

## Chapter 1 Challenges of Nation Building

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**Q 1. Which among the following statements about the partition is incorrect?**

1. Partition of India was the outcome of the “two-nation theory”.
2. Punjab and Bengal were the two provinces divided on the basis of religion.
3. East Pakistan and West Pakistan were not contiguous.
4. The scheme of Partition included a plan for the transfer of population across the border.

**Ans.** d. The scheme of partition included a plan for the transfer of population across the border.

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**Q 2. Match the principles with instances:**

(a) Mapping of boundaries on religious ground	(i) Pakistan and Bangladesh
(b) Mapping of boundaries on grounds of different languages	(ii) India and Pakistan
(c) Demarcating boundaries within a country by geographical zones	(iii) Jharkhand and Chattisgarh
(d) Demarcating boundaries within a country on administrative and political grounds	(iv) Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand

**Ans.** (a)-(ii), (b)-(iv), (c)-(i), (d)-(iii)

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**Q 3. Take a current political map of India (showing outlines of states) and mark the location of the following Princely States.**

1. Junagadh
2. Manipur
3. Mysore
4. Gwalior.

**Ans.** Please see the Map attached at the end of the chapter. The places are marked as 3(a), 3(b), 3(c) and 3(d).

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**Q 4. Here are two opinions:**

**Bismay:** “The merger with the Indian State was an extension of democracy to the people of the Princely States.” **Inderpreet:** “I am not so sure, there was force being used. Democracy comes by creating consensus.”

**What is your opinion in the light of accession of Princely States and the responses of the people in these parts?**

**Ans.** Accession of princely states and merger with Indian Union was to expand democracy all over the country because princely states never enjoyed their political rights. Indian government central government used force to extend democracy to some extent as this was mandatory to have a uniform base in the country.

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**Q 5. Read the following very different statements made in August 1947:**

“Today you have worn on your heads a crown of thorns. The seat of power is a nasty thing. You have to remain ever wakeful on that seat... you have to be more humble and for bearing... now there will be no end to your being tested.” -M.K. Gandhi

“India will awake to a life of freedom.... we step out from the old to the new.... we end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity ...”, -Jawaharlal Nehru

Spell out the agenda of nation building that flows from these two statements. Which one appeals more to you and why?

**Ans.** These two statements focus on the agenda of secularism, democracy, sovereignty and freedom. A path which will lead to the real development and prosperity of our country. The first statement appeals to me more than the second one because it invokes the countrymen to remain awake, alert and conscious as it is not the end of our struggle. The time to build the nation initiates now.

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**Q 6. What are the reasons being used by Nehru for keeping India secular? Do you think these reasons were only ethical and sentimental? Or were there some prudential reasons as well?**

**Ans.** Reasons for keeping India secular:

1. All the Muslims did not leave India during partition. Some muslims stayed in India as a minority. Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to deal with them in a very civilised and dignified manner.
2. He advocated the security and democratic rights of Muslims as a citizen of India.

No, these reasons were not only ethical and sentimental, but there were some prudential reasons also as:

1. India's secular nature cherished its long term goals and principles like socialism, equality, liberty and fraternity.
  2. Secularism stops any single faith to become superior and inferior to those who practised another religion. Hence, it considers all citizens equal irrespective of religious affiliation.
  3. They cherished, therefore, the idea of a secular nation. This ideal was enshrined in the Indian Constitution.
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**Q 7. Bring out two major differences between the challenge of nation building for eastern and western regions of the country at the time of Independence.**

**Ans.** The two major differences between eastern (Bengal) and western (Punjab) regions can be summed up as follows:

1. The Muslim majority provinces of British India, Punjab and Bengal, had very large areas where the non-Muslims were in majority.
2. Eventually, it was decided that these two provinces would be bifurcated according to the religious majority at the district or even lower level.
3. This decision could not be made by the midnight of 14-15 August. It meant that a large number of people did not know on the day of Independence whether they were in India or in Pakistan.
4. The Partition of these two provinces caused the deepest trauma of Partition.
5. These regions were the Muslim majority of provinces to be joined. Hence, it was decided that the new country Pakistan will comprise two territories i.e. West and East Pakistan.
6. There was the problem of minorities on sides of the border. Lakhs of Hindus and Sikhs in the areas that were now in Pakistan and an equally large number of Muslims on the Indian side of Punjab and Bengal (and to some extent Delhi and surrounding areas) found themselves trapped.
7. As soon as it became clear that the country was going to be partitioned, the minorities on both sides became easy targets of attack. No one had quite anticipated the scale of this problem. No one had any plans for handling this.
8. Initially, the people and political leaders kept hoping that this violence was temporary and would be controlled soon. But very soon the violence went out of control.
9. The minorities on both sides of the border were left with no option except to leave their homes, often at a few hours' notices.

**Q 8. What was the task of the States Reorganisation Commission? What was its most salient recommendation?**

**Ans.** The States Reorganisation Commission was set up in 1953 by the government to look into the matter of redrawing of boundaries of states.

1. The Commission evolved that state boundaries should reflect the boundaries of different languages to accommodate linguistic diversity.
  2. The States Reorganisation Act was passed in 1956 which resulted in the creation of 14 states and 6 union territories.
  3. Its most salient recommendation was the formation of linguistic states i.e. to reorganise states on the basis of accommodation of their languages to prepare a uniform base for the nation.
  4. The accommodation of regional demands and the formation of linguistic states were also seen as more democratic.
  5. Linguistic reorganisation also gave some uniform basis to the drawing of state boundaries. It did not lead to the disintegration of the country as many had feared earlier. On the contrary, it strengthened national unity.
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**Q 9. It is said that the nation is too large extent an “imagined community” held together by common beliefs, history, political aspirations and imaginations. Identify the features that make India a nation.**

**Ans.** India proved herself through all stages of three challenges at the time of nation building like:

1. India is a secular country where people speak different languages and follow different culture and religion to be recognised as a nation of unity in diversity with common faith and beliefs.
2. Political aspiration ensures democratic setup based on a parliamentary form of government creating political competition in a democratic framework.
3. India's imaginations established a welfare state on the principle of equality and special protection to socially disadvantaged groups and religions as well as cultural communities.

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**Q 10. Read the following passage and answer the questions below:**

“In the history of nation-building, only the Soviet experiment bears comparison with the Indian. There too, a sense of unity had to be forged between many diverse ethnic groups, religious, linguistic communities and social classes. The scale-geographic as well as demographic was comparably massive. The raw material the state had to work with was equally unpropitious: a people divided by faith and driven by debt and disease.”—Ramachandra Guha

1. List the commonalities that the author mentions between India and the Soviet Union and give one example for each of these from India.
2. The author does not talk about the dissimilarities between the two experiments. Can you mention two dissimilarities?
3. In retrospect which of these two experiments worked better and why?

**Ans.** a. Commonalities between India and the Soviet Union:

1. Both nations shaped the nation on a linguistic basis.
2. To promote welfare motives, economic and technological developments took place in India also.
3. States were divided on the grounds of geographical boundary and strength of populations also in both the nations.

b. Dissimilarities:

1. The Soviet Union was divided into 15 independent republics/countries to be disintegrated.
2. India maintained its unity and integrity even among the diversified nature of states and peoples without any more division.

C. The Indian experiment worked better to promote linguistic and cultural plurality without affecting unity and integrity of the nation though India adopted some diplomatic measures to make country united.