

1. In what ways did the Shah Bano case change the politics in India? Analyse.**Introduction**

The Mohd. Ahmad Khan vs. Shah Bano Begum & Ors. or the Shah Bano maintenance case is seen as one of the legal milestones in battle for protection of rights of Muslim women. The petitioner asked for maintenance from her husband after he pronounced irrevocable talaq and became unaccountable for providing maintenance as per Islamic law.

Body

The Supreme Court upheld the right to alimony in the case, however, subsequent dilution of it by the then government, through passage of Muslim Women (Protection on Rights of Divorce) Act set off a political battle which is continuing to this day.

The Act allowed maintenance to a divorced woman only during the period of iddat, or till 90 days after the divorce. This was seen as discriminatory as it denied divorced Muslim women the right to basic maintenance which women of other faiths had recourse to under secular law.

Impact on Indian politics:

- The Act was seen as 'appeasement' of the minority community and discriminatory to non-Muslim men by the Hindu communalists.
- It set off a chain of events that continued up to the opening of the Ram mandir, to satisfy the hindu communalists, and eventually the demolition of Babri Masjid.
- Minority community was seen as a good vote bank by keeping them away from social reforms that could have disturbed the conservative elements. The impact can be seen even today, in dismal social indicators in Muslim community.
- Freedom of Religion (Article 25) was given priority over Right to Equality (Article 14,15) and Right to Life (Article 21).
- Uniform Civil code (Article 44), which was incorporated under Directive Principles of State Policy aiming for a secular society, is now seen as a threat to minority personal laws.
- Whereas Women of other religion are being given more rights and protection against discrimination and violence, Muslim women still suffer from practices like triple talaq, nikah halala, polygamy etc. with no law to protect them.

Conclusion

The case laid the ground for Muslim women's fight for equal rights in matters of marriage and divorce in regular courts, the most recent example being the Shayara Bano case in which the Supreme Court invalidated the practice of instant triple talaq.

However, unlike the previous case, this time the individual rights were given priority over the religious rights through introduction of Triple talaq bill, settling the political debate that started through the Shah Bano case.

2. How did Indian leaders cope with the global pressures mounted at the time of Cold War? Was it effective? Critically analyze.

Introduction:

Cold war was the open yet restricted rivalry that developed after the WW2 between the US and Soviet Union and their respective allies. It was waged on political, economical and propaganda fronts and had only limited resource to weapons.

Approach of the Indian leaders:

- The onset of the peak of the Cold war and India's independence almost coincided. The leaders did not want to compromise on sovereignty or any freedom due to involvement with either side.
- The basic aims, principles and parameters of Indian stand towards the global division of powers at the time of Cold war was outlined by the 1st Prime Minister of India, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. It was one of balancing the competing interests of both sides.
- They were based on promotion of international peace and security, friendly relations with other countries, respect for international law and peaceful settlement of international disputes.

Measures taken:

- Panchsheel: Signed in 1954, the Panchsheel agreement laid down 5 basic principles emphasizing on durable world peace and friendly relations among countries. It included mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression against each other, Non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence.
- Non-alignment: India's determination to preserve its hard earned independence without joining either of the 2 blocs, its opposition to imperialism and colonialism, gave birth to Non-alignment. Indian leaders of the time lead by Nehru postulated on taking an independent stand on international issues based on merits of the case but at the same time not committing to come under influence of any bloc.

- India played a significant role in multilateral institutions and particularly in UN peacekeeping operations. They ensured deep respect for international law and sovereign equality of nations.

Effectiveness of the measures taken:

Pros:

- It made India a leader of NAM with many nations pledging support under the same principles of non-alignment.
- It helped India play a major role in the efforts towards decolonization of many countries thereafter.
- It provided for a forum for 3rd world countries to engage the developed countries in a productive dialogue over divergent views.
- India received aid from both the power blocs and neither of them considered India as a threat.
- India could thus successfully utilize the best of both powers for its interests diplomatically.

