

HISTORY

Chapter 10: India after Independence



India after Independence

Partition of India

The joy of Indian Independence in 1947 from the colonial rule was marred by the partition of the country. A country called 'Pakistan' came into existence.

Apart from the violence which killed millions of people on both sides of the border, a newly independent state of India had to face the following problems:

- a. Because of partition, about 8 million refugees travelled to India from Pakistan. The Government of India not only had to settle these refugees but also had to provide them the means of earning a livelihood.
- b. During Independence, there were almost 500 princely states. These princely states had to be persuaded to join the Indian Union in order to maintain the unity and integrity of the country.
- c. People of different castes, classes, faiths and languages were residing in the country. One of the major challenges was to maintain the diversity of the country.
- d. Majority of the Indians were living in villages during Independence. Agriculture, which heavily depends on the monsoon, was the main occupation of the people. The failure of rains affected not only the farmers but also people working in non-farm sectors. The condition of workers in villages was also bad. Thus, the challenge before the Government was to increase the productivity of the land and to set up new industries to create jobs in the cities.

Framing of the Constitution of India

The Constitution of India was framed by the Constituent Assembly which held a series of meetings between 1946 and 1949. People from each region, caste, class, and political party were represented in the Constituent Assembly. The main features of the Constitution:

- a. **Universal Adult Franchise:** The Constitution granted voting rights to each citizen of India who was above 21 years of age.
- b. **Equality of all citizens before the law:** The Constitution of India guaranteed equality of all citizens before the law. This was an important feature as people belonging to different religions, castes and communities were residing in the country. Many people were of the opinion that India should be declared as a Hindu state but the leaders of the country outrightly rejected this idea.
- c. **Special privileges to the suppressed classes:** The Constitution provided special privileges for the poorest and most disadvantageous classes of society. Untouchability was abolished. People belonging to lower castes could now enter into temples and use public wells for

drinking water and ghats for bathing. Along with the scheduled castes, the Adivasis or the people of the scheduled tribes were also granted special privileges.

- d. **Quasi Federal State:** After Independence, many people were of the view that more autonomy and powers should be given to the Central Government in order to maintain the unity of the country. Other sections felt that more independence should be given to the State Governments so that they can work at the grassroot level to improve the condition of the people. The framers of the Constitution took a balanced view and introduced three lists of subjects. In the **Union List**—laws could be framed only by the Central Government. Some of these subjects were defense, taxes and foreign affairs. In the **State List**, only the State Governments could make laws for their own states. These included health and education. In the **Concurrent List**, both states and the Central Government could make laws.

One of the major debates in the Constituent Assembly was related to the adoption of official language in India. Many people contended that English being a foreign language should no longer be an official language. Many people wanted Hindi to become an official language because it was spoken by the majority of the people in the country. People of South India were not in favour of Hindi being imposed on them. A compromise was finally arrived. Hindi was declared as an official language of the country, but English was to be used in the courts, various government services and communications which were to take place between or among the states.

Dr B. R. Ambedkar was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. He believed that political democracy should be accompanied by economic and social democracy. He was of the opinion that giving the right to vote to each citizen would not necessarily lead to the removal of inequalities between the rich and the poor or between the people of the upper and lower castes. It is only when the people themselves work for eliminating inequalities existing in society that equality granted by the Constitution in the sphere of politics (equal voting rights) would be of any value.

Formation of the States

In the early years of the twentieth century, the Indian National Congress (INC) had promised that after Independence each major linguistic group would have its own province. However, after Independence, INC did not keep its promise because of the following reasons:

- India had already been partitioned on the basis of religion which involved violence and killing of large numbers of people.
- Both Nehru and Sardar Patel were against the creation of linguistic states.

Congress leaders met with strong opposition from several quarters. The Kannada speakers, the Marathi speakers and the Malayalam speakers protested against the decision of the Congress.

People of Madras Presidency strongly protested against the decision of the Government. In October 1952, Potti Sriramulu went on a hunger strike demanding the formation of the state of Andhra to protect the interest of the Telugu speakers. He was supported by Telugu speakers and hartals were observed in many towns. The death of Potti Sriramulu resulted in large-scale protests all over the province. Finally, the Central Government agreed to the demands and a new state of Andhra Pradesh was created on 1 October 1953.

