

APPOLO



STUDY CENTRE

INM
TEST-6

NATIONAL RENAISSANCE- EARLY UPRISING AGAINST BRITISH RULE, INC, EMBECCENCE OF NATIONAL LEADERS AND TAMIL NADU LEADERS		
10TH BOOK	Unit - 2	The World between Two World Wars
	Unit - 7	Anti-Colonial Movements and The Birth of Nationalism-(7.5)
	Unit - 8	Nationalism: Gandhian Phase
11TH VOL II	Unit - 16	The Coming Of The Europeans
	Unit - 17	Effects of British Rule
	Unit - 19	Towards Modernity
12TH VOL I	Unit - 1	Rise of Nationalism in India
	Unit - 2	Rise of Extremism and Swadeshi Movement
DIFFERENT MODES OF AGITATION GROWTH OF SATYAGRAHA AND MILITANT MOVEMENTS		
12th std	Unit - 3	Impact of World War I on Indian Freedom Movement
	Unit - 4	Advent of Gandhi and Mass Mobilisation
	Unit - 5	Period of radicalism in Anti-imperialist Struggles
	Unit - 6	Religion in Nationalist Politics
COMMUNALISM AND PARTITION		
12TH VOL I	Unit - 7	Last Phase of Indian National Movement

10th book
Unit - II

The World between Two World Wars

The First World War shattered the global capitalist system based on European imperialism. The European powers were gravely weakened by the War, financially and politically. The conflict between the workers and the ruling classes that controlled the government became intense. As a result of this Fascism emerged in Italy and Germany. Anti-colonial struggles got intensified as the colonial powers were weakened by the War.

As we saw in the last chapter, the crisis in the Western world had led to the outbreak of World War I. We now turn to the social and political developments in the world after the end of the War.

The Great Depression

Developments in the post-World War I

The First World War led to the expansion of certain industries in the hope that the war-time boom would continue. However, when the War came to an end, the industries that grew to meet war-time requirements had to be abandoned or modified. The situation was made worse by the political complications caused by the Treaty of Versailles. A new wave of economic nationalism which expressed itself in protectionism or in tariff barriers affected world trade. The war also placed a heavy burden of debt on every European country.

Stock Market Crash in the US

The first huge crash occurred on 24 October 1929. This discouraged investors and consumers to such an extent that more and more people began to sell their shares and dispose of their stocks. But there were no buyers. This was followed by the failure of American banks. The American financiers were forced to recall their own funds invested abroad.

Breakdown of the International System of Exchange

Despite emergency measures such as cutbacks in expenditure and increased taxation, the situation did not improve in England. So England decided to leave the Gold Standard. Immediately a great number of countries left the gold standard. Each nation adopted a policy of protectionism and devaluation of currency. Devaluation forced creditors to stop lending. This led to a world-wide credit contraction. Thus the defensive measures adopted by various nations to safeguard their economic interests led to an unprecedented decline in world economic activity. As its effect was deep and prolonged economists and historians call it the Great Depression.

Gold Standard is a monetary system where a country's currency or paper money carried a value directly linked to gold.

Repercussion in Politics

The Depression changed the political conditions in several countries. In England, the Labour Party was defeated in the general elections of 1931. In the USA, the Republican Party was rejected by the people in successive elections for about twenty years after the Depression.

Rise of Fascism and Nazism

(a) The Impact of War in Italy

The first of the nations of Western Europe to turn against the old ruling regime was Italy. During World War I the primary task of Italy was to keep the Austrians occupied on the Southern Front, while the British, French and Americans cornered Germany into submission along the battle lines in Flanders. The financial cost of the participation in the War was huge. Moreover, after the War, in the sharing of the spoils, Italy got less than she expected. The country suffered heavy losses in a war that was unpopular with both socialists and pro-Austrian Catholics. The nationalists were equally unhappy with the marginal gain in territory from the Treaty of Versailles. The War resulted in inflation. There were frequent protests and strikes. People held the rulers responsible for the humiliation at Versailles.

Emergence of Mussolini

In the elections held November 1919 in the aftermath of the Treaty of Versailles, Italian socialists, proclaiming that they were following Bolshevism (Communism in Soviet Russia), won about a third of the seats. Mussolini, son of a blacksmith and qualified as an elementary school master, in the end became a journalist with socialist views. A forceful speaker, Mussolini began to support the use of violence and broke with the socialists when they opposed Italy's entry into the War. When the Fascist Party was founded in 1919 Mussolini immediately joined it. As Fascists stood for authority, strength and discipline, support came from industrialists, nationalists, ex-soldiers, the middle classes and discontented youth. The Fascists resorted to violence freely. In October 1922, in the context of a long ministerial crisis, Mussolini organised the Fascist March on Rome. Impressed by the show of force, the King invited Mussolini to form a government. The inability of the Democratic Party leaders to combine and act with resolution facilitated Mussolini's triumph.

Fascism is a form of radical authoritarian ultra-nationalism, characterised by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition and strong regimentation of society and of the economy, which came to prominence in early 20th-century Europe. -Wikipedia.

Fascists under Mussolini

In the 1924 elections, after intimidation of the electors, 65 per cent of the votes were cast for the Fascists. Matteotti, a socialist leader, who questioned the fairness of the elections was murdered. The opposition parties boycotted the Parliament in protest. Mussolini reacted by banning opposition parties and censoring the press. Opposition leaders were killed or imprisoned. Assuming the title of Il Duce (the leader), in 1926 he became a dictator with power to legislate. He passed a law forbidding strikes and lockouts. Unions and employers were organized into corporations. In 1938 Parliament was abolished and was replaced by a body representing the Fascist Party and the corporations. This new arrangement bolstered

Mussolini's dictatorial control of the economy, as well as enabling him to wield enormous power as head of the administration and the armed forces.

Mussolini's Pact with Pope

In order to give respectability to the Fascist Party, Mussolini won over the Roman Catholic Church by recognising the Vatican City as an independent state. In return the Church recognised the Kingdom of Italy. The Roman Catholic faith was made the religion of Italy and compulsory religious teaching in school was ordered. The Lateran Treaty incorporating the said provisions was signed in 1929.

Italy during the Great Depression

During the years of the Great Depression the much publicised public works of building new bridges, roads and canals, hospitals and schools did not provide solution to the unemployment problem. In 1935, Mussolini invaded Ethiopia. This was useful to divert attention of the people away from the economic troubles.

(b) Germany in the post-War

From 1918 to 1993 Germany was a republic. The factors which led to the eventual triumph of Fascism in Germany were many. Between 1871 and 1914 Germany had risen to dizzy heights of economic, political and cultural accomplishments. Germany's universities, its science, philosophy and music were known all over the world. Germany had surpassed even Britain and the US in several fields of industrial production.

Germany's defeat and humiliation at the end of World War I caused a deep shock to the of German people. The Great Depression further deepened their frustration and prompted them to turn against the Republican government.

Evolution of German Fascism

The origin of German fascism goes back to 1919 when a group of seven men met in Munich and founded the National Socialist German Workers' Party (abbreviated as Nazi Party). One of them was Adolf Hitler. During World War I, he served in the Bavarian army. A gifted speaker, he could whip up the passion of the audience. In 1923 Hitler attempted to capture power in Bavaria. His launch of the National Revolution on the outskirts of Munich landed him in prison. During his time in prison wrote *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), an autobiographical book containing his political ideas. In the Presidential election of 1932, the Communist Party polled about 6,000,000 votes. Alarmed capitalists and property owners tilted towards supporting fascism Hitler exploited this opportunity to usurp powers.

