

Emergence of a new state

Subject : History

Lesson: Emergence of a new state

Course Developers

**Making of the constitution
Integration of princely states**

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And

Land reform and beginning of planning

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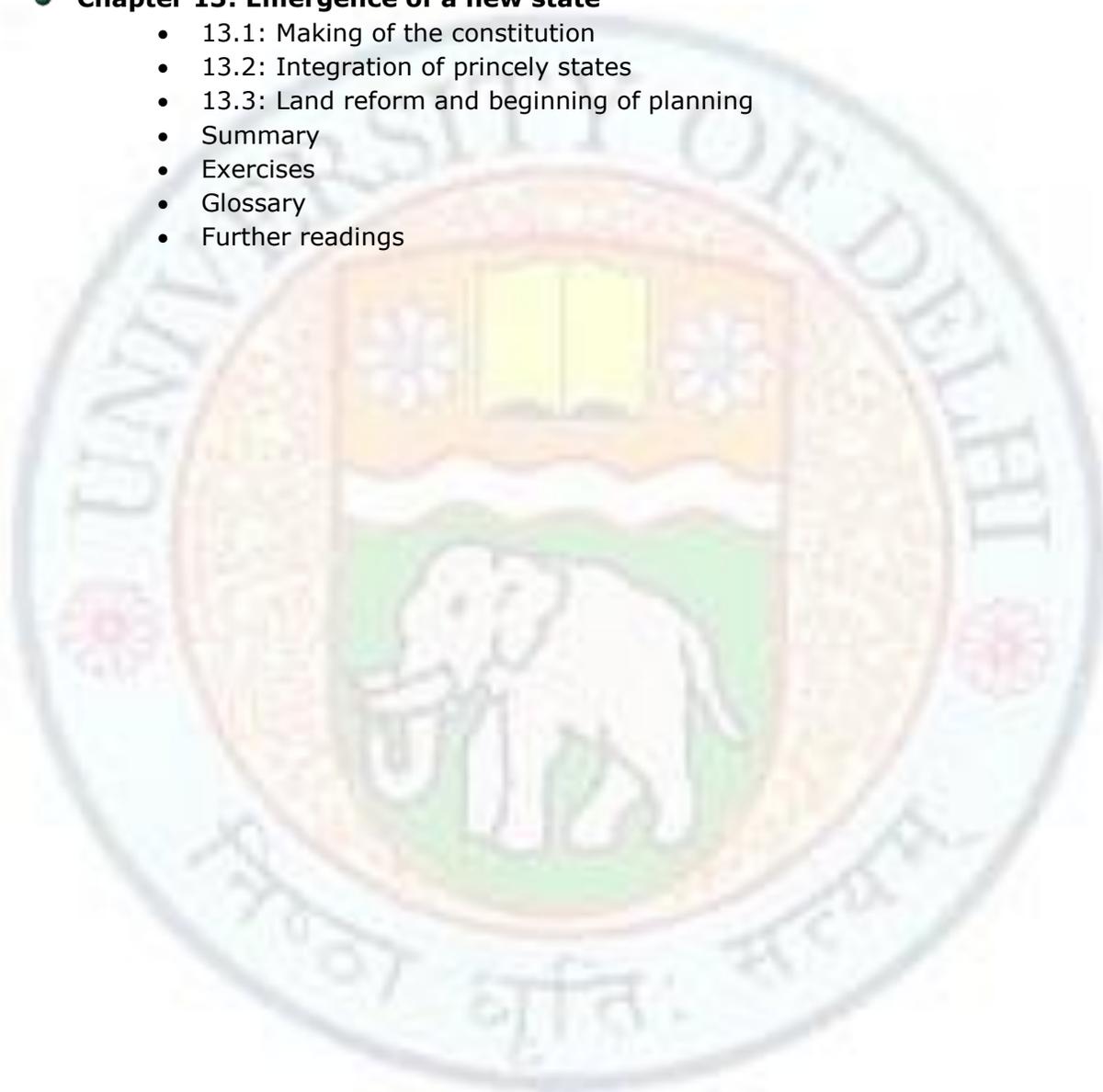
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13.1: Making of the constitution

On 26 January 1950, the Indian constitution came into effect. By this act, the Dominion of India transformed itself into the Republic of India. The constitution had been drafted, discussed, and finalized by the **Constituent assembly** between December 1946 and December 1949. Comprising 395 articles and 8 schedules, this lengthy document set out the architecture of the new state. The deliberations of the Constituent assembly were comparably long and painstaking. They provide a fascinating window into the range of ideas and institutions that the makers of the constitution envisioned for the new India. But these debates, and the resultant constitution, also reflected the wider context in which the Constituent assembly met and functioned.

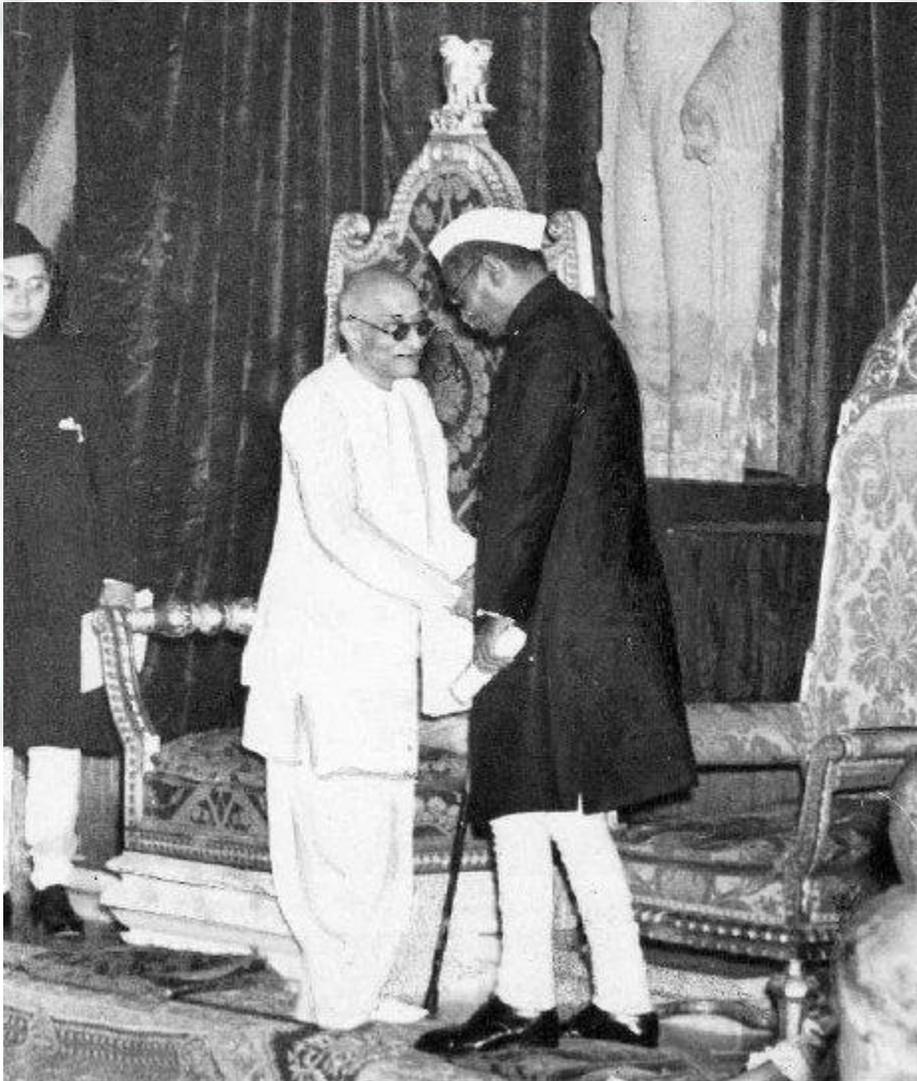


Figure 13.1.1: India's first President, Rajendra Prasad, is being led to the 'presidential chair' by Governor-General C. Rajagopalachari, January 1950

Source: <http://www.hinduonnet.com/af/india60/stories/2007081560020200.htm>

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Video clip: watch this clip of Jawaharlal Nehru's famous 'tryst with destiny' speech on the eve of independence.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wUcw8Ufx_Y

The Constituent assembly of India was formed following the Cabinet Mission of 1946. The Mission's Plan rejected the idea of direct elections as too slow, and provided for indirect elections by the provincial legislatures. (The provincial legislatures, we will recall, were themselves elected on a very restricted franchise.) The princely states were given a fixed number of seats in the Constituent assembly. Elections to the Assembly were held in July 1946. But, owing to the fall-out between the Congress and the Muslim League over the terms of grouping in the Cabinet Mission Plan, the Muslim League boycotted the Assembly. Some members of the League would join it after Partition had been announced, and then only because they were staying behind in India. Representatives of the princely states, too, took their time to join the Assembly.

Thus when the Constituent assembly met for the first time on 9 December 1946, it was a remarkably small (numbering about 300) and unrepresentative body, dominated by the Congress Party. This trend, however, was kept in check by two factors. The Congress itself housed a variety of ideologies and viewpoints, and included a substantial 'opposition' within itself. These, as one scholar has observed, 'ranged from a rabid Hindi-supporter to a secular socialist, from a strong advocate of the presidential system to a convinced parliamentarian, from a protagonist of a highly centralized state to a protagonist of loose federalism' (Chaube 2000, 99). Second, the Constituent assembly sought submissions on various issues from the public at large. A draft of the constitution was also published in February 1948. The voluminous representations from practically every segment of Indian society might have slowed down its proceedings, but the process broadened its outlook and strengthened its legitimacy.

Much of the Constituent assembly's work was done in its numerous committees, sub-committees, and ad hoc committees. The drafting of the text was left to the seven-member Drafting Committee consisting mainly of lawyers and not politicians. The Committee was chaired by B.R. Ambedkar, the brilliant lawyer and leader of the low-castes, who was also minister for law in the Union cabinet. The work of the Constituent assembly was largely facilitated by four Congress leaders: Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, and Abul Kalam Azad. The foremost historian of the Indian Constitution, Granville Austin, calls them an 'oligarchy', but one that was responsive to the various currents of opinion within the Assembly (Austin 1999, 21-25).

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Figure 13.1.2: B. R. Ambedkar with other members of the Drafting Committee

Source: <http://www.sankalpindia.net/drupal/ambedkar-the-architect-indian-constitution>

Video clip: watch this video clip showing the drafting committee at work with a speech by Ambedkar in the background.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEC1cs85yC0&feature=related>

Value addition: biographical sketch

B. N. Rau

Among the influential 'makers of the constitution' was one individual who was not a member of the Constituent assembly. B. N. Rau served as constitutional advisor to the Government of India. After education at Trinity College, Cambridge, Rau joined the Indian Civil Service in 1910. He held a succession of legal appointments, including the post of the Reforms Commissioner in 1928. He had also been the prime minister of Kashmir in 1944-45. A gifted legalist and draftsman, Rau undertook a tour of western democracies to study their constitutional models. Thereafter he prepared a series of notes that informed the workings of Ambedkar's committee. Subsequently, Rau also served as India's representative to the UN and played an important role in the proceedings over Kashmir.

