sangh on the right. In Punjab it was called the 'Popular United Front' and comprised the two rival Akali parties at that time – Sant group and the Master group – with both the communist parties – the CPI and the CPI(M), the SSP, the Republican Party and the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.



Credit: Kutty

A cartoonist's reading of Charan Singh's attempt to build a United Front of non-communist parties in 1974

Defection

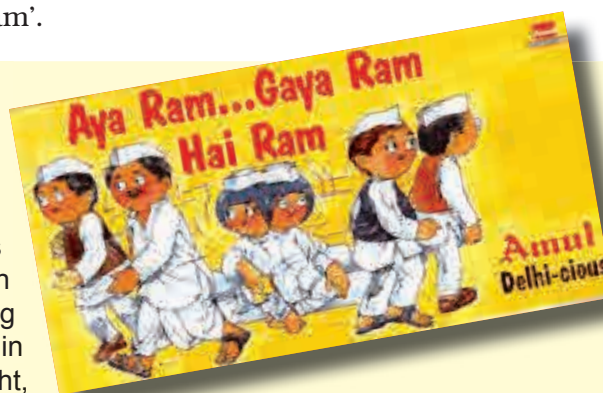
Another important feature of the politics after the 1967 election was the role played by defections in the making and unmaking of governments in the States. Defection means an elected representative leaves the party on whose symbol he/she was elected and joins another party. After the 1967 general election, the breakaway Congress legislators played an important role in installing non-Congress governments in three States - Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The constant realignments and shifting political loyalties in this period gave rise to the expression 'Aya Ram, Gaya Ram'.

The story of 'Aya Ram, Gaya Ram'

The expression 'aya ram, gaya ram' became popular in the political vocabulary in India to describe the practice of frequent floor-crossing by legislators. Literally translated the terms meant, Ram came and Ram went. The expression originated in an amazing feat of floor crossing achieved by Gaya Lal, an MLA in Haryana, in 1967. He changed his party thrice in a fortnight, from Congress to United Front, back to Congress

and then within nine hours to United Front again! It is said that when Gaya Lal declared his intention to quit the United Front and join the Congress, the Congress leader, Rao Birendra Singh brought him to Chandigarh press and declared "Gaya Ram was now Aya Ram".

Gaya Lal's feat was immortalised in the phrase "Aya Ram, Gaya Ram" which became the subject of numerous jokes and cartoons. Later, the Constitution was amended to prevent defections.



Split in the Congress

We saw that after the 1967 elections, the Congress retained power at the Centre but with a reduced majority and lost power in many States. More importantly, the results proved that the Congress could be defeated at the elections. But there was no substitute as yet. Most non-Congress coalition governments in the States did not survive for long. They lost majority, and either new combinations were formed or President's rule had to be imposed.

Indira vs. the 'Syndicate'

The real challenge to Indira Gandhi came not from the opposition but from within her own

K. Kamaraj

(1903-1975): Freedom

fighter and Congress

President; Chief

Minister of Madras

(Tamil Nadu); having

suffered educational

deprivation, made

efforts to spread

education in Madras

province; introduced mid-day meal

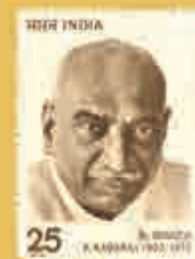
scheme for schoolchildren; in 1963 he

proposed that all senior Congressmen

should resign from office to make way

for younger party workers—this proposal

is famous as the 'Kamaraj plan.'



The Congress 'Syndicate'

Syndicate was the informal name given to a group of Congress leaders who were in control of the party's organisation. It was led by K. Kamraj, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and then the president of the Congress party. It included powerful State leaders like S. K. Patil of Bombay city (later named as Mumbai), S. Nijalingappa of Mysore (later Karnataka), N. Sanjeeva Reddy of Andhra Pradesh and Atulya Ghosh of West Bengal. Both Lal Bahadur Shastri and later Indira Gandhi owed their position to the support received from the Syndicate. This group had a decisive say in Indira Gandhi's first Council of Ministers and also in policy formulation and implementation. After the Congress split the leaders of the syndicate and those owing allegiance to them stayed with the Congress (O). Since it was Indira Gandhi's Congress (R) that won the test of popularity, all these big and powerful men of Indian politics lost their power and prestige after 1971.



S. Nijalingappa (1902-2000): Senior Congress leader; Member of Constituent Assembly; member of Lok Sabha; Chief Minister of the then Mysore (Karnataka) State; regarded as the maker of modern Karnataka; President of Congress during 1968-71.

So, there is nothing new about State level leaders being the king-makers at the centre. I thought it happened only in the 1990s.



party. She had to deal with the 'syndicate', a group of powerful and influential leaders from within the Congress. The Syndicate had played a role in the installation of Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister by ensuring her election as the leader of the parliamentary party. These leaders expected Indira Gandhi to follow their advise. Gradually, however, Indira Gandhi attempted to assert her position within the government and the party. She chose her trusted group of advisers from outside the party. Slowly and carefully, she sidelined the Syndicate.



Karpooori Thakur (1924-1988): Chief Minister of Bihar between December 1970 and June 1971 and again between June 1977 and April 1979; Freedom Fighter and socialist leader; active in labour and peasant movements; staunch follower of Lohia;

participated in the movement led by JP; known for his decision to introduce reservations for the backward classes in Bihar during his second Chief Ministership; strong opponent of the use of English Language.

Indira Gandhi thus faced two challenges. She needed to build her independence from the Syndicate. She also needed to work towards regaining the ground that the Congress had lost in the 1967 elections. Indira Gandhi adopted a very bold strategy. She converted a simple power struggle into an ideological struggle. She launched a series of initiatives to give the government policy a Left orientation. She got the Congress Working Committee to adopt a Ten Point Programme in May 1967. This programme included social control of banks, nationalisation of General Insurance, ceiling on urban property and income,

public distribution of food grains, land reforms and provision of house sites to the rural poor. While the 'syndicate' leaders formally approved this Left-wing programme, they had serious reservations about the same.

Presidential election, 1969

The factional rivalry between the Syndicate and Indira Gandhi came in the open in 1969. Following President Zakir Hussain's death, the post of President of India fell vacant that year. Despite Mrs Gandhi's reservations the 'syndicate' managed to nominate her long time opponent and then speaker of the Lok Sabha, N. Sanjeeva Reddy, as the official Congress candidate for the ensuing Presidential elections. Indira Gandhi retaliated by encouraging the then Vice-President, V.V. Giri, to file his nomination as an independent candidate. She also announced several big and popular policy measures like the nationalisation of fourteen leading private banks and the abolition of the 'privy purse' or the special privileges given to former princes. Morarji Desai was the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister.

V.V. Giri (1894-1980):

President of India from 1969 to 1974; Congress worker and labour leader from Andhra Pradesh; Indian High Commissioner to Ceylon (Sri Lanka); Labour Minister in Union cabinet; Governor of U.P., Kerala, Mysore (Karnataka); Vice-President (1967-1969) and acting President after the death of President Zakir Hussain; resigned and contested presidential election as independent candidate; received support from Indira Gandhi for his election as President.



Credit: R. K. Laxman in The Times of India, 21 August 1969

"The Left Hook" was published after the victory of V.V. Giri, (the boxer with the garland) over the nominee of the Syndicate, represented here by Nijalingappa (on his knees).

“History ... is replete with instances of the tragedy that overtakes democracy when a leader who has risen to power on the crest of a popular wave or with the support of a democratic organisation becomes a victim of political narcissism and is egged on by a coterie of unscrupulous sycophants.....”

S Nijalingappa

Letter to Indira Gandhi expelling her from the party, 11 November 1969.

On both the above issues serious differences emerged between him and the Prime Minister resulting in Desai leaving the government.

Congress had seen differences of this kind in the past. But this time both the parties wanted a showdown which took place during the Presidential elections. The then Congress President S. Nijalingappa issued a ‘whip’ asking all the Congress MPs and MLAs to vote in favour of Sanjeeva Reddy, the official candidate of the party. Supporters of Indira Gandhi requisitioned a special meeting of the AICC (that is why this faction came to be known as ‘requisitionists’) but this was refused. After silently supporting V.V. Giri, the Prime Minister openly called for a ‘conscience vote’ which meant that the MPs and MLAs from the Congress should be free to vote the way they want. The election ultimately resulted in the victory of V.V. Giri, the independent candidate, and the defeat of Sanjeeva Reddy, the official Congress candidate.

The defeat of the official Congress candidate formalised the split in the party. The Congress President expelled the Prime Minister from the party; she claimed that her group was the real Congress. By November 1969, the Congress group led by the ‘syndicate’ came to be referred to as the Congress (Organisation) and the group led by Indira Gandhi came to be called the Congress (Requisitionists). These two parties were also described as Old Congress and New Congress. Indira Gandhi projected the split as an ideological divide between socialists and conservatives, between the pro-poor and the pro-rich.

Abolition of Privy Purse

In Chapter One you have read about the integration of the Princely States. This integration was preceded by an assurance that after the dissolution of princely rule, the then rulers’ families would be allowed to retain certain private property, and given a grant in heredity or government allowance, measured on the basis of the extent, revenue and potential of the merging state. This grant was called the privy purse. At the time of accession, there was little criticism of these privileges since integration and consolidation was the primary aim.

Yet, hereditary privileges were not consonant with the principles of equality and social and economic justice laid down in the Constitution of India. Nehru had expressed his dissatisfaction over the matter time and again. Following the 1967 elections, Indira Gandhi supported the demand that the government should abolish privy purses. Morarji Desai, however, called the move morally wrong and amounting to a ‘breach of faith with the princes’.

The government tried to bring a Constitutional amendment in 1970, but it was not passed in Rajya Sabha. It then issued an ordinance which was struck down by the Supreme Court. Indira Gandhi made this into a major election issue in 1971 and got a lot of public support. Following its massive victory in the 1971 election, the Constitution was amended to remove legal obstacles for abolition of ‘privy purse’.



Credit: Vijayan, Shankar's Weekly



20 July 1969

A cartoonist's impression of the leadership rivalry in the Congress Party in 1969.

The 1971 Election and Restoration of Congress

The split in the Congress reduced Indira Gandhi Government to a minority. Yet her government continued in office with the issue-based support of a few other parties including the Communist Party of India and the DMK. During this period the government made conscious attempts to project its socialist credentials. This was also a phase when Indira Gandhi vigorously campaigned for implementing the existing land reform laws and undertook further land ceiling legislation. In order to end her dependence on other political parties, strengthen her party's position in the Parliament, and seek a popular mandate for her programmes, Indira Gandhi's government recommended the dissolution of the Lok Sabha in December 1970. This was another surprising and bold move. The fifth general election to Lok Sabha were held in February 1971.

The contest

The electoral contest appeared to be loaded against Congress(R). After all, the new Congress was just one faction of an already weak party. Everyone believed that the real organisational strength of the Congress party was under the command of Congress(O). To make matters worse for Indira Gandhi, all the major non-communist, non-Congress opposition parties formed an electoral alliance known as the Grand Alliance. The SSP, PSP, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Swatantra Party and the Bharatiya Kranti Dal came together under this umbrella. The ruling party had an alliance with the CPI.

Yet the new Congress had something that its big opponents lacked – it had an issue, an agenda and a positive slogan. The Grand Alliance did not have a coherent political programme. Indira Gandhi said that the opposition alliance had only one common programme: *Indira Hatao* (Remove Indira). In contrast to this, she put forward a positive programme captured in the famous slogan: *Garibi Hatao* (Remove Poverty). She focused on the growth of the public sector, imposition of ceiling on rural land holdings and urban property, removal of disparities in income and opportunity, and abolition of princely privileges. Through *garibi hatao* Indira Gandhi tried to generate a support base among the disadvantaged, especially among the landless labourers, Dalits and Adivasis, minorities, women and the unemployed youth. The slogan of *garibi hatao* and the programmes that followed it were part of Indira Gandhi's political strategy of building an independent nationwide political support base.

Almost four decades after giving the slogan of *Garibi Hatao*, we still have much poverty around! Was the slogan only an election gimmick?



The outcome and after

The results of the Lok Sabha elections of 1971, were as dramatic as was the decision to hold these elections. The Congress(R)-CPI alliance won more seats and votes than the Congress had ever won in the first four general elections. The combine won 375 seats in Lok Sabha and secured 48.4 per cent votes. Indira Gandhi's Congress(R) won 352 seats with about 44 per cent of the popular votes on its own. Contrast this with the performance of the Congress(O): the party with so many stalwarts could get less than one-fourth of the votes secured by Indira Gandhi's party and win merely 16 seats. With this the Congress party led by Indira Gandhi established its claim to being the 'real' Congress and restored to it the dominant position in Indian politics. The Grand Alliance of the opposition proved a grand failure. Their combined tally of seats was less than 40.

Credit: R. K. Laxman in The Times of India



“The Grand Finish” is how a cartoonist interpreted the outcome of the 1971 elections. Players on the ground are the then leading opposition figures.

Credit: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India



Soon after the 1971 Lok Sabha elections, a major political and military crisis broke out in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). As you have read in Chapter Four, the 1971 elections were followed by the crisis in East Pakistan and the Indo-Pak war leading to the establishment of Bangladesh. These events added to the popularity of Indira Gandhi. Even the opposition leaders admired her statesmanship. Her party swept through all the State Assembly elections held in 1972. She was seen not only as the protector of the poor and the underprivileged, but also a strong nationalist leader. The opposition to her, either within the party or outside of it, simply did not matter.

With two successive election victories, one at the centre and other at the State level, the dominance of the Congress was restored. The Congress was now in power in almost all the States. It was also popular across different social sections. Within a span of four years, Indira Gandhi had warded off the challenge to her leadership and to the dominant position of the Congress party.



Credit: Kutty

The new manner of choosing CMs by Indira Gandhi inspired this cartoon.

Restoration?

But does it mean that the Congress system was restored? What Indira Gandhi had done was not a revival of the old Congress party. In many ways she had re-invented the party. The party occupied a similar position in terms of its popularity as in the past. But it was a different kind of a party. It relied entirely on the popularity of the supreme leader. It had a somewhat weak organisational structure. This Congress party now did not have many factions, thus it could not accommodate all kinds of opinions and interests. While it won elections, it depended more on some social groups: the poor, the women, Dalits, Adivasis and the minorities. This was a new Congress that had emerged. Thus Indira Gandhi restored the Congress system by changing the nature of the Congress system itself.

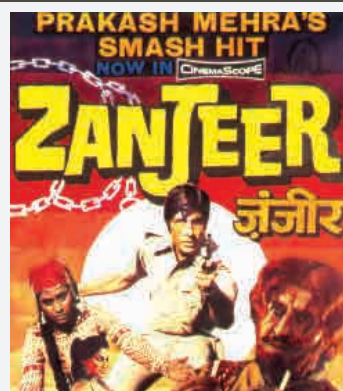
Despite being more popular, the new Congress did not have the kind of capacity to absorb all tensions and conflicts that the Congress system was known for. While the Congress consolidated its position and Indira Gandhi assumed a position of unprecedented political authority, the spaces for democratic expression of people's aspirations actually shrank. The popular unrest and mobilisation around issues of development and economic deprivation continued to grow. In the next chapter you will read about how this led to a political crisis that threatened the very existence of constitutional democracy in the country.

That is like changing the top and legs of a table and still calling it the old table! What was common between the Old and the New Congress?



Let's watch a Film

ZANJEER



Vijay, a young police officer is framed in false charges and sent to jail while fighting gangsters. Released from jail, Vijay is determined to take revenge. He fights all odds and vanquishes the villains. Even while he is engaged in taking revenge, Vijay is fighting the anti-social element and gets the tacit support of many others from within the system.

This film portrayed the erosion of moral values and the deep frustrations arising from that quite forcefully. It represents the indifference of the system and the harsh and volcanic eruption of protest through the anger of Vijay. The film set the trend of what was later to be known as the 'angry young man' of the seventies.

Year: 1973
 Director: Prakash Mehra
 Screenplay: Javed Akhtar
 Cast: Amitabh Bachchan, Ajit, Jaya Bhaduri, Pran

EXERCISES

1. Which of these statements about the 1967 elections is/are correct?
 - (a) Congress won the Lok Sabha elections but lost the Assembly elections in many states.
 - (b) Congress lost both Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.
 - (c) Congress lost majority in the Lok Sabha but formed a coalition government with the support of some other parties.
 - (d) Congress retained power at the Centre with an increased majority.

2. Match the following:

(a) Syndicate

(b) Defection

(c) Slogan

(d) Anti-Congressism

- i. An elected representative leaving the party on whose ticket s/he has been elected
- ii. A catchy phrase that attracts public attention
- iii. parties with different ideological position coming together to oppose Congress and its policies
- iv. A group of powerful members within the Congress

3. Whom would you identify with the following slogans/phrases?

(a) Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan

(b) Indira Hatao!

(c) Garibi Hatao!

4. Which of the following statement about the Grand Alliance of 1971 is correct?

The Grand Alliance

(a) was formed by non-Communist, non-Congress parties.

(b) had a clear political and ideological programme.

(c) was formed by all non-Congress parties.

5. How should a political party resolve its internal differences? Here are some suggestions. Think of each and list out their advantages and shortcomings.

(a) Follow the footsteps of the party president

(b) Listen to the majority group

(c) Secret ballot voting on every issue

(d) Consult the senior and experienced leaders of the party

6. State which of these were reasons for the defeat of the Congress in 1967. Give reasons for your answer.

(a) The absence of a charismatic leader in the Congress party

(b) Split within the Congress party

(c) Increased mobilisation of regional, ethnic and communal groups

(d) Increasing unity among non-Congress parties

(e) Internal differences within the Congress party

7. What were the factors which led to the popularity of Indira Gandhi's Government in the early 1970s?
8. What does the term 'syndicate' mean in the context of the Congress party of the sixties? What role did the Syndicate play in the Congress party?
9. Discuss the major issue which led to the formal split of the Congress Party in 1969.
10. Read the passage and answer the questions below:

...Indira Gandhi changed the Congress into highly centralised and undemocratic party organisation, from the earlier federal, democratic and ideological formation that Nehru had led.....But this... could not have happened had not Indira Gandhi changed the entire nature of politics. This new, populist politics turned political ideology into a mere electoral discourse, use of various slogans not meant to be translated into government policies..... During its great electoral victories in early 1970s, amidst the celebration, the Congress party as a political organisation died..... — SUDIPTA KAVIRAJ

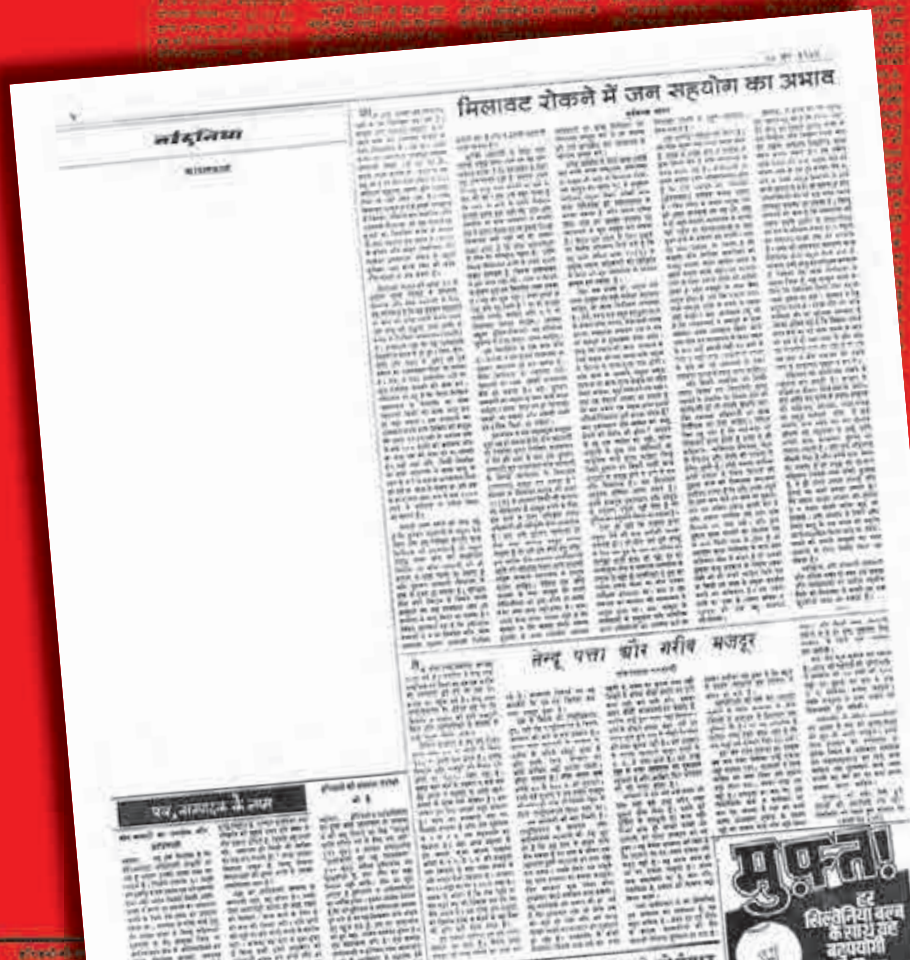
(a) What according to the author is the difference between the strategies of Nehru and Indira Gandhi?

(b) Why does the author say that the Congress party 'died' in the seventies?

(c) In what way, did the change in the Congress party affect other political parties also?

LET US DO IT TOGETHER

- Make a list of slogans coined by political parties.
- Do you see any similarities between advertisements and manifestoes, slogans and advertisements of political parties?
- Have a discussion on how price rise affects the political fortunes of the political parties.



In this chapter...

We have seen in the last chapter that the Congress recovered after 1971, but was not the same kind of party. The difference became clear in a series of events between 1973 and 1975 that brought new challenges to India's democratic politics and the institutional balance sought by the Constitution. These developments led to the imposition of 'emergency' in June 1975. Normally, we would associate 'emergency' with war and aggression or with natural disaster. But this 'emergency' was imposed because of the perceived threat of internal disturbance. The Emergency ended as dramatically as it had begun, resulting in a defeat of the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections of 1977.

In this chapter we focus on this crucial phase in the history of democracy in India and ask some questions that have remained controversial after all these years.

- Why was Emergency imposed? Was it necessary?
- What did the imposition of Emergency mean in practice?
- What were the consequences of Emergency on party politics?
- What are the lessons of Emergency for Indian democracy?

The editorial page of 'Nai Dunia' of 27 June 1975 was like any other day, except that the space for editorial was left blank. The editorial was "censored" using emergency powers. Many other newspapers also carried such blank spaces—sometimes to protest against emergency. Later, leaving blank space was also banned.

THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRATIC ORDER

CHAPTER



Background to Emergency

We have already studied the changes that were taking place in Indian politics since 1967. Indira Gandhi had emerged as a towering leader with tremendous popularity. This was also the period when party competition became bitter and polarised. This period also witnessed tensions in the relationship between the government and the judiciary. The Supreme Court found many initiatives of the government to be violative of the Constitution. The Congress party took the position that this stand of the Court was against principles of democracy and parliamentary supremacy. The Congress also alleged that the Court was a conservative institution and it was becoming an obstacle in the way of implementing pro-poor welfare programmes. The parties opposed to the Congress felt that politics was becoming too personalised and that governmental authority was being converted into personal authority. The split in the Congress had sharpened the divisions between Indira Gandhi and her opponents.

Economic context

In the elections of 1971, Congress had given the slogan of *garibi hatao* (remove poverty). However, the social and economic condition in the country did not improve much after 1971-72. The Bangladesh crisis had put a heavy strain on India's economy. About eight million people crossed over the East Pakistan border into India. This was followed by war with Pakistan. After the war the U.S government stopped all aid to India. In the international market, oil prices increased manifold during this period. This led to an all-round increase in prices of commodities. Prices increased by 23 per cent in 1973 and 30 per cent in 1974. Such a high level of inflation caused much hardship to the people.

Industrial growth was low and unemployment was very high, particularly in the rural areas. In order to reduce expenditure the government froze the salaries of its employees. This caused further dissatisfaction among government employees. Monsoons failed in 1972-1973. This resulted in a sharp decline in agricultural productivity. Food grain output declined by 8 per cent. There was a general atmosphere of dissatisfaction with the prevailing economic

PM says

**Hard
days
ahead**



Credit: Abu

The best we can hope for is that 1973 will be hataoed quickly



Poor people must have had a tough time. What happened to the promise of *garibi hatao*?

“*Sampoorna Kranti ab nara hai, bhavi itihās hamara hai* [With Total Revolution as our motto, the future belongs to us]

A slogan of the Bihar movement, 1974

situation all over the country. In such a context non-Congress opposition parties were able to organise popular protests effectively. Instances of students' unrests that had persisted from the late 1960s became more pronounced in this period. There was also an increase in the activities of Marxist groups who did not believe in parliamentary politics. These groups had taken to arms and insurgent techniques for the overthrow of the capitalist order and the established political system. Known as the Marxist-Leninist (now Maoist) groups or Naxalites, they were particularly strong in West Bengal, where the State government took stringent measures to suppress them.

Gujarat and Bihar movements

Students' protests in Gujarat and Bihar, both of which were Congress ruled States, had far reaching impact on the politics of the two States and national politics. In January 1974 students in Gujarat started an agitation against rising prices of food grains, cooking oil and other essential commodities, and against corruption in high places. The students' protest was joined by major opposition parties and became widespread leading to the imposition of President's rule in the state. The opposition parties demanded fresh elections to the state legislature. Morarji Desai, a prominent leader of Congress (O), who was the main rival of Indira Gandhi when he was in the Congress, announced that he would go on an indefinite fast if fresh elections were not held in the State. Under intense pressure from students, supported by the opposition political parties, assembly elections were held in Gujarat in June 1975. The Congress was defeated in this election.

In March 1974 students came together in Bihar to protest against rising prices, food scarcity, unemployment and corruption. After a point they invited Jayaprakash Narayan (JP), who had given up active politics and was involved in social work, to lead the student movement. He accepted it on the condition that the movement will remain non-violent and will not limit itself to Bihar. Thus the students' movement assumed a political character and had national appeal. People from all walks of life now entered the movement. Jayaprakash Narayan demanded the dismissal of the Congress government in Bihar and gave a call for total revolution in the social, economic and political spheres in order to establish what he considered to be true democracy. A series of bandhs, gehraos, and strikes were organised in protest against the Bihar government. The government, however, refused to resign.

