CONTEMPORARY INDIA (1950-1990)

B.A.(Programme) History **SEMESTER-VII**

Discipline Specific Core Course (DSC)

COURSE CREDIT-4

AS PER THE UGCF-2022 AND NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

(Department of History)

READING NOTES

CONTEMPORARY INDIA-1950-1990

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UNIT– 1

MAKING OF THE CONSTITUTION: KEY DEBATES AND AMENDMENTS

STRUCTURE

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1.1 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, student would be able to:

- Explain the historical circumstances that led to the framing of the Indian Constitution.
- Describe the composition, working, and ideological orientations of the Constituent Assembly.
- Analyze the major debates, especially on language, minority rights, and federalism.
- Outline the process from committee reports to the adoption of the Constitution.
- Identify and explain the basic features of the Constitution of India.
- Evaluate the significance of the Constitution as a living document in contemporary India.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of India is the supreme law of the land, providing the framework for governance, the distribution of powers, and the protection of fundamental rights. It is the product of a unique historical moment — the culmination of India's long struggle for independence, the trauma of Partition, and the aspiration to build a democratic, inclusive, and modern nation-state.

The process of constitution-making in India was remarkable for:

- Its indigenous character — drafted by Indians for India.
- Its deliberative nature — every clause debated in the open.
- Its pluralistic participation — though dominated by the Congress, it included voices from Scheduled Castes, Tribes, minorities, and women.

The Constituent Assembly's work was not merely legal drafting; it was an exercise in nation-building, where competing visions of India's future were reconciled through debate, compromise, and amendment.

1.3 MAKING OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

The Indian Independence Act, 1947 made the Constituent Assembly, already elected in 1946, a sovereign body free from all limitations. In its first meeting, after the election of its interim President and settling basic rules for the transaction of business, on 13th December 1946, the following objective resolution was moved for the Constitution:

1. To proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution;
2. Wherein the said territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside British India and the States as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the Independent Sovereign India, shall be a Union of them all;
3. Wherein the said territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such

others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the law of the Constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous Units, together with residuary powers, and exercise all powers and functions of government and administration, save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union, or as are inherent or implied in the Union or resulting there from; and

4. Wherein all power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people; and

5. Wherein shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and political morality; and

6. Wherein adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes; and

7. Whereby shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the Republic and its sovereign rights on land, sea and air according to justice and the law of civilized nations; and

8. This ancient land attains its rightful and honoured place in the world and makes its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

Later the Resolution besides getting reflected in the entire Constitution acquired special prominence in its Preamble after going through the process of the rest of the provisions of the Constitution.

For the efficient and effective conduct of its business the Assembly appointed several committees, out of which Drafting Committee chaired by Dr. Ambedkar undertook the task of drafting the Constitution and steering it through the Assembly for its adoption on 26th November 1949. A few of the provisions of the Constitution came into effect on that day, while the rest of the Constitution came to effect on 26th January 1950 which is also specified as the day of commencement of the Constitution.

Colonial legacy:

The Government of India Act, 1935 provided administrative experience but lacked democratic legitimacy.

Cabinet Mission Plan (1946): Proposed the formation of a Constituent Assembly elected by provincial legislatures, with representation for princely states and minorities.

Partition (1947): Reduced the Assembly's membership from 389 to 299 and heightened concerns over unity, minority right

1.4 CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Table 1 state wise membership of the Constituent Assembly of India as on 31st December, 1947 (British Provinces -229)

States	No. of Members
Madras	49
Bombay	21
West Bengal	19
United Province	55
East Punjab	12
Bihar	38

Central Province	17
Assam	8
Orissa	9
Delhi	1
Ajmer-Merwar	1
Coorg	1

Table 2 Princely States

States	No. Members of
Alwar	1
Baroda	3
Bhopal	1
Bikaner	1
Cochin	1
Gwalior	4
Indore	1
Jaipur	3
Jodhpur	2
Kolhapur	1
Kotah	1

Mayurbhanj	1
Mysore	7
Patiala	2
Rewa	2
Travancore	6
Udaipur	2
Sikkim and Cooch Bihar Group	1
Tripura, Manipur and Khasi States Group	1
U.P. States Group	1
Eastern Rajputana States Group	3
Central States Group (Including Bundelkhand and Malwa	3
Western India States Group	4
Gujarat States Group	2
Deccan and Madras States Group	2
Punjab States Group	3
Punjab States Group I	4
Eastern States Group II	3
Residuary States Group	4

The total membership as recommended by the Cabinet Mission was 389. After partition Indian Constituent Assembly was 229 + 70 = 299.

1.5 SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Although the Assembly was dominated by members of the Indian National Congress, it was not a monolithic body. It included prominent figures from Scheduled Castes such as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, tribal leaders like Jaipal Singh Munda, and women leaders including Hansa Mehta, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, and Durgabai Deshmukh. Religious minorities were represented through leaders such as Frank Anthony for the Anglo-Indian community and Mohammed Saadulla for Muslims who remained in India after Partition. While the majority of members were English-educated elites, the Assembly nonetheless reflected a conscious effort to include voices from across India's social and cultural spectrum, even if certain sections — particularly the rural poor and many linguistic minorities — were under-represented.

1.6 FIRST MEETING OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met for the first time on 9 December 1946 in the Constitution Hall, now known as the Central Hall of Parliament House in New Delhi. Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha, the oldest member, presided over the inaugural session as the temporary chairman. In his opening remarks, he invoked the historical significance of the moment, comparing it to the constitutional conventions of the United States and France. On 11 December 1946, Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected as the permanent President of the Assembly, with H.C. Mukherjee as Vice- President. The early sessions were marked by optimism and a sense of historic responsibility, even though the shadow of Partition loomed over the proceedings.

The first historical session of Indian Constituent Assembly commenced on the 9th December 1946, Monday, in the Constitution hall of New- Delhi. Though the Constituent Assembly consisted of 296 members, the first historical session was attended by only 210 members. Attending this session, Mr. K.M. Munshi, a prominent intellectual of the then India, remarked, "A great day for India has dawned. Indians are going to frame their own constitution, but there is unhappiness everywhere." Observing the discouraging political scenario of the country Mr. K.M. Munshi had expressed such views as because the Muslim league had decided not to attend the aforesaid historical session of the Constitutent Assembly. The rulers of different princely states were also not co- operating with the Congress leaders and the British Govt. had no particular message regarding this historical session. The British Prime Minister Mr. Churchill added fuel to the fire by his self-styled views in connection with this historical session that "The Constituent Assembly represented only one major community of India." Mr. Viscount Simon had also expressed his negative remarks by saying that "The Constituent Assembly of India was a body of Hindus.

In fact, the aforesaid views were after all wrong, unjust and politically motivated. Because, Braja Paikray the first historical session of Constituent Assembly was attended by the representatives of all castes, communities and religions of India. Amongst the 210 members who attended the first historical session of the Constituent Assembly, there were 155 high caste Hindus, 30 Schedule Caste representatives, 5 Tribal, 5 Sikhs, 5 Indian Christians, 3 Anglo-Indians, 3 Parsi and 4 Muslim members. Though the Constituent Assembly had 80 Muslim members out of total 296 members their attendance was very poor as because the Muslim

League had called upon the Muslim members to boycott the first historical session of constituent Assembly.

The main duty and responsibility of the makers of Indian Constitution was to reflect and represent the hopes, aspirations and dreams of each caste, class and community of the country. Some people had opposed the method of nomination of members to the Constituent Assembly and appended that as the nominated members were not the elected representatives of the common people they would fail to reflect the hopes, aspirations and dreams of Indians while framing the Constitution. Reacting to the aforesaid apprehension of the opposing people, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar remarked "The Constituent Assembly in making a Constitution has no partisan motive. Beyond securing a good and workable Constitution it has no axe to grind. In considering the articles of the Constitution it has no eye on getting through a particular measure. The future parliament if it met as a Constituent Assembly.

Its members will be acting as partisans seeking to carry amendments to the Constitution

to facilitate the passing of party measures which they have failed to get through Parliament by reason of some articles of the Constitution which has acted as an obstacle in their way. Parliament have an axe to grind when the Constituent Assembly has none."

As per the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi, the Constituent Assembly should reflect and represent the national life of Indians. Gandhi's vision was going to become a reality as because towering personalities like Sarbapalli Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr.

B.R. Ambedkar, Mr. K.M. Munshi, Alladi Krishna Swami Ayar, Prof. K.T. Sah,

N. Gopalswamy Ayengar and Hrudayanath Kunjur were the members of Indian Constituent Assembly.

The agenda of the first historical session of Indian Constituent Assembly was :-

1. The selection of Interim Chairman.
2. The oath taking ceremony of members.

In the beginning of the Session, Acharya Krupalini proposed the name of Mr. Sachidananda Sinha, a prominent Congress Leader of the country, to adorn the post of interim chairman of Constituent Assembly and after assuming the chairmanship, Mr. Sinha in his inaugural speech stated briefly regarding the Constitution of different Countries of the world and advised the members to study and go deep through the American Constitution. Mr. Sinha further opined that-while framing the constitution, the makers of Constitution must study and observe the socio- economic and political situation of the country in order to meet the needs of all classes of people.

Quoting the noteworthy sayings of famous American jurist Mr. Joseph story, Mr. Sachidanand Sinha addressed the dignitaries present at the first historical session of Indian Constituent Assembly as follows,

"Republics are created by virtue of public spirit and intelligence of citizens. They fall, when the wise are banished from the public councils because they dare to be honest and the profilgates are rewarded because they flatter the people, in order to betray them." Reciting some verses of Poet Iqbal and predicting the bright future of India Mr. Sinha concluded his speech quoting the famous stanza from Bible "where there is no vision, the people perish."

After the concluding speech of Mr. Sinha, the oath taking ceremony of members was commenced. The secretary of Constituent Assembly Mr. H.V.R. Ayengar called the names of each member to participate in oath taking ceremony. Each member was going to the secretary when called by name and was returning to his concerned seat after taking the oath and putting his signature on a register.

Before declaring the conclusion of the first historical session of Indian Constituent Assembly Mr. K.M. Munshi, one of the greatest intellectual of India, remarked : "For the moment, the spirit of triumph is in the air, but the smell of coming danger persists. Thus began the first hour of our freedom."

1.7 FUNCTIONING OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Following the attainment of independence on 15 August 1947, the Constituent Assembly assumed a dual role: it functioned both as the sovereign law-making body of the new Dominion of India and as the constitution-drafting body. This meant that

alongside debating constitutional

provisions, it also passed ordinary legislation necessary for the governance of the country. The political climate was charged with the urgency of nation-building, the rehabilitation of millions of refugees, and the integration of princely states. These challenges inevitably influenced the Assembly's deliberations, pushing members to favour a strong central government and to seek compromises that could hold the fragile union together.

- This Constituent Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution.
- The territories that had comprised British India, the territories that have now formed the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside India and the States as well as other territories as are willing to be constituted into the independent sovereign India, shall be a Union of them all.
- The territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the law of the Constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous units together with residuary powers and exercise all powers and functions of Government and administration save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union or as are inherent or implied in the Union or resulting therefrom.
- All *power and authority of the sovereign independent India*, its constituent parts, and organs of Government will be *derived from the people*;
- It shall be *guaranteed and secured to all the people of India* justice, social, economic, and political; equality of status of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association, and action, subject to the law and public morality; and
- Adequate safeguards shall be provided *for minorities, backward and tribal areas*, *depressed* and *other backward classes*.
- The *integrity of the territory* of the Republic and its sovereign rights on land, sea, and air are to be maintained *according to justice and the law of civilised nations*;
- India as an ancient land attains its rightful and honoured place in the world and makes its full and willing contribution *to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind*.

1.8 APPOINTMENT OF VARIOUS COMMITTEES FOR CONDUCTING WORK

To manage its vast and complex task, the Assembly appointed a series of committees, each responsible for specific aspects of the Constitution. These committees gathered evidence, consulted experts, and prepared reports that would form the basis of the debates in the full Assembly. The committee system allowed for detailed examination of issues ranging from fundamental rights to the distribution of powers between the Centre and the states, and from minority safeguards to the official language policy.

Drafting committee members Chairman – Dr. BR Ambedkar

Members:

- N Gopalaswamy Ayyangar
- Muhammad Saadullah
- Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar
- KM Munshi
- BL Mittar substituted by N Madhava Rao following his resignation on health issues
- Dr. DP Khaitan (died in 1948 and was substituted by TT Krishnamachari)

The committees of Procedural affairs include:

- Steering Committee
- Rules of Procedure Committee
- Committee on the effect of Indian Independence Act of 1947
- Orders of Business Committee Credentials Committee
- House Committee
- Hindi Translation Committee
- Urdu Translation Committee
- Finance and Staff Committee
- Press Gallery Committee

1.9 MAJOR COMMITTEES AND THEIR CHAIRPERSONS

Among the most important committees were the Union Powers Committee chaired by Jawaharlal Nehru, the Provincial Constitution Committee chaired by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Minorities, and Tribal and Excluded Areas, also chaired by Patel. The Drafting Committee, chaired by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, held a special place in the process, as it was tasked with transforming the Assembly's decisions into precise constitutional language. Other significant committees included the States Committee, the Steering Committee, and the Rules of Procedure Committee. Each chairman brought his or her own ideological leanings and political priorities to the work, shaping the eventual form of the Constitution.

Major Committees of the Indian Constituent Assembly	Chairmen
Ad hoc Committee on the National flag	Rajendra Prasad
Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights,	Vallabhbhai Patel
Committee on the Functions of the Constituent Assembly	G.V. Mavalankar

Committee on Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas	Vallabhbhai Patel
Committee on the Rules of Procedure	Rajendra Prasad
Special Committee to Examine the Draft Constitution	Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar
Provincial Constitution Committee	Vallabhbhai Patel
Drafting Committee	B.R. Ambedkar
Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas Sub-Committee	A.V. Thakkar
Finance and Staff Committee	Rajendra Prasad
Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee	J.B. Kripalani
House Committee	B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya
Minorities Sub-Committee	H.C. Mukherjee
North-East Frontier Tribal Areas and Assam, Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas Sub-Committee	Gopinath Bardoloi
Order of Business Committee	K.M. Munshi
States Committee	Jawaharlal Nehru
Steering Committee	Rajendra Prasad
Union Constitution Committee	Jawaharlal Nehru
Union Powers Committee	Jawaharlal Nehru

1.10 VISION AND IDEOLOGICAL CONCEPTIONS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The members of the Constituent Assembly were united in their commitment to building a democratic India, but they differed in their visions of how that democracy should function. Leaders like Nehru and Patel emphasised national unity and a strong Centre, seeing these as essential in the wake of Partition. Ambedkar focused on social justice and the eradication of caste-based discrimination, ensuring that the Constitution contained robust provisions for equality and affirmative action. Jaipal Singh Munda and other tribal representatives sought recognition and protection for indigenous cultures and autonomy for tribal areas. Language was another ideological fault line: while some members saw Hindi as the natural choice for a national language, others feared it would alienate non-Hindi-speaking regions. These ideological orientations often clashed, but the Assembly's culture of debate and compromise allowed it to reconcile many of these differences in the final text.

Composition and Nature of the Constituent Assembly: According to the Cabinet Mission's provisions, the Constituent Assembly was to be indirectly elected by a system of proportional representation from the Provincial Legislatures. These Legislatures

were themselves elected on a limited franchise, consisting of about 20% to 24 % of adult population. The basic features of the composition of Constituent Assembly are as follows:

(i) **Election on popular basis:** The Constituent Assembly was elected on democratic basis. Each Province was represented in the Assembly on the basis of its population.

(ii) **Abolition of communal electorates:** Communal electorates were abolished to the extent that no community, except the Sikhs and the Muslims, was given separate electorate.

(iii) **Indigenous base:** All the members of Constituent Assembly were Indians. The British Government did not nominate any member to the Constituent Assembly. In this sense, the Assembly was purely Indian and to that extent was free from outside control or interference. Thus this Assembly was sovereign within the framework of the scheme.

(iv) **Nomination of members from the Princely States :** The nominees of the Princely States were not elected by the people of the States but were nominated by the respective Princes. This made the Assembly less representative. The Constituent Assembly was to have 389 members out of which 296 were to be elected from the British Indian Provinces and 93 were to be the nominated members of various Princely States. Out of the 296 elected members -212 were put in the general category, 4 seats were reserved for Sikhs and the Muslims.

(v) **Dominance of the Congress Party**: The Constituent Assembly was dominated by the Congress party. Congress secured 58 percent of the total seats in the Provincial Legislatures. In the Constituent Assembly, the INC got 203 seats out of 212 general seats respectively. Thus the Congress represented 69 percent of the total seats of the Constituent Assembly. This percentage rose to 82 percent after partition. Thus the Congress was considered as the largest dominated Party in the Constituent Assembly.

(vi) **It represented the diverse ideologies:** Indian National Congress was a heterogeneous party before independence because it included the groups belonging to various ideologies. The important groups were the Socialists, the Gandhian and the Rightists. The Socialists were further subdivided into the Marxian and the Democratic groups. Marxian socialists believed in the revolutionary methods for the transformation of the society while the Democratic Socialists were in favour of the evolutionary methods. Both these groups opposed the institution of private property and wanted to establish an egalitarian society. Nehru was a representative of Democratic Socialism. The rightist group supported the interests of the capitalist and landed class. They stood for private ownership of property. Sardar Patel was the leader of the Rightist group. The Gandhian group advocated the promotion of village and small scale industries. It criticized the capitalist mode of production. Thus all these ideologies had a definite impact on the making of the constitution.

