

Chapter 10: India After Independence

Activity: 1

Question: Imagine that you are a British administrator leaving India in 1947. You are writing a letter home where you discuss what is likely to happen to India without the British. What would be your views about the future of India?

Answer:

- Without the British, India would not remain united but it would divide into various parts; among different language speakers between high castes and low castes; Hindu and Muslim; the rich and the poor.
- It would again adopt some inhuman customs and become an uncivilized country.
- Indians are incompetent to take responsibility. They have no sense of duty and a commitment to work. So, the country would again be enslaved.

Activity: 2

Question: Imagine a conversation between a father and son in a Muslim family. After Partition, the son thinks it would be wiser for them to move to Pakistan while the father believes that they should continue to live in India. Taking information from the chapter so far (and Chapter 9), act out what each would say.

Answer:

Son: Father, lets move to Pakistan.

Father: No, Son we should stay in India only

Son: But all my Muslim friends are moving to Pakistan. Millions of people are being forced to flee from their homes. I don't want to stay here.

Father: Listen son, We should never leave our motherland at any cost. We have born here, We should die here. Many of my Hindu friends will help us in this difficult situation.

Son: Okay father. Let us stay in India only and serve the country.

Activity: 3

Question: Discuss in your class, one advantage and one disadvantage today of the decision to keep English as a language of India.

Answer:

Advantages:

- Today, India is a major outsourcing destination. It links us with the rest part of the world.
- English as a language of India unites the whole country, i.e., the north and the south.

Disadvantage:

- English creates a sense of inferiority in the minds of a majority of Indians.
- English cripples Indians, makes distance between them from their own social surroundings and makes them strangers in their own lands.

Activity: 4

Question: Look at Figs. 5(a), 5(b) and 5(c) (Textbook). Notice how the Princely States disappear in Fig. 5(6). Identify the new states that were formed in 1956 and later and the languages of these states.

Answer:

States formed in 1956	Languages	States formed after 1956	Languages
Andhra Pradesh	Telugu, Urdu	Arunachal Pradesh	English, Hindi
Madhya Pradesh	Hindi	Chhattisgarh	Chhattisgarhi, Hindi
Rajasthan	Hindi	Gujarat	Gujarati, Hindi
		Haryana	Hindi, Punjabi
		Himachal Pradesh	Hindi, Punjabi
		Jharkhand	Hindi
		Manipur	Meitei
		Meghalaya	English, Khasi, Garo
		Mizoram	Mizo
		Nagaland	English
		Sikkim	English
		Tripura	English, Bengali, Kpikborok
		Uttarakhand	Hindi, English, Urdu

Activity: 5

Question: Discuss in your class whether Mira Behn was right in her view that science and machinery would create problems for human beings. You may like to think about examples of the effects of industrial pollution and de-forestation on the world today.

Answer: Mira Behn was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. She was greatly impressed by the ideals, philosophy and ways of working of Gandhiji. Mira Behn worked against caste discrimination, untouchability, in favour of women equality and rights. She emphasized the development of agriculture, cottage, industries and education. Mira Behn worked for protection of environment.

She desired to protect environment along with economic development. She opposed blindly use of modern science and technology. Mira Behn wrote in 1949, by "science and machinery he (mankind) may get huge returns for a time, but ultimately will come desolation. We have got to study Nature's balance, and develop our lives within her laws, if we are to survive as a physically healthy and morally decent species."

Let's imagine

Question: You are witness to an argument between an adivasi and a person who is opposed to the reservation of seats and jobs. What might be the arguments you heard each of them put forward? Act out the conversation

Answer: The arguments that I might have heard from the adivasi is about how they have been struggling for the past 100s of years and now is when they got proper justice. And from the person opposed to reservation of seats might have argued about how the offers towards adivasis is affecting the lives of the upper caste severely, and how they are not getting the opportunity to achieve anything since they have to score the highest percentages for proper jobs and seats when the adivasis can score lower marks but still get good jobs and seats.

Let's recall

Question 1: Name three problems that the newly independent nation of India faced.

Answer:

- As a result of Partition, 8 million refugees had come into the country from what was now Pakistan. These people had to be found homes and jobs.
- There was the problem of the princely states, almost 500 of them, each ruled by a maharaja or a nawab. Each of whom had to be persuaded to join the new nation.
- The new nation had also to adopt a political system that would best serve the hopes and expectations of its population.

Question 2: What was the role of the Planning Commission?

Answer: Role of Planning Commission

- Lifting India and Indians out of poverty, and building a modern technical and industrial base were among the major objectives of the new commission.
- A broad agreement was reached on “mixed economy” model.
- In mixed economy both the State and the private sector would play important and complementary roles in increasing production and generating jobs.
- These roles were:
 - Which industries should be initiated by the state.
 - Which industries by the market.
 - How to achieve a balance between the different regions and states.
- Roles of state and private sectors were to be defined by the Planning Commission.
- To make 5-year plans.