Source: Guha, Ramachandra. 2007. *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi: Picador, 107; Austin, Granville. 1998. *The Indian Constitution : Cornerstone of a Nation*. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 344-45.

The nature of political institutions

The Constituent assembly set itself a lofty goal: the creation of conditions for a major social and economic transformation of India. 'The first task of this assembly', Nehru told his colleagues, 'is to free India through a new constitution, to feed the starving people, and to clothe the naked masses, and to give every Indian the fullest opportunity to develop himself according to his capacity' (Constituent Assembly Debates, vol. 2, p. 316). Hence, the major

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question confronting the Assembly was what form of political institutions would enable and encourage such far-reaching change. This led first to the consideration of the basic constitutional pattern of the new state.

The experience of limited self-governance under colonial rule predisposed many members to look towards European-American constitutional tradition. Others, however, favoured drawing on India's own indigenous traditions. Advocates of a 'Gandhian' constitution called for the revival of the panchayati raj system of village councils. In this scheme, the village would function as the basic unit of politics and governance.

Value addition: interesting detail
The 'Gandhian' constitution
The most elaborate statements of a Gandhian constitution came not from Gandhi, but from his followers. Gandhi's own preferences can be glimpsed in two plans that he submitted (in January 1946 and January 1948) to the committee charged with revising the Congress' constitution. The second plan called for disbanding the Congress as a 'parliamentary machine' and turning it into a social service organization based on a country-wide network of panchayats. Each village panchayat would form a unit; two such units would constitute a working party with an elected leader. Fifty such leaders would elect a second-grade leader, who would coordinate their efforts and be available for national service. Second-grade leaders could elect a national chief to 'regulate and command all groups'. The Congress Working Committee, however, turned down these ideas. Its members held that the new state needed a centrally controlled, mass political party.
Source: Austin, Granville. 1998. <i>The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation</i>. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 28-29.

In the event, the Constituent assembly settled for a parliamentary, federal constitution in the Euro-American model. In contrast to the 'Gandhian' model, this political system would be much more centralized. In deference to the Gandhian view, the constitution would promote administrative (as opposed to political) decentralization below the level of the provinces. The state's duty to promote the development of panchayats was written into the Directive Principles of State Policy (of which more below). In a more dramatic break with the past, the Assembly also settled for a direct election by adult suffrage. This was regarded as an essential prerequisite for socio-economic transformation. Many members of the Constituent assembly believed that universal suffrage would shift the balance of governmental power towards the poor, and encourage policies that would be really beneficial to them.

The decision in favour of a parliamentary, federal constitution was also prompted by several immediate considerations. First, in the aftermath of the Second World War, there was a severe food shortage in the country. The rise in food prices, the low grain reserve, and the differences between provinces with surpluses and with shortages, all pointed to the need for national government control of this crucial sector. More broadly, the Assembly believed that economic progress required a centralized authority and centralized planning. Second, The

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massive blood-bath preceding and accompanying Partition underlined both the weaknesses of the provincial law and order machinery, and the need for central power to uphold order and stability. Third, the Pakistan-abetted tribal invasion of Kashmir and the outbreak of the Communist rebellion in Telengana highlighted the importance of a strong central government capable of managing external defence and internal security.

Structure of political institutions

The structure of political institutions, too, drew on European and American models. The American presidential system and the Swiss Executive model were debated and discarded. The Assembly chose a slightly modified version of the British cabinet system. A President, indirectly elected for a term of five years, would be constitutional head of state. The President would be commander-in-chief of the armed forces and could refer bills back to Parliament. The position, as Nehru noted, had no 'real power' but 'great authority and dignity' (Constituent Assembly Debates, vol. 4, p. 734). As in Britain, there would be a council of ministers responsible collectively to the Parliament, to assist and advise the head of state. The Parliament would be elected by the British 'first-past-the-post' system. Given the diversity of interests and groupings in India, it was felt that this would make for strong government.

The Assembly provided for an independent election commission, and an independent comptroller general of accounts. To ensure the independence of the judiciary, judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts would be appointed by the President in consultation with the chief justices. Their salaries would not be decided by Parliament but would be charged directly to the Treasury. The Supreme Court would have original jurisdiction in all 'federal' disputes between the units and the Union government. It would also have broad appellate jurisdiction. Any civil and criminal case could be appealed to it if an interpretation of the constitution was involved. The Supreme Court was thus seen as a guardian of the rights enshrined in the constitution.

The federal structure adopted by the Assembly was undoubtedly biased in favour of the centre as against the constituent units. The constitution provided for three areas of responsibility: Union, States, and Concurrent. Subjects in the first list were under the control of the central government, while those in the second fell under the remit of the provinces. The third list was the joint responsibility of the centre and the provinces. The Union list, however, was much larger than those in other countries. The centre's share in concurrent list, too, was more expansive. Further, Article 356 gave it power to take over a state's administration on the recommendation of the governor. Most significantly, the centre was empowered with Emergency Provisions. The President might proclaim a state of emergency if he was satisfied that national security was threatened by external aggression or internal unrest. During an emergency, the Union government and Parliament could practically dictate terms to the states.

Historians have differed on the extent of resistance put up by the representatives of the provinces. Granville Austin suggests that 'states rights' issues never assumed much importance in the deliberations of the Constituent assembly. This was because provinces

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had never worked in a truly federal system like the United States or Australia (Austin 1999, 188-89). Ramachandra Guha argues, however, that not only did provincial politicians fight “hard for the rights of states ... they mounted on the principle [of centralization] itself.” (Guha 2007, 111)

This set of decisions taken by the Assembly was influenced by wider concerns as well: communal violence during Partition and the need to resettle the massive flow of refugees; need to improve agricultural and industrial productivity. Three other factors contributed to this outcome. During the period when the constitution was being framed, the provinces of India were already functioning as part of a federal structure under the Government of India Act of 1935. Hence, their bargaining power was inherently limited. Furthermore, the creation of Pakistan convinced the Assembly that no new divisive forces should be encouraged. Finally, the Congress Party dominated the political landscape. The absence of strong regional or provincially-based parties eased the path to a strong federal centre.

Value addition: interesting detail
The tight federation
The representatives of the provinces were constrained by the fact that they were already operating in a federation created by the Government of India Act of 1935. Ambedkar reminded the Constituent assembly that ‘The Federation was not the result of an agreement by the States to join in a Federation ... the Federation not being the result of an agreement, no State has the right to secede from it.’
Source: <i>Constituent Assembly Debates. 1999 (reprint). New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat. Vol. 7, 43.</i>

The model of fiscal federalism adopted by the constitution drew on the Government of India Act of 1935. In the case of some taxes, such as customs duties and company taxes, the centre would keep all the revenue. In other cases, such as income taxes and excise duties, the revenue would be shared with the states. Yet other sources, for instance estate duties, were assigned wholly to the states. The states, for their part, could levy their own taxes, including sales tax, land and property taxes. On the whole, though, the financial provisions favoured the Union government. This trend towards fiscal centralization was strengthened by the unstable financial situation prevailing when the constitution was drawn up. Moreover, members of the Constituent assembly believed that the ‘needs’ of the provinces should determine how revenue was distributed. This was seen as a key to achieving socio-economic transformation. But it naturally required a greater role to be played by the Union government.

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Fundamental rights and directive principles

The core of the constitution's commitment to furthering socio-economic transformation lay in the **Fundamental rights** and Directive Principles of State Policy. Following the Bill of Rights of the American Constitution (and in contrast to the British model), the Constituent assembly outlined the rights of citizens that could not be abridged by the state. These Fundamental rights include: the Right of Equality, the Right of Freedom, the Right against Exploitation, the Right to Freedom of Religion, Cultural and Educational Rights, the Right to Property, and the Right to Constitutional Remedies. The Directive Principles went further and sought to ensure that the Indian people would be free in the positive sense—free from societal coercion and wretched physical conditions that prevented them from achieving all that they desired. These principles would not be justiciable, that is the courts could not enforce them. But they would be 'fundamental in the governance of the country'.

Much of the existing scholarship views these provisions as the culmination of a long process dating back to the late 19th century. In this reading, liberal democracy struck roots in India in the form of nationalism. The Indian National Congress' commitment to civil liberties and its vision of social justice and equality could be seen in a series of documents and declarations: the Motilal Nehru report of 1928, the Karachi Resolution of 1931, Nehru's address to the Faizpur Congress of 1936, and the Sapru report of 1946. (See Austin 1999, 52-57; Bhargava 2000). By contrast, Sunil Khilnani argues that the traditional account is steeped in both imperial and nationalist views of India's political development. The national movement certainly had 'a pragmatic attachment to forms of consensual decision-making'. But these practices 'do not exhaust even a narrow definition of democracy, or of liberalism'. The constitution of 1950, he contends, was actually a radical break with the past.

The Fundamental rights, however, were not considered to be absolute. The Constituent assembly considered in what ways and to what extent these rights should be limited. Broadly, two considerations impacted on the question of limiting these rights: social reform and national unity. Some of the concerns raised by the former could be tackled in the drafting of the provisions. For instance, some members opposed allowing 'free practice' of religion since this could include retrograde practices like sati, purdah, and the devadasi. In consequence, the constitution provided that the right to freedom of religion did not prevent the state from making laws for social welfare and reform. Other issues proved more difficult to deal with. The most protracted debates surrounded the right to property. Land-reform laws were being contemplated by many provinces, and the government wanted to prevent dispossessed landlords from approaching the courts. Eventually, the right of due process was not allowed in property legislation.

Considerations of national unity and public security also led to the curtailment of individual liberty. A majority in the Constituent assembly believed that public peace was essential to achieving social and economic progress. This stance was understandable against the

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backdrop of the communal violence that engulfed the country in 1947. But this led the Assembly to approve of provisions that went against liberal values. These included the powers given to the government during a national emergency and the provision of 'preventive detention' without trial. The latter was seen as the only way to prevent or contain communal violence. But it also attracted the most public criticism of any provision in the draft constitution. Preventive detention, after all, had been a favoured legal mechanism of the British Raj.

