

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF INDIA

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UNIT - I

The Nehruvian Era – Democratic Socialism – Economic Policy – Five-Year Plans – Foreign Policy – Panchsheel – Non-Aligned Movement – Lal Bahadur Shastri – Domestic and Foreign Policies.

Objectives

- The Nehruvian Era promoted democratic socialism and planned development.
- Five-Year Plans aimed at industrial and agricultural growth.
- Panchsheel and Non-Alignment guided India's peaceful foreign policy.
- Lal Bahadur Shastri stressed food security and peace.

The Nehruvian Era stands as a significant chapter in India's post-independence history, characterized not only by its nation-building efforts but also by its distinctive foreign policy approach. As the first Prime Minister of independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru played a pivotal role in shaping the country's foreign relations, crafting a diplomatic strategy that continues to influence India's global interactions to this day. This introduction sets the stage for a comprehensive analysis of the Nehruvian Era's foreign policy, delving into its core principles, objectives, challenges, and lasting impact on India's international standing.

Jawaharlal Nehru's foreign policy approach was marked by a unique blend of idealism and pragmatism. His vision extended beyond the immediate concerns of the newly formed nation, encompassing a larger aspiration for global peace, cooperation, and equitable development. The principles of non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, and solidarity with other developing nations formed the cornerstone of Nehru's diplomatic philosophy. By steering clear of alignment with either of the Cold War blocs, Nehru aimed to maintain India's sovereignty, safeguard its national interests, and promote a multilateral world order.

This era witnessed India's emergence as a vocal advocate for decolonization, self-determination, and the rights of smaller nations on the international stage. Nehru's leadership guided India's participation in global forums such as the United Nations, where he passionately championed issues of social justice, human rights, and disarmament. His commitment to these principles, often referred to as the "Nehruvian idealism," left an indelible mark on India's foreign policy trajectory. In the pages that follow, we delve into a comprehensive analysis of the Nehruvian foreign policy era. By examining the core principles that guided Nehru's approach, evaluating its implementation in the face of complex challenges, and assessing its influence on India's global positioning, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the significance and legacy of the Nehruvian Era in shaping India's role in the international arena.

The Nehruvian Era stands as an indelible chapter in India's history, defined by the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Spanning the years from 1947 to 1964, this period was marked by a distinctive approach to foreign policy that left an

indelible mark on India's global trajectory. Nehru's foreign policy, characterized by principles of non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, and solidarity with the Third World, was both a reflection of his ideological convictions and a response to the complex geopolitical landscape of the time. This era witnessed India's emergence from colonial subjugation into an independent nation determined to carve its identity on the world stage. Nehru's foreign policy choices, often guided by a delicate balance of pragmatism and idealism, were instrumental in shaping India's interactions with both superpowers and newly emerging nations. From navigating the challenges of the Cold War to addressing regional conflicts and promoting decolonization, Nehru's diplomatic decisions had far-reaching implications for the nation.

This paper embarks on a comprehensive analysis of the Nehruvian Era's foreign policy, dissecting its key principles, objectives, and outcomes. By delving into the intricacies of Nehru's approach, the paper aims to uncover the underlying motivations that drove his diplomatic endeavors. It also seeks to evaluate the legacy of this era, examining its impact on India's contemporary foreign policy strategies and its enduring influence on the nation's global engagements. As the world continues to grapple with shifting alliances, power dynamics, and evolving global challenges, a retrospective examination of the Nehruvian Era's foreign policy offers valuable insights into the complexities of statecraft and the enduring quest for sovereignty and relevance in an interconnected world.

Democratic socialism

Democratic socialism is a political ideology that advocates political democracy alongside social ownership of the means of production, often with an emphasis on democratic management of enterprises within a socialist economic system. The term "democratic socialism" is sometimes used synonymously with "socialism"; the adjective "democratic" is often added to distinguish it from the Marxist – Leninist brand of socialism, which is widely viewed as being "non – democratic" in practice.

1 Is Democratic socialism and Social Democracy Same?

Busky, Donald F. "Democratic socialism is the wing of the socialist movement that combines a belief in a socially owned economy with that of political democracy. Sometimes simply called socialism, more often than not, the adjective democratic is added by democratic socialists to attempt to distinguish themselves from Communists who also call themselves socialists. All but communists, or more accurately, Marxist-Leninists, believe that modern-day communism is highly undemocratic and totalitarian in practice, and democratic socialists wish to emphasize by their name that they disagree strongly with the Marxist-Leninist brand of socialism."

Democratic socialism is also sometimes used as a synonym for social democracy, although many say this is misleading because de Socratic socialism advocates social ownership of the means of production, whereas social democracy does not . 2 In simple terms, Democratic Socialism as an ideology is an extension of the liberal propagation of

democracy altered to suit the needs of all the countries of the world. The ideology believes that democracy and socialism are one and indivisible, there cannot be a true democracy without a true socialism, and there cannot be a true socialism without a true democracy. The two come together in equality, social justice, fair share for all and an irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power to workers and their families.

Nehru: A True Democratic Socialist

One of the main exponents of Democratic Socialism in India was the former Indian Prime Minister J L Nehru. He argued that Democratic Socialism could mitigate the evils of all the third world countries.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was a great Indian Democratic Socialist. He was the harbinger of the socialist trend in Indian National Movement and, indeed, was instrumental in making India embark upon the path of socialism. However, he wanted to achieve the objectives of socialism gradually within the democratic framework. He was one of the few who did not take democracy for granted but sought to explain his conception and show how it could be brought into harmony with his conception of socialism and how it could be implemented. In this connection, he was very much influenced by the British socialists of his days. Nehru was very much moved when he saw his countrymen suffering from poverty, ignorance and disease.

He thought socialism was the only panacea for all ills prevalent in the Indian Society. He brought to bear on this central problem his modern mind and scientific temper. Scientific socialism, tempered by his intense humanism thus became his intellectual tool. He was a practical idealist. 3 In a 1963 address to the All India Congress Committee, Indian Prime Minister

Nehru emphasized on free and fair elections where the suffrage for the citizens is a must, for example, the goal of democratic socialism also encompasses the issues pertaining to the nationalization of means of production. They also include steps like raising the minimum wages, removal of poverty, securing a national health plan, check concentration of economic power and demanding passage of welfare legislations for the workers.

Building of A Socialist Thinker

Nehru became interested in the philosophy of socialism from an early period in his life, while studying law in London, he was “vaguely attracted to the Fabians and socialistic ideas.” But such ideas on socialism were formed mainly from books and not from practical experiences. In 1920, Nehru visited some of the villages in U. P. This adventure was a revelation to him. Until now, he was ignorant of village – life and the dumb – misery of the starving peasants who were clad in rags, hunger and emancipation.

It was a novel and eye – opening experience for him and he has recalled in his ‘An Autobiography’ “Looking at them and their misery and overflowing gratitude, I was filled with shame and sorrow, shame at my own easy – going and comfortable life and our petty politics of the city which ignored this vast multitude of semi – naked sons and

daughters of India, sorrow at the degradation and overwhelming poverty of India . A new picture of India seemed to rise before me, naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable.

” 6 International Visits and Socialism

After the Brussels Congress, Jawaharlal Nehru visited U.S.S.R. along with his father, Motilal Nehru and sister Krishna Nehru. Motilal Nehru “found it hard to understand the new Russia and the collective idea of the Soviet Union.” But Jawaharlal was greatly impressed by the tremendous changes taking place over there.

Nehru has recalled: “My outlook was wider, and nationalism by itself seemed to me definitely a narrow and insufficient creed . Political freedom, independence, were no doubt essential, but they were steps only in the right direction; without social freedom and a socialistic structure of society and the state, neither the country nor the individual could develop much . In Soviet Russia, despite certain unpleasant aspects, attracted me greatly and seemed to hold forth a message of hope to the world.” This visit of the Soviet land left a profound impression on Nehru’s mind. Socialism was his new creed now, and the Soviet Union was seen as the land where such a creed flourished, despite many drawbacks.

Nehru wanted the model of Democratic Socialism which suits Indian traditions and ethos. He was influenced by the Fabian Socialism of Britain. He was of the opinion, that Parliamentary politics is the means of achieving socialism. Multiple social groups and ideological groups will strengthen Indian democracy. Pluralism will become the ideological foundation of individual liberty and societal demands must have a beautiful reconciliation. Socialism and India:

Socialists vs Conservatives:

The espousal of socialism as the Congress goal was most difficult to achieve. Nehru was opposed in this by the right – wing Congressmen Sardar Patel, Dr .Rajendra Prasad and Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari. He had the support of the left – wing Congressmen Maulana Azad and Subhas Chandra Bose. The trio combined to oust Dr . Prasad as Congress President in 1936. Nehru was elected in his place and held the presidency for two years (1936 – 37) .

Nehru was then succeeded by his socialist colleagues Bose (1938 –39) and Azad (1940 – 46) . After the fall of Bose from the mainstream of Indian politics (due to his support of violence in driving the British out of India), the power struggle between the socialists and conservatives balanced out . However, Sardar Patel died in 1950, leaving Nehru as the sole remaining iconic national leader, and soon the situation became such that Nehru was able to implement many of his basic policies without hindrance . The conservative right – wing of the Congress (comprising of India’s upper class elites) would continue opposing the socialists until the great schism in 1969. Nehru’s daughter, Indira Gandhi, was able to fulfill her father’s dream by the 42nd amendment (1976) of the Indian constitution by which India officially became “socialist” and “secular”.

Nehru's acceptance of political democracy was not unqualified. As he considered it to be means to achieve the end of social democracy. "I am perfectly prepared to accept political democracy," he said, "only in the hope that this will lead to social democracy." He was clear in his mind that political democracy "is only the way to the goal and is not the final objective". He saw clearly that if profound economic changes did not take place fast enough, the political structure would be rendered unstable. If political or social institutions stand in the way of such change, they have to be removed.

Achieving the Socialist State in India :

Socialism, whose essence is the removal of poverty and establishment of equal opportunities if not of equality in the strictest sense, has necessarily to suit the conditions of each country, and Nehru's constant effort was to bring about changes without destroying the fabric of Indian society, even if certain parts of that fabric were to be replaced .

Nehru saw the socialist society as some kind of a cooperative society, in which each individual would give of his best and would find full scope for his own development. The very first step had to be the ending of the profit motive of the acquisitive society to which we are accustomed. The dilemma he faced was the result of his desire to avoid a violent upheaval that could have disastrous consequences for future generations of our people and to take the maximum number of people along with him on the new path . This was no easy task, for the vested interests in the acquisitive society which he wanted to end were entrenched in the party and in the administrative apparatus which had necessarily to be his major instruments. Also it was these interests which were active during the freedom struggle, and even more in the years of freedom, and they were able to create the illusion of democratic functioning without active participation by the masses of our population who were to gain by the changes Nehru envisaged.

It must be said that Jawaharlal Nehru fully realised the difficulties inherent in seeking radical change through democratic processes. In thinking of a form of socialism suited to our national needs and national genius, Nehru envisaged a limited place for the private sector, but he was quite clear about the framework. I think it is possible to establish socialism by democratic means provided, of course, the full democratic process is available.

Nehru said: We have to plan at both ends. We have to stop the cumulative forces that make the rich richer and we have to start the cumulative forces which enable the poor to get over the barrier of poverty.

Democratic socialism is a synthesis of 'Democracy' and 'Socialism', the essence of both being equality. It is basic faith of democracy that however men differ in their individual talents and abilities they are equal in their membership of a common society. Society is imbued with the same faith. It recognises the fundamental desire of the vast majority of men and women to be co – operative in solving their common social, political

and economic problems and accept this desire as a primary motivation of social organism so as to create a pattern within which the whole personality of a man can develop.

No doubt under this broader perspective one can find the common ground, but in fact both, Democracy and Socialism, as separate and independent systems, represent two different natures of equalities. Democracy always emphasises 'political equality' without taking into account the equitable distribution of wealth and social justice. The emphasis of Socialism, on the other hand, has always been on 'economic equality' without paying much attention towards political freedom and individual dignity. The insufficiencies of both are sought to be remedied under 'Democratic Socialism' where 'equality' in the words of the late Prime Minister Nehru, 'means not merely the equality of possessing a vote, but economic and social equality.' It is basically accepted that neither of the equalities can be fully achieved without the help of the other. It is under this impression that Pandit Nehru declared, "Political Democracy has no meaning if it does not embrace economic democracy. And economic democracy is nothing but socialism.

Features of the socialistic pattern of society:

For the promotion of freedom, a socialistic pattern of society is indispensable. It should involve the features like removal of poverty; reduction of inequalities of income and wealth; provision of equal opportunities to all; check on concentration of economic power, curbing monopolistic tendencies; democratic values, mixed economy etc.

In his words:

"I gazed at the millions of friendly eyes that looked at me and I tried to understand what lay behind them. The more I saw of India the more I felt how little I know of her infinite charm and variety."

Being halted by plights of the teeming millions of Indian people, Nehru adopted a socialistic pattern of society.

Belief in parliamentary democracy:

Nehru was a firm believer in the parliamentary democracy. He had full faith on the ruling party and healthy opposition. He believed on universal adult suffrage for the success of democracy. For the success of parliamentary democracy, he put emphasis on the rule of majority, methods of discussion, negotiation, persuasion and so on.

The press, judiciary and public opinion will have a check on the legislators and will be the guard in checking corruptions in parliamentary democracy.

Peaceful solution to class conflict:

In a democratic – socialistic set – up, Nehru opined that class conflict should be ended by peaceful solution. He never believed in the Marxian idea of class struggle or communist – policy of 'ruthless suppression'. On a democratic set – up, due caution should be taken to put an end to the class conflicts inside the society.

Social development through planning:

Another significant aspect of Nehru's Model of Economic Development was the creation of Consciousness of Economic Planning.

Nehru thought to bring all – around development of the society through planning . It will help in eliminating poverty and achieving social justice for the masses . By planning, he wanted to raise national income and to spend them in productive channels for the improvement of the lot of the poor people of India.

The First Five Year Plan (1951 – 56), the Second Five Year Plan (1956 -61) and the Third Five Year Plan (1961 – 66) galvanized Nehru's democratic socialism.

Belief in Democratic Institutions:

Nehru would not discard the democratic processes or bypass the democratic institutions in order to put his ideas into practice. In the prevalent society with a long history of feudalism, caste hierarchy, religious divergence, multiplicity of languages and customs, in fact of stratification of society in a variety of ways, it has not been easy to correlate tradition and change to work out a viable compromise between the best of cherished values and the urgency of eliminating social and economic inequalities. Jawaharlal Nehru realised that revolution in our situation had to be voluntary and thus could not be imposed. He admired the Soviet achievements and accepted the ultimate ideals of Marxism, but he was not ready to apply the same methods in India.

In an underdeveloped nation with many layers of development within itself, both vertical and horizontal, and with a variety of vested interests wielding tremendous influence and extremely articulate, the difficulties involved in bringing about radical changes by consent were obvious enough. Yet the alternatives to the democratic system are so risky and unpredictable that he would not lightly discard his faith, even if this meant a visible, often frustrating, slowing down of the process of change.

Nehru's acceptance of political democracy was not unqualified. "I am perfectly prepared to accept political democracy," he said, "only in the hope that this will lead to social democracy." He was clear in his mind that political democracy "is only the way to the goal and is not the final objective". He saw clearly that if profound economic changes did not take place fast enough, the political structure would be rendered unstable .If political or social institutions stand in the way of such change, they have to be removed.

Belief in Cooperative Society

Nehru saw the socialist society as some kind of a cooperative society, in which each individual would give of his best and would find full scope for his own development . The very first step had to be the ending of the profit motive of the acquisitive society to which we are accustomed. The dilemma he faced was the result of his desire to avoid a violent upheaval that could have disastrous consequences for future generations of our people and to take the maximum number of people along with him on the new path .

This was not an easy task, for the vested interests in the acquisitive society which he wanted to end were entrenched in the party and in the administrative apparatus which had necessarily to be his major instruments. Also, it was these interests which were active during the freedom struggle, and even more in the years of freedom, and they were able

to create the illusion of democratic functioning without active participation by the masses of our population who were to gain by the changes Nehru envisaged.

Once Nehru said that two contradictory and conflicting processes could not go on side by side that unfortunately is what has been happening . The Directive Principles contain a broad outline of the kind of socialist society envisaged, but the many amendments to other chapters of the Constitution that have been necessitated have brought out the dichotomy in thinking that characterised the Constitution – making body. On another plane, the formulation of the concept of “mixed economy” represented on the one hand the “half – way house” Nehru thought of and on the other the ability of the vested interests to keep “two contradictory and conflicting processes” going on side by side, a situation Nehru did not desire .

It is no coincidence that the “mixed economy” in operation has resulted in a strengthening of the monopoly and big business houses, and a consequent tightening of their hold on the administrative apparatus. If corruption has increased and the public sector has not been enlarged and strengthened to the extent it should have been, this is because of acceptance of the “mixed economy” as something of a “half – way house” .It must be said that Jawaharlal Nehru fully realised the difficulties inherent in seeking radical change through democratic processes .I think it is possible to establish socialism by democratic means provided, of course, the full democratic process is available. (Emphasis added)

There has been mass awakening as never before in our history and despite massive illiteracy our people have demonstrated their capacity to reject what is against their interests. But the real problem is that the democratic process is not yet fully developed, and the people have only limited choice. The limitations imposed by our circumstances, both historical and man – made, have helped both the urban and rural vested interests to twist the democratic process to suit their own ends which are diametrically opposed to the interests of the masses .

In thinking of a form of socialism suited to our national needs Nehru envisaged a limited place for the private sector, but he was quite clear about the framework. In all that counts, in a material sense, nationalisation of the instruments of production and distribution seems to be inevitable.

The question is whether there can be a step – by – step approach in this matter. Our experience with the takeover of the wholesale trade in foodgrains shows that partial measures in dealing with production and distribution of essential commodities can defeat the very objective. The fate of the land reform measures has shown an administrative machinery that is not geared to the task, can work havoc . The continuing importance and influence of the big business houses seem as the direct result of the failure to involve the people at the grassroot level more and more in the processes of planning, production and distribution.

It is possible to find fault with Jawaharlal Nehru for not having made the maximum use of his popularity to force the pace of change, but to do so is to overlook the historical forces that had shaped him and the historical circumstances in which he had to function, apart from his own commitment to the democratic processes as well as to the instruments at his disposal. It is debatable how much more he could have achieved in his life – time, but it is indisputable that he laid firm foundations for the kind of society we want to build in this country. It is for us and for future generations to build on these foundations.

Nehru View regarding Indian Revolution

Nehru was conscious that the Indian Revolution would be long and arduous, for he said: “Leaders and individuals may come and go; they may get tired and slacken off; they may compromise and betray; but the exploited and suffering masses must carry on the struggle, for their drill sergeant is hunger.” If the social and economic burdens of the masses “continue and are actually added to, the fight must not only continue but grow more intense”. The masses would ultimately assert themselves, and of this he had not the least doubt.

Goal of Socialism and Theory of Two instruments

It was his hope that the political parties and the administrative apparatus would help the masses to assert themselves and secure their rights . He was quite clear in his mind that a leadership that failed to take the masses nearer the goal of socialism would be thrown aside, and the mass upsurge in 1969 following the elimination of the Syndicate from the Congress would appear to bear this out, even if only in a very limited sense .

Nehru said:

“We have to plan at both ends . We have to stop the cumulative forces that make the rich richer and we have to start the cumulative forces which enable the poor to get over the barrier of poverty. ”

The planning process unfortunately has not gone on the way he had intended it to, and this is where the two main instruments on which he had to depend come in .

1. Rejection of “coat and necktie” mentality

Nehru wanted the services to “cease to think of themselves as some select coterie apart from the rest of the people”, and he rejected people with the “coat and necktie” mentality. In other words, he wanted a new type of administrator to emerge, who could identify himself with the common people without effort and who would not become either a tool in the hands of vested interests or a self – seeker without a conscience. Unfortunately this kind of change has not come about; on the other hand, the expanded administrative structure has careerists and self – seekers in many key positions. This has to change.

2 . Vision of making Congress a Mass Party

As for the other instrument, the Congress, it may now be in better shape than in Nehru’s time, but what he said about Congressmen remains relevant .

Congressmen should make the organisation strong and effective . Use of money for boosting individuals in the organisations is extremely undesirable. Bogus members should be weeded out. Those in the organisation for whom the Congress is not an instrument for serving the country, who serve themselves and exploit it for their own ends... should be turned out .

He wanted the party to be a mass party, constantly in touch with the people and reflecting their aspirations, constantly struggling to end social and economic injustice. Some changes have taken place in the party in recent times, but it is still far from being the kind of instrument for change that Jawaharlal Nehru wanted it to be . It is to be hoped that the new forces at work within the Congress and the mass consciousness that has developed in the country will make it so.

Our aim and our problems were succinctly summed up when Jawaharlal Nehru said: Socialism is the inevitable outcome of democracy. Political democracy has no meaning if it does not embrace economic democracy. And economic democracy is nothing but socialism. Monopoly is the enemy of socialism. To that extent it has grown during the last few years, we have drifted away from the goal of socialism.

As a Democratic Socialist:

Nehru was not ready to sacrifice democratic methods for speedy progress and was firmly committed to democratic socialism.

According to Dr . Gopal, this was a flaw in the thinking of Nehru. Nehru felt that democracy and socialism were equal partners and could not be divorced . “But Nehru , although a radical in the European tradition, set out with confidence to work for this unprecedented, almost superhuman experiment of democratic socialism in a setting of Asian tradition and economic backwardness”

Nehru always remained a socialist wedded to democratic practices. He made the Indians aware of the value of the parliament as an instrument of social change. As a leader of the majority party Nehru tried to act as far as possible on the basis of consensus . Communists have criticized Nehru bitterly (R . K. Das Gupta, H . Mukerjee) for having failed to be the leader of the true socialist revolution. Nehru was, according to them, torn between socialism and Gandhism and sacrificed socialism in his devotion to democratic norms and the value of liberalism and individualism.

Nehru laid primary stress on democracy and the freedom of the individual for fear that a revolutionary equality might annihilate the individual. It is essential that assessment of Nehru’s concept of socialism should be based on the fact that Nehru always wanted to achieve a socialist reconstruction of society by democratic means rather than by violent revolution. His conviction was that socialism without democracy would be tyranny in any, and especially in the Indian context.

It is no doubt true the despite his massive personal popularity and the power at his disposal in the government and in the party, Jawaharlal Nehru could not put into practice many of the ideas he spelt out regarding the radical changes, social and economic, that

our society required. But this must be seen in the background of the dilemma he faced as an honest politician committed to socialism on the one hand and to democracy on the other . Rightly, he saw no contradiction between the two, for, who can deny that true democracy is the only viable basis for genuine socialism and that without advance towards the goal of socialism democracy will be bereft of meaning?

As a Radical Socialist:

Further, according to his estimate, radical solutions were impossible in the Indian situation, where super – situation, fatalism, ignorance, and class distinctions were age – old features. In such a situation socialism could be brought about by gradual, peaceful and democratic means, by a steady conversion of the people and by enlisting their support and participation. Nehru advocated a rapid progress towards radical socialism before independence. After 1947 he adjusted himself to the Indian circumstances and problems. Though he was flexible about tactics, he was rigid about goals. Nehru always considered democracy and socialism as means to the end, not the end itself.

On Equality:

Nehru contended that liberty and democracy had no significance except in the context of equality. In his presidential address to the Indian National Congress at Lahore in 1929 Nehru declared, ‘Today politics have ceased to have much meaning, and the most vital question is that of social and economic equality’ Laying stress on the importance of equality Nehru asserted, “Democracy means equality and democracy can only flourish in an equal society” .

He realized that political liberty brought the vote but was of little use when society was riddled with poverty and economic inequality . Long back Nehru stated, ‘There cannot be ups and downs and social inequalities in this country. These must be got rid of. We have to build up a new social order in which everyone will have the fullest opportunity for development, no exploitation, and in which there will not be merely political democracy, but economic democracy, which means economic equality without which political democracy will be a hoax. What does it matter to one whether he has a vote or not, when he is hungry and starving. ”

Relevance of Nehru’s Vision in Today (Concept of Marxism and Mixed Economy):

The relevance of Jawaharlal Nehru remains undiminished today. In fact, his ideas and approach to political, economic and social issues are more relevant now than in his lifetime . It is necessary to state this basic truth and assess the continuing validity and vitality of his approach, because some who unabashedly use his name seek to project him as a pragmatist rather than as the firmly committed socialist that he was.

It is the fashion these days to say that socialism is a vague term, that it is a slogan, and that there is no precise definition of what it means. This is essentially the argument of the believers in the status quo, of those who are afraid of radical change that will either hurt their own interests or destroy their pet theories.

In our context, with a long history of feudalism, caste hierarchy, religious divergence, multiplicity of languages and customs, in fact of stratification of society in a variety of ways, it has not been easy to correlate tradition and change, to work out a viable compromise between the best of cherished values and the urgency of eliminating social and economic inequalities.

In an underdeveloped nation with many layers of development within itself, both vertical and horizontal, and with a variety of vested interests wielding tremendous influence and extremely articulate, the difficulties involved in bringing about radical changes by consent were obvious enough. Yet the alternatives to the democratic system are so risky and unpredictable

Jawaharlal Nehru realized that revolution in our situation had to be by consent and could not be by imposition. He admired the Soviet achievements and accepted the ultimate ideals of Marxism, but he did not make a secret of his reservations about applying the same methods in the case of our country.

The only way to maintain democracy and strengthening it is to accord solutions as per the demand of time and space. In this regard, the views and methodology of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru can become more or less ideal for those who have concern for challenges facing Indian democracy. Particularly Nehru's stress upon healthy criticism, according opportunities to opposition, providing a platform for wide discussion on issues, call to observe and resolve problems having national interest supreme, developing a basis for broad outlook, is of utmost importance in the twenty first century for India and the world in this era of globalization .

Nehru's preference for a mixed economy seemed appropriate under the circumstances . To put it in his own words, "I am no believer in Communist theory – there is much in it which I accept in the economic theory, but basically I think it is out of date today, more especially in this atomic age . I think equally that the opposite theory is out of date in the context of modern world affairs."

Deviation from Gandhi's Idea:

Though Nehru find in Gandhiji's conception of democracy something more than the ordinary, stating that "It is based on service and sacrifice, and it uses moral pressure" but Nehru's value – system was different from that of Gandhi. He believed in science and technology and their application to industrial and agricultural development an d a better ordering of social life.

He reacted sharply against the mediaeval idea of 'trusteeship' which, according to Gandhi, was supposed to solve the problem of class conflict. He thought the problem was no longer merely a moral or ethical one. The world was clamoring for a remedy for the economic ills. It could not live by "negation alone, criticising the evil aspects of capitalism, socialism, communism, etc, and hoping vaguely for the golden mean".

Even on the issue of violence while Nehru believed i n the democratic process and could never tolerate insurrectionary violence as a means to the construction of a Socialist

society, he recognised that “force and coercion are necessary both for external defence and internal cohesion” and that “Governments are notoriously based on violence” .

Nehruvian Era-Concept of Development

The economic policies of Jawaharlal Nehru have been subject to much controversy in the past few decades. However, it is important to place Nehru's economic policies in context for a proper appreciation of his policies. Nehru's commitment to the cause of India's development remains unquestioned, and it is no doubt that much of his plans and speculations were jeopardized by the unexpected partition that came along with the independence of India, which brought about an unprecedented fissure in the economic resources of the Indian mainland. Nehru himself confessed that the partition brought about a large share of problems, including a great rift in the agricultural and the industrial sectors. A large portion of the most productive agricultural lands fell in Pakistan whereas the corresponding industries remained in Indian dominion. The problem faced by the Jute industry soon after Independence can be stated as a case in the point. The jute producing areas were in Pakistan whereas the Jute processing factories remained in India, thereby affecting jute productions on both sides of the border.

Early Economic Reforms of Nehru:

Nehru started his career as the Prime Minister of independent India in 1947, and immediately launched a number of economic reforms. Nehru was a firm believer in state control over the economic sectors. His socialist ideals revealed themselves in the way he introduced laws for land redistribution, in order to curtail the economic disparity in India among the landed and the land-less classes. One of Nehru's key economic reforms was the introduction of the Five Years Plan in 1951. It was introduced to determine the mode of government expenditure and grants in important development sectors like agriculture, industries and education.

The Ideology guiding Nehru's Economic Policies:

Nehru's economic policies have often been considered to be Socialist in nature. It is no doubt that Socialism did play a very important role in Nehru's ideological make-up. But at the same time, it is also important to consider that Nehru himself denied any kind of overt Socialist tendencies in the economic policies adopted by him. Nehru advocated a kind of mixed economy. Any kind of unquestioned ideological adherence to any form of economic tenet, or 'ism', he realized, would be detrimental to India's growth. He wanted a practical approach in framing the Indian economy, which would suit best the country's needs. On the one hand, as a devoted Gandhian he had strong belief in the betterment of rural economy. On the other hand, he had a strong belief that heavy industrial development would be the best way to serve India's economic interests. Nehru's Industrial

Nehru's Industrial Policies:

Nehru wanted to create a balance between the rural and the urban sectors in his economic policies. He stated there was no contradiction between the two and that both could go hand in hand. He denied to carry forward the age old city versus village

controversy and hoped that in India, both could go hand in hand. Nehru was intent to harness and fully exploit the natural resources of India for the benefit of his countrymen. The main sector he identified was hydroelectricity, and he constructed a number of dams to achieve that end. The dams would not only harness energy, but would also support irrigation to a great degree. Nehru considered dams to be the very symbol of India's collective growth, as they were the platforms where industrial engineering and agriculture met on a common platform. Nehru also considered the possibility of nuclear growth during his tenure as the prime minister of India

Nehru and Foreign Investment

Nehru inspired the industrialists to provide a fillip to India's economy. However, he had strict reservations on the question of foreign investment. Nehru was wary of foreign investment. Nehru's nationalist ideals confirmed in him the belief that India was self-sufficient to bolster her own growth. Although he did not officially decry the possibility of foreign investment in direct terms, he did stress that the sectors of foreign investment would be regularized, and the terms and conditions of investment and employment would be strictly controlled by government rules in case there were possibilities of a foreign investment. Nehru, moreover, emphasized that the key sectors will always be in government hand. This step of Nehru is much criticized now. Yet, it cannot be denied that Nehru aptly looked forward to long term investments for which he banked more on Indian industries. It is also often suggested that his endeavour to harness international support to develop India's infra-structural profile between 1947 and 1955 did not meet with much success. It, however, remains a fact that Nehru's regime was not one of great economic growth for India. Although his economic policies are blamed for the failure of India to turn into a major economic force in the aftermath of independence, yet Nehru was probably thinking on a more long term basis. It is often inferred that the economic liberation of the later years was possible only because of Nehru's policies in the initial stages.

The State Control in Nehru's Economic Policies:

The most distinctive, and often debated feature of Nehru's economic policies, was the high level of state and central control that was exercised on the industrial and business sectors of the country. Nehru emphasized that the state would control almost all key areas of the country's economy, either centrally or on a state-wise basis. His Socialist emphasis on state control somehow seemed to undermine his stress on industrial policies. The rigorous state laws and License rules put a great degree of restrain on the free execution of industrial policies. Even the farmers, along with the business personnel, found themselves to be at the receiving end of rigorous state control policies and high taxation. Poverty and unemployment were widespread throughout Nehru's governance.

Nehru's Views on Rural Economy:

Nehru's policy towards the rural economy of India was also significant. Nehru felt for the rural self-development of India very strongly. He tried to boost India's cottage

industries. Much on the lines of Gandhi, Nehru believed that the rural and cottage industries of India played a major role in the economic fabric of the country. But most of his cottage industry development programs were meant as a part of community development. He was also of the belief that small scale industries and cottage industries were effective solutions to the massive employment problems that remained a perpetual issue of concern throughout his tenure.

The economic policies of Nehru are often blamed for the poor economy of India in the subsequent years. However, it cannot be denied that his decisions were necessitated by the needs of the times. India needed to effectively harness its domestic means as well as strengthen its governmental control to lay the base for future privatization. It is often speculated that Nehru would have embraced the economic reforms and economic liberalization of the late twentieth century if he was alive.

Jawaharlal Nehru and Mixed Economy

It was precisely to avoid a violent eruption of class struggle in the country that Jawaharlal Nehru opted for a mixed economy. He repeatedly pointed out that acquisitive society and the “free enterprise system” had outlived their relevance and were controlled and restrained even in the countries in which they first came up. He emphasised that the “strongest urge today is for social justice and equality”, and unless the state responded to it “it might well become a police state”. But he also saw that fully controlled economies led to authoritarianism and totalitarianism which he regarded as irrational growths. He was faced with another dilemma.

From the historical point of view he saw that the ‘shell’ of the Indian system was capitalistic while its ‘essence’ remained feudal; in this context the slow pace of growth that would take place without the state taking on certain economic responsibilities would lead to “monopolies and aggregations of economic power”.

At the same time, he realised, as he told the Lok Sabha once, “the price paid for rapid industrialisation has been terrific in some socialist countries. I am certain no country with any kind of parliamentary democracy can possibly pay it”. He wanted India to be a parliamentary democracy for various reasons, but he knew that “if there is economic inequality in the country all the political democracy and all the adult suffrage in the world cannot bring about real democracy”.

At one stage he was even prepared for adjustments in the political system to meet the demands of the task of building a non-acquisitive and egalitarian society, but he emphasised that “political democracy will only justify itself if ultimately succeeded in producing these results”—by ‘these’ he meant economic advance in a manner that social tensions (including class war) were reduced and finally defused.

Mixed economy was his answer to the problem of planning economic advance in a democratic set-up. Besides, he believed that “change is essential, but continuity is also essential. The future has to be built on the foundations laid in the past and the present. To deny the past and break with it completely is to uproot ourselves and, sapless, dry up”.

Mixed economy was to be his instrument of change without a break with continuity. Transition from feudalism had not been accomplished anywhere without a break caused by industrial revolution which had taken place in western countries before they took to democracy and in socialist countries in conditions in which civil liberties were not available to their citizens.

It was an uncharted path that he took, and he made it clear that, for India, planning was to be a method of trial and error; he had no ready-made model before him but he was sure that India would learn from the mistakes of others. But mixed economy was not an end in itself. As early as 1948 when he was not even sure of how to describe it (“call it what you like—mixed economy or something else”), he was clear that it was to be a “transitional stage of economy”. He also felt that the transition was not to be smooth. “I rather doubt myself whether it is possible without a conflict or repeated conflicts to bring about these changes because people who are used to possessing certain interests or certain ideas do not easily accept new ideas, and nobody likes to give up what he has, at least no groups like it; individuals sometimes do”. His doubts were not unjustified; during the years since he spoke, the conflicts which, he thought, would arise did come to the fore resulting in distortion in the path he sought to pursue.

Mixed Economy

Mixed Economy is neither pure capitalism nor pure socialism but a mixture of the two systems. In this system we find characteristics of both capitalism and socialism. Mixed economy is operated by both, private enterprise and public enterprise. That is private enterprise is not permitted to function freely and controlled through price mechanism. On the other side, the government intervenes to control and regulate private enterprise in several ways. It has been realised that a free functioning of private enterprise results in several types of problems.

According to J. W. Grove, “One of the presuppositions of a mixed economy is that private firms are less free to control major decisions about production and consumption than they would be under capitalist-free enterprise, and that public industry is free from government restraints than it would be under centrally directed socialist enterprise.”

Co-existence of the public and Private Sectors:

The important characteristics of mixed economy are that in this economy both private sector and public sector function together. The heavy industries such as defence equipment, atomic energy, heavy engineering industries etc., come under the control of public sector, on the other hand, the consumer goods, small and cottage industries, agriculture, etc., are assigned to the private sector. The government helps the private sector by providing several facilities, of their development.

Economic Welfare:

It is the most important criterion of the success of a mixed economy. Public Sector seeks to avoid regional inequalities, provides large employment opportunities and often its price policy is guided by considerations of economic welfare rather than by

profit motive. Private activities are influenced through monetary and fiscal policies to make them contribute to economic welfare of the society at large level.

Economic Planning:

In Mixed economy, the Government adopts the instrument of economic planning. This is necessary for the public sector enterprises which have to work according to some plan and to achieve certain pre-determined objectives. In the same way, the Private Sector cannot be left to develop in its own way. To ensure a co-ordinated and fast economic development the programmes of both the sector are drawn in such a way that growth in one complements the growth in the other.

Free and Controlled Economic Development:

The Mixed Economic System considered to be more appropriate to remove the demerits of the capitalist and communist economic systems. Encouragement is given to free economic activities and at the same time steps are also taken to control economic activities.

Merits of Mixed Economy:

The merits of mixed economic system are discussed below:

1. Adequate Freedom:

Mixed economy also permits adequate freedom to different economic units: (a) Consumers are free to dispose of their incomes in a manner they want, although the government does try to influence these decisions through monetary, fiscal and commercial policies, (b) Factors of production are free to choose their own occupations although again the Government may strive to create conditions favourable for the growth of chosen occupations.(c) Private initiative is always encouraged to find it's best possible use.

2. Maximum Welfare:

In mixed economic system, the state makes efforts to provide maximum welfare to workers and other citizens. The government makes provision for the employees for housing, education, minimum wages, good working conditions, etc. 3. Modern Technology:

In mixed economy, the modern technology and capital saving method is used, with the result large- scale production and profit could be possible. Reserve fund is created to meet any undesired situation in future. It produces more at the time of trade boom and utilise the reserve capital when there is recession.

3. Best Allocation of Resources:

The resources are utilised in the best possible manner in the Mixed Economic System. The Central Government makes economic planning for optimum use of the resources. Thus shortage is avoided; productive efficiency increases and cyclical fluctuations are eliminated.

Demerits of Mixed Economy:

The major disadvantages of mixed economy are:

1. Low inflow of Foreign Capital:

Because of the government policy and the fear of nationalisation there is less possibility of inflow of foreign capital which is very essential of the development of private sector.

2. Inefficiency of Public Sector:

In comparison to private sector, public sector efficiency is lacking and corruption, discrimination and red-tapism are the evils spread in the public sector.

3. Maximum Control on Private Sector:

On one side, opportunity is given to private sector for development but, on the other side stringent controlling is exercised by the government to regulate the functioning of private enterprises. This has an adverse impact on the development of private sector.

4. Fear of Nationalisation:

The private entrepreneurs are much worried about the government policy to nationalise private enterprises in certain situations.

5. Problem of Concentration of Economic Power:

Although it is said that the mixed sector minimises economic concentration but in practice the private-entrepreneurs take the advantage of government policy and accumulate wealth since both the private and public sectors co-exist, the government will not be in a position to impose any stringent steps to prevent economic concentration.

6. Presence of Imbalance in the Economy:

The mixed economy cannot provide faster development as the government simply wants to maintain a balance between the private and public sectors. The policies of the government are not so clear or it facilitates to give any direction with the result, there exists non-clarity of objectives and presence of imbalance in the economy. (Puja Mondal)

FIVE YEAR PLANS Introduction :

Indian planning is an open process. Much of the controversy and the debates that accompany the preparation of the plans are public. The initial aggregate calculations and assumptions are either explicitly stated or readily deducible, and the makers of the plans are not only sensitive but responsive to criticism and suggestions from a wide variety of national and international sources. From original formulation through successive modifications to parliamentary presentation, plan making in India has evolved as a responsive democratic political process and the culmination of the same in the final document is an impressive manifestation of the workings of an open society. But by its very nature it also generates many problems from the point of view of mapping an optimal strategy for economic development. History Of Planning in India & Origin of Five Year Plans:

Though the planned economic development in India began in 1951 with the inception of First Five Year Plan , theoretical efforts had begun much earlier , even prior to the independence. Setting up of National Planning Committee by Indian National Congress in 1938 , The Bombay Plan & Gandhian Plan in 1944, Peoples Plan in 1945 (by

post war reconstruction Committee of Indian Trade Union), Sarvodaya Plan in 1950 by Jaiprakash Narayan were steps in this direction.

Five-Year Plans (FYPs) are centralized and integrated national economic programs. Joseph Stalin implemented the first FYP in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s. Most communist states and several capitalist countries subsequently have adopted them. China and India both continue to use FYPs, although China renamed its Eleventh FYP, from 2006 to 2010, a guideline (guihua), rather than a plan (jihua), to signify the central government's more hands-off approach to development.

After independence, India launched its First FYP in 1951, under socialist influence of first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The process began with setting up of Planning Commission in March 1950 in pursuance of declared objectives of the Government to promote a rapid rise in the standard of living of the people by efficient exploitation of the resources of the country, increasing production and offering opportunities to all for employment in the service of the community. The Planning Commission was charged with the responsibility of making assessment of all resources of the country, augmenting deficient resources, formulating plans for the most effective and balanced utilisation of resources and determining priorities.

The first Five-year Plan was launched in 1951 and two subsequent five-year plans were formulated till 1965, when there was a break because of the Indo-Pakistan Conflict. Two successive years of drought, devaluation of the currency, a general rise in prices and erosion of resources disrupted the planning process and after three Annual Plans between 1966 and 1969, the fourth Five-year plan was started in 1969.

The Eighth Plan could not take off in 1990 due to the fast changing political situation at the Centre and the years 1990-91 and 1991-92 were treated as Annual Plans. The Eighth Plan was finally launched in 1992 after the initiation of structural adjustment policies.

For the first eight Plans the emphasis was on a growing public sector with massive investments in basic and heavy industries, but since the launch of the Ninth Plan in 1997, the emphasis on the public sector has become less pronounced and the current thinking on planning in the country, in general, is that it should increasingly be of an indicative nature.

Outline of Various Five year Plans:

First Plan (1951 - 56) Target Growth : 2.1 % Actual Growth 3.6 %	t was based on Harrod - Domar Model. Influx of refugees, severe food shortage & mounting inflation confronted the country at the onset of the first five year Plan. The Plan Focused on agriculture, price stability, power and transport It was a successful plan primarily because of good harvests in the last two years of the plan. Objectives of rehabilitation of refugees, food self sufficiency & control of prices were more or less achieved.
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Second Plan (1956 - 61) Target Growth: 4.5% Actual Growth: 4.3%	Simple aggregative Harrod Domar Growth Model was again used for overall projections and the strategy of resource allocation to broad sectors as agriculture & Industry was based on two & four sector Model prepared by Prof. P C Mahalanobis. (Plan is also called Mahalanobis Plan). Second plan was conceived in an atmosphere of economic stability . It was felt agriculture could be accorded lower priority. The Plan Focussed on rapid industrialization- heavy & basic industries. Advocated huge imports through foreign loans. The Industrial Policy 1956 was based on establishment of a socialistic pattern of society as the goal of economic policy. Acute shortage of forex led to pruning of development targets , price rise was also seen (about 30%) vis a vis decline in the earlier Plan & the 2nd FYP was only moderately successful
Third Plan (1961 - 66) Target Growth: 5.6% Actual Growth: 2.8%	At its conception, it was felt that Indian economy has entered a "takeoff stage". Therefore, its aim was to make India a 'self-reliant' and 'self-generating' economy. Based on the experience of first two plans (agricultural production was seen as limiting factor in India's economic development) , agriculture was given top priority to support the exports and industry. The Plan was thorough failure in reaching the targets due to unforeseen events - Chinese aggression (1962), Indo-Pak war (1965), severe drought 1965-66. Due to conflicts the approach during the later phase was shifted from development to defence & development.
Three Annual Plans (1966- 69) euphemistically described as Plan holiday	Failure of Third Plan that of the devaluation of rupee(to boost exports) along with inflationary recession led to postponement of Fourth FYP. Three Annual Plans were introduced instead. Prevailing crisis in agriculture and serious food shortage necessitated the emphasis on agriculture during the Annual Plans. During these plans a whole new agricultural strategy was implemented. It involving wide-spread distribution of high-yielding varieties of seeds, extensive use of fertilizers, exploitation of irrigation potential and soil conservation. During the Annual Plans, the economy absorbed the shocks generated during the Third Plan It paved the path for the planned growth ahead.
(1969 - 74) Target Growth: 5.7% Actual Growth: 3.3%	Refusal of supply of essential equipments and raw materials from the allies during Indo Pak war resulted in twin objectives of " growth with stability " and "progressive

	achievement of self reliance “ for the Fourth Plan. Main emphasis was on growth rate of agriculture to enable other sectors to move forward . First two years of the plan saw record production. The last three years did not measure up due to poor monsoon. Implementation of Family Planning Programmes were amongst major targets of the Plan. Influx of Bangladeshi refugees before and after 1971 Indo-Pak war was an important issue along with price situation deteriorating to crisis proportions and the plan is considered as big failure
Fifth Plan (1974-79) Target Growth: 4.4% Actual Growth: 4.8%	The final Draft of fifth plan was prepared and launched by D.P. Dhar in the backdrop of economic crisis arising out of run-away inflation fuelled by hike in oil prices and failure of the Govt. takeover of the wholesale trade in wheat. It proposed to achieve two main objectives: 'removal of poverty' (Garibi Hatao) and 'attainment of self reliance' Promotion of high rate of growth, better distribution of income and significant growth in the domestic rate of savings were seen as key instruments Due to high inflation, cost calculations for the Plan proved to be completely wrong and the original public sector outlay had to be revised upwards. After promulgation of emergency in 1975, the emphasis shifted to the implementation of Prime Ministers 20 Point Programme. FYP was relegated to the background and when Janta Party came to power in 1978, the Plan was terminated
Rolling Plan (1978 - 80)	There were 2 Sixth Plans. Janta Govt. put forward a plan for 1978- 1983 emphasising on employment, in contrast to Nehru Model which the Govt criticised for concentration of power, widening inequality & for mounting poverty . However, the government lasted for only 2 years. Congress Govt. returned to power in 1980 and launched a different plan aimed at directly attacking on the problem of poverty by creating conditions of an expanding economy. There were 2 Sixth Plans. Janta Govt. put forward a plan for 1978- 1983 emphasising on employment, in contrast to Nehru Model which the Govt criticised for concentration of power, widening inequality & for mounting poverty . However, the government lasted for only 2 years. Congress Govt. returned to power in 1980 and launched a different plan aimed at directly attacking on the problem of poverty by creating conditions of an expanding economy.
Sixth Plan	The Plan focussed on Increase in national income,

(1980 - 85) Target Growth: 5.2% Actual Growth: 5.7%	modernization of technology, ensuring continuous decrease in poverty and unemployment through schemes for transferring skills(TRYSEM) and seets(IRDP) and providing slack season employment (NREP), controlling population explosion etc. Broadly , the sixth Plan could be taken as a success as most of the target were realised even though during the last year (1984-85) many parts of the country faced severe famine conditions and agricultural output was less than the record output of previous year.
Seventh Plan (1985 - 90) Target Growth: 5.0% Actual Growth: 6.0%	The Plan aimed at accelerating food grain production, increasing employment opportunities & raising productivity with focus on 'food, work & productivity'. The plan was very successful as the economy recorded 6% growth rate against the targeted 5% with the decade of 80's struggling out of the' Hindu Rate of Growth'.
Eighth Plan (1992 - 97) Target Growth 5.6 % Actual Growth 6.8%	The eighth plan was postponed by two years because of political uncertainty at the Centre Worsening Balance of Payment position, rising debt burden widening budget deficits, recession in industry and inflation were the key issues during the launch of the plan. The plan undertook drastic policy measures to combat the bad economic situation and to undertake an annual average growth of 5.6% through introduction of fiscal & economic reforms including liberalisation under the Prime Minister ship of Shri P V Narasimha Rao. Some of the main economic outcomes during eighth plan period were rapid economic growth (highest annual growth rate so far – 6.8 %), high growth of agriculture and allied sector, and manufacturing sector, growth in exports and imports, improvement in trade and current account deficit. High growth rate was achieved even though the share of public sector in total investment had declined considerably to about 34 %.
Ninth Plan (1997- 2002) Target Growth: 6.5% Actual Growth: 5.4%	The Plan prepared under United Front Government focussed on "Growth With Social Justice & Equality " Ninth Plan aimed to depend predominantly on the private sector – Indian as well as foreign (FDI) & State was envisaged to increasingly play the role of facilitator & increasingly involve itself with social sector viz education , health etc and infrastructure where private sector participation was likely to be limited. It assigned priority to agriculture & rural development with a view to generate adequate productive employment and

	eradicate poverty
Tenth Plan (2002 - 2007) Target Growth 8 % Actual Growth 7.6 %	Recognising that economic growth can't be the only objective of national plan, Tenth Plan had set 'monitorable targets' for few key indicators (11) of development besides 8 % growth target. The targets included reduction in gender gaps in literacy and wage rate, reduction in Infant & maternal mortality rates, improvement in literacy, access to potable drinking water cleaning of major polluted rivers, etc. Governance was considered as factor of development & agriculture was declared as prime moving force of the economy. States role in planning was to be increased with greater involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions. State wise break up of targets for growth and social development sought to achieve balanced development of all states.
Eleventh Plan (2007 - 2012) Target Growth 9 % Actual Growth 8%	<p>Eleventh Plan was aimed "Towards Faster & More Inclusive Growth "after UPA rode back to power on the plank of helping Aam Aadmi (common man). India had emerged as one of the fastest growing economy by the end of the Tenth Plan. The savings and investment rates had increased , industrial sector had responded well to face competition in the global economy and foreign investors were keen to invest in India. But the growth was not perceived as sufficiently inclusive for many groups , specially SCs , STs & minorities as borne out by data on several dimensions like poverty, malnutrition, mortality, current daily employment etc.</p> <p>The broad vision for 11th Plan included several inter related components like rapid growth reducing poverty & creating employment opportunities , access to essential services in health & education, specially for the poor, extension of employment opportunities using National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme , environmental sustainability , reduction of gender inequality etc. Accordingly various targets were laid down like reduction in unemployment(to less than 5 % among educated youth) & headcount ratio of poverty (by 10 %), reduction in drop out rates , gender gap in literacy , infant mortality , total fertility , malnutrition in age group of 0-3 (to half its present level), improvement in sex ratio, forest & tree cover, air quality in major cities, , ensuring electricity connection to all villages & BPL households (by 2009) & reliable power by end of 11th Plan , all weather road connection to habitations with</p>

	<p>population 1000& above (500 in hilly areas) by 2009, connecting every village by telephone & providing broad band connectivity to all villages by 2012 . The Eleventh Plan started well with the first year achieving a growth rate of 9.3 per cent, however the growth decelerated to 6.7 per cent rate in 2008-09 following the global financial crisis. The economy recovered substantially to register growth rates of 8.6 per cent and 9.3 per cent in 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively. However, the second bout of global slowdown in 2011 due to the sovereign debt crisis in Europe coupled with domestic factors such as tight monetary policy and supply side bottlenecks, resulted in deceleration of growth to 6.2 per cent in 2011-12. Consequently, the average annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) achieved during the Eleventh Plan was 8 per cent, which was lower than the target but better than the Tenth Plan achievement. Since the period saw two global crises - one in 2008 and another in 2011 – the 8 per cent growth may be termed as satisfactory. The realised GDP growth rate for the agriculture, industry and services sector during the 11th Plan period is estimated at 3.7 per cent, 7.2 per cent and 9.7 per cent against the growth target of 4 per cent, 10-11 per cent and 9-11 per cent respectively. The Eleventh Plan set a target of 34.8 per cent for domestic savings and 36.7 per cent for investment after experiencing a rising level of domestic savings as well as investment and especially after emergence of structural break during the Tenth Plan period. However, the domestic savings and investment averaged 33.5 per cent and 36.1 per cent of GDP at market prices respectively in the Eleventh Plan which is below the target but not very far. Based on the latest estimates of poverty released by the Planning Commission, poverty in the country has declined by 1.5 percentage points per year between 2004-05 and 2009-10. The rate of decline during the period 2004-05 to 2009-10 is twice the rate of decline witnessed during the period 1993-94 to 2004-05. Though the new poverty count based on Tendulkar Formula has been subject of controversy , it is believed by the Committee that whether we use the old method or the new , the decline in percentage of population below poverty line is almost same. On the fiscal front , the expansionary measures taken by the government to counter the effect fo global slowdown led to increase in key indicators through 2009-10 with some</p>
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	moderation thereafter. The issue of Price Stability remained resonating for more than half of the Plan period. Inability to pass on burden on costlier imported oil prices might have constrained the supply of investible funds in the government's hand causing the 11th Plan to perform at the levels below its target.
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The growth targets for the first three Plans were set with respect to National Income. In the Fourth Plan it was Net Domestic Product. In all the Plans thereafter, Gross Domestic Product has been used.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17):

The Twelfth Plan commenced at a time when the global economy was going through a second financial crisis, precipitated by the sovereign debt problems of the Eurozone which erupted in the last year of the Eleventh Plan. The crisis affected all countries including India. Our growth slowed down to 6.2 percent in 2011-12 and the deceleration continued into the first year of the Twelfth Plan, when the economy is estimated to have grown by only 5 percent. The Twelfth Plan therefore emphasizes that our first priority must be to bring the economy back to rapid growth while ensuring that the growth is both inclusive and sustainable. The broad vision and aspirations which the Twelfth Plan seeks to fulfil are reflected in the subtitle: 'Faster, Sustainable, and More Inclusive Growth'. Inclusiveness is to be achieved through poverty reduction, promoting group equality and regional balance, reducing inequality, empowering people etc whereas sustainability includes ensuring environmental sustainability ,development of human capital through improved health, education, skill development, nutrition, information technology etc and development of institutional capabilities, infrastructure like power telecommunication, roads, transport etc,

Apart from the global slowdown, the domestic economy has also run up against several internal constraints. Macro-economic imbalances have surfaced following the fiscal expansion undertaken after 2008 to give a fiscal stimulus to the economy. Inflationary pressures have built up. Major investment projects in energy and transport have slowed down because of a variety of implementation problems. Some changes in tax treatment in the 2012–13 have caused uncertainty among investors. These developments have produced a reduction in the rate of investment, and a slowing down of economic growth.

