

Post Independence India Class 08

11th February, 2024 at 1:00 PM

INTRODUCTION (01:07 PM)

- A Brief Review Of The Previous Class.

ASSAM NATIONALIST MOVEMENT (1975-85) (01:14 PM)

Reasons:

- The migration of Bengalis since 1947 continued even after the creation of Bangladesh due to better economic opportunities in India. (* communal violence was also the reason post-1947).
- Fear of immigrants @ economic capture, land grabbing, and jobs plus fear of cultural and political domination especially the highly sensitive issue of faulty voter lists (1978, 1983).
- Assamese felt that since the British era, their natural resources and economy benefitted outsiders.
- After the first Anglo-Burma war 1824-1826, the British annexed the Ahom kingdom of Assam.
- Assam tea gardens were owned by foreigners plus local trade was under the control of outsiders though extracted in Assam, it was refined outside Assam.
- Therefore, hurts job creation potential in Assam.
- From 1975-1978, peaceful protests failed and then in 1978 huge malpractice was revealed in the voter list.
- Now the youth of Assam created the All Assam Students Union (AASU, 1979).
- They deployed methods of violent agitations. (United liberation Front Of Assam or ULFA, 1979) many popular after the 1983 faulty voter list).

Demands of AASU in 1979 :

- Stop the immigration of Bangladeshis and deport those already present.
- Bring a new economic policy so Assam's natural resources are used to benefit of natives.
- Greater participation in administration for natives. (Reservation for youths)
- More administrative autonomy. (i.e. 6th schedule in more areas of Assam).

Result:

- Assam Accord 1985 by Rajiv Gandhi, settled the AASU, 1979 led movement (ULFA 1979 is separate).

Concerning foreigners:

- Those who entered before 1961 to get citizenship and all rights.
- 1961-25 th March 1971: to get citizenship and all the rights except the right to vote for 10 years.
- Those who entered after the 25th of March 1971 were declared illegal immigrants and to be deported back.

- **Concerning Economy:**
- The 2nd oil refinery + a paper mill + IIT Guwahati.
- **Concerning Culture:** Promise of the legislature and administrative safeguards to protect cultural and linguistic identity and heritage (Think that ASI protection to Assamese heritage, restoration of monuments, govt. scholarships for Assamese authors etc.
- Assam Gana parishad was set up as a political party which fought elections and won.
- And prafull Mahanta became CM at the age of 32.
- (ULFA 1979)
- Mainly active and popular after 1983, faulty voyeur
- Method: Armed struggle/Insurgency)
- Goal: Pre-1826 status where an Independent Assam or Ahom Kingdom existed.
- 1992: ULFA 1979 declared that their movement was for all original inhabitants of Assam and not just for Assamese people.
- 2011-2013: Ceasefire with factions (not all of ULFA) of ULFA via a tripartite agreement between Gol, Government of Assam, and ULFA.
- Today's demand for statehood for Assam by :
- Bodos demand Bodoland.
- Karbi Anglong wants a separate state.
- Kochi Rajbanshis demand Kamtapur. (Like ULFA there are KLOs)
- All 3 have 6th Schedule status.

PUNJAB CRISIS (01:51 PM)

- Sikh Gurus fought the Mughals to establish a Sikh State in and around Anantapur and later Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1801-39) set up a powerful Sikh State which was annexed in 1849 by the British after the 2nd Anglo-Sikh War.
- Akali Movement 1920-25: for getting control of Gurudwaras from Udasi Sikh Mahants to representatives of the people.
- After this movement, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) came to exist as a party with a focus on Sikhism.
- Note:
- Earlier: (1905-1911 Swadeshi: LL rai active + 1878 Lahore Indian Association, HRLs 1916-18 + Gadar Movement 1921-1915, Rowlat Satyagraha 1919 and then 13 April 1919 Jalianwala bagh)
- Post-independence there was demand for Punjab as a Sikh majority state within India via Punjabi Suba Civil Movement until 1966 led by Akali Dal. E.g. Master Tara Singh, a prominent Akali leader, argued that Punjab should be ruled by a Sikh organization.
- Reason = political power.
- Demand rejected by the State Reorganisation Act 1956 because based on religion.