The Assembly paid considerable attention to the rights of the minorities. Initially, some Muslim members sought to retain **separate electorates**. The Congress leadership was staunchly opposed to this, believing that it had been instrumental in leading to Partition. However, there were other Muslim members who believed that it was in the best interests of Muslims to align their identity with that of other citizens. Eventually, Muslim members came round to the view that instead of seeking separate electorates, they should organize themselves as voting blocs, and so acquire political importance. Female members of the Assembly, too, rejected the idea of reservation for women. They argued that ensuring equality, rather than special privileges, was the best way to protect women's rights. Reservations were, however, extended for the Untouchables. This was in recognition for the historic injustices they had suffered. Seats were set aside in legislatures and jobs in government agencies. Similar provisions were also extended to the tribals.

Language

The question of a 'national' language provoked some of the most heated and contentious debates in the Constituent assembly. It assumed such importance because it mattered, like fundamental rights, to everyone. Almost from the outset, proponents of Hindi made it clear that they would press their case to the utmost. They demanded initially that the official version of the constitution be in Hindi rather than English. The Drafting Committee refused to accept this, arguing that the English language was more suitable for the technical and legal nature of the document. The advocates of Hindi then demanded that each clause of the draft constitution be discussed in Hindi.

The case for Hindi was given additional vigour by partition. Hitherto, **Hindustani** rather than Hindi had been the lingua franca of much of Northern India. Hindustani was a mixture of Hindi (written in Devanagari script and drawing heavily on Sanskrit) and Urdu (written in modified Arabic script and drawing on Persian and Arabic). It could be written using either Hindi or Urdu script. Both Gandhi and Nehru had supported Hindustani as a bridge between north and south India, the Hindus and the Muslims. But partition more or less laid to rest. Hindi, on the other hand, began to turn increasingly Sanskritized.

The extreme advocates of Hindi not only wanted it to be the national language but also that it should replace English for official purposes in the central government. They also held that Hindi should soon replace English in the provincial governments. The militancy of the proponents of Hindi roused the ire of South Indian representatives. The latter bitterly opposed making Hindi the national language. Besides, there was a group of moderate Hindi

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speakers who believed that Hindi might be declared the 'official' language, but that it should only be the first among equals. Other regional languages should also have national status. English, they held, should be replaced very slowly and cautiously.



Figure 13.1.3: Purshottam Das Tandon, Congress leader and prominent advocate of Hindi in the Constituent assembly

Source:

<http://www.timescontent.com/tss/showcase/previewbuy/126030/Entertainment/Purshottam-Das-Tandon.html>

After months of heated debate, the moderates, led by Nehru, managed to get a majority to adopt most of their suggestions. Hindi in the Devanagari script would be the 'official language'. However, for an initial period of 15 years English would continue to serve as the official language. After this period Hindi would replace English, unless the Parliament legislated otherwise. The provincial governments could conduct their affairs either in one of their own languages or in English. Further, the major regional languages were listed in a schedule to the constitution. This compromise enabled the Assembly to avoid a deadlock on the emotive issue of language.

The Constituent assembly completed its task in two years, eleven months and seventeen days. Given the size of the constitution and the gravity of the issues under consideration, this was celerity itself. Historical judgments on this unprecedented exercise have mostly been favourable. Granville Austin, for instance, sees the constitution as a 'seamless web', which smoothly brought together the strands of democracy, social reform, and unity. Other scholars have questioned this assessment. Sunil Khilnani, for instance, argues that the makers of the constitution were oblivious of the ways in which character of representation, rights and equality might change with time; and in the process change the character of Indian democracy itself.

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The makers of the constitution themselves seem to have regarded their task as just the beginning of a long journey. As Ambedkar observed in his brilliant closing address, the principles embodied in the constitution were the views of his generation, open to modification in the light of the experience of succeeding generations. This was the reason why relatively simple procedures had been introduced for amending the constitution. Working the constitution was the task of the Indian people.

“On the 26th of January 1950,” Ambedkar said in peroration, “we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has laboriously built up.”

13.2: Integration of the princely states

In the run-up to independence, the key question engaging the thoughts and energies of the leaders of the Indian National Congress was the nature and shape of the new state or states that would supplant the Raj. The demand for the creation of Pakistan was, of course, the central issue. But it was not the only one. Even after the Congress leadership agreed to partition and to the establishment of Pakistan, the political geography of the new Indian state remained unclear. For the political and administrative structure of the Raj had rested on two pillars: the provinces directly ruled by the British, and the indirectly ruled princely states. The ‘partition plan’, however, dealt only with the provinces, and did not offer a clear resolution of the fate of the princely states (hereafter referred to as states).

In 1947, there were nearly 600 states of varying size and importance. They ranged from Kashmir and Hyderabad, which approximated France in area and population, to principalities which were barely larger than a village. Together they formed a major chunk of pre-1947 India, accounting for two-fifths of the population and a third of the area of the empire in India. The future of the states, therefore, held momentous consequences for the subcontinent once the British decided to quit.

Between 1947 and 1949, the Indian government succeeded in incorporating an overwhelming majority of the states in the new union. Much of the existing literature holds that by the mid-1930s or the early 1940s the princely order was doomed to extinction (for example, Manor 1978; Rangaswami 1981). The underlying explanations tend to accord broadly with contemporary Indian nationalists’ view of the states as anachronistic autocracies incapable of surviving in the post-colonial age.

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Such a teleological view has been challenged by more recent scholarship. Ian Copland has argued that the dissolution of the states was a much more contingent process – the cumulative outcome of numerous errors committed by individuals acting under pressure and uncertainty. Copland's examination of the choices made by the princes in 1947 and after is cursory, and tends to overlook the importance of the wider political currents that shaped these choices. But he certainly undercuts the inevitability thesis. More importantly, the metaphor of 'integration' is misleading insofar as it suggests a smooth historical progression and underplays the coercive dimensions of the process. Indeed, the most interesting cases of the Indian government's interaction with the states pertain to those that resisted integration.

Princely India and the Raj

The political relationship between the British and the states can be traced back to the mid-18th century when the East India Company began establishing diplomatic relations with Indian kingdoms. By mid-19th century most of the major kingdoms were linked to the Company by treaty. More important, by this time the central elements of what came to be known as '**paramountcy**' were in place. A vague and ill-defined term, paramountcy included among other things a system of British 'Residents' in princely states, control over the states' foreign affairs, and the regulation of succession within such states. If the princely order survived without being subsumed within the colonial bloc, it was mainly owing to their strategic importance to the Raj—first during the upheaval of 1857 and more importantly during the First World War.

Value addition: interesting detail
Princely states and the first world war
The states contributed in several ways to the war effort. Imperial Service Troops were deployed in France and the Middle East. The rulers of Bikaner, Nawanagar, Idar, Akalkot, Loharu and Sachin spent time on the battlefield. Despite war-time privations, the princes contributed generously to the imperial coffers. Some offered up to half a year's revenue, while others gave considerable sums from their own purses. They also helped out with the massive recruitment drive undertaken by the Raj. Finally, the princes played an important role in the propaganda effort. Before the outbreak of the war, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany had instructed his officials: "Our consuls in Turkey and India, our agents etc., must arouse the whole Muslim world into wild rebellion ... England must at least lose India." In pursuit of this aim, the Ottoman Caliphate (Germany's ally) declared in late 1914 a holy war against the entente powers and called on Muslims in their empires to rise against them. To counter this, the British sought and obtained from the Nizam of Hyderabad (the de facto leader of India's Sunni Muslims) a formal proclamation urging Indian Muslims to fight on the British side.
Sources: Copland, Ian. 1999. <i>The Princes of India in the Endgame of Empire</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 32-34; Strachan, Hew. 2003. <i>The First World War</i>. London: Penguin Viking, 99-101.

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After the war, the princes wanted to obtain greater freedom from the constraints of paramountcy and guarantees against further encroachment. In recognition of their services, they managed to secure in 1919 the creation of a 'Chamber of Princes'— a 120 member outfit that would advise the viceroy on all matters pertaining to the states. Another decade passed before the Chamber got its act together. In the run-up to the first Round Table Conference of 1930-31, the Chamber initially sought to work towards the elimination of paramountcy. Once it became clear that the British would not concede this, the princes decided upon the idea of joining an all-India federation as the best alternative.

Value addition: biographical sketch
K. M. Panikkar
The idea of a federation as the best means of regaining the princely states' status and powers was the brainchild of K. M. Panikkar. He served in Patiala and Bikaner, and was an important background figure in the Chamber of Princes in the 1930s and 1940s. Panikkar was a graduate of Oxford (where he was the second Indian ever to get a first class degree), Sorbonne, and Middle Temple. Although he served the states, he also had links with Indian nationalists. He had edited the Madras newspaper, <i>Swarajya</i> , had helped Gandhi diffuse the Akali gurudwara agitation in Punjab, and had participated in the Vaikom temple satyagraha in his native state of Travancore. Besides, he had also worked as an academic historian. Given his diverse talents and connections, it is not surprising that he was appointed independent India's ambassador to China in 1948. Panikkar subsequently played an important role in shaping India's policies towards China under Prime Minister Nehru.
Source: Panikkar, K. M. 1997. <i>An Autobiography</i>. Madras: Oxford University Press.

The passage of the Government of India Act of 1935 paved the way for an all-India federation. But drawing up a standard Instrument of **Accession**—which would define the sections of the Act that would apply to the acceding states—proved far more difficult. Over time, some of the bigger states like Hyderabad and Bikaner began to have second thoughts about the very idea of a federation. Moreover, the Congress-inspired mass agitation in the states in 1938 led many princes to doubt the party's commitment to the federal provisions of the Act. In the event, the federal scheme had to be aborted owing both to the lack of unanimity among the princes and the onset of the Second World War.

As in the previous War, the states contributed substantially to British war efforts. In so doing, the princes managed to repair their relations with the imperial authorities to some extent. But in the aftermath of the war, the new Labour government in Britain had decided to wind up the Raj. Unlike its predecessor, this government shared no personal ties with the princely order and had no ideological sympathy for monarchies. Prime Minister Attlee and his senior colleagues quickly concluded that Britain's ties with the states would have to be snapped. The British government took the line that the treaties were decades-old and that with the passage of time and changed circumstances they were no longer appropriate. The Cabinet Mission of 1946 made only a brief comment in relation to the states in its recommendations.

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Value addition: interesting detail
Cabinet mission on the states
The Cabinet Mission quietly pulled the rug from beneath the relationship between Britain and the states, leaving the latter in a state of uncertainty. But it did not transfer paramountcy to the state or states that would succeed the Raj, and so left room for the states to manouevre.
The Mission's 'Memorandum on States' Treaties and Paramountcy' stated: "When a new fully self-governing or independent Government or Governments come into being in British India ... the rights of the States which flow from their relationship to the crown will no longer exist ... all the rights surrendered by the States to the paramount power will return to the States ... The void will have to be filled either by the States entering into a federal relationship with the successor Government or Governments in British India, or, failing this, entering into particular political arrangements with it or them."
Source: Menon, V. P. 1956. <i>The Story of the Integration of the Indian States</i>. London: Longmans Green.