Social Democratic Party was founded as the General German Workers Association on 23 May 1863 in Leipzig. Founder was Ferdinand Lassalle. German elites of the late 19th century considered the very existence of a socialist party a threat to the security and stability of the newly unified Reich, and so Bismark outlawed this party from 1878 to 1890. However, in 1945, with the fall of Hitler, the Social Democratic Party was revived. It was the only surviving party from the Weimar period with a record of opposition to Hitler.

The Nazi State of Hitler

Republican government fell, as the Communists refused to collaborate with the Social Democrats. Thereupon industrialists, bankers and Junkers prevailed upon President Von Hindenburg to designate Hitler as Chancellor in 1933. The Nazi state of Hitler, known as Third Reich, brought an end to the parliamentary democracy.

Hitler replaced the flag of the Weimar republic by the swastika banners of National Socialism. Germany was converted into a highly centralised state. All political parties except the Nazi party were declared illegal. The army of brown-shirted and jack-booted storm-troopers was expanded. The Hitler Youth was created, and the Labour Front set up. Trade unions were abolished, their leaders arrested. Strikes were made illegal, wages were fixed by the government. Total state control was extended over the press, the theatre, the cinema, radio and over education.

The Nazi Party's propaganda was led by Josef Goebbels, who manipulated public opinion through planned propaganda. The Gestapo or Secret State Police was formed and run by Himmler.

Nazi Policy towards Jews

Along with the repressive measures, Hitler's government followed a policy of repressing Jewish people. The Jews were removed from government positions, excluded from the universities and deprived of citizenship. Jewish businesses were closed down, and their establishments were attacked. After the outbreak of World War II concentration camps, barracks surrounded by electrified fences and watch towers, were built where Jews were interred and used as forced labour. Later they were turned into extermination camps where industrial means of murder such as gas chambers were used to kill them in what the Nazis termed 'The Final Solution'.

Defiance of the Treaty of Versailles

In August 1934 Hindenburg died and Hitler, apart from being Chancellor, became both President and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. Hitler's foreign policy aimed at restoring the armed strength of Germany and annulling provisions of Versailles Treaty.

Anti-Colonial Movements and Decolonisation Processes in Asia

(a) French Indo-China Rise of Anti-Colonialism

Indo-China (today's Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam) had shown its discontent right from the beginning of the French occupation (1887). While the Indo-Chinese resisted the imposition of French language and culture, they learned from them the ideas of revolution. During the First World War about 100,000 Indo-Chinese fought in France and returned with first-hand knowledge of how the French had fought and suffered during the War. Communist ideas from mainland China were also a major influence. Many became convinced that the considerable wealth of Indo-China was benefiting only the colonial power.

Decolonisation is a process through which colonial powers transferred institutional and legal control over their colonies to the indigenous nationalist governments.

The Emergence of Viet Minh

The mainstream political party in IndoChina was the Vietnam Nationalist Party. Formed in 1927, it was composed of the wealthy and middle class sections of the population. In 1929 the Vietnamese soldiers

Ho Chi Minh (1890-1969) was born in Tongking. When Ho Chi Minh was twenty one, he went to Europe. After working as a cook in a London hotel, he went to Paris. In the Paris peace conference, he lobbied for the independence for Vietnam. His articles in newspapers and especially the pamphlet, French Colonialism on Trial, made him well known as a Vietnam nationalist. In 1921 he became a founder-member of the French Communist party. Two years later he went to Moscow and learnt revolutionary techniques then. In 1925, he founded the Revolutionary Youth Movement.

mutinied, and there was a failed attempt to assassinate the French Governor-General. This was followed by a large scale peasant revolt led by the Communists. The revolt was crushed followed by what is called "White Terror." Thousands of rebels were killed.

After the White Terror, Ho Chi Minh left for Moscow and spent the 1930s in Moscow and China. When France was defeated by Germany in 1940, Ho Chi Minh and his lieutenants

used this turn of events to advance the Vietnamese cause. Crossing over the border into Vietnam in January 1941, they organized the League for the Independence of Vietnam, or Viet Minh. This gave renewed emphasis to a distinct Vietnamese nationalism.

(b) Decolonisation in India

Dyarchy in Provinces

The decolonization process started in India from the beginning of the twentieth century with the launch of the Swadeshi Movement in 1905. The outbreak of the First World War brought about rapid political as well as economic changes. In 1919, the Government of India Act introduced Dyarchy that provided for elected provincial assemblies as well as for Indian ministers to hold certain portfolios under Transferred Subjects. The Indian National Congress rejected Dyarchy and decided to boycott the legislature.

Lack of Measures to Industrialise India

Despite the discriminating protection given to certain select industries such as sugar, cement, and chemicals, there was no change in the colonial economic policy. But in the case of indigenous industries, support was only in the form of providing “technical advice and education, and the establishment of pioneer factories in new industries”. However, even this policy was soon abandoned as many British enterprises were opposed to this.

Impact of Depression on Indian Agriculture

The ‘Great Depression’ also dealt a death blow to Indian agriculture and the indigenous manufacturing sector. The value of farm produce, declined by half while the land rent to be paid by the peasant remained unchanged. In terms of prices of agricultural commodities, the obligation of the farmers to the state doubled. The great fall in prices prompted Indian nationalists to demand protection for the internal economy. The 1930s saw the emergence of the Indian National Congress as a militant mass movement.

Government of India Act, 1935

The British had to appease the Indian nationalists and the outcome was the passage of the Government of India Act, 1935. This provided for greater power to the local governments and the introduction of direct elections. In the 1937 elections the Congress won a resounding victory in most of the provinces. However the decision of Britain to involve India in the Second World War, without consulting the popular Congress ministries, forced the latter to resign from office.

Anti-Colonial Movements in Africa Colonisation of Africa

The African coastline had been explored in the sixteenth century and a few European settlements had come about. But the interior of Africa was unknown to the outside world

until the last quarter of nineteenth century. European colonisation began after about 1875. The Berlin Colonial Conference of 1884–85 resolved that Africa should be divided into spheres of influence of various colonial powers. The war between the British and Boers in South Africa, however, was in defiance of this resolution.

Boer Wars

The relations between the two British colonies of Natal and Cape Colony and the two independent Boer states of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State had long been unfriendly. The discovery of gold in Transvaal, in 1886, led to large numbers of British miners settling in and around Johannesburg. The Boers hated these people whom they referred to as Uitlanders (foreigners). The Boers taxed them heavily apart from denying political rights. So the question was whether the British or the Boers were to be supreme in South Africa. Fearing attacks from the British, the Boers armed themselves and decided to attack.

The Boer War lasted for three years, 1899- 1902. Initially, the Boers were successful. But by the first half of 1900, the Boer army was defeated. Pretoria was occupied. The Boers took to guerrilla fighting. This continued for about two years. In retaliation the British destroyed farms and crops. They set up internment camps for Boer women and children. Shortage of food, medical and sanitary facilities caused the death of 26,000 people. The British annexed the two Boer states. Boers were however promised self-government in due course. In 1907 full responsible government was given to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The four states formed into a union and the South Africa Act passed by the British parliament in 1909 provided for a Union Parliament at Cape Town. The Union of South Africa came into being in May 1910.

The descendents of original Dutch settlers of South Africa, also known as Afrikaners, were called Boers. Their language is Afrikaans.

Nationalist Politics in South Africa

There were two main political parties: the Unionist Party which was mainly British, and the South Africa Party which had largely Afrikaners (Boers). The first Prime Minister, Botha belonged to the South Africa Party ruled in cooperation with the British. But a militant section of the South Africa Party formed the National Party under Herzog. In the 1920 elections the National Party gained fortyfour seats. The South Africa Party, now led by Smuts, secured forty-one seats. At this juncture the British-dominated Unionist Party merged with the South Africa Party. This gave Smuts a majority over the militant Afrikaner-controlled National Party.

