

UPSC Civil Services Examination

UPSC Notes [GS-I]

Topic: Nehru Report - Recommendations & Responses [NCERT Notes on Modern Indian History for UPSC]

The Nehru Report had the primary motive of assigning Dominion status to India within the British Commonwealth.

The major components of the Nehru Report are:

1. Bill of Rights
2. Assigning Equal rights to men and women as citizens
3. Formation of a federal form of government with residuary powers in the hands of Centre
4. Proposal for the creation of Supreme Court

This is an important topic for the UPSC Exam. This a part of NCERT notes on important topics for the UPSC [Civil Services Exam](#) preparation. These notes will also be useful for other competitive exams like Bank PO, SSC, state civil services exams and so on.

Background

- When the Simon Commission came to India in 1928, it was vehemently opposed by Indians especially the Congress Party for the lack of a single Indian in the Commission.
- So, the Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead challenged the Indian leaders to draft a constitution for India, implicitly implying that Indians were not capable of finding a common path and drafting a constitution.
- The political leaders accepted this challenge and an All Party Conference was held and a committee appointed with the task of drafting a constitution.
- This committee was headed by Motilal Nehru with [Jawaharlal Nehru](#) as the Secretary. Other members were Ali Imam, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mangal Singh, M S Aney, Subhas Chandra Bose, Shuaib Qureshi and G R Pradhan.
- The draft constitution prepared by the committee was called the Nehru Committee Report or Nehru Report. The report was submitted at the Lucknow session of the all-party conference on August 28, 1928.
- This was the first major attempt by Indians to draft a constitution for themselves.

Read about [Indian National Congress Sessions & their Presidents](#) in the linked article.

Recommendations of the report

- Dominion status for India (like Canada, Australia, etc.) within the British Commonwealth. (This point was a bone of contention with the younger set of leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose who favoured complete independence.)

- Nineteen fundamental rights including the right to vote for men and women above 21 years of age, unless disqualified.
- Equal rights for men and women as citizens.
- No state religion.
- No separate electorates for any community. It did provide for reservation of minority seats. It provided for reservation for seats for Muslims at the centre and in provinces where they were in a minority and not in Bengal and Punjab. Similarly, it provided for reservation for non-Muslims in the NWFP.
- A federal form of government with residual powers with the centre. There would be a bicameral legislature at the centre. The ministry would be responsible to the legislature.
- Governor-General to be the constitutional head of India. He would be appointed by the British monarch.
- A proposal for the creation of a Supreme Court.
- The provinces would be created along linguistic lines.
- The language of the country would be Indian, written either in Devanagari (Sanskrit/Hindi), Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Bengali, Marathi or Gujarati in character. English usage to be permitted.

Responses

- The issue of communal representation was controversial. In December 1927, many Muslim leaders met Motilal Nehru at Delhi and suggested a few proposals. These were accepted by Congress at its Madras session. These 'Delhi Proposals' were:
 1. 1/3rd representation of Muslims in the Central Legislature.
 2. Representation to Muslims in Punjab and Bengal in proportion to their populations.
 3. Formation of three new provinces with a Muslim majority – Sindh, Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).
- However, the Hindu Mahasabha was opposed to the formation of the new provinces and the communal representation in Bengal and Punjab. They pressed for a strictly unitary system.
- The report made concessions to the Hindu group by stating that joint electorates would be the system followed with reservation of seats for Muslims only where they were in a minority. Sindh would be created into a new province (by severing from Bombay) only after dominion status was granted and weightage would be given to the Hindu minority there.
- At the all-party conference held in Calcutta in 1928 to discuss the report, Jinnah made three amendments to the report:
 1. 1/3rd representation of Muslims in the Central Legislature.
 2. Reservation to Muslims in Punjab and Bengal in proportion to their populations until adult suffrage was established.
 3. Residual powers to be vested with the provinces and not the centre.
- Since these demands of Jinnah were not met, he gave the 'Fourteen Points' in March 1929, which served as the basis of all future agenda of the League.

Jinnah's Fourteen Points

1. Federal constitution with residual powers with the provinces.
2. Provincial autonomy.
3. No constitutional amendment without the agreement of the states.
4. All legislatures and elected bodies to have adequate Muslim representation without reducing Muslim majority in a province to minority or equality.
5. Adequate Muslim representation of Muslims in the services and in self-governing bodies.
6. 1/3rd representation of Muslims in the Central Legislature.
7. 1/3rd Muslim members in the central and state cabinets.
8. Separate electorates.
9. No bill to be passed in any legislature if 3/4th of a minority community considers it against its interests.
10. Any reorganisation of territories not to affect the Muslim majority in Bengal, Punjab and the NWFP.
11. Separation of Sindh from Bombay Presidency.
12. Constitutional reforms in the NWFP and Baluchistan.
13. Full religion freedom for all communities.
14. Protection of the religious, cultural, educational and language rights of Muslims.