

2016

UPSC Civil Services Exam

[INDIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE]

A Brief Summary

Beginner's Note:

*For this section the recommended books (**India After Independence** by Bipan Chandra or **India After Gandhi** by Ramchandra Guha) are quite bulky. But if you have patience, read them once thoroughly and make your own notes out of them (I also did the same). You can google some of the topics and add to your notes. While reading these books, keep in mind that you need not memorize those points which are totally of political nature and remember only that much which is necessary to formulate a narrative of all the events.*

Don't miss the nationally and socially important events – understand their background, causes if any and their consequences on national democratic and socio-economic framework.

Always keep things manageable. It is not so important that how much you read, but how well you read. Keep in mind that whatever you read, you have to revise that also at times of mains exam. So, limit your study material.

Best of luck!

Nitin Sangwan

AIR 28 (2016), AIR 359 (2015), AIR 320 (2014)

Drop me a comment at: www.meandupsc.blogspot.in if you need some further help in the exam, suggestions or any major discrepancies in these notes for benefit of others.

Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country

COLONIAL LEGACY and ITS FALL OUTS

Colonialism and capitalism led to a complex integration of colonies into world economy in a subservient manner. Indian raw material was cheaply exported and finished goods were expensively imported which also destroyed domestic industries, handicrafts and handlooms. Ruined artisans failed to find alternative employment and crowded agriculture as sharecroppers and laborers. Modern industries that were developed were guided colonial interest and they were also stunted in their growth. They couldn't even replace the erstwhile homegrown cottage industries, handlooms and handicrafts. Before 1900, cotton, jute and tea dominated and before 1930s, cement, sugar and paper dominated. Hallmark of backwardness of Indian industry was virtual absence of capital goods and machinery industry and equipment were largely imported. Further, industrial development was highly uneven in spread. Modern industry contributed a meager 8% of national income at the time of independence. Similarly, electricity and banking was also grossly ignored.

This subservient and disadvantaged position led to extremely poor domestic savings – less than 3% of GNP, as compared to 33% today. Even this chunk of savings was misappropriated by the colonial rulers in form of economic drain, military and administrative spending. From 1890 to 1947, military spending amounted 50% of total government budget. State support to industries was zero in contrast to most of the European countries at that time. While free trade was

established with India no tariff protection was given to fledgling Indian industry which was done aggressively at home. Similarly, currency policy was manipulated in colonial favor.

Further, tax structure was highly iniquitous, as peasantry was heavily taxed and upper class like bureaucrats, landlords etc paid hardly any tax. In 1900, land revenue alone contributed more than 50% of government revenues and salt tax another 16%. As a result, poor investment and lack of modernization of agriculture lead to poor produce and stagnation. Moneylenders, landlords and middlemen made the situation worse and they too find exploitation of sharecroppers, tenants and laborers easier than investing in agriculture. Prime agricultural land was diverted to commercial crops leading to problems of food security as well. At the time of independence, 70% land was with landlords and landlessness was at historic high level of 28% at time of independence. Land holdings had fragmented to uneconomical sizes.

Better means of communication like railways were used not for development of hinterlands, but to make inroads for exports of rural goods. Railway freights rates were discriminatory and discouraged internal movement of goods and promoted external trade. India suffered many famines despite good connectivity. Last major famine was Bengal famine of 1943 which took toll of more than 30 lakh lives.

Another hallmark of backwardness was high proportion of rural population which stood at more than 80% at the time of independence. Dependency on agriculture increased from 67% in 1901 to more than 70% in 1947.

Education was also underdeveloped and technical education was even worse with only 7 engineering colleges at the time of independence. Similarly, health facilities were also poor and there were just 10 medical colleges by 1947 and epidemics were a regular phenomenon. Life expectancy was hardly 30 years. Medium of higher education was English throughout the country. It stifled development of local languages and created a gulf between educated intelligentsia minority and unlettered masses creating a social divide. Learning by rote was promoted at the expense of rational inquiry. Mass education and girls' education were grossly neglected.

By 1947, almost 50% bureaucrats were Indians, but top positions were still manned by non-Indians. Further, bureaucracy was replete with elite class and caste and posed a major challenge in desired social change after independence with its rigid and conservative outlook. Though ICS officers were largely upright, lower level officials were notoriously corrupt and corruption reached great heights during Second World War as government tried to increase control and taxes. It led to massive black-marketing and corruption.

There were some positive features of colonial rule as well. Communication means were well developed. Indian capitalist class also grew after 1914 and by end of Second World War, more than 60% of industry was driven by Indian capital. Indian capitalist class was more enterprising and took bold steps after 1914. Similarly, Indian capital had also made significant inroads in banking and insurance sector. Further, colonial rule also established modern principle of 'rule of

law' and judiciary was also relatively independent despite the fact that judicial system was expensive and detrimental to the poor. Further, for a long time judicial and administrative functions were not separated and bureaucracy wielded enormous power. Several liberties were also extended and press was also modernized. Constitutional reforms were started after 1857, though real power vested with colonial powers. Only 3% of Indians were able to vote by 1919 and just 15% by 1939. British also led administrative unification of India and through a uniform educational, judicial and civil structure they achieved union of India. But paradoxically, they simultaneously also pursued their divide and rule policy as well which culminated into participation and communalization of Indian society.

Just a few months before his death, Thakur Rabindranath wrote in 1941 '*The wheels of fate will someday compel the English to give up their empire. But what kind of India will they leave behind, what stark misery? When the stream of their centuries' administration run dry at last, what a waste of mud and filth will they leave behind them*'.

LEGACY of NATIONAL MOVEMENT

India derived its political and economic structure largely from colonial rule, but values and ideals were distinctively derived from national movement and they still serve as political and ethical benchmarks for vast population.

Indian national movement was an inclusive one accommodating wide ideological viewpoints. It was largely non-violent and included not only the elite leadership, but masses also. Ideas of civil liberties, democratic organization and tolerance were inculcated during national movement. Masses had already starting appreciating ideals of liberty and democracy as a result of mass involvement, active debate and, hence, were ready to utilize adult franchise soon after independence.

Congress when founded in 1885, as organized on democratic lines. It vouched for liberty of press and individual freedom and called for wider parliamentary reforms. Tilak proclaimed '*liberty of the press and liberty of speech give birth to a nation and nourish it*'. It had an accommodative approach and dissent was encouraged and listened to. It and other organizations were marked by their all-Indianess and call for a unified nation. There was an acknowledgement of common goal and diverse group always supported each other in time of crisis. Moderates defended extremist Tilak's right to speech and expression and similarly, non-violent congress persons lent extensive support to Bhagat Singh. Similarly, Public Safety Bill of 1928 and Trade Disputes Bill (to suppress trade unions and leftists) were unequivocally opposed by not only political leaders, but even by capitalists such as Ghanshyam Das Birla and Purushottamdas Thakurdas etc. National movement promoted dual objective of 'unity in diversity' and 'national integration' and hence promoted a 'composite national culture'.

Spirit of nationalism was not a result of colonial policies, but result of ardent work of nationalist leaders who took the idea of nation to every corner of India and help them identify their interests against colonial rulers. Idea of a nation was present even before colonial rule as the

notions of '*Bharat Varsha*' and '*Hindustan*' show which were in currency much earlier. Colonial consolidation only complemented the process which was already going on. Colonial rulers, in fact, tried to misguide Indians by saying that democracy is not fit for them.

Apart from these values, national movement also projected an image of strong and self-reliant India and an antipathy to economic imperialism. Both agriculture and industry were accorded high priority. 1931 Karachi Resolution on '*Fundamental Rights and Economic Program*' was presided over by Sardar Patel and drafted by Nehru echoed state participation in major field of economic self-reliance. Gandhiji primarily supported cottage industry, but said that he is not opposed to machines which are for the larger benefit of community and doesn't replace human labor. Agrarian reforms were identified as key focus area.

Removal of poverty was also accorded next priority to uprooting of colonialism along with goal of equality irrespective of caste, religion and gender. Karachi Session declared that '*every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right to freely process and practice his religion*'. Indians never criticized the British on religious lines they criticized their oppression and not the fact that they were Christians. Secularism never conflicted with religion and Gandhiji believed, politics and religion are not opposite to each other as politics is to be based on morality and all religion are source of morality. But later he also preached separation of two in wake of rising communalization of Indian society.

Movement however failed to reflect a strong anti-caste ideology and also couldn't avert partition and communalization of Indian society.

THE CONSTITUTION

India finally zeroed in on a federal government with a strong center. It had a peculiar Indian context in which the decision was taken. India had borne the scourge of partition and there were many cleavages in form of communalism, caste, regionalism etc which could be overcome only by a strong central leadership. There was also a strong need to give India a shape of single nation through emotional, social and political integration and a center leaning federation was a necessity rather than a desire. India, thus, emerged as a 'union' of states in which states had no right to secede. Unlike federation in which, states are brought together through an 'agreement' out of their own will, union made it clear that their existence is merely for administrative convenience.

EARLY YEARS

India inherited enormous challenges like poverty, deprivation, inequality, illiteracy, underdevelopment, communalism and so on at the time of independence however, the optimism was also no lesser. Jawahar Lal Nehru's famous speech '*Tryst with Destiny*' on the eve of Independence reflected it. One big advantage India had was a consensus on the goals which was a result of spirit of nationalism inculcated through long freedom struggle. Another one was a relatively stable political system.

Biggest task at hand was consolidation of India and realization of dream of true 'nationhood'. Unity of our nation was fragile and needed to be bolstered up amidst its legendary diversity of race, religion, caste, region and culture. Vision of secular India and idea of not only political freedom, but social and economic emancipation were the spirit behind.

India also aimed at self-sufficiency in economic field and hence truly dislodge the burden of dependency. Planned development was sought for social and economic justice apart from growth. Socialism was also set as a guiding light. Indian socialism was not an ideological dogma, but a broad guide to development and social change. According to Nehru *'Socialism or communism might help you to divide the existing wealth, but in case of India there is no wealth and all you can divide is poverty... How we can have a welfare state without wealth'*. So socialism was not a blind ideological goal, but it rather accommodated a lot of other ideas which were necessary for the development of India.

Three pillars of Nehruvian strategy of development strategy were – **planning** for rapid industrial and agricultural growth, a **public sector** to develop strategic industries and a **mixed economy**. Mixed economy was preferred earlier for lack of adequate resources, but private sector working under broad framework of planning. In the long run, state were to occupy commanding heights of the economy, owning and controlling all basic industries and strategic sectors of the economy. Public sector was also expected to generate revenues in long turn for government.

One of the effects of five year plans was that private enterprises were hamstrung by the government regulations and allowing public sector companies a free hand. Later, the same public sector which was thought of giving commanding heights to economy proved an inefficient juggernaut.

Another big achievement of India was a democratic polity based on universal adult franchise. In words of K M Panikkar, *'adult suffrage has many social implications far beyond its political significance. Many social groups previously unaware of their strength and barely touched by the political changes that had taken place, suddenly realized that they were in a position to wield power'*. It was a huge experiment and likes of Churchill predicted that it would fail. Democratization aimed that all challenges will be dealt with equal participation of all irrespective of one's status and capabilities. It was also realized that democracy was necessary in a country which aims at national integration. Democracy served on the one hand an empowering tool, a vent for dissent and dissatisfaction on the other. Democracy was also visualized as a tool of social change.

Gandhiji had foreseen the challenges that are ahead and commented that *'with the end of slavery and the dawn of freedom, all the weakness of the society are bound to come to the surface'*.

In social scene, caste was a big malady and condition of lower castes was still deplorable. Status of women was also no better, they had little inheritance rights and literacy was an abysmal 7.9%. There was also a lack of a civil code and polygamy was prevalent.

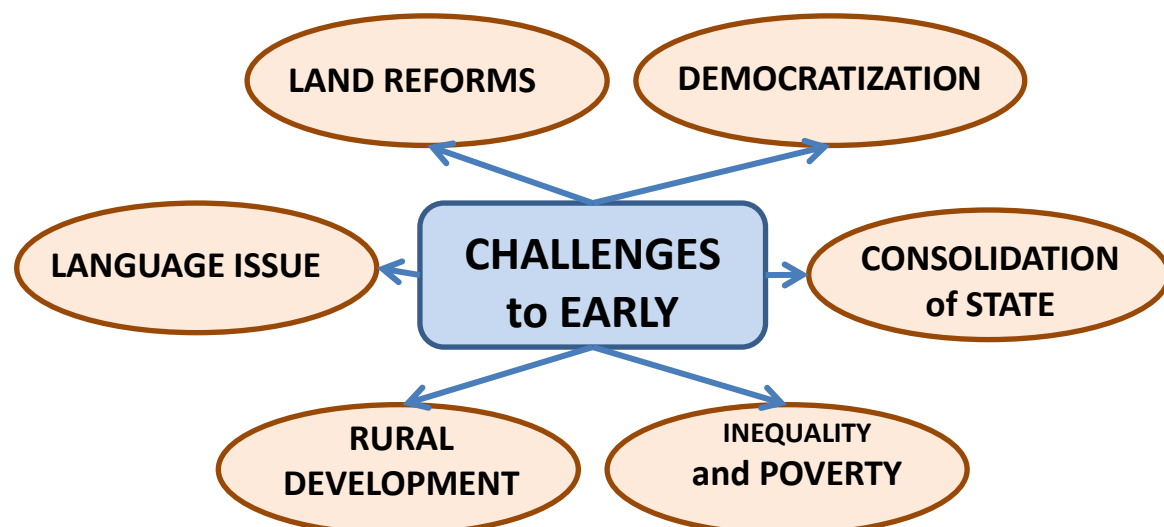
Another big challenge was meeting the expectations of people who had infinite hopes from a government of 'their own'. Universal adult franchise, lofty promises like '*Garibi Hatao*' of Indira Gandhi in 1971 and grass root mobilization further fuelled these expectations. Rise of regional parties in 1960s further stoked the fire of expectations.

Neveille Maxwell, a Times correspondent, in a series of articles wrote that Indian democracy will disintegrate under the burden of caste, communalism, regionalism, economic disparities, linguistic jingoism and other economic challenges. According to him, '*The great experiment of developing India in a democratic framework has failed*' and fourth general elections will be the last one. Imposition of emergency further made this doomsday prophecy look more like a reality. Early wars with China and Pakistan, death of charismatic leaders like Nehru and Indira, communal flares, linguistic violence and Dravida movement, secessionist movements in Kashmir, North-eastern states, rise of left wing extremism, apparent failure of land reforms, agrarian distress, elite capture of politics, uncontrolled population and so on further posed an existential question. It was advocated that unlettered masses of India require a leadership with iron fist and not liberal democracy which they are likely to squander away. Extreme leftists argued that Green Revolution would be turned into Red revolution and India too needs like a Russian Revolution of 1917 and workers revolution of China of 1952-3.

It was argued that democracy and integration of India are imposed from above and not a result of natural evolutionary process. An immature citizenry will fail to appreciate this change and will be eventually disillusioned by failing mountain of expectations. Despite all this skepticism, democracy in India had started deepening its roots aided by a stable early period in Indian polity. Early charismatic popular leaders and their accommodative stance helped in allaying many of the fears of various groups.

EARLY CHALLENGES

Early challenges included administrative and physical integration of nation, communal harmony, rehabilitation of refugees migrated from Pakistan, communist insurgency etc. Apart from these there were also social challenges like poverty, inequality, casteism etc and economic challenges like poor industrial base, low per capita income and investment, backward agriculture and so on and political challenges like building of a participative representative democracy. At international level, India needed to



project itself as a nation with independent foreign policy in wake of ensuing Cold War. Another challenge was to address the high hopes of a euphoric nation without belying them. The biggest of all of them being – holding of India together.

Holding **election** and **strengthening of democracy** on the basis of universal adult franchise was one of the biggest challenges for such a huge illiterate people. First general elections were held in 1951-52 and those above 21 years were eligible for vote. Symbols were used for easy identification of candidates. Opposition parties were liberally allowed including Jan Sangh – political front of RSS which was banned just 3 years ago – and CPI which was involved in insurgency just some times back. Nehru did vigorous campaigning in which he laid stress on voter education and awareness. In some places polls were celebrated like festivals and less than 5% votes were invalid which showed that people had used their rights judiciously. More than 40% of eligible women voted which showed their active participation as well. In total, 46% used their voting rights. Congress swept elections with more than 75% seats in Lok Sabha and 68% in states forming government in all of them, but still getting less than 50% voteshare. Communists were second largest single party in Lok Sabha. Further, independents and local regional parties garnered almost 27% of voteshare and 71 seats. It is said that it heralded one party domination in India. Opposition was small, but many leaders were of high caliber. First democratically formed communist government was formed in Kerala in 1957. It was however dismissed in 1959 by Nehru which is still criticised. Certain negative trends also started like – squabble for tickets, vote bank politics, shifting of loyalties. However, after the successful conduct of first three elections, it became apparent that democracy in India has taken deep roots and it defied the expectation of nay sayers. Constitutional framework was now accepted by one and all including communists and communalists.