Cons:

- The NAM broadly worked on the lines of ideology than the actual active implementation of developmental efforts.
- At the beginning, the group mainly consisted of nations lacking in economic and social spheres, including India and thus had reduced impact on the whole.
- It seemed to have any future goals as the Cold war declined.

Conclusion:

- The core principle of non-alignment still drives our foreign policy even today, though with changes in interpretation of functional and strategic interests. E.g.: Diplomacy with US and Iran, Russia and US etc.,
- As there is no bipolar world as earlier, the non-alignment does not have practical relevance as an idea, but is still relevant to question the morality of international decisions and more on the lines of issue based alignment on merits, rather than just the ideology.

3. Nuclear tests conducted at Pokhran in 1998 helped to get the global high table to make space for India. Do you agree? Critically comment.

Introduction:

Nuclear test conducted in 1998 is one of the great mile stone in the India's scientific timeline and with this India showcased its nuclear power and modified its terms with

other states accordingly. This test is a turning point in India's engagement with the world which was long overdue.

Body:

India had three main objectives behind the testing of 1998:

- First was to validate new designs to ensure the credibility of the nuclear deterrent as the data set from the 1974 test was limited.
- Second was to declare that India was now a nuclear weapon state and modify the terms of our engagement with other states accordingly.
- Third was to generate an acceptance of India as a responsible state with an impeccable non-proliferation record.

Given its adverse security environment in the early 1990s, India's pursuit of nuclear weapons as a deterrent against Chinese and Pakistani adventurism would have appeared not only wise but necessary.

Pakistan, initially accused India for arms race in sub-continent, also immediately conducted the nuclear test. India, unlike Pakistan, separated its civil and military programs and put a nuclear doctrine in place.

The Pokhran test brought immediate international condemnation from a world that has officially scorned nuclear testing since 1996 by endorsing Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which prohibits all nuclear tests.

The immediate global reaction started with the US and it imposed few sanctions on India but with diplomatic conversation between two countries provided the basis for reconciliation with the global nuclear order, and redefined our relationship with the US.

The 1998 nuclear tests began the process for the world to acknowledge India as a responsible nuclear power. India had remained true to the highest NPT standards despite being an NPT outlier. While harmonising itself with the global nuclear order, the tests and their aftermath ironically destroyed the prevalent 'nuclear superstructure'.

Apart from these the major achievements which India made on global level are as follows:

- India-US civil nuclear deal i.e. 123 Agreement, which assured full civil nuclear cooperation of US with India.
- Waivers from the NSG.
- Membership of three of four global non-proliferation regimes i.e. Australia Group (AG), Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), and Wassenaar Arrangement (WA)
- Nuclear deals with Japan
- Multi countries on board to favour India's entry into NSG, except China.

Conclusion:

Tests created one of the pre-requisites for India's aspiration to become a leading power. Tests were needed to end India's international isolation. The actions we took 20 years ago ensured our national security. Our responsible record and subsequent engagements ensured global understanding of our policies. That is also shown by our nuclear collaborations around the world. The world had got used to a certain kind of India. That was challenged, successfully.

4. The creation of Bangladesh in 1971 changed India's geopolitics forever. Elucidate.**Introduction:**

The Instrument of surrender signed on 16th December 1971 in Dhaka, by the Pakistan General of Army, marked the formation of East Pakistan as the new nation of Bangladesh. With the birth of Bangladesh, Pakistan also lost half its territory.

Background:

In 1971, when Bangladesh (then E.Pakistan) was fighting to seek freedom from W.Pakistan, the Pakistan army began to commit barbaric genocide on innocent Bengali population of E.Pakistan.

Intervention by India:

- As Pakistan's atrocities increased, then PM Indira Gandhi decided to take action and ordered the Indian Army to launch an offensive against Pakistan followed by a full scale war against its neighbor.
- Indian Army captured around 15000 km of Pak territory with the war lasting around 13 days and ending with the fall of Dhaka and the public surrender of Pak military.

