



India became independent in 1947 CE. India accepted the constitutional framework in 1950 and became a sovereign democratic nation. The Indian society is multicultural and people of various languages, religions, ethnicities and castes live together.

During the initial period after independence, India needed to solve different issues of economic, political and social development. The establishment of the Planning Commission and emphasis on industrialisation was a means to achieve economic development and to eliminate poverty in India. Successful conduct of elections and faith in democratic traditions made it possible for us to achieve political stability. At the same time, several social reforms including policies and programmes for the weaker sections of the society were sought to be implemented.

**The 1960s (Nineteen-sixties) :** In the decade of the 1960s, several events occurred which had a huge impact on the political situation in India. The regions of Goa, Diu and Daman were freed from Portuguese rule and became parts of the Indian federation. The tensions between India and China on the northern border which had been rising since 1950, culminated in the war of 1962 between two countries. This war was fought in the region of the MacMahon line.



Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

After India became independent, Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru led the country. He was

the architect of India’s foreign policy. His contribution to the social and economic development of India is significant.

Jawaharlal Nehru passed away in 1964. Lal Bahadur Shastri succeeded him and became the next Prime Minister of India. During his tenure, India and



Lal Bahadur Shastri

Pakistan went to war over the Kashmir issue in 1965. The Soviet Russia tried to mediate between the two countries. Lal Bahadur Shastri breathed his last at Tashkent in 1966. Lal Bahadur Shastri gave the slogan ‘Jai Jawan Jai Kisan’ with which he highlighted the importance of Indian soldiers and Indian farmers.



Indira Gandhi

Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister of India in 1966. Her decision making ability was admirable. Her decisions regarding the Nationalisation of banks and cancelling pensions of Princes had far reaching effects. During her tenure, Pakistan’s oppressive policies in East Pakistan resulted in a big movement there. This movement was led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his organisation, ‘Mukti Bahini.’ This crisis in East Pakistan affected India as well, because millions of refugees came to India.

**The 1970s (Nineteen-seventies) :** The 1971 war between India and Pakistan led to the creation of an independent country

called Bangladesh. Role of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's strong leadership was prominent in this issue. As a part of India's policy to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes, India successfully carried out an underground test of an atomic device at Pokharan in Rajasthan in 1974. In 1975, the people of Sikkim voted for joining the Indian republic and Sikkim became a full-fledged State in the Indian federation.

During this decade, the government declared a state of National Emergency on the basis of the constitutional provisions relating to Emergency. During this turbulent period, the fundamental rights of Indian citizens were suspended. Due to the emergency, the Indian administration became disciplined, but the human rights were restricted. The period of national emergency lasted from 1975 to 1977 and after that general elections were conducted.

On the backdrop of the emergency, many opposition parties came together and formed a party called the Janata Party. The Congress party led by Indira Gandhi was roundly defeated by this newly formed 'Janata Party'. Morarji Desai became the Prime Minister, but under his leadership the Janata Party government couldn't last long due to internal differences. Charan Singh succeeded him, but even his government was a short-lived one. Elections were conducted once again in 1980 and the Congress party under the leadership of Indira Gandhi came to power again.

### **The 1980s (Nineteen-eighties) :**

During this decade the Indian political system faced many new challenges. The

Sikhs in Punjab demanded an independent state of Khalistan and began a movement which went on to become violent and destructive. Pakistan had lent its support to this movement. The Indian army was sent into the Golden Temple at Amritsar, a holy shrine of the Sikhs in 1984, to evict the terrorists who had allegedly taken shelter there. One of the bodyguards in Indira Gandhi's personal security



**Rajiv Gandhi**

assassinated her. During this period, an organisation called United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) carried on a major movement in North-east India.

Right after Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984, Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister of India. He tried to make several reforms in the field of Indian economy and that of science and technology. He took the lead in solving the issues of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka. He promoted the idea of a united Sri Lanka with internal autonomy to the Tamil community, but his efforts in this regard proved to be in vain.

The Congress party was defeated in the general elections held in 1989. Several political parties formed a coalition called the Janata Dal and Vishwanath Pratap Singh became the next Prime Minister of India. The policy for providing reservations for other backward classes (OBC) is considered to be his most important contribution. He could not continue as Prime Minister due

to internal differences in the party. In 1990, Chandra Shekhar became the Prime Minister of India. His government was also short-lived. In 1991, during the election campaign, the terrorist organisation in Sri Lanka, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), assassinated Rajiv Gandhi.

Towards the end of the decade of 1980s, the unrest in Jammu and Kashmir had begun. This problem grew serious day by day and today it has taken the form of terrorism. The terrorist activities there forced the Kashmiri Pandits to leave the valley.

**The changes after 1991 :** The year 1991 is held to be very important in the history of the world as well as India. The Soviet Russia disintegrated into several different small countries and the Cold War came to an end. In India, the Government under the leadership of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao initiated many changes in the Indian economy.



**Atal Bihari Vajpayee** worked as Prime Ministers in this period amongst them. Finally, in 1999 the 'National Democratic Alliance' came to power under the flag of Bharatiya Janata Party and Atal Bihari Vajpayee became India's Prime Minister.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee tried to establish a dialogue with Pakistan but was not successful. India conducted a number of nuclear tests in 1998 and declared herself as an atomic power. In 1999, there was war between India and Pakistan in Kargil region over the Kashmir issue. India defeated Pakistan in this war.

