



INDIA'S STRUGGLE AFTER INDEPENDENCE

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ABSTRACT: Following its independence in 1947, India faced a complicated and multidimensional conflict with elements of politics, society, economy, and culture. This paper offers an overview of the obstacles and triumphs India has faced on its post-independence path towards nation-building. Politically, the nation made its way toward constructing a democratic framework, as seen by the progressive Constitution that placed a strong emphasis on social justice and secularism. In terms of the economy, India undertook planned development programs to combat inequality and poverty, despite obstacles including ineffective bureaucracy and recurring crises. Affirmative action laws and social change were used to address societal problems including gender inequality and caste prejudice. India's cultural variety has emerged as both an asset and a burden, necessitating a delicate balance between national unity and the maintenance of individual identities. Notwithstanding significant progress, enduring obstacles such as destitution, dishonesty, and discord within the community highlighted the continuous fight to realize the goals of its citizens.

Keywords: Independence, Constitution, Politics, Conflict, Pakistan, China, Foreign Policy, Nation

I. INTRODUCTION

India gained independence in August 1947, facing numerous challenges including the arrival of eight million refugees from Pakistan and the need to convince over 500 princely states to join the newly formed nation. The country had a large population of around 345 million, with significant differences between Hindu society and other faiths, as well as between high and low castes. The people lived in diverse ways, with a variety of occupations, languages, clothing, and food preferences. After independence, the country faced significant changes in its sociopolitical, economic, and cultural landscape. During the post-independence era, democratic institutions were strengthened, social fairness and economic advancement were prioritized, and a national identity was established among a heterogeneous population. This period of Indian history was marked by a resilient struggle to overcome these hurdles and realize the ideals of freedom, equality, and progress envisioned by its founding leaders. The post-independence era saw the strengthening of democratic institutions, prioritization of social fairness and economic advancement, and the establishment of a national identity among the heterogeneous population.

II. NATIONAL CHALLENGES

The Indian Constitution, enacted on January 26, 1950, is considered one of the most significant accomplishments of Indian independence. It established a democratic and federal system, aiming to advance equality and social justice by granting basic rights to its people. However, discrimination based on caste, social injustices, and gender differences continued to exist. India had to integrate over 500 princely kingdoms into its newly formed nation after gaining independence. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India, played a crucial role in convincing the majority of these states to join India. The preservation of India's geographical integrity relied heavily on the merger of princely kingdoms, which required cautious diplomacy and consideration for the various identities and goals of the people and leaders of these governments. After India gained its freedom, it became necessary to address numerous

socioeconomic problems that had afflicted the country for generations. The government started programs to fight social injustice, poverty, and illiteracy, implemented land reforms to share land more fairly among farmers, and implemented affirmative action and reservation policies to improve neglected communities. India has been on a continuous path towards social improvement and equality, but poverty remains a major problem, and disparity in access to healthcare and education persists, especially in rural regions. India's economy faced severe difficulties after independence, with the government using a planned economic model with five-year plans to encourage industrialization and growth. However, the 1990s economic crisis led to a change in policy toward globalisation and liberalization, with the 1991 economic reforms aiming to liberalize the Indian economy, draw in foreign capital, and promote the expansion of the private sector. Despite the success of the planned economic model, it also caused inefficiencies, unnecessary red tape, and a decline in competitiveness in several industries. The 1990s saw a surge in foreign investment, technical breakthroughs, and economic expansion, but also raised concerns about reconciling economic liberalization with social welfare and challenges like income disparity.

III. FOREIGN POLICY-THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

India's foreign policy seeks to safeguard both its strategic independence and its peaceful neighbour's cohabitation. During the Cold War, the nation supported non-alignment, opting not to support any major power blocs. India actively pursued the development of close diplomatic connections with many nations and was instrumental in UN peacekeeping missions. Pragmatism and the pursuit of national interests while maintaining a commitment to world peace and cooperation have also been characteristics of the strategy. It has been difficult to maintain a careful balance in its interactions with major powers and its neighbours, particularly in light of geopolitical tensions and regional dynamics. India has a dynamic challenge in its foreign policy, which is defined by its goal of strategic autonomy and peaceful cohabitation. India's unwavering dedication to non-alignment, or a neutral posture, garnered praise and condemnation in a time defined by Cold War tensions. At times, because India has refused to associate itself with major power blocs, the West has referred to India's foreign policy as "confused." India's status as a developing world power presents possibilities as well as difficulties, calling for a cautious and nuanced approach to foreign policy.

