

# Recent Developments in Indian Politics

## TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

1. Unscramble a bunch of disarranged press clipping file of Unni-Munni... and arrange the file chronologically.

- (a) Mandal Recommendations and Anti Reservation Stir.
- (b) Formation of Janata Dal.
- (c) The demolition of Babri Masjid.
- (d) Assassination of India Gandhi.
- (e) The formation of NDA government.
- (f) Godhra incident and its fallout.
- (g) Formation of UPA government.

**Answer:** (a) Assassination of India Gandhi(1984).

(b) Formation of Janata Dal (1989)

(c) Mandal Recommendations and Anti Reservation Stir (1990)

(d) The demolition of Babri Masjid (1992)

(e) The formation of NDA government (1997)

(g) Formation of UPA government (2004)

2. Match the following:

(a) Politics of Consensus	(i) Shah Bano case
(b) Caste based parties	(ii) Rise of OBCs
(c) Personal Law and Gender Justice	(iii) Coalition government
(d) Growing strength of Regional parties	(iv) Agreement on Economic policies

**Answer:** (a)-(iv), (b)-(ii), (c)-(i), (d)-(iii).

3. State the main issues in Indian politics in the period after 1989. What different configurations of political parties these differences lead to?

**Answer:** In the decade of eighties, the country witnessed five main developments which had a long lasting impact on politics:

1. End of Congress system.
2. Mandal issues
3. New Economic Reforms
4. Babri Masjid Issues
5. Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi 1989 elections led to defeat of Congress and emerged the era of 'Multi Party- System' when no single party secured majority in Lok Sabha elections since 1989. It led the era of coalition government also when regional parties played an crucial role in forming a ruling alliance.

Since 1989, there have been nine governments at the centre either coalition government or minority government supported by other parties. In this phase, government could be formed only with the participation of many regional parties.

The nineties also saw the emergence of powerful parties to represent Dalits and backward classes and regional assertions as well.

**4. "In the new era of coalition politics, political parties are not aligning or realigning on the basis of ideology." What arguments would you put forward to support or oppose this statement?**

**Answer:** The statement is justified because in the new era of coalition politics the emphasis on pragmatic considerations rather than ideological positions and political alliance without ideological agreement:

1. Coalition politics has shifted the focus from ideological differences to power sharing arrangements.
2. Most parties of NDA did not agree with the 'Hindutva' ideology of B JP still they came together to form government and remained in power also for full term.

**5. Trace the emergence of BJP as a significant force in post-Emergency politics.**

**Answer:** The major trends in the electoral performance of BJP since 1989 can be traced as follows:

1. In the elections of 1989, the National front under V.P. Singh came to power supported by left front and BJP from outside because they wanted to keep the Congress out of power. Due to Mandal Commission Report and implementation of its recommendations forced BJP to reconsider its support and finally withdrew it. Thus, in November 1990, the rule of National Front came to an end.
2. In 1996 BJP minority government was formed for a short period. In June 1996 BJP failed to get majority support in the vote of confidence and thus collapsed.
3. From March 1998 to October 1999, BJP and others formed alliances NDA (National Democratic Alliance) under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The regional Parties demanded more share in the government to extend their support.
4. The political competition during nineties and divided between the coalition led by BJP and coalition led by Congress.

**6. In spite of the decline of Congress dominance the Congress party continues to influence politics in the country. Do you agree? Give reasons.**

**Answer:** The defeat of Congress Party in 1989 marked an end of Congress dominance over Indian Party System. But Congress continued to influence politics in country:

1. Congress improved performance and came back to power after mid term elections in 1991.
2. It also supported United Front government.
3. In 1996, the left continued to support the non-Congress government but this time Congress

supported it as both Congress and Left wanted to keep BJP out of power.

4. Thus, Congress remained an important party and ruled country more than any other party even during the period since 1989. But it lost the kind of centrality it earlier enjoyed in the party system.

**7. Many people think that a two-party system is required for successful democracy. Drawing from India's experience of last twenty years, write an essay on what advantages the present party system in India has.**

**Answer:** In the first decade of electoral politics India did not have a recognised opposition party. But some of vibrant and diverse opposition parties had come into being even before the first General Election of 1952 as the non-Congress parties. Hence, the roots of almost all the non-Congress parties of today can be traced to one or the other of the opposition parties of 1950s.

All these opposition parties gained only a representation, still their presence played a crucial role in maintaining democratic character of system. Hence due to following reasons two party system is required for successful democracy:

1. Within two party systems, the opposition party offers a sustained and principled criticism of policies and practices of ruling party keeping it under a strict check.
2. By keeping democratic political alternative alive, these parties prevented the resentment with the system from turning anti-democratic.