Racist Policy against the Blacks

The Afrikaners pursued a harsher, racist policy towards the blacks and the minority Indians. In 1923 an Act was passed to confine the native residents to certain parts of towns. Already an Act of 1913 had segregated black and white farmers, which made it impossible for the blacks to acquire land in most parts of the country. The 1924 elections were won by the National Party with the support of the Labour movement, composed mainly of white miners. The Act passed in 1924 prevented blacks from striking work and from joining trade unions. In the Cape Province the voting right to blacks was abolished. Native Blacks suffered in all spheres: social, economic and politics.

Apartheid in South Africa

Apartheid, which means separateness, became the racial policy of the Nationalist Party in 1947. From 1950 onwards a series of laws came to be enforced. The whole country was divided into separate areas for the different races. Marriage between white and non-white was forbidden. Nearly all schools were brought under government control so that education different from that of the Whites could be implemented for Africans. University education was also segregated. Apartheid is based on the belief that the political equality of White and Black in South Africa would mean Black rule. The ANC which fought the practice of racism was banned and its leader Nelson Mandela was put behind bars. Mounting pressure at the global level helped to end the racist regime in South Africa. In 1990 the ban on ANC was lifted and Mandela freed after 27 years. In the elections held subsequently the Africans were allowed to vote and ANC won the election and Mandela became the first black president of South Africa. Even though apartheid was dismantled the Whites completely dominate the economic sphere.

Political Developments in South America

Mayas and Aztecs

Before the European discovery of America three centres of civilisations existed there in Pizarro Mexico in Central America and in Peru in South America. The Maya, the Inca and the Aztec Civilizations were highly advanced. There were several states in each of these areas of civilisation. Well organised and strong governments existed. Around the eleventh century, large cities formed into a league of Mayapan (centre of Maya civilisation of Native Americans American Indians). For over hundred years the League of Mayapan lasted. Though Mayapan was destroyed towards the close of twelfth century, other cities continued. Aztecs from Mexico conquered the Maya country in the fourteenth century and founded their capital city of Tenochtitlan. For nearly two hundred years the Aztecs ruled their empire.

European Colonisation and its Impact

In the sixteenth century (around 1519) when the Aztecs were at the height of their power, the whole empire collapsed before a handful of adventurers led by a Spaniard named

Hernan Cortes. Mexican civilisation collapsed. With it the great city of Tenochtitlan also perished. This is one of the world's worst genocides. The other famous Conquistador (conqueror) was also a Spaniard by name Francisco Pizarro. Who led the conquest of the Incan Empire. Later the Spaniards made Peru a part of their dominions.

By the late 18th century, demand for political freedom, administrative autonomy and economic self-determination was articulated throughout Latin America. There were bloody conflicts between Haitian slaves, colonists, the armies of the British and the French colonizers. These struggles led by Toussaint L'Ouverture during 1791-1804 ended in the Haitian people's independence from the colonial control of France. Haiti thus became the first Caribbean country to throw off slavery and French colonial control.

Impact of Napoleonic Invasion of Spain and Portugal

The American and French Revolutions provided inspiration to the Latin Americans. The Napoleonic invasion of Spain and Portugal in 1808 quickened the process of liberation Struggle in South America. Already the spirit of independence was growing under the leadership of Simon Bolivar, called El Liberator, the liberator. In the case of Brazil, the Portuguese royal family in the context of conquest of Portugal by Napoleon fled from Lisbon and thereby assisted the transition of Brazil from colony to independent nation. Pedro I renouncing the claim to the Portuguese throne declared independence of Brazil.

The Monroe Doctrine

The fight for independence intensified when Napoleon fell in 1815. But Monroe, the President of the USA, came up with his famous Monroe doctrine, which declared that if Europeans interfered anywhere in America, north or south, it would amount to waging a war against the United States. This threat frightened the European powers. By 1830 the whole of South America was free from European domination. Thus the U.S. protected the South American republics from Europe; but there was no one to protect them from the Protector, the United States.

Disunity among Latin American Nationalists

Latin American nationalists fought not only Spain and Portugal but also each other. In 1821 Central America seceded from Mexico. Later (1839) Central America itself split into five republics (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua). Uruguay split from Brazil in 1828. In 1830 Venezuela and Ecuador seceded from Gran Columbia, the republic created by Bolivar.

US Imperial Interests

At the dawn of the twentieth century the United States had occupied Cuba and Puerto Rico, after defeating the Spanish in 1898. From 1898 to 1902 Cuba was under US military rule. When the Americans finally left they retained a naval station in Cuba. Roosevelt made an important amendment to the doctrine in 1904. It authorised US intervention in Latin

America 'in order to maintain order.' After effecting this amendment, the US became the dominant influence not only politically but also in economics.

Great Depression in South America

The situation created by the Great Depression made it impossible for oligarchic regimes to accommodate the rising expectations of several assertive groups. In Mexico, there was violent social protest involving dissatisfied segments of the oligarchy, middle-class intellectuals, and peasant communities. Elsewhere electoral reform enabled newer social groups to obtain political power through the ballot box.

Latin America protested American intervention and disliked their "dollar imperialism". The opposition to political intervention produced a change in US policy after 1933. Franklin Roosevelt in his "Good Neighbour" policy agreed that the US would not intervene in the internal affairs of any state, and would give economic and technical assistance to Latin America.

Dollar Imperialism, the term used to describe the policy of the USA in maintaining and dominating over distant lands through economic aid.

10h Std
Unit -7

Anti-Colonial Movements and The Birth of Nationalism

1915. The rising popularity of Annie Besant was the other factor which compelled the moderates to put up a common front against the colonial government. In the Lucknow session of Indian National Congress (1916), it was decided to admit the militant faction into the party.

Tilak set up the first Home Rule League in April 1916. In September 1916, after repeated demands of her impatient followers, Annie Besant decided to start the Home Rule League without the support of Congress. Both the leagues worked independently. The Home Rule Leagues were utilised to carry extensive propaganda through, press, speeches, public meetings, lectures, discussions and touring in favour of self-government. They succeeded in enrolling young people in large numbers and extending the movement to the rural areas. The Home Rule Movement in India borrowed much of its principles from the Irish Home Rule Movement.

(b) Objectives of the Home Rule Movement

- To attain self-government within the British Empire by using constitutional means.
- To obtain the status of dominion, a political position accorded later to Australia, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand.
- To use non-violent constitutional methods to achieve their goals.

(c) Lucknow Pact (1916)

The Home Rule Movement and the subsequent reunion of moderate and the militant nationalists opened the possibility of fresh talks with the Muslims. Under the Lucknow Pact (1916), the Congress and the Muslim League agreed that there should be self-government in India as soon as possible. In return, the Congress leadership accepted the concept of separate electorate for Muslims.

(d) British Response

The response of the government of British India to the Home Rule Movement was not consistent. Initially it stated that there should be reform to accommodate more Indians in local administrative bodies. As the demand for Swaraj was raised by Tilak and Annie Besant that gained popularity, the British used the same old ploy to isolate the leaders by repressing their activities.

In 1919 the British government announced the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms which promised gradual progress of India towards self-government. This caused deep disappointment to Indian nationalists. In a further blow the government enacted what was called the Rowlatt Act which provided for arbitrary arrest and strict punishment.

I mean by self-government that the country shall have a government by councils, elected by the people, elected with the power of the purse and the government is responsible to the house.... India should demand self-government not based on loyalty to the British government or as a reward for her services in the war but as a right based on the principle of national self-determination.

