

HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

Q.1. Mention the difficulties the country was going through during the period of Lal Bahadur Shastri?

Ans. The morale of the country was low after the defeat from China in the 1962 War and there was a food grain shortage in India.

Q.2. What type of politics emerged after election results of 1967?

Ans. This election produced politics of alliances, coalitions and defections.

Q.3. What challenges did the Congress party face for the first time during 1960s?

Ans. The Congress party was in absolute power since 1947 but political competition started emerging with time. The Congress was finding it difficult to have absolute control over the power with internal conflicts. The opposition was stronger and united than before. During this time, Congress was facing external and internal challenges.

Q.4. What after Jawaharlal Nehru's death? What different types of apprehensions were circulated on this?

Ans. People in general had feared that after Nehru's death, India would not be able to resolve issue of succession like other newly independent countries. They feared that if democracy would remain in India, that could give rise to the dictatorship in politics. They also had feared if the new successor would be able to resolve the challenges faced by the country.

Q.5. Why did Indira Gandhi take time to settle as a Prime Minister?

Ans. Indira Gandhi had to lead the Lok Sabha Election within one year of becoming the Prime Minister. Economic condition was grim at that time and the Syndicate had absolute control over the Congress. Due to these difficulties, Indira Gandhi had taken some time to settle as a Prime Minister.

Q.6. What efforts led to increase in Indira Gandhi becoming popular?

Ans. Indira Gandhi introduced a 20 point program, bank nationalization and terminated Privy Purse. Indira Gandhi ensured to get Labour leader V.V. Giri elected as the President of India, against a strong party candidate. These were few steps that made Indira Gandhi a popular leader.

Q.7. What was the impact of economic difficulties in the country?

Ans. Due to the shortage of essential items, their prices increased rapidly. People then started to revolt on the issue of inflation of essential commodities, shortage of food grains and unemployment due to bad economic situation. Call for strikes and bans were

frequent in the country. The popularity of the government dropped and it began to counter this as Law and Order situation rather than an economic situation.

Q.8. What was the strategy of Indira Gandhi in the 1971 General Election?

Ans. During her Election campaign in 1971 general election, Indira Gandhi stressed upon public sector growth, rural landownership, and delimitation of urban property, end of disparity in income and opportunity, and termination of Privy Purse as election agendas. She also tried to muster support of oppressed classes, tribes, minority, women and unemployed youth by giving slogan of 'Garibi Hatao'.

Q.9. Why was the decade of 1960 known as 'Dangerous Decade'?

Ans. The decade of 1960 is known as 'Dangerous Decade' because India had lost a major War with China. Subsequently, Jawaharlal Nehru passed away and there was a fear of failing democratic succession within India. Lal Bahadur Shastri became Prime Minister and had to face a War with Pakistan and grim economic crisis. Subsequently, Lal Bahadur Shastri passed away and Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister. The political uncertainty and economic crisis led to this decade being called a 'Dangerous Decade'.

Q.10. How did Lal Bahadur Shastri become the Prime Minister after the death of Jawaharlal Nehru?

Ans. K. Kamraj, the President of the Congress party consulted party leaders and Congress members of the Parliament and found that there was a consensus in favour of Lal Bahadur Shastri. He was unanimously chosen as the leader of the Congress parliamentary party and thus became the Prime Minister. Lal Bahadur Shastri was a freedom fighter and leader from Uttar Pradesh. He had been a Minister in Nehru's cabinet for many years.

Q.11. What were the results of India's fourth General elections?

Ans. The fourth general elections to the Lok Sabha and State assemblies were held in February 1967. These election results were declared as a 'political earthquake'. Congress did manage to get majority in the Lok Sabha but half the ministers in Indira Gandhi's cabinet were defeated. The political stalwarts, who lost in their constituencies included K. Kamaraj in Tamil Nadu, S. K. Patil in Maharashtra, Atulya Ghosh in West Bengal and K.B. Sahay in Bihar. Congress lost majority in seven states. In two other states, defections prevented it from forming a government. This was the first time any non-Congress party had secured a majority of its own in any state. The elections of 1967 brought into picture the phenomenon of coalitions as no single party had gotten majority and various non-congress parties came together to support non-Congress government.