“*Indira is India, India is Indira*”

A slogan given by D. K. Barooah, President of the Congress, 1974

The Naxalite Movement

In 1967 a peasant uprising took place in the Naxalbari police station area of Darjeeling hills district in West Bengal under the leadership of the local cadres of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Beginning from the Naxalbari police station, the peasant movement spread to several states of India and came to be referred broadly as the Naxalite movement. In 1969, they broke off from the CPI (M) and a new party, Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) (CPI-ML), was formed under the leadership of Charu Majumdar. It argued that democracy in India was a sham and decided to adopt a strategy of protracted guerrilla warfare in order to lead to a revolution.

The Naxalite movement has used force to snatch land from the rich landowners and give it to the poor and the landless. Its supporters advocated the use of violent means to achieve their political goals. In spite of the use of preventive detention and other strong measures adopted by the West Bengal government run by the Congress party, the Naxalite movement did not come to an end. In later years, it spread to many other parts of the country. The Naxalite movement has by now splintered into various parties and organisations. Some of these parties, like the CPI – ML (Liberation) participate in open, democratic politics.



Currently about 75 districts in nine States are affected by Naxalite violence. Most of these are very backward areas inhabited by Adivasis. In these areas the

sharecroppers, under-tenants and small cultivators are denied their basic rights with regard to security of tenure or their share in produce, payment of fair wages etc. Forced labour, expropriation of resources by outsiders and exploitation by moneylenders are also common in these areas. These conditions lead to the growth of the Naxalite movement.

Governments have taken stern measures in dealing with the Naxalite movement. Human right activists have criticised the government for violating constitutional norms in dealing

with the Naxalites. Many thousand people have lost their lives in the violence by the Naxalites and the anti-Naxalite violence by the government.



Charu Majumdar (1918-1972): Communist revolutionary and the leader of the Naxalbari uprising; participated in the Tebhaga movement before independence; left the CPI and founded the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist); believed

in the Maoist path of peasant rebellion and defended revolutionary violence; died in police custody.

Credit: R. K. Laxman in The Times of India, 16 April 1974



Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) (1902-1979): A marxist in his youth; founder general secretary of the Congress Socialist

Party and the Socialist Party; a hero of the 1942 Quit India movement; declined to join Nehru's cabinet; after 1955 quit active politics; became a Gandhian and was involved in the Bhoodan movement, negotiations with the Naga rebels, peace initiative in Kashmir and ensured the surrender of decoits in Chambal; leader of Bihar movement, he became the symbol of opposition to Emergency and was the moving force behind the formation of Janata Party.

The movement was beginning to influence national politics. Jayaprakash Narayan wanted to spread the Bihar movement to other parts of the country. Alongside the agitation led by Jayaprakash Narayan, the employees of the Railways gave a call for a nationwide strike. This threatened to paralyse the country. In 1975, JP led a peoples' march to the Parliament. This was one of the largest political rallies ever held in the capital. He was now supported by the non-Congress opposition parties like the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the Congress (O), the Bharatiya Lok Dal, the Socialist Party and others. These parties were projecting JP as an alternative to Indira Gandhi. However, there were many criticisms about his ideas and about the politics of mass agitations that he was employing. Both the Gujarat and Bihar

agitations were seen as anti-Congress and rather than opposing the State governments, they were seen as protests against the leadership of Indira Gandhi. She believed that the movement was motivated by personal opposition to her.

Railway Strike of 1974

What would happen when the railways stop running? Not for one or two days, but for more than a week? Of course, many people would be inconvenienced; but more than that, the economy of the country would come to a halt because goods are transported from one part to another by trains.

Do you know that such a thing actually happened in 1974? The National Coordination Committee for Railwaymen's Struggle led by George Fernandes gave a call for nationwide strike by all employees of the Railways for pressing their demands related to bonus and service conditions. The government was opposed to these demands. So, the employees of India's largest public sector undertaking went on a strike in May 1974. The strike by the Railway employees added to the atmosphere of labour unrest. It also raised issues like rights of the workers and whether employees of essential services should adopt measures like strikes.

The government declared the strike illegal. As the government refused to concede the demands of the striking workers, arrested many of their leaders and deployed the territorial army to protect railway tracks, the strike had to be called off after twenty days without any settlement.

Conflict with Judiciary

This was also the period when the government and the ruling party had many differences with the judiciary. Do you remember the discussion about the long drawn conflict between the Parliament and the judiciary? You have studied this last year. Three constitutional issues had emerged. Can the Parliament abridge Fundamental Rights? The Supreme Court said it cannot. Secondly, can the Parliament curtail the right to property by making an amendment? Again, the Court said that Parliament cannot amend the Constitution in such a manner that rights are curtailed. Thirdly, the Parliament amended the Constitution saying that it can abridge Fundamental Rights for giving effect to Directive Principles. But the Supreme Court rejected this provision also. This led to a crisis as far as the relations between the government and the judiciary were concerned. You may remember that this crisis culminated in the famous Kesavananda Bharati Case. In this case, the Court gave a decision that there are some basic features of the Constitution and the Parliament cannot amend these features.

Two developments further added to the tension between the judiciary and the executive. Immediately after the Supreme Court's



Do 'committed judiciary' and 'committed bureaucracy' mean that the judges and government officials should be loyal to the ruling party?

decision in 1973 in the Keshavananda Bharati case, a vacancy arose for the post of the Chief Justice of India. It had been a practice to appoint the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court as the Chief Justice. But in 1973, the government set aside the seniority of three judges and appointed Justice A. N. Ray as the Chief Justice of India. The appointment became politically controversial because all the three judges who were superseded had given rulings against the stand of the government. Thus, constitutional interpretations and political ideologies were getting mixed up rapidly. People close to the Prime Minister started talking of the need for a judiciary and the bureaucracy 'committed' to the vision of the executive and the legislature. The climax of the confrontation was of course the ruling of the High Court declaring Indira Gandhi's election invalid.

Declaration of Emergency

On 12 June 1975, Justice Jagmohan Lal Sinha of the Allahabad High Court passed a judgment declaring Indira Gandhi's election to the Lok Sabha invalid. This order came on an election petition filed by Raj Narain, a socialist leader and a candidate who had contested against her in 1971. The petition, challenged the election of Indira Gandhi on the ground that she had used the services of government servants in her election campaign. The judgment of the High Court meant that legally she was no more an MP and therefore, could not remain the Prime Minister unless she was once again elected as an MP within six months. On June 24, the Supreme Court granted her a partial stay on the High Court order – till her appeal was decided, she could remain an MP but could not take part in the proceedings of the Lok Sabha.

Crisis and response

The stage was now set for a big political confrontation. The opposition political parties led by Jayaprakash Narayan pressed for Indira Gandhi's resignation and organised a massive demonstration in Delhi's Ramlila grounds on 25 June 1975. Jayaprakash announced a nationwide satyagraha for her resignation and asked the army, the police and government employees not to obey "illegal and immoral orders". This too threatened to bring the activities of the government to a standstill. The political mood of the country had turned against the Congress, more than ever before.

The response of the government was to declare a state of emergency. On 25 June 1975, the government declared that there was a threat of internal disturbances and therefore, it invoked Article 352 of the Constitution. Under the provision of this article the government could declare a state of emergency on grounds of external threat or a threat of internal disturbances. The government decided that a grave crisis had arisen which made the proclamation of a state of emergency necessary. Technically speaking this was within the powers of the

That is like asking the army to disobey the government! Is that democratic?





Credit: R. K. Laxman in The Times of India, 26 June 1975

This cartoon appeared few days before the declaration of Emergency and captures the sense of impending political crisis. The man behind the chair is D. K. Barooah, the Congress President.

government, for our Constitution provides for some special powers to the government once an emergency is declared.

Once an emergency is proclaimed, the federal distribution of powers remains practically suspended and all the powers are concentrated in the hands of the union government. Secondly, the government also gets the power to curtail or restrict all or any of the Fundamental Rights during the emergency. From the wording of the provisions of the Constitution, it is clear that an Emergency is seen as an extraordinary condition in which normal democratic politics cannot function. Therefore, special powers are granted to the government.

On the night of 25 June 1975, the Prime Minister recommended the imposition of Emergency to President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. He issued the proclamation immediately. After midnight, the electricity to all the major newspaper offices was disconnected. In the early morning, a large number of leaders and workers of the opposition parties were arrested. The Cabinet was informed about it at a special meeting at 6 a.m. on 26 June, after all this had taken place.



Should the President have declared Emergency without any recommendation from the Cabinet?

110

नई दुनिया

अखबारों पर बंदिश लगी, हटी

इन्दौर 25 अक्टूबर। भारतीय राज के बीच बात समाचार पत्र के कार्यालयों में एक सप्ताह किया कि 25 अक्टूबर पूर्ण विफल करके। कुछ ही दिनों में समाचार पत्र के कार्यालयों पर पुलिस अधिकारी और समाचार पत्र के अधिकारी हटाने के आदेश दिए गए। जम्मू में जम्मू काश्मीर के समाचार पत्र के कार्यालयों पर पुलिस अधिकारी और समाचार पत्र के अधिकारी हटाने के आदेश दिए गए।

देश में तानाशाही रोकने के लंबे संघर्ष हेतु तैयार रहें

रामलाला भद्रान की विद्याल सभा में जयबाद की घोषणा
25 अक्टूबर में विद्याल सभा में जयबाद की घोषणा की गई। सभा में रामलाला भद्रान की अध्यक्षता में विद्याल सभा के सदस्यों ने देश में तानाशाही रोकने के लंबे संघर्ष हेतु तैयार रहें की घोषणा की।

श्रीमती गांधी
मिलकर हैरी
राष्ट्रीय संघ
संस्कृत संघ



Chief Subs/SUBSI
Message to Chief Sub, Bombay/Ahmadabad, from Chief Sub, Delhi.

The censor rang up to say that the Prime Minister's interview to the correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" should be sent to him before publication.

September 28, 1947

No news, comments, roundup or other reports relative to the family planning programme should be published without clearance from the Censor.

Editorial, 7/3/1976



11 December 1975

RAMSON PAINTS
BOMBAY-2.
A Division of Ramson Corporation, Bombay

THE TIMES OF INDIA

BOMBAY, FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1949

SEA PALACE HOTEL

STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED

Several leaders arrested

CM warns Security in peril, says P.M. against call

NEW DELHI, June 16.

THE President, Mr. Prasad, has declared a state of emergency in the country. He has also arrested several leaders.

Chief Subs, Delhi, to Chief Sub, Bombay/Ahmadabad:
Phone from censor (Mr. Laxmi Chand): "Only official version of Indo-Pak talks today to be used. No comments or editorials to be written."

Rights suspended

Be vigilant, states told

Pre-censorship

2018-19

नया आपात्काल : जयप्रकाश और कई नेता गिरफ्तार

नई दिल्ली २६ जून (यूएनआई)। भारत के इतिहास में पहली बार मादक पदार्थों के उपयोग को धोखा देकर राष्ट्रपति कमलदेव जय प्रकाश ने आज सुबह सात बजे के तारी प्रमुख नेताओं को दिल्ली से बांधी जाति अतिरिक्त से गिरफ्तार करके के संघर्ष की गिरफ्तार है।

क्या नहीं हुआ

(१) भारत का विधान बन भी लागू है और वह लागू नहीं हुआ है। भारतीयों की योजना विधान की भारत २५२ के अंतर्गत की गई है। भारत ने जो कदम उठाए हैं, उन्हें उठाने के अधिकार उसे १९७१ से रहे हैं।

(२) राष्ट्रपति मादक पदार्थ नहीं हुआ है। भारत के इतिहास में राष्ट्रपति मादक पदार्थ को कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है। विधान परिषद राष्ट्रपति को मादक पदार्थ प्रयोग करने के लिए बाध्य है। भारत अपने संविधान को विनाट तक...

Emergency ensures YOUR Security—and the NATION'S

WORK MORE TALK LESS

प्रधान मंत्री का क्रान्तिकारी कार्यक्रम आइए, इसे सफल बनाएं

To our readers

The city edition of Friday and Saturday of Friday and Saturday of the Hindustan Times could not be brought out as no power was available from 12-45 p.m. on Thursday till 7-15 p.m. on Friday. The inconvenience is deeply regretted.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

MRS GANDHI DEFEATED

Janta Party forges ahead in North

Bansi Lal, Sanjay out



Cong rout in Delhi total

Nightmare over, says Vajpayee

The night the didn't sleep

We've always practised Compulsory Sterilisation

Party position at 2.30 a.m.

Late City Edition

Consequences

This brought the agitation to an abrupt stop; strikes were banned; many opposition leaders were put in jail; the political situation became very quiet though tense. Deciding to use its special powers under Emergency provisions, the government suspended the freedom of the Press. Newspapers were asked to get prior approval for all material to be published. This is known as press censorship. Apprehending social and communal disharmony, the government banned Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Jamait-e-Islami. Protests and strikes and public agitations were also disallowed. Most importantly, under the provisions of Emergency, the various Fundamental Rights of citizens stood suspended, including the right of citizens to move the Court for restoring their Fundamental Rights.

Now, even the Supreme Court gave in! What was happening to everyone in those days?



The government made extensive use of preventive detention. Under this provision, people are arrested and detained not because they have committed any offence, but on the apprehension that they may commit an offence. Using preventive detention acts, the government made large scale arrests during the Emergency. Arrested political workers could not challenge their arrest through habeas corpus petitions. Many cases were filed in the High Courts and the Supreme Court by and on behalf of arrested persons, but the government claimed that it was not even necessary to inform the arrested persons of the reasons and grounds of their arrest. Several High Courts gave judgments that even after the declaration of Emergency the courts could entertain a writ of habeas corpus filed by a person challenging his/her detention. In April 1976, the constitution bench of the Supreme Court over-ruled the High Courts and accepted the government's plea. It meant that during Emergency the government could take away the citizen's right to life and liberty. This judgment closed the doors of judiciary for the citizens and is regarded as one of the most controversial judgments of the Supreme Court.

There were many acts of dissent and resistance to the Emergency. Many political workers who were not arrested in the first wave, went 'underground' and organised protests against the government. Newspapers like the *Indian Express* and the *Statesman* protested against censorship by leaving blank spaces where news items had been censored. Magazines like the *Seminar* and the *Mainstream* chose to close down rather than submit to censorship. Many journalists were arrested for writing against the Emergency. Many underground newsletters and leaflets were published to bypass censorship. Kannada writer Shivarama Karanth, awarded with Padma Bhushan, and Hindi writer Fanishwarnath Renu, awarded with Padma Shri, returned their awards in protest against the suspension of democracy. By and large, though, such open acts of defiance and resistance were rare.

The Parliament also brought in many new changes to the Constitution. In the background of the ruling of the Allahabad High

Court in the Indira Gandhi case, an amendment was made declaring that elections of Prime Minister, President and Vice-President could not be challenged in the Court. The forty-second amendment was also passed during the Emergency. You have already studied that this amendment consisted of a series of changes in many parts of the Constitution. Among the various changes made by this amendment, one was that the duration of the legislatures in the country was extended from five to six years. This change was not only for the Emergency period, but was intended to be of a permanent nature. Besides this, during an Emergency, elections can be postponed by one year. Thus, effectively, after 1971, elections needed to be held only in 1978; instead of 1976.



Let us not talk about the few who protested. What about the rest? All the big officials, intellectuals, social and religious leaders, citizens... What were they doing?

Controversies regarding Emergency

Emergency is one of the most controversial episodes in Indian politics. One reason is that there are differing view points about the need to declare emergency. Another reason is that using the powers given by the Constitution, the government practically suspended the democratic functioning. As the investigations by the Shah Commission after the Emergency found out, there were many 'excesses' committed during the Emergency. Finally, there are varying assessments of what the lessons of Emergency are for the practice of democracy in India. Let us look at these one by one.

Was the Emergency necessary?

The Constitution simply mentioned 'internal disturbances' as the reason for declaring Emergency. Before 1975, Emergency was never proclaimed on this ground. We have noted that agitations were going on in many parts of the country. Was this reason enough for declaring Emergency? The government argued that in a democracy, the opposition parties must allow the elected ruling party to govern according to its policies. It felt that frequent recourse to agitations, protests and collective action are not good for democracy. Supporters of Indira Gandhi also held that in a democracy, you cannot continuously have extra-parliamentary politics targeting the government. This leads to instability and distracts the administration from its routine task of ensuring development. All energies are diverted to maintenance of law and order. Indira Gandhi wrote in a

Shah Commission of Inquiry

In May 1977, the Janata Party government appointed a Commission of Inquiry headed by Justice J.C. Shah, retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, to inquire "into several aspects of allegations of abuse of authority, excesses and malpractices committed and action taken in the wake of the Emergency proclaimed on the 25th June, 1975". The Commission examined various kinds of evidence and called scores of witnesses to give testimonies. These included Indira Gandhi who appeared before the Commission but refused to answer any questions.

The Government of India accepted the findings, observations and recommendations contained in the two interim reports and third and final report of the Shah Commission. The reports were also tabled in the two houses of Parliament.

“ In the name of democracy it has been sought to negate the very functioning of democracy. Duly elected governments have not been allowed to function. ... Agitations have surcharged the atmosphere, leading to violent incidents. ... Certain persons have gone to the length of inciting our armed forces to mutiny and our police to rebel. The forces of disintegration are in full play and communal passions are being aroused, threatening our unity. How can any Government worth the name stand by and allow the country's stability to be imperilled? The actions of a few are endangering the rights of the vast majority.

Indira Gandhi
Addressing the nation on
All India Radio on
26 June 1975



Credit: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India

Mrs. Gandhi's confrontation with the Shah Commission provoked this cartoon when the commission's report was released.

letter to the Shah Commission that subversive forces were trying to obstruct the progressive programmes of the government and were attempting to dislodge her from power through extra-constitutional means.

Some other parties, like the CPI that continued to back the Congress during the Emergency, also believed that there was an international conspiracy against the unity of India. It believed that in such circumstances some restrictions on agitations were justified.

Demolitions in Turkman Gate area, Delhi

Emergency witnessed large-scale displacement of people living in Delhi's poorer localities. The *jhuggi-jhopris* were forcibly relocated in the then barren areas across the river Yamuna. One such affected area was the colonies in Turkman gate. The *jhuggis* of the area were demolished. Hundreds of people of this area were forcibly sterilised. However, many people escaped sterilisation simply because they were able to motivate other people to get themselves sterilised and were rewarded by the grant of title to a piece of land. Thus, while some people became victims of government-sponsored actions, some people managed to victimise others in their desire to legally secure a piece of land, which would safeguard them from arbitrary displacement.

Source: Shah Commission of Inquiry, Interim Report II

Ask your parents or other elders in the family or neighbourhood about their experience during 1975-77. Take down notes on the following:

- Their personal experience of the Emergency.
- Any report of support or opposition to the Emergency in your locality.
- Their participation in the 1977 elections and why they voted the way they did.

Put your notes together and make a collective report on 'Emergency in my city/village.'

Let's re-search

The CPI felt that the agitations led by JP were mainly by the middle classes who were opposed to the radical policies of the Congress party. After the Emergency, the CPI felt that its assessment was mistaken and that it was an error to have supported the Emergency.

On the other hand, the critics of the Emergency argued that ever since the freedom movement, Indian politics had a history of popular struggles. JP and many other opposition leaders felt that in a democracy, people had the right to publicly protest against the government. The Bihar and Gujarat agitations were mostly peaceful and non-violent. Those who were arrested were never tried for any anti-national activity. No cases were registered against most of the detainees. The Home Ministry, which is entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring the internal situation of the country, also did not express any concern about the law and order situation in the country. If some agitations had over-stepped their limits, the government had enough routine powers to deal with it. There was no need to suspend democratic functioning and use draconian measures like the Emergency for that. The threat was not to the unity and integrity of the country but to the ruling party and to the Prime Minister herself. The critics say that Indira Gandhi misused a constitutional provision meant for saving the country to save her personal power.

What happened during emergency?

The actual implementation of the Emergency is another contentious issue. Did the government misuse its Emergency powers? Were there excesses and abuse of authority? The government said that it wanted to use the Emergency to bring law and order, restore efficiency, and above all, implement the pro-poor welfare programmes. For this purpose, the government led by Indira Gandhi announced a twenty-point programme and declared its determination to implement this programme. The twenty-point programme included land reforms, land redistribution, review of agricultural wages, workers' participation in management, eradication of bonded labour, etc. In the initial months

after the declaration of Emergency, the urban middle classes were generally happy over the fact that agitations came to an end and discipline was enforced on the government employees. The poor and rural people also expected effective implementation of the welfare programmes that the government was promising. Thus, different sections of society had different expectations from the emergency and also different viewpoints about it.



Credit: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India

Critics of Emergency point out that most of these promises by the government remained unfulfilled, that these were simply meant to divert attention from the excesses that were taking place. They question the use of preventive detention on such a large scale. We have noted that many prominent political leaders were arrested. In all, 676 opposition leaders were arrested. The Shah Commission estimated that nearly one lakh eleven thousand people were arrested under preventive detention laws. Severe restrictions were put on the press, sometimes without proper legal sanctions. The Shah Commission report mentions that the General Manager of the Delhi Power Supply Corporation received verbal orders from the office of the Lt. Governor of Delhi to cut electricity to all newspaper presses at 2.00 a.m. on 26 June, 1975. Electricity was restored two to three days later after the censorship apparatus had been set up.

Custodial death of Rajan

On 1 March 1976, P. Rajan, a final year student of the Calicut Engineering College, Kerala, was whisked away from the hostel in the early hours along with another student, Joseph Chali. Rajan's father, T.V Eachara Warrior made frantic efforts to trace his son. He met legislators, he petitioned the concerned authorities, he also sought the help of the then Home Minister, K. Karunakaran. As the emergency was proclaimed, issues relating to the citizen's liberty could not be raised in the courts. After the Emergency was lifted, Warrior filed a petition for writ of Habeas Corpus in the Kerala High Court at Ernakulam. From the evidence of witnesses, it became clear that from the hostel, Rajan had been taken to the Tourist Bungalow in Calicut the next day where he was tortured by the police. At a subsequent hearing Kerala government told the High Court that Raian had died in "unlawful police custody", as a result of continuous police torture. The Division Bench of Kerala High Court held that Karunakaran had lied to the Court. K. Karunakaran who had by then become Chief Minister of Kerala, had to resign because of the strictures passed by the High Court.

Source: Shah Commission of Inquiry, Interim Report II

There were other and more serious allegations regarding the exercise of governmental power by people who held no official position. Sanjay Gandhi, the Prime Minister's younger son, did not hold any official position at the time. Yet, he gained control over the administration and allegedly interfered in the functioning of the government. His role in the demolitions and forced sterilisation in Delhi became very controversial.

Apart from the arrests of political workers and the restrictions on the press, the Emergency directly affected lives of common people in many cases. Torture and custodial deaths occurred during the Emergency; arbitrary relocation of poor people also took place; and over-enthusiasm about population control led to cases of compulsory sterilisation. These instances show what happens when the normal democratic process is suspended.

Lessons of the Emergency

The Emergency at once brought out both the weaknesses and the strengths of India's democracy. Though there are many observers who think that India ceased to be democratic during the Emergency, it is noteworthy that normal democratic functioning resumed within a short span of time. Thus, one lesson of Emergency is that it is extremely difficult to do away with democracy in India.

Secondly, it brought out some ambiguities regarding the Emergency provision in the Constitution that have been rectified since. Now,

“... death of
D. E. M. O'Cracy, mourned by
his wife T. Ruth, his son
L. I. Bertie, and his
daughters Faith, Hope and
Justice.”

An anonymous advertisement in the Times of India, soon after the declaration of Emergency, 1975.

“
*Today is India's
 Independence Day... Don't
 Let the Lights Go Out on
 India's Democracy*
 ”

An advertisement in The
 Times, London,
 15 August 1975 by
 'Free JP Campaign'.

'internal' Emergency can be proclaimed only on the grounds of 'armed rebellion' and it is necessary that the advice to the President to proclaim Emergency must be given in writing by the Union Cabinet.

Thirdly, the Emergency made everyone more aware of the value of civil liberties. The Courts too, have taken an active role after the Emergency in protecting the civil liberties of the individuals. This is a response to the inability of the judiciary to protect civil liberties effectively during the emergency. Many civil liberties organisations came up after this experience.

However, the critical years of emergency brought many issues that have not been adequately grappled with. We have noted in this chapter that there is a tension between routine functioning of a democratic government and the continuous political protests by parties and groups. What is the correct balance between the two? Should the citizens have full freedom to engage in protest activity or should they have no such right at all? What are the limits to such a protest?

Secondly, the actual implementation of the Emergency rule took place through the police and the administration. These institutions could not function independently. They were turned into political instruments of the ruling party and according to the Shah Commission Report, the administration and the police became vulnerable to political pressures. This problem did not vanish after the Emergency.

Politics after Emergency

The most valuable and lasting lesson of the Emergency was learnt as soon as the Emergency was over and the Lok Sabha elections were announced. The 1977 elections turned into a referendum on the experience of the Emergency, at least in north India where the impact of the Emergency was felt most strongly. The opposition fought the election on the slogan of 'save democracy'. The people's verdict was decisively against the Emergency. The lesson was clear and has been reiterated in many state level elections thereafter – governments that are perceived to be anti-democratic are severely punished by the voters. In this sense the experience of 1975 -77 ended up strengthening the foundations of democracy in India.

