



The British Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act (July, 1947). According to the provisions of this Act, India was divided into two countries, the Indian Union and the Pakistan Union.

Partition of India and Resettlement of Refugees

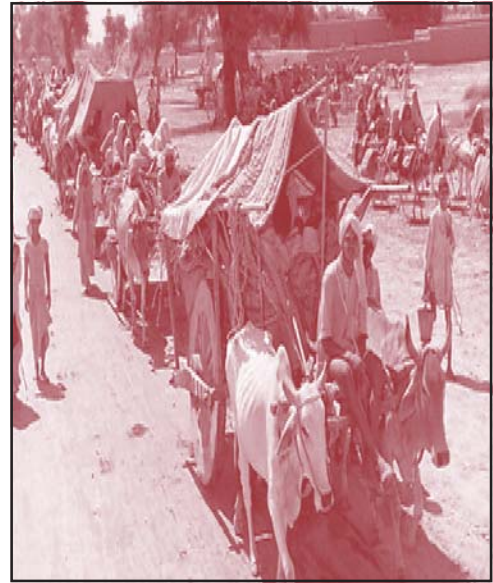
Our country became independent on August 15, 1947. There was an atmosphere of tremendous joy for the whole country. Along with moments of joy these were some challenges too. With the partition of India, two nations, India and Pakistan, came into existence. About 8 million refugees came to India from Pakistan following the policy of expelling non-muslims from Pakistan. Accomodating these refugees and providing them employment was a huge problem. The Government of India discharged this responsibility very tactfully. The people of the country and the government provided adequate facilities to these refugees. A huge refugee camp was opened. After the resettlement of the refugees they all became united with others and began a new life.

At that time there were 562 small and large independent states in India. Convincing these states to join the Union of India was also a daunting task. At the same time, it was a challenge to build a constitution and a political system that could meet the expectations and aspirations of the people.

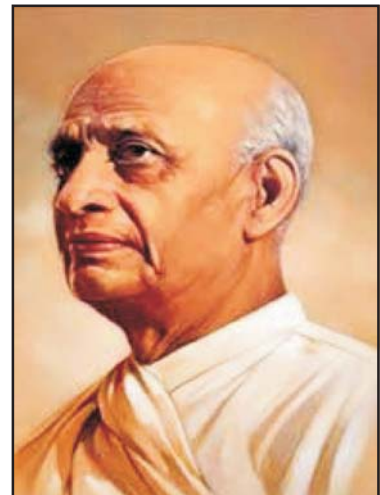
In 1947 AD, the population of India was around 35 crores. There was difference in language, dress, region, and culture of these people. Despite all these differences, it was also necessary to develop national integration. At the time of independence, a large section of the population lived in villages and was engaged in farming. Moreover, dirty cities, densely populated areas, poverty, lack of education and health facilities and the problems of agriculture and associated employment in rural areas were challenging. It was necessary to develop the nation with national unity along with all the challenges.

Unification and Merger of Native States

The amalgamation of 562 native states into Indian Union was the immediate problem of India. There were large native states like Kashmir, Hyderabad and Mysore while some of the native states were very small. It was a mammoth task to persuade all these native states to join the Union of India. Maharaja Krishnakumar Singh of Bhavnagar, was the first king to start 'responsible government' in Bhavnagar. With the efforts of Sardar Patel, the United State of Saurashtra was formed and the state of Bhavnagar was merged into it. Jawaharlal Nehru described this Saurashtra incident as "the most significant unification in contemporary history."



Scene – Partition of India and Pakistan



Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel



After gaining independence, the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel appealed the native kings to voluntarily allow their states to join the Indian Union in the interest of the people under their rule and the Indian Union. He awakened patriotism in the kings. With practical intelligence he started the process of merging almost all the native states into India. With the efforts of Sardar Patel and his secretary V. P. Menon all the states except Hyderabad, Junagadh and Kashmir were merged into the Union of India. Hyderabad was merged with the Indian union through police action and gave assurance to protect Nizam's interests.