(vii) **Dominance of the Westernized professional middle class:** Most of the members of the Constituent Assembly belonged to an extremely small Westernized middle class which was the outcome of the British education system in India. The members of this class inherited a radical and alien social

perspective, based largely on the European experience in the 20th century. Besides, most of the members of the Constituent Assembly were lawyers who endeavoured to make the constitution more legalistic. Therefore, it has been rightly said that our constitution suffers from an overdose of legalism.

1.11 DRAFT COMMITTEE REPORT

The work of the Constituent Assembly moved from broad principles to concrete constitutional language through the reports of its various committees. These reports distilled months of deliberations, expert consultations, and comparative study of other constitutions into

recommendations that could be debated in the full Assembly. The Drafting Committee, appointed on 29 August 1947 and chaired by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, was the central body in this phase. Its mandate was to take the decisions of the Assembly — as expressed in committee reports and plenary debates — and translate them into a coherent, legally precise draft constitution.

First Draft (21 February 1948)

The Drafting Committee, chaired by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, presented the first draft on 21 February 1948. It had 315 Articles and 8 Schedules. This draft was circulated for public discussion, attracting over 7,000 comments from provincial assemblies, legal experts, and the public, shaping future revisions.

Second Draft (21 October 1948)

The second draft was introduced in the Constituent Assembly on 21 October 1948. It reflected changes from public feedback and Assembly debates. Members deliberated extensively on fundamental rights, the federal system, and emergency provisions. This draft remained open for detailed discussions until November 1949.

Third Draft (Feb – Oct, 1949)

Between February and October 1949, the Drafting Committee submitted the third draft after considering nearly 2,000 amendments moved in the Assembly. Key debates covered the national language, separation of powers, minority rights, and the judiciary's role, bringing the Constitution close to its final shape.

Final Draft (26 November 1949)

On 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly formally adopted the final Constitution with 395 Articles, 22 Parts, and 8 Schedules. The process had taken 2 years, 11 months, and 18 days. This date is now observed as Constitution Day in India.

Signature (24 January 1950)

On 24 January 1950, 284 of 299 members of the Constituent Assembly signed the final handwritten copies in English and Hindi. Two days later, on 26 January 1950, the Constitution came into effect, marking India's transition to a sovereign democratic republic.

Challenges Faced by Drafting Committee

The drafting committee although being filled with the members belonging to Political and Legal backgrounds faced several challenges while drafting of the constitution as given below:

- Balancing linguistic, religious, and cultural differences.
- Fundamental Rights vs Directive Principles while Ensuring social justice without compromising liberty.
- Confusion in Federal vs Unitary Structure while determining power distribution between Union and States.
- Adapting and integrating ideas from other constitutions to suit Indian context.
- Drafting amid post-independence economic and political instability.

Criticism of Drafting Committee

In spite of various features and successful implementation of final draft, the drafting committee faced several backlashes including:

- Limited representation, with only seven members, potentially reducing diversity of perspectives.
- Dominant influence of the Chairman, Dr. Ambedkar, though positive for efficiency.
- Too complex for the Public to understand.
- Domination of Advocates and Politicians.
- No representation of Woman.
- Borrowing of Provisions

1.11.1 Reports of the Constitutional Committee

Before the Drafting Committee could begin its work, the Assembly's subject- specific committees submitted their reports. The Union Powers Committee, chaired by Jawaharlal Nehru, defined the scope of the central government's authority, favouring a strong Centre in light of the recent Partition and the need for national integration. The Provincial Constitution Committee, under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, outlined the powers and responsibilities of the states, while also addressing the integration of princely states into the Union. The Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Minorities, and Tribal and Excluded Areas, also chaired by Patel, recommended a set of justiciable rights for all citizens and special safeguards for disadvantaged groups. These reports were not final blueprints but rather frameworks that the Drafting Committee would refine.

1.11.2 Debates of the Constituent Assembly (CAD)

The Constituent Assembly Debates — often referred to simply as the CAD — were the arena where these committee recommendations were tested, contested, and amended. Members spoke at length on issues ranging from the scope of fundamental rights to the choice of the national language. The debates were marked by both high ideals and sharp disagreements. For example, the language question provoked passionate interventions from members like R.V. Dhulekar, who insisted on Hindi as the sole official language, and Naziruddin Ahmad, who cautioned against alienating non-Hindi speakers. Tribal leader Jaipal Singh Munda used the forum to demand recognition and protection for Adivasi languages and cultures. These exchanges were not mere rhetoric; they often led to substantive changes in the draft provisions.

1.11.3 The Drafting Committee

The Drafting Committee's role was both technical and political. Ambedkar, as chairman, was responsible for reconciling the Assembly's often divergent decisions into a single, internally consistent document. The committee's other members — including K.M. Munshi, Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, and Syed Mohammad Saadulla brought expertise in law, administration, and minority rights. They examined constitutions from around the world, borrowing useful provisions while adapting them to Indian conditions. The committee also had to ensure that the language of the Constitution was clear, precise, and free from ambiguity, a task complicated by the need to accommodate political compromises reached in the Assembly.

1.11.4 Adoption of the Constitution

The Draft Constitution was debated clause by clause over the course of nearly a year. Members proposed and voted on hundreds of amendments, some minor and technical, others altering the substance of key provisions. The language compromise — retaining English alongside Hindi for an initial period — emerged from these debates, as did refinements to the provisions on minority rights and the powers of the President during emergencies. On 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution, with Dr. Rajendra Prasad declaring it a document that reflected the will and aspirations of the people of India. The Constitution came into force on 26 January 1950, 26th January chosen to commemorate the declaration of Purna Swaraj in 1930.

1.12 DECLARATION OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

The formal declaration of the Constitution of India was a moment of profound historical and symbolic significance. On **26 November 1949**, after nearly three years of deliberation, the Constituent Assembly adopted the final text of the Constitution. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, as President of the Assembly, addressed the members in a speech that captured both the pride of achievement and the gravity of responsibility. He acknowledged the tireless work of the Drafting Committee, the contributions of every member, and the guidance of constitutional adviser

B.N. Rao. This declaration was not merely a procedural act; it was a public affirmation that India now possessed a supreme legal document, created by its own representatives, which would govern the political life of the nation. The choice of **26 January 1950** as the date for the Constitution to come into effect was deliberate — it marked the twentieth anniversary of the 1930 Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress, when the demand for *Purna Swaraj* (complete independence) had first been proclaimed. By linking the enforcement of the Constitution to that earlier milestone, the framers underscored the continuity between the freedom struggle and the new Republic.

1.13 THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

When it came into force on **26 January 1950**, the Constitution of India was the lengthiest written constitution in the world. It contained **395 Articles** and **8 Schedules** (now expanded to 470 Articles and 12 Schedules through amendments), covering every aspect of governance — from the structure of the legislature, executive, and judiciary to the distribution of powers between the Union and the states, from fundamental rights and directive principles to emergency provisions and official language policy.

The Constitution was remarkable for the breadth of its vision. It sought to combine political democracy with social and economic justice, to protect individual freedoms while enabling the state to undertake transformative reforms, and to preserve the unity of the nation while recognising its diversity. It was both a legal charter and a moral covenant, embodying the aspirations of a people emerging from colonial rule into self-government.

1.14 BASIC FEATURES OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

The Constitution's basic features are those essential characteristics that define its identity and cannot be altered in a way that destroys its core principles. While the "basic structure doctrine" would only be articulated later by the Supreme Court in the *Kesavananda Bharati* case (1973), many of these features were embedded from the outset.

1.14.1 Written Constitution

India's Constitution is a single, consolidated document, unlike the unwritten conventions of the British system. This written form ensures clarity, accessibility, and a definitive reference for all matters of governance.

1.14.2 Self-Made and Enacted Constitution

Unlike many post-colonial states that inherited constitutions drafted by their former rulers, India's was framed entirely by its own Constituent Assembly. This gave it a unique legitimacy and a deep connection to the democratic aspirations of its people.

1.14.3 Preamble of the Constitution

The Preamble sets out the guiding philosophy of the Constitution, declaring India to be a **Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic** and committing the state to securing justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity for all citizens. It serves as both an introduction and a moral compass for interpreting the rest of the document.

1.14.4 India as a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Republic Country

1.14.1.1 India as a Sovereign State

The Preamble proclaims that India is a sovereign state. It testifies to the fact that India is no longer the dependency or colony or possession of the British Crown. It affirms the end of the dominion status that India technically got after the end of British rule on 15th August, 1947. It confirms that India is free internally and externally to take her own decisions.

1.14.1.2 India as a Socialist State

Although the term “Socialist” was added to the Preamble by the 42nd Amendment in 1976, the Constitution from the beginning envisaged a state committed to reducing inequalities and promoting social and economic justice.

1.14.1.3 India as a Secular State

Secularism in the Indian context means that the state maintains an equal distance from all religions, neither favouring nor discriminating against any faith, while guaranteeing freedom of religion to all citizens. Under Articles 25 to 28, the Constitution grants the Right to Religious

freedom to all the citizens. It provides for equal rights to all the citizens without any discrimination, rule of law and special protection to minorities.

1.14.1.4 India as a Democratic State

Preamble declares India to be a Democratic State and the Constitution of India provides for a democratic system. The authority of the government rests upon the sovereignty of the people. Democracy in India is based on universal adult franchise, periodic elections, and the accountability of the government to the people through their elected representatives.

1.14.1.5 India as a Republic

Being a republic means that the head of state is elected, directly or indirectly, for a fixed term, rather than holding office by hereditary right. The Preamble declares India to be a Republic. This means that India is not ruled by a monarch or a nominated head of state. Positively, it means that India has an elected head of state who" exercise power for a fixed term. The Republican status of India is in no way in conflict with the Indian membership of the Commonwealth. The President of India is the sovereign head of the state who is directly elected by the people for a fixed term of 5 years. Hence India is a Republic.

1.14.5 Union of States

Article I of The Constitution describes India as a “Union of States,” signifying that the federation is not the result of an agreement among sovereign units but rather an indestructible union with an indestructible Centre.

1.14.6 Federal System with Unitary Spirit

While the Constitution establishes a federal structure with powers divided between the Union and the states, it also equips the Centre with strong powers

— especially during emergencies

— to ensure the unity and integrity of the nation.

The constitution provides for a federal structure with a unitary spirit. Scholars describe India as a 'Quasi Federation' or a federation with a unitary bias or even as a Unitarian federation. Like a federation, the Constitution of India provides for

(i) a division of powers between the centre and states, (ii) a written and rigid constitution, (iii) supremacy of ate Constitution, (iv) independent judiciary with the power to decide Central-State disputes over division of powers, and (v) bicameralism. However, by providing a very strong centre, common constitution, single citizenship,

emergency provisions, common Election Commission, common All India Services etc. the Constitution clearly reflects the unitary spirit. The mixture of federalism-unitarianism has been done keeping in view both the pluralistic nature of Indian society and presence of regional diversities, and the need for securing unity and integrity of the nation. The former feature has compelled a decision in favour of Federalism while the latter has necessitated unitarianism. Hence, the Constitution of India is neither federal nor unitary but a mixture of the two.

Concentration of Powers

A unitary government is one in which all the powers of administration are vested in a single centre. The centre is omnipotent. A unitary state may be divided into small units for the sake of administrative convenience but the units do not have any constitutional status of their own.

In other words, the constitution does not confer any powers on the units. It is the central government which dele gates certain powers to the units on its own accord. The units are, therefore, subordinate agents of centre. The powers enjoyed by them are the gifts of the centre and as such these can be taken back at any moment. The units are thus not autonomous and independent in any way.

Single Government

In a unitary government, there is a single set of governmental apparatus. There is a single supreme legislature, single executive body and one supreme judiciary. England, for example, is a unitary state. She has one parliament as her legislature, the King-in-Council as the executive and the judicial committee of the House of Lords as her supreme judiciary.

Written or unwritten Constitution A unitary government may or may not have a writ ten constitution. As for example, England and France are unitary states. France has a written constitution but England has none

Rigid or Flexible Constitution Unlike a federation, a unitary state may or may not have a rigid constitution, e.g., the constitution of England is flexible but that of France is slightly rigid.

No Special Judiciary There is no need of having a special judiciary with wide powers of judicial veto in a unitary government. Even the highest court of U.K., for example, cannot sit in judgment over the law passed by Parliament.

1.15 CONCLUSION

The making of the Indian Constitution was a monumental exercise in democratic deliberation, carried out under the most challenging circumstances. It reflected the vision of leaders who sought to reconcile unity with diversity, liberty with equality, and tradition with modernity. The debates and amendments that shaped the final text were not mere technicalities; they were the means by which India's founding generation negotiated the terms of its collective life. The Constitution they produced has endured for decades, adapting through amendments and judicial interpretation, yet remaining faithful to its core ideals. For students of history, it stands as both a record of a nation's birth and a living framework for its future.

1.16 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQs)

1. Who was the President of the Constituent Assembly?
   A. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
   B. Rajendra Prasad
   C. Jawaharlal Nehru
   D. Sardar Patel
2. When was the Constituent Assembly of India formed?
   A. 26 January 1950
   B. 15 August 1947
   C. 9 December 1946
   D. 26 November 1949
3. Who was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution?
   A. Rajendra Prasad
   B. B.N. Rau
   C. Jawaharlal Nehru
   D. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
4. When was the Constitution of India adopted?
   A. 15 August 1947
   B. 26 January 1950
   C. 26 November 1949
   D. 9 December 1946
5. Which plan proposed the Constituent Assembly?
   A. Mountbatten Plan
   B. Cripps Mission
   C. Cabinet Mission Plan
   D. Simon Commission
6. How many members were there in the Constituent Assembly initially?
   A. 292
   B. 389
   C. 318

D. 250

7. Who was the Constitutional Advisor to the Constituent Assembly?

A. K.M. Munshi

B. Sardar Patel

C. B.N. Rau

D. Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar

8. When was the Drafting Committee formed?

A. 29 August 1947

B. 26 November 1949

C. 15 August 1947

D. 9 December 1946

9. Which of the following influenced the Indian Constitution the most?

A. American Constitution

B. French Constitution

C. British Parliamentary System

D. Russian Constitution

10. Who presented the ‘Objectives Resolution’ in the Constituent Assembly?

A. Mahatma Gandhi

B. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

C. Jawaharlal Nehru

D. Rajendra Prasad

11. How many women were members of the Constituent Assembly?

A. 10

B. 12

C. 15

D. 17

12. From which country did India borrow the idea of Fundamental Rights?

A. United Kingdom

B. United States of America

C. USSR

D. France

13. Who opposed separate electorates in the Constituent Assembly?

A. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

B. Maulana Azad

C. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

D. Jawaharlal Nehru

14. Who was the Vice-President of the Constituent Assembly?

A. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

B. Jawaharlal Nehru

C. H.C. Mukherjee

D. K.M. Munshi

15. When did the Constitution of India come into force?

A. 26 November 1949

B. 15 August 1947

C. 26 January 1950

D. 9 December 1946

16. In which language(s) was the Indian Constitution handwritten?

A. Only English

B. Only Hindi

C. English and Hindi

D. Sanskrit and Hindi

17. Who was the first Law Minister of independent India?

A. Jawaharlal Nehru

B. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

C. Rajendra Prasad

D. Sardar Patel

18. Which member emphasized the protection of minorities in the debates of the Constituent Assembly?

A. Mahatma Gandhi

B. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

C. Rajendra Prasad

D. Jawaharlal Nehru

19. From which country did India borrow the idea of Directive Principles of State Policy?

A. USA

B. UK

C. Ireland

D. USSR

20. Which of the following best describes the nature of the Indian Constitution?

A. Federal

B. Unitary

C. Federal with Unitary bias

D. Completely Unitary

1.17 ANSWERS TO MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQs)

1. B
2. C
3. D
4. C
5. C
6. B
7. C
8. A
9. C
10. C
11. C
12. B
13. C
14. C
15. C
16. C
17. B
18. B
19. C

20. C

1.18 FOR FURTHER STUDY

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UNIT – 2

MAJOR TRENDS IN POLITICS AND SOCIETY

STRUCTURE

2.1 Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Changing Nature of the Party System

- 2.3.1 Congress Dominance (1952–1967)
- 2.3.2 Decline of Congress Dominance (1967–1989)
- 2.3.3 Bharatiya Jana Sangh (1951) and the Formation of the BJP (1980)
- 2.3.4 Growth of Regional Parties
- 2.3.5 Left Parties
- 2.3.6 Coalition Politics
- 2.3.7 The Emergency (1975–1977)

2.4 People's Movements

- 2.4.1 Dalit Movements
- 2.4.2 Adivasi (Tribal) Movements
- 2.4.3 Labour Movements
- 2.4.4 Peasant Movements

2.5 Women's Movement and Institutional Changes

- 2.5.1 The Women's Movement
- 2.5.2 Debates on Personal Laws
- 2.5.3 Legislation Addressing Violence Against Women (till 1990)

2.6 Interconnections and Impact

2.7 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

2.8 Further Readings

2.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we intend to provide you an insight into major trends in politics and society after 1947. By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- To understand the evolution of the Indian party system from single-party dominance to a multi-party framework between 1950 and 1990.
- To analyze the transformation of the Congress Party's dominance and the emergence of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).
- To examine the rise of regional and left parties and their impact on Indian politics.

- To explore the dynamics of coalition politics and the significance of the Emergency (1975– 1977).
- To study the role of people's movements, including Dalit, Adivasi, labor, and peasant movements, in shaping social and political change.
- To evaluate the women's movement and institutional changes, including debates on personal laws and legislation addressing atrocities against women.
- To assess the interplay between political and social trends in shaping contemporary India during this period.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

After independence, India inherited a centralized political structure in which the Congress Party emerged as the dominant force. This dominance, however, often came at the cost of ideological diversity, as alternative visions rooted in cultural nationalism were sidelined. The evolution of the party system can thus be seen as a gradual erosion of Congress hegemony and the assertion of nationalist, regional, and ideological alternatives.