Institution building was also a challenge. Independence of courts and press was carefully nurtured. Parliament as institution was also paid full respect by the early leaders and it was used as a platform of debates and discussion to the fullest. Despite congress dominance, opposition was strengthened. Nehru and others responded positively to their criticism and suggestions. States were allowed to work independently in spirit of federalism and Nehru never coerced them even if there was disagreement over issues like land reforms which were close to his heart. Congress rule at both center and states helped in smoothening this process. Similarly army was also insulated from civil administration and politics. Its size was kept under limits and steps were taken to re-inforce secular nature.

Another decision was taken with respect to **continuance of civil services** and especially Indian Civil Services (ICS). Nehru was a critic of civil services for their colonial legacy and conservatism. According to him, ICS was '*neither Indian, neither civil nor a service*'. While Nehru wanted to replace ICS with another type of administrative machinery which could better respond to needs of new India, Patel felt the doing so will create a great void and discontinuity dangerous to unity of country. According to him, it was because of their hard work and patriotism that India could be united. They were renamed as Indian Administrative Services, but it is also blamed that we failed to build their character suitable to our needs. It is said that administration has actually

deteriorated over the years due to corruption, feudalistic mindset, political nexus, inaccessibility and so on.

Another challenge was developing the field of **science and technology**. Nehru was well aware of the role of science and technology in alleviating poverty and backwardness. He himself assumed chairmanship of Indian Council of Scientific Research (ICSR) which guided and financed national laboratories and scientific institutions and opened first national laboratory – National Physical Laboratory – in 1947 itself. First five IITs were opened on lines of MIT, USA starting with establishment of IIT Kharagpur in 1952. Atomic Energy Commission was formed in 1948 with Homi Jehangir Bhabha as its chairman for development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. First nuclear reactor also went critical in 1956 in Trombay. Similarly, in field of space TERLS was established in 1962. However, Indian scientific endeavor also suffered due to hierarchical structure, brain drain and high entry barriers.

Perhaps biggest of all challenges was in field of **social change**. India had tacitly declared its socialistic agenda through initiation of land reforms, labor laws, progressive taxation, expansion of education and health, planned economic development and rapid expansion of public sector. Untouchability was abolished in constitution and a commissioner for SCs and STs was established. Towards upliftment of women, Hindu Code Bill was passed in parliament in form of four separate acts and provided for – right to property and maintenance, raised age of marriage and consent, abolished polygamy and gave them right to divorce. However, similar reforms were not introduced in case of Muslim women and neither uniform civil code was introduced.

Rural upliftment was another big challenge and two major programs were launched in form of Community Development Program (CDP), 1952 and Panchayati Raj, 1959. CDP was launched in 55 blocks of 100 villages each and aimed at addressing all aspects of rural life like agriculture, health, education and infrastructure with the help of local community. It aimed at self-reliance, building capacity and leadership at rural level and augmenting durable rural assets and institutions. It was also accompanied by National Extension Services and achieved success in major extension work – better seeds, fertilizers, etc. It also led to building of basic infrastructure in form of roads, tanks, primary health setups etc. However it was gross failure on its objective of local involvement and instead it raised expectations and government reliance. It became highly bureaucratic and BDOs became center piece of it. Major gains were usurped by the rural elites and powerless landless got little benefit out of it. Balwant Rai Mehta Committee was appointed to evaluate it and it recommended establishment of a Panchayati Raj framework for decentralisation of developmental administration which happened in form of a 3-tier structure in various states. However, like CDP, it too proved dead duck with states showing little enthusiasm and bureaucracy showing little willingness to loosen its grip over rural administration.

Pursuance of **independent foreign policy** and an ability to raise her voice in international arena was also a challenge for India. Concrete shape to such ideas was given in form of '**Non-Aligned Movement**', principled distance from world superpowers and non-involvement in Cold War. It

doesn't meant indifference to others, but avoidance of only the unreasonable. It never came in way of strengthening our relations with the USSR and nor did it came in way of India's joining of Commonwealth. Niether it meant utopian pacifism as India used force when it realized that it is necessary to do so as in case of 1947, 1965 and 1971 wars. It was agreed that developing countries cannot afford to waste precious resources in rivalaries and hence India neiwther joied nor approved regional west supported blocs like Baghdad Pact, SEATO (South East Asian Treaty Organization), CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) and so on. Western thinkers tried to malign Indian approach by caling it as '*immoral neutrality*', however it was rebuffed by India by stressing that non-alignment meant deciding issues on their merit, shunning of colonialism and fascism, believing in their own strengths, world peace, disarmament and democratization of international relations. India supported the cause of colonies and development of newly independent countries. Towards peaceful coexistence, Nehru also devised '**Panchsheel**' doctrine influenced from Buddhism which called for mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. Even before independence, 'Asia Relations Conference' was held in Delhi in March 1947 attended by 20 nations which set tone for independence of Asian countries. Another one was called in 1948 against Dutch (Netherlands or Holland) aggression in Indonesia in an attempt to recolonize it and it resolved that Asian countries will deny shores to Dutch ships. Another landmark event was 'Bandung Afro Asian Conference', 1955 held in Indonesia. It passed a resolution for world peace and dangers of nuclear weapons and it proved a precursor to 'Belgrade Non-Alignment Conference', 1961 under leadership of Nehru, Naseer of Egypt and Tito of Yugoslavia. India also remained active member of the international bodies like UN, IMF, World Bank etc and sent its forces actively in international peacekeeping operations. Stance of non-alignment also helped in ensuring economic interests of India and it got help from both Western countries and Soviet union. Its military procurement net was also cast widely which shows its balanced approach, reduced excessive dependency on one country and better bargaining. It got Hunter and Canberra aircrafts from UK, MI-4 Helicopters and MIG interceptors from Soviet, Toofani aircrafts from France, Jonga jeeps and Nissan trucks from Japan and so on. India also skillfully managed its relations with other countries. On one hand through various agreements in 1964-65 Soviet Union became the biggest defense partner, on the other hand, it made US a key ally in bringing Green Revolution.

EARLY LEADERSHIP

Leadership included Nehru accompanied by Congressmen like Sardar Patel, C Rajagopalachari, Morarji Desai, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad etc and outside Congress, socialists like Acharya Narendra Dev, J P Narayana, communists like P C Joshi, Ajoy Ghosh, Dalit leaders like Baba Ambedkar and so on. Congress enjoyed enormous support at that time, and leaders from other parties though disagreed on certain issues, there was broad consensus on larger issues related to social change and national development. Constituent Assembly was highly representative from all segments and so was the first cabinet which included 5 non-Congress persons (out of total 14) like liberal communalist Syama Prasad Mukharjee, Ambedkar, John Mathai etc. S Radha

Krishnan first vice-president and second president was never a Congressman.

Patel has been grossly misunderstood leader and was accused by leftists for being rightist and by rightist for following Nehruvian socialism. He shared the ideals of national movement and was strictly opposed to communalism and landlordism. He did supported capitalism, but for the growth of nation and social development and this was also the reason that he supported right to property as a fundamental right despite opposition of Nehru. He had an austere lifestyle and had a zero tolerance for corruption. He died in December 1950 leaving behind a unified India.

RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN

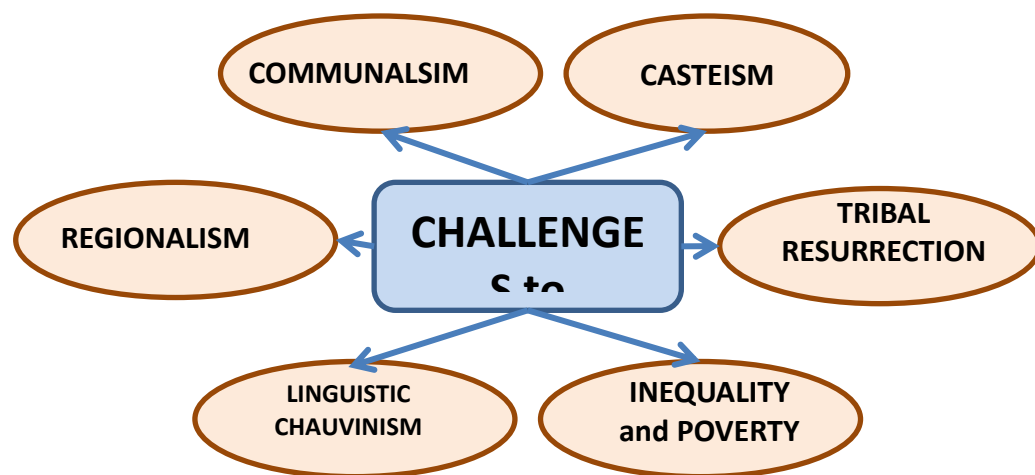
Despite the bitterness generated by Kashmir issue and communal massacre, India tried to adopt a generous and friendly attitude towards Pakistan. It gave Rs 550 million to Pakistan for its assets in India on insistence of Gandhiji going on fast. It also tried to mollify communal sentiments and urged Pakistan to protect minorities as a matter of duty. Nehru even signed 'Nehru Liaquat' pact with the then PM of Pakistan to prevent communal killings of Hindus in east Pakistan and Muslims in West Bengal. That, however, didn't stop killings and refugee immigration. India also showed its generousness in Indus Water Treaty which was facilitated by World Bank and allowed Pakistan to take major share of its waters.

CONSOLIDATION of INDIA

Indian national leadership was aware even before independence that integration and unification is a long ongoing process and is beset with challenges. The biggest challenge came in form of partition. Even if physical and territorial

integration is achieved, in words of Nehru, '*psychological and emotional integration remain the biggest challenge*', given the enormous diversity of India. There were more than 1,500 languages and dialects out of which 14 major ones were recognized by constitution in 8th Schedule. There were tribes, there were minorities in terms of language and religion and so on. Challenge for India was to utilize this diversity in a manner that India can leverage upon that and turn it into 'unity in diversity'.

Broad strategy for consolidation was a multi-pronged one involving political and territorial integration, secularism and anti-communalism, mobilisation of political and institutional resources, economic development and adoption of such policies which promote social justice in



society. Constitutional and political structure was made conducive for the demands of diversity as well as need for unity in diversity. Decentralisation was distinguished from disintegration. Various means of positive discrimination were provided and a promise of free and fair election served as a guarantee of participation of everyone. Parliament acted as a unifying force.

Political parties of all hues and ideology – whether Socialist Party, CPI, Jan Sangha or Swatantra Party – were mainly all-India in character and promoted bigger goal of national integration as well. Congress also had people of all hues in it and it itself accommodated diverse ideologies from rightists to socialists. Most of the national leaders – whether from Congress or outside – were a product of national movement and were not tied to any narrow regional ideology.

Indian Army and administrative services were also agents of national integration. They were merit based and had a pan-Indian outlook. All India recruitment free from caste, color, region and religion bias and common training inculcated a common national character in these services.

Similarly, in field of economy as well Industrialization was carried out in all parts of nation and were even taken to rural and backward areas. Big industries became a symbol of national endeavor and unity. Economic development was seen as necessary for national consolidation and planned development was pursued.

Center state relations were also aptly handled and there were fewer occasions of confrontations. Center adopted an accommodative approach and Congress rule in both center and state helped this cause.

An independent, non-aligned foreign policy also supported consolidation process as it freed India from an ideological bias.

In social sphere, steps were taken to minimize inequalities and disparity through various active steps like positive discrimination for weaker sections, land reforms, community development program, integrated rural development and so on. However, caste and other social evils were most inadequately addressed and it was on the social front that integration agenda lagged behind the most and as a result caste discrimination continued unabated and also took form of casteism or mobilisation of caste identities for electoral gains.

POLITICAL and TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION

Accession of princely states was one of the most daunting tasks. Princely states occupied almost 40% of the colonial territory and were more than 500 in numbers. During British rule they enjoyed paramountcy and were insulated from both external aggression and their own people under British patronage. Many of them started to think of independent existence after independence was declared as amidst ambiguous statement of British PM Clement Atlee that paramountcy is not transferrable to either India or Pakistan. British government however later clarified the matter and urged the states to join either of the dominion, but a few states have made their mind.

Presence of such independent states interspersed within India could have posed significant security, political and administrative challenges threatening the hard earned liberty and integrity of the nation itself. Further, people of these states were equal stakeholders in national movement and had their own aspirations of liberty and pan-Indian nationalism. National movement and its leaders have also long believed that power lies in the hands of people and not the princely rulers. State People's Conference has also been demanding democratic transfer of power and integration with larger national identity since long.

Integration of such states was done through both pressure and persuasion in two stages under able guidance of Sardar Patel who was also helped by V P Menon. Some of them joined at the time of formation of constituent assembly out of sheer patriotism or wisdom, others lingered on. Patel urged states to join before 15th August 1947 with lenient terms or face ire of their own people and perhaps government of India as well. As result all but three states – Junagarh, Kashmir and Hyderabad – have joined India before D-day.

Junagarh lied in Saurashtra and today's Gujarat and had no border touching with Pakistan, but its ruler Nawab still wanted to merge into Pakistan despite opposition from its subjects majority of which were Hindus. Pakistan encouraged Nawab to sign accession document, but people launched a movement and Nawab had to flee to Pakistan. Indian government was then invited to intervene by its Dewan and India army was sent in. A plebiscite was held in which overwhelming support was there in favor of joining India.

In **Kashmir**, Hari Singh was a Hindu ruler with 75% of Muslim population and he was also averse to idea of joining either India or Pakistan out of his apprehensions regarding both democracy and communalism. Popular political forces led by Sheikh Abdullah wanted to join India on the other hand. India, however, remained non-committal and left it to the people themselves to decide as was done in case of Junagarh and Hyderabad. Pakistan on the other disliked idea of plebiscite and launched an attack taking along several Pathan tribesmen in October 1947 and a panicked Hari Singh sought Indian military intervention. India when consulted the then Governor General Mountbatten, was advised that India cannot intervene as per international law before a formal instrument of accession is not signed by Kashmir. As a result, Sheikh Abdullah was appointed administrator and India sent troops to valley capturing most of the part including Sri Nagar and fight ensued for other parts. Fearing a full-fledged war, India referred the matter to UN for Pakistan's vacation of valley and restoration of peace on advice of Mountbatten which it later regretted. UK and US dominated security council sided Pakistan in highly partisan manner (as UK had a soft corner for Muslim League rather than Congress and US saw Pakistan as a buffer against rising Soviet Communism) and it came as a great shock to India. Russia also didn't lend support to India at that time as it was not sure of India's credentials and saw India joining Commonwealth as indicator of India's imperialist bias. Ceasefire was declared on 31st December 1948 and Kashmir was virtually divided along ceasefire line which today is known as 'LoC'. In 1951, the UN passed a resolution calling for a referendum subject to withdrawal of troops by Pakistan which never happened and hence plebiscite could also not happen. Later elections were held in Kashmir and Constituent Assembly was formed in Kashmir which also

ratified the accession of Kashmir to India and hence rendered the very question of plebiscite irrelevant. Pakistan continues to claim Kashmir as a part of it on the basis of two nation theory (which India never accepted as Pakistan is not the only home to Muslims of India), but India sees its accession as a testimony to its adherence to principle of secularism.

Hyderabad was ruled by Nizam who was autocratic ruler. Indian government even made some concessions when it signed a standstill agreement hoping that Nizam will introduce a representative form of government. But Nizam started to expand its military base on encouragement from Pakistan and wanted to take advantage of Indian engagements in Kashmir. Meanwhile, three important developments happened in the state. First, there was rapid growth of a militant Muslim communal organization '*Ittihad ul Muslimin*' and its paramilitary wing '*Razakars*'. Secondly, in on 7th August 1947, Hyderabad State Congress also launched a powerful Satyagraha demanding democratization. It was ruthlessly suppressed by Nizam and Razakars and more than 20,000 were imprisoned as well. Thirdly, peasants of Telangana region led by Communist leadership defended the Razakar attacks and also attacked landlords and redistributed their land and peasants and landless. All this led to immense unpopularity of Nizam and government of India became impatient and despite its continued efforts Nizam dragged on his feet. Finally government of India launched a military operation in September 1948 and Hyderabad was acceded to India. Nizam was given favorable and generous treatment and he was made '*Rajpramukh*' or nominal head and was even allowed to keep his enormous wealth and was also given a hefty Privy Purse amount. With merger of Hyderabad, merger of princely states with India was complete. It was also a victory of Indian secularism as Muslims in significant numbers supported cause of people both within and from outside the state.