Lok Sabha Elections, 1977

In January 1977, after eighteen months of Emergency, the government decided to hold elections. Accordingly, all the leaders and activists were released from jails. Elections were held in March 1977. This left the opposition with very little time, but political developments took place very rapidly. The major opposition parties had already been coming closer in the pre-Emergency period. Now they came together on the

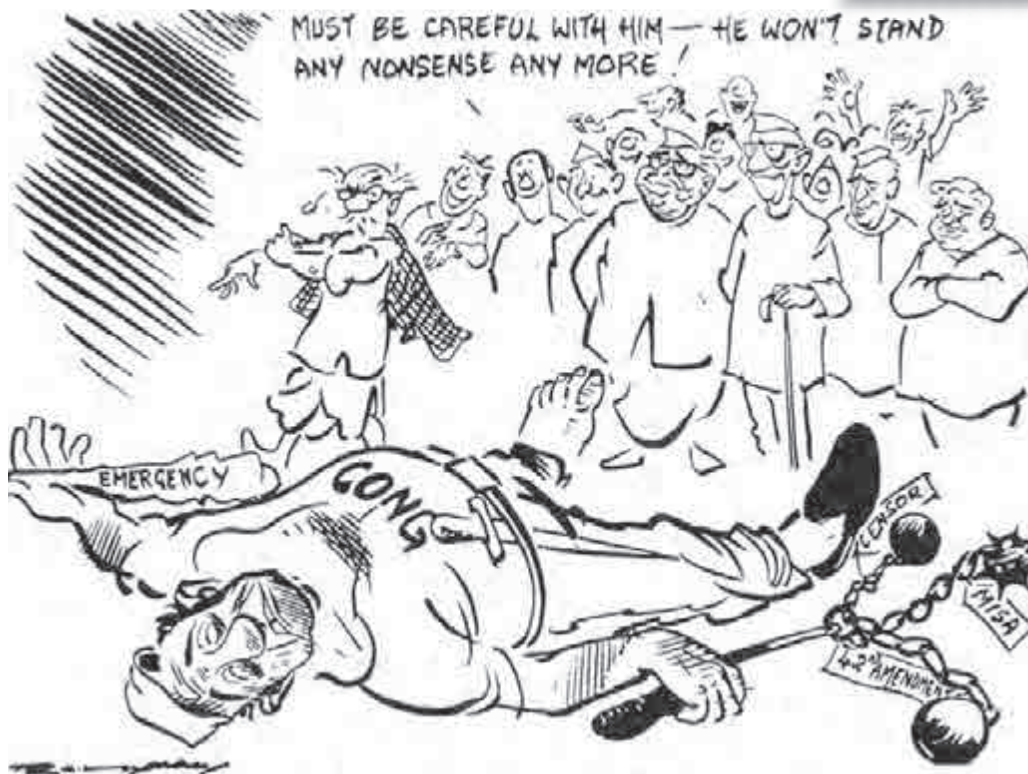
eve of the elections and formed a new party, known as the Janata Party. The new party accepted the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan. Some leaders of the Congress who were opposed to the Emergency also joined this new party. Some other Congress leaders also came out and formed a separate party under the leadership of Jagjivan Ram. This party named as Congress for Democracy, later merged with the Janata Party.

The Janata Party made this election into a referendum on the Emergency. Its campaign was focused on the non-democratic character of the rule and on the various excesses that took place during this period. In the backdrop of arrests of thousands of persons and the censorship of the Press, the public opinion was against the Congress. Jayaprakash Narayan became the popular symbol of restoration of democracy. The formation of the Janata Party also ensured that non-Congress votes would not be divided. It was evident that the going was tough for the Congress.

Yet the final results took everyone by surprise. For the first time since Independence, the Congress party was defeated in the Lok Sabha elections. The Congress could win only 154 seats in the Lok Sabha. Its share of popular votes fell to less than 35 per cent. The Janata Party and



Morarji Desai (1896-1995): Freedom fighter; a Gandhian leader; Proponent of Khadi, naturopathy and prohibition; Chief Minister of Bombay State; Deputy Prime Minister (1967-1969); joined Congress (O) after the split in the party; Prime Minister from 1977 to 1979—first Prime Minister belonging to a non-Congress party.



Credit: R. K. Laxman
in The Times of India
29 March 1977

A cartoonist's reading of who won and what was defeated in the 1977 election. Those standing with the common man include Jagjivan Ram, Morarji Desai, Charan Singh and Atal Behari Vajpayee.

its allies won 330 out of the 542 seats in the Lok Sabha; Janata Party itself won 295 seats and thus enjoyed a clear majority. In north India, it was a massive electoral wave against the Congress. The Congress lost in every constituency in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana and the Punjab and could win only one seat each in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Indira Gandhi was defeated from Rae Bareilly, as was her son Sanjay Gandhi from Amethi.

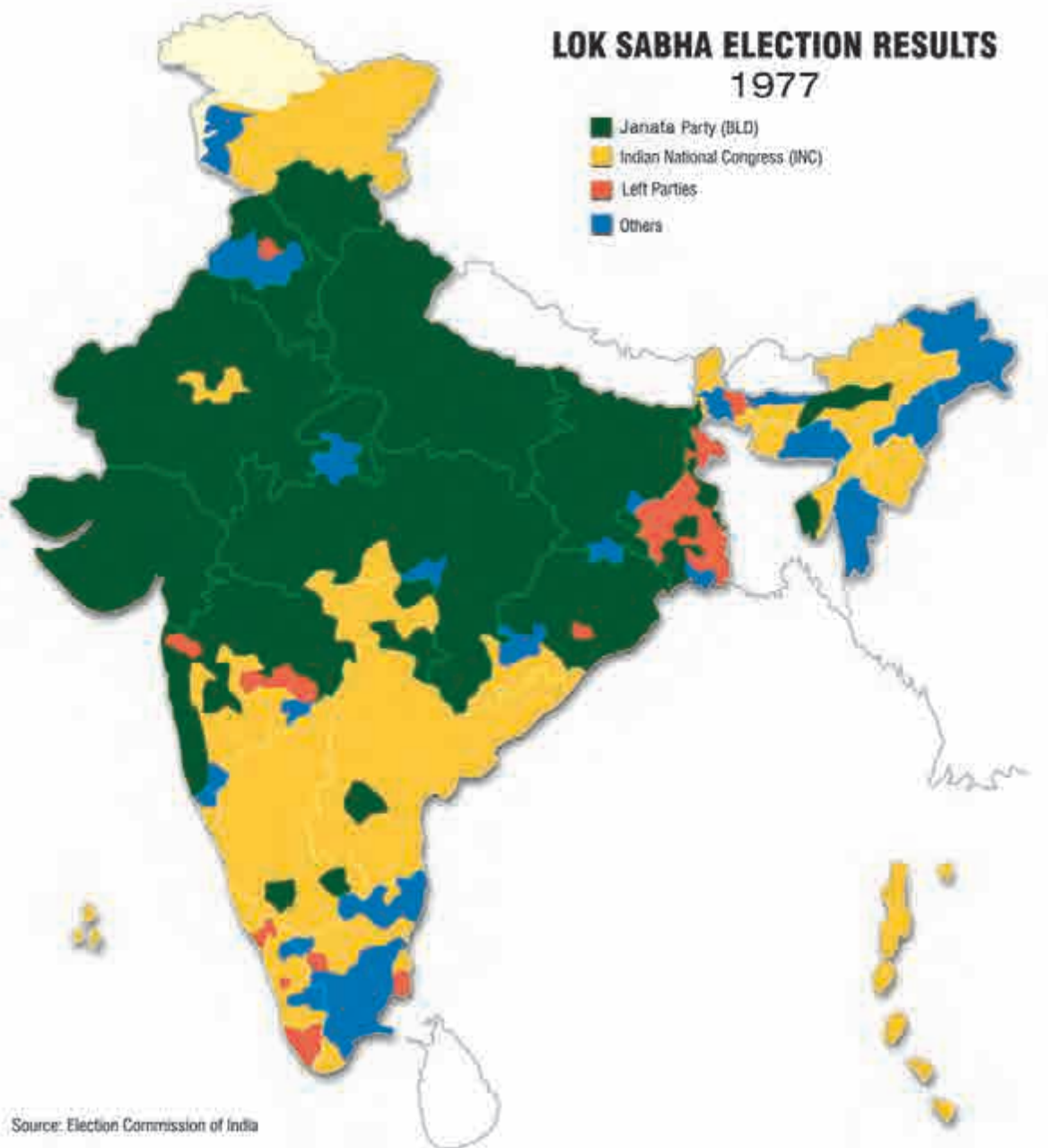
But if you look at the map showing the result of this election, you will notice that Congress did not lose elections all over the country. It retained many seats in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Orissa and virtually swept through the southern States. There are many reasons for this. To begin with, the impact of Emergency was not felt equally in all the States. The forced relocation and displacements, the forced sterilisations, were mostly concentrated in the northern States. But more importantly, north India had experienced some long term changes in the nature of political competition. The middle castes from north India were beginning to move away from the Congress and the Janata party became a platform for many of these sections to come together. In this sense, the elections of 1977 were not merely about the Emergency.

Janata Government

The Janata Party government that came to power after the 1977 elections was far from cohesive. After the election, there was stiff competition among three leaders for the post of Prime Minister – Morarji Desai, who



Oath taking by the first non-congress government at the centre in 1977. In the picture are Jayaprakash Narayan, J. B. Kriplani, Morarji Desai and Atal Behari Vajpayee.



Note: This illustration is not a map drawn to scale and should not be taken to be an authentic depiction of India's external boundaries.

Read this map and identify the states where

- Congress lost,
- Congress lost very badly and
- those states where Congress and its allies nearly swept the polls.

Which are the constituencies in north India that the Congress managed to win?

How can we talk about a mandate or verdict in 1977 when the north and the south voted so differently?





Chaudhary Charan Singh (1902-1987): Prime Minister of India between July 1979 - January 1980; freedom fighter; active in the politics of Uttar Pradesh; proponent of rural and agricultural development; left Congress party and founded Bharatiya Kranti Dal in 1967; twice Chief Minister of U.P.; later he was one of the founders of the Janata Party in 1977 and became Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister (1977-79); founder of Lok Dal.



I got it! Emergency was like a vaccination against dictatorship. It was painful and caused fever, but strengthened the resistance of our democracy.



Janata Party's faction fight inspired many cartoons at that time. Here is a selection.

Credit: Atanu Roy/India Today

Credit: R. K. Laxman in The Times of India, 13 November 1979

Credit: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India

was the rival to Indira Gandhi ever since 1966-67; Charan Singh, leader of the Bharatiya Lok Dal and a farmers' leader from UP; and Jagjivan Ram, who had vast experience as a senior minister in the Congress governments. Eventually Morarji Desai became the Prime Minister but that did not bring the power struggle within the party to an end.

The opposition to Emergency could keep the Janata Party together only for a while. Its critics felt that the Janata Party lacked direction, leadership, and a common programme. The Janata Party government could not bring about a fundamental change in policies from those pursued by the Congress. The Janata Party split and the government which was led by Morarji Desai lost its majority in less than 18 months. Another government headed by Charan Singh was formed on the assurance of the support of the Congress party. But the Congress party later decided to withdraw its support with the result that the Charan Singh government could remain in power for just about four months. Fresh Lok Sabha elections were held in January 1980 in which the Janata Party suffered a comprehensive defeat, especially in north India where it had swept the polls in 1977. Congress party led by Indira Gandhi nearly repeated its great victory in 1971. It won 353 seats and came back to power. The experience of 1977-79 taught another lesson in democratic politics: governments that are seen to be unstable and quarrelsome are severely punished by the voters.

Legacy

But was it only a case of return of Indira Gandhi? Between the elections of 1977 and 1980 the party system had changed dramatically. Since 1969, the Congress party had started shedding its character as an umbrella party which accommodated leaders and workers of different ideological dispensations and view points. The Congress party now identified itself with a particular ideology, claiming to be the only socialist and pro-poor party. Thus with the early nineteen seventies, the Congress's political success depended on attracting people on the basis of sharp social and ideological divisions and the appeal of one leader, Indira Gandhi. With the change in the nature of the Congress party, other opposition parties relied more and more on what is known in Indian politics as 'non-Congressism'. They also realised the need to avoid a division of non-Congress votes in the election. This factor played a major role in the elections of 1977.

In an indirect manner the issue of welfare of the backward castes also began to dominate politics since 1977. As we saw above, the results of 1977 elections were at least partly due to a shift among the backward castes of north India. Following the Lok Sabha elections, many states also held Assembly elections in 1977. Again, the northern States elected non-Congress governments in which the leaders of the backward castes played



Jagjivan Ram (1908-1986): Freedom fighter and Congress leader from Bihar; Deputy Prime Minister of India (1977-79); member of Constituent Assembly; also a Member of Parliament since 1952 till his death; Labour Minister in the first ministry of free India; held various other ministries from 1952 to 1977; a scholar and astute administrator.



Credit: India Today



Credit: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India

This cartoon appeared after the election results of 1980.

an important role. The issue of reservations for 'other backward classes' became very controversial in Bihar and following this, the Mandal Commission was appointed by the Janata Party government at the centre. You will read more about this and about the role of the politics of backward castes, in the last chapter. The elections after the Emergency set off the process of this change in the party system.

The Emergency and the period around it can be described as a period of constitutional crisis because it had its origins in the constitutional battle over the jurisdiction of the Parliament and the judiciary. On the other hand, it was also a period of political crisis. The party in power had absolute majority and yet, its leadership decided to suspend

the democratic process. The makers of India's Constitution trusted that all political parties would basically abide by the democratic norm. Even during the Emergency, when the government would use extraordinary powers, its use would be within the norms of the rule of law. This expectation led to the wide and open ended powers given to the government in times of Emergency. These were abused during the Emergency. This political crisis was more serious than the constitutional crisis.

Another critical issue that emerged during this period was the role and extent of mass protests in a parliamentary democracy. There was clearly a tension between institution-based democracy and democracy based on spontaneous popular participation. This tension may be attributed to the inability of the party system to incorporate the aspirations of the people. In the two chapters that follow we shall study some of the manifestations of this tension, in particular, popular movements and debates around regional identity.

Let's watch a Film

HAZARON KHWAISHEIN AISI



Siddharth, Vikram and Geeta are three spirited and socially engaged students. Graduating from Delhi, they follow different paths. While Siddharth is a strong supporter of the revolutionary ideology of social transformation, Vikram is in favour of achieving success in life, whatever the cost. The film narrates the story of their journeys towards their goals and the underlying disappointments.

The film is set in the backdrop of the seventies. The young characters are products of the expectations and idealism of that period. Siddharth is not successful in his ambition to stage a revolution, but is so involved in the plight of the poor that he begins valuing their uplift more than revolution. On the other hand, Vikram becomes a typical political fixer but is constantly ill at ease.

Year: 2005
Director: Sudhir Mishra
Screenplay: Sudhir Mishra
Ruchi Narain
Shivkumar Subramaniam
Cast: Kay Kay Menon, Shiney Ahuja, Chitrangada Singh

EXERCISES

1. State whether the following statements regarding the Emergency are correct or incorrect.
 - (a) It was declared in 1975 by Indira Gandhi.
 - (b) It led to the suspension of all fundamental rights.
 - (c) It was proclaimed due to the deteriorating economic conditions.
 - (d) Many Opposition leaders were arrested during the emergency.
 - (e) CPI supported the proclamation of the Emergency.

2. Find the odd one out in the context of proclamation of Emergency
 - (a) The call for 'Total Revolution.
 - (b) The Railway Strike of 1974
 - (c) The Naxalite Movement
 - (d) The Allahbad High Court verdict
 - (e) The findings of the Shah Commission Report

3. Match the following

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Total Revolution (b) Garibi hatao (c) Students' Protest (d) Railway Strike 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Indira Gandhi ii. Jayaprakash Narayan iii. Bihar Movement iv. George Fernandes
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4. What were the reasons which led to the mid-term elections in 1980?

5. The Shah Commission was appointed in 1977 by the Janata Party Government. Why was it appointed and what were its findings?

6. What reasons did the Government give for declaring a National Emergency in 1975?

7. The 1977 elections for the first time saw the Opposition coming into power at the Centre. What would you consider as the reasons for this development?

8. Discuss the effects of Emergency on the following aspects of our polity.
 - Effects on civil liberties for citizens.
 - Impact on relationship between the Executive and Judiciary
 - Functioning of Mass Media
 - Working of the Police and Bureaucracy.

9. In what way did the imposition of Emergency affect the party system in India? Elaborate your answer with examples.

10. Read the passage and answer the questions below:

*Indian democracy was never so close to a two-party system as it was during the 1977 elections. However, the next few years saw a complete change. Soon after its defeat, the Indian National Congress split into two groups..... The Janata Party also went through major convulsions.....*David Butler, Ashok Lahiri and Prannoy Roy. — PARTHA CHATTERJEE

(a) What made the party system in India look like a two-party system in 1977?

(b) Many more than two parties existed in 1977. Why then are the authors describing this period as close to a two-party system?

(c) What caused splits in Congress and the Janata parties?



Credit: Bhawan Singh

Photograph on this and the facing page are of the participants and leaders of the Chipko Movement, recognised as one of the first environmental movements in the country.

In this chapter...

Three decades after Independence, the people were beginning to get impatient. Their unease expressed itself in various forms. In the previous chapter, we have already gone through the story of electoral upheavals and political crisis. Yet that was not the only form in which popular discontent expressed itself. In the 1970s, diverse social groups like women, students, Dalits and farmers felt that democratic politics did not address their needs and demands. Therefore, they came together under the banner of various social organisations to voice their demands. These assertions marked the rise of popular movements or new social movements in Indian politics.

In this chapter we trace the journey of some of the popular movements that developed after the 1970s in order to understand:

- what are popular movements?
- which sections of Indian society have they mobilised?
- what is the main agenda of these movements?
- what role do they play in a democratic set up like ours?

RISE OF POPULAR MOVEMENTS

Nature of popular movements

Take a look at the opening image of this chapter. What do you see there? Villagers have literally embraced the trees. Are they playing some game? Or participating in some ritual or festival? Not really. The image here depicts a very unusual form of collective action in which men and women from a village in what is now Uttarakhand were engaged in early 1973. These villagers were protesting against the practices of commercial logging that the government had permitted. They used a novel tactic for their protest – that of hugging the trees to prevent them from being cut down. These protests marked the beginning of a world-famous environmental movement in our country – the Chipko movement.

Chipko movement

The movement began in two or three villages of Uttarakhand when the forest department refused permission to the villagers to fell ash trees for making agricultural tools. However, the forest department allotted the same patch of land to a sports manufacturer for commercial use. This enraged the villagers and they protested against the move of the government. The struggle soon spread across many parts of the Uttarakhand region. Larger issues of ecological and economic exploitation of the region were raised. The villagers demanded that no forest-exploiting contracts should be given to outsiders and local communities should have effective control over natural resources like land, water and forests. They wanted the government to provide low cost materials to small industries and ensure development of

Fascinating!
But I wonder how it
relates to the history of
politics.



Two historic pictures of the early Chipko movement in Chamoli, Uttarakhand.



Credit: Anupam Mishra

the region without disturbing the ecological balance. The movement took up economic issues of landless forest workers and asked for guarantees of minimum wage.

Women's active participation in the Chipko agitation was a very novel aspect of the movement. The forest contractors of the region usually doubled up as suppliers of alcohol to men. Women held sustained agitations against the habit of alcoholism and broadened the agenda of the movement to cover other social issues. The movement achieved a victory when the government issued a ban on felling of trees in the Himalayan regions for fifteen years, until the green cover was fully restored. But more than that, the Chipko movement, which started over a single issue, became a symbol of many such popular movements emerging in different parts of the country during the 1970s and later. In this chapter we shall study some of these movements.

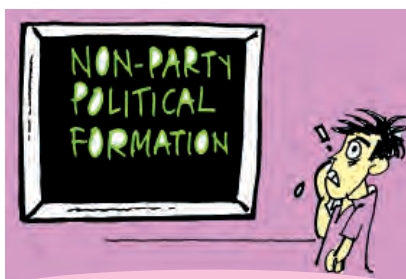
Party based movements

Popular movements may take the form of social movements or political movements and there is often an overlap between the two. The nationalist movement, for example, was mainly a political movement. But we also know that deliberations on social and economic issues during the colonial period gave rise to independent social movements like the anti-caste movement, the *kisan sabhas* and the trade union movement in early twentieth century. These movements raised issues related to some underlying social conflicts.

Some of these movements continued in the post-independence period as well. Trade union movement had a strong presence among industrial workers in major cities like Mumbai, Kolkata and Kanpur. All major political parties established their own trade unions for mobilising these sections of workers. Peasants in the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh organised massive agitations under the leadership of Communist parties in the early years of independence and demanded redistribution of land to cultivators. Peasants and agricultural labourers in parts of Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal,

Bihar and adjoining areas continued their agitations under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist workers; who were known as the Naxalites (you have already read about the Naxalite movement in the last chapter). The peasants' and the workers' movements mainly focussed on issues of economic injustice and inequality.

These movements did not participate in elections formally. And yet they retained connections with political parties, as many participants in these movements, as individuals and as organisations, were actively associated with parties. These links ensured a better representation of the demands of diverse social sections in party politics.



I don't get it. How can you do politics without a party?

Non-party movements

In the 1970s and 1980s, many sections of the society became disillusioned with the functioning of political parties. Failure of the Janata experiment and the resulting political instability were the immediate causes. But in the long run the disillusionment was also about economic policies of the state. The model of planned development that we adopted after Independence was based on twin goals of growth and distribution. You have read about it in Chapter Three. In spite of the impressive growth in many sectors of economy in the first twenty years of independence, poverty and inequalities persisted on a large scale. Benefits of economic growth did not reach evenly to all sections of society. Existing social inequalities like caste and gender sharpened and complicated the issues of poverty in many ways. There also existed a gulf between the urban-industrial sector and the rural agrarian sector. A sense of injustice and deprivation grew among different groups.

Many of the politically active groups lost faith in existing democratic institutions and electoral politics. They therefore chose to step outside of party politics and engage in mass mobilisation for registering their protests. Students and young political activists from various sections of the society were in the forefront in organising the marginalised sections such as Dalits and Adivasis. The middle class young activists launched service organisations and constructive programmes among rural poor. Because of the voluntary nature of their social work, many of these organisations came to be known as voluntary organisations or voluntary sector organisations.

These voluntary organisations chose to remain outside party politics. They did not contest elections at the local or regional level nor did they support any one political party. Most of these groups believed in politics and wanted to participate in it, but not through political parties. Hence, these organisations were called 'non-party political formations'. They hoped that direct and active participation by local groups of citizens would be more effective in resolving local issues than political parties. It was also hoped that direct participation by people will reform the nature of democratic government.

Such voluntary sector organisations still continue their work in rural and urban areas. However, their nature has changed. Of late many of these organisations are funded by external agencies including international service agencies. The ideal of local initiatives is weakened as a result of availability of external funds on a large scale to these organisations.

Popular movements have inspired artistic production like these posters. The three posters (from Top to Bottom) are from a campaign against a Coca Cola plant, agitation against a highway and Save Periyar river movement.



Credit: Design and People

Namdeo Dhasal

Turning their backs to the sun, they journeyed through centuries.
 Now, now we must refuse to be pilgrims of darkness.
 That one, our father, carrying, carrying the darkness is now bent;
 Now, now we must lift the burden from his back.
 Our blood was spilled for this glorious city
 And what we got was the right to eat stones
 Now, now we must explode the building that kisses the sky!
 After a thousand years we were blessed with sunflower giving fakir;
 Now, now, we must like sunflowers turn our faces to the sun.



English translation by Jayant Karve and Eleanor Zelliott of Namdeo Dhasal's Marathi poem in Golpitha.

Dalit Panthers

Read this poem by well-known Marathi poet Namdeo Dhasal. Do you know who these 'pilgrims of darkness' in this poem are and who the 'sunflower-giving fakir' was that blessed them? The pilgrims were the Dalit communities who had experienced brutal caste injustices for a long time in our society and the poet is referring to Dr. Ambedkar as their liberator. Dalit poets in Maharashtra wrote many such poems during the decade of seventies. These poems were expressions of anguish that the Dalit masses continued to face even after twenty years of independence. But they were also full of hope for the future, a future that Dalit groups wished to shape for themselves. You are aware of Dr. Ambedkar's vision of socio-economic change and his relentless struggle for a dignified future for Dalits outside the Hindu caste-based social structure. It is not surprising that Dr. Ambedkar remains an iconic and inspirational figure in much of Dalit liberation writings.

Origins

By the early nineteen seventies, the first generation Dalit graduates, especially those living in city slums began to assert themselves from various platforms. Dalit Panthers, a militant organisation of the Dalit youth, was formed in Maharashtra in 1972 as a part of these assertions. In the post-Independence period, Dalit groups were mainly fighting against the perpetual caste based inequalities and material injustices that the Dalits faced in spite of constitutional guarantees of equality and justice. Effective implementation of reservations and other such policies of social justice was one of their prominent demands.

You know that the Indian Constitution abolished the practice of untouchability. The government passed laws to that effect in the 1960s and 1970s. And yet, social discrimination and violence against the



Has the condition of Dalits changed much since that time? I keep reading about atrocities against Dalits. Did these movements fail? Or is it the failure of the entire society?

ex-untouchable groups continued in various ways. Dalit settlements in villages continued to be set apart from the main village. They were denied access to common source of drinking water. Dalit women were dishonoured and abused and worst of all, Dalits faced collective atrocities over minor, symbolic issues of caste pride. Legal mechanisms proved inadequate to stop the economic and social oppression of Dalits. On the other hand, political parties supported by the Dalits, like the Republican Party of India, were not successful in electoral politics. These parties always remained marginal; had to ally with some other party in order to win elections and faced constant splits. Therefore the Dalit Panthers resorted to mass action for assertion of Dalits' rights.

Activities

Activities of Dalit Panthers mostly centred around fighting increasing atrocities on Dalits in various parts of the State. As a result of sustained agitations on the part of Dalit Panthers along with other like minded organisations over the issue of atrocities against Dalits, the government passed a comprehensive law in 1989 that provided for rigorous punishment for such acts. The larger ideological agenda of the Panthers was to destroy the caste system and to build an organisation of all oppressed sections like the landless poor peasants and urban industrial workers along with Dalits.

The movement provided a platform for Dalit educated youth to use their creativity as a protest activity. Dalit writers protested against the brutalities of the caste system in their numerous autobiographies and other literary works published during this period. These works portraying the life experiences of the most downtrodden social sections of Indian society sent shock waves in Marathi literary world, made literature more broad based and representative of different social sections and initiated contestations in the cultural realm. In the post-Emergency period, Dalit Panthers got involved in electoral compromises; it also underwent

HIDDEN APARTHEID | Dalit Women

Drop-out Rate

- The SC Female drop-out rate at every stage of education is higher than that of either SC boys or the general female population.
- That over 82% of SC females drop out of school at the secondary stage, the most crucial one for the next stage of higher education and for future employment, is a tragedy.
- Though the drop-out rate for the general school-going female population fell from 3 to 4 percent in each stage between 1988-89 and 1990-91, the drop-out rate for SC females barely changed for either the primary or middle stages, extremely important stages in early education during the same timeperiod.
- As a result, the fall in drop-out rates between SC girls and general girls in these two stages has widened by 2 to 4 percent in just three years!

