

Post Independence Preview



INDIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

GS Mains Paper I

For Civil Services Exams

Table of Contents

Sr.no.	Chapter Title	Page no.
Chapter 1	Political parties after independence	1
Chapter 2	Initial challenges	12
Chapter 3	Time period of Jawahar Lal Nehru	30
Chapter 4	From Jawahar Lal Nehru to Lal Bahadur Shastri	36
Chapter 5	Lal Bahadur Shastri to Indira Gandhi	42
Chapter 6	Era of Emergency	56
Chapter 7	Janta Party Government	70
Chapter 8	Re-emergence of Indira Gandhi	78
Chapter 9	Tenure of Rajiv Gandhi	86
Chapter 10	National front government	96
Chapter 11	Re-emergence of congress	101
Chapter 12	Rise of BJP	104

CHAPTER 1 POLITICAL PARTIES AFTER INDEPENDENCE

1. Congress

Resignation of Socialist and Communist from Congress

Before independence, socialists and communists were part of their respective parties as well as some of them were also members of Congress. After independence, at the initiative of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, 1st Home Minister (popularly known as Patel Amendment), a provision was introduced into the organizational rule of Congress that no person belonging to any other political party or group which had its own constitution and organization structure could be a member of Congress.

On account of this amendment, the Congress socialists decided to withdraw from Congress and believed that from now on Congress would be transformed into a right-wing capitalist party.

Jawahar Lal Nehru decided to stay with the Congress and even appealed socialists to continue with Congress. During the leadership of Jawahar Lal Nehru, the political orientation of Congress was Centre or middle party with the left orientation.

Leadership of Party v/s Government

During times of Jawahar Lal Nehru, two different viewpoints emerged within the Congress- whether political party should decide the policies of the government and its working or the government should be kept independent of political party.

In November 1946, Jawahar Lal Nehru joined interim government and resigned from party presidency on the ground that the two roles, namely party president and leader of the government, could not be combined into one.

J. B. Kripalani succeeded J. L. Nehru as president of Congress party. He demanded that the party should have direct role in functioning of government.

He was of this view because he believed that government was formed on account of elections won by the party. As a result, parties are representatives of the people. Moreover, important role to party in functioning of government would maintain the prestige of party and motivate the workers of the party.

On the other hand, J. L. Nehru was against the control of party over the functioning of government. According to him, the government is responsible to elected legislature and not to political party. Moreover, some proceedings of the government are secret in

nature. Also, the party may misuse the government machinery for promotion of its interests.

J. L. Nehru's view was finally accepted. J.B. Kripalani resigned from party presidentship in November 1947. Kripalani was succeeded by Rajendra Prasad and thereafter, Bhogaraju Pattabhi Sitaramayya. Neither of them tried to promote the principle of supremacy of party over government.

Relationship between Nehru and Patel

In 1945, communists left the Congress and after independence, adopted hostile attitude towards Congress. Similarly, the socialists also left the Congress after independence. As a result, the left forces were weak in the Congress and the domination of right-wing forces or conservatives was building in Congress.

Though, Nehru and Patel shared amicable relations, however there were certain ideological differences between them. These issues arose because the political orientation of J. L. Nehru was Centre with left and it is alleged that Sardar Patel sometimes favored conservationist and right-wing stand.

Points of difference:

- 1) Sardar Patel favoured abolition of landlords (Zamindari System) but only upon payment of compensation.
- 2) Patel was also conservative regarding issues of class and socialism. He was totally opposed to socialists and communists.
- 3) He shared positive approach towards capitalism and successfully argued for stimulus to private enterprises.
- 4) On account of his efforts, right to property was incorporated as fundamental right.
- 5) Though he was secular, some allegations have been raised on his secular credentials. He questioned Nehru's foreign policy towards Pakistan. He was of the view that Pakistan has attacked Kashmir. As a result, he opposed the grant of compensation to Pakistan on account of loss of assets in India. Thus, he was of the view, India should refuse payment of Rs. 55 crores to Pakistan.

- 6) The most important difference emerged over the presidentship of Congress. In 1950, elections were due for leadership of Congress. Nehru supported J. B. Kripalani as his candidate; on the other hand, Patel supported Purushottam das Tandon.
- 7) Purushottam Das was conservationist. The control of conservationist President created fear in the minds of Nehru. Finally, Tandon became president of Congress in 1950. Tandon gave important positions within Congress to people sharing conservationist ideology. On account of resentment, J. B. Kripalani along with his supporters left Congress and formed Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party. Vallabhbhai Patel died shortly thereafter on 15th Dec. 1950.

In 1951, J. L. Nehru gave resignation from CWC (Congress working committee) and asked the other members to decide whose view, Tandon or his view, would they like to accept. The Congressmen sided with Nehru. As a result, Tandon resigned from the party. J. L. Nehru was elected as leader of the party.

The other difference between Tandon and Nehru was on whether party should dictate the functioning of the government. After 2-year term, J. L. Nehru never became party president till his death in 1964. But at the same time, there was no conflict between the party and the government.

However, even until present times in India, party has strong control over functioning of the government. This is unlike the situation in the US or Britain.

Development of differences between Socialists and Congress

The amendment brought by Sardar Patel and ideological differences led to departure of socialists from Congress. Departure of socialists from Congress led to weakening of radical forces in Congress. Nehru wanted socialists to maintain continuance within the Congress. He even proposed Jaya Prakash Narayan (J.P.), a socialist leader, a cabinet seat. In initial years, Nehru regarded J.P. as his brother.

On the other hand, socialists headed by J. P. believed that Congress had sidelined the left agenda. J.P. specifically wanted immediate implementation of his 14-point program which included specified constitutional amendments, land reforms, nationalization of banks, insurances, and mines etc. Congress was not prepared to go so far.

Socialism in the Congress

Gradually, Nehru took steps towards implementing left agenda. For instance, in 1953, Congress decided to adopt land reforms, ranging from abolition of Zamindari system to

fixation of land ceilings. Zamindari System was abolished immediately; however, land ceilings were adopted gradually.

In 1955, session held at Avadhi (Tamil Nadu), Congress declared its objective to establish socialist pattern of society. Further, in second and third five-year plan document, J. L. Nehru committed to socialist pattern of society. While placing the second five-year plan before Parliament, he stated "I do not propose to define precisely what socialism means, because we wish to avoid rigid or doctrinaire thinking." He further said, "by socialism we mean a society in which there is equality of opportunity and the possibility for everyone to live a good life". He also added that emphasis shall be laid on equality, on removal of disparities and of poverty. The essential thing is that there must be wealth and production.

The Congress moved further to the left in Nagpur session in 1959. In this session, Congress declared that the future agrarian pattern should be that of co-operative joint farming. Initially service (services to agriculture) cooperatives were to be established which were ultimately to be transformed into agricultural co-operatives. Further, Congress decided to implement ceilings on land holdings and state trading in food grains.

Decline of Congress in Early Years

Congress weakened in early years because of following reasons:

1. Internal divisions involving alienation of socialists and communists.
2. Discredit in the eyes of common man because party officials sought power, money and were less concerned with public interest.
3. Thirdly, Congress was losing contact with the masses.

To restore the image of Congress and its support, K. Kamaraj, Madras Chief Minister, proposed a plan to Congress working committee. The plan was that number of leading Congress officials, who were in Union Cabinet or Chief Ministers should voluntarily resign and take up party work in order to revive the party.

This plan was also made to cleanse the administration from unwanted Congress officials. Large number of resignations were submitted to Nehru, including Cabinet Ministers like Morarji Desai, Lal Bahadur Shastri, S. K. Patil, Jagjivan Ram etc.

'Kamaraj plan', however could not succeed because of death of J. L. Nehru in 1964 in Bhubaneswar. The leaders who resigned were not assigned organizational work except Kamaraj, who became party president.

2. Socialist Party

Of all the other political parties, apart from Congress, Socialist party was the most important. The leader of the party was Jai Prakash Narayan, his popularity was next only to J. L. Nehru. The other important leaders within Socialist party were Acharya Narendra Dev, Achyut Patwarthan, Ram Manohar Lohia, S. M. Joshi and Ashoka Mehta.

The socialist party was born in 1934 and remained a part of Congress, though it had its separate constitution and ideology. Socialists rejected plan for partition of India and demanded definite commitment and program towards socialism. In 1948, on account of Patel amendment, socialists left the Congress.

However, gradually the socialist party lost support in public, because of shift of Congress towards left and internal divisions.

3. KMPP (Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party)

KMPP was founded by J.B Kripalani. He was gandhian and was in agreement with basic policies of Congress. However, he formed KMPP after he failed to get elected as president of Congress.

The other important leaders of KMPP were P. C Ghosh, (ex-Congress Chief Minister of west Bengal), T. Prakasam (ex-Congress Chief Minister of Madras). KMPP won 9 seats in 1951-52 elections.

Both Socialist party and KMPP decided to merge as Kripalani said both the parties want a casteless and classless society, free from social, economic, and political exploitation. The socialists called it socialists' society and KMPP called it Sarvodaya (upliftment of everyone). (The concept of Sarvodaya was given by M. Gandhi in 1908).

4. Praja Socialist Party (PSP)

In 1952, PSP was formed by merging KMPP and socialist party. Kripalani was chairperson and Ashoka Mehta was General Secretary. It was the largest opposition party at that time.

PSP underwent divisions on account of internal differences in 1953. Ashoka Mehta offered his thesis that in a backward country the most important task was of economic development and therefore the opposition should adopt constructive spirit. He further

said that Congress and PSP have similar ideology and objectives. Therefore, PSP should oppose Congress only when matters of principle were involved.

The party (PSP) rejected Mehta's thesis in favor of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's approach. Lohia stood for opposition to Congress and a position of equal distance from both Communists and Congress. He even arranged various militant mass movements such as civil disobedience, strikes etc.

Lohia left PSP in 1955 and formed Socialist party. Acharya Narendra Dev died in 1956. J. P. withdrew from active politics and decided to work for 'Bhoodan' movement (Bhoodan movement was started by Acharya Vinoba Bhave). J.P. also advocated that party politics is not suitable form of politics and instead emphasized on party-less democracy. In 1960, Kripalani also left the party to play independent role in politics.

In 1963, Ashoka Mehta was appointed as Deputy Chairperson of Planning Commission by Congress. As a result, he was expelled by PSP along with one third followers of PSP, who were supporters of Ashoka Mehta.

Many state level leaders also defected from Congress, such as T. Prakasam (from Andhra), Pattom Thanu Pillai (Kerala), P.C. Ghosh in Bengal, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha (Bihar), and Triloki Singh (Uttar Pradesh). Finally in 1971, more than half of remaining cadre of PSP joined Congress. In 1971 General Elections, PSP secured only 2 seats. The remaining members of PSP joined Socialist Party (Ram Manohar Lohia) to form Samyukta Socialist Party.

The main failure of the socialists was their inability to distinguish from Congress. As Congress took leftwards turn, the socialists were marginalized.

Bhoodan and Gramdan Movement

Bhoodan movement was an attempt at land reform mainly land redistribution through a social movement and not through government legislation.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave was inspired by Gandhian ideas of trusteeship that all land belongs to God. He persuaded the large landowners to donate at least 1/6th of their land as gift for distribution among landless and poor people. The target was to get 50 million acres of land in donation.

The movement began in beginning of 1950s. It was joined by Jai Prakash Narayan. In initial years, the movement achieved considerable success. By 1956, 4 million acres of land was donated.

After this, the movement lost momentum. Moreover, substantial part of donated land was covered under litigations and was of poor quality.

By end of 1955, the movement took a new form that of 'Gramdan' or donation of village. In gramdan villages, the movement declared that all land is owned collectively. Despite, initial success of movement, the movement failed to build the large-scale mass movement.

5. Socialist Party under Ram Manohar Lohia

After leaving PSP, Dr Lohia formed socialist party by end of 1955. The hallmark of the new party was political militancy such as agitations, civil disobedience movements, walk-outs and disruptions in legislatures. The party was totally opposed to Congress.

The two major demands of party were:

- a. Immediate abolition of English and its replacement by Hindi as the sole link language.
- b. Reservation of over 60% for SC, ST, BC and women.

In 1967 elections, they initiated the politics of anti – Congress alliance comprising of Swatantra party and Jan Sangh on one hand and the Communists on the other. Dr. Lohia died in 1967. In 1971, Socialist party merged with PSP to form Samyukta Socialist party.

6. Communist Party

Communists were part of Congress, since 1936, however, during World War-II, differences emerged between Congress and Communists. Communists decided to leave Congress. Communist party possessed several able leaders and disciplined cadres. P.C. Joshi was the General Secretary of the communist party.

Initially, the party agreed that India is free and asked its supporters to rally behind Nehru. Later, by December 1947, the Communist Party changed its stand and argued that Indian independence is fake. Communists considered Nehru as agent of imperialism, keen on protecting the interest of capitalists and landlords. The communist party increasingly came under the influence of Stalin.

At the second session of Communists after independence in 1948, B.T. Ranadive became General Secretary of the Communist party. In this session, communists declared that Congress is an agent of imperialism. The party followers were called to continue the

armed peasant struggle in Hyderabad. Initially, this struggle was against Nizam, but hence forth the struggle was to continue against Indian government.

Moreover, a national railway strike was organized on 9th March 1949. However, the strike was partially successful. Gradually, the support of communist party eroded. This erosion of support created pressure upon communists to change their tactics. In 1951, Ajoy Ghosh, became General Secretary of the party, adopted new strategy. The objective of party was held as eventual overthrow of Indian government but communists agreed that people were not yet ready.

As a result, Communists decided to withdraw from violent struggle and participated in elections. The government also lifted ban over Communists. In 1951 elections, it won 23 seats. In 1957 elections, first non-Congress state government was formed by Communists in Kerala. The Communist party of India finally splited in 1964 on ideological grounds. CPI tilting towards centrist ideology and CPI (Marxist) representing left ideology.

CPI (M) believed that it was necessary to start violent agrarian struggle and mass violent struggle. On the other hand, CPI believed that objectives could be achieved through peaceful means only. Gradually, the ideological differences between both these parties submerged. These parties formed combined governments in west Bengal, Kerala and Tripura.

7. Bhartiya Jan Sangh

Bhartiya Jan Sangh was founded in 1951 by Syama Prasad Mookerjee. Bhartiya Jan Sangh is considered as right-wing party because the party seeks to promote Hindu interests in India. Syama Prasad Mookerjee died in 1953. In 1954, Mauli Chandra Sharma became president of Bhartiya Jan Sangh. However, he resigned on account of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) control over Bhartiya Jan Sangh. Jan Sangh was strongly against Pakistan. It argued for Akhand Bharat (United India).

Jan Sangh emphasized on Bhartiya Culture and Bhartiya Nationalism, based on non-western and traditional values. Gradually, Bhartiya was replaced by Hindutva. The party supported the promotion of Hindi and Sanskrit and was against English and Urdu. The party is also called conservationist because it seeks to uphold traditional norms of Hinduism.

The other political parties sharing similar ideologies were Hindu Mahasabha, and Ram Rajya Parishad. Together these 3 parties won 10 seats in first General Election. In 1967,

Hindu Mahasabha and Ram Rajya Parishad merged into Jan Sangh. In 1967 elections it secured 33 seats.

RSS was formed in 1925 as an organization to promote Hindu interests. RSS held Gandhiji and other Congress leaders as traitors who sacrificed Hindu interests. RSS was banned after assassination of Gandhiji. However, soon thereafter, the ban was lifted when RSS agreed to restrict itself to cultural activities and not intervene in politics. Jan Sangh is considered to be political organization associated with RSS. M.S. Golwalkar was its head from 1931-1981.

8. Swatantra Party

It was first, All India Secular Conservative Party formed in 1959. Many distinguished Congress leaders defected from Congress to form Swatantra party. The important leaders of Swatantra Party were Rajagopalachari, Minoo Masani, N.G. Ranga, K.M. Munshi.

Swatantra party brought right wing secular forces under single leadership. The provocation for formation of Swatantra party was 1955 Avadi session and 1959 Nagpur session of Congress, where congress took leftwards turn.

The policy of Swatantra party was:

- 1) Freedom to Private Enterprises.
- 2) Opposition to Nationalization.
- 3) Opposition to land reforms especially ceiling on land holdings.
- 4) Secularism.
- 5) Party opposed non-alignment policy and favored intimacy with US and Western Europe.

In 1967 elections, Swatantra party won 44 seats. However, gradually, the party weakened on account of internal divisions. C. Rajagopalachari died in 1967. Some members of the party rejoined Congress and the remaining members carried under Minoo Masani.

In 1969, Congress was divided into Congress (O) and Congress (R). Congress (O) was right wing party. The reason for independent existence of Swatantra party diminished with formation of Congress (O).

9. Muslim League

After partition of India, the foremost objective of Muslim league was fulfilled. The remaining leadership of Muslim League in India failed to gather public support. Some Muslim league leaders joined Congress. Moreover, the role of Muslim league got confined only to the state politics of Kerala.

Economic Impact of British Legacy

- 1) Pattern of India's foreign trade indicated the colonial character of Indian economy. As late as 1935-39, food, drinks, tobacco and raw material constituted 68.5% of India's exports while manufactured goods constituted 64.4% of India's imports.
- 2) Savings rate of Indian economy from 1914-1916 was only 2.75% of GDP per annum. Large amount of these savings was appropriated by British officials, landlords and money lenders.
- 3) It is estimated that nearly 5% to 10% of national income was transferred annually to Britain.
- 4) After 1890, military expenditure was equivalent to nearly 50% of Central Government's income.
- 5) The taxation system was also regressive in nature. The peasants were required to pay highest shares of taxes. Land revenue contributed 53% of total tax revenue of the government. Salt tax contributed 16% of total tax revenue (1900-01). The upper income groups such as bureaucrats, landlords and merchants paid very little taxes.
- 6) The per capita agriculture production fell by 14% between 1901-1941. The fall in per capita food grains was 24% during the same period.
- 7) By 1940s, landlords controlled over 70% of agricultural land. Government, landlords and money-lenders appropriated more than half of the total agricultural production.
- 8) As late as 1946, cotton and jute textiles accounted for more than 55% of value addition by manufacturing. These industries also employed nearly 30% of total work force employed in industries. The share of industrial sector was only 7.5% in national income.