Second stage and the difficult stage of integration of princely states started in December 1947. Many of the small states were merged together and five new unions were formed – Rajasthan, PEPSU (Patiala and East Punjab States Union), Travancore Cochin, Madhya Bharat and Saurashtra. Erstwhile rulers were given Privy Purse with constitutional guarantee of it. Such concessions to erstwhile princes were criticized a lot, but they were a small cost of national integration and growth of democratic polity in pan-India. Further, it in some way compensated for the loss of territories to Pakistan as a result of partition.

Another issue regarding integration was presence of French and Portuguese settlements along the coastal areas. Pondicherry a French settlement and Goa a Portuguese settlement were major ones. French were more reasonable and after due negotiations, they handed over the settlements to India in 1954. Portuguese were more adamant and were supported by NATO allies like US and UK who were miffed by Indian stand in East Asia. People of Goa protested, but they were suppressed. Seeing little international pressure over Portugal, Indian government finally moved its army into Goa in 1961 and territorial and political integration of India was complete after 14 long years of efforts.

COMMUNALISM and INTEGRATIONAL ISSUES

Communalism in India was largely a result of divide and rule policy of the British and it was later

strengthened by the two nation theory of Pakistan and hatred bred by it for all non-Muslims. It later gave birth to a counter force in terms of ideas of a potential Hindu State.

Partition triggered off a communal bomb which claimed more than 5 lakh lives, making it one of the greatest human tragedies and it once threatened the social and political fabric of newly independent nation. Bengal and Bihar were worst affected. Gandhiji made extensive tours and urged both communities to placate their members. Government of India showed exemplary responsiveness and no measure was left unturned. Army was called in streets at time and national leadership itself came to fore. Nehru used persuasions as well as threats in form of resignation. As a result, the situation was under control within a few months and minority Muslims were given a sense of reassurance. Communalism further retreated with the death of Gandhiji who was mourned equally by both Hindus and Muslims and Nehru declared on All India radio that '*the light has gone out of our lives*'. Some of RSS cadre even celebrated death of Gandhiji and RSS was banned which was however lifted in 1949 on the condition that RSS will limit itself to only cultural activities and not dabble into politics and will have a written constitution.

Communal riots were over, but not communalism as an ideology. Nehru made extensive public speeches and took active efforts to discourage it and even compared it with fascism. He even advocated a ban on political organization on the basis of religion and he was supported by Sardar Patel and Rajgopalachari as well.

Next big challenge was rehabilitation of Hindu immigrants and refugees as fallout of communal riots in Pakistan. Challenge from East Bengal was greater as refugees continued to come for several years till 1971 due to intermittent riots. While refugees in Punjab and UP etc were able to settle relatively easily as plenty of land was left by the emigrant Muslims in these areas, but it was not so in case of Bengal. Linguistic and cultural barriers also prevented refugees from East Pakistan to look beyond West Bengal and as a result the refugees were forced to abandon their traditional agriculture occupation and take to menial tasks in crowded urban and semi-urban areas leading to considerable impoverishment of once prosperous Bengal.

LINGUISTIC ISSUES and CONSOLIDATION CHALLENGE – THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY

Back in the 1920s, the Indian National Congress – the main party of the freedom struggle – had promised that once the country won independence, each major linguistic group would have its own province. However, after independence the Congress did not take any steps to honour this promise in wake of horrors of partition and rising disruptive forces on parochial lines.

In the debate in the constituent assembly over the issue of language, A compromise was finally arrived at: namely, that while Hindi would be the “official language” of India, English would be used in the courts, the services, and communications between one state and another.

Issue of language snowballed into one of the biggest issues threatening the socio-cultural integration. Language emerged as an emotive issue which people identified with their core

cultural identities. Language had other repercussions in form of promotion of culture, opportunities in government job and access to political power. Issue of language became a major one over two issues – one, controversy over declaration of official language and second, linguistic re-organization of states.

Issue of 'official' language became one of Hindi and non-Hindi one. National leadership has already brushed aside the idea that one 'national' language is necessary for national unity and instead averred that India was a multi-lingual country and will remain so. Constitutional has also de facto given many Indian languages the status of national languages through their inclusion in 8th schedule. Importance of local language in cultural and educational development was recognized way back from times of freedom struggle movement. However, official work could not be carried in so many languages and therefore issue of selecting an official language arose and only English and Hindi were two viable options for their wide reach. But English was already rejected during national movement for its foreign roots, a symbol of the raj and being the language of the oppressors who used it to exclude the masses. Gandhiji said, '*genius of a people couldn't unfold nor their culture flower in a foreign language*'. Though it was acknowledged as a world language and a window for scientific and other literature, it was acknowledge that it should not displace indigenous languages. Hindi or Hindustani (a language in Devnagri or Urdu script which evolved over time as a hybrid of many languages like Sanskrit, Urdu, Hindi, and Persian and so on) was an obvious choice as it had also played a mass mobilizing role during independence struggle as well. Congress also promoted its maximum use in its meetings. So, in constitutional debates it was asked whether it should replace English and in how much time?

Partition changed the scenario and votaries of Hindi in Devnagri became vociferous and dubbed Hindustani in Urdu script a symbol of secession and partition. Even in vote in Congress, Hindi supporters won. Southern states saw adoption of Hindi as official language as detrimental to their interests as they considered it as a language with shallow history and literature. It was also viewed as putting them on back foot in matters of public employment and political partition. As a result, a compromise was arrived that Hindi was adopted only gradually and total transition from English to Hindi will happen in 1965. Further, government in the meantime will encourage its use and a Joint Parliamentary Committee will periodically review its progress. It was hoped that with spread of education, Hindi will make its reach wider and hence resistance to it will decrease.

However this didn't happen as 1965 approached. Further, non-Hindi speakers were also irritated by the fanatic zeal with which Hindi speakers tried to impose it on others rather than do it through mild persuasion. They wasted their energies on strident propaganda rather than developing meaningful literature and arousing curiosity of others in the language. Further, Hindi protagonists didn't make any efforts in simplifying and standardizing the language to make it suitable for masses, but they instead sanskritised it on the name of maintaining purity of the language.

After recommendation of Official Language Commission, 1956 that Hindi should progressively

replace English by 1965 and consequent recommendation of a Joint Parliamentary Committee, president in 1960 announced a slew of measures to promote Hindi including a Central Hindi Directorate, translation of major works, laws etc in Hindi and so on. This aroused suspicion among non-Hindi states and open opposition to Hindi emerged from non-Hindi areas. C Rajgopalachari, who headed '*Hindi Pracharini Sabha*' of South before independence declared that '*Hindi is as foreign to non-Hindi speaking people as English to the protagonists of Hindi*'. Protagonists of Hindi on the other hand accused government of dragging its feet over the issue and some like Dr Ram Manohar Lohiya and his party Samyukta Socialist Party and Jan Sangh launched militant movements for immediate imposition of Hindi as official language. Nehru tried to assuage the fears of non-Hindi speaking areas by declaring in Parliament over and again that English will continue to be used so long as non-Hindi people wish it to and not as decided by Hindi speaking people. Nehru wanted to make adoption of Hindi language as official language as a gradual natural process and not the one which is bounded by any deadline. Parliament also passed 'Official Language Act, 1963' to allay the fears of non-Hindi regions as it had provisions that English will continue to remain official language along with Hindi even beyond 1965 contrary to stipulated constitutional deadline of 1965. But all these measures didn't help. Death of Nehru in 1964 and inept handling of the matter by Lal Bahadur Shastri further aggravated the situation. Even it was declared that Hindi will now be alternative language in UPSC exams. Non-Hindi speakers perceived that it will put Hindi speakers in an undue advantageous position.

As 26th January approached near, atmosphere became tense and a strong anti-Hindi movement started brewing especially in Tamil Nadu. DMK called for observing 26th January as a day of mourning. Students groups actively agitated and soon the issue snowballed into violent protests. Four students even self-immolated and 2 cabinet ministers resigned. Indira Gandhi was minister of Information and Broadcasting at that time and she rushed to Madras amidst crisis and assured the agitators of a fair deal and as a result after deliberation in Congress, government revised its stand. When Indira became PM in 1966, southern states were further reassured of safeguarding of their interests and Official Language Act 1963 was amended to suit their demands and it now unambiguously provided for continuation of English along with Hindi so long as non-Hindi areas wanted it. Provision of using provincial language in UPSC was also made by parliament. A new three language formula was also promoted according to which non-Hindi area students were to compulsorily learn Hindi apart from English and their vernacular. Similarly, Hindi speaking students have to learn a non-Hindi language. Since 1967, language is no longer a barrier to consolidation and has in fact helped in consolidation. Both English and Hindi have progressed well due to various factors and even government has made active efforts in promoting Hindi which has also borne fruits.

LINGUISTIC ISSUES and CONSOLIDATION CHALLENGE – LINGUISTIC RE-ORGANIZATION of STATES

Language is not just a medium of communication, but a tool for socio-cultural development. During freedom struggle it was acknowledged that vernaculars are essential tools for mass mobilization and education of masses. Administrative can be effective only if, it is conducted in

the language that masses understand. So, even Congress started to promote working of its regional branches in vernaculars after 1919 and Gandhiji even proclaimed that '*redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis was necessary if provincial languages were to grow to their full height*'. Thus, there was a strong case present for linguistic re-organization for effective administration and educational and cultural development of people. In fact after the Nagpur session of Congress in 1920 the principle was recognized as the basis of the reorganization of the Indian National Congress party itself. Many Provincial Congress Committees were created by linguistic zones, which did not follow the administrative divisions of British India.

However, the agenda was not pursued so vigorously immediately post-independence as there were other more important issues were at hand in form of maintaining communal harmony, war with Pakistan over Kashmir, inclusion of princely states and so on. Further, it was feared that linguistic re-organization may promote linguistic chauvinism and rivalry and vitiate the atmosphere which may prove counter-productive for national integration. The need for postponement was also felt because the fate of the Princely States had not been decided. Also, the memory of partition was still fresh. It was also felt that this would draw attention away from other social and economic challenges that the country faced. The central leadership decided to postpone matters.

For these reasons, first Justice Dhar Commission or Linguistic Provinces Commission of 1948 and another committee JVP Committee in the same year headed by Jawahar Lal, Vallabhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya advised against creation of states on linguistic lines and instead they recommended creation of states on the basis of administrative convenience for unity, security and economic development of the nation. However, demand for linguistic reorganization of certain regions became vociferous and especially of a Telugu speaking region of Andhra out of Madras province. JVP report acknowledged this demand, but also highlighted that Madras city was a contentious area for the two sides.

In a dramatic turn of events, in October 1952 a popular freedom fighter Patti Sriramalu died as a result of his 58 day long hunger strike in support of separate Andhra and rioting and protests ensued following which government hurriedly announced creation of Andhra on linguistic lines out of existing Madras province and Tamil Nadu was also created. As a result of it, many other demands also made and government was forced to appoint 'State Reorganization Commission' headed by Faiz Ali, K M Panikkar and Hridayantah Kunzru in 1953 to look into the issue and it submitted its report in 1955. It recommended that states should primarily be reorganized on linguistic lines and secondary only on the basis of administrative convenience. It also recommended non-reorganization of Bombay and Punjab. It drew some adverse reaction, but government implemented its recommendations with some modifications and brought 'State Reorganization Act, 1956'. It led to creation of 14 states and 6 UTs. Strong opposition was witnessed in Maharashtra and 80 people were killed in clashes. Government decided to reorganize Bombay as Gujarat and Maharashtra with Bombay as centrally administered unit. But it too was opposed and finally after long tussle, Gujarat with Ahmadabad and Maharashtra with Bombay were formed in 1960.

Punjab was reorganized later as an exception to the principle of linguistic re-organization as it was opined by many as rather organized on 'communal' basis with idea of separate Sikh area as central to its formation led by Akali Dal and Hindi region led by Jan Sangh. Idea of separate states was already rejected in 1956 by State Reorganization Commission as well as national leadership as the demand was trying to camouflage communal intentions as linguistic ones. When PEPSU was merged with Punjab in 1956 reorganization drive it included three different areas into it viz hilly, Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking. Indira Gandhi finally conceded to the demand in November 1966 and Punjab and Haryana were created and some Pahari areas were merged with Himachal Pradesh. It also marked completion of state reorganization for the time being.

Contrary to apprehensions, state reorganization on linguistic lines didn't hamper the federal structure and unity of our nation and have instead helped in consolidating and integrating it. It has led to rationalization of the map which was arbitrarily drawn by the alien rulers as per their convenience and in order of their conquests of Indian regions. Language question could have posed difficult problems for its strong emotive quotient if it would have not been timely addressed. After reorganization, language issue has not been ever politicized significantly and has in fact promoted better administration in homogeneous political units in languages that masses understand.

Outcomes of linguistic re-organization –

- I. *The path to politics and power was now open to people other than the small English speaking elite.*
- II. Linguistic reorganization also gave some uniform basis to the drawing of state boundaries.
- III. It did not lead to disintegration of the country as many had feared earlier. On the contrary it strengthened national unity. Above all, the linguistic states underlined the acceptance of the principle of diversity.
- IV. Gandhi on Linguistic Basis - *"..if linguistic provinces are formed, it will also give a fillip to the regional languages.*

However certain issues still remained unresolved. Issue of minority languages still remains. Even in states which are created on linguistic lines, there are minorities in those states which speak different language and they don't speak the official language of the state. There is around 18% population which falls in this category and separate states cannot be created for such small communities. To allay their apprehensions of development, constitution has also made certain provisions in form of Article 30 to establish and administer educational institutions. A constitutional amendment was also made after 1956 re-organization that state should make adequate provision for the education of such minorities in their mother tongue. It also provides for appointment of a 'Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities' to investigate and review the safeguards provided for such minorities. However, despite such measures ground reality is

different and more so in case of tribal minority languages. Urdu, which is one of the biggest minority languages, has not been accorded status of official language in even single state except Jammu and Kashmir. It also suffered because it was wrongfully associated with the communal question. In lack of official support, the language declined considerably, but still maintains a strong presence through newspapers, cinema and cultural activities.

TRIBAL INTEGRATION and NATIONAL CONSOLIDATION

Tribals in India are a very heterogeneous community. There are more than 400 tribal communities as per 1971 census, some like Negis and Meenas well assimilated in mainstream, others like tribes of North eastern states still retaining original cultural identities.

During British period, they were grossly isolated at times and were exploited on the other by merchants, administrators, forest officials, money-lenders and so on. They primarily depended on forests which were alienated from them. Their unique culture also came under threat from outsiders like missionaries. In most cases, they were alienated from their lands as well. Their anger was also vented out in form of many uprisings during colonial period. Colonial rule left them in gross suspicion and insecure and their 'integration' into Indian nation became a challenge as India had already witnessed the ill effects of policies of 'isolation' and 'assimilation' in past. So, Nehru and other leaders saw a middle path in form of integrative approach and said '*tribal areas have to progress and have to progress in their own way*'. Tribals had to be developed economically, socially and politically, but as per their own genius. Their forest and land rights have to be acknowledged. Their language and culture has to be preserved.

Provisions were also made in the constitution itself. Article 46 called for their educational and economic development without injustice and exploitation. Similarly, special provisions were made for tribal areas and governors were given additional responsibility. State and central laws have to be modified to be applicable in these areas. Right to Property and Right to free travel and residence were curtailed in these areas. Seats were reserved in legislatures for them. National Commission for Scheduled Tribes was also setup. Tribal Advisory Councils were setup in areas with tribal population.

However, execution of above ideas remained far from satisfaction and tribals lagged behind in the developmental race and tribal areas are still exploited by the money-lenders, forest officials, merchants and traders, forest contractors and land grabbers. Their ignorance of law has also made them even more vulnerable. Their educational performance have remained very low and little attention has been paid on education in their own language despite constitutional directives. As a result of this, there have been many protest movements, violent actions and vociferous demands for their development in post-independence period. Antagonism of tribals towards non-tribals is another grave development. In many areas tribals have been outnumbered by the outsiders and it has further fuelled their anger.

Manipur was a Monarchy at the time of Independence, however it signed the Instrument of Accession on the conditions that its autonomy will be maintained. But people wanted self rule

and as a result Maharaja of Manipur ordered elections of assembly in 1948. These were the first election in India after independence and Congress came to power. After elections, the state became a constitutional monarchy. In the Legislative Assembly of Manipur there were sharp differences over the question of merger of Manipur with India. While the state Congress wanted the merger, other political parties were opposed to this. The Government of India succeeded in pressurising the Maharaja into signing a Merger Agreement in September 1949, without consulting the popularly elected Legislative Assembly of Manipur. This caused a lot of anger and resentment in Manipur, the repercussions of which are still being felt.