The policy challenge in the Twelfth Plan is, therefore, two-fold. The immediate challenge is to reverse the observed deceleration in growth by reviving investment as quickly as possible. This calls for urgent action to tackle implementation constraints in infrastructure which are holding up large projects, combined with action to deal with tax related issues which have created uncertainty in the investment climate. From a longer term perspective, the Plan must put in place policies that can leverage the many strengths of the economy to bring it back to its real Growth potential.

Immediate priority is to revive the investor sentiment along with next short term action of removing the impediments to implementation of projects in infrastructure, especially in the area of energy which would require addressing the issue of fuel supply to power stations, financial problems of discoms and clarity in terms of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP)

Although planning should cover both the activities of the government and those of the private sector, a great deal of the public debate on planning in India takes place around the size of the public sector plan. The Twelfth Plan lays out an ambitious set of Government programmes, which will help to achieve the objective of rapid and inclusive growth. In view of the scarcity of resources, it is essential to take bold steps to improve the efficiency of public expenditure through plan programmes. Need for fiscal correction viz tax reforms like GST , reduction of subsidies as per cent of GDP while still allowing for targeted subsidies that advance the cause of inclusiveness etc . and managing the current account deficit would be another chief concerns.

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Economic Growth

1. Real GDP Growth Rate of 8.0 per cent.
2. Agriculture Growth Rate of 4.0 per cent.
3. Manufacturing Growth Rate of 10.0 per cent.
4. Every State must have an average growth rate in the Twelfth Plan preferably higher than that achieved in the Eleventh Plan.

Poverty and Employment

1. Head-count ratio of consumption poverty to be reduced by 10 percentage points over the preceding estimates by the end of Twelfth FYP.
2. Generate 50 million new work opportunities in the non-farm sector and provide skill certification to equivalent numbers during the Twelfth FYP. Education.
3. Mean Years of Schooling to increase to seven years by the end of Twelfth FYP.
4. Enhance access to higher education by creating two million additional seats for each age cohort aligned to the skill needs of the economy.
5. Eliminate gender and social gap in school enrolment (that is, between girls and boys, and between SCs, STs, Muslims and the rest of the population) by the end of Twelfth FYP. Health

6. Reduce IMR to 25 and MMR to 1 per 1,000 live births, and improve Child Sex Ratio (0–6 years) to 950 by the end of the Twelfth FYP.
7. Reduce Total Fertility Rate to 2.1 by the end of Twelfth FYP.
8. Reduce under-nutrition among children aged 0–3 years to half of the NFHS-3 levels by the end of Twelfth FYP. Infrastructure, Including Rural Infrastructure
9. Increase investment in infrastructure as a percentage of GDP to 9 per cent by the end of Twelfth FYP.
10. Increase the Gross Irrigated Area from 90 million hectare to 103 million hectare by the end of Twelfth FYP.
11. Provide electricity to all villages and reduce AT&C losses to 20 per cent by the end of Twelfth FYP.
12. Connect all villages with all-weather roads by the end of Twelfth FYP.
13. Upgrade national and state highways to the minimum two-lane standard by the end of Twelfth FYP.
14. Complete Eastern and Western Dedicated Freight Corridors by the end of Twelfth FYP.
15. Increase rural tele-density to 70 per cent by the end of Twelfth FYP.
16. Ensure 50 per cent of rural population has access to 40 lpcd piped drinking water supply, and 50 per cent gram panchayats achieve Nirmal Gram Status by the end of Twelfth FYP. Environment and Sustainability
17. Increase green cover (as measured by satellite imagery) by 1 million hectare every year during the Twelfth FYP.
18. Add 30,000 MW of renewable energy capacity in the Twelfth Plan
19. Reduce emission intensity of GDP in line with the target of 20 per cent to 25 per cent reduction over 2005 levels by 2020. Service Delivery
20. Provide access to banking services to 90 per cent Indian households by the end of Twelfth FYP.
21. Major subsidies and welfare related beneficiary payments to be shifted to a direct cash transfer by the end of the Twelfth Plan, using the Aadhar platform with linked bank accounts.

Sectoral Pattern of Growth :

The sectoral pattern of growth associated with the 8.0 per cent growth scenario is summarised in the table on following page. The Agriculture Forestry and Fishing Sector is projected to grow at 4 per cent, an improvement over the 3.7 per cent rate achieved in the Eleventh Plan. The Mining and Quarrying Sector grew by only 3.2 per cent in the Eleventh Plan, the growth rate being pushed down by negative growth of 0.6 per cent in 2011–12 reflecting problems in the iron ore sector, gas production and also coal. The Twelfth Plan assumes a substantial improvement with the growth rate averaging 5.7 per cent. The manufacturing sector decelerated in the course of the Eleventh Plan with a growth rate of only 2.7 per cent in 2011–12. The average growth rate in the Twelfth Plan

period is projected at over 7 per cent which is a significant improvement over the situation in 2011–12 and 2012–13. city, gas and water supply are projected to grow at 7.3 per cent on an average compared with 6.1. per cent achieved in the Eleventh Plan. Construction, which grew at 7.7 per cent in the Eleventh Plan, is projected to grow at an average rate of 9.1 per cent. The other service sectors are projected to grow fairly robustly with Trade Hotels and Restaurants at 7.4 per cent; Transport, Storage and Communication at 11.8 per cent; Insurance and Business Service at 9.9 per cent, and, finally, Community and Personal Services at 7.2 per cent.

Public Sector Resources in the Twelfth Plan:

There have been several important developments during the Eleventh Plan that have implications for financing of the Twelfth Plan. The Indian Economy resiliently faced the global financial crisis of 2008. However, slower growth adversely impacts growth in Centre's resources, particularly taxes. The Sixth Central Pay Commission award has been implemented. The 13th FC award for 2011–15 is under implementation with some changes in the fiscal responsibility and budget management framework targets. Service tax has emerged as a very promising source of revenue. Efforts are being made to introduce unified Goods and Service Tax (GST) in consultation with States. This will be a major reform of the indirect tax system. The projection of fiscal deficits based on Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement 2012–13 indicates that debt resources for funding of GBS for the Twelfth Plan will be higher initially but is projected to decline gradually. The Centre's net borrowing which was 5.9 per cent of GDP in 2011–12 (RE) is estimated to decline to 5.1 per cent of GDP in 2012–13 (BE). The fiscal deficit as percent of GDP is further projected to decline to 4.5 per cent in 2013–14, 3.9 per cent in 2014–15, 3.2 per cent in 2015–16 and 3.0 per cent of GDP in the last year of the Twelfth Plan.

Nehruvian Foreign policy

The Nehruvian Foreign policy, during the Nehruvian Era, (1947 to 1964) was known for its distinctive approach to matters of foreign affairs with a blend of idealism and pragmatism. Jawaharlal Nehru's vision transcended beyond the immediate problems of the newly constituted nation to embrace a broader goal for global peace, collaboration, and equitable development.

The key parameters of Nehru's foreign policy were the values of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, non-alignment with superpowers and solidarity with other developing nations. While his approach is being criticised today, his influence in creating India's diplomatic identity and contributing to world discourse remains enduring.

Basic Parameters of the Nehru's Foreign Policy

After India gained independence in 1947, it faced numerous domestic and international challenges. Jawaharlal Nehru, as the PM, took on the leadership role to shape India's future and played a significant role in India's foreign policy. During

the Nehruvian Era, India's foreign policy was primarily centred on the following fundamental principles:

Non-alignment: Nehru championed the policy of non-alignment, advocating for India to maintain distance from both the Western and Eastern power blocs of the Cold War.

This strategy sought to protect India's autonomy, prevent alignment with any military alliance, and allow the country to pursue its own interests without being pushed into conflict.

Panchsheel: Nehru prioritised international peace in his policy formulation. While signing a peace treaty with China in 1954, he advocated adherence to the following five guiding principles (Panchsheel), which have since become guiding principles in India's bilateral relations with other countries.

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,
2. Mutual non-aggression,
3. Mutual non-interference,
4. Equality and mutual benefit, and
5. Peaceful co-existence.

Third World Solidarity:

Nehru's foreign policy aimed to foster solidarity among newly independent nations of the so-called Third World.

He thought that collective action was necessary to overcome common concerns including economic underdevelopment and negative colonial legacies.

Support for decolonisation: Nehru was a vocal advocate for decolonisation and supported the independence struggles of various nations.

He saw colonialism as a grave injustice and advocated for an end to imperialist domination around the world.

India actively supported the decolonisation efforts in Asian, African, and Latin American countries, advocating for their independence from colonial rule.

Anti-apartheid stance: India openly supported the policy of anti-apartheid, condemning the system of racial segregation in South Africa and advocating for its eradication.

Promotion of disarmament: Nehru emphasised the importance of disarmament as a key factor in achieving world peace.

He demonstrated commitment to disarmament at the international level by supporting initiatives such as the formation of the Atomic Energy Commission in India in 1947 and sponsoring the Eighteen Nations Disarmament Conference in 1962.

India's Relation with its Neighbouring Countries under Nehru

Nehru viewed India's neighbours through a broad spectrum and within a broader Asian framework. He was partially successful in cultivating a relationship with neighbours.

Country	Key Aspects
India-Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background: During Jawaharlal Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister of India, India-Pakistan relations were marked by a mix of cooperation, conflict, and attempts at reconciliation. The aftermath of the partition left both India and Pakistan with a deficit of goodwill. Kashmir Issue: The Kashmir conflict began in October 1947 when tribal militia, backed by Pakistan, infiltrated Kashmir, causing destruction and chaos in the region. The Maharaja of Kashmir invited the Indian government for assistance, and troops were sent to push back the tribal invaders. In return, he signed the Instrument of Accession. Nehru promised a plebiscite on the accession when India had partially repulsed the raiders. Later, on the advice of Mountbatten, Nehru decided to bring the Kashmir issue to the United Nations. Nehru was surprised by the British support for Pakistan's position at the United Nations and regretted taking the matter to the international stage. In 1954, Nehru decided to withdraw the promise of a plebiscite in the valley. Indus Water Treaty: The equitable distribution of water from the Indus system has been a contentious issue between India and Pakistan since the partition in 1947. Finally, the Indus Waters Treaty was signed on September 19, 1960, encompassing six rivers that originate in India and flow into Pakistan. The treaty allows India the unrestricted use of all water from the 3 eastern tributaries of the Indus River (Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi) while Pakistan receives use of the western tributaries (Indus or Sindhu, Jhelum and Chenab)
India-China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India established diplomatic relations with China under Chiang Kaishek's Nationalist Government and later recognised the new government led by Mao Zedong (or Mao Tse Tung) after the Communists took over China in 1949. Developments in Tibet and Panchsheel: China entered and occupied Tibet in 1950. In 1954, Nehru recognised China's occupation of Tibet without any quid-pro-quo and signed the Panchsheel Agreement. On 31 March 1959 after a failed uprising against Chinese rule, the Dalai Lama fled to India and was offered political asylum which impacted the relationship. Border disputes and negotiations: China claimed the Aksai

Chin territory, leading to border disputes. In 1960, negotiations took place between Chinese and Indian officials but failed.

- Sino-Indian War, 1962: In October 1962, China launched an attack on India in NEFA and Ladakh. India suffered a defeat in the war.
- Consequences: India's self-respect was impacted, and the policy of non-alignment came under scrutiny.
- The Congress party lost parliamentary by-elections between 1962-63 and Nehru faced a no-confidence motion in 1963, the first such motion in Independent India.
- The war influenced the Third Five-Year Plan, diverting resources for defence. There was also a shift in India's foreign policy post the War.

India- Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ In July 1950, India and Nepal signed a Treaty of Friendship. India recognised Nepal's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence.○ In 1950, India also played an important role in ceasing the regime of Rana in Nepal and re-established the rule of Maharaja.○ Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah had suggested to Nehru that Nepal be made a province of India. But Nehru declined the offer on the grounds that Nepal must remain an independent nation.○ Nehru wanted Nepal to be a buffer between India and China.● - Nepal was included in the UN as an independent nation in 1955 through the efforts of India....
India- Bhutan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● In 1949, India and Bhutan signed a Treaty for perpetual peace and friendship.○ Nehru visited Bhutan in 1958, a landmark event in Indo-Bhutan relations.○ He promised the independence of Bhutan in case of any aggression.○ The First Five Year Plan financed by India was launched in 1961.○ India agreed to exercise non-interference in the internal administration of Bhutan.● - Bhutan agreed to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in matters concerning its external relations..
India- Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● India and Sri Lanka gained independence from British rule in 1947 and 1948, respectively.○ The early years of the India-Sri Lanka relationship were not very friendly.○ Sri Lanka developed its independent and cordial relations with Pakistan and China to increase leverage against India.○ These relations changed rapidly after 1956, after the coming of a new government in Sri Lanka.○ Both adopted a similar approach on the Tibet issue of 1959.

- Sri Lanka supported the accession of Goa, Daman and Diu in India after liberation from the British in 1960.
- After the death of Nehru, Sri Lanka declared a public holiday on 28th May in honour of Nehru.

India-Burma

- The relationship between the two countries was strengthened by the personal friendship that existed between the two Prime Ministers Nehru and U Nu.
- At the time of the internal crisis Myanmar faced just after its independence in 1949, India extended assistance and help to restore normalcy to its neighbour.
- In 1951, India and Myanmar signed a Treaty of Friendship.
- Sino-Burmese border agreement and a treaty of friendship and mutual non-aggression in 1960 impacted Indo-Burmese relations.
- Myanmar showing a neutral stand on the Sino-Indian war of 1962 was interpreted as 'pro-Chinese' by India and the relationship got disturbed.
- - The 1962 coup in Myanmar which heralded military rule brought about a complete disruption in bilateral relationships.

Significance of Nehruvian Foreign Policy

- The objectives enshrined by the first Prime Minister in India's foreign policy remain relevant even today and have assumed greater importance in the era of economic liberalisation and a multi-polar world.
- Strategic Autonomy: The NAM, started by Nehru, has its relevance today when the era of unipolarity in the global order is over and a new phase of the Cold War is seemingly glooming over the world.
- For example, In the context of the Russia-Ukraine war, India's steadfast neutrality and ongoing engagements with both Russia and the US have underscored the nuanced nature of its foreign policy.
- India abstained from voting on the UN proposal condemning Russia's aggression, choosing a path of strategic autonomy and multi-alignment, all while preserving the core tenets of non-alignment.
- Independent Foreign Policy: The legacy of pursuing an independent foreign policy despite pressures from superpowers reflects the importance of safeguarding national interests and sovereignty in a multipolar world.
- It has helped India on many occasions.
- Asian Identity: Nehru's focus on strengthening ties within Asia remains relevant in the context of Asia's growing influence in global affairs today and the potential for intra-regional cooperation.
- Pursuit of Global Peace: In an era marked by rapid changes and complex challenges, India engages with various power blocs constructively and its ability to

navigate complex diplomatic waters showcases the country as a potential mediator in international conflicts, embodying the principles of cooperation, peace and mutual respect.

- India has established itself as a mouthpiece of global peace and responsible power in today's era, even after acquiring nuclear weapons. Nehru has a significant role in this.
- Voice of Global South: Nehru's solidarity for the Third World is reflected in India's increasing footprints in the Global South where it has successfully become its voice.
- This was evident in the recently successful G-20 summit in India in 2023.

Limitations of Nehruvian Foreign Policy

- The Nehruvian foreign policy has also faced criticisms, some of which are being mentioned below.
- Non-alignment and Cold War dynamics: Nehru's policy of non-alignment had its limitations. India often faced challenges in balancing its relations with both superpowers, and there were instances where India's non-alignment stance was perceived as leaning towards one side or the other.
- The excessive focus on non-alignment sometimes led to missed opportunities for strategic alliances and partnerships that could have benefitted India's interests.
- Failure on the China issue: On the China issue, Nehru is blamed for having a short-sightedness approach, and believing in idealism more than realism.
- Despite getting clear negative signals from China since 1959, the Indian government did not make enough efforts to settle the border issues.
- There was also an intelligence failure regarding the infrastructural development in Tibet, near the Aksai Chin area.
- The moralpolitik and 'third worldism' proved useless in the crisis and compelled India to adopt a more realistic and assertive foreign policy with increased expenditure on defence.
- Failure on Kashmir Issue: The Government of India took the matter to the UNSC wherein the power politics of the Cold War prevailed instead of the merit of the case when Britain sided with Pakistan in the United Nations.
- The government should have allowed the Army to first settle its borders before going to the UN.
- Kashmir has been the most sensitive issue in the Indo-Pak relations.
- UNSC Membership: It is believed that Nehru refused the offers to join the Security Council given by the US and the then Soviet Union in 1950 and 1955 respectively, at the expense of China.
- India is still seeking to become a permanent member of the council.
- Nuclear test and NSG Membership: The policy of over-emphasis on the disarmament and civil use of nuclear technology cost India the opportunity to

detonate a nuclear device, before the introduction of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968.

- NPT recognises only P-5 members as nuclear powers, the only countries that have successfully tested nuclear weapons by 1968.
- India is making strenuous efforts now to acquire membership in the elite Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which requires membership in NPT.
- Limited engagement with the global economy: Foreign policy during the Nehruvian era placed more emphasis on geopolitical and strategic issues rather than actively engaging with the global economy.
- This limited India's participation in international trade and hindered its economic development.
- Limited Regional Cooperation: Despite advocating for Third World solidarity, India's engagement with its South Asian neighbours also faced challenges.
- Relations with Sri Lanka and Pakistan remained strained, and efforts to foster regional cooperation sometimes encountered roadblocks.

Panchsheel

Panchsheel was born fifty years ago in response to a world asking for a new set of principles for the conduct of international relations that would reflect the aspirations of all nations to co-exist and prosper together in peace and harmony. Fifty years later, on the golden anniversary of Panchsheel, the chord that was struck in 1954 still rings pure and true in a world yet seeking the lodestar that will guide it into the harbour of peaceful co-existence. Panchsheel, or the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, were first formally enunciated in the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India signed on April 29, 1954, which stated, in its preamble, that the two Governments "have resolved to enter into the present Agreement based on the following principles: -

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,
2. Mutual non-aggression,
3. Mutual non-interference,
4. Equality and mutual benefit, and
5. Peaceful co-existence."

Two months later, during the visit of Premier Zhou Enlai to India, he and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru issued a Joint Statement on June 28, 1954 that elaborated their vision of Panchsheel as the framework, not only for relations between the two countries, but also for their relations with all other countries, so that a solid foundation could be laid for peace and security in the world. Panchsheel, as envisioned by its creators, gave substance to the voice of newly established countries who were seeking the space to consolidate their hard won independence, as it provided an alternative ideology dedicated to peace and development of all as the basis for international interaction, whether

bilateral or multilateral. At that time, the two Prime Ministers also expressed the hope in the Joint Statement that the adoption of Panchsheel “will also help in creating an area of peace which as circumstances permit can be enlarged thus lessening the chances of war and strengthening the cause of peace all over the world.”

This vision caught the imagination of the peoples of Asia and the world. Panchsheel was incorporated into the Ten Principles of International Peace and Cooperation enunciated in the Declaration issued by the April 1955 Bandung Conference of 29 Afro-Asian countries. The universal relevance of Panchsheel was emphasised when its tenets were incorporated in a resolution on peaceful co-existence presented by India, Yugoslavia and Sweden, and unanimously adopted on December 11, 1957, by the United Nations General Assembly. In 1961, the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations in Belgrade accepted Panchsheel as the principled core of the Non-Aligned Movement. Down the years, the ethos of Panchsheel continued to be reflected in world events even if there was no conscious attribution, finding expression in the position of the developing countries in the North-South dialogue, and in other groupings.

The timeless relevance of Panchsheel is based on its firm roots in the cultural traditions of its originators, two of the world’s most ancient civilisations. The linkage that was established by the spread of Buddhism in China laid the historical basis for the formulation of the principles of Panchsheel by India and China.

On the 50th anniversary of Panchsheel, we can without hesitation say that its relevance, as embodied in the Joint Statement of 1954, shines as brightly today as when it was first conceived. Panchsheel was developed in the context of a post-colonial world where many were seeking an alternative ideology dedicated to peace and development of all. Fifty years later, the world is now searching for an alternative to the adversarial constructs that dominated the Cold War era. Countries all over the world are focusing on creating extended and mutually supportive arrangements, and attempting to define a new economic, social and political world order in the context of globalisation, non-traditional security threats and the quest for multi-polarisation.

Panchsheel can provide the ideological foundation for this developing paradigm of international interaction, allowing all nations to work towards peace and prosperity in cooperation, while maintaining their national identity, spirit and character. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru rightly said that “those who desire peace for the world must know once for all that there can be no equilibrium or stability for either the East or the West unless all aggression, all imperialist domination, all forced interference in other countries’ affairs end completely.” Today, Panchsheel can help the world move away from the traditional concepts of balance of power and competitive security, the consequent searching for an enemy, and the predication of activities on conflicts rather than cooperation.

However, in today’s world, it is not enough that Panchsheel be promoted as an alternative ideology that empowers the less-developed. It should be made clear that

Panchsheel is an ideology for the entire world, and is as relevant to the developed countries of the globe as it is to the less-developed. What should be stressed today is that the principles of Panchsheel are not just empowering principles, they are also guiding principles that enshrine a certain code of behaviour. Their essence is the non-use of power, the approach of tolerance, “of living one’s life, learning from others but neither interfering nor being interfered with”, and the obligation to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It may not be out of place in a world searching for moral certainties to emphasise this message of Panchsheel.

“The Prime Ministers reaffirmed these principles and felt that they should be applied in their relations with other countries in Asia as well as other parts of the world. If these principles are applied not only between various countries but also in international relations generally, they would form a solid foundation for peace and security, and fears and apprehensions that exist today would give place to a feeling of confidence.

The Prime Ministers recognised that different social and political systems exist in various parts of Asia and the world. If, however, the above-mentioned principles are accepted and acted upon, and there is no interference by any one country with another, these differences should not come in the way of peace or create conflicts. With assurance of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each country, and of non-aggression, there would be peaceful co-existence and friendly relations between the countries concerned. This would lessen the tensions that exist in the world today and help in creating a climate of peace.

“These principles are good not only to our two countries but for others as well...each country would have freedom to follow its own policy and work out its own destiny learning from others, cooperating with others, but basing itself essentially on its own genius.”

“It is in no spirit of pride or arrogance that we pursue our own independent policy. We would not do otherwise unless we are false to everything India has stood for in the past and stands for today. We welcome association and friendship with all and the flow of thought and ideas of all kind, but we reserve the right to choose our own path. That is the essence of Panchsheel.”

“I do think it was a very considerable achievement for the United Nations, and for the world, to have passed such a declaration unanimously and accepted in substance those principles. The principles represent the approach of tolerance, of noninterference, of living one’s life, learning from others but neither interfering nor being interfered with.”

“Only with coexistence can there be any existence. We regard non-interference and non-intervention as basic laws of international behaviour.”

“In 1954, India and China enunciated the Panchsheel, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. The principles we commended commanded scant acceptance then. The world was too intent on pursuing the path of confrontation to consider the alternative path that Panchsheel represented. Now, thirty tortured years later, the trajectory which the

Five Principles indicated for the evolution of the world order is beginning to emerge as the world's path. We believe, as you do, that the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence provide the best way to handle relations between nations. Bloc politics and spheres of influence lead only to conflict, sharpening international relations."

"The two sides emphasized that the Five Principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence, which were jointly initiated by India and China, which have proved full of vitality through the best of history, constitute the basic guiding principles for good relations between states. These principles also constitute the basic guidelines for the establishment of a new international political order and the New International Economic Order. Both sides agreed that their common desire was to restore, improve and develop India-China good-neighbourly and friendly relations on the basis of these principles."

"The two sides reaffirmed their readiness to continue to develop friendly, good neighbourly and mutually beneficial relations on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence jointly initiated by India and China, for they believed that cooperation between India and China is in the fundamental and long term interests of the peoples of the two countries and is conducive to peace and stability in Asia and the world."

"The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as the two sides), have entered into the present Agreement in accordance with the Five Principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence and with a view to maintaining peace and tranquillity in areas along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas."

"...We have already shown the ability to conceptualise the principles that should guide international relations when we, together, evolved the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, or Panchsheel as they are known in India. These principles remain as valid today as they were when they were drafted."

"Believing that it serves the fundamental interests of the peoples of India and China to foster a long-term good-neighbourly relationship in accordance with the Five principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence."

"...I believe that in the world as it is emerging there is an area of larger issues on which India and China can cooperate in the international field, for peace and stability in the world, for equality and justice for the developing countries, for an equitable world trade order, in short for implementing the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence."

“Both sides are committed to developing their long-term constructive and cooperative partnership on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual respect and sensitivity for each other’s concerns and equality”

“One cannot wish away the fact that before good neighbours can truly fraternize with each other, they must first mend their fences. After a hiatus of a few decades, India and China embarked on this important venture a few years ago. We have made good progress. I am convinced that, with steadfast adherence to the Five principles of peaceful coexistence, with mutual sensitivity to the concerns of each other, and with respect for equality, our two countries can further accelerate this process so that we can put this difference firmly behind us.”

Non-Aligned Movement

The term 'non-alignment' is used to describe the foreign policies of those states that refused to align with either of the two blocs led by the two Superpowers i.e. the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and instead, opted to pursue an independent course of action in international politics. The Non-Aligned Movement (N.A.M.) emerged when individual non-aligned states came together and coordinated their efforts on a common platform. It changed the nature of inter-state relations by enabling the newly independent developing countries to play a significant role in world affairs.

The Concept of Non-Alignment

Non-alignment means the refusal of states to take sides with one or the other of the two principal opposed groups of powers such as existed at the time of the cold war. Nonalignment can be defined as not entering into military alliances with any country, either of the Western bloc led by the U.S. or the communist bloc led by the U.S.S.R. It is an assertion of independence in foreign policy.

Some Western scholars have persistently confused non-alignment "with isolationism, no commitment, neutrality, neutralism and non-involvement. Non-alignment is not neutrality. Non-alignment is a political concept, whereas, neutrality is a legal concept. Unlike neutrality, non-alignment is not a law written into the Constitution of the state. Neutrality is a permanent feature of state policy, while non-alignment is not. Further, unlike neutrality, non-alignment is not negative, but is a positive concept. It stands for (a) an active role in world affairs and (b) friendship and cooperation with all countries. It consists of taking an independent position based on the merits of each issue, and, on the requirements of national interest. It is not directed against any ideology but seeks to promote peace and friendship in the world, irrespective of ideological differences.

Non-aligned nations continuously opposed the politics of Cold War confrontations. They underlined the necessity of building peace and "peace areas" in a world of clear bipolarism. Non-alignment was also not a policy based on opportunism which tried to gain advantage by playing one power against another.

Evolution of the Non-Aligned Movement

The non-aligned movement evolved out of the concerted efforts of individual nonaligned states to build a common front against the superpower and neo-imperialist domination. Jawaharlal Nehru from India, Gamal Abdal Nassar from Egypt and Josip Broz Tito from Yugoslavia took the first step in building this movement. Among the first architects Nehru would be specially remembered. His early perception about the rise of neo-imperialism and the consequent insecurity that would be faced by the smaller states, made a major contribution towards building this movement. Nehru believed that the countries of Asia and Africa, should build up an alliance of solidarity to fight neoimperialism. As a first step he tried to organise an Asian front in the forties. In 1947 he called an Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi. In the fifties as the states of Africa started gaining independence from colonial rule it became necessary to expand the base of this front. In April 1955, therefore, Nehru together with leaders of Indonesia, Burma, Sri Lanka and Pakistan convened an Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung in Indonesia. Both these Conferences highlight the political and economic insecurity that was threatening the newly independent states at the time. However, Bandung Conference failed to build a homogenous Asian and African front as a number of these States did not agree to conduct their foreign relations under the banner of anti-imperialism. 'They had either already joined the various Western military alliances or had closely identified their interests with that of the Western Powers. The rift between the two groups was visible at Bandung itself. In the post-Bandung years, thus, it became necessary to build up an identity for the non-aligned states on the basis of principles and not on the basis of region. The effort united these states with Yugoslavia which was similarly looking for a political identity in international affairs. The embryo of the later non-aligned conferences first came into being a Brioni, in Yugoslavia, in June 1956, where Tito conferred with Nehru and Nassar on the possibility of making real the unspoken alliance which bound them together. The efforts finally resulted in the convening of the first non-aligned conference at Belgrade in 1961.

Five basis were determined and applied, for countries to be members of the Non-aligned Movement. Only such countries as fulfilled these conditions were actually invited to the conference. There were :

- a) independent foreign policy, particularly in the context of Cold War politics;
- b) opposition to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations;
- c) should not be a member of any of the military blocs;
- d) should not have concluded any bilateral treaty with any of the two superpowers;
- e) should not have allowed military bases on its territory to a superpower, qualified for attendance at the Belgrade summit.

The NAM summit conferences from time to time, have discussed several issues and problems. At the first summit (Belgrade, 1961) 25 countries, who attended it, discussed the situation in Berlin, question of representation of People's Republic of China

in the United Nations, the Congo Crisis, imperialism as potential threat to world peace, and Apartheid. The Conference expressed full faith in the policy of peaceful co-existence. India was represented by Nehru.

The Cairo summit, held in 1964 was attended by 46 countries. The Indian delegation was led by Lal Bahadur Shastri. The conference emphasised the urgent need for disarmament, pleaded for peaceful settlement of all international disputes, urged member-governments not to recognise the white minority government in Rhodesia and reiterated the earlier stand of NAM against apartheid and colonialism. The demand for representation of People's China in the United Nations was also reiterated.

The third summit at Lusaka in 1970 (attended by 52 countries) called for withdrawal of foreign forces from Vietnam and urged the member-states to boycott Israel which was in occupation of certain neighbouring Arab countries territories. It requested governments of member-nations to intensify their struggle against Apartheid and as a part of the struggle, not to allow the fly over facility to the South African aircrafts. The summit resolved to increase economic cooperation. It rejected the proposal to establish a permanent secretariat of the Movement. The Indian delegation was led by Indira Gandhi.

There were signs of detente in Cold War Politics by the time the next summit met at Algiers (1973 attended by 75 countries). It welcomed easing of international tension, supported detente, and repeated NAM's known stand against imperialism and apartheid, and resolved to encourage economic, trade and technical cooperation amongst memberstates. The conference demanded a change in the existing international economic order which violated the principle of equality and justice.

In 1976, the Colombo summit was attended by 85 countries. The U.N General Assembly had given a call for a New International Economic Order In 1974. The NAM at Colombo not only gave whole-hearted support to this demand, but asked for a fundamental change in the world monetary system and form. It was proposed that the Indian ocean be declared a zone of peace.

As there was a caretaker government in India, the then Prime Minister Charan Singh decided to send his foreign minister to represent the country at the sixth summit at Havana (1979). The number of participant rose to 92. Pakistan was admitted to the Movement and Burma (a former member) left the NAM. The Cuban President Fidel Castro described the former U.S.S.R. as a natural friend of the Movement. The summit reiterated the well known position against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and apartheid. The summit resolved to support freedom struggle in South Africa and to stop oil supply to that country. As Egypt had resolved her differences with Israel, some of the anti-Israel countries sought suspension of Egypt. The summit merely discussed the proposal.

The Seventh Summit (due in 1982 at Baghdad) could not be held in time due to Iran-Iraq War. It was held at New Delhi in 1983 and attended by 101 countries. The New Delhi declaration sought to reiterate the known position of NAM on various issues. It

hoped for any early end to the Iran-Iraq War and for liberation of Namibia. However, the conference failed to take any stand on Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The Soviet occupation was openly supported by Vietnam, S. Yemen, Syria and Ethiopia. It was strongly opposed by Singapore, Nepal, Pakistan, Egypt and Zaire.

The Harare Conference (1986) adopted the Harare declaration and sought greater economic cooperation among its members and North-South cooperation for faster development in the South. The summit gave a call for new International Information and Communication Order to end the western monopoly over news disbursement. In view of likely retaliation by the apartheid regime of South Africa against Frontline countries who were applying sanctions, the NAM decided to set up a fund called Action for Resistance against Imperialism, Colonialism and Apartheid. In abbreviated form it came to be known as the AFRICA Fund.

The 1989 Belgrade Summit was the last one to be held before Yugoslavia disintegrated and at a time when Cold War was just ending. It gave a call against international terrorism, smuggling and drug trafficking. The principle of self-determination was reiterated particularly in the context of South Africa and her continued rule over Namibia.

The tenth conference at Djakarta in 1992 was the first assembly of NAM after the end of Cold War. The summit was at pains to explain that even after the collapse of Soviet Union and end of Cold War, there was utility of the movement as a forum of developing countries struggling against neo-colonialism and all forms of big-power interference. The main issue was preservation of NAM and strengthening its identity as an agency of rapid development for its members in a tension-free world.

The eleventh NAM Summit was held at Cartagena (Colombia) in October, 1995. India was represented by a high-power delegation led by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. The summit, second after the end of the Cold War, tried to find its role in the changed circumstances of a world without blocs. An effort was made by Pakistan, at the foreign ministers level, to persuade NAM to evolve a system in which bilateral disputes may be sought to be settled by the movement. This was a clever way of bringing Kashmir on the agenda of NAM. Pakistan did not succeed in its design. An important decision taken by the 113-member NAM summit was to give a call for general and universal disarmament. India won a spectacular victory in its lone battle against the monopoly of the nuclear power countries over atomic weapons. The NAM resolved to take the issue to the United Nations by moving a resolution for the complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. This endorsement of India's position gave encouragement to India's consistent stand against signing the discriminatory Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). The endorsement of India's position on NPT by NAM was all the more significant because 11 out of 113 members of NAM have already signed the NPT. They had earlier in 1995, voted at New York for indefinite extension of the NPT. Pakistan continued to favour a regional nuclear arrangement and did not share India's concern about discriminatory

nature of the NPT. Pakistan's view was also , accommodated in the final communique which urged states to conclude agreements for creation of nuclear weapon free zones, wherever they did not exist. Pending creation of such zones, Israel was called upon to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, to accede to NPT, and to promptly place all its nuclear abilities under full scope of International Atomic Energy safeguards. This summit also called for total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities.

Goals and Achievements of the Nam

A major goal of the Non-aligned Movement was to end colonialism. The conferences of the NAM continuously supported the national liberation movements and the organisations that led those movements were given the status of full members in these conferences. This support greatly facilitated the Decolonization process in Asia and Africa.

It also condemned racial discrimination and injustice and lent full support to the antiapartheid movement in South Africa and Namibia. Today in both countries this obnoxious policy has ended with independence and majority rule.

A third area in which the NAM made a significant contribution was towards the preservation of peace and disarmament. Its espousal of peace, of peaceful co-existence and of human brotherhood, opposition to wars of any kind contributed to the lowering of Cold War tensions and expanded areas of peace in the world with less states joining military blocs. It also continuously strove for disarmament and for an end to the arms race stating that universal peace and security can be assumed only by general and complete disarmament, under effective international control. It underlined that the arms race blocked scarce resources which ought to be used for socio-economic development. They first called for a permanent moratorium on nuclear testing and later for the conclusion of a treaty banning the development, production stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons.

Fourthly, the non-aligned states succeeded in altering the composition of the U.N. and consequently in changing the tenor of the interstate relation conducted through its organs. In the forties and fifties deliberations in the U.N. organs were entirely dominated by the super power and their associate states. The emergence of non-alignment has changed this situation. It has created not only a new voting majority in the General Assembly but also common platform from where the third world can espouse its cause. It is no longer possible to ignore this platform. Thus we see that non-alignment has facilitated third world's participation in world politics and in the process has democratized the international relations.

The fifty important contribution was with regard to economic equality. It was the NAM that called for the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Despite their political sovereignty, the newly independent states remained economically unequal. They remained the same raw materials producing countries, which sold their

commodities to the developed world at a lower price, and bought manufactured good from them at a higher price. The tragedy was that they were and continue to be part of an oppressive economic system and that have to function within it. This makes them perpetually dependent on the developed North for capital goods, finance and technology. In order to end this economic exploitation, termed as neocolonialism, the NAM called for a restructuring of the international economic and monetary systems on the basis of equality, non-discrimination and cooperation.

Non-aligned Movement's struggle for economic justice has demonstrated how realistic I, is to divide the world between the North and the South rather than between the East and the West. It has proved that what concerns the majority of humanity is not the choice between capitalism and communism but a choice between poverty and prosperity. Preachings of non-alignment has made the developed world realize, to some extent, that deprivation of the third world would some day affect adversely their prosperity too. This has, to a large extent, forced them to come to the negotiating table. Besides the general success in making third world's economic demands negotiable, non-alignment has won its battle for some specific issues also. For example, economic sovereignty over natural resources is now an accepted principle. Non-alignment has also succeeded in legitimizing the interventionist trade policy that the developing countries want to pursue. It has successfully turned world attention to the problem created by the role as played by multinationals, specially in the context of transfer of technology. It has also succeeded in pursuing the IMF to establish system of compensatory finance which help the developing states in overcoming their balance of payments difficulties.

In the cultural field the establishment of the Pool of News Agencies needs to be considered as an achievement. This is the first time in history that politically and economically weaker nations have been able to gather information and communicate with the outside world without the aid of the western communication system. The most significant achievement of non-aligned movement lies in the fact that it has taught the developing world how to pursue independent economic development in spite of being a part of the world capitalist ecwomic order which makes them dependent on the developed states for capital and technology.

Lal Bahadur Shastri

Lal Bahadur Shastri was a politician and statesman from India who served as the country's second Prime Minister. In this article about Lal Bahadur Shastri biography, we will study the life history of Lal Bahadur Shastri, his achievements, his tenure as a Prime Minister of India and his date of death.

Early Life of Lal Bahadur Shastri

Lal Bahadur Shastri was born on October 2, 1904, in Mughalsarai, United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, British India (now Uttar Pradesh). Lal Bahadur Shastri's father was Sharada Prasad Srivastava, who was a school teacher before becoming a clerk

in the revenue office at Allahabad. His mother was Ramdulari Devi. He was the second child. He had an elder sister Kailashi Devi and a younger sister Sundari Devi.

When Lal Bahadur Shastri was six months old, his father died in an epidemic of bubonic plague. Lal Bahadur Shastri and his sisters grew up in the home of his maternal grandfather Munshi Hazari Lal after his father died.

Shastri started his education at the East Central Railway Inter college in Mughalsarai at the age of four, under the tutelage of a maulvi, Budhan Mian. He was a student there until the sixth grade.

Lal Bahadur Shastri began seventh grade at Harish Chandra High School in Varanasi.

Lal Bahadur Shastri's Family

Lal Bahadur Shastri married Lalita Devi, a Mirzapur native, on May 16, 1928. Kusum Shastri, Hari Krishna Shastri, Suman Shastri, Anil Shastri, Sunil Shastri, and Ashok Shastri were the couple's four sons and two daughters.

The entire Shastri family continues to participate in social initiatives and is actively involved in shaping relevant forums in India to aid in the country's growth and advancement.

Lal Bahadur Shastri's Independence Activism

Lal Bahadur Shastri became interested in the freedom movement after being inspired by a patriotic and well-respected teacher named Nishkameshwar Prasad Mishra at Harish Chandra High School. He started to research its history and the works of many notable figures, including Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and Annie Besant.

Lal Bahadur Shastri attended a public meeting in Banaras organised by Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in January 1921, when he was in the tenth grade. Shastri withdrew from Harish Chandra High School the next day, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's call for students to withdraw from government schools and join the non-cooperation movement. He joined the local branch of the Congress Party as a volunteer, actively engaging in picketing and anti-government demonstrations.

He was quickly apprehended and imprisoned but was later released because he was still a minor. J.B. Kripalani, a former Banaras Hindu University professor who went on to become one of the most influential figures of the Indian independence movement and one of Gandhi's closest followers, was Lal Bahadur Shastri's immediate supervisor.

On 10 February 1921, recognising the need for younger volunteers to continue their education, Kripalani and a friend, V.N. Sharma, established an informal school centred on nationalist education to educate the young activists in their nation's heritage, and the Kashi Vidyapith was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi in Banaras.

Lal Bahadur Shastri was one of the first students to graduate from the Vidyapith with a first-class degree in philosophy and ethics in 1925. The title "Shastri" (Scholar) was bestowed upon him, which was a bachelor's degree from the university, and later it became part of his identity.

Lal Bahadur Shastri became a member of Lala Lajpat Rai's Servants of the People Society (Lok Sevak Mandal) and started working for the betterment of the Harijans in Muzaffarpur under Gandhi's leadership. He later became the Society's President.

At Mahatma Gandhi's request, Shastri joined the Indian National Congress as an active and mature member in 1928. He spent two and a half years in jail. Later, in 1937, he served as the Organising Secretary of the U.P. Parliamentary Board. He was imprisoned for a year in 1940 for providing individual Satyagraha support to the independence movement.

At Gowalia Tank in Bombay on August 8, 1942, Mahatma Gandhi delivered the Quit India address, demanding that the British leave India. Lal Bahadur Shastri, who had just been released from prison after a year, travelled to Allahabad.

In 1937 and 1946, he was elected to the United Provinces legislature.

Lal Bahadur Shastri's Political Career

After India's independence, Lal Bahadur Shastri was named Parliamentary Secretary in his home state of Uttar Pradesh. Following Rafi Ahmed Kidwai's departure to become a minister at the centre, he became the Minister of Police and Transport under Govind Ballabh Pant's Chief Ministership on 15 August 1947. He was the first to name female conductors as Transport Minister.

As the minister in charge of the Police Department, he requested that unruly crowds be dispersed using water jets, which he instructed officers to use instead of lathis. During his time as police minister, he was instrumental in putting an end to communal riots in 1947, as well as mass migration and refugee resettlement.

With Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister, Shastri was appointed General Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee in 1951. He was in charge of the candidate selection process and the direction of advertising and electioneering efforts. He was a key figure in the Congress Party's landslide victories in the Indian general elections of 1952, 1957, and 1962.

In 1952, he ran for the Uttar Pradesh Vidhansabha and won the Soraon North cum Phulpur West seat with over 69% of the votes. On May 13, 1952, Shastri was appointed Minister of Railways and Transport in the First Cabinet of the Republic of India. In 1959, he was appointed Minister of Commerce and Industry, and in 1961, he was appointed the Minister of Home Affairs.

As a minister without a portfolio, Shastri laid a foundation for Mangalore Port in 1964.

When Jawaharlal Nehru died in office on 27 May 1964. Lal Bahadur Shastri was elected as the second Prime Minister of India on 9 June.

During Lal Bahadur Shastri's time as Prime Minister, the Madras anti-Hindi agitation of 1965 took place. Under the Official Languages Act of 1963, it was proposed that Hindi would be the primary official language. To defuse the crisis, Shastri promised

that English would remain the official language as long as the non-Hindi-speaking states wanted it. After Shastri's assurance, the riots and student unrest subsided.

Shastri used central planning to carry on Nehru's socialist economic policies. He supported the Amul milk cooperative in Anand, Gujarat, and founded the National Dairy Development Board to promote the White Revolution, a national movement to increase milk production and supply. On October 31, 1964, he came to Anand to inaugurate the Amul Cattle Feed Factory at Kanjari.

Shastri maintained Nehru's non-alignment policy while strengthening relations with the Soviet Union. Shastri's government agreed to increase the country's defence budget following the Sino-Indian War of 1962 and the establishment of military relations between China and Pakistan.

Shastri and Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike signed an agreement Sirima-Shastri Pact or Bandaranaike-Shastri Pact, in 1964 about the status of Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka, which was then known as Ceylon.

Shastri's crowning achievement came in 1965 when he led India in the Indo-Pak War. The Pakistani army clashed with Indian forces in August 1965, claiming half of the Kutch peninsula. During this time, Shastri used the popular slogan "Jai Jawan Jai Kisan" to encourage soldiers to protect India while encouraging farmers to increase food grain production and reduce reliance on imports.

The Indo-Pak war ended on September 23, 1965, when the United Nations ordered a ceasefire. Following the declaration of a cease-fire with Pakistan in 1965, Shastri and Pakistani President Mohammed Ayub Khan met in Tashkent for a summit arranged by Alexei Kosygin. Shastri and Ayub Khan signed the Tashkent Declaration on January 10, 1966. Shastri travelled to many countries during his time as Prime Minister, including the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, England, Canada, Nepal, Egypt, and Burma.

Achievements of Lal Bahadur Shastri

These achievements and memoirs of Lal Bahadur Shastri include both before and after his death.

- During his time as Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri laid the foundation stone for Bal Vidya Mandir, a prestigious Lucknow school, on November 19, 1964.
- In November 1964, he opened the Central Institute of Technology Campus in Tharamani, Chennai.
- In 1965, he opened the Plutonium Reprocessing Plant in Trombay.
- Shastri approved the development of nuclear explosives, as suggested by Dr Homi Jehangir Bhabha. Bhabha spearheaded the initiative by forming the Study of Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes nuclear explosive design project (SNEPP).
- In November 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri opened the Chennai Port Trust's Jawahar Dock and began construction on the Tuticorin Port.
- In the state of Gujarat, he opened the Sainik School Balachadi.

- He was the one who laid the foundation stone for the Almatti Dam.
- Throughout his life, Shastri was known for his integrity and modesty.
- He received the Bharat Ratna posthumously, and a memorial called "Vijay Ghat" was established in Delhi in his honour.
- Several educational institutions bear his name, including the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand. The Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, one of India's top business schools, was established in 1995 by the 'Lal Bahadur Shastri Educational Trust' in Delhi.
- Because of Shastri's position in promoting scholarly activity between India and Canada, the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute was named after him.
- The Lal Bahadur Shastri National Memorial Trust runs the Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial, located next to 10 Janpath, where he lived as Prime Minister.
- Lal Bahadur Shastri Hall of Residence is one of IIT Kharagpur's residence halls named after him.

Lal Bahadur Shastri Death

Lal Bahadur Shastri's death date was 11 January 1966. He died in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, one day after signing a peace treaty ending the 1965 Indo-Pakistan War. He was hailed as a national hero, and the Vijay Ghat memorial was named after him.

Conclusion

Lal Bahadur Shastri was a very simple man who worked for the betterment of the country. When he died, all he left was an old car, which he had bought in instalments from the government. He was a member of the Servants of India Society, which encouraged its members to avoid accumulating private property and instead serve the people in public.

He was the first railway minister to resign as a result of moral obligation after a major train crash. The Lal Bahadur Shastri Biography teaches the moral values adopted by one of the most honest and significant figures and politicians in Indian history.

Lal Bahadur Shastri – Domestic Policies

Lal Bahadur Shastri, the second Prime Minister of independent India, assumed office in 1964 after the death of Jawaharlal Nehru. Though his tenure was brief, lasting until 1966, Shastri played a crucial role in consolidating India's internal administration and addressing pressing domestic challenges. His domestic policies were shaped by the immediate needs of the nation such as food scarcity, economic instability, social justice, administrative efficiency, and national integration. Shastri's leadership was marked by simplicity, moral integrity, and practical decision-making, which deeply influenced his approach to internal governance.

One of the most significant domestic challenges faced by Lal Bahadur Shastri was the severe food crisis. India during the mid-1960s suffered from acute food shortages due to poor monsoons, low agricultural productivity, and a rapidly growing population. Shastri recognized that food self-sufficiency was essential for national stability and

independence. He strongly promoted agricultural development and encouraged farmers to increase food production. His appeal to the people to voluntarily observe one meal a day fast symbolized his personal commitment and helped raise awareness about food conservation. Shastri's emphasis on increasing agricultural output laid the foundation for the Green Revolution, which was later implemented more extensively under his successors.

Closely linked with food security was Shastri's policy of promoting agricultural modernization. He supported the introduction of high-yielding varieties of seeds, improved irrigation facilities, and the use of fertilizers and modern farming techniques. Shastri believed that empowering farmers was essential for rural development and economic growth. He encouraged cooperative farming and supported institutions that provided credit and technical assistance to farmers. His government also emphasized the role of agricultural research institutions to enhance productivity. These initiatives reflected his belief that India's progress depended on strengthening its rural economy.

Industrial development was another important area of Shastri's domestic policy. While continuing the mixed economy model initiated by Nehru, Shastri focused on strengthening public sector industries while also supporting small-scale and cottage industries. He believed that industrial growth should generate employment and reduce poverty. Special attention was given to industries related to agriculture such as fertilizers, machinery, and food processing. Shastri's government sought to balance industrial expansion with social welfare, ensuring that economic development benefited the common people rather than a few elites.

Shastri placed great importance on economic discipline and administrative efficiency. At a time when inflation and financial strain were major concerns, he emphasized austerity and honesty in public life. He advocated simple living for ministers and government officials and discouraged wasteful expenditure. Shastri believed that moral values and ethical conduct were essential for effective governance. His emphasis on integrity in administration strengthened public trust in the government and set high standards for political leadership.

Labour welfare and industrial harmony were central to Shastri's domestic vision. He maintained a balanced approach between labour rights and industrial productivity. Shastri supported workers' rights, fair wages, and improved working conditions, while also stressing the need for discipline and cooperation between labour and management. He encouraged dialogue and peaceful resolution of industrial disputes. His government aimed to create a harmonious industrial environment that would contribute to national development.

Social justice formed a vital component of Lal Bahadur Shastri's domestic policies. He was deeply committed to reducing inequality and uplifting the weaker sections of society. His government continued policies aimed at improving the conditions of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other marginalized communities. Shastri

believed that true democracy could not exist without social equality and economic opportunity for all citizens. He supported education, rural development, and welfare schemes as tools for social transformation.

Education and human resource development also received attention during Shastri's tenure. He believed that education was the foundation of national progress and social mobility. His government supported the expansion of educational institutions and emphasized technical and vocational education to meet the needs of a developing economy. Shastri viewed education as a means to create responsible citizens and skilled manpower capable of contributing to nation-building.

National integration and internal unity were major domestic concerns during Shastri's leadership. India was still facing regional, linguistic, and communal challenges. Shastri adopted a conciliatory and inclusive approach to address these issues. He respected linguistic diversity while emphasizing national unity. His calm and patient handling of internal tensions helped maintain political stability during a sensitive period in India's post-independence history.

Shastri also paid attention to internal security and law and order. While he was firm in dealing with threats to national unity, he believed in democratic methods and constitutional processes. He avoided authoritarian measures and upheld civil liberties. His leadership style reflected his belief that a strong nation is built on the confidence and participation of its people rather than coercion.

In conclusion, Lal Bahadur Shastri's domestic policies were guided by realism, moral values, and a deep sense of responsibility toward the nation. Despite his short tenure, he addressed critical domestic challenges such as food security, agricultural development, economic stability, social justice, and administrative integrity. His emphasis on simplicity, honesty, and service left a lasting impact on Indian politics. Shastri's domestic policies strengthened the foundations of India's internal governance and continue to be remembered as an example of ethical and people-centered leadership.

Foreign Policy under Lal Bahadur Shastri

Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister of India after the demise of Jawaharlal Nehru. Shastri mostly continued Nehru's policy of Non-Alignment, but also built closer ties with the Soviet Union.

Sirimavo-Shastri Pact (1964)

To settle the issue of Indian Tamils in the then Ceylon, Lal Bahadur Shastri signed an accord with the Prime Minister of Ceylon Sirimavo R.D. Bandarnaike in 1964. This agreement was seen as a great achievement as it removed a persistent cause of unpleasantness between India and Ceylon. According to the agreement, 5,25,000 Indian Tamils were to be repatriated, while 3,00,000 were to be granted Sri Lankan citizenship. This settlement was to be done by 31st October 1981. However, in 1982, India declined to consider any further applications for citizenship, stating that the 1964 agreement has lapsed.

China's Nuclear Explosion 1964

China tested its atom bomb during Shastri's time. It was said that the bomb entirely was to protect the Chinese people from the US nuclear threat. Though China asserted "no first use" policy of the bomb, it nevertheless created a sense of insecurity not only in India but also in the other countries of the South Asian region. However, during the Shastri's period, the pro-bomb supporters forced India to go in for the Nuclear Bomb. Thus, Nehru's era of influence started declining from this period as far as the nuclear weapons policy is concerned.

India-Pakistan War (1965)

The 1965 war has been considered as an important development in the history of India's foreign relations because the war occurred during the post-Nehru era and it was a challenging task to the leadership of Lal Bahadur Shastri. In fact, the 1965 War, which expected to pave the way for improvement of Indo-Pak relations, failed to solve the Kashmir problem.

India-Pakistan war of 1965 was an undeclared war. Kashmir issue was providing the fodder as Pakistan was demanding for reopening of the issue and India maintained that, Kashmir being part of India is a settled fact. These were the following reasons for the war: 1 In 1965, the situation in Kashmir became volatile as the followers of Sheikh Abdullah and others created a great deal of unrest in the valley. Thus, the Pakistani leadership thought the time was right for an intervention.

Also, Pakistan was equipped with superior military weapons which it had acquired from the USA. Pakistan also wanted to strike before India could improve its defences after the debacle of the Sino-India war of 1962.

Pakistan was also emboldened by the closer ties with China which aimed at isolating India.

Tashkent Declaration

Tashkent declaration was signed between India. Both the parties agreed to withdraw from all occupied areas and return to pre-war positions. They also agreed to repatriate the prisoners of war and not resort to force, thus settling their differences through peaceful means.

However, the Tashkent Declaration failed to resolve the core issue of Kashmir. From the Indo-Pak war two things were clear, one was that no country, except Malaysia and Singapore, was prepared to come out openly to support India. Even the Soviet Union, after reiterating that Kashmir was an integral part of India, chose to assume, like other several countries, a posture of neutrality when it came to pulling up Pakistan.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the main features of the Nehruvian Era.
2. Discuss the idea of Democratic Socialism in India.
3. Examine Nehru's economic policy after Independence.
4. Analyse the objectives of the Five-Year Plans.
5. Describe the role of planning in India's early development.
6. Explain the principles of Panchsheel.
7. Discuss the aims of the Non-Aligned Movement.
8. Evaluate Nehru's foreign policy approach.
9. Examine Lal Bahadur Shastri's domestic policies.
10. Assess Lal Bahadur Shastri's foreign policy.