– Annie Besant (in September 1915)



Unit - 8 Nationalism: Gandhian Phase

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi arrived in India in 1915 from South Africa after fighting for the civil rights of the Indians there for about twenty years. He brought with him a new impulse to Indian politics. He introduced satyagraha, which he had perfected in South Africa, that could be practiced by men and women, young and old. As a person dedicated to the cause of the poorest of the poor, he instantly gained the goodwill of the masses. Before Gandhi, the constitutionalists appealed to the British sense of justice and fair play. The militants confronted the repression of the colonial state violently. Gandhi, in contrast, adopted nonviolent methods to mobilise the masses and mount pressure on the British. In this lesson we shall see how Gandhi transformed the Indian National Movement.

Gandhi and Mass Nationalism

(a) Evolution of Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869 into a well-to-do family in Porbandar, Gujarat. His father Kaba Gandhi was the Diwan of Porbandar and later became the Diwan of Rajkot. His mother Putlibai, a devout Vaishnavite, influenced the young Gandhi. After passing the matriculation examination, Gandhi sailed to England in 1888 to study law. After becoming a barrister in June 1891, Gandhi returned to India as a firm believer in British sense of justice and fair play. His experiences in London had not prepared him for the racial discrimination he would encounter in South Africa.

On returning to India, Gandhi's attempt to practice in Bombay failed. It was during this time that a Gujarati firm in South Africa sought the services of Gandhi for assistance in a lawsuit. Gandhi accepted the offer and left for South Africa in April 1893. Gandhi faced racial discrimination for the first time in South Africa. On his journey from Durban to Pretoria, at the Pietermaritzburg railway station, he was physically thrown out of the first class compartment. Indians were treated only as coolies. But Gandhi was determined to fight.

Gandhi called a meeting of the Indians in the Transvaal and exhorted them to form an association to seek redress of their grievances. He continued to hold such meetings, petitioned the authorities about the injustices which were in violation of their own laws. Indians in the Transvaal had to pay a poll tax of £ 3, could not own land except in areas marked for them, and could not move outdoors after 9 p.m. without a permit. He launched a struggle against such unjust laws.

Gandhi was introduced to the works of Tolstoy and John Ruskin. He was deeply influenced by Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, Ruskin's *Unto This Last* and Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*. Gandhi's ideas were formed due to a blend of Indian and Western thought. Despite being deeply influenced by Western thinkers, he was highly critical of Western civilisation and industrialisation. Inspired by Ruskin, Gandhi established the Phoenix Settlement (1905) and the Tolstoy Farm (1910).

Equality, community living and dignity of labour were inculcated in these settlements. They were training grounds for the satyagrahis.

Satyagraha as a Strategy in South Africa

Gandhi developed satyagraha (devotion to the truth, truth-force) as a strategy, in which campaigners went on peaceful marches and presented themselves for arrest in protest against unjust laws. He experimented with it for fighting the issues of immigration and racial discrimination. Meetings were held and registration offices of immigrants were picketed. Even when the police let loose violence no resistance was offered by the satyagrahis. Gandhi and other leaders were arrested. Indians, mostly indentured labourers turned hawkers continued the struggle despite police brutality. Finally, by the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement the poll tax on indentured labourers was abolished. Gandhi's stay in South Africa was a learning experience for him. It was there that Gandhi realised that people of different religions, regions, linguistic groups could be welded into one to fight against exploitation. After the outbreak of the First World War, Gandhi returned to India.

Gandhi's Early Satyagrahas in India

Gandhi regarded Gopal Krishna Gokhale, whom he had met on previous visits to India, as his political guru. On his advice, Gandhi travelled the length and breadth of the country before plunging into politics. This enabled him to understand the conditions of the people. It is on one of these journeys through Tamil Nadu that Gandhi decided to discard his following robes and wear a simple dhoti. Gandhi before returning to India visited England where he enlisted for the War to offer ambulance services. Considering himself a responsible citizen of the Empire he believed it was his duty to support England in its difficult times and even campaigned for the recruitment of Indians in the army. However, his views changed over the years.

(a) Champaran Satyagraha

In Champaran in Bihar the *tinkathi* system was practiced. Under this exploitative system the peasants were forced by the European planters to cultivate indigo on three-twentieths of their land holdings. Towards the end of nineteenth century German synthetic dyes had forced indigo out of the market. The European planters of Champaran, while realising the necessity of relieving the cultivators of the obligation of cultivating indigo, wanted to turn the situation to their advantage. They enhanced the rent and collected illegal dues as a price for the release of cultivators from the obligation. Resistance erupted. Rajkumar Shukla, an agriculturist from Champaran who suffered hardships of the system, prevailed on Gandhi to visit Champaran. On reaching Champaran, Gandhi was asked by the police to leave immediately. When he refused he was summoned for trial. The news spread like wild fire and thousands swarmed the place in support of Gandhi. Gandhi pleaded guilty of disobeying the order, and the case had to be finally withdrawn. According to Gandhi, "The country thus had its first object lesson in Civil Disobedience". He was assisted by Brajkishore Prasad, a lawyer by profession, and Rajendra Prasad, who became the first President of independent India. The Lieutenant Governor eventually formed a committee with Gandhi as

a member which recommended the abolition of the tinkathia system, thereby ending the oppression of the peasants by the Indigo Planters.

The success of Champaran satyagraha, followed by his fruitful intervention in Ahmedabad mill strike (1918) and the Kheda Satyagraha (1918) helped Gandhi establish himself as a leader of mass struggle. Unlike earlier leaders, Gandhi demonstrated his ability to mobilise the common people across the country.

(b) Rowlatt Satyagraha and Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

In the aftermath of the First World War, people expected liberal political reforms from the British. The Government of India Act 1919, however, caused disappointment, as it did not transfer real power to the Indians. Besides, the government began to enforce the permanent extension of war time restrictions. The Rowlatt Act was enacted which provided for excessive police powers, arrest without warrant and detention without trial. Gandhi called it a 'Black Act' and in protest called for a nation-wide satyagraha on 6 April 1919. It was to be a non-violent struggle with fasting and prayer, and it was the earliest anticolonial struggle spread across the country. The anti-Rowlatt protest was intense in Punjab, especially in Amritsar and Lahore.

Gandhi was arrested and prevented from visiting Punjab. On 9 April two prominent local leaders Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal were arrested in Amritsar leading to protests in which a few Europeans were killed. Martial law was declared.

General Dyer's Brutality

On 13 April 1919 a public meeting was arranged at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. As it happened to be Baisaki day (spring harvest festival of Sikhs) the villagers had assembled there in thousands. General Reginald Dyer, on hearing of the assemblage, surrounded the place with his troops and an armoured vehicle. The only entrance to the park that was surrounded. The brutality enraged Indians. Rabindranath Tagore returned his knighthood. Gandhi surrendered his Kaiser-i-Hind medal.

(c) Khilafat Movement

The First World War came to an end in 1918. The Caliph of Turkey, who was considered the head of Muslims of the world, was given a harsh treatment. A movement was started in his support called the Khilafat Movement. Led by the Ali brothers, Maulana Mohamed Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali, it aimed to restore the prestige and power of the Caliphate. Gandhi supported the movement and saw in it an opportunity to unite Hindus and Muslims. He presided over the

All India Khilafat Conference held at Delhi in November 1919. Gandhi supported Shaukat Ali's proposal of three national slogans, Allahu Akbar, Bande Mataram and Hindustan Ki Jai. The Khilafat Committee meeting in Allahabad on 9 June 1920 adopted Gandhi's non-violent non-cooperation programme. Non-Cooperation was to begin on 1 August 1920.

Non-Cooperation Movement and Its Fallout

The Indian National Congress approved the non-cooperation movement in a special session held in Calcutta on September 1920.

