

# CLASS NOTES

Class: XII

Ch- 3 PARTY AND PARTY SYSTEM IN INNDIA – PART 1

Subject: POLITICAL SCIENCE

## CONGRESS SYSTEM

Differentiate between 'one party dominance, and 'one party system'. (HOTS; All India 2011)

Answer:

'One party dominance' simply means dominance of one party in a democratic set up e.g. Congress Party in the early years of independence. On the other hand one party system, means existence of only one party in the country for e.g. Communist Party in China.

What is meant by 'one-party dominance' in the Indian context? (All India 2009)

Answer:

One-party dominance means dominance of Congress party in first three general elections held in 1952, 1957 and 1962 in both Lok Sabha as well as in State Assemblies. In 1952, Congress won 364 seats out of 489, in 1957, 371 out of 494 and in 1962 won 361 out of 494 seats Lok Sabha elections.

What distinguished the dominance of the Congress Party in India from the one-party dominance in other countries? Explain.

The dominance of one Congress is different from one party dominance elsewhere in the world.

- In some countries like China , Cuba and Syria constitution permits only one party to rule the country.
- Some other like Myanmar, Belarus , Egypt and Eritrea are effectively one party states due to legal and military reasons.
- In Mexico PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) dominated for almost six decades. But during this period most of the times undemocratic means were used by the PRI to win elections. Elections were not free and fair.
- In contrast, to all the above countries Congress exercised the dominance totally under democratic conditions.

Explain any four reasons for the dominance of the Congress Party in the first three general elections.

The Congress party succeed in maintaining its dominance till 1967 due to the following reasons :

1. the roots of this extraordinary success of the Congress Party go back to the legacy of the freedom struggle. Congress was seen as inheritor of the national movement. Many leaders who were in forefront of the struggle were now contesting elections as Congress candidates.
2. The Congress party was supported by elites, educated business classes and middle classes people. It also got support from peasants because of its socialist nature.
3. It had many popular faces like Jawaharlal Nehru, C Rajgopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel etc. Moreover Jawaharlal Nehru was charismatic and a very popular leader.
4. Congress worked at upper level as well as at grass root level. Congress was popularised due to the participation in civil disobedience movement.
5. During period of Nehru Ji, Congress attained mass popularity, but the powerful narrow elite of Congress continued to benefit from the low level of political consciousness of the electorate.
6. The traditional loyalties made Congress, a one-party dominance.

Q. For a long time, Congress Party had been a social and ideological coalition". Justify the statement.

Ans. After its origin in 1885 Congress Party evolved as an ideological and social coalition which gave it an unusual strength. There were many factors for its coalition-like character :

- The Congress began as a party dominated by the English speaking, upper caste, upper middle-class and urban elite.
- With every civil disobedience movement it launched, its social base widened.
- It brought together diverse groups, whose interest were often contradictory.
- Peasants and industrialists, urban dwellers and villagers, workers and owners, middle, lower and upper classes and castes, all found space in the Congress.
- By the time of Independence, the Congress was transformed into a rainbow-like social coalition broadly representing India's diversity in terms of classes and castes, religions and languages and various interests.

### **FALL OF CONGRESS SYSTEM- FALL AND RESTORATION OF CONGRESS SYSTEM(CH-5 OF TEXT BOOK)**

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.

Indira Gandhi was the daughter of popular ex Prime Minister J.L Nehru. She had become Congress President in 1958 and had been Union Minister for Information in Shashtri's Cabinet from 1964-66.

i. She had given a positive famous slogan "Garibi Hatao".

ii. She had focused on the growth of the public sector and had imposed the ceiling on rural land holdings and urban property to remove disparities in income and opportunity.

iii. She had abolished the princely privileges to prevail the principles of equality and social and economic justice.

iv. Decisive victory in the 1971's India – Pakistan war soared Indira Gandhi's popularity. First nuclear explosion in 1974, which termed it a peaceful explosion, had also increased her popularity.

State which of these were reasons for the defeat of the Congress in 1967. Give reasons for your answer.