The 'Partition Plan' of 3 June 1947 tersely stated that the British government's policy towards the states remained as explained in the Cabinet Mission's memorandum. Indeed, until this point the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, had been preoccupied with the negotiations with Congress and Muslim League on Pakistan. With just a little over two months left for transfer of power, the future of the princely states hung in the balance.

A basket of apples

The question of the states was further complicated by the opposing positions adopted by the Congress and the Muslim League. Congress leaders held that the states had to join either of two dominions. Mohammed Ali Jinnah claimed they could also opt to stay independent. By mid-June 1947, Travancore and Hyderabad, on encouragement from Jinnah, announced their decision to remain independent and sovereign entities. Congress leaders feared that this might lead to a 'Balkanization' of India. They passed a stern resolution stating that the lapse of paramountcy did not mean independence for the states, and that the people—as opposed to the princes—should decide the question of accession. Jinnah, for his part, issued statements espousing the right of the rulers to decide on accession and to remain independent.

Thus the problem facing Mountbatten was to devise a form of accession that would simultaneously convince the princes to give up independence and remove the concerns of the Congress leadership. More importantly, the states would have to be convinced to accede prior to 15 August 1947. The solution to this conundrum was devised by Mountbatten's constitutional advisor, V.P. Menon. Menon came up with a simple yet ingenious idea. The states would be asked to accede only in respect of defence, foreign affairs, and communications—issues over which they had long ago lost control. In all other matters,

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they would be unconstrained by the Union government. When Mountbatten formally raised this idea with Vallabhbhai Patel, the latter agreed to these terms of accession provided the viceroy came up with 'a full basket of apples'.

Value addition: biographical sketch
V. P. Menon
Of humble origins, V. P. Menon began his career not as an officer in the Indian Civil Service but as a lowly clerk in the Madras Presidency. His outstanding administrative abilities enabled him to overcome this handicap and rise steadily up the ladder. In 1924 he was appointed assistant secretary in the newly created Reforms Office. Eighteen years later he was heading the office as Reforms Commissioner. In 1947 few officials had comparable knowledge and experience of the administrative and legal framework of the Raj. This made Menon an indispensable adviser to the viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, and subsequently to the deputy prime minister and states minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. As secretary of the ministry of states V.P. Menon would play a significant role in the consolidation of independent India. After his death in 1966 an obituary in <i>The Times</i> wittily remarked that Menon found this task congenial: "He, the ex-secretariat clerk, was in a position to enforce upon the proudest dynasties of ancient India the settlements, which in his judgment, the interests of the new India required."
Source: The Times (London), 4 January 1966.

Menon, Mountbatten and Patel quickly got down to work. By the end of July 1947, a 'ministry of states' was established under Patel. On 25 July, Mountbatten addressed a meeting of the Chamber of Princes to sell the new accession plan. Speaking extempore for over an hour, Mountbatten exhorted them to seize the moment and accede on the three subjects. This entailed no financial liability and on other matters no inroads would be made into their sovereignty. Though the rulers were technically free to join either Dominion, he reminded them that there were certain geographical considerations which could not be wished away. 'Out of something like 565 States, the vast majority are irretrievably linked geographically with the Dominion of India.' In the following weeks, by employing a potent mix of charm, bullying and cajoling, Mountbatten, Patel and Menon managed to get most of the States to accede.

Not all states came on board the Indian dominion by 14 August 1947. Nearly a dozen states, including some large ones such as Indore and Jodhpur, did not return the signed instruments of accession by the agreed date. Some of them, such as Jodhpur, dithered in the face of generous inducements held out for accession by the leaders of Pakistan. Even after the accession of these states had been secured, two sets of problems remained. First, three important apples were still not in the basket: Junagadh acceded to Pakistan; Hyderabad wished to remain independent; Kashmir remained undecided. Second, the policy of limited accession had prevented Balkanization of India, but it had not solved the problems of the viability of the states and future of the monarchical system.

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The second set of issues had for some time been a matter of concern to the Congress leadership. Nehru and other senior leaders thought that only 12 big states had 'inherent survival value' - a point with which British officials had concurred. Besides, as the Indian constituent assembly began the task of drawing up a democratic constitution, Congress leaders felt that the states would have to undertake reforms as well. In discussions with the princes, Mountbatten and Patel offered verbal assurances that none of the 18 major states would be called upon to merge; that the states would be allowed to democratize slowly; and that if India became a republic, states could opt to secede. The Indian government, however, quickly overturned this understanding. But contrary to claims by some scholars (for example, Copland 1999) the pace and direction of their policies were not premeditated but rather dictated by events on the ground.

When an adivasi revolt broke out in the Orissa states in late 1947, the princes were persuaded by Menon to sign a pact integrating their states into Orissa. In January 1948, after a similar situation in Rajkot, the Kathiawar princes agreed to merge and form a state named Saurashtra. Thereafter, the smaller Gujarat and Deccan states merged with Bombay province. In March 1948, the Punjab 'hill states' were absorbed into a new entity called Himachal Pradesh. The following months saw the creation of Madhya Bharat, Rajashtan, and Patiala and East Punjab States Union. Almost simultaneously, the states began to democratize their internal systems. Heads of merged states agreed to act as constitutional monarchs.

The princes went along with these drastic changes for at least two reasons. The coercive power of the Indian government was an important consideration. Even if it was not openly brandished by New Delhi, the states knew that they were weak and vulnerable to economic blockade. The measures taken against Junagadh (and later Hyderabad) would have reinforced this perception. Further, the princes realised that following Indian independence their subjects also expected democratic transformation. The states people's congresses and praja mandals were already engaged in mobilizing the people to press for such change. The wider currents of political change were increasingly proving difficult to resist.

These considerations eventually led the 'governors' of newly amalgamated entities to sign fresh instruments of accession, ceding to the Union the powers to pass laws in respect of all matters falling within the federal and concurrent legislative lists of the Government of India Act of 1935. These entities, in short, merged with the Union of India. In return, these princes were offered a handsome 'privy purse', its size pegged to the revenue earned by the state. In addition, most of the rulers of the biggest states were given a place in the new constitutional order as governors and lieutenant governors, or offered attractive ambassadorial appointments.

However, the more difficult set of problems pertained to states that resolutely refused accession in the first instance.

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Junagadh

Situated in the Kathiawar region of western India, Junagadh was ruled by a Muslim Nawab but over 80% of its 700,000 people were Hindu. Junagadh shared no land frontiers with Pakistan, and its outlet to the sea was a few hundred kilometres from the Pakistani port of Karachi. Following Jinnah's advice, the Nawab delayed the discussion of accession with New Delhi. On 15 August 1947, Junagadh declared that it had acceded to Pakistan.



Figure 13.2.1: Nawab Mahabat Khan of Junagadh, seen here with one of his 800 pet dogs. The Nawab dearly loved animals and played a crucial role in the preservation of the Asiatic Lion in Gir

Source: <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2003/20030524/windows/main2.htm>

Indian leaders were concerned that Junagadh's accession to Pakistan would endanger the administrative and economic unity of Kathiawar. When both Junagadh and Pakistan did not respond to Indian queries, New Delhi imposed an embargo of essential supplies on the state, including coal, petroleum and sugar. After Pakistan announced that it had accepted the accession of Junagadh, New Delhi proposed that the future of the state be determined by the people via a referendum or plebiscite. Such referenda had been used prior to partition in the North West Frontier Province and in the Sylhet district of Assam. Pakistan turned down this idea.

Subsequently, Indian troops were deployed in the areas surrounding Junagadh, and V. P. Menon was sent to confer with the Nawab. Since the nawab claimed he was indisposed, Menon had a long but inconclusive discussion with the Dewan. Menon also met leaders of the state people's organizations in Kathiawar, who pressed him to take a firmer stance towards Junagadh. These leaders went on to form a 'provisional government' of Junagadh—

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an organization that claimed to represent the people of Junagadh and actively worked to overthrow the Nawab's administration.

Value addition: did you know?
The 'provisional government' of Junagadh
The so-called provisional government of Junagadh was announced on the 25 September 1947. It was led by Samaldas Gandhi, a nephew of the Mahatma. Scholars are divided on the nature of the relationship between this entity and the Indian government. Some have argued that it was merely a tool created and used by the Indian government to overthrow the Nawab. The evidence now available suggests that V. P. Menon did play an important role in the creation of the provisional government. But Patel was not pleased with the move, which he felt was hasty. Besides, the Indian government turned down requests from the provisional government for recognizing it as the legitimate government of Junagadh. The Indian cabinet felt that the provisional government could not be recognized unless "India was at war with Junagadh or Pakistan." Recognition "would in itself be tantamount to an act of war" by India. Of course, it is possible that Menon remained in touch with the leaders of the outfit. A full assessment will have to await the opening of Indian official records pertaining to this episode.
Source: Raghavan, Srinath. 2009. <i>War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years</i>. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.

Following Menon's visit, the Indian government reiterated its demand for a referendum. New Delhi also began to plan for military action in the event that its proposal was turned down. Nehru felt that he could pressurize Junagadh to accept the proposal by deploying additional troops around the state. At a meeting with Pakistan's prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, he reiterated India's stance. The Pakistani leadership, however, continued to delay substantive discussion of a plebiscite.

By the end of October 1947, the provisional government had begun operations against the Junagadh authorities, and began occupying pockets of Junagadh territory. The Nawab panicked and fled to Karachi, leaving the Dewan in charge. Given Pakistan's reluctance to send troops to assist Junagadh, the latter had no option but to come to terms with India. He asked the Indian government to take over administration of the state, and to restore law and order pending a final settlement. Delhi accepted this suggestion with alacrity and instructed its forces to enter Junagadh.

Pakistan strongly protested New Delhi's takeover of Junagadh, and subsequently raised the matter in the United Nations Security Council. In February 1948, a referendum was held in Junagadh by the Indian government. Almost 95 per cent of the 200,000 registered voters exercised their franchise. Only 91 votes went in favour of accession to Pakistan. At the Security Council, India offered, if necessary, to conduct another referendum to satisfy the international community about the verdict. The Council took no further steps on the matter. Although Pakistan did not recognize the legality of Junagadh's accession to India (its maps continued to show Junagadh as its territory until the 1960s), the issue fell by the wayside.

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Hyderabad

Hyderabad was India's largest state. Its position, in some ways, was similar to that of Junagadh. The Nizam presided over a population of nearly 16 million, over 80% of them Hindus. But Hyderabad was of much greater importance to the Indian government, for the state was located at the centre of India. After the Partition Plan was announced, Jinnah urged Hyderabad to declare its intention to remain independent. The Nizam duly did so in an edict.

