

Chapter-14

CHALLENGES TO AND RESTORATION OF CONGRESS SYSTEM

Prepared by Lect. Zahoor Mehdi (BHSS Hariganwan Ganderbal)

"The congress system was first challenged during 1960's . It faced challenges from non-congress parties that emerged as strong opposition parties against congress system. The congress faced challenged from within. The most powerful and influential leaders also challenged the congress new/real. During and after the 1967 elections. In 1971 election congress new led by Indira Gandhi defeated non congress parties and restored the congress by winning 1971 election.

After studying you must be able to:

1. Understand the challenge the political succession that emerged after J.L Nehru?
2. How unity of non congress party and syndicates posed a challenge to congress system
3. How Indira Gandhi overcame the challenges posed by non congress parties?
4. How 1967 election was a political earthquake for Indian National congress?
5. Understand coalition and defection as a challenge to a party politics?
6. Under the policies and programmes of Indira Gandhi that helped the restoration of Congress system.

CHALLENGE OF POLITICAL SUCCESSION

J.L Nehru was the first PM of India. PM J.L Nehru died in 1964 that generated lot of speculation after the question of political succession that is after Nehru who? And after Nehru What?

The 1960's were labeled dangerous decade. IN this connection many doubts emerged regarding leadership. The main doubt was how new leaders will be able to handle different crises that awaited a solution. The ease with which succession to place proved all critics wrong. K Kamraj the President of congress consulted party leaders and found there was consensus in favour Lal Bahadur Shastri. After Nehru Lal Bahadur Shastri became PM of India from 1964 to 1966. During his leadership he faced multiple challenges. His famous slogan "Jay Jawan Jay Kisan" symbolized countries's resolve to face both the challenges. Shastri died on 10th January 1966.

After his death congress faced the political succession in two years. This time was a competition between Morji Desai and Indira Gandhi. The senior leaders decided to back Indira Gandhi. For political transition secret ballot among congress leaders were used and Indira Gandhi became PM of India after shastri.

CHALLENGES THAT EMERGED DURING 1967

OR

FOURTH GENERAL 1967:- A CHALLENGE THAT EMERGED FOR CONGRESS SYSTEM

General election 1967 is known as land mark year in India's electoral history. In the first three elections Indian National Congress dominated the entire elections and parties as well. Thus we witnessed domination of Indian National Congress in first three elections in India. But fourth general election had created many challenges for congress system

The 1960's decade is popularly known as dangerous decade, because in this decade India faced two wars from China and Pakistan. Unresolved problems like poverty, inequality, communal and regional divisions also emerged, the economic situation due to drought and famine conditions led the people to protest against the ruling party. Food scarcity and increased price of commodities also emerged as challenge to ruling party. Thus congress faced protests hartals and bands from people. Now the challenge was how to solve crises that emerged in this decade.

Emergence of non congressism as challenge to congress system:- As we have seen many challenged emerged in 1960's for Congress system. IN such situation non congress that is anti congress party joined their hands together in order to criticize the policies and programmes of congress. It was a socialist leader "Ram Manahar Lohia" who have this strategy the name of non congressism. He provided theoretical argument for its defence. He advocated the that congress was undemocratic and opposite to interests of common people. The coming of non congress parties together was essential for reclaiming democracy for people of India. Thus non congressism emerged as a challenged to congress system.

Fourth Lok Saba election 1967:- In February 1962 fourth general election was conducted in India. The election of 1962 was a great challenge for a congress as non congressism emerged against congress system. Thus political and electoral competition was between congress and non congress system. After declaration of election both center and state assemblies lost seats but managed to get majority in Lok Saba. Half of the ministers in Indira Gandhi's cabinet lost in their constituencies. IN State assemblies congress lost majorities in as many as seven states. For the first time in the electoral history of India, coalition government were format by non congress parties. The political scientists describe 1967 election as political earthquake. The domination of congress system was over. In short congress system faced many challenges from non congress parties.

Emergence of Coalition and defection:- The election of 1967 witnessed the phenomena of coalitions and defections. Coalitions:- when a single political party is not in a position to form government of its by not getting 50% +1 seats in Lok Saba then two or more political parties join their hands together to form a government that govt is popularly known as coalition govt. Defection:- When elected representative leaving the party on whose ticket he/she has been elected is known as defection. The constant realignment and shifting political loyalties in this period gave rise to expression popularly known as "Aaya Ram Gaya Ram" (Ram Came and Ram Went). Thus Coalition and defections also posed challenges to the party politics.

