

Q Assess the role of the left wing within the Indian National Congress between 1920 & 1947.

When the Non-Cooperation Movement was called off in 1922 many young nationalists were disappointed. Many people got dissatisfied with Gandhian policies & ideas. This was the time when powerful left-wing groups developed in India. Within the Congress the left-wing tendency found reflection in the election of Jawaharlal Nehru & Subhash Chandra Bose as Presidents & in the formation of the Congress Socialist Party.

The left-wing group within the Congress had a significant impact on the national movement which was reflected in -

- i) The resolution on fundamental Rights & Economic Policy passed by the Karachi session of the Congress in 1931
- ii) The resolutions on economic policy passed at the Faizpur session in 1936.
- iii) The election manifesto of Congress in 1936
- iv) The setting up of National Planning Committee in 1938
- v) The foundation of the All-India Students' Federation & the convening of the first All-India States' Peoples Conference in 1936.
- vi) The left-wing group within the Congress was also very active in All-India Women's Conference.

But one of the most important achievements of the left-wing group within the Congress which included Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, Jayprakash Narayan, Achut Achyut Patwardhan, Acharya Narendra Dev etc, was to organise workers & peasants and to make them politically aware. This led to the rise of trade unions & Kisan Sabhas.

However, the left-wing group within the Congress also had its weaknesses, like it failed to show ideological & tactical flexibility & hence could not establish the hegemony of socialist ideas & parties over the national movement. It also had a wrong perception that masses were ever ready for struggle in any form if only the leaders were willing to initiate it.

Despite these shortcomings the socialist leaders within the Congress played a very important role in the national movement. They influenced the Congress with their socialist ideas & rekindled the spirit of political participation among the workers & the peasants.