The period from 1950 to 1990 was a transformative era in India's political and social landscape. Following independence in 1947, India embarked on a journey to establish a democratic republic amidst diverse social, cultural, and economic challenges. The Indian National Congress (INC) dominated the political sphere initially, but the rise of opposition parties like the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (later BJP), regional parties, and left parties marked a shift toward a multi-party system. The imposition of the Emergency (1975–1977) was a critical juncture that tested India's democratic resilience. Simultaneously, people's movements, including those of Dalits, Adivasis, laborers, and peasants, challenged social hierarchies and demanded inclusion. The women's movement gained momentum, advocating for gender equality and legal reforms, particularly in personal laws and protections against atrocities. This unit explores these major trends, their interconnections, and their lasting impact on India's polity and society.

2.3 CHANGING NATURE OF THE PARTY SYSTEM

The study of party systems has so far focused on two contrasting phenomena, the two-party or multi-party system on the one hand, and the "one-party system" on the other. The Indian party system can be described as a one-party dominance system, which is very different from the single- party system. From the first general election in 1952 until the sixth general election in March 1977, the Congress, on the basis of its leadership depth and organisational ability, ruled the centre and most of the Indian states continuously. The dominance of Congress by 'Rajni Kothari' from 1952- 1967 was named as 'Congress System'. It was a competitive party system, which included both a 'party of consent' and a 'party of pressure'. The Congress Party has been a party working on the principle of 'pressure' and 'consensus', in which its various organisations and leaders press for their demands, which are decided unanimously by its National Working Committee.

According to political scientists 'Lloyd Rudolph' and 'Susan Rudolph', the Congress party took a middle path while building a consensus. Due to the quality of taking

decisions with 'pressure' and 'consensus', Congress played the role of both India's main party and opposition for three decades after independence. Morris-Jones described the 1950–1967 phase in similar terms as "coexistence with competition but without at race of alternative". But gradually this supremacy began to be challenged as the Congress began to lose its legacy as the national party of the freedom struggle. Congress faced a leadership crisis after the death of Prime Minister ‘Jawaharlal Nehru' and Prime Minister 'Lal Bahadur Shastri'. A rift had developed between the senior members of the Congress organisation known as the Syndicate, and the Youth Congress leaders, over the election of a new Prime Minister after the death of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri'. Syndicate leaders wanted to make Indira Gandhi, the daughter of Prime Minister 'Jawaharlal Nehru', the new Prime Minister while the youth was in support of 'Morarji Desai'.

After the election of Indira Gandhi as the new Prime Minister, the disputes within the party came to the fore more openly, who can be seen as a presidential candidate. With this, the Congress split into Congress (R) and Congress (I) in 1969. Indira Gandhi began a tradition of appointing Gandhi- Nehru family loyalists to the party's National Executive Committee, leaving no room for leaders who disagreed with the policies of the Gandhi-Nehru family. Because of this, gradually one by one the regional leaders left the Congress and formed their own regional parties like TMS, NCP, YSR Congress, Telangana Rashtra Samithi, Biju Janata Dal and countless smaller parties. As a result of this there was a rapid rise of regional parties in the politics of India and the Congress kept getting away from power election after election.

Rajni Kothari revisited the 'Congress system' in 1974 and proposed that the system still worked, albeit in some areas, because it still had the characteristics of consensus and pressure. 1977 marked the beginning of the end of the 'Congress system' described by Rajni Kothari, which had been facing challenges since 1967 when Congress lost power in eight states for the first time. However, he admitted that after 1967 the dominance of the Congress had "diminished to a great extent".

In 1967 Congress started getting challenges at state level and national level, Congress got first challenge and with that Congress completely lost its supremacy. This model of the Congress party lasted for three decades, but this phase came to an end as soon as Prime Minister 'Indira Gandhi' took charge of the party. 'Rudolph and Rudolph' show that the Congress won a landslide victory in the 1980 Lok Sabha elections under the leadership of 'Indira Gandhi', but the era of unilateral supremacy of the Congress was over.

The rise of coalition politics in 1989 brought an end to the Congress system. But it is difficult to imagine Indian politics without the Congress, which remains an important political force. After the assassination of Prime Minister 'Rajiv Gandhi' there was a political vacuum in the party, but at the centre 'P.V. Narasimha Rao' became the Prime Minister and in 1997-98 the Congress also supported the United Front government. The arrival of Mrs. 'Sonia Gandhi' and 'Rahul Gandhi' changed the face of the Congress and made up for the damage done to the party after the death of 'Rajiv Gandhi'. The party led the UPA coalition government at the Centre in 2004 and again in 2009, winning 206 seats. But could not save himself for long and lost in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The party lost about 88 percent (369) of the 421 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

2.3.1 Congress Dominance (1952–1967)

The Indian National Congress, having led the freedom movement, emerged as the

dominant political force in post-independence India. Under Jawaharlal Nehru (1947–1964), the Congress implemented socialist policies, including the establishment of the Planning Commission and Five- Year Plans, fostering a mixed economy and secular state. The "Congress system," as described by political scientist Rajni Kothari, was characterized by a one-party dominance model, where the Congress acted as a broad-based, centrist party accommodating diverse interests. It won majorities in the first three general elections (1951–52, 1957, and 1962), securing over 70% of Lok Sabha seats. The party's organizational strength, rooted in its nationalist legacy, allowed it to dominate both national and state politics. However, internal factionalism and regional challenges began to erode its dominance by the mid-1960s.

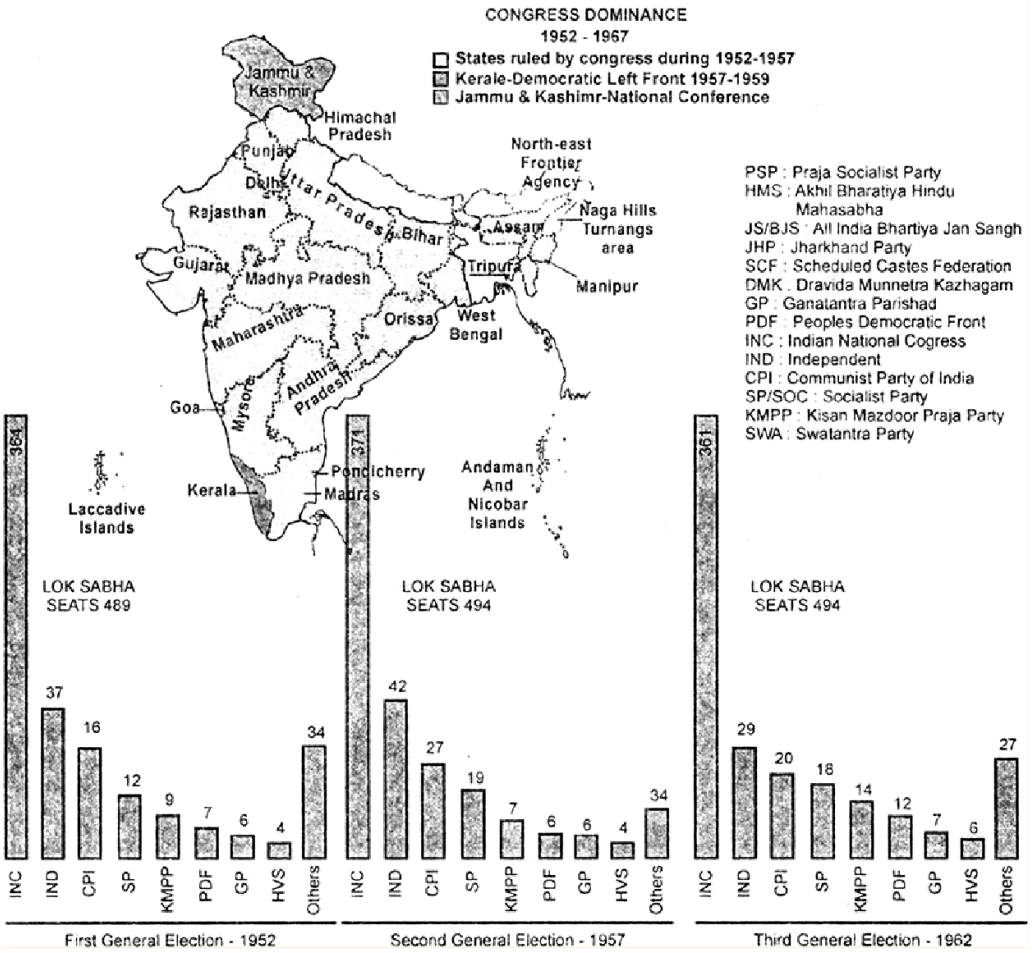
Between 1952 and 1967, Congress functioned as the "system party," monopolizing power through its organizational reach and legacy of the freedom struggle. Yet, from a right-wing perspective, this dominance suppressed genuine ideological debate. Nehruvian socialism and secularism alienated traditionalist and nationalist sections, while over-centralization weakened grassroots democracy and ignored India's civilizational ethos.

Dominance of Congress in First Three General Elections

The first general election in India wasn't a surprise because everyone expected the Indian National Congress to win. They had a strong presence all over the country and Jawaharlal Nehru, their leader, was very popular. When the results came out, Congress won 364 out of 489 seats, which was way more than any other party. Even in state elections held at the same time, Congress won in almost all states. Nehru became the Prime Minister. In the next two elections, Congress continued to dominate, winning three-fourths of the seats each time. This was partly because of how our voting system works. Even though Congress didn't get half of the votes, they won most of the seats because they got more votes than any other single party. Other parties got votes too, but they were divided among different candidates, so Congress still came out on top.

The First General Election: A Landslide Victory

The outcome of the inaugural general election in 1952 was largely anticipated, with the Indian National Congress emerging as the frontrunner. The Congress party's extensive organizational network, coupled with Nehru's charismatic leadership, propelled it to a sweeping victory, securing 364 out of 489 seats in the Lok Sabha.



Source-
https://www.zigya.com/study/book?class=12&board=cbse&subject=Political+Science&book=Politics+In+India+Si nce+Independence

Continued Dominance: Success in the Second and Third Elections

In both the 1957 and 1962 general elections, the Congress maintained its stronghold over Indian politics, winning three-fourth of the seats in the Lok Sabha. Opposition parties struggled to make significant inroads, with none able to challenge the Congress's electoral supremacy.

The decline of Congress dominance began in 1967, when opposition parties formed governments in several states. This period until 1989 reflected the growing disillusionment with Congress’s elitist policies, corruption, and neglect of cultural roots. Economic stagnation, unemployment, and identity-based politics further eroded its legitimacy, creating space for alternative political forces.

Electoral System Dynamics: Amplifying Congress's Victory

Despite not securing a majority of the popular vote, the Indian National Congress benefited disproportionately from the first-past-the-post electoral system. The Congress's ability to garner a significant share of seats, despite winning less than half of the total votes, underscored the electoral system's inherent biases.

The Role of the First-Past-the-Post Method

The first-past-the-post method favored the party with the highest number of votes, often resulting in a lopsided distribution of seats. While non-Congress parties collectively garnered more votes, their fragmented nature allowed the Congress to maintain its dominance.

Impact on Governance and Representation

The Congress's overwhelming electoral victories translated into extensive control over both the national and state governments. However, the disportionate representation in the legislative bodies raised concerns about the democratic legitimacy of the electoral process.

The era spanning from 1952 to 1962 witnessed the unchallenged ascendancy of the Indian National Congress in Indian politics. Leveraging its organizational prowess and charismatic leadership, the Congress secured landslide victories in the first three general elections, consolidating its hold over the nation's governance. Despite criticisms of the electoral system's biases, the Congress's dominance underscored the complexities of India's democratic journey in its early years.

2.3.2 Decline of Congress Dominance (1967–1989)

The 1967 elections marked a turning point, with the Congress losing power in several states due to economic challenges, such as food shortages and inflation, and internal factionalism. The death of Nehru in 1964 and Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1966 led to leadership transitions, with Indira Gandhi assuming power in 1966. Her leadership initially consolidated Congress's position, but splits within the party (e.g., the 1969 split between Congress (R) and Congress (O)) weakened its organizational cohesion. The 1977 elections, following the Emergency, saw the Congress lose power at the center for the first time to the Janata Party coalition, signaling the end of single-party dominance. By the 1980s, the Congress faced competition from emerging opposition parties, and its vote share declined, particularly after the 1989 elections, which ushered in an era of coalition governments.

Rise of Opposition and Regional Parties:- Due to the absence of strong opposition till the time of Prime Minister 'Jawaharlal Nehru' and Prime Minister 'Lal Bahadur Shastri', the Congress party was able to maintain its supremacy. But after his death, when 'Indira Gandhi' came to the fore as the Prime Minister, her differences with the old leaders of the party started emerging. Due to disagreement on many things, many leaders left the Congress party and new parties were formed, due to which gradually the Congress party became weak and the regional and opposition parties became stronger. Which started the rise of the coalition government at the state as well as at the central level.

Preference to Seniority and Dynasty over Talent:- Congress has always preferred seniority and dynasty over talent. Example: Selection of 'Ashok Gehlot' over 'Sachin Pilot' and 'Jyotiraditya Scindia' as Chief Minister of Rajasthan and 'Kamal Nath' as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. On the contrary, 'Narendra Modi' has appointed new and young leaders like 'Devendra Fadnavis', 'Yogi Adityanath', 'Manohar Lal Khattar', 'Sarbanand Sonowal', 'Jairam Thakur' and 'Biplab Kumar Deb' as Chief Ministers. Rahul Gandhi made 'Ashok Gehlot' the Chief Minister of Rajasthan. Opposing this, he said that he was pressured by the senior leaders of the organisation to make

Gehlot the Chief Minister, while he wanted to make the young 'Sachin Pilot' the Chief

Minister. (Kumar, 2016)

Domination of the Nehru-Gandhi Family:- The Congress has become a Nehru-Gandhi entanglement over the past few decades. A leader from outside the family cannot be seen as leading the party. It is possible that in place of 'Rahul Gandhi', leaders like 'A.K. Antony' or Ashok Gehlot' can be elected as the party president. 'Sonia Gandhi' never trusted a capable person like 'Pranab Mukherjee'. Due to this Congress has also faced the crisis of good political leadership.

Allegations of Corruption and Scams:- The UPA tenure was characterised by corruption and scams. The coal scam, the Commonwealth Games scam and the 3G spectrum scam created disillusionment among the general public who wanted clean and transparent governance. Rising inflation and unemployment, economic slowdown and policy paralysis contributed to a great extent affecting the image of the Congress and its allies in the eyes of the public.

Behind the new age politics:- Congress is still stuck in the politics of caste mobilisation and religious appeasement of the Mandal era. To win elections, Congress depends more on a loyal vote bank than on administrative performance. While the BJP government created attractive policies for all classes.

Electoral System :- In India's 'first-past-the-post' system, representation or seats are not given in proportion to the votes polled in elections. Thus, even in the years of Congress dominance, from 1952 to 1967, when Congress had more than 70 percent of the seats in Parliament, Congress never got more than 50 percent of the votes in Parliament or the State Legislature as a whole. (Rudolph & Rudolph,1987) The dominance of the Congress in elections, like the decline of the Congress, has been amplified by the unequal results of the 'first-past-the-post' electoral system.

2.3.3 Emergence of Bharatiya Jana Sangh and BJP

The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), founded in 1951 by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, laid the cornerstone for what would later become one of the most significant political forces in India—the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Over the decades, the journey from BJS to BJP has been marked by ideological evolution, political strategy, and significant contributions from key figures such as

Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Balraj Madhok, and Deendayal Upadhyaya a pivotal roles played by these leaders, alongside an analysis of how this political entity has managed to dominate Indian polity, especially since 2014. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh was established on October 21, 1951, by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. The party emerged as a response to what was perceived as the over-centralization of power by the Indian National Congress and the dominance of Nehruvian socialism. Mukherjee, a former Congress minister and a prominent leader, envisioned a party that would promote Hindu nationalist ideals, economic nationalism, and a strong, unified India.

BJP is a major political party in India. The BJP supports Hindu nationalism, self-sufficient and free-market economy. A few months after the death of Prime Minister 'Jawaharlal Nehru' in 1964, political scientist 'Rajni Kothari' published a seminal article titled "The Congress System in India". In it, he argued that India's political system was characterized by "one-party dominance". This old Congress system, which lasted roughly from 'Nehru' to 'Narasimha Rao', collapsed after 50 years of independence.

The landslide victory of the BJP in two consecutive Lok Sabha elections has ushered India into a new era. Some observers describe this emerging pattern of competition as the second phase of single-party dominance, the first phase referring to the period of Congress's dominance over national and state politics in the 1950s and 1960s. After two decades of transition, it has now been replaced by the 'new BJP dominance '.

Mukherjee's leadership was instrumental in articulating the party's core ideology of "Integral Humanism," which sought to balance individual rights with societal duties. His untimely death in 1953 under mysterious circumstances during a protest in Kashmir was a significant blow to the party but also a galvanizing moment that underscored the BJS's commitment to national integrity and sovereignty. Balraj Madhok and the Organizational Build-up Following Mukherjee's demise, Balraj Madhok took on a crucial role in expanding the party's organizational structure. Madhok, a historian and academic, was a strong advocate for a robust cadre-based organization. His tenure as the President of BJS saw the consolidation of the party's base, particularly in the northern and western states of India. Madhok's efforts were instrumental in the BJS's increasing electoral success. Under his leadership, the party managed to increase its share of popular votes and parliamentary seats in successive elections from 1952 to 1967. He emphasized grassroots mobilization and ideological training for party workers, ensuring a dedicated and ideologically committed base.

