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Congress Rule - Practice Question

Q. Critically examine Congress Ministries of 1937. How far is it correct to suggest that it paved the way for a separate Muslim homeland in India?

Answer:

i) Introduction

The Government of India Act 1935 changed the history of Indian nationalism which was evident in the 1937 provincial elections. Indian National Congress (INC) dominated the provincial elections by attaining victory in 5 out of the 11 provinces which included: Madras, the United Provinces (U.P.), the Central Provinces (C.P.), Bihar, and Orissa. The Congress also managed to accept coalition ministries in 2 more provinces. The All India Muslim League (AIML) which claimed to be the flag-bearers of Indian Muslim representation managed only 104/489 Muslim seats. Punjab was dominated by the Unionist

Party and Bengal was dominated by the Krishak Lok Party. However, INC emerged as the largest party of India and established provincial governments in the 7 provinces. Despite multiple requests by the ATML, the Congress rejected the proposal of a coalition government. Nehru made a significant statement post-elections by saying "There are only two parties in the country today: the Congress and the government."

The sheer disregard of ATML as the third-party and the rejection towards establishing a coalition government with them highly disappointed Jinnah. After coming to power, INC unleashed Hindu dominance by promoting their culture, religion, language, and ideas while disregarding Muslim interests. As a result the parting of ways between ATML and INC took place leading to a shift in Jinnah's ideology. The 1937-1939 thus paved way for Jinnah's and ATML's demand for a separate Muslim homeland.

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ii) INC as a Communal Organisation and Promotion of Hindu Nationalism

a. The Wardha Scheme - 1937:

The INC introduced the "Wardha Scheme" as per the vision of Gandhi.

It was an educational scheme which was believed to be promoting Hindu culture and thus was opposed by the Muslims. The Muslims rejected the scheme due to the following reasons:

1. Hindi as primary education language: This move indicated a shift from Urdu to Hindi which was a part of Muslim culture. Hindi was perceived as an imposition of Hindu culture on Muslims.

2. Secular nature of Education: The Wardha Scheme emphasised on secular education which the Muslims felt disregarded Islamic teachings. In addition, few aspects of the secular curriculum contradicted with Islamic teachings such as promotion of "non-violence" while in Islam a great deal of emphasis is laid upon Jihad when circumstances demand it.

3. Hindu Dominated Control: Muslims feared that the scheme would be implemented by Hindus and Muslims will not be part of it which would disregard their interests and Hindus would not safeguard their religious demands, resulting in severe discrimination.

b. Vidya Mandis Scheme - 1939

After the 1937 elections, the vidya mandis scheme was framed by the government.

This scheme was similar to the Wardah Scheme because this too was highly Hindu-centric. Therefore, it received resistance from the Muslim community and led to further polarisation of the political landscape of British India. Major Muslim objection of Muslims towards the scheme was based on the following:

1. Hindu Religious Instruction: The scheme included the instruction of Hindu religion in the curriculum which Muslims perceived as a major threat.
2. Cultural Integration: The scheme also aimed to integrate Hindu culture.

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in formal education system.

3. Exclusion of Islamic Teachings: The scheme disregarded any mention of the inclusion of Islamic teachings in the curriculum.

c. Vande Matram as National Song

The national song was announced to be Vande Matram which was written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in Chapter X of "Anand Math" book. The song and the book was perceived by Muslims to be "anti-Muslim" and promoted idolatry which was unacceptable to the Muslims.

However, singing the song became mandatory at all educational institutes.

d. Tri-colour Flag as National Flag

The tri-colour flag which was associated with the INC was hoisted at all national buildings was a signal of INC dominance which was disliked by AIML.

e. Congress Raj or Hindu Raj

The attitude of the Congress

Leaders towards the Muslims was discriminatory. The Congress despite advocating itself as the national party, showed extreme hatred towards the Muslims. The Muslims seeing the attitude of Congress leaders began to disassociate themselves from INC.

f. Reverence Paid to Roadli and Cow Protection

Protecting and Promoting Hindu beliefs, culture, and practices became common and mandatory here all. The cow sacred to Hindus was to be treated by the Muslims in a similar way. This indicated the growing Hindu sentiment in British India.

iii) Congress and Muslim League - Parting of Ways

a. Muslim Mass Contact Programme (1937-1939)

After securing victory in the 1937 elections, INC realised the need to completely suppress AIML's claim of being the sole representation of

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Eventually, the programme failed and was ended by 1939 due to Congress secessive activities against Muslims, lack of resources dedicated by INC towards the programme, and due to severe AIML counter opposition. However, this programme led to the parting of ways between INC and AIML and the major ideology of Jinnah shifted.

b. Impact of Congress Ministries and Parting of ways

The period between 1937 till 1939 was an eye-opener for Muslims of British India. They practically saw the regression conducted by INC under their provincial rule. Fears among the Muslims and AIML arose when they realised that when Federal (centre) elections are conducted INC will come with a majority. The relations between AIML and INC were for sure considered to be strained now in the long-term considering INC's rejection of AIML's presence.

