



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss how the policies of Jawaharlal Nehru helped in the nation-building and post-independence consolidation of India.

13 May, 2021 GS Paper 1 History

Approach

- Start the answer by briefly explaining the challenges faced by the newly independent India.
- Discuss Nehru's role in post independence consolidation and nation building.
- Conclude Suitably.

Introduction

India gained independence in 1947, but as a nation faced very difficult circumstances. For instance, freedom came with partition of the country and communal violence. Entire country was burdened by poverty, illiteracy and lack of development. On the foreign policy front, geopolitics was witnessing the start of the cold war.

In this scenario, Jawahar Lal Nehru became the first Prime Minister of Independent India and initiated a slew of reforms and policies that helped in nation building and post-independence consolidation of India.

Body

- **Consolidation of the Nation:** JL Nehru established the State Reorganization Committee to fulfil regional aspirations of the people which would lower the chances of them wanting to cede from the nation.
- **Rehabilitation of Refugees:** Refugees from Pakistan were given shelter and attempts were made to reduce communalism.
- **Secularism:** It was mainly due to JL Nehru's efforts that India emerged as a secular state in the mid-twentieth century.
 - Much before independence, he played a heroic role in the development of a secular basis for Indian polity.
 - This helped in building the narrative of 'Unity in Diversity'.
- **Welfare state:** JL Nehru was a practical idealist and believed that socialism and democracy were not contradictory but complementary to each other.
 - He wanted to build a welfare state for the equitable distribution of wealth.
- **Planning Commission:** JL Nehru, a pragmatic socialist understood the importance of the welfare state in a country which does not have sufficient infrastructure, established a planning commission for long term planning of social schemes.
- **Non-Alignment Policy (NAM):** JL Nehru, being the Foreign Minister, did not want to join either of the power blocs. Also he did not want India to remain aloof from world politics. Therefore, Nehru's visionary approach to establish NAM with other third world countries proved to be an ideal foreign policy approach.

Conclusion

Despite facing daunting challenges, JL Nehru was successful in maintaining and strengthening the nation. Carrying the traditions of the national movement, he nurtured the newly born nation, India. That is why he is widely acclaimed as one of the architects of modern India.

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