- After the formation of Andhra Pradesh, many linguistic communities demanded the formation of their own states.
- A States Reorganization Commission was set up which suggested the redrawing of districts and provincial boundaries to form various lingual states.
- A large region of Hindi-speaking North India was also broken into several states. In 1960, Bombay was divided into a separate state for Marathi and Gujarati speakers.
- Similarly, the state of Punjab was also divided into Punjab (for Punjabi speakers) and Haryana (for Haryanvi or Hindi speakers).

Economic Planning

The Planning Commission was set up by the Government in 1950 to design and execute policies for economic development. India followed a model of 'mixed economy' where both private and public sectors worked for increasing production and generating jobs.

Aims of the Five-Year Plans

- The First Five Year Plan emphasised on striking a balance between the public and private sectors. It aimed to achieve increased agricultural productivity.
- The Second Five Year Plan was formulated in 1956. It concentrated mainly on the development of heavy industries such as steel and the building of large dams.
- While many people supported the main aims of the Second Five Year Plan, many criticised it on the grounds that it did not lay enough stress on the development of agriculture. People also criticised it for neglecting primary education and not paying adequate attention on environmental implications of the economic policies.

India's Foreign Policy

- By early 1950s, the world saw the rise of two supreme powers—the United States of America and the erstwhile USSR. Their ideological conflicts resulted in the emergence of the Cold War. The world was divided into two armed camps—one led by USSR and the other led by USA.
- India under Jawaharlal Nehru decided not to join any military camp. He along with

statesmen from Egypt and Yugoslavia started the Non-Alignment Movement which urged countries not to join any military camp.

- As opined by many critics, the movement did not aim at isolating itself from world politics, but it aimed at reducing tensions by mediating between USA and USSR.
- Many newly independent nations joined the Non-Alignment Movement.

India – Sixty Years On

Achievements

India has been an independent nation for more than sixty years. Some achievements of the country have been

- Many Asian and African nations which became independent after the Second World War either came under dictatorial or military control. However, democracy has become so deep rooted in the country that it is known as the largest democracy in the world.
- During Independence, it was feared by many people that India would sooner or later break up into various small nations as there is a large diversity in the country. Their fears have now been proved wrong. Diversity has become one of the major strengths of the country.
- The Constitution of our country has given fundamental rights to all the citizens irrespective of their caste, gender, sect or religion.
- Independence of judiciary has certainly been an important constitutional feature of our country.

Failures

- Although our Constitution has guaranteed equality to all its citizens, deep caste divides still exist in the country. Untouchables in the country still face violence and discrimination.
 - Despite India being a secular nation, communal clashes still take place in the country.
 - Though the economy of India has considerably improved and is on the way of becoming one of the most industrialised nations in the world, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened over the years.
 - Majority of the rural areas in the country still suffer from the lack of water and electric supply.
- Thus, although India has achieved a lot after Independence, it still has to deal with major challenges such as poverty, illiteracy, economic divide, and caste discrimination.

The Nation, Sixty Years On

On 15 August 2007, India celebrated sixty years of its existence as a free nation. India is still united, and democratic. Many foreign observers thought that India could not survive as a single country, and would break up into many parts, with each region or linguistic group seeking to form a nation of its own. Some believed that it would come under military rule.