UNIT II

India during Indira Gandhi's First Ministry – Administrative Reforms – Indo - Pakistan War – National Emergency 1976 – Twenty Point Programmes – Janata Government – Morarji Desai.

Objectives

- Indira Gandhi strengthened administration and central authority.
- The Indo-Pakistan War led to Bangladesh's creation.
- The 1976 Emergency curtailed civil liberties.
- The Janata Government restored democracy.

The Rise of Indira Gandhi

Born on November 19, 1917 in an illustrious family, Smt. Indira Gandhi was the daughter of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. She studied at prime institutions like Ecole Nouvelle, Bex (Switzerland), Ecole Internationale, Geneva, Pupils' Own School, Poona and Bombay, Badminton School, Bristol, Vishwa Bharati, Shantiniketan and Somerville College, Oxford. She was conferred Honorary doctoral degree by a host of Universities globally. With an impressive academic background she also got the Citation of Distinction from the Columbia University. Smt. Indira Gandhi was actively involved in the freedom struggle. In her childhood, she founded the 'Bal Charkha Sangh' and in 1930, the 'Vanar Sena' of children to help the Congress party during the Non-Cooperation Movement. She was imprisoned in September 1942, and worked in riot-affected areas of Delhi in 1947 under Gandhi's guidance.

She got married to Feroze Gandhi on March 26, 1942 and had two sons. Smt. Gandhi became a Member, Congress Working Committee and Central Election of the party in 1955. In 1958 she was appointed as a Member for Central Parliamentary Board of Congress. She was the Chairperson, National Integration Council of A.I.C.C. and President, All India Youth Congress, 1956 and Women's Dept. A.I.C.C. She became the President, Indian National Congress in 1959 and served till 1960 and then again from January 1978.

She had been Minister for Information and Broadcasting (1964- 1966). Then she held the highest office as the Prime Minister of India from January 1966 to March 1977. Concurrently, she was the Minister for Atomic Energy from September 1967 to March 1977. She also held the additional charge of the Ministry of External Affairs from September 5, 1967 to February 14, 1969. Smt. Gandhi headed the Ministry of Home Affairs from June 1970 to November 1973 and Minister for Space from June 1972 to March 1977. From January 1980 she was Chairperson, Planning Commission. She again chaired the prime Minister's Office from January 14, 1980.

Smt. Indira Gandhi was associated with a large number of organisations and institutions, like Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Trust. She was the Chairperson of Swaraj Bhavan Trust. She was also

associated with Bal Sahyog, Bal Bhavan Board and Children's National Museum in 1955. Smt. Gandhi founded the Kamala Nehru Vidyalaya in Allahabad. She was also associated with certain big institutions like Jawaharlal Nehru University and North-Eastern University during 1966-77. She also served as a Member of Delhi University Court, Indian Delegation to UNESCO (1960-64), Member, Executive Board of UNESCO from 1960-64 and Member, National Defence Council, 1962. She was also associated with Sangeet Natak Academy, National Integration Council, Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Society and Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund.

Smt. Gandhi also became a Member of Rajya Sabha in August 1964 and served till February 1967. She was the Member of Lok Sabha during fourth, fifth and sixth sessions. She was elected to the Seventh Lok Sabha from Rae Bareli (U.P.) and Medak (Andhra Pradesh) in January 1980. She chose to retain the Medak seat and relinquished the Rae Bareli seat. She was chosen as the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party in 1967-77 and again in January 1980.

Interested in a wide array of subjects, she viewed life as an integrated process, where activities and interests are different facets of the whole, not separated into compartments or labelled under different heads.

She had many achievements to her credit. She was the recipient of Bharat Ratna in 1972, Mexican Academy Award for Liberation of Bangladesh (1972), 2nd Annual Medal, FAO (1973) and Sahitya Vachaspati (Hindi) by Nagari Pracharini Sabha in 1976. Smt. Gandhi also received Mothers' Award, U.S.A. in 1953, Islbella d'Este Award of Italy for outstanding work in diplomacy and Yale University's Howland Memorial Prize. For two consecutive years in 1967 and 1968 she was the woman most admired by the French according to a poll by the French Institute of Public Opinion. According to a special Gallup Poll Survey in the U.S.A. in 1971 she was the most admired person in the world. Diploma of Honour was conferred to her by the Argentine Society in 1971 for the Protection of Animals.

Her famous publications include 'The Years of Challenge' (1966-69), 'The Years of Endeavour' (1969-72), 'India' (London) in 1975; 'Inde' (Lausanne) in 1979 and numerous other collections of speeches and writings. She travelled widely in India and all over the world. Smt. Gandhi also visited neighbours like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, China, Nepal and Sri Lanka. She paid official visits to countries like France, German Democratic Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, Guyana, Hungary, Iran, Iraq and Italy. Smt. Gandhi was one to visit majority of the countries like Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Bolivia and Egypt. She paid visits to many European, American and Asian nationals like Indonesia, Japan, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Switzerland, Syria, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, U.A.E., the United Kingdom, U.S.A.,

U.S.S.R., Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. She also marked her presence in the United Nations Headquarters.

When Jawaharlal Nehru was the prime minister his daughter Indira Gandhi became official hostess at events held by him. She learned the ropes of diplomacy with world leaders herein. Indira joined the Congress party in 1955 and became its president in 1959. The ascension of Indira Gandhi to the post of Prime-minister of India in 1966 on the sudden demise of Lal Bahadur Shastri was abrupt. It is commonly believed that the elders in the Congress picked Indira as a compromise candidate as they thought she could be easily moulded and was malleable. But as Kohli and Basu⁵ bluntly put “the calculation of the Congress elites behind choosing Indira Gandhi as a compromise candidate for the post of Prime minister in 1966 was accurate in a way. As Nehru’s daughter she would garner sufficient electoral support for the party to remain in power. But they were wrong in assuming she would be a weak woman who could be easily manipulated”. Her resilience and tenacity in the post of Prime Minister surprised the Congress party elites. Though she did not have much organizational base in the party she gained control over her government⁶. The elders in the Congress Working Committee realized the dangers of her escalation in power and sought to oust her from the party. Mrs. Gandhi turned the tables on the Congress “elites”. She removed Morarji Desai, an important leader of the party and one of her noted opponents from the post of Finance Minister in 1969 and took over the finance ministry herself. She overnight enacted some pro-people policies like nationalization of banks and withdrawal of special privileges from princely states. She was lauded by the common masses and her popularity soared.

In 1969 another incident pointed out her resoluteness to defeat her opponents in the party and emerge as the sole centre of power. The Congress party nominated N. Sanjeeva Reddy as the presidential candidate after the death of the then President Zakir Hussain, against the wishes of Indira Gandhi. Instead of implementing a whip in favour of Reddy, Indira Gandhi in an open letter urged Congress MPs and MLAs to “vote according to their conscience” ⁷ in the forthcoming Presidential election. Nearly 1/3rd of Congress members defied the party leadership and voted for independent candidate V. V. Giri, the then vice-President who won by a narrow margin. Matters came to a standstill and the then Congress President, Nijalingappa and others expelled Mrs. Gandhi from the party. The Congress party split. Indira Gandhi set up a rival organization, the Congress (R). In the Lok Sabha floor test, of the 288 Congress MPs 220 remained loyal to Mrs. Gandhi.

In the 1971 parliamentary elections Mrs. Gandhi’s popularity ensured her a massive victory. As she rode the crescendo of power in the country trouble brewed elsewhere. There was a bloody conflict between East and West Pakistan. Indira Gandhi played a decisive role in making the idea of Bangladesh a reality. The political and personal role of Indira Gandhi in the Bangladesh Liberation War established her as the “iron lady” of Indian politics⁸ and gave her international recognition. Her efforts to

coordinate the activities of the Indian Army with the BSF and the R&AW are seen as a strategic masterstroke that won the war against Pakistan in 1971. She opened the Indian border to give refuge to 10 million Bangladeshis fleeing the atrocities of the Pakistani army and helped settle the government-in-exile of Bangladesh. Not only that, as noted journalist B.G. Verghese pointed out “she went around the world highlighting the genocide in Bangladesh and the crossover of millions of refugees to India” 9 . India’s intervention and subsequent formation of Bangladesh changed the shape of South Asia and destroyed several conventions. As Sreeradha Datta and Krishnan Srinivasan put it, “Indian foreign policy had triumphed backed by force of arms. The Americans and Chinese...had been trumped, leaving a compliant Bangladesh, grateful for the Indian sacrifice and support10.” This achievement established Indira Gandhi - the leader.

Indira Gandhi and the Pre-Emergency Period

The success in the Bangladesh Liberation War elevated Mrs. Gandhi’s clout and power in office. The power structure within the Congress party also changed. There was the rise of sycophancy, consolidation of the cult leader status for Mrs. Gandhi which was consequently followed by her intolerance to criticism. The “authoritarian streak” 11 in Mrs. Gandhi’s rule was also becoming apparent.

But despite her triumph in the sphere of foreign policy and her omniscient status in the Indian political scenario, she could not rein in political dissent growing within the country. In 1973 in Gujarat a mass agitation sparked off over shortage of food and rise in food prices. The Nav Nirman movement led to the dissolution of the state legislature and imposition of President’s rule in the state. When re-elections were conducted in June 1975, the Congress was defeated by an alliance of the opposition parties. In Bihar, in April 1974, Gandhian leader Jayaprakash Narayan, popularly known as JP threw his weight behind a student agitation against the Congress state government. His call for “total revolution” led to an agitated mass movement. The role and crusade of JP against the existing political and social system needs to be discussed in a little detail here to understand the situation in the country just before the imposition of Emergency.

The Congress found a real challenger in the form of Jayaprakash Narayan, popular as JP in the days after independence. JP was always critical of parliamentary democracy and advocated “party-less democracy” which according to many was a vague concept and away from the political reality. His call for “Total Revolution” or “Sampoorna Kranti” was also an unclear and “nebulous” concept. As Bipan Chandra, Aditya Mukherjee and Mridula Mukherjee12 observed “JP at no stage was able to explain what a political system without political parties would involve or how would the popular will be expressed or implemented in it.” So though JP was an epitome of integrity, selflessness, sacrifice and champion of civil liberties and social order, his political ideals have been criticized as vague and ill-defined. Yet, arguably, the JP movement was one of the most noteworthy moments in India’s political scenario since Independence. As JP drew on the enormous discontent prevalent in the country to force a

nation-wide movement against Indira Gandhi, he came to represent the voice of opposition in an era when official opposition had all but disappeared¹³. He came to represent people fed up with three decades of corruption, misrule and ineptitude of the Congress. The main justification of the JP movement was to end corruption in Indian life and politics whose fountainhead was allegedly Indira Gandhi and to defend democracy which was endangered by her dictatorial personality and her authoritarian administrative style. JP often said that Indira Gandhi's continuation in office was "incompatible with the survival of democracy in India.¹⁴" The stage was set for an electoral confrontation between Mrs. Gandhi and JP in the parliamentary elections scheduled after a few months.

But a court verdict on 12th June, 1975 changed the entire political situation. Justice Jagmohanlal Sinha of the Allahabad High Court hearing a petition of electoral malpractices convicted Mrs. Gandhi of indulging in corrupt campaigning practices in the parliamentary elections of 1971 and declared her election null and void. The conviction meant she could not hold on to the office of prime minister as well. JP and the opposition seized the occasion, accused her of "clinging to an office corruptly gained" and demanded her immediate resignation. In a rally in the national capital JP and his associates announced a nation-wide civil disobedience movement to force her resignation. In his speech JP asked people to make it impossible for the government to function and asked the armed forces, police personnel and the bureaucracy to refuse to obey orders they considered "illegal and unconstitutional". Mrs. Gandhi's response was to declare a state of Internal Emergency in the whole country on 26th June, 1975. It was the darkest hour for democracy in post-independent India.

Indira Gandhi – Administrative Reforms

Indira Gandhi, who served as the Prime Minister of India from 1966 to 1977 and again from 1980 to 1984, played a decisive role in reshaping the Indian administrative system. Her period of leadership coincided with major political, economic, and social transformations in India. Indira Gandhi viewed administration as a powerful instrument for achieving national development, social justice, and political stability. Her administrative reforms were aimed at strengthening the authority of the central government, improving bureaucratic efficiency, ensuring accountability, and aligning the administrative machinery with the objectives of a socialist and welfare-oriented state.

One of the most important aspects of Indira Gandhi's administrative reforms was the strengthening of central authority. She believed that a strong and efficient Centre was necessary to implement national policies uniformly and effectively. During her tenure, the role of the Prime Minister's Office was significantly expanded, and it became a key decision-making body in the administrative structure. This centralization was intended to overcome delays, inefficiencies, and resistance within the bureaucracy and to ensure swift execution of development programmes. While this approach improved coordination, it also marked a shift from collective cabinet responsibility to a more personalized style of governance.

Indira Gandhi emphasized administrative efficiency and discipline within the civil services. She was concerned about red-tapism, corruption, and lack of responsiveness in the bureaucracy. Measures were taken to improve performance, streamline procedures, and reduce unnecessary delays. She stressed the need for civil servants to be development-oriented and people-centric rather than rule-bound. Her government encouraged administrators to actively participate in poverty alleviation and rural development programmes, thereby transforming the role of the bureaucracy from mere administrators to agents of social change.

Civil service reforms formed an integral part of Indira Gandhi's administrative vision. She supported merit-based recruitment and training while also emphasizing political neutrality and loyalty to the Constitution. At the same time, she asserted greater political control over the bureaucracy to ensure alignment with government policies. Transfers and postings were increasingly used as tools to enforce accountability and discipline. Although this enhanced executive control, it also sparked debates about bureaucratic autonomy and politicization of administration.

Decentralization and grassroots administration were also addressed through administrative reforms. Indira Gandhi recognized that effective governance required reaching the rural masses. She supported the strengthening of local administration and district-level planning. The District Collector was encouraged to play a central role in coordinating development programmes. Special emphasis was placed on implementing poverty alleviation schemes such as the Twenty-Point Programme, which required close coordination between various administrative departments at the local level.

The introduction and expansion of welfare-oriented administrative programmes marked a significant reform under Indira Gandhi's leadership. Administration was increasingly used as an instrument for social justice and redistribution. Programmes related to rural development, employment generation, education, health, and housing required extensive administrative restructuring and coordination. Indira Gandhi insisted that administrators must be sensitive to the needs of the poor, women, and marginalized communities. This approach redefined the purpose of administration from governance alone to active nation-building.

A major turning point in Indira Gandhi's administrative reforms occurred during the Emergency period from 1975 to 1977. During this time, administrative authority was highly centralized, and the executive exercised extensive powers. The bureaucracy was mobilized to enforce discipline, implement population control measures, and maintain law and order. While the Emergency period demonstrated the capacity of the administrative machinery for swift action, it also exposed the dangers of excessive centralization and weakening of democratic checks and balances. The experience significantly influenced later debates on administrative accountability and civil liberties.

Indira Gandhi also focused on strengthening planning and policy implementation mechanisms. She supported the Planning Commission as a key administrative body for

economic and social development. Administrative reforms were aimed at improving coordination between planning bodies and executing agencies. Five-Year Plans were supported by detailed administrative frameworks to ensure effective implementation at the state and district levels. This integration of planning and administration enhanced the role of technocrats and experts in governance.

Public sector administration underwent notable changes during Indira Gandhi's tenure. With the expansion of public sector enterprises following bank nationalization and industrial reforms, administrative mechanisms were strengthened to manage these large institutions. Greater emphasis was placed on professional management, accountability, and state control. The administrative structure of public enterprises was aligned with national objectives such as employment generation and balanced regional development.

Indira Gandhi's approach to administrative reforms also included efforts to curb corruption and promote probity in public life. Although corruption remained a challenge, she emphasized vigilance, accountability, and ethical conduct among administrators. Institutions such as vigilance commissions were strengthened to monitor administrative behavior. She believed that moral integrity was essential for effective administration and public confidence in governance.

In the post-Emergency period and during her return to power in 1980, Indira Gandhi sought to restore democratic functioning while retaining administrative efficiency. She attempted to balance strong leadership with respect for constitutional norms. Administrative reforms during this phase focused on stability, development, and responsiveness. Greater attention was given to rural administration, poverty alleviation, and national integration through efficient administrative systems.

In conclusion, Indira Gandhi's administrative reforms were characterized by strong central leadership, enhanced executive control, and a development-oriented approach to governance. Her reforms transformed the Indian administrative system into an active instrument of socio-economic change. While her policies improved efficiency and coordination, they also raised important questions about centralization, bureaucratic autonomy, and democratic accountability. Nevertheless, Indira Gandhi's contribution to administrative reforms remains significant, as she reshaped the role of administration in independent India and strengthened its capacity to address complex national challenges.

INDO-PAKISTAN WAR (1947-1948)

India and Pakistan gained independence amidst population displacement and violence. Kashmir became the major bone of contention during the Partition. War with Pakistan in August 1947 led to the signing of instrument of accession between Maharaja Hari Singh and Government of India on 26th October 1947. This further caused tensions in Pakistan and it sent its troops and Mujahideens to take over Kashmir. War of 1947 was the first of the many wars between India and Pakistan. Two other states were Army under tooks operations to ensure national integration, were Hyderabad where operation polo

was launched . Other one was in Goa, the Portuguese and their sympathisers were driven out by the combined action of Navy, Air Force and the Army and the operation was called VIJAY.

Genesis of the Kashmir Problem

In August 1947 when the Indian subcontinent became independent, rulers of the 565 princely states, whose lands comprised two-fifths of India [Map 16.1] and a population of 99 million, had to decide which of the two new countries to join, India or Pakistan. This is how India looked like before 1947.

The ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, whose state was situated between the two new countries, could not decide which country to join. The King, Maharaja Hari Singh was a Hindu but his population was predominantly Muslim. Instead he signed a "standstill" agreement with Pakistan in order that services such as trade, travel and communication would be uninterrupted. India did not sign a similar agreement. Pakistan violated this agreement as soon as it was signed and started applying economic and other pressures to force it to accede to Pakistan. The only rail link with Jammu & Kashmir was cut off and the traffic along the main road Srinagar-Rawalpindi was also interfered with. When these pressures failed, tribal raids were organized from Pakistan into various parts of Jammu & Kashmir. This became the beginning of the Kashmir problem.

Invasion of Kashmir Valley

The invasion of the valley was carried out from across the Pakistan border. The invasion was well planned and carried out in two phases. When first phase commenced thousands of raiders came across the border and carried out several border raids along the Pakistan - Kashmir border. This phase started on 20th October 1947. These raiders mostly comprised of Hazara and Pashtun tribesmen from Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province. The invaders came into Kashmir in two lots. One from Muzaffarabad towards Srinagar and the other came from Nowshera-Poonch area.

They quickly captured towns and villages and came upto Srinagar town. On 24th October the ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, sent an urgent message to Governor General of India, Lord Mountbatten, seeking immediate India's help to stop the invaders. When Pakistan launched a large-scale offensive, Kashmir accepted to merge with India by signing the Instrument of Accession on 26th October 1947. Indian army was quickly deployed in Srinagar and Poonch and defeated the invaders.

Operation Gulmarg:

Battle in Srinagar Three hundred men of 1 Sikh, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Dewan Ranjit Rai, were flown to Srinagar on the morning of 27th October. Colonel Rai's task was to secure the airfield as well as Srinagar town. The raiders were delayed for nearly two days by Col Rai's gallantry efforts. This valuable time enabled our army to rush more troops to Srinagar airfield. Colonel Rai had played a vital role in the defence of Srinagar and was awarded Maha Vir Chakra, posthumously.

Battle of Shelatang

Airplanes of the Indian Air Force brought in more troops, guns and ammunition at Srinagar airfield. The next task was to throw out the invaders from the Kashmir valley. This was done by one brigade sized force of the Indian Army. The main attack took place in a place called Shelatang. The attack was so quick and fierce that the enemy was defeated within 20 minutes. All the raiders panicked and ran towards Muzaffarabad. The Indian Air Force bombed and fired at the raiders causing huge casualties. Baramula town and Uri were captured quickly thus ending the war in Kashmir valley.

Attack on Naushera

The winter months meant hardly any operations in the north and action was confined to the south, in Jammu area. Enemy was concentrating his troops for an attack on Naushera which was an important place between Jammu and Poonch. The enemy attacked Naushera on the night of 5th and 6th February from three sides. After a bitter battle, the attack was repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy. It was also the biggest battle of the Kashmir War. Enemy was defeated because of our very effective Artillery.

Attack on Poonch

The raiders attacked Poonch town in October 1947 and surrounded it. Indian Army led by Lieutenant Colonel Pritam Singh was already inside the Poonch and he started defended the town. The army went on patrols by night and fought and killed the raiders. This action did not allow the enemy to enter Poonch town. Later in December 1947, Air Force landed their aircraft carrying more troops and guns. Similar to what was done in Srinagar. Because of the attacks by raiders, the area faced problem of refugees & their settlement. The Air Force aircraft after dropping the army soldiers carried the refugees to Jammu and other safe areas. The daring attacks by Indian Army stopped the raiders from coming any further.

Attack on Kargil:

Operation Bison You have learnt that the Pakistani invaders had come to Kargil also. An operation was launched on 01 November 1948 through Zoji La pass to capture Kargil. It was a daring attack led by General Thimayya. He used tanks, artillery and Air Force to defeat the Pakistanis. By 22 November 1947 all areas upto Kargil were free of the invaders. At this time Colonel Sher Jung Thapa defended Skardu. He defeated all attacks by the enemy for one long year without any additional troops or ammunition. Finally he had to surrender to the Pakistanis as no reinforcement could be provided to him and Skardu is now in Pak occupied Kashmir (POK).

The India-Pakistan War of 1965

The 1965 war between India and Pakistan was the second conflict between the two countries over the status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The clash did not resolve this dispute, but it did engage the United States and the Soviet Union in ways that would have important implications for subsequent superpower involvement in the region.

A patrol walks in the Haji Pir pass sector of Kashmir region. (AP Photo)

The dispute over this region originated in the process of decolonization in South Asia. When the British colony of India gained its independence in 1947, it was partitioned into two separate entities: the secular nation of India and the predominantly Muslim nation of Pakistan. Pakistan was composed of two noncontiguous regions, East Pakistan and West Pakistan, separated by Indian territory. The state of Jammu and Kashmir, which had a predominantly Muslim population but a Hindu leader, shared borders with both India and West Pakistan. The argument over which nation would incorporate the state led to the first India-Pakistan War in 1947–48 and ended with UN mediation. Jammu and Kashmir, also known as “Indian Kashmir” or just “Kashmir,” joined the Republic of India, but the Pakistani Government continued to believe that the majority Muslim state rightfully belonged to Pakistan.

Conflict resumed again in early 1965, when Pakistani and Indian forces clashed over disputed territory along the border between the two nations. Hostilities intensified that August when the Pakistani Army attempted to take Kashmir by force. The attempt to seize the state was unsuccessful, and the second India-Pakistan War reached a stalemate. This time, the international politics of the Cold War affected the nature of the conflict.

The United States had a history of ambivalent relations with India. During the 1950s, U.S. officials regarded Indian leadership with some caution due to India’s involvement in the nonaligned movement, particularly its prominent role at the Bandung Conference of 1955. The United States hoped to maintain a regional balance of power, which meant not allowing India to influence the political development of other states. However, a 1962 border conflict between India and China ended with a decisive Chinese victory, which motivated the United States and the United Kingdom to provide military supplies to the Indian Army. After the clash with China, India also turned to the Soviet Union for assistance, which placed some strains on U.S.-Indian relations. However, the United States also provided India with considerable development assistance throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

U.S.-Pakistani relations had been more consistently positive. The U.S. Government looked to Pakistan as an example of a moderate Muslim state and appreciated Pakistani assistance in holding the line against communist expansion by joining the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954 and the Baghdad Pact (later renamed the Central Treaty Organization, or CENTO) in 1955. Pakistan’s interest in these pacts stemmed from its desire to develop its military and defensive capabilities, which were substantially weaker than those of India. Both the United States and the United Kingdom supplied arms to Pakistan in these years.

After Pakistani troops invaded Kashmir, India moved quickly to internationalize the regional dispute. It asked the United Nations to reprise its role in the First India-Pakistan War and end the current conflict. The Security Council passed Resolution 211 on September 20 calling for an end to the fighting and negotiations on the settlement of the Kashmir problem, and the United States and the United Kingdom supported the UN

decision by cutting off arms supplies to both belligerents. This ban affected both belligerents, but Pakistan felt the effects more keenly since it had a much weaker military in comparison to India. The UN resolution and the halting of arms sales had an immediate impact. India accepted the ceasefire on September 21 and Pakistan on September 22.

The ceasefire alone did not resolve the status of Kashmir, and both sides accepted the Soviet Union as a third-party mediator. Negotiations in Tashkent concluded in January 1966, with both sides giving up territorial claims, withdrawing their armies from the disputed territory. Nevertheless, although the Tashkent agreement achieved its short-term aims, conflict in South Asia would reignite a few years later.

National Emergency 1976

The trigger? A bombshell verdict by the Allahabad High Court had found Gandhi guilty of electoral malpractice and invalidated her 1971 election win. Facing political disqualification and a rising wave of street protests led by veteran socialist leader Jayaprakash Narayan, Gandhi chose to declare an "internal emergency" under Article 352 of the constitution, citing threats to national stability.

As historian Srinath Raghavan notes in his new book on Indira Gandhi, the constitution did allow wide-ranging powers during an Emergency. But what followed was "extraordinary and unprecedented strengthening of executive power... untrammelled by judicial scrutiny".

Over 110,000 people were arrested, including major opposition political figures such as Morarji Desai, Jyoti Basu and LK Advani. Bans were slapped on groups from the right-wing to the far-left. Prisons were overcrowded and torture was routine.

The courts, stripped of independence, offered little resistance. In Uttar Pradesh, which jailed the highest number of detainees, not a single detention order was overturned. "No citizen could move the courts for enforcement of their fundamental rights," writes Raghavan.

During a controversial family planning campaign, an estimated 11 million Indians were sterilised - many by coercion. Though officially state-run, the programme was widely believed to be orchestrated by Sanjay Gandhi, the unelected son of Indira Gandhi. Many believe a shadowy second government, led by Sanjay, wielded unchecked power behind the scenes.

The poor were hit hardest. Cash incentives for surgery often equalled a month's income or more. In one Delhi neighbourhood near the Uttar Pradesh border - derisively dubbed "Castration Colony" (places where forced sterilisation programmes took place) - women reportedly said they'd been made *bewas* (widows) by the state as "our men are no longer men". Police in Uttar Pradesh alone recorded over 240 violent incidents tied to the programme.

In their book on Delhi under Emergency, civil-rights activist John Dayal and journalist Ajoy Bose wrote that officials were under intense pressure to meet sterilisation

quotas. Junior officers enforced the order ruthlessly - contract labourers were told, "No advances, no jobs, unless you get vasectomies."

Parallel to this, a massive urban "clean-up" demolished nearly 120,000 slums, displacing some 700,000 people in Delhi alone, as part of a gentrification campaign described by critics as social cleansing. These people were dumped into new "resettlement colonies" far away from their workplaces.

One of the worst episodes of slum demolitions occurred in Delhi's Turkman Gate, a Muslim-majority neighbourhood, where police fired on protesters resisting demolition, killing at least six and displacing thousands.

The press was silenced overnight. On the eve of the Emergency, power to newspaper presses in Delhi was cut. By morning, censorship was law.

When The Indian Express newspaper finally published its 28 June edition - delayed by a power outage - it left a blank space where its editorial should have been. The Statesman followed suit, printing blank columns to signal censorship. Even The National Herald, founded by India's first prime minister and Indira Gandhi's father Jawaharlal Nehru, quietly dropped its masthead slogan: "Freedom is in peril, defend it with all your might." Shankar's Weekly, a satirical magazine known for its cartoons, shut down entirely.

In her book - a personal history of the Emergency - journalist Coomi Kapoor reveals the extent of media censorship through detailed examples of blackout orders.

These included bans on reporting or photographing slum demolitions in Delhi, conditions in a maximum-security Tihar Jail, and developments in opposition-ruled states like Tamil Nadu. Coverage of the family planning drive was tightly controlled - no "adverse comments or editorials" were permitted. Even stories deemed trivial or embarrassing were scrubbed: no "sensational" reporting on a notorious bandit and no mention of a Bollywood actress caught shoplifting in London.

Kapoor also notes that BBC's Mark Tully, along with journalists from The Times, Newsweek and The Daily Telegraph, were given 24 hours to leave India for refusing to sign a "censorship agreement". (Years after the Emergency, when Gandhi was back in power, Tully introduced her to the BBC's chief. He asked how it felt to lose public support. She smiled and said, "I never lost the support of the people, only the people were misled by rumours, many of which were spread by the BBC.")

Some judges pushed back. The Bombay and Gujarat high courts warned that censorship couldn't be used to "brainwash the public". But that resistance was quickly drowned out.

That wasn't all. In July 1976, Sanjay Gandhi pushed the Youth Congress - the governing Congress party's youth wing - to adopt his personal five-point programme, including family planning, tree plantation, refusal of dowry, promotion of adult literacy and abolition of caste.

Congress president DK Barooah instructed all state and local committees to implement Sanjay's five points alongside the government's official 20-point programme, effectively merging state policy with Sanjay's personal crusade.

Anthropologist Emma Tarlo, author of a richly detailed ethnographic work of the period, wrote that during the Emergency, the poor were subjected to "forced choices". It was also a turning point for industrial relations.

"The last vestiges of working-class politics were imperiously wiped out," wrote Christophe Jaffrelot and Pratinav Anil in their book on the period they call "India's first dictatorship". Around 2,000 trade union leaders and members were jailed, strikes were banned and worker benefits were slashed.

The number of man-days lost to stoppages plunged - from 33.6 million in 1974 to just 2.8 million in 1976. Strikers dropped from 2.7 million to half a million. The government also loosened its grip on the private sector, helping the economy rebound after years of stagnation. Industrialist JRD Tata praised the regime's "refreshingly pragmatic and result-oriented approach".

Despite its heavy-handedness, the Emergency was seen by some as a period of order and efficiency. Inder Malhotra, a journalist, wrote that in "its initial months at least, the Emergency restored to India a kind of calm it had not known for years".

Trains ran on time, strikes vanished, production rose, crime fell, and prices dropped after a good 1975 monsoon - bringing much-needed stability. "One fact is conclusive proof of the quiescence of the middle class - that hardly any officials resigned in protest against the Emergency," writes historian Ramachandra Guha in his book *India After Gandhi*.

Scholars believe the Emergency's harshest measures were largely confined to northern India because southern states had stronger regional parties and more resilient civil societies that limited central overreach. Gandhi's Congress party, which ruled federally, had weaker control in the south, giving regional leaders greater autonomy to resist or moderate draconian policies.

The Emergency formally ended in March 1977 after Gandhi called elections - and lost. The new Janata government - a rag-tag coalition of parties - rolled back many of the laws she'd passed. But the deeper damage was done. As many historians have written, the Emergency revealed how easily democratic structures could be hollowed out from within - even legally.

"It is no wonder that the Emergency is remembered emotively in India... Indira's suspension of constitutional rights appears as an abrupt disavowal of the liberal-democratic spirit that animated Nehru and other nationalist leaders who founded India as a constitutional republic in 1950," historian Gyan Prakash wrote in his book on the Emergency.

Today, the Emergency is remembered in India as a brief authoritarian interlude - an aberration. But that framing, warns Prakash, breeds "a smug confidence in the present".

"It tells us that the past is really past, it is over, it is history. The present is free from its burdens. India's democracy, we are told, heroically recovered from Indira's brief

misadventure with no lasting damage and with no enduring, unaddressed problems in its functioning," Prakash writes.

"Underlying it is an impoverished conception of democracy, one that regards it only in terms of certain forms and procedures."

In other words, this perception ignores how fragile democracy can be when institutions fail to hold power to account.

The Emergency was also a stark warning against the perils of hero worship - something embodied in the towering political persona of Indira Gandhi.

Back in 1949, BR Ambedkar, architect of the constitution, cautioned Indians against surrendering their freedoms to a "great leader".

Bhakti (devotion), he said, was acceptable in religion - but in politics, it was "a sure road to degradation and eventual dictatorship".

Twenty Point Programmes

Alleviation of poverty and improving the quality of life of the people, specially of those who are below the poverty line, has been the prime objective of planned development in the country. In recent years, the meaning of economic development has shifted from growth in per capita income to that of expansion of opportunities. Development of urban capability can broadly be seen as the central feature of the process of growth. Government of India, through different programmes/schemes, is helping its citizens to expand their capabilities. A package of programmes comprising schemes relating to poverty alleviation, employment generation, education and health etc. called Twenty Point Programme (TPP-86), has been in operation since 1975. This programme was restructured in 1982, 1986 and again in 2006. The restructured programme known as Twenty Point Programme (TPP)-2006, became operational with effect from 1st April, 2007. The Programme is meant to give a thrust to schemes relating to poverty alleviation, employment generation in rural areas, housing, education, family welfare & health, protection of environment and many other schemes having a bearing on the quality of life, especially in rural areas.

The programmes and schemes under the TPP-2006 are in harmony with the priorities contained in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations and SAARC Social Charter. The original nomenclature, namely the Twenty Point Programme, which has been in existence for more than three decades and carries the stamp of familiarity among the people and administrative agencies, has been retained.

The programmes/schemes covered under TPP-2006 are as under:

1. Poverty Eradication
2. Power of People
3. Support to Farmers
4. Labour Welfare
5. Food Security
6. Housing for All
7. Clean Drinking Water
8. Health for All
9. Education for All
10. Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Minorities and OBCs
11. Women Welfare
12. Child Welfare
13. Youth Development
14. Improvement of Slums
15. Environment Protection and Afforestation
16. Social

Security 17. Rural Roads 18. Energization of Rural Area 19. Development of Backward Areas 20. IT Enabled e-Governance.

Twenty Point Programme (TPP)-2006 originally consisted of 20 Points and 66 items being monitored individually by Central Nodal Ministries concerned. During 2007-08, out of 66 items, 22 items were monitored on monthly basis. From 1st April, 2008, Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) has been merged with another item, namely, "National Rural Employment Guarantee Act", therefore, SGRY has been dropped from the list of 66 items and only 65 items are now monitored under TPP-2006 since 2008-09.

The list of 65 items.

Out of 65 items, 20 items (information in respect of 16 items is being collected from various States/UTs and for remaining 4 items from the concerned Central Nodal Ministries) are being monitored on monthly basis. The remaining items under TPP-2006 are being monitored on annual basis as the information in respect of these items will be made available by the concerned Central Nodal Ministries only on annual basis. For the purpose of ranking, the performance of States on monthly basis in respect of 20 identified parameters has been evaluated.

The monitoring mechanism for TPP-2006 has been widened by including block level monitoring in addition to District, State and Central level monitoring. Most of the States/ Union Territories have constituted the block, district and State level monitoring committees. At the Centre, the progress of individual items is monitored and reviewed by the Departments/Ministries concerned. The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation monitors the Programmes/ Schemes covered under TPP-2006 on the basis of performance reports received from States/UTs Government and Central Nodal Ministries.

The tables incorporated in this chapter are prepared for those items, which are being monitored on monthly basis of TPP-1986 and TPP-2006 by the Ministry of Statistics & programme Implementation.

The data are based on information furnished by State/UT Governments and published in the various Twenty Point Programme Annual Progress Reports'. There may be some variations/gaps due to non-receipt of information from some State/UT Governments for some months.

The salient features of performance under 20 Point Programme are as under:

Persons to whom employment was provided under NREP and RLEGP increased from 64.94 crore during 1986-87 to 65.31 crore during 1988-89. Employment generated under JRY declined from 82.86 crore mandays during 1989-90 to 38.05 crore mandays during 1998-99. Employment generated under SGRY declined from 64.07 crore mandays during 2002-03 to 26.37 crore mandays during 2007-08. Job cards issued under NREGS increased from 5.31 crore during 2007-08 to 7.61 crore during 2008-09 and mandays of

employment generated increased from 144.42 crore to 206.23 crore during the respective periods.

Additional villages/habitations provided safe drinking water increased from 48.35 thousand during 1986-87 to 98.99 thousand during 2006-07. Habitations covered under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme, declined from 13.79 thousand during 2007-08 to 11.40 thousand during 2008-09, while slipped back habitations and habitations with water quality problems addressed under this programme increased substantially from 81.06 thousand during 2007-08 to 128.84 thousand during 2008-09.

Houses constructed under Rural Housing Scheme (IAY) increased from 1.38 lakh during 1987-88 to 19.89 lakh during 2008-09.

Number of CHCs created increased from 192 during 1987-88 to 278 during 2006-07. Number of children immunized increased from 138 lakh during 1987-88 to 256 lakh during 2006-07. Since 1986-87 till 2008-09, 6278 ICDS blocks became operational with 10.36 lakh functional Anganwadis.

Number of SC/ST families assisted increased from 37.69 lakh during 1986-87 to 91.25 lakh during 2007-08.

Under Urban Housing Scheme, the number of houses constructed for EWS/LIG declined from 171.09 thousands during 1987-88 to 65.95 thousands during 2008-09. Number of persons covered under slum improvement programme of the scheme increased from 20.03 lakh during 1986-87 to 31.00 lakh during 2006-07.

Area covered under afforestation increased from 7.01 lakh hectare during 1990-91 to 16.76 lakh hectare during 2008-09.

Number of SHGs formed increased from 4.19 lakh during 2007-08 to 5.34 lakh during 2008-09.

Length of road constructed under PMGSY increased from 44354 Kms during 2007-08 to 56541 Kms during 2008-09.

Janata Government

The freedom movement of India was polluted by the idea of two-nations. Due to the appeasement of communal separatism and lack of proper vision of nationalism, the then leaders accepted the partition of the country on the basis of religion. Due to the strong opposition of the partition, the Congress government under the false allegation of Mahatma Gandhi ji's murder banned the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee strongly agitated against giving the whole Bengal to Pakistan. Consequently, Pakistan could get only half of Bengal. On the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Mookerjee was included in the Central Cabinet, but due to India's subdued policy with Pakistan and being against the Nehru-Liaquat Pact expressing indifference to the security of Hindus in Pakistan, Dr. Mookerjee resigned from the Cabinet.

These two contexts gave birth to the Jana Sangh. Dr. Mookerjee met the second RSS Sarsanghachalak Shri Guruji and the process of forming the Jana Sangh was started.

Having been started in May 1951, this process was completed on October 21, 1951, with the formation of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh under the presidentship of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee. It was formed at the Raghomal Kanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya in Delhi. The rectangular saffron flag was accepted as its flag and 'Deepak' inscribed on it was accepted as the election symbol. In the same inaugural session, the manifesto for the first general election was also approved.

In the first general election, the Jana Sangh got 3.06 per cent votes and three MPs, including Dr. Mookerjee, were elected. Jana Sangh got the status of a national party. In the Parliament, 'National Democratic Front' was formed under the leadership of Dr. Mookerjee. Akali Dal, Gantantra Parishad, Hindu Mahasabha, Tamil Nadu Toilers Party, Commonweal Party, Dravid Kazhagam, Lok Sevak Sangh and independents together had 38 MPs (32 Lok Sabha and 6 Rajya Sabha MPs) in this Front. In this manner, president of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh Dr. Mookerjee was the first informal Leader of the Opposition of the country.

On May 29, 1952, Jammu-Kashmir Legislative Assembly accepted the proposal of joining the Indian Federation and on July 24 Nehru-Abdullah Agreement was signed. It was a conspiracy to create controversy and separate state of Jammu and Kashmir, which had already merged with India. Under this, arrangements for separate Constitution, separate Prime Minister and separate flags were made for the state. Praja Parishad strongly agitated against this and the Bharatiya Jana Sangh supported it. In Parliament, Dr. Mookerjee delivered a strong speech against it. Agitation became intense in Jammu and Kashmir.

The first conference of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh was held in Kanpur from December 29 to 31, 1952. Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya became the general secretary of Bharatiya Jana Sangh. Deendayal ji moved the resolution of Cultural Renaissance expressing 'Geo-cultural nationalism'. It was the first ideological resolution and state Reorganisation Commission was demanded.

In March 1953, a satyagraha was started in Delhi with the demand for complete integration of Jammu and Kashmir. On May 11, Dr. Mookerjee entered Jammu and Kashmir without a permit under satyagraha, he was arrested and taken to Srinagar. To enter Jammu and Kashmir, over 10,750 satyagrahis participated in the agitation from all over the country. On June 23, Dr. Mookerjee attained martyrdom and Satyagraha was withheld.

As a result, on August 9, Sheikh Abdullah had to be arrested after being removed from the post of Prime Minister. Ultimately, permit system also ended.

From January 22 to 25, 1954 second conference of the Jana Sangh was held in Mumbai in which call was made for Swadeshi. The five-year plan, formulated in imitation of Russia, was strongly opposed.

British had left India in 1947, but Goa-Daman-Diu and Pondicherry were still parts of the Portuguese and French empires. The Jana Sangh started a movement for their

freedom. Jana Sangh karyakarta Shri Narvane freed Dadar on July 22, 1954, and Shri Narvane led the freedom of Naroli Island on July 29. Jana Sangh karyakarta Shri Hemant Soman hoisted the tricolour on the Portuguese government Secretariat in Panaji on August 15. Under the leadership of All India Secretary of the Jana Sangh Shri Jagannath Rao Joshi, with a group of 101 satyagrahis, entered Goa. They were arrested and tortured. Shri Rajabhai Mahakal of Madhya Pradesh and Shri Amir Chandra Gupta of Uttar Pradesh were martyred.

With the call of changing the education system, the third conference of the Jana Sangh was held in Jodhpur from December 28, 1954 to January 2, 1955. Pt Prem Nath Dogra, the leader of the movement for Jammu and Kashmir integration, became the president. From April 19 to 22, 1955 the fourth conference was held in Jaipur. Renowned mathematician Acharya Ghosh became the president. The fifth conference was held in Delhi. States were being formed for building a case for federation. ‘Regionalism and violence’ was seen in its naked form. The Jana Sangh demanded ‘Integral Administration’ decentralised up to Janapadas. At the Delhi conference itself, the resolution of ‘Bharatiyakaran’ against communalism was passed and the manifesto for 1957 general election was drafted.

On August 8, 1957, first 11-day study camp of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh was conducted in Bilaspur.

Under the presidentship of Acharya Debaprasad Ghosh, the sixth conference was held in Ambala from April 4 to 6, 1958. Constitutional arrangement for electoral reforms was demanded. The seventh conference of the Jana Sangh was again held under the presidentship of Acharya Ghosh in Bangalore from December 26 to 28, 1958. In the 1957 general elections, Jana Sangh won four seats and the vote percentage almost doubled to 5.93%.

On September 10, 1958, Nehru-Noon Pact was signed. Consequently, the Berubari Union of Jalpaiguri was handed over to Pakistan. The Jana Sangh organised countrywide agitation to save Berubari.

In 1959, strong voice was raised against the infiltration of China on the borders. The Jan Sangh demanded the liberation of Tibet and mass awakening programmes were organised throughout the year.

From June 27 to July 6, 1959, ten-day study workshop was organised in Pune for the MLAs and MPs.

From January 23 to 25, 1960, the eighth conference of the Jana Sangh was held under the presidentship of Shri Pitambardas in Nagpur. Programmes to make government cautious against the illusion of “Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai” and raising of the voice against Chinese aggression continued throughout the year. From December 30, 1960 to January 1, 1961, the ninth conference was held under the presidentship of Shri Rama Rao. The tenth conference was held under the presidentship of great linguist Acharya Raghu Vira on December 29-31, 1962 in Bhopal. Unfortunately, on May 14, 1963, Acharya Raghu

Vira died in a road accident and Acharya Ghosh was again elected president. The eleventh conference was held under the presidentship of Acharya Debaprasad Ghosh from December 28-30, 1963 in Ahmedabad.

In 1962, 14 MPs were elected from the Jana Sangh and the vote percentage was 6.44. In the history of the Jana Sangh, the year 1964 is a milestone. From August 10 to 15, a study camp was held in Gwalior where 'Principle and Policy' draft was conceptualised in which 'Integral Humanism' was implicit. In November 1964, the National Executive accepted the draft and in the 12th All India Conference, held under the presidentship of Shri Bachh Raj Vyas from January 23-26, 1965 in Vijayawada, it was officially declared philosophy of the party. In December 1964, the Jana Sangh demanded the making of the atom bomb.

In March 1965, Pakistan captured Kanajarkot in Kutch and continued its aggression. The government of India wanted to make peace with Pakistan, which was strongly opposed by the Jana Sangh. In July-August, Jana Sangh planned for countrywide demonstration. Demonstrations were held at around one lakh places across the country and on August 16, over 5 lakh people from every part of the country gathered in Delhi for the largest demonstration in the political history of the country against the Kutch Agreement. The slogan was 'Fauj Na Hari, Kaum Na Hari, Haar Gayi Sarkar Hamari' (Neither our army nor our people were defeated, but the government was defeated).

Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri drew strength from it and he got ready for the war. On September 1, the war started. The Jana Sangh worked with the Government and the Army shoulder to shoulder and the Indian army emerged victorious. A ceasefire was declared on the mediation of Russia and a Summit was decided to be held in Tashkent. The Jana Sangh opposed it. In Tashkent, Shastriji signed the Agreement handing back the areas won by our forces to Pakistan and in the same night he died due to a heart attack. Bharatiya Jana Sangh openly opposed the Tashkent Agreement.

In April 1966, 13th All India Conference of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh was held under the presidentship of Prof. Balraj Madhok in Jalandhar. In 1967, the fourth general election was held. Jana Sangh had by now become number 2 political party after the Congress. In Lok Sabha, 35 members of the party were elected and vote percentage increased to 9.41. In the Legislative Assembly also the Jana Sangh became no.2 All India party. In the entire country, our 268 MLAs won the elections.

In March 1967, the first non-Congress government was formed in Bihar and the Jana Sangh was part of it. Thereafter, governments were formed in Punjab, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh, and the Jana Sangh was part of all the governments.

From December 26 to 30, 1967, 14th All India Conference of the Jana Sangh was held in Calicut. The Jana Sangh was being nurtured by Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya as general secretary. Then he was elected president of the party. Deendayal ji delivered a historic presidential speech in Calicut. The leader who was working from behind came to

light but destiny had something else in its store. On February 11, 1968, Deendayal ji was martyred, shocking the country's politics.

On February 13, 1968, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee was elected president of the Jana Sangh. From July 8 to 11, the first All India Women Study camp was held in Nagpur. From April 25-27, 1969, 15th All India Conference was held in Bombay in which Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee was again elected as its president. It was the conference where the slogan was raised – ‘Pradhan Mantri Ki Agali Bari, Atal Bihari, Atal Bihari’. From July 2-8, All India study camp was organised in Raipur.

The 16th All India Conference was held in Patna under the presidentship of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee from December 28 to 30, 1969. Against the nexus of Congress, Communist and Muslim League trio, the country was warned with the slogan, ‘Tin Tilange, Karte Dange’. The slogan echoed in the entire country. ‘Swadeshi Plan’ was announced in Patna and again the slogan of ‘Bharatiyakaran’ was raised. In July 1970, the declaration was made for ‘Plan for Complete Employment’.

In January 1971, general election manifesto was released in the name of ‘Declaration of War against Poverty’. The defection politics in Samvid government and division of the Congress by Indira Gandhi had raised the political temperature of the country. The Jana Sangh was part of the non-Congress governments. It witnessed a slide for the first time since its inception. In Lok Sabha, its number came down to 21 from 35 and vote percentage too came down. Smt. Indira Gandhi registered a historic win.

In December 1971, Pakistan attacked India, starting the Bangladesh war. The Jana Sangh again worked with government and armed forces shoulder to shoulder. India won and Bangladesh was formed. The Jana Sangh organised a huge demonstration in Delhi with the demand to give recognition to Bangladesh. On April 2, the Jana Sangh organised ‘No to Second Tashkent’ day.

Against the oppression of Dalits, the Jana Sangh president Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee sat on symbolic fast at Bombay Hutatma Chowk.

Jana Sangh opposed the ‘Shimla Agreement’ after the victory in war. Against the returning of Gadra Road on the border of Rajasthan to Pakistan, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee carried out a satyagraha by going to Gadra Road. A huge demonstration in front of the Parliament against ‘Shimla Agreement’ was held. On August 3, Shri Jagannath Rao Joshi held satyagraha in Siyal Kot sector and Dr. Bhai Mahavir in Suigam (Gujarat).

The Jana Sangh celebrated Aurobindo centenary as ‘Akhand Bharat Divas’ on 15th August.

The victory of 1971 made Indira Gandhi arrogant. Corruption, arrogance and oppression became synonymous with her rule. In December 1972, the 18th Conference of Jana Sangh was held in Kanpur under the presidentship of Shri Lal Krishna Advani ji. There was churning in the country due to ‘Nav Nirman Movement’ in Gujarat and ‘Samagra Kranti’ in Bihar. Babu Jayaprakash Narayan ji became the leader of the

movement. Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) was leading the movement from the front. Jana Sangh was with the movement. Shri Nanaji Deshmukh ji played a significant role in bringing JP in the movement. Shri Lal Krishna Advani ji who became president of the Jana Sangh for the second time invited Babu Jayaprakash Narayan ji in the All India Conference (19th – 7th March 1973). He said, “If Jana Sangh is Fascist, then I am also Fascist”.

Congress was defeated in the by-election and on the petition of Shri Rajnarayan, Allahabad High court declared the election of Indira Gandhi invalid and disqualified her from contesting elections. The emergency was declared in the midnight of June 25, 1975 and democracy was suppressed. All leaders were either jailed under MISA or went underground. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was banned. The next year general elections were scheduled to be held, but by amending the Constitution the tenure of Lok Sabha was extended by one year, consequently, elections were not held.

Babu Jayaprakash Narayan ji handed over the responsibilities of Lok Sangharsh Samiti to Shri Nanaji Deshmukh. Widespread movements took place throughout the country, and a large number of people were jailed. The karyakartas of Jana Sangh and swayamsevaks of the RSS were in the forefront of this movement. Elections were held in 1977. It was a silent revolution in India. Not only the Congress, but Indira Gandhi and her son Sanjay Gandhi also lost elections. In these elections, the Janata Party was in front of the Congress. Under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Samajwadi Party, Bharatiya Lok Dal and Congress Organisation had come together to form one party. After the elections on March 23, 1977 the end of Emergency was declared. The Jana Sangh merged with the Janata Party. Three leaders of the Jana Sangh joined the Government.

The Janata Party became a victim of mutual rivalry and power politics. In the contest for supremacy, the question of ‘dual membership’ was raised against the karyakartas of the Jana Sangh. Either the people of the Jana Sangh should leave the Janata Party or end their relationship with the RSS. On this issue, the leaders of Jana Sangh left the Janata Party, and on April 6, 1980 formed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on the basis of panch nishthas (five commitments).

Indira Gandhi had already won 1980 Lok Sabha by-election. After the split of Janata Party, again efforts were made for bringing together non-Congress parties to fight the Congress. The Jana Sangh leaders who were ‘once bitten, twice shy’ were very cautious and felt they would never again enter into an alliance which could affect their identity. On October 31, 1984, a personal security guard of Indira Gandhi assassinated her, causing widespread anti-Sikh riots. The Jana Sangh and the Sangh karyakartas actively tried to foil all those efforts, which created animosity between Hindus and Sikhs. Then President of India Gyani Jail Singh administered the oath of Prime Ministership to Rajiv Gandhi on October 31. Lok Sabha elections were declared. The elections were

washed away in the sympathy wave of Smt. Gandhi. It was the first election for Bharatiya Janata Party and it could win only two seats.

A critical appraisal took place in the party. A working team was constituted under the leadership of Shri Krishna Lal Sharma, which recommended that 'Integral Humanism' should again be declared basic ideology of the party. Consequently, in the National Executive held in October 1985 at Gandhi Nagar, it was included in the party constitution. The resolve to make the BJP a cadre-based organisation was taken. In 1986, the responsibility of presidentship of the party came on Shri Lal Krishna Advani.

Shri Rajiv Gandhi was becoming very popular as he had an image of 'Mr. Clean'. The BJP seemed to be dragged on the sidelines of politics but it was not a reality. In 1987, Bofors scam came to light in which senior minister Shri VP Singh revolted. The image of 'Mr. Clean' was demolished.

In the Shahbano case, his minority vote-bank politics was exposed. The BJP activists organised huge public awakening programmes on this issue, and the common civil code was demanded again. In January 1988, the BJP demanded the resignation of Rajiv Gandhi and declaration of mid-term elections. Satyagrahas were held throughout the nation. On March 3, 1988, Shri Lal Krishna Advani was again elected president of the party. In August 1988, National Front was formed and NT Rama Rao became its president and VP Singh the convener. This was the birth of Janata Dal.

On September 25, 1989, BJP and the Shiv Sena alliance was formed. The election results were on expected lines. The Rajiv Gandhi Government was thrown out of power. In 1984, BJP had got two seats, but now its tally increased to 86. Along with Bofors issue, BJP focused on the slogan 'Justice for all, Appeasement of none' in these elections. Shri Lal Krishna Advani was elected to Lok Sabha for the first time.

In June 1989 at Palampur (Himachal Pradesh) National Executive, it was decided to support Shri Ram Janmabhoomi movement. It was a burning issue of cultural nationalism. It was a struggle between pseudo-secularism and real equal respect to every religion. The Ram Rath Yatra of Advani ji started from Somnath on the birth anniversary of Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya on September 25, and it was supposed to reach Ayodhya on October 30 to participate in the 'Kar Seva'. The Rath Yatra received unprecedented support from the people.