On the basis of above mentioned features it is justifiable to have a two party system which have following advantages:

1. India has arrived at more competitive politics.
2. Political parties act within the spheres of consensus.
3. -New forms, vision, pathways of development have been identified.
4. Issues like poverty, displacement, minimum wages, livelihood and social security are being put on political agenda.
5. Issues of justice and democracy are being voiced by various classes, castes and regions to remind states its responsibility.

**8. Read the passage and answer the questions below:**

**Party politics in India has confronted numerous challenges. Not only has the Congress system destroyed itself, but the fragmentation of the Congress coalition has triggered a new emphasis on self-representation which raises questions about the party system and its capacity to accommodate diverse interest,... An important test facing the polity is to evolve a party system or political parties that can effectively articulate and aggregate a variety of interests.**

—Zoya Hasan

**(a) Write a short note on what the author calls challenges of the party system in the light of what you have read in this chapter.**

**(b) Given an example from this chapter of the lack of accommodation and aggregation mentioned in this passage.**

**(c) Why is it necessary for parties to accommodate and aggregate variety of interests?**

**Answer:** (a) The author calls challenges to coalition government as well as coalition in Congress party itself to trigger a new emphasis on self-representation.

(b) To unsolve a party system to accommodate diverse interests but the political parties formed under the leadership of Kanshi Ram for Dalits only.

(c) It is necessary for parties to accommodate and aggregate variety of interests to maintain the culture of India 'Unity in Diversity' so that there should be no space for separatist movements in India.

## MORE QUESTIONS SOLVED

### Very Short Answer Type Questions [ 1 Mark]

**1. Name two alliances/fronts that formed the government at the centre in 1989 and 1996 respectively.**

**Answer:** National front-1989,United front-1996.

**2. Mention any two incidents of violence against minority community which are a threat to democracy.**

**Answer:** 1. Violent anti-Mandal protest  
2. Godhra incident

**3. What is the difference between a coalition party and coalition in Congress system?**

**Answer:** Coalition party government refers government of more than two regional and political parties whereas coalition in Congress system refers to encouragement of various factions inside the party with different ideologies.

**4. Which organisation took up the cause of Bahujans?**

**Answer:** The Backward and Minority Classes Employees Federation (BAMCEF) took various steps and strong position in favour of political power to Bahujans including SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities.

**5. What was the status of BSP?**

**Answer:** The Bahujan Samaj Party emerged under the leadership of Kanshi Ram supported by Dalit voters in Punjab, Haryana and U.P. But in 1989 and 1991 elections, it achieved a breakthrough success in U.P.

**6. When did the phase of coalition politics begin?**

**Answer:** With elections of 1989, coalition politics began in India i.e. National front in 1989, United Front in 1996 and 1997 and UPA in 2004.

**7. When were new economic reforms announced?**

**Answer:** In 1991.

### Very Short Answer Type Questions [2 Marks]

**1. AWho was the chairperson of Mandal Commission? State any one recommendation made by him/her.**

**Answer:** Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal was the chairperson of Mandal Commission set up in 1978 to investigate the extent of educational and social backwardness among various sections of society and recommend ways to identify these classes.

The Mandal Commission gave its recommendations in 1980:

1. The commission advised that backward classes should be understood to mean backward castes since many castes other than the SCs were also treated as low in caste hierarchy
2. Reservation 27% seats in educational institutions and government jobs for these groups.
3. It recommended land reforms to improve the condition of OBCs.
4. Hence, Mandal commission made recommendations in economic and occupational structures.

**2. State any two major political happenings of 1984 in India.**

**Answer:** 1. Assassination of Indira Gandhi  
2. Lok Sabha elections were held.

### 3. What was change in electoral performance of Congress party and BJP from 1984-2004?

**Answer:** 1. In the elections of 1989, Congress secured 197 seats but did not get majority.

Therefore, it decided to sit in opposition.

2. The National Front under V.P. Singh came to power supported by left front and BJP from outside.

3. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in May 1991 led to emergence of Congress as the single largest party and formed the government supported by AIADMK.

4. In 1996, BJP minority government was formed for short period. Later in June 1996 United Front with the support of Congress formed the Government and H.D. Deve Gowda became Prime Minister and after 11 months I.K. Gujral came to power to rule till March 1998.

5. From March 1998 to October 1999, BJP and other parties formed alliances NDA (National Democratic Alliance) under the leadership of Atal Behari Vajpayee and regional parties demanded more share in government to extend its support.

6. In the elections of May 2004, Congress and its allies formed UPA (United Progressive Alliance) and came to power and Manmohan Singh became Prime Minister.

### 4. When was India's New Economic Policy launched? Who was its chief architect?

**Answer:** It was launched in 1991 as the structure adjustment programme and it was started by the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao:

1. India's New Economic Policy was launched by the then Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

2. The economic changes first became visible in 1991 and radically changed the direction that Indian Economy had pursued since independence towards liberalised and open economy.