**Indian economy :** Right from independence, the modernisation of economy, economic self-sufficiency and social justice have been the characteristics of Indian economy. India wanted to acquire modernity and self-reliance by establishing industries. We wanted to establish an economy based on social justice through planning. For this, the National Planning Commission was established that would coordinate development through the policy of Five Year Plans.

The Narasimha Rao Government started economic reforms from 1991. These economic reforms are called as economic liberalisation. The Indian economy flourished as a result of the implementation of this policy. The foreign investment in India increased. Skilled Indian professionals helped reform the Indian economy. The field of information technology opened several avenues of employment in the country. The changes after 1991 are also described as 'globalisation'.

**Science and technology :** Two major events must be mentioned while describing India's efforts towards self-reliance. Dr M. S. Swaminathan is known as the father of



the Green Revolution in 1965. He implemented new scientific agricultural techniques and increased the production of foodgrains. The experiment in co-operative dairy movement by Dr. Verghese Kurien led to increase of milk production in India. This is called as 'White Revolution'.

India had also made a lot of progress in the fields of atomic energy and space research. Dr. Homi Bhabha laid the foundation of the Indian atomic power programme. India insisted on using atomic energy for peaceful purposes like generation of electricity, pharmaceuticals and defence. India has achieved considerable success in space technology as well. In 1975, the first satellite 'Aryabhata' was launched. Today, India has a successful space programme and many satellites have been launched under this programme. India has also made considerable advancement in the telecom sector.

**Changes in social field :** During this period, there were several major changes in the social field in India.

Some of the changes are related with the issue of the empowerment of women, and the others are related with the policies regarding the uplift of the deprived sections of the society. To promote the all-round development of women and children, a separate 'Department of Women and Child Development' was created in 1985 under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Some laws were made to ensure social justice to women and to help the implementation of various schemes in this direction. They include the Prohibition of Dowry Act, Equal Remuneration Act. As per the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments, seats were reserved for women in the local self-government bodies.

According to the makers of the Indian Constitution, some constituents of the

Indian society were deprived of dignity and equal opportunities due to the caste system. The 'Kakasaheb Kalelkar Commission' was set up in 1953 to make recommendations so as to improve their condition. In 1978, a commission was constituted under the chairmanship of B. P. Mandal to study the issue of the other backward classes. The policy of reservation was adopted in order to strengthen the representation of backward sections in various services and institutions. The Government passed the Prevention of Atrocities Act in 1989 to enable those belonging to the Scheduled castes and tribes to live with dignity and respect, free from fear, violence and oppression of the upper classes.

**Globalisation :** Globalisation brought about many changes in different fields like economy, politics, science and technology and society and culture. We have discussed some of these changes in the above paragraphs. India has emerged as an important country on the global scene in different spheres. India is an important member of international organisations like G-20 and 'BRICS' (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). India has experienced an important revolution in the field of telecommunication technology.

Mobile phones, internet and the communication facilities based on satellite have spread all across the country. In the political field, India has demonstrated to the world how a stable democracy can function successfully. All this has resulted in a total transformation in the lifestyle of Indians and especially the youth. These changes are visible from their dietary habits, clothing, language and beliefs.

In the next chapter, we are going to study some internal challenges before India.



## Exercises

### 1. (A) Choose the correct option from the given options and complete the statements.

- (1) The Prime Minister of India who took an initiative in resolving the question of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka was ..... .
  - (a) Rajiv Gandhi
  - (b) Indira Gandhi
  - (c) H. D. Devegowda
  - (d) P. V. Narasimha Rao
- (2) ..... is the father of the Green Revolution in India.
  - (a) D. R. Verghese Kurien
  - (b) Homi Bhabha
  - (c) M. S. Swaminathan
  - (d) Dr Norman Borlaug.

### (B) Identify and write the wrong pair.

- (1) Indira Gandhi – National Emergency
- (2) Rajiv Gandhi – Development in science and technology
- (3) P. V. Narasimha Rao – Economic improvements
- (4) Chandrashekhar – Mandal Commission.

### 2. Complete the activity as per given instruction.

(A) Based on the information in the chapter, prepare a chronological chart of Prime Ministers and their tenure.

### (B) Write short notes on-

- (1) Globalisation
- (2) White Revolution

### 3. Give reasons.

- (1) The Morarji Desai government lasted for short while.
- (2) The army had to be sent into the Golden Temple in Amritsar.
- (3) The National Planning Commission was set up in India.

### 4. Answer the following questions in detail.

- (1) How was 1991 a year of important changes in the history of the world and of India?
- (2) What are the characteristics of the Indian economy?

### 5. With the help of the information in the chapter, complete the list of the challenges before India and the strengths of India.

The challenges in front of India	Strengths
For example, India-Pakistan war	Unity in diversity
.....	.....
.....	Nuclear preparedness
Separatism	.....

## Projects

- (1) Find some information about Indian soldiers who bravely fought in the India-Pakistan war of 1965.
- (2) Collect pictures of the brave soldiers of Kargil war.
- (3) Collect pictures of all the Indian Prime Ministers till date.
- (4) Collect some information about Dr Homi Bhabha Atomic Research Centre.
- (5) Get some information along with pictures about the various businesses based on dairy products.

