

# Challenges to and Restoration of Congress System

## Notes Class 12 Political Science Book 2 Chapter 5

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### **Elections in India**

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- Conducting elections in the country was no less than a challenge. it was because:
- Only 16 percent of the people in the country were educated.
- Most of the country's population was suffering from poverty.
- Lack of means of communication and technology
- 3200 MLAs and 489 MPs were to be elected by 17 crore voters.
- The constituencies were to be determined.

### **India's first General Election – 1952**

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- For holding the first general election in the country
- Nearly 3 lakh people have been trained
- Constituencies demarcated
- Voter list prepared (every person who was above 21 years of age)
- Election campaigning started in the country.

### **1952 Election Results**

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- Democracy was successful in India.
- People enthusiastically participated in the election.
- There was a tough competition between the candidates in the election and the losing candidates also declared the result correct.
- The people of India carried out the electoral experiment very well and all the critics were silenced.
- In the elections, Congress won 364 seats and emerged as the single largest party.
- The second largest party was the Communist Party of India which won 16 seats.
- Jawahar Lal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of the country.

## **Second General Election – 1957**

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- In 1957, the second general elections were held in India, this time the situation remained the same as the last time and the Congress won the elections comfortably in almost all the places, the Congress got 371 seats in the Lok Sabha and Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister of India for the second time but in Kerala. The influence of the Communist Party was visible and the Congress could not form the government in Kerala.
- In 1957 the Communist Party of India formed the government in Kerala and ES Nambooripad became the Chief Minister, but in 1959 the Central Government (Congress) dismissed his government using Article 356 of the Constitution. This decision also caused a lot of controversy in the future.

## **Third General Election 1962**

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- In 1962, the third general election was held in India, in which again the Congress easily won the elections in almost all the places. In this election, Congress won 361 seats in the Lok Sabha and Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister for the third time.
- The performance of the Congress remained the same as in the previous elections and no opposition party could compete with the Congress .

## **Congress Dominance**

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- In the elections of 1952, where Congress got 364 seats on one hand, the second largest party, Communist Party of India could win only 16 seats. These numbers clearly show the dominance of Congress. But why did this happen?
- This happened because –
  - biggest and oldest party
  - Congress was the only party whose organization was spread all over the country.
  - legacy of freedom struggle
  - Leadership of great and charismatic leaders
  - Support of all sections and inclusion of all ideologies

## **Nature of Congress's dominance**

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- The rule of Congress in India was similar to that of one party

- its characteristic
  - It was established in democratic conditions, that is, the people had given the chance to the Congress to rule for so many years by electing them.
  - It was completely different from other countries. In other countries such as Cuba , China and Syria, only one party rule is provided in the constitution and on the other hand, in countries like Myanmar and Belarus, one party rule was done for military reasons.
  - The situation in India was different from this, only through democratic rule in India, the dominance of Congress was established, which shows the popularity of Congress in India.

## **Death of Jawaharlal Nehru**

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- Jawaharlal Nehru died **in 1964 due to a heart attack.**
- After the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, **the discussion of political successor** started, that is, who will lead the Congress after Nehru and who will take over the post of Prime Minister.
- But this problem was solved very easily.
- All the big leaders of the party after consultation **decided to make Lal Bahadur Shastri the Prime Minister.**

## **Who was Lal Bahadur Shastri?**

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- Lal Bahadur Shastri was one of the few well-known and popular leaders of the Congress.
- Lal Bahadur Shastri had been a minister in Nehru's government.
- Once taking the responsibility of a railway accident, Shastri had resigned from his railway minister's post, which showed his loyalty and responsibility towards his post.
- For this reason, the proposal to make Lal Bahadur Shastri the Prime Minister was accepted.
- In this way Lal Bahadur Shastri came after Nehru.

## **Reign of Lal Bahadur Shastri**

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The reign of Lal Bahadur Shastri was full of problems, during which there were two biggest problems.