"Girl's labour is needed for agriculture and household work like cooking, etc. It is difficult for poor people, agricultural labourers, to incur expenditure on education of women. As a result the drop-out rate of SC/ST girls is very high as compared to girls of upper caste and boys"

(A.B. Joshi, "Caste among Dalits, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Women" in Dalit Women in India: Issues and Perspectives, Jogland P.O., Gyan Publishing House, Pune, 1995, p.152)

dalits a people a culture a nation
NCDHR

Credit: Anhad and NCDHR

many splits, which led to its decline. Organisations like the Backward and Minority Communities' Employees Federation (BAMCEF) took over this space.

Bharatiya Kisan Union

The social discontent in Indian society since the seventies was manifold. Even those sections that partially benefited in the process of development had many complaints against the state and political parties. Agrarian struggles of the eighties is one such example where better off farmers protested against the policies of the state.

Growth

In January 1988, around twenty thousand farmers had gathered in the city of Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. They were protesting against the government decision to increase electricity rates. The farmers camped for about three weeks outside the district collector's office until their demands were fulfilled. It was a very disciplined agitation of the farmers and all those days they received regular food supply from the nearby villages. The Meerut agitation was seen as a great show of rural power power of farmer cultivators. These agitating farmers were members of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), an organisation of farmers from western Uttar Pradesh and Haryana regions. The BKU was one of the leading organisations in the farmers' movement of the eighties.

We have noted in Chapter Three that farmers of Haryana, Punjab and western Uttar Pradesh had benefited in the late 1960s from the state policies of 'green revolution'. Sugar and wheat became the main cash crops in the region since then. The cash crop market faced a crisis in mid-eighties due to the beginning of the process of liberalisation of Indian economy. The BKU demanded higher government floor prices

for sugarcane and wheat, abolition of restrictions on the inter-state movement of farm produce, guaranteed supply of electricity at reasonable rates, waiving of repayments due on loans to farmers and the provision of a government pension for farmers.

Similar demands were made by other farmers' organisations in the country. Shetkari Sanghatana of Maharashtra declared the farmers' movement as a war of Bharat (symbolising rural, agrarian sector) against forces of India (urban industrial sector). You have already studied in Chapter Three that the debate between industry and

Credit: Hindustan Times



A Bhartiya Kisan Union Rally in Punjab.

agriculture has been one of the prominent issues in India's model of development. The same debate came alive once again in the eighties when the agricultural sector came under threat due to economic policies of liberalisation.

Characteristics

Activities conducted by the BKU to pressurise the state for accepting its demands included rallies, demonstrations, sit-ins, and *jail bharo* (courting imprisonment) agitations. These protests involved tens of thousands of farmers—sometimes over a lakh—from various villages in western Uttar Pradesh and adjoining regions. Throughout the decade of eighties, the BKU organised massive rallies of these farmers in many district headquarters of the State and also at the national capital. Another novel aspect of these mobilisations was the use of caste linkages of farmers. Most of the BKU members belonged to a single community. The organisation used traditional caste panchayats of these communities in bringing them together over economic issues. In spite of lack of any formal organisation, the BKU could sustain itself for a long time because it was based on clan networks among its members. Funds, resources and activities of BKU were mobilised through these networks.

Until the early nineties, the BKU distanced itself from all political parties. It operated as a pressure group in politics with its strength of sheer numbers. The organisation, along with the other farmers' organisations across States, did manage to get some of their economic demands accepted. The farmers' movement became one of the most successful social movements of the 'eighties in this respect. The success of the movement was an outcome of political bargaining powers that its members possessed. The movement was active mainly in the prosperous States of the country. Unlike most of the Indian farmers who engage in agriculture for subsistence, members of the organisations like the

BKU grew cash crops for the market. Like the BKU, farmers' organisations across States recruited their members from communities that dominated regional electoral politics. Shetkari Sanghatana of Maharashtra and Rayata Sangha of Karnataka, are prominent examples of such organisations of the farmers.

I have never met anyone who says he wishes to be a farmer. Don't we need farmers in the country?



Kisan union wants agriculture out of WTO purview

By Our Staff Correspondent
 MYSORE, FEB. 15. The Bharatiya Kisan Union has warned of socio-economic upheavals in the country if India does not bargain to keep agriculture out of the purview of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Addressing a press conference here today, the chief
 The Hindu, Feb 16, 2005

of the union, Mahendra Singh Tikait, and its national coordinating committee convener, M. Yudhveer Singh, warned of the impending dangers if India goes ahead and agrees to the stipulations of the WTO in the next round of meeting scheduled to be held in Hong Kong in November. The leaders said a farmers' rally will be taken out in New Delhi on March 17 to pressure the Government to keep agriculture out of the purview of the WTO. More than five lakh farmers from all over India are expected to attend the rally. Subsequently, the agitation will be intensified across the country.



Credit: Hfindu

National Fish Workers' Forum

Do you know that the Indian fishers constitute the second largest fishing population in the world? Both in the eastern and the western coastal areas of our country hundreds of thousands of families, mainly belonging to the indigenous fishermen communities, are engaged in the occupation of fishing. These fish workers' lives were threatened in a major way when the government permitted entry to mechanised trawlers and technologies like bottom trawling for large-scale harvest of fish in the Indian seas. Throughout the seventies and eighties, local fish workers' organisations fought with the State governments over the issues of their livelihood. Fisheries being a State subject, the fish workers were mostly mobilised at the regional level.

With the coming of policies of economic liberalisation in and around the mid 'eighties, these organisations were compelled to come together on a national level platform—the NFF or National Fishworkers' Forum. Fish workers from Kerala took the main responsibility of mobilising fellow workers, including women workers from other States. Work of the NFF consolidated when in 1991 it fought its first legal battle with the Union government successfully. This was about the government's deep sea fishing policy that opened up India's waters to large commercial vessels including those of the multinational fishing companies. Throughout the nineties the NFF fought various legal and public battles with the government. It worked to protect the interests of those who rely on fishing for subsistence rather than those who invest in the sector for profit. In July 2002, NFF called for a nationwide strike to oppose the move of the government to issue licenses to foreign trawlers. The NFF joined hands with organisations all over the world for protecting ecology and for protecting lives of the fish workers.

Anti-Arrack Movement

When the BKU was mobilising the farmers of the north, an altogether different kind of mobilisation in the rural areas was taking shape in the southern State of Andhra Pradesh. It was a spontaneous mobilisation of women demanding a ban on the sale of alcohol in their neighbourhoods.

Credit: Zuban



Liquor Mafia take to Heels as Women Hit Back

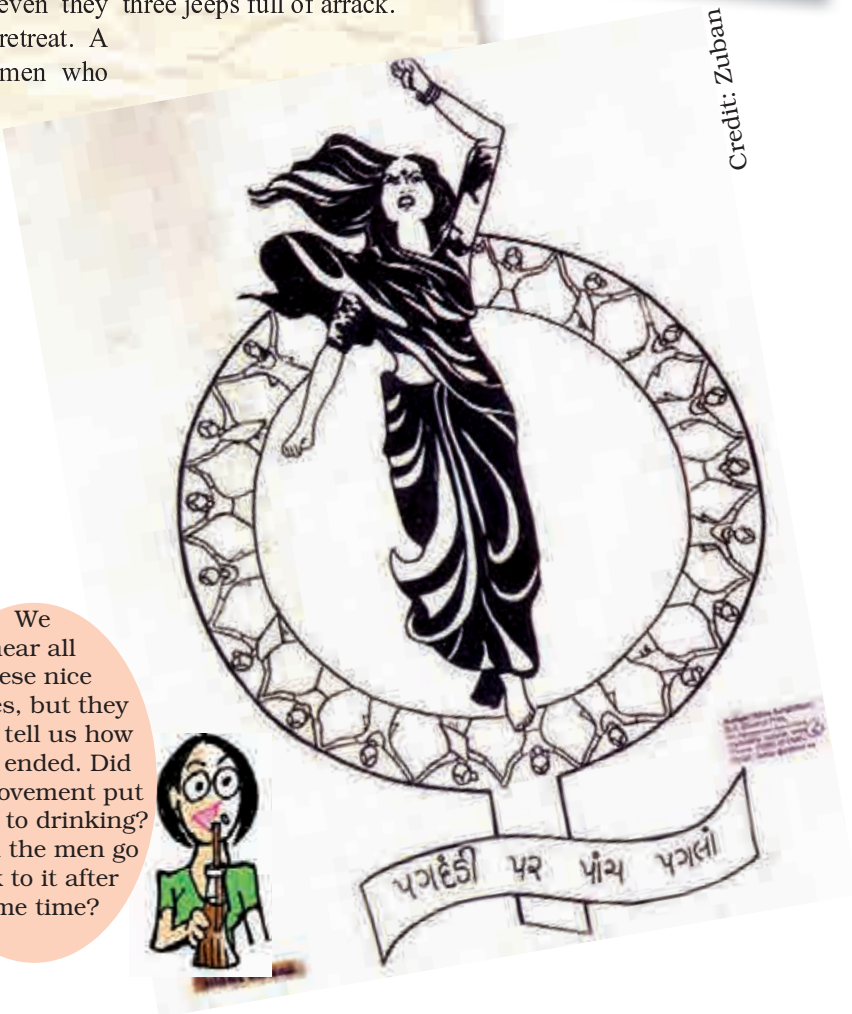
The women of village Gundlur in Kalikari mandal of Chittoor district assembled and resolved to put an end to the sale of arrack in their village. They conveyed this resolution to the village arrack vendor. They turned back the jeep that brought arrack packets to the village. However, when the village arrack vendor informed the contractor about this, the contractor sent him a gang of men to help him resume sales. Women of the village were adamant and opposed this move. The contractor called in the police but even they had to beat a retreat. A week later, women who prevented the sale of arrack were assaulted by arrack contractor's goondas with iron rods and other lethal weapons. But when the women resisted the assault unitedly, the hired mafia took to their heels. The women later destroyed three jeeps full of arrack.

Based on a report in Eenadu, October 29, 1992.

Credit: Zuban

Stories of this kind appeared in the Telugu press almost daily during the two months of September and October 1992. The name of the village would change in each case but the story was the same. Rural women in remote villages from the State of Andhra Pradesh fought a battle against alcoholism, against mafias and against the government during this period. These agitations shaped what was known as the anti-arrack movement in the State.

We hear all these nice stories, but they never tell us how these ended. Did this movement put an end to drinking? Or did the men go back to it after some time?



Origins

In a village in the interior of Dubagunta in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh, women had enrolled in the Adult Literacy Drive on a large scale in the early nineteen nineties. It is during the discussion in the class that women complained of increased consumption of a locally brewed alcohol arrack by men in their families. The habit of alcoholism had taken deep roots among the village people and was ruining their physical and mental health. It affected the rural economy of the region a great deal. Indebtedness grew with increasing scales of consumption of alcohol, men remained absent from their jobs and the contractors of alcohol engaged in crime for securing their monopoly over the arrack trade. Women were the worst sufferers of these ill-effects of alcohol as it resulted in the collapse of the family economy and women had to bear the brunt of violence from the male family members, particularly the husband.

Credit: The Hindu



Women taking out procession in Hyderabad in 1992, protesting against the selling of arrack.

Women in Nellore came together in spontaneous local initiatives to protest against arrack and forced closure of the wine shop. The news spread fast and women of about 5000 villages got inspired and met together in meetings, passed resolutions for imposing prohibition and sent them to the District Collector. The arrack auctions in Nellore district were postponed 17 times. This movement in Nellore District slowly spread all over the State.

Linkages

The slogan of the anti-arrack movement was simple — prohibition on the sale of arrack. But this simple demand touched upon larger social, economic and political issues of the region that affected women's life. A close nexus between crime and politics was established around the business of arrack. The State government collected huge revenues by way of taxes imposed on the sale of arrack and was therefore not willing to impose a ban. Groups of local women tried to address these complex issues in their agitation against arrack. They also openly discussed the issue of domestic violence. Their movement, for the first time, provided a platform to discuss private issues of domestic violence. Thus, the anti-arrack movement also became part of the women's movement.

Earlier, women's groups working on issues of domestic violence, the custom of dowry, sexual abuse at work and public places were active mainly among urban middle class women in different parts of the country. Their work led to a realisation that issues of injustice

to women and of gender inequalities were complicated in nature. During the decade of the eighties women's movement focused on issues of sexual violence against women within the family and outside. These groups ran a campaign against the system of dowry and demanded personal and property laws based on the norms of gender equality.

These campaigns contributed a great deal in increasing overall social awareness about women's questions. Focus of the women's movement gradually shifted from legal reforms to open social confrontations like the one we discussed above. As a result the movement made demands of equal representation to women in politics during the nineties. We know that 73rd and 74th amendments have granted reservations to women in local level political offices. Demands for extending similar reservations in State and Central legislatures have also been made. A constitution amendment bill to this effect has been proposed but has not received enough support from the Parliament yet. Main opposition to the bill has come from groups, including some women's groups, who are insisting on a separate quota for Dalit and OBC women within the proposed women's quota in higher political offices.

Credit: India Today



Women's demonstration in favour of anti-dowry act.

Let's watch a Film

AAKROSH



The lawyer Bhaskar Kulkarni is assigned a legal aid case to represent Bhiku Lahanya, an Adivasi who is charged with murdering his wife. The lawyer tries hard to find out the cause of the killing but the accused is determinedly silent and so is his family. The lawyer's perseverance leads to an attack on him and also a tip off by a social worker about what had happened.

But the social worker disappears and Bhiku's father dies. Bhiku is permitted to attend the funeral of his father. It is here that Bhiku breaks down and the 'Aakrosh' (screaming cry) erupts....This hard hitting film depicts the sub-human life of the oppressed and the uphill task facing any intervention against dominant social powers.

Year: 1980
 Director: Govind Nihlani
 Story: Vijay Tendulkar
 Screenplay: Satyadev Dubey
 Actors: Naseeruddin Shah, Om Puri, Smita Patil, Nana Patekar, Mahesh Elkunchwar

Narmada Bachao Aandolan

Social movements that we discussed so far raised various issues about the model of economic development that India had adopted at the time of Independence. Chipko movement brought out the issue of ecological depletion whereas the farmers complained of neglect of agricultural sector. Social and material conditions of Dalits led to their mass struggles whereas the anti-arrack movement focused on the negative fallouts of what was considered development. The issue implicit in all these movements was made explicit by the movements against displacement caused by huge developmental projects.

Sardar Sarovar Project

An ambitious developmental project was launched in the Narmada valley of central India in early 'eighties. The project consisted of 30 big dams, 135 medium sized and around 3,000 small dams to be constructed on the Narmada and its tributaries that flow across three states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Sardar Sarovar Project in Gujarat and the Narmada Sagar Project in Madhya Pradesh were two of the most important and biggest, multi-purpose dams planned under

the project. Narmada Bachao Aandolan, a movement to save Narmada, opposed the construction of these dams and questioned the nature of ongoing developmental projects in the country.

Sardar Sarovar Project is a multipurpose mega-scale dam. Its advocates say that it would benefit huge areas of Gujarat and the three adjoining states in terms of availability of drinking water and water for irrigation, generation of electricity and increase in agricultural production. Many more subsidiary benefits like effective flood and drought control in the region were linked to the success of this dam. In the process of construction of the dam 245 villages from these States were expected to get submerged. It required relocation of around two and a half lakh people from these villages. Issues of relocation and proper rehabilitation of the project-affected people were first raised by local activist groups. It was around 1988-89 that the issues crystallised under the banner of the NBA a loose collective of local voluntary organisations.

Debates and struggles

Since its inception the NBA linked its opposition to the Sardar Sarovar Project with larger issues concerning the nature of ongoing developmental projects, efficacy of the model of development that



Credit: Design and People

A poster in support of Narmada Bachao Andolan.



Credit: NBA

the country followed and about what constituted public interest in a democracy. It demanded that there should be a cost-benefit analysis of the major developmental projects completed in the country so far. The movement argued that larger social costs of the developmental projects must be calculated in such an analysis. The social

costs included forced resettlement of the project-affected people, a serious loss of their means of livelihood and culture and depletion of ecological resources.

Initially the movement demanded proper and just rehabilitation of all those who were directly or indirectly affected by the project. The movement also questioned the nature of decision-making processes that go in the making of mega scale developmental projects. The NBA insisted that local communities must have a say in such decisions and they should also have effective control over natural resources like water, land and forests. The movement also asked why, in a democracy, should some people be made to sacrifice for benefiting others. All these considerations led the NBA to shift from its initial demand for rehabilitation to its position of total opposition to the dam.

Arguments and agitations of the movement met vociferous opposition in the States benefiting from the project, especially in Gujarat. At the same time, the point about right to rehabilitation has been now recognised by the government and the judiciary. A comprehensive National Rehabilitation Policy formed by the government in 2003 can be seen as an achievement of the movements like the NBA. However, its demand to stop the construction of the dam was severely criticised by many as obstructing the process of development, denying access to water and to economic development for many. The Supreme

I have never heard of posh colonies and cities being demolished for any developmental project. Why is it always the Adivasis and the poor who are asked to leave their homes?



Top: NBA leader Medha Patkar and other activists in Jalsamadhi (protesting in rising waters) in 2002.

Bottom: A boat rally organised by NBA.



Credit: NBA

Court upheld the government's decision to go ahead with the construction of the dam while also instructing to ensure proper rehabilitation.

Narmada Bachao Aandolan continued a sustained agitation for more than twenty years. It used every available democratic strategy to put forward its demands. These included appeals to the judiciary, mobilisation of support at the international level, public rallies in support of the movement and a revival of forms of Satyagraha to convince people about the movement's position. However, the movement could not garner much support among the mainstream political parties including the opposition parties. In fact, the journey of the Narmada Bachao Aandolan depicted a gradual process of disjunction between political parties and social movements in Indian politics. By the end of the 'nineties, however, the NBA was not alone. There emerged many local groups and movements that challenged the logic of large scale developmental projects in their areas. Around this time, the NBA became part of a larger alliance of people's movements that are involved in struggles for similar issues in different regions of the country.

Lessons from popular movements

The history of these popular movements helps us to understand better the nature of democratic politics. We have seen that these non-party movements are neither sporadic in nature nor are these a problem. These movements came up to rectify some problems in the functioning of party politics and should be seen as integral part of our democratic politics. They represented new social groups whose economic and social grievances were not redressed in the realm of electoral politics. Popular movements ensured effective representation of diverse groups and their demands. This reduced the possibility of deep social conflict and disaffection of these groups from democracy. Popular movements suggested new forms of active participation and thus broadened the idea of participation in Indian democracy.

Critics of these movements often argue that collective actions like strikes, sit-ins and rallies disrupt the functioning of the government, delay decision making and destabilise the routines of democracy. Such an argument invites a deeper question: why do these movements resort to such assertive forms of action? We have seen in this chapter that popular movements have raised legitimate demands of the people and have involved large scale participation of citizens. It should be noted that the groups mobilised by these movements are poor, socially and economically disadvantaged sections of the society from marginal social groups. The frequency and the methods used by the movements suggest that the routine functioning of democracy did not have enough space for the voices of these social groups. That



Can we say that movements are like laboratories of politics? New experiments are carried out here and the successful ones are taken up by parties.

The People's Movement

News Magazine of the National Alliance of People's Movements
Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan-Feb-2004, Rs-20

Renaissance

Volume 2, Issue 1, A Journal of People-Centered Development, December 2003

MANUSHI



अम्बेडकर इण्डिया

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भारतीय प्रजासत्ताक चिरायू होंगे।

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g:net

Nothing but HOT GAS

SADBHAV MISSION PATRIKA

A Grave Misadventure

In the third week of December US forces, under orders from President Clinton, began massive air strikes against Iraq jointly with Britain. Iraq was already reduced to rubble by the devastating Gulf war, with all its infrastructure demolished, and military capabilities crushed. Yet no means did the war strict imposing any threat in any country. Yet after the war strict imposing some sanctions were imposed against it, and the entire world community abided by them, that denied restrictions, medicine and basic amenities to millions of innocent people, pushing them to the verge of death. At the height of it, the inspection and basic amenities to millions of innocent people, pushing them to the verge of death.

Years have passed but no visible sign of weapons of mass destruction have been found. Yet the inspection teams refuse to end their work and insist on checking every minor quarter, overruling the fundamental right of Iraq to secrecy, for legal and chemical weapons. Human rights groups and intelligence agencies could have done this job more skillfully and efficiently than the inspectors. However, intelligence has not detected any such facilities in Iraq.

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गौड़ गणराज्य (भूमिगत संरक्षित)

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सं. 200-सं. राखाना



Popular movements have produced a wide range of literature, often in the form of small magazines. Here is a selection.

Movement for Right to Information

Credit: Pankaj Pushkar



“Ghotala Rathyatra”, a popular theatre form evolved by MKSS.

The movement for Right to Information (RTI) is one of the few recent examples of a movement that did succeed in getting the state to accept its major demand. The movement started in 1990, when a mass based organisation called the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) in Rajasthan took the initiative in demanding records of famine relief work and accounts of labourers. The demand was first raised in Bhim Tehsil in a very backward region of Rajasthan. The villagers asserted their right to information by asking for copies of bills and vouchers and names of persons on the muster rolls who have been paid wages on the construction of schools, dispensaries, small dams and community centres. On paper such development projects were all completed, but it was common knowledge of the villagers that there was gross misappropriation of funds. In 1994 and 1996, the MKSS organised Jan Sunwais or Public Hearings, where the administration was asked to explain its stand in public.

The movement had a small success when they could force an amendment in the Rajasthan Panchayati Raj Act to permit the public to procure certified copies of documents held by the Panchayats. The Panchayats were also required to publish on a board and in newspapers the budget, accounts, expenditure, policies and beneficiaries. In 1996 MKSS formed National Council for People's Right to Information in Delhi to raise RTI to the status of a national campaign. Prior to that, the Consumer Education and Research Center, the Press Council and the Shourie committee had proposed a draft RTI law. In 2002, a weak Freedom of Information Act was legislated but never came into force. In 2004 RTI Bill was tabled and received presidential assent in June 2005.



Credit: Sudhir Tailang/UNDP and Planning Commission

Identify at least one popular movement in your city or district in the last 25 years. Collect the following information about that movement.

- When did it start? How long did it last?
- Who were the main leaders? Which social groups supported the movement?
- What were the main issues or demands of the movement?
- Did it succeed? What was the long term effect of the movement in your area?

Let's re-search

is perhaps why these groups turned to mass actions and mobilisations outside the electoral arena.

This can be seen in the recent case of the new economic policies. As you will read in Chapter Nine, there is a growing consensus among political parties over the implementation of these policies. It follows that those marginal social groups who may be adversely affected by these policies get less and less attention from political parties as well as the media. Therefore, any effective protest against these policies involves assertive forms of action that are taken up by the popular movements outside the framework of political parties.

Movements are not only about collective assertions or only about rallies and protests. They involve a gradual process of coming together of people with similar problems, similar demands and similar expectations. But then movements are also about making people aware of their rights and the expectations that they can have from democratic institutions. Social movements in India have been involved in these educative tasks for a long time and have thus contributed to expansion of democracy rather than causing disruptions. The struggle for the right to information is a case in point.

Yet the real life impact of these movements on the nature of public policies seems to be very limited. This is partly because most of the contemporary movements focus on a single issue and represent the interest of one section of society. Thus it becomes possible to ignore their reasonable demands. Democratic politics requires a broad alliance of various disadvantaged social groups. Such an alliance does not seem to be shaping under the leadership of these movements. Political parties are required to bring together different sectional interests, but they also seem to be unable to do so. Parties do not seem to be taking up issues of marginal social groups. The movements that take up these issues operate in a very restrictive manner. The relationship between popular movements and political parties has grown weaker over the years, creating a vacuum in politics. In the recent years, this has become a major problem in Indian politics.

EXERCISES

1. Which of these statements are incorrect
The Chipko Movement
 - (a) was an environmental movement to prevent cutting down of trees.
 - (b) raised questions of ecological and economic exploitation.
 - (c) was a movement against alcoholism started by the women
 - (d) demanded that local communities should have control over their natural resources

2. Some of the statements below are incorrect. Identify the incorrect statements and rewrite those with necessary correction:
 - (a) Social movements are hampering the functioning of India's democracy.
 - (b) The main strength of social movements lies in their mass base across social sections.
 - (c) Social movements in India emerged because there were many issues that political parties did not address.

3. Identify the reasons which led to the Chipko Movement in U.P in early 1970s. What was the impact of this movement?

4. The Bharatiya Kisan Union is a leading organisation highlighting the plight of farmers. What were the issues addressed by it in the nineties and to what extent were they successful?

5. The anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh drew the attention of the country to some serious issues. What were these issues?

6. Would you consider the anti-arrack movement as a women's movement? Why?

7. Why did the Narmada Bachao Aandolan oppose the dam projects in the Narmada Valley?

8. Do movements and protests in a country strengthen democracy? Justify your answer with examples.

9. What issues did the Dalit Panthers address?

10. Read the passage and answer questions below:

....., nearly all 'new social movements' have emerged as corrective to new maladies – environmental degradation, violation of the status of women, destruction of tribal cultures and the undermining of human rights – none of which are in and by themselves transformative of the social order. They are in that way quite different from revolutionary ideologies of the past. But their weakness lies in their being so heavily fragmented.a large part of the space occupied by the new

social movements seem to be suffering from .. various characteristics which have prevented them from being relevant to the truly oppressed and the poor in the form of a solid unified movement of the people. They are too fragmented, reactive, ad hocish, providing no comprehensive framework of basic social change. Their being anti-this or that (anti-West, anti-capitalist, anti-development, etc) does not make them any more coherent, any more relevant to oppressed and peripheralized communities. — RAJNI KOTHARI

- (a) What is the difference between new social movements and revolutionary ideologies?
- (b) What according to the author are the limitations of social movements?
- (c) If social movements address specific issues, would you say that they are 'fragmented' or that they are more focused? Give reasons for your answer by giving examples.

LET US DO IT TOGETHER

Trace newspaper reports for a week and identify any three news stories you would classify as 'Popular Movement'. Find out the core demands of these movements; the methods used by them to pursue their demands and the response of political parties to these demands.