Maharaja Krishnakumar Singhji Kanhaiyalal Munshi played an important role in Hyderabad. Nawab of Junagadh signed a treaty to join Pakistan. The citizens of Junagadh in Mumbai formed the ‘Aarzi hukumat’ to join the Indian Union. Almost all the states and people of Saurashtra opposed the Nawab’s alliance with Pakistan. The Nawab of Junagadh migrated to Pakistan and India occupied Junagadh. A referendum was then held in which the people of Junagadh overwhelmingly supported the alliance with the Union of India. Thus, Junagadh was merged with the Union of India.

Maharaja Harisinh Dogra of Kashmir did not sign the treaty of alliance with India. Meanwhile, Pakistan invaded Kashmir to annex it. Harisinh sought India’s military help and signed a pact with India to merge with it. The Indian army immediately went to Kashmir and defended it but in the meantime Pakistan illegally occupied one third of Kashmir. India lodged a complaint against Pakistan with the UN Security Council, which called for a ceasefire. Pakistan still holds one-third of Kashmir which is today known as P.O.K. (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir). Actually it is a part of India. It is an indisputable fact that Kashmir is legally a part of India. Thus, political unity was achieved in India before the end of 1948.

Formation and Reorganization of States

With the completion of the process of unification of the native states after the independence of India, the question arose whether we should accept the federal state system and form such state as the constituent states of the Union. The units formed by the unification of the former British Provinces and native states were initially divided into four categories A, B, C, D. The status of these four types of states were not equal.



Creation of Gujarat

This was a temporary arrangement, because after India became a republic, there arose the demand for the formation of states in the country on linguistic basis. For this, fierce agitations started in some states in which Telugu speaking people from Madras state started agitation with the demand of formation of Andhra Pradesh. The central government had to accept their demand and in 1953 AD, a separate state of Andhra Pradesh was formed. After Andhra Pradesh, other language communities started demanding their own separate state based on language. As a result, a State Reorganization Commission was formed to create states on linguistic basis, chaired by former Supreme Court Justice Dr. Faizal Ali. This commission submitted its report to the government in 1956 AD. As it came into force on November 1, 1956, the system of the previous four classes of states was dissolved and replaced by the system of 14 States and 6 Union Territories. Most of these 14 states were formed on the basis of language but Punjab and Mumbai were the exceptions. Mumbai consisted of bilingual areas i.e Marathi and Gujarati. Against this, there was a strong demand for the formation of states on the basis of Marathi and Gujarati languages and the Mahagujarat movement started. Its leaders were Indulal Yagnik (Induchacha), Bhailalbhai (Bhaikaka), Brahmakumar Bhatt etc. As a result, separate Marathi and Gujarati speaking states were formed. Inauguration of the new state of Gujarat was done by Ravishankar Maharaj on 1 May, 1960 at Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad. Mehndi Nawaz Jung sworn in as the first Governor of Gujarat and Dr. Jivraj Mehta became the first Chief Minister. Punjab and Haryana were recognized as separate states by dividing Punjab in 1966 AD.

Over the time, seven states of Northeast India were formed namely Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. These seven states are known as the ‘Seven Sister States’. Demands for the formation of small states from the larger ones continued. In 2000 AD, the states Jharkhand from Bihar, Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh were formed. In 2014, Telangana became a separate state from Andhra Pradesh. Lastly, since October, 2019, Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh have been accorded the status of Union Territories. India currently consists of 28 States, 8 Union Territories, Delhi State and National Capital Region.

Merger of French and Portuguese Institutions into the Union of India

Till 26th January 1950 AD, when India became republic, the Indian states had joined the Union of India. But the territories occupied by France and Portugal remained pending to be merged with the Union of India. Puducherry, Mahe, Yanam, Karaikal, Chandranagar were under the control of the French. The locals there started ‘Hind Chhodo’ campaign against the French government. The Government of India initiated negotiations with the French Government to resolve this issue peacefully. Recognizing the mood of the people and their strong desire to join the Union of India, France handed over its colonies to India. On October 13, 1954, France ceded its territories to the Government of India and bid farewell to India.