(a) The absence of a charismatic leader in the Congress party

(b) Split within the Congress party

(c) Increased mobilisation of regional, ethnic and communal groups

(d) Increased unity among non-Congress parties

(e) Internal differences within the Congress party

The following reasons were responsible for the defeat of the Congress in 1967 :

(a) The absence of a charismatic leader in the Congress party : There was no charismatic leader like Nehru in the Congress party. Nehru was very popular among the masses. No opposition leader could match him in politics till his death in 1964. The Congress party was fighting a general election without Nehru. On the other hand, the new Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi was seen as a political novice. She had been in office for less than a year.

(b) Split within the party: The party got split into Congress(O) and Congress(R) over the issue presidential candidature and even the Prime Minister herself was expelled from the party. This presented the Party in poor light to public.

(c) Increased mobilisation of regional, ethnic and communal groups: DMK, a regional Party in Tamil Nadu had secured a clear majority by leading a massive anti- Hindi agitation against the centre on the issue of imposition of Hindi as the official as the official language.

(d) Increased unity among non-Congress parties : Non-Congressism led to the defeat of the Congress in 1967. There was grave economic crisis in the country. The opposition parties were organising public protests against the government. These parties also realised that the division of their votes in the previous elections had kept Congress in power. This brought opposition parties with different ideologies and programmes together. These parties formed anti-Congress fronts and entered into electoral adjustments of sharing of seats in different states.

(e) Internal differences within the Congress party : There were some internal differences within the Congress. For example, after the death of Shastri, there was intense competition between Morarji Desai and Indira Gandhi. The contest was decided through a secret ballot among Congress MPs. The opposition thought that this internal factionalism within the Congress provided them an opportunity to topple the Congress.

**Why was the year 1967 considered as landmark year in India's political and electoral history? Explain.**

1. The fourth general election held in 1967 was the first election to be held without Nehru.
2. Several non-Congress parties joined together to bring Congress down. They realised that their disintegration kept Congress in power. So, they joined to form a big alliance called Samyukt Vidhayak Dal.
3. Congress still managed to win in Lok Sabha election, but with the poorest performance ever. Congress lost in many states. Influential leaders of Congress lost their position.
4. Many Congress leaders left the party in order to join the other party.
5. Local politics gained momentum.
6. The election of 1967 brought picture the phenomenon of coalitions.
7. Another important feature of the political after the 1967 election was the role played by defection in the making and unmaking of government.
8. Thus parties that were different got together to form anti-Congress fronts in some states and entered into electoral adjustments of sharing seats in others. This strategy was given the name of non-Congress by Ram Manohar Lohia.

Explain any three factors responsible for the dramatic victory of Indira Gandhi in the elections of 1971.

The factors responsible for Mrs. Indira Gandhi's dramatic win in 1971 were:

(i) The grand alliance did not have a coherent political programme. Congress had something which its opponents lacked – it had an issue, an agenda and a positive slogan.

(ii) Indira Gandhi said that the opposition alliance had only one common programme i.e. 'Indira Hatao (Remove Indira)', in contrast to this, she put forward a positive programme captured in the famous slogan: 'Garibi Hatao'.

(iii) Through Garibi Hatao, she tried to generate a support base among the disadvantaged especially among landless labourers, Dalits, Adivasis, minorities, women and the unemployed youth. This was part of her political strategy of building an independent nationwide political support base.

Discuss the major issue which led to the formal split of the Congress Party in 1969.

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The major issue which led to the formal split of the Congress Party in 1969 was the differences between Indira Gandhi and the 'syndicate'. Its discussed below:

(i) 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, land reforms and other items. While (syndicate) leaders approved this left wing programme, they had serious reservations about the same.

(ii) The factional rivalry between the syndicate and Indira Gandhi came in the open in the Presidential election in 1969. The official Congress candidate was N. Sanjeeva Reddy. Indira Gandhi, however, encouraged V.V. Giri, to file nomination as an independent candidate. The Congress President issued a whip but Indira Gandhi called for a 'conscience vote' leading to V.V. Giri victory.

(iii) In the meantime, Indira Gandhi also announced the nationalisation of fourteen leading private banks and the abolition of privy purses which led differences between Indira Gandhi and the Finance Minister Morarji Desai resulting in Desai leaving the government.

These events led to the split in the Congress in 1969 into two - Congress (Organisation) and Congress (Requisitionists).