### 5. What happened to the state government after demolition of Babri Masjid?

**Answer:** 1. The BJP state government was dismissed.

2. Alongwith that, other states where the BJP was in power, were also put under President's rule.

3. A case against Chief Minister of U.P. was registered in Supreme Court.

### 6. What led to the serious debate over secularism?

**Answer:** The demolition of disputed mosque at Ayodhya on December 6,1992, by Karseva, led to a serious debate over secularism:

1. Most political parties condemned the demolition and declared it to be against secularism.

2. A debate took place about using religious sentiments for electoral purposes.

### 7. List the four groups to be emerged in 1990s.

**Answer:** 1. Parties in coalition with Congress— UPA (United Progressive Alliance).

2. Parties in alliance with BJP—NDA (National Democratic Alliance).

3. Left front parties (Left Parties).

4. Other parties not to be part of the rest (Others).

### Short Answer Type Questions [4 Marks]

#### 1. Describe any four major developments in the Indian politics since 1989.

**Answer:** In the midst of severe competition and many conflicts, a consensus appears to have emerged among most parties. This consensus consists of four elements:

(i) Agreement on new economic policies: While many groups are opposed to the new economic policies, most political parties are in support of the new economic policies. Most parties believe that these policies would lead the country to prosperity and a status of economic power in the world.

(ii) Acceptance of political and social claims of the backward castes:

Political parties have recognised the social and political claims of the backward castes need to be accepted. As a result, all political parties now support reservation of seats for the 'backward classes' in education and employment. Political parties are also willing to ensure that the OBCs get adequate share of power.

(iii) Acceptance of the role of state level parties in governance of the country: The distinction between state level and national level parties is fast becoming less important. State level parties are showing power at the national level and have played a central role in the country's politics of last twenty years or so.

(iv) Emphasis on pragmatic considerations rather than ideological positions and political alliances without ideological agreement:

Coalition politics has shifted the focus of political parties from ideological differences to power sharing arrangements. Thus, most parties of the NDA did not agree with the 'Hindutva' ideology of the BJP. Yet, they came together to form a government and remained in power for a full term.

## 2. When and why did a long phase of coalition politics begin in India?

**Answer:** The era of coalitions could be seen after 1989 elections onwards. The Congress was the largest party but did not achieve a single majority, hence it decided to act as opposition party. This led to National Front (Alliance of Janata Dal and other regional parties). It received major support from BJP and left front. BJP and left front did not join the government but gave support from outside. The coalition era had many PMs and some of them held office for short duration.

## 3. "Coalition government helps in consensus building". Do you agree with the statement?

**Give arguments in support of your answer.**

**Answer:** In the midst of severe competition and conflicts, a consensus appears to have emerged among most parties consisting of following four elements:

1. Most political parties were in support of new economic policies to lead the country to prosperity and a status of economic power in the world.
2. All political parties supported, reservation of seats for backward classes in education and employment and even to ensure the OBCs to get adequate share of power.
3. Role of state level parties was accepted in the governance of country.
4. Coalition politics has shifted the focus of political parties from ideological differences to power sharing arrangements. Hence most of the NDA did not agree the Hindutva ideology of BJP, still they came together to form a government and remained in power for full term.

## 4. Write a note on Hindu-Muslim Riots in Gujarat.

- Answer:**
1. The Anti-Muslim Riots took place at a station called Godhara in 2002.
  2. A fire took place on a bogey full of learsevakos returning from Ayodhya.
  3. The hand of Muslims was suspected behind this fire.
  4. Widespread violence took place against muslims in which nearly 1100, mostly muslims were killed.
  5. Human Right commission criticised Gujarat government's role in failing to control violence and provided relief to victims.
  6. Gujarat riots show that the government machinery also becomes susceptible to passion and alert us the danger involved in using religious sentiments for political purposes.

## Passage Based Questions [5 Marks]

1. Read the passage given below carefully and answer the questions:

Thus, with the elections of 1989, a long phase of coalition politics began in India. Since then, there have been nine governments at the Centre, all of which have either been coalition

governments or minority governments supported by other parties, which did not join the government. In this new phase, any government could be formed only with the participation or support of many regional parties. This applied to the National Front in 1989, the United Front in 1996 and 1997, the NDA in 1997, BJP-led coalition in 1998, NDA in 1999 and the UPA in 2004.

#### Questions

1. What is meant by coalition politics?
2. Name any two regional political parties which were a part of coalition government.
3. Write the full form of NDA.
4. What does a minority government mean?

#### Answer:

1. Coalition politics does not have majority even to a single party but parties may enter into an alliance or get support of other parties to form government.
2. NDA and United front.
3. National Democratic Alliance.
4. Minority governments are supported by other parties which did not join the government.

