

1. Many other countries got liberated from the colonial rule around the time of India's independence. However, many of those failed or got embroiled into internal civil wars. What made India a success story then? Analyse.

Introduction

The period after Second World War saw the emergence of most countries of Asia & Africa as independent nations. Generally, the colonial powers were not willing to give up their hold on the colonies and left only when they found that it was not possible to maintain their rule any more.

Body

During the Second World War, many imperialist countries had been ousted from their colonies, but after the war they tried to re-establish their rule. For some time they succeeded in doing so but were ultimately forced to withdraw. The achievement of independence was the result primarily of the struggles of the peoples of the colonies.

The independence of India was of great importance in the history of freedom movements in Asia and Africa. India had, however, been partitioned & along with it, another independent state, Pakistan, also came into being.

India, A success story

- Visionary Leadership: strong and staunch leaders like Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Patel, etc set the course in the direction of unity and development and provided a stable constitutional regime. Example Sardar Patel integrated the princely states with the Indian democracy. Pandit Nehru framed the economic framework and foreign policy for the country.
- Spirit of Gandhism: Gandhi's values of satyagraha, non violence, passive resistance etc demonstrated during the freedom struggle inspired the nature of movements in India after independence e. g. Bhoodan movement
- Unity in diversity: India being a multi ethnic, multi cultural nation has always followed the idea of unity in diversity and the principle of Vasudeva Kutumbakam (whole world as one family)
- Constitutional framework: India has a strong constitution based on the ethos of democracy, unity, integrity, secularism, balanced federation etc and a clear provision and roles for different institution.
- Political structure: India has a stable political structure based on democratic values. It has set up Election Commission on 1950 for free and fair election and has given universal adult franchise to its citizen.

India always had a far sighted reach towards dimensions like communalism, regionalism etc. and has a vision to maintain its internal stability but many countries has failed to maintain their internal stability like Myanmar, Libya, Sri Lanka eg

persecution of minorities in Myanmar. Also, Countries in South east Asia, Africa are facing legitimacy crisis even today cause of their lopsided political structure.

Conclusion

India's struggle for independence was unique in its nature because of the people involved in it and their cordial attitude and unity with each other negating caste race religion etc. The constitutional framework it has adopted has ensured peace and solidarity.

2. What is your assessment of the way the nationalist leaders addressed the language issue post independence? Substantiate your views.

Introduction

The language problem was the most divisive issue in the first twenty years of independent India, and it created the apprehension among many that the political and cultural unity of the country was in danger. The problem posed to national consolidation by linguistic diversity has taken two major forms, one was the dispute over official language of the union and other was the linguistic reorganization of the states.

Body

Language issues in post-independence of India

Official language debate

- **Problems regarding Hindi being the official language:** When the Indian Constitution was being framed in the Constituent Assembly, the question of choosing one language as the official language arose in the minds of the Constitution makers. The official language of the Central government was the single most divisive official issue in the Indian Constituent Assembly. There were two problems regarding Hindi being the official language: a) the dialect of Hindi; and b) the other languages existing in India.
- **Question of adopting a Hindi dialect:** Hindi is spoken in around 13 different dialects. So debate arose as to which of the dialect was to be chosen as the official Hindi dialect. Later, Hindi dialect was adopted which was the one spoken in the Delhi-Agra region with Sanskrit vocabulary.
- **Gandhi's Dream of One National language:** Most of the members of Constituent Assembly wanted to fulfill Mahatma Gandhi's dream who had opined that there should be a national language which would give a distinct identity to the nation. They chose the most popular language of the country to be crowned as the official language of the Union of India. As soon as the proposal was laid down before the Assembly, many members of the assembly opposed it on the ground of it being unfair for the non-Hindi

speaking population who'll suffer in terms of employment opportunities, education, and public services because of their non-Hindi background.