Change in India's geopolitics after:

- Turning a foe into a friendly neighbor: Due to the outbreak of the war, roughly 9M refugees fled to India and were given shelter in Indian states like Tripura etc.
- As India ran the risk of fighting the US and Arabs, then allies of Pakistan, it rendered the victory highly difficult. Through diplomatic relations built with the Soviets by the PM, a fully fledged military support was promised in case of both US and Chinese Intervention. The victory however was formulated as a highly risky but successful victory of India in the international eyes.
- The strong alliance with USSR proved extremely useful in the UN, when USSR vetoed the resolution to ceasefire and withdrawal of troops. It also

prevented any combat roles by the US fleet in the Bay of Bengal by dispatch of their own fleet.

- The liberation increased the influence of India as a power over the NE South Asian region and gave way to the rise of India as a nation with a strong defense at a time when only superpowers intervened in armed conflicts of countries.
- The personal diplomacy campaign of PM Indira Gandhi at the time, with European Capitals and Moscow hold relevance even now and stood the test of time.
- Considered the largest military surrender after WW2, this liberation was put India at the International context as a rising might and a developing nation in the South Asian region and a success of strategic diplomacy.

Conclusion:

The US who had opposed the intervention accorded recognition to Bangladesh as an independent state as early as March 1972. The UN did not condemn India and rationality of India's actions was vindicated by the relatively quick and widespread recognition of Bangladesh. The intervention was seen as a positive humanitarian outcome that brought a political solution to the crisis in the end. India's diplomacy and regional influence as capable and dependable leader was also exhibited as a result of the creation of Bangladesh.

5. India has witnessed several terrorist attacks in the past. In what way is 26/11 terror attack on Mumbai different? Examine.

Intro:

Terrorism in India, according to the Home Ministry, poses a significant threat to the people of India. Terrorism found in India includes ethno-nationalist terrorism, religious terrorism, left wing terrorism and narco terrorism.

Body:

Some of the major terror attacks that have occurred in India are

- Punjab killings of 1991
- Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi - 1991
- Parliament attacks - 2001
- Mumbai attacks 2008
- Pulwama attack 2019

India experienced a terrorist attack on its financial and entertainment capital Mumbai on 26 November 2008. It was different in a way that

- Firstly the location the of the attack was Mumbai- which is one of the most densely populated cities in India, the financial capital of India, land to UNESCO Heritage sites and a major tourist attraction.
- The sheer scale and audacity of the attacks clearly set them apart from earlier terrorist attacks in India. There were 12 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks which lasted four days, killing 164 and injuring several hundreds.
- There were bombings in multiple locations instead of single location like,

Chatrapathi shivaji terminus

Leopold cafe

The Taj mahal hotel

The Oberio trident

The Nariman House (Jewish Community Centre)

- Apart from targeting the civilians the attack was largely targeted towards international tourists visiting Mumbai which had a great impact affecting the tourism industry. Post 26/11 there has been a significant decline in the number of foreign tourists arriving in India.
- The attack on Mumbai sea port which disrupted the trade of our country. It affected inwards and outwards of International cargoes. Imports and Exports had to be rerouted till the operations was complete.
- Places like the Chatrapathi Shivaji terminus (UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the Taj mahal hotel (near gateway of India) were attacked which damaged the tangible cultural heritage of India.
- Another notable impact was on the airline industry, since of the three routes of arrival, air is the most preferred route with over 92 per cent of foreign tourists choosing this route. Also the airspace closure affected several domestic and international flights.
- There was a huge psychological impact which shook not only the entire nation but also the entire international community.

Following the 26/11 attack, a number of structural reforms were ambitiously proposed for the security set up.

Notably, the creation of regional hubs for National Security Guard deployment in various states, the establishment of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the setting up of a National Intelligence Grid (NatGrid), and the plan for a National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), along with several other initiatives, to enable a qualitative improvement in our counter-terror infrastructure and strategy.

Conclusion:

The draft bill as recommended by the Law Commission of India which is a comprehensive and effective legal framework to deal with all aspects of terrorism needs to be enacted. A multipronged approach encompassing legal and administrative measures combined with good governance, inclusive development, a vigilant media and an alert citizenry can defeat terrorism in any form.

