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Q92

What was the main reason for the split in the Indian National Congress at Surat in 1907? (a) Introduction of communalism into Indian politics by Lord Minto (b) Extremists' lack of faith in the capacity of the moderates to negotiate with the British Government (c) Foundation of Muslim League (d) Aurobindo Ghosh's inability to be elected as the President of the Indian National Congress Official key: B.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2016 · General Studies · 2 marks · History (Ancient, Medieval, Modern)

Ancient, medieval and modern Indian history - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation

(a)

Lord Minto's encouragement of communal electorates (1909) is a parallel colonial track. It was not the main reason the Congress split at Surat in 1907. This option is not the key.

(b) Official key

At Surat (December 1907) the Extremists (**Tilak**, Lajpat Rai, Pal, **Aurobindo**) had lost faith that Moderate methods - petitions, prayers and negotiation - could extract real concessions after the Swadeshi years. Clash over the presidential election and over boycott/swadeshi as Congress creed produced the split. That Extremist distrust of Moderate capacity to negotiate with the British is the official key.

(c)

The All-India Muslim League was founded in 1906 at Dacca. It is background to communal politics, not the immediate cause of the Surat split inside Congress. This option is wrong.

(d)

Aurobindo Ghosh was a leading Extremist; the presidential tussle was about **Rash Behari Ghosh** versus the Extremist claim, not primarily '**Aurobindo**'s inability to be elected President'. This option is not the key.

Summary

Official key is (b) Extremists' lack of faith in the capacity of the moderates to negotiate with the British Government. After 1905 Swadeshi, Extremists wanted Congress to endorse boycott and passive resistance; Moderates wanted to keep the movement constitutional. Surat exploded over the chair and the creed. Minto-Morley communalism, the League's birth, and **Aurobindo**'s personal election are nearby facts, not the main reason given in the key.

Related possible facts

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

Surat session

December 1907; Congress split into Moderates and Extremists

Rash Behari Ghosh

Moderate president at the disputed Surat sitting

Four-point Extremist programme

Swadeshi, boycott, national education, swaraj

Lucknow, 1916

Reunion of Moderates and Extremists, plus Congress-League pact

Morley-Minto reforms

Indian Councils Act, 1909; separate electorates

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