Question 3: Fill in the blanks:

(a) Subjects that were placed on the Union List were _____, _____ and _____.

(b) Subjects on the Concurrent List were _____ and _____.

(c) Economic planning by which both the state and the private sector played a role in development was called a _____ model.

(d) The death of _____ sparked off such violent protests that the government was forced to give in to the demand for the linguistic state of Andhra.

ANSWERS:

A. Taxes, defense, and foreign affairs

B. Forests and agriculture

C. Mixed economy model

D. Potti Sriramulu.

Question 4: State whether true or false:

(a) At independence, the majority of Indians lived in villages.

(b) The Constituent Assembly was made up of members of the Congress party.

(c) In the first national election, only men were allowed to vote.

(d) The Second Five Year Plan focused on the development of the heavy industry.

Answer:

(a) True

(b) False; The Constituent Assembly was made up of members of different political parties existing in India.

(c) False; After independence, India chose to grant the right to vote to all its citizens regardless of gender, class or education. Thus, all men and women were allowed to vote in the first national election.

(d) True

Let's discuss

Question 5: What did Dr. Ambedkar mean when he said that “In politics, we will have equality, and in social and economic life we will have inequality”?

Answer:

- Dr. Ambedkar pointed out that political democracy had to be accompanied by economic and social democracy.
- He wanted to say that giving the right to vote would not automatically lead to the removal of other inequalities such as between rich and poor, or between upper and lower castes.
- He meant that with the new Constitution, India was going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics, we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one value. While in our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value.

Question 6: After independence, why was there a reluctance to divide the country into linguistic lines?

Answer: Back in the 1920s, the Indian National Congress – the main party of the freedom struggle – had promised that once the country won independence, each major linguistic group would have its own province. However, after independence, it did not take any steps to honor this promise. Actually, India had already been divided on the basis of religion. As a result of the partition of India, more than a million people had been killed in riots between Hindus and Muslims.

Due to this, further divisions were not considered to be feasible. Congress leaders believed that any further divisions of the country would only disrupt its unity and progress. On the way to make India a nation, everything which helped the growth of nationalism had to go forward and everything which threw obstacles in its way had to be rejected.

Question 7: Give one reason why English continued to be used in India after independence.

Answer: Many members of the Constituent Assembly believed that the English language should leave India with the British rulers. According to them, Hindi should take place of English. However, those who did not speak Hindi were of a different opinion. Speaking in the Assembly, T.T. Krishnamachari conveyed “a warning on behalf of people of the South”, some of whom threatened to separate from India if Hindi was imposed on them.

Finally, the dispute was settled by making a compromise that while Hindi would be the official language of India, English would be used in the courts, the services and communications between one state and another.

Question 8: How was the economic development of India visualized in the early decades after Independence?

Answer: In 1950, the government set up a Planning Commission to help design and execute suitable policies for economic development. The main aim of the Planning Commission was to formulate, plan and execute suitable policies for the economic development of India.

It took following important steps to boost the economic status of the nation:

Mixed economy model: According to this, both the state and the private sector would play important and complementary roles in increasing production and generating jobs. Now, it was on the Planning Commission to define which industries should be initiated by the state and which by the market and how to achieve a balance between the different regions and states

Focus on heavy industries and dams: In 1956, the Second Five Year Plan was formulated which focused on the development of heavy industries such as steel, and on the building of large dams. These sectors would be under the control of the state.

Let's do

Question 9: Who was Mira Behn? Find out more about her life and her ideas.

Answer:

(1) Mira Behn was an English woman and her original name was Madelene Slade. She was like a daughter of Bapu and often acted as a bridge between him and the British bureaucracy.

(2)

- Mira Behn (November 22, 1892— July 20, 1982) was the daughter of a British admiral. She left her home in England to live and work with Gandhi.
- She devoted her life to human development, the advancement of Gandhi's principles, and the freedom struggle in India. She was awarded Padma Vibhushan in 1982.

Question 10: Find out more about the language divisions in Pakistan that led to the creation of the new nation of Bangladesh. How did Bangladesh achieve independence from Pakistan?

Answer: When the State of Pakistan was formed in 1947, it had two wings, one to the West of India and the other to the East. The two regions were split along cultural, geographical, and linguistic lines. In 1948, the government of Pakistan ordained Urdu as a sole national language which sparked extensive protests among the Bengali-speaking majority of East Pakistan.

The Bengali Language Movement of 1952 was the first sign of friction between the two wings of Pakistan. This movement was a political effort in then East Pakistan, which advocated the recognition of the Bengali language as an official language of Pakistan. Apart from linguistic discrimination, political and economic neglect led to popular agitations against West Pakistan.

This led to the war of independence in 1971. With the help of Indian troops in the last few weeks of the war, East Pakistan defeated West Pakistan on December 16, 1971. This resulted in the establishment of Bangladesh. In February 1974, Pakistan also agreed to recognize the independent state of Bangladesh.