Tribals of North East were subjected to high degree of isolation during British rule and as a result of it, they were able to preserve their unique identities, little land was owned by outsiders, they remained in majority in the areas they resided, but all this at the cost of their underdevelopment. This area also remained politically isolated as well and was hence untouched by ideas of nationalism and a common unifying bond. Special needs of North east tribes were addressed through provisions of 6th Schedule which is applicable only to tribes of North East. It provided for 'tribal autonomous districts' and 'regional councils' which could work independently and perform some of legislative and judicial functions as well. However, problems arose in tribal areas for their threat perception and integration issues. Hill tribals had little cultural affinity with those in plains of Assam and Bengal and they were apprehensive that people from plains will intrude into their areas and will ultimately take control over resources and cultural identities. Political leadership also failed to perceive this development and it aggravated over time and in mid 1950s, a demand for separate hill state arose in Assam to which government didn't pay any serious attention. When Assamese was made the sole official language ignoring other tribal languages in 1961, protest voices got further louder and it culminated into first creation of Meghalaya state within state Assam in 1969 and later a full state in 1972. UTs of Manipur and Tripura were also granted statehood.

Though transition to statehood of Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh was smooth, it was not so in case of **Nagaland** and Mizoram. Naga areas were totally isolated during British rule and after Independence, government of India sought to integrate them, but they opposed in favor of a separate independent state under leadership of A Phizo and British officers and missionaries support. In 1955, a violent campaign was launched by Nagas and they declared independence from Assam and India. To this government of India responded with a firm foot and sent army and prolonged negotiations were also pursued along with. After army intervention, rebellions back was broken and more moderate leader Dr Imkongliba accepted the offer of separate Naga state which came into existence in 1963. Declaration of separate state led to decline of insurgency which saw sporadic outbursts with Chinese, East Pakistani and Burmese support. Army also gained some unpopularity due to some unpleasant incidents.

A few years later, similar situation developed in autonomous district of **Mizo** in Assam. They were relatively settled with the idea of being part of India, but inadequate measures during 1959 famine and later declaration of Assamese as official language stoked the secessionist tendencies and Mizo National Front (MNF) was formed with Laldenga as its leader and tacit

support from China and East Pakistan. It declared independence in 1966 and launched violent insurgency which was met by tough stance of Indian army. Ladenga and others fled into East Pakistan and Mizoram was given status of a UT in 1973. In 1986, when MNF and Laldenga surrendered, government also softened its stance and invited them into mainstream announcing full statehood to Mizoram with Laldenga as its first chief minister in 1987.

Case of **Jharkhand** was different. It also had 1/3rd tribal population and Jharkhand area was generally poor and exploited despite presence of mineral resources. Early leaders like Jaipal mobilized support in 1950s with tribal identity as a rallying point, but soon realized that larger population was non-tribal and hence the idea didn't work. In 1970s Jharkhand Mukti Morcha led by Shibu Soren redefined the strategy and took both the tribals and non-tribals together claiming that north Bihar and other outsiders have led to their exploitation and underdevelopment. The struggle went through various ups and downs before Jharkhand got full statehood in 2000.

REGIONALISM, REGIONAL INEQUALITIES and NATIONAL CONSOLIDATION

Regionalism is not about local patriotism or local pride as Gandhiji said '*As the basis of my pride as an India, I must have pride in myself as a Gujarati otherwise we shall be left without any moorings*'. National pride is not opposite of regional pride and rather two of them coexist together and this was core to our nationalistic ideology too during our freedom struggle. Special efforts to uplift one's region is not regionalism as it promotes a progressive thinking and healthy competition and even undermines other divisive factors like caste and class by diverting attention from them to regional well being. For same regions, demand for a separate state or an autonomous region is also not regionalism unless it is marked by bitterness towards others.

Regionalism is instead an ideology which propagates that interests of a region are not in harmony with national interests or interests of other regions and hence may lead to hostility. Politics of DMK during 1950s in Tamil Nadu is an apt example when a region becomes more assertive of its cultural identity in a hostile manner. Case of Punjab during 1980s is not an example of regionalism, but communalism.

Linguistic reorganization of states averted a major face-off between various regions by acting as a safety valve. Another area of potential conflict is sharing of riparian waters, especially in southern states. Even such disputes have not aroused passions to such great extents to cause major integrational threats.

Another potential source of regionalism can be economic disparity. However, many special programs like Food for Work, IRDP etc in 1970s and special aid for development of such regions helped in diffusing growth of strident regionalism. Industrial policy also ensured that new industries are widely spread out. During planning process also, more development aid and funds were given to lesser developed regions which continue even today and role of Finance Commission is important in this aspect which allocates more grants to backward regions. Public investment in various infrastructure projects like – rail, road, ports, industries etc also played

role in offsetting the inequalities. Tax soaps and other incentives were provided to private sector also to invest in industrially backward regions. Licensing policy was used to guide the location of industries in various regions. Nationalization of banks started process of financial inclusion of backward areas as well. However, investment in agriculture sector and irrigation remained one ignored area. Green Revolution led to unequal benefits and considerable heartburn in other rain-fed and dry areas which was tried to minimize through extending the Green Revolution to other areas as well.

Results of above efforts have been a mixed one. Industrialization has relatively evenly spread except a few states like North Eastern states and Jammu and Kashmir. Some states have progressed more than others and others have failed to keep pace. While states like Haryana and Himachal Pradesh have improved upon, states like West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh have lost their position. Andhra and Rajasthan have stagnated.

One of the major reasons of economic disparity of poor economic growth of the nation as a whole and it was not good enough to make a dent in regional inequalities. Specific issues of social and political organization of certain states are also a reason of their backwardness as in case of Bihar and West Bengal. Similarly, agrarian structure in UP and Orissa is still backward. In Bihar and UP casteism is there. In West Bengal CPI led leadership didn't allow much industrial growth due to strong trade-unionism. Intra-regional disparities have also given birth to sub-regional movements as well as in case of Vidharbha in Maharashtra, Telangana in Andhra, Saurashtra in Gujarat, Darjeeling or Gorkhland in West Bengal, Bodoland in Assam etc.

For various reasons, economic disparity has not led to growth of regionalism in India. While it is digested for many reasons, some rational explanations like fault of their own political leadership are given in other cases. Some others are even unaware of the acuteness of the situation.

One particular instance of regionalism raising its head is in form of 'sons of the soil doctrine' since 1950s. It holds that a state and its resources specifically belong to a particular cultural or linguistic group inhabiting in that state. It creates a notion of 'us' for insiders and 'them' for outsiders. Outsiders are not regarded 'sons of the soil' even if they have been residing there since long. To harness the employment and economic opportunities this doctrine was used along communalism, casteism and nepotism. As migration into major cities accelerated after 1951, urban areas specifically became the playfield of this doctrine as 'insiders' were gradually reduced to minority in these cities as these areas witnessed acute struggle for middle class jobs and other opportunities. Failure to create new employment opportunities created more competition in 1960s and 1970s. It particularly flourished in states of Maharashtra, Assam and Telangana and was primarily led by urban middle class as people in these areas had little tradition of migration as compared to other states like West Bengal, Kerala etc. Worst among these was one led by Shiv Sena in 1960s which was more antagonistic towards South Indians especially Tamilians.

However, regional chauvinism has not posed a great challenge to national unity after 1960s and 70s. DMK has contended itself by changing the name of state and its capital city. Shiv Sena has

turned to Hindu communalism instead. There are occasional flares like violence in Assam and rhetoric of Maharashtra Navnirman Sena, but they are only limited in their intensity.

INDIA'S ROLE in INTERNATIONAL ARENA

Korea War and Non-Alignment Policy: End of Second World War left Korea divided and hostile to each other. India supported US resolution in 1950 in UN when North Korea invaded South Korea and condemned North Korea as aggressor. However, US got miffed when India abstained from another resolution calling for an armed intervention. US sent its force under leadership of General MacArthur without a UN approval and crossed the 38th parallel and marched into North Korea. China warned US on this and came into defense of North Korea and fight ensued. US moved another resolution calling China aggressor (though in reality it was US which was aggressor) and India voted against it. India was only line of communication between China and US and after long efforts, both sides agreed to hold ceasefire and recognized the same boundaries which they wished to change. A 'Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission' was formed under India General Thimayya's leadership to repatriate soldiers. Korean War was a test of Non-Alignment policy of India and its foreign policy. In whole turn of events, India first miffed USSR and China when it termed North Korea aggressor and then miffed US when it abstained from UN vote and later voted against US resolution calling China as an aggressor. India didn't dilute its stance in difficult circumstances as in the same period, China attacked Tibet without taking India into picture, India even supported permanent seat of China in UNSC which USSR didn't like. India also needed US help to meet challenge of food security during famine. However, later everyone acknowledged the stance of India and the incidents prove to be a sound testimony of genuineness and worth of non-alignment policy.

Indo-China (Today's Laos-Vietnam-Cambodia) – Indo-China was on brink of becoming theater of cold war in 1950s. US was goading France to continue its efforts to occupy the region and China was getting ready to intervene if US comes into picture. Indian leaders held intense negotiation for maintaining peace and even declared such intention in the Colombo Conference, 1954. Finally, after much parleys, India was successful in assuring China that it should not intervene and also extracted promise from France that it would not allow US to have a military base in the region. As a result, India was appointed Chairman of 'International Control Commission' which would supervise the import of foreign armaments in Indo-China. This commission was later subverted by US and Indo-China did become a theater of anti-communism crusade of West, but same peace efforts initiated by India were followed by the regional leaders later.

Suez Canal Episode – Suez was nationalized by Nasser in 1956 and this made UK and France apprehensive and they demanded international control over it, however India asked both sides to restrain and suggested a formula allowing Egypt to control canal, but with an advisory role for users at London Conference which was widely appreciated. But UK and France perceived it as a future irritant in terms of trade route use and they ultimately supported Israel attack on Egypt and their control of Suez canal. This attack was widely condemned as 'naked aggression' by

India, US and UN and as a result withdrawal of forces started to take place under UN supervision in which India also lend help in form of peacekeeping forces.

INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH SUPERPOWERS and NEIGHBOURS

India and the USA – India wanted to have cordial and friendly relationships with US despite its policy of non-alignment. The US, however, disappointed India first on Kashmir issue, then over food aid. The US had big influence in the UN and it used it to project a negative image of India over Kashmir issue and ignored the fact that Pakistan was an aggressor and it later even provided military help to Pakistan on the name of countering Soviet threat. Similarly food-aid was delayed to India and she was humiliated. The US also showed its open displeasure over India's recognition of communist China as a nation and India's support to its permanent seat in UNSC. The US was also miffed by India's abstention in the UN resolution over Korea war. US also dragged cold war at India's doorstep by including Pakistan in military blocks like SEATO and CENTO and it termed non-alignment as immoral. On Goa issue also, the US supported Portuguese claim. The US was grossly obsessed with its anti-communist crusade and in this fervor failed to appreciate Indian stance quite frequently. Further, the US never saw India as a strong bulwark against communism and according to it India might collapse under burden of its diversity. However, people to people contacts remained healthy and the US was also a source of technology and machinery. When India went closer to the USSR, the US got wary and started to think towards improving its relations with India. However, situation took a bad turn in wake of 1962 war with China in which the US tacitly supported India. When Indira Gandhi came to power, she tried to considerably improve relations with the US and the UK. However, she was disappointed when the US president Lyndon Johnson dithered over her request for food shipments in aftermath of 1965 war and draught as the US wanted to make India apologetic of her criticism of Vietnam War. As a result, India ventured on to bring Green Revolution for food security, further strengthening NAM and pursue a more independent foreign policy.

India and USSR – Indian relations with Soviet Union started on a cold note as it perceived India under imperial influence as India joined Commonwealth. Further, Communist Party of India was also in opposition to Indian government. First major sign of India's truly non-aligned status appeared in India's position vis-à-vis Korea war when India voted against UN resolution calling China as aggressor. Impressed, Soviet and China sent food shipments to India when India was badly hit by draught. The process of friendship speeded up after death of Stalin in 1954 and it even offered military equipment in wake of Pakistan joining CENTO and SEATO, but India refused citing its non-alignment. Relations took healthy turn when Nehru visited USSR in 1955 and Russian president visited India following year. This time onward, the USSR also offered full support on Kashmir issue through veto in UNSC and it provided huge relief to India. USSR also supported integration of Goa. USSR also supported industrial development of India and helped in setting up heavy industries like Bhilai and Bokaro steel plant. The USSR also supplied machinery and equipments for other heavy industry projects. The USSR also didn't sided with its communist brother China when Indo-China relations deteriorated over Dalai Lama issue in 1959 and in fact made first military agreement with India in 1960 to make border roads along Chinese

border which were damaged by China. In 1962, India got a license to manufacture MIG aircrafts – first time for a non Soviet nation. The USSR also remained neutral and rather empathized with India in war with China and later bolstered their military equipment ties with India which served India well in 1971 war. The USSR also got a tacit ally amidst Cold War as India's stance was always tilted towards the USSR. Soviets also had a long disputed border with China and friendship with India meant diverting Chinese attention and keeping a check on it. Most importantly, the support of the USSR had always been unconditional unlike Western support which always came with many strings attached. When Indira came to power, she also continued a policy of closeness with the USSR.

Nepal and India – With Nepal, there were historic ties of India and they were further strengthened with 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship and allowed Nepal free passage through India. Both countries also agreed to be responsible for each other's security.

Burma and India – With Burma, border issues were settled amicably.

Pakistan and India – Pakistan's invasion of Kashmir and subsequent accession of Kashmir and ensuing events have already been discussed. Kashmir issues was continuously used to blackmail India in UN and Pakistan also grew closer to US and joined its regional military blocks like SEATO, CENTO etc. It was only USSR which recognized genuineness of Indian non-alignment that it helped India militarily as well in international fora as well. It supported Kashmir issue as well by vetoing resolutions in UNSC. From 1962, Pakistan also sided with China, thus threatening India in a two side pressure which seemed to be very acute in 1971. India showed great generousness in division of pre-partition assets, division of water of Indus water and treatment of refugees and their compensation.

China and India – India always wanted to have friendly relationships with China as both have borne the brunt of colonialism and it was evident in its recognition of Communist China right from the beginning in 1950, support of China in Korea war and support of China in UNSC seat. India also raised little objection over Chinese occupation over Tibet in 1950 and it even formally recognized it in 1954 as **Panchsheel** agreement was signed between the two and agreed on a mutual co-existence on the basis of it. India even hailed Chinese leadership in Bandung conference in 1959. But in the same year, a big uprising happened in Tibet and thousands of Tibetan refugees along with the Dalai Lama sought refuge in India which was provided by India on humanitarian grounds on the condition that no political activities should be carried out from Indian soil. China, however, didn't take it so kindly and soon after that skirmishes took place on Indo-China border between soldiers of two sides and China for the first time laid a firm claim on disputed area of NEFA and Ladakh. In October 1962, Chinese forces launched a massive attack on NEFA (today's Arunachal Pradesh) and soon occupied vast areas as Indian army showed little resistance. Indian PM Nehru sought Western help, but China voluntarily retreated as unpredictably as it has launched strike leaving a bruised ego and a broken friendship. Non-alignment and Panchsheel got a body blow and ironically India was hit not by a capitalist imperial country, but by a socialist friend. The US and the UK had responded positively and they

could not be brushed aside in post-war scenario. Pakistan thought India was weakened and launched 1965 war.

Many analysts feel that Nehru failed to foresee the developments and instead of sorting out border dispute early on allowed the matters deteriorate and instead followed a 'forward policy' which alarmed China and it had to launch attack in self-defense. Some others argue that India was still an under developed country and could not have afforded too much military spending – especially on Chinese border – and have instead chosen to focus on Industrialization and nation building. India also didn't want to have another insecure neighbor when one was already there in form of Pakistan. In aftermaths of refuge to the Dalai Lama, India had very little choice. Indian failure had not been because of naïve faith in Chinese friendship, not because of belief in utopian pacifism and Panchsheel or under-equipped armed forces. In fact military strength of Indian armed forces have been multiplied many times since 1947 when India defeated Pakistan. It was rather due to unexpected nature of the war. Approach of armed forces was not an integrated one as it was evident from little use of Indian air power in the war. Civilian-military coordination was not good either. It was a failure of logistics, of intelligence, of nerve on the part of military commander who fled seeing onslaught of enemy. Others also argue that China for long wanted to make her presence felt on global scene, but was thwarted every time. Be it US recognition of Taiwan as real China, denying of UNSC seat, attempt to check-mate her in case of Korea war and Indo-China conflict, differences between Soviet and China over border issues. The Chinese were also upset that Afro-Asian countries were following Indian line in making friendship with both the US and the USSR, rather than Chinese way of distancing from both. These events made China frustrated and isolated and prompted China on path of aggressive assertion as manifested in 1962 war. Thus, Chinese war a result of China's own compulsions rather than aggressive posture of India or misjudgment of Nehru. In fact Nehru was right in pursuing a policy of friendship as a developing country could hardly afford two hostile nations at its doorstep.