Simultaneously, he approached Mountbatten for according dominion status to Hyderabad. When informed that this was impossible, the Nizam expressed interest in a 'treaty' with India, but firmly refused to consider accession. Patel was clear that there was no alternative to accession. If India signed a treaty with Hyderabad, other states would accuse New Delhi of a breach of faith. After several tortuous rounds of negotiations, India agreed to a temporary, year-long, '**standstill agreement**' – effectively a continuation of the status quo.

The standstill agreement, however, failed to work almost from the outset. Hyderabad accused India of imposing a covert embargo of supplies. New Delhi, for its part, felt that the Nizam was not curbing the violent activities of the Ittehad-i-Muslimeen, a pro-independence Muslim outfit. Most importantly, Hyderabad made no moves towards introducing even a measure of representative government. When negotiations for accession resumed in February 1948, Patel made it clear that Hyderabad had to introduce representative government at the earliest. This was the only way to control the Ittehad and keep a check on communal violence in the state.



Figure 13.2.2: V. P. Menon (extreme right) and Sardar Patel discussing Hyderabad affairs

Source: <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl1820/18200780.htm>

In subsequent negotiations, the Hyderabad delegation insisted that they could not agree to anything more than equal representation for Muslims and Hindus in the state government. Nor would they agree to ban the Ittehad's militia, the Razakar. In the meantime, the leader of Ittehad, Kasim Razvi, raised the temperature by a series of inflammatory speeches against India. New Delhi now demanded a ban on the Ittehad, the introduction of full representative government, and the establishment of a constituent assembly to consider the

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state's future. The Nizam, however, was unwilling to agree to anything beyond token gestures.

When further negotiations reached a deadlock, the Indian government suggested that the Nizam should accept a plebiscite on accession and that he should introduce serious reforms in the Hyderabad government. The Nizam agreed to a plebiscite conducted solely by Hyderabad, but refused to take any steps to make the government representative. A final round of negotiations in August 1948 failed to make headway.

Meanwhile, India had prepared contingency plans for the occupation of Hyderabad and positioned troops in suitable areas. These plans had been prepared owing to the steadily increasing violence of the Razakar against the Hindus of the state. The activities of the Razakar became difficult to ignore after a Hindu member of the state's executive council openly denounced the violence unleashed by them. Besides, skirmishes between Hyderabad forces and Indian authorities occurred periodically. As the situation steadily worsened and the prospect of a settlement receded, New Delhi geared up for the invasion of Hyderabad – euphemistically called 'police action'. The attack commenced on the morning of 13 September 1948. Four days later the Nizam's forces surrendered unilaterally. The state remained under military occupation until the elections three years later.

Kashmir

The position of Kashmir was the obverse of Hyderabad. Here a Hindu Maharaja ruled over a population that was overwhelmingly Muslim. Furthermore, the state was geographically contiguous to both Pakistan and India. The Maharaja delayed a decision on accession, hoping all the while that Kashmir might become a neutral, independent state—the Switzerland of the subcontinent. The Pakistani leaders feared that if Kashmir went to India, their security would be jeopardized. To forestall this possibility, they organized a tribal 'lashkar' to invade Kashmir and overthrow the Maharaja. On 22 October 1947, the tribal invasion commenced.

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Figure 13.2.3: Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir and Jammu

Source: [http://pvmishra.blog.co.in/files/2009/04/maharaja_of_kashmir_hari_singh_1895 -
_1961.jpg](http://pvmishra.blog.co.in/files/2009/04/maharaja_of_kashmir_hari_singh_1895_-_1961.jpg)

The move backfired. Faced with the onslaught, the Maharaja sought India's military assistance and offered to accede. The Indian leadership decided to send troops to Kashmir and to accept the accession with the proviso that the people's wishes would be ascertained when conditions permitted.

Value addition: interesting detail
Kashmir's accession
The date on which the Maharaja signed the instrument of accession has been a matter of some dispute. The traditional Indian account is laid out in V. P. Menon's memoirs, wherein he claims that he had flown to Jammu on the evening of 26 October 1947, obtained the Maharaja's signature on the instrument of accession, and returned to Delhi the same day. Using British documents, Alastair Lamb convincingly demonstrates that Menon did not leave Delhi on 26 October. Lamb, however, overreaches himself in contending that the Maharaja never signed an instrument of accession – an assertion that willfully overlooks clear evidence to the contrary. Prem Shankar Jha argues that Menon had obtained the Maharaja's signature in Srinagar on the night of 25 October or the early hours of the 26 th . But Jha's account relies heavily

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on the oral testimony that is incorrect on crucial details. On balance, it seems almost certain that the instrument of accession was signed on 27 October 1947 after Indian troops had left for Kashmir.

Sources: Jha, Prem Shankar. 2003. *The Origins of a Dispute: Kashmir 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press; Lamb, Alastair. 2001. *Birth of a Tragedy: Kashmir 1947*. Karachi: Oxford University Press; Menon, V. P. 1956. *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*. London: Longmans Green.

Meeting Jinnah on 1 November 1947, Mountbatten advanced an Indian proposal to hold plebiscites in all disputed states where the ruler and majority of the population belonged to different communities. Jinnah brushed aside the idea, claiming that plebiscites were 'redundant and undesirable'. He was prepared to accept Junagadh's accession to India in return for Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. Besides, he claimed that he could not force Hyderabad to accept a plebiscite. The proposal, which arguably represented the most workable solution to the problem of Kashmir, was shelved. India's unilateral pledge to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir held; though it too would change with time and circumstances.

Video clip: Nehru's visit to Kashmir on 2 November 1947

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGlCNJSKwI>

As the fighting in Kashmir intensified, the Indian leadership was faced with the prospect of widening the war to other parts of Pakistan in order to prevail in Kashmir. Their reluctance to do so, led to the decision to refer the Kashmir dispute to the UN. It was a decision that Nehru came bitterly to regret; for following Britain's lead, the Security Council set aside India's position on Kashmir's accession and cast the dispute as a continuation of the Hindu-Muslim problem. India's diplomatic position hardened further when the Pakistan army entered the fighting in Kashmir in April 1948.

By October 1948, Indian leaders had come to conclusion that a plebiscite in Kashmir was very unlikely. The necessary preliminary measure of withdrawal of Pakistani forces was almost impossible to attain: Pakistani forces were well entrenched in the northern parts of the state and in a slice of territory adjoining West Punjab. The Indians concluded, therefore, that a partition of the state based more or less on the status quo was the most feasible solution. The Pakistanis, however, were deeply averse to this idea; for it would leave the Kashmir valley in Indian hands. Besides, India would be in a position to control the river waters flowing from Kashmir to West Punjab. When the ceasefire was declared on 31 December 1948, both sides were no closer to a solution.

In the aftermath of the war, New Delhi focused on securing its ties with the main Kashmiri party, the National Conference, and its leader Sheikh Abdullah. Provisions were written into the Indian constitution according special status to Kashmir and ensuring its autonomy. Article 370 allowed Kashmir to have its own constitution: the Indian parliament could only legislate on Kashmir's defence, external affairs, and communications. The state's constituent assembly would make the final decision on which other subjects it wished to

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concede. Significantly, the article also provided for the state to sever its links with India on the recommendation of its constituent assembly.

However, the volatile external dimension of the problem made it difficult for India to treat Kashmir entirely as an internal question. The falling out of Nehru and Abdullah in 1953 over the future of the state led to another period of uncertainty. 70 years on, Kashmir continues to remind us of the difficult, uneven and tenuous process of the consolidation of the new Indian state—a process that was much more complex than that suggested by notion of 'integration'.

13.3: Land reform and the beginning of planning

Towards land reform

India in the first half of the 20th century was witness to some significant peasant movements which laid the foundation for future land reforms after independence. These peasant movements fought for key changes in the way agrarian relations had emerged in the colonial era. The Congress party and its socialist factions, and also the Communist parties tried to address the land reform question. The onset of land reform after independence unleashed multiple levels of transformation in agrarian relations. The subject of new agrarian relationships and the agrarian structure has remained a matter of intense disagreement amongst the historians and other social scientists. There were claims of gradual transformation of the semi feudal agrarian structure of pre-independence India into a largely peasant economy. The Indian official accounts claim progress in land reforms by showing progress made in the abolition of zamindari, **jagirs**, **inams** and other intermediary tenures. It was also pointed out that these reform measures helped an approximately twenty million tenants, though such figures are highly unreliable, to own land directly from the state. The state governments came to possess 1.6 million of acres of cultivable land meant for redistribution to landless peasants.

The road map for decisive initiative to be undertaken towards a programme of land reform began when the new Indian constitution granted its federal states the powers to enact and implement land reforms. This autonomy ensured that there were variations across states in terms of the number and types of land reforms that would be enacted and the time in which this would be achieved. The following sections give a broad picture of various stages of land reform.

Land reform: broad features1 1.1: Land Ref

One can classify the land reforms introduced after independence into four main categories. This classification is based broadly on the issues that were sought to be resolved. For instance, in the first category of reforms one can list the enactment of legislative acts aimed at the abolition of intermediaries. Several states introduced legislation prior to 1958 to abolish landed intermediaries like zamindars, **jagirdars** etc. The second category relates to tenancy reform. Tenancy acts incorporate attempts to regulate tenancy contracts both via

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registration and stipulation of contractual terms, such as shares in share tenancy contracts, as well as attempts to abolish tenancy and transfer ownership to tenants. The third category of land reform acts concerned efforts to implement ceilings on land holdings. This was done with a view to redistributing surplus land to the landless. Fourthly, there was an attempt at moderate cooperativization and consolidation of disparate landholdings.

Zamindari abolition

Prelude: the pre-independence experience

The first crucial test of land reform, as a prelude to the zamindari abolition bills to be enacted after independence, began when Congress ministries came into power. The tenancy legislation during the Congress ministries of 1937-39 laid the foundation for future land reform in the country. It was the first experience of substantial power by the Indian nationalists. The widespread Kisan Sabha movement, particularly in UP and Bihar, popularized the demand for zamindari abolition. The Krishak Praja Party in Bengal directed its programme against the zamindars. All these crucially helped to orientate the Congress programme of land reform. The land reform initiative helped the Congress party to expand its agrarian base. The victory of Fazlul Haq's Krishak Praja Party in Bengal and the Congress in U.P. in 1937 was a clear signal of the popularity of the anti-zamindari slogan. It was to this aspect of peasant mobilization that the Congress party responded after independence by undertaking legislative measures to abolish zamindari.