Diu, Daman, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli were occupied by the Portuguese. The Portuguese proved to be more obstinate than the French. Despite many attempts by the Indian government to hand over these territories through persuasion and negotiations, the Portuguese government did not agree. The locals then started the 'Goa Liberation Movement' for alliance with India. During this movement thousands of people



tried to enter Goa, Diu, Daman in which many Satyagrahis became martyrs. Steps like satyagraha and persuasion did not work, the Indian government launched 'Operation Vijay' under the leadership of General Chaudhary to liberate Goa. On December 18, 1961, the Portuguese rulers of Goa surrendered and Goa, Diu, Daman were merged with India.

Five Year Plans and Economic Development of India

The Government of India launched the Planning Commission to meet the goals and ideals of the Constitution in 1950 AD. Today this planning commission is known as the 'NITI aayog'. The Planning Commission consists of expert economists, administrative experts and experts in various fields. It is chaired by the Prime Minister. India's economic planning has long-term as well as short-term objectives. India's economic planning has started with a view to rapid economic growth and development, to reduce economic inequality, full employment, self-reliance, price stability, educational development etc. The first five year plan was undertaken from 1951-56 AD. Efforts for planned economic development were made during this period. Heavy industries were established for industrial development. We have become almost self-sufficient in industrial production. Because of Green Revolution in Agriculture the country, which imported grain, has today become a grain exporter. Developmental steps have been taken to increase production through White Revolution in milk production, Yellow Revolution to increase production of oilseeds etc. Poverty alleviation programs have been implemented after independence to reduce poverty and economic inequality. As a result of five year plans, national income and per capita income have increased today. But the number of the poor could not be reduced. Population growth is one of the reasons for this. Nevertheless, the government has made continuous efforts to reduce poverty, economic inequality, increase employment opportunities, promote education, and ensure that the essential commodities are available to the poor. People's health has improved today. We have been able to eradicate smallpox from India. Average life expectancy has improved, child mortality has decreased, education (literacy rate) has increased.

Current India - Hope and Development

How has our country's development journey been after so many years of independence ? To what extent have we achieved the ideals set in the Constitution ?

India has kept the democratic ideals alive even today. This can be considered a proud achievement. Because many foreign critics believed that India as a nation, can not last much longer. All these fears proved wrong and baseless. Since independence, many elections of the Lok Sabha as well as local bodies and the Legislative Assembly have been successfully completed. In India, citizens are given adult suffrage. India has freedom of the press. There is an impartial and neutral judiciary. Linguistic diversity and religious diversity do not become a hindrance to national unity but has become a nutrient that creates unity in diversity.

Compared to other developing countries in the world, India has developed in the field of technology in the post- independence years and has kept pace with the developed countries. Despite scarce and limited resources, low literacy rate, the development of India's science and technology sector is significant. Peaceful use of nuclear science and technology and the process of development through it has been active. In terms of industries, the country is booming in the fields of electronics, energy, petroleum, telecommunications, steel, fertilizer, cement, petrochemicals etc. In the field of space and research, India has launched a special type of GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle) for launching satellites into space.



Apart from this, the satellites launched by India and the Mars mission to reach Mars as well as complete self-reliance in launching satellites have all been the distinguished and significant achievements of India. Countries around the world have also taken note of India's achievements. The importance of Indian traditions, rich cultural heritage and human resources has been acknowledged by the countries of the world. The best example of this is the importance of yoga accepted by the countries of the world. June 21 has been declared World Yoga Day by the UN (United Nations). India is speedily advancing on the bright path of development.

Exercise

1. Fill in the blanks :

- (1) Act was passed by the British Parliament for the partition of India.
- (2) The first Chief Minister of Gujarat was
- (3) Presently Planning Commission is known as

2. Write the answers of the following questions in one or two sentences :

- (1) When did India become independent ?
- (2) Who was the Chairman of the State Reorganisation Commission ?
- (3) When was the state of Gujarat established ?

3. Answer the following questions briefly :

- (1) What were the challenges faced by independent India ?
- (2) When was Junagadh merged with Indian Union ?
- (3) Write a note on the progress made by India in the field of space technology.

4. Write detailed answers of the following questions :

- (1) Give information about the unification and merger of the native states.
- (2) Give information on economic development made through five year plans.
- (3) Give a brief account of the progress made by India in the post-independence years.

Activity

- Collect information from the elders of your family about the 'Maha Gujarat Movement'.
- Prepare a hand written issue with illustrated information on the development of India after independence.