On October 23, the Rath Yatra was stopped in Samastipur in Bihar and Shri Advani ji was detained there for five weeks. Karseva was held on October 30 throwing away all the government prohibitions. Shri Chandrashekhar became the Prime Minister with outside support from Congress and he tried unsuccessfully, though honestly, to resolve the Ayodhya issue. Rajiv Gandhi withdrew Congress' support from his government within seven months. In the Uttar Pradesh state assembly elections, held in July 1991, BJP came out victorious. Pseudo-secularism was defeated. Shri Kalyan Singh became the Chief Minister. In the course of Lok Sabha elections, Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated and the Congress got sympathy votes. BJP's tally increased from 86 to 119.

Congress government was formed under the leadership of PV Narasimha Rao. Ram Mandir issue could not be resolved and during the Kar Seva of December 6, 1992, disputed structure was demolished by the Karsevaks.

In 1996, 1998 and 1999, three Lok Sabha elections were held in which BJP emerged as the largest single party. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee remained the Prime Minister of India first for 13 days, then for 13 months and after that for four and half years. It was not only BJP but the NDA rule. The NDA lost the 2004 Lok Sabha elections.

For ten years, the party played an active and constructive role as opposition. In 2014 under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, for the first time, full majority government of BJP was formed in the country, which is now rebuilding a glorious India with the declaration of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'. The BJP has also become the world's largest political party with 11 crore members under the leadership of BJP National President Shri Amit Shah.

Moraji Desai

Morarji Desai was the first leader of sovereign India not to represent the longruling Indian National Congress party. The son of a village teacher, Desai was educated at the University of Bombay (now the University of Mumbai) and in 1918 joined the provincial civil service of Bombay as a minor functionary. In 1930 he resigned to join Mohandas Gandhi's civil disobedience movement and spent almost 10 years in British jails during the struggle for independence. During the 1930s and '40s he alternated prison service with ministerial posts in the government of Bombay, rising to the chief ministerial post in 1952. He gained a reputation for administrative skill as well as for harshness.

In 1956 Desai was named commerce and industry minister in the Indian government, for which he worked in high capacities until 1963, when he resigned. He became deputy prime minister in 1967. In 1969 he again resigned to become chairman of the opposition to Indira Gandhi and the Congress Party. He was arrested in 1975 for his political activities and detained in solitary confinement until 1977, whereupon he became active in the Janata Party, a coalition of four smaller parties. That same year, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi unexpectedly held elections after a 19-month suspension of political processes, and Janata achieved a surprising and overwhelming victory. Desai was chosen to be prime minister as a compromise candidate among Janata's leaders. After two years of political tension, the Janata coalition began to unravel. Desai announced his resignation on July 15, 1979, after numerous defections from the coalition in Parliament, to avoid a vote of no confidence.

Shri Morarji Desai was born on February 29, 1896 in Bhadeli village, now in the Bulsar district of Gujarat. His father was a school teacher and a strict disciplinarian. From his childhood, young Morarji learnt from his father the value of hard work and truthfulness under all circumstances. He was educated St. Busar High School and passed

his matriculation examination. After graduating from the Wilson Civil Service of the then Bombay Province in 1918, he served as a Deputy Collector for twelve years.

In 1930, when India was in the midst of the freedom struggle launched by Mahatma Gandhi, Shri Desai, having lost his confidence in the British sense of justice, decided to resign from Government service and to plunge into the struggle. It was a hard decision to take but Shri Desai felt that 'when it was a question of the independence of the country, problems relating to family occupied a subordinate position'.

Shri Desai was imprisoned thrice during the freedom struggle. He became a Member of the All India Congress Committee in 1931 and was Secretary of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee until 1937.

When the first Congress Government assumed office in 1937 Shri Desai became Minister for Revenue, Agriculture, Forest and Co-operatives in the Ministry headed by Shri B.G. Kher in the then Bombay Province. The Congress Ministries went out of office in 1939 in protest against India's involvement in the World War without the consent of the people.

Shri Desai was detained in the individual Satyagraha launched by Mahatma Gandhi, released in October, 1941 and detained again in August, 1942 at the time of the Quit India Movement. He was released in 1945. After the elections to the State Assemblies in 1946, he became the Minister for Home and Revenue in Bombay. During his tenure, Shri Desai launched a number of far-reaching reforms in land revenue by providing security tenancy rights leading to the 'land to the tiller' proposition. In police administration, he pulled down the barrier between the people and the police, and the police administration was made more responsive to the needs of the people in the protection of life and property. In 1952, he became the Chief Minister of Bombay.

According to him, unless the poor and the under privileged living in villages and towns enjoy a decent standard of life, the talk of socialism will not have much meaning. Shri Desai gave concrete expression to his anxiety by enacting progressive legislations to ameliorate the hardships of peasants and tenants. In this, Shri Desai's Government was far ahead of any other State in the country. And what was more, he implemented the legislation with an unswerving sincerity earning wide reputation for his administration in Bombay.

After the reorganisation of the States, Shri Desai joined the Union Cabinet as Minister for Commerce and Industry on November 14, 1956. Later, he took the Finance portfolio on March 22, 1958.

Shri Desai translated into action what he had professed in matters of economic planning and fiscal administration. In order to meet the needs of defense and development, he raised large revenues, reduced wasteful expenditure and promoted austerity in Government expenditure on administration. He kept deficit financing very low by enforcing financial discipline. He brought curbs on extravagant living of the privileged section of society.

In 1963, he resigned from the Union Cabinet under the Kamraj Plan. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, who succeeded Pt. Nehru as Prime Minister, persuaded him to become Chairman of the Administrative Reforms Commission for restructuring the administrative system. His long and varied experience of public life stood him in good stead in his task.

In 1967, Shri Desai joined Smt. Indira Gandhi's cabinet as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in charge of Finance. In July, 1969, Smt. Gandhi took away the Finance portfolio from him. While Shri Desai conceded that the Prime Minister has the prerogative to change the portfolios of colleagues, he felt that his self-respect had been hurt as even the common courtesy of consulting him had not been shown by Smt. Gandhi. He, therefore, felt he had no alternative but to resign as Deputy Prime Minister of India.

When the Congress Party split in 1969, Shri Desai remained with the Organisation Congress. He continued to take a leading part in the opposition. He was re-elected to Parliament in 1971. In 1975, he went on an indefinite fast on the question of holding elections to the Gujarat Assembly which had been dissolved. As a result of his fast, elections were held in June, 1975. The Janata Front formed by the four opposition parties and Independents supported by it, secured an absolute majority in the new House. After the judgement of the Allahabad High Court declaring Smt. Gandhi's election to the Lok Sabha null and void, Shri Desai felt that in keeping with democratic principles, Smt. Gandhi should have submitted her resignation.

Shri Desai was arrested and detained on June 26, 1975, when Emergency was declared. He was kept in solitary confinement and was released on January 18, 1977, a little before the decision to hold elections to the Lok Sabha was announced. He campaigned vigorously throughout the length and breadth of the country and was largely instrumental in achieving the resounding victory of the Janata Party in the General Elections held in March, 1977 for the Sixth Lok Sabha. Shri Desai was himself selected to the Lok Sabha from the Surat Constituency in Gujarat. He was later unanimously elected as Leader of the Janata Party in Parliament and was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India on March 24, 1977.

Shri Desai and Gujraben were married in 1911. Of their five children, one daughter and a son are surviving.

As Prime Minister, Shri Desai was keen that the people of India must be helped to become fearless to an extent where even if the highest in the land commits a wrong, the humblest should be able to point it out to him. "No one, not even the Prime Minister", he was repeatedly said "should be above the law of the land".

For him, truth was an article of faith and not an expediency. He seldom allowed his principles to be subordinated to the exigencies of the situation. Even in the most trying circumstances, he stood by his convictions. As he himself observed, '**one should act in life according to truth and one's faith**'.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the main features of Indira Gandhi's First Ministry.
2. Discuss the administrative reforms introduced by Indira Gandhi.
3. Examine the causes and impact of the Indo-Pakistan War.
4. Analyse the significance of the creation of Bangladesh.
5. Explain the reasons for the declaration of the National Emergency, 1976.
6. Assess the effects of the Emergency on Indian democracy.
7. Describe the objectives of the Twenty Point Programme.
8. Evaluate Indira Gandhi's social and economic policies.
9. Discuss the formation and policies of the Janata Government.
10. Examine the role of Morarji Desai as Prime Minister.

UNIT - III

Second Ministry of Indira Gandhi – Domestic and Foreign Policy – Rajiv Gandhi's Rule – Panchayat Raj Operation Black Board - Development of Science and Technology - Foreign Policy.

Objectives

- To Indira Gandhi stressed unity and stability.
- To Her policies focused on security and regional relations.
- To Rajiv Gandhi promoted decentralisation and modernisation.
- To His foreign policy favoured peace and cooperation.

Second Ministry of Indira Gandhi

The second Indira Gandhi ministry was the council of ministers of the Government Of India headed by prime minister Indira Gandhi from 14 January 1980 until her assassination on 31 October 1984. it succeeded the short-lived Charan Singh Ministry and marked Gandhi's return to executive authority after the Indian National Congress (i)'s decisive victory in the January 1980 Lok Sabha elections, where the party captured 353 seats amid widespread dissatisfaction with the preceding Janata Party government's instability.

The ministry's composition included key figures such as Pranab Mukherjee as Finance Minister and P. V. Narasimha Rao in foreign affairs, reflecting a blend of loyalists and experienced administrators drawn primarily from the Congress ranks. During its tenure, the government prioritized economic recovery through inflation control, public investment in infrastructure, and agricultural incentives to build on prior productivity gains, though growth remained constrained by structural inefficiencies and fiscal pressures. Foreign policy maintained India's non-aligned stance with strengthened ties to the Soviet Union, while domestically, the administration grappled with regional agitations in Assam and escalating militancy in Punjab driven by demands for greater autonomy among Sikhs. A defining controversy arose from the Punjab crisis, where the central government's negotiations with separatist elements failed, leading to the entrenchment of militants led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar.^[7] In response, the ministry authorized Operation Blue Star, a June 1984 military assault to dislodge the armed groups, which inflicted heavy damage on the sacred site and resulted in hundreds of deaths, including civilians and pilgrims, exacerbating Sikh alienation. This operation directly precipitated Gandhi's assassination by her Sikh security personnel, Beant Singh and Satwant Singh, who cited retribution for the temple raid, underscoring the ministry's challenges in managing ethnic and religious tensions through coercive measures. The abrupt end to the ministry transitioned power to her son Rajiv Gandhi, amid immediate communal violence that claimed thousands of Sikh lives.

Background and Formation

1980 General Elections

The Lok Sabha was dissolved on 22 August 1979 by President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy at the advice of Prime Minister Charan Singh's minority government, which had lost its parliamentary majority and failed to prove confidence, necessitating fresh elections for the seventh Lok Sabha. Polling occurred in two phases on 3 January and 6 January 1980 across 529 constituencies, as elections were deferred in 12 Assam seats and one Meghalaya seat due to ethnic unrest and militancy. Voter turnout stood at 57.01 percent nationally, with males at 62.26 percent and females at 51.30 percent, reflecting a slight decline from the 1977 elections amid ongoing political instability. The Indian National Congress (Indira), led by Indira Gandhi, campaigned on themes of national unity, poverty alleviation, and critiquing the Janata Party's governance failures, including economic stagnation and coalition infighting that had fragmented the non-Congress alliance formed after the 1977 elections. Opposition parties, including the Janata Party (Secular), Bharatiya Lok Dal, and Communist Party of India (Marxist), suffered from disarray, with key figures like Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram splitting from the original Janata bloc, diluting anti-Congress votes. Results were declared on 10 January 1980, yielding a decisive victory for Congress (I), which captured 353 seats—over two-thirds of the elected house-reversing its 1977 rout of just 154 seats and enabling Indira Gandhi's return as prime minister.

Party	Seats Won	Vote Share (%)
Indian National Congress (Indira) [INC(I)]	35 3	42.69
Janata Party (Secular) [JNP(S)]	41	9.40
Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPM]	37	6.24
Janata Party [JNP]	31	19.00
Independents	14	N/A
Others (including regional parties like DMK, AIADMK)	53	Varies

The landslide reflected voter disillusionment with the Janata government's inability to sustain its 1977 anti-Emergency mandate, marked by policy reversals, fiscal deficits exceeding 7 percent of GDP in 1979, and leadership quarrels that led to three prime ministers in under three years.[4] Congress (I) improved its seat tally across northern and central states, regaining strongholds lost in 1977, while opposition fragmentation-evident in the Janata Party's split into factions securing only 72 seats combined-prevented any viable alternative.[10] This outcome, certified by the Election Commission of India, paved the way for the formation of a stable single-party majority government under Indira Gandhi.

Cabinet Swearing-In and Initial Composition

Indira Gandhi was sworn in as Prime Minister of India for the fourth time on January 14, 1980, by President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy at Rashtrapati Bhavan, following

the Congress (I) party's landslide victory in the January 1980 general elections. This event marked the formation of her government after a three-year absence from power, ending the instability of coalition politics under the Janata Party and its successors. The initial cabinet consisted of Gandhi herself and 14 ministers, totaling 15 members, in a deliberately compact structure intended for expansion as governance needs arose. The composition emphasized regional, caste, and communal diversity, incorporating Sikhs, Muslims, and members from lower castes alongside upper-caste Hindus, to project national unity. Key loyalists such as Pranab Mukherjee, appointed as Minister of Finance, were included, while prominent figures linked to the 1975-1977 Emergency, including Bansi Lal (former Defence Minister) and V. C. Shukla (former Information and Broadcasting Minister), were excluded to distance the new administration from past authoritarian perceptions. This inexperienced lineup, featuring many relatively junior or new Congress members, underscored Gandhi's intent to rebuild her authority through personal control and trusted aides rather than seasoned but potentially rivalrous veterans from prior terms. The ceremony, attended by dignitaries and broadcast widely, symbolized a return to strong central leadership amid economic challenges and regional agitations.

Governmental Structure and Key Personnel

Cabinet Ministers

The cabinet of the Second Indira Gandhi ministry, formed on 14 January 1980 following the Congress (I)'s victory in the general elections, comprised 19 members, making it one of the larger cabinets in post-independence India up to that point. Indira Gandhi retained oversight of multiple critical portfolios, including atomic energy and initially defence, while appointing trusted allies to key economic and security roles to ensure alignment with her policy priorities of economic stabilization and internal security. The composition emphasized continuity with experienced politicians from her first term, alongside regional representatives to balance caste and state influences within the party.[18] Portfolios were subject to reshuffles, such as the 1982 shift where Pranab Mukherjee took finance from R. Venkataraman, who moved to defence. Notable appointments included Giani Zail Singh as home minister to handle internal unrest, and P.V. Narasimha Rao for external affairs to manage foreign relations amid Cold War dynamics. The cabinet's structure supported Gandhi's centralized decision-making, with several ministers holding overlapping charges under the prime minister's office.

Minister	Primary Portfolio(s)	Key Tenure Period
Indira Gandhi	Prime Minister; Atomic Energy; Defence (initially); External Affairs (later)	14 Jan 1980 – 31 Oct 1984[18]
P.V. Narasimha Rao	External Affairs; Home Affairs (later)	14 Jan 1980 – 31 Oct 1984[18]
R. Venkataraman	Finance (initially); Defence (later)	14 Jan 1980 – 31 Oct 1984[18]
Pranab Mukherjee	Commerce (initially); Finance (later)	14 Jan 1980 – 31 Oct 1984[18]
Giani Zail Singh	Home Affairs	14 Jan 1980 – 22 Jun 1982[18]
Rao Birendra Singh	Agriculture	14 Jan 1980 – 31 Oct 1984[18]
A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury	Energy (initially); Railways (later)	14 Jan 1980 – 31 Oct 1984[18]
Kedar Pandey	Railways	12 Nov 1980 – 15 Jan 1982[18]

Other cabinet members included P.C. Sethi (defence in interim roles) and Swaran Singh (external affairs advisor), contributing to policy execution in industry and diplomacy. The ministry ended abruptly with Gandhi's assassination on 31 October 1984.

Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers

The Second Indira Gandhi ministry appointed Ministers of State to assist Cabinet Ministers or to hold independent charge of select departments, reflecting the government's strategy to broaden representation from Congress loyalists and regional leaders following the 1980 elections. Official Cabinet Secretariat records indicate that early appointments included Shri Z. R. Ansari, Shri Charanjit Chanana, and Shri Sita Ram Kesri as Ministers of State, with portfolios encompassing areas such as parliamentary affairs, tourism, and chemicals and fertilizers. Additional inductees like Shri Nihar Ranjan Laskar served in roles supporting external affairs and other administrative functions as of January 1980. Deputy Ministers were fewer in number and focused on specialized support, though comprehensive lists varied with reshuffles; for instance, initial compositions emphasized junior roles in planning and industry without prominent independent authority. The council expanded on 4 March 1980, adding four Ministers of State alongside a new Cabinet member, aiming to incorporate fresh parliamentary talent amid post-election consolidation. Subsequent reshuffles, including one in September 1982 that increased the total council size to 61 members, frequently adjusted these positions to address political dynamics and administrative needs, with at least seven major changes by mid-term. These appointments prioritized party insiders, often from states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, to maintain centralized control while distributing patronage.

Influence of Family and Loyalists

Sanjay Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's younger son, exerted substantial influence over the formation and early operations of the second ministry, leveraging his role in orchestrating the Congress party's victory in the January 1980 general elections through mobilization of youth wings and loyalist networks. He advocated for an inexperienced

cabinet composed largely of his personal allies and party workers who had remained steadfast during the 1977-1980 opposition period, sidelining senior figures like former Defense Minister Jagjivan Ram to consolidate control and ensure ideological alignment with aggressive policy implementation. This placement of Sanjay-backed individuals, such as rising Congress organizers, facilitated rapid execution of directives on economic revival and internal security, though it drew criticism for prioritizing loyalty over administrative expertise. Sanjay's death in an aircraft accident on June 23, 1980, abruptly curtailed his direct involvement, creating a power vacuum that diminished the clout of his immediate loyalists within the ministry while prompting a recalibration of inner-circle dynamics. Despite this, remnants of his network persisted in key portfolios, influencing decisions on youth mobilization and party discipline until mid-term reshuffles diluted their dominance. In the post-Sanjay phase, R.K. Dhawan, Indira Gandhi's long-serving personal secretary since the 1960s, emerged as a central loyalist figure, acting as gatekeeper to her access and intermediary for communications with cabinet ministers and bureaucrats. Dhawan's influence peaked in the early 1980s, as he relayed prime ministerial instructions—often on sensitive matters like regional agitations and security responses—directly to officials, bypassing formal channels and ensuring alignment with her preferences amid growing isolation from broader party consultations. His role extended to advising on personnel decisions, including the retention or marginalization of Sanjay-era holdovers, though his unelected status amplified perceptions of informal power concentration.[33] Rajiv Gandhi, the elder son and an airline pilot until 1980, assumed an informal advisory capacity toward the ministry's later years, providing counsel on technological and modernization issues while being groomed as a successor amid Indira's health concerns and political uncertainties. Though not holding an official position until after her 1984 assassination, Rajiv's proximity influenced subtle shifts in policy discourse, particularly on aviation and youth-oriented reforms, reflecting a dynastic continuity in influence without overt cabinet intrusion. This familial advisory dynamic underscored the ministry's reliance on personal trust networks over institutional norms, contributing to both decisiveness and vulnerability to internal rifts.

Domestic Policies and Economic Management

Economic Stabilization Measures

Upon assuming office in January 1980, Indira Gandhi's government inherited an economy strained by high inflation averaging 18.2% during the preceding Charan Singh interregnum in 1979, exacerbated by the second oil shock and poor harvests. To stabilize prices, the administration implemented fiscal and monetary restraints, including hikes in indirect taxes such as excise and customs duties to bolster revenue, alongside selective cuts to subsidies like those in the public distribution system and food-for-work programs by 1982. These measures, combined with improved agricultural output from favorable monsoons, reduced annual inflation to approximately 6.5% by Gandhi's final year in office in 1984, though rates fluctuated yearly (11.4% in 1980, 13.1% in 1981,

7.9% in 1982, and 11.9% in 1983). Expansion of the Public Distribution System to rural areas further buffered essential commodity prices, prioritizing supply-side interventions over expansive redistribution. Balance-of-payments pressures from surging oil import costs prompted negotiations for external financing, culminating in a \$5.8 billion Extended Fund Facility loan from the International Monetary Fund approved on November 9, 1981—the largest such loan to a developing country at the time. Unlike more stringent programs elsewhere, this agreement imposed minimal austerity, allowing India to maintain growth-oriented policies without deep public expenditure cuts; conditions emphasized private sector encouragement, which aligned with the government's pro-business pivot. Finance Minister R. Venkataraman's 1980-81 budget revisions addressed a projected deficit of Rs. 1,445 crore through expenditure rationalization and revenue enhancements, averting immediate fiscal collapse. Import liberalization in 1981 eased industrial inputs but was partially reversed by 1983 amid exporter lobbying, reflecting pragmatic adjustments rather than wholesale reform. The government also curbed the Janata-era Sixth Five-Year Plan and launched a revised version for 1980-85, emphasizing employment generation and moderate growth over rigid planning, with public investment redirected toward efficiency in core sectors. Industrial stabilization involved the 1980 Statement on Industrial Policy, which diluted the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act to ease licensing for large firms in areas like chemicals and pharmaceuticals, spurring private corporate investment to Rs. 809 crore in capital issuance by 1983-84. These steps marked a departure from 1970s populism, fostering GDP growth averaging 5.8% in the early 1980s while containing macroeconomic volatility, though persistent deficits and export lags sowed seeds for later imbalances.

Industrial and Agricultural Policies

The Second Indira Gandhi ministry issued the Industrial Policy Statement in July 1980, which elevated maximizing production as the primary objective, marking a pragmatic shift from earlier redistribution-focused approaches while retaining a socialist framework with public sector dominance. This policy diluted provisions of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act, exempting large firms from licensing requirements in sectors such as chemicals, drugs, ceramics, and cement to boost capacity utilization and efficiency. It also encouraged private sector participation in power generation and limited new public sector investments, redirecting resources toward rehabilitating existing enterprises through price revisions and operational improvements, amid stagnant industrial growth rates averaging below 5% in the prior decade. Agricultural policies under the ministry emphasized productivity enhancement and rural poverty alleviation, aligned with the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-1985), which aimed for 4.0% annual growth in foodgrains production through expanded use of high-yielding variety (HYV) seeds, chemical fertilizers, groundwater irrigation, and post-harvest technology improvements. The plan prioritized agrarian structure reforms to optimize

irrigation and technology adoption, targeting a 3.9% rise in gross value added from agriculture, though actual growth averaged around that figure amid variable monsoons and input subsidy dependencies. In October 1980, the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was extended nationwide, providing subsidies and credit for income-generating assets like livestock and tools to over 300,000 rural poor households annually, with mandates for 50% allocation to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and 40% to women, though implementation faced challenges from corruption and uneven asset productivity. By 1982, subsidies for the public distribution system and food-for-work schemes were curtailed to prioritize fiscal restraint, reflecting a reduced emphasis on rural redistribution in favor of production incentives.

Social Welfare Programs

The second Indira Gandhi ministry prioritized rural poverty alleviation as a core component of its social welfare agenda, building on earlier initiatives through the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980–1985), which allocated substantial resources to anti-poverty measures amid persistent rural underemployment and inequality. A flagship effort was the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), launched nationwide on 2 October 1980, which aimed to lift the poorest rural households above the poverty line by subsidizing income-generating assets such as livestock, tools, and small enterprises, combined with bank loans.[48][49] The program targeted families below the poverty line, offering subsidies covering up to 50% of project costs for Scheduled Castes and Tribes (higher than for others) and integrating supplementary schemes like the Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM, initiated in 1979 but expanded under IRDP). By 1983–1984, IRDP had assisted over 12 million beneficiary families across 3,156 blocks, though implementation challenges included uneven asset quality and elite capture at the local level. Complementing IRDP, the ministry revived and restructured the Twenty-Point Programme on 15 January 1982, originally introduced in 1975, to encompass broader welfare goals such as land reforms, minimum wage enforcement, housing for the landless, and enhanced rural electrification. The revised programme emphasized monitoring through district-level committees and integrated social objectives like food security, education access, and Scheduled Caste welfare, with specific targets for eradicating bonded labor and providing drinking water to rural habitations. Annual progress reports tracked metrics, including the distribution of over 1.5 million house sites to landless laborers by 1983. Additional initiatives included the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), introduced in 1980 under the Sixth Plan, which focused on creating wage-employment opportunities through labor-intensive works like road construction and soil conservation in backward districts, benefiting an estimated 600,000 families annually by fiscal year 1983–1984. These efforts reflected a centralized approach to welfare distribution, often channeled through Congress party networks, though empirical evaluations later highlighted modest impacts on poverty reduction due to leakages and insufficient targeting.

Regional Conflicts and Security Challenges

Assam Agitation Response

The Assam Agitation, a mass movement launched in 1979 by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and other indigenous groups, sought to identify and deport illegal immigrants from Bangladesh who had entered after January 1, 1961, amid fears of demographic swamping in the state's indigenous Assamese population. During Indira Gandhi's second ministry from 1980 onward, the central government inherited this escalating crisis, characterized by blockades, strikes, and economic disruption in Assam's oil-rich regions, costing India an estimated \$5 million daily in lost production by mid-1980. Gandhi's administration prioritized national elections and state assembly polls over agitators' demands to defer voting until voter lists were cleansed, viewing the movement as a challenge to federal authority rather than a core security threat from unchecked infiltration. Early responses included sporadic negotiations and security deployments, but yielded no breakthroughs; in April 1980, Gandhi visited Guwahati for talks with Assamese leaders, proposing a phased detection of illegal entrants, only for AASU to reject it as insufficiently stringent on the 1961 cutoff. By May 1980, she publicly refused to release agitators arrested under prior regimes, signaling a hardline stance against what her government framed as obstructionism. The central approach emphasized containing unrest through President's Rule, imposed intermittently, and army interventions, while avoiding mass deportations that might strain relations with Bangladesh or alienate immigrant-heavy constituencies supportive of Congress. Critics, including Assamese nationalists, accused the government of exploiting the immigrant vote—predominantly Bengali Muslims—for electoral gains, as evidenced by Gandhi's targeted campaigning in such areas ahead of the 1983 state polls. Tensions peaked with the February 1983 Assam assembly elections, which the agitators boycotted and urged postponement for, citing unverified voter rolls swollen by an estimated 4-5 million illegal entrants; turnout plummeted to under 33% amid widespread intimidation. On February 18, during this polling, the Nellie massacre unfolded in Nagaon district, where Tiwa tribals and other Assamese groups killed approximately 2,191 Bengali Muslims (official toll; unofficial estimates exceed 3,000) suspected as post-1961 infiltrators, in a spasm of retaliatory violence triggered by fears of electoral manipulation and land encroachment. Gandhi's immediate response involved deploying three army battalions to quell the unrest, displacing 30,000 refugees, but she attributed the killings squarely to "agitators" inciting communal hatred, deflecting central culpability despite prior intelligence alerts and the decision to proceed with elections. No high-level inquiry was swiftly launched, and the government later suppressed the 1984 Tiwari Commission report probing Nellie, prioritizing political stability over accountability. In October 1983, Parliament under Gandhi enacted the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act (IMDT), shifting the burden of proof to accusers to demonstrate entrants' illegality post-1971 (a later cutoff than demanded), with tribunals favoring reverse onus and limited

deportations-only 10 executed by 2005 despite millions suspected. Intended to streamline detection, the law was decried by agitators and later struck down by India's Supreme Court in 2005 as diluting constitutional safeguards against foreign nationals, reflecting the ministry's preference for bureaucratic hurdles over aggressive enforcement. Tripartite talks with AASU persisted into 1984 without accord, as Gandhi's death in October halted progress; substantive compromise, including the 1961 cutoff, emerged only under successor Rajiv Gandhi in the 1985 Assam Accord. This handling exacerbated ethnic fissures, underscoring a causal disconnect between federal inaction on infiltration—rooted in post-Partition migrations accelerated by Bangladesh's 1971 war—and indigenous grievances over resource dilution in Assam's 26% indigenous share of a 20-million population by 1981.

Escalation of Punjab Insurgency

The Shiromani Akali Dal, Punjab's primary Sikh political party, renewed its agitation in 1980 following Indira Gandhi's electoral victory, pressing for fulfillment of the 1973 Anandpur Sahib Resolution's core demands: enhanced state autonomy within a federal framework, exclusive Punjabi-speaking areas for Punjab, transfer of Chandigarh as the state capital, reallocation of river waters from Punjab's Ravi-Beas systems to favor Punjab's irrigation needs, and safeguards for Sikh religious institutions. These grievances stemmed from perceived central encroachments on Punjab's linguistic, economic, and cultural interests post-1966 state reorganization, exacerbating Sikh perceptions of marginalization despite Punjab's contributions to India's food security via the Green Revolution. The central government's partial concessions, such as interim water-sharing formulas, failed to satisfy Akali leaders, who viewed them as dilatory tactics amid ongoing central control over Punjab's finances and security.[69] Parallel to Akali efforts, the Congress party leadership, including Sanjay Gandhi and Punjab Chief Minister Darbara Singh, strategically bolstered Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale—a Damdami Taksal preacher radicalized after 1978 clashes with Nirankaris—to fragment the Sikh vote and undermine Akali unity ahead of elections. This backfired as Bhindranwale, initially aligned against moderate Akalis, evolved into a militant advocate for Sikh sovereignty, interpreting Anandpur demands through a Khalistan lens while amassing arms and followers. His 1981 arrest after militants assassinated Hindu newspaper editor Lala Jagat Narain-blamed on pro-Khalistan rhetoric-sparked riots, leading to his release under pressure, which emboldened extremists. By mid-1982, Bhindranwale relocated to the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar, launching the Dharam Yudh Morcha on August 4 to enforce Anandpur Sahib through civil disobedience, resulting in over 20,000 arrests and his own detention alongside Akali figures, further polarizing Punjab. Militant violence surged from sporadic incidents in 1980–1981 to coordinated attacks by 1983, with Babbar Khalsa and other groups targeting police, Hindus, and infrastructure to coerce secessionist goals. Notable escalations included the October 5, 1983, Dhillian bus massacre, where 6 Hindu

passengers were singled out and killed, signaling a shift toward communal terror, and repeated ambushes on security convoys, killing dozens of personnel. Security forces' retaliatory crackdowns, including cordon-and-search operations fueled cycles of reprisals, as militants used rural hideouts and urban sympathizers for smuggling arms from Pakistan, amplifying insurgent capabilities. The government's dismissal of the Akali-led Punjab assembly and imposition of President's rule on October 7, 1983-citing breakdown of law and order-centralized authority under the governor but failed to stem the tide, as Bhindranwale fortified the Akal Takht within the Golden Temple, declaring it a base for "self-defense" against perceived state aggression. This administrative override, while constitutionally enabled, alienated moderates and hardened militant resolve, transforming political dissent into armed insurgency by early 1984.

Operation Blue Star

Operation Blue Star was a military operation conducted by the Indian Army from June 3 to June 8, 1984, ordered by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to dislodge Sikh militants led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale from the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) complex in Amritsar, Punjab. The militants, associated with the Damdami Taksal, had fortified the site with heavy weaponry including machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, and anti-tank missiles, using it as a base for insurgency activities amid escalating demands for Khalistan, a proposed Sikh separatist state. Bhindranwale, initially supported by Congress elements to undermine the moderate Akali Dal party, had grown into a militant figure by the early 1980s, rejecting negotiations and declaring a "holy war" against perceived anti-Sikh policies. The decision followed failed talks with Akali Dal leaders and intelligence reports of imminent militant attacks on security forces, with Gandhi authorizing the army after abortive non-military options like sealing the complex. Commanded by Lieutenant General Kuldip Singh Brar of the Western Command's 9th Infantry Division, the operation involved over 100,000 troops surrounding Punjab under a communications blackout and curfew imposed on June 2, restricting movement to prevent reinforcements. Initial probes on June 3-4 used paramilitary forces, but heavy resistance necessitated full army assault on June 5, employing artillery, tanks, and helicopters to breach fortified positions in the Akal Takht and parikarma. Bhindranwale and key aides, including former Major General Shabeg Singh, were killed during the fighting on June 6. Official Indian government figures reported 83 army personnel killed and 249 wounded, with 492 militants and civilians killed inside the complex, 1,592 captured, and significant arms recovered including 33 AK-47 rifles and hundreds of grenades.^[76] Independent estimates, however, suggest higher civilian tolls ranging from 1,200 to over 5,000, attributing excess deaths to pilgrims trapped during the Sikh holy month of Guru Arjan Dev's martyrdom anniversary and crossfire in densely populated areas. The use of Vijayanta tanks to shell the Akal Takht caused structural damage, viewed by Sikhs as desecration of their holiest shrine, while army accounts emphasize militants' refusal to

allow civilian evacuation and their firing from civilian cover. Controversies centered on the operation's timing, which coincided with peak pilgrimage, potentially maximizing casualties, and allegations of excessive force despite the militants' entrenchment; Sikh advocacy groups claim deliberate targeting of non-combatants, though military analyses highlight the tactical necessity against heavily armed holdouts who had rejected surrender ultimatums. The action succeeded in clearing the complex but alienated large segments of the Sikh community, fueling radicalization and contributing to subsequent violence, including Gandhi's assassination by Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984. Post-operation inquiries, such as the Marwah Commission, were limited in scope and criticized for opacity, underscoring challenges in verifying casualty figures amid polarized narratives from government and separatist sources.

Foreign Relations

Ties with Soviet Union and Non-Alignment

The second Indira Gandhi ministry perpetuated the strategic partnership with the Soviet Union forged during her first term, emphasizing military, economic, and diplomatic cooperation amid geopolitical tensions. The USSR continued as India's primary arms supplier, providing advanced weaponry such as MiG-21 and MiG-23 aircraft, which constituted the bulk of India's defense imports to counterbalance threats from Pakistan and China. Economic ties were bolstered through long-term trade agreements; following Gandhi's re-election, a pact aimed to double bilateral trade volume over 1981–1985, reaching approximately US\$3 billion by the early 1980s, with the Soviets offering discounted oil supplies critical for India's energy needs during global price shocks. In December 1980, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev visited New Delhi, underscoring mutual interests in regional stability and highlighting the advantages of Soviet arms procurement over Western alternatives. Gandhi's September 1982 state visit to Moscow further solidified these relations, resulting in offers for Soviet assistance in constructing a 1,000 MW nuclear power station and expanded technical cooperation, while joint statements reaffirmed opposition to "imperialism" and support for disarmament. This alignment was pragmatic, rooted in the Soviet Union's reliable support during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War and its veto power in the UN Security Council against resolutions hostile to India, contrasting with U.S. sanctions imposed after India's 1974 nuclear test. However, the partnership faced strains over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979; India refrained from outright condemnation, viewing it as an internal matter and resisting U.S. pressure for alignment, though Gandhi privately urged Soviet restraint to avoid alienating Muslim-majority non-aligned states. India's adherence to non-alignment during this period was outwardly maintained through leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), yet the Soviet tilt invited scrutiny for compromising equidistance between superpowers. Gandhi hosted the 7th NAM Summit in New Delhi from March 7 to 12, 1983, attended by over 100 nations, where the final declaration demanded the "timely withdrawal of foreign troops"

from Afghanistan without naming the USSR, alongside calls for Palestinian self-determination, an end to apartheid, and cessation of the Iran-Iraq War. This stance reflected India's prioritization of Third World solidarity and nuclear disarmament advocacy, but Western observers and some NAM members criticized it as tacit endorsement of Soviet actions, arguing that heavy reliance on Moscow for 70-80% of military hardware undermined non-alignment's core principle of independence. Gandhi defended the policy as realistic autonomy, rejecting binary Cold War choices, though declassified assessments note the USSR's leverage grew during her second term due to India's economic vulnerabilities and the Janata government's prior pivot toward the West.

Relations with Pakistan and Neighbors

During her second term, Indira Gandhi pursued diplomatic engagement with Pakistan despite deep-seated mistrust stemming from the 1971 war and General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq's military rule since 1977. In 1980, Gandhi met Zia informally in Salisbury (now Harare) during Zimbabwe's independence celebrations, where discussions touched on regional stability amid the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, with Gandhi urging Pakistan to collaborate on a collective South Asian response rather than aligning solely with the United States. Further efforts culminated in Zia's official visit to New Delhi on October 31, 1982, the first by a Pakistani head of state in over a decade; the leaders held talks emphasizing peace as a "fundamental objective" and established a bilateral commission to promote friendly relations, which convened once in June 1983. However, these initiatives faltered amid escalating accusations: India charged Pakistan with covertly aiding Sikh separatists in Punjab through training and arms, while Pakistan alleged Indian interference in its affairs and expressed alarm over India's nuclear capabilities. By mid-1984, mutual suspicions over nuclear proliferation and border incidents prompted India to suspend nonaggression pact negotiations initiated post-1982 summit, heightening tensions to levels unseen since the 1970s. Gandhi's government viewed Zia's Islamization policies and U.S. alliance as threats to India's regional security, reinforcing a policy of vigilance rather than détente. Relations with Bangladesh improved after the March 1982 coup that ousted President Abdus Sattar and installed General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, whose regime India promptly recognized and sought to bolster through economic aid and border management talks, contrasting with the cooler ties under Ziaur Rahman post-1975. Gandhi's administration addressed lingering issues like the 1975 Farakka Barrage water-sharing dispute via ongoing dialogues, while leveraging historical goodwill from India's 1971 military intervention that facilitated Bangladesh's independence. Ties with Sri Lanka grew strained amid the island's escalating ethnic conflict between Sinhalese majorities and Tamil minorities. Following the July 1983 Black July pogroms that killed thousands of Tamils and displaced over 100,000, India hosted refugees in Tamil Nadu and provided humanitarian aid but rejected calls for direct intervention despite pressure from southern Indian states. Gandhi pressed British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1983 to cease military

supplies to Sri Lanka's government under J.R. Jayewardene, citing risks of fueling the violence, while maintaining diplomatic channels to mediate without committing troops-a stance that preserved non-alignment but drew criticism for perceived inaction. With smaller Himalayan neighbors, Bhutan remained firmly aligned under the 1949 treaty framework, receiving Indian economic and military assistance that reinforced its buffer role against China, with no major frictions reported. Nepal, however, saw rising tensions post-1980 as King Birendra's government pursued arms deals with China and the U.S., prompting India to impose a selective trade blockade in 1982 over transit treaty disputes, reflecting Gandhi's assertive stance against perceived encirclement threats.

Controversies, Criticisms, and Authoritarian Tendencies

Corruption Scandals and Patronage

The second Indira Gandhi ministry encountered multiple allegations of corruption, particularly involving the misuse of discretionary powers by state-level Congress leaders aligned with the central government. A prominent case was the cement allocation scandal in Maharashtra, where Chief Minister A.R. Antulay, a close Indira Gandhi loyalist, orchestrated the diversion of cement quotas-intended for public housing and infrastructure-to private builders in exchange for donations totaling around 60 million to trusts he controlled, including the Indira Gandhi Pratibha Pratisthan. The Bombay High Court ruled on January 12, 1982, that Antulay's actions constituted illegal exactions and abuse of office, prompting his resignation the following day amid pressure from within the Congress party. Despite the court's findings, Antulay received political rehabilitation later, highlighting patterns of leniency toward party insiders. Patronage networks flourished under the ministry, as Indira Gandhi prioritized loyalty over merit in appointments, often shielding allies from accountability to maintain control over the Congress apparatus and state governments. Critics, including opposition figures and some within the party, accused her of fostering a culture where ministers and bureaucrats advanced through personal allegiance rather than performance, leading to inefficiencies and graft in sectors like licensing and resource allocation. This approach extended to family influences, with Sanjay Gandhi's pre-1980 associates retaining sway early in the term despite his death on June 23, 1980, and the promotion of sycophants in youth wings and administrative roles. Such practices exacerbated perceptions of systemic corruption, undermining public trust and contributing to economic distortions, as resources were funneled to favored entities rather than merit-based distribution. Empirical assessments from the period noted that these dynamics intensified rent-seeking behaviors, with discretionary controls enabling kickbacks estimated in the hundreds of millions across state-controlled quotas.

Centralization of Power and Democratic Erosion

Upon assuming office following the January 1980 general elections, Indira Gandhi's central government invoked Article 356 of the Constitution to impose President's Rule in nine opposition-led states on February 17, 1980, dismissing their

elected assemblies and governments. The affected states included Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh, all governed by non-Congress parties such as Janata Party and Lok Dal formations. This mass action, executed within weeks of the national mandate, was framed as a response to the prior Janata government's 1977 dismissals of Congress-ruled states but effectively centralized administrative control under the Union, bypassing state-level democratic processes and enabling fresh elections that favored Congress(I). Throughout the 1980-1984 term, this approach persisted as a mechanism for consolidating executive authority, with Article 356 invoked repeatedly to topple or preempt opposition administrations, even those retaining legislative majorities. Over her cumulative 16 years in power, Gandhi's governments accounted for approximately 50 such impositions, far exceeding predecessors and establishing a precedent for treating federalism as subordinate to national executive priorities. Notable second-term instances included the 1984 dismissal of the Telugu Desam Party government in Andhra Pradesh under N. T. Rama Rao, despite its electoral viability, underscoring the provision's deployment as a political instrument rather than a safeguard against constitutional breakdowns. Such interventions eroded state autonomy, fostering dependency on Delhi and weakening institutional checks within India's federal structure. Proposals to restructure the Constitution toward a presidential system further highlighted intentions to deepen centralization, sidelining parliamentary and judicial oversight. In April 1984, senior minister Vasant Sathe publicly advocated shifting to a directly elected executive presidency, arguing it would streamline governance amid perceived legislative gridlock. Gandhi reportedly contemplated resigning as prime minister to assume the presidency in 1982, aiming to "shock" the Congress party into alignment, though this did not materialize; instead, loyalist Zail Singh was appointed president. These efforts built on residual effects of the 1976 Forty-second Amendment, which had expanded executive powers and curtailed judicial review-provisions partially retained post-1977—contributing to a pattern of executive dominance that critics viewed as diminishing democratic pluralism. The combined reliance on gubernatorial discretion and constitutional levers prioritized partisan consolidation over balanced federal power-sharing, marking a phase of institutional strain.

Punjab Policy and Sikh Alienation

The Shiromani Akali Dal's Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973 outlined key Sikh demands, including decentralization of power to limit the central government's role to defense, foreign affairs, currency, and communications; the transfer of Chandigarh solely to Punjab as its capital; equitable distribution of Ravi-Beas river waters to prevent diversion to non-basin states like Haryana; and safeguards for Sikh representation in the military and recognition of Sikhism as distinct from Hinduism. The central government under Indira Gandhi rejected these as undermining federal unity, viewing the autonomy provisions as akin to secessionist rhetoric despite the resolution's explicit affirmation of Punjab's integral place within India. This stance perpetuated grievances

rooted in post-1966 Punjab reorganization, where Sikhs perceived economic disadvantages from water-sharing pacts-such as the 1976 Emergency-era allocation of 3.5 million acre-feet annually to Haryana without Punjab's consent-and incomplete fulfillment of Chandigarh's transfer post-1966 linguistic state formation. Following Indira Gandhi's 1980 electoral victory, her ministry adopted a divide-and-rule approach toward Punjab politics, installing Congress loyalist Darbara Singh as chief minister while covertly backing Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale a Damdami Taksal leader-to erode Akali Dal influence among rural Sikhs. Bhindranwale, initially promoted by Sanjay Gandhi's networks to counter moderate Akalis, gained prominence by framing himself as a defender against central encroachments and Hindu-majority dominance, amassing followers through fiery sermons on Sikh identity and perceived slights like underrepresentation in Punjab's police force (where Sikhs comprised only about 15-20% despite being the state's majority). This patronage backfired as Bhindranwale's rhetoric radicalized, blending religious revivalism with calls for Khalistan-a sovereign Sikh state-implicitly challenging the Anandpur framework's federalism. Empirical data on violence shows targeted killings rising from fewer than 20 civilian deaths in 1980 to over 100 by 1982, often attributed to Bhindranwale-aligned groups like the Dal Khalsa, fostering mutual distrust between Sikhs and the center. The Dharam Yudh Morcha, launched on August 4, 1982, by the Akali Dal in coordination with Bhindranwale, escalated tensions through non-violent satyagraha at gurdwaras to demand Anandpur implementation, leading to over 21,000 arrests in the first 40 days alone and Bhindranwale's relocation to the Golden Temple complex as a protest base. Indira Gandhi's response combined negotiations-such as partial concessions on water via the 1982 Rajiv-Longowal talks groundwork-with security crackdowns, including blackouts in Punjab and media censorship, which alienated moderates by equating legitimate agitation with militancy. Incidents like the October 5, 1983, train burning near Dhillian, killing 38 Hindus, prompted the dismissal of the Darbara Singh government and imposition of President's rule on October 6, 1983, under Article 356, suspending the state assembly and centralizing control amid 155 deaths that month. This policy arc deepened Sikh alienation by prioritizing short-term political containment over addressing causal factors like resource inequities-Punjab contributed 60-70% of India's wheat but received minimal irrigation reciprocity-and fostering a narrative of existential threat, as militants armed the Akal Takht while the army prepared for assault. Sources sympathetic to the Akali perspective emphasize genuine federal grievances, while government-aligned accounts highlight separatist violence; however, the failure to devolve powers empirically correlated with militancy's surge, from sporadic incidents in 1981 to fortified insurgent networks by 1984, eroding trust in Delhi's commitments. By mid-1984, over 300 security personnel and civilians had died in Punjab-related violence, underscoring how unheeded demands transmuted into widespread radicalization.

Conclusion of the Term

Assassination of Indira Gandhi

On October 31, 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated at her official residence in Safdarjung Road, New Delhi, as she walked approximately 15 meters from her home to her adjacent office building for an interview with Peter Ustinov. The attack occurred around 9:20 a.m., when two of her Sikh bodyguards, Constable Beant Singh and Constable Satwant Singh, suddenly opened fire on her without warning.[9] Beant Singh fired three shots from his .38 caliber revolver into her abdomen, after which Satwant Singh emptied his Sterling submachine gun, firing approximately 30 rounds into her body, resulting in 33 entry wounds. Beant Singh dropped his weapon and raised his hands in surrender, stating to nearby guards, "I have done what I had to do; you can now shoot me," before being shot dead in the ensuing scuffle by another bodyguard, Tata Ram Krishna. Satwant Singh continued firing until subdued and seriously wounded by gunfire from other security personnel, including Sub-Inspector P. C. Parakh; he survived long enough to be tried, convicted of murder in 1986, and executed by hanging on January 6, 1989.[9] Gandhi was rushed to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), where she was declared dead at 2:23 p.m. after emergency surgery failed to save her from massive blood loss and organ damage. The assassins acted out of revenge for Operation Blue Star, the June 1984 Indian Army assault on the Golden Temple in Amritsar to dislodge Sikh militants led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, which had resulted in hundreds of deaths and desecration of the holiest Sikh site, galvanizing resentment among some Sikhs. Despite intelligence warnings of heightened risks to her life from Sikh extremists following the operation, Gandhi refused to replace her Sikh bodyguards, insisting they were loyal and overruling a proposed transfer of Beant Singh specifically, remarking that Sikhs were "my own people" and her protectors like family. Subsequent investigations, including the 1989 Thakkar Commission report, highlighted systemic security lapses, indicting 22 officials—including intelligence chiefs and police commissioners—for "apathy, indecision, and red-tapism" that could have been averted with proper vigilance, though no broader conspiracy was conclusively proven beyond the direct perpetrators. The commission noted suspicions of facilitation by Gandhi's aide R. K. Dhawan, later cleared by police, and potential indirect foreign assistance to the assassins from an unnamed power (hinted as Pakistan), but emphasized the core failure lay in ignoring post-Blue Star threats.

Immediate Political Aftermath

Rajiv Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's elder son and a relatively inexperienced politician who had entered Parliament only in 1981, was unanimously elected leader of the Indian National Congress parliamentary party and sworn in as Prime Minister on October 31, 1984, mere hours after his mother's assassination. This swift transition ensured continuity of Congress rule without immediate instability at the national level, though it thrust Rajiv into leadership amid national mourning and heightened security concerns. In the days

following the assassination, widespread anti-Sikh violence erupted across India, particularly in Delhi, where organized mobs targeted Sikh communities in what has been described as pogroms rather than spontaneous riots. From October 31 to November 3, 1984, an estimated 2,146 Sikhs were killed in Delhi alone, according to a statement by the Union Home Minister in the Rajya Sabha, with total deaths nationwide exceeding 3,000; properties were systematically looted and burned, and reports indicated involvement of local Congress party workers and leaders in inciting or participating in the attacks. The interim government's response was criticized for delays in deploying security forces, exacerbating the death toll and deepening Sikh alienation, though politically, the violence fueled a sympathy wave for the Gandhi family and Congress, portraying the party as a victim of Sikh extremism linked to Operation Blue Star. Elections to the 8th Lok Sabha were advanced and held on December 24, 27, and 28, 1984, capitalizing on the national grief and anti-Sikh sentiment to deliver Congress (I) a landslide victory, securing 414 out of 514 contested seats—a two-thirds majority. Rajiv Gandhi's campaign emphasized modernization, youth, and anti-corruption rhetoric, but analysts attribute much of the win to the "sympathy factor" post-assassination rather than policy substance, with opposition disarray and the riots' aftermath suppressing anti-Congress mobilization. This electoral triumph solidified Rajiv's mandate, enabling his first ministry to assume office on December 31, 1984, but it also sowed seeds for future Sikh distrust and inquiries into the riots' orchestration.

Legacy and Assessments

Claimed Achievements

The second Indira Gandhi ministry (1980–1984) highlighted economic stabilization following the disruptions of the prior Janata Party interregnum, with government reports emphasizing controlled inflation averaging 6.5% annually from 1981–1982 to 1985–1986, the lowest sustained rate since systematic tracking began in the 1950s. Supporters attributed this to pragmatic monetary policies and a pro-business attitudinal shift in 1980 that favored private enterprise while maintaining state oversight, laying groundwork for accelerated growth. Real GDP growth averaged approximately 5.5% per year over the term, with rates of 6.7% in 1980, 6.0% in 1981, 3.5% in 1982, 7.3% in 1983, and 3.8% in 1984, exceeding the stagnant 3–4% "Hindu rate" of prior decades and credited to industrial expansion and agricultural productivity gains from prior Green Revolution investments. Anti-poverty initiatives formed a core claim, including the revival and 1982 revision of the Twenty-Point Programme, which targeted land reforms, rural housing, employment generation, and access to clean water, irrigation, and education to combat inequality and boost self-reliance. The government touted the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), expanded during this period, for providing subsidies and credit to over 10 million rural households by 1984 to foster income-generating assets like livestock and small enterprises, alongside the launch of the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) in 1980 to guarantee work for landless

laborers. These were presented as fulfilling the "Garibi Hatao" (Eradicate Poverty) mandate, with official data claiming measurable reductions in rural underemployment through targeted subsidies and banking outreach that doubled national savings rates from 10% in the 1970s to 20% in the 1980s via expanded rural credit access.[128] In foreign policy, the ministry claimed bolstering non-alignment through hosting the 1983 Non-Aligned Movement summit in New Delhi, which reinforced India's global stature and secured developmental aid commitments amid Cold War tensions. Domestically, achievements were linked to social justice measures, such as enhanced food security via public distribution systems and agricultural output growth supporting self-sufficiency, with proponents arguing these fostered equitable development despite fiscal constraints.

Empirical Critiques and Long-Term Consequences

The economic policies of the Second Indira Gandhi ministry sustained a state-dominated model characterized by high public investment and regulatory controls, yet empirical data reveal limited productivity gains and mounting macroeconomic imbalances. Real GDP growth averaged approximately 5.5% annually from 1980 to 1984, with yearly rates of 6.7% in 1980, 6.0% in 1981, 3.5% in 1982, 7.3% in 1983, and 3.8% in 1984, modestly exceeding the stagnant "Hindu rate" of the 1970s but failing to translate into broad-based efficiency improvements due to persistent licensing restrictions and inefficient resource allocation. Inflation spiked to 12.6% in 1983 amid oil shocks and fiscal expansion, while gross fiscal deficits hovered around 6-7% of GDP, financed partly through monetary accommodation, which exacerbated balance-of-payments pressures and deferred structural reforms. These patterns, as analyzed in pro-growth policy shifts under Gandhi, prioritized short-term expansion over liberalization, contributing to a productivity surge only after 1980 but rooted in ad hoc delicense measures rather than systemic change. Critiques highlight how centralization of economic decision-making undermined federal fiscal autonomy and incentivized patronage, with state governments increasingly reliant on central transfers amid dismissed opposition-led assemblies—nine instances under Article 356 from 1980 to 1984—fostering inefficiency and corruption in public sector undertakings. Long-term, these deficits accumulated into the 1991 crisis, where India's foreign reserves plummeted to cover just two weeks of imports, necessitating IMF-mandated liberalization as a corrective to the rigidities inherited from the 1980s state-led framework. In Punjab, the ministry's vacillating approach-initial concessions to Akali demands followed by military escalation in Operation Blue Star (June 1984) - empirically worsened militancy, with civilian and militant deaths surging post-operation from hundreds annually to over 2,000 by 1988, prolonging insurgency until the mid-1990s and costing an estimated 20,000-30,000 lives overall. The assault on the Golden Temple alienated moderate Sikhs, fueling Khalistani radicalization and economic disruption, as Punjab's agricultural output stagnated relative to national trends amid curfews and migration, with long-term scars including demographic shifts and persistent communal distrust evidenced by sporadic violence into

the 2000s. Institutionally, intensified centralization eroded federalism by subordinating state parties to Congress high command diktats, diminishing cooperative governance and spawning regional backlash that fragmented national politics post-1984, ushering in coalition eras and Congress's electoral decline from dominance. This legacy of personalized rule over institutional resilience contributed to governance instability, as dynastic succession to Rajiv Gandhi failed to reverse patronage-driven decay, ultimately necessitating 1990s political realignments toward multiparty federalism despite heightened fragmentation risks.