Muslims in India. Although the election results had proved that Muslim League was not a major political power among Muslims yet INC had also not directly won Muslim seats. Therefore, INC launched the Muslim Mass Contact Programme in 1937. The primary objective of the campaign was to close the gap between INC and Muslim electorate by diminishing the existence of ATML. INC started to bypass ATML and began to conduct political mobilisation under the flag of "Promoting Unity" while undermining ATML.

ATML saw this as a direct threat to their presence and believed this move was aimed at reducing their power. Resultantly, major distrust emerged between the two parties on the fact that INC did not discuss their ambitions with ATML. Fearing political marginalisation, ATML started complete opposition to the programme. On the basis of the need for separate Muslim representation.

and political sovereignty as a party.
Muslims could visualise the Two
Nation Theory concept practically now.
The rejection of INC's mass contact
programme, imposition of Hindi culture
and religion at educational institutes,
the unriling of INC as a Hindu party
and the disregard of Muslim identity
resulted in a major ideological shift
for the Muslims, AIML, and most
importantly for Jinnah.

iv) The Way towards Separate Muslim Homeland

a). Jinnah's Ideological Shift

It can be confidently stated
that the Congress Ministries from
1937 till 1939 were the major factor
which resulted in Jinnah's ideological
shift. The ambassadors of "Hindu-
Muslim unity" had practically witnessed
the wrath of Hindu rule. As a result,
Jinnah declared the resignation of
INC's ^{from} Congress ministries as "Day

of Deliverance" on 22nd December 1939.

b) Rise of Demand for Separate Homeland (Post-1939)

The ideological shift of Jinnah led to the demand for a separate Muslim homeland just a few months after resignation of Congress ministers through the famous Lahore Resolution 1940. The rise for the demand for a separate Muslim homeland can be related to the Congress Ministers from 1937 to 1939 only.

VI. Conclusion

Congress Ministers indeed paved the way for a separate Muslim homeland in India. Prior to 1937, Muslims had not practically experienced Hindu dominated rule with highly devolved powers. The flag, the anthem, the reverence paid to Gandhi, emphasis to cow protection, Hindu-centric curriculum - all these were deliberate and far-reaching attacks on civil and cultural rights.

Of The Muslim community. Therefore,
The parting of ways and the Hindu-
centric Congress rule during 1937 till
1939 eventually led to the demand
for separate homeland for the Muslims.

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Q2: Civil-Military Relations

- Q. Why Military of Pakistan Intervened in Pakistan's politics? What is the role of the present leadership to de-politicise army? Give specific measures.

Answer:

i) Introduction

Pakistan has been mired in political instability and has been under military rule at numerous occasions. Military dictators have ruled Pakistan for 33 years since independence. Today Pakistan is considered a security state operating under a hybrid democratic environment. Military intervention first took place in 1958 when Iskander Mirza placed Pakistan under Martial Law and General Ayub Khan became the Chief Martial Law Administrator. As a country Pakistan faced significant security, economic, and political crisis at the very beginning. Consequently, the military intervened and since then their political presence has been constitutionally legalised by the Supreme Court at multiple occasions and the public

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Sentiment towards military dictators has also not been highly unpleasant. The reason behind military intervention and acceptance is primarily because of political fallacies, security needs, geo-political environment surrounding Pakistan, and lack of visionary civilian leadership. The process of de-politicising the military requires strengthening of political parties, collaborative approach with the military, increasing resilience of civil institutions, and creating credible military alternatives.

ii) Analysing Reasons behind Military Intervention in Pakistan's Politics

a. Political Fallacies:

The political landscape of Pakistan is highly polarised and gets dysfunctional from time to time. The political parties are proponents of dynastic politics due to which grassroots politicians do not emerge to the top ranks. In addition, political parties prefer highly centralised party structure due to