In 1966 Indira Gandhi separated Haryana from Punjab with Chandigarh as the common capital & a UT because:

- a. Long pending demand
- b. Hindi-speaking groups also demanded Haryana
- c. Sant Fateh Singh, an Akali leader, assured that demand was not communal but linguistic i.e. no discrimination based on religion after reorganization
- d. However, no consensus on Chandigarh, negotiations failed & territory of Punjab should be given to Haryana (Abohar & Fazilka) in return for Chandigarh.
- Akalis still could not form a single-party majority government (even in 1967).
- This is because the core support base of Akalis i.e. Jatt Sikh is equal to 35% population out of 60% Sikh population.
- Therefore to consolidate Sikh votes Akalis brought the Anantpur Sahib resolution (ASR, 1973).
- Chandigarh & other Punjabi-speaking areas of neighbouring states to Punjab
- b. Favourable River Water Sharing Treaty @ Ravi, Beas, Sutlej with Haryana & Rajasthan
- c. More % of Sikh in the army
- d. The demand for true federalism by amending the constitution to have a weak Centre & strong state i.e. Centre's power in States be limited to Defense, Foreign Affairs, Currency and some aspects of general administration. (*a regional party always wants a weak Centre as it can't be in power at the Centre)
- e. The preamble of ASR 1973 stated that Akalis are representatives of a Sikh Nation although Political Goal was defined as Autonomy within India. (*Two Nation One State Solution)
- f. During the Emergency (1975-77)- Akalis were imprisoned and in 1977 came to power and also revived demands of ASR 1973.

RISE OF JARNAIL SINGH BHINDERWALE (02:50 PM)

- a. Nirankaris consider themselves as Sikh but believe in a living Guru hence regarded as heretics by other Sikhs
- b. 1978- Nirankaris were to hold a big rally in Amritsar and Bhindrawale was leading the opposition to this meeting.
- He gave a hate speech from Golden Temple and his supporters attacked the meeting.
- In clashes, 15 died (including Bhindrawale supporters). This raised his profile.

Personality:

- Inspiring preacher with deep knowledge of Sikh scriptures
- Left family to head a seminary called Damdami Taksal
- He wanted Sikhs to purify themselves and return to the golden past e.g. spoke against alcohol, tobacco, cutting of hair etc
- He raised political tensions e.g. argued that Sikhs are slaves in India and are discriminated against by Hindus.
- Some argue that Sanjay Gandhi & Gyani Zail Singh (Congress Sikh leader, CM, then Union Minister, then President) cultivated
- Bhindrawale to create a bigger religious icon than Akalis to cut the vote base of Akalis. Whoever supported Bhindrawale, later showed his own Charisma and acted independently.

Bhindrawale got the support of:

- 1. Lower Sikh castes of Artisans & Laborers as they saw purification as a path to social mobility
- 2. Many Jat peasants argued that the Green Revolution benefitted only the big landlords and this resonated with small peasants.
- 3. A general increase in religiosity due to the unexpected benefits of the Green Revolution increased the support base.

Became Popular as:

- 1978: His supporters attacked the rally of Nirankaris. 15 died.
- Allegedly got the support of Sanjay Gandhi and Gyani Jail Singh who wanted a bigger religious icon to cut the votes of Akalis.
- Now competition between Bhinderwale and Akalis to get Sikh support.
- Both demanded ASR 1973 fulfilment.
- But methods of Akali were protesting on the streets while methods of Bhinderwale were targeted killings.
- June 1980- Khalistan was proclaimed in the Golden Temple by followers of Jagjit Singh Chouhan who was settled abroad. Proclamation was made also in the UK, US, and Canada.
- 1980 onwards, phase of protests by Akalis and killings by Bhindrawale supporters e.g.
 - a. Apr 1980- Gurcharan Singh, leader of Nirankaris, was shot dead in Delhi.
 - b. Sep 1981- Lala Jagat Narain, editor of Punjab Kesari, who wrote anti-communal politics articles shot dead in daylight.
- Bhindrawale was not arrested immediately and when arrested in Sep 1981, it was ensured only Sikh policemen arrested him. Then protests began in Punjab & he was released on grounds of lack of evidence within 26 days.
- This was a turning point in his popularity as the perception that the Indian State was afraid to act against him.
- November 1981- Bhindrawale made Golden Temple his headquarters. He set up a parallel govt eg settled disputes and cases + conducted a campaign for ASR1973.
- In April 1983, he came to Delhi with his armed supporters to demand the release of his supporters. Marched towards President House (Gyani Zail Singh), was detained but released.
- 1982- Negotiations on ASR1973 between Longowal & GOI failed. Major issues were Chandigarh & River Water Sharing.
- 1983- Akali MLAs resigned & thus suggested disloyalty to the Constitution of India.
- This was the product of competition for Sikh support between Bhindrawale & Akalis. Thus
- Akalis took a more radical step since Bhindrawale's popularity was rising.
- 15 Apr 1983- DIG A.S. Atwal was shot dead in the Golden Temple complex and his body could not be picked up for hours.
- Thus morale of the police crashed + Banks robberies followed + an exodus of Hindus began + Hindy Suraksha Sanghas set for defence and
- Hence centuries-old Hindu Sikh unity began collapsing.
- Bhindrawale stated that Sikhs are a separate community.
- He didn't demand Khalistan directly but stated that wouldn't refuse if offered + attacked the Central Govt e.g. referred to Indira Gandhi as Panditain & declared that wouldn't go to meet the PM and she could come to meet him if she wanted.
- He increased communal tensions further with hate speeches.
- By the end of 1983, he took residence in Akal Takht which has great symbolic value as it was from here that Gurus gave Hukumnamas
- Plus sikh warriors took blessings before fighting against the Mughals + Guru Gobind Singh compiled Guru Granth Sahib here.

3RD JUNE 1984- OPERATION BLUE STAR (03:35 PM)

- a. 100s of army men died & 100s of Bhindrawale supporters & Bhindrawale killed + the Golden Temple complex was damaged + tanks were used.
- b. It was not a well-planned operation i.e. not based on effective intelligence on military preparations inside the complex.
- c. Rampant communal violence followed
- d. Even neutral youth joined militancy
- e. Indira Gandhi was killed by her bodyguards on 31 Oct 1984f.
- f. Anti-Sikh riots in Delhi where police remained inactive for 3 days.
- g. Agitations by Akalis continued.

July 1985- Punjab Accords or Rajiv-Longowal Accords [not fully implemented]

- a. Compensation to those killed after 1 Aug 1982
- b. Rehabilitation for Sikhs who deserted the Army
- c. Chandigarh to Punjab
- d. Sarkaria Commission to deal with federal demands
- e. A Tribunal for River Water Sharing
- f. Promote Punjabi
- g. Sutlej Yamuna Link Canal construction to continue
- h. Hindi areas of Punjab to Haryana
- i. Merit to be only criterion for recruitment to the army.
- 1987-91: President Rule.

1988 Operation Blackthunder

- a. After Operation Bluestar & assassination of Indira Gandhi, militants believed that the police/army would never enter the Golden Temple again.
- Thus took haven in the Golden Temple
- b. Much better planned based on effective intelligence.
- c. Without any damage to Golden Temple, militants were flushed out and their leaders neutralized.
- 1992 elections- Congress came to power due to low voter turnout KPS Gill, IPS gave free hand to deal with militancy. He gave Gill Doctrine
- a. People don't support militants, they support the stronger faction as they fear for their security
- b. Thus Police should demonstrate that they are more powerful
- c. He was ruthless and eliminated militancy in Punjab
- d. The leadership of militants was targeted and eliminated.
- But in the process, civilians suffered either at the hands of militants or of police as there were allegations of rapes and murders.

Note: Refer to PPT for the Rajiv Gandhi era.

(The syllabus for the Post Independence class stands completed)