SPLITS/ FACTIONALISM IN CONGRESS SYSTEM

The real challenge to congress/ Indira Gandhi came not only from non congressism but from within her own party. She had to deal with syndicate__ a powerful and influential leaders from within the congress. Indira Gandhi faced two challenges she needed to built her independence from syndicate. She also needed to work towards regaining ground that the congress had lost in 1967 from non congress parties. Indira Gandhi adopted a bold strategy in order to achieve a challenges posed by non congress parties and syndicates.

The faction rivalry between the syndicate and Indira Gandhi came in 1969. After death of president Zakir Hussain's death the syndicates managed to nominate N. Sanjeeva Reddy as the official candidate for the office of president. But Indira Gandhi encouraged V.V Giri to file his nomination as independent candidate. Thus this difference between Indira Gandhi syndicated led base of split within the congress. V.V Giri got elected by the support of Indira Gandhi and other members of congress. Thus by 1969 congress led by Indira Gandhi came to be known as congress (requisitionist)/ (Congress R). and the faction led by syndicated was known as Congress old (O). Thus these two factions were known as congress new and congress old. Thus factionalism emerged as a challenge to congress system.

ELECTION 1971 AND RESTORATION OF CONGRESS SYSTEM

In 1970 government led by Indira Gandhi recommended for the dissolution of Lok Sabha. The fifth general election to Lok Sabha was held in February 1971.

The electoral contest was between Congress led by Indira Gandhi and Grand Alliances formed by Non Congress and Non Communist parties. Moreover Congress led by Indira Gandhi had something that its big opponents lacked. It had an issue, an agenda and a positive slogan. The Grand Alliance did not have a coherent and people friendly policies and programmes. According to Indira Gandhi the Grand Alliances had only one programme that is "Indira Hato (Remove Indira). But her party had one slogan i.e. Garibi Hato (Remove Poverty). Through this slogan Indira got support from people and got popular support during election of 1971.

After declaration of result, Congress (R) led by Indira Gandhi and CPI alliances won more seats and votes than earlier elections. The combine won 375 seats and secured 48.4 percent votes. Congress (R) / New managed to secure 352 with 44% of votes on its own. The Indira Gandhi regained its electoral dominance. The Grand Alliances of the opposition proved a grand failure. They won with combine only less than 40.

With two successive election victories one at center other at state level, the dominance of the Congress was restored. The Congress was now in power both at centre and state assemblies with a span of four years. Indira Gandhi had awarded the challenge to her leadership and to the dominant position of the Congress party. Thus there was revival of Congress system.

IF YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND MORE THE READ.

1. Politics in India since independence by N.C.E.R.T.
2. Politics in India by Paul Brass.
3. India after Gandhi by Ram Chandra Guha.

AFTER STUDYING THIS LESSON NOW YOU MUST BE ABLE TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

Q NO. 1. Which of these statements about 1971 election are correct.

- a) Congress new led by Indira Gandhi was defeated by syndicates.
- b) Indira Gandhi led congress won 1971 election with great majority
- c) Both syndicates and now congress parties were in favour of Indira Gandhi.
- d) Now congress parties won 1971 election after defeating Indira Gandhi.

Q NO. 2. Which of the following statement is correct about 1967 election.

- a) End of congress dominant system.
- b) Non congress parties were supporting INC.
- c) System of coalition and defection did not emerge in 1967 election.
- d) Indira Gandhi did not formed govt. in the Lok Sabha.

Q NO. 3. Explain how political succession emerged as a challenge to congress system?

Q NO. 4. How 1967 election changed the dominant nature of congress system.

Q NO. 5. How congress new/ Indira Gandhi faced the challenges during 1971 election. Discuss how she managed to restore congress system.

Q NO. 6. Explain the following?

- a) Syndicates.
- b) Coalitions.
- c) Grand Alliances.
- d) Defection.
- e) Non Congress.

Q NO. 7. Discuss the major issue which led to the formal split of the congress party in 1969.