Q.12. Which six factors contributed to the popularity of Indira Gandhi's government in the decade of 1970s?

Ans. The various causes of Indira Gandhi's popularity were:

- (i) Indira Gandhi steered the Congress and the government towards a socialist leaning and this led to support from people.
- (ii) Indira Gandhi campaigned to implement land reform legislation and land ceiling legislations that increased support among landless people.
- (iii) She ended her dependence on other political parties by strengthening her party's position and recommended the dissolution of Lok Sabha in December 1970.
- (iv) The crisis in East Pakistan and Indo-Pak war to establish Bangladesh as an independent one also enhanced the popularity of Indira Gandhi.
- (v) Indira Gandhi gave a popular slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' that resonated with the people apart from the abolition of privy purse, nationalization of banks, etc.
- (vi) Congress became popular among different social sections such as women, minorities and oppressed classes.
- (vii) Congress had lost in the 1967 elections. Indira Gandhi adopted a very bold strategy. She converted a simple power struggle into an ideological struggle. She launched a series of initiatives to give the government policy a Left orientation. She got the Congress Working Committee to adopt a Ten Point Programme in May 1967. This programme included social control of banks, nationalisation of General Insurance, ceiling on urban property and income, public distribution of food grains, land reforms and provision of house sites to the rural poor.

Q.13. Describe the Presidential elections of 1969.

Ans. After the death of President Zakir Hussain, the post of the President of India fell vacant. The 'syndicate' managed to nominate the then speaker of the Lok Sabha, N. Sanjeeva Reddy, as the official Congress candidate for the Presidential elections. Indira Gandhi retaliated by encouraging the then Vice-President, V. V. Giri, to file his nomination as an independent candidate. The then Congress President S. Nijalingappa issued a 'whip' asking all the Congress MPs and MLAs to vote in favor of Sanjeeva Reddy, the official candidate of the party. Supporters of Indira Gandhi requisitioned a special meeting of the AICC but this was refused. After silently supporting V. V. Giri, the Prime Minister openly called for a 'conscience vote', that meant that MPs and MLAs from the Congress should be free to vote the way they want. The election ultimately resulted in the victory of V. V. Giri, the independent candidate, and the defeat of Sanjeeva Reddy, the official Congress candidate.

Q.14. Analyse the circumstances that favoured Indira Gandhi to become Prime Minister after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri. Mention any four achievements of Indira Gandhi that made her popular as a Prime Minister.

Ans. Shastri's death brought the challenge of succession back within two years. After Lal Bahadur Shastri, Congress chose Indira Gandhi as the successor. At that time, she was young and daughter of Nehru, one of the most able leaders of India. Congress President proposed the name of Indira Gandhi, which was endorsed by nearly all the Congress Chief Ministers. She had been Union Minister for Information in Shastri's Cabinet from 1964-66. **Four achievements Nehru's** death in 1964 had left doubts about continuation of democracy in India. 'Shastri's untimely death in 1966 again raised these doubts. During this period India had seen two wars with China in 1962 and with Pakistan in 1965. A dynamic leader was required and Congress brought a young and vibrant leaders for India. Congress won the parliamentary elections in 1967 and Indira became the first ever elected woman to lead a democracy.

- She had focused on the growth of the public sector.
- She had given a positive famous slogan "Garibi Hatao". Indira Gandhi promised the emancipation of poor without sharing political power. 'Garibi Hatao' was as a magical slogan. Indira Gandhi succeeded in shifting the indifferent mood of the voters into votes for her party. While aiming to increase purchasing power of poor people, she did no harm to the section which funded the Congress party. 'Garibi Hatao' programmes were launched since 1971.
- Decisive victory in the 1971's India –Pakistan war soared Indira Gandhi's popularity.
- First nuclear explosion in 1974 also increased her popularity. India termed it a peaceful explosion.

Q.15. Elections of 1967 gave rise to which two political strategies? Explain them.