It was subsequently passed in the Nagpur Session held on December 1920, Chaired by Salem C. Vijayaraghavachariar. The programme of non-cooperation included:

1. Surrender of all titles of honours and honorary offices.
2. Non-participation in government functions.
3. Suspension of practice by lawyers, and settlement of court disputes by private arbitration.
4. Boycott of government schools by children and parents.
5. Boycott of the legislature created under the 1919 Act.
6. Non-participation in government parties and other official functions.
7. Refusal to accept any civil or military post.
8. Boycott of foreign goods and spreading the doctrine of Swadeshi.

(a) No-Tax Campaign and Chauri Chaura Incident

Programmes such as no-tax campaigns caught the imagination of the kisans (peasants). Gandhi announced a no-tax campaign in Bardoli in February 1922. These movements greatly enhanced Gandhi's reputation as a national leader, especially the peasants. Gandhi made a nation-wide tour. Wherever he visited there was a bonfire of foreign cloth. Thousands left government jobs, students gave up their studies in large numbers and the lawyers gave up thriving practices. Boycott of British goods and institutions were effective. The boycott of the Prince of Wales' visit to India was successful. During this boycott trade unions and workers participated actively. However, Gandhi suddenly withdrew the movement because of the Chauri Chaura incident.

On 5 February 1922 a procession of the nationalists in Chauri Chaura, a village near Gorakhpur in present-day Uttar Pradesh provoked by the police turned violent. The police finding themselves outnumbered shut themselves inside the police station. The mob burnt the police station 22 policemen lost their lives. Gandhi immediately withdrew the movement. This was done much against the wishes of many congressmen including young leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose who thought the movement was gaining momentum. Gandhi was arrested and was released only in 1924. Gandhi believed that the movement failed not because of any defect in the means employed, viz. non-violent non-cooperation but because of lack of sufficiently trained volunteers and leaders. Soon after the Khilafat Movement also came to an end as the office of the Caliph (Caliphate) was abolished in Turkey.

(b) Swarajists

Meanwhile Congress was divided into two groups viz. pro-changers and no-changers. Some of the Congressmen led by Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das wanted to contest the elections and enter the legislature. They argued that the national interest could be

promoted by working in the Legislative Councils under Dyarchy and wrecking the colonial government within. They were called the pro-changers. Staunch followers of Gandhi like Vallabhbhai Patel, C. Rajaji and others, known as no-changers, wanted to continue non-cooperation with the government. Despite the opposition C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru formed the Swaraj Party on 1 January 1923, which was later approved by a special session of the Congress. Swaraj Party members were elected in large numbers to the Imperial Legislative Assembly and the various Provincial Legislative Councils. They effectively used the legislature as a platform for propagation of nationalist ideas. In Bengal, they refused to take charge of transferred subjects, as they did not want to cooperate with the government. They exposed the true nature of the colonial government. However, the Swaraj Party began to decline after the death of its leader C.R. Das in 1925. Some of the Swaraj Party members began to accept government offices. Swaraj Party withdrew from the legislatures in 1926.

Dyarchy, a system of dual government introduced under the Government of India Act 1919, divided the powers of the provincial government into Reserved and Transferred subjects. The Reserved Subjects comprising finance, defence, the police, justice, land revenue, and irrigation were in the hands of the British. The Transferred Subjects that included local self-government, education, public health, public works, agriculture, forests and fisheries were left under the control of Indian ministers. This system ended with the introduction of provincial autonomy in 1935.

(c) Constructive Programme of Gandhi

After the Chauri Chaura incident, Gandhi felt that the volunteers and the people had to be trained for a non-violent struggle. As part of this effort he focused on promoting Khadi, Hindu-Muslim unity and the abolition of untouchability. He exhorted the Congressmen, "Go throughout your districts and spread the message of Khaddar, the message of Hindu-Muslim unity, the message of anti-untouchability and take up in hand the youth of the country and make them the real soldiers of Swaraj." He made it compulsory for all Congress members to wear khaddar. The All India Spinner's Association was formed. Gandhi believed that without attaining these objectives Swaraj could never be attained.

Despite the cooperation of the Hindus and Muslims during the Khilafat Movement and the Non-Cooperation Movement, the unity was fragile. The 1920s saw a series of communal riots between the Hindus and the Muslims. Hindu Mahasabha was gaining in popularity under Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Muslim League under the Ali Brothers. Gandhi undertook a 21-day fast in between 1924 to appeal to the hearts of the Hindus and Muslims involved in communal politics. Serious efforts by Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who at that time believed Swaraj was possible only with Hindu-Muslim unity, failed to stem the communal riots.

(d) Boycott of Simon Commission

On 8 November 1927, the British Government announced the appointment of the Indian Statutory Commission. Composed of seven members headed by Sir John Simon it came to be widely known as the Simon Commission. It was an all-white commission with no Indian member. Indians were angered that they had been denied the right to decide their own

constitution. All sections of India including the Congress and the Muslim League decided to boycott the commission. Wherever the Commission went there were protests, and black flag marches with the slogan 'Go Back Simon'. The protesters were brutally assaulted by the police. In one such assault in Lahore, Lal Lajpat Rai was seriously injured and died a few days later.

(e) Nehru Report

The Simon boycott united the different political parties in India. An all party conference was held in 1928 with the objective to frame a constitution for India as an alternative to the Simon Commission proposals. A committee under the leadership of Motilal Nehru was formed to outline the principles on the basis of which the constitution was to be drafted. The committee's report, known as the Nehru Report, recommended,

- Dominion status for India.
- Elections of the Central Legislature and the Provincial Legislatures on the basis of joint and mixed electorates.
- Reservation of seats for Muslims in the Central Legislature and in provinces where they are in a minority and for the Hindus in North-West Frontier Province where they were in a minority.
- Provision of fundamental rights, and universal adult franchise.

Jinnah proposed an amendment to the reservation of seats in the Central Legislature. He demanded that one-third of the seats be reserved for Muslims. Tej Bahadur Sapru supported him and pleaded that it would make no big difference. However, it was defeated in the All Party Conference. Later he proposed a resolution which came to be known as Jinnah's Fourteen Points. However, it was also rejected. Jinnah who was hailed as Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity thereafter changed his stand and began to espouse the cause of a separate nation for Muslims.

The Struggle for Poorna Swaraj and Launch of Civil Disobedience Movement

Meanwhile some congressmen were not satisfied with dominion status and wanted to demand complete independence. In the Congress session held in Lahore in December 1929 with Jawaharlal Nehru as the President, Poorna Swaraj was declared as the goal. It was also decided to boycott the Round Table Conference and launch a Civil Disobedience Movement. 26 January 1930 was declared as Independence Day and a pledge was taken all over the country to attain Poorna Swaraj non-violently through civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes. The Indian National Congress authorised Gandhi to launch the movement.

(a) Salt Satyagraha Movement

A charter of demands presented to the Viceroy Lord Irwin with an ultimatum to comply by 31 January 1930 included:

- Reduction of expenditure on army and civil services by 50%
- Introduction of total prohibition

- Release of all political prisoners
- Reduction of land revenue by 50%
- Abolition of salt tax.

When the Viceroy did not respond to the charter of demands, Gandhi launched the Civil Disobedience Movement. The inclusion of abolition of salt tax was a brilliant tactical decision. Salt was an issue which affected every section of the society. It transformed Civil Disobedience Movement into a mass movement drawing all sections of the population including women to the streets. At the break of dawn on 12 March 1930 Gandhi set out from Sabarmati Ashram with 78 of his inmates. The procession became larger and larger when hundreds joined them along the march. At the age of 61 Gandhi covered a distance of 241 miles in 24 days to reach Dandi at sunset on 5 April 1930. The next morning, he took a lump of salt breaking the salt law.