IV. RELATION WITH PAKISTAN AND CHINA

Indo-Pak relations have been shaped by historical and political developments, including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, the violent division of British India in 1947, and several military conflicts between the two nations. The partition of British India led to one of the largest human migrations in history, resulting in the evacuation of up to 12.5 million people and an estimated 1 million deaths. India became a secular nation with a majority of Hindus and a sizeable Muslim minority, while Pakistan evolved into an Islamic republic with a great majority of Muslims and a very tiny minority of followers of other religions. The first confrontation between India and Pakistan occurred in 1947 when armed tribesmen from Pakistan attacked Jammu and Kashmir. The conflict persisted until 1948's second half, when the United Nations (UN) arranged a UN peacekeeping force, a clearly defined ceasefire line, and a proposal for a plebiscite on Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India. This put an official stop to the conflict on January 1, 1949. The second war between India and Pakistan began in 1965, with the signing of the Tashkent Declaration and the declaration of a UN-mandated ceasefire following diplomatic involvement by the US and the Soviet Union. In 1971, East Pakistan gained independence and became Bangladesh. In 1972, Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto signed the Simla Agreement, pledging to end the conflict and promote a friendly and harmonious relationship. In 1989, an armed insurrection broke out in the Kashmir Valley, with Muslim political parties establishing militant wings after claiming that the state government had rigged the state legislature elections in 1987. Pakistan claims to be providing "moral and diplomatic" assistance to the extremists, but it is generally accepted that Pakistan is actively encouraging the insurgency. In 1998, India exploded five nuclear bombs at Pokhran, while Pakistan set up six in the Chaghai Hills. Both nations were subject to international penalties as a result of the testing. In 1999, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee met with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, signing the Lahore Declaration, reaffirming their commitment to the terms of the Simla Agreement and implementing Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) to enhance bilateral ties.

India-China relations began in the 1950s with the establishment of diplomatic ties between India and China after India's independence in 1947. The Panchasheel Agreement in 1954 emphasized non-interference in domestic affairs and peaceful coexistence. However, tensions increased due to border conflicts over Tibet, leading to the Sino-Indian War in 1962, which China won. Strategic distance between the 1970s and 1980s

was strained due to China's rivalry with the USSR and India's increasing closeness to the USSR. Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms in China in 1978 led to better relations. In the 1980s, both nations attempted to normalize relations through diplomatic engagement and trust-building initiatives. An important step towards strengthening relations was made in 1988 when Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited China, resulting in the creation of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) in 2012. After the Cold War, China and India aimed to build more cooperative ties, with economic engagement becoming a key component of their relationship. The Special Representatives Mechanism was established in 2003 to handle border disputes, but border conflicts continued, especially over Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin, sometimes resulting in military standoffs.

V. POLITICAL INSTABILITY

Both at the federal and state levels, there were several leadership transitions during the early years following independence. This resulted in part from the necessity for political consolidation as well as the unpredictability of government following colonial control. Numerous political parties representing a range of interests and ideologies have emerged in India. At first, the Indian National Congress dominated the political landscape and was a key player in the independence fight. On the other hand, the emergence of new parties caused the political system to become more fractured, which increased instability. As a result of the numerous parties and the lack of a certain majority for any one party, coalition governments have become prevalent at the federal and state levels. These coalitions frequently lacked cohesiveness and stability, which resulted in repeated changes to the administration and policy gridlock. Political instability in India was also influenced by the country's linguistic and cultural diversity. The nation's stability and unity were put in jeopardy by protests and agitations brought on by the desire for language states and regional autonomy. A number of issues beset the young Indian economy, such as unemployment, poverty, and sluggish industrial growth. These difficulties were made worse by political instability, which made it more difficult to develop and carry out cogent economic strategies. Insurgencies in the Northeastern states and tribal regions were among the internal conflicts that India experienced, aside from the fight with Pakistan over Kashmir. Occasionally, political unrest made these disputes worse or made it more difficult for them to be resolved.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

Regarding the conversation around India Struggle After Independence, a wealth of literature exists that provides in-depth analyses. Brig (Dr) Ashok Pathak in his paper "India 1952-1976 and 2014-2021: Two periods of political stability- A comparative analysis" talks about the two stages of Indian politics, providing a comparative analysis that takes into account the international environment, strategic choices and expansion, as well as India's place in the world. He examines the data during the years 1952–1976 and 2014–2021. Thongkolal Haokip in his work "Political Integration of Northeast India: A Historical Analysis" discusses the historical study of Northeast India's process of state-to-state integration. He also discusses the political climate in India's northeastern states. Poonam Sharma, in her paper "From Struggles to Triumphs: Independent India's Challenges" talks about the several difficulties and battles India had to fight after gaining independence in 1947. She talks about nation-building, as well as issues related to the economy, society, and the country. Alyssa Ayres in her article on "The China-India border dispute" addresses the conflict between China and India, raising concerns over the presence of troops from both countries. She also wonders how a peaceful conclusion would be achievable down the road.