Deendayal Upadhyaya was one of the most influential ideologues of the BJS, introducing the concept of "Integral Humanism" in 1965. This philosophy sought to create a harmonious society by integrating the spiritual and material dimensions of human life. Upadhyaya argued against both Western capitalism and Eastern socialism, proposing instead a socio-economic framework rooted in Indian culture and values. Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism became the philosophical bedrock of the BJS and later the BJP. It emphasized self-reliance, decentralized governance, and cultural nationalism. Upadhyaya's tragic death in 1968 under mysterious circumstances was a significant loss, but his ideas continued to shape the party's policies and strategies.

The Transition to Bharatiya Janata Party: The Emergency period (1975-1977) imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was a turning point in Indian politics. The suspension of democratic processes and civil liberties galvanized opposition parties, including the BJS, to unite against the authoritarian regime. This period saw the formation of the Janata Party, a coalition that included the BJS, which won the 1977 general elections, ending Indira Gandhi's rule.

However, ideological and organizational differences within the Janata Party led to its disintegration. In 1980, the members of the former BJS, led by leaders like Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani, formed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP retained the core ideological principles of the BJS but sought to broaden its appeal by adopting a more moderate stance.

The Rise of BJP 1980-1998: 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.

The NDA Era 1998-2004: The BJP's perseverance paid off in 1998 when it formed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and led the coalition government with Atal Bihari Vajpayee as Prime Minister. Vajpayee's tenure is remembered for its pragmatic approach to governance, economic reforms, and efforts to improve relations with Pakistan. Under Vajpayee's leadership, India conducted nuclear tests in 1998, asserting its status as a nuclear power. The government also initiated significant economic reforms, including the liberalization of the telecom sector and the introduction of the National Highway Development Project. Despite these achievements, the BJP- led NDA lost the 2004 general elections. However, the party's tenure had established it as a credible alternative to the Congress, and its governance model continued to influence Indian politics.

- **Nuclear tests and national security**:

India conducted the Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998, establishing the country as a nuclear power, though it initially faced international sanctions that were later lifted.

- **Kargil War**:

India engaged in a military conflict with Pakistan in 1999, which concluded with a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Indian territory.

- **Economic reforms**:

The government implemented economic reforms that led to a near doubling of GDP growth, a reduction in inflation, and increased foreign exchange reserves.

- **Infrastructure**:

Significant investment was made in infrastructure projects, including highways, railways, and airports.

- **Social and other reforms**:

  - **Education**: Launched the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to promote universal education.
  - **Health**: Implemented health policies to increase coverage and combat diseases.
  - **Food security**: Launched the Antyodaya Anna Yojanato provide targeted food security to the poorest families.
  - **Tourism**: Accorded Export House status to the tourism industry to boost its development.

- **Foreign policy**:

  - The visit of U.S. President Bill Clinton in 2000 significantly improved Indo-U.S. relations.

The Resurgence and Dominance, 2014-Present: The BJP's return to power in 2014 under Narendra Modi marked the beginning of a new era. Modi, a former Chief Minister of Gujarat, campaigned on a platform of economic development, good governance, and strong national security. His charismatic leadership and the promise of a "New India" resonated with voters across the country. The 2014 general elections saw the BJP winning a historic mandate, with a clear majority in the Lok Sabha. Modi's government focused on economic reforms, infrastructure development, digital initiatives like Digital India and Make in India, and welfare schemes like Swachh Bharat and Jan Dhan Yojana.

The BJP's victory in the 2019 general elections further solidified its dominance. The party's ideological commitment to cultural nationalism was evident in its policies, such as the abrogation of Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and the enactment of the Citizenship Amendment Act.

Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, the Visionary Founder, had a vision for a strong, unified India based on cultural nationalism and economic self-reliance and had set the ideological foundation for the BJS and later the BJP. His commitment to national sovereignty and integrity, exemplified by his protest against the special status of Kashmir, remains a cornerstone of BJP's policy. Mukherjee's ability to articulate a distinct ideological stance and mobilize support for it laid the groundwork for the party's future success. Balraj Madhok the Organizational Architect's contributions to the organizational strength of the BJS were crucial in its early years. His focus on cadre-based mobilization and ideological training ensured a committed and disciplined party base. Madhok's leadership during the formative years helped the BJS establish a foothold in Indian politics, paving the way for its transformation into a national political force.

Deendayal Upadhyaya, the Ideological Pillar, had given the concept of Integral Humanism which provided the philosophical foundation that distinguished the BJS and BJP from other political parties. His vision of a socio-economic order rooted in Indian culture and values resonated with a broad spectrum of the Indian populace. Upadhyaya's ideas continue to influence BJP's policies, particularly in areas of economic nationalism and social welfare.

The journey from Bharatiya Jana Sangh to Bharatiya Janata Party is an achievement. The enduring appeal of its core ideology and the strategic acumen of its leaders. From its inception in 1951 to its dominance in contemporary Indian politics, the BJS/BJP has evolved while staying true to its foundational principles of cultural nationalism, economic self-reliance, and strong national security. The contributions of leaders like Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Balraj Madhok, and Deendayal Upadhyaya have been instrumental in shaping the party's ideology and organizational strength. Today, as the BJP continues to influence the Indian polity and public discourse, it is evident that the Nehruvian paradigm is being challenged, and the vision of its founding leaders is being realized. The BJP's trajectory from a marginal political entity to the dominant force in Indian politics underscores the power of a clear ideological vision and effective leadership. As India navigates the complexities of the 21st century, the BJP's role in shaping its future will undoubtedly remain significant.

The 2024 Indian general elections have once again culminated in a decisive victory for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), marking another chapter in its journey of dominance in Indian politics. This 3rd time victory reflects not only the electorate's approval of the party's governance but also the enduring appeal of its ideology. The BJP's triumph can

be attributed to its steadfast commitment to cultural nationalism, economic development, and strong leadership under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

2.3.4 Growth of Regional Parties

The 1960s and 1970s saw the rise of regional parties, reflecting India's linguistic, cultural, and regional diversity. Parties like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in Andhra Pradesh, and Akali Dal in Punjab gained prominence by championing regional identities and interests. The 1984 elections saw the TDP emerge as the main opposition party in the Lok Sabha, highlighting the growing influence of regional forces. These parties often formed alliances with national parties, shaping coalition politics in the 1980s and 1990s. The rise of regional parties also reflected dissatisfaction with the Congress's centralized approach and the demand for greater federalism.

The other regional parties that pursue an all-India platform and run candidates in all regions of the country, but only find success in a few regions or States, such as the Indian National Lok Dal, All- India Forward Bloc, Revolutionary Socialist Party, Samajwadi Party, National Congress Party etc. There are those parties which form as a result of a split in a national party, typically termed as 'splinter parties'. Finally, there are some parties that arise as a vehicle to carry individual politicians with personal popularity and name recognition to the ballot box. These parties, however, struggle to define their positions on issues and move beyond the image of their charismatic leader, and hence, do not survive for very long. Some of the more notable examples include the Lok Janshakti Party and the Haryana Vikas Party.

The emergence of regional parties and coalition politics has resulted in Centre-State relations becoming a cause of tension, with regional parties constantly demanding greater financial and political autonomy from the Central government. For many years after the Constitution came into force, Centre-State relations were largely smooth and without conflict as one party dominated politics at the Central and State.

2.3.5 Left Parties

Left parties, primarily the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)), played a significant role in Indian politics, particularly in states like West Bengal, Kerala, and Tripura. The CPI, founded in 1925, and the CPI(M), formed after a split in 1964, advocated for socialist policies, land reforms, and workers' rights. The CPI(M)-led Left Front governed West Bengal from 1977 to 2011, implementing land reforms and promoting rural development. Left parties often supported Congress-led coalitions (e.g., the United Progressive Alliance in 2004) but maintained ideological independence. Their influence was limited nationally but significant in shaping state-level politics and labor movements.

2.3.6 Coalition Politics

The decline of Congress dominance led to the rise of coalition politics in the 1980s. The 1989 elections marked the beginning of an era where no single party secured a clear majority, necessitating coalitions. The National Front, led by V.P. Singh, formed a government with support from the BJP and Left parties. The 1990s saw frequent coalition governments, including the United Front (1996–1998) and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA, 1998–2004), led by the BJP. Coalition politics empowered regional parties, which played kingmaker roles, but also led to instability, as seen in the short-lived governments of the 1990s. The era highlighted the complexities of

managing diverse ideological and regional interests.

2.3.6 The Emergency (1975–1977)

The Emergency, declared by Indira Gandhi on June 25, 1975, was a pivotal event in Indian politics. Citing threats to national security and economic instability, the government suspended civil liberties, censored the press, and arrested opposition leaders. The Emergency was a response to political challenges, including the Allahabad High Court's ruling against Indira Gandhi's election and mass protests led by Jayaprakash Narayan. It exposed the fragility of democratic institutions and led to widespread human rights abuses, including forced sterilizations. The 1977 elections, which ended the Emergency, saw the Janata Party's victory, reflecting public backlash against authoritarianism. The Emergency reshaped political discourse, strengthening opposition unity and raising debates on democracy and secularism.

2.4 PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS

2.4.1 Dalit Movements

History testifies the presence of social cleavages in Indian society, in terms of caste, class, gender and the like. Such cleavages has changed the entire social fabric of Indian society, whereby the exploited section, be it the Dalits, adivasis or women, have been systematically pushed to the periphery by the traditional Brahmanical structure of oppression. Dalits are the people who are economically, socially, politically exploited from centuries. Unable to live in the society of human beings, they have been living outside the village depending on lower level of occupation, and lived as ―untouchable‖ .This exploitation is due to the discrimination followed by age old caste hierarchical tradition in the Hindu society. This hierarchy has been the cause for oppression of Dalits in each and every sphere of society since centuries. It has subjected them to a life of poverty and humiliation. The Dalits(ex-untouchables), who have been brutally exploited by the so-called upper castes, lag outside the Varnasrama theory and were referred to as outcasts in pre-independent India. India attained independence, but the Dalits were not allowed to live a life with dignity and equality. It is this idea of e quality, which sparked the beginning of the Dalit Movement in India, as a protest to the age-old atrocities committed against them. Dalit movement is a struggle that tries to counter attack the socio – cultural hegemony of the upper castes. It is a movement of the masses that craves for justice through the speeches, literary works, dramas, songs, cultural organisations and all the other possible measurers. So it can be called as a movement which has been led by Dalits to seek equality with all other castes of the Hindu society. The main objective of the Dalit Movement was to establish a society in India based on social equality.

Dalit movements emerged as a powerful force to challenge caste-based discrimination and demand social equality. Inspired by B.R. Ambedkar, Dalit activism gained momentum in the 1970s with the formation of the Dalit Panthers in Maharashtra, modeled after the Black Panthers. The Panthers protested caste oppression and untouchability through literature, protests, and cultural assertion. In 1978, the Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation (BAMCEF) was formed, followed by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in 1984, led by Kanshi Ram. The BSP mobilized Dalits and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in northern India, particularly Uttar Pradesh, advocating for political power as a means to achieve social justice. The Mandal Commission's recommendations (1990) for OBC reservations further amplified Dalit and backward caste political assertion.

2.4.2 Adivasi Movements

The Adivasis of India have been trying to protect their lands and assert their collective right to self-determination since India's Independence and long before. The Pathalgadi movement is the most powerful recent mass expression of self-determination, which is presumably why its participants have been terrorized and criminalized by the Indian state. This also why it is vital that more and more people understand this movement.

The word 'Adivasi' comprises two Hindi words – *Adi* and *vasi* – so literally it means 'original inhabitant', implying indigeneity.

Adivasi (tribal) movements focused on land rights, cultural preservation, and resistance to displacement due to industrialization and development projects. The 1950s and 1960s saw tribal uprisings in states like Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh against land alienation and exploitation. The Jharkhand Movement demanded a separate state to protect tribal identity and resources, culminating in the creation of Jharkhand in 2000. Adivasi activism also intersected with left-wing movements, as seen in the Naxalite movement, which addressed tribal exploitation but often turned violent. These movements highlighted the marginalization of Adivasis and their struggle for inclusion in India's development narrative.

2.4.3 Labor Movements

The seeds of India's labour movement were planted during the colonial era when British industrialization began transforming the traditional economic structure. The establishment of railways, cotton mills, jute factories, and coal mines in the mid-19th century created an unprecedented demand for wage labour. This period marked the beginning of a significant social transformation: the emergence of India's industrial working class.

The 1850s saw the establishment of the first cotton mills in Bombay (now Mumbai) and jute mills in Bengal. By 1879, there were 56 cotton mills in India employing nearly 43,000 workers. The railway workshop in Jamalpur, Bihar, established in 1862, became one of the largest employers of industrial labour. These industrial centres attracted large numbers of rural workers, creating new urban industrial communities.

Early working conditions and exploitation

The early industrial working class faced severe exploitation. Workers endured:

- **Extreme working hours:** 16-hour workdays were common, with no weekly day off
- **Unsafe conditions:** Factories lacked basic safety measures, resulting in frequent accidents
- **Child labour:** Children as young as six worked in hazardous conditions
- **Meager wages:** Payment was barely sufficient for subsistence
- **Poor housing:** Workers lived in overcrowded, unsanitary settlements near factories

These conditions created fertile ground for worker discontent. The absence of any protective legislation meant that employers had virtually unrestricted power over their workforce. Workers had little recourse against arbitrary dismissals, wage cuts, or unsafe working conditions.

Labor movements were driven by trade unions affiliated with left parties (e.g., CPI's All India Trade Union Congress and CPI(M)'s Centre of Indian Trade Unions) and the Congress's Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC). The 1970s saw significant labor unrest, including strikes in industries like textiles and railways. The 1974 railway strike, one of the largest in India's history, demanded better wages and working conditions but was suppressed during the Emergency. Labor movements faced challenges due to economic liberalization in the 1980s, which prioritized industrial growth over workers' rights, leading to a decline in union influence.

2.4.4 Peasant Movements

Peasant movements addressed issues like land reforms, tenancy rights, and agricultural prices. The 1950s and 1960s saw successful land reforms in states like West Bengal and Kerala, driven by left-led governments. The Naxalite movement, originating in Naxalbari (West Bengal) in 1967, was a radical peasant uprising against feudal landlords, advocating armed struggle. While it spread to other states, it faced state repression. The 1980s saw the rise of farmers' movements, such as those led by the Bharatiya Kisan Union, demanding better crop prices and debt relief, reflecting agrarian distress amidst the Green Revolution's uneven benefits.

2.5 WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

2.5.1 The Women's Movement

The women's movement in India gained momentum in the 1970s, driven by feminist organizations and grassroots activism. Groups like the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Gujarat and the Progressive Organisation of Women in Hyderabad addressed issues like economic empowerment, violence against women, and patriarchal norms. The movement challenged dowry- related violence, rape, and workplace discrimination, leading to public campaigns and legal advocacy. The publication of *Towards Equality* (1974), a government report, highlighted gender disparities and galvanized feminist activism. The movement was diverse, encompassing urban middle-class feminists and rural women's struggles, and played a key role in pushing for legal reforms.

2.5.2 Debating Personal Laws

Personal laws, governing marriage, divorce, and inheritance, were a contentious issue due to their basis in religious traditions. Hindu personal laws were reformed in the 1950s through acts like the Hindu Marriage Act (1955) and Hindu Succession Act (1956), granting women greater rights in marriage and property. However, Muslim personal laws remained largely unreformed, leading to debates over gender equality and secularism. The Shah Bano case (1985), where the Supreme Court granted maintenance to a divorced Muslim woman, sparked controversy. The Congress government's passage of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, overturned the verdict, prioritizing community sentiments over gender justice, which fueled debates on uniform civil codes and secularism.

2.5.3 Legislation on Atrocities Against Women

The women's movement led to significant legislative changes to address violence against women. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983, strengthened laws against rape and sexual assault, introducing stricter penalties and recognizing custodial rape. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, was amended in 1984 and 1986 to address dowry-

related violence, though enforcement remained weak. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, aimed to curb objectification in the media. These laws reflected the women's movement's success in highlighting gender-based violence but faced challenges in implementation due to societal attitudes and judicial inefficiencies.

2.6 INTERCONNECTIONS AND IMPACT

The period from 1950 to 1990 saw a complex interplay between political and social trends. The decline of Congress dominance and the rise of regional and identity-based parties reflected growing social assertiveness among marginalized groups. People's movements, including those of Dalits, Adivasis, laborers, and peasants, challenged the state and societal structures, influencing political agendas. The women's movement intersected with debates on secularism and personal laws, highlighting tensions between tradition and modernity. The Emergency underscored the fragility of democratic institutions, while coalition politics reflected India's diverse polity. These trends laid the foundation for India's transition to a more pluralistic and contested political landscape in the 1990s.