हमें हर भारतवासी का सहयोग चाहिये
अन्याय-शोषण व दमन के खिलाफ
उत्तराखण्ड राज्य के निर्माण के लिए ।



आबाद प्रकृति और आजीविका
हारे ॥ उन्नत राज्य निर्माण के लिए ॥

आभला सर्व भारतीय जनता सहयोगादि आहे ।
उत्तराखण्ड राज्याच्या निर्माण साठी ।



ہمیں ہر ہندوستان کا اور ہندوستان کی فہمیر کیلئے
بورا ہونا تعاون چاہئے

2 ക്കുറാകാ അതിരുകൾ മറികടന്നു കൊണ്ട്
ഇന്ത്യയ്ക്കകലും ഉൾക്കൊള്ളണം



ਉਸਾਰਤ ਸਰਜਮ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਣ ਸ਼ਟੀ ਸਰੰ
ਸਰ ਤਰਤੁਸ਼ੀ ਟਾ ਸਰਿਸੰਗ ਸਰੀਟਾ ਟੈ ।

WE SEEK SUPPORT OF EVERY INDIAN AGAINST
INJUSTICE, EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION
FOR THE CREATION OF UTTARAKHAND STATE

Uttarakhand State for Every Indian Against Injustice, Exploitation and Oppression (Uttarakhand)
© 1980-81 by the author

Regional aspirations are usually expressed in the language of the region and addressed to the local population or the rulers. This unusual poster from Uttarakhand movement appeals to all the Indian citizens in seven different languages and thus underscores the compatibility of the regional aspirations with nationalist sentiments.

In this chapter...

In the first chapter of this book we studied the process of 'nation-building' in the first decade after Independence. But nation-building is not something that can be accomplished once and for all times to come. In the course of time new challenges came up. Some of the old problems had never been fully resolved. As democratic experiment unfolded, people from different regions began to express their aspirations for autonomy. Sometimes these aspirations were expressed outside the framework of the Indian union. These involved long struggles and often aggressive and armed assertions by the people.

This new challenge came to the fore in the 1980s, as the Janata experiment came to an end and there was some political stability at the centre. This decade will be remembered for some major conflicts and accords in the various regions of the country, especially in Assam, the Punjab, Mizoram and the developments in Jammu and Kashmir. In this chapter we study these cases so as to ask some general questions.

- Which factors contribute to the tensions arising out of regional aspirations?
- How has the Indian state responded to these tensions and challenges?
- What kind of difficulties are faced in balancing democratic rights and national unity?
- What are the lessons here for achieving unity with diversity in a democracy?

REGIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Region and the Nation

1980s may be seen as a period of rising regional aspirations for autonomy, often outside the framework of the Indian Union. These movements frequently involved armed assertions by the people, their repression by the government, and a collapse of the political and electoral processes. It is also not surprising that most of these struggles were long drawn and concluded in negotiated settlements or accords between the central government and the groups leading the movement for autonomy. The accords were reached after a process of dialogue that aimed to settle contentious issues within the constitutional framework. Yet the journey to the accord was always tumultuous and often violent.

Indian approach

In studying the Indian Constitution and the process of nation-building we have repeatedly come across one basic principle of the Indian approach to diversity – the Indian nation shall not deny the rights of different regions and linguistic groups to retain their own culture. We decided to live a united social life without losing the distinctiveness of the numerous cultures that constituted it. Indian nationalism sought to balance the principles of unity and diversity. The nation would not mean the negation of the region. In this sense the Indian approach was very different from the one adopted in many European countries where they saw cultural diversity as a threat to the nation.

India adopted a democratic approach to the question of diversity. Democracy allows the political expressions of regional aspirations and does not look upon them as anti-national. Besides, democratic politics allows parties and groups to address the people on the basis of their regional identity, aspiration and specific regional problems. Thus, in the course of democratic politics, regional aspirations get strengthened. At the same time, democratic politics also means that regional issues and problems will receive adequate attention and accommodation in the policy making process.

Such an arrangement may sometimes lead to tensions and problems. Sometimes, the concern for national unity may overshadow the regional needs

Does it mean that regionalism is not as dangerous as communalism? Or may be, not dangerous at all?



and aspirations. At other times a concern for region alone may blind us to the larger needs of the nation. Therefore, political conflicts over issues of power of the regions, their rights and their separate existence are common to nations that want to respect diversity while trying to forge and retain unity.

Areas of tension

In the first chapter you have seen how immediately after Independence our nation had to cope with many difficult issues like Partition, displacement, integration of Princely States, reorganisation of states and so on. Many observers, both within the country and from outside, had predicted that India as one unified country cannot last long. Soon after Independence, the issue of Jammu and Kashmir came up. It was not only a conflict between India and Pakistan. More than that, it was a question of the political aspirations of the people of Kashmir valley. Similarly, in some parts of the north-east, there was no consensus about being a part of India. First Nagaland and then Mizoram witnessed strong movements demanding separation from India. In the south, some groups from the Dravid movement briefly toyed with the idea of a separate country.

These events were followed by mass agitations in many parts for the formation of linguistic States. Today's Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Gujarat were among the regions affected by these agitations. In some parts of southern India, particularly Tamil Nadu, there were protests against making Hindi the official national language of the country. In the north, there were strong pro-Hindi agitations demanding that Hindi be made the official language immediately. From the late 1950s, people speaking the Punjabi language started agitating for a separate State for themselves. This demand was finally accepted and the States of Punjab and Haryana were created in 1966. Later, the States of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand were created. Thus the challenge of diversity was met by redrawing the internal boundaries of the country.

Why does the challenge always come from the border States?



Yet this did not lead to resolution of all problems and for all times. In some regions, like Kashmir and Nagaland, the challenge was so complex that it could not be resolved in the first phase of nation-building. Besides, new challenges came up in States like Punjab, Assam and Mizoram. Let us study these cases in some detail. In this process let us also go back to some of the earlier instances of difficulties of nation building. The successes and failures in these cases are instructive not merely for a study of our past, but also for an understanding of India's future.

Jammu and Kashmir

You may have heard about the violence in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). This has resulted in the loss of many lives and the displacement of many families. The 'Kashmir issue' is always seen as a major issue between India and Pakistan. But the political situation in the State has many dimensions.

Jammu and Kashmir comprises three social and political regions: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The heart of the Kashmir region is the Kashmir valley; the people are Kashmiri speaking and mostly Muslim with a small Kashmiri speaking Hindu minority. Jammu region is a mix of foothills and plains, of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs and speakers of various languages. The Ladakh region is mountainous, has very little population which is equally divided between Buddhists and Muslims.

The 'Kashmir issue' is not just a dispute between India and Pakistan. This issue has external and internal dimensions. It involves the issue of Kashmiri identity known as Kashmiriyat and the aspirations of the people of J&K for political autonomy.

Roots of the problem

Before 1947, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) was a Princely State. Its Hindu ruler, Hari Singh, did not want to merge with India and tried to negotiate with India and Pakistan to have an independent status for his state. The Pakistani leaders thought the Kashmir region 'belonged' to Pakistan, since majority population of the State was Muslim. But this is not how the people themselves saw it – they thought of themselves as Kashmiris above all. The popular movement in the State, led by Sheikh Abdullah of the National Conference, wanted to get rid of the Maharaja, but was against joining Pakistan. The National Conference was a secular organisation and had a long association with the Congress. Sheikh Abdullah was a personal friend of some of the leading nationalist leaders including Nehru.

In October 1947, Pakistan sent tribal infiltrators from its side to capture Kashmir. This forced the Maharaja to ask for Indian military help. India extended the military support and drove back



Note: This illustration is not a map drawn to scale and should not be taken to be an authentic depiction of India's external boundaries.

In that case, why don't they rename the State as "Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh"? Besides, JKL makes for an easy abbreviation!





E.V. Ramasami Naicker (1879-1973):

Known as Periyar (the respected); strong supporter of atheism; famous for his anti-caste struggle and rediscovery of Dravidian identity; initially a worker of the Congress party; started the self-respect movement (1925); led the anti-Brahmin movement; worked for the Justice party and later founded Dravidar Kazhagam; opposed to Hindi and domination of north India; propounded the thesis that north Indians and Brahmins are Aryans.

Dravidian movement

'Vadakku Vaazhkirathu; Therkkku Thaeikirathu' [The north thrives even as the south decays]. This popular slogan sums up the dominant sentiments of one of India's most effective regional movements, the Dravidian movement, at one point of time. This was one of the first regional movements in Indian politics. Though some sections of this movement had ambitions of creating a Dravida nation, the movement did not take to arms. It used democratic means like public debates and the electoral platform to achieve its ends. This strategy paid off as the movement acquired political power in the State and also became influential at the national level.

The Dravidian movement led to the formation of Dravidar Kazhagam [DK] under the leadership of Tamil social reformer E.V. Ramasami 'Periyar'. The organisation strongly opposed the Brahmins' dominance and affirmed regional pride against the political, economic and cultural domination of the North. Initially, the Dravidian movement spoke in terms of

the whole of south India; however lack of support from other States limited the movement to Tamil Nadu.

The DK split and the political legacy of the movement was transferred to Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). The DMK made its entry into politics with a three pronged agitation in 1953-54. First, it demanded the restoration of the original name of Kallakudi railway station which had been renamed Dalmiapuram, after an industrial house from the North. This demand brought out its opposition to the North Indian economic and cultural symbols. The second agitation was for



Anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu, 1965

Credit: The Hindu



giving Tamil cultural history greater importance in school curricula. The third agitation was against the craft education scheme of the State government, which it alleged was linked to the Brahmanical social outlook. It also agitated against making Hindi the country's official language. The success of the anti-Hindi agitation of 1965 added to the DMK's popularity.

Sustained political agitations brought the DMK to power in the Assembly elections of 1967. Since then, the Dravidian parties have dominated the politics of Tamil Nadu. Though the DMK split after the death of its leader, C. Annadurai, the influence of Dravidian parties in Tamil politics actually increased. After the split there were two parties – the DMK and the All India Anna DMK (AIADMK) – that claimed Dravidian legacy. Both these parties have dominated politics in Tamil Nadu for the last four decades. Since 1996, one of these parties has been a part of the ruling coalition at the Centre. In the 1990s, many other parties have emerged. These include Marumalarchchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK), Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) and Desiya Murpokku Dravidar Kazhagam (DMDK). All these parties have kept alive the issue of regional pride in the politics of Tamil Nadu. Initially seen as a threat to Indian nationalism, regional politics in Tamil Nadu is a good example of the compatibility of regionalism and nationalism.



Credit: Hindustan Times



Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah (1905-1982): Leader of Jammu and Kashmir; proponent of autonomy and secularism for

Jammu and Kashmir; led the popular struggle against princely rule; opposed to Pakistan due to its non-secular character; leader of the National Conference; Prime Minister of J&K immediately after its accession with India in 1947; dismissed and jailed by Government of India from 1953 to 1964 and again from 1965 to 1968; became Chief Minister of the State after an agreement with Indira Gandhi in 1974.

the infiltrators from Kashmir valley, but only after the Maharaja had signed an 'Instrument of Accession' with the Government of India. It was also agreed that once the situation normalised, the views of the people of J&K will be ascertained about their future. Sheikh Abdullah took over as the Prime Minister of the State of J&K (the head of the government in the State was then called Prime Minister) in March 1948. India agreed to maintain the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir.

External and internal disputes

Since then, the politics of Jammu and Kashmir always remained controversial and conflict ridden both for external and internal reasons. Externally, Pakistan has always claimed that Kashmir valley should be part of Pakistan. As we noted above, Pakistan sponsored a tribal invasion of the State in 1947, as a consequence of which one part of the State came under Pakistani control. India claims that this area is under illegal occupation. Pakistan describes this area as 'Azad Kashmir'. Ever since 1947,

Kashmir has remained a major issue of conflict between India and Pakistan.

Internally, there is a dispute about the status of Kashmir within the Indian union. You know that Kashmir was given a special status by Article 370 in our Constitution. You have studied about the special provisions under Articles 370 and 371 last year in Indian Constitution at Work. Article 370 gives greater autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir compared to other States of India. The State has its own Constitution. All provisions of the Indian Constitution are not applicable to the State. Laws passed by the Parliament apply to J&K only if the State agrees.

This special status has provoked two opposite reactions. There is a section of people outside of J&K that believes that the special status of the State conferred by Article 370 does not allow full integration of the State with India. This section feels that Article 370 should therefore be revoked and J&K should be like any other State in India.

Another section, mostly Kashmiris, believe that the autonomy conferred by Article 370 is not enough. A section of Kashmiris have expressed at least three major grievances. First, the promise that Accession would be referred to the people of the State after the situation created by tribal invasion was normalised, has not been fulfilled. This has generated the demand for a 'Plebiscite'. Secondly, there is a feeling that the special federal status guaranteed by Article 370, has been eroded in practice. This has led to the demand for restoration of autonomy or 'Greater State Autonomy'. Thirdly, it is felt that democracy which is practiced in the rest of India has not been similarly institutionalised in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Let's watch a Film

ROJA



Tamil film depicting the travails of Roja, a newly wed and doting wife when her husband, Rishi, is abducted by militants. Rishi is a cryptologist who is assigned duty in Kashmir to decode the enemy messages. As love blossoms between the husband and the wife, the husband is kidnapped. The kidnapers demand that their jailed leader, be set free in exchange of Rishi.

Roja's world is shattered and she is seen knocking at the doors of officials and politicians. Since the film has the background of Indo-Pakistan dispute, it made instant appeal. The film was dubbed in Hindi and many other Indian languages.

Year: 1992
 Director: Maniratnam
 Screenplay: Maniratnam
 Cast (Hindi version): Madhu, Arvind Swamy, Pankaj Kapoor, Janagaraj

Politics since 1948

After taking over as the Prime Minister, Sheikh Abdullah initiated major land reforms and other policies which benefited ordinary people. But there was a growing difference between him and the central government about his position on Kashmir's status. He was dismissed in 1953 and kept in detention for a number of years. The leadership that succeeded him did not enjoy as much popular support and was able to rule the State mainly due to the support of the Centre. There were serious allegations of malpractices and rigging in various elections.

So, Nehru kept his personal friend in jail for such a long period! How did they feel about it?



During most of the period between 1953 and 1974, the Congress party exercised a lot of influence on the politics of the State. A truncated National Conference (minus Sheikh Abdullah) remained in power with the active support of Congress for some time but later it merged with the Congress. Thus the Congress gained direct control over the government in the State. In the meanwhile, there were several attempts to reach an agreement between Sheikh Abdullah and the Government of India. Finally, in 1974 Indira Gandhi reached an agreement with Sheikh Abdullah and he became the Chief Minister of the State. He revived the National Conference which was elected with



The Times of India

Published simultaneously in Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta. BOMBAY: MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 1953. 2 1/2 ANNAS

SHEIKH ABDULLAH ARRESTED

STRICT SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

Permits Issued Invalidated

NEW DELHI, August 9. Security arrangements for Sheikh Abdullah and his family were tightened today to prevent any possibility of escape from the State. Permits issued to the public to visit the State were also invalidated today.



Sheikh Abdullah

CHARGES OF CORRUPTION AND MALADMINISTRATION

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed Sworn In As Prime Minister

POLICE OPEN FIRE ON VIOLENT DEMONSTRATORS

"The Times of India" News Service

SKINAGAR, August 9. The arrest of Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, the 48-year-old Prime Minister of Kashmir, at his week-end retreat at Gulmarg today, followed swiftly upon his dramatic removal from office late last night by the Sadar-i-Riyasat as his Cabinet had lost the confidence of the people.



Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed

The dismissed Prime Minister, who was taken into custody under the Public Security Act, was charged with corruption, maladministration, nepotism, mismanagement and other charges. He was sworn in as Prime Minister by the Sadar-i-Riyasat, Nira Alad Rais, a close associate of Sheikh Abdullah and the Revenue Minister in his Cabinet. He was also arrested on similar charges at Srinagar.

Grave Threat To Freedom

Premier's Call Kashmir Faces Crisis

SKINAGAR, August 9. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, the new Premier of Kashmir, tonight called for unity in the State to avert the grave crisis which he threatened in spite of "relative possibilities for the future of the people of Kashmir."

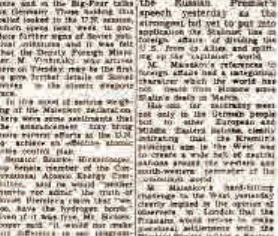


Sheikh Abdullah

CALM U.S. RECEPTION TO H-BOMB CLAIM

Serious Consideration Of M. Malenkov's Speech

NEW YORK, August 9. The United States reacted today with "calm and composure" to the claim that the Soviet Union had tested a hydrogen bomb. The news of serious consideration was in sharp contrast with the anxiety and alarm expressed just four years ago when Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin announced that Russia had the atom bomb.



M. Malenkov

SOBER SATISFACTION IN DELHI

"Timely Action By The Sadar-i-Riyasat"

NEW DELHI, August 9. News of the dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah from his office here today was met with sober satisfaction in Delhi. The action was hailed as a timely and necessary step to restore order and stability in the State. The Sadar-i-Riyasat's decision was seen as a bold and decisive move to deal with the crisis in Kashmir.

THE "LION" IS ANGRY. The dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah was followed by the elevation of the Deputy Prime Minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, to the Premiership of the State. He was sworn in at 4.55 a.m. by the Sadar-i-Riyasat, Nira Alad Rais, a close associate of Sheikh Abdullah and the Revenue Minister in his Cabinet. He was also arrested on similar charges at Srinagar.

NEW YORK, August 9. The United States reacted today with "calm and composure" to the claim that the Soviet Union had tested a hydrogen bomb. The news of serious consideration was in sharp contrast with the anxiety and alarm expressed just four years ago when Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin announced that Russia had the atom bomb.

Credit: The Times of India

a majority in the assembly elections held in 1977. Sheikh Abdullah died in 1982 and the leadership of the National Conference went to his son, Farooq Abdullah, who became the Chief Minister. But he was soon dismissed by the Governor and a breakaway faction of the National Conference came to power for a brief period.

The dismissal of Farooq Abdullah's government due to the intervention of the Centre generated a feeling of resentment in Kashmir. The confidence that Kashmiris had developed in the democratic processes after the accord between Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah, received a set-back. The feeling that the Centre was intervening in politics of the State was further strengthened when the National Conference in 1986 agreed to have an electoral alliance with the Congress, the ruling party in the Centre.

Insurgency and after

It was in this environment that the 1987 Assembly election took place. The official results showed a massive victory for the National Conference – Congress alliance and Farooq Abdullah returned as Chief Minister. But it was widely believed that the results did not reflect popular choice, and that the entire election process was rigged. A popular resentment had already been brewing in the State against the inefficient administration since early 1980s. This was now augmented by the commonly prevailing feeling that democratic processes were being undermined at the behest of the Centre. This generated a political crisis in Kashmir which became severe with the rise of insurgency.

By 1989, the State had come in the grip of a militant movement mobilised around the cause of a separate Kashmiri nation. The insurgents got moral, material and military support from Pakistan. For a number of years the State was under President's rule and effectively under the control of the armed forces. Throughout the period from 1990, Jammu and Kashmir experienced violence at the hands of the insurgents and through army action. Assembly elections in the State were held only in 1996 in which the National Conference led by Farooq Abdullah came to power with a demand for regional autonomy for Jammu and Kashmir. J&K experienced a very fair election in 2002. The National Conference failed to win a majority and was replaced by People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Congress coalition government.

Separatism and beyond

Separatist politics which surfaced in Kashmir from 1989 has taken different forms and is made up of various strands. There is one strand



Peace in Kashmir

<http://govande.sulekha.com>

“The Kashmiris were convinced now at the second dethronement of their elected leader [in 1984] that India would never permit them to rule themselves.”

B. K. Nehru

Governor of J&K before the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah's government.

This is all about governments, officials, leaders, terrorists... but what about the people in Kashmir? In a democracy we must go by what they want, shouldn't we?



Master Tara Singh (1885-1967):

Prominent Sikh religious and political leader; one of the early leaders of the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC); leader of the Akali movement; supporter of the freedom movement but opposed to Congress' policy of negotiating only with the Muslims; after Independence, he was the senior most advocate of formation of separate Punjab State.

of separatists who want a separate Kashmiri nation, independent of India and Pakistan. Then there are groups that want Kashmir to merge with Pakistan. Besides these, there is a third strand which wants greater autonomy for the people of the State within the Indian union. The idea of autonomy attracts the people of Jammu and Ladakh regions in a different way. They often complain of neglect and backwardness. Therefore, the demand for intra-State autonomy is as strong as the demand for the State autonomy.

The initial period of popular support to militancy has now given way to the urge for peace. The Centre has started negotiations with various separatist groups. Instead of demanding a separate nation, most of the separatists in dialogue are trying to re-negotiate a relationship of the State with India.

Jammu and Kashmir is one of the living examples of plural society and politics. Not only are there diversities of all kind (religious, cultural, linguistic, ethnic, tribal) but there are also divergent political aspirations. However, despite all these diversities and divergence on the one hand, and the continued situation of conflict on the other, the plural and secular culture of the State has remained largely intact.

Punjab

The decade of 1980s also witnessed major developments in the State of Punjab. The social composition of the State changed first with Partition and later on after the carving out of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. While the rest of the country was reorganised on linguistic lines in 1950s, Punjab had to wait till 1966 for the creation of a Punjabi speaking State. The Akali Dal, which was formed in 1920 as the political wing of the Sikhs, had led the movement for the formation of a 'Punjabi suba'. The Sikhs were now a majority in the truncated State of Punjab.

Political context

After the reorganisation, the Akalis came to power in 1967 and then in 1977. On both the occasions it was a coalition government. The Akalis discovered that despite the redrawing of the boundaries, their political position remained precarious. Firstly, their government was dismissed by the Centre mid-way through its term. Secondly, they did not enjoy strong support among the Hindus. Thirdly, the Sikh community, like all other religious communities, was internally differentiated on caste and class lines. The Congress got more support among the Dalits, whether Hindu or Sikh, than the Akalis.

It was in this context that during the 1970s a section of Akalis began to demand political autonomy for the region. This was

reflected in a resolution passed at their conference at Anandpur Sahib in 1973. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution asserted regional autonomy and wanted to redefine centre-state relationship in the country. The resolution also spoke of the aspirations of the Sikh *qaum* (community or nation) and declared its goal as attaining the *bolbala* (dominance or hegemony) of the Sikhs. The Resolution was a plea for strengthening federalism, but it could also be interpreted as a plea for a separate Sikh nation.

The Resolution had a limited appeal among the Sikh masses. A few years later, after the Akali government had been dismissed in 1980, the Akali Dal launched a movement on the question of the distribution of water between Punjab and its neighbouring States. A section of the religious leaders raised the question of autonomous Sikh identity. The more extreme elements started advocating secession from India and the creation of 'Khalistan'.

Cycle of violence

Soon, the leadership of the movement passed from the moderate Akalis to the extremist elements and took the form of armed insurgency. These militants made their headquarters inside the Sikh holy shrine, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, and turned it into an armed fortress. In June 1984, the Government of India carried out 'Operation Blue Star', code name for army action in the Golden Temple. In this operation, the Government could successfully flush out the militants, but it also damaged the historic temple and deeply hurt the sentiments of the Sikhs. A large proportion of Sikhs in India and abroad saw the military operation as an attack on their faith and this gave further impetus to militant and extremist groups.

Still more tragic turn of events complicated the Punjab problem further. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated on 31 October 1984 outside her residence by her bodyguards. Both the assassins were Sikhs and wanted to take revenge for Operation Bluestar. While the entire country was shocked by this development, in Delhi and in many parts of northern India violence broke out against the Sikh community. The violence against the Sikhs continued



Sant Harchand Singh Longowal (1932-1985):

Sikh political and religious leader; began his political career in mid-sixties as an Akali leader; became president of Akali Dal in 1980; reached an agreement with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on key demands of Akalis; assassinated by unidentified Sikh youth.





“ There is also evidence to show that on 31-10-84 either meetings were held or persons who could organise attacks were contacted and were given instructions to kill sikhs and loot their houses and shops. The attacks were made in a systematic manner and without much fear of the police, almost suggesting that they were assured that they would not be harmed while committing those acts or even after.”

Justice Nanavati
Commission of Inquiry,
Report, Vol. I, 2005

for almost a week. More than two thousand Sikhs were killed in the national capital, the area worst affected by this violence. Hundreds of Sikhs were killed in other parts of the country, especially in places like Kanpur, Bokaro and Chas. Many Sikh families lost their male members and thus suffered great emotional and heavy financial loss. What hurt the Sikhs most was that the government took a long time in restoring normalcy and that the perpetrators of this violence were not effectively punished. Twenty years later, speaking in the Parliament in 2005, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed regret over these killings and apologised to the nation for the anti-Sikh violence.



Women looking at a wall painting depicting Indira Gandhi's assassination.

Credit : Raghu Rai

Credit : Times of India



The Times of India brought out a special mid-day edition on the day Indira Gandhi was assassinated.

Road to peace

After coming to power following the election in 1984, the new Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi initiated a dialogue with moderate Akali leaders. In July 1985, he reached an agreement with Harchand Singh Longowal, then the President of the Akali Dal. This agreement, known as the Rajiv Gandhi - Longowal Accord or the Punjab Accord, was a step towards bringing normalcy to Punjab. It was agreed that Chandigarh would be transferred to Punjab, a separate commission would be appointed to resolve the border dispute between Punjab and Haryana, and a tribunal would be set up to decide the sharing of Ravi-Beas river water among Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. The agreement also provided for compensation to and better treatment of those affected by the militancy in Punjab and the withdrawal of the application of Armed Forces Special Powers Act in Punjab.

However, peace did not come easily or immediately. The cycle of violence continued nearly for a decade. Militancy and counter insurgency violence led to excesses by the police and violations of human rights. Politically, it led to fragmentation of the Akali Dal. The central government had to impose President's rule in the State and the normal electoral and political process was suspended. It was not easy to restore the political process in the atmosphere of suspicion and violence. When elections were held in Punjab in 1992, only 24 per cent of the electors tuned out to vote.