OTHER EARLY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS and CONGRESS

Social base of Congress extended from metropolitan areas to rural one and it acted as one of the major instruments of political stability. It is also said that after independence, it transformed itself from a social movement to a political institution. To provide further organizational cohesion, Patel made a provision that no person who is a member of any other party with a constitution can be its member though it was earlier allowed as in case of Congress Socialist and Communist party. As a result, Socialists left the party terming it as a bourgeoisie move and base of Congress didn't remain as broad as it was earlier. Nehru, However, made several attempts to bring them back and even Congress retained its left of the center approach. Still Congress largely remained democratic and view of party members was reflected in meetings of AICC.

Nehru felt that he wouldn't be able to do justice to two roles at one time and hence resigned from Congress presidency and J B Kriplani was appointed president instead. Kriplani demanded that decisions of government should be discussed with party organization as well.

However Nehru and Pate deemed it unrealistic and improper as executive works under principle of confidentiality in a parliamentary democracy and is responsible to legislature alone. Kriplani resigned on this issue and this issue again arose when Purushottamdas Tandon became party president with whom Nehru had significant differences over his conservative attitude. Kriplani and others also left the party around same time. In a tussle between Tandon and Nehru, Tandon had to resign and Nehru once again president of party contrary to his own decision to not to do so.

During times of Nehru party cadre was never mobilized to implement the vision of Nehru and as a result party members lost touch from the ground. Departure of socialists like Jayprakash Narayan weakened the radical forces within the party and they didn't show any willingness to side Congress despite some repeated appeals from Nehru and finally the two moved ways apart. Nehru in turn tried to ingrain socialism in the party structure itself by pursuing policy of land reforms, planned development, cooperative farming etc. However, even assertion of socialism couldn't stall the decline of party and party was marred by power hunger, factionalism, nepotism and so on.

First signs of it appeared in the loss of party in 3 Lok Sabha by-elections in 1963. As a result, Nehru made a last ditch effort to strengthen party internally with the help of K Kamraj, chief minister of Madras. They came up with what is known as '**Kamraj Plan**' in August 1963 to infuse a new life into the party and restore the balance between party and the government. The plan stressed that leading Congressmen who are in good positions in government like cabinet ministers, Chief Ministers etc should voluntarily resign and should instead focus on strengthening organizational aspect of party. Nehru was made authority to decide whose resignation to accept and thus also to have an authority to cleanse the party at the top. Response of Congressmen was immense and all cabinet ministers and all chief ministers offered their resignations and out of which resignations of 6 cabinet ministers viz Babu Jagjivan Ram, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Morarji Desai, S K Patil etc and 6 chief ministers. However, the decision came very late as Nehru was ailing at that time and all the Congressmen, who were relieved, were not given any significant duty to bolster party except Kamraj who was made party president. They sulked or made intrigues against political rivals in the state. Congressmen continued to be obsessed with administrative power and patronage and overall morale of party remained low.

OTHER EARLY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS and OPPOSITION PARTIES

One of the most important parties that emerged was Socialist Party which was born in 1934 as Congress Socialist Party as a part of Congress, but with its own constitution and ideology. Many of its leaders were of tall stature like – Acharya Narendra Dev, Jayprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia, S M Joshi etc. Due to ideological differences, its members even didn't participate in constituent assembly and also opposed partition. It parted ways with Congress in 1948 after Congress put precondition that its no member will be part of any other party which has a separate constitution and its differences with Congress leaders whom it wanted to have a definite program and ideological commitment to socialism. However, it could

not achieve great political success immediately after independence as Congress herself pursued socialist agenda and Socialist remained opposed to whatever Congress did.

Another dissident group from Congress led by J B Kriplani formed **Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party** claiming to be Gandhian. T Prakasam was another eminent leader of the party. However, party didn't fair well in elections. It merged with Socialist Party after first general elections to form a new party **Praja Socialist Party (PSP)**, but it couldn't remain cohesive and was marred by ideological difference and many of its leaders gradually left, renounced politics or were expelled. Jayprakash left in 1954 to focus on Bhoodan and other constructive activities. In 1957, he even declared that party democracy is not suitable for India and instead, there should be 'partyless democracy' in India. T Prakasam, Ashok Mehta etc also defected to Congress. The party virtually lost any significance soon as its electoral performance remained poor.

Lohia formed **Socialist Party** and took a militant approach and resorted to strikes, agitations, civil disobedience etc and had an anti-Congress, anti-Nehru agenda. Main agendas were immediate substitution of English with Hindi and 60% reservation for women, SCs, STs and other backward sections. It again merged with PSP and subsequently lost its identity.

Communist Party of India was also a part of Congress since 1934, but later parted ways in 1945 and had remarkable growth a few years before. It had an advantage in terms of party organization as it had a very strong disciplined cadre and presence at ground level among peasants, workers etc. Earlier it supported Indian cause, but later under Soviet influence declared Indian independence as a lie (*ye azaadi jhoothi hai*), declared Congress as a party of feudalists, constitution as a charter of slavery and they launched an armed struggle. It decided to continue the struggle in Telangana against Nizam which had been going since 1946 and even directed it against Indian government. It also tried to call a railway strike in 1949 and a host of other terrorist activities and as a result of which it was also banned for some time. It soon declared that masses are not ready for revolution and decided to participate in electoral politics where it performed well and emerged as largest opposition party in first general elections. It emerged as a force to reckon with in Bengal, Kerala and Andhra and even formed first democratically elected communist government in the world when it won elections of Kerala Assembly in 1957 and by this time had also recognized independence of India. It too like socialists suffered from internal feud over its future approach in India. Differences merged sharply during Chinese attack in 1962, Russia-China differences. China further fueled differences when it gave an international call to CPI members to split from those supporting Soviet line. It finally got split in 1964 into CPI and Marxist CPM. CPM was more radical in its approach and envisaged an armed revolution at suitable future time and till then work under constitutional framework. Both formed government in Kerala, Tripura and Bengal at times. The party failed to appreciate the nature of Indian nationalism fully and its internal organization, which was bureaucratic and secretive, made it unsuitable for working in a democratic setup.

CPM formed government in Bengal in Coalition with Bengal Congress under leadership of Jyoti Basu and it created rift in leadership. A faction of party, especially younger cadre influenced by

ongoing cultural revolution in China, accused party of betraying the revolution and instead asked to go for armed insurrection to alleviate the sufferings of poor peasantry and later spreading to whole country. Starting was made from Naxalbari area of West Bengal in which a peasant uprising was launched. As a result, CPM leadership expelled the revolutionaries accusing them of spreading left-wing-adventurism. This breakaway faction came to be known as **Naxalites**. It also attracted middle class intelligentsia and college youth. CPM (Leninist) was formed in 1969 under leadership of Charu Mazumdar and it called Indian democracy a sham and instead launched Guerilla attacks on Chinese model and they even declared Chinese president Mao Ze Dong as their Chairman as well and received political and ideological support also from China. The attempt was made with repression from Indian government and as a result, the movement was largely suppressed and Maoists were divided into various splinter groups. Decline of cultural revolution in China and change in leadership in China also led to their further decline.

Jan Sangh was founded as a Hindu communalist party, but didn't openly pursued it as communalism was in very bad taste after death of Mahatma Gandhi. It was a political front of Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), which itself was founded in 1925 on militaristic lines. Growth of communal politics in 1940s helped its growth. Golwalkar termed Congressmen as traitor and termed India as a Hindu nation and exhorted others to either follow Hindu culture or remain subservient to it. It strongly criticized secular parties of Muslim appeasement. It was strongly anti-Pakistan in ideology and after partition even doled out rhetoric of re-uniting Indian subcontinent again as '*Akhand Bharat*'. It was also banned in aftermaths of assassination of Gandhiji. The ban was lifted after RSS gave a written undertaking that it would no longer indulge in political activities and as a result Jan Sangh emerged as its front organization in 1951 with Shyama Prasad Mukharjee as its first president. Later party also propagated planning, neo-liberal, neo-socialistic programs and even inducted Muslims in its fold. It merged into Janta Party in 1977 and its anti-Pakistan, anti-Muslim and Akhand Bharat slogan were considerably muted and its leaders used the word Hindu Nationalist to define themselves which was in fact a euphemism for Hindu Communalism.

Swatantra Party was perhaps the first all India-secular conservative party which came in existence in 1959 as a reaction to increasing leftist policies of Congress and its most of the members were Congress old timers like C Rajagopalachari, Minoo Masani, N G Ranga and K M Munshi. It was an attempt to bring together the fragmented right wing forces together. It stood for free, private enterprise and opposed the active role of the state in economic development. It had a very narrow social base consisting of some Industrialists and capitalist, princes, jagirdars, rich landlords, rich farmers etc who were fed up of socialistic agenda and controlling mindset of government. It also wanted to radically restrict the role of centralized planning and the role of public sector, as also state regulation. It also vouched for right to property and opposed any ceiling on land-holdings. It accused Nehru of toeing the blind ideological line of Communism and hence taking India to ruins. On foreign relations front, it opposed non-alignment and instead called for allegiance to the US. In 1962 elections it didn't fair too badly and emerged as largest

opposition party in 4 states. It declined after death of C Rajagopalachari's death in 1967. When Congress got split in 1969, the reason for existence of Swatantra Party as a separate right wing party also disappeared as Congress (O) was much more right winged.

SHORTCOMINGS of NEHRUVIAN ERA

Nehru didn't create many institutional and structural mechanisms to mobilize masses and he primarily used his charisma to get things done. People didn't participate in politics greatly except in taking parts in elections.

Bureaucracy and administrative structure also remained unreformed. He also overlooked emerging evils like corruption, bureaucratization etc.

On social front as well no great measures were taken evils like caste system, male dominance etc.

Other areas of neglect which today assumed monstrous proportions. The entire educational system was left untouched and unreformed and could not reach masses. No worthwhile political and ideological struggle was launched against communalism as an ideology. Land reforms could also not be implemented properly and so failed CDP leading to enhancement of already existing inequalities.

SHASTRI ERA

Nehru died without naming a political heir and dissension and factionalism had become a part of Congress. Major contenders of PM post were Morarji Desai – a honest sound administrator, but unpopular for being self-righteous, inflexible and even right winger; and Lal Bahdur Shastri – a mild, tactful, likeable and personally incorruptible. The succession happened under a group formed in 1963 collectively known as **Syndicate** headed by K Kamraj the then party president, S K Patil, Neelam Sanjeev Reddy etc. They didn't wanted Desai to be PM for his apparent unpopularity and after internal discussions, Desai gracefully backed out and Shastri was made PM within one week of Nehru's death.

Shastri showed less interest in party activities and even provided greater autonomy to cabinet. He, however, had a slack attitude regarding various problems like language issue, Punjabi suba demand and Goa merger which took a bad shape over time and he was even accused of indecisiveness. Indian economy was also stagnated at that time and there was severe food insecurity due to draught in 1965. The US also suspended food aid in wake of Pakistan war. One positive development was initiation of Green Revolution. With time, Shastri also got hand of administration and India was one of the first countries to criticize the US bombing of North Vietnam. He also setup his own secretariat and named it as PMO which emerged as parallel cabinet during Indira Gandhi's time.

However, the real moment of reckoning for Shastri came during war with Pakistan in August 2015. Kashmir issue was still simmering and calculating that India must have weakened after

1962 war with China, Pakistan having recently acquired some sophisticated weaponry from the US started a teaser war in marshy area of Kuchh which Indian army could not handle so well due to terrain issues and matter was ultimately referred to international arbitration. Pakistan took it as a sign of Indian weakness and under-preparedness and launched an all out infiltration in Kashmir. Shastri took a bold step and ordered army to even cross LoC and seal the various passes and occupy strategic peaks like Uri, Kargil, Haji Pir etc. Unlike 1962, entire country was standing united behind Indian army and leadership. China made threatening noises and declared India as aggressor, though Soviet sympathized with India and restrained China from taking any adverse steps. Western powers also condemned this undeclared war and cut supplies to both the countries. War was inconclusive with both sides having notions of victory. However, result was that infiltration bid of Pakistan had been foiled. India's lost pride in Chinese war also regained to great extent. Kashmiris also didn't sided with Pakistani forces and it proved a test of Indian secularism in which it came with flying colours. A ceasefire was declared and under mediation of Soviet leadership, Shastri met General Ayub Khan, the Pakistani president to sign **Tashkent Declaration**. Under this agreement, both sides agreed to withdraw from their respective occupied positions and return to pre-war positions. India has to return certain strategic peaks like Haji Pir to avert heartburn and a future conflict with Pakistan. Shastri had a history of heart trouble and died in Tashkent of a sudden stroke.

INDIRA ERA

Morarji Desai again laid his claim after death of Shastri and this time also Syndicate was in no mood of allowing him to become PM and instead made Indira a choice. This time, matters were not to be decided by consensus as Desai insisted for a vote in part in which Indira emerged as a clear winner. She inherited many problems like – demand for Punjabi suba, unrest among Mizos and Naga which she deal with effectively. However, situation on economic front was poor. Rains have again failed in 1966, inflation was acute and food shortage grave. Two back to back wars had eaten into funds and military expenses were high which affected planning process adversely. Indira Gandhi launched a war-like effort to deal with famine and food insecurity. At that time India was heavily dependent upon **PL-480 program** of the US to import wheat for food security.

She also took a bold, but controversial step of devaluation of Indian currency by 35% to boost Indian exports and make India as an investment destination more attractive. India, US and UK had also stopped aid in wake of Indo-Pak war and were now demanding to devalue rupee if such aid were to be resumed. However, neither aid resumed significantly, nor capital inflow increased. The step was seen as buckling under foreign pressure and Congress leaders like Kamraj also criticized it as a decision taken without due consultation with party members in an election year.

Indira Gandhi also tried to bolster ties with US and visited US. Lyndon Johnson postured to help India out and promised resumption of PL-480 program, but the US sent shipments in small installments to show its resentment to India's criticism of Vietnam War. India felt humiliated

with this 'ship-to-mouth' approach of the US. India now decided to strengthen food security by enhancing indigenous production through 'Green revolution' and India made it in her mind to never be too dependent on the US and later Indira also openly condemned US aggression in Vietnam. India instead developed close relations with Nasser of Egypt and Tito of Yugoslavia and re-focused on non-alignment apart from pursuing good relations with the USSR.

Domestically, 1966 was an year of turmoil as due to food shortage, inflation was galloping, unemployment was rising and economic conditions were bad. Agitations and protests were also on rise. Bandhs were a new feature of protest. The year also saw downgrade of Parliament as an institution and it as frequently marred by indiscipline, disturbances and so on. The young PM was shown little courtesy and was termed '*goongi gudiya*' by Lohia. Within Congress also dissent and factionalism was on the rise and Syndicate led by Kamraj wanted to have greater say in working of the government.

Elections were scheduled to be held in 1967 and people were hugely disenchanted with Congress, but had little other choice. Syndicate dominated in ticket distribution leading to great dissent among others. In this election, opposition parties united for the first time irrespective of their ideologies. Communal Jan Sangh joined hand with socialist Lohia group which in turn joined hands with rightist Swatantra Party. Election results led to big decline in Congress seats, though it won majority in Lok Sabha, but situation in state assembly was not good and it lost majority in 8 states. This was also a blow to Syndicate as stalwarts like K Kamraj, S K Patil lost elections and so did many of their close supporters and Syndicate was cut to its size, only big challenge in party was in form of Morarji Desai who was made deputy prime minister. This time was also a test of Indian federalism which she passed successful as situation remained more or less same in terms of administrative relations between center and state. This election also highlighted the important position of rich peasants of North India who were upset by government policies regarding food procurement etc and they played a decisive role in defeat of Congress in the North. The elections also heralded a new era of coalitions and defections and unstable governments. States like Bihar had 7 governments from 1967-70 and there had been 8 instances of presidential rule in 7 states. Defection phenomenon started from Haryana which marked beginning of *Aya Ram*, *Gaya Ram* politics. It could be checked only in 1986, with passage of Anti Defection legislation.

Congress was split in 1969. Some of the Syndicate members like K Kamraj, S K Patil won by-elections and joined hands with their old foe Morarji Desai to reassert party say in government working. After poor performance in 1967 polls, party was in a dilemma over future course of action and party launched '**Ten Point Program**' in 1967 as a part of its socialist agenda and it comprised nationalization of banks and general insurance, state trading in imports and export of trade, ceiling on urban property, ceiling on urban property and income, curb on monopolies, public distribution of food grains, rapid implementation of land reforms, house site for the poor and abolition of princely privileges. It also provoked rightist among Congress like Morarji Desai and the then president Nijalingappa. Differences between Syndicate and Indira grew and Syndicate hatched plans in 1969 to dislodge Indira as PM, but Indira Gandhi still adopted a

cautious approach. Death of President Zakir Hussain in 1969 precipitated events as Syndicate wanted to have their own man in the office and nominated Sanjeeva Reddy – a member of Syndicate. Indira now decided to put her feet down and took away finance portfolio from Desai and assumed this role herself. Immediately she decided nationalization of 14 banks and withdrawal of privileges from princes. These moves became very popular among masses and left parties. In presidential elections also she didn't issue a whip and instead called party workers to vote according to their conscience and as a result, V V Giri, the former vice president and an independent candidate won. A humiliated Syndicate expelled her from party as a disciplinary action and party was divided as – Congress (R) lead by Indira, R standing for requisitionists, and Congress (O) led by Syndicate, O standing for Organization. Over the time, Congress (R) became the Congress which exists today.