2.7 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQS)

1. Which party dominated Indian politics from 1950 to 1967?
   a) Bharatiya Jana Sangh
   b) Indian National Congress
   c) Communist Party of India
   d) Janata Party
2. Who founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in 1951?
   a) Atal Bihari Vajpayee
   b) Syama Prasad Mukherjee
   c) Lal Krishna Advani
   d) Narendra Modi
3. What ideology is associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)?
   a) Socialism
   b) Hindutva
   c) Secularism
   d) Communism
4. Which event marked the end of single-party dominance in India?
   a) 1967 General Elections
   b) 1977 General Elections
   c) 1989 General Elections

d) 1996 General Elections

5. Which regional party emerged as the main opposition in the 1984 Lok Sabha elections?

a) Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)

b) Telugu Desam Party (TDP)

c) Akali Dal

d) Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)

6. Which state was governed by the Left Front from 1977 to 2011?

a) Kerala

b) West Bengal

c) Tripura

d) Tamil Nadu

7. What was a key feature of coalition politics in the 1990s?

a) Single-party dominance

b) Ideological coherence

c) Regional parties' influence

d) Stable governments

8. Why was the Emergency declared in 1975?

a) Economic crisis

b) Threat to national security

c) Political instability

d) All of the above

9. Which movement was inspired by the Black Panthers in the 1970s?

a) Jharkhand Movement

b) Dalit Panthers

c) Naxalite Movement

d) Women's Movement

10. Who founded the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)?

a) B.R. Ambedkar

b) Kanshi Ram

c) Mayawati

d) V.P. Singh

11. What was the primary demand of the Jharkhand Movement?

a) Land reforms

b) Separate statehood

c) Labor rights

d) Women's rights

12. Which strike was a major labor movement in the 1970s?

a) Textile Strike

b) Railway Strike (1974)

c) Coal Miners' Strike

d) Farmers' Strike

13. What was the Naxalite movement's primary focus?

a) Urban labor rights

b) Peasant uprisings against landlords

c) Women's empowerment

d) Environmental protection

14. Which report galvanized the women's movement in the 1970s?

a) Mandal Commission Report

b) Towards Equality Report

c) Shah Bano Case

d) Sachar Committee Report

15. Which act was amended in the 1980s to address dowry-related violence?

a) Hindu Marriage Act

b) Dowry Prohibition Act

c) Muslim Women Act

d) Criminal Law Amendment Act

16. What was the outcome of the Shah Bano case (1985)?

a) Uniform civil code implemented

b) Maintenance granted to a divorced Muslim woman

c) Ban on triple talaq

d) No legal change

17. Which party led the National Front government in 1989?
    a) Janata Dal
    b) BJP
    c) Congress
    d) CPI(M)
18. What was a major consequence of the Emergency (1975–1977)?
    a) Rise of Congress dominance
    b) Strengthening of opposition unity
    c) Economic liberalization
    d) Decline of regional parties
19. Which organization was formed in 1978 to mobilize Dalits and OBCs?
    a) Dalit Panthers
    b) BAMCEF
    c) BSP
    d) SEWA
20. Which act aimed to curb objectification of women in media?
    a) Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
    b) Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983
    c) Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
    d) Hindu Succession Act, 1956

2.8 ANSWERS TO MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. b
2. b
3. b
4. b
5. b
6. b
7. c
8. d
9. b
10. b

11. b
12. b
13. b
14. b
15. b
16. b
17. a
18. b
19. b
20. a

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UNIT– 3

TURNING POINTS IN THE 1980s AND 1990s

STRUCTURE

3.1 Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Political Developments

- 3.3.1 Decline of Congress Dominance
- 3.3.2 Rise of Coalition Politics
- 3.3.3 Mandal Commission and OBC Politics
- 3.3.4 Rise of Hindutva and Communal Politics

3.4 Economic Transformations

- 3.4.1 Prelude to Liberalization (1980s)
- 3.4.2 The 1991 Economic Crisis and Reforms
- 3.4.3 Impact of Liberalization

3.5 Social and Cultural Changes

- 3.5.1 Caste-Based Movements
- 3.5.2. Women's Movements and Gender Issues
- 3.5.3 Communal Tensions and Secularism
- 3.5.4 Cultural Shifts and Globalization

3.6 Foreign Policy Shifts

- 3.6.1 End of the Cold War and Its Impact
- 3.6.2 India's Foreign Policy in the 1990s
- 3.6.3 Nuclear Tests and Global Positioning

3.7 Conclusion

3.8 Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs)

3.9 Answers to Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs)

3.10 Further Readings

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Analyze the decline of the Indian National Congress's dominance and the emergence of coalition politics.
- Evaluate the causes, implementation, and consequences of the 1991 economic reforms.

- Examine the social and cultural transformations, including caste-based mobilization, gender issues, and communal tensions.
- Assess India's foreign policy adaptations in response to global geopolitical changes.
- Critically reflect on the key turning points that shaped contemporary India.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The 1980s began with India navigating the aftermath of the Emergency (1975–1977) and the return of democratic governance. The political landscape was marked by the dominance of the Indian National Congress under Indira Gandhi and later Rajiv Gandhi, yet it was also a period of growing regional and opposition movements. The rise of coalition politics, the emergence of new political parties, and the increasing assertiveness of regional identities challenged the centralized political structure. Significant events, such as the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 and the subsequent anti-Sikh riots, exposed deep communal tensions and raised questions about national unity and secularism. The 1990s further saw the decline of single-party dominance, with the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and other regional players, signaling a shift toward a more fragmented yet pluralistic political order.

Economically, the 1980s were a prelude to the liberalization reforms of 1991, which became a defining moment for India. The country faced severe economic challenges, including a balance- of-payments crisis, which necessitated bold reforms under Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Finance Minister Manmohan Singh. The shift from a state-controlled, protectionist economy to a liberalized, market-oriented framework opened India to global trade and investment. This period saw the rise of the middle class, the growth of the private sector, and the seeds of India's information technology boom, fundamentally altering its economic identity.

Socially, the 1980s and 1990s were marked by tensions and transformations. The Mandal Commission's recommendations in 1990, advocating reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBCs), sparked nationwide debates on caste, equity, and social justice. Simultaneously, the Ram

Janmabhoomi movement gained momentum, fueling communal polarization and reshaping India's secular fabric. The period also witnessed strides in education, urbanization, and women's empowerment, alongside challenges like poverty and inequality.

Culturally, the advent of television, the spread of Bollywood, and the influence of global media brought about a cultural renaissance, blending tradition with modernity. The 1980s and 1990s thus represent a crucible of change, where India balanced its historical roots with aspirations for global integration. This unit examines these turning points, encouraging students to critically analyze their impact on contemporary India's political, economic, and social landscape, and their lasting legacy in shaping the nation's present and future.

3.3 POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

This section examines the erosion of the Indian National Congress's political hegemony, the emergence of coalition governments, the transformative impact of the

Mandal Commission, and the rise of Hindutva-driven communal politics, which collectively reshaped India's political landscape.

3.3.1 Decline of Congress Dominance

This subheading explores the factors leading to the weakening of the Congress party, which had dominated Indian politics since independence. It covers Indira Gandhi's return in 1980, her assassination in 1984, Rajiv Gandhi's modernizing yet controversy-ridden tenure, and the party's electoral defeat in 1989, marking the end of its unchallenged supremacy.

- **Internal dissent and factionalism**: One of the primary reasons for the Congress's decline was internal dissent and factionalism within the party. As the party grew in size and influence, it became increasingly difficult to maintain unity among its diverse membership. Factional conflicts and power struggles weakened the party's organizational structure and eroded its support base.
- **Economic challenges**: By the late 1960s, India was facing several economic challenges, including food shortages, inflation, and unemployment. The Congress government's inability to effectively address these issues led to growing dissatisfaction among the population. This discontent provided an opportunity for opposition parties to gain support and challenge the Congress's dominance.
- **The rise of regional parties:** The 1967 elections saw the emergence of several regional parties that successfully challenged the Congress in various states. These parties, such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu and the Akali Dal in Punjab, capitalized on regional sentiments and offered alternative political platforms that resonated with local populations. The rise of these regional parties marked the beginning of a more diverse and competitive political landscape in India.
- **Impact of the 1967 elections:** The 1967 elections were a watershed moment in Indian politics, as they marked the first significant decline in the Congress's dominance. Several states, including Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Punjab, saw the formation of non-Congress governments. This shift in power dynamics signaled the end of the Congress's unchallenged supremacy and paved the way for a more pluralistic and competitive party system in India.
- **Indira Gandhi's Return (1980)**: After the Janata Party's collapse, Indira Gandhi regained power, but her centralized leadership faced challenges from regional insurgencies (e.g., Punjab's Khalistan movement, Assam's anti-foreigner agitation) and economic stagnation, eroding public trust.
- **Assassination and Aftermath (1984)**: Indira's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards, following Operation Blue Star, triggered anti-Sikh riots, damaging Congress's secular image. Rajiv Gandhi's landslide victory in 1984 was driven by a sympathy wave but marked the beginning of new challenges.
- **Rajiv Gandhi's Tenure (1984–1989)**: Rajiv's focus on technology and modernization (e.g., telecom revolution) was overshadowed by the Bofors corruption scandal and foreign policy missteps, such as India's involvement in Sri Lanka's civil war (IPKF deployment).
- **1989 Elections**: The Congress's defeat to the National Front, led by V.P. Singh,

signaled the fragmentation of national politics, with regional and ideological parties gaining prominence.

3.3.2 Rise of Coalition Politics

This subheading analyses the shift from single-party dominance to coalition governments, reflecting India's diverse political spectrum and the challenges of maintaining stable governance.

- **Regional aspirations:** India is a country with diverse cultures, languages, and regional identities. Regional parties began to represent the specific interests and aspirations of their states, gaining substantial support.
- **Fragmented electorate:** The Indian electorate became more fragmented with time, making it difficult for a single party to secure a clear majority. This fragmentation necessitated alliances and coalitions.
- **Decline of the Congress party:** The weakening of the Congress party's grip on Indianpolitics created a vacuum that regional and smaller national parties sought to fill.
- **National Front Government (1989–1991)**: V.P. Singh's coalition, supported by the BJP and leftists, introduced significant policies but collapsed due to internal rifts and the contentious Mandal decision.
- **Chandra Shekhar's Brief Tenure (1990–1991)**: A splinter government supported by Congress, this short-lived administration underscored the instability of early coalition experiments.
- **1990s Coalition Governments**: The decade saw fragile governments under H.D. Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral, alongside the BJP's brief 1996 tenure, highlighting the complexities of coalition dynamics.
- United Front (1996-1998): The United Front coalition, formed in 1996, was one of the early examples of successful coalition politics in India. Comprising several regional and left-leaning parties, the United Front came to power after the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) failed to secure a majority. This coalition highlighted the growing importance of regional parties and their ability to influence national politics.
- **National Democratic Alliance (NDA):** In 1998, the BJP led the formation of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a coalition of like-minded parties. The NDA's success marked a significant shift in Indian politics, as it demonstrated that a coalition could provide stable governance. Under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the NDA governed India until 2004, focusing on economic reforms and infrastructure development.
- **United Progressive Alliance (UPA):** The United Progressive Alliance (UPA), led by the Congress party, emerged in 2004 after defeating the NDA in the general elections. The UPA, comprising several regional and left-leaning parties, governed India for a decade, focusing on social welfare schemes and inclusive growth. The success of the UPA further cemented the role of coalition politics in India.

3.3.3 Mandal Commission and OBC Politics

This subheading details the Mandal Commission's recommendations and their

implementation, which redefined caste-based politics by empowering Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and sparking debates on social justice. The Mandal Commission adopted a more scientific approach than its predecessor. It used eleven criteria to identify backward classes, including:

- **Social criteria:** Castes considered untouchable by higher castes, those excluded from temple entry, and communities from which higher castes wouldn't accept water.
- **Educational criteria:** Castes with literacy rates below the national average and low representation in higher education.
- **Economic criteria:** Communities primarily engaged in manual labor and those with limited land ownership.
- **Background**: Constituted in 1979 under B.P. Mandal, the commission identified OBCs and recommended 27% reservation in government jobs and education to address historical inequalities.
- **Implementation (1990)**: V.P. Singh's decision to implement the recommendations led to widespread protests from upper-caste groups and self-immolation incidents, but it mobilized OBC communities, strengthening regional parties.
- **Impact**: The rise of OBC leaders like Mulayam Singh Yadav and Lalu Prasad Yadav transformed electoral politics, with parties like the Samajwadi Party and Rashtriya Janata Dal gaining prominence.

3.3.4 Rise of Hindutva and Communal Politics

The early 20th century was a period of intense political awakening in India. The freedom struggle was gaining momentum, but it was also marked by growing communal tensions. The partition of Bengal in 1905, the formation of the All-India Muslim League in 1906, and the introduction of separate electorates had created an atmosphere where religious identity was increasingly becoming a factor in political calculations.

It was in this charged environment that Vinayak Damodar Savarkar articulated his vision of Hindutva in his seminal work "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?" published in 1923. Savarkar's concept went beyond religion to encompass a cultural and political identity. According to him, a Hindu was someone for whom India was both their fatherland (pitribhumi) and holy land (punyabhumi). This definition had profound implications, as it suggested that Muslims and Christians, whose holy lands lay outside India, could not be considered fully Indian. This subheading also traces the growth of Hindu nationalism, driven by the BJP and its affiliates, and its impact on India's secular framework, particularly through the Ram Janmabhoomi movement.

- **Ram Janmabhoomi Movement**: The Vishwa Hindu Parishad's campaign for a Ram temple in Ayodhya, amplified by L.K. Advani's 1990 Rath Yatra, polarized voters and boosted the BJP's electoral base.
- **Babri Masjid Demolition (1992)**: The demolition by kar sevaks triggered nationwide riots, notably in Mumbai, challenging India's secular ethos and strengthening the BJP's political ascent.
- **BJP's Growth**: From 2 Lok Sabha seats in 1984 to 161 in 1996, the BJP's rise reflected the growing appeal of Hindutva ideology.

3.4 ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

This section covers the gradual shift from a controlled economy to a market-driven one, culminating in the landmark 1991 reforms, and evaluates their long-term impact on India's growth trajectory.

3.4.1 Prelude to Liberalization (1980s)

This subheading examines the economic challenges of the 1980s and the initial reforms under Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, which laid the groundwork for later liberalization.

- **Economic Challenges**: High tariffs, public sector dominance, and the restrictive "license raj" stifled growth, despite an average GDP growth of 5.7%.
- **Rajiv Gandhi's Reforms**: Partial delicensing, export promotion, and technology investments (e.g., C-DOT for telecommunications) marked early liberalization efforts, though structural inefficiencies persisted.
- **External Shocks**: The Soviet Bloc's collapse and the Iraq-Kuwait war disrupted trade and oil supplies, exacerbating fiscal deficits.

3.4.2 The 1991 Economic Crisis and Reforms

This subheading details the Balance-of-Payments crisis and the subsequent reforms under P.V.

Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh, which dismantled India's socialist economic framework.

- **Crisis Context**: With foreign reserves at $1 billion, India faced a severe BoP crisis due to fiscal deficits, external shocks, and unsustainable spending.
- **Reforms**: The Rao-Singh duo introduced rupee devaluation, trade liberalization, industrial deregulation, FDI encouragement, and fiscal discipline, supported by an IMF loan.
- **Key Measures**: Abolition of the license raj, tariff reductions, and opening sectors like telecom and banking to private players marked a paradigm shift.

3.4.3 Impact of Liberalization

Liberalization in India began with tentative steps in the 1980s, including industrial de-licensing and limited foreign investment, which fueled economic growth but also contributed to a growing fiscal deficit and the 1991 Balance of Payments crisis. The 1990s saw comprehensive reforms, known as LPG (Liberalisation, Privatisation, Globalisation) reforms, abolishing industrial licenses, opening sectors to the private sector and foreign investment, and reducing trade barriers, resulting in increased industrial growth, foreign investment, and consumer choices. These measures fundamentally transformed India into a more market-oriented economy, leading to significant benefits alongside new challenges like increased income inequality and competition for domestic industries. This subheading assesses the outcomes of the 1991 reforms, including economic growth, global integration, and persistent challenges.

- **Economic Growth**: GDP growth averaged 5.8% in the 1990s, driven by the private sector, particularly in IT and pharmaceuticals.
- **Global Integration**: Increased FDI and trade boosted industries but highlighted India's reliance on global markets.

- **Challenges**: Jobless growth, a dominant informal sector, and agricultural stagnation underscored uneven development, with rising inequalities and rural neglect.

3.5 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES

The 1980s and 1990s represent a decisive phase in modern history, marked by profound social and cultural transformations across the globe. These decades witnessed the end of the Cold War, the rise of globalization, the rapid spread of mass media, and the beginnings of the digital revolution. Social movements advocating for gender equality, civil rights, environmental protection, and cultural diversity gained momentum, reshaping traditional norms and institutions. In many countries, the 1980s brought challenges of economic restructuring, political upheavals, and shifting identities, while the 1990s opened a new era of liberalization, global connectivity, and multiculturalism.

This section explores the social and cultural transformations driven by caste mobilization, gender

activism, communal tensions, and globalization's cultural impact.

3.5.1 Caste-Based Movements

This subheading analyzes the empowerment of marginalized caste groups through political and social mobilization, reshaping India's social hierarchy.

- **Mandal Commission Impact:** The Mandal Commission, officially known as the Second Backward Classes Commission (1979), marked a watershed moment in India's social and political history. Appointed under the chairmanship of B.P. Mandal, its primary objective was to identify the socially and educationally backward classes (SEBCs) and recommend measures for their advancement. In 1980, the Commission submitted its report, suggesting 27% reservation in government jobs and educational institutions for Other Backward Scheduled Tribes (STs). society experienced one of its most dramatic turning points since independence. The move leading to political polarization and social unrest. parties and leaders, altering electoral dynamics.
- **Dalit Assertion**: The Bahujan Samaj Party's growth under Kanshi Ram and Mayawati challenged upper-caste dominance, amplifying Dalit voices.
- **Subaltern Studies**: This academic movement highlighted marginalized histories, influencing social justice discourses.

3.5.2 Women's Movements and Gender Issues

The decades of the 1980s and 1990s occupy a significant place in the history of women's movements and gender debates in India as well as across the globe. These years witnessed a shift laws, demand legal reforms, and push for greater representation in politics and employment.

Globally, the 1980s and 1990s were also shaped by the influence of the United Nations Decade for Women (1975–1985) and subsequent international conferences, particularly the Beijing Conference of 1995, which emphasized gender equality, reproductive rights, and women's participation in development. In India, these international developments coincided with debates on issues such as reservation for women in local governance, women's labor rights, and the impact of economic liberalization on women's lives.