Militancy was eventually eradicated by the security forces. But the losses incurred by the people of Punjab – Sikhs and Hindus alike – were enormous. Peace returned to Punjab by the middle of 1990s. The alliance of Akali Dal (Badal) and the BJP scored a major victory in 1997, in the first normal elections in the State in the post-militancy era. The State is once again preoccupied with questions of economic development and social change. Though religious identities continue to be important for the people, politics has gradually moved back along secular lines.

“ I have no hesitation in apologising not only to the Sikh community but the whole Indian nation because what took place in 1984 is the negation of the concept of nationhood and what is enshrined in our Constitution. So, I am not standing on any false prestige. On behalf of our Government, on behalf of the entire people of this country, I bow my head in shame that such thing took place. But, Sir, there are ebbs, there are tides in the affairs of nations. The past is with us. We cannot rewrite the past. But as human beings, we have the willpower and we have the ability to write better future for all of us. ”

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh intervening in Rajya Sabha debate on 11 August 2005

The North-East

In the North-East, regional aspirations reached a turning point in 1980s. This region now consists of seven States, also referred to as the 'seven sisters'. The region has only 4 per cent of the country's population but about twice as much share of its area. A small corridor of about 22 kilometers connects the region to the rest of the country. Otherwise the region shares boundaries with China, Myanmar and Bangladesh and serves as India's gateway to South East Asia.

The region has witnessed a lot of change since 1947. Tripura, Manipur and Khasi Hills of Meghalaya were erstwhile Princely States which merged with India after Independence. The entire region of North-East has undergone considerable political reorganisation. Nagaland State was created in 1963; Manipur, Tripura and Meghalaya in 1972 while Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh became separate States only in 1987. The Partition of India in 1947 had reduced the North-East to a land locked region and affected its economy. Cut off from the rest of India, the region suffered neglect in developmental terms. Its politics too remained insulated. At the same time, most States in this region underwent major demographic changes due to influx of migrants from neighbouring States and countries.

Note: This illustration is not a map drawn to scale and should not be taken to be an authentic depiction of India's external boundaries.

The isolation of the region, its complex social character and its backwardness compared to other parts of the country have all resulted in the complicated set of demands from different states of the

North-East. The vast international border and weak communication between the North-East and the rest of India have further added to the delicate nature of politics there. Three issues dominate the politics of North-East: demands for autonomy, movements for secession, and opposition to 'outsiders'. Major initiatives on the first issue in the 1970s set the stage for some dramatic developments on the second and the third in the 1980s.



Demands for autonomy

At independence the entire region except Manipur and Tripura comprised the State of Assam. Demands for political autonomy arose when the non-Assamese felt that the Assam government was imposing Assamese language

on them. There were opposition and protest riots throughout the State. Leaders of the major tribal communities wanted to separate from Assam. They formed the Eastern India Tribal Union which later transformed into a more comprehensive All Party Hill Leaders Conference in 1960. They demanded a tribal State to be carved out of Assam. Finally instead of one tribal State, several States got carved out of Assam. At different points of time the Central Government had to create Meghalaya, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh out of Assam. Tripura and Manipur were upgraded into States too.

The reorganisation of the North-East was completed by 1972. But this was not the end of autonomy demands in this region. In Assam, for example, communities like the Bodos, Karbis and Dimasas wanted separate States. They worked for this demand by mobilising public opinion and popular movement as well as through insurgency. Often the same area was claimed by more than one community. It was not possible to go on making smaller and yet smaller States. Therefore, some other provisions of our federal set up were used to satisfy their autonomy demands while remaining in Assam. Karbis and Dimasas have been granted autonomy under District Councils while Bodos were recently granted Autonomous Council.

Secessionist movements

Demands for autonomy were easier to respond to, for these involved using the various provisions in the Constitution for accommodation of diversities. It was much more difficult when some groups demanded a separate country, not in momentary anger but consistently as a principled position. The country's leadership faced this problem for a very long time in at least two States in the North-East. A comparison of these two cases offers us a lesson in democratic politics.

After Independence, the Mizo Hills area was made an autonomous district within Assam. Some Mizos believed that they were never a part of British India and therefore did not belong to the Indian union. But the movement for secession gained popular support after the Assam government failed to respond adequately to the great famine of 1959 in Mizo hills. The Mizos' anger led to the formation of the Mizo National Front (MNF) under the leadership of Laldenga.

In 1966 the MNF started an armed campaign for independence. Thus, started a two decade long battle between Mizo insurgents and the Indian army. The MNF fought a guerilla war, got support from Pakistani government and secured shelter in the then East Pakistan. The Indian security forces countered it with a series of repressive measures of which the common people were the victims. At one point even Air Force was used. These measures caused more anger and alienation among the people.

At the end of two decades of insurgency everyone was a loser. This is where maturity of the political leadership at both ends made

My friend Chon said that people in Delhi know more about the map of Europe than about the North-East in our country. I think she is right at least about my schoolmates.

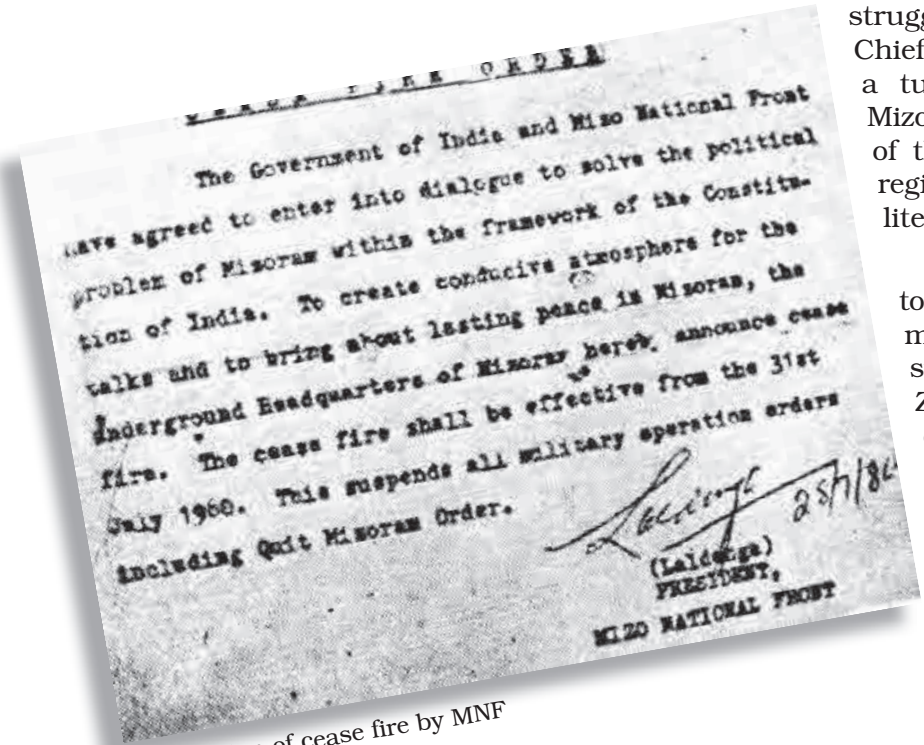


Laldenga (1937-1990): Founder and leader of the Mizo National Front; turned into a rebel after the experience of the famine in 1959; led an armed struggle against India for two decades; reached a settlement and signed an agreement with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986; became the Chief Minister of the newly created State of Mizoram.

Credit : Times of India



a difference. Laldenga came back from exile in Pakistan and started negotiations with the Indian government. Rajiv Gandhi steered these negotiations to a positive conclusion. In 1986 a peace agreement was signed between Rajiv Gandhi and Laldenga. As per this accord Mizoram was granted full-fledged statehood with special powers and the MNF agreed to give up secessionist struggle. Laldenga took over as the Chief Minister. This accord proved a turning point in the history of Mizoram. Today, Mizoram is one of the most peaceful places in the region and has taken big strides in literacy and development.



Declaration of cease fire by MNF

The story of Nagaland is similar to Mizoram, except that it started much earlier and has not yet had such a happy ending. Led by Angami Zaphu Phizo, a section of the Nagas declared independence from India way back in 1951. Phizo turned down many offers of negotiated settlement. The Naga National Council launched an armed struggle for sovereignty of Nagas. After a period of violent insurgency a section of the Nagas signed an agreement with the Government of India

but this was not acceptable to other rebels. The problem in Nagaland still awaits a final resolution.

Movements against outsiders

The large scale migration into the North-East gave rise to a special kind of problem that pitted the 'local' communities against people who were seen as 'outsiders' or migrants. These latecomers, either from India or abroad are seen as encroachers on scarce resources like land and potential competitors to employment opportunities and political power. This issue has taken political and sometimes violent form in many States of the North-East.

The Assam Movement from 1979 to 1985 is the best example of such movements against 'outsiders'. The Assamese suspected that there were huge numbers of illegal Bengali Muslim settlers from Bangladesh. They felt that unless these foreign nationals are detected and deported they would reduce the indigenous Assamese into a minority. There were other economic issues too. There was widespread poverty and unemployment in Assam despite the existence of natural resources like oil, tea and coal. It was felt that these were drained out of the State without any commensurate benefit to the people.

In 1979 the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), a students' group not affiliated to any party, led an anti-foreigner movement. The movement was against illegal migrations, against domination of Bengalis and other outsiders, and against faulty voters' register that included the names of lakhs of immigrants. The movement demanded that all outsiders who had entered the State after 1951 should be sent back. The agitation followed many novel methods and mobilised all sections of Assamese people, drawing support across the State. It also involved many tragic and violent incidents leading to loss of property and human lives. The movement also tried to blockade the movement of trains and the supply of oil from Assam to refineries in Bihar.

Eventually after six years of turmoil, the Rajiv Gandhi-led government entered into negotiations with the AASU leaders, leading to the signing of an accord in 1985. According to this agreement those foreigners who migrated into Assam during and after Bangladesh war and since, were to be identified and deported. With the successful completion of the movement, the AASU and the Asom Gana Sangram Parishad organised themselves as a regional political party called Asom Gana Parishad (AGP). It came to power in 1985 with the promise of resolving the foreign national problem as well as to build a 'Golden Assam'.

Assam accord brought peace and changed the face of politics in Assam, but it did not solve the problem of immigration. The issue of the 'outsiders' continues to be a live issue in the politics of Assam



Angami Zapu Phizo

(1904-1990):

Leader of the movement for independent Nagaland; president of Naga National Council; began an armed struggle against the Indian state; went 'underground', stayed in Pakistan and spent the last three decades of his life in exile in UK.

I've never understood this insider-outsider business. It's like the train compartment. Someone who got in before others treats others as outsiders.



नई दुनिया

✓ असम समझौता: उल्लेखनीय उपलब्धि

असम के बारे में केंद्र सरकार तथा असम के छात्र संगठनों के बीच पंद्रह तारीख को तबके हुए समझौते में असम का छः वर्ष पुराना आंदोलन समाप्त हो गया है। असम के विभिन्न छात्र संगठनों द्वारा संचालित सरकार विरोधी आंदोलन के दौरान साढ़े तीन हजार से अधिक जाने गईं और अरबों रूपों की आर्थिक हानि हुई। बारह अप्रैल १९८० को जब तत्कालीन प्रधानमंत्री श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी गुआहाटी गईं या तो छात्र नेता १९६७ को आधार वर्ष मानकर विदेशी नागरिकों की समस्या को समाधान के तैयार हो गए थे। पर प्रधानमंत्री तब १९७१ को आधार वर्ष माने जाने पर अड़ी रही। फलस्वरूप सरकार तथा छात्र संगठनों के बीच बातचीत दृढ़ गई। श्रीमती गांधी ने असम समस्या को सलझाने के लिए चार गृहमंत्रीयो— (जैर्लासह, श्री आर. वेंकटरमन, श्री प्रकाशचंद सेठी तथा श्री नरसिंहराव) की सेवाओं का उपयोग किया। किंतु, अविश्वास और कठोर पैतरी का जो वातावरण बना था, वह ऐसा नहीं था कि कोई समझौता हो पाता।

श्री राजीव गांधी के काम करने की शैली इस अर्थ में नई है कि वह सहज ही विपक्षी दल का विश्वास जीत लेती है। श्री गांधी रियायत देने को तैयार रहते हैं, जिसके फलस्वरूप सामने वाला पक्ष भी रियायत देकर समझौता करने को तैयार हो जाता है। केंद्र सरकार के गृह सचिव श्री आर. डी. प्रधान ने असम के छात्र नेताओं के साथ बुनियादी बातचीत कर सहमति का आधार तैयार किया। गृहमंत्री श्री एस. डी. चन्दा ने अल्पि दौर में बातचीत में भाग लिया। कुछ हफ्तावटों के बाद प्रधानमंत्री राजीव गांधी के हस्तक्षेप से छात्रों को समझौते के लिए राजी किया जा सका और दस सूत्री समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर हो गए।

समझौते को देखने से यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि बुनियादी मामलों में केंद्र सरकार तथा छात्र संगठनों, "आम" तथा "अखिल असम गण संघाम परिषद्" के नेताओं, दोनों ने एक-दूसरे को उल्लेखनीय रियायतें दी हैं। इसलिए यह मानने का कोई आधार नहीं है कि पंद्रह अगस्त का असम समझौता किसी पक्ष विशेष की जीत या किसी पक्ष विशेष की हार है। असम समझौता एक महत्वपूर्ण राष्ट्रीय उपलब्धि है, जिसका श्रेय भारत के युवा नेताओं श्री राजीव गांधी को जाता है। असम के छात्र संगठनों के नेता भी बधाई के पात्र हैं कि गृह, विवेक और भीमार्ड का परिचय देकर वे अपना छः वर्ष पुराना आंदोलन समाप्त करने को राजी हो गए हैं। प्रधानमंत्री की कीर्ति में असम समझौते ने एक और चांद जोड़ दिया है। अभी २४ अगस्त को ही उन्होंने पंजाब की अतृप्त रूप से

दिन बाद ही अन्नत त्रासदी के नाम से पुकारी जाने वाली असम की समस्या का समाधान ऋजकर श्री राजीव गांधी ने अपूर्व समाधानकर्ता का विशेषण अर्जित कर लिया है।

समझौते के अनुसार विदेशी नागरिकों की पहचान करने के लिए १ जनवरी १९९९ को आधार वर्ष माना गया है। इस तिथि के पहले आए विदेशियों को नियमसम्मत मान लिया जाएगा। एक अनुमान के अनुसार १९६१ और १९६५ के बीच ही लगभग पांच लाख विदेशी पूर्वी पाकिस्तान से असम राज्य में आए थे। १ जनवरी १९९९ को २४ मार्च १९७१ के बीच असम में अर्जित विदेशियों को,

and many other places in the North-East. This problem is particularly acute, for example, in Tripura as the original inhabitants have been reduced to being a minority in their own land. The same feeling informs the hostility of the local population to Chakma refugees in Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

Cheers greet Assam pact announcement

NEW DELHI Aug. 16—Cheers who broke the happy news amidst off the agitation and

Assarmed & dangerous

Amul Safer tea times

राज्य	मार्च	अप्रैल
पंजाब	25	60
दार्जिलिंग	13	18
दिल्ली	12	15
मिज़ोरम	9	13

... और अंत में एक नजर, वार प्रवेशों में आतंकवादियों की आज की गतिविधियों पर.

Credit: HT book of Cartoon Rambabu Mathur

To end the news, here is a look at the activities of terrorists in the four regions... Punjab, Darjeeling, Delhi, Mizoram

Sikkim's merger

At the time of Independence, Sikkim was a 'protectorate' of India. It meant that while it was not a part of India, it was also not a fully sovereign country. Sikkim's defence and foreign relations were looked after by India, while the power of internal administration was with the Chogyal, Sikkim's monarch. This arrangement ran into difficulty as the Chogyal was unable to deal with the democratic aspirations of the people. An overwhelming majority of Sikkim's population was Nepali. But the Chogyal was seen as perpetuating the rule of a small elite from the minority Lepcha-Bhutia community. The anti-Chogyal leaders of both the communities sought and got support from the Government of India.

The first democratic elections to Sikkim assembly in 1974 were swept by Sikkim Congress which stood for greater integration with India. The assembly first sought the status of 'associate state' and then in April 1975 passed a resolution asking for full integration with India. This was followed by a hurriedly organised referendum that put a stamp of popular approval on the assembly's request. The Indian Parliament accepted this request immediately and Sikkim became the 22nd State of the Indian union. Chogyal did not accept this merger and his supporters accused the Government of India of foul play and use of force. Yet the merger enjoyed popular support and did not become a divisive issue in Sikkim's politics.



Kazi Lhendup Dorji Khangsarpa (1904):

Leader of democracy movement in Sikkim; founder of Sikkim Praja Mandal and later leader of the Sikkim State Congress; in 1962 founded the Sikkim National Congress; after an electoral victory, he led the movement for integration of Sikkim with India; after the integration, Sikkim Congress merged with the Indian National Congress.

Accommodation and National Integration

These cases have shown us that even after six decades of Independence, some of the issues of national integration are not fully resolved. We have seen that regional aspirations ranging from demands of statehood and economic development to autonomy and separation keep coming up. The period since 1980 accentuated these tensions and tested the capacity of democratic politics to accommodate the demands of diverse sections of the society. What lessons can we draw from these examples?

First and the most elementary lesson is that regional aspirations are very much a part of democratic politics. Expression of regional issues is not an aberration or an abnormal phenomenon. Even in smaller countries like the United Kingdom there are regional aspirations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Spain faces secessionist movement from the Basques and so does Sri Lanka from the Tamils. A large and diverse democracy like India must deal with regional aspirations on a regular basis. Nation building is an ongoing process.



Rajiv Gandhi (1944-1991): Prime Minister of India between 1984 and 1989; son of Indira Gandhi; joined active politics after 1980; reached agreements with militants in Punjab, Mizoram and the students' union in Assam; pressed for a more open economy and computer technology; sent Indian Army contingent on the request of Sri Lankan government, to sort out the Sinhala-Tamil conflict; assassinated by suspected LTTE suicide bomber.

The second lesson is that the best way to respond to regional aspirations is through democratic negotiations rather than through suppression. Look at the situation in the eighties – militancy had erupted in Punjab; problems were persisting in the North-East; students in Assam were agitating; Kashmir valley was on the boil. Instead of treating these as simple law and order problems, the Government of India reached negotiated settlement with regional movements. This produced a reconciliation which reduced the tensions existing in many regions. The example of Mizoram shows how political settlement can resolve the problem of separatism effectively.

The third lesson is about the significance of power sharing. It is not sufficient to have a formal democratic structure. Besides that, groups and parties from the region need to be given share in power at the State level. Similarly, it is not sufficient to say that the states or the regions have autonomy in their matters. The regions together form the nation. So, the regions must have a share in deciding the destiny of the nation. If regions are not given a share in the national level decision making, the feeling of injustice and alienation can spread.

The fourth lesson is that regional imbalance in economic development contributes to the feeling of regional discrimination. Regional imbalance is a fact of India's development experience. Naturally, the backward states or backward regions in some states feel that their backwardness should be addressed on priority basis and that the policies of the Indian government have caused this imbalance. If some states remain poor and others develop rapidly, it leads to regional imbalances and inter-regional migrations.

Finally, these cases make us appreciate the farsightedness of the makers of our Constitution in dealing with questions of diversity. The federal system adopted by India is a flexible arrangement. While most of the states have equal powers, there are special provisions for some states like J&K and the states in the North-East. The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution allows different tribes complete autonomy of preserving their practices and customary laws. These provisions proved crucial in resolving some very complex political problems in the North-East.

What distinguishes India from many other countries that face similar challenges is that the constitutional framework in India is much more flexible and accommodative. Therefore, regional aspirations are not encouraged to espouse separatism. Thus, politics in India has succeeded in accepting regionalism as part and parcel of democratic politics.

Goa's liberation

Although the British empire in India came to an end in 1947, Portugal refused to withdraw from the territories of Goa, Diu and Daman which were under its colonial rule since the sixteenth century. During their long rule, the Portuguese suppressed the people of Goa, denied them civil rights, and carried out forced religious conversions. After India's Independence, the Indian government tried very patiently to persuade the Portuguese government to withdraw. There was also a strong popular movement within Goa for freedom. They were strengthened by socialist satyagrahis from Maharashtra. Finally, in December 1961, the Government of India sent the army which liberated these territories after barely two days of action. Goa, Diu and Daman became Union Territory.

Another complication arose soon. Led by the Maharashtrawadi Gomanatak Party (MGP) one section desired that Goa, as a Marathi speaking area should merge with Maharashtra. However, many Goans were keen to retain a separate Goan identity and culture, particularly the Konkani language. They were led by the United Goan Party (UGP). In January 1967, the Central Government held a special 'opinion poll' in Goa asking people to decide if they wanted to be part of Maharashtra or remain separate. A referendum-like procedure was used to ascertain people's wishes on this issue. The majority voted in favour of remaining outside of Maharashtra. Thus, Goa continued as a Union Territory. Finally, in 1987, Goa became a State of the Indian Union.



Credit: R.K. Laxman in The Times of India, 21 April 1954

EXERCISES

1. Match the following.

A

Nature of regional aspirations

- (a) Socio-religious identity leading to statehood
- (b) Linguistic identity and tensions with Centre
- (c) Regional imbalance leading to demand for Statehood
- (d) Secessionist demands on account of tribal identity

B

States

- i. Nagaland /Mizoram
- ii. Jharkhand /Chattisgarh
- iii. Punjab
- iv. Tamil Nadu

2. Regional aspirations of the people of North-East get expressed in different ways. These include movements against outsiders, movement for greater autonomy and movement for separate national existence. On the map of the North-East, using different shades for these three, show the States where these expressions are prominently found.
3. What were the main provisions of the Punjab accord? In what way can they be the basis for further tensions between the Punjab and its neighbouring States?
4. Why did the Anandpur Sahib Resolution become controversial?
5. Explain the internal divisions of the State of Jammu and Kashmir and describe how these lead to multiple regional aspirations in that State.
6. What are the various positions on the issue of regional autonomy for Kashmir? Which of these do you think are justifiable? Give reasons for your answer.
7. The Assam movement was a combination of cultural pride and economic backwardness. Explain.
8. All regional movements need not lead to separatist demands. Explain by giving examples from this chapter.
9. Regional demands from different parts of India exemplify the principle of unity with diversity. Do you agree? Give reasons.
10. Read the passage and answer the questions below:
One of Hazarika's songs.. ... dwells on the unity theme; the seven states of north-eastern India become seven sisters born of the same mother. 'Meghalaya went own way....., Arunachal too separated

and Mizoram appeared in Assam's gateway as a groom to marry another daughter.' The song ends with a determination to keep the unity of the Assamese with other smaller nationalities that are left in the present-day Assam – 'the Karbis and the Mising brothers and sisters are our dear ones.' — SANJIB BARUAH

- (a) Which unity is the poet talking about?
- (b) Why were some States of North-East created separately out of the erstwhile State of Assam?
- (c) Do you think that the same theme of unity could apply to all the regions of India? Why?



In this chapter...

In this last chapter we take a synoptic view of the last two decades of politics in India. These developments are complex, for various kinds of factors came together to produce unanticipated outcomes in this period. The new era in politics was impossible to foresee; it is still very difficult to understand. These developments are also controversial, for these involve deep conflicts and we are still too close to the events. Yet we can ask some questions central to the political change in this period.

- What are the implications of the rise of coalition politics for our democracy?
- What is Mandalisation all about? In which ways will it change the nature of political representation?
- What is the legacy of the Ramjanambhoomi movement and the Ayodhya demolition for the nature of political mobilisation?
- What does the rise of a new policy consensus do to the nature of political choices?

The chapter does not answer these questions. It simply gives you the necessary information and some tools so that you can ask and answer these questions when you are through with this book. We cannot avoid asking these questions just because they are politically sensitive, for the whole point of studying the history of politics in India since Independence is to make sense of our present.

Ups and downs of various political parties in the 1990s appeared to many, like this cartoon drawn in 1990, as a roller coaster ride. Riding the roller coaster are Rajiv Gandhi, V. P. Singh, L. K. Advani, Chandrashekhar, Jyoti Basu, N. T. Rama Rao, Devi Lal, P. K. Mahanta and K. Karunanidhi.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIAN POLITICS

Context of the 1990s

You have read in the last chapter that Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. He led the Congress to a massive victory in the Lok Sabha elections held immediately thereafter in 1984. As the decade of the eighties came to a close, the country witnessed five developments that were to make a long-lasting impact on our politics.

First the most crucial development of this period was the defeat of the Congress party in the elections held in 1989. The party that had won as many as 415 seats in the Lok Sabha in 1984 was reduced to only 197 in this election. The Congress improved its performance and came back to power soon after the mid-term elections held in 1991. But the elections of 1989 marked the end of what political scientists have called the 'Congress system'. To be sure, the Congress remained an important party and ruled the country more than any other party even in this period since 1989. But it lost the kind of centrality it earlier enjoyed in the party system.



Congress leader Sitaram Kesri withdrew the crutches of support from Deve Gowda's United Front Government.

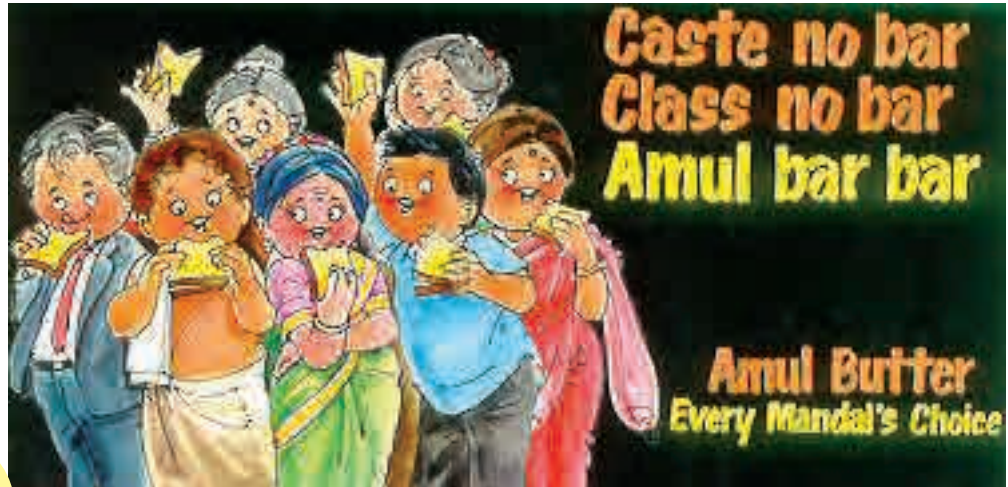
Second development was the rise of the 'Mandal issue' in national politics. This followed the decision by the new National Front government in 1990, to implement the recommendation of the Mandal Commission that jobs in central government should be reserved for the Other Backward Classes. This led to violent 'anti-Mandal' protests in different parts of the country. This dispute between the supporters and opponents of OBC reservations was known as the 'Mandal issue' and was to play an important role in shaping politics since 1989.