In 1970, the government abolished managing agency system which had enabled a handful of capitalists to control a large number of industrial enterprises in which they had little financial stake. Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act was also passed in 1969 to prevent excessive wealth concentration in hands of a few capitalists. Land ceiling agenda was taken again. She also launched the much delayed 4th plan. However, her party was a minority government and had to face pressures from other parties. On the issue of Supreme Court challenging abolition of Privy Purse of princely states which was done by 24th Constitutional Amendment, she dissolved the Lok Sabha and announced fresh elections. Other parties of heterogeneous ideologies like Jan Sangh, Swatantra Party, Congress (O) formed a 'Grand Alliance' and called for 'Indira Hatao', she countered it with 'Garibi Hatao' which proved more effective and Grand Alliance suffered a major defeat and Indira won majority.

Almost after swearing in as PM after 1971 elections, **Bangladesh Crisis** broke out. It was a direct challenge to the Two Nations Theory itself that people of one religion form one nation. Political and economic elites of West Pakistan had dominated the scene and people of East Pakistan had no mechanism to air their grievances as Pakistan had been under military rule for significant period. They through a pavement vented their grievances and called for political democracy and greater autonomy for East Pakistan, but they were suppressed instead. Elections were held by General Yahya Khan in which Bengal's Awami League won 99% seats of East Pakistan and overall majority. But the army and Yahya Khan backed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto didn't allow him to form government and when Rehman launched a protest movement, he was arrested. It also led to terror of army in form of innocent killings, arrests of intellectuals, rapes, illegal detentions etc in East Pakistan. A large section of East Pakistan police and paramilitary organizations revolted. Many leaders of Awami League escaped to Calcutta and formed there government in exile and organized '**Mukti Bahini**' and launched fierce underground movement and guerilla warfare. Hindus and other minorities like Sikhs were special targets and more than 10 lakh refugees had taken refuge in India by that time at a great humanitarian cost to India and it left India with no choice, but to intervene. Pakistan in the meanwhile spread the propaganda that the insurgency had been instigated by India. But India rubbished this claim and supported the cause of people of Bengal.

Eight months passed before any real fight took place and foreseeing trouble on border, Indian army made full preparations and in the meanwhile Mukti Bahini also gained time to strengthen itself as Indian army provided training to them. This time was also utilized to educate international opinion about burden of refugees on India and gross inhumane behavior of West Pakistan. Indian opinion won support from West as well apart from Soviet and east European Communist countries. The US and China on the other hand adopted a hostile stance and tried to dub the issue as one of Indo-Pakistan rivalry ignoring centrality of plight of Bangladesh. To counter possible interference of the US and China, India also signed a 20 years treaty of peace friendship and cooperation with the USSR in August 1971 and it also provided for mutual help in case of third party military attack. It further strengthened Indian position, but India was still reluctant to make a first move. Pakistan was also increasingly becoming impatient over guerilla attacks of Mukti Bahini and on 3rd December launched an attack on Western front of India through air strikes. India immediately responded by recognizing Bangladesh and it erected strong defense on Western front and also made a swift move in the East forcing Pakistani army to surrender even before the US and China could decide about intervening. The US even termed India aggressor and brought two UN resolutions which were vetoed by the USSR and abstained by France and the UK. An irritated US also resorted to gun-boat diplomacy and sent aircraft carrier **USS Enterprise** to exert pressure on India. But India ignored the US move and Dacca was captured by 16th December within 2 weeks of Pakistan launching attack on Western front and declared unilateral ceasefire on Western front as continuation of war on Western front could have been hazardous for both the sides. Pakistan too accepted the ceasefire and released Mujbir Rehman on 12th January 1972.

The war was a victory of democracy, humanitarian value and of people of Bangladesh. It also had many gains for India and it was a rejection of Two Nations Theory and re-established India as a regional power. Refugee crisis was also solved significantly as more than 1 crore of them sent back. The war was also a symbol of independence of foreign policy despite the US resistance.

India still had over 90,000 prisoners of war, had more than 9,000 sq km of foreign land under control and Pakistan had still not recognized Bangladesh. For durable peace a mutually agreed framework was necessary. A hostile Pakistan meant high military expenditure and a possible outside power interference in Indo-Pak relations. As a result, Indira Gandhi and Zulifqar the newly elected Pakistani PM met in Shimla to sign **Shimla Agreement** in 1972. According to it, India agreed to return the territories occupied by it except a few strategic ones like those in Kargil sector. In return Pakistan agreed to respect LoC and resolve all the matters by mutual agreement without external mediation like from UN, the US etc. India also returned the prisoners of wars and one year later Pakistan also recognized Bangladesh.

Government also took several steps to implement its left of the center agenda. General insurance and coal industry was nationalized in 1972 Ceiling was also imposed on urban land ownership. MRTP Commission was also appointed in 1971 to implement MRTP Act 1969. Many states also passed new land ceiling laws and land re-distribution laws for the landless and the

marginal farmers. Cheap food distribution scheme and rural unemployment guarantee scheme was also launched. Financial inclusion program was also launched to increase penetration of banking in rural areas. Planning Commission was also strengthened. Two important Constitutional Amendments were also passed. 24th Amendment to the constitution passed in 1971 restored parliamentary power to amend fundamental rights and 25th Amendment empowered the parliament to decide the amount of compensation to be paid for acquisition of private property. India also achieved success in the field of nuclear power when India conducted an underground nuclear test at Pokharan in 1974 codenamed **Smiling Buddha**.

However, tide was turning against Indira Gandhi since 1973 which found expression in **J P Movement** of 1974. Many of the government programs launched as part of 10 Point Program didn't come up well and poverty remained despite promise of '*Garibi Hatao*'. Burden of feeding huge refugee population and costs of war further weakened economic condition of India. Monsoon rains also failed in two successive years – 1972 and 73 leading to massive food grain shortage and price rise. There were external shocks as well. The year 1973 also witnessed the notorious 'oil shock' in which crude oil prices witnessed 4 fold increase leading to forex drain. It had a domino effect on domestic goods as fuel, fertilizers and food prices spiraled up by 22% and budgetary deficit deepened. Recession and unemployment led to industrial unrest and mass strikes, biggest of which was Railways Strike of 1974. Political environment was also poisoned, administration was also marred by corruption. India was almost on the boil.

The spark came from movements from Gujarat and Bihar. In Gujarat there were angry protests in 1974 over rising prices and situation became so volatile that Central government dismissed state government and imposed president's rule. Inspired by success of Gujarat, student groups in Bihar launched a gherao of Bihar assembly and in clashes with police may died. Unlike Gujarat movement, movement in Bihar grew more strident and innovative. Student groups requested J P Narayan to come out of political retirement and lead the movement against government and as a result, J P Narayan gave a call for '**Total Revolution**' or '**Sampoorna Kranti**'. He called for non-payment of any taxes, asked legislators to resign and dissolution of assembly which was refused by Indira Gandhi. J P also toured country extensively and he was supported by almost all opposition parties. The movement, however, started to show signs of fatigue by late 1974 and even J P Narayan accepted the challenge of participating in upcoming general elections of 1976.

Situation took a sudden twist when a June 1975 Judgment of Allahabad High Court on an election petition by Raj Narain – a socialist who had contested against her – declared the election of Indira Gandhi as invalid on account of corrupt practices in election campaign. But Indira Gandhi chose to stay in office and filed an appeal in Supreme Court. In the meanwhile, Gujarat assembly elections result came out in which Janata Party won and Congress was defeated. These developments revived the protest movement and J P once again was at the helm of movement and asked armed forces, bureaucracy and police to refuse to obey orders from above and make functioning of government impossible.

This attempt of a coup d'état alarmed Indira Gandhi and she declared **nationalemergency** on

25th June 1974 (in the same month of Allahabad High Court judgment) even without consulting her cabinet on vague grounds of internal disturbances. The emergency lasted for 18 long months and saw arrests of major political opponents including J P Narayan, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Morarji Desai etc. and many academicians, media persons, trade unionists and students were also put behind bars. Among arrested were also hoarders and other anti-social elements as well. Freedom of press was severely curtailed and parliament as an institution was grossly subverted. Several groups like RSS, Jamat-e-Islami, Maoists were banned. Non-Congress governments in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu were dismissed and even Congress rule states were put under strict control of center. Internal democracy within party was smothered and Sanjay Gandhi led Youth Congress became all powerful in a highly unconstitutional manner. He also put his own 4 Points which became even more important than official 20 points and included – family planning and 2 child family norm, tree planting, no to dowry and total literacy. He even stressed on city beautification by removing slums. Many laws were passed to undermine democratic values like Defense of India Act, Maintenance of Internal Security Act (Amendment Act) and 42nd Constitutional Amendment in 1976 changed the very character of constitution and also prohibited judicial review as it was deemed to as an hindrance to enactment of social legislations.

Initially people didn't feel much pinch of emergency and instead felt relieved as they were tired with everyday disruption of life by movements, bandhs and gheraos. Administration also improved, many anti-social elements were put behind bars and black marketers were also dealt with heavy hand. Government even announced a '**20 Point Program**' in 1976 for socio-economic upliftment of rural poor and improve the health of economy. However, disillusionment with emergency also came very soon as it didn't improve socio-economic condition and soon became suffocating. Government machinery was also irritated for excessive control and being pushed into performing pet projects of government like forced sterilization. Bureaucracy remained inefficient and corrupt even grew powerful due to lack of fear of criticism from press, MPs, courts, popular movements etc and people now didn't have any way to vent out their grievances. In absence of trustworthy press, rumor market was heated up stoking unknown fears of people.

Emergency, it seemed for once, had put the very character of Indian democracy in danger and naysayers even predicted that India will now be pushed in the league of other post-colonial failed nations. However, in hindsight we can say that Indian democracy not only survived, but also emerged stronger bearing brunt of J P Movement and National Emergency. In January 1977, Indira Gandhi suddenly announced elections to be held in March and released political prisoners, lifted all form of censorship and other political restrictions. When elections were held, both Indira Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi lost their seats

J P Movement was historic for its mass mobilization, exposing flaws in governance and highlighting the high handed approach of a democratically elected PM. But it also had many weaknesses. It almost pushed India on the brink of instability and exposed it to external interventions as well. Call for mutiny among armed forces was a dangerous idea from security

point of view. It presented a utopian picture of India which raised expectations of masses and gave opportunist political groups to exploit the situation as was evident by joining of diverse ideological parties like Jan Sangh, Jamat-e-Islami, Congress (O) and even Naxalite group. Ideas of 'Total Revolution' and 'Partyless democracy' were vague and difficult to implement. It didn't have an alternative ideology, policy or system and the only agenda was the removal of Indira Gandhi. Further, it used extra-constitutional and undemocratic ways as well and although J P was a peace loving man of integrity, the movement was susceptible of being hijacked by fascist groups. A more pragmatic and democratic approach could have been waiting for the Supreme Court judgment and participating in the upcoming general elections which were just a few months away.

Declaration of Emergency was not democratic either. Since elections were imminent and country was on boil, Indira Gandhi made a knee jerk decision to announce state of emergency. In doing so, she also undermined many democratic and constitutional values. Like J P Movement she also ignored the option of holding elections.

After emergency, **Shah Commission** was appointed by Janata Government to examine the excesses done during Emergency. The investigations by the Shah Commission after the emergency found out, there were many 'excesses' committed during the emergency. The Shah Commission estimated that nearly one lakh eleven thousand people were arrested under preventive detention laws. Bureaucracy worked in a highly 'committed manner' and '*Civil servants, who were merely asked to bend the rules, chose to crawl to ingratiate themselves with their political bosses*'. According to the Shah Commission Report, the administration and the police became vulnerable to political pressures. This problem did not vanish after the Emergency.

It was 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 letter to the Shah Commission that subversive forces were trying to obstruct the progressive programs 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. 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.

On the other hand, others think that 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.

The Emergency at once brought out both the weaknesses and the strengths of India's democracy. Lessons of the Emergency can be summarized as –

- I. 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.
- II. Secondly, it brought out some ambiguities regarding the Emergency provision in the Constitution that have been rectified since. Now, '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 Council of Ministers.
- III. Thirdly, the Emergency made everyone more aware of the value of civil liberties.
- IV. 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.

THE JANATA INTERREGNUM – 1977-84

After being released from jails, opposition leaders of various hues – Congress (O), Socialists, Bhartiya Lok Dal etc – formed Janata Party and won the general election of 1977. In 7 Northern states, Congress only got 2 seats and was virtually wiped out. Surprisingly, in Southern states, performance of Congress improved as Emergency was less severely implemented in these states and 20 Point Program was better implemented. However, victory of Janata Party didn't mean a smooth transition as there was a tiff over post of PM among Morarji Desai, Jagjeevan Ram and Charan Singh in which Desai emerged as winner. New central government dismissed governments in 9 Congress ruled states and embarked on a journey to undo the work done by previous government. 44th Amendment tried to restore the constitutional framework and also restored power of judicial review.

New policies of the Government took a U-turn from the planned approach of the earlier government. It stressed on decentralized planning, replacing heavy industries with cottage industry and promoting a rich peasantry led agriculture growth fuelled by generous subsidies and shift of resources from industry to rural sector. It also launched a radical '**Food for Work**' program to improve rural employment and also boost rural infrastructure. It was especially well implemented in West Bengal. It also tried to re-orient its foreign policy to genuine non-alignment and tried to go closer to the US and the UK and moderating relations with the USSR. However, there was no fundamental new vision and economy didn't improve. Floods and draughts made situation even worse and budget deficit increased.

Janata government was a heterogeneous group of opportunist politicians and it soon showed signs of disintegration. Social tensions were also on the rise as there was confusion in rural areas

over new policies of Janata government which were opposite to policies of Indira government. Many landlords tried to take their lands back. Communal incidents were also on rise.

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.

INDIRA and RAJIV after JANATA GOVERNMENT

Congress (R) was further split in 1978 as Congress (I) – I for Indira, and Congress (U) – U for Devraj Urs. 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. When Indira came to power, she also dismissed governments in 9 states. 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.

In second term also Congress was beset with organizational weakness as Congress was driven by her charisma and there was little focus on institution building. The government also achieved some success on foreign affairs front. It hosted 7th non-alignment summit in 1983. She didn't condemn the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, but asked Soviets to withdraw as soon as possible. She criticized the proxy intervention of the US and Pakistan in Afghanistan. She also tried to normalize relations with the US, Pakistan and China.

She was killed on 31st October 1984 and North India was swept in anti-Sikh riots as a reaction as she was killed by her Sikh bodyguards who revenged her ordering of '**Operation Bluestar**' and desecration of their holy shrine. Rajiv Gandhi was appointed as PM and in the next general elections party performed exceptionally well riding on the sympathy wave.

Another big tragedy that hit India was gas leak in **Union Carbide** factory in Bhopal which left more than 2000 dead and also left thousands maimed. Compensation for this accident was long delayed and was highly inadequate.

Rajiv Gandhi paid great attention towards technological advancement and as a result, he launched **six technological missions**. They were target oriented projects designed to make India modern. In most of the cases, millennium was set as the deadline. Man behind devising these mission was 'Sam Pitroda' – a US trained Indian entrepreneur who also became chairman of Telecom Commission. Most important of these was 'Drinking Water Mission' and it aimed at providing potable drinking water to every village as by that time only 20% village were covered under drinking water projects. The idea was to use satellite, geology, biochemistry and civil engineering to identify and extract water and make it suitable for drinking. Another mission was 'Literacy Mission' as still almost 60% of population was illiterate. It also aimed at using

television, audio-video cassettes etc to make a dent in illiteracy. Third was 'Immunization Mission of Pregnant Women and Children'. Fourth was 'White Revolution' aimed at improving per capita availability of milk by improving yield and cattle variety. Fifth as the 'Edible Oil Mission' as at that time India used to import edible oil. Sixth mission was 'Rural Telephony Mission' which aimed at providing one telephone in every village. He also pushed ahead with investment in computer technology despite its criticism and he saw it as a crucial for bringing in communication revolution.