### **Food Crisis**

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In the early 1960s, many parts of the country experienced drought due to lack of proper rainfall in many parts of the country. This had a direct impact on agriculture and a situation of food crisis arose in the country. Due to which it became necessary to increase food production in the country.

## **Pakistan War (1965)**

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- After the 1962 China war, India's problems did not end and in 1965, a war between India and Pakistan started over the problem of water division.
- These were the two biggest problems of Lal Bahadur Shastri's reign. In view of the situation, Lal Bahadur Shastri gave the slogan of Jai Jawan Jai Kisan.
- Lal Bahadur Shastri went to Tashkent in 1966 to end the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 and to negotiate peace restoration. Lal Bahadur Shastri died suddenly on 10 January 1966.
- After the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri again the problem of election of the next leader arose.
- This time the names of 2 leaders came out.

## **Indira Gandhi**

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- President of Congress
- Daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru
- Ministers during the Reign of Lal Bahadur Shastri

## **After Lal Bahadur Shastri**

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### **Morarji Desai**

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- He was the Chief Minister of Bombay (Maharashtra).
- He had also served as a minister in the central government.
- This time due to competition between two people, secret ballot was conducted.
- Indira Gandhi very comfortably defeated Morarji Desai and was elected to the post of Prime Minister.
- Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister of the country after Lal Bahadur Shastri

### **The main reason for choosing Indira**

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- At that time the group of big leaders present inside the Congress were called Syndicate.
- At the time of the election of the Prime Minister, the Syndicate decided to support Indira Gandhi thinking that Indira Gandhi does not have much experience, therefore she will depend on the Syndicate.

## **Fourth General Election (1967)**

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The fourth general election in India was held in 1967. The situation in the country was different from before and this time the Congress had a new challenge in the form of non-congressism.

## **State of the country at the time of the fourth general election**

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### **Face two wars**

- China (1962)
- Pakistan (1965)

### **Death of two great leaders**

- Jawahar Lal Nehru
- Lal Bahadur Shastri
  - Economic problem
  - Food crisis
  - Decrease in foreign exchange
  - Increase in military spending
  - Inexperienced prime minister

## **Fourth General Election (1967)**

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- Due to the poor condition of the country and being an inexperienced leader, the opposition got an opportunity to remove the Congress from power.
- Ram Manohar Lohia called the Congress government undemocratic and against the poor and asked the opposition to come together so that the system can be brought back in the country.
- Ram Manohar Lohia called it non-Congressism and called upon the opposition to fight the elections together.
- Elections in the country went smoothly as usual, but their results surprised everyone.
- The Congress suffered a severe setback both at the Center and in the state.
- The Congress somehow managed to form the government in the Lok Sabha, but there was a drastic decline in both the number of seats and the number of votes.
- Many big leaders of Congress lost the elections.
- Congress could not form government in 9 states
  - Congress did not get majority in 7 states
  - Congress could not form government due to defection in 2 states
- The phenomenon of coalition unfolded

## **After the 1967 Election**

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- After the poor performance in the 1967 elections, some problems started emerging within the Congress as well.
- Indira Gandhi started making her place in the Congress, due to which the differences between the Syndicate and Indira started increasing.
- Indira Gandhi started running the Congress on her own terms and the Syndicate did not like this.

- Although all this was going on within the party and did not seem to be such a big problem, but this problem came in front of the country in 1969, when the President Zakir Hussain died.

## **1969 presidential election and split of Congress**

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- President Zakir Hussain died in 1969 and a new President was to be elected
- On one hand, where the syndicate selected the Lok Sabha Speaker N Sanjiva Reddy as the presidential candidate, Indira Gandhi on the other hand promoted VV Giri due to differences with Sanjiva Reddy.
- N Nijalingappa, who was the party's president at that time, asked all the MPs to vote for the party's candidate Sanjeeva Reddy. Whereas Indira Gandhi asked everyone to vote after listening to the voice of their mind.