Thus, the women's movements of the 1980s and 1990s not only expanded the scope of gender issues from legal reforms to structural inequalities but also redefined the agenda of feminism in India. This period can rightly be seen as a turning point where women's voices emerged more assertively in public life, influencing both policy and social consciousness. This subheading examines the women's movement's focus on legal reforms and political representation, alongside cultural contributions to gender discourse.

- **Key Issues**: Campaigns against dowry deaths and domestic violence led to laws like the Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 1984.
- **Feminist Literature**: Works by Kamala Das and Arundhati Roy explored gender and identity, shaping cultural narratives.
- **Political Representation**: The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1992) reserved 33% seats for women in local governance, enhancing their political agency.
- **Dalit feminism and the challenge to mainstream narratives:** Dalit women began organizing independently, asserting that their experiences of oppression were distinct due to the intersection of caste and gender. Organizations like the National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW), established in 1995, highlighted issues such as caste-based violence, land rights, and the exploitation of Dalit women in manual scavenging.

The Mandal Commission and its aftermath further emphasized the need to consider caste within gender politics. Feminist movements had to reckon with the fact that gender equality could not be achieved without addressing caste-based hierarchies and oppression.

3.5.3 Communal Tensions and Secularism

This subheading addresses the challenges to India's secular framework posed by rising communalism, particularly post-1992. Modern communalism's impact extends far beyond occasional riots or protests, penetrating deep into India's social, economic, and political fabric. The consequences affect not just immediate victims but entire communities and the nation's development trajectory.

Economic consequences

Communal tensions impose significant economic costs on Indian society. Areas prone to communal violence often experience reduced investment, as businesses avoid locations perceived as unstable. The 2002 Gujarat riots, for instance, led to massive economic losses, with small businesses and informal sector workers bearing the brunt of the disruption.

Moreover, communalism creates artificial barriers to economic cooperation. When communities are suspicious of each other, they're less likely to engage in mutually beneficial trade, partnerships, or employment relationships. This reduces overall economic efficiency and perpetuates poverty cycles.

Social fragmentation

Communalism gradually erodes the social trust that binds diverse communities together. Mixed neighborhoods often segregate along religious lines following communal incidents, creating physical and psychological barriers between communities. Children growing up in such environments internalize prejudices that

become harder to overcome in adulthood.

The education system also suffers when communal considerations influence curriculum decisions, teacher appointments, or student admissions. Instead of promoting critical thinking and secular values, educational institutions may become sites of communal indoctrination.

Political polarization

Communalism distorts democratic processes by encouraging vote-bank politics rather than issue- based campaigning. Politicians find it easier to mobilize voters through religious appeals than to address complex governance challenges. This leads to policy paralysis on important issues like urban planning, environmental protection, or economic reform.

The phenomenon also weakens democratic institutions by promoting loyalty to religious leaders or communal organizations over constitutional authorities. When citizens prioritize religious identity over civic duties, it becomes difficult to maintain the rule of law and democratic accountability.

- **Ayodhya Dispute**: The Ram Janmabhoomi movement and Babri Masjid demolition intensified Hindu-Muslim tensions, sparking riots.
- **Secularism Debates**: Intellectuals debated balancing India's pluralistic traditions with communal challenges.
- **Cultural Responses**: Literature and cinema, such as Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Deepa Mehta's *Fire*, engaged with these issues.

3.5.4 Cultural Shifts and Globalization

This subheading explores how globalization transformed Indian culture through media, cinema, and consumerism. Cultural globalization refers to the process by which cultural elements, ideas, practices, and values are exchanged and spread across the globe, often resulting in the convergence of cultural identities and the emergence of shared global norms. This phenomenon has been significantly accelerated by advances in communication technologies, mass media, and international travel. The impact of cultural globalization is multifaceted: while it facilitates the creation of a more interconnected world, it also raises questions about cultural homogenization, the preservation of local traditions, and the construction of new identities. As global connections deepen, people around the world are increasingly exposed to foreign cultures, languages, and lifestyles, often leading to the formation of global identities. However, cultural globalization does not simply replace local cultures with global ones; instead, it often results in the hybridization or adaptation of local traditions, which blend global influences with indigenous practices. These dynamics raise important questions about how cultures interact in a globalized world and how individuals and communities navigate their local traditions in the face of global pressures.

- **Media Boom**: Private TV channels (e.g., Star TV) and cable networks introduced global cultural influences.
- **Cinema Evolution**: Bollywood and regional films addressed social issues while adopting global aesthetics.
- **Consumerism**: Multinational brands transformed urban lifestyles, reflecting economic liberalization's cultural impact.

3.6 FOREIGN POLICY SHIFTS

This section evaluates India's foreign policy adaptations in response to global changes, including the end of the Cold War, new regional engagements, and nuclear assertion.

3.6.1 End of the Cold War and Its Impact

The strategic shifts in India's foreign policy during the Cold War reflected a gradual evolution from idealism toward pragmatism, though elements of both approaches remained present throughout the period.

Achievements and limitations - India's Cold War foreign policy yielded mixed results:

- **National security:** Successfully protected territorial integrity and advanced core security interests despite limited resources
- **Strategic autonomy:** Maintained decision-making independence despite growing alignment with the Soviet bloc
- **Regional influence:** Established India as the dominant power in South Asia
- **Economic development:** Failed to fully leverage international relationships for domestic economic advancement Despite the pragmatic shifts, certain core principles endured throughout the Cold War period and continue to influence Indian foreign policy:
- **Strategic autonomy:** Persistent emphasis on independent decision-making
- **Multi-alignment:** Maintaining diverse international partnerships without exclusive commitments
- **Regional primacy:** Assertion of India's role as the predominant power in South Asia
- **Status recognition:** Pursuit of recognition as a major global power

The Cold War experience fundamentally shaped India's approach to international relations, establishing patterns of pragmatic engagement that would evolve but not fundamentally change in the post-Cold War era.

3.6.2 India's Foreign Policy in the 1990s

This subheading details India's strategic reorientation toward a multipolar world, emphasizing regional and global engagement.

- **Look East Policy**: One of the most significant foreign policy initiatives of the 1990s was India's "Look East" policy. Launched in 1991 by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, this policy represented India's strategic pivot toward engagement with East and Southeast Asian nations, particularly the rapidly developing economies of ASEAN. The "Look East" policy was motivated by multiple factors:

Economic opportunity: The Asian Tigers and emerging ASEAN economies offered promising markets for Indian goods and potential sources of investment.

Cultural reconnection: The policy sought to revive India's historical and cultural connections with Southeast Asia.

Strategic balancing: Closer ties with East Asian nations offered India options beyond traditional relationships in a changing world order.

Initially focused primarily on economic engagement, the "Look East" policy gradually acquired security and strategic dimensions as well. India became a sectoral dialogue partner of ASEAN in 1992, a full dialogue partner in 1995, and a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1996, marking its growing integration with the region. The policy represented a rejection of the inward-looking approach that had characterized much of India's post-independence foreign policy. Instead, it embraced economic interdependence and recognized that India's future prosperity was linked to deeper integration with dynamic Asian economies.

- **Engagement with the US**: Perhaps the most dramatic shift in India's foreign policy during the 1990s was the gradual improvement in relations with the United States. Decades of Cold War mistrust gave way to a cautious but steady rapprochement as both countries discovered new bases for cooperation in the post-Cold War world.

From estrangement to engagement The journey toward better Indo-US relations was neither smooth nor linear. Several factors contributed to this thaw:

Economic liberalization: India's market reforms removed a major source of friction with the US, which had long pushed for greater economic openness.

End of Cold War politics: The dissolution of rigid bloc politics allowed both countries to reassess relations based on contemporary interests rather than Cold War calculations.

Diaspora influence: The growing economic and political clout of the Indian- American community helped bridge understanding between the two democracies.

Despite this improving trajectory, significant challenges remained, particularly regarding India's nuclear program. When India conducted its Pokhran-II nuclear tests in May 1998 under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the US imposed economic sanctions. However, these tensions ultimately led to a more mature dialogue on nuclear issues through the Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott talks, laying the groundwork for the later transformation of Indo-US relations.

- **Gujral Doctrine**: A distinctive contribution to India's foreign policy thinking in the 1990s came from Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, who articulated what came to be known as the "Gujral Doctrine" in 1996. This doctrine outlined principles for India's relations with its immediate neighbors and represented a significant evolution in India's approach to regional diplomacy.

The five principles of the Gujral Doctrine were:

1. India would not ask for reciprocity but give and accommodate what it could in good faith and trust.
2. No South Asian country should allow its territory to be used against the interests of another country in the region.
3. No country should interfere in the internal affairs of another.
4. All South Asian countries must respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

5. All disputes should be settled through peaceful bilateral negotiations.

The doctrine acknowledged that as the largest country in South Asia, India needed to show greater generosity and accommodation toward its smaller neighbors. This approach marked a significant shift from the more assertive regional policies of previous decades and attempted to address the perception of Indian hegemony among neighboring countries. While the Gujral Doctrine's implementation was limited by the brief tenure of Gujral's government, its principles continued to influence India's neighborhood approach in subsequent years, particularly in water-sharing agreements and trade policies.

3.6.3 Nuclear Tests and Global Positioning

The culmination of India's foreign policy evolution in the 1990s came with the Pokhran-II nuclear tests in May 1998. After decades of maintaining nuclear ambiguity, India openly declared itself a nuclear weapons state, fundamentally altering its strategic position and diplomatic relationships.

The decision to conduct nuclear tests was driven by multiple factors:

- **Security concerns:** Growing evidence of China-Pakistan nuclear cooperation created anxiety about India's strategic vulnerability.
- **International pressure:** The indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995 and the push for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty threatened to permanently constrain India's nuclear options.
- **Domestic politics:** The BJP-led government had long advocated for a more assertive nuclear policy.
- **Global Impact**: The tests strained but later improved relations with global powers, particularly the US.
- The immediate international reaction was severe, with economic sanctions imposed by the US and several other countries. However, the long-term diplomatic consequences were more nuanced. The tests eventually led to India's de facto recognition as a responsible nuclear power, culminating in the historic Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement a decade later.
- **Major Power Status**: Economic growth, nuclear capability, and diplomacy positioned India as an emerging global player. The foreign policy innovations of the 1990s laid crucial groundwork for India's diplomatic approaches in subsequent decades:
- **Economic liberalization** created the foundation for India's growing global economic influence.
- **The "Look East" policy** evolved into the more ambitious "Act East" policy under later governments.
- **Nuclear weaponization** eventually led to India's unique accommodation within the global nuclear order.
- **The recalibration with the United States** enabled the strategic partnership that would develop in the 21st century.
- **The Gujral Doctrine's principles** informed later neighborhood

initiatives like “Neighborhood First.”

The 1990s represented a period of profound transition in which India shed outdated approaches without abandoning core principles. The decade’s diplomacy reflected a growing realism about power equations in international relations while maintaining India’s distinctive voice in global affairs. Perhaps most importantly, this era witnessed India’s evolution from a relatively insular, economically isolated regional power to an increasingly integrated global player willing to engage proactively with the international community on multiple fronts.

3.7 Conclusion

The 1980s and 1990s marked India’s transition from a Congress-dominated, socialist state to a liberalized, multiparty democracy with global ambitions. The Mandal Commission and Babri Masjid demolition reshaped caste and communal dynamics, while the 1991 reforms integrated India into the global economy. Social movements empowered marginalized groups, and cultural shifts reflected globalization’s influence. Foreign policy adaptations, culminating in the 1998 nuclear tests, cemented India’s strategic autonomy. These turning points laid the foundation for contemporary India’s political, economic, and social landscape.

3.8 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQS)

1. Who was the Prime Minister of India when the Mandal Commission recommendations were implemented?

   A) Rajiv Gandhi

   B) V.P. Singh

   C) P.V. Narasimha Rao

   D) Atal Bihari Vajpayee

2. What was the primary cause of the 1991 Balance-of-Payments crisis in India?

   A) High fiscal deficits

   B) Global recession

   C) Decline in agricultural productivity

   D) Political instability

3. Which event in 1992 significantly impacted India’s secular fabric?

   A) Mandal Commission implementation

   B) Babri Masjid demolition

   C) Pokhran-II nuclear tests

   D) Economic liberalization

4. Which policy was introduced under P.V. Narasimha Rao to strengthen ties with Southeast Asia?

   A) Non-Alignment Policy

   B) Look East Policy

C) Gujral Doctrine

D) Nuclear Doctrine

5. What was the name of the scandal that tarnished Rajiv Gandhi's government in the late 1980s?

A) Coal Scam

B) Bofors Scandal

C) 2G Scam

D) Hawala Scandal

6. Which party led the National Front government in 1989?

A) Congress

B) BJP

C) Janata Dal

D) CPI(M)

7. What was the average GDP growth rate in India during the 1990s?

A) 4.5%

B) 5.8%

C) 6.2%

D) 7.0%

8. Which constitutional amendments reserved seats for women in local governance in 1992?

A) 70th and 71st

B) 73rd and 74th

C) 75th and 76th

D) 77th and 78th

9. Who was the Finance Minister during the 1991 economic reforms?

A) P. Chidambaram

B) Manmohan Singh

C) Yashwant Sinha

D) Jaswant Singh

10. Which movement emerged prominently in the 1950s?

A) Mandal Movement

B) Ram Janmabhoomi Movement

C) Dalit Movement

D) Women's Movement

11. Which party's rise in the 1990s was linked to the Hindutva ideology?

A) Congress

B) BJP

C) Janata Dal

D) BSP

12. What was the primary focus of the Gujral Doctrine?

A) Economic liberalization

B) Non-reciprocal relations with neighbors

C) Nuclear disarmament

D) Military modernization

13. Which event marked India's emergence as a nuclear power in 1998?

A) Operation Blue Star

B) Pokhran-II Tests

C) Kargil War

D) Babri Masjid Demolition

14. Which leader was associated with the rise of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)?

A) Lalu Prasad Yadav

B) Kanshi Ram

C) Mulayam Singh Yadav

D) V.P. Singh

15. What was a major criticism of the 1991 economic reforms?

A) Excessive government spending

B) Jobless growth

C) Over-reliance on agriculture

D) Lack of foreign investment

16. Which is Gulf war

A) Kargil War

B) Iraq-Kuwait War

C) Indo-Pak War of 1971

D) Sino-Indian War

17. Which academic movement highlighted the histories of marginalized groups in the 1980s and 1990s?

A) Positivist Tradition

B) Subaltern Studies

C) Annales School

D) Marxist Historiography

18. Which sector became the main engine of growth after the 1991 reforms?

A) Public Sector

B) Agricultural Sector

C) Private Sector

D) Informal Sector

19. Which leader's Demons

A) Atal Bihari Vajpayee

B) L.K. Advani

C) Murli Manohar Joshi

D) Uma Bharti

20. Which global event in 1991 necessitated a reorientation of India's foreign policy?

A) Gulf War

B) Collapse of the Soviet Union

C) Formation of the European Union

D) End of Apartheid

3.9 ANSWERS TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQS)

1. B
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. B
6. C
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. C
11. B
12. B
13. B

14. B
15. B
16. B
17. B
18. C
19. B
20. B

3.10 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT–4

THE NEW PUBLIC SPHERE

STRUCTURE

4.1 Objectives

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- 4.3.1 Historical Context
- 4.3.2 Characteristics of the Indian Public Sphere

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- 4.4.1 Rise of Bollywood
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4.7 Science, Technology, and Education

- 4.7.1 Science and Technology
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4.9 Challenges and Limitations

4.10 Conclusion

4.11 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

4.12 Answers to Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

4.13 Further Readings

4.1 OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this unit, learners will be able to:

- Understand the concept of the public sphere and its evolution in post-

independence India (1950–1990).

- Analyze the role of popular and parallel cinema in shaping public discourse and cultural identity.
- Examine the contributions of art and literature to the new public sphere.
- Explore the impact of science, technology, and education on societal transformation.
- Evaluate the interplay between these domains in constructing a modern Indian identity.
- Critically assess the socio-political and cultural dynamics of the period through multiple- choice questions.
- Identify key resources for further study on the new public sphere in contemporary India.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

The period from 1950 to 1990 was a defining era in India's post-independence history, marked by the emergence of a dynamic public sphere. Jürgen Habermas's concept of the public sphere, a space for rational-critical debate influencing public opinion, takes a unique form in India due to its diverse linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic landscape. This unit examines how popular and parallel cinema, art, literature, science, technology, and education shaped India's public sphere during this period. These domains not only reflected the aspirations of a newly independent nation but also negotiated tensions between tradition and modernity, urban and rural divides, and global and local influences.

Popular cinema, epitomized by Bollywood, became a mass medium that entertained and shaped cultural narratives, while parallel cinema offered critical perspectives on social issues. Art and literature provided intellectual and creative platforms, and advancements in science, technology, and education drove India's modernization. Together, these elements fostered a pluralistic public sphere that reflected India's complex identity. This unit explores these contributions, their interconnections, and the challenges they faced, providing a comprehensive understanding of the new public sphere in contemporary India.

4.3 THE CONCEPT OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN INDIA

Jurgen Habermas' understanding of Public Sphere is a space where citizens and the public body who assemble freely and express their opinion which forms public opinion. Hence, public sphere and public opinion are correlated.

The public sphere in post-independence India was a multifaceted space shaped by its colonial legacy, democratic aspirations, and cultural diversity. Unlike Habermas's European model, which focused on bourgeois discourse, India's public sphere was characterized by inclusivity, contestation, and state intervention.

4.3.1 Historical Context

The concept of "communication" has undergone a significant transformation in India. Historically, it was closely linked with activities such as letter writing, the technology

of conveying information, and even transportation. Colonial government reports in India used the term to refer to the movement of goods for revenue purposes and the movement of people. In those times, communication was embedded within the context of political economy and revenue collection, and its meaning was defined by the specific context.