#### 2. Read the passage given below carefully and answer the questions:

In fact the BSP, under Kanshi Ram's leadership was envisaged as an organisation based on pragmatic politics. It derived confidence from the fact that the Bahujans (SC, ST, OBC and religious minorities) constituted the majority of the population, and were a formidable political force on the strength of their numbers.

#### Questions

1. Which organisation was formed by Kanshi Ram?
2. Name any two religious minorities.
3. Why are Bahujans considered a formidable political forces?

#### Answer:

1. BSP (Bahujan Samaj Party)
2. Muslims and Christians
3. Because Bahujans constituted the majority of population, hence they were formidable political force on strength of their numbers.

#### Long Answer Type Questions [6 Marks]

1. In 2014 elections, people have voted for a stable government at the Centre. Do you think that the era of coalition has ended? Support your answer with suitable arguments.

**Answer:** After Independence, Congress party came in power. It ruled over the country as a democratic government till 1977. One after the other the government was represented by the Congress Prime Ministers like Nehru, Shastri and then Mrs. Indira Gandhi. It was due to some political upheaval; a state Emergency was declared in 1975. During Emergency all the opposition leaders were jailed and their constitutional powers were seized. It made all the opposition leaders unite and form first united party in the name of Janata Party which came in power in 1977. The general election held soon after the Emergency. Though it couldn't last long, but it started a new concept of rule in India. One after the other, India saw many governments ruled by alliance group, except a few single-party-led government. But with the elections of 1989, a long phase of coalition politics began in India. Since then there have been nine governments at the centre all of which have either been coalition government or minority government supported by other parties which did not join the government. The National Front government in 1989, the United Front government in 1996 and 1997, the NDA government in 1997, 1998 and 1999 and then UPA government in 2004 and 2009 and again BJP-led NDA government in 2014 have been the coalition governments in India. In none of these governments any one single party had the number enough to form the government at its own. But in 2014, there was a change in the pattern. BJP could gain 284 seats in the Lok

Sabha election which was sufficient to form the government at its own -which required to only 272. But as the election was fought with a pre-poll alliance by NDA led by BJP. So the present government was formed with Narendra Modi, the leader of BJP.

This election shows that people are again turning to the single party government at the centre which may be stable. People have experienced the lack of stability, lack of policy decision and lack of proper development in the government ruled by the coalition group.

## **2. In the midst of severe competition and many conflicts in 1989, a consensus appeared to have emerged among most parties. Explain any three points.(or)**

**Examine growing consensus over the crucial issues.**

**Answer:** In the midst of severe competition and conflicts, a consensus appears to have emerged among most parties consisting of following four elements:

1. Most political parties were in support of new economic policies to lead the country to prosperity and a status of economic power in the world.
2. All political parties supported reservation of seats for backward classes in education and employment and even to ensure the OBCs to get adequate share of power.
3. Role of state level parties was accepted in the governance of country.
4. Coalition politics has shifted the focus of political parties from ideological differences to power sharing arrangements. Hence most of the NDA did not agree with the Hindutva ideology of BJP, still they come together to form a government and remained in power for full term.

## **3. What was Mandal Commission? Did it try to solve the problems of other Backward classes? State any two arguments in support of your answer?**

**Answer:** Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal was the chairperson of Mandal commission set up in 1978 to investigate the extent of educational and social backwardness among various sections of society and recommended way to identify these classes.

The Mandal commission gave its recommendations in 1980:

1. The commission advised that backward classes should be understood to mean backward castes since many castes other than the SCs were also treated as low in caste hierarchy.
2. Reservation 27% seats in educational institutions and government jobs for these groups.
3. It recommended land reforms to improve the condition of OBCs.
4. Hence, Mandal commission made recommendations in economic and occupational structures.

The government of India accepted recommendations in 1990:

1. 27% jobs reservation has been made in central and state government.
2. Many Welfare Schemes have also been launched as Swarnima National Backward classes Finance and Development Corporation.

## **Picture/Map Based Questions [5 Marks]**

**1. Study the picture given below and answer the questions that follow:**



### **Questions**

**1. What does the cartoon represent?**



2. Describe the role of such government in Indian Democratic set up.

3. What does this statement "Support the government from outside" mean?

**Answer:**

1. A puppet government showing example of coalition government.

2. It plays negative and positive role both. In a negative way, it provides unstable form of government.

In a positive way, it provides opportunities to regional parties also in forming ruling alliances.

3. No direct participation and position in government but support in the formation of government.

2. Study the picture given below and answer the questions that follow:



A cartoonist's depiction of the change from one-party dominance to a multi-party alliance system.

**Questions**

1. What does the picture indicate?

2. Which party is being referred to as one party dominance?

3. Identify female character in the cartoon.

**Answer:**

1. It depicts change from one party dominance to a multi-party alliance system.

2. Congress.

3. Mrs. Indira Gandhi.