I wish to find out if the Congress can still bounce back to its old glory.





I wish to be sure if this phenomenon would have a long-term effect.



A reaction to Mandalisation.

Third, the economic policy followed by the various governments took a radically different turn. This is known as the initiation of the structural adjustment programme or the new economic reforms. Started by Rajiv Gandhi, these changes first became very visible in 1991 and radically changed the direction that the Indian economy had pursued since Independence. These policies have been widely criticised by various movements and organisations. But the various governments that came to power in this period have continued to follow these.

Credit: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India

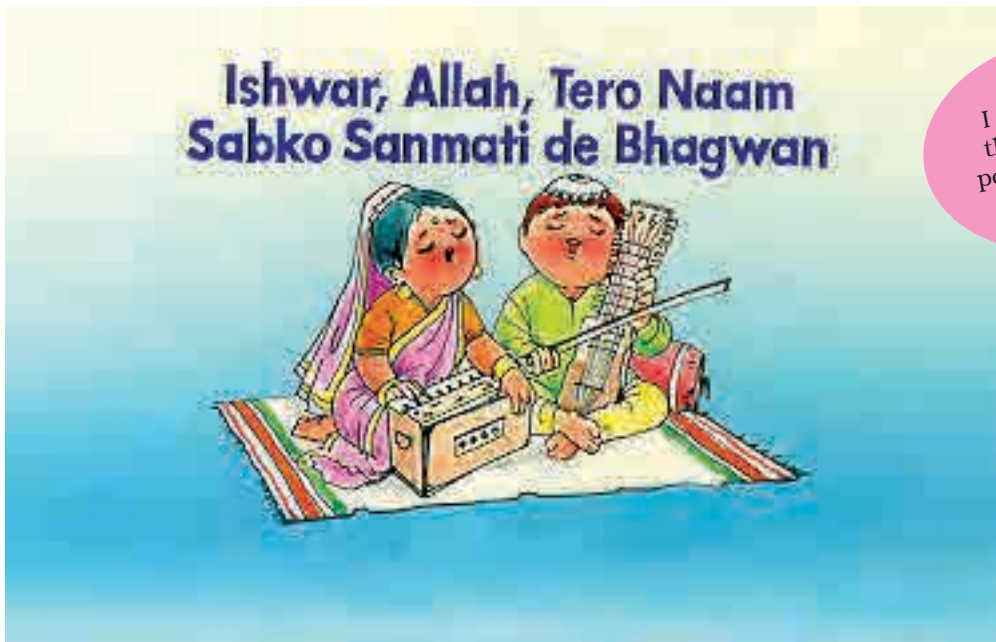


I am not clear if this will make a difference to politics, especially if everyone has the same policy.



Manmohan Singh, the then Finance Minister, with Prime Minister Narsimha Rao, in the initial phase of the 'New Economic Policy'.

Fourth, a number of events culminated in the demolition of the disputed structure at Ayodhya (known as Babri Masjid) in December 1992. This event symbolised and triggered various changes in the politics of the country and intensified debates about the nature of Indian nationalism and secularism. These developments are associated with the rise of the BJP and the politics of 'Hindutva'.



I wonder how this will affect political parties!



A reaction to rising communalism.

Finally, the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in May 1991 led to a change in leadership of the Congress party. He was assassinated by a Sri Lankan Tamil linked to the LTTE when he was on an election campaign tour in Tamil Nadu. In the elections of 1991, Congress emerged as the single largest party. Following Rajiv Gandhi's death, the party chose Narsimha Rao as the Prime Minister.



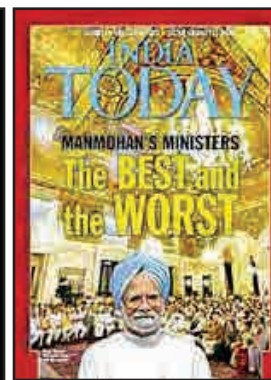
1 May 1996



25 October 1995



20 August 2001



25 October 2004

Leadership in Congress made many headlines.

Era of Coalitions

Elections in 1989 led to the defeat of the Congress party but did not result in a majority for any other party. Though the Congress was the largest party in the Lok Sabha, it did not have a clear majority and therefore, it decided to sit in the opposition. The National Front (which itself was an alliance of Janata Dal and some other regional parties) received support from two diametrically opposite political groups: the BJP and the Left Front. On this basis, the National Front formed a coalition government, but the BJP and the Left Front did not join in this government.

The National Front Government lead by V. P. Singh was supported by the Left (represented here by Jyoti Basu) as well as the BJP (represented by L. K. Advani)



Credit: Sudhir Tailang / HT Book of Cartoons

Decline of Congress

The defeat of the Congress party marked the end of Congress dominance over the Indian party system. Do you remember the discussion in Chapter Five about the restoration of the Congress system? Way back in the late sixties, the dominance of the Congress party was challenged; but the Congress under the leadership of Indira Gandhi, managed to re-establish its predominant position in politics. The nineties saw yet another challenge to the predominant position of the Congress. It did not, however, mean the emergence of any other single party to fill in its place.

Thus, began an era of multi-party system. To be sure, a large number of political parties always contested elections in our country. Our Parliament always had representatives from several political parties. What happened after 1989 was the emergence of several parties in such a way that one or two parties did not get most of the votes or seats. This also meant that no single party secured a clear majority of seats in any Lok Sabha election held since 1989 till 2014. This development initiated an era of coalition governments at the Centre, in which regional parties played a crucial role in forming ruling alliances.

Talk to your parents about their memories of the events happening since the 1990s. Ask them what they felt were the most significant events of the period. Sit together in groups and draw a comprehensive list of the events reported by your parents, see which events get cited most, and compare them with what the chapter suggests were the most significant. You can also discuss why some events are more important for some and not for others.

Let's re-search

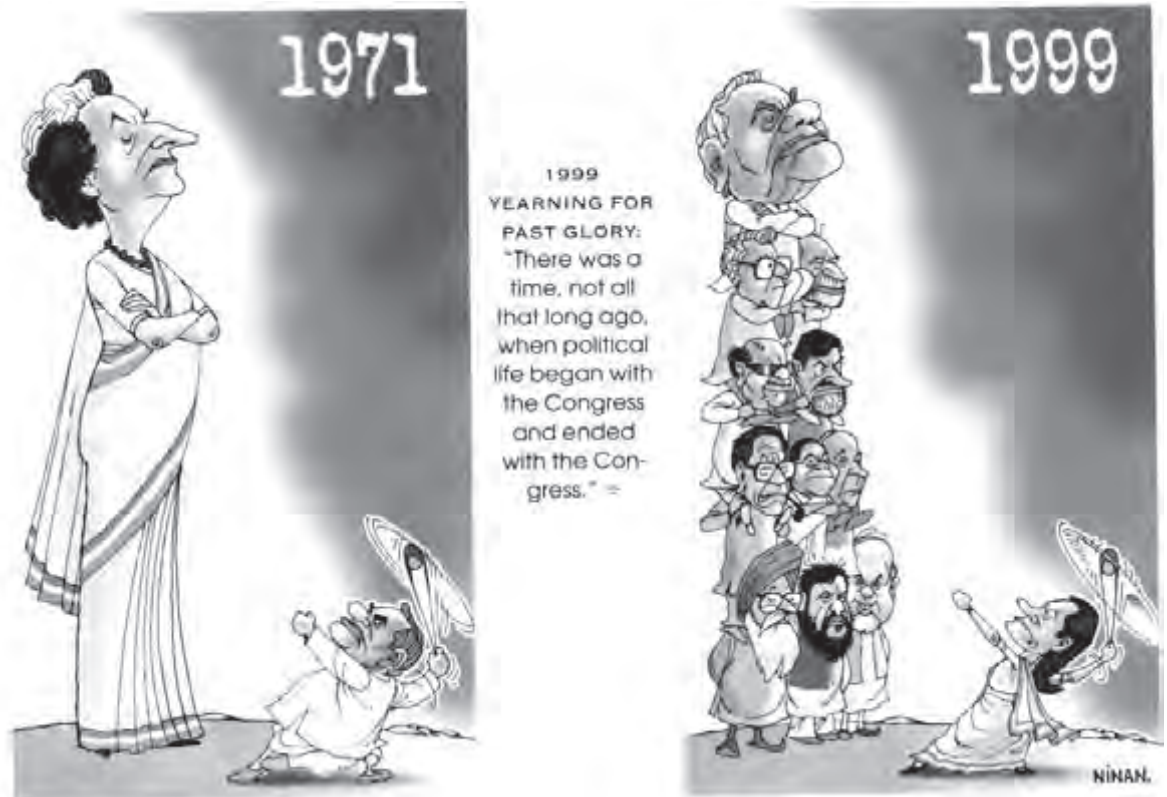
Alliance politics

The nineties also saw the emergence of powerful parties and movements that represented the Dalit and backward castes (Other Backward Classes or OBCs). Many of these parties represented powerful regional assertion as well. These parties played an important role in the United Front government that came to power in 1996. The United Front was similar to the National Front of 1989 for it included Janata Dal and several regional parties. This time the BJP did not support the government. The United Front government was supported by the Congress. This shows how unstable the political equations were. In 1989, both the Left and the BJP supported the National Front Government because they wanted to keep the Congress out of power. In 1996, the Left continued to support the non-Congress government but this time the Congress, supported it, as both the Congress and the Left wanted to keep the BJP out of power.

They did not succeed for long, as the BJP continued to consolidate its position in the elections of 1991 and 1996. It emerged as the largest party in the 1996 election and was invited to form the government. But most other parties were opposed to its policies and therefore, the BJP government could not secure a majority in the Lok Sabha. It finally came to power by leading

a coalition government from May 1998 to June 1999 and was re-elected in October 1999. Atal Behari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister during both these NDA governments and his government formed in 1999 completed its full term.

Credit: Ajit Ninan/India Today



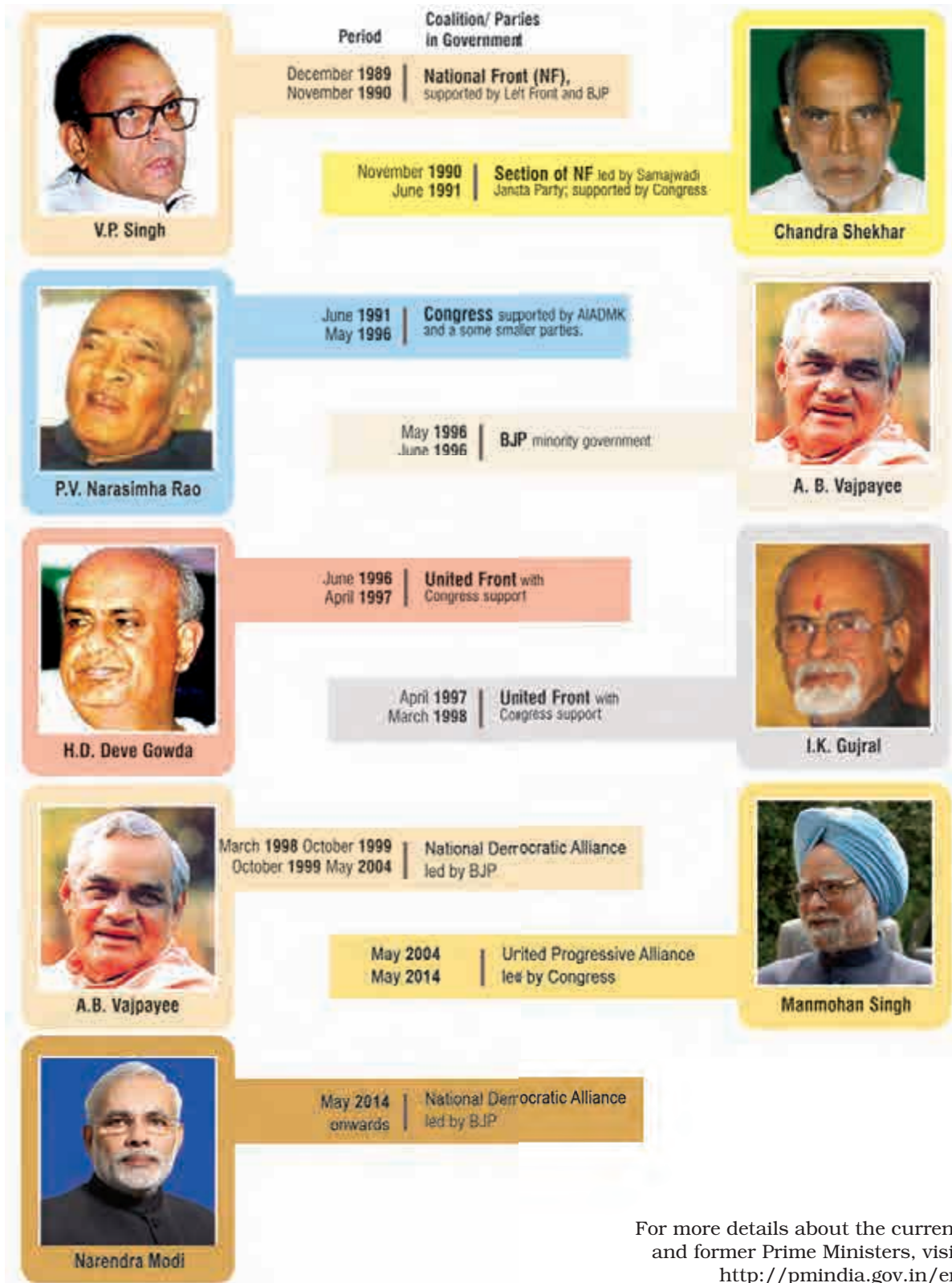
A cartoonist's depiction of the change from one-party dominance to a multi-party alliance system.

Thus, with the elections of 1989, a long phase of coalition politics began in India. Since then, there have been eleven governments at the Centre, all of which have either been coalition governments or minority governments supported by other parties, which did not join the government. In this new phase, any government could be formed only with the participation or support of many regional parties. This applied to the National Front in 1989, the United Front in 1996 and 1997, the NDA in 1997, the BJP-led coalition in 1998, the NDA in 1999, the UPA in 2004 and 2009. However, this trend changed in 2014.

Let us connect this development with what we have learnt so far. The era of coalition governments may be seen as a long-term trend resulting from relatively silent changes that were taking place over the last few decades.

We saw in Chapter Two that in earlier times, it was the Congress party itself that was a 'coalition' of different interests and different social strata and groups. This gave rise to the term 'Congress system'.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS SINCE 1989



For more details about the current and former Prime Ministers, visit <http://pmindia.gov.in/en>

Note: The blank space is for you to record more information on the major policies, performance and controversies about that government.

We also saw in Chapter Five that, especially since the late 1960s, various sections had been leaving the Congress fold and forming separate political parties of their own. We also noted the rise of many regional parties in the period after 1977. While these developments weakened the Congress party, they did not enable any single party to replace the Congress.



Political Rise of Other Backward Classes

One long-term development of this period was the rise of Other Backward Classes as a political force. You have already come across this term 'OBC'. This refers to the administrative category 'Other Backward Classes'. These are communities other than SC and ST who suffer from educational and social backwardness. These are also referred to as 'backward castes'. We have already noted in Chapter Six that the support for the Congress among many sections of the 'backward castes' had declined. This created a space for non-Congress parties that drew more support from these communities. You would recall that the rise of these parties first found political expression at the national level in the form of the Janata Party government in 1977. Many of the constituents of the Janata Party, like the Bharatiya Kranti Dal and the Samyukta Socialist Party, had a powerful rural base among some sections of the OBC.

'Mandal' implemented

In the 1980s, the Janata Dal brought together a similar combination of political groups with strong support among the OBCs. The decision of the National Front government to implement the recommendations

of the Mandal Commission further helped in shaping the politics of 'Other Backward Classes'. The intense national debate for and against reservation in jobs made people from the OBC communities more aware of this identity. Thus, it helped those who wanted to mobilise these groups in politics. This period saw the emergence of many parties that sought better opportunities for OBCs in education and employment and also raised the question of the share of power enjoyed by the OBCs. These parties claimed that since OBCs constituted a large segment of Indian society, it was only democratic that the OBCs should get adequate representation in administration and have their due share of political power.



Implementation of Mandal Commission report sparked off agitations and political upheavals.

The Mandal Commission

Reservations for the OBC were in existence in southern States since the 1960s, if not earlier. But this policy was not operative in north Indian States. It was during the tenure of Janata Party government in 1977-79 that the demand for reservations for backward castes in north India and at the national level was strongly raised. Karpoori Thakur, the then Chief Minister of Bihar, was a pioneer in this direction. His government had introduced a new policy of reservations for OBCs in Bihar. Following this, the central government appointed a Commission in 1978 to look into and recommend ways to improve the conditions of the backward classes. This was the second time since Independence that the government had appointed such a commission. Therefore, this commission was officially known as the Second Backward Classes Commission. Popularly, the commission is known as the Mandal Commission, after the name of its Chairperson, Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal.



B.P. Mandal (1918-1982): M.P. from Bihar for 1967-1970 and 1977-1979; chaired the Second Backward Classes Commission that recommended reservations for Other Backward Classes; a socialist leader from Bihar; Chief Minister of Bihar for just a month and a half in 1968; joined the Janata Party in 1977.

The Mandal Commission was set up to investigate the extent of educational and social backwardness among various sections of Indian society and recommend ways of identifying these 'backward classes'. It was also expected to give its recommendations on the ways in which this backwardness could be ended. The Commission gave its recommendations in 1980. By then the Janata government had fallen. The Commission advised that 'backward classes' should be understood to mean 'backward castes', since many castes, other than the Scheduled Castes, were also treated as low in the caste hierarchy. The Commission did a survey and found that these backward castes had a very low presence in both educational institutions and in employment in public services. It therefore recommended reserving 27 per cent of seats in educational institutions and government jobs for these groups. The Mandal Commission also made many other recommendations, like, land reform, to improve the conditions of the OBCs.

In August 1990, the National Front government decided to implement one of the recommendations of Mandal Commission pertaining to reservations for OBCs in jobs in the central government and its undertakings. This decision sparked agitations and violent protests in many cities of north India. The decision was also challenged in the Supreme Court and came to be known as the 'Indira Sawhney case', after the name of one of the petitioners. In November 1992, the Supreme Court gave a ruling upholding the decision of the government. There were some differences among political parties about the manner of implementation of this decision. But now the policy of reservation for OBCs has support of all the major political parties of the country.

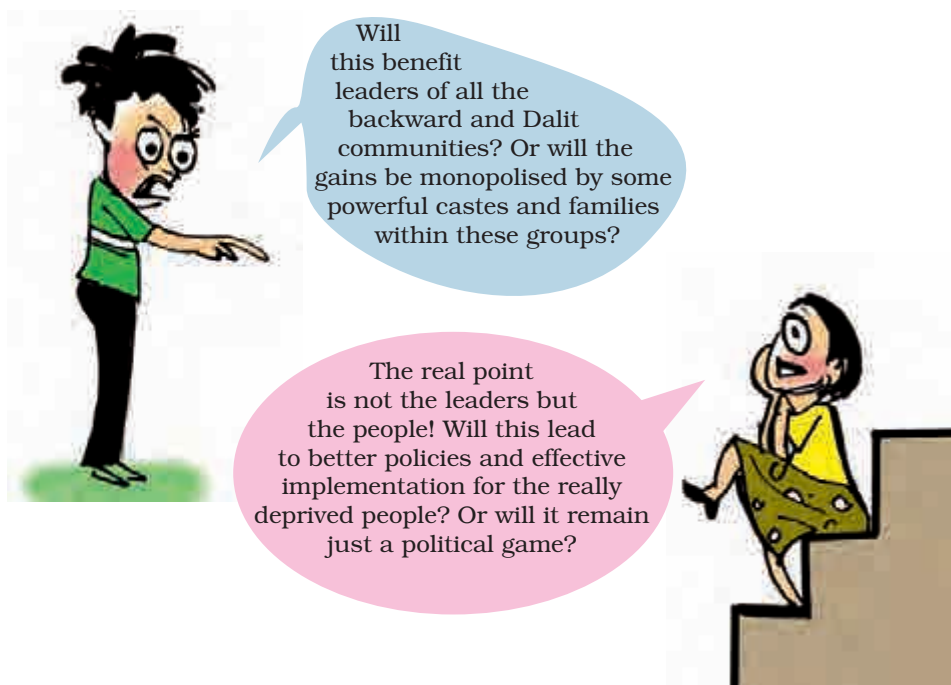
Political fallout

The 1980s also saw the rise of political organisation of the Dalits. In 1978 the Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation (BAMCEF) was formed. This organisation was not an ordinary trade union of government employees. It took a strong position in favour of political power to the 'bahujan' – the SC, ST, OBC and minorities. It was out of this that the subsequent Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti and later the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) emerged under the leadership of Kanshi Ram. The BSP began as a small party supported largely by Dalit voters in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. But in 1989 and the 1991 elections, it achieved a breakthrough in Uttar Pradesh. This was the first time in independent India that a political party supported mainly by Dalit voters had achieved this kind of political success.

In fact, the BSP, under Kanshi Ram's leadership was envisaged as an organisation based on pragmatic politics. It derived confidence from the fact that the Bahujans (SC, ST, OBC and religious minorities) constituted the majority of the population, and were a formidable political force on the strength of their numbers. Since then the BSP has emerged as a major political player in the State and has been in government on more than one occasion. Its strongest support still comes from Dalit voters, but it has expanded its support now to various other social groups. In many parts of India, Dalit politics and OBC politics have developed independently and often in competition with each other.



Kanshi Ram (1934-2006): Proponent of Bahujan empowerment and founder of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP); left his central government job for social and political work; founder of BAMCEF, DS-4 and finally the BSP in 1984; astute political strategist, he regarded political power as master key to attaining social equality; credited with Dalit resurgence in north Indian States.



Communalism, Secularism, Democracy

The other long-term development during this period was the rise of politics based on religious identity, leading to a debate about secularism and democracy. We noted in Chapter Six that in the aftermath of the Emergency, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh had merged into the Janata Party. After the fall of the Janata Party and its break-up, the supporters of erstwhile Jana Sangh formed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1980. Initially, the BJP adopted a broader political platform than that of the Jana Sangh. It embraced 'Gandhian Socialism' as its ideology. But it did not get much success in the elections held in 1980 and 1984. After 1986, the party began to emphasise the Hindu nationalist element in its ideology. The BJP pursued the politics of 'Hindutva' and adopted the strategy of mobilising the Hindus.

Hindutva literally means 'Hinduness' and was defined by its originator, V. D. Savarkar, as the basis of Indian (in his language also Hindu) nationhood. It basically meant that to be members of the Indian nation, everyone must not only accept India as their 'fatherland' (*pitrubhu*) but also as their holy land (*punyabhū*). Believers of 'Hindutva' argue that a strong nation can be built only on the basis of a strong and united national culture. They also believe that in the case of India the Hindu culture alone can provide this base.

Two developments around 1986 became central to the politics of BJP as a 'Hindutva' party. The first was the Shah Bano case in 1985. In this case a 62-year old divorced Muslim woman, had filed a case for maintenance from her former husband. The Supreme Court ruled in her favour. The orthodox Muslims saw the Supreme Court's order as an interference in Muslim Personal Law. On the demand of some Muslim leaders, the government passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986 that nullified the Supreme Court's judgment. This action of the government was opposed by many women's organisations, many Muslim groups and most of the intellectuals. The BJP criticised this action of the Congress government as an unnecessary concession and 'appeasement' of the minority community.

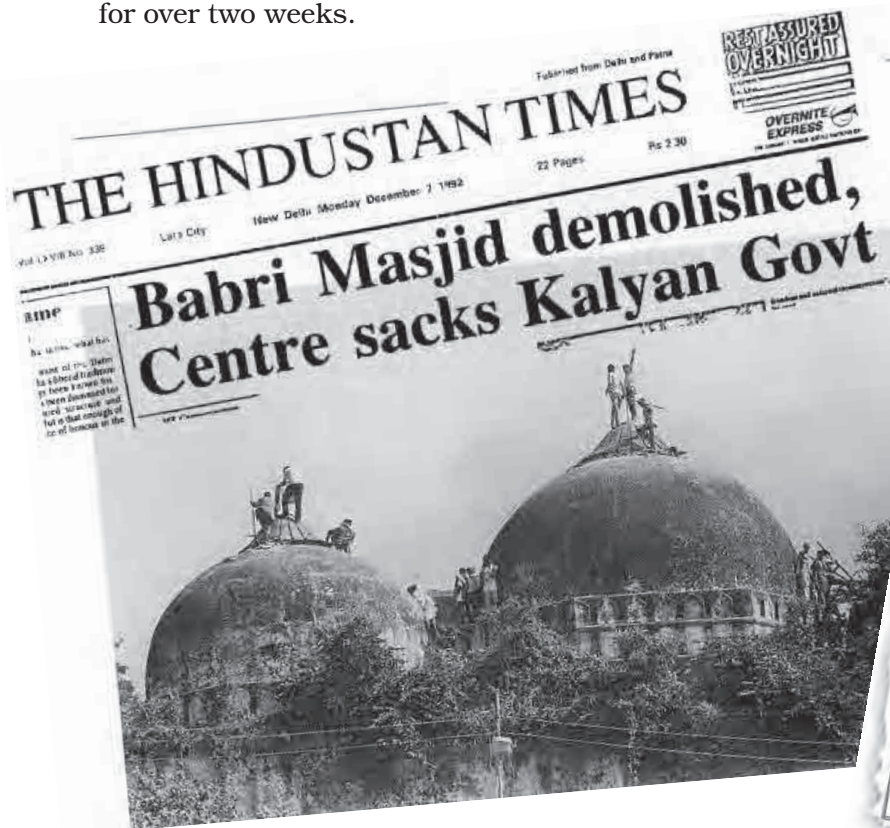
Ayodhya dispute

The second development was the order by the Faizabad district court in February 1986. The court ordered that the Babri Masjid premises be unlocked so that Hindus could offer prayers at the site which they considered as a temple. A dispute had been going on for many decades over the mosque known as Babri Masjid at Ayodhya. The Babri Masjid was a 16th century mosque in Ayodhya and was built by Mir Baqi – Mughal emperor Babur's General. Some Hindus believe that it was built after demolishing a temple for Lord Rama in what is believed to be his birthplace. The dispute took the form of a court case and has continued for many decades. In the late 1940s the mosque was locked up as the matter was with the court.