However, the meaning of “communication” has evolved. Today, it is typically separated from its immediate context, and “communication” itself often provides the context and significance of an event. Terms like “print revolution,” “television era,” or “digital age” are used to describe historical periods, suggesting that technology plays a determining role in historical change. This perspective often incorporates a modernist viewpoint, where each new medium is seen as defining a historical period, while older media are relegated to a functional role.

Arvind Rajagopal argues that various elements can function as “media” within specific political contexts. For instance, the colonial ban on drums and buffalo horns during the Pabna revolt of 1873 acknowledged that musical instruments had become tools of peasant insurgency in a largely non-literate rural population. The Salt March of 1930 demonstrated how a common household item could become a symbol of nationalist mobilization. These examples highlight that mediation is a social process that goes beyond traditional “media” and must be understood in broader terms, not simply as a function of a specific object, technology, or institution.

The concept of the “public sphere” is central to discussions of media and its influence. It refers to the space where publicity operates, shaping public opinion. Jurgen Habermas's work on the 19th-century bourgeois public sphere in Western Europe explored how practices like letter writing, novel reading, and critical discussion contributed to the development of individual participation in modern democracy. While Habermas's specific arguments may be debated, his emphasis on the relationship between communication forms and their socio-political contexts has been influential.

Benedict Anderson's concept of “imagined communities” also contributes to our understanding of the public sphere. Anderson argued that the creation of markets for print commodities in a shared language fosters an imagined linguistic community, which in turn creates a basis for nationalist mobilization. This “imagined community” allows individuals who are geographically separated to perceive themselves as connected, not by traditional ties of ethnicity, race, or religion, but by a shared identity.

However, Anderson's focus on print capitalism tends to homogenize the mediatic context of a given public sphere. In reality, print does not simply replace older media. In colonial contexts, attempts to discredit native modes of communication, such as rumor, often reinforced their importance as tools for mobilization. Older media could be reinvigorated with the introduction of print, especially in situations where literacy was limited and mass movements were common.

Ranajit Guha's work illustrates how the colonial state perceived rumor and the transmission of aural or visual signs, like drums and horns, as threats. Christopher Pinney's analysis of Indian calendar art reveals how religious and nationalist themes intersect, challenging a purely secular nationalist historiography. These examples demonstrate that communication contexts are shaped by historical and political conditions, as well as the materials and practices through which information is conveyed.

India’s independence in 1947 marked a turning point, with the state playing a central

role in nation- building. The Nehruvian vision emphasized secularism, socialism, and scientific progress, influencing the public sphere. Institutions like the Film Division of India (1948), the Sahitya Akademi (1954), and the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs, starting 1951) were established to promote cultural, intellectual, and scientific discourse. The public sphere also emerged through grassroots movements, regional voices, and media, reflecting the aspirations and challenges of a diverse nation.

The 1950s saw the consolidation of democratic institutions, with the first general elections in 1951–52 marking a significant step toward participatory governance. The spread of print media, radio, and cinema expanded the reach of public discourse, though access was limited by literacy and economic barriers. By the 1980s, television further democratized the public sphere, bringing national narratives to rural and urban audiences alike.

4.3.2 Characteristics of the Indian Public Sphere

- **Historical evolution:**

  The public sphere in India evolved from its colonial roots and the national movement, creating its own unique historical context and challenges.

- **Dominance and exclusion:**

  There has historically been a dominant public sphere that reflects the values of the ruling social groups, often leading to the neglect and marginalization of minority groups and their issues.

- **Cultural diversity and conflict:**

  It is shaped by India's diverse cultures, leading to a complex interplay of different values and beliefs, and sometimes a struggle between majoritarian norms and the representation of minority cultures.

- **Influence of mass media:**

  Traditional mass media has played a significant role, but its role has become more commercialized and less socially responsible, contributing to the marginalization of some citizens.

- **The rise of new media:**

  The advent of new communication technologies, especially mobile phones, has created new, more accessible platforms for public discourse, potentially democratizing communication and correcting some of the marginalization caused by mass media.

- **Diversity**: India’s linguistic and cultural diversity led to multiple public spheres, each with distinct concerns. For example, Hindi, Tamil, and Bengali media created regional public spheres alongside a national one.
- **Inclusivity and Exclusion**: While cinema and radio made the public sphere accessible, illiteracy and poverty excluded large sections of the population.
- **Contestation**: The public sphere was a site of ideological debates, including secularism versus communalism, socialism versus capitalism, and tradition versus modernity.
- **State Influence**: The state shaped the public sphere through censorship,

funding, and institutional support, often balancing control with creative freedom.

- **Challenges of virtual discourse:**

  Digital discussions have opened up new avenues but also raise concerns about the quality of discourse, with a risk of it becoming less logic-oriented and more dysfunctional.

- **Emergence of counter-publics:**

  Due to the exclusionary nature of the dominant public sphere, alternative or "counter- publics" have emerged, such as the Dalit public sphere, to provide a platform for marginalized voices.

- **Critique of Habermasian model:**

  Some scholars critique the traditional Habermasian model of a rational, reasoned public sphere as being too narrow, noting the importance of "aesthetic-affective" forms of communication like rhetoric, myth, and theatre in the Indian context.

4.4 POPULAR CINEMA AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Popular cinema, particularly Bollywood, was a dominant force in India's public sphere, serving as a medium for entertainment, cultural expression, and social commentary.

4.4.1 Rise of Bollywood

The 1950s, often called Bollywood's golden age, saw the emergence of iconic filmmakers like Raj Kapoor, Guru Dutt, and Bimal Roy. Films like *Awara* (1951), *Pyaasa* (1957), and *Mother India* (1957) addressed themes of poverty, justice, and nation-building, resonating with a nation grappling with post-independence challenges. *Mother India*, for instance, portrayed the struggles of a rural woman, symbolizing India's resilience and moral strength. These films combined melodrama, music, and social messaging, making them accessible to diverse audiences.

Bollywood's reach was amplified by the growth of cinema halls and the Film Division's documentaries, which promoted national integration. The industry's star system, with actors like Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand, and Nargis, created cultural icons who influenced public tastes and aspirations.

The 1950s is often celebrated as the "golden age" of Indian cinema, a period when films not only entertained but also engaged deeply with the social, political, and cultural realities of a newly independent nation. With India having gained independence in 1947, the country was in the midst of reconstructing its identity and grappling with the promises and challenges of freedom. The cinema of this era, particularly Bollywood and Bengali films, emerged as a reflection of these aspirations and anxieties. This decade witnessed the rise of legendary filmmakers, unforgettable actors, and timeless classics, while also shaping the contours of what we now call Indian popular culture.

In the Hindi film industry, later christened as "Bollywood," the 1950s marked a golden chapter in storytelling, music, and performance. Directors like Raj Kapoor, Guru Dutt, and Bimal Roy used cinema as a medium of social commentary while ensuring that their films remained accessible to the masses. Raj Kapoor's 'Awara' (1951), for example, became an iconic film not only in India but also in the Soviet Union and parts

of the Middle East. The story of a wayward young man torn between crime and morality resonated with audiences struggling with the contradictions of modernity and tradition. Its famous dream sequence, along with soulful songs, became symbolic of Kapoor's style—melodramatic yet deeply humanist.

Guru Dutt, on the other hand, created films that explored the loneliness of the artist and the hypocrisies of society. His Pyaasa (1957) remains a landmark in Indian cinema, depicting the struggles of a poet alienated by a materialistic world. Dutt's mastery lay in blending poetic visuals with haunting music, making his films both lyrical and socially relevant. Similarly, Bimal Roy's Mother India (1957) became a milestone, often hailed as India's answer to Italian neorealism. Portraying the hardships of a rural mother, played memorably by Nargis, the film symbolized the resilience, sacrifice, and moral fiber of India's poor, while also echoing the themes of justice and national identity. These films epitomized the core concerns of post-independence India: poverty, justice, morality, and the challenges of nation-building. Unlike the purely escapist entertainment of later decades, 1950s Hindi cinema was an earnest attempt to create socially conscious art that could appeal to a wide audience. Melodrama, music, and symbolism were used not as distractions but as tools to communicate complex issues to a diverse and largely illiterate population.

The 1950s also saw the consolidation of the "star system" in Bollywood. Actors like Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand, and Raj Kapoor became cultural icons, their screen personas influencing not just fashion and style but also popular ideas of romance, tragedy, and heroism. Dilip Kumar, often called the "tragedy king," became famous for his sensitive portrayals of doomed lovers and social rebels. Dev Anand, with his urban charm and lighthearted screen presence, epitomized the modern Indian male. Female stars such as Nargis, Madhubala, and Meena Kumari were equally influential, admired for their beauty, talent, and nuanced portrayals of womanhood.

The growth of cinema halls during this period amplified Bollywood's cultural reach. Films became a major form of affordable entertainment, attracting people across class and caste boundaries. The state also recognized cinema's potential as a tool for nation-building. The Film Division of India produced documentaries and newsreels that were shown in theaters before feature films, spreading messages of national integration, health, education, and development. Thus, cinema became both a mirror of society and an instrument of social pedagogy. While Bollywood dominated the national imagination, the 1950s were also the golden era of Bengali cinema, which enjoyed a disproportionately large representation in the intellectual and artistic sphere of Indian cinema. Bengal, with its rich literary and cultural traditions, produced some of the most innovative filmmakers of the time.

Foremost among them was Satyajit Ray, whose films brought Indian cinema unprecedented global recognition. Beginning with Pather Panchali (1955), the first part of his famous Apu Trilogy, Ray depicted rural Bengal with a realism and humanism previously unseen in Indian cinema. The trilogy- Pather Panchali (1955), Aparajito (1956), and Apur Sansar (The World of Apu, 1959)— captured the journey of Apu from childhood to adulthood, portraying universal themes of poverty, aspiration, loss, and resilience. These films combined simplicity with profound emotional depth and are now regularly listed among the greatest films ever made. Other Bengali filmmakers such as Mrinal Sen and Ritwik Ghatak also played pioneering roles in shaping India's parallel cinema movement. Mrinal Sen used film to critique social inequalities and political oppression, while

Ritwik Ghatak's Meghe Dhaka Tara (1960) and Ajantrik (1958) remain classics for their bold experimentation with form and content. Bimal Roy, though later associated with Bollywood, also belonged to this milieu, bringing with him the sensibilities of Bengali realism into Hindi cinema. The Bengali film industry also produced classics like Nagarik (1952), Jalsaghar (1958), Neel Akasher Neechey (1959), and Devi (1960), each exploring different facets of society, spirituality, and human struggle. Unlike mainstream Bollywood, which relied heavily on melodrama and spectacle, Bengali cinema often sought to blend realism with artistic experimentation, drawing from literature, theater, and fine arts. Parallel to Bollywood's stars, Bengali cinema had its own set of cultural icons who left an indelible mark on Indian film history. Uttam Kumar, widely considered the most celebrated Bengali actor, became a legend in the 1950s. His on-screen pairing with Suchitra Sen was so beloved that they came to be known as "The Eternal Pair," defining romantic ideals for an entire generation.

Soumitra Chatterjee, who debuted in Satyajit Ray's Apur Sansar, became another towering figure in Bengali cinema. A frequent collaborator of Ray, Chatterjee went on to play memorable roles, including the iconic detective Feluda in Sonar Kella (1974) and Joy Baba Felunath (1978). His rivalry with Uttam Kumar for stardom in the 1960s became a fascinating chapter in the history of Bengali cinema.Actresses like Sharmila Tagore also rose to prominence during this period. Having made her debut in Ray's The World of Apu, she went on to achieve success in both Bengali cinema and Bollywood, bridging the gap between regional and national stardom.

The 1950s were also remarkable for the music that defined Indian cinema. In Bollywood, playback singers like Lata Mangeshkar, Mohammed Rafi, Mukesh, Talat Mahmood, and Kishore Kumar created songs that continue to resonate today. The collaboration between lyricists, composers, and singers transformed film music into an integral part of India's cultural fabric.

Bengali cinema too had a rich musical tradition, shaped by pioneers such as Raichand Boral, Pankaj Mullick, and K.C. Dey, all of whom were associated with the iconic New Theatres of Calcutta. Playback singers like Hemanta Mukherjee, Manna Dey, Shyamal Mitra, Sandhya Mukhopadhyay, and Kishore Kumar contributed timeless songs that remain cherished in Bengali households. Music in Bengali cinema was often deeply connected to poetry and literature, reflecting the region's intellectual traditions.The 1950s, therefore, stand out as a decade when Indian cinema was both entertaining and enlightening, regional yet national, popular yet profound. Bollywood's golden age produced films that engaged with post-independence realities, combining melodrama and music with powerful social messages. At the same time, Bengali cinema carved a parallel path of artistic innovation and realism, led by giants like Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, and Mrinal Sen.

Together, these twin traditions of Indian cinema not only shaped the cultural imagination of mid- twentieth-century India but also established the foundations for the global recognition of Indian films. The legacies of Raj Kapoor, Guru Dutt, Bimal Roy, Uttam Kumar, Satyajit Ray, and many others continue to inspire filmmakers and audiences alike, ensuring that the 1950s remain etched as one of the most remarkable decades in the history of Indian cinema.

Indian Cinema in the 1950s

The Golden Age of Bollywood and the Flourishing of Bengali Cinema. The 1950s is often celebrated as the "golden age" of Indian cinema, a period when films not only

entertained but also engaged deeply with the social, political, and cultural realities of a newly independent nation. With India having gained independence in 1947, the country was in the midst of reconstructing its identity and grappling with the promises and challenges of freedom. The cinema of this era, particularly Bollywood and Bengali films, emerged as a reflection of these aspirations and anxieties. This decade witnessed the rise of legendary filmmakers, unforgettable actors, and timeless classics, while also shaping the contours of what we now call Indian popular culture.

Bollywood in the 1950s: Cinema with a Social Conscience

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The Rise of Stars and the Expanding Reach of Cinema

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The Parallel Flourishing of Bengali Cinema

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Actors and Cultural Icons in Bengali Cinema

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Music and the Soundscape of an Era

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Together, these twin traditions of Indian cinema not only shaped the cultural imagination of mid- twentieth-century India but also established the foundations for the global recognition of Indian films. The legacies of Raj Kapoor, Guru Dutt, Bimal Roy, Uttam Kumar, Satyajit Ray, and many others continue to inspire filmmakers and audiences alike, ensuring that the 1950s remain etched as one of the most remarkable decades in the history of Indian cinema.

4.4.2 Social and Cultural Impact

- **National Integration**: Bollywood films promoted linguistic and cultural unity, with Hindi serving as a link language across regions.
- **Cultural Reflection and Shaping:** Films often reflect the society in which they are made, portraying social values, cultural norms, and the zeitgeist of the time. At the same time, they also shape culture by introducing new ideas, influencing trends, and reinforcing or challenging existing beliefs.
- **Social Awareness and Empathy**: Films have the power to bring social issues to the forefront of public consciousness, sometimes achieving what traditional forms of activism struggle to do. By showing real-life struggles through compelling narratives, films evoke empathy and create awareness about important societal problems.
- **Influence on Individual Behaviour**: Beyond cultural and social impact, film has a direct influence on individual behaviours, attitudes, and decision-making. Movies can inspire people, affect their emotional states, or alter their views on certain issues.
- **Political Influence**: Film has been used as a tool for political expression and propaganda for decades. Governments, social movements, and activists use cinema to promote specific ideologies or bring attention to political issues.

- **Economic Impact**: Film is also a major economic driver, contributing billions of dollars to the global economy through ticket sales, employment, tourism, and cultural exchange. The film industry not only creates jobs within production but also stimulates tourism in filming locations
- **Moral and Social Messaging**: Films often reinforced traditional values, such as family and community, while addressing issues like gender roles, class disparities, and rural-urban divides. For example, *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953) highlighted the plight of farmers.
- **Cultural Influence**: Bollywood's music, fashion, and dialogues shaped popular culture, with songs like "Mera Joota Hai Japani" from *Shree 420* (1955) becoming anthems of national pride.

4.4.3 Commercialization and Challenges

Prioritization of profit over art: The central driver of commercialization is profit, which leads studios to favour formulas that guarantee box-office success. This often results in a surge of sequels, remakes, and established franchises.

Marginalization of alternative voices: Independent and non-commercial films, which may tackle complex or niche social issues, struggle to compete with the marketing power of big-budget productions. This trend can push diverse perspectives and narratives to the margins, limiting the types of stories and ideas circulating in the public sphere.

Dominance of escapism and entertainment: Commercial cinema often provides audiences with a form of melodramatic entertainment that prioritizes spectacle over deep social commentary. This can encourage a passive consumer mindset, distracting from rather than engaging with real-world issues. In some cases, films may include social issues but often wrap them in a package of high drama, song, and dance to maintain mass appeal.

Shift from public space to private consumption: The rise of multiplexes within shopping malls has transformed the cinema experience from a democratic public gathering to a privatized, consumption-oriented leisure activity. The proliferation of streaming platforms has further accelerated this shift, moving the film-viewing experience into the individualized, at-home space and eroding the shared communal aspect of cinema.

Formulaic and simplified narratives: In catering to the "lowest common denominator" for the broadest possible audience, commercial films can simplify complex subjects.

By the 1970s, Bollywood became more commercialized, with action films and multi-starrer spectacles dominating the industry. The "angry young man" archetype, epitomized by Amitabh Bachchan in films like *Zanjeer* (1973) and *Sholay* (1975), reflected public frustration with corruption and inequality. However, this shift often prioritized entertainment over social critique, leading to accusations of escapism.

Challenges included state censorship, which restricted political content, and the industry's reliance on formulaic narratives, which limited innovation. The rise of video piracy in the 1980s further threatened Bollywood's dominance, though it remained a powerful force in the public sphere.