- **Demand for including regional languages:** Several arguments were raised for the inclusion and non-inclusion of Hindi language. Some of the members of the Constituent Assembly including L.K.Maitra and N.G.Ayyangar demanded that the regional languages should also be recognized (at State level) and the chosen national language should not be made exclusive. There were others like Lokamanya Tilak, Gandhiji, C. Rajagopalachari, Subhash Bose and Sardar Patel who demanded that Hindi should be used throughout India without any exceptions and the states should also resort to the use of Hindi language because it would promote integration.
- **Two groups in the Assembly:** The whole assembly was divided into two groups, one which supported Hindi and wanted it to become the official language and the other which did not favour Hindi to become the official language. The assembly was at loggerheads.
- **Ambedkar's views:** Introducing multiple languages as official languages was not considered feasible. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was quoted as saying, "One language can unite people. Two languages are sure to divide people. This is an inexorable law. Culture is conserved by language. Since Indians wish to unite and develop a common culture, it is the bounden duty of all Indians to own up Hindi as their official language."
- **Munshi-Ayyangar formula:** Ultimately, when the Constituent Assembly was on the verge of losing its unity, a compromise called Munshi-Ayyangar formula was adopted without dissent. It was a half-hearted compromise because no group got what it wanted. According to this formula, English was to continue as the official language of India along with Hindi for a period of fifteen years but the limit was elastic and the power of extension was given to the Parliament. A statute titled 'Official Languages Act, 1963' was enacted when the period of fifteen years was about to expire in an attempt to prevent agitation in the non-Hindi speaking States. But the provisions of the Act could not satisfy the views of the protestors.
- **Lal Bahadur Shastri policy:** Lal Bahadur Shastri, Nehru's successor as prime minister, did not pay much heed to the opinion of non-Hindi groups. He, instead of effectively countering the fears of non-Hindi groups that Hindi would become the sole official language, declared that he was considering making Hindi an alternative medium in public service examinations which meant that although the non-Hindi speakers would still be able to compete in the all-India services in English medium, the Hindi speakers would have an added advantage of being able to use their own mother tongue Hindi as a medium. This increased the fury of the non-Hindi groups and they became more anti-Hindi and later also raised and popularized the slogan of 'Hindi never, English ever'. Thus Lal Bahadur Shastri only gave air to the blazing agitation of the non-Hindi groups against Hindi.
- **Amendment to the official languages act:** The Official Languages Act was ultimately amended in the year 1967 by Indira Gandhi's government which

provided for indefinite usage of English and Hindi as the official languages of the country.

Conclusion

After many twists and turns, a great deal of debate and several agitations, small and big, and many compromises India had arrived at a widely accepted solution to the very difficult problem of the official and link language for the country. Since 1967, this problem has gradually disappeared from the political scene, demonstrating the capacity of the Indian political system to deal with a contentious problem on a democratic basis, and in a manner that promoted national consolidation.

3. Do you think India's first Prime Minister- Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru misunderstood the intentions of the Chinese in the 1950s? Critically comment. Was there any other way to address the Chinese problem? Suggest.

Introduction

India adopted a policy of friendship towards China from the very beginning. Nehru had great hopes that the two countries with their common experience of suffering at the hands of colonial powers and common problems of poverty and underdevelopment would join hands to give Asia its due place in the world.

Body

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's Views towards China

- Nehru's understanding of Chinese history, of the history of revolutions, especially the Russian revolution, had convinced him that China should not be isolated and pushed into a corner, but should be brought into the community of nations and its revolution humanized. 'We know enough history to realize that a strong China is normally an expansionist China,' he said, but did not want to precipitate any conflict with China as it would be as disastrous for both countries as was the French-German conflict. He added that soon after the Chinese revolution he had come 'to the conclusion that our borders were going to be, well, threatened in some way.'
- With Pakistan already hostile, India did not need another neighbor as an enemy. Preparing for war on two fronts would have meant an end to development. Therefore, the conflict, even if inevitable, should be delayed as much as possible by adopting a friendly approach and asking others to do the same, for example by trying to get China into the UN.
- He understood that the Chinese occupation of Tibet meant a common border with attendant conflicts. But he also saw that China could not think of expansionism as yet, as it had big problems to solve. After the revolt in Tibet, and the Dalai Lama's arrival, and the border clashes, he was well aware of the dangers, but what good would it have done to threaten China? In an effort to checkmate the Chinese he did make diplomatic preparations, by moving closer to the Soviets.

- Nehru was shocked at the scale of the 1962's attack, as he had thought at there may be occasional border skirmishes here and there, but not an invasion of this nature. He erred in not anticipating the precise nature of the attack, rather than in the foreign policy he pursued. A further mistake was the panic in appealing to USA and UK for help, as next day the Chinese withdrew.
- Nehru was well aware and had been warning of the possibilities of border clashes with the Chinese since 1959. But neither the political nor the military leadership anticipated the precise nature of the Chinese attack, and were therefore taken by surprise.
- The failure was also, it is felt, due to the lack of a proper system of higher defence command and management, and because there was no system of defence planning and the structure of civil-military relations was flawed. The chiefs of staff were not integrated into the civilian policymaking structure, but remained theatre commanders preparing for the near-term future but not for the long-term future security environment. Despite Nehru's warnings since 1959, of trouble with China, much professional thought had not gone into the planning for a war in the Himalayas. It was a failure of logistics, of intelligence, or rather of analysis of intelligence, of coordination of different wings such as the Army with the Air Force, etc.