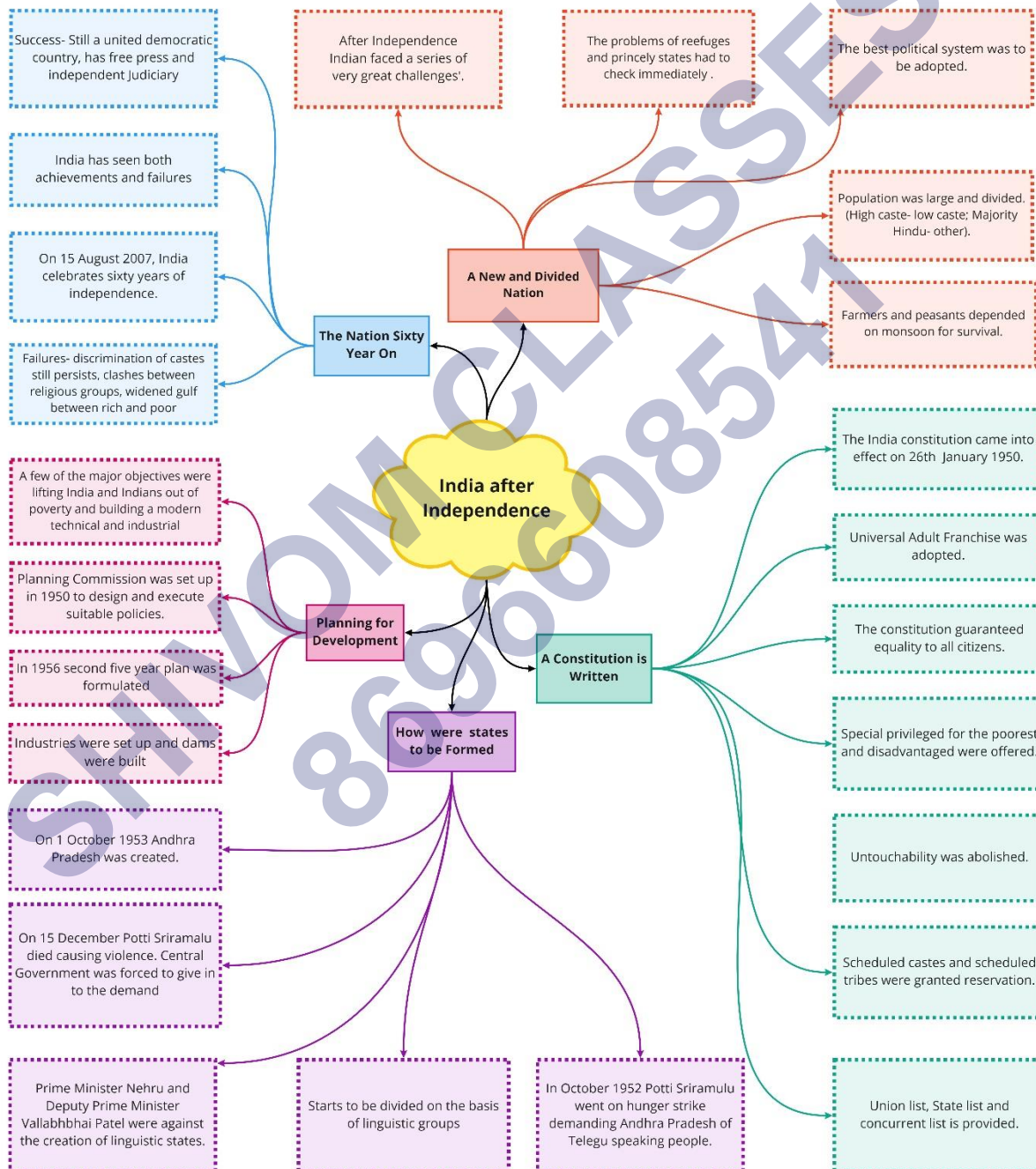
Despite constitutional guarantees, the Dalits still face violence and discrimination in many parts of rural India. And despite the secular ideals enshrined in the Constitution, there have been clashes between different religious groups in many states.

Over the years, the gulf between the rich and the poor has grown. Some parts of India and some groups of Indians have benefited a great deal from economic development. At the same time, many others continue to live below the poverty line.

The Constitution recognises equality before the law, but in real life, some Indians are more equal than others. Judging by the standards it set itself at Independence, the Republic of India has not been a great success. But it has not been a failure either.

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Class : 8th Social Studies (History)
Chapter 10 India After Independence



Important Questions

Multiple Choice Questions-

Question 1. How many countries of the world joined the conference of Bandung in Indonesia?

- (a) 29 countries
- (b) Less than 20 countries
- (c) More than 100 countries
- (d) 100 countries

Question 2. Dharavi, the largest slum of the world, is situated in

- (a) Calcutta
- (b) Chennai
- (c) Delhi
- (d) Mumbai

Question 3. The leader who went on hunger strike for the Andhra Pradesh to protect the interest of Telugu speakers is

- (a) Chitta Ranjan Das
- (b) Potti Sriramulu
- (c) Krishna Menon
- (d) None of these

Question 4. The Bhilai steel plant was set up in the year

- (a) 1950
- (b) 1952
- (c) 1955
- (d) 1959

Question 5. How many Indians formed the Constituent Assembly?