## **Results of Presidential Elections**

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- V V Giri, supported by Indira, won the election and became the President, and the Syndicate candidate Sanjiva Reddy had to face defeat.
- This defeat was not tolerated by the Syndicate and they expelled the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi from the party and thus the Congress was split.
- Many MPs who supported Indira Gandhi also left the Syndicate Congress and joined Indira Gandhi's Congress.
- In this way the Congress was divided and two Congresses were formed.
  - Congress (O – Organisation) Syndicate
  - Congress (R – Requisitionist) Indira Gandhi
- Due to the partition, the Congress was reduced to a minority as the parliamentarians got divided.
- Meanwhile, CPI and DMK supported the Congress and the government was formed at the Centre.

## **After partition**

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- Now Indira Gandhi adopted socialist policies and decided to pay more attention to the poor.
- Steps taken by Indira Gandhi
  - Nationalization of 14 Banks
  - End of Privy Purse
  - Promoted land reforms
  - Made policies for the benefit of the poor in the country.

**In 1970, Indira Gandhi decided to topple the government with this support. It was a bold move but the results were positive. The country held the fifth general elections in February 1971 due to the fall of the government in 1970.**

### **Fifth General Election (1971)**

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- The fifth general elections were held in the country in February 1971.
- This time the contest was between Congress (O) and Congress (R).
- Everyone believed that the real power of Congress was in the hands of Congress (O).
- Meanwhile, all non-Congress and non-communist parties formed a coalition called the Grand Alliance.

### **Election campaign begins**

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- Indira gave the slogan “Gareebi Hatao”
- Opposition gave slogan “Indira Hatao”

### **Election results**

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- Elections were held in the country and the results of the elections once again shocked everyone.
- In this election, Congress (R) had formed an alliance with CPI and the alliance of these two got the maximum number of seats in the country.
- The alliance got a total of 375 seats, out of which only Congress (R) got 352 seats.
- On the other hand, Congress (O) and Grand Alliance were completely wiped out.
- Congress (O) got only 16 seats
- Grand Alliance could win only 40 seats.
- In this way the Congress (R) and Indira Gandhi made a comeback.

### **Reasons of the victory of Congress (R)**

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- Nationalization of 14 Banks
- End of Privy Purse
- Promoted land reforms
- Made policies for the benefit of the poor in the country.
- Socialist policies
- Remove poverty slogan
- Popularity of Indira Gandhi

## **Restoration of Congress**

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By restoration of Congress means to take Congress to its old position. As we read that in 1967 the Congress got very less votes and seats, but in 1971, under the leadership of Indira Gandhi, the Congress came back to its old position and got the same old position. This was called the restoration of Congress.

Features of the Restoration of Congress.

- Depends on Indira's popularity
- Elimination of different factions present in the party
- Socialist ideology
- Welfare of the poor was the main issue
- More organized and powerful than ever

## **Other key points**

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### **Syndicate**

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The group of big leaders present inside the Congress was called Syndicate.

### **Defection**

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- Defection is called the situation when a leader contests an election with the election symbol of one party, but after winning, leaves that party and joins another party.
- For example, suppose there is a leader who contests the election with the symbol of Congress, but after winning, consider any other party and joins BJP, then it will be called a defection.

### **Alliance**

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It refers to the situation when two or more parties come together to form a government. This is done because no party would have got a majority, that is, no party would have got enough seats to form the government alone.

## **Why 1960s decade is called a Dangerous decade?**

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- **1960s**
- The decade of 1960 was full of problems for India.



- The main problems of that decade were
  - Faced two wars
    - China (1962)
    - Pakistan (1965)
  - Death of two great leaders
    - Jawahar Lal Nehru
    - Lal Bahadur Shastri
  - Economic problem
  - Food crisis
  - Decrease in foreign exchange
  - Increase in military spending