4.5 PARALLEL CINEMA: A CRITICAL VOICE

Indian Parallel Cinema, often referred to as the New Wave or Art Cinema, emerged as a distinct movement in Indian filmmaking during the late 1940s and 1950s. Unlike mainstream Bollywood, which is characterized by its song-and-dance routines, melodrama, and formulaic narratives, Parallel Cinema aims to portray realistic stories with a focus on social and political issues. It draws heavily on the traditions of Italian Neorealism, French New Wave, and Japanese Cinema.

Parallel cinema, or the Indian New Wave, emerged as an alternative to Bollywood, offering socially conscious and aesthetically innovative films. Supported by the Film Finance Corporation (later the National Film Development Corporation, NFDC), it challenged mainstream norms and enriched the public sphere.

4.5.1 Origins and Key Figures

Parallel cinema was set into motion in the 1950s. So it started in Bengal and Bengali cinema were filmmakers started making realistic films about social issues that were relevant to the society. By the 1960s this movement finally reached Hindi Cinema or Bombay. This particular cinema was a non-commercial kind of a cinema because the idea was not to generate more and more of business. Therefore a term came to be associated with it which was 'art cinema'. So art cinema, parallel cinema, alternative cinema - these are all terms that have long been used to describe the Indian New Wave cinema. Parallel cinema made the audience the nation wake up and take notice of their surroundings, and jolted them into consciousness. It offered a kind of commentary on the social and cultural as well as political environment of the nation at that point of time. All the films that came about in this particular time, shared a specific stylistic approach as different from mainstream cinema. They were experimental films that did not enjoy much of financial success as quite a few of them were not received very well by the audience. The setting up of FTII and NFDC encouraged the production of realistic films that were patronised by the government as a means to project the culture of India through cinema. Middle Cinema was another name that gradually came to be associated with parallel cinema, specifically the films by Shyam Benegal.

The early parallel cinema was often too realistic and experimental for the audience to fully appreciate. Therefore, gradually parallel cinema evolved and developed into a cinema that sat in the middle of the mainstream cinema and the too-realistic-for-audience-palette parallel cinema. Therefore the term middle cinema was used to define it. This avatar of parallel cinema started to gain ground with the audience and gaining momentum and acquiring national and international acclaim. The movement also provided some amazing acting geniuses to the to the Hindi film industry which included the likes of Om Puri, Shabana Azmi, Smita Patil, Naseerudidn Shah, Deepti Naval, Farooq Shaikh, Amol Palekar and Pankaj Kapoor among many other great actors.

4.5.2 Themes and Aesthetics

- **Realism**: Parallel films adopted a documentary-like style, using natural settings and non- professional actors to depict everyday life. For example, *Ankur* (1974) by Shyam Benegal portrayed rural power dynamics.
- **Social Critique**: Films addressed pressing issues like caste, gender, and economic inequality. *Manthan* (1976), funded by 500,000 farmers, highlighted

the cooperative dairy movement.

- **Literary Connections**: Parallel cinema drew inspiration from Hindi literature, particularly the *Nayi Kahani* movement, with stories by writers like Vijaydan Detha and Premchand adapted into films.
- **Narrative Style:** The narratives are often straightforward and slow-paced, allowing the audience to engage deeply with the characters and their environments.
- **Character Development:** Characters are complex and multi-dimensional, often grappling with socio-economic issues, personal dilemmas, and moral conflicts.
- **Setting:** Films are frequently shot on location, capturing the authentic atmosphere of rural villages, urban slums, or middle-class households
- **Natural Lighting:** Filmmakers often use natural light to achieve a more organic and less polished look.
- **Minimalistic Art Direction:** Sets and costumes are kept simple and true to the setting of the story.
- C**inematography:** There is an emphasis on long takes, handheld camera work, and static shots, which contribute to the immersive experience.
- **Social Inequality:** Many films address issues of poverty, caste discrimination, and gender inequality.
- **Political Issues:** Films often critique governmental policies and societal structures.
- **Human Relationships:** The complexities of human emotions and relationships are a central focus.
- **Critical Acclaim**: Parallel Cinema has garnered significant critical acclaim both nationally and internationally. It has been recognized at major film festivals like Cannes, Berlin, and Venice, helping to elevate Indian cinema on the global stage.
- **Influence:** The movement has influenced a generation of filmmakers who continue to draw inspiration from its aesthetics and thematic concerns. Directors like Mani Kaul, Kumar Shahani, and more recently, Anurag Kashyap and Dibakar Banerjee, owe a debt to the legacy of Parallel Cinema.
- **Cultural Impact:** Parallel Cinema has played a crucial role in shaping the discourse on social and political issues in India. It has provided a platform for marginalized voices and brought attention to the struggles of everyday life.

4.5.3 Decline in the 1990s

Parallel cinema had been doing really well in the 70s and 80s specifically. But some economic factors brought on a decline in parallel cinema. By the time India reached the 1990s, the Indian economy was under intense economic pressure so much so that India was almost on the verge of defaulting various loans that it had taken from various international organisations. India was bailed out in the year 1991 by the IMF and the World Bank, but after all of this happened there were also some major economic

reforms that had to be introduced by the government and one of the most important ones was the liberalisation of the Indian economy. After liberalisation there was an increase in the cost of production. These was also a dearth of exhibition spaces for parallel cinema in India.

Another reason was that television had entered the industry and by the 1990s it gained a lot of popularity. There are also some international players in the scene with Zee TV and Star TV all of them coming up and of course there was a general lack of funding because the cost of making films had gone up. Liberalisation had led to foreign investors investing into filmmaking which is why film became a huge affair. The investors were only interested in films that were sure shot successes. Parallel cinema did not look like something that would reap definite benefits. Therefore there was a lack of funding for parallel cinema. Another thing that hit parallel cinema was the unauthorised or the illegal copying of films.

Parallel cinema is comprised of films that are anchored in the social reality of a society. This kind of cinema had always existed, from the beginning filmmaking in India and throughout the decades. But the social realist film reached its peak in the 70s and 80s when the movement of parallel cinema really or took on. The economic situation of the country in 1990s dealt a severe blow to this brand of filmmaking. However, in the 2000s, with the new millennium, there was a gradual revival of parallel cinema.

One of the strongest reasons for the same was the advent of multiplexes. Multiplexes were beginning to replace single-screen cinemas. Single-screen cinemas used to house a single screen, therefore could showcase only one film at any given time for a certain number of days or a certain number of weeks. But with the coming of multiplexes, more than one screen was available for film screenings. This meant that there were more spaces for films to be showcased to people. Therefore screens were now available for the mid-budget films as well. These mid-budget films were not the most profit-making films and thus were not picked up by single screen cinemas. The multiplexes, with the availability of more screens could now afford to run some mid-budget films alongside the guaranteed profit-making big-budget films. Thus mid-budget films that tend to be slightly experimental and offbeat were also alloted screens. The opposite is also true for thus situation, because the availability of more screens encouraged filmmakers to experiment with their filmmaking.

This gave rise to a new kind if cinema, sometimes referred to as 'multiplex cinema'. Films like Kohsla ka Ghosla (2006), Peepli Live (2010), Dev.D (2009), Being Cyrus (2005) started coming to the fore. These were not exactly parallel films like the films of 1970s, but were based on that kind of social realism and combined a bit of both; they had elements of the parallel cinema but also took on characteristics of mainstream cinema. Generally, multiplex films are independent films and they are made on a low or mid-budget kind of financing. The concentration is more on the content and how it is being narrated. These multiplex films can be said to be parallel films but in a new avatar that are founded in realism but with modified mainstream cinematic tropes. There could be song and dance in the film, but it would be a reason, for specifically drawing attention to a specific detail by the director.

Some actors associated with multiplex cinema are actors like Manoj Bajpai, Boman Irani, Abhay Deol, Kalki Koechlin, Konkana Sen, Rajkumar Rao and others. In the contemporary times, this kind of a cinema is really doing very well as a larger audience

is going to the cinemas to watch these films. Mainstream actors and mainstream directors are also dabbling with this kind of cinema in a big way. For example, Being Cyrus had Saif Ali Khan who is considered to be a mainstream actor. This is where parallel cinema is at the moment where the mainstream cinema is being experimented with and it is taking on the characteristics of parallel cinema as well.

4.6 Art and Literature in the Public Sphere

Art and literature were critical components of India's public sphere, providing spaces for intellectual debate, creative expression, and cultural reflection.

4.6.1 Literature

The 1950s to 1990s saw the rise of modern Indian literature, with movements like *Nayi Kahani* and *Sathottari* poetry addressing post-independence disillusionment. Writers like Premchand, Amrita Pritam, Mahasweta Devi, and Nirmal Verma explored themes of partition, gender, and social justice. For example, Mahasweta Devi's *Draupadi* (1978) critiqued state violence and tribal oppression.

Literary magazines like *Dharmayug*, *Sarika*, and *Hans* were central to the public sphere, publishing short stories, essays, and poetry that fostered debate. The Sahitya Akademi, established in 1954, promoted regional literatures, translating works across languages to create a national literary culture.

4.6.2 Art

Indian art during this period reflected a synthesis of tradition and modernity. The Progressive Artists' Group, founded in 1947 by artists like M.F. Husain, S.H. Raza, and F.N. Souza, blended Indian themes with modernist techniques, challenging colonial aesthetics. Husain's paintings, for instance, drew on Indian mythology and rural life, while Raza explored abstract forms.

The Lalit Kala Akademi, established in 1954, promoted artistic innovation through exhibitions and awards. Regional art movements, such as the Baroda School led by figures like Bhupen Khakhar, enriched the cultural landscape. Public art spaces, like galleries and museums, became forums for intellectual exchange.

4.6.3 Interconnections

Literature and art intersected with cinema, creating a rich cultural dialogue. For example, Satyajit Ray's films, inspired by Rabindranath Tagore's works, combined literary depth with visual artistry. Similarly, Shyam Benegal's *Ankur* adapted a story by Vijaydan Detha, bridging literature and cinema. These interconnections strengthened the public sphere by fostering cross-disciplinary engagement.

4.7 Science, Technology, and Education

Advancements in science, technology, and education were pivotal in shaping India's modern identity and public sphere, aligning with the Nehruvian vision of progress.

4.7.1 Science and Technology

The establishment of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in 1969 and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in 1942 marked India's commitment to scientific advancement. The Green Revolution (1960s–1970s), led by scientists like M.S. Swaminathan, transformed agriculture through high-yield crops, addressing food security. India's nuclear program, culminating in the 1974 Pokhran test, and ISRO's satellite launches, such as Aryabhata (1975), signaled technological ambition.

Scientific institutions like the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (T Nekton (TIFR) fostered a scientific temper, countering superstition through public campaigns. These advancements shaped public discourse by promoting rationality and progress.

Benefits of science and technology in education

Personalized learning: Technology can adapt to individual student needs through personalized learning platforms, moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach.

Enhanced engagement:

Interactive tools, simulations, and real-time data analysis make learning more engaging and hands- on.

Vast resources: Students gain immediate access to a wealth of information and a diversity of educational resources far beyond traditional textbooks.

Improved efficiency: Technology can streamline administrative tasks for teachers and provide real-time feedback on student progress.

Global connectivity: Students can connect with peers and experts globally, gaining a broader perspective.

Skill development:

Integrating technology prepares students for the digital age by fostering critical thinking, problem- solving, and digital literacy.

Challenges and considerations

Access and equity: The benefits of technology are limited for those who lack access to devices and reliable internet.

Implementation costs: The financial responsibility of implementing and maintaining large-scale technology can be significant and is often overlooked.

Over-reliance and human interaction: Technology should be a tool to support, not replace, crucial human interaction between teachers and students.

Curriculum lag: Technology often advances faster than instructional materials, requiring creative approaches to keep curriculum up-to-date.

Critical use: It is important to question the terms under which technology is used, ensuring it is appropriate, inclusive, and sustainable. Learners should also be taught to selectively and critically use technology to enhance their learning.

4.7.2 Education

The expansion of higher education through institutions like the IITs (starting 1951) and

the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) created a professional class that contributed to public discourse. The University Grants Commission (UGC), established in 1956, standardized higher education, while IGNOU (1985) democratized learning through open and distance education. These initiatives empowered diverse populations, including women and rural communities, to participate in the public sphere.

4.7.3 Public Sphere Implications

- **Scientific Temper**: Campaigns like the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha promoted scientific thinking, challenging traditional beliefs.
- **Education as Empowerment**: Education enabled social mobility, with graduates contributing to public debates on policy and development.
- **Technology and Media**: The introduction of television in the 1980s, with programs like *Bharat Ek Khoj* (1988), brought historical and scientific narratives to the masses, enriching the public sphere.

4.8 Interplay of Domains

The public sphere in India from 1950 to 1990 was a dynamic space where cinema, art, literature, science, technology, and education intersected. Popular cinema provided emotional resonance, appealing to mass audiences with narratives of national unity and moral values. Parallel cinema offered critical reflections on social issues, challenging mainstream norms. Literature and art fostered intellectual debate, while science, technology, and education drove modernization. For example, *Bharat Ek Khoj*, based on Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India*, combined historical narrative, literature, and media to educate and engage the public.

These domains were interconnected: literary works inspired parallel cinema, scientific advancements influenced educational curricula, and art shaped cinematic aesthetics. Together, they negotiated the complexities of tradition and modernity, creating a pluralistic public sphere that reflected India's diverse aspirations.

4.9 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

- **Access and Inequality**: Illiteracy, poverty, and urban-rural divides limited access to the public sphere, excluding marginalized groups.
- **Censorship**: State control over cinema and media restricted free expression, particularly on political issues.
- **Commercialization**: The dominance of commercial cinema and media marginalized alternative voices, such as parallel cinema and literary magazines.
- **Regional Disparities**: The Hindi-centric public sphere often overshadowed regional narratives, creating imbalances in representation.

4.10 CONCLUSION

The new public sphere in India from 1950 to 1990 was a vibrant and contested space shaped by popular and parallel cinema, art, literature, science, technology, and education. These domains articulated India's post-independence identity, balancing tradition with modernity and fostering public discourse. Popular cinema unified diverse

audiences, parallel cinema critiqued social inequities, literature and art provided intellectual depth, and science and education drove progress. Despite challenges like censorship and inequality, the public sphere laid the foundation for India's cultural and intellectual growth, influencing contemporary debates and future trajectories.

4.11 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQs)

1. What is the primary role of the public sphere as conceptualized by Jürgen Habermas?

   A) Economic development

   B) Rational-critical debate

   C) Religious discourse

   D) Political propaganda

2. Which institution supported the growth of parallel cinema in India ?

   A) Film Division of India

   B) National Film Development Corporation

   C) Sahitya Akademi

   D) Indian Council for Cultural Relations

3. Which film is considered a hallmark of Bollywood's golden age in the 1950s?

   A) Sholay

   B) Mother India

   C) Bhuvan Shome

   D) Uski Roti

4. What was a key theme of parallel cinema in the 1970s?

   A) Escapist entertainment

   B) Social realism

   C) Mythological narratives

   D) Action-adventure

5. Which literary movement influenced parallel cinema in the 1960s and 1970s?

   A) Progressive Writers' Movement

   B) Nayi Kahani

   C) Chhayavad

   D) Bhakti poetry

6. Which artist was associated with the Progressive Artists' Group?

   A) Amrita Sher-Gil

   B) M.F. Husain

C) Jamini Roy

D) Raja Ravi Varma

7. What was a major achievement of the Green Revolution in India?

A) Space exploration

B) Agricultural productivity

C) Nuclear technology

D) Educational reform

8. Which institution was established in 1985 to promote open and distance learning?

A) IIT

B) IGNOU

C) ISRO

D) CSIR

9. Which film by Shyam Benegal addressed the cooperative movement in rural India?

A) Ankur

B) Manthan

C) Bhuvan Shome

D) Sara Akash

10. What was a key challenge faced by the public sphere in India during 1950–1990?

A) Lack of cultural diversity

B) Economic prosperity

C) Censorship

D) Over-education

11. Which magazine was central to the Hindi public sphere in the 1950s and 1960s?

A) India Today

B) Dharmayug

C) Filmfare

D) Outlook

12. Who directed the parallel cinema film *Bhuvan Shome*?

A) Mani Kaul

B) Mrinal Sen

C) Basu Chatterjee

D) Shyam Benegal

13. What was a key feature of Bollywood films in the 1970s?

A) Minimal use of music

B) Commercialization

C) Documentary style

D) Regional focus

14. Which institution promoted artistic innovation in post-independence India?

A) Sahitya Akademi

B) Lalit Kala Akademi

C) Sangeet Natak Akademi

D) Film Division

15. What was a major focus of the Nehruvian vision in the public sphere?

A) Religious revivalism

B) Scientific temper

C) Feudal traditions

D) Colonial nostalgia

16. Which film is an example of a literary adaptation in parallel cinema?

A) Sholay

B) Ankur

C) Pyaasa

D) Deewar

17. What contributed to the decline of parallel cinema in the 1990s?

A) Increased state funding

B) Rise of private television

C) Growth of literary magazines

D) Expansion of Bollywood

18. Which writer was associated with the *Nayi Kahani* movement?

A) Rabindranath Tagore

B) Premchand

C) Nirmal Verma

D) Saadat Hasan Manto

19. What was a key role of television in the 1980s public sphere?

A) Promoting regional cinema

B) Disseminating historical narratives

C) Supporting print media

D) Limiting public discourse

20. Which organization was instrumental in India's space program?

A) CSIR

B) ISRO

C) UGC

D) IIT

4.12 ANSWERS TO MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQs)

1. B
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. C
11. B
12. B
13. B
14. B
15. B
16. B
17. B
18. C
19. B
20. B

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