He also took steps to liberalise the control over economy, increase exports and cut imports. He also took steps to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions. He also launched 'Jawahar Gramin Yojna' to mark 100th birth anniversary of Jawahar Lal Nehru. He also launched a new education policy and specific steps were taken in form of 'Operation Blackboard' – to provide basic amenities in schools. 'Navodya Vidyalas' as residential schools with free and quality education in rural areas. National Perspective Plan for Women was also launched in 1988. Anti-dowry legislations were also strengthened.

Government also paid attention to environment and a new ministry was created. A mega Ganga cleaning project was also launched. Seven zonal cultural centers were also setup. Efforts were also taken to introduce openness in political and bureaucratic system. Anti Defection Act was passed in 1985. Lok Adalats and Consumer Courts were also setup.

On foreign policy front also several steps were taken. Rajiv Gandhi extensively toured other countries. India firmly stood against nuclear proliferation and apartheid. Rajiv Gandhi signed 'Delhi Declaration' in 1986 with Gorbachev for nuclear disarmament. The US remained skeptical of India and didn't respond to Indian initiatives much and even denied Indian requests of supercomputers. On the other hand relations with the USSR improved, Rajiv met Gorbachev 8 times in 5 years. He also visited China in 1988, the first after Nehru's visit in 1954. India even refrained from condemning Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989 in China. He also visited Pakistan and again first to do so after Nehru.

However, relations with neighbors deteriorated. Bangladesh was growing more fundamentalist, Nepal imposed heavy duties on Indian goods and discounted Chinese goods and asked Indian residents to obtain work permits for working in Nepal.

However, most important development was regarding Sri Lanka. In 1983, thousands of Sri Lankan Tamils fled to Tamil Nadu when Sri Lankan government launched assault on LTTE base in Jaffna. Public opinion gathered around cause of Tamilians and voices were raised for Indian intervention. India, as a result started supplies of food and other necessities in areas under blockade. Sri Lankan PM also approached Indian government for help in the matter and as a result, 'Indo-Sri Lanka Accord' as signed in 1987 which underlined that north-eastern Tamil dominated areas will be merged into a single province and considerable devolution of power will happen. It was also decided that LTTE should lay down its arms. However, LTTE remained adamant to lay down arms. In this situation, Tamil President sought help of Indian army and Indian troops were sent which resulted in a fiasco for India. Indian troops find it difficult to deal

with a guerilla warfare. They also became unpopular among both the Sri Lankan Tamils and larger population as well due to presence of a foreign army. The new PM Premadasa also asked Indian Army to leave, making situation more difficult for India and as a result India withdrew her forces gradually.

Rajiv Gandhi also tried to give a new lease of life to NAM by giving it a new purpose of nuclear disarmament. He also gave go ahead of to Modernization of armed forces which led to extensive spending on defense. However, it was also the time of unraveling of defense scandals like Bofors deal scandal, HDW Submarine scandal etc. Bofors scandal was snowballed so much that Giani Zail Singh was tempted to suspend Rajiv Gandhi on dual grounds of corruption and not able to keep inform president of important developments.

On social front as well, Rajiv Gandhi failed a crucial test in **Shah Bano Case, 1987** in which Supreme Court provided maintenance to an old divorcee Muslim woman. Initially government welcomed the decision, but later buckled under the pressure from the orthodox Muslim groups who called it an interference in their personal law and as a result Rajiv Gandhi made a U-turn and brought a legislation which overturned Supreme Court decision. The case first estranged Muslims when decision came, and later Hindus when government failed to show some nerve in direction of uniform civil code. Economy registered growth on one hand, was also marred by high deficit and debt.

POST RAJIV GANDHI& TILL NOW

V P Singh who had been a close ally of Rajiv in Congress at that time had launched crusades against corruption, but after differences with Rajiv was expelled from Congress. He now launched vigorous anti-corruption campaigns to expose Congress. He formed a coalition of Congress dissidents, BJP and other parties in form of 'National Front' which came to power in 1989 elections with V P Singh as PM and Devi Lal as deputy PM and a lot of sulking leaders like Chander Shekhar, Ajit Singh (son of Charan Singh) etc. It was a rag-tag coalition and couldn't take many effective decisions. Situation in Kashmir deteriorated at that time and Advani announced Rath Yatra at the same time. Another political move was implementation of Mandal commission in August 1990 which was appointed by Janata Government and reservation was allowed for OBC. It led to widespread dismay and protests from parties as well by public as unlike in case of SCs and STs, there were no conclusive proof of backwardness of OBCs. CPM instead advocated economic criteria. Many forward castes also formed caste associations with a renewed vigour and caste identities came to fore once again. It was a socially divisive decision which pitted one caste against the other on the name of social justice and unfurled an unending race to bottom for reservation. No empirical examination was done to judge the efficacy of reservation policy in existence since 40 years. Consideration of reservation as only strategy of social justice prevented other strategies of social justice. However, SC stayed implementation of the decision. When Advani's Rath Yatra reached Bihar, he was arrested and communal sentiments flared up and BJP threatened to pull support on this issue.

Some MPs withdrew from Janata Party which was part of National Front and formed

government with support of Congress and with Chandra Sekhar as PM. However, soon elections were announced and Rajiv Gandhi was killed by alleged LTTE suicide bombers when he was on an election tour in Sri Perumbudur near Chennai. Congress emerged biggest party without majority and formed government with Narsimha Rao as PM and it lasted for a full five year term and it undertook most radical of economic reforms widely known as 'liberalization of Indian economy' partly under Western and Brettonwoods Institutions pressure. However, Babri demolition and large scale rioting also happened during this government. Hawala scandal also emerged during this government which laid foreign exchange violation charges against many Congress and other leaders. In next elections in 1996, Congress got lesser seats and BJP more than Congress, but no party got majority. BJP formed a highly short lived government which was followed by United Front government led by H D Dev Gowda and supported by Congress and left parties. However, Congress pulled support mid way leading to formation of another United Front government, again with Congress support with I K Gujaral as prime minister. Support was again withdrawn and elections were held in 1998 leading to formation of NDA government. It also didn't last long and elections were held again and NDA again came to power in 1999 followed by UPA in 2004 and 2009.

New steps taken were – Right to Information Act 2005 by efforts of Aruna Roy led Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), MNREGA was also brought in 2005 and so was Domestic Violence Act 2005, reservation for OBCs in higher education was started from 2007, Right to Education Act was brought in 2009.

On foreign policy front, relations with Western powers were re-oriented in a liberalized economy as there was no Soviet Union to fall back upon now. However, Russia was still a formidable power and India continued to maintain good relations with her in her own self-interest and similar approach was followed with other erstwhile members of the USSR. While still supporting the Palestinian cause, India also started formal links with Israel in first half of 1990s. New trade blocks were coming up and India failed to take stoke of the situation. It missed the ASEAN bus and had to satisfy herself by being an observer in it. At the same time it also initiated its 'Look East Policy' as well. Japan had been a big donor and was also seen as a check on China. India had supported historically Vietnam in war with the US. It had also supported Indonesian struggle against Dutch aggression in past. India had also supported against French and American colonialism in Indo-China (Thailand, Laos and Cambodia). India was committed for a multi-polar world and democratization of international relations. India also opposed American role in Kosovo as it was interference on the name of protecting human rights and could have detrimental precedents for a multi-cultural country like India and China.

In 1998, India also conducted her **second nuclear test** and declared herself a nuclear state and it attracted worldwide criticism. Sanctions were put by West and aid was suspended by countries like Japan and Norway. France, Germany and Russia continued their normal relations. India's position on acquiring nuclear deterrent is justified on many counts. First, post-World War dynamics have changed substantially and have created an iniquitous and unethical global order. Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is highly flawed in its design and it serves interests of already

existing five nuclear powers. It discourages new tests and acquirement of nuclear weapon by the other states, but is silent on existing stockpile of 5 powers. Similarly, Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is also discriminatory. So, non-nuclear countries have virtually no voice and India refused to bow down to such a regime by refusing to sign these two treaties. Secondly, it had two hostile neighbors with nuclear power and their growing nexus. Further, nuclear powered American vessels are also not far from its territory at times. So, there was no talk of 'peaceful purpose' as was there during Indira Gandhi's time. Development of missile program now effectively complements Indian nuclear capabilities. This time many government persons also openly claimed that the tests were directed against threat from China and Pakistan and this irked China to some extent. Pakistan also conducted a nuclear test following India's test.

Atmosphere with Pakistan seemed cordial as Vajpayee government initiated talks and started Bus Diplomacy, Pakistan on the other hand was sending its troops and Mujahideens to infiltrate into India. When snows started to melt in summer of 1999, it was discovered that Pakistani infiltrators have intruded deep into LoC and even occupied several strategic peaks in **Kargil** area. India mounted a massive counter offensive from a disadvantaged military position. Pleasantly surprisingly, international opinion was in favor of India and even countries like the US, China and EU condemned Pakistani aggression. The US stance could be partially explained by growing threat of Islamic terrorism. China see in India a tacit ally against growing hegemony of the US which was witnessed during India's criticism of the US in Kosovo crisis. In Pakistan, fallout of the Kargil war was removal of Nawaz Sharif by General Musharraf and it became apparent that Kargil conspiracy was largely hatched by the army establishment keeping the political bosses in the dark. In spite of such a betrayal, India invited Pakistani president Musharraf to Agra Summit in 2001. Vajpayee wanted to make talks broad based, but Musharraf wanted to focus on Kashmir only. Musharraf utilized the limelight to drive home the point that insurgency in Kashmir is basically an indigenous freedom struggle. Indian credibility vis-à-vis Kashmir increased considerably when free elections were held in 2002.

Sanctions imposed by the United States on India were gradually revoked in wake of new global dynamics post 9/11 attacks and a dialogue also moved in the direction of **Civil Nuclear Deal or 123 Agreement** and high tech trade. In 2005, after extensive negotiation, the US agreed to tinker domestic laws and international regimes to enable full civilian nuclear cooperation with India. India in turn agreed to separate its civil and military nuclear programs and place its civil nuclear facilities under watch of IAEA, continue its self-declared moratorium on tests and also ensure non-proliferation. Concerns were raised that if India suspended its voluntary moratorium, the US will immediately stop all the help and will even ask for return of material that it had earlier supplied. It was also argued that civil and nuclear programs cannot be separated. However, government argued that the deal is crucial to meet burgeoning energy needs of India and by this agreement, India was de-facto accepted as a nuclear weapon state. Further, the agreement provided advance rights of re-processing. India was also guaranteed of assured fuel supply and strategic fuel reserve. The US also assured that it will not hinder the growth of India's nuclear weapon program.

PROBLEMS of NORTH-EASTERN STATES

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'. A small corridor of about 22 kilometers connects the region to the rest of the country. 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 reorganization. Nagaland State was created in 1960; Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura in 1972 while Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram became separate States only in 1986.

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 neighboring States and countries. People of Assam also felt robbed as huge mineral, oil and forest resources were appropriated by the center and outsiders, but little share was given to the state. 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. Problem in Assam became even more acute after 1971 war which saw huge influx of refugees in Assam who gradually became permanent residents and were even issued voter cards and ration cards.

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.

- I. 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 '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 reorganization 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. 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.

- II. Secessionist movements – 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 a difference. Laldenga came back from exile in Pakistan and started negotiations with the Indian government. 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. 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.
- III. Movements against outsiders – 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. 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 demanded that all outsiders who had entered the State after 1951 should be sent back. 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 organized 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.

ISSUES in OTHER STATES

In **Bengal**, communists had a particularly strong hold since even before independence. CPI organized a large number of mass movements to address issues related to workers, trade unions and peasants. Congress was defeated in the state in 1967 elections and a United Front government was formed with CPM support, but could not last long and in this time, CPM also gained popularity. In this time, Naxalism was also on the rise and was dealt with severity which further led to popularity of CPM as an alternative. Finally in 1977, CPM came to power and remained for next 35 years or so. One of the biggest achievements of CPM was tenancy reforms. After coming to power, it launched a program called '**Operation Barga**' which reformed the tenancy or *jotedari* system in favor of *bargadars* or sharecroppers and it benefitted 25% of households. *Jotedars* were intermediaries between sharecroppers or actual cultivators and *zmindars* or land owners who collected rent and they were not eliminated completely, but their share was limited. It ensured security of tenure to the sharecroppers through legal registration and laws were also passed limiting the share of the landowner, thus, improving their incomes as well. Reforms in *jotedari* system also improved agricultural productivity leading in income of both *jotedars* and sharecroppers. Another step taken by CPM was unearthing of Benami land holdings which were otherwise above land ceiling. Government also supplemented these two activities with credit expansion and hence bringing them out of clutches of money lenders. Panchayati Raj system was also reformed and acted as a vehicle for these agrarian reforms. Record of CPM government in curbing communal violence is also remarkable as it had significant Hindu and Muslim population and more remarkably so during Babri riots when whole nation was under communal siege. However, CPM government failed miserably in one area – industrial development and it failed to come up with an alternate strategy as well.

Kashmir issue is another touchy regional issue. 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. It is the issue of secular principle vs Two Nations Theory. It is an issue of national integration of India. Related to this issue is the debate over propriety of special provision for the state. 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. 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'. It is felt that democracy which is practiced in the rest of India has not been similarly institutionalized in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. However, over the years, the special status has been considerably diluted. Jurisdiction of many union institutions like Supreme Court, Election Commission, Auditor General etc have

been extended to the state. Constitutional provisions like fundamental rights have also been extended to the state. Similarly, Parliament may now make laws for state and President's rule can also be imposed. State's services are also integrated with All India Services.

Another grave issue is the **rise of insurgency** in the state. During most of the period between 1953 and 1974, the Congress party exercised a lot of influence on the politics of the State. In 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 and dilution of special status 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 mobilized around the cause of a separate Kashmiri nation. The insurgents got moral, material and military support from Pakistan. Lakhs of Kashmiri Pundits were also forced to leave the state during this period. 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. People often complain of neglect and backwardness. Therefore, the demand for intra-State autonomy is as strong as the demand for the state autonomy.

Punjab was also engulfed in a separatist movement during 1980s which was grossly communal in nature. Communalism had a long history in Punjab dating back to colonial times. Soon after independence, allegations of discrimination were made by the Sikh leaders on national leadership. Two issues that dominated in early years were – issue of language of administration and education. While Hindu communalists wanted Hindi, Sikh communalists wanted Gurmukhi. Second issue was a demand for a separate Punjabi suba on the basis of language, which was actually not on the basis of language, but on the basis of religion and was rejected by State Reorganization Commission as well. Akali Dal represented itself as the sole guardian of the Sikhs and it used SGPC's control over gurudwaras to mobilize the crowds. Nehru tried to have an accommodative approach and conceded Akali demands which were secular in nature which was also seen by Hindu communalists at times as minority appeasement. Earlier demands of language and separate Punjabi suba were met by Indira Gandhi in 1966. Akalis however didn't get majority in 1967 elections and didn't emerge as the dominant political force as they had envisaged. As a result, they made the communal demands even stronger and this time also revived the separatist agenda which became strident in 1980s. Earlier in 1973, one of the Akali Dals had also submitted a resolution (Anandpur Sahib Resolution) to the government with many

demands including non-sharing of river waters, control over Chandigarh and launched a virulent campaign.

Parallel to Akali militancy, **terrorism** led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale also raised its head in Punjab in 1981 as a culmination of communal politics. He was also tacitly supported by Punjab Congress and especially Giani Zail Singh to counter Akalis, but he later became a Frankenstein monster. Many Akali, Nirankari and even Congress leaders were killed by Bhindranwale along with some journalists, dissidents etc. Bhindranwale moved to Golden Temple to protect himself and for a long time directed his campaign from there and his campaign was growing highly fundamentalist and anti-national in character. From 1983, Hindus were targeted on a large scale, banks were looted and they even killed an Inspector General of police in premise of Golden Temple. Golden Temple became a hub of smuggled arms and a training center of terrorists and became a center of a parallel government type regime. Indira Gandhi refused to take stern action for three long years from 1981-84 and it encourage the terrorists a great deal. In the meanwhile, Pakistan also started stoking secessionist tendencies in a dangerous manner. Hindu-Sikh tension also peaked. Situation almost reached a dead end and the government had to call army to flush militants out of Golden Temple in a surgical operation named 'Operation Bluestar' in June 1984. However, militants were far greater in number and when army seized the shrine, many devotees were still trapped inside. In cross fire, building of temple was also severely damaged and finally all the militants were either killed or captured. Bhindranwale was also dead. Sikhs all over India were angered over the manner in which the operation was carried out and in vengeance, Indira Gandhi was killed in the same year in October 1984 by her two Sikh bodyguards.