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Which the concept of internal democratic functioning ceases to exist. The personalisation of power results in weak political party structure leading to them playing an ineffective role in the country. Furthermore, mass corruption is an embedded norm in politics of Pakistan due to which the civilians find it difficult to build trust or strong affiliation with the political parties. Lastly, discord between politicians has been a persistent problem in Pakistani political landscape. Resultantly, the notion of "us versus them", dominated by self-interest weakens the entire political branch of the country. The lack of consensus among political parties, mass corruption, personalised politics, and short-term vision results in creating a vacuum which has been exploited by the military.

b. Top Brass of Military

The political intervention of the military has been the decision of the top brass of military and not the military as a whole. The reason behind their

intervention has been because of security concerns ^{and} failure of political parties to ensure stable governance. The top leadership of the Military has always been aware of the political landscape of Pakistan and has intervened at times when political failure has been evident. The first martial law was placed in 1958 and between 1951 to 1958, there were 7 Prime Ministers. The failure of the political parties led to the invitation of military intervention.

C. Weak Civil Institutions:

Pakistan's military is perceived to be the strongest institution in Pakistan among the Pakistani masses. The civil institutions have failed at multiple occasions due to which the military was called for assistance in the internal affairs of the country. During Musharraf's tenure, the military was invited to conduct domestic activities such as conducting elections, cleaning canals, and managing the census. The consistent request

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§ From The military has resulted in the Hero's Complex. The military has proven to be ^{the} saviors of the country by outperforming all civil institutions. The civil institutions are weak, poorly managed, lack strong leadership, and are surrounded by corrupt officers.

d: Pakistan: A Security State

Security concerns have been the most important aspect for Pakistan since inception. Settling between two hostile nations, Pakistan has been troubled because of its geo-strategic location. The Afghan border has been a source of persistent instability while the Indian border has been a consistent threat. The 1948 war ^{on} ~~with~~ Kashmir with India resulted in escalating fear of maintaining Pakistan's sovereignty. Consequently, Pakistan was part of the arms race and searched for alliances. The search for alliances placed Pakistan as a country willing to provide military support to powerful nations in exchange for

economic and military aid. Resultantly, the role of the military was signified and their power grew along with a rapidly increasing defence budget.

e. The Role of Judiciary:

The judiciary at multiple instances upheld the martial law citing the "Doctrine of Necessity." The precedent was set by the Dosso Case (1958) in which the Supreme Court legalised the martial law imposed by General Ayub Khan. The legal precedent legitimised extra-Constitutional actions under the doctrine of necessity. The legal actions of the Apex Court led to providing the military a legal cover for their political intervention in ~~subsequent~~ subsequent years.

iii) De-politicising The Military

a. Resolving Political Fallacies

Political parties are the core institution that can regulate military action and

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Political intervention. The Charter of Democracy (2006) was an essential first step towards removing the internal hurdles to provide a united front. An agreement like the one in 2006 needs to take place again by the present leadership to resolve the problem of military intervention. The need is for a political consensus among all parties to dissociate politics and military and act in terms of the Constitution of Pakistan (1973).

b. Strengthening Civil Institutions:

Limiting the military from internal affairs is the core step to ensuring a proper democratic system. As per the Constitution of Pakistan (1973), Article 245 defines the armed forces role in the country, and mentions that armed forces might be called for civilian aid but that aid should only be utilised in emergency conditions such as during war and not for basic domestic affairs. The military should operate in the external domain only while the

internal domain should be operated, effectively by the civil institutions. Therefore, necessary restructuring of civil institutions and realignment of goals should be conducted immediately.

C. Collaborative Approach with Military:

There is a dire need for key stakeholders engagement where the domain of each institution and jurisdiction needs to be conducted by the political leadership. It is the responsibility of the premier of the state to define boundaries and conduct a consensus based meeting. The hierarchy needs to be reiterated and the middle ground needs to be agreed through collaborative-participatory agreements. The political leadership should utilise the National Security ^{Council} Committee to discuss national security matters and reiterate domains.

iv) Conclusion

Direct Military intervention in politics in Pakistan stands in the root today.

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Pakistan's Key stakeholders which include the three organs of State should look back at history and learn the lessons. The need for military intervention can be situationally justified but not democratically. Today, political leadership should conduct a participatory process by defining domains, strengthening internal democratic institutions, and a proactive role should be played by the judiciary to ensure democratically set precedents are set in the future.