As soon as the locks of the Babri Masjid were opened, mobilisation began on both sides. Many Hindu and Muslim organisations tried to mobilise their communities on this question. Suddenly this local dispute became a major national question and led to communal tensions. The BJP made this issue its major electoral and political plank. Along with many other organisations like the RSS and the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), it convened a series of symbolic and mobilisational programmes. This large scale mobilisation led to surcharged atmosphere and many instances of communal violence. The BJP, in order to generate public support, took out a massive march called the *Rathiyatra* from Somnath in Gujarat to Ayodhya in UP.

Demolition and after

In December 1992, the organisations supporting the construction of the temple had organised a *Karseva*, meaning voluntary service by the devotees, for building the Ram temple. The situation had become tense all over the country and especially at Ayodhya. The Supreme Court had ordered the State government to take care that the disputed site will not be endangered. However, thousands of people gathered from all over the country at Ayodhya on 6 December 1992 and demolished the mosque. This news led to clashes between the Hindus and Muslims in many parts of the country. The violence in Mumbai erupted again in January 1993 and continued for over two weeks.



Ayodhya BJP's worst miscalculation: Vajpayee

Had warned Advani, but no place for moderates, laments veteran

Tarun Mehta
New Delhi

SETHUJI B.P. Mehta and former Vajpayee had said his party's Ayodhya action was the "most reprehensible" and a "violation". He had conceded that scenes of provocation were incited by hardliners.

In the most harrowing incident on the Ayodhya crisis till date, Mr Vajpayee submitted his party had failed to launch "violent non-violence" in the Supreme Court, Parliament and Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao that the "disputed structure" would not be touched during the December 6 karava.

Mr Vajpayee's executive interview with state channel News Service on Thursday was marked by an acute sense of anguish and indignation at moderate within the party having been totally sidelined. "Moderates have no place," Mr Vajpayee lamented, adding with a raspy air, "what's going to happen in the next six months?"

However, he ruled out quitting the party saying he had a lifelong association with it and "where the ship is facing a storm, you don't desert the ship," he said, despite having been proposed as a Prime Minister candidate, he had chosen to concentrate on his duties. Mr Vajpayee said...



India will come out united: Vajpayee

and you won't sever lifelong association with it," he elaborated.

Mr Vajpayee said the events did not worry him (emotionally) but he was happy in the face of the right wing taking the party "New banner".

should be used to bring about a permanent reconciliation between the two communities and that can be done in the name of give and take. Muslims should realize their strongly Hinduized faith about the temple in the light of the fact that it was built about 1500 years ago. They will have to accept the fact that the mosque in Ayodhya has not of the same place," he said.

"Hindu," he added, "will come out united and stronger from this crisis. I was sure of this." Asked if that included the minorities, he said, "Yes."

Asked to respond to the Prime Minister's charge that the BJP was guilty of demagoguery and betrayal, Mr Vajpayee said, "We are sorry to believe so. We believed in and we believed that our workers will believe. So we were also betrayed in that sense. And even the reason it was a miscalculation."

He said though Mr Rao failed to find a solution, his leadership could not be questioned. "The Prime Minister tried to find a solution and he wanted to assert the crisis. He thought that we will be in a position to offer to our people," Mr Vajpayee said. However, he added the failure was deliberate.

"I said the BJP might have failed," he said and he might have failed...

Demolition no cause for remorse: Advani

Special Correspondent

New Delhi

Janata Party leader's self-confessed "sadness" following the demolition of the Ayodhya mosque appears to be completely unshared by the government. The crowd in the thousands in the UAE. They were not of the population.

He said though Mr Rao failed to find a solution, his leadership could not be questioned. "The Prime Minister tried to find a solution and he wanted to assert the crisis. He thought that we will be in a position to offer to our people," Mr Vajpayee said. However, he added the failure was deliberate.

"I said the BJP might have failed," he said and he might have failed...



Violent reaction world over

DEC 7. — Muslims angry at the demolition of the Babari Masjid today attacked temples in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and in England, set fire to an Indian Airlines office and damaged the Indian High Commission in Dhaka as the 50-member Organization of Islamic Countries condemned the Ayodhya incident as "shameful", reports PTL.

Six temples in Pakistan and...

Federal Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif, this morning expressed "deep anguish and grave concern" over the Ayodhya incident and the people of India will realize the grave implications of the unprecedented fanaticism.

Radio Pakistan said Pakistan would appeal to the UN and the OIC to exert their influence...

Credit (Clockwise): The Pioneer, The Pioneer and The Statesman.

The events at Ayodhya led to a series of other developments. The State government, with the BJP as the ruling party, was dismissed by the Centre. Along with that, other States where the BJP was in power, were also put under President's rule. A case against the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh was registered in the Supreme Court for contempt of court since he had given an undertaking that the disputed structure will be protected. The BJP officially expressed regret over the happenings at Ayodhya. The central government appointed a commission to investigate into the circumstances leading to the demolition of the mosque. Most political parties condemned the demolition and declared that this was against the principles of secularism. This led to a serious debate over secularism and posed the kind of questions our country faced immediately after Partition – was India going to be a country where the majority religious community dominated over the minorities? Or would India continue to offer equal protection of law and equal citizenship rights to all Indians irrespective of their religion?

During this time, there has also been a debate about using religious sentiments for electoral purposes. India's democratic politics is based on the premise that all religious communities enjoy the freedom that they may join any party and that there will not be

community-based political parties. This democratic atmosphere of communal amity has faced many challenges since 1984. As we have read in Chapter Eight, this happened in 1984 in the form of anti-Sikh riots. In February-March 2002, similar violence broke out against the Muslims in Gujarat. Such violence against the minority community and violence between two communities is a threat to democracy.

“ These proceedings have the echo of the disastrous event that ended in the demolition on the 6th December, 1992 of the disputed structure of ‘Ram Janam Bhoomi-Babri Masjid’ in Ayodhya. Thousands of innocent lives of citizens were lost, extensive damage to property caused and more than all a damage to the image of this great land as one fostering great traditions of tolerance, faith, brotherhood amongst the various communities inhabiting the land was impaired in the international scene.

It is unhappy that a leader of a political party and the Chief Minister has to be convicted of an offence of Contempt of Court. But it has to be done to uphold the majesty of law. We convict him of the offence of contempt of Court. Since the contempt raises larger issues which affect the very foundation of the secular fabric of our nation, we also sentence him to a token imprisonment of one day.

Chief Justice Venkatachaliah and Justice G.N. Ray of Supreme Court

Observations in a judgement on the failure of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh to keep the promise that he had made before the National Integration Council to protect the ‘Ram Janam Bhumi-Babri Masjid’ structure, Mohd. Aslam v. Union of India, 24 October 1994

Gujarat riots

In February-March 2002, large-scale violence took place in Gujarat. The immediate provocation for this violence was an incident that took place at a station called Godhra. A bogey of a train that was returning from Ayodhya and was full of *Karsevaks* was set on fire. Fifty-seven people died in that fire. Suspecting the hand of the Muslims in setting fire to the bogey, large-scale violence against Muslims began in many parts of Gujarat from the next day. This violence continued for almost a whole month. Nearly 1100 persons, mostly Muslims, were killed in this violence. The National Human Rights Commission criticised the Gujarat government’s role in failing to control violence, provide relief to the victims and prosecute the perpetrators of this violence. The Election Commission of India ordered the assembly elections to be postponed. As in the case of anti-Sikh riots of 1984,

GUJARAT IS BURNING

Former MP’s family among 70 dead

HT Correspondent
Ahmedabad, February 28

MORE THAN 70 people were killed and several injured as Gujarat reported incidents of stabbing, rioting, arson, looting and police firing on Thursday, a day after four bogies of the Sabarmati Express carrying kar sewaks from Ayodhya were set on fire in Godhra killing 58 people.

The Cabinet Committee on Security put the Army on stand-by in the riot-hit areas.

Over 26 towns statewide have been put under indefinite curfew. Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) activists who had called a statewide bandh on Thursday to protest the killing of the kar sewaks, attacked several Muslim-populated areas of the state and set fire to Muslim-owned properties.

Over 50 of those killed were in Ahmedabad. And 19 of them were relatives of former Congress MP Ehsan Jaffrey, who himself was killed. They died when the building they lived in was set on fire in Meghanagar. In an earlier incident, 17 Muslim slum-dwellers were also burned alive.

The Wakf Board offices in Gandhinagar were burned down and the Centre for



BACKLASH: A truck on fire in Ahmedabad.

ple of mosques being attacked by VHP activists. Six buses and a truck were also set on fire.

Police arrested 700 people — 80 in Godhra, including two councillors — in connection with Wednesday’s attack.

Two persons died and at least six were injured when police opened fire to disperse a rampaging mob in Ahmedabad on Thursday afternoon. Gujarat Chief

Minister Narendra Modi has ordered a judicial inquiry of the attack. He said those responsible for the attack on the

“On 27 February 1947, at the very first meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly on Fundamental Rights, Minorities and Tribals and Excluded Areas, Sardar Patel asserted:

“It is for us to prove that it is a bogus claim, a false claim, and that nobody can be more interested than us, in India, in the protection of our minorities. Our mission is to satisfy every one of them. Let us prove we can rule ourselves and we have no ambition to rule others”.

“The tragic events in Gujarat, starting with the Godhra incident and continuing with the violence that rocked the state for over two months, have greatly saddened the nation. There is no doubt, in the opinion of the Commission, that there was a comprehensive failure on the part of the state government to control the persistent violation of the rights to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the people of the state. It is, of course, essential to heal the wounds and to look to a future of peace and harmony. But the pursuit of these high objectives must be based on justice and upholding of the values of the constitution of the republic and the laws of the land.”

National Human Rights Commission, Annual Report 2001-2002.



Is this going to continue to be our future? Is there no way we can make all this a matter of past?

Can we ensure that those who plan, execute and support such massacres are brought to the book? Or at least punished politically?



Gujarat riots show that the governmental machinery also becomes susceptible to sectarian passions. Instances, like in Gujarat, alert us to the dangers involved in using religious sentiments for political purposes. This poses a threat to democratic politics.

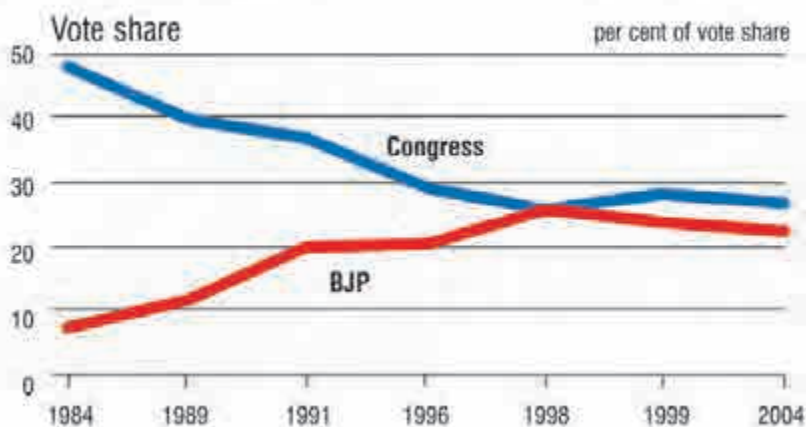
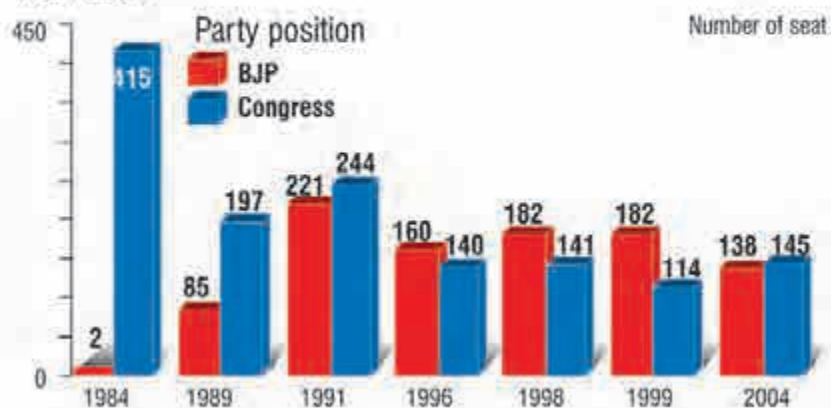
Emergence of a new consensus

The period after 1989 is seen sometimes as the period of decline of Congress and rise of BJP. If you want to understand the complex nature of political competition in this period, you have to compare the electoral performances of the Congress and the BJP.

“My one message to the Chief Minister [of Gujarat] is that he should follow ‘raj dharma’. A ruler should not make any discrimination between his subjects on the basis of caste, creed and religion.”

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, Ahmedabad, 4 April 2002.

Changing electoral performance of Congress and the BJP 1984-2004



Now let us try to understand the meaning of the information given in the figure.

- You will notice that BJP and Congress were engaged in a tough competition in this period. What is the difference between

their electoral fortunes if you compare these with the 1984 elections?

- You will notice that since the 1989 election, the votes polled by the two parties, Congress and the BJP do not add up to more than fifty per cent. The seats won by them too, do not add up to more than half the seats in the Lok Sabha. So, where did the rest of the votes and seats go?
- Look at both the charts showing Congress and Janata 'family' of parties. Which among the parties that exist today are neither part of Congress family of parties nor part of Janata family of parties?
- The political competition during the nineties is divided between the coalition led by BJP and the coalition led by the Congress. Can you list the parties that are not part of any of these two coalitions?

Lok Sabha Elections 2004

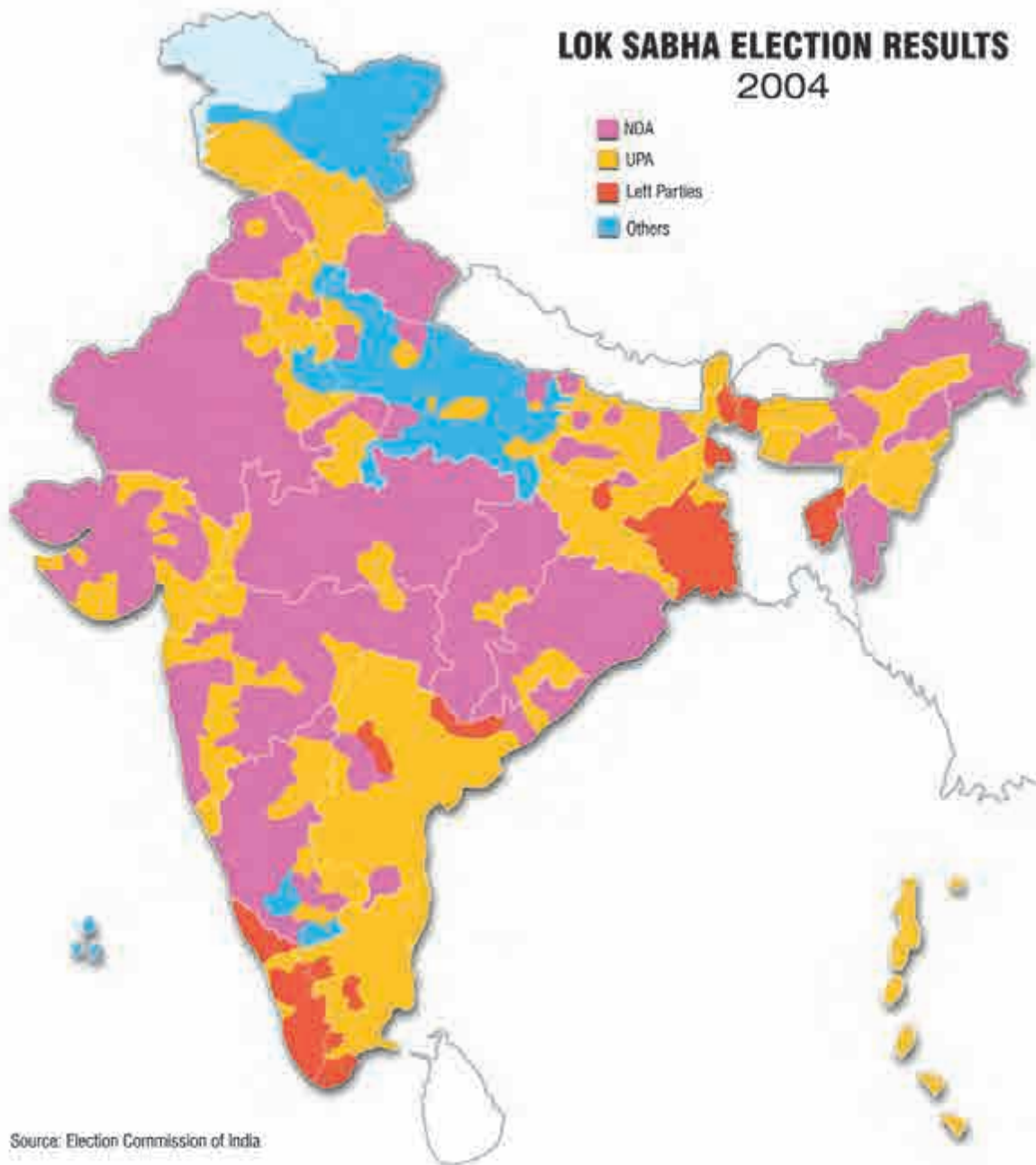
In the elections of 2004, the Congress party too entered into coalitions in a big way. The NDA was defeated and a new coalition government led by the Congress, known as the United Progressive Alliance came to power. This government received support from the Left Front parties. The elections of 2004 also witnessed the partial revival of Congress party. It could increase its seats for the first time since 1991. However, in the 2004 elections, there was a negligible difference between the votes polled by the Congress and its allies and the BJP and its allies. Thus, the party system has now changed almost dramatically from what it was till the seventies.

The political processes that are unfolding around us after the 1990s show the emergence of broadly four groups of parties – parties that are in coalition with the Congress; parties that are in alliance with the BJP; Left Front parties; and other parties who are not part of any of these three. The situation suggests that political competition will be multi-cornered. By implication the situation also assumes a divergence of political ideologies.

Growing consensus

However, on many crucial issues, a broad agreement has emerged among most parties. In the midst of severe competition and many conflicts, a consensus appears to have emerged among most parties. This consensus consists of four elements.

First, agreement on new economic policies – while many groups are opposed to the new economic policies, most political parties are in support of the new economic policies. Most parties believe that these policies would lead the country to prosperity and a status of economic power in the world.



Note: This illustration is not a map drawn to scale and should not be taken to be an authentic depiction of India's external boundaries.

Second, acceptance of the political and social claims of the backward castes – political parties have recognised that the social and political claims of the backward castes need to be accepted. As a result, all political parties now support reservation of seats for the 'backward classes' in education and employment. Political parties are also willing to ensure that the OBCs get adequate share of power.

Third, acceptance of the role of State level parties in governance of the country – the distinction between State level and national level parties is fast becoming less important. As we saw in this chapter, State level parties are sharing power at the national level and have played a central role in the country’s politics of last twenty years or so.

Fourth, emphasis on pragmatic considerations rather than ideological positions and political alliances without ideological agreement – coalition politics has shifted the focus of political parties from ideological differences to power sharing arrangements. Thus, most parties of the NDA did not agree with the ‘Hindutva’ ideology of the BJP. Yet, they came together to form a government and remained in power for a full term.

All these are momentous changes and are going to shape politics in the near future. We started this study of politics in India with the discussion of how the Congress emerged as a dominant party. From that situation, we have now arrived at a more competitive politics, but politics that is based on a certain implicit agreement among the main political actors. Thus, even as political parties act within the sphere of this consensus, popular movements and organisations are simultaneously identifying new forms, visions and pathways of development. Issues like poverty, displacement, minimum wages, livelihood and social security are being put on the political agenda by peoples’ movements, reminding the state of its responsibility. Similarly, issues of justice and democracy are being voiced by the people in terms of class, caste, gender and regions. We cannot predict the future of democracy. All we know is that democratic politics is here to stay in India and that it will unfold through a continuous churning of some of the factors mentioned in this chapter.

That is my question – will democracy survive?



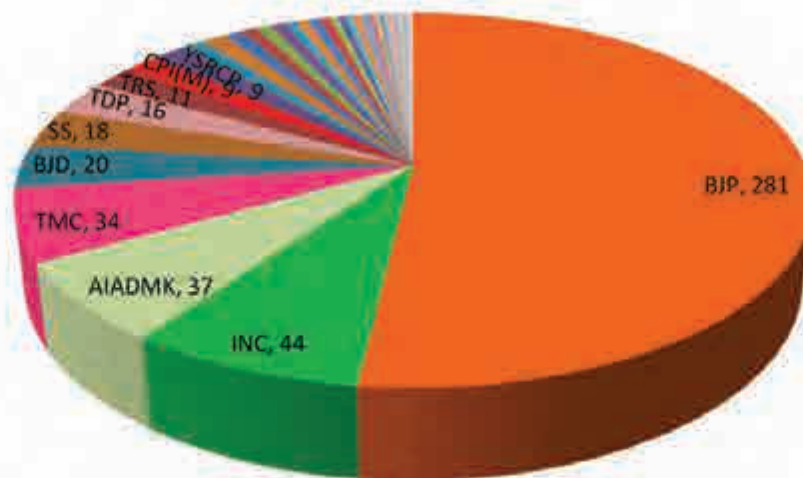
Or may be the real question is – will democracy offer meaningful political choices?



Credit: Ravishankar/India Today

Party Position in 16th Lok Sabha

(As on 19.02.2015)



- Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) (281)
- All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) (37)
- Biju Janata Dal (BJD) (20)
- Telugu Desam (TDP)(16)
- Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI(M) (9)
- Nationalist Congress Party (6)
- Samajwadi Party (5)
- Rashtriya Janata Dal (4)
- All India United Democratic Front (3)
- Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (3)
- Indian National Lok Dal (2)
- Janata Dal (Secular) (2)
- Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (2)
- Communist Party of India (1)
- Kerala Congress (M) (1)
- National Peoples Party (1)
- Revolutionary Socialist Party (1)
- All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (1)
- Indian National Congress INC(44)
- All India Trinamool Congress (TMC)(34)
- Shivsena (SS)(18)
- Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS)(11)
- Yuva Jana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP)(9)
- Lok Jan Shakti Party (6)
- Aam Aadmi Party (4)
- Shiromani Akali Dal (4)
- Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party (3)
- Independents (3)
- Indian Union Muslim League (2)
- Janata Dal (United) (2)
- Apna Dal (2)
- All India N.R. Congress (1)
- Naga Peoples Front (1)
- Pattali Makkal Katchi (1)
- Sikkim Democratic Front (1)
- Swabhimani Paksha (1)

Source: <http://loksabha.nic.in>

EXERCISES

1. Unscramble a bunch of disarranged press clipping file of Unni-Munni... and arrange the file chronologically.
 - (a) Mandal Recommendations and Anti Reservation Stir
 - (b) Formation of the Janata Dal
 - (c) The demolition of Babri Masjid
 - (d) Assassination of Indira Gandhi
 - (e) The formation of NDA government
 - (f) Godhra incident and its fallout
 - (g) Formation of the UPA government

2. Match the following.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Politics of Consensus (b) Caste based parties (c) Personal Law and Gender Justice (d) Growing strength of Regional parties 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Shah Bano case ii. Rise of OBCs iii. Coalition government iv. Agreement on Economic policies
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3. State the main issues in Indian politics in the period after 1989. What different configurations of political parties these differences lead to?
4. "In the new era of coalition politics, political parties are not aligning or re-aligning on the basis of ideology." What arguments would you put forward to support or oppose this statement?
5. Trace the emergence of BJP as a significant force in post-Emergency politics.
6. In spite of the decline of Congress dominance, the Congress party continues to influence politics in the country. Do you agree? Give reasons.
7. Many people think that a two-party system is required for successful democracy. Drawing from India's experience of last 30 years, write an essay on what advantages the present party system in India has.
8. Read the passage and answer the questions below:

Party politics in India has confronted numerous challenges. Not only has the Congress system destroyed itself, but the fragmentation of the Congress coalition has triggered a new emphasis on self-representation which raises questions about the party system and its capacity to accommodate diverse interests, An important test facing the polity is to evolve a party system or political parties that can effectively articulate and aggregate a variety of interests. — ZOYA HASAN

- (a) Write a short note on what the author calls challenges of the party system in the light of what you have read in this chapter.
- (b) Given an example from this chapter of the lack of accommodation and aggregation mentioned in this passage.
- (c) Why is it necessary for parties to accommodate and aggregate variety of interests?

LET US DO IT TOGETHER

- This chapter covers the major developments in Indian politics until the 2004 Elections (14th Lok Sabha). Subsequently, the Lok Sabha elections were held in 2009, during which the UPA led by the Congress won. In the 2014 Elections, the NDA led by the BJP emerged victorious. The position of various parties in the 16th Lok Sabha is given on page 193.
- A detailed study of Members of the 16th Lok Sabha is available on the website of the Lok Sabha (<http://loksabha.nic.in>).
- Compare and contrast the electoral performances of various political parties in the 2009 Elections (15th Lok Sabha) and the 2014 Elections (16th Lok Sabha) by collecting the data about the results from the website of the Election Commission of India (<http://eci.nic.in>).
- Prepare a timeline of the major political events in India since 2004. Share and discuss it in your classroom.



I believe that corruption has been one of the major obstacles to economic, political and social progress of our country. I believe that all stakeholders such as Government, citizens and private sector need to work together to eradicate corruption.

I realise that every citizen should be vigilant and commit to highest standards of honesty and integrity at all times and support the fight against corruption.

I, therefore, pledge:

- To follow probity and rule of law in all walks of life;
- To neither take nor offer bribe;
- To perform all tasks in an honest and transparent manner;
- To act in public interest;
- To lead by example exhibiting integrity in personal behaviour;
- To report any incident of corruption to the appropriate agency.

**For details about the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC),
log on to www.cvc.nic.in**