Indira Gandhi's assassination stoked communal riots killing thousands of Sikhs in Delhi and other parts of India. When Rajiv Gandhi assumed power major jailed leaders were released and political climate was mellowing down and elections were held in 1985 in which Akalis emerged winner. However, Akalis failed to put a check on resurgent terrorism and Surjit Singh Barnala government was dismissed in 1987. Khalistan movement kept on becoming stronger amidst cycles of waxing and waning and it seemed that both central and state government had lost the strategic gains made during Operation Bluestar as even Rajiv Gandhi led central government failed to take advantage of President's rule. It was only during Narsimha Rao government that Beant Singh led Congress government in state took a firm stance against terrorism and terrorism was finally flushed out of Punjab by end of 1993, but not before more than 1500 policemen, many leaders of CPI, CPM and Congress and the Chief Minister Beant Singh himself losing their lives. Communalism and terrorism in Punjab could be suppressed because common man largely didn't subscribe to the views of communal ideologues and Punjab had a rich history of secular movements and leadership including Ghadar Party, Kirti Kisan movement, Bhagat Singh, a strong communist presence etc. People could differentiate that secessionism and fundamentalism is not synonymous with religious cause.

AGRICULTURE and LAND REFORMS

Traditional nature of Indian agriculture was altered by the colonial impact. It created more classes and commoditized land. Colonial rule introduced high tax regime, evil of intermediaries like zamindars and sub-zamindars, growth of landlordism, rack-renting on a very wide scale, destroyed traditional handicraft and artisanal industry, increased the number of the landless and so on. Instead of imbibing a modern capitalist outlook, colonial rule pushed agriculture into backwardness. Problem of small holdings were further accentuated by their fragmentations. Extremely high taxes led to high indebtedness and bonded labor. In such situation, where the bulk of the Indian peasantry was drained of any resources, living close to or below subsistence level, and where the upper sections of rural society found rent and usury more profitable than capitalist agriculture as a source of income, very little agriculture investment and improvement actually took place. Backwardness of industry also led to overcrowding of the agriculture and industry failed to absorb surplus rural labor.

Support to the cause of peasantry started very early in the national movement. Early outfits like Poone Sarvajanik Sabha and Indian Association raised their issues aggressively. 1920s saw peasants movements emerging in Uttar Pradesh and Malabar in close association with Non-cooperation and Khilafat movements. Bardoli Satyagrah of 1928 emerged as a model peasant movement and marked the unification of the peasant struggle and the national movement to an unprecedented level. Indian National Congress at its Karachi Session of 1931 included agriculture agenda also in its '*Fundamental Rights and economic Program*' and included provisions like reduction of rent or revenue, relief from agricultural indebtedness etc. Bihar Kisan Sabha adopted the slogan of Zamindari abolition. Communist and socialist also joined the cause of peasantry. The movement was given a pan-Indian shape with formation of All India Kisan Sabha in 1936 which joined by likes of Jawahar Lal Nehru as well. When Congress formed provincial governments in 1937, it brought various measures to alleviate the condition of peasants. For example – in Bihar, tenancy legislations were passed which abolished all increases in rent since 1911. In 1942, national leadership further grew sympathetic to cause of peasantry and Gandhiji even suggested that peasants should seize the land of landlords and landlords should respond by giving the land in favor of those who cultivate it. After the war, the peasant movements which had subsided during it again revived. Congress appointed 'Agrarian Reforms Committee' soon after Independence under leadership of J C Kumarappa in 1949 and in its Nagpur session of 1959, it brought out a radical program for improving conditions of peasant class.

Land reforms that were started covered 4 broad areas –

- I. Abolition of intermediaries like zamindars and jagirdars – A number of states had introduced zamindari abolition laws by 1949. However, often it was marred by litigations and termed as a violation of right to property. Government had to bring first constitutional amendment to counter it. Another difficulty in its implementation was absence of land records. Compensation paid to zamindars for acquisition of their lands varied from state to state and was even zero in states like Kashmir. However, the program of the abolition of Zamindari system was beset with many problems. In states

like Uttar Pradesh, zamindars were permitted to keep lands that were declared to be under their personnel cultivation and what constituted personnel cultivation was very loosely defined. In some states like Bihar, there was no limit on the size of land that could be kept under personal cultivation. Big landlords also pressurized state legislators to pass legislations in their favor as land is a state subject. If passed, such laws were frequently subjected to litigation. Implementation of laws was also shabby and revenue officers often colluded with the zamindars.

- II. Tenancy reforms – These reforms had three basic objectives – first, to guarantee security of tenure to the tenants who had cultivated a piece of land for a fixed particular number of years. Secondly, to seek the reduction of rents paid by the tenants to a fair level. Thirdly, to provide for opportunity to tenant to gain ownership of the lands he cultivated subject to certain restrictions. Such legislations sought to balance the interests of tenants and landowners. However, in many cases official contracts were not entered into and as a result tenancy continued in a concealed manner hence not protected by the legislations. Tenants were also converted into sharecroppers who were not treated as tenants by the law. Tenancy reforms were particularly successful in states of West Bengal and Kerala. In West Bengal, Operation Barga in 1977 was launched for tenancy reforms. Tenancy laws by and large failed to provide security of tenure to tenants. Reduction of rent to a fair level was almost impossible to achieve as often market determined rents were always higher than those mentioned in legislations. Success of Green Revolution also led to rise in rents in Northern India.
- III. Ceilings on size of landholdings – Ceilings were proposed to make land distribution more equitable. However, it met with many difficulties. In many states, ceilings fixed were very high. Further, in most areas, ceilings were placed on individuals and not on family. Benami transactions were also made to escape ceiling. Further, many exemption clauses were added, which made imposition of ceiling with many loopholes. Further, long delay in bringing in the legislations and frequent litigations defeated the very purpose of ceiling as most of the land holders devised methods to escape it. It could be implemented with some success only in Jammu and Kashmir. To make the ceiling legislations more effective, government also brought 34th Amendment to the constitution and included the revised ceiling laws in the Ninth Schedule. With this renewed effort in 1970s, some success was achieved in redistribution of the surplus land. However, still only 2% of the cultivable area could be redistributed. Another significant contribution was those of **Bhoodan** and Gramdan movements. Bhoodan aimed at land re-distribution in a voluntary manner. Acharya Vinoba Bhave who was a Gandhian social worker, launched this movement in 1951. He organized 'Sarvodaya Samaj' a federation of constructive workers. He and his followers took a march of feet (*padyatra*) to persuade large landowners to donate at least 1/6th of their land for redistribution among the landless and target was 50 million acres – 1/6th of 300 million acres land. He was also joined by Jayprakash Narayan who left active politics for constructive social work. The movement started from Pochapalli village of Telangana region Andhra. In early phases it received almost 4 million acres as donation. However, the movement lost momentum

after some time. Further, most of the land donated was either disputed or unfit for cultivation. The movement took a new form in form of **Gramdan** in 1955 which derived its idea from the Gandhian notion that all village land belongs to Gopal or God i.e. land in a Gramdan village will collectively belong to all villagers. The movement started in Orissa and was most successful there. It is argued that this movement emerged in mainly in those villages where class differentiation has yet not emerged.

- IV. Cooperativization and community development programs –First plan laid the foundation of cooperative movement in India, though it had been suggested by J C Kumarappa led Agrarian reforms Committee as well. Government gave priority to service cooperatives and cooperative farming was pursued only on voluntary basis where conditions were mature. However, the movement could not succeed for various reasons. Rich farmers employed proxy members to evade land ceiling laws. These were used by elite strata to take substantial financial assistance offered by the state in form of subsidy, agricultural seeds, fertilizers etc. Pilot cooperative farms were run like any government sponsored project rather than genuine motivated, joint efforts of the cultivators led them to be generally expensive unsuccessful pursuits. Service cooperatives like credit societies were relatively successful, but they also suffered certain limitations as they too fell into hands of rural elite and were victim of politicization. Cooperative credit societies also suffered huge defaults which were mostly well-to-do peasants. Populist measures like loan waiver by National Front government in 1990 also led to significant blow to repayment measures. One successful cooperative effort worth mentioning is milk cooperative movement which started from Gujarat from Kaira or Kheda village which also harbingered White Revolution. Peasants of Kheda used to supply milk through intermediary traders into villages and felt cheated and they formed cooperatives to counter this problem and themselves started to supply milk after advice of leaders like Patel. ‘Kaira District Cooperative Milk Producers Union Ltd’ was registered as a cooperative society in 1946. V Kurien an engineer from Kerala also put his efforts towards success of this movement. Slowly, the cooperative society diversified its activities and also started to provide better seeds, immunization, rural outreach for veterinary services, frozen and processed dairy products and so on. Government also decided to replicate Anand Pattern in other parts of country and formed ‘National Dairy Development Board’ located in Anand itself with Kurein as its chairman and it launched ‘Operation Flood’ which showed great result during 1990s. Another big achievement of milk cooperative movement was that around 60% of the beneficiaries were marginal or small farmers. It also promoted indigenous equipment industry as well. Women empowerment also got a significant push by establishment of many women dairy cooperatives with the help of NGOs like SEWA.

Land reforms didn’t produce very dramatic results as they did in various other parts of the world like China in form of communes. However, they did lead to substantial amount of self-cultivation and hence incentivized greater investment in agriculture for improving productivity. It was also successful in rooting out the feudal elements from Indian agriculture. There were also other

reasons for failure of reforms. Population increase made the small gains in form of redistribution and ceiling as ineffective. Industrialization also failed to absorb the surplus labor.

Another effort was made in form of Green Revolution in 1960s to improve yield and farm incomes. It was brought in background of stagnated growth in agriculture, high food imports through schemes like PL-480, draughts and rising population. It introduced High Yield Varieties (HYV) seeds of wheat and rice. Mexican dwarf wheat was introduced in wheat growing northern areas. It was also coupled by availability of fertilizers and credit. Green revolution made India food surplus nation, but also had many other social and economic fallouts as well.

AGRARIAN STRUGGLES

Agrarian struggles post independence had a considerably changed nature as now they were against the policies of a welfare state. They were partly in reaction to structural disparities that still existed and partly in reaction to the hopes that were belied.

Telangana peasant struggle was one of the early manifestations. Peasants of Telangana suffered an extreme form of feudal oppression in the hands of jagirdars and deshmukhs, some of who had thousands of acres of land. Peasants also suffered excessive grain levy and begar at the hands of government, landlords and officials. The movement was organized by the Communist leadership which organized peasantry in form of armed guerilla rebellion groups or dalams for attacking the landlords, armed paramilitary groups razakars and officials. When Nizam was displaced by Indian army, Communist leadership gave a call to fight out Indian government as well. It saw Indian government also a symbol of bourgeoisie rule and gave call for true liberation. In a tragic fight with Indian army, thousands of peasants suffered.

Another movement post independence was that of Patiala Muzara movement. It was a movement by the muzaras against the Biswedars or the landlords who had limited rights over land during British rule, but gained significant hold after independence. Peasants organized themselves into armed groups under communist leadership like Teja Singh Swatantra in 1948.

Other movement post independence included Naxalbari movement and movement by tribal peasants of Srikakulam of Andhra Pradesh which were also driven by communist ideology. Both of these movements were influenced by the thoughts of Mao Zedong and aspired radical change in the social structure.

Another stream of popular agrarian movement is categorized as 'New Farmers Movement'. These movements were based upon ideas of relative deprivation and were not led by the marginalized peasantry class, but by well to do farmers lobby. Shetkari Ssanghtan of Sharad Joshi, Bhartiya Kisan Union of Mahendra Singh Tikait were such organizations which represented new demands like increase in subsidy, free electricity, rise in MSP and so on.

WOMEN SINCE INDEPENDENCE

Before independence, women's movement got a significant push during National Movement.

Many organizations like All India Women's Conference were formed. Social condition was aimed to be improved after independence through legislations like Hindu Code Bill. Shah Bano Case also provided government an opportunity to ameliorate conditions of Muslim women which government failed to cash on.

In social movements also, women exhibited high levels of participation. For example – in Tebhaga movement in Bengal, women organized themselves into Nari Bahini. In Telangana peasant struggle also their participation was significant. A Gandhian organization Textile Labor's Union in Gujarat also formed its women's wing Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) led by Ela Bhatt which took the cause of women in unorganized sector and played a role in organizing them, training them and giving them better collective bargaining power. Women also participated in Chipko movement of Uttarakhand. In Madhya Pradesh, Mahila Mukti Morcha was formed in 1970s to take up the cause of tribals. After emergency, women's group in Delhi were led by able leaders like Madhu Kishwar. Similarly, Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Udyog Sangathan played an important role in getting justice for the affected. After 1980s, there is a shift in women's movements away from mass campaigns and to less dramatic works like setting up of women's centers for legal aid, counseling, documentation, research, publication and so on.

INDIAN ECONOMY and INDUSTRIALIZATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Colonial rule debilitated domestic industry by destroying indigenous industries and by discouraging growth of modern industry on the other hand. A small, but independent, industrial base with Indian ownership and control emerged between 1914-47 and by the times, Indians were also doing well in field of finance and banking as well. Large business conglomerates like Tatas, Birlas, Singhania, Dalmias have emerged during that period itself.

Post independence a pure Soviet model was not followed and private capital was given space in a mixed economy which primarily aimed at import substitution, self-dependence and rapid Industrialization. Planned economic growth was at the heart of strategy of development. Even before independence, **Bombay Plan** was drafted in 1945 by major Industrialists who favored growth of capital goods industry to reduce dependency. Since capital goods industry offers return in long term, it could be funded by public money only in an underdeveloped country. First Plan could focus on problems at hand only and it was 2nd Plan or Nehru Mahalanobis Plan that laid foundation of industrial growth in India. However, care was taken that it doesn't promote regional imbalance, prevents wealth concentration and interests of small labor intensive industries are not hurt. However, the period also laid the foundation of license raj as well. Savings and investment rates significantly increased. GDP growth rate was also 4 times than colonial average in first 2 decades. Industry grew at a rate of more than 7% during first three plans and agriculture too grew at more than 3% at a rate much better than during colonial period. Public sector captured 'commanding heights' and further marginalized an already small foreign sector. In social sector also considerable investments were made. Scientific research was also rapidly promoted and CSIR was established with many of its labs. Similarly atomic energy was also given a push with establishment of Atomic Energy Commission in 1948.

Two successive monsoon failures of 1965 and 1966 brought significant hardship to the Indian economy. Wars in 1962 and 1965 also added pressure on economy and inflation too reached to alarming levels. So much so that, even long term planning was to be suspended for three years – 1966-69 and instead, annual plans were rolled out. Foreign aid also declined in wake of 1965 war and India's criticism of Vietnam War, the US also put stop on PL-480 wheat loan. Pressure was put on India to liberalize her economy and devalue currency, but when India did so situation of Indian economy worsened and government was even criticized for devaluing the currency. Government took a left turn and many measures like MRTP Act, FERA Act, Nationalization of banks and industry was taken up starting from 1969 till 1970s. In the same period, Green Revolution also happened leading to food security.

However, a few shortcomings were also associated with the approach taken by government in early years. Import substitution insulated Indian industry from competition and curbed outside exposure. It led to inefficiencies into the industry and technological backwardness. MRTP Act too went against basic principle of economies of scale which is at the heart of capitalist development and hence punished efficiency. Political pressures, bureaucratic hurdles and trade unionism further worsened the situation. Indian economy failed to develop a competitive edge when nature of international markets changed from domestic production to outsourcing and early movers like China and east Asian countries reaped the benefits. India failed to benefit from changing nature of international capital. Government expenses were fast outstripping its incomes and as a result fiscal deficit touched dangerous levels of 10% and debt increased from 30% in 1970 to 54% in 1991 having domino effects in forms of inflation, lower foreign capital inflow and lesser industrial investments. Though India grew at an average of 5.5% in the decade 1980-90, it was largely a debt led growth based on huge government expenditures and deficit. Forex reserve fell drastically to just \$2.1 billion in 1990, just enough to meet one month's imports. Iraqi invasion of Kuwait further fueled oil prices and it further strained Indian economy. Situation was so acute that government had to sell its 20 tonnes of gold to banks of Switzerland. These were the situations in which minority governments led by Narsimha Rao liberalized the Indian economy and brought economic reforms also termed as 'structural adjustment program' partly under IMF and World Bank pressure in exchange of aid. Exchange rate was now almost deregulated, licensing system in industries was considerably dismantled, MRTP Act was abolished, disinvestment of public sector started, FDI and FII was promoted and so on. As a result, Indian economy staged a quick recovery and 8th plan (1992-97) averaged growth rate of 7%. Debt to GDP ratio was also improved at 28% by 1995-96. Reforms in stock market also led to dramatic change in capitalization.

Money economists argue that economic liberalization has exposed India of global shocks and have again integrated Indian economy in a subservient manner. Investment in the capital goods industry remains still poor and poverty levels have also not come down significantly. No serious steps were taken to boost public savings and improve the condition of public sector. Labor market also remained non-reformed. In 1996-97, Indian economy was also hit by East Asian Economic Crisis. In 1999, Indian economy was hit by sanctions in wake of nuclear tests

conducted by India.