Salt Satyagraha in Provinces

In Tamil Nadu, C. Rajaji led a similar salt march from Tiruchirappalli to Vedaranyam. Salt marches took place in Kerala, Andhra and Bengal. In the North West Frontier Province Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan led the movement. He organized the Khudai Khidmatgar, also known as the Red Shirts. Government crushed the movement with brutal force, causing in many casualties. The soldiers of the Garhwali regiment refused to fire on unarmed satyagrahis.

Gandhi was arrested at midnight and sent to Yeravada Jail. Jawaharlal Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other leaders were swiftly arrested. Soon other forms of protests such as boycott of foreign cloth, picketing of liquor shops, non-payment of taxes, breaking of forest laws etc. were adopted. Women, peasants, tribals, students, even children and all sections participated in the nation-wide struggle. It was the biggest mass movement India had ever witnessed. More than 90,000 people were arrested.

The British enacted the first forest act in 1865. This act restricted the access of the forest dwellers to the forest areas to collect firewood, cattle fodder and other minor forest produce such as honey, seeds, nuts, medicinal herbs. The Indian Forest Act of 1878 claimed that original ownership of forests was with the state. Waste lands and fallow lands were included as forest. Shifting cultivation practiced by the tribal people, was prohibited. Alienation of forests from local control was stiffly resisted by the aggrieved adivasis (tribals) and the nationalists.

The most striking evidence of continuing struggles of the tribal groups was the one waged by Alluri Sitarama Raju in Rampa. Raju made Adivasi areas in the Eastern Ghats (the forest area along the Visakapatnam and Godavari district) his home. The Adivasis who were organized by Alluri Sitarama Raju lived in abject poverty. They were also harassed by police, forest and revenue officials in 'Manyam' (forest area). Raju's efforts at fighting corrupt officials to protect the interests of Rampa tribals prompted the British to target his life. A special Malabar Police team was sent to quell the

uprisings (1922-24) of Rampa Adivasis. Alluri SitaramaRaju attained martyrdom for the cause of forest dwellers.

(b) Round Table Conferences

In the midst of the movement the First Round Table Conference was held at London in November 1930. Ramsay Macdonald, the British Prime Minister, proposed a federal government with provincial autonomy. There was a deadlock over the question of separate electorates for the minorities. The Congress did not attend it as its leaders were in jail. The Conference closed without any decision on the question. It was clear that without Congress participation the discussions were of no value. Gandhi was released unconditionally.

(c) Gandhi-Irwin Pact

Lord Irwin held talks with Gandhi which resulted in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact on 5 March 1931. The British agreed to the demand of immediate release of all political prisoners not involved in violence, return of confiscated land and lenient treatment of government employees who had resigned. It also permitted the people of coastal villages to make salt for consumption and non-violent picketing. The Congress agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience Movement and attend the conference. Gandhi attended the Second Round Table Conference which began on 7 September 1931. Gandhi refused to accept separate electorates for minorities. As a result, the second conference ended without any result.

(d) Renewal of Civil Disobedience Movement.

On returning to India, Gandhi revived the Civil Disobedience Movement. This time the government was prepared to meet the resistance. Martial law was enforced and Gandhi was arrested on 4 January 1932. Soon all the Congress leaders were arrested too. Protests and picketing by the people were suppressed with force. Nearly 80,000 people were arrested within four months. The nationalist press was completely gagged. Despite Government's repressive measures it is worth mentioning here in that the movement continued till April 1934.

In the meantime, the Third Round Table Conference was held from 17 November to 24 December 1932. The Congress did not participate in the conference as it had revived the Civil Disobedience Movement.

(e) Communal Award and Poona Pact

On 16 August 1932, Ramsay MacDonald announced the Communal Award. It provided separate electorates to the minorities, viz. Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and women and the "depressed classes". Gandhi strongly opposed the inclusion of depressed classes in the list of minorities. Gandhi argued that it would not only divide the Hindus but also make the campaign against untouchability meaningless, as they would be considered distinct from the Hindus. However, he supported reservation of seats. B.R. Ambedkar, the leader of the depressed classes, strongly argued for the separate electorate, as

it, according to him, would give them political representation and power. On 20 September 1932, Gandhi went on a fast unto death against the separate electorates for the depressed classes. Madan Mohan Malaviya, Rajendra Prasad and others held talks with Ambedkar and M.C. Rajah the leaders of the depressed classes. After intense negotiations an agreement was arrived between Gandhi and Ambedkar. Known as the Poona Pact, its main terms were:

„The principle of separate electorates was abandoned. Instead, the principle of joint electorate was accepted with reservation of seats for the depressed classes.

„Reserved seats for the depressed classes were increased from 71 to 148. In the Central Legislature 18 percent of these seats were reserved.

(f) Campaign Against Untouchability

Gandhi devoted the next few years towards abolition of untouchability. His engagement with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar made a big impact on his ideas about the caste system. He shifted his base to the Satyagraha Ashram at Wardha. He undertook an all-India tour called the Harijan Tour. He started the Harijan Sevak Sangh to work for the removal of discriminations. He worked to promote education, cleanliness and hygiene and giving up of liquor among the depressed class. He also undertook two fasts in 1933 for this cause. An important part of the campaign was the Temple Entry Movement. 8 January 1933 was observed as 'Temple Entry Day'. His campaign earned the ire of the orthodox Hindus and an attempt was made on his life by obscurantist upper caste Hindus. But this did not deter his mission. The work among the depressed classes and the tribals took the message of nationalism to the grassroots.

Beginnings of Socialist Movements

Inspired by the Russian Revolution of 1917 the Communist Party of India (CPI) was founded at Tashkent, Uzbekistan in October 1920. M.N. Roy, Abani Mukherjee, and M.P.T. Acharya were some of its founding members. The British government in India made vigorous efforts to suppress the communist movement by foisting a series of cases in the 1920s. In a further attempt to eliminate the threat of communism M.N. Roy, S.A. Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, M. Singaravelar among others were arrested and tried in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case of 1924. The charge on them was "to deprive the King Emperor of his sovereignty of British India, by complete separation of India from imperialistic Britain."

(a) Foundation of Communist Party

The communists used it as a platform to propagate their views and to expose the 'true colour of British rule in India'. In an attempt to form a party an All India Communist Conference was held at Kanpur in 1925. Singaravelar gave the Presidential Address. It led to the founding of the Communist Party of India in Indian soil. The Communists organised workers' and peasants' organisations in different parts of India. A number of strikes were organised in the 1920s. Their efforts eventually led to the establishment of the All India Workers' and Peasants' Party in 1928. The progress in this

direction was halted with the Meerut Conspiracy Case in 1929. Muzaffar Ahamed, S.A. Dange, S.V. Ghate, G. Adhikari, P.C. Joshi, S.S. Mirajkar, Shaikat Usmani, Philip Stratt and twenty-three others were arrested for organising a railway strike. They were charged with conspiring to overthrow the British government of India.

(b) Revolutionary Activities

The youths who were disillusioned with the sudden withdrawal of the Non Cooperation Movement by Gandhi took to violence. In 1924 Hindustan Republican Army (HRA) was formed in Kanpur to overthrow the colonial rule by an armed rebellion. In 1925 Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan and others held up a train carrying government money and looted in Kakori, a village near Lucknow. They were arrested and tried in the Kakori Conspiracy Case. Four of them were sentenced to death while the others were sentenced to imprisonment.

Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and their comrades reorganized the HRA in Punjab. Influenced by socialist ideas they renamed it as Hindustan Socialist Republican Association in 1928. Sanders, a British police officer, responsible for the lathi charge that led to Lala Lajpat Rai's death was assassinated. Bhagat Singh along with B.K. Dutt threw a smoke bomb inside the Central Legislative Assembly in 1929. It was not intended to hurt anyone. They threw pamphlets and shouted 'Inquilab Zindabad' and 'Long Live the Proletariat'. He along with Rajguru was arrested and sentenced to death. Bhagat Singh's daring and courage fired the imagination of the youth across India, and he became popular across India. During the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations there was wide-spread demand to include the case of Bhagat Singh and Rajguru. The Viceroy was not willing to commute the death sentence.