- (a) One hundred
- (b) Two hundred
- (c) Three hundred
- (d) Four hundred

Question 6. When did the Constituent Assembly met in?

- (a) Bombay
- (b) New Delhi
- (c) Calcutta
- (d) Madras

Question 7. In 1966, into which Punjab was divided?

- (a) Punjab and Himachal Pradesh
- (b) Punjab and Delhi
- (c) Punjab and Chandigarh
- (d) Punjab and Haryana

Question 8. What was the first dam built on the Chambal River in Madhya Pradesh?

- (a) Rana Pratap Sagar Dam
- (b) Gandhi Sagar Dam
- (c) Sardar Sarovar Dam
- (d) Govind Sagar Dam

Question 9. With whose help the Bhilai Steel Plant was set up?

- (a) England
- (b) France
- (c) Germany
- (d) USSR

Question 10. How can we describe the practice of untouchability?

- (a) Inhuman practice
- (b) Derogatory practice
- (c) Slur and blot on the Hindu society
- (d) All of them

Question 11. What do you understand by the term “mixed economy”?

- (a) International and national state
- (b) Both private sector and state
- (c) Purely government sector
- (d) None of these

Question 12. New state of Andhra Pradesh came into being

- (a) Own nation to linguistic group

- (b) Own assembly to Linguistic group
- (c) Own province to Linguistic group
- (d) None of these

Question 13. New state of Andhra Pradesh came into being

- (a) on 1 October, 1953
- (b) on 15 October, 1953
- (c) on 1 May, 1953
- (d) on 15 May, 1953

Question 14. Who was Potti Sriramulu?

- (a) African leader
- (b) Gandhian leader
- (c) Congress leader
- (d) None of these

Question 15. Which Industry was set up with the help of USSR?

- (a) Barauni Dairy Plant
- (b) Bhilai Steel plant
- (c) Tata steel plant
- (d) None of these

Very Short:

1. When was the Indian Constitution adopted?
2. Which step has been described as revolutionary?
3. On what point did Nathuram Godse disagree with Gandhiji?
4. Name two subjects of the State List.
5. Name two subjects of the Concurrent List.
6. Who was Potti Sriramulu?
7. When did the new state of Andhra Pradesh come into existence?
8. What were the points of focus of the Second Five Year Plan?
9. How was the Bhilai Steel Plant viewed?
10. What was the basic objective of the foreign policy of Independent India?
11. What is meant by 'Universal Adult Franchise'?

12. Who was appointed as Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution?

Short Questions:

1. Mention the challenges faced by independent India.
2. After Independence why was there a reluctance to divide the country on linguistic lines?
3. 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?"
4. What were the major objectives of new nation?
5. What created problems in unifying the people of India after it got independence?
6. What was the label of development of India at the time it got independence?
7. What special privileges were offered for the poorest and most disadvantaged Indians by the constitution?
8. How have powers and functions of the Central and State Governments been divided by the Constitution?

Long Questions:

1. Under what circumstances a compromise was made with respect to language?
2. Under what circumstances did the new state of Andhra Pradesh come into being?
3. Give a detailed description of the features of the Indian Constitution.
4. Write in brief the process of state formation.
5. Give an account of the successes and failures of the country during sixty-two years of its independence.
6. When was the Indian constitution adopted and what were its features?

Answer Key:

MCQ:

1. (a) 29 countries
2. (d) Mumbai
3. (b) Potti Sriramulu
4. (d) 1959
5. (c) Three hundred
6. (b) New Delhi
7. (d) Punjab and Haryana
8. (b) Gandhi Sagar Dam

9. (d) USSR
- 10.(d) All of them
- 11.(b) Both private sector and state
- 12.(c) Own province to Linguistic group
- 13.(a) on 1 October, 1953
- 14.(b) Gandhian leader
- 15.(b) Bhilai Steel plant

Very Short Answer:

1. The Indian Constitution was adopted on 26 January, 1950.
2. All Indians above the age of 21 would be allowed to vote in state and national elections.
3. Nathuram Godse disagreed with Gandhiji's conviction that Hindus and Muslims should live together in harmony.
4. Education and health.
5. Forests and agriculture.
6. He was a veteran Gandhian who went on a hunger strike demanding the formation of Andhra state to protect the interests of Telugu speakers.
7. The new state of Andhra Pradesh came into existence on 1 October, 1953. .
8. Development of heavy industries.
 - Building of large dams.
9. The Bhilai Steel Plant was viewed as an important sign of the development of modern India after Independence
10. The basic objective of the foreign policy of Independent India was non-alignment, i.e., the American and Soviet alliances.
11. Universal Adult Franchise meant that everybody above the age of 18 regardless any caste, class, religion, gender and race can have a right to vote.
12. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Short Answer:

- Ans: 1.**
- Framing a new constitution for India
 - Integration of states into the Indian union.
 - Planning for development of nation (5year plan).
 - To develop an independent foreign policy for country.

Ans: 2. India had been divided on the basis of religion: despite the wishes and efforts of Gandhi, freedom had come not to one nation but to two. As a result of the partition of India, more than a million people had been killed in riots between Hindu & Muslims.

Ans: 3. Dr. Ambedkar meant that in politics everybody regardless gender, class and education will have right to vote and everybody will be equal but in social and economic life there would be great difference between high castes and low castes, rich and poor; Hindu communities and Indian who practiced different faiths. Rich people will live in multi –storied buildings and poor will live in villages.

Ans: 4. Lifting India and Indians out of poverty by building a modern technical and industrial base

2. In 1950, the planning commission was set up to help design suitable politics for economic development.

3. In 1956, the Second Five Year Plan was formulated.

4. This focused strongly on the development of heavy industries such as steel, and on the building of large dams.

5. These sectors would be under the control of the State.

Ans: 5. The points that created problems were:

(a) At the time of independence, India's population was large. It was divided too. There were divisions between high castes and low castes, between the majority Hindu community and Indians who practised other faiths.

(b) The citizen of this country spoke different languages, wore different kinds of dresses, ate different kinds of foods and practised different professions.

Ans: 6. At the time India got independence the level of its development was very low. A vast majority of Indians lived in the villages. Farmers and peasants depended on the monsoon for their survival. So did the non-farm sector of the rural economy, for if the crops failed, barbers, carpenters, weavers and other service groups would not get paid for their services either.

In the cities too the condition was not good. Factory workers usually lived in crowded slums. They had little access to education and health care.

Ans: 7. First of all the practice of untouchability was abolished. Hindu temples were thrown open to all including the former untouchables.

- A certain percentage of seats in legislatures as well as jobs in government were reserved for members of the lowest castes.

- Along with the former untouchables, the adivasis also known as the Scheduled Tribes were also granted reservation in seats and jobs. They too had been deprived and discriminated against like the Scheduled Castes

Ans: 8. The Indian Constitution gives the division of power in the form of three lists, known as

Union List, State List and Concurrent List. The Union List includes subjects such as taxes, defenses and foreign affairs. On these subjects the central government makes the laws. The State List includes subjects such as education and health. It is the exclusive responsibility of the state government to take care of these subjects. In the last comes the Concurrent List which contains subjects such as forests and agriculture. On these subjects the Centre and the States have joint responsibility.

Long Answer:

Ans: 1. Several members of the Constituent Assembly believed that the English language should be driven out of India with the British rule. They were of the opinion that Hindi should take place of English language. However, those who did not speak Hindi were of different opinion. T.T. Krishnamachari on behalf of the people of the south strongly opposed Hindi. Some threatened to separate from India if Hindi was imposed on them. Finally, a compromise was made. It was decided 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.

Ans: 2. The decision of the Congress leaders not to divide the country on linguistic lines disappointed the Kannada speakers, Malayalam speakers and the Marathi speakers. They had all looked forward to having their own state. The Telugu-speaking districts of what was the Madras Presidency raised the strongest protests. In October 1952, a veteran Gandhian named Potti Sriramulu went on a hunger fast demanding the formation of Andhra state to protect the interests of Telugu-speakers. The fast went on and with hartals and bandhs began to be observed. Meanwhile, Potti Sriramulu died. This incidence intensified the situation. The protests now became widespread and intense. This forced the Central Government to give in to demand. On 1 October, 1953, the new state of Andhra Pradesh came into being.