There were no other ways to address the Chinese problem

India was newly independent country in 1950s; even though Investment on defense was one of the important factors but her main priority was eradication of poverty, development of agriculture, development of Health and Education of her people which was more important and foothold issue. India's First Prime Minister Nehru took a pragmatic decision to concentrate on development of nation rather than investing scarce resources on defense. As per the political scientists this was the best solution available at that time.

Conclusion

The debacle of the India-China war in no way raises doubts on the correctness of Nehru's basic thrust in foreign policy. For example, nonalignment ensured that even in the India-China war, the US and the Soviet blocs were not ranged on opposite sides and India succeeded in getting greater or lesser sympathy from both. Nehru had been right in pursuing a policy of friendship with China, even if it ended the way it did.

4. The 1960s and 70s can be regarded as the decades that restored India's self-esteem and pride. Elucidate.

Introduction

The 1960s and 70's were the real watershed decades in the life of Independent India. It was the period which heralded the coming of age of the new Nation as a functional

and vibrant democracy, and sowed the seeds of multiple developments, most of which were very significant and having far reaching impact on the future course of the nation.

Body

Until the start of the 1960's, India had been a young independent nation trying to tackle the challenges arising out of a nascent democracy in a polarised world order with problems like crisis of foreign exchange shortage by 1959. In this regard, the 1960's and 70's can be regarded as the decades that restored India's self-esteem and pride due to the following factors:

- 1. Operation Smiling Buddha(1974)** - In 1974, the Indian government conducted its first nuclear test in the deserts of Pokhran, Rajasthan making it a peaceful nuclear explosion. 'Smiling Buddha' was the assigned code name of India's first successful nuclear bomb test. With the Smiling Buddha, India became the world's sixth nuclear power after the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France and China to successfully test out a nuclear bomb.
- 2. India-Pakistan war of 1965** - The war was the second fought between India and Pakistan over the region of Kashmir. The war began following the failure of Pakistan's "Operation Gibraltar" which was designed to infiltrate and invade Jammu and Kashmir. Decisive mandate in the war helped India overcome the failure of 1962 Indo-China war and restored its self-esteem.
- 3. Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971** - The Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 was the first war between the countries that did not involve fighting over the Kashmir region. Pakistan was separated as a result of the war and the new nation of Bangladesh was formed with the help of India. Such a result restored India's pride on the world stage as a regional power.
- 4. General Elections of 1967 and 1977** - The March 1967 general elections in India was perhaps the last time when the people voted to elect the Union as well as the State Governments simultaneously. The Congress party, even while retaining power at the Centre, had a reduced strength in the Lok Sabha and was voted out of power in nine states. Whereas in 1977 general elections, centre saw the 1st non-congress government in independent India. In the aftermath of Emergency(1975-1977), India emerged as a more resilient democracy and strengthened democratic culture.
- 5. Green Revolution and White Revolution** - Green Revolution was aimed to increase the production of food-grains that resulted in a drastic reduction in imports and made India self-sufficient in food-grains. White Revolution was the concerted effort on a cooperative level to increase milk supply through which Indian Dairy Industry grew to the extent that milk output not only topped the world, but also represents sustained growth in the availability of

milk and milk products. These efforts helped India overcome its dependency on foreign countries for food and restored its self esteem and pride.

6. **Economic Measures** - June 6, 1966 was a defining day in independent India's economic history. It was the day on which Indira Gandhi devalued the rupee by 36.5%, increasing the dollar's value against it by 57.4%. Further in 1969, the Nationalization of Banks was carried out to ensure the release of huge amounts held by the Private Banks by way of deposits from the general public for the equitable and inclusive growth of the Country's economy and facilitate easy access to credit for the common people for their various productive needs. These measures showcased confidence of nation to take decisive steps towards achievement of its ideals.
7. **States Reorganisation** - In 1960, the state of Bombay was bifurcated to create the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra following violence and agitation. In 1963, the state of Nagaland was created for the sake of the Nagas. By 1966, Punjab was divided into three states along linguistic lines—Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. Further, more states were created in northeastern India. These efforts showcased the ability of Union to accommodate multiple demands of people.

Conclusion

Though some events like dynastic political succession and emergency in 1975 were a blot on the inclusive democratic functioning of the nation, the 1960's and 70's formed the defining decades of post independent India where India emerged as a resolute south Asian power on the world stage with a stable democratic system which restored its lost self esteem and pride.