Ans. (i) The election gave rise to concept of alliances and coalitions. All the major noncommunist, non-Congress opposition parties formed an electoral alliance known as the Grand Alliance. The SSP, PSP, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Swatantra Party and the Bharatiya Kranti Dal came together under one common umbrella. The ruling party had an alliance with the CPI.

(ii) After the 1967 elections, defection played an important role in the formation of governments in the state. Defection means elected representatives leave the party on whose symbol they were elected and join another party. After the 1967 general election, the breakaway Congress legislators played an important role in installing non-Congress governments in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. This gave rise to the expression 'Aya Ram, Gaya Ram'.

Q.16. Explain any three incidents of the 1977 elections, which were responsible for the downfall of the Congress party.

Ans. The three incidents responsible for the downfall of Congress were:

(i) The imposition of Emergency was highly criticized and led to a decrease in popularity of Indira Gandhi. The excesses such as forced sterilization, conflict with judiciary, etc. alienated the people and they refused to support the Congress in election.

(ii) There was an acute economic crisis in India that led to the increased costs, rise in unemployment and other economic hardships for Indians. The government was unable to support its slogan of 'Garibi Hatao'.

(iii) The opposition was united and formed a coalition under 'anti-congressism'. They were able to showcase their governance in multiple States in India before Emergency and formed alliances and coalitions after the Election.

Q.17. The socio-economic and political context of 1967 elections had a profound impact on its electoral verdict. In the light of the above statement, explain the context of 1967.

[CBSE Sample Paper 2016]

Ans. The socio-economic context of 1967 elections:

(i) This period was fraught with grave economic crisis resulting from successive failure of monsoons, widespread droughts, decline in agricultural production, serious food shortage, depletion of foreign exchange reserve, and drop in industrial production combined with sharp rise in military expenditure and diversion of resources from planning and economic development.

(ii) The economic situation triggered off price rise. People started protesting against increase in prices of essential commodities, food scarcity and growing unemployment and overall economic condition of the country. Moreover, the communists and the socialists launched struggles for greater equality.

(iii) Politically, a wave of 'non congressism' swept all across the country. Parties opposed to congress realized that the division of their votes kept Congress in power. Thus parties that were entirely different and disparate in their programmes and ideology got together to form anti Congress fronts in different states.

Q.18. Which factors contributed to the popularity of Janata Party in the 1977 Elections?

Ans. The leaders of Janata party were the main opposition to the Indira Gandhi government during the Emergency. They protested and organized mass movements against the excesses of the Emergency and were jailed also. They earned the respect and sympathy of the people of India. The Janata party was able to organize an alliance of multiple parties with differing ideologies as a coalition. They followed a policy of justice and had strong socialist credentials among the people through the support of J.P. Narayan. There was also widespread anger against the Indira Gandhi government that the Janata Party was able to convert into their support.

Q.19. Examine the major changes that the country witnessed at the time of fourth general election in 1967.

[CBSE (AI) 2016]

Ans. Major changes country witnessed at the time of Fourth General Elections.

Two prime ministers died in quick succession.

- (i) The period was fraught with grave economic crises.
- (ii) Widespread drought and decline in agricultural production.
- (iii) Serious food shortage.
- (iv) Depletion of foreign exchange reserves.
- (v) Drop in industrial production and exports.

Q.20. Mention any three challenges faced by the Congress from 1964-1971.

Ans. The three main challenges faced by the Congress were:

- (i) There was a war with Pakistan in 1965 and an economic crisis in India. This led to an increase in prices of essential items and food grains, rise in unemployment and transfer of funds from development expenses to defense expenses.
- (ii) The death of Lal Bahadur Shastri led to the fear of succession in India. Indira Gandhi was made Prime Minister with the support of the Syndicate. Subsequently, conflict arose between the two factions and the Congress split into Congress (R) and Congress (O).
- (iii) The opposition had begun to form alliances and there was a rise in defection in State assemblies. Congress was at lowest seats since the 1952 elections and the party lost elections in multiple State assemblies.