VII. RESEARCH GAPS

Research on India's post-independence struggles offers numerous opportunities to explore the country's challenges. Potential research gaps include examining regional disparities, socioeconomic inequality, political fragmentation, identity politics, environmental challenges, urbanization and infrastructure, foreign policy and international relations, technology and innovation, healthcare and public health, and education and skill development. Regional disparities could be studied, including economic, social, and political disparities between states and regions. Socioeconomic inequality could be explored, including causes, consequences, and solutions. Political fragmentation could be examined, focusing on regional parties, coalition politics, and federalism. Identity politics could be studied, including caste, religion, and ethnicity. Environmental challenges, such as pollution, deforestation, and climate change, could be assessed. Urbanization and infrastructure dynamics could be studied, including patterns of urban growth, challenges related to poverty

and slums, and the role of infrastructure in promoting economic growth and social inclusion. Technology and innovation could be explored, focusing on the evolution of India's science and technology policies, the impact of technological change on economic growth and social change, and challenges related to the digital divide.

VIII. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives of this study is to deepen the understanding about all the struggles and challenges India faced after its independence. The objective is also to investigate and analyze the challenges with a focus on understanding the socio-economic, political, and cultural dimensions of the nation's post-independence journey. Where India got its freedom after being colonised by the British after years of hardships, it is also important to acknowledge the fact that along with studying about the pre- independence situation we should also learn about the post-independence struggles as India did not become a good economy state and did not achieve these goals overnight.

IX. FINDINGS

1. *Partition and Intercommunal Violence*: In 1947, British India was divided into India and Pakistan, leading to one of the biggest mass migrations in human history as well as a great deal of intercommunal violence. The riots that followed resulted in the displacement of millions of people and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people.
2. *Integration of Princely states*: Bringing more than 500 princely kingdoms into the Indian Union was one of the major obstacles that independent India had to overcome. The first Deputy Prime Minister of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, was instrumental in convincing these states to join India and forming the nation.
3. *Economic Difficulties*: Following its independence, India faced a number of difficult economic situations, such as poor industrialization, extreme poverty, and a mostly rural economy. The administration implemented a mixed economy strategy that included planning through five-year plans and state intervention in important industries.
4. *Foreign Policy Difficulties*: India had to deal with a number of difficult foreign policy issues, such as border conflicts with China and Pakistan in particular. The nation's security problems were highlighted by the Sino-Indian War of 1962 and the Indo-Pak conflicts of 1947, 1965, and 1971.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Establish your Research Scope*: Because the subject is so broad, it's important to specify the precise areas you wish to investigate. You might concentrate on social movements, foreign policy, political developments, economic difficulties, or cultural changes, for instance.
2. *Consult Reputable Sources*: Make use of a range of sources, such as scholarly publications, books, films, and trustworthy websites. Seek publications by reputable historians, economists, sociologists, and political scientists with knowledge of Indian politics and history.
3. *Historical Context*: Recognize the events that led to British India's 1947 separation into India and Pakistan as well as the events that preceded that country's independence. Examine the influences that molded India after independence, including the socioeconomic divide, religious conflicts, and the legacy of colonialism.
4. *Important Ideas and Occurrences*: List the major topics and occasions in India's post-independence history, including the Green Revolution, the 1990s economic liberalization, the Emergency regime, the Naxalite insurgency, and local disputes like the Kashmir dispute.

XI. CONCLUSION

India's journey after independence was marked by a democratic, secular path, focusing on social justice, secularism, and fundamental rights. The country adopted socialism principles to combat poverty, inequality, and agricultural reforms. However, bureaucratic inefficiencies, limitations of socialist programs, and economic crises remained. India also faced social issues like gender inequity, caste prejudice, and regional differences. Despite these challenges, India has made significant achievements, including democracy consolidation, advancements in science and technology, and economic growth. However, persistent issues like poverty, corruption, communal tensions, and environmental degradation continue to hinder progress. India's struggle is a testament to its resilience and the complexities of nation-building.

XII. REFERENCES

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