Ans: 3. We have a written Constitution which was adopted on 26 January 1950.

Features:

(a) One feature of the Indian Constitution was that it adopted universal adult franchise. All Indians above the age of 21 (now 18) would be allowed to vote in state and national elections.

(b) Our Constitution guaranteed equality before the law to all citizens, regardless of their caste or religious affiliation.

(c) The Constitution offered special privileges for the poorest and most disadvantaged Indians. The evil practice of untouchability was abolished. Hindu temples were thrown open to all, including the former untouchables. After a long debate, the Constituent Assembly also recommended that a certain percentage of seats in legislatures as well as jobs in government be reserved for members of the lowest castes, including the adivasis.

(d) Our Constitution clearly defined the powers and functions of the central and the state governments. It gave division of power in the form of three lists—a Union List with subjects

such as taxes, defenses and foreign affairs, which would be the exclusive responsibility of the Centre, a State List of subjects such as education and health, which would be taken care of mainly by the States, a Concurrent List under which would come subjects such as forests and agriculture in which the Centre and the States would have joint responsibility.

Ans: 4. The Congress leaders were in no mood to further divide the country on linguistic lines. This created great disappointment among the Kannada speakers, Malayalam speakers, and the Marathi speakers, and the Telugu speakers, because they had all looked forward to having their own state. The Telugu speakers, however, showed the strongest protests. Their leader Potti Sriramulu went on a hunger fast demanding the formation of Andhra state to protect the interests of Telugu speakers. As the fast went on, it attracted much Hartals and bandhs began to be observed. Meanwhile, Potti Sriramulu died. This incidence intensified the situation. The protests took intense form. This forced the Central Government to give in to the demand and the new state of Andhra Pradesh came into existence on 1 October, 1953.

After the formation of Andhra Pradesh, other linguistic communities also demanded their own separate states. Hence, a State Reorganisation Commission was set up, which submitted its report in 1956. It recommended the redrawing of district and provincial boundaries to form compact provinces of Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu speakers respectively. The large Hindi-speaking region of north India was broken up into several states. Then in 1960, the bilingual state of Bombay was divided into separate states for Marathi and Gujarati speakers. In the year 1960, the state of Punjab was also divided into Punjab and Haryana, Punjab for the Punjabi speakers and Haryana for the rest who spoke Haryanvi or Hindi.

Ans: 5. Sixty-two years of independence have passed. This duration covers a long journey. A lot have been achieved during this time. But at the same time there have been a number of failures.

Successes:

(a) India is still united and it is still democratic. These achievements definitely make us proud. Many foreign observers had felt that India could not survive as a single country. Others believed that it would come under military rule. Neither of these predictions proved to be true. As many as thirteen general elections have been held since independence, as well as hundreds of state and local elections.

(b) There is a free press and an independent judiciary.

(c) The fact that people speak different languages or practise different faiths has not come in the way of national unity.

Failures:

(a) Deep divisions are still there. Despite constitutional guarantees, people belonging to the lowest castes, such as dalits face violence and discrimination. In many parts of rural India they are not allowed access to water sources, temples, parks and other public places.

(b) The gulf between the rich and the poor has grown over the years. Some groups of people avail all facilities while many others continue to live below the poverty line.

(c) Our Constitution provides equality before the law but in real life this does not happen. Some Indians are more equal than others.

Ans: 6. The Indian constitution was adopted on 26th January 1950.

Features of the Indian Constitution:

- 1. Adoption of Universal Adult Franchise:** It adopted universal adult franchise. According to this Indians above the age of 21 would be allowed to vote in state and national elections.
- 2. Equality to all citizens:** It guaranteed equality before the law to all citizens, regardless of their caste or religious affiliation. All the people of different religions would be given the same opportunities when it comes to seeking jobs in government or the private sector, the same rights before the law.
- 3. Granting special privilege to SC and ST:** It offered privileges for the poorest and most disadvantaged Indians.
- 4. Abolition of Untouchability:** The practice of untouchability was abolished. The Hindu temples were open to all including the untouchables.
- 5. Reservation of seats in Govt offices:** Constituent Assembly recommended that a certain percentage of seats in legislatures as well as jobs in govt. be reserved for members of the lowest castes.