Abolition of zamindari

In the states of UP, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Madras, Bihar and Bombay the respective state governments enacted legislative measures to abolish landed intermediaries. Most of this legislation was enacted by 1950. The primary model for discussion was the United Provinces Zamindari Abolition Committee report. Submitted in 1948 under the chairmanship of G. B. Pant, this report signalled the last days of landed intermediaries. The Zamindari Abolition Committee argued that a typical zamindar had invested little capital in increasing production and was not "an organiser of agricultural activities in the sense in which an industrialist or a businessman is". Cultivators, on the other hand, lacked the incentive to improve the land under a rental system. The Committee argued that the removal of intermediaries between the tiller of the soil and the State would in itself go a good way towards the rehabilitation of agriculture. Thus, what was envisaged was an agrarian economy based on peasant proprietorship, towards which goal the state was deemed to be moving.

This did not, however, necessarily mean that the agrarian structure had really become more rational and equitable. All attempts to implement these measures had been reduced to the level of mere rhetoric and had failed to become reality. The AICC-appointed Economic Programme Committee of 1947-8 and the Government Agrarian Reforms Commission set up in November 1947, whose proposals fed directly into the early stages of the planning process, stated that the land reform legislation that had been implemented by state

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governments was merely ameliorative, and provided an inadequate base for the future development of the rural economy.

With the introduction of zamindari abolition bills in various states, the zamindars too began to take action. They challenged such legislative acts in the Indian courts and often the courts came to the defence of the landlords. To overcome these legal entanglements the government of India amended the Indian constitution to pave the way for implementation of these legislative measures. The first and fourth amendment of the constitution in 1951 and 1955 respectively brought some respite. The state governments were better armed as landed property was no more regarded as a fundamental right. The subject of inadequate compensation raised by the zamindars in the courts was also not entertained any more. The social authority of zamindars gradually disappeared over a period.

A major fallout of the zamindari abolition was the substantial compensation package given out to the zamindars over a period. The total compensation was estimated at Rs. 6.1 billion in 1968. This included both interest and rehabilitation packages. Until 1968, however, the total compensation actually handed out to the zamindars was Rs. 2.1 billion. The value and mechanism of compensation payment to the zamindars was worked out through a complex process. Such a compensation package was expected to be of reasonable value and such that the tenants would not feel betrayed. Net income, net assets and basic annual revenue became the basis for computation of compensation. At the same time, in some states, a flat rate was added to this computational method while making the final compensation package. For example, in UP the tenants were required to pay the government ten times the value of the rent in a lump sum or twelve times the rent in instalments. The money thus gathered by the government was used as part of the compensation. Of the financial compensation, the government paid the zamindars a substantial portion through transferable and negotiable bonds. These bonds, issued with interest, were redeemable over a period of five years to forty years.

Officially, it was by the 1950s that the abolition of zamindari was completed. However, there was lack of institutional mechanism to put the zamindari abolition Acts into effective order. Moreover, tenants continued to pay a high rate of rent to the government, which the latter used to pay the zamindars. Later critics pointed out the high degree of flexibility and favouritism that the state governments had shown to the zamindars. The latter could retain a large portion land as either home-farm land or land under personal cultivation. Nevertheless, despite its major deficiencies the zamindari abolition programme became a major success story for the Congress party.

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Value addition: interesting fact

Zamindari abolition in U. P.

On August 8, 1946 the U. P. Legislative Assembly passed the following resolution:

"This Assembly accepts the principle of the abolition of the Zamindari System in this Province which involves intermediaries between the cultivator and the State and resolves that the rights of such intermediaries should be acquired on payment of equitable compensation and that Government should appoint a Committee to prepare a scheme for this purpose."

As an outcome of this resolution, a committee was formed. It was chaired by Govind Ballabh Pant, who was the premier of United Provinces.

Source: Report of the United Provinces Zamindari Abolition Committee, Vol. 1, 1948.

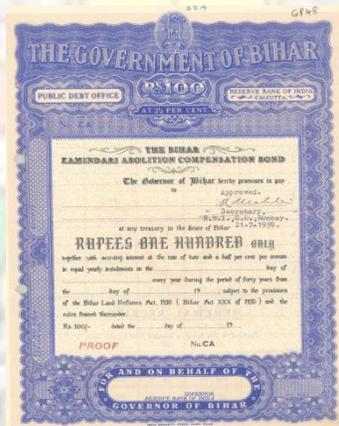


Figure 13.3.1: A bond issued by the Reserve Bank of India given to a zamindar in Bihar
Source: http://rbi.org.in/scripts/fun_debt7.htm

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Figure 13.3.2: Wood engraving by Somnath Hore: a procession in protest against jotedar tyranny

Source: <http://www.indowindow.net/delhimagazine/sanam/shore/files/engrav4.gif>

Tenancy reform

Despite some form of implementation of zamindari abolition measures, tenancy remained a troublesome issue inside the previously intermediary controlled areas. Not only that, the practice of landlordism was rampant even inside the Ryotwari areas. It was in this context that tenurial security became a matter of serious concern for various state governments. Legislative measures aimed at securing tenancy rights and curtailing the rights of the landlords were quickly put in place despite strong opposition from the landlords and other social groups. These tenancy reforms incorporated three broad issues. First, they tried to ensure tenancy rights to those tenants who had been cultivating certain plots of land for a certain period. The length of this duration differed from region to region. Secondly, it also sought a reduction in the rents paid by the tenants. It was estimated that the most reasonable level of rent would be between one-fourth to one-sixth of the gross produce. Finally, tenancy reform also paved the way for tenants to acquire ownership of the land they cultivated. Granting of such ownership was qualified and depended on several pre-conditions like cultivating a plot of land for a continuous period of twelve years. The government of India, on the eve of fourth five year plan, claimed that approximately 3 million tenants and sharecroppers had acquired ownership of 7 million acres of land in the country.

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Pushing for an upper limit in land holding

It is generally agreed that the idea of fixing the upper limit of land holdings of individual landlords began to gain ground in the 1940s. In 1946 the All India Kisan Sabha movement argued for fixing the upper limit of the landlords at 25 acres. In 1947 the All India Congress Committee (AICC) also began to articulate its views on issues of upper limit for land holding. A committee under the chairmanship of J. L. Nerhu recommended the adoption of a maximum size of the landholding. Later, in 1949, the AICC's Agrarian Reform Committee, which was chaired by J. C. Kumarapa, suggested that such a fixation should be done at three times higher than a standard economic holding. The idea of upper limit finally received an institutional framework in the framing of First Five Year plan. The plan suggested that the exact size of the upper limit should be fixed by the states themselves. It was in 1957 that the Standing Committee of the National Development Council presided over by the Prime Minister agreed to push for promulgating legislative measures for fixing the upper limit of land holdings.

With limited success in the abolition of landed intermediaries, legislation for imposing ceilings on holdings began in the 1950s. Christened as the Land Ceiling Act and enacted in several states, in its structure and process it followed a common pattern. Most of the Indian states had passed ceiling Acts by 1961. The primary intention of the Act was equitable distribution of land to the landless by fixing a ceiling on the holdings of agricultural land. The latter process would ensure surplus which would be made available for distribution to the landless poor. The ceiling limit for a family varied from state to state depending on the nature of legislative enactments.

Ceiling laws were enacted and enforced in two phases. The first phase covered the period from 1960 to 1972. During this period, apart from the legal challenges, implementation of the ceiling act suffered from major weaknesses. For instance, the classes of land that were exempted from the operation of ceiling laws varied widely in the states. The legislative measures also had loop-holes. The latter was used by the bigger landed interests to evade the laws. Again, in anticipation of the ceilings, the big land holders partitioned their holdings. Such partitioned land was fictitiously transferred in pieces to other individuals through illegal transfers on a very large scale.

The scope of the entire ceiling legislation was examined by the Central Land Reforms Committee. The committee made certain recommendations that were considered by the Chief Ministers of the states in their Conference held in July 1972. In July 1972 the AICC adopted new guidelines for implementing ceiling Acts in the country. These 'national guidelines' were to govern ceiling legislation in the future. The post 1972 ceiling legislation has been rationalized and put more or less on a uniform basis throughout the country based on the national guidelines. The second phase, after the adoption of these guidelines, gave a new turn to the history of implementation of the Act and the way in which it was perceived.

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Bhoodan movement

Parallel to this varied and complex land reform initiative, another kind of land reform also played a key role in Indian agrarian history immediately after independence. The ideological origin of this movement went back to Mahatma Gandhi's idea of rural reconstruction. Such an idealistic orientation acquired the form of a movement, which was christened as the Bhoodan movement. The movement found its most ardent follower in Vinoba Bhave. Bhave reframed the Gandhian concept of creating a '**Sarvodaya**' society in rural India as a land reform movement. The movement was based on the theory of the possibility of an ethical transformation of those who own land and wealth so that they would voluntarily relinquish a substantial portion of their possessions. The proponents of the Bhoodan movement aimed at redistribution of land – the basic means of production in agriculture, which would originate in the gifting of land by the rural rich. The Bhoodan Movement started in 1951.

The backdrop of this new movement was the Telengana peasant movement in Andhra Pradesh, under the leadership of Communist Party of India. The movement had acquired widespread popularity. The peasant struggle, led by poor peasants against the local landlords, often acquired a violent form. Vinoba believed that if the landlords would come forward to voluntarily gift their land this would help in solving the problems of landlessness in India. This would pave the way for a non-violent radical solution born out of love and not out of hatred.

Many landlords in Andhra found in it enough scope to escape from the wrath of the struggling peasants. For instance in the village of Pochampali, in Telangana, the landlord Ram Chandra Reddy was persuaded by Vinoba to donate hundred acres of land. This has often been cited as a prime example of tactics used by the landlords to escape the pressure of poor peasants' struggle. This also encouraged Vinoba to undertake a countrywide campaign for the land gifting movement. He also proposed a redistribution of this collected land. In the next couple of years, Vinoba walked fifty thousand miles and could collect an estimated four million acres of land.

Despite its early promise, the weaknesses of the Bhoodan movement became clear within a short period. For instance in Bihar, while large tracts of land were collected, most of them were uncultivable. Often the landlords collected back the land gifted by them. In some cases, the gifted land formed those estates where the landlords were involved in legal disputes. Many claimed that land gifted to the movement was only partially distributed amongst the landless peasants. The movement had widened the concept of land gift and moved from individual to village gift. This only resulted in grand gestures, but in reality, the landlords retained their control over their lands.

The Bhoodan movement was inspired by anti-property ideology, which began to draw opposition from the landed elite. The movement brought into its fold some of India's towering socialist leaders like Jay Prakash Narayan, but very quickly it turned out to be an example of a spectacular failure.

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Value addition: did you know?

Bhoodan movement

Vinoba Bhave received the first gift of land as part of the Bhoodan movement on 18 April 1951. This happened in the village Pochampalli in the Telengana region of present Andhra Pradesh. Bhave received 12,000 acres as donation. He walked approximately 50,000 miles over a period of two years.

Source: Chandra, Bipan. et al. 2003. *India after Independence, 1947-2000*. Delhi: Penguin.



Figure 13.3.3: Vinoba Bhave addressing the workers of Sarvodaya movement and students of Agra University, on May 10, 1960

Source: <http://www.timescontent.com/tss/showcase/preview-buy/128132/News/Acharya-Vinoba-Bhave.html>

Land reform and changing agrarian structure

The Indian government visualized land reforms as important in ensuring high productivity. It was seen as an instrument of equitable distribution towards realizing the objective of poverty abolition. In the process, the right of property in land was somewhat circumscribed. Depending on the local agrarian and political conditions, dimensions of land reform varied in nature from state to state.

Broadly speaking land reforms undertaken in most states brought in two different levels of change into the Indian agrarian structure. It is claimed that after land reform there was an increase in the percentage of households in the marginal ownership or operational category. There was a simultaneous increase in the area owned or operated by these households. Secondly, one can also notice a decrease in the households in the medium and large ownership or operational categories. A definite change took place in the rural property

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structure. It was also claimed that the agrarian structure had become more rational and equitable. The reforms helped to do away with some of the feudal characteristics of agrarian relations in India. Similarly, acquisition of proprietary rights by the tenants in their land encouraged them to take agriculture much more seriously than when the land ownership was in the hands of the intermediaries.

However, such claims have limited realistic implications. The first round of land reforms largely failed to live up to the planners' expectations. One major problem was that of ensuring fair treatment for under-tenants and sharecroppers, who found it hard to assert themselves even where they had the backing of the law. Despite these difficulties, land redistribution and the creation of a peasant system of production was made the main plank of the Government's programme to increase agricultural output and productivity and ensure social justice in the Second Plan.

In U.P., the Zamindari Abolition and Land Reform Act, 1950, which came into effect in 1952, specifically recognized a close connection between the cultivators and the state. The Act, however, defined 'a cultivator' not necessarily as the 'tiller of the land'. This gave advantages to the zamindars to manipulate the provisions of the Act. For example, the Act identified four categories of landholders viz. **bhumihars**, sirdars, asamis and adivasis. It also secured the cultivators ownership of land. The former zamindars or talukdars now became the bhumihars. They retained land which they formerly cultivated, or the cultivation of which they supervised and that which they rented out. They now paid the same amount of revenue as before, and they were allowed to retain approximately half of the revenue they collected. The Act allowed them to retain land for cultivation and thus seriously undermined the larger goal of land reform.

Challenges to tenancy reform

A strong push for tenancy reform also did not mean that the existing interests of the landlords, particularly small landlords, were completely jeopardized. The interests of the absentee landowners was also protected by allowing them to resume their land for personal cultivation. In due course the idea of personal cultivation became highly contested and the landlords could manipulate it in different ways. Similarly, the landlords who came back to the villages often leased out part of the land they owned, under various forms of open and disguised tenancy. They took extreme care to forestall any kinds of permanent rights to the tenants. The new tenancy arrangement also ignored many informal share-cropping arrangements that had been in existence in different parts of the country. The implementation of tenancy reforms could not generally address the larger agrarian problems of India. This also has not prevented tenancy from cropping up again despite its legal abolition. Against this background there was a strong push to re-conceptualize the idea of 'land to the tiller' as embodied in the objectives of different plans. Within the government machinery there is a strong argument for retaining tenancy in a rational and efficient form devoid of its exploitative dimensions.

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In the 1960s the government of India had a serious re-look into the agrarian affairs of the country. It pointed out that tensions between tenants and landlords, between agricultural labourers and employers and between poor peasants and big landowners had been increasing in the rural areas in recent years. The government also admitted that the geographically widespread peasant agitation for the distribution of land to the landless and poor peasants elicited maximum response. The government also revealed that over four-fifth of the agitations and struggles in the Indian rural areas were led by the very small landowners and agricultural workers against landlords.

During this period forcible occupation of land was a recurring phenomenon in states such as Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Tenants continued to struggle for tenurial security and also fair rent. It coincided with the growth of struggles of agricultural labourers for minimum wages. Several parts of the country also were witness to the tribal people's struggle against exploitation by landlords and money-lenders.

The consolidation of land holdings led to widespread eviction of insecure tenants. The absence of a record of rights also helped in the large-scale manipulation of tenancy practices. Such manipulations were termed by the landlords either 'voluntary surrenders' or the tenants were newly identified as their 'servants'. Tenants also found it extremely difficult to claim tenancy rights successfully as most of the leases were based on informal arrangement.

The history of the Indian Planning Commission

The ideological orientation of the Congress leadership preceding independence was an important factor that led to the establishment of the Indian Planning Commission in March 1950. The Planning commission intended to uphold the ideals of development through a mixed bag of careful assessment of the resources of the country and their effective utilization. Though it was effectively planned and outlined after independence, its pre-history went back to the first few decades of the 20th century when its trajectory was given a shape.

The idea of planning in India became a part of the central agenda of the Indian nationalist economic thought in 1938. Such an idea had already gained ground since early in the 20th century. Several key thinkers like Gokhale, K. T. Shah, and Visveswarya crystallised the idea of planning for future India. A couple of decades later, Indian industrialists and political leaders were enthused by the 'de facto' recognition by the British rulers of the Indian demand for a positive role of the state in organizing the socio-economic development of the country. This allowed them to formulate the blueprint of a plan and appeal to the colonial regime to implement it. Early British efforts at planning, the mode and economic objectives of planning attempted by the British officials during 1930-34, did not differ qualitatively from what Indian planners were to advance later.

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The pre-history of Indian planning can broadly be summed up as follows. It began with M. Vishveswarya's *Planned Economy for India* in 1934, a pioneering effort that was followed by the establishment of the National Planning Committee under the tutelage of the Indian National Congress in 1938. In 1944 a few influential and front rank Indian industrialists and economists from Bombay published a report which aimed at understanding the direction of Indian planning after independence. The signatories to this report, known as the Bombay Plan, were J. R. D Tata, Ghanshyam Das Birla, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Sir Sri Ram, Sir Ardeshir Dalal, Ardeshir Darabshaw Shroff and Dr. John Mathai.

As a blueprint for independent India's economic direction, the key idea behind it was the assumption that the Indian economy could not grow without government intervention and regulation. While it sought to achieve a balanced economy, the report held that the Indian industries, already under tremendous pressure of colonialism, would not be able to compete in a free-market economy. The report proposed that the Indian government after independence protect indigenous industries. The report also advocated an active role for the government in deficit financing and planning equitable growth. It spelled out the role of the government in facilitating a transition from an agrarian to an industrialized society. It favoured the establishment of basic industries as public sector enterprises. The report drew immense public attention. Many believed that it held the key to resolving India's larger political problems.

A new landmark was achieved when the All India Congress Committee constituted the National Planning Committee (NPC) in October 1938. It was chaired by Jawaharlal Nehru. The main emphasis of this Committee was to give a larger perspective to the economic development of the country. The scope and role of the committee was widened through the formation of various sub-committee like housing, population etc., but later critics argued that the NPC also neglected several core areas of India's development. The NPC, however, clearly formulate the aims of planning. The NPC wanted the attainment of national self-sufficiency for the country as a whole, as well as doubling of what was then the standard of living in India, within a set time frame.

Several other such attempts with varied ideological orientation followed. Finally, years of exercise and exposure to contemporary international planning experiences led to the formation of the Advisory Planning Board by Nehru in 1946. Amongst the most widely publicized, impressive and successful planning experiments which drew the attention of the Indian leaders was that of the first plan of Soviet Russia during 1928-33. While both socialist and capitalist blocks aspired to evolve their planning, they had different goals in mind. In the context of colonial subjugation, planning helped legitimize the imperial role through economic measures.

It was against this background that the Indian leaders crystallised their idea of economic planning for India. The Indian leadership had the dual responsibility of having to appear independent from any imperialist influences, material or ideological, while maintaining and pursuing a path of development within a capitalist framework and. The rescue came with the concept of Nehruvian socialism. Such a position would also help to establish the

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ideological autonomy of the new nation-state. Similarly, Nehru's concept of a social industrial society was highly acceptable for the emerging Indian elite.

The plan

The Indian Planning Commission issued the first draft plan in 1951. The draft primarily focused on the question of agriculture and increasing demands for food production. The Prime Minister, Nehru, reminded his fellow Indian citizens of the need for India to industrialize "as rapidly as possible". The plan also emphasized the development of transportation, communications and provision of social services. The second five-year plan (1956-61) further consolidated the Nehruvian goal of socialist planning. Emphasis was given to the need of the public sector to drive the rapid growth of the Indian national economy. The plan perceived a need for developing "basic heavy industries for the manufacture of producer goods to strengthen the foundation of economic independence" of the country. Nehru essentially believed that planning was crucial for India's development and this would be able to resolve much of India's key problems whether economic, political or social.

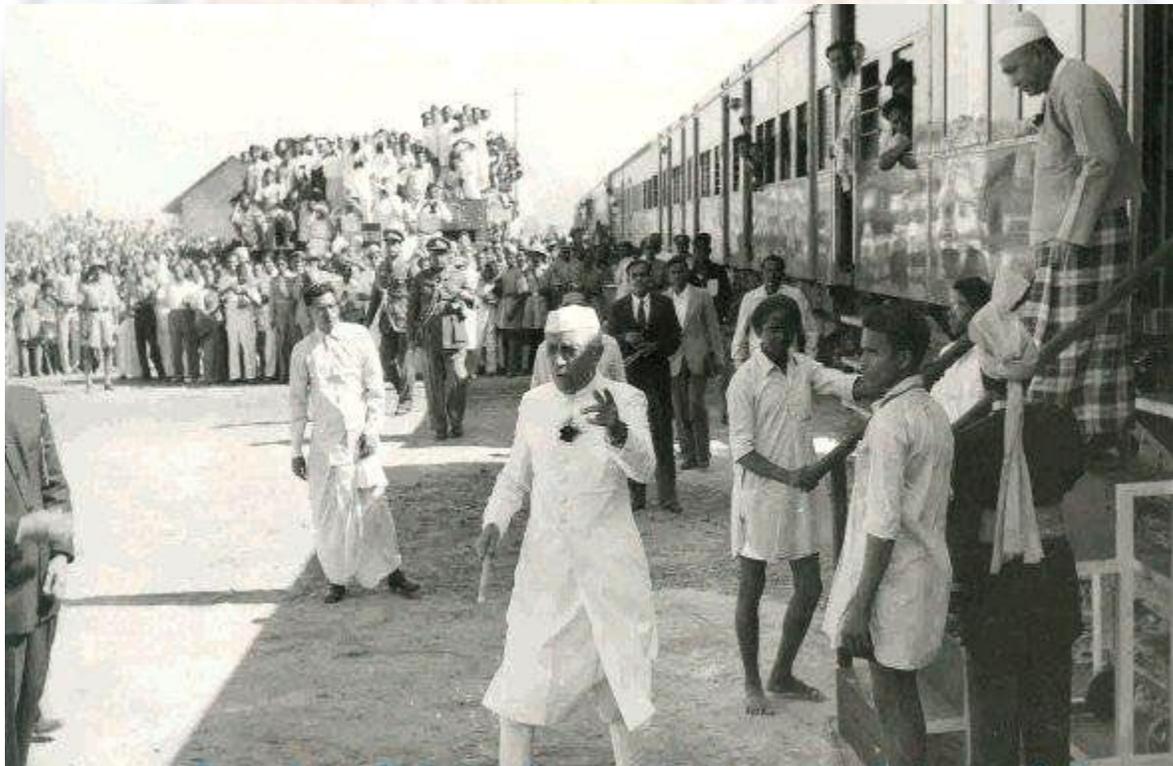


Figure 13.3.4: Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru at Rourkela Steel Plant

Source: <http://www.sail.co.in/slide/slide%2050-60/phpslideshow.php?directory=.¤tPic=9>

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Value addition: did you know?

P. C. Mahalanobis

The Cambridge trained physicist and statistician Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis (1883-1972) played the key role in drafting and designing the drafts of the first two five year plans of India. He was also instrumental in giving shape to the National Sample Survey in 1950.



Figure 13.3.5: P. C. Mahalanobis

Source:

<http://cambridgeforecast.files.wordpress.com/2008/03/mahalanobis.png>

Source: Original

Emergence of a new state

Summary

- The making of the Indian constitution was a massive exercise undertaken by the constituent assembly between December 1946 and December 1949. It has justifiably been termed a democratic revolution.
- The work of the Constituent assembly was largely facilitated by an 'oligarchy' of four Congress leaders: Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, and Abul Kalam Azad. The actual drafting was done by a committee led by B. R. Ambedkar.
- After much deliberation, the Assembly decided on a parliamentary, federal constitution in the Euro-American model. This centralized model was preferred to the more decentralized 'Gandhian' model. The background of Partition played an important role in shaping this choice.
- The core of the constitution's commitment to furthering socio-economic transformation lay in the Fundamental rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. However, these rights were limited by two considerations: social reform and national unity.
- The issue of a 'national' language provoked some of the most heated and contentious debates in the Constituent assembly. Eventually a compromise was struck.
- The integration of the princely states—numbering over 600 in 1947—was a key challenge for the new Indian state.
- The Congress party held that the states had to join either of two dominions. The Muslim League claimed they could also opt to stay independent. Encouraged by the latter, Travancore and Hyderabad actually announced their decision to stay independent.
- The Indian government managed to convince most states to join India by offering accession only in respect of defence, foreign affairs, and communications.
- Three important states held out. Junagadh initially acceded to Pakistan, but subsequently under pressure from India the ruler capitulated. Hyderabad held out for independence. The failure of negotiations coupled with the worsening communal situation led India to attack and occupy the state. Kashmir acceded to India when faced with a Pakistan abetted tribal invasion. The issue however got bogged down in the United Nations and a de facto partition persists to date.

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Summary

- After independence, several layers of land reforms were initiated in India with deep-rooted social implications.
- The first round of land reform was aimed at abolishing landed intermediaries.
- The second round aimed at essentially securing tenurial security for the tenants.
- In another crucial intervention, the Indian government aimed at imposing an upper limit for individual land holdings.
- Various phases of land reforms ushered in key changes into the agrarian structure.
- The process of the making of a modern nation state was also critically connected with the foundation of the Indian Planning commission which led the way in developing India within the Nehruvian socialist framework.



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13.1 & 13.2: Exercises

Essay questions

- 1) Why did the constituent assembly decide against adopting the 'Gandhian' model?
- 2) How convincing is the argument that the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution reflected the Congress Party's longstanding attachment to democracy and liberalism?
- 3) Why did language become such a contentious issue in the constituent assembly?
- 4) Why did the Congress Party and the Muslim League adopt opposing stances on the rights of princely states to opt for independence?
- 5) The Indian government had all along planned for closer integration of the princely states that had acceded only on three subjects. Would you agree?
- 6) Why did the Indian government agree to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir?

Objective questions

Question Number	Type of question	LOD
1	True or False	1

Question

- a) The Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly was chaired by Rajendra Prasad.
- b) The Objectives Resolution was moved by Jawaharlal Nehru.
- c) The office of the President was modelled on the American system.
- d) Directive Principles of State Policy were designed to be enforced by the courts.
- e) The ruler of Travancore initially wished to stay independent after 15 August 1947.
- f) By late 1948, Indian leaders were open to the idea of partitioning Kashmir.

Correct Answer / Option(s)

a) False b) True c) False d) False e) True f) True

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Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

- a) It was chaired by Ambedkar.
- b) It was the overarching resolution of the constituent assembly and hence moved by the prime minister designate.
- c) In the American system the President is the head of the government.
- d) After much debate, it was decided that these would not be enforceable by courts.
- e) He changed course only after a popular protest forced his and his chief minister's hand.
- f) By this time the Indian leaders felt that the plebiscite was unlikely to occur, hence partition was seen as a practical option.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

Reviewer's Comment:

Question Number	Type of question	LOD
2	Multiple choice question	2

Question

Elections to the Constituent Assembly were held in:

- a) January 1946
- b) November 1945
- c) July 1946
- d) September 1946

Correct Answer / Option(s) c)

Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

The constituent assembly was elected indirectly by members of the provincial legislative assemblies.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

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Reviewer's Comment:

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Question Number	Type of question	LOD
3	Multiple choice question	2

Question

The Constituent Assembly adopted which of the following models for electing the lower house of the parliament:

- a) British
- b) Swiss
- c) American
- d) A combination of British and American

Correct Answer / Option(s)

a)

Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

Direct election to the lower house by adult franchise is British system.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

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Reviewer's Comment:

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Question Number	Type of question	LOD
4	Multiple choice question	2

Question

The Instrument of Accession gave the Union government the power to act in which of the following areas:

- a) defence, foreign affairs, finance
- b) foreign affairs, communications, finance

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c) defence, foreign affairs, communications, finance

d) defence, foreign affairs, communications

Correct Answer / Option(s)

d)

Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

These were the only three areas where the central government had an undeniable role. Hence the accession was designed on these subjects.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

Reviewer's Comment:

Question Number	Type of question	LOD
5	Multiple choice question	2

Question

In which of the following states was a referendum on accession held:

a) Junagadh

b) Hyderabad

c) Junagadh and Hyderabad

d) Bhopal

Correct Answer / Option(s)

a)

Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

Junagadh was the only state where a referendum was held after partition- in February 1948.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

Reviewer's Comment:

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13.3: Exercises

Essay questions

- 1) What were the broad features of the Indian land reform programme undertaken after independence?
- 2) What was the primary aim of the zamindari abolition?
- 3) What were the crucial challenges to tenancy reforms in India?
- 4) Did the Bhoodan movement significantly differ from other forms of tenancy reform?
- 5) Discuss the broad background to the growth of the idea of an Indian Planning Commission.

Objective questions

Question Number	Type of question	LOD
1	True or False	1

Question

There were only two members who signed in the Bombay Plan.

Correct Answer / Option(s)	False
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Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

There were seven signatories to the Bombay Plan, and all were eminent industrialists and economists.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

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Question Number	Type of question	LOD
2	Multiple choice question	2

Question

When did the UP Zamindari Abolition Act come into force?

- a) 1953
- b) 1948
- c) 1952

Correct Answer / Option(s)

c)

Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

The Act came into force in 1952, though discussions had been taking place since 1948.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

The discussion towards UP zamindari abolition began in 1948 though the Act came into effect since 1952.

Reviewer's Comment:

Question Number	Type of question	LOD
3	Multiple choice question	2

Question

Who was the principal ideologue of the Bhoodan movement?

- a) M. K. Gandhi
- b) Vinoba Bhave
- c) Jay Prakash Narayan

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Correct Answer / Option(s)	b)
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Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

It was Vinoba Bhave who crystallised the idea of the Bhoodan movement.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

a): The Bhoodan movement was based Mahatma Gandhi's visions of the ideal rural society but Vinoba Bhave gave it concrete shape.

c): Jay Prakash Narayan was a follower of the Bhoodan movement along the path set by Vinoba Bhave.

Reviewer's Comment:

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Question Number	Type of question	LOD
4	Multiple choice question	2

Question

Who headed the National Planning Committee?

- a) Subhas Chandra Bose
- b) Jawaharlal Nehru
- c) P. C. Mahalanobis

Correct Answer / Option(s)	b)
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Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

J. L. Nehru chaired the NPC.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

a): S. C. Bose was only the president of Indian National Congress under whose guidance the NPC came into existence.

c): P. C. Mahalanobis became a key figure during the First Planning

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Commission.

Reviewer's Comment:

Question Number	Type of question	LOD
5	Multiple choice question	2

Question

In which year was the Agrarian Reforms Commission established?

- a) 1947
- b) 1938
- c) 1952

Correct Answer / Option(s)

a)

Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer

The Agrarian Reforms Commission was established in 1947.

Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer

b): The National Planning Commission was established in 1938.

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Glossary

Accession: a legal term referring to the formal association of a princely state to the central government

Constituent Assembly: the body elected in July 1946 to give a constitution for independent India

Fundamental Rights: a list of rights provided in the constitution, including the Right of Equality, the Right of Freedom, the Right against Exploitation, the Right to Freedom of Religion, Cultural and Educational Rights, the Right to Property, and the Right to Constitutional Remedies

Gandhian constitution: a system inspired by Gandhi's thinking, designed to be decentralized and based on the village as the basic unit

Hindustani: a mixture of Hindi and Urdu. It could be written using either Hindi script (Devanagari) or Urdu script (modified Arabic)

Paramountcy: an ill-defined term, it included among other things a system of British 'Residents' in princely states, British control over the states' foreign affairs, and regulation of succession within such states

Separate electorates: a system of divided representation, whereby a number of seats for each community would be fixed, and people belonging to a religious community could only vote for candidates from their community

Standstill agreement: an agreement to continue with existing arrangements till the question of accession was decided

Glossary

Bhumihars: upper caste landlords in northern India and parts of central India

Inam: a gift of land or land revenue

Jagirdar: the grantee of a jagir

Jagir: a tract of land originally granted by the ruler to an army chieftain for a fairly short term, usually three years, but not extending beyond his lifetime, in recognition of the latter's military service

Sarvodaya: meaning 'universal uplift' or 'progress of all' popularized by M. K. Gandhi as part of his program for rural uplift

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