5. The emergency declared in 1975 is considered to be a black chapter in India's democratic political history. However, it served as a shock therapy for a young nation and paved the way for a series of constitutional measures and judicial pronouncements that would go a long way in strengthening democracy. Comment.

Introduction

The emergency was declared by the Indira Gandhi government in 1975 and was in place for 21 months. Threat to national security and bad economic conditions were cited as reasons for the declaration. Considering it as a black chapter, a famous historian Coomi Kapoor noted "The number of those in Indira Gandhi's prisons during the Emergency far exceeded the total number jailed during the 1942 Quit India".

Body

Reasons for emergency declaration:

- Economic issues:
 - India support to Bangladesh's liberation caused serious repercussion on India's foreign exchange reserves
 - Consecutive monsoon failure in 1972 & 73 affected India food grains availability and fueled prices.
 - Large scale unemployment and economic recession led to industrial unrest and wave of strikes in different parts of country which culminated in All India railway strike in May 1974.
- Executive tussle with Judiciary:
 - Union government under the leadership of Indira Gandhi amended the constitution in the Parliament that it can abridge Fundamental rights while giving effect to DPSPs. But, Later, In Kesavananda Bharti Case, the Apex Court ruled that there are some basic features of the constitution, which can't be amended.
 - Furious with SC judgment, Union Government changed the long-term precedence of appointing senior most judges in SC as Chief Justice.
 - Allahabad HC, while hearing the plea of socialist leader Raj Narain on the validity of victory of Indira to Lok Sabha ruled in the his favour and set aside her victory and ruled her election invalid on the grounds of abuse of power.
- JP Movement:
 - The students of Gujarat protested immensely in 1974 against the rise in prices of food-grain, cooking oil & other essential commodities, later joined by the political parties too
 - Inspired by the efforts and success by Gujarat student's movement, similar agitation was initiated in Bihar by students in March 1974.
 - JP Narayan gave a call for "Sampoorn Kranti" (Total Revolution) against the immense corruption, to defend democracy from authorization personality of Indira Gandhi.

Black Chapter in India's democratic history:

The union government misused its emergency powers and curbed democratic rights of the citizens, opposition parties and of the press.

- Electricity of the newspaper houses got disconnected, leaders of opposition parties were arrested.
- Government curtailed the freedom of press via "Press censorship" and made it mandatory to get its approval before publishing it.
- Protests, strikes and public agitations were not allowed.
- Fundamental right of constitutional remedies to move the court for restoring their FRs got suspended.
- Religious and cultural organization like RSS, Jamait-E-Islami was banned on the apprehension of disturbance to social and communal harmony.
- Government misused the provision of preventive detention, arrested the political workers of opposition parties.

- Torture and custodial deaths occurred during Emergency, arbitrary relocation of poor people, imposition of compulsory sterilization to control population.

The power misused came as a wakeup call for the entire nation and consequent steps were taken to amend the constitution (44th constitutional amendment) to take safeguards against misuse of powers:

- Ground for Emergency declaration: the word 'internal disturbance' was replaced by 'armed rebellion' in respect of national emergency.
- Made the president to declare a national emergency only on the written recommendation of the cabinet.
- Empowered the president to send back once, the advice of the cabinet for reconsideration.
- Provided that the fundamental rights guaranteed by article 20 and 21 cannot be suspended even during emergency.
- Gave constitutional protection to publication in newspaper of true reports of the proceedings of parliament and state legislatures.

Further, it was the supreme court decision which upheld that government can arrest any person or even take extreme steps under emergency, it is legal and no relief is available. However, the judiciary learnt its lessons and consequently passed several judgements to uphold democracy.

- the Supreme Court has thereafter enlarged the concept and the application of Article 21 well beyond what was ever contemplated by the framers of the constitution
- The supreme court expressed its view on ADM Jabalpur judgement to be violative of fundamental rights in Ram deo Chauhan case.
- The supreme court strengthened the concept of Basic structure which was reiterated in cases like Minerva mills.
- The judiciary in later judgements evolved the collegium system for appointments of the judges to uphold the independence of the judiciary.
- To uphold the democratic rights of the citizens, it also invented tools like Public interest litigation in 1980.

Conclusion

The 1975 emergency is viewed as the darkest phase in the democratic history of India. But it also reminded the absolute powers vested in the government in emergency situation. The consequent defeat of congress illustrated that it is the citizens who are the ultimate deciders of democratic fate in India. It also helped in perfecting the Indian democratic setup to restore the people's faith in democracy.