In April 1930, the Chittagong Armoury Raid was carried out by Surya Sen and his associates. They captured the armouries in Chittagong and proclaimed a provisional revolutionary government. They survived for three years raiding government institutions. In 1933 Surya Sen was caught and hanged after a year.

(c) Left Movement in the 1930s

By the 1930s the Communist Party of India had gained strength in view of the economic crisis caused by world-wide Great Depression. Britain transmitted the effects of Depression to its colonies. The effects of Depression were reflected in decline in trade returns and fall in agricultural prices. The governmental measures included forcible collection of land revenue which in real terms had increased two-fold due to a 50% fall in agricultural prices, the withdrawal of money in circulation, retrenchment of staff and expenditure on developmental works.

In this context, the Communist Party, fighting for the cause of peasants and industrial workers hit by loss of income and wage reduction, and problems of unemployment gained influence and was therefore banned in 1934. The Congress, as a movement with a wide spectrum of political leanings, ranging from the extreme Left to the

extreme Right, welded together by the goal of Swaraj, emerged as a powerful organisation. There was a constant struggle between the right and left in the Congress during the 1930s. In 1934 the Congress Socialist Party was formed by Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev and Minoo Masani. They believed that nationalism was the path to socialism and that they would work within the Congress. They worked to make Congress pro-peasant and pro-worker.

‘Real Swaraj will come not by acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority, when abused.’ - M. K. Gandhi

First Congress Ministries under Government of India Act, 1935

The Government of India Act 1935 was one of the important positive outcomes of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The key features of the Act were provincial autonomy and dyarchy at the centre. The Act provided for an all India Federation with 11 provinces, 6 Chief Commissioner's provinces and all those Princely states which wished to join the federation. The Act also provided autonomy to the provinces. All the subjects were transferred to the control of Indian ministers. Dyarchy that was in operation in provinces was now extended to the central government. The franchise, based on property, was extended though only about ten percent of the population enjoyed the right to vote. By this Act Burma was separated from India.

(a) Congress Ministries and their Work

The Government of India Act 1935 was implemented with the announcement of elections in 1937. The Congress immensely benefitted because of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Congress called off its programme of boycott of legislature and contested elections. It emerged victorious in seven out of the eleven provinces. It formed ministries in 8 provinces - Madras, Bombay, Central Provinces, Orissa, Bihar, United Provinces, North West Frontier Province. In Assam it formed a coalition government with Assam Valley Muslim Party led by Sir Muhammad Sadullah. The Congress Ministries functioned as a popular government and responded to the needs of the people. The salaries of ministers were reduced from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 500 per month. Earlier action taken against nationalists were rescinded. They repealed the Acts which vested emergency powers in the government, lifted the ban imposed on political organisations except the Communist Party, and removed the restrictions on the nationalist press. Police powers were curbed and reporting by the CID on political speeches discontinued. Legislative measures were adopted for reducing indebtedness of the peasantry and improving the working conditions of the industrial labour. Temple entry legislation was passed. Special attention was paid to education and public health.

(b) Resignation of Congress Ministries

In 1939 the Second World War broke out. The colonial government of India entered the War on behalf of the Allies without consulting the Congress ministries. The Congress ministries resigned in protest. Jinnah who had returned from London with the determination of demanding separate state for Muslims, revived the Muslim League in 1934. He was one of

the staunchest critic of the Congress Ministries. He declared the day when the Congress Ministries resigned as the 'Day of Deliverance'. By 1940 he was demanding a separate state for the Muslims arguing that in an independent India the Muslims would lose all political power to the Hindus.

(c) National Movement during the Second World War, 1939-45

In 1939 Subhas Chandra Bose became the President of the Congress by defeating Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the candidate of Gandhi. When Gandhi refused to cooperate, Subhas Chandra Bose resigned his post and started the Forward Bloc. The Communists initially opposed the War, calling it an imperialist war. However, with the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, they called it the 'People's War' and offered cooperation to the British. As a result, in 1942, the ban on the Communist Party of India was lifted.

Hindu Communalism, Muslim Communalism and Indian Nationalism

The Muslim League dubbed the Congress as a Hindu organisation and claimed that it alone was the representative of the Muslims of India. Similarly, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) took a pronounced anti-Muslim stance. Both Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League claimed that the interests of the Hindus and Muslims were different and hostile to each other. The British policy of divide and rule, through measures such as Partition of Bengal, Communal Award, had encouraged the vested interests out to exploit the religious differences. In 1933, Rahmat Ali a student of Cambridge University conceived the idea of Pakistan, comprising the provinces of Punjab, Kashmir, North West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan. Muhammad Iqbal, who was advocating Hindu-Muslim unity later changed his stance and began to campaign for the formation of a separate state for Muslims. Indian Nationalism represented by Gandhi, Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and others opposed the idea of partitioning the country.

Developments leading to Quit India Movement

(a) Individual Satyagraha

In August 1940 Viceroy Linlithgow made an offer in return for Congress' support for the war effort. However, the offer of dominion status in an unspecified future was not acceptable to the Congress. However, it did not want to hamper the British during its struggle against the fascist forces of Germany and Italy. Hence Gandhi declared limited satyagraha which would be offered by a few individuals. The objective was to convey to the world that though India was opposed to Nazism it did not enter the War voluntarily. Vinobha Bhave was the first to offer satyagraha on 17 October 1940. The satyagraha continued till the end of the year. During this period more than 25,000 people were arrested.

(b) Cripps Mission

On 22 March 1942, the British government sent a mission under Cabinet Minister Sir Stafford Cripps as the Japanese knocked on the doors of India. The negotiations between the Cripps Mission and the Congress failed as Britain was not willing to transfer effective power immediately. The Cripps Mission offered:

1. Grant of Dominion Status after the War
2. Indian Princes could sign a separate agreement with the British implying the acceptance for the demand of Pakistan.
3. British control of defence during the War.

Both the Congress and the Muslim League rejected the proposal. Gandhi called the proposals as a post-dated cheque on a crashing bank.

(c) "Do or Die" Call by Gandhi

The outcome of the Cripps Mission caused considerable disappointment. Popular discontent was intensified by war time shortages and steep rise in prices. The All India Congress Committee that met at Bombay on 8 August 1942 passed the famous Quit India Resolution demanding an immediate end to British rule in India. Gandhi gave a call to do or die. Gandhi said, 'We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery.' A non-violent mass struggle under Gandhi was to be launched. But early next morning on 9 August 1942 Gandhi and the entire Congress leadership was arrested.

(d) Role of Socialists

With Gandhi and other prominent leaders of the Congress in jail, the Socialists provided the leadership for the movement. Jayaprakash Narayan and Ramanand Misra escaped from prison and organised an underground movement. Women activists like Aruna Asaf Ali played a heroic role. Usha Mehta established Congress Radio underground which successfully functioned till November 1942. British used all its might to suppress the revolt. Thousands were killed with machine guns and in some cases airplanes were used to throw bombs. Collective fines were imposed and collected with utmost rigour. Gandhi commenced a twenty-one day fast in February 1943 which nearly threatened his life. Finally, the British government relented. Gandhi was released from jail in 1944.

(e) People's Response

As news spread to different parts of India, a spontaneous protest broke out everywhere. The people protested in whatever form that they could, such as hartals, strikes, picketing. The government suppressed it with brute force. People attacked government buildings, railway stations, telephone and telegraph lines and all that stood as symbols of

British authority. This was particularly widespread in Madras. Parallel governments were established in Satara, Orissa, Bihar, United Provinces and Bengal.

