

□ Book 2: Politics in India Since Independence

□□ Chapter 1: Challenges of Nation Building

□ 1. Three Challenges Faced by Independent India

After gaining independence in 1947, India faced three major nation-building challenges:

Integration of Princely States

Establishment of Democracy

Development and Upliftment of the Nation

□ “The first and the most immediate challenge was to shape a nation that was united, yet accommodative of the diversity in our society.” — NCERT

□ 2. Partition: Displacement and Riots

Partition of India (1947) led to the creation of India and Pakistan.

Triggered violent communal riots, displacing nearly 10 million people.

Over a million people died, and women were subjected to atrocities.

Massive refugee crisis—particularly in Punjab and Bengal.

□ The partition was not merely territorial—it was communal, based on religion.

□ 3. Integration of Princely States

At independence, India had over 565 princely states.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, as the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, played a key role.

Used diplomacy, force, and the Instrument of Accession to unify states.

Special cases:

Junagadh (Hindu majority, Muslim ruler) – integrated through plebiscite.

Hyderabad (Operation Polo, 1948) – military action to integrate.

Kashmir – joined India after tribal invasion; still disputed.

□ “The integration of princely states was a silent revolution.” — NCERT

□ 4. Reorganization of States

States were reorganized on linguistic lines.

Led to formation of State Reorganization Commission (1953).

States Reorganization Act (1956) reorganized boundaries and created modern map.

□ 5. Constitution and Democratic Foundations

Indian Constitution came into effect on 26 January 1950.

Established:

Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic

Universal Adult Franchise

Fundamental Rights

Federalism

Independent Judiciary

□ 6. Planning and Economic Development

Adoption of planned economic development through Five-Year Plans.

Focused on:

Self-reliance

Industrialization

Land reforms

Public sector dominance

□ Nation-building was not just about politics—it included social and economic transformation.

□□ Chapter 2: Era of One-Party Dominance

□ 1. Congress Dominance Post-Independence

The Indian National Congress emerged as the dominant political force post-1947.

Congress won a majority in the first three general elections: 1952, 1957, and 1962.

□ In 1952, Congress won 364 of 489 Lok Sabha seats.

Congress was not a party of one ideology—it had diverse views, including conservatives and socialists.

□ 2. First General Elections (1951–52)

Conducted with:

Universal adult suffrage

Over 17 crore eligible voters

Used ballot boxes, not EVMs

Supervised by Election Commission under Sukumar Sen

□ Despite high illiteracy, voter participation was remarkably high.

□ 3. Reasons for Congress Dominance

Legacy of the freedom struggle

Charismatic leadership (Nehru)

Presence in all regions

Focus on nation-building

Weak opposition

□ Congress was seen as the natural party of governance.

□ 4. Nature of Congress Party

Congress acted as a “coalition of diverse interests”.

Operated as an umbrella party, including:

Farmers

Businessmen

Workers

Social reformers

□ It practiced internal democracy, but Nehru's stature gave it coherence.

□ 5. Opposition Parties and Their Role

Despite Congress dominance, opposition parties:

Helped keep democracy alive

Raised alternative viewpoints

Laid foundation for later coalitions

Important Oppositions:

Socialist Party – promoted democratic socialism.

Communist Party of India (CPI) – later split into CPI(M).

Bharatiya Jana Sangh (1951) – predecessor of BJP.

Swatantra Party – conservative, pro-market.

□ 6. Dominance Without Authoritarianism

Congress dominance did not mean authoritarianism.

Regular elections were held.

Press and judiciary remained independent.

Peaceful transfer of power occurred when Congress lost in states in 1967.

□ This dominance is different from one-party systems like China, which don't allow opposition.

□ 7. Criticism of Congress System

Critics called it a de facto one-party rule.

Argued that real democracy requires alternation of power.

Others argued that internal competition within Congress served as a substitute for multi-party democracy.