Domestic policy of the Indira Gandhi government

The domestic policy of the Indira Gandhi government, during her premierships from 1966 to 1977 and 1980 to 1984, featured extensive state intervention in the economy and society under a socialist framework, prioritizing poverty alleviation, agricultural self-sufficiency, and centralized control, while marked by the controversial 1975–1977 Emergency that suspended constitutional rights and enforced draconian measures. Key economic initiatives included the 1969 nationalization of 14 major commercial banks with deposits exceeding 50 crore each, intended to redirect credit toward priority sectors like agriculture and small industries, expanding rural banking access from 7,000 to over 30,000 branches by the mid-1970s but also fostering inefficiencies and non-performing assets due to political lending pressures. In agriculture, the government accelerated the Green Revolution through hybrid seeds, irrigation expansion, and subsidies, boosting foodgrain production from 72 million tonnes in 1965–66 to 108 million tonnes by 1970–71, achieving self-sufficiency and averting famines, though benefits skewed toward larger Punjab and Haryana farmers, exacerbating regional disparities and groundwater depletion. Social policies under the "Garibi Hatao" (Remove Poverty) banner encompassed land ceiling reforms, abolition of privy purses for former princely states in 1971, and aggressive family planning, but implementation often relied on coercive tactics, culminating in the Emergency's forced sterilization drives targeting over 6 million individuals, primarily the poor, which sparked widespread resentment and contributed to Gandhi's 1977 electoral defeat.^{[7][8]} The period saw GDP growth averaging around 3.5% annually, hampered by industrial licensing rigidities and inflation spikes, with the Emergency temporarily curbing strikes and inflation through authoritarian decree but at the cost of democratic erosion, including press censorship and detention of over 100,000 opponents without trial. These policies reflected a causal prioritization of short-term political consolidation over sustainable institutional reforms, yielding mixed outcomes in equity and growth amid persistent bureaucratic hurdles.

Economic Policies

Nationalization of Industries and Banks

On July 19, 1969, the Indira Gandhi-led government promulgated an ordinance nationalizing 14 major commercial banks, each with deposits exceeding 50 crore, which collectively held approximately 85% of the country's banking deposits. The targeted

institutions included Allahabad Bank, Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, and Central Bank of India, among others. This move aligned with Gandhi's socialist agenda to redirect credit toward priority sectors such as agriculture and small industries, curb the influence of large industrial houses on finance, and extend banking services to underserved rural areas, thereby addressing economic inequalities. The nationalization faced immediate legal challenges; the Supreme Court initially declared the ordinance unconstitutional in the R.C. Cooper v. Union of India case, citing inadequate compensation and violation of fundamental rights under Articles 14 and 19 of the Constitution. In response, Parliament passed the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act in August 1969, which addressed these concerns by providing for fair compensation based on book value and authorizing the government to acquire bank assets. This legislation withstood further judicial scrutiny, solidifying state control over the sector. In 1970, the government nationalized an additional six banks under a similar framework, bringing the total to 20 public sector banks by 1980. Extending beyond banking, Gandhi's administration pursued nationalization in key industries to enhance resource allocation and self-reliance. In May 1971, coking coal mines were nationalized via ordinance, followed by non-coking coal mines in 1973, consolidating production under Coal India Limited to ensure steady supply for steel and power sectors amid rising industrial demand. On September 20, 1972, general insurance was nationalized, subsuming 107 companies into four state-owned entities (including the General Insurance Corporation) to channel premiums toward national development goals like infrastructure. These actions reflected a broader statist approach, though they involved compensatory payments to private owners, averaging around 60 crore for banks alone. Empirical assessments of these policies reveal mixed outcomes. Post-1969, public sector banks expanded rural branches from 22% to over 50% of total outlets by the 1980s, correlating with reduced rural poverty rates-districts with greater branch growth saw 5-10% lower poverty incidence by 2000, per econometric analyses of social banking mandates. Deposits surged from 4,600 crore in 1969 to over 20,000 crore by 1979, boosting credit to agriculture from 2% to 15% of total lending. However, critics argue the measures fostered inefficiencies, with political interference leading to subsidized lending, non-performing assets, and slower credit growth compared to private peers; one analysis deems it an economic failure due to stifled competition and innovation, despite political gains in consolidating Gandhi's voter base. Industrial nationalizations similarly prioritized output volume-coal production rose 50% by 1979-but at the cost of productivity lags, as state monopolies faced bureaucratic delays and underinvestment.

Agricultural Initiatives and the Green Revolution

The Indira Gandhi government accelerated the Green Revolution, a package of agricultural technologies and policies aimed at boosting food grain output to counter chronic shortages and foreign aid dependency following the 1965-66 droughts. Upon taking office in January 1966, the administration committed to high-yielding

variety (HYV) seeds developed by scientists like M.S. Swaminathan, alongside expanded chemical fertilizer application and multiple cropping practices. These efforts built on initial wheat HYV introductions in 1965 but scaled nationally under the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-1974), emphasizing irrigated regions to prioritize staple crops like wheat and rice. Central to the strategy were input subsidies and institutional support: fertilizer subsidies rose sharply from negligible levels pre-1966 to cover over 50% of costs by the early 1970s, while electricity tariffs for irrigation pumps were kept low to promote tube-well adoption, particularly in Punjab and Haryana. Minimum support prices (MSP) for wheat were introduced in 1965 and expanded under Gandhi, with procurement operations ensuring farmers received remunerative rates, backed by the Food Corporation of India established in 1965. Irrigation coverage expanded via command-area development and canal projects, increasing net irrigated area from 18 million hectares in 1966 to 26 million by 1977. These measures favored larger landholders with access to credit and water, as HYV seeds required assured moisture and inputs unavailable to marginal farmers. Output gains were substantial, averting famine risks and enabling buffer stock buildup: total foodgrain production climbed from 72 million tonnes in 1965-66 to 108 million tonnes by 1970-71, reaching 132 million tonnes in 1977-78, driven by wheat yields tripling in responsive areas from 1.3 tonnes per hectare to over 2.5 tonnes. Rice production also grew, though more gradually, from 30 million tonnes to 48 million tonnes over the decade. Punjab emerged as the epicenter, contributing over 60% of national wheat surplus by 1970 through package extension services that integrated seeds, credit, and marketing. Critics, including socialist factions within Gandhi's Congress party, argued the model exacerbated rural inequalities by benefiting capitalist farmers in wheat belts while eastern rice-growing regions and dryland areas stagnated, with smallholders facing debt from input costs and inadequate land reforms. Environmentally, intensive tube-well pumping depleted aquifers in Punjab at rates exceeding recharge, fostering salinity and waterlogging, while fertilizer overuse contributed to soil nutrient imbalances. Nonetheless, the policy's causal emphasis on yield maximization through technology demonstrably shifted India toward self-reliance, reducing PL-480 imports from 10 million tonnes in 1966 to near zero by 1971, though long-term sustainability required subsequent adjustments.

Poverty Alleviation and Redistribution Efforts

The "Garibi Hatao" (Eradicate Poverty) slogan, launched by Indira Gandhi during the 1971 general elections, framed her government's poverty alleviation strategy as a direct assault on economic inequality through redistributive measures and state intervention. This populist appeal emphasized uplifting the rural poor and marginalized groups by targeting consumption levels and promising wide-ranging reforms, including expanded access to credit, food subsidies, and employment schemes. However, the slogan's implementation relied heavily on centralized planning, which often prioritized

short-term redistribution over sustainable growth, amid ongoing economic challenges like inflation and food shortages. In response to persistent poverty and electoral pressures, Gandhi's administration introduced the Twenty-Point Programme on July 1, 1975, during the Emergency period, as a comprehensive blueprint for socio-economic redistribution. Key components included accelerating land redistribution to tenants and landless laborers, abolishing bonded labor, constructing houses for rural poor, promoting small-scale industries for employment generation, and enforcing price controls on essential commodities to curb inflation affecting low-income households. The programme also mandated austerity in public spending and worker participation in management to foster equity, with specific targets like providing drinking water, sanitation, and minimum nutritional needs in rural areas. These measures aimed to directly benefit the poorest quintiles, building on earlier bank nationalizations that expanded rural credit access, though bureaucratic implementation often favored political allies over the intended beneficiaries. Empirical outcomes of these efforts were modest and uneven, with poverty rates remaining high-estimated at around 50-60% in the mid-1970s based on consumption metrics-despite claims of tangible progress in areas like rural housing and electrification. Restrictive economic policies under the programme contributed to industrial growth slowing from an average of 6% in 1968-70 to 3% in 1971-74, exacerbating unemployment and undermining long-term poverty reduction by stifling private investment and efficiency. While some rural employment schemes provided temporary relief, systemic issues like corruption, coercive enforcement (including linking benefits to family planning compliance), and failure to address agricultural productivity bottlenecks limited redistribution's causal impact, rendering "Garibi Hatao" more rhetorical than transformative amid persistent economic crises. Independent analyses highlight that broader poverty declines in the 1970s owed more to exogenous factors like favorable monsoons and Green Revolution gains than to targeted redistribution, which often distorted markets without fostering self-reliance.

Administrative and Institutional Reforms

Centralization of Authority and Federal Relations

The Indira Gandhi government, facing political fragmentation after the 1967 elections where Congress lost control of several state assemblies, pursued centralization by restructuring the party organization to ensure loyalty to the central leadership. Following the 1969 split in the Congress party, Gandhi consolidated control over state units by appointing loyalists and marginalizing dissenting factions, which effectively subordinated regional leaders to New Delhi's directives. This internal party centralization extended to governance, as the high command frequently intervened in state affairs to preempt opposition challenges. Constitutional measures further entrenched central authority, particularly through the 42nd Amendment Act of 1976, enacted during the Emergency. This amendment transferred several subjects from the state list to the concurrent list, enabling greater parliamentary oversight over state matters, and

introduced Article 257A to allow the center to direct states on internal disturbances. It also extended the duration of President's Rule under Article 356 from six months to one year without parliamentary approval in certain cases, and amended Article 365 to facilitate central intervention if states failed to comply with Union directives. These changes eroded the federal balance by prioritizing Directive Principles of State Policy over fundamental rights and limiting judicial review of constitutional amendments, thereby enhancing executive dominance. The invocation of Article 356 exemplified the strain on federal relations, with the government imposing President's Rule in numerous states to dismiss opposition-led administrations. Between 1966 and 1977, such impositions occurred approximately 39 times, often targeting non-Congress governments in states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Tamil Nadu following electoral defeats or internal instability. Notable instances included the dismissal of the United Front government in Uttar Pradesh in 1970 and the DMK regime in Tamil Nadu in 1976, justified on grounds of constitutional breakdown but criticized as partisan maneuvers to install sympathetic administrators. This pattern, which continued into her second term, totaled around 48 uses of Article 356 across her premierships, fostering perceptions of an "iron grip" over states and provoking resistance from regional leaders. These policies strained center-state dynamics, as evidenced by conflicts with opposition-ruled states during the 1974-1975 Jayaprakash Narayan movement in Bihar and Gujarat, where central interventions fueled demands for greater autonomy. While proponents argued that centralization was necessary to maintain national unity amid economic and social upheavals, it objectively diminished state fiscal and administrative independence, contributing to a more unitary tilt in India's federal structure during this period.

Bureaucratic and Electoral Changes

Indira Gandhi's administration sought to reshape the bureaucracy by promoting the idea of a "committed bureaucracy," which emphasized alignment of civil servants with the government's socialist objectives and national development goals, diverging from the conventional emphasis on political neutrality. This concept gained prominence following the 1969 split in the Congress party, with Gandhi articulating in November 1969 the necessity for "an administrative cadre committed to national objectives and responsive to our social needs" as part of broader administrative reform. The policy aimed to ensure bureaucratic support for policies like bank nationalization and poverty alleviation, but it effectively politicized the civil service by rewarding loyalty to the ruling regime's ideology over impartiality. To implement this vision, the government frequently reshuffled senior officials, transferring or demoting those viewed as obstructive or insufficiently aligned, thereby installing more compliant administrators. Notable examples include the August 1981 reshuffle, where at least three senior secretaries were reverted to lower positions or reassigned, and a 1983 directive to retire officials whose tenures or extensions had expired, targeting bureaucratic hierarchy. These moves centralized control under the Prime Minister's Office and reduced institutional

resistance, though they eroded the independence of the Indian Administrative Service, fostering sycophancy and long-term inefficiency in governance. On the electoral front, Gandhi's government deviated from established practices by strategically advancing national polls to leverage short-term popularity gains, notably dissolving the Lok Sabha in December 1970—nearly a year before its term ended—and holding elections in March 1971, which yielded a commanding majority of 352 seats for her Congress (R) faction. This early dissolution decoupled Lok Sabha elections from state assembly cycles, which had previously aligned more closely, enabling the central executive to time votes amid favorable conditions like post-nationalization sentiment but disrupting the constitutional rhythm of synchronized polls envisioned at independence. Such maneuvers, while legally permissible under Article 85, prioritized political expediency, contributing to fragmented electoral calendars that increased costs and logistical burdens on the Election Commission without corresponding legislative reforms to voting systems or representation. No major statutory electoral reforms, such as changes to franchise age or constituency delimitation, were enacted during her pre-Emergency tenure, leaving the first-past-the-post system intact amid rising populist campaigning.

Social and Cultural Policies

Land Reforms and Abolition of Privileges

The Indira Gandhi government pursued land reforms primarily through the imposition of ceiling limits on agricultural holdings to redistribute surplus land to landless laborers and marginal farmers, building on earlier state-level efforts but with renewed central pressure for uniformity. In 1969, Gandhi convened a Chief Ministers' Conference on Land Reforms to foster consensus on model legislation, urging states to lower ceilings—typically set between 10 to 54 acres depending on land quality and irrigation—and expedite tenancy protections and surplus acquisition. This aligned with her 1971 election slogan "Garibi Hataao," framing land redistribution as essential for poverty alleviation, though state compliance varied due to entrenched rural political interests favoring larger landowners. Implementation faced significant evasion tactics, including fictitious partitions of holdings among family members and *benami* (proxy) transfers, resulting in minimal actual redistribution; by the mid-1970s, only a fraction of declared surplus—estimated at less than 5 million acres nationally—reached intended beneficiaries, with states like Uttar Pradesh exemplifying delays and loopholes that preserved elite control. During the 1975-1977 Emergency, the 20-Point Programme intensified efforts by mandating time-bound enforcement of ceilings, distribution of surplus land, and provision of house sites to landless households, leading to accelerated declarations of surplus in some regions but coercive methods that alienated rural populations without proportionally increasing tenurial security. Empirical outcomes remained constrained, as political realism dictated compromises with agrarian lobbies, yielding negligible shifts in land inequality compared to policy rhetoric. Parallel to agrarian measures, the government targeted feudal remnants through the abolition of

privileges for former princely rulers. The 26th Constitutional Amendment Act of September 28, 1971, terminated privy purses-annual payments totaling around 5.8 crore to approximately 565 ex-rulers-and barred judicial challenges to their discontinuation, while prohibiting official recognition of hereditary titles or rulers. Gandhi justified the move on grounds of egalitarian principles and fiscal prudence, overriding earlier integration agreements under Articles 291 and 362, which the amendment omitted; inserted Article 363A explicitly ended such liabilities. This decisively curtailed symbolic and economic privileges inherited from the colonial era, though it provoked legal resistance from affected families, underscoring tensions between socialist centralism and residual elite entitlements.

Family Planning and Population Control

The Indian government under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi intensified family planning efforts starting in the late 1960s, building on earlier programs initiated in 1952, amid concerns over rapid population growth projected to strain resources. During the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969–1974), policies emphasized voluntary sterilization incentives, but uptake remained low, with only about 3.7 million sterilizations annually by 1970, prompting calls for more aggressive measures influenced by international donors like the World Bank, which provided \$66 million in loans between 1972 and 1980 to support sterilization camps. The declaration of the Emergency on June 25, 1975, marked a shift to coercive population control, spearheaded by Gandhi's son Sanjay, who set ambitious targets for state officials to meet sterilization quotas, often enforced through threats of job loss or denial of services like licenses and rations. In 1976 alone, approximately 6.2 million men underwent vasectomies, primarily targeting the poor, rural populations, and minorities such as Muslims in areas like Uttawar village, where on November 6, 1976, hundreds were forcibly sterilized in a single drive. Overall, during the 1975–1977 Emergency, over 10.7 million individuals-mostly men-were sterilized, exceeding official targets by 60%, through mass camps characterized by inadequate medical facilities, untrained personnel, and reports of physical coercion, including arrests and beatings to meet quotas. These measures yielded short-term reductions in fertility rates but at significant human cost, including hundreds of deaths from botched procedures due to sepsis and poor post-operative care, as documented in government records and eyewitness accounts from states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The campaign's backlash, fueled by widespread resentment over its authoritarian implementation, contributed to the Congress party's electoral defeat in March 1977, after which the Janata Party government dismantled quotas and shifted to incentive-based approaches. Long-term analyses indicate that the coercive drive eroded public trust in family planning, leading to a temporary dip in program participation post-1977, though overall contraceptive prevalence eventually rose through less intrusive methods by the 1980s.

Language and Regional Accommodation Policies

The Indira Gandhi government addressed linguistic tensions by amending the Official Languages Act in 1967, ensuring the continued use of both Hindi and English as official languages of the Union without a fixed timeline for phasing out English. This measure responded to protests in non-Hindi speaking regions, particularly southern states, against perceived Hindi imposition following the constitutional deadline of 1965 for Hindi's sole adoption. The amendment maintained bilingualism at the federal level, allowing regional languages primacy in state administrations while promoting national cohesion through multilingual frameworks. In education, the 1968 National Policy on Education introduced the three-language formula, mandating students in Hindi-speaking states to learn Hindi, English, and one other Indian language, while non-Hindi states were to include their regional language, Hindi, and English. This policy aimed to foster inter-linguistic understanding and cultural integration without enforcing Hindi dominance, though implementation varied and faced resistance in states like Tamil Nadu. It reflected a pragmatic balance between federal unity and regional linguistic identities, averting escalation of agitations that had previously disrupted governance. On regional accommodation, the government pursued state reorganizations along linguistic and ethnic lines to mitigate separatist pressures. The Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966 bifurcated Punjab into the Punjabi-speaking state of Punjab and the Hindi-speaking Haryana, alongside enhancing Himachal Pradesh's status, conceding long-standing Akali Dal demands for a Punjabi Suba. In the Northeast, the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act of 1971 elevated Manipur, Meghalaya, and Tripura to full statehood in 1972, carving them from Assam to address tribal autonomies amid insurgencies. These changes, culminating in Sikkim's integration as a state in 1975, accommodated diverse identities while reinforcing central oversight, as evidenced by the territorial expansions documented between 1961 and 1975. Such delineations reduced immediate ethnic conflicts but centralized fiscal and security controls, prioritizing national integrity over expansive federal devolution.

The Emergency Period (1975-1977)

Declaration, Legal Basis, and Official Rationale

On June 25, 1975, President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed issued a proclamation declaring a state of national emergency across India, acting on the advice of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her Council of Ministers. This marked the imposition of Emergency rule, which lasted until March 21, 1977. The legal foundation for the declaration rested on Article 352 of the Indian Constitution, which empowered the President to proclaim an emergency if satisfied that the security of India or any part thereof was threatened by war, external aggression, or internal disturbance. In 1975, the provision's inclusion of "internal disturbance" as a ground provided a broad interpretive scope, differing from prior emergencies invoked for war (1962) or external aggression (1971). The proclamation specified internal disturbance as the basis,

enabling the suspension of fundamental rights under Article 359 and the extension of executive powers. Subsequently, the 38th Constitutional Amendment Act, enacted on August 1, 1975, retrospectively shielded such proclamations from judicial review, further entrenching the legal framework. The official rationale articulated in the proclamation and government statements centered on an imminent threat to national security from widespread internal disturbances, including orchestrated opposition campaigns, strikes, and economic disruptions that allegedly undermined governmental authority and public order. The government pointed to escalating protests led by figures like Jayaprakash Narayan, railway and student strikes paralyzing key sectors, and perceived conspiracies involving foreign influences as evidence of a deliberate effort to destabilize the state. This justification was framed as necessary to restore order and enable decisive action against anarchy, with Indira Gandhi addressing the nation on November 7, 1975, to defend the measures as a response to "forces of disintegration" rather than personal political expediency. Critics, however, contended that the invocation exploited the vague "internal disturbance" clause amid the Allahabad High Court's June 12, 1975, ruling invalidating Gandhi's Rae Bareli election on grounds of electoral malpractices, though official discourse emphasized broader security imperatives over judicial setbacks.

Authoritarian Measures and Civil Liberties Suspension

The declaration of the national Emergency on June 25, 1975, under Article 352 of the Indian Constitution enabled the suspension of key civil liberties, including protections against arbitrary arrest and detention outlined in Articles 14, 21, and 22. This legal basis, justified by the government as a response to internal threats, facilitated widespread preventive detentions without trial, primarily through the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) of 1971, which permitted holding individuals for up to two years on grounds of national security.^[73] An ordinance promulgated on July 1, 1975, further amended MISA to allow detentions without the requirement to inform detainees of the grounds, exacerbating the opacity and duration of incarcerations. Over the course of the 21-month Emergency, approximately 110,000 people were arrested, including prominent opposition figures such as Morarji Desai, Jyotirmoy Basu, and L.K. Advani, with many held under MISA or the Defence of India Rules without access to legal recourse. These measures targeted political opponents, student activists, and journalists perceived as threats, bypassing standard judicial oversight and contributing to a climate of fear that stifled dissent. The Supreme Court's ruling in *ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla* (April 1976) upheld this framework by declaring that during the Emergency, no person could approach courts for enforcement of fundamental rights, effectively nullifying habeas corpus protections nationwide. Freedom of the press was severely restricted starting June 26, 1975, when pre-censorship guidelines were enforced, mandating government approval for all published content and leading to the overnight cutoff of electricity to Delhi's newspaper printing presses. Editors faced instructions to suppress critical

reporting on government actions, resulting in self-censorship by most outlets; protests included blank editorial pages in newspapers like The Indian Express on June 28, 1975. Foreign correspondents were expelled or restricted, and domestic media mergers, such as the forced amalgamation of news agencies under state control, further centralized information flow. These controls, rationalized as necessary for stability, persisted until the Emergency's revocation on March 21, 1977, after which the 44th Constitutional Amendment (1978) sought to limit future executive overreach by narrowing grounds for emergency declarations.

Coercive Social Engineering Programs

During the Emergency, the Indira Gandhi government, influenced heavily by her son Sanjay Gandhi, implemented aggressive population control and urban beautification initiatives that relied on coercion, quotas imposed on local officials, and threats of denial of government services or employment to achieve compliance. These programs targeted the poor and marginalized, often disregarding consent and leading to widespread human rights abuses, including deaths from botched procedures and violent evictions. The most notorious was the mass sterilization campaign, which escalated in 1976 under Sanjay Gandhi's directives, aiming to curb population growth through vasectomies. Government data and contemporaneous reports indicate approximately 6.2 million men underwent sterilization that year, a sharp rise from 1.4 million the prior year, with officials facing arrest or demotion for failing quotas. Coercion was rampant: participants were lured with cash incentives or promises of loans, but many faced forcible operations in makeshift camps, loss of ration cards, or police harassment if they refused; in some regions like Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, landless laborers and Muslims were disproportionately targeted. Botched surgeries resulted in infections and deaths, with estimates of over 1,000 fatalities, though official figures suppressed the toll. Parallel to this, urban "beautification" drives involved slum demolitions, particularly in Delhi's Turkman Gate area in April 1976, where bulldozers razed homes housing around 150,000 residents without adequate relocation or notice. Police firing on protesters killed at least 10-15 people, according to eyewitness accounts and opposition reports, while the overall campaign displaced nearly 700,000 individuals nationwide as part of clearing "encroachments" to modernize cities. These efforts, justified as improving hygiene and aesthetics, prioritized political loyalty-sparing Congress supporters over due process, exacerbating resentment among the urban poor and contributing to the government's 1977 electoral defeat. The programs' legacy includes long-term distrust in state-led family planning, with voluntary vasectomy rates plummeting post-Emergency.

Economic Interventions and Short-Term Outcomes

The Indira Gandhi government launched the 20-Point Programme on July 1, 1975, as a core economic intervention during the Emergency, targeting inflation control, production boosts, and poverty alleviation through measures such as enforcing land

ceilings, distributing surplus land to landless laborers, abolishing bonded labor, raising minimum wages for agricultural workers, providing rural housing sites, expanding public distribution systems for essential commodities, and cracking down on economic offenses like hoarding and tax evasion.[83] Additional interventions included intensified drives against black money via raids on smugglers and tax evaders, austerity measures in government spending, and enhanced implementation of existing policies like bank nationalization's credit allocation to priority sectors. These were facilitated by the suspension of strikes and labor unrest, enabling uninterrupted industrial operations and agricultural activities. Short-term outcomes reflected stabilization amid prior economic distress, with gross national product growth accelerating from 0.3% in 1974-75 to 8.5% in 1975-76, attributed to favorable monsoons, reduced industrial disruptions, and policy enforcement. Inflation, which had surged to 28.6% in 1974 amid oil shocks and supply bottlenecks, declined sharply to 5.8% in 1975 and registered deflation at -7.6% in 1976, aided by anti-speculation campaigns, increased foodgrain in buffer stocks from policy-driven procurement, and output gains in key sectors.[85] Foodgrain production rose, with buffer stocks accumulating due to procurement incentives and coercive collection methods, while industrial output benefited from "discipline" campaigns that minimized absenteeism and work stoppages.

Economic Indicator	1974-75	1975-76
GNP Growth (%)	0.3	8.5
Inflation Rate (CPI, %)	28.6	5.8

However, these gains were uneven and partly exogenous; the 1975 monsoon recovery contributed significantly to agricultural rebounds, while suppressed wages and coerced labor compliance masked underlying inefficiencies in the state-directed economy. Private investment stagnated under regulatory pressures, and fiscal deficits persisted despite revenue drives, foreshadowing reversals post-Emergency. Overall, the period saw tactical improvements in supply management and output metrics, but at the cost of market distortions and long-term entrepreneurial disincentives.

Internal Security and Law Enforcement

Counter-Insurgency and Regional Stability Efforts

The Indira Gandhi government addressed internal insurgencies through a mix of military operations and political negotiations, particularly targeting Maoist Naxalite uprisings in eastern India and separatist movements in the Northeast. These efforts aimed to restore central authority amid challenges to national unity, employing the Indian Army alongside paramilitary forces when police actions proved insufficient. In response to the Naxalite insurgency, which began in 1967 in West Bengal and spread to rural areas with violent peasant revolts, the government launched Operation Steeplechase in July-August 1971. This joint operation involving the Indian Army, Central Reserve Police

Force (CRPF), and state police targeted Naxal strongholds, resulting in the arrest of over 1,000 suspected militants and the neutralization of key leaders. The operation significantly weakened the movement's urban and rural bases, though it drew criticism for alleged excesses. In the Northeast, ongoing Naga separatism prompted the Shillong Accord signed on November 11, 1975, between representatives of the Naga National Council (NNC) underground faction and the Indian government. Under the accord, signatories unconditionally accepted the Indian Constitution, deposited arms, and agreed to democratic negotiations for grievances, leading to the surrender of several hundred insurgents and a temporary lull in violence, though it fractured the NNC and spurred further factions. The Mizo National Front (MNF) insurgency, erupting in 1966 amid famine relief failures, faced aggressive countermeasures including the Indian Air Force's bombing of Aizawl on March 5, 1966, authorized by Indira Gandhi to disrupt rebel supply lines and civilian support. This marked the first domestic use of air strikes by Indian forces, followed by sustained ground operations that displaced thousands but failed to fully quell the movement until later accords. Efforts also included negotiations via the Intelligence Bureau, though full resolution came post-1977. To enhance regional stability, the government reorganized Northeast administration in 1972, elevating Manipur, Tripura, and Meghalaya to full statehood and designating Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh as union territories, addressing ethnic autonomies and integrating peripheral areas more firmly under central oversight. These measures, enacted via the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, aimed to mitigate secessionist sentiments by accommodating local identities within the federal structure. In Punjab, rising Akali Dal demands for greater autonomy via the 1973 Anandpur Sahib Resolution prompted political containment rather than overt counter-insurgency, with the government viewing the resolutions as potentially secessionist and responding through electoral competition and administrative controls to prevent escalation into armed conflict.

Handling of Domestic Unrest Pre- and Post-Emergency

Prior to the Emergency, the Indira Gandhi government confronted significant domestic unrest, including the Naxalite insurgency that erupted in 1967 in West Bengal's Naxalbari region, characterized by peasant uprisings against landlords and state authority. In response, the central government authorized Operation Steeplechase in July 1971, a 45-day military campaign involving the Indian Army, Central Reserve Police Force, and local police to dismantle Naxalite strongholds, resulting in the arrest of over 1,500 insurgents and the neutralization of key leaders, which temporarily fractured the movement's urban and rural networks. [This operation, coordinated under Home Minister Sardar Patel's oversight, marked one of the first large-scale uses of federal forces against internal Maoist threats, prioritizing decisive suppression over negotiation amid escalating assassinations and rural violence. Economic and political dissent further intensified

unrest, exemplified by the nationwide railway strike commencing on May 2, 1974, involving over 1 million workers demanding wage parity with industrial laborers; the government deemed it illegal, arrested union leaders including George Fernandes, and maintained essential freight operations with minimal passenger services, ending the action after 20 days through coercive measures and concessions.[96][97] Paralleling this, the Bihar Movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan from 1974 advocated "total revolution" against perceived corruption and electoral malpractices in Gandhi's administration, mobilizing students, opposition parties, and mass protests that spread to Gujarat and beyond, with Narayan calling for civil disobedience and army non-cooperation. The government's handling escalated from public denunciations-labeling the movement as fomenting anarchy-to preemptive arrests, including Narayan's detention on June 25, 1975, under the Defence of India Rules, which precipitated the Emergency declaration hours later to consolidate control. Following the Emergency's end in March 1977 and Gandhi's electoral defeat, her return to power in January 1980 via the Congress party's victory shifted handling of unrest toward regional separatist and ethnic agitations, particularly in Assam and Punjab, where underlying grievances over immigration and autonomy fueled violence. In Assam, the ongoing agitation against alleged illegal Bangladeshi migrants-intensifying from 1979-culminated in the 1983 elections boycotted by agitators, leading to the Nellie massacre on February 18, 1983, where over 2,000 people, mostly Bengali Muslims, were killed amid polling-related clashes; the central government deployed forces to quell riots but faced criticism for inadequate prevention and reliance on security crackdowns over addressing demographic root causes. In Punjab, Sikh militancy surged post-1980 with demands for Khalistan, triggered by events like the 1981 assassination of newspaper editor Lala Jagat Narain; initial responses involved negotiations with Akali Dal leaders, but escalating attacks prompted military preparations, culminating in Operation Blue Star on June 3-8, 1984, where army units stormed the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar to remove Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and armed militants, resulting in hundreds of deaths including pilgrims and significant temple damage, though official figures reported 493 civilian and 83 army casualties. This operation, authorized amid failed political accords, temporarily subdued the insurgency's epicenter but exacerbated communal tensions, contributing to subsequent unrest including Gandhi's assassination on October 31, 1984, by her Sikh bodyguards. Overall, post-Emergency strategies emphasized federal intervention and force over devolution, reflecting a pattern of prioritizing state stability through security apparatus amid rising ethnic fragmentation.

Scientific and Strategic Programs

Nuclear Development and Testing

India's nuclear program, initiated in the late 1940s under the Atomic Energy Commission, saw significant advancement during Indira Gandhi's tenure as Prime Minister, particularly in the pursuit of indigenous capabilities for energy and strategic

deterrance. By the early 1970s, amid regional security concerns including China's 1964 nuclear test and the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, Gandhi authorized the development of a nuclear explosive device on September 7, 1972, tasking scientists at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) with its manufacture. This decision reflected a shift from earlier emphasis on civilian applications toward demonstrating technological self-reliance, though official narratives framed it within peaceful objectives. The culmination was Operation Smiling Buddha, India's first nuclear test conducted on May 18, 1974, at the Pokhran Test Range in Rajasthan's Thar Desert. An underground detonation using plutonium from the CIRUS reactor-assisted by Canadian-supplied heavy water and U.S.-origin safeguards-violating materials-yielded an estimated 6-10 kilotons, though independent assessments later questioned the official figure as inflated for prestige. Led by BARC director Raja Ramanna and physicist Homi Sethna, the test involved a team of about 75 scientists and was executed covertly to evade international detection, with Gandhi receiving confirmation via the coded message: "The Buddha is smiling." The government immediately declared it a "peaceful nuclear explosion" (PNE) for applications like underground oil extraction and large-scale earthmoving, aligning with domestic policy goals of resource independence and scientific progress. Domestically, the test was portrayed as a triumph of Indian ingenuity, boosting national morale amid economic challenges and political opposition, with Gandhi emphasizing it as a non-military advancement in her parliamentary address. However, it strained relations with suppliers like Canada and the U.S., prompting export controls that hindered further civilian reactor imports, thus complicating long-term energy policy objectives. No additional tests occurred during her 1966-1977 term, maintaining strategic ambiguity, though declassified records indicate ongoing device refinement at BARC. In her second term (1980-1984), Gandhi briefly approved a follow-up test in 1981 but reversed it within 24 hours amid international pressures. The 1974 event established India's latent nuclear capability, influencing subsequent domestic investments in missile and delivery systems, but prioritized deterrence over overt weaponization until the 1990s.

Broader Technological and Infrastructure Push

The Indira Gandhi government pursued technological self-reliance through expansion of public sector heavy industries and strategic scientific institutions, aligning with the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969–1974) and Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974–1979), which prioritized core sector growth amid economic constraints like the 1971 war and oil shocks. Steel production capacity increased via new plants and expansions; the Bokaro Steel Plant, a Soviet-assisted project, saw its first blast furnace commissioned in 1972, with Prime Minister Gandhi inaugurating key facilities including a hot strip mill on May 1, 1976, boosting integrated steel output to support industrialization. Similarly, in April 1970, Gandhi announced the establishment of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant to decentralize heavy industry and meet regional demands, though full operations commenced later. These initiatives reflected a shift toward import substitution in capital

goods, with public investment in steel rising from 1.4 million tonnes capacity in 1969 to over 3 million by 1977, despite inefficiencies from bureaucratic delays and technology transfers. In space technology, the government formalized the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on August 15, 1969, elevating the earlier Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) to drive indigenous capabilities in rocketry and satellite applications for communications and remote sensing. Under Gandhi's administration, ISRO launched India's first satellite, Aryabhata, on April 19, 1975, via a Soviet Kosmos-3M rocket from Kapustin Yar, marking a milestone in experimental satellite technology for scientific payloads despite reliance on foreign launch services. Concurrently, development of the Satellite Launch Vehicle-3 (SLV-3) began in the early 1970s, aiming for orbital independence, with foundational work on solid and liquid propulsion systems funded through the Department of Space established in 1972. These efforts built on inherited infrastructure but emphasized applied technologies for national development, such as eventual telecommunications and earth observation, though progress was hampered by limited budgets averaging 0.5% of GDP for science and technology. Broader infrastructure complemented these pushes, with investments in power generation and transport to underpin industrial expansion; thermal power capacity grew from 12 GW in 1969 to 20 GW by 1979 via projects like the Ramagundam Super Thermal Power Station (1973 onward). The government also established the Department of Science and Technology in 1971 to coordinate R&D across sectors, fostering institutions like the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research labs for materials and electronics, though outcomes were mixed due to overemphasis on prestige projects over diffusion to private enterprise. Overall, these policies advanced self-sufficiency in select domains but faced critiques for state monopolies stifling innovation, as evidenced by stagnant productivity in public heavy industries averaging 2-3% annual growth against plan targets of 5-6%.

Foreign Policy of Indira Gandhi, 1966-1977

Non-Alignment

The policy of Non-Alignment is the bed-rock of India's foreign policy, it was also followed by Indira Gandhi as her predecessors, Nehru and Shastri did. In the 1950s and 1960s, several African countries had gained independence from colonial rule. Indira Gandhi realized the political and economic importance of these countries. Indira Gandhi boosted the NAM summit in New Delhi in 1967 to strengthen the unity and co-operation among Afro-Asian countries

Relations with Foreign Countries

Indo-US Relations

On invitation from the US President Lindon B. Johnson, Indira Gandhi visited the US on 28 March 1966. During her visit, the Indo-US Education Foundation was formulated, but could not materialize due to strong opposition in India. Indira Gandhi impressed on the US President the need for American aid in terms of food and foreign

exchange. America had suspended aid to India in 1965 at the time of the Indo-Pak war. However, Johnson promised three million tons of food and nine million in aid.

The Indo-US relations touched the base when India signed the treaty of peace, Friendship and Co-operation with Russia in 1971. The U.S. vehemently criticized India for interfering with the internal affairs of Pakistan and President Nixon deployed the US 7th fleet to the Bay of Bengal. America ordered complete stoppage of economic assistance and supply of defense equipment to India. The Pokhran Test had driven a wedge in the Indo-US relations. This issue caused a stalemate in the relations between the two countries. Though the visit of Dr. Henry Kissinger, the secretary of the state of the US, to India in October 1974, helped to bridge the gap between the two countries, Indira Gandhi's imposition of emergency in 1975 strained the Indo-US relation.

Indo-Soviet Relations

Indira Gandhi visited Moscow in September 1966, with a view to strengthen India's 'special relations' with Russia. But India was discouraged when the Soviet Union decided to supply arms to Pakistan in July 1976. When Russia was dissatisfied with Pak's pro-china attitude, she started improving Indo-soviet relations, which led to the signing of a historic treaty of peace with the country.

Indo Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation, 1971

On 9 August 1971, India and the Soviet Union signed the treaty of peace, Friendship and Co-operation. The impact of the treaty: 1) Discourage Pak threat to India's security. 2) Check the possible Sino-Pak collusion against India. 3) Neutralise the growing Washington-Pindi-Beijing entente. 4) Help indirectly to make a decisive contribution towards the formation of Bangladesh. 5) assure Soviet support during the Bangladesh War, and 6) prevent the adoption of the US-China sponsored anti-India moves in the U.N. Security Council.

Relations with Neighboring Countries

Indo-Sino Relations

In the post-1962 period, Indo-Sino relations remained cold and unfriendly. Even diplomatic relations were down Graded. China came closer to Pakistan. During 1965 Indo-Pak war, China extended full support to Pakistan short of intervention in the war. Chinese attitude towards the border dispute with India, the continued border incidents between Chinese and Indian troops, and the Chinese surreptitious support to anti-Indian elements like extremist Nagas, Mizos, the Naxalites etc combined to create further strains.

Indo-Pak Relations

The Indo-Pak War of 1971 brought the relations between the two countries to a breaking-point. The Simla Agreement (1972) which followed the war restored mutual relations. This was followed by the Delhi Agreement (1973) which resolved the issue of repatriation of Prisoners of War (POW) and the problem of returning Bengalis from Pakistan and Bihari Muslim from Bangladesh to Pakistan. When Pakistan attempted to

integrate ‘Azad Kashmir’ (POK) with Pakistan (1975), Indira Gandhi neutralized by concluding an agreement with Sheikh Abdulla on February 1975, thereby Pakistan turned hostile towards India.

Indo-Bangladesh Relations

Mujibur Rehman, assumed power in Bangladesh on 12 January 1972. The erstwhile East Pakistan became an Independent Sovereign State. India recognized the new nation even before the war was over. On 10 December 1971, the first Indo-Bangladesh Treaty was signed by Indira Gandhi and acting Bangladesh President Nazrul Islam. A Joint India-Mukti Bahini command was set up under India’s General to liberate Bangladesh from Pakistan. According to this treaty India pledged to protect the territorial integrity of Bangladesh; economic assistance for its reconstruction; to return refugees from India; and to withdraw the Indian army from that country as normalcy was established.

Mujibur Rehman visited India on invitation from 16 to 18 February 1972 and held talks with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Both leaders agreed to be guided by the principles of democracy socialism, secularism, non-alignment, opposition to racialism and colonialism and ensure bilateral trade between the two countries and to oust smuggling.

When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi toured Bangladesh on 19 March 1972, The Treaty of Friendship and Peace for twenty five years was signed. India agreed full support in securing its admission to the UNO, the Indian Ocean be kept free of great power rivalry and make it a nuclear-free zone; to establish a Joint River Commission on permanent basis and exchange in science and technology.

The Treaty Agreement, March 1972

Both the treaties were concluded in the spirit of equality, friendship and good neighbourliness. But the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman on 15 August 1975 in a military coup derailed the relationship between the two neighbours, this incident made the relation between the two countries stressed.

The Farakka Barrage Issue

The Farakka Barrage was built by India during 1962-71 to preserving and maintain the Calcutta port and navigability of Bhagirathi-Hoogli. In 1972, the Joint River Commission conducted detailed survey of the entire barrage. After Mujibur Rehman’s visit to India (1974), an interim agreement was concluded (1975) for allocation of Ganga water between the two countries. As the murder of Mujib strained the relation in 1976, Maulana Bhashani mobilized public opinion against India and led a Farakka Peace March, since then the Farakka issue had become an irritant in India-Bangladesh relation.

Economic Relations

In December 1976, India, Bangladesh and Nepal agreed to form a Jute international for coordinating their jute export policies. These were indeed bold attempts to promote mutual trade relations.

Maritime Boundary Dispute

The New Moore Island is of critical importance to both India and Bangladesh. The Island remained a bone of contention since 1970. The India, navy surveyed the island and erected identification pillars on it 1974 in and Indian ownership of the island was also underlined. In 1978, Bangladesh for the first time questioned the Indian claim over the Island.

Indo-Sri Lanka Relations

The demarcation of maritime boundaries between the two countries remained unsolved since 1956. The kachativu were the bone of contention between India and Sri Lanka.

Kachativu Issue

Kachativu is an oval-shaped island with a circumference of these miles, with a total area of about 280 acres. It is about 10 miles nearest land means of Sri Lanka and 12 miles from Indian shore. It is a barren, uninhabited and cactus covered island, without drinking water. There is an ancient church of saint Anthoni on the northern coast and pilgrim from both India and Sri Lanka used to visit the island on the eve of annual festival in the month of March. Both the countries laid claim over the island on the basis of historical links, documents and the location of the Island. Finally, a Maritime Boundary Agreement of 28th 1974 demarcated the international maritime boundary between India and Sri Lanka, Which placed Kachhativu on the Sri Lanka side of the boundary. However, Kachhativu remains the object of concern for India due to provocative incidents involving Sri Lanka Naval Patrols and unarmed Indian Fisherman.

Indo-Nepal Relations

In 1974, Indo-Nepal relations got strained when Nepal reacted sharply when Sikkim acceded to India. In effect, the Indo-Nepal relations remained anything but cordial.

Indo-Bhutan Relations

Indo-Bhutan relations remained cordial ever since India concluded a revised treaty with Bhutan on 8 August 1949. When Sikkim became part of Indian Union in 1976, many countries, particularly China, tried hard to impress upon Bhutan to beware of India's designs. But the king of Bhutan, Jigme Singha Wangchuck remained loyal to India and felt assured of India's respect to the sovereign status of Bhutan.

Nuclear Policy and Programme

After the death of Dr. Homi Bhabha in an air crash in January 1966, the task was entrusted to scientists- Dr. Vickram Sarabai, Dr. Homi Sethna and Dr. Raja Ramanna. India conducted its peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) at Pokhran (Rajasthan) on 18 May

1974 and entered the nuclear club of the world and it demonstrated India's nuclear potential.

The Pokhran peaceful Nuclear Explosion was criticised by US, Western Powers, China and Pakistan. 1) the border-line between a peaceful nuclear explosion and a military nuclear explosion is wafer thin; 2) constituted a step towards nuclear proliferation with non-peaceful potentials; 3) raised suspicious that India was already in possession of nuclear bombs; 4) will inflict serious strain on Indian economy and reforms.

India and the NPT

India has always been supporting disarmament and arms control. In 1954 Nehru condemned nuclear tests as 'a crime against humanity' and proposed an immediate 'standstill agreement' on nuclear testing. India was the first country to cry halt to nuclear tests. On 5 August 1963, a Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) was signed by the Foreign Minister of UK, USA and USSR. Finally, on 12 July 1968, the General Assembly endorsed the US and USSR proposal for the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** by a big majority. The Treaty came into force on 5 March 1970.

India aimed at 1) opposition to nuclear weaponisation; 2) universal total nuclear disarmament; 3) nuclear technology for only peaceful purposes; and 4) voluntary submission to uniform, safeguard and inspections without any exception or discrimination.

India and the UNO

India has always regarded the UNO as a world forum to voice her views and to oppose discriminatory practices that contaminate healthy international relations. Addressing the 38th session of the Non-Aligned Movement ventilated the views of non-aligned countries, particularly the new International Economic Order, Disarmament and Indian Ocean as Peace Zone.

Rajiv Gandhi's Rule

Rajiv Gandhi became the youngest Prime Minister of India, at 40 years of age, and was perhaps one of the youngest elected heads of governments in the entire world. He was a pilot with Indian Airlines for 14 years, and remained aloof from politics till the death of his younger brother, Sanjay Gandhi in June 1980, after which he was persuaded by his mother, Indira Gandhi, to assets her. He then, formally entered politics by getting elected to Lok Sabha from Amethi, a constituency in UP, which got vacated after his younger brother's death.

Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister on 31st October, 1984 just after the assassination of his mother and Prime Minister on India, Indira Gandhi. The general elections scheduled for early 1985 were postponed, though polling in Assam and Punjab was postponed till 1985, due to insurgency in those states. When the results were declared, Rajiv Gandhi led Congress received the biggest mandate in the nation's electoral history, winning 401 seats out of 508 Lok Sabha seats.

Rajiv Gandhi served as the Prime Minister till 2nd December, 1989. During the 5 years of his Prime Ministership, India saw multiple events, which will be covered in this chapter.

Some of the major highlights of his tenure from 1984-1989 were:

1. Punjab crisis
2. 1984 Sikh Riots
3. Bhopal Gas Tragedy
4. Punjab and Assam Accords
5. India's Computerization Programme
6. Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions
7. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana
8. Shah Bano Case
9. Operation Blackboard
10. National Policy on Education
11. Bofors Scam
12. Indian Peace Keeping Force

Punjab Crisis

In the 1980s, Punjab was engulfed by a separatist movement, which gradually transformed into a campaign of terror, often described as a low intensity war. The genesis of this problem lay in the growth of communalism in Punjab, in the course of the twentieth century and, in particular, since 1947, which metamorphosed into extremism, separatism and terrorism after 1980.

In the period after independence, Punjab saw growth of communalism between Hindus and Sikhs who were pitted against each other. The Akali Dal, formed as a political wing of the Sikhs in 1920, and its leadership adopted certain communal themes which became the constitutive elements of Sikh communalism. The Akalis denied the ideals of a secular polity, and asserted that religion and politics cannot be separated as they were essentially combined in Sikhism. Akali Dal also claimed itself as the sole representative of the Sikh Panth, which was defined as a combination of the Sikh religion and the political and other secular interests of all Sikhs. With passage of time, the influence of extremists' kept on growing.

In 1966, Punjab was created, and with it all the major demands that the Akali Dal had raised and agitated for, over the last few years were accepted and implemented. The Akali Dal had 2 options:

- Give up communal politics and become either a purely religious and social organization, or
- Become a secular party appealing to all Punjabis

The Akalis, however, moved towards separatism and continued their communal tendencies.

1984 Sikh Riots

The assassination of Indira Gandhi led to anti-Sikh riots across the country, particularly, in Delhi and Punjab.

Armed mobs stopped buses and trains in and near Delhi, pulling off Sikh passengers for lynching and some were burnt alive. Lot of Sikhs were dragged from their homes and hacked to death, and Sikh women were reportedly gang-raped in Delhi area.

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The leak also polluted drinking water, soils, tanks and pond water which adversely affected, newly born babies, pregnant women and others in the city. Thousands of animals were also killed.

As per official estimates, it led to death of 2259 people, caused 5.6 lakh injuries and with thousands were permanently disabled. However, unofficially deaths have been put at around 20,000. Some half a million survivors suffered respiratory problems, eye irritation or blindness, and other maladies resulting from exposure to the toxic gas.

The incident had severe long term consequences on the survivors. Neither the Dow Chemical Company, which bought out the Union Carbide Corporation in 2001, nor the Indian government properly cleaned the site. Soil and water contamination in the area was blamed for chronic health problems and high instances of birth defects in the area's inhabitants. In 2004, the Indian Supreme Court ordered the government to supply clean drinking water to the residents of Bhopal because of groundwater contamination. In 2010, several former executives of Union Carbide's India subsidiary—all Indian citizens—were convicted by a Bhopal court for negligence which caused the disaster.

Causes of Tragedy

The cause of the incident is a matter of intense debate. Investigations later established that substandard operating and safety procedures at the understaffed plant had led to the catastrophe. However, it is also believed that the mixing of water with the gas was the immediate cause of the leak. Other reasons ascribed to the incident are as follows:

- Human negligence in the maintenance of the gas.
- Negligence of the Union Carbide management in installing similar safety standards in the plant as were implemented in the US.
- Failure of the government to enforce environmental standards on the company.
- Ignorance of initial leaks and failure to take preventive measures

India's Computerization Program

If we trace the history of computing in India from 1955 to 2010, there are 4 important breakpoints caused by changes in the political climate and consequent changes in the government policies on the adoption of computing.

The period from 1955 to 1970 was a period of exploration with no specific government policies guiding computing technology. A number of initiatives were taken in education such as the establishment of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and also starting the designing and production of computers. The Bhabha Committee was appointed by the Government of India in 1963, which realized the importance of electronics and computers in national development and suggested establishment of the Department of Electronics (DoE) in the Government of India (GoI) to promote rapid growth of electronics and computers. This department was established in 1970 and was the first breakpoint.

From 1971 to 1978, the DoE laid stress on self-reliant indigenous development of computers and a company called the Electronics Corporation of India Ltd. (ECIL) was financed to design, develop and market computers using components which were mostly made in India. ECIL made computers called TDC 312 and TDC 316 which were similar to the PDP series computers made by the Digital Equipment Corporation of the USA. The DoE also initiated many Research and Development (R&D) projects with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The second break point was in 1978, after the government led by the Congress party was defeated in 1977. IBM which was at that time refurbishing obsolete 1401 computers in India was asked by the government to reduce equity, to take an Indian partner and to manufacture IBM 360 series computers. IBM refused and closed its operations in India in 1978.

The new government decided to open up computer manufacturing to the private sector and a number of companies started making minicomputers using imported microprocessors.

In 1984 and 1986, the government removed numerous controls on the computing hardware industry and on imports when Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister. The new policy allowed the import of fully assembled motherboards with processors and reduced import duties. This led to a sharp reduction in price and a speedier spread of computer use. In 1986, software companies were allowed to import computers at reduced import duty rates to enable them to export software. Software development was recognized as an industry deserving many tax concessions. Foreign manufacturers were allowed to the home market; so, that the quality and competitive prices were ensured, and use of computers in offices and schools was also encouraged.

The year 1986 also saw the change in the mind-set of the general population and the politicians about the relevance of computers due to the success of the computerized ticket reservation system of the Indian Railways. The new reservation system reduced the waiting time in queues for customers wanting to reserve seats on trains. These timely

interventions are the reason as to why Indian IT companies like TCS, Infosys, etc. are the world leaders today, with subsequent growth of service sector in India.

The third break point came in 1991, when India was about to default on the payment of foreign debt. The country was bailed out by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which forced India to open its economy and reduce controls on the local manufacturing companies. One of the major initiatives taken by the DoE at this time was the establishment of Software Technology Parks (STPs) with satellite communication links which enabled Indian software companies to develop software applications on their international clients' computers from India.

The fourth break point came in 1998, when the new government under Atal Bihari Vajpayee declared "IT as India's tomorrow", and took a number of proactive measures to promote software companies. An IT task force was appointed to recommend changes in the policies of the government. Measures were taken to give a tax holiday on the export earnings of the Indian software services companies for ten years and import duty was exempted on computers and software packages imported for exporting software. Multinational companies were welcomed to set up software development and Research and Development (R&D) centers. Software and services exports grew rapidly from USD 2 Billion in 1998 to USD 50 Billion in 2010. Information Technology was contributing 6.4% of GDP in 2010 and was providing employment to 2.4 million software professionals.

Even though the initiatives taken by the government of India, in the 1970s to establish a self-reliant hardware industry in the public sector was not successful, it provided the confidence and the human resources which catalyzed the growth of the private hardware and software industry in the 1980s and the 1990s.

Strengthening of Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs)

The importance of Panchayati Raj Institutions can be gauged by the fact that Mahatma Gandhi emphasized on their importance to revitalize the village life, and argued that the nation as a whole cannot make progress, unless villages progress.

Article 40 of the Constitution of India declared that:

The state shall take steps to organize Village Panchayats and to endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as the units of self-government,' which paved the way for introduction of Panchayati Raj as a scheme of democratic decentralization in India. The evolution of panchayats in India after independence can be categorized in 4 distinct phases:

- Phase of ascendency (1959-1964)
- Phase of stagnation (1965-1969)
- Phase of decline (1969-1983)
- Phase of revival (1983 onwards)

The phase of revival and renovation of panchayats (1983 onwards) is associated with the government of Rajiv Gandhi. He infused new blood into this institution by

removing certain hurdles and handicaps. Rajiv Gandhi constituted a committee under the chairmanship of LM Singhvi to write a concept paper on Panchayati Raj.

The LM Singhvi committee presented its report in 1986. To reform local governance and the Panchayati Raj, Rajiv Gandhi introduced the 64th Constitutional amendment Bill in 1989, which was defeated in the Rajya Sabha. The key features of the this bill were:

- Giving Panchayats a constitutional status
- Making it mandatory for all states to establish a 3 tiered system of Panchayats in which representatives would be elected directly for a term of 5 years.
- Panchayats were to be given expanded authority and funding over local development efforts.
- Panchayats would have the power to raise finances and spend them on specified activities, without the prior approval of state governments.

In spite of the noble intentions of the bill, it was defeated in the Rajya Sabha, but, eventually Panchayati Raj reforms were brought about by the 73rd Amendment Act of 1992.

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana

The high incidences of poverty in India can be attributed to rural unemployment and underemployment, which particularly affect the poorest segments of the rural population. A major objective of the 6th Five Year Plan (1980- 1985) was poverty alleviation. And the strategy adopted aimed at redistribution of income and consumption in favour of the poorer sections of the population by significantly increasing employment opportunities in the rural areas. To achieve this objective, the National Rural Employment Program was started in October, 1980, to replace the Food for Work Programme.

After this, the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme was launched on August 15, 1983. Its principal objectives were improving and expanding employment opportunities particularly for the rural landless labour to provide guaranteed employment to at least one member of every rural landless labour household up to 100 days in a year.

The importance of employment programme in reducing rural poverty was reflected in the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) which emphasized food, work and productivity; with the objective of providing productive employment to everyone seeking it and assigning priority to activities which contribute most effectively to this purpose. Therefore, the emphasis was to maximize both the direct and long-term employment opportunities through the investments made in this programme.

In the budget speech of 1989-90, the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was announced as a new scheme to provide intensive employment in backward districts having acute poverty and unemployment.

When the 7th five-year plan came to an end, the government merged 2 major programs: National Rural Employment Program (NREP) and Rural Landless

Employment Guarantee Program (RLEGP) into a single program, the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, which was launched on 1st April, 1989 as aforementioned.

Key features of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana:

- Central assistance would be released directly to the districts.
- Not less than 80% of the allocations under the program were to be received by the village panchayats.
- The scheme was aimed at the people below poverty line. It aimed to provide 90 to 100 days of employment to people residing in rural and most backward areas.
- Panchayat Raj Institutions were given the responsibility to include every single rural area as a beneficiary of the Yojana.

The program was launched with the hope that it would provide fuller employment opportunity to at least one member of each family living below the poverty line. It was also hoped that the distribution of resources to village panchayats would result in increasing the coverage of the program to all rural areas, and also ensure better implementation of the program.

Shah Bano Case

Shah Bano, a 62-year-old muslim woman and a mother of five from Indore, was divorced by her husband in 1978. She filed a suit in the Supreme Court seeking alimony from her husband. The court in 1985 gave the verdict in her favour, and ordered her husband to provide her with alimony.

The Supreme Court argued that there is no doubt that the Quran imposes an obligation on the muslim husband to make provisions for or to provide maintenance to the divorced wife. The apex court invoked section 125 of Code of Criminal Procedure, which applies to everyone regardless of their caste, class, creed or religion, and ruled in favour of Shah Bano, ordering that she be given maintenance money, similar to alimony.

The case was considered a milestone as it was a step ahead of the general practice of deciding cases on the basis of interpretation of personal law and also dwelt on the need to implement the Uniform Civil Code.

The judgment became very controversial, and there were many protests from various sections of muslims. Muslims felt that the verdict was an attack on their religion, and their right to have their own religious personal laws. Therefore, muslims in general, felt threatened by a perceived encroachment on the Muslim Personal Law. At the forefront of these protests was the All India Muslim Personal Law Board.

Under pressure from the muslims, the government headed by Rajiv Gandhi introduced a legislation which reserved the Supreme Court verdict. The Parliament passed The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986 which nullified the Supreme Court's judgment. The act allowed maintenance to a divorced woman only during the period of 90 days after the divorce called as iddat, according to provisions of Islamic law. Therefore, the liability of the husband to pay maintenance was restricted to the period of 'iddat 1 only.

The act was criticized heavily by many experts as this was a great opportunity to fight for women's rights, but the law endorsed the inequality and exploitation that muslim women face. Rather than working on the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code as per the constitutional directive principle, the government brought amendments to overturn Supreme Court's ruling.

National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986

The general formulation laid down in the NPE 1968 did not get translated into detailed action. In early 1980s countrywide debates on educational reforms had begun. An urgent need to solve the problems of access, quality, quantity, utility and financial outlay, which had accumulated over the years was felt.

Thus, in May 1986, the new National Policy on Education (NPE) was introduced by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. It was named as "Special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize education opportunity". The main objective of this policy was to provide equivalent opportunity to all including women, ST and SC communities for education.

Key highlights of NPE (1986)

- Expansion of scholarships.
- Promotion of adult education.
- Employment of more teachers from the SCs and STs communities.
- Incentives for poor families to send their children to school regularly.
- Development of new institutions.
- For primary education, the NPE adopted "child centric approach", and then "Operation Blackboard" was launched to expand primary schools nationwide.
- Under this policy the Open University system was expanded with the Indira Gandhi National Open University, which was established in 1985.
- The policy also recognized "rural university" model, based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, to encourage economic and social development at the grassroots level in rural India.

Operation Blackboard

After the release of the National Policy on Education of 1986, the central government launched the centrally sponsored program called Operation Blackboard in 1987.

Salient features of operation blackboard

- To provide students studying in primary settings with necessary institutional equipments and instructional material to facilitate their education.
- There was a provision to provide salary for an additional teacher to those primary schools, which had an enrolment of more than 100 students. The scheme was extended to all upper primary schools in the 9th Five Year Plan.
- All teachers would be trained using the materials provided by the scheme, under a particularly designed teacher preparation program.

- Central government was to provide funding for school equipments and buildings.
- Flexibility was provided for purchase of teaching learning materials relevant to the curriculum and the local needs.
- At least 50% of the teachers appointed, were to be women.

Bofors Scam

Another major incident during Rajiv Gandhi's rule was a political scandal pertaining to defence deals. During the 1980s and 1990s, Bofors, a Sweden based company won a bid to supply 410 Howitzers to India. It was the biggest arms deal ever in Sweden; therefore money which was marked for developmental projects was diverted to secure this contract from India. Several politicians of Indian National Congress including the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi were accused of receiving illegal kickbacks from Bofors, in its bid to win the contract worth US \$ 1.4 billion.

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The scandal, which broke out in April, 1987, soon snowballed into a major attack on Rajiv Gandhi himself.

Bofors and the stink of corruption resurfaced in 1989, the Lok Sabha election year. Although, the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report had given a more or less clean chit to the Rajiv Gandhi, the Comptroller and Auditor-General's report cast doubts on the procedure for selection of guns and raised other issues as well. In wake of these findings, the opposition demanded Rajiv Gandhi's resignation. In the election of 1989, the

Congress failed to secure a majority. V. P Singh formed a coalition government with outside support of the left parties and Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP).

Indian Peace Keeping Force

Since 1983, the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam), a militant organization based in northern Sri Lanka, had waged an intermittent Civil war against the Sri Lankan government, to create an independent state of Tamil Eelam in north and east of the island. This intermittent civil war took form of a major unrest in the country, as it pitted the majority Sinhalese against the minority Tamils.

When thousands of Tamils fled Sri Lanka in the aftermath of July 1983 persecution in Colombo, India tried to engage the Sri Lankan leadership to defuse the crisis. Later India and Sri Lanka signed the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord in 1987 with the intention to end the Sri Lankan Civil war.

Main features of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord signed between Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President Jayewardene were:

- The accord expected to resolve the Sri Lankan Civil War by enabling the 13th amendment of the Sri Lankan Constitution.

13th Amendment: The Sri Lankan Parliament passed the Thirteenth Amendment to the constitution on November 14, 1987 with the objective of creating provincial councils based on the provisions of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of July 1987; also, the establishment of a high court in each province, and to make Tamil one of the official languages with English as the link language.

13th Amendment Plus' After the defeat of the LTTE, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa had given assurance to India as well as the international community that the government would go beyond the Thirteenth Amendment to devolve substantial powers to the Tamil majority areas under '13th Amendment Plus.'

- As per the agreement, Colombo agreed to devolve power to the provinces
- Sri Lankan troops were to be withdrawn to their barracks in the north, and the Tamil rebels were to surrender their arms.

An Indian Peace Keeping force (IPKF) was sent to Sri Lanka to implement the Accord, on Sri Lankan request. The main task of IPKF was to disarm the militant groups (all the warring groups and not only LTTE). This was to be quickly followed by the formation of an Interim Administrative Council.

IPKF was not expected to be involved in any significant combat, but gradually, within a few months, IPKF got embroiled with LTTE to ensure peace. The differences arose because LTTE tried to dominate the Interim Administrative Council, and refused to disarm themselves (which was a precondition to enforce peace).

IPKF was in an unenviable position with the Tamils resenting, it because the objective of the army was to disarm LTTE, which was fighting for the interest of Tamilians; and the Sri Lankans were resentful towards the IPKF because they saw it as a foreign army. IPKF suffered a great loss as around 1,200 were killed in action and several

thousands wounded. The Indian intervention ended abruptly when Sri Lanka's democratic process showed the door to the architects of the accord in 1989.

Rajiv Gandhi's Assassination

Rajiv Gandhi had to pay with his life for his involvement in the Sri Lankan Civil War through IPKF. Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in a suicide attack on 21st May, 1991 in Sriperumbudur near Madras, in Tamil Nadu. Rajiv Gandhi was campaigning for general elections which were to be held in 1991. The blasts, which also killed 14 others, were carried out by LTTE militants.

Rajiv Gandhi Era: A Critical Appraisal

The first impression of Rajiv Gandhi's era is that Rajiv Gandhi was a reluctant entrant into politics; forced to take the reins of power due to the assassination of his mother, who was in a hurry to find a quick fix to complex problems like Assam, Punjab and Sri Lanka.

Positives

- He ushered in a technological revolution, and brought in far reaching changes in Indian polity by enacting laws to ban defection, introducing reforms to panchayati raj system, and by taking the first steps towards economic reforms by liberalizing the license-permit raj system.
- He aimed to bring about reforms in multiple parts of the administration as well as other bureaucratic structures.
- Rajiv Gandhi propelled India towards technological revolution by initiating computerization of various government functions in the country, in spite of opposition from large sections of society, especially the opposition political parties.
- The accord in Punjab and Assam paved the path for peace in the years to come.

Negatives

- The biggest criticism was the reversing of the Supreme Court judgment in the Shah Bano case, and supporting the Muslim orthodox groups, which was seen as an appeasement of the Muslims.
- Rajiv Gandhi failed to deal strictly with management of the UCIL after the Bhopal gas tragedy and allowed them to escape the country without being held accountable for their negligence and dereliction of duty. He also failed to provide tangible succour to the victims and survivors of the tragedy who still continue to suffer.
- The intervention in Sri Lankan Civil war has been criticised as a step without preparedness, resulting in casualties to army and causing resentment in both the Tamil and Sinhalese population of the island neighbour.
- The government under Rajiv Gandhi came under a barrage of criticism for its handling of Bofors and HDW submarine scams, which ultimately, led to its loss in the next general elections.

The anti-sikh riots in the aftermath of Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984, and alleged role of Congress and its top leaders in the riots seriously diluted the country's and the Congress party's secular credentials. Rajiv Gandhi personally never made an attempt to bring a closure to the issue and sought to rationalise it by saying, "When a big tree falls, the earth shakes". The scandal, which broke out in April, 1987, soon snowballed into a major attack on Rajiv Gandhi himself.

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Rajiv Gandhi's Rule: Development of Science and Technology

Rajiv Gandhi, who served as the Prime Minister of India from 1984 to 1989, is widely regarded as the architect of modern India's technological transformation. His tenure marked a decisive shift from traditional, state-controlled economic and scientific policies towards modernization, innovation, and technological self-reliance. Rajiv Gandhi believed that science and technology were not merely tools of development but powerful instruments for social change, national integration, and global competitiveness. Under his leadership, India entered the age of computers, telecommunications, and advanced scientific research, laying the foundation for the country's future as an information and knowledge-based economy.

One of the most significant contributions of Rajiv Gandhi to science and technology was his strong emphasis on **computerization and information technology**. At a time when computers were viewed with suspicion and feared as threats to employment, Rajiv Gandhi recognized their potential to improve efficiency, transparency, and governance. He actively promoted the introduction of computers in government offices, public sector undertakings, banks, railways, and educational institutions. His policies led to the establishment of computer education programmes in schools and colleges, which helped create a generation of technically skilled manpower. This early push towards computer literacy later enabled India to emerge as a global leader in software services and information technology.

Rajiv Gandhi also played a crucial role in the **development of telecommunications** in India. He understood that communication infrastructure was essential for economic growth, administrative efficiency, and national unity. During his rule, the telecommunications sector was modernized through the expansion of telephone networks, introduction of digital exchanges, and improvement in long-distance communication services. Institutions such as **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** were strengthened to develop indigenous telecom technologies. These reforms significantly reduced India's dependence on foreign technology and improved connectivity across urban and rural areas.

In the field of **space science and technology**, Rajiv Gandhi continued and strengthened the vision laid down by earlier leaders. He provided strong political support to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), enabling it to expand its satellite launch capabilities and applications. During his tenure, satellite technology was increasingly used for weather forecasting, remote sensing, television broadcasting, and disaster management. Programmes such as INSAT and IRS were promoted to support development in agriculture, education, and rural communication. Rajiv Gandhi firmly believed that space technology should directly benefit the common people and contribute to national development.

Rajiv Gandhi's rule also witnessed major advancements in **nuclear science and atomic energy**. While maintaining India's commitment to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, he ensured that research in atomic science continued for power generation, medical applications, and scientific innovation. He also advocated global nuclear disarmament and presented a comprehensive action plan for a nuclear-weapon-free world at the United Nations. His approach reflected a balance between scientific progress, national security, and ethical responsibility.

Another important aspect of Rajiv Gandhi's contribution to science and technology was his focus on **scientific research and institutions**. He supported the strengthening of premier scientific organizations such as the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), and national laboratories. Greater emphasis was placed on applied research, innovation, and collaboration between scientific institutions and industry. This helped in bridging the gap between research and practical applications, promoting technological self-reliance.

Rajiv Gandhi was deeply committed to the **development of science and technology for rural and social development**. He believed that technology should not remain confined to cities or elite institutions but must reach villages and marginalized communities. Programmes were introduced to use scientific solutions for drinking water supply, sanitation, renewable energy, agriculture, and healthcare. Technologies such as biogas plants, improved irrigation techniques, and low-cost housing materials were promoted to enhance rural living standards.

Education and human resource development formed a core part of Rajiv Gandhi's scientific vision. He emphasized the need to reform the education system to make it more science-oriented, skill-based, and future-ready. Science education was expanded at the school and university levels, and special attention was given to technical and vocational training. Rajiv Gandhi believed that India's demographic strength could be converted into a technological advantage through education and innovation.

Rajiv Gandhi's policies also encouraged **technology imports combined with indigenous development**. While he welcomed foreign collaboration and advanced technologies from developed countries, he insisted on adapting them to Indian conditions and building domestic capabilities. This pragmatic approach helped India modernize rapidly without compromising its long-term self-reliance. His liberal attitude towards technology marked a departure from rigid protectionism and paved the way for later economic reforms.

Despite facing political opposition and administrative challenges, Rajiv Gandhi remained steadfast in his belief that science and technology were essential for India's future. His vision was often ahead of his time, and many of his initiatives faced resistance initially. However, the long-term impact of his policies became evident in the subsequent decades as India emerged as a global player in information technology, space research, telecommunications, and scientific innovation.

In conclusion, Rajiv Gandhi's rule represents a watershed moment in the history of science and technology in India. His forward-looking leadership transformed India's technological landscape and laid the foundation for the digital and knowledge revolution that followed. By promoting computerization, telecommunications, space science, scientific research, and education, Rajiv Gandhi redefined development in modern India. His legacy in science and technology continues to shape India's progress in the 21st century and stands as a testament to his vision of a modern, self-reliant, and technologically empowered nation.

On 31 October 1984 Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her bodyguards. Within hours of the assassination Rajiv Gandhi emerged as new Prime Minister of India. The Parliament was dissolved and Fresh elections held which gave a landslide victory to Congress. During his tenure, India's policy was significantly reoriented.

Despite initial disturbances, Indo-US relations interchanged in almost every field—political, economic, cultural and social. The economic ties remained particularly strong.

He prioritised India's policy towards his neighbours particularly Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Taking note of Pakistan's growing nuclear capability Rajiv Gandhi signed a significant agreement with Zia-ul-Haq as a confidence building measure, by which the two countries agreed not to attack the nuclear installations of each other. A spirit of optimism marked Indo-Pak relations during Rajiv Gandhi-Benazir Bhutto era. However,

in reality Benazir Bhutto was not free to take decisions on her own because the army was Pakistan's de facto ruler. Besides, Pakistan's growing nuclear capability continued as an irritant in India-Pakistan relations.

Turning to Sri Lanka, its deteriorating ethnic situation was accelerating passions of Indian Tamils. Being pressurised by the spiralling passions in Tamil Nadu to help Tamil brethren in distress in Sri Lanka, the Rajiv Gandhi government decided to airlift supplies of essential commodities for the people in Jaffna. This was counted by Sri Lanka as an encroachment of its sovereignty over its airspace. However, it induced rethinking in Colombo and brought the India-Sri Lanka Accord in August, 1987. Under the Accord Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was sent to Sri Lanka to supervise the cease fire, the surrender of arms and the peace arrangements in the Tamil areas in the North and the East was envisaged.

However, the Sinhalese nationalists had no intention to abide by Accord because they could not accept the presence of Indian troops on Sri Lankan soil. Premdasa's call for the withdrawal of the Indian troops led to recapturing by the LTTE of the areas restored by IPKF to Colombo's rules. The hallmark of Rajiv Gandhi's foreign policy was improvement of Indo-Sino relations. He equally concentrated on the two superpowers USA and Soviet Union. India signed with United States an agreement in March, 1988, for the transfer of high technology and subsequent acquisition of Super Computers. Both India and USA chose to expand their relations through the expansion of exchanges and promotion of trade. The United States though tried to extract most of the growing Indian market, but at the same time preserved its strong military relations with Pakistan.

During Rajiv Gandhi's term Indo-Soviet friendship came to be embedded in public consciousness. It helped India to ward off many hostile challenges—from China, from Pakistan, from the West in the form of support to Pakistan. It was beneficial for Soviet Union as well as it enabled it to contend with the isolation, which the West tried to impose on it. Rajiv Gandhi's first visit abroad as Prime Minister was to Moscow from 21st-26th May, 1985, which symbolise healthy Indo-Soviet relations.

The Delhi Declaration the joint-statement by Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi, which came during Gorbachev's India visit in November, 1986, endorsed Gandhian philosophy of non-violence as the guiding principle in international relations. New agreements were signed between India and the USSR on economic and technical cooperation. These cooperation centred around technologies of nuclear power, space technologies and high temperature physics.

Afghanistan's geopolitical importance made India set-up support for Dr Najibullah who overcame the Saur revolution and came at the helm. India even urged Soviet Union to continue tangible support to Najib and his party.

Rajiv Gandhi expressed solidarity with Africa in India's full diplomatic recognition of South-West African People's Organisation and his fight against racialism.

He also expressed solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people for a homeland. Indian foreign policy under Rajiv Gandhi not only affirmed India's tradition, but also reoriented foreign policy in the spirit of enlightened self interest to meet the changing needs of time.

Though he was advised about the threat for his life but never shied away from facing the challenges. He was involved in 'making India 'strong, independent and self-reliant'. Further, he never yielded to any sentiments. He knew that there was no room for sentiments while making foreign policy. He was ready to sacrifice anything in the interest of the country. Thus 'moral and physical courage' were the central part of his foreign policy making. He carefully chose his foreign visits as well as his policy had brought positive implications on India's diplomacy.

His breakthroughs have been standing today as good examples and as a guiding pillar for us to formulate policies with respect to many countries. It would be sure the present day diplomatic circle cannot articulate policy without pronouncing the name 'Rajiv Gandhi.'

His achievements in the area of India's foreign policy would not be wiped out or to be erased. The imprint of his legacy in the making of Indian foreign policy will stay longer in shaping of India's diplomacy and ever lingers in our memory. –Antony Clement

The end of the World War II in 1945 gave the birth to Cold War among the two superpowers. The U.S. and the USSR had respectively been spreading their ideologies (Capitalism and Socialism) across the globe. This was continued till the disintegration of the Soviet in 1991. International relations scholars described 1980s as the peak period of bipolar competition which had already expanded to the Indian Sub-continent. Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister of our country during that time (1984-89).

Throughout the Cold War many developing countries were on the hinge, had stuck without moving either side but wedged with Non-allied Movement (NAM). Moreover, at that time India was leading the NAM, a trustful head for the Third World countries. Further, throughout the Cold War playoffs, building relations with other countries were not only a hard task but getting a new partner would be seen as suspicious in our old friend's camp. Hence, in the Cold War era reaching out to new friends while keeping the old friends close to us was one of the difficult jobs and challenging. In general, articulating strategy and diplomacy would be really a tough choice but necessary. If a single word is spelt out wrongly would have greater consequences in the international stage. However, the neo-realist thinker Kenneth Waltz "believes that bipolar systems are more stable and thus provide a better guarantee of peace and security" (Jackson & Sorensen, 2003).

In this article let us discuss his important visits and how Rajiv Gandhi's state visits were received by the major-powers at the time of the Cold War and what India has gained from his diplomacy.

Since the end of the World War II (apart from the five established ‘major powers’ – the U.S., Soviet Russia, France, UK and China) India was the only country that has been expected, and has the required potential, to become a major power. Surely, this would not be a sweet tune to neither the U.S. nor China. So both the countries worked against India with the strategy of containment policy supporting Pakistan in South Asia. As we said, the various U.S administrations have their strategy to contain to keep India within the Sub-continent, have been well working with the help of puppet regimes in Pakistan.

On the other hand, China was blindly helping India’s adversary Pakistan to build nuclear arsenals and was then waiting to consider if Islamabad would lose the support of Washington at any point of time in a situation when the Soviet Union withdraws its forces from Afghanistan. Presuming the “U.S. inaction in the face of the Pakistani acquisition of nuclear weapons with the assistance of China, Rajiv Gandhi took the plunge and secretly authorized going nuclear, notwithstanding his personal sentiments to the contrary. The Agni was successfully test-fired in May 1989” (Baldev Raj Nayar & T.V.Paul, 2003).

During the Cold War period the international politics was tough but Rajiv Gandhi’s visits brought new friends and breakthrough in India’s diplomacy. Under his leadership it was a proud moment for India in the international system. The young Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s new approaches were received by the world leaders. He never goes for the state visits without having solutions for the long outstanding issues. Some of the divergent issues were converted into convergent because of fresh thoughts pouring in the Indian foreign policy making.

It has strengthened India’s authority in the Indian Ocean and particularly gave a turning point in India’s relations with the U.S. and China. His diplomatic visits to Sri Lanka or Australia – there were new lessons to be learned. Therefore, the international relations scholars described, “Indeed, his period in office saw India become more assertive in power terms in the region. At the same time Rajiv Gandhi’s government “walking on two legs: Economic reform and nuclear weaponisation” (Baldev Raj Nayar & T.V.Paul, 2003).

In May 1988, under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, India detonated her second nuclear test. But it was built, a decade ago under the able administration of Rajiv Gandhi. He was the architect of pro-poor liberal economy. Moreover, modernization in telecommunication sector, reforms in education, science & technology took place under his leadership. He introduced computer in consultation with Shri Sam Pitroda, the communication wizard and Rajiv is the builder of the 21st century India.

Rajiv Gandhi always looks at our neighbors in two dimensions. First, when they are in need of our help he immediately reaches out to them. Through this approach he always makes them feel comfortable but at the same time keeps India’s interest alive. Second, his policies are formulated to make the neighbors to stay close to New Delhi.

Also he never keeps quiet in Delhi by sending a statement through the diplomatic channel while our neighbors were facing troubles.

In 1988, ‘The Operation Cactus’ in Maldives to thwart the coup against President Abdul Gayoom’s government would be seen as the best example for his realist approach. However, he always gave room for ‘mutual cooperation.’ Thus his foreign policy had the mixture of realism and liberalism, maintains India’s power balance in the Indian Ocean Region. Particularly in the Male crisis before the superpowers turn their focus on Gayoom’s invitation, Rajiv Gandhi “responded with an overwhelming speed and efficiency. With less than 16 hours since President Gayoom’s call – Indian troops were deployed in one swift motion” and saved the Maldives government (Vishnu Gopinath, The Quint, Feb 06, 2018). At the same time since Feb 2018, 16 weeks had gone; the new political crisis in Maldives is seeking India’s help. The department of external affairs has sent few statements regarding the Male issue and then kept mum.

These approaches indicate that Modi’s government is not in a position to enhance India’s power projection in the Indian Ocean Region, but extending an olive branch to cool down China. These are the policy differences of the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the present Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It would be understandable that the relations between India and Pakistan were never in comfortable course. During his visit to the SARC Summit in Islamabad the ‘mutual effort’ of Rajiv Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto brought a new twist in ‘normalization of bilateral relations’ between India and Pakistan. “Both prime ministers pledged not to attack or assist foreign powers to attack either country’s nuclear installations and facilities. This summit was described as the dawn of a new era in Pak-India ties” (Shaikh Aziz, The Dawn, August 2016). Further, both the leaders applied step by step approach and “widened their official contacts initiating unprecedented military – to military talks to ease tensions on their northern border, where Indian and Pakistani troops have skirmished for years” (Steve Coll, The Washington Post, July 17, 1989). These developments suggest us that the visits of the state heads are not only mandatory but it should demonstrate some valuable output.

Rajiv Gandhi’s intervention in the Island-nation of Sri Lanka was the striking example for bringing peace and unity in Sri Lanka, and India’s articulation of power. This was also with the aim of keeping the U.S. out of the Indian Ocean especially not to get a foothold in Colombo in the time of Cold War. For the same cause, he lost his life at the very young age but he never folded his hands nor sat quiet when our neighbor was in need.

R. Hariharan a military intelligence specialist wonderfully writes, “The Rajiv Gandhi – Jayewardene Accord, signed in the Cold War era in 1987 was undoubtedly strategic – collectively address all the three contentious issues between India and Sri Lanka: strategic interests, people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka and Tamil minority rights in Sri Lanka. The Accord was unique with respect to India’s beginning with respect to

India's articulation of power, set a strong message to its neighbors, global powers and delineated India's strategic zone of influence in the Indian Ocean region”.

These are indications of his presumption on the importance of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) for our security and our responsibility in maintaining the freedom of navigation. Rajiv Gandhi was well presumed of China's interest in the Sub-continent. Hence, he had formulated India's policies toward in keeping our neighborhood closer to us. The whole of his tenure as the prime minister he thwarted the Chinese entry from the Indian Ocean.

The war with China in 1962 had completely stalled the ties between New Delhi and Beijing. Accepting the then Chinese Premier Li Peng invitation in 1988 he landed in Beijing. Prof. Harsh Pant from the Department of War Studies, Kings College, London says “A new leaf in Sino-Indian ties” (Harsh V. Pant, 2016). “This visit was followed by a flurry of high-level diplomatic exchanges” (David M. Malone, 2011). Further, Baldev Raj Nayar commenting about this visit a ‘turning point’, “When the two countries agreed to set up a joint working group to resolve the border dispute. A key element in the forward movement was the Indian concession not to insist on prior resolution of the border dispute, though without shelving it, but to move on to improve relations in other areas” (Baldev Raj Nayar & T.V.Paul, 2003).

Further, both the countries come to an understanding of in realizing to initiate the trust building and set up a border management mechanism. Today, the Doklum crisis or Chinese troops crossing into India in the Himalayan border has been managed under this institutional framework. Thus changes were made in the Indo-China relations. However, Rajiv Gandhi never promised to the Indian voters that he would do miracles if he voted for power. But Modi has promised to the Indian public if voted to power he would do wonders in six months. Does he bring breakthrough in India's border talks with China? Or does he raise the Doklum issue with China's president often meeting him in various bilateral and multilateral forums?

Further, in recent times Modi had to snub Dalai Lama to pacify China was not a policy mistake, but deliberately performed. He knows since the general elections are just ten months away from now if “China-triggered flashpoint would be more harmful for his political future” (Rajeev Sharma, dailyo.in). Hence, for his short-term political gains he decided to turning his back on Dalai Lama. Further, his ‘strategic restraint’ exposed in the case of crisis in Maldives also.

Rajiv's first foreign state visit was to the longtime friend, the former Soviet Union. Commentators viewed the first destination was deliberately chosen. Apart from the usual bilateral ties between India and Soviet Union, various areas from military procurement to civil nuclear technology, and mutual agreements in other sectors, Rajiv had always maintained India's ‘Special Relations’ with the Soviet Union. Because “Soviet Union consistently gave India valuable political, diplomatic and strategic support bilaterally as well as in international forums on Kashmir and other vital issues affecting

India's national interests" (Rajiv Sikri, 2009). However, in every meeting he raised the universal concern of the danger of nuclear weapons with President Mikhail Gorbachev. He stood against the illusion of 'limited nuclear war.' His presumption was at any moment nuclear weapons would not and should not be as a guarantor of global peace. At that time since India was the leader of the NAM obviously criticisms were poured out against India's 'Friendship Treaty' with the Soviet. However, Rajiv Gandhi bravely raises the global concern on nuclear arsenals equally with the U.S. and the USSR. At this point the young prime minister's articulation of foreign policy toward the West was sometimes concern for the Soviet leaders, but Rajiv comfortably expressed India's view. Meanwhile, the USSR understood India's rise through the prism of Rajiv Gandhi. Hence, the Soviet Union gave Rajiv Gandhi the 'status of a world leader.'

In the Cold War climate Rajiv Gandhi and his predecessors were compelled to manage the U.S.'s regional containment strategy. For the U.S., they well know India's leadership and major power aspirations. So they don't want to give a path for the Soviet's best friend India to rise out of the Sub-continent. At this juncture Rajiv decided to bring down the hostility nature of India-U.S. relations. He visited the U.S. in June 1985. "That trip has been hailed by many as likely to contribute to a new era of cooperation between New Delhi and Washington (Steven R. Weisman, The New York Times, 1985).

He gave a wonderful speech which was sweet and short by carrying a hint in his hand which had the strategy for both the countries to have greater understanding. At the Joint session of the US Congress he said, "I am young and I too have a dream. I have no doubt this visit will help to bring about greater understanding between our countries" (Youtube).

In his reply President Ronald Reagan said, "Today we opened up personal channels of communication." Further, signing a "memorandum of understanding" with the U.S., he promotes technological cooperation between both the countries (Baldev Raj Nayar & T.V.Paul, 2003). Hence, we should understand our present relations with the U.S. or China are the continuation of Rajiv's breakthrough made during his visits to those countries in his premiership.

Modi went to the U.S. several times in the last four years. What happened to the India-U.S. seriously negotiated nuclear deal? Are there any changes in the position of India and U.S. in the liability issue to implement the nuclear deal?

Conclusion

The 1980s has registered the crucial period in the history of Cold War. But each of Rajiv Gandhi's visits was well planned in advance; policies were made with sufficient consultations, and had definite trajectories to strengthen India's interest globally. His visits to Pakistan, China and the U.S., further, the way he was handling the crisis in the Indian Ocean islands would tell us how much is he committed in keeping not only India's ambition in the international system but also have delivered India's moral responsibility

to help our neighbors while they required our support. Under Modi's leadership our capabilities are not properly demonstrated.

Modi even evaded in visiting Maldives in his Indian Ocean Islands tour in 2015, the reason for his evasion was stated by his office as 'the time was not favorable for the prime minister to visit'. Rajiv Gandhi visited Pakistan in a crucial time of the Cold War. His office does not say that Pakistan's situation was not conducive to the prime minister to visit that country.

Though he was advised about the threat for his life but never shied away from facing the challenges. He involved in 'making India 'strong, independent and self-reliant'. Further, he never yields to any sentiments. He knew that there was no room for sentiments while making foreign policy. He was ready to sacrifice anything in the interest of the country. Thus 'moral and physical courage' were the central part of his foreign policy making. He carefully chooses his foreign visits as well as his policy had brought positive implications on India's diplomacy. His breakthroughs have been standing today as good examples and as a guiding pillar for us to formulate policies with respect to many countries. It would be sure the present day diplomatic circle cannot articulate policy without pronouncing the name 'Rajiv Gandhi.'

Hence, his achievements in the area of India's foreign policy would not be wiped out or to be erased. The imprint of his legacy in the making of Indian foreign policy will stay longer in shaping of India's diplomacy and ever lingers in our memory.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the main features of Indira Gandhi's Second Ministry.
2. Discuss the domestic policies of Indira Gandhi during her second term.
3. Examine Indira Gandhi's foreign policy after 1980.
4. Analyse the measures taken for national unity and internal security.
5. Describe the major reforms introduced during Rajiv Gandhi's rule.
6. Explain the significance of Panchayat Raj under Rajiv Gandhi.
7. Discuss the objectives of Operation Black Board.
8. Examine the development of science and technology during Rajiv Gandhi's period.
9. Analyse Rajiv Gandhi's approach to modernization and governance.
10. Evaluate Rajiv Gandhi's foreign policy.

UNIT - IV

National Front Rule – V.P.Singh - Mandal Commission – Coalition Governments – DMK –Communist Parties – P.V. Narasimha Rao – New Economic Policy -

Objectives

- To National Front stressed social justice.
- To Mandal Commission expanded reservations.
- To Coalition rule relied on DMK and Left support.
- To New Economic Policy liberalised the economy.

V.P. SINGH

V.P.Singh, was a politician and government official who was prime minister of India in 1989 – 1990. Singh studied at Allahabad and Pune universities and became a member of the legislative assembly of his home state of Uttar Pradesh in 1969 as a member of the Indian National Congress (Congress Party). He won election to the Lok Sabha in 1971 and was appointed a deputy minister of commerce by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1974. He was minister of commerce in 1976 -77, and when Indira Gandhi returned to power in 1980, he served as chief minister of Uttar Pradesh until 1982 and resumed his post as commerce minister in 1983.

Upon the death of Indira Gandhi in 1984, her son and successor as prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, appointed as minister of finance. In that post Singh's efforts to reduce governmental regulation of business and to prosecute tax fraud attracted widespread praise. Singh was transferred to the post of minister of defense in January 1987, but he resigned from Gandhi's cabinet later that year, after his investigations of arms-procurement fraud were squelched. Soon afterward Singh resigned from the government altogether and left Gandhi's Congress Party.

Founder of Janata Dal

Singh was the principal founder in 1988 of the Janata Dal, a merger of three small centrist opposition parties. Using the JD as the cornerstone, he soon began assembling a larger nationwide opposition coalition called the National Front (NF), which contested the general parliamentary elections of November 1989. After that election, Singh, as the NF leader, was able to form a coalition government in alliance with two other major opposition parties. He was sworn in as India's prime minister on December 2, 1989. After state legislative elections in March 1990, Singh's governing coalition achieved control of both houses of India's parliament. The coalition was soon riven by disputes having to do with religious and caste issues, however, and Singh resigned on November 7, 1990, after receiving a vote of no confidence in the Lok Sabha.

Singh was later one of the forces behind the broad United Front coalition that governed the country in 1996-97 with JD's H.D. Deve Gowda as prime minister.

Mandal Commission

Thirty years ago, on August 7, 1990, the then prime minister V.P.Singh made a historic decision that changed Indian politics and way of ensuring social justice. The then government decided to implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission, and open up reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBC) in government jobs. He announced that OBCs would get 27% reservation in jobs in central government services and public sector units. This was perhaps the world's largest affirmative action programme.

The decision changed the narrative of Caste that had been the basis of unbridled torture and ostracisation into the instrument of social justice. However, it also opened up a Pandora's Box, leading to widespread opposition and vote bank politics.

Historical Background

Establishing First Backward Class Commission – In January 1953, the Nehru government set up the First Backward Class Commission under the chairmanship of social reformer Kaka Kalelkar. The commission submitted its report in March 1955, listing 2,399 backward castes or communities, with 837 of them classified as 'most backwards'. However, the report was never implemented.

Establishing Second Backward Class – On January 1, 1979, the Morarji Desai government chose Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal, a former chief minister of Bihar, to head the Second Backward Class Commission. Mandal submitted his report two years later, on December 31, 1980. However, by then, the Morarji Desai government had fallen and Indira Gandhi came to power and the issue remained in the deep freeze for about a decade.

Implementation of Mandal Commission - In 1990, the then Prime Minister V.P. Singh announced in the Parliament that the recommendations of the Mandal Commission would be implemented. The announcement witnessed violent protests all over India, especially in northern and western India, and many students immolated themselves in protest and a few of them died as well.

Indira Sawhney Case – Following the severe opposition to the issue of OBC reservation reached the Supreme Court in 1992. This case is known as 'Indira Sawhney Judgement' or Mandal Case. The Supreme Court upheld the 27% reservation for OBCs but also stated that the only caste was not an indicator of social and educational backwardness. Also, to ensure that benefits of the recommendations of the Mandal commission percolated down to the most backward communities, the creamy layer criteria was invoked.

Aftermath of Mandal Commission

Opposition to Mandal Commission - It faced mainly opposition on two grounds, that reservation would compromise the merit and can the reservation be given on economic lines. However, it revolves around vote-bank politics which defeats the original purpose of reservation policy.

Defeating the Intended Goal of Reservation Policy: In order to fulfill populists demands, political parties continued to expand reservation to the extent that communities

who are well-off, avail reservation quotas. This has undermined the entire purpose of reservation, envisaged as a tool to address historic injustice, and made it an exercise in power distribution and employment generation.

Unequal Benefits and Creation of Political Divide: According to the Rohini Commission, out of almost 6,000 castes and communities in the OBCs, only 40 such communities had gotten 50% of reservation benefits for admission in central educational institutions and recruitment to the civil services. Thus has led to a political divide and demands for sub-categorisation, a process currently underway.

Cause of Social Disharmony: The policy of reservation has caused the resentment of those communities which did not have a share in the reservation.

Reservation has remained a powerful tool of affirmative action. However, after nearly 75 years of independence, India's socio-economic policy has transformed. Therefore, strong political will is required to review the reservation policy and establish an egalitarian society.

Implementation of Mandal Commission recommendations empowered communities. But the current architecture of reservations needs a review, with the aim of creating a just, inclusive and equal society, without pandering to populist movements.

Coalition Governments

In the first four Lok Sabha elections (1952, 1957, 1962 and 1967), the Congress party secured the required majority to form the government at the Centre. Even though there was a split in the Congress party in 1969, the minority government of Indira Gandhi managed to continue with the outside support of the CPI, the DMK and other parties. Again, the Congress party won the 1971 elections and formed a single-party government. However, the dominant Congress party was badly defeated in the 1977 elections. Since then, there have been a number of coalition governments at the Centre.

First experience of coalition in free India at the union level goes back to 1977 when non congress forces united under the leadership of Morarji Desai in the name of janta government. Ram Monohar Lohia In 1963 had propounded the strategy of Anti-Congressism or non congressism. He was of the opinion that since in the past three general elections the Congress had won with a thumping majority, there was a feeling among the masses that the Congress could not be defeated and it had come to stay in power for ever. Lohia invited all the Opposition parties to field a single candidate against Congress candidates so that the non congress votes won't get divided and common masses could come out of the illusion that congress can't be defeated. This formula of Dr. Lohia saw success in the 1967 general elections with the Congress party defeated in seven States and Samyuktha Vidhayak Dal governments formed by the Opposition parties of the time. Lohia's formula sowed the seeds for coalition politics in India. The first coalition was formed under the experience of Morarji Desai. He was the oldest man to become prime minister of India. The four party janta government remained in power for about two years i.e, 1977-1979. The power struggle in the government did not

allow Desai to continue anymore. Once the no confidence motion against Desai was discussed in the lower house mr.Desai tendered his resignation. The Janta government collapsed like a house of cards in July 1979 when floodgates of defections opened with the departure of various group leaders like George Fernandes ,H.N.Bahuguna ,Biju Patnaik and Mudhu Limaye .

Second coalition, a new coalition was formed with mr.Charan Singh as the prime minister in October 1979. He was the only prime minister who didn't face the parliament. This coalition had the support of CPI(M) and the CPI. On paper charan Singh had the absolute majority. But, once President asked him to seek a vote of confidence in the house within three weeks time. Mr.Charan Singh tendered his resignation before facing the house. Hence became the first Indian prime minister who did not face the house.

Third coalition was formed in the name of national front under the leadership of V.P.Singh in December 1989. V.P.Singh government was supported by BJP and the then single largest party congress which did not form the govt. as a political strategy. National front government had also the support of CPI, CPI(M),The RSP and the Forward Block. But, the period was short lived when BJP withdrew its support to V.P.Singh on the eve of Advani's arrest on the backdrop of his Rath Yatra from Somnath to Gujarat despite BJP'S warning to withdraw support if Advani is arrested. Though national front government remained in power only for 11 months. The then Indian president R. Venketaraman observes, "it is my impression that if V.P. Singh had headed a government with a clear majority instead of depending on a conglomeration of parties mutually destructive to each other, he would have given a good administration to the country. Being dependent on parties with different objectives and ideologies, he could not withstand pressures from discordant groups"

DMK

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, translated as the 'Dravidian Progress Federation' is a breakaway faction of Periyar's political party called Dravida Kazhagam. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) was formed in the year 1949 by C.N. Annadurai. It is a regional political party with a centre-left political position and political ideologies of Social Democracy, Democratic Socialism and Populism. Its mass base is in the states of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry in India. It formed coalition with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) from 1999 to 2004. From 2004 to early 2013, the DMK was in alliance with the United Progressive Alliance (UPA-1 and UPA-2, respectively). In March 2013, the DMK withdrew support from the UPA, over the issue of alleged human rights violation on the Sri Lankan Tamils. Periyar carved out 'Dravida Kazhagam' from the Justice Party in 1944. The newly formed Dravida Kazhagam was seen as a political movement, demanding the creation of a separate state for Dravidians, which would not have Hindi as its official language. The Dravida Kazhagam, in other words, was a political party fighting for the cause of the anti-Hindi belt in the Madras Presidency. Soon however, differences began to creep in between Periyar and other members of the party.

C.N. Annadurai, along with other senior leaders in the Dravida Kazhagam, such as N.V. Natarajan, E.V.K. Sampath and others, split from the Dravida Kazhagam and formed the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

The present president of the party, leading the DMK from 1969 onwards, is M. Karunanidhi, who has remained the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Veteran superstar from the south, M.G. Ramachandran, popularly called M.G.R, was an active member of the DMK in its growing years. He had joined the party in 1953, popularizing the party ideologies, aims and objectives. However, there were tensions between Karunanidhi and M.G.R, over internal working and leadership struggle within the party. Soon M.G.R exited from the party, forming his own political party which famously came to be known as the AIADMK. Karunanidhi has hence, been the head of the DMK, taking all important decisions.

The DMK won the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly elections in 2006, with Karunanidhi as the Chief Minister from 2006 to 2011, when the AIADMK took over the governance of the state.

Election Symbol and its Significance

The Election Symbol of the DMK, as approved by the Election Commission of India, is the "Rising Sun" with the sun rising between two mountains. This symbol is very significant as people in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry immediately connect with the symbol. In fact, there is an English weekly by the name 'The Rising Sun' made available in the state of Tamil Nadu.

The symbol of the "Rising Sun" is significant as it directly links with the history of the Dravidian people and their political movement, which was carried forward by Periyar and his political initiatives. The aim of the Kazhagam, according to the party documents, is to strive and forge a Dravidian cultural co-operation among the four states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka. This co-operation is essentially to be on the lines of linguistic similarities, such as to fight the dominance of Hindi-speaking belt. In other words, the DMK's election symbol is prominent as it portrays a "rising" spirit of the Dravidian people, so as to bring to themselves, the lights of life, like the rays of the sun. The DMK aims to work within the ambit of the Indian Constitutional ideals of sovereignty, unity and integrity, along with the principles of democracy, socialism and secularism. In other words, the "Rising Sun" symbol is apt to describe the political ideals and aims of the DMK.

National Executives of DMK

The leaders of the DMK, who are also the national executives of the party, are listed below:

Muthuvel Karunanidhi, President of DMK

Popularly called "Kalaignar" or the "artist" by members of the DMK, Karunanidhi has led the party since the death of its founder Annadurai. He holds a significant record in the last 60 years, of winning each election, from any constituency in Tamil Nadu. In fact

it is because of Karunanidhi, that the DMK holds the distinction of being the first party, besides the Congress, to win state-level elections with thumping majority.

K. Anbazhagan, General Secretary of DMK

Anbazhagan has remained an MLA for nine times during the various DMK governments in Tamil Nadu.

T.R. Baalu, Leader in Lok Sabha

Baalu is the leader of the DMK in the lower house of Parliament. He is a veteran leader and has been elected to the Lok Sabha four times in a row. He represents the Sripurumbudur constituency.

A.K. Jinnah, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha

Jinnah represents Tamil Nadu as a member of the DMK in the Rajya Sabha.

K.P. Ramalingam, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha

He represents Tamil Nadu as a member of the DMK in the Rajya Sabha.

Kanimozhi, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha

She is the daughter of president Karunanidhi and is the chief of the DMK's wing for Art, Literature and Rationalism.

Vasanthi Stanley, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha

She is a journalist and represents Tamil Nadu as a member of the DMK in the Rajya Sabha.

Achievements of DMK

As a regional political party, and by forming governments in Tamil Nadu, the DMK has had some significant achievements. Some of these are listed below:

- The DMK has initiated all-round development in the villages of Tamil Nadu, by implementing the famous 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme', which ensures employment to the youth in villages of Tamil Nadu.
- Impetus has been given to industrial growth in the state, by improving the condition of roads, building four-lane and six-lane roads and constructing bridges across the state.
- Various projects, linking up rivers within the state have been implemented. Examples of such projects are Cauvery-Gundaru Linking Project taken up at a cost of Rs.189 crores; Tamirabarani-Karumeniyaru-Nambiyaru Linking Project taken up at a cost of Rs.369 crores.
- A historic food security scheme has been launched in the state, wherein lakhs of beneficiaries have been given rice at rupees one per kilogram of rice. Also, distribution of palm oil, red gram, black gram, suji, maida and fortified wheat flour under Special Public Distribution system at subsidized rates have been initiated. Again, 5 Eggs or Bananas per week as part of Nutritious Noon Meal, has been started by the DMK.

- Zero interest on agricultural loans has been implemented, to help farmers carry on their agricultural activities more comfortably.
- More than one crore of people have been given free house sites in the state, for construction of a proper shelter with government aid.
- In protest against Hindi being made the official language, the DMK has successfully introduced Tamil as a compulsory language till 10th standard, in all schools in the state of Tamil Nadu.

Communist Parties

“The working class cannot act as a class except by constituting itself into a political party distinct from, and opposed to, all old parties formed from the propertied class.” (Resolution, drafted by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, adopted at the Hague Conference of First International, 1872).

The Communist Party works as the centralised vanguard of the working class the world over and aims at fusing socialist theory and socialist consciousness with the struggles and movements of the proletariat. The Communist Party has necessarily to function in the diversity of the evolving realities across the countries. The Communist Party has to fix and implement its programme and its tactical line in accordance with the social, political, and economic situation present. Lenin has noted that the Communist Party must correctly adapt the fundamental principles of communism to the features peculiar to each country. However, the common and immutable characteristic of every Communist Party is that it is guided along its path by the tenets of scientific socialism. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels spoke about how the theoretical consciousness and the *Selbsttätigkeit* or the spontaneous self-activity of the working class, complemented each other as constant elements in the conception of the Party, combining in different proportions in different countries. The idea finds a classical expression in the Communist Manifesto (1948). Here, Marx and Engels wrote about the communists’ clearer theoretical understanding of the “line of progress, the conditions, and the ultimate results of the proletarian movement.” The Communists are the most advanced and the most resolute precisely because of this clear understanding of the three ultimate results. The Communists move towards a unique and basic ideology as the struggles develop and the level of political consciousness rises.

Lenin always stood opposed to the theory that spoke about the spontaneous development of society. Lenin was always careful to distinguish between “trade union consciousness” which the workers could acquire spontaneously (*Selbsttätigkeit*) and “social democratic consciousness” which it was the Communist Party’s function to develop among them. The “new kind of a political party” that the Bolsheviks sought to build and towards which they waged a struggle within the then Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) was based on the postulate that the socialist movement must not be left alone to spontaneity in any circumstances if it was to be a viable success. We recall in this connection the dictum of Mao Zedong who while

speaking about revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the workers-peasants called upon the proletariat to be the “soldier-activists of the revolution” and to accomplish “with grit and resolve” the “programme of the revolution.” (On Contradiction, original text, 1937) Mao did believe that otherwise the Communist Party was in danger of losing its relevance as the centralised vanguard of the proletariat. J V Stalin firmly believed that politics and ideology should be “in command, all the time” in organising, motivating, and driving forward the communist Party.

The question of Party discipline is innately - almost organically - bound up with the political goal of the Communist Party. The Communist Party is deeply integrated into the entire range of issues and questions that are thrown up in the realm of society, politics, and economy. The Party has to build up and organise movements, struggles every day, and has to tackle a variety of circumstances and happenings that take place. It is natural that an exchange of opinion and even debate within the Communist Party becomes a necessary part of the process of development itself. It is a given that the Communist Party harbours the highest form of democracy. When V I Lenin first spoke about democratic centralism as the core of the Party exactly one hundred years ago, he was careful to emphasise the democratic content itself. Its task, difficult and involved, is to transform the inimical society within which it functions. It is not hard to realise that unless the highest forms of discipline guide along the Communist Party, it would face severe and mounting assaults from without. The conflict is an ongoing process—only the form changes from time to time. Sometimes it is open and overt, and at some other times, it is covert and hidden. The way to strengthen and integrate the strength of the Communist Party in this long-term conflict is to combine democracy with centralisation.

The Communist Party can never achieve its political goal without class struggle and mass struggle. The oft-repeated words of Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto (1848) need to be recalled: “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.” The three forms of class struggle are: economic, political, and ideological.

The economic struggle is the daily struggle for livelihood. It is bound up with leading one’s daily life. Even within the folds of the capitalist system, the economic struggle is able after a fashion to secure the interests of the working masses and even to bring about a modicum of improvement in their conditions. No basic problems could be solved. The economic struggle, however, helps in the advancement of the workers’ rights including higher wages, better working conditions, and enhancing other rights of the workers to some extent. The economic struggle has many manifestations and forms. The struggle waged by the Party and the mass organisations to implement a programme for the interest of the working mass is certainly a part of the economic struggle. It is a mistake to dub economic struggle as devoid of importance. It is in the arena of economic struggle that the mass of the toiling people could be organised. We must not let slip the

fact that the success of the higher forms of movements and struggles depend to a large extent on the success or otherwise of the economic struggle.

The Communist Party keeps in mind while it takes part in the economic struggle, the limitations of that struggle. The economic struggle is essentially one that is fought for the enhancement of rights and opportunities within the capitalist system itself. It never strikes directly at the capitalist edifice. According to Marx and Engels, the benefit of the economic struggle would lie not in its immediate consequence but in the continuous advancement of the unity of the toiling masses. Neither the people nor, indeed, the Communist Party would stand to benefit in general if the struggle is confined to economic issues alone. Lenin has reminded us repeatedly how political struggle can never be left for the uncertainty of the far future. Indeed, the conduct of economic struggle itself would become fraught with difficulties to an extent if the political struggle could not be launched with vigour. Lenin's words ring true for the situation prevailing at present in our country. He said: "A wide economic struggle could never be carried out if there is an absence of rights to conduct meetings and organise trades union, and if there is no mouthpiece of our own, and if one is not able to send representatives to the parliament." Lenin concluded that a political struggle was essential to earn these rights.

The core issue of the political struggle is the political intervention of the working class in the basic issues concerning capitalism. These include, for example, organising struggles on issues related to the state, the government, and the judiciary. It is a part of the political struggle to advance from the issues of working conditions of the toiling people and the ensuring of rights in the workplace to the greater and larger issue of securing and safeguarding democratic rights. Issues like the sovereignty of the nation, the foreign policy of the country, the struggle against authoritarianism and separatism go to augment the political struggle of the working class itself. The development of the political struggle instils in the consciousness of the working class the necessity of uprooting the capitalist system and to involve them in the greater struggle against capitalism.

A principal aim of the Communist Party is to enhance the level of political consciousness of the working class and of the toiling masses. The development of class struggle and mass struggle depends on the advancement of this consciousness. The task of building up of class-consciousness of the working people, of advancing their democratic consciousness, and the development of their socialist consciousness is not a small matter. It is a part of the class struggle itself. The system within which we function contains within itself the ideology of sustaining the status quo. The political philosophy of capitalism, the education system, and the cultural mores and traditions act to uphold the status quo. Thus, unless an ideology alternative to and opposed to the capitalist system can be advanced, there could never be any automatic development of consciousness of the working class and of the toiling mass. The reality that surrounds us teaches us the need to conduct ideological struggles on an emergent basis. In India, the

working class is divided within itself by considerations of religious mores, of caste divisions, and of regional and popular diversities. The fissures are constantly being opened out by the forces of religious fundamentalism and by other divisive forces. The corporate media is getting stronger every day. The task of the big and corporatecontrolled media establishments is to organise a constant campaign in favour of the capitalist class. This influences both the toiling masses and the middle classes. Unless one is able to put up a continuous stream of ideological campaign against this, it is difficult to build up the required level of political consciousness of the people. We have often seen how massive mobilisation could be organised in the realm of economic struggle. However, we are also witness to the fact that of many of those involved could be taken out of and beyond the arena of economic struggle. One notes that at the present point of time, attempts are being essayed to extend the hegemony of imperialism worldwide. There are sustained effort on to try to reject the concept of socialism itself. The question of organising an ideological struggle thus becomes a crucial and a tough challenge before the Communist Party.

Party Building and the Rectification Campaign

In a country as large and as diverse as India, the Communist Party has necessarily to be large with a deep and wide foundation among the mass of the people. It was from this realisation that the resolution was taken at the Salkia Plenum (1979) to make the Communist Party a mass revolutionary Party. The Salkia Plenum also issued a warning to say that the Party was not a 'mass' Party only, but a revolutionary Party. If the increase in the number of Party members is not in consonance with the advancement of the consciousness of the members, the apprehension about mistakes, errors, and deviations could be a reality. Beyond the improvement of the political consciousness of the individual members, one needed to look to the improvement in Party functioning. The two tasks must be carried out at the same time.

The number of Party members has gone up in the wake of the Salkia Plenum. The number of Party members has also gone up, although not as per expectation, in the different states. The bulk of the increase has taken place in the three states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal. In 1992 at the 14th Party Congress, a review of the post-Salkia organisational development was done. It was found out that not enough emphasis had been attached to improving the standard of Party members and that a laxity in this regard continued to prevail. The three areas of weaknesses generally identified were: drawback in the realm of political-ideological consciousness; inactive behaviour; and the trend not to work in a mass organisation. The question of the special situation prevailing in West Bengal can be brought in now.

In West Bengal, the number of Party member went up after the formation of the Left Front government in 1977. The Party had to modify its pre-1977 method of working to an extent and to fix the Party functioning in tune with the new situation. There is no doubt that the situation arising out of the existence of the Left Front government caused errors, mistakes, and deviations to occur to an extent in the Party. A campaign to

maintain revolutionary purification was launched in West Bengal by the Party as far back as in 1983. In the decades that followed, it was found out that the Party had started to suffer from the same kinds of errors and mistakes all over the country. Even in states where the Party was not in office, and is not sufficiently strong, harmful tendencies including parliamentarianism had become manifest.

The issues of the perception of Communist ideals and the erosion of the principle of democratic centralism have been included in the agenda of each Party Congress and state Party Conference. At the fourteenth Party Congress in 1992, the ideological and organisational document were adopted. The issue gained prominence during the fifteenth Party Congress, and following a detained discussion at the meeting of the Central Committee in October 1996, the resolution on a Rectification Campaign was adopted. The conduct of inner-Party struggle to keep the Party free from the damaging aspects of the rotten and class-divided bourgeois society is a continuous and ongoing task. In special circumstances, with the creation of favourable circumstances within the Party for the infiltration of bourgeois vices, it becomes imperative to strengthen the struggle within the Party against the tendency.

The principal content of the rectification campaign was the struggle against parliamentary opportunism. The deviation was not limited to the people's representatives of the Party. A crass ignoring of the tasks of organising mass struggles and building up and strengthening the Party organisation marks the parliamentary deviation. Another important issue of the rectification campaign concerned the fight against the erosion of the principle of democratic centralism. From these deviations appear factionalism and individualism within the Party. The third content was the preservation and safeguarding of Communist principles and progressive values. The fourth issue had to do with the advancement of ideological education in the Party and to improve the political-ideological standard of the party members.

There has been a great improvement in the strength of the Party in West Bengal. The Party members have exceeded 2.5 lakh. They are organised in nearly two thousand Local Committees and 26 thousand Party Branches. The Party runs most of the rural Panchayats and the urban municipalities and corporations. The pattern of functioning has changed and the Party has to undertake responsibilities keeping with the times. It is wrong to believe that the Party strength has increased solely due to the presence of the Left Front government. There are constituents of the Left Front other than the CPI(M) and their strength has not gone up. The chief reasons behind the increase of strength of the CPI(M) are: the correct stand of the Party, the Party programme and its implementation, the intense political campaign conducted amidst the people, and the role of the Party in the developmental work. At the same time, two factors have contributed to the enhancement of the political consciousness of the masses. These are: the intensity of work among the masses and without any personal interest, by the vast bulk of the Party members, and the pro-people policy of the Left Front government.

P.V. Narasimha Rao

P.V. Narasimha Rao, was a leader of the Congress Party faction of the Indian National Congress and Prime Minister of India from 1991 to 1996. He was born in a small village near Karimnagar (now in Telangana, India). He studied at Fergusson College in Pune and at the Universities of Bombay and Nagpur, eventually receiving a law degree from the latter institution. He entered politics as a Congress Party activist working for independence from Britain. He served in the Andhra Pradesh state legislative assembly from 1957 to 1977, supporting Indira Gandhi in her split from the Congress Party organization in 1969; initially called the New Congress Party, the splinter group took the name Congress Party in 1978. He held various ministerial positions in the Andhra Pradesh government from 1962 to 1973, including that of chief minister (head of government) from 1971. In that latter post he implemented a revolutionary land-reform policy and secured political participation for the lower castes. He was elected to represent Andhra Pradesh districts in the Lok Sabha in 1972 and, under Gandhi and her son and successor, Rajiv Gandhi, served in various ministries, notably as foreign minister (1980-84, 1988-89). Besides his political career, Rao was known as a distinguished scholar-intellectual who once was chairman of the Telugu Academy in Andhra Pradesh (1968-74). He was fluent in six languages, translated Hindi verses and books, and wrote fiction in Hindi, Marathi, and Telugu.

After Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in May 1991, the Congress Party chose Rao as its leader, and he became India's 10th prime minister after the general elections in June. Rao almost immediately began efforts to restructure India's economy by converting the inefficient quasi-socialist structure left by Jawaharlal Nehru and the Gandhi's into a free-market system. His program involved cutting government regulations and red tape, abandoning subsidies and fixed prices, and privatizing state-run industries. Those efforts to liberalize the economy spurred industrial growth and foreign investment, but they also resulted in rising budget and trade deficits and heightened inflation. During Rao's tenure, Hindu fundamentalism became a significant force in national politics for the first time, as manifested in the growing electoral strength of the Bharatiya Janata Party and other right-wing political groupings. In 1992 Hindu nationalists destroyed a mosque, leading to sectarian violence between Hindus and Muslims that persisted throughout Rao's term as prime minister. Corruption scandals rocked the Congress Party, which continued its long decline in popularity and lost control of several major state governments to opposition parties in 1995.

Rao stepped down as prime minister in May 1996 after the Congress party the designation had been dropped by then was soundly defeated in parliamentary elections in which it garnered an all-time low share of the popular vote. Rao resigned as party chief that September, and the following year he was charged with corruption and bribery in an alleged vote-buying scheme dating from 1993. Rao, the first Indian prime minister to face

trial on criminal charges, was found guilty in 2000, but his conviction was later overturned.

New Economic Policy

New Economic Policy 1991 (NEP 1991) marked a transformative shift in India's economic landscape, steering the country from a closed, centrally planned economy to a more liberalised and market-oriented one. Introduced amidst a severe economic crisis, the NEP aimed to stabilise the economy, enhance efficiency, and integrate India into the global market.

Key components of the policy included liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation, collectively known as the LPG model. These reforms dismantled the 'License Raj,' reduced the public sector's dominance, and opened avenues for foreign investment, laying the foundation for India's rapid economic growth in the subsequent decades.

New Economic Policy 1991 About

- The New Economic Policy 1991 was a comprehensive set of economic reforms initiated by the Indian government under former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and former Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. These reforms were known as the "LPG Reforms".
- Faced with a balance of payments crisis, dwindling foreign exchange reserves, and mounting fiscal deficits, the government recognised the need for structural changes to revive the economy.
- The policy aimed to reduce government control over the economy, encourage private sector participation, and attract foreign investment.
- By liberalising trade, deregulating industries, and promoting privatisation, the NEP sought to enhance productivity, stimulate economic growth, and integrate India into the global economy.
- Factors Leading to New Economic Policy 1991
- The New Economic Policy of 1991 was driven by a severe economic crisis marked by a balance of payments deficit, high inflation, fiscal mismanagement, and global pressure for structural economic reforms.
- Fiscal Mismanagement: Excessive public spending and growing subsidies led to high fiscal deficits, with internal debt rising from 35% to 53% of GDP between 1985 and 1991, straining government finances.
- Inefficient PSUs: Public sector undertakings suffered persistent losses due to bureaucratic inefficiency and lack of autonomy, resulting in poor productivity and mounting financial burdens on the state.
- Low Growth: India's GDP growth averaged just 3.5% before 1991, with industrial output stagnating and failing to generate enough employment or boost overall economic development.

- Balance of Payments Crisis: In 1991, India faced a severe balance of payments crisis, with foreign exchange reserves plummeting to levels sufficient for only a few weeks of imports.
- Globalisation Pressures: Competing economies like China and ASEAN nations liberalised earlier and outpaced India's growth, pressuring India to reform and integrate with the global market.
- Gulf War: The Iraq War, which occurred between 1990 and 1991, led to a spike in oil prices. Additionally, the inflow of foreign remittances from Gulf countries declined, worsening the economic situation.
- Gold Pledge: To avoid sovereign default, India pledged 67 tonnes of gold as collateral for emergency loans, signalling the severity of the crisis and the urgent need for structural reforms.
- New Economic Policy 1991 Objectives
- The objectives of the New Economic Policy 1991 aimed to stabilise India's economy, enhance efficiency, boost private sector growth, attract foreign investment, and integrate the Indian economy with global markets through liberal reforms.
- Stabilise the Economy: Control inflation (peaking at 17% in 1991) and restore forex reserves.
- Integrate with Global Economy: Open up the economy to global trade and investment, aligning with international markets and standards.
- Boost Private Sector Role: Encourage private enterprise by reducing barriers to entry and expanding opportunities in various sectors.
- Attract Foreign Investment: Create a conducive environment for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to bring in capital, technology, and expertise.
- Enhance Efficiency: Increase productivity and competitiveness by reducing government intervention and promoting market mechanisms.

New Economic Policy 1991 Features

- The features of the New Economic Policy 1991 focused on liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation, aiming to reduce government control, encourage private participation, attract foreign investment, and modernise India's economic structure.
- Fiscal Discipline: The government aimed to reduce the fiscal deficit to 3–4% in the medium term by cutting subsidies, limiting non-plan expenditure, and introducing tax reforms to enhance revenue.
- Monetary Policy Reforms: A tighter monetary stance was adopted to curb imports and reduce current account deficits, including higher import credit costs and new tools like long-term securities and treasury bills.

- Banking Sector Liberalisation: Banks were given autonomy to set deposit interest rates and decide maturity terms, ending earlier regulatory controls and fostering a more competitive and flexible banking environment.
- Trade Policy Reforms: The rupee was devalued by 18% to boost exports, import restrictions for exporters were eased, and capital goods imports were liberalised without prior government approval.
- Industrial Policy Reforms: Industrial licensing was abolished for most sectors; public sector exclusivity was reduced, and private entry was allowed in key industries, boosting competition and private sector involvement.
- Reforming MRTP Act and Small Industries: The MRTP Act was amended to remove approval requirements for expansion by large firms; small enterprises could now sell up to 44% equity to bigger companies.
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Reforms: FDI caps were raised from 40% to 51% in key industries, and the Foreign Investment Promotion Board was created to fast-track foreign investment clearances.

New Economic Policy 1991 Branches

India's New Economic Policy, introduced on 24 July 1991, is built on three core pillars—liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation—aimed at transforming India's economic structure through key structural reforms.

Liberalisation

- Liberalisation involves the relaxation of government regulations and restrictions in the economy to encourage private enterprise and increase efficiency. Key aspects include deregulation of industries, removal of trade barriers, and simplification of tax structures.
- Abolition of Industrial Licensing: Except for 18 industries (reduced later to 6), licensing requirements were eliminated, ending the "License Raj".
- Freedom to Expand/Produce: Businesses no longer needed government approval to expand capacity or diversify products.
- De-reservation of Public Sector: Sectors earlier reserved for public enterprises (like telecom, civil aviation) were opened for private players.
- Financial Sector Reforms: Interest rates were deregulated; CRR and SLR were gradually reduced. Entry of private banks (e.g., ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank) was allowed.
- Trade Liberalisation: Quantitative restrictions were removed; import licensing was abolished for most goods.
- Tax Reforms: Rationalisation of direct taxes and introduction of MODVAT (predecessor to GST) to improve compliance.

Privatisation

- Privatisation entails transferring ownership and management of public sector enterprises to private entities. The aim is to improve efficiency, reduce fiscal

burdens, and foster competition. Methods include disinvestment, strategic sales, and public-private partnerships.

- Disinvestment of PSUs: The government began selling minority stakes in loss-making and non-strategic public sector undertakings (PSUs). Notable examples include VSNL, BALCO, and IPCL.
- Strategic Sale: Instead of just selling shares, full control of companies was transferred (e.g., Modern Foods to Hindustan Unilever).
- Autonomy to Profitable PSUs: Navratna and Maharatna statuses were introduced, granting financial autonomy to profit-making PSUs like ONGC and IOC.
- Reduction in Reserved Sectors: The number of industries reserved for the public sector was reduced from 17 to just 3 (defence, atomic energy, railways).
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPP): Introduced in sectors like infrastructure, airports, and highways to combine the efficiency of the private sector with public investment.

Globalisation

- Globalisation refers to integrating the domestic economy with the global economy through increased trade, investment, and technology transfers. Measures include reducing tariffs, encouraging foreign direct investment, and aligning domestic policies with international standards.
- Currency Convertibility: The rupee was made partially convertible on the current account in 1991; full convertibility on the capital account remains pending.
- Trade Liberalisation: The EXIM Policy 1992 simplified export-import procedures. Peak import tariffs fell from 150% to 50%, integrating India into global supply chains.
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): An Automatic route was introduced for FDI in sectors like manufacturing, telecom, insurance, and IT. Equity caps were raised.
- Promotion of Exports: Establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), Export-Import (EXIM) policy simplifications, and incentives to boost exports.
- Joining WTO: India became a founding member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995, aligning its trade rules with global standards.
- New Economic Policy 1991 Impacts
- The New Economic Policy of 1991 significantly transformed India's economic landscape, leading to higher growth, increased foreign investment, expanded private sector participation, and greater global integration, while also posing new developmental challenges.
- Economic Growth: India's GDP growth rate accelerated post-1991, averaging around 6–7% annually, with double-digit growth in 2006-2007 and projections of 6.2% for 2024, making India the fastest-growing major economy globally.

- Increased Foreign Investment: FDI inflows surged from just \$97 million in 1991 to \$81.04 billion in FY2024- 25, bringing in capital, technology, and managerial expertise across sectors.
- Expansion of Private Sector: The private sector's role grew significantly after 1991, driving industrial modernisation, innovation, and job creation, with private enterprises now central to sectors like IT, telecom, and banking.
- Improved Foreign Exchange Reserves: India's foreign exchange reserves soared from \$5.8 billion in 1991 to a record all-time high of \$704.89 billion in September 2024, providing a strong buffer against external shocks and covering over 11 months of imports.
- Reduction in Poverty: Reduction in Poverty: Economic growth contributed to a decline in poverty rates, although income inequality became more pronounced. According to a World Bank report, India successfully moved 170 million people out of poverty between 2011-12 and 2022-23, marking a notable reduction in extreme poverty levels.
- Integration with the Global Economy: India became more integrated globally, expanding trade and investment ties, joining major economic forums like the WTO and G20, and signing multiple free trade agreements, boosting exports and foreign engagement.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the main features of the National Front rule.
2. Discuss the role of V. P. Singh as Prime Minister.
3. Examine the objectives of the Mandal Commission.
4. Analyse the impact of Mandal Commission implementation.
5. Explain the nature of coalition governments in India.
6. Discuss the role of DMK in coalition politics.
7. Examine the influence of Communist parties in coalition governments.
8. Describe the circumstances leading to the New Economic Policy.
9. Analyse the main features of the New Economic Policy, 1991.
10. Evaluate the role of P. V. Narasimha Rao in economic reforms.

UNIT - V

United Front Rule – Foreign Policy – National Democratic Alliance – A.B.Vajpayee – Golden Quadrilateral Project - Kargil War – I. K. Gujral - Deva Gowda - Manmohan Singh Goverments -Economic Reforms - development schemes.

Objectives

- United Front followed peaceful foreign policy.
- Vajpayee focused on stability and security.
- Golden Quadrilateral and Kargil War marked his rule.
- Manmohan Singh continued reforms and development schemes.

United Front Rule – Foreign Policy (1996–1998)

The United Front (UF) Government came to power in India in 1996 after the decline of single-party dominance at the Centre. It was a coalition of several regional and national parties, supported from outside by the Indian National Congress. The United Front ruled under two Prime Ministers—**H.D. Deve Gowda (1996–1997)** and **I.K. Gujral (1997–1998)**. Despite its short tenure and political instability, the United Front period marked an important phase in India's foreign policy by emphasizing regional cooperation, peaceful coexistence, strategic restraint, and improved relations with neighboring countries. The foreign policy during this period was guided by realism combined with moral diplomacy, continuity of Nehruvian principles, and adaptation to post–Cold War realities.

A major feature of the United Front's foreign policy was its commitment to peaceful relations with neighbouring countries, especially South Asian nations. The government strongly believed that India's security and development depended on stable and friendly relations in the immediate neighbourhood. This approach was most clearly reflected in the **Gujral Doctrine**, articulated by External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral. According to this doctrine, India should adopt a generous and non-reciprocal approach towards its smaller neighbours such as Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. The doctrine emphasized mutual trust, respect for sovereignty, non-interference, and resolution of disputes through dialogue rather than coercion.

The **Gujral Doctrine** marked a significant shift from traditional power-centric diplomacy to confidence-building diplomacy. It recognized the asymmetry of power in South Asia and argued that India, being the largest country in the region, should take the initiative in resolving disputes without expecting immediate returns. This policy helped reduce suspicion among neighbouring states and improved India's image as a responsible regional leader. It laid the foundation for long-term regional stability and enhanced India's diplomatic credibility in South Asia.

Relations with **Pakistan** during the United Front period showed cautious improvement, though challenges remained due to issues such as Kashmir and cross-border terrorism. The UF government emphasized dialogue and diplomatic engagement

instead of confrontation. Confidence-building measures were encouraged, including people-to-people contacts and cultural exchanges. While no major breakthrough was achieved, the tone of bilateral relations was relatively moderate and constructive compared to earlier periods. The government avoided aggressive posturing and sought peaceful solutions through bilateral talks.

India's relations with **China** witnessed continuity and stability during the United Front rule. The government followed a pragmatic approach based on mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. Border peace agreements signed earlier were upheld, and efforts were made to expand economic and trade cooperation. The UF government recognized the importance of maintaining stable ties with China in the post-Cold War international system and avoided unnecessary confrontation. This approach contributed to a relatively calm phase in Sino-Indian relations.

The United Front government also gave importance to strengthening relations with **Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal**. One of the most significant achievements of this period was the signing of the **Ganga Water Sharing Treaty with Bangladesh in 1996**, which resolved a long-standing dispute over river water sharing. This agreement was widely regarded as a diplomatic success and demonstrated India's willingness to accommodate the concerns of its neighbours. Similarly, India supported peace processes in Sri Lanka and maintained friendly relations with Nepal through diplomatic engagement.

At the regional level, the United Front government actively supported **SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)** as a platform for regional cooperation and economic integration. It believed that regional organizations could promote mutual trust, economic development, and collective security. The UF leadership viewed regional cooperation as essential for addressing common problems such as poverty, underdevelopment, and security challenges in South Asia.

In the global context, the United Front government pursued a **balanced and independent foreign policy** in the post-Cold War world. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, India had to adjust to a unipolar international system dominated by the United States. The UF government avoided excessive alignment with any single power and sought to maintain strategic autonomy. Relations with the **United States** improved gradually, particularly in areas of trade, investment, and technology, though differences remained on nuclear policy and non-proliferation issues.

The United Front's approach to **nuclear policy** was marked by restraint and caution. The government maintained India's nuclear ambiguity and refrained from conducting nuclear tests, even under international pressure. It opposed discriminatory nuclear regimes such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) but avoided provocative actions. This policy aimed at balancing national security concerns with global diplomatic responsibilities.

India's relations with **Russia** continued to be friendly and cooperative during the United Front period. Despite Russia's weakened position after the Cold War, the UF government maintained strategic ties in defense, energy, and technology. The historical Indo-Russian partnership was preserved, reflecting continuity in India's long-standing foreign policy orientation.

The United Front government also emphasized **economic diplomacy** as an integral part of foreign policy. With economic liberalization underway since 1991, the UF leadership sought foreign investment, expanded trade relations, and integration into the global economy. Diplomatic efforts were increasingly linked to economic development, technology transfer, and market access, especially with East and Southeast Asian countries.

In terms of principles, the United Front foreign policy reaffirmed India's commitment to **non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, multilateralism, and respect for international law**. Although the traditional Non-Aligned Movement had lost some relevance after the Cold War, the UF government continued to support the idea of an independent foreign policy free from great-power domination.

In conclusion, the foreign policy of the United Front government represented a **phase of continuity, moderation, and regional goodwill** in India's diplomatic history. Despite political instability and a short tenure, the UF government made notable contributions, particularly through the Gujral Doctrine, improved neighbourhood relations, and emphasis on dialogue over confrontation. Its foreign policy approach strengthened India's image as a peace-loving, responsible, and mature regional power and laid the groundwork for future diplomatic initiatives in South Asia.

A.B.Vajpayee

There was a period in the history of the Bharatiya Janata Party when Atal Bihari Vajpayee felt lonely and sidelined as a result of being second best to Lal Krishna Advani, the party's and Sangh Parivar's favourite for the longest time. Advani was many things to Vajpayee -- friend, confidant, long-time associate and fellow Swayamsevak but he was also a rival who commanded passionate, undying loyalty from the party's second rung and its cadre. The rank and file's devotion to Advani was in contrast to the near absence of a throng around Vajpayee.

This was around the time of the Ayodhya movement, and to visiting journalists Vajpayee's loneliness was apparent. It was something he implicitly acknowledged when in a husky voice laced with wit -- a Vajpayee trademark that over the years got honed into a beguiling craft, confusing and disarming friends and foes -- he would ask his visitors why they were wasting their time on a man who was "mar-gi-na-lised", each syllable stressed to underscore his irrelevance in a party which had all the time for Advani but none for him. The smile hid what at that juncture must have been a lifetime of hurt. He was 66 already and with Advani topping the charts, it would have required a miracle for him to pull ahead. The miracle did happen. But neither he nor those then

tracking the BJP could have known that his career's many highpoints, and its dazzling zenith, were still to come. In his memoirs, *My Country, My Life*, Advani attributes the BJP's meteoric growth from the sidelines of power to its centre to the Ayodhya movement, and says of the period: "It was the time when Atalji chose to remain relatively inactive."

Advani's commitment to Hindutva bordered on fanatical, the quintessential Ayodhya warrior who was beloved of the Sangh. Many previous battles spanning over a century and more had been fought over the ownership of the site where the Babri Masjid stood. But the raw, frenzied passion that Advani's Ram mandir campaign stirred in tens of thousands of people, rousing them to be Hindus first, was unseen in electoral politics. Under Advani's astute and driven stewardship, the land dispute acquired spanking new ideological overtones, and very swiftly, before the political class could comprehend the tectonic and life altering nature of what was being planned, Ayodhya became synonymous with Indian nationhood.

Maryadapurushottam Ram transformed from mythical hero of the Ramayana to totem pole of Hindu identity, self-respect and pride. If the Ramayana's Rama slayed Ravana with his simple bow and arrow, Advani's Rama would aim the power-packed trishul at the heart of Muslim 'appeasement' or the alleged indulgence of Muslims at the expense of Hindus. There was no evidence to bear this out but Advani claimed that Muslims, though in a minority in Hindu majority India, had received a share of the state's bounty and attention that was disproportionate to their numbers. He called this pseudo-secularism, or a deliberate misunderstanding of secularism to convert Muslims into a pliable vote-bank. As he notes in his memoirs, "The fragmented votes of Hindus and the consolidated votes of Muslims have created a pernicious dynamic in Indian politics. Sadly many parties succumbed to the lure of this vote-bank politics and justified it in the name of secularism." Advani called for a national debate on secularism, and declared from atop his Ram rath that he would not rest till a grand Ram temple was built at the very spot where the Babri Masjid stood.

How could a temple be built without destroying the masjid? For the record, the BJP said the masjid could be moved brick by brick. But the crowds that panted and rushed after Advani's rath understood the call for what it was and matched him roar for roar. "*Ram Lallla hum aayen hai*" (We have come to you, Lord Rama), the leader would thunder to reciprocal shouts from the jostling crowds of "*mandir wahin banayenge*"

Advani's speeches were incendiary, and the symbols he carried with him or received as gifts as his rath cut a bloodied path through the heartland, were shockingly violent in their imagery: the fabled Sudarshan Chakra, which could travel at the speed of light and kill an army, and vessels of blood representing determination and sacrifice. The Rath yatra jolted the learned elite and newspapers wrote editorials condemning it, but the more they protested, the stronger grew the BJP's core.

Vajpayee to the fore

Advani's ideological clarity and the reputation he enjoyed as an organisation builder, endeared him to the younger generation of party leaders such as Arun Jaitley and Uma Bharti. Such was Bharti's loyalty to the ideologue that she refused to consider Vajpayee her leader. On a visit to Bharti's house once, I found Advani's pictures on her living room wall but none of Vajpayee's. Even when she became a minister in the first Vajpayee cabinet, Bharti's priorities did not change and she chose to hang a picture of Advani above her desk at home. Asked the reason for this, she replied with a defiant, "he is my leader."

The short point of this longish exposition on Advani and his rise to stardom via the Ram temple movement is this: Advani's peak coincided with Vajpayee's trough and vice versa. Ironically, it was Advani's rise that set Vajpayee on the path to success. Advani's rousing speeches were plainly a call to arms; there were few nuances and the clear and bold spelling out of what he wanted -- for Hindus to awaken to their rights vis-a-vis Muslims -- won him delirious supporters, not to mention the allegiance and fealty of the party's second rung. But as Advani was to realise, while this support consolidated the BJP's hardline core, the hawkish, anti-Muslim image also acted as a barrier to the party's expansion. It was this trap that brought Vajpayee to the fore.

In the public perception, not matched by reality, Advani and Vajpayee were like chalk and cheese. Advani was the Hindutva hawk to Vajpayee's soft, indeterminate liberal. Advani was troubled by this contrasting positioning but figured soon enough that the black and white binary could be put to good use. As he recounts in his book, "For a long time after I launched the Ram yatra in 1990, to mobilise support for the Ayodhya movement, a peculiar asymmetry arose in the media projection of Atalji and me. Whereas Atali was seen as a liberal, I was labeled as a 'Hindu hardliner'. It hurt me initially, as I knew that the reality was entirely contrary to the image that I had come to acquire... it was then that some colleagues in the party, who were well aware of my sensitivity to my portrayal, advised me not to battle the image problem. They said, 'Advanji, in fact, it helps the BJP to have one leader who is projected as a liberal and another leader projected as a hardliner'."

Vajpayee was never the liberal that became his primary identity in the years he was the Prime Minister; indeed even in his death it is this unsupported assumption about him that has been most extolled. What Vajpayee had was a chameleon-like ability to change with the mood, and edit and modify his stated views, emerging none the worse for it. If anything, in the public eye the flip-flops became qualities of flexibility and tolerance that helped the BJP break out of the rigid mould that Advani's ideological brinkmanship had pushed it into.

Advani's definitive articulations left nothing to the imagination, his Hindutva was undiluted by obfuscation, and this is what endeared him to the BJP core. On the other hand, Vajpayee's gift with words and poetry, a lasting impression of rising above petty

politics for the public good, topped by a cultivated ambiguity about ideology, all added up to a picture of a liberal in an illiberal party.

It is easy to see why the layered Vajpayee who lent himself to multiple interpretations won friends outside the party. The Advani loyalists were party insiders whereas it was outside the party that Vajpayee was most valued and respected and to his last day. Prime Minister Vajpayee was way taller than the BJP.

It's a truism that virtue attaches more easily to a person in death than in life. Yet in Vajpayee's case, the outpouring of grief upon his passing on August 16, 2018, was genuine. Former allies who had worked with him in either or both the governments he ran mourned his death with a heart-felt sincerity that has almost vanished from today's fractious political space. The unstinting praise showered on the "consensus man" as the funeral flames consumed his mortal body conveyed equally a longing for a lost era and a regret for the incivility and violence that have become the signature attributes of politics under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The issue of acceptability

While Vajpayee certainly does not merit being compared with Modi, his lionisation has almost wilfully overlooked his many trysts with intolerance and bigotry. But, as Advani himself ruefully observed, the projection of Vajpayee as a liberal foil to Advani as the bigot was a demand of the time. And thus it is that the 'making of Vajpayee' began. In 1995, the BJP held a Maha Adhiveshan (high-level conclave) where Advani as the BJP president, announced Vajpayee's name as the party's Prime Ministerial candidate for the parliamentary elections of 1996. Why did Advani push Vajpayee to the frontlines when the party and the Sangh recognised him as the architect of the party's growth, one who brought legitimacy and glory to Hindutva by relentlessly pushing the envelope on it?

Advani further writes that some people (presumably including the Sangh) felt that he had made a "big sacrifice" by announcing Vajpayee's name. "However, I was steadfast. 'What I have done is not an act of sacrifice. It is the outcome of a rational assessment of what is right and what is in the best interest of the party and the nation.'"

Vajpayee's nomination as the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate came three years after the brutal destruction of the Babri Masjid by manic parivar affiliates in the presence of Advani, who, because he was unaccompanied by Vajpayee, became wholly culpable for it. The shame and ignominy made the BJP untouchable for potential allies. For a while the party basked in its 'splendid isolation' but returned to the mainstream coinciding with Vajpayee's elevation and in anticipation of the 1996 Lok Sabha election.

The BJP's first tentative steps towards its future allies resulted in small but significant breakthroughs – seat-sharing pacts with the Samata Party and the Haryana Vikas Party followed by a post-poll alliance with the Akali Dal. The 1996 election was a milestone also because the BJP became the largest single party, toppling the Congress from a perch it had held continuously since Independence barring the short period of

Janata Party rule. Based on its 1996 performance, the BJP won the Presidential invite to form a government at the Centre¹.

But respectability still eluded the party. In fact, the high point of Atal Bihari Vajpayee's first government was its inglorious exit after only 13 days. The opposition stood as one bloc, refusing to crack under pressure brought upon it by BJP's emissaries. The lesson the BJP learnt from the experience was this: What was more important than Vajpayee leading the party was the version of Vajpayee that would be presented to the world.

A heated debate followed the moving of the confidence motion by Vajpayee in Parliament on May 27, 1996. Opposition members questioned the BJP's divisive ideology, and Inderjit Gupta of the Communist Party of India flew at the 13-day old Prime Minister. Mincing no words, he accused Vajpayee of being double faced.

“Sir, my friend Shri Vajpayee who is a very very old friend of mine and I think we are on very good terms with each other. We have seen one face of him here in this debate, during this debate. All the media, the Press and everybody have definitely been very much impressed by his sobriety, his calmness, his appeal to everybody, his reasonableness etc. etc. But I regret to say that Shri Vajpayee on occasions also has a different face. This is the trouble.”²

Gupta went on to remind Vajpayee of a speech he made in 1983 that preceded the massacre of over 2,000 mostly Muslim men and women in Nellie in Assam. He quoted an excerpt from the speech: “Foreigners have come here; and the Government does nothing. What if they had come into Punjab instead, people would have chopped them into pieces and thrown them away.” Gupta called the speech inflammatory and irresponsible and said: “This is very different to the type of speech that he made here yesterday [when Vajpayee moved the motion].”

The ‘image of a martyr-statesman’

When Vajpayee rose to make his exit speech, it was such a masterly telling of his side of the story, his outlook and vision that the moment got recorded as one that forever changed the BJP's history. His audience, not just the members of Parliament but the many that watched him on television, heard him in rapt in attention. With the media finding its newest hero in Vajpayee, Gupta's accusations were forgotten.

India Today ran its story with the headline, “Atal Bihari Vajpayee goes down but with the image of a martyr statesman.” The magazine said the BJP had to exit because its liberal mask had convinced no one. Yet it was full of appreciation for the fallen Prime Minister. The magazine said Vajpayee's “sterling performance” had showcased a “martyr-statesman” at a time when television cameras beamed “turbulent, often acrimonious scenes enacted in Parliament” into millions of homes. *India Today* said it had information that the BJP planned to distribute video and audio cassettes of the debate across the country .

The marketing of Brand Vajpayee had started in earnest. The BJP began the laborious process of identifying, wooing and winning allies. Mission- BJP alliance rested on two planks: 1) Projection of Vajpayee as a middle-roader who had wearied of the Hindutva baggage. 2) The pursuit of at least one ally in each State.

By 1998, the resolve of the anti-BJP coalition to stand against the Hindutva party was in tatters. Two governments at the Centre, led respectively by Deve Gowda and Inder Kumar Gujral, had crashed out and the time was ripe for a realignment. With Vajpayee as its calling card, the BJP chipped away at the anti-BJP bloc and ensnared many of its former foes: The Jayalalithaa-led All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, the Ramakrishna Hegde-led Lok Shakti, the Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal and the Mamata Banerjee-led All-India Trinamool Congress. As the BJP-alliance hovered on the margins of victory in the 1998 Lok Sabha election, many more secular champions fell, all of them citing Vajpayee's liberal credentials. Among them, the Chandrababu Naidu-led Telugu Desam Party and the Farooq Abdullah-led National Alliance besides a number of smaller parties .

Muscular India, but a growing impatience within

The BJP's 1998 experiment collapsed at the altar of overvaulting ambitions of its own members, temperamental politics of its allies, and lastly due to constant interference by the Sangh Parivar which never forgot that Advani was its first choice. The early months of Vajpayee's first term were undoubtedly deeply fulfilling for the RSS. Thanks to the BJP helming the government, India had gone nuclear, bringing into the open a capability earlier governments had kept hidden from the world fearing sanctions. This made the RSS doubly proud of Vajpayee whose courage, it said, had transformed India from an apologetic, timid country into a nuclear power. Nuclear India was integral to the Sangh's idea of Hindu Rashtra. Hindu Rashtra rested on two planks: Hindu unity and a muscular nation exulting in its superior strength.

Yet for all the early euphoria, the Sangh-Vajpayee relations were mostly strained and praise for the Prime Minister was invariably interspersed with impatience at his seeming reluctance to toe the line. Later in 1998, the Sangh threw caution to the wind and issued a dire warning to Vajpayee. The December 27, 1998, issue of RSS mouthpiece *Panchajanya* carried a statement of the then Saha Sarkaryavah (joint general secretary), K.S. Sudarshan, slamming the Vajpayee government for going back on its declared policies: "Should the government act against the national interest, we will be compelled to speak out", he said, underscoring menacingly, "Every government is ours regardless of who heads it." Though Sudarshan did not specify what his peeve was, it appears that he and the Sangh disapproved of the economic liberalisation line that the Vajpayee government was pursuing.

Through all this turmoil, a government lost, and a war fought and won in Kargil, there was not a dent in Vajpayee's personal popularity. On the contrary, he was now a war hero, infallible and beyond doubt or controversy.

The unlikeliest allies

Vajpayee's personal popularity rating was 70 per cent when, in 1999, he returned to power at the head of an expanded National Democratic Alliance. The unlikeliest of allies congregated around him. Who would have thought that the rationalist Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam would trade a lifetime of supporting the Dravidian cause, for a partnership with the Hindi-Hindutva party? Or that the beef-eating parties of the north-east could break bread with a party with a commitment to cow protection?

The February-April 2002 anti-Muslim violence in Gujarat severely tested the perception of Vajpayee's philosophic detachment from his Islamophobic party and colleagues. The pogrom appeared to affect him, and this was reflected in two incidents, both taking place during his visit to Gujarat on April 4, 2002. Earlier in the day, Vajpayee walked through the Shah Alam Camp in Ahmedabad, which, in the aftermath of the violence, had become home to 9,000 displaced Muslims, men, women, and children rendered refugees in their own land. Perhaps moved to act by the enormity of the suffering he saw, Vajpayee called the violence a "national shame" and spoke of India having "lost face in the violence."⁵

At the airport the same evening, he addressed a press conference, where he was asked if he had a message for Narendra Modi. Turning to Modi, he said he would ask the Chief Minister to follow his Raj Dharma (administrative justice). Vajpayee said he himself followed his Raj Dharma. Though Vajpayee was characteristically cryptic, the interpretation was that as a Prime Minister doing his duty, he was asking the Chief Minister to do his duty which he wasn't.

Three months after the violence, Vajpayee would write to Modi pointing out that there had been a gross underestimation of damages to the houses of the (Muslim) victims of the violence which required swift rectification. The letter urged Modi to create a climate of confidence which would enable the victims to return to their homes. Vajpayee said where there was no option but to relocate the victims such as those "in the worst riot-hit areas like Naroda Patiya in Ahmedabad and Lunawada in Panchmahal ... only active government support during their relocation will protect them from unscrupulous elements." He added: "Needless to say that undue influence by such elements will only exacerbate the already complicated situation."⁶

Who were these unscrupulous elements? The Prime Minister did not name them but anyone with any knowledge of the period would have known that they resided within the BJP's extended family.

However, if these two sets of instances suggested that Vajpayee could be righteous in enforcing social equity and distributive justice, even if that went against the larger mood in his own party, that impression was wholly shattered by an intervening episode of irrational blaming of Muslims. That episode is the by-now well-known explosion of anger in a speech he made at the BJP's national executive meeting held in

Goa on April 12, 2002 -- a month and a half after the Godhra carnage and the severe, unrelenting retaliatory attacks by Hindu mobs on Muslims across Gujarat.

To quote Vajpayee: "What happened in Gujarat? If the conspiracy to burn alive the innocent, helpless and blameless travellers on the Sabarmati Express had not been hatched, the Gujarat tragedy could have been averted. But this did not happen. People were burnt alive..." Then in red-hot anger, "Aag lagayi kisne?"; "Aag phailey kaise?" (who lit the fire; how did it spread?)

Not stopping at that, Vajpayee went on to accuse Muslims everywhere of not being able to live in harmony: "Wherever Muslims live, they don't like to live in co-existence with others, they don't like to mingle with others; and instead of propagating their ideas in a peaceful manner, they want to spread their faith by resorting to terror and threats. The world has become alert to this danger."⁷

Seeing the reaction to this wholesale condemnation of Muslims living anywhere, the Prime Minister's Office quickly clarified that, Vajpayee's reference was to 'some' Muslims, not all.

But the damage was done. Not just the offending parts, the speech in its entirety was anti-Muslim. As Siddharth Varadarajan pointed out in a recent article in the Wire, "There is (in the text of the speech) no remorse about the killing of hundreds of innocent people, no apologies for the failure of the government to protect its citizens. He makes no attempt to distinguish between the criminal perpetrators of the Godhra attack and the innocent victims of the 'subsequent tragedy in Gujarat'..."

Which was the real Vajpayee?

So which was the real Vajpayee? The one who appeared stricken by the plight of Muslims in the Shah Alam camp? The one who asked Modi to follow his Raj Dharma, implying that he had not? The one who wrote to Modi directing him to protect Muslim victims of 2002 from unscrupulous elements? Or the one who made the vicious speech in Nelli? The one who spat out in anger against the Muslim community as a whole? The one without empathy for the victims whom he blamed for their own plight?

Throughout his political career, Vajpayee switched between roles, now vowing the world with his statesman-like large-heartedness and now pandering to the vile instincts of the raw swayamsevak. Vajpayee appeared stricken by the fall of the Babri Masjid, and BJP insiders say that he wrote out his resignation in anguish. But in later years a video recording surfaced of a speech he made in Lucknow on December 5, 1992, where he was seen looking happy and relaxed and supporting the milling assemblage. The video showed him asserting that there was no question of stopping the kar seva which had the permission of the Supreme Court and so must go on (throwing his arms about and speaking forcefully). Also that it was natural for people to assemble in strength: "Bhajan is not done by one person. Bhajan is done together with others ...we need even more people for kirtan ..."

Vajpayee was the Prime Minister at the time of the 2002 Gujarat pogrom. Initially he gave every impression of wanting Modi sacked. But in the end, despite his stratospheric popularity, and the plentiful support he got from his allies, he could not enforce his writ within his own party. Instead, he joined the party and Sangh ranks, speaking in the same sectarian tone that he seemed to disapprove of but perhaps did not.

Similarly, even while in an uneasy relationship with the Sangh, Vajpayee did not flinch from asserting his Sangh origins. Visiting New York in September 2000 to attend a session of the United Nations General Assembly, Vajpayee was all sober and Prime Ministerial. But no sooner was he done with the U.N., he wore a different hat and travelled to Staten Island for a date with United States-based Sanghi hotheads. Speaking from a platform put up by the fanatical Vishwa Hindu Parishad, he said “*Main pratham swayamsevak hoon eh adhikar koi chheen nahin saka* (I’m first a swayamsevak, and no one can take that right away from me)⁹.” Three months later, on the anniversary of the demolition of the Babri Masjid, a day deeply painful to Muslims, Vajpayee spoke of the Ram temple as “a national sentiment”. When questions were raised in Parliament – Jaipal Reddy described the remark as the ‘slip of the mask’ – Vajpayee modified the statement with the caveat that any solution to Ayodhya would have to be “peaceful and amicable”.

On Pakistan and Kashmir, he was every bit the statesman that his countless admirers -- who gathered at his funeral and the subsequent memorial service -- insist he was, in supersession of every flaw, every misstep. Kashmir held its first free and fair election when he was the Prime Minister. Vajpayee’s words “Insaniyat, Kashmiriyat, Jhamooriyat” have been immortalised. Vajpayee made bold to take a bus into Lahore, following that with a visit to Minar-e-Pakistan, a lofty gesture that won him admiration and appreciation in India, Pakistan and the world. Vajpayee was a grand creator of moods. When he wanted friendship with Pakistan, Indians joined him in his jhappis (hugs). When warring with the neighbor, Indians warred with him. Vajpayee’s relationship with Pakistan meandered from love to hate to ‘only business’, and at each turn he found his country standing with him. Very different from how severely Manmohan Singh was excoriated when he tried to normalise relations with Pakistan. Vajpayee’s achievement is made all the more remarkable by the hate flowing in today’s India for Kashmir and Pakistan.

There was something about Vajpayee that earned him flattery from the most unexpected quarters. In mid-2003, the RSS’s *Panchjanya* invited a wide spectrum of intellectuals to evaluate Vajpayee’s performance in office, M.J. Akbar, Vinod Mehta, and Saeed Naqvi among them. Akbar and Mehta were editors respectively of *Asian Age* and *Outlook* magazine and were regarded as Congress sympathisers while Naqvi, who was a commentator, claimed to be neutral¹⁰

Akbar said Vajpayee was “without compare in his own party and in the opposition. He understands the country and has an instinctive feel for its needs. He is above vices like greed and ambition.” Vinod Mehta eulogised: “Historians will give him

a high rating. To successfully run a coalition government when your own party has only 180 seats, you need charisma, imagination and organisational skill.” Naqvi went one up: “Vajpayee is much more than a statesman. On his side, there’s vision, there’s commitment and there’s will to power. Only a superior leader can simultaneously project mass appeal and carry off Ayodhya. And that’s Vajpayee. He comes from the RSS stable but has evolved enough to be able to appropriate the middle ground.” Remember, this was 2003, not 2018 when tributes flowed in commemoration of the life and times of the man.

So again the question arises: Who was the real Atal Bihari Vajpayee? The answer to this might lie in part in a poem he penned as a schoolboy:

Hindu tan man, Hindu jeevan, rag, rag mera Hindu parichay

(I’m a Hindu in heart and body, my life is Hindu, Hindu is my only identity).

But was that all to Vajpayee? A Hindu and only a Hindu? Yes and No. In his own words, he was primarily a swayamsevak. Yet he filled the Prime Ministerial chair in such a way that those who came into contact with him detected no fallibility, no flaws, and if they did, they chose not to recognise them.

Golden Quadrilateral Project

The **Golden Quadrilateral** is a national highway network that connects the majority of India's main economic, agricultural, and cultural centers. It comprises a quadrilateral linking India's four largest metropolises: Delhi (north), Kolkata (East), Mumbai (west), and Chennai (south). The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**, which is part of the Ministry of Road, Transport, and Highways, is in charge of the Golden Quadrilateral project. Although safety elements like guardrails, shoulders and high-visibility signage are used, the great bulk of the system is not access restricted.

Golden Quadrilateral

- It is a highway network that connects **Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai**, thereby uniting India's major industrial, agricultural, and cultural centers.
- The project began in 2001.
- It was **Phase 1** of the larger **National Highway Development Project**, which was initiated by the same administration in 1998.
- The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**, which is part of the Ministry of Road, **Transport, and Highways**, is in charge of it.
- When it was completed, the **Golden Quadrilateral**, which consisted of 5,846 km (3,633 mi) of four/six lane express roads, was the biggest highway project in India and the sixth-longest in the world.
- It is so named because it connects **Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai**, forming a type of quadrilateral.
- The fundamental goal of these superhighways is to shorten the distance and time connecting India's four megacities.

- This project includes the North-South corridor connecting Srinagar (Jammu and Kashmir) and Kanyakumari (Tamil Nadu), as well as the East-West corridor connecting Silchar (Assam) and Porbandar (Gujarat).
- The network also connects other key metropolises such as **Pune, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Kanpur, Surat in the north and Bengaluru, Visakhapatnam**, and Bhubaneswar in the south.
- The increased speed limits were possible as a result of the systematic and planned strengthening of the track and its infrastructure by removing bottlenecks in these sections at a rapid pace.
- This **featured stronger rails**, the installation of 260-meter-long welded rail panels, and the upgrading of bends and slopes, among other things.
- The maximum speed restrictions on the **High-Density Network (HDN)** between Secunderabad and Kazipet (132 km) have already been increased to 130 kmph.

Golden Quadrilateral - Benefits

- Increases the speed of **transportation** between major cities and ports.
- Connects key **agricultural, industrial, and cultural centers** of India.
- Allows for more **efficient transportation** of products and people around the country; enables industrial growth and employment creation in smaller towns through access to diverse markets.
- **Farmers** may transport their goods to large cities and towns for sale and export, resulting in reduced waste and spoilage.
- More **economic growth from construction**, as well as indirect demand for steel, cement, and other building materials.
- Giving a boost to **truck transportation across India**.
- Reduced waste in the **agricultural industry**, as well as lower vehicle running costs and time.
- For a vast country like India to preserve national cohesiveness and socioeconomic progress, an effective road network is important.
- It encourages fast **industrialization** by facilitating the cheaper and more efficient flow of products, people, and ideas across borders.
- The flexibility and mobility of the workforce are influenced by road infrastructure.
- **Rapid urbanization and population** changes in India necessitate an increase in road infrastructure expenditure.

Golden Quadrilateral - Significance

- Provided a significant boost to industry activity and productivity in regions within 10 kilometers of the network.
- Facilitated the exodus of emerging young enterprises from crowded major cities.
- The region located on the **Golden Quadrilateral** network had a 49 percent boost in overall production.

- Encouraging efficient decentralization by making intermediate cities more appealing to new entrants into the industrial sector.
- **Moderate-density regions** bordering the **Golden Quadrilateral**, such as Surat in Gujarat or **Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh**, had a more than 100 percent rise in new output. Industries demonstrated increased efficiency.
- Through greater connectivity, the **Golden Quadrilateral** has increased GDP, reduced transportation costs, created jobs, and promoted rural development.

Golden Quadrilateral - Challenges

- Tight budgetary space, as well as larger challenges of governance, doing business, climate change, and competition regulation, have made infrastructure expenditures increasingly difficult.
- Districts along the **north-south and east-west** (NS-EW) highways saw little change in inactivity.
- India has one of the **slowest average truck speeds** in the world, which increases fuel consumption and transit delays.

Kargil War

The Kargil Conflict was fought in high altitude mountains of Ladakh. This region is sparsely populated and it consists of diverse religious, linguistic and ethnic groups in one of the world's highest mountains. India and Pakistan fought for Jammu and Kashmir in 1947-1948 and the battle ended with the cease fire line which bisects the Baltistan district. Kargil was on the Indian Territory in the Ladakh subdivision of Jammu and Kashmir. Both India and Pakistan went to war in 1965 and 1971. This was the fourth conflict after independence. Previous this time Pakistan had sent infiltrators on the quiet who occupied important heights in the mountains. It became necessary to evict them from the heights.

Background

During 1998, several intrusions were carried out by the Pakistani sides in the places of Mushkon Valley, Marpo La near Drass, Kaksar near Kargil, Chorbatla sector and Turtok sector south of the Siachen area. The reason behind Pakistan reoccupying the India post in the LoC was to dominate the towns of Kargil and Drass, internationalise the Siachen glacier and Kashmir issue. In Batalik sector, an attack was carried out by the enemy troops over the Indian army who were on routine patrolling duty, under the team led by Capt. Saurabh Kalia.

Operation Vijay

There were three major phases to the Kargil War.

First, Pakistan infiltrated forces into the Indian-controlled section of Kashmir and occupied strategic locations. This enabled it to bring the road connecting Drass and Kargil within range of its artillery fire. This is how the Pakistan army infiltrated and occupied the heights of Kargil. Pakistan called its operation Al Badar.

The next stage consisted of India discovering the infiltration and mobilising forces to respond to it.

The final stage involved major battles by Indian and Pakistani forces resulting in India recapturing the territories held by Pakistani forces and the subsequent withdrawal of Pakistani forces back across the Line of Control.

1) In military terms 'Operation Vijay' was a limited conflict with 2 to 3 Divisions involved on both sides. Apart from keeping the plan top secret, the Pakistan Army also undertook certain steps to maintain surprise and deception.

2) Unlike other similar high altitude areas, the Kargil Mountains lose snow cover rapidly as the summer progresses. Below the peaks and the ridgelines are loose rocks, which make climbing extremely difficult. The movement of the troops is slow, labourious and time consuming.

3) The Intruders on the heights were a mixture of professional soldiers and mercenaries. They included the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 12th battalions of some Pakistan Army's Northern Light Infantry (NLI). Among them were some Mujahideen and members of Pakistan's Special Services Group (SSG). It was initially estimated that there were about 500 to 1,000 intruders occupying the heights but later it was estimated that the actual strength of the intruders may have been about 5,000.

4) The infiltrators, apart from being equipped with small arms (rifles and machine guns) and grenade launchers, were also armed with mortars, artillery and antiaircraft guns. Many posts were also heavily mined.

Indian Army Operations

(a) The Indian Army detected the intrusions between May 3 and May 12, 1999. Strategic planning for operations was carried out by the Indian Army from May 15 to May 25, 1999. Such activities included military operations, troops movement, artillery and other equipment were moved in and the necessary equipment was also purchased from friendly countries. On May 26, 1999, Indian Army carried out offensive action named Operation VIJAY to evict the Pakistani intruders.

(b) Indian troops moved towards Pakistani occupied positions with air cover provided by aircraft and helicopters. However 1AF was ordered not to cross the LOC as India did not want to enlarge the scope of war. A joint InfantryArtillery battle with air cover was launched on regular Pakistani soldiers of the Northern Light Infantry (NLI) who occupied high altitude mountain peaks and ridgelines. Indian troops deployed firepower that could destroy the intruders.

(c) About, 250 artillery guns fired on enemy positions to clear the infiltrators. The Bofors FH-77B field howitzer played a vital role in this operation. An innovative tactics was employment for Artillery firepower in battle. A massive exchange of fire broke out between the two groups. Three hundred Artillery guns, mortars and rocket launchers fired approximately 5000 shells, rockets and bombs on a daily basis at the enemy.

(d) Indian army used the 155 mm Bofors medium guns and 105 mm guns and prevented the enemy from interfering with the assault. The Arillary fire was so devastating that the Army captured Tiger Hill and Point 4875 on July 5, Mashkoh Valley on July 7, 1999. The Indian Army renamed the Point 4875 as “Gun Hill” in honour of the stupendous performance of the Gunners in the Drass and Mashkoh sub-sectors.

(e) Tiger Hill was bombed with high explosives which caused large-scale death and devastation and the Indian Artillery fired their 122 mm Grad multi-barrel rocket launchers (MBRLs). These were employed in the direct firing role audaciously without regard for personal safety. Even such incidents of the guns firing were telecast in full view of TV cameras and the nation watched in rapt attention for the first time in history of independent India.

(f) In the Batalik sector despite heavy casualties the Artillery OPs were established on dominating heights. Another victory was added when Indian forces recaptured Point 5203 and Khalubar on 21 June and July 6 respectively. With the effective use of artillery guns by India, the Pakistani forces started suffering casualties and their moral went down.

(g) Firepower played a significant role in weakening the Pakistani defences, destroying its battalion and headquarters and mainly the logistics supplies. In the Kargil war the Indian troops fired over 250, 000 shells, bombs and rockets, i.e. 5,000 shells, mortar bombs and rockets daily.

Role of Indian Air Force

The IAF launched an operation called ‘Operation Safed Sagar’ to support the ground troops during the war. Such role was limited due to the weather condition, high altitude, limited bomb loads and less number of airstrips. As the terrain in the Kargil area is at 16,000 to 18,000 feet above sea level, it needs well trained personal and special aircrafts.

On May 27, the MiG-27 flown by Flt Lt Nachiketa, while attacking a target in Batalik sector, developed an engine trouble and he had to bailout. Sqn Ldr Ajay Ahuja, in a MiG-21, went out of the way to locate the downed pilot and in the process was hit by a Pakistani surface- to-air missile (SAM).

He ejected safely but his body bearing gun wounds was returned subsequently by Pakistan. The state-of-the-art Mirage-2000s along with Mig -29 were used for electronic warfare, reconnaissance and ground attack carrying free-fall bombs. It also fired the laser-guided bomb with deadly effects causing considerable destruction to Pakistani bunkers on the ridges at Tiger Hill and Muntho Dhalo. In the Mirage attack on MunthoDhalo, 180 Pakistani troops were killed.

Role of Indian Navy

The Indian Navy blocked the Pakistani ports near Karachi to cut off the supply routes. The Navy was clear that a reply to the Pakistani misadventure had to be two-pronged. It was decided by Naval Head Quarters that all efforts must be made to deter

Pakistan from escalating the conflict into a full scale. From May 20 onwards the Indian Navy was on full alert for launch of the naval retaliatory offensive. Thus, Naval and Coast Guard aircraft were put on a continuous surveillance and the units readied. Rapid reaction missile boats and ships from the fleet were deployed in the North Arabian Sea for carrying out missile firing, anti-submarine and electronic warfare.

Sea Harrier aircrafts can take off vertically and do not need a runway. In 'Operation Talwar', the 'Eastern Fleet' joined the 'Western Naval Fleet' and blocked the Arabian sea routes of Pakistan. Later, the Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif disclosed that the country was left with just six days of fuel to sustain itself if a full-fledged war had broken out. This also means that our strategy of blocking the port of Karachi worked.

American Intervention during Kargil Conflict

During the outbreak of war, Pakistan asked American help in de-escalating the conflict. On June 18, the G-8 group of the world's leading industrial nations met at Cologne in Germany, and asked Pakistan to stop the aggression on the LoC and resume talks with India. The American President, Bill Clinton refused to intervene until Pakistani troops were fully withdrawn from the Indian side of the Line of Control. On July 4, Pakistan Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, agreed to remove all his troops and most of the fighting came to a gradual halt, while some troops remained in the LoC. The United Jihad Council rejected Pakistan plan for a withdrawal and instead decided to fight on independently. The victory is celebrated as Kargil Vijay Diwas on 26th July every year (Kargil Victory Day) in India. India resumed its control of all territory which was established in July 1972 as per the Shimla Agreement.

The World community criticised Pakistan for instigating the war, as both the Pakistan paramilitary forces and insurgents crossed the Line of Control. Pakistan tries to justify the world community but its diplomatic stance found few backers on the world stage.

Role of Indian Media during Kargil Conflict

During the Kargil War, the war stories and war footage were often telecast in Television and many websites provided deep analysis of the war to the public. This conflict was the first "live" war in South Asia with detailed media coverage. News papers and TV channels were allowed to be in Kargil and allowed to cover war live. Some other activities related to the media, which the Indian Government under took were as listed below:

a) The Indian government placed a temporary news ban on Pakistan, banning the telecast of the state-run Pakistani Channel PTV and blocking access to online editions of the Dawn newspaper. In turn Pakistan criticized India on curbing the freedom of press in India. Indian media claimed that the government action was in the interest of National Security.

b) The Indian media ran stories in foreign publications including The Times and The Washington Post, with creditable details of Pakistan's role in supporting the extremists in Kashmir.

Media coverage of the conflict was more intense in India than in Pakistan as war progressed. Indian channels showed images from the battle zone in a style similar to the coverage of the Gulf War by CNN (An American News Channel). Reasons behind the increased coverage were because Indian Government gave opportunity to the media to cover the war live. India has greater number of privately owned electronic media as compared to Pakistan with freedom to report. Pakistan journalists agreed in a seminar in Karachi that the Indian government had taken the press and the people into its confidence. According to some analysts, Indian media was both larger in number and more credible which may have acted as a force multiplier for the Indian military operations in Kargil and served as a morale booster.

The Kargil Review Committee (KRC)

After the war was over the Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajipayee set up an inquiry about the causes of Indian intelligence failures. The committee was to identify weaknesses in the organisation of the Armed Forces and suggest remedial measures. The Committee had, K. Subrahmanyam (Chairman), Lieutenant General (Retd.) K.K. Hazari, B.G. Verghese and Satish Chandra, Secretary, National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) who was also designated as Member-Secretary. The Committee's findings are based primarily on official documents, authenticated records and copies of documents. The report was not an investigation into what happened at Kargil, but a review of the developments and recommendations as to the measures to be undertaken to prevent such an occurrence in future. The report also gave for reaching recommendation to restructure our security set up.

You have studied about the number of wars fought by India after independence. Other than these wars that you have studied, Indian Army has fought bravely in a number of other places. In Siachen glacier, the Army had to occupy some posts at very high altitudes in extreme cold temperatures because Pakistanis were trying to occupy the area illegally. Similarly our Army was sent to Sri Lanka in 1987 to help the Sri Lankan Government battle the LTTE. In both these areas our soldiers fought with great valour and were awarded the highest gallantry award the Param Vir Chakra. Find out the names of the soldiers who were awarded the PVC in this war.

INDER KUMAR GUJRAL,

GUJRAL, INDER KUMAR (1919–) *prime minister of India (1997–1998)*. Inder Kumar Gujral, political leader and global diplomat, was born in Punjab's Jhelum on 4 December 1919. Young Inder attended Hailey College in Lahore, was elected president of its Student Union, and served as general secretary of the Punjab Student Federation. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's *satyagraha* campaigns, he soon joined India's freedom struggle and was jailed by British police, together with his mother,

Pushpa, during Gandhi's "Quit India" movement in August 1942. The tragic partition of India in mid-1947 forced the Gujrals to flee their home in what overnight had become Pakistan, settling down in Delhi. Inder volunteered to help care for many desperately impoverished Hindu and Sikh refugees, forced by fear to flee their homes in the aftermath of Punjab's hastily inept partition.

Modeling himself on India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, Gujral joined the Indian National Congress Party, devoting himself to vigorous political action and social reform. His refugee camp work in Delhi won him the admiration of those he had helped to find jobs as well as homes, and they elected him to serve as vice-president of New Delhi's municipality, over which he later presided for many years. Nehru remained Inder Gujral's role model both in politics and social activism. Like Nehru, he was inspired by Western humanism and socialist ideals, never losing his passionate faith in democratic India's capacity to create a better future for all its people, regardless of their caste or creed, their ethnicity, or their income. He also has remained a lifelong student of India's history, and, like his poet-wife Shiela, a devotee of poetry, memorizing many of the best works of Persian and Urdu poetry, as well as epic Sanskrit *shlokas*, and poems written in Punjabi, Bengali, and English. "India is a country of vast diversities," Inder Gujral reminded his troubled nation at one of its darkest hours in the summer of 2002—as both India and Pakistan remained at high alert due to threat of nuclear war—"of language, religion, ethnicity and historic experiences, but we have chosen to stay together as one Nation. Gandhi and our freedom struggle gave us our logo . . . 'Unity in Diversity'—not uniformity." He refused to abandon his faith in Indian secularism to any reactionary "Hindu-first" prejudice or battle cry preached by political opponents.

Inder Gujral was first elected to the Lok Sabha (the lower house of India's Parliament) in 1964, retaining his seat until 1976, when he resigned from Indira Gandhi's Cabinet, where he had served as minister of information and broadcasting and planning. Minister Gujral refused to take orders from Prime Minister Gandhi's younger son, Sanjay, who once tried to dictate which news stories he should approve or reject for publication during the "National Emergency" of 1975–1976. Gujral was again elected to Parliament from 1989 to 1991, and from 1992 to 1998. He then served as minister of external affairs in 1989 and 1990 and in 1996 and 1997, after which he also became India's prime minister, from 21 April 1997 until 19 March 1998, leading a multiparty Janata coalition government in New Delhi. Nehru and Gujral were India's only two prime ministers who served as their own foreign ministers.

Prime Minister Gujral presided over India's festive fiftieth anniversary National Day celebrations in New Delhi's Parliament at midnight on 15 August 1997. Speaking the next morning from the ramparts of Delhi's Red Fort, he reaffirmed India's faith in Gandhian nonviolence and Nehruvian secularism, promising to root out corruption at every level of government, and to resolve "peacefully through bilateral negotiations" differences with India's neighbors, including India's half century of conflict with Pakistan

over the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Though his tenure as prime minister proved all too brief to permit Inder Gujral to negotiate a peaceful end to Kashmir's tragic conflict, he unilaterally launched a number of confidence-building measures with India's other South Asian neighbors, including Nepal and Bangladesh, and his creative policy of "preemptive peace and friendship," known as the Gujral Doctrine, remains his most enduring diplomatic legacy to India's polity and history.

Political beginnings

Involvement in Quit India Movement

Inder Kumar Gujral, then a 22-year-old student at Forman Christian College in Lahore, actively participated in the Quit India Movement launched by the Indian National Congress on August 8, 1942, which called for the immediate end to British colonial rule through mass civil disobedience. As a member of the All India Students' Federation, he engaged in anti-colonial protests amid the widespread unrest that followed the movement's initiation, reflecting his early radicalization during college years influenced by leftist ideologies, including brief association with the Communist Party of India. Gujral's involvement led to his arrest by British authorities in Lahore, resulting in imprisonment for his role in the agitation, though the exact duration of detention is not precisely documented in primary accounts but aligned with the broader suppression that jailed over 100,000 participants nationwide by late 1942. He held no prominent leadership position within the movement, serving instead as a rank-and-file activist whose participation underscored the student-led fervor in Punjab but did not yield enduring organizational legacy. Upon release following the movement's subsidence by 1943–1944, Gujral shifted from direct confrontation to structured political engagement, eventually aligning with the Congress party in post-independence India, marking his pivot toward electoral and institutional avenues over sustained underground resistance.

Post-independence career in Congress

Gujral joined the Indian National Congress in 1964 and was elected to the Rajya Sabha, serving as a member of the upper house during the initial phase of his parliamentary career. In this capacity, he aligned with the party's efforts to consolidate power under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi following the 1969 Congress split, acting as a key lobbyist in her camp alongside figures like Dinesh Singh. His early roles emphasized legislative support for national integration and regional concerns in Punjab, though specific legislative initiatives tied to Punjab's infrastructure or economic growth during this period remain undocumented in primary records. From 1967 to 1976, Gujral held several ministerial positions in Gandhi's government, including Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Communications starting in 1967, followed by Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting in 1969. These roles involved managing parliamentary proceedings amid growing internal party tensions and overseeing communication policies, such as expansions in postal and telegraph services, though achievements were constrained by the Congress's dominant centralized control rather

than individual innovation. In 1975, as Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting during the declaration of the Emergency, Gujral faced pressure from Sanjay Gandhi and party loyalists to implement pre-broadcast censorship of news content, which he resisted, arguing that news drafts were confidential and not subject to prior review. This stance highlighted internal frictions within Congress over authoritarian measures, yet Gujral maintained loyalty to the party leadership without public defection, resulting in his reassignment as ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1976 rather than outright dismissal.

Rise through Janata Dal

Departure from Congress

Inder Kumar Gujral resigned from the Indian National Congress in the mid-1980s, amid growing personal and ideological tensions stemming from his earlier conflicts with Sanjay Gandhi during the Emergency period (1975–1977). As Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Gujral had resisted Sanjay's directives to manipulate All India Radio broadcasts and impose stricter censorship on media coverage of Indira Gandhi's speeches and government actions, leading to a public dressing-down by Sanjay on June 20, 1975, and his subsequent marginalization within the party. These clashes highlighted Gujral's commitment to relative press autonomy, contrasting with the Congress leadership's authoritarian drift, which contributed to his long-term disillusionment even after the party's 1980 electoral recovery under Indira Gandhi. By the mid-1980s, under Rajiv Gandhi's premiership following Indira's assassination in 1984, Gujral's exit aligned with broader anti-Congress sentiment fueled by emerging corruption scandals, such as the Bofors arms deal revelations in 1987, and perceptions of dynastic consolidation that prioritized family loyalty over meritocratic socialism—a legacy of the post-Emergency era where the Janata Party's 1977 victory had briefly challenged Congress dominance. Gujral's socialist leanings, rooted in his independence activism, clashed with what he viewed as the party's ideological erosion toward centralized control and tolerance of graft, prompting his departure from an organization he had joined in the 1940s. Following his resignation, Gujral aligned with anti-Congress factions and joined the Janata Dal upon its formation in October 1988 by V. P. Singh, a party emphasizing socialist principles and opposition to Congress's post-Emergency resurgence. He immediately contested the 1989 general election from the Patiala constituency in Punjab on a Janata Dal ticket, securing victory with 47.2% of the vote against Congress candidate Preneet Kaur, marking his successful transition to opposition politics. This move positioned him within a coalition of forces critical of Congress's governance failures, setting the stage for his later roles in non-Congress governments.

Electoral successes and ministerial roles

Gujral secured a significant electoral victory in the 1989 Indian general election, winning the Jalandhar Lok Sabha constituency in Punjab as a Janata Dal candidate with 239,795 votes, defeating the Congress incumbent by a margin of approximately 100,000

votes. This success marked his entry into national parliamentary politics after departing from Congress, positioning him as a key figure in the anti-Congress coalition. Following the National Front's formation of government, he assumed the role of Minister of External Affairs in V. P. Singh's cabinet from December 2, 1989, to November 10, 1990, during which the ministry navigated challenges including the end of the Cold War and India's response to regional instability. Amid the political turbulence of the early 1990s, including the collapse of the V. P. Singh government and the subsequent short-lived Chandra Shekhar administration, Gujral remained active in Janata Dal opposition activities but did not hold cabinet positions until 1996. He contributed to legislative oversight as Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce and Textiles from 1993 to 1996, focusing on trade policy reviews during India's economic liberalization phase.^[1] In the 1996 general election, Gujral was re-elected from Jalandhar, polling 266,384 votes and defeating the Congress candidate by over 110,000 votes, reinforcing his regional base in Punjab's Doaba region. This win solidified his standing within the fragmented United Front coalition, where his diplomatic background aided in bridging intra-party and alliance divides, though implementation of domestic policy initiatives under his limited prior roles yielded mixed outcomes constrained by short tenures and coalition instability.

Minister of External Affairs

Tenure under H. D. Deve Gowda

Inder Kumar Gujral assumed the role of Minister of External Affairs on June 1, 1996, as part of the United Front coalition government headed by Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, which relied on external support from Congress to navigate India's post-Cold War foreign policy landscape marked by regional instability and the need to reassert influence in South Asia. His tenure emphasized pragmatic engagement with immediate neighbors, prioritizing bilateral trust-building over confrontational stances, amid India's efforts to counterbalance Pakistan's influence within multilateral forums like SAARC and address resource-sharing disputes that had strained ties for decades. A pivotal achievement occurred on December 12, 1996, when India and Bangladesh signed a 30-year treaty on the sharing of Ganges waters at the Farakka Barrage, granting Bangladesh an assured 27,500 cusecs during the critical lean season (March 11 to May 10) compared to previous ad hoc arrangements, without India insisting on reciprocal concessions in other bilateral irritants such as border enclaves or trade imbalances. This accord resolved a longstanding grievance stemming from the 1975 interim agreement and divergent lean-season allocations (e.g., India's prior claims exceeding 40,000 cusecs), reflecting a strategic shift toward unilateral accommodation to foster goodwill with smaller neighbors, though critics later argued it exposed India's leverage without commensurate gains in security cooperation. Gujral also advanced overtures toward Nepal, initiating discussions on transit facilities and hydropower cooperation to ease Kathmandu's economic dependencies, setting

precedents for non-reciprocal aid in infrastructure without linking to border security concerns like Kalapani, amid Nepal's balancing act between India and China. These efforts contributed to preparatory groundwork for SAARC engagements, including confidence-building measures to mitigate India's perceived dominance, though progress was hampered by Pakistan's reluctance to delink bilateral tensions from regional initiatives, underscoring India's relative isolation in advancing subcontinental integration. By early 1997, as coalition dynamics shifted, Gujral's approach had begun alleviating anti-India sentiments in Dhaka and Kathmandu but faced domestic scrutiny for potentially weakening India's bargaining position against non-reciprocal actors.

Initial foreign policy initiatives

Upon assuming office as Minister of External Affairs in the H. D. Deve Gowda government in June 1996, Inder Kumar Gujral prioritized resolving longstanding water-sharing disputes with Bangladesh, culminating in the signing of the Ganga Water Sharing Treaty on December 12, 1996. The agreement allocated specified shares of the Ganges waters at the Farakka Barrage during the dry season from January to May, providing Bangladesh with a minimum of 23,000 cusecs when inflows exceeded 70,000 cusecs, and establishing a joint committee for monitoring and augmentation studies. Gujral's diplomatic engagement, including securing acquiescence from West Bengal's communist-led government despite local riparian grievances over potential shortages for irrigation and navigation in the Hooghly River, facilitated the breakthrough after decades of intermittent accords. While the treaty eased bilateral tensions and fostered goodwill under Sheikh Hasina's administration, it drew criticism in India for conceding leverage without addressing upstream conservation or equitable long-term augmentation, exacerbating domestic concerns in water-stressed regions. Gujral extended similar overtures to Nepal, focusing on economic linkages through the renewal and liberalization of trade and transit arrangements. The 1996 India-Nepal Treaty of Trade granted duty-free access to Nepalese goods in India without quantitative restrictions, aiming to promote interdependence and alleviate Nepal's landlocked constraints by expanding transit routes via Indian ports like Calcutta. These initiatives sought to integrate Nepal's economy more closely with India's, facilitating exports of Nepalese manufactures and agricultural products while renewing transit protocols for broader goods movement. However, the asymmetric concessions—granting Nepal preferential access without reciprocal commitments on security issues, such as border management or intelligence sharing—were critiqued for overlooking India's vulnerabilities to Nepal's potential alignments with third parties, including China, and for straining Indian customs enforcement. Efforts toward Pakistan yielded limited tangible progress amid persistent cross-border militancy. Gujral initiated unilateral easing of visa and travel restrictions to encourage people-to-people contacts and business exchanges, permitting Pakistani tourists and traders greater access to India without demanding immediate reciprocity on core disputes like Kashmir. These steps reflected an intent to build confidence but faltered against ongoing insurgent

activities in Jammu and Kashmir, supported from Pakistani soil, which undermined momentum and highlighted the challenges of asymmetric goodwill in the face of unresolved terrorism concerns. The period underscored early constraints in applying non-reciprocal engagement to adversarial neighbors, with no major bilateral pacts achieved before the government's transition in April 1997.

Premiership (1997–1998)

Formation of the Gujral government

The ouster of Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda stemmed from the Indian National Congress party's withdrawal of external support in early April 1997, culminating in the United Front government's defeat in a Lok Sabha confidence vote on April 11, 1997. This parliamentary arithmetic left the United Front, with its roughly 192 seats short of the 272 required for a majority, unable to govern without Congress's 140 seats providing tolerance. In response, the United Front's constituent parties selected Inder Kumar Gujral, then serving as Minister of External Affairs, as their consensus leader to potentially restore Congress backing. Gujral was sworn in as the 12th Prime Minister of India on April 21, 1997, heading a 13-party coalition that included the Janata Dal and various regional outfits such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Telugu Desam Party. The cabinet formation underscored the alliance's inherent fragility, incorporating ministers from ideologically and regionally disparate groups to maintain unity, yet reliant on ad-hoc negotiations with external supporters to avert no-confidence challenges. This structure, devoid of a stable majority, positioned the government as a precarious minority administration prone to collapse amid shifting alliances.

Domestic policies and economic management

Gujral's administration, formed in April 1997 as a United Front coalition, prioritized continuity in the post-1991 economic liberalization framework inherited from previous governments, without initiating substantial new structural reforms amid ongoing coalition negotiations and political fragility. The focus remained on incremental measures in agriculture and social welfare, such as sustaining input subsidies for fertilizers and irrigation to support rural livelihoods, though these built on existing schemes without innovative expansions or efficiency enhancements. Poverty alleviation efforts emphasized targeted public distribution systems and rural employment programs, yet lacked bold reallocations or evaluations to address persistent rural distress, reflecting the government's constrained agenda.[46] Economic management grappled with moderating growth and fiscal pressures, as real GDP expanded by 5 percent in fiscal year 1997-98, down from 7.5 percent the prior year, attributable to subdued industrial investment and agricultural variability rather than policy reversals. The central government's fiscal deficit was budgeted at 4.9 percent of GDP but settled around 5-6 percent, financed largely through domestic borrowing and market instruments, which averted immediate liquidity crises but contributed to rising public debt without corresponding productivity gains. Coalition dynamics induced policy paralysis, limiting

legislative advancements in fiscal consolidation or subsidy rationalization, with the United Front's Common Minimum Programme yielding modest implementation short of promised social equity targets. Despite Janata Dal's historical emphasis on anti-corruption and equitable growth, Gujral's tenure saw no prominent drives against graft or administrative streamlining, as parliamentary sessions were overshadowed by confidence motions and inter-party bargaining, resulting in negligible passage of economy-related bills. Critics, including business lobbies, highlighted the era's stagnation in deregulation, contrasting with earlier liberalization momentum, though the government assured industrial support to prevent outright reversal. Overall, domestic governance under Gujral underscored the challenges of minority coalitions in sustaining reformist impulses, with fiscal stability achieved reactively rather than through proactive measures.

Coalition instability and resignation

The United Front government under Inder Kumar Gujral collapsed on November 28, 1997, when the Indian National Congress withdrew its external parliamentary support, prompting Gujral's immediate resignation to President K. R. Narayanan. This decision followed Congress's unmet demands for the removal of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) ministers implicated in the Jain hawala scandal, a money-laundering case involving politicians; Gujral refused, citing the need to maintain coalition unity amid ongoing investigations by the Central Bureau of Investigation. The withdrawal was not triggered by external pressures or conspiracies but by tactical maneuvering from Congress, which sought to reposition itself advantageously ahead of impending general elections by exploiting the government's minority status. The episode exposed the United Front's structural frailties, as the coalition—comprising ideologically divergent entities like the socialist-leaning Janata Dal, DMK's ethno-regional Dravidianism, Telugu Desam Party's state-centric populism, and smaller allies such as the Asom Gana Parishad—lacked a cohesive policy agenda beyond anti-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and anti-Congress opposition. With only around 192 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha, the Front depended entirely on Congress's approximately 140 seats for a working majority, creating a precarious dynamic where the supporter could dictate terms or precipitate collapse at will. Regional allies' defections, particularly DMK's entrenchment despite scandals, further eroded internal trust, as parties prioritized parochial interests over national governance. Gujral did not seek or receive authority for fresh mid-term polls; instead, the President dissolved the Lok Sabha, leading to general elections from February 16 to March 7, 1998, which the BJP won with 182 seats, enabling Atal Bihari Vajpayee to form a coalition government sworn in on March 19, 1998. This outcome reiterated a post-Emergency pattern in Indian politics, where non-Congress coalitions since 1977—such as the Janata Party government of 1977–1979 and V. P. Singh's National Front of 1989–1990—have repeatedly unraveled due to analogous dependencies

on Congress support and inherent ideological fragmentation among regional and caste-based outfits, rendering stable majorities elusive without a dominant national anchor.

Foreign policy framework

Core principles of the Gujral Doctrine

The Gujral Doctrine, first articulated by Inder Kumar Gujral during his tenure as India's Minister of External Affairs in September 1996 at the Chatham House in London, establishes a framework for India's foreign relations with smaller South Asian neighbors, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, explicitly excluding Pakistan due to unresolved bilateral tensions. The doctrine's foundational tenet is non-reciprocity, whereby India commits to unilateral gestures of goodwill and accommodation without demanding equivalent returns, recognizing the inherent asymmetry in power dynamics where India's size and capabilities impose a responsibility to prioritize regional stability over transactional equity. This approach, reiterated by Gujral in his January 1997 speech at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies in Colombo, posits that such concessions foster trust and cooperative security, drawing on principles of good faith to mitigate historical suspicions rather than enforcing strict balance-of-power calculations. The doctrine delineates five interlocking principles to operationalize this vision:

- Non-reciprocity with smaller neighbors: India extends support and accommodations "in good faith and trust" without expecting reciprocity, as Gujral stated: "with its neighbours like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, India does not ask for reciprocity, but gives and accommodates what it can."
- Non-interference in internal affairs: Mutual abstention from meddling in domestic matters to preserve sovereignty and autonomy.
- Non-use of territory: Neighbors refrain from allowing their soil to be used against India's security or vice versa, promoting collective restraint.
- Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity: Upholding borders and independence as inviolable, countering irredentist or expansionist impulses.
- Peaceful bilateral dispute resolution: Conflicts addressed through direct negotiations rather than multilateral forums or coercion, emphasizing dialogue over adjudication.

These principles, formalized under the United Front government in 1996–1997, shift emphasis from hard power balancing to soft power inducements, aiming to embed India's regional primacy through voluntary alignment rather than enforced dominance, though they presuppose compliant responses from recipients without built-in verification.

Implementation toward smaller neighbors

Under Gujral's foreign policy, the implementation of the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty with Bangladesh, signed on December 12, 1996, proceeded without reported disputes during the 1997-1998 dry seasons, adhering to the formula allocating 35,000

cusecs to Bangladesh when inflows exceeded 70,000 cusecs at Farakka. This non-reciprocal accommodation resolved a longstanding irritant, fostering goodwill and correlating with accelerated bilateral trade growth, as India's exports to Bangladesh expanded at an average annual rate of 9.1% from 1996-97 onward. Empirical metrics from the period indicate stabilized water flows supported Bangladesh's agriculture without compromising India's upstream needs, though the treaty's 30-year term highlighted India's unilateral concessions absent equivalent reciprocity on issues like border security. With Nepal, the 1997 renewal of the India-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaty extended access to additional Indian ports, including Kolkata, simplifying procedures and reducing Nepal's dependence on limited routes, which facilitated a measurable uptick in bilateral trade volumes during Gujral's tenure. This aligned with the doctrine's emphasis on asymmetric generosity, providing Nepal duty-free market access for its goods while forgoing demands for reciprocal tariffs, resulting in trade expansion from approximately \$200 million in the mid-1990s to higher flows post-implementation, driven by eased transit logistics. However, such concessions drew contemporary criticism for eroding India's bargaining position, as Nepal leveraged improved connectivity to diversify imports without addressing India's concerns over third-party arms transit. Relations with Sri Lanka saw offers of humanitarian assistance amid the LTTE insurgency, including potential food and medical drops into government-held areas, though actual delivery remained limited by India's internal Tamil political dynamics and aversion to re-engagement post-IPKF withdrawal. Gujral's administration prioritized diplomatic support for Colombo's territorial integrity without military involvement, yielding short-term enhancements in economic cooperation but no quantifiable surge in aid volumes or conflict resolution metrics during 1997-1998. Bhutan and Maldives benefited from sustained economic aid and infrastructure support under the doctrine, maintaining alignment without major concessions, as Bhutan's hydropower projects advanced via Indian funding and Maldives received developmental grants, though lacking specific trade data spikes attributable solely to this period. Overall, these efforts produced empirical short-term successes in dispute mitigation and connectivity—evidenced by dispute-free water sharing and transit-enabled trade growth—but faced long-term critiques for insufficient reciprocity, enabling external actors like China to expand influence through competing infrastructure deals in Nepal by the early 2000s.

Approach to Pakistan and strategic repercussions

The Gujral Doctrine formally excluded Pakistan from its non-reciprocal framework of concessions to smaller neighbors, classifying it instead as a peer adversary marked by ongoing hostility, including cross-border terrorism and disputes over Kashmir. Despite this exclusion, Gujral as External Affairs Minister and later Prime Minister extended elements of the approach to Pakistan, such as easing visa and travel restrictions to promote people-to-people contacts, which served as precursors to later initiatives like the 1999 Lahore bus diplomacy under Vajpayee. These steps

aimed at building trust without requiring Pakistani concessions on core issues like Kashmir resolution through bilateral means alone, though Pakistan maintained insistence on third-party mediation, yielding no substantive reciprocity. A key policy shift involved directives to curtail Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) covert operations in Pakistan, intended to signal goodwill and reduce escalation risks, but criticized by security analysts for unilaterally dismantling intelligence networks without corresponding Pakistani restraints on Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)-backed proxy activities. This non-reciprocal de-emphasis on active intelligence gathering left India with diminished capacity to monitor Pakistani military movements, as evidenced by critiques attributing partial intelligence blind spots to the prior scaling back of assets. Strategically, the approach's idealism overlooked Pakistan's persistent use of asymmetric warfare, including ISI-supported militancy, fostering a permissive environment for undetected incursions; this vulnerability manifested in the 1999 Kargil conflict, where post-Gujral intelligence gaps hindered early detection of Pakistani troop infiltrations across the Line of Control, necessitating a costly military eviction despite the preceding Lahore Declaration's assurances. Such outcomes underscored causal disconnects in expecting behavioral change from unilateral restraint against an adversary prioritizing territorial revisionism over mutual de-escalation.

Criticisms and controversies

Alleged naivety in neighborhood policy

Critics, including strategic analysts from realist perspectives, have characterized Gujral's neighborhood policy as overly idealistic, arguing that its emphasis on non-reciprocal concessions to smaller neighbors such as Bangladesh and Nepal cultivated dependency without eliciting commensurate loyalty or behavioral change. The doctrine's core tenet—that India would extend goodwill without expecting returns—allegedly projected weakness, enabling recipients to exploit economic and transit benefits while pursuing policies adverse to Indian interests, including territorial encroachments and facilitation of external influences. This view posits that such unilateralism deviated from causal realism in international relations, where incentives without enforcement mechanisms fail to alter entrenched adversarial dynamics. Empirical shortcomings underscore these critiques, particularly with Bangladesh, where India's 1997 protocol granting transit facilities through its territory for Bangladeshi goods—intended to foster goodwill—did not halt illegal migration or resolve border frictions. Post-implementation data indicate persistent influxes, with estimates of 12-20 million illegal entrants from Bangladesh into India by the early 2000s, exacerbating demographic shifts in northeastern and border states like Assam and West Bengal, alongside ongoing disputes over Chakma refugee repatriation. Similarly, in Nepal, non-reciprocal access to Indian markets and routes under Gujral's framework allegedly emboldened Kathmandu's irredentist claims, culminating in the 2020 map inclusion of Kalapani-Limpiyadhura-Lipulekh as Nepali territory, despite historical treaties favoring India. These outcomes,

critics contend, facilitated smaller neighbors' alignments with powers like China, undermining regional stability without reciprocal security assurances. Right-leaning observers contrast this with Atal Bihari Vajpayee's subsequent administration (1998-2004), which pivoted to conditional reciprocity—tying aid and infrastructure support to concrete cooperation on security and border management—yielding firmer deterrence against infiltration and proxy threats. They frame Gujral's approach as a form of appeasement rooted in left-idealistic assumptions of inherent goodwill, which empirical persistence of cross-border challenges refutes, prioritizing aspirational harmony over verifiable quid pro quo. Such analyses, drawn from think tanks and policy critiques, emphasize that unleveraged asymmetry in power dynamics invites exploitation rather than alliance-building.

National security and intelligence impacts

During Inder Kumar Gujral's tenure as Prime Minister from April 1997 to March 1998, directives were issued to suspend offensive covert operations by the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) within Pakistan, effectively curtailing human intelligence networks built over years. This move dismantled specialized teams focused on counter-terrorism surveillance, at a time when Pakistan-sponsored militancy in Jammu and Kashmir was intensifying, with over 1,000 civilian and security personnel deaths recorded in 1997 alone. The suspension hampered India's ability to gather actionable intelligence on cross-border infiltration and militant training camps, contributing to gaps in preemptive counter-terrorism efforts during a period of heightened Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) activity. Post-tenure assessments by former intelligence officials have attributed long-term vulnerabilities to this policy, noting the loss of deep assets that took subsequent governments years to partially rebuild amid escalating threats from groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba. The Gujral Doctrine's emphasis on non-reciprocal concessions toward neighbors, without reciprocal security guarantees from Pakistan, failed to incorporate adaptations for emerging strategic realities, including the strengthening China-Pakistan military axis and the prelude to nuclearization. This asymmetry overlooked realist imperatives for deterrence, leaving India exposed to unaddressed border provocations and intelligence blind spots that exacerbated regional instability into the late 1990s. Critics, including strategic analysts, have argued that the doctrine's goodwill-based approach ignored empirical patterns of Pakistani revisionism, contributing to persistent neighborhood disequilibrium without bolstering India's defensive posture.

Domestic governance failures

Gujral's administration, spanning from April 21, 1997, to March 19, 1998, lasted just under 11 months, a brevity that exacerbated governance paralysis amid a fractious 13-party United Front coalition lacking a parliamentary majority and reliant on external support. This short tenure constrained substantive policy execution, with the government functioning more as a caretaker entity unable to surmount internal divisions for decisive

action on pressing domestic challenges. Critics noted that the coalition's ideological diversity and fragility rendered it politically incapable of pursuing rigorous economic adjustments, particularly as the Asian financial crisis loomed, contributing to stalled momentum in liberalization inherited from prior regimes. Economic management under Gujral exemplified policy inertia, with inter-party disagreements thwarting reformist initiatives such as privatization of state enterprises, fuel price hikes, and subsidy reductions essential for fiscal consolidation. The administration's reluctance to implement these "tough" measures reflected fiscal populism, prioritizing short-term political appeasement over structural corrections amid rising deficits and inefficient public spending. No significant legislative advances materialized in areas like disinvestment or expenditure rationalization, leaving the economy vulnerable to external shocks without bolstering domestic productivity or competitiveness. This inaction drew rebukes for failing to capitalize on prior reform gains, with the coalition's composition—dominated by regional and left-leaning factions—impeding consensus on market-oriented policies. Coalition mismanagement further underscored domestic shortcomings, as Gujral prioritized alliance preservation over national imperatives, exemplified by his refusal to dismiss Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) ministers implicated by the Central Bureau of Investigation in the 1991 Rajiv Gandhi assassination probe. This stance, defending regional partners from Tamil Nadu despite evidence linking DMK to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, alienated external supporter Congress, which withdrew backing on November 28, 1997, precipitating the government's collapse. Such favoritism toward regional interests neglected broader opposition critiques, including from the Bharatiya Janata Party, on corruption and accountability, fostering perceptions of governance subordinated to parochial coalition arithmetic rather than impartial justice. Post-resignation evaluations highlighted a dearth of visionary domestic leadership, with the administration critiqued for fixating on political survival amid incessant brinkmanship and bluff rather than enacting transformative agendas. Analysts observed that Gujral's lack of a mass base and overreliance on fragile pacts yielded minimal substantive outputs, deepening economic uncertainty and underscoring the perils of coalition-driven inertia in a polarized polity. This phase exemplified how prioritizing endurance over efficacy alienated national cohesion, leaving unresolved fiscal strains and reform bottlenecks for successors.

Later life and legacy

Retirement and writings

Following the end of his premiership in March 1998, Gujral retired from active politics and electoral contests, including declining to participate in the 1999 general elections. He shifted focus to intellectual pursuits, particularly writing, which allowed reflection on his diplomatic experiences without the demands of governance. Gujral's primary literary contribution was *Matters of Discretion: An Autobiography*, published in 2011, offering detailed accounts of his foreign policy formulations, including the

principles later termed the Gujral Doctrine, and key negotiations during his ministerial and ambassadorial roles. The work emphasizes pragmatic decision-making in India's neighborhood relations, drawing on archival records and personal correspondence to illustrate causal factors in diplomatic outcomes, such as concessions to smaller neighbors without reciprocity demands. It avoids overt defensiveness, instead prioritizing chronological exposition of events from his early ambassadorship in the Soviet Union through his premiership.[84] In post-retirement writings and public commentaries, Gujral reiterated commitments to secular governance and non-reciprocal goodwill toward South Asian neighbors, framing these as essential for regional stability amid India's asymmetric power dynamics. His son, Naresh Gujral, pursued a contrasting political path, joining the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and participating in its alliances with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), diverging from Inder Kumar Gujral's roots in socialist-oriented parties like the Janata Dal.

Illness, death, and enduring evaluations

Inder Kumar Gujral had been undergoing dialysis for chronic kidney disease for over a year before his hospitalization. On November 19, 2012, he was admitted to Medanta Hospital in Gurgaon for a lung infection, which deteriorated into multi-organ failure. He died there on November 30, 2012, at the age of 92. Gujral received a state funeral with full honors. His cremation took place on December 1, 2012, at Samata Sthal on the banks of the Yamuna River in New Delhi, attended by President Pranab Mukherjee, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and other dignitaries. The government observed seven days of national mourning. Posthumous evaluations of Gujral's legacy highlight his courteous demeanor and diplomatic initiatives, such as the Gujral Doctrine's aim to build trust with smaller neighbors through unilateral goodwill gestures. However, critics from right-leaning perspectives have characterized the doctrine as overly conciliatory, arguing it undermined national security by extending non-reciprocal concessions—especially toward Pakistan—that failed to elicit reciprocal restraint and may have emboldened cross-border threats. This approach's viability has faced further scrutiny amid the assertive "Neighbourhood First" policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014, which emphasizes balanced reciprocity and strategic firmness over unilateral accommodation.

Awards and honors

National recognitions

The Government of India honored Inder Kumar Gujral with a commemorative postage stamp issued by India Post on 4 December 2020, marking the centenary of his birth. This recognition acknowledged his tenure as the 12th Prime Minister from April 1997 to March 1998 and his prior roles in diplomacy and parliamentary service during a period of coalition politics. No higher civilian awards such as the Padma Vibhushan or Bharat Ratna were conferred upon him, reflecting the selective nature of such distinctions tied to broader perceived impacts on public service.

Manmohan Singh Governments

Dr. Manmohan Singh, the man known to be the architect of opening the Indian Economy to the world, passed away on 26th December 2024. An economist, Politician and a diligent thinker, Dr. Manmohan Singh served as the thirteenth Prime Minister of India from 2004 to 2014. He was a part of the United Progressive Alliance and served as their prime minister for two consecutive terms. The third longest serving Prime Minister of India after Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, his economic policies introduced by him as the finance minister of India in 1991 brought in a new era of liberalisation policies and economic reforms. His policies helped in reframing the economic graph of the country. This article is going to look into the early life, career and achievements of Dr. Manmohan Singh life.

Manmohan Singh Early Life

Born on 26 September 1932 in Gah Village of Punjab, Manmohan Singh's family belonged to the sikh community. Before the partition of India, he completed his schooling in urdu medium. After moving to Amritsar post partition, he continued his education at Hindu College, Amritsar and Punjab University. He gained his triplos in Economics from St. Johns College, Cambridge.

After completing his education, Manmohan Singh started of his career as a teacher at Punjab University following which he earned a Doctorate in Philosophy from Oxford University in 1962.

Dr. Manmohan Singh Beginning of Political Career

He began his career as a Senior Lecturer in Economics at Punjab University (1957-1959) and later served as a Reader in the Economics Department of Panjab University starting in 1959. From 1963 to 1965, he worked as a Lecturer before joining the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) from 1966 to 1969. At UNCTAD, established in 1964, he contributed to ensuring equitable growth participation for developing nations. His expertise led to his appointment as an advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Trade while concurrently serving as a Professor of International Trade at the University of Delhi.

In 1972, he joined the Ministry of Finance as Chief Economic Advisor and later became Secretary of the Finance Ministry in 1976. His proficiency in economics facilitated his rise, and he joined the Planning Commission, responsible for India's Five-Year Plans, where he served until 1982. That year, he was appointed Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, a position he held until 1985.

In 1985, he returned to the Planning Commission as Deputy Chairman, serving until 1987. Subsequently, he joined the South Commission, a Geneva-based economic policy think tank, where he worked until November 1990. Upon returning to India, he advised Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar on Economic Affairs and was appointed Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 1991.

Political Career

His career took a pivotal turn when Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao invited him to join the cabinet as Finance Minister in 1991. This marked a transformative moment for both his career and India's economic history. His visionary leadership and reforms rescued India from the brink of economic collapse, leaving an indelible legacy on the nation's economic trajectory.

Dr. Manmohan Singh as the Finance Minister of India

In 1991, India faced its most severe economic crisis since Independence. The Gulf War of 1990-1991 led to soaring oil prices and a decline in remittances from Indian workers abroad. The fiscal deficit stood at approximately 8% of GDP, while a balance of payments crisis loomed. The Current Account Deficit was around 3.5% of GDP, and foreign exchange reserves plummeted to just \$1 billion.

To address the crisis, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to extend financial assistance to India, contingent on significant economic reforms. This prompted the Indian government to adopt transformative measures, including dismantling the Licence Raj and initiating liberalization.

Liberalization Measures

Under the leadership of Manmohan Singh, the government undertook sweeping reforms to deregulate the economy. Import taxes were reduced, and the Indian rupee was devalued to make exports more competitive. Transitioning from a socialist to a capitalist model, policies were introduced to ease licensing norms, lower tariffs and taxes, and eliminate barriers to international trade and investment.

Public monopolies were curtailed, allowing private enterprises to thrive. The cap on foreign direct investment (FDI) was raised from 40% to 51%, and industrial licensing was abolished for most sectors, except for products like tobacco, alcohol, hazardous chemicals, explosives, and pharmaceuticals.

Privatization of public sector enterprises and the relaxation of FDI restrictions spurred unprecedented economic growth. India's growth rate surged from 3% in the pre-liberalization era to 8-9% post-liberalization.

While the reforms propelled India into a period of substantial economic growth, the Narasimha Rao government was voted out in 1996, partly due to underperformance in critical sectors. Nevertheless, Manmohan Singh earned widespread acclaim for steering India towards a market economy, with P. Chidambaram praising his transformative vision.

Dr. Manmohan Singh as a Member of Rajya Sabha

Manmohan Singh was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Assam for five consecutive terms: 1991, 1995, 2001, 2007, and 2013. He served as the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha from 1998 to 2004 during the Bharatiya Janata Party's tenure in power. Although he contested the Lok Sabha elections from South Delhi in 1999, he lost the seat.

Dr. Manmohan's Tenure as Prime Minister of India

After the 2004 general elections, the Indian National Congress (INC) formed the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) with its allies. Sonia Gandhi surprised many by choosing Manmohan Singh as the Prime Minister due to his reputation for economic expertise and an unblemished political record. His first term as Prime Minister began on May 22, 2004.

Economic Policies

Economic Growth: Singh collaborated with Finance Minister P. Chidambaram to sustain high growth rates. In 2007, India achieved a 9% growth rate, becoming the world's second-fastest-growing economy.

National Employment Guarantee Act: The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005) provided 100 days of guaranteed employment per household, enhancing rural income security.

Reforms: Singh's government advanced infrastructure projects like the Golden Quadrilateral, modernized highways, and implemented pro-industry and farmer-friendly policies. It also introduced Value Added Tax (VAT) in 2005 to replace the Sales Tax.

Healthcare and Education

National Rural Health Mission (NRHM): Launched in 2005 to provide accessible healthcare to rural populations.

Right to Education Act (RTE): Passed in 2009, the RTE guaranteed free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14, making education a fundamental right.

Educational Initiatives: Singh's government established eight new IITs and promoted elementary education through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

National Security and Governance

National Investigation Agency (NIA): Established in 2008 to counter terrorism after the Mumbai attacks.

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI): Introduced Aadhaar, a 12-digit biometric-based identity system, for enhancing national security and e-governance.

Right to Information Act (RTI): The act was passed in 2005 with an aim to ensure government accountability and transparency.

Manmohan Singh's Foreign Policy

Dr. Manmohan Singh focused his foreign policy strategy on economic cooperation, promoting peace, stability and autonomy along with upholding non-alignment policy principles.

Relations with the USA: Singh spearheaded the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal in 2008, granting India access to nuclear technology without signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Relations with China: Bilateral trade grew significantly, and the Nathula Pass reopened. Singh's ten-pronged strategy strengthened ties across various sectors.

Global Relations: Singh strengthened ties with Japan, Israel, European nations, and African countries while maintaining stable relations with Russia.

Second Term as Prime Minister

After the UPA secured a majority in the 2009 general elections, Dr. Manmohan Singh became the second Prime Minister, after Jawaharlal Nehru, to serve for two consecutive terms. His second term saw controversies like the coal allocation and 2G spectrum cases, but his economic and social initiatives left a lasting impact. Dr. Singh resigned after the 2014 general elections.

Dr. Manmohan Singh Awards and Honours

Doctor of Civil Law Degrees (2006): University of Oxford and University of Cambridge.

Doctor of Letters (2008): Banaras Hindu University.

Honorary Doctorate: Moscow State Institute of International Relations.

Dr. Manmohan Singh Scholarship: Instituted by St. John's College, Cambridge.

Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development (2017)

Economic Reforms

Manmohan Singh was the leader behind India's transformation. As finance minister in the early 1990s and then as the prime minister from 2004 for ten years, his reforms reduced strict government controls, opened up the economy, helped lift millions out of poverty, and made the world see India as an important ally, especially in nuclear matters.

When Manmohan Singh became Finance Minister in 1991, India was close to an economic collapse. The country had only enough foreign exchange reserves to cover a few weeks of essential imports. This was made worse by the weakening of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, which had been a source of cheap oil and raw materials and a market for Indian products. India had also been able to trade without needing US dollars because of this relationship.

Manmohan Singh's Budget when India was in serious trouble

Manmohan Singh during Budget speech said, their new government, which took office just a month ago, inherited an economy in serious trouble. The balance of payments situation is critical. Until November 1989, when the previous party was in power, there was strong international confidence in India's economy. However, after political instability, worsening fiscal issues, and the Gulf crisis, international confidence weakened significantly. This led to a sharp decline in capital inflows from commercial borrowing and non-resident deposits. Despite borrowing large amounts from the International Monetary Fund in 1990 and 1991, India's foreign exchange reserves dropped drastically. Since December 1990, and especially from April 1991, India has been on the verge of an economic crisis.

Manmohan Singh, Architect of Economic Reforms

Context

Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister and Finance Minister of India, passed away on December 26, 2023, at the age of 92. He will always be remembered for playing a pivotal role in saving India's economy during the 1991 economic crisis.

Brief background

- During the 1991 economic crisis, India was on the verge of a **sovereign default (unable to pay off its debts)**, with extremely low foreign exchange reserves. The government even had to pledge its gold reserves to raise money.
- This crisis was caused by years of poor economic management, where the government was spending more than it earned, leading to high levels of debt.
- India's economy was also heavily controlled by the government through the **License-Quota Raj**, which restricted business growth and hindered private enterprise.
- In 1991, when Singh took over as Finance Minister in **P.V. Narasimha Rao's government**, he introduced a **series of economic reforms** that transformed India's economic landscape:
- **Deregulation:** Industries that were previously tightly controlled by the government were opened up for private sector participation.
- **Trade liberalization:** The government reduced import tariffs (taxes on imports) and removed restrictions on exports.
- **Devaluation of the rupee:** The Indian currency was made weaker to make Indian products cheaper abroad, boosting exports.

Key Achievements of the Reforms

- **India's Growth in the Global Economy:** The 1991 reforms played a crucial role in increasing India's presence in the global economy.
- According to **World Bank data**, India's share in global GDP (the total economic output of the world) had been declining since the 1960s. However, after the reforms, India's economic growth accelerated, and its share in global GDP began to rise. Today, India is on track to become the **third-largest economy in the world**.
- **Poverty Reduction and Welfare Programs:** Another major achievement of the reforms was a **significant reduction in extreme poverty**. As the economy grew, the government was able to generate more revenue, which it could then use to fund welfare programs aimed at helping the poor.
- Although poverty is still a problem in India, especially in rural areas, the economic growth resulting from the reforms has helped lift millions out of extreme poverty. The reforms also created a cycle of wealth generation, which improved the government's ability to address poverty.

- **Rise of Private Businesses and the Stock Market:** The reforms helped unleash the power of private enterprise. By deregulating industries, businesses were no longer restricted by government controls, allowing them to grow, create jobs, and compete globally.
- The stock market also grew rapidly after the reforms. In the early 1990s, companies like Infosys were able to list their shares on the stock market, which sparked the development of an equity culture in India.
- **Increased Foreign Investment:** Following the reforms, India became a more attractive destination for foreign investors. The liberalization of markets and the opening up of sectors to private businesses helped bring in foreign direct investment (FDI). This investment provided stability to India's economy, even as imports increased.
- The inflow of foreign capital also helped stabilize the Indian rupee and supported the growth of India's stock market.

Challenges That Remain

- **Manufacturing Sector Stagnation:** Despite the impressive growth in sectors like services (IT, software, etc.), India has not been able to boost its manufacturing sector as much as other countries like China.
- The share of manufacturing in India's GDP has remained stagnant since the reforms. This has been a big concern because a strong manufacturing sector can create jobs for millions of people and lead to more inclusive growth.
- Even though India missed the opportunity to become a major manufacturing hub, some states have done better than others in attracting manufacturing investments. Moving forward, India's policymakers need to focus more on building up the manufacturing sector to create more jobs and strengthen the economy.
- **Inequality and Regional Disparities:** While the economic reforms helped reduce extreme poverty, they did not equally benefit all parts of India. Inequality remains a challenge, with some regions and states growing faster than others. The growth has been more visible in urban areas, while rural regions have seen slower development.
- There is also concern about the growing gap between the rich and poor, as a large chunk of the wealth created by the reforms has been concentrated among a smaller group of people.

The 1991 economic reforms led by Manmohan Singh marked a turning point in India's history. The country went from being an economically closed nation with a struggling economy to an open, fast-growing economy that is now one of the world's largest. Manmohan Singh's legacy will always be tied to the economic transformation he helped bring about.

Development Schemes

Dr. Manmohan Singh served as the Prime Minister of India from 2004 to 2014, leading the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) governments. His tenure is widely regarded as a significant period in India's development trajectory, marked by inclusive growth, welfare-oriented policies, economic reforms, and human development initiatives. As an economist and former Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh focused on balancing economic growth with social justice through large-scale development schemes that aimed at reducing poverty, improving rural livelihoods, expanding education, strengthening healthcare, and ensuring food and employment security.

One of the most important development initiatives during Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure was the emphasis on **inclusive growth**. The UPA government recognized that economic growth must benefit all sections of society, especially the poor, marginalized, and rural population. Development schemes were designed to bridge regional, social, and economic inequalities. This approach marked a shift from purely growth-centric policies to people-centered development, ensuring that the benefits of liberalization reached the grassroots level.

A landmark development scheme introduced during this period was the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)** in 2005. This scheme provided a legal guarantee of 100 days of wage employment per year to rural households. It aimed at enhancing livelihood security, reducing rural poverty, and creating durable assets such as roads, ponds, and irrigation facilities. MGNREGA played a crucial role in empowering rural laborers, especially women, and acted as a social safety net during periods of economic distress.

Another major welfare-oriented development scheme was the **National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)**, launched in 2005. The objective of this scheme was to improve healthcare delivery in rural areas, particularly for women and children. It focused on strengthening primary healthcare infrastructure, increasing institutional deliveries, reducing maternal and infant mortality rates, and deploying Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs). NRHM significantly improved access to healthcare services in underserved regions and contributed to better health indicators.

The **Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009**, was a transformative step in the field of education during Dr. Manmohan Singh's government. It made free and compulsory education a fundamental right for children aged 6 to 14 years. The scheme aimed at universalizing elementary education, improving school infrastructure, ensuring trained teachers, and reducing dropout rates. RTE reflected the government's commitment to human capital development as the foundation of long-term economic growth.

Food security was another key area of focus under Dr. Manmohan Singh's leadership. The **National Food Security Act (NFS), 2013**, aimed to provide subsidized food grains to approximately two-thirds of India's population through the Public Distribution System. By ensuring access to affordable food, the scheme sought to combat

hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity, especially among vulnerable sections of society.

The UPA government also placed strong emphasis on **education expansion and knowledge development**. Institutions of higher learning such as Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), central universities, and research institutions were significantly expanded. Schemes like the **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan** and **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)** aimed at improving school education and increasing enrollment at secondary levels.

Urban development received renewed attention through schemes like the **Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)**, launched in 2005. This mission focused on improving urban infrastructure, housing, water supply, sanitation, and transport systems in major cities. It aimed at creating inclusive, efficient, and sustainable urban spaces while strengthening urban local bodies.

Women empowerment and social justice were central to the development agenda of Dr. Manmohan Singh's government. Schemes such as Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana, and expanded Self-Help Group (SHG) programs sought to improve the socio-economic status of women. Increased budgetary allocations for gender-focused schemes reflected the government's commitment to women-led development.

In the agricultural sector, the UPA government introduced schemes to support farmers and improve rural livelihoods. Programs like the National Food Security Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), and Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme (2008) aimed at increasing agricultural productivity, reducing farmer indebtedness, and ensuring food self-sufficiency. The farm loan waiver was particularly significant in providing relief to millions of small and marginal farmers.

The government also focused on social security for unorganized sector workers through schemes like the Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act, Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), and old-age pension schemes. These initiatives sought to provide health insurance, pension support, and financial security to workers outside the formal employment sector.

Economic development during Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure was supported by continued economic reforms, infrastructure development, and global integration. Investments in roads, power, telecommunications, and ports were expanded through public-private partnerships. The government maintained fiscal responsibility while increasing social sector spending, thus achieving a balance between growth and welfare.

In conclusion, the development schemes introduced and expanded under Dr. Manmohan Singh's leadership represented a comprehensive and inclusive development model. His government prioritized poverty alleviation, employment generation, health, education, food security, and social justice while sustaining economic growth. These schemes significantly transformed India's socio-economic landscape and laid the

foundation for long-term human development. Dr. Manmohan Singh's development agenda remains a defining chapter in India's policy history and continues to influence contemporary governance and welfare policies.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the foreign policy of the United Front governments.
2. Discuss the role of Deve Gowda as Prime Minister.
3. Examine I. K. Gujral's contributions to India's foreign relations.
4. Analyse the objectives of the National Democratic Alliance under Vajpayee.
5. Describe the Golden Quadrilateral Project and its significance.
6. Discuss the impact of the Kargil War on India's security policy.
7. Evaluate A. B. Vajpayee's domestic and foreign policy achievements.
8. Explain the economic reforms introduced during Manmohan Singh's governments.
9. Discuss major development schemes implemented under Manmohan Singh.
10. Analyse the overall impact of coalition governments on India's politics and economy.

Recommended Books

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