Though the movement was suppressed, it demonstrated the depth of nationalism and the readiness of the people to sacrifice for it. Nearly 7000 people were killed and more than 60,000 jailed. Significantly it also demonstrated the weakening of the colonial hegemony over the state apparatus. Many officials including policemen helped the nationalists. Railway engine drivers and pilots transported bombs and other materials for the protestors.

(f) Subhas Chandra Bose and INA

Subhas Chandra Bose's INA Subhas Chandra Bose who had left the Congress was now under house arrest. He wanted to strike British hard by joining its enemies. In March 1941, he made a dramatic escape from his house in disguise and reached Afghanistan. Initially he wanted to get the support of Soviet Union. After the Soviet Union joined the Allied Powers which included Great Britain, he went to Germany. In February 1943, he made his way to Japan on a submarine and took control of the Indian National Army. The Indian National Army Captain Lakshmi Sahgal headed it (Azad Hind Fauj) had earlier been organized by Gen. Mohan Singh with Indian prisoners of war with the support of Japanese in Malaya and Burma. Bose reorganised it into three brigades: Gandhi Brigade, Nehru Brigade and a women's brigade named after Rani of Jhansi. Subhas Chandra Bose formed the Provisional Government of Free India in Singapore. He gave the slogan 'Dilli Chalo'. INA was deployed as part of the Japanese forces. However, the defeat of Japan stopped the advance of INA. The airplane carrying Subhas Chandra Bose crashed bringing to an end his crusade for freedom.

The British government arrested the INA officers and put them on trial in the Red Fort. The trial became a platform for nationalist propaganda. The Congress set up a defence committee comprising Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Bhulabhai Desai and Asaf Ali. Though the INA officers were convicted they were released due to public pressure. The INA exploits and the subsequent trials inspired the Indians.

Towards Freedom

(a) Royal Indian Navy Revolt

The Royal Indian Navy ratings revolted at Bombay in February 1946. It soon spread to other stations involving more than 20,000 ratings. Similar strikes occurred in the Indian Air Force and the Indian Signal Corps at Jabalpur. Thus the British hegemonic control ceased even in the armed forces. Despite the victory in the War, it left the British completely weakened. British surrender in South-East Asia to the Japanese was a big blow to imperial prestige. All the political leaders were released and the ban on Congress was lifted.

(b) Negotiating Independence: Simla Conference

The Wavell Plan was announced on 14 June 1945. It provided for an interim government, with an equal number of Hindus and Muslims in the Viceroy's

Executive Council. All portfolios, except war portfolio, were to be held by Indian ministers. However, in the Shimla Conference, the Congress and the Muslim League could not come to an agreement. Jinnah demanded that all the Muslim members should be from the Muslim League and they should have a veto on all important matters. In the provincial elections held in early 1946 the Congress won most of the general seats and the Muslim League won most of the seats reserved for the Muslims thus bolstering its claim.

(c) Cabinet Mission

In Britain, the Labour Party had won a landslide victory and Clement Attlee became the Prime Minister. He declared that he wanted to transfer power at the earliest. He sent a Cabinet Mission comprising Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander. Rejecting the demand for Pakistan, it provided for a Federal government with control over defence, communications and foreign affairs. The provinces were divided into three groups viz. Non-Muslim Majority Provinces, Muslim Majority Provinces in the Northwest and the Muslim Majority Provinces in the Northeast. A Constituent Assembly was to be elected and an interim government set up with representation for all the communities. The Congress and the Muslim League accepted the plan. However, both interpreted it differently. The Congress wanted the division of the provinces to be temporary while the Muslim League wanted it to be a permanent arrangement.

(d) Direct Action Day Call by Muslim League

A difference arose between Congress and Muslim League when the former nominated a Muslim member. The League argued it was to be the sole representative of the Muslims and withdrew its approval. Jinnah declared 16 August 1946 as the 'Direct Action Day'. Hartals and demonstrations took place which soon turned into Hindu-Muslim conflict. It spread to other districts of Bengal. The district of Noakhali was the worst affected. Gandhi left for the worst affected regions and toured them on barefoot bringing the communal violence under control and spreading the message of peace and non-violence.

(e) Mountbatten Plan

The interim government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru was formed in September 1946. After some hesitation the Muslim League joined it in October 1946. Its representative Liaquat Ali Khan was made the Finance Member. In February 1947, Clement Attlee declared that power would be transferred by June 1948. Lord Mountbatten was sent as Viceroy to India with the specific task of transfer of power. On 3 June 1947 the Mountbatten Plan was announced. It proposed:

- Power would be transferred on the basis of dominion status to India and Pakistan.
- Princely states would have to join either India or Pakistan.
- Boundary commission was to be set up under Radcliffe Brown and the award would be announced after the transfer of power.
- Punjab and Bengal Legislative Assemblies would vote on whether they should be partitioned.

(f) Independence and Partition

The Mountbatten Plan was given effect by the enactment of the Indian Independence Act on 18 July 1947 by the British Parliament.

The Act abolished the sovereignty of the British Parliament over India. India was partitioned into two dominions - India and Pakistan. On 15 August 1947 India won independence.



16. The coming of Europeans

Introduction

The beginning of British rule in India is conventionally ascribed to 1757, after the Battle of Plassey was won by the English East India Company against the Nawab of Bengal. But the Europeans had arrived in India by the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their original intention was to procure pepper, cinnamon, cloves and other spices for the European markets and participate in the trade of the Indian Ocean.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish themselves in India. Vasco da Gama discovered the direct sea route to India from Europe around the Cape of Good Hope at the end of the fifteenth century. Subsequently, the Portuguese conquered Goa on the west coast in 1510. Goa then became the political headquarters for the Portuguese in India and further east in Malacca and Java. The Portuguese perfected a pattern of controlling the Indian Ocean trade through a combination of political aggressiveness and naval superiority. Their forts at Daman and Diu enabled them to control the shipping in the Arabian Sea, using their well-armed ships.

The other European nations who came to India nearly a century later, especially the Dutch and the English, modelled their activities on the Portuguese blueprint. Thus we need to understand the advent of the European trading companies as an on-going process of engagement with Indian political authorities, local merchants and society, which culminated in the conquest of Bengal by the British in 1757.

This lesson has two parts. The political history of India and the changing scenario that emerged after 1600 are discussed in the first part. The second part deals with the arrival of European trading companies in India and the impact each one made on Indian society.

I

Political Affairs

1600-1650: The Mughal Empire

This was the period when the Mughal Empire was at the peak of its power. The Europeans were quite aware of the wealth and power of the Mughals, and English poets even wrote about the fabulous "wealth of India". Travellers from all parts of Europe visited India regularly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The journals of their travels present a detailed contemporary account of the empire and society in India.

By 1600 Akbar had achieved his imperial dream and extended the frontiers of the Mughal Empire through his conquests in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Gujarat was conquered in 1573, and this gave the Mughal empire valuable access to the port of Surat, which was the gateway to west Asia and Europe. Besides trade, the ships carrying pilgrims to Mecca left from Surat. The importance of Surat to the Mughals can be appreciated from the fact that Surat had two governors, one the governor of the city, and the other, the governor of the castle which had been built on the river Tapti to protect the city. The governor of the city was in charge of civilian affairs and collecting the revenues from customs duties.

Akbar had also tried to extend his empire in the east beyond Bihar by conquering Bengal. But Bengal was not really integrated into the empire until nearly three decades later,

when it became one of the provinces (subah) under Jahangir. Under Akbar, the revenue system of the empire had been revamped by Todar Mal so that a unified system of governance and revenue collection could function throughout the empire. At his death, therefore, