

## Long Answer Questions

---

**Q.1. Which three major developments took place in Indian politics during the last decade of the 20th century? Describe.**

[CBSE (AI) 2015]

**Ans. (i) Decline of Congress:** The defeat of the Congress Party in the election of 1989 marked the end of Congress dominance over the Indian party system. It could win only 197 seats in Lok Sabha.

**(ii) Rise of Mandal Issue:** The Mandal Issue started with the National Front Government's decision to implement the recommendation of Mandal Commission in the jobs that in the Central government seats should be reserved for OBCs. This led to violent anti-Mandal protests in different parts of the country.

**(iii) New Economic Policy:** The government adopted new economic policy in 1991. It was started by Rajiv Gandhi. These changes first become visible in 1991. It radically changed the direction that the Indian economy had pursued since independence.

**(iv) Demolition of Babri Masjid or Ayodhya dispute:** Ayodhya dispute started with the demolition of the disputed structure of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya in December 1992. It led to various changes in politics of the country. It raised the question about the nature of Indian nationalism and secularism.

**(v) Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi:** The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in May 1991 led to change in the leadership of the Congress. In the election of 1991, Congress emerged as the single largest party. P.V. Narsimha Rao was elected as the Prime Minister of India.

*(Any three points)*

**Q.2. Elaborate upon the Mandal Commission and its report.**

**Ans.** The central government appointed a Commission in 1978 to consider and recommend means to improve the conditions of the backward classes. This was the second time since Independence that the government had appointed such a commission and came to be known as the Second Backward Classes Commission and popularly known as the 'Mandal Commission', after the name of its Chairperson, Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal. The Mandal Commission was set up to consider the extent of educational and social backwardness among various sections of Indian society and recommend ways of identifying these 'backward classes'. The commission also had to recommend means to end the backwardness. The Commission gave its

recommendations in 1980. The Commission recommended reserving 27 per cent of seats in educational institutions and government jobs for these groups. The Mandal Commission also made many other recommendations such as land reforms to improve the conditions of the OBCs.

**Q.3. Describe any three points of consensus that emerged among most political parties in India in spite of severe competition and conflicts.**

[CBSE (AI) 2015]

**Ans.** The consensus that emerged among most political parties in India in spite of severe competition and conflicts:

**1. First agreement of new economic policies:** While many groups are opposed to the new economic policies, most political parties are in support of the new economic policies. Most parties believe that these policies would lead the country to prosperity and a status of economic power in the world.

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

**3. Third,** acceptance of the role of state level parties in governance of the country – the distinction between state level and national level parties is fast becoming less important. State level parties are sharing power at the national level and have played a central role in the country's politics of last twenty years or so.

Emphasis on pragmatic considerations rather than ideological positions and political alliances without political agreement – coalition politics has shifted the focus of political parties from ideological differences to power sharing arrangements.

(Any three points)

**Q.4. Give an account of the political rise of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in India and the impact on Indian politics.**

**Ans.** Other backward classes refer to the administrative category and are social communities other than SC and ST who suffer from educational and social backwardness. These communities were primarily supporter of Congress but with time grew dis-illusioned with the Congress. They believed their interests were not being served by the Congress. 1970s onward, caste based politics began to rise and gave rise to political leaders from OBC communities. These leaders further formed social and political parties and started to rise in support from these communities especially in State politics. The Mandal agitation gave rise to electoral consolidation of OBC vote bank and government was formed in Indian States either with the support from OBC leaders and

communities. The political rise of Other Backward Classes was also connected to the increase in regional aspirations in States' politics.

**Q.5. Give a brief account of religious clashes and dent to secular values during the 1990- 2000 decade.**

**Ans.** The 1990-2000 saw multiple clashes and causes of tensions among Hindus and Muslims in India. In 1990s, there was mobilisation with regards to the Ayodhya dispute. In 1992, the Babri Masjid was demolished by religious fundamentalists and led to death of many people in Ayodhya. The demolition led to the BJP led State government in Uttar Pradesh being dismissed and President's Rule being implemented, along with other BJP ruled States. A case against the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh was registered in the Supreme Court. There were subsequent Hindu-Muslim riots in Mumbai. In 2002, a train bogey carrying kar sewaks from Ayodhya was set on fire in Godhra in Gujarat and Muslims were suspected of doing so. This led Hindu-Muslim riots in the State that carried on for more than a month. These incidents led to a permanent dent in the secular fabric of India.

**Q.6. Give a brief introduction of the scenario of Indian politics before the 1990 decade.**

**Ans.** Indira Gandhi had been assassinated in 1984 and Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister of India. There were anti-Sikh riots in Delhi, Haryana and Punjab as the aftermath of the assassination. The Congress had only won 197 seats in the 1989 elections and marked the end of Congress System in India. Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by LTTE terrorists in 1991. The new government under Narsimha Rao was formed and Manmohan Singh began to restructure the Indian economy with structural adjustment programs and liberalisation of the economy. The Mandal Commission had been constituted and led to emergence of Mandal politics and anti-reservation agitations across India. There was a rise in Hindutva politics with political mobilization on the Ayodhya dispute.

**Q.7. Give an account of the rise of Bharatiya Janta Party in the 90's decade.**

**Ans.** Initially, the BJP adopted a broader political platform under 'Gandhian Socialism' as its ideology. But it did not get much success in the elections held in 1980 and 1984. After 1986, the party began to emphasise Hindutva in its ideology. The BJP pursued the politics of 'Hindutva' and adopted the strategy of mobilising the Hindus. There was political mobilization around the Ayodhya issue with the Rath Yatra by L.K. Advani. BJP supported the National Front government of V.P. Singh from outside. The BJP did not support the United Front government as it was being supported by the Congress. It emerged as the largest party in the 1996 election and was invited to form the government but could not secure a majority in the Lok Sabha. It formed a coalition government from May 1998 to June 1999. In the 1999 election, BJP was re-elected and Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister during both these terms.

**Q.8. Elaborate upon the formation and successive government formed after the 1989 election.**

**Ans. (i)** After the 1989 election, the National Front under V.P. Singh formed the government with the support of the Left Front and the BJP. The Congress under Rajiv Gandhi was still the single largest party in the Lok Sabha.

**(ii)** Chandra Shekhar broke the government and got outside support from the Congress and became the Prime Minister of India. Subsequently, Congress withdrew support.

**(iii)** PV Narsimha Rao became the Prime Minister after the Congress won the most seats in 1991 election but required support of regional parties to form government.

**(iv)** In the 1996 election, BJP won most of the seats and A.B. Vajpayee formed the government but could not get support of regional parties to form majority and therefore resigned.

**(v)** United Front under Deve Gowda formed the government with the Congress', support but subsequently, I.K. Gujral became Prime Minister.

**(vi)** In the 1998 election, BJP got the highest number of seats and Atal Bihari Vajpayee became the Prime Minister but could not get majority support in the Lok Sabha. Elections were again held in 1999 and a majority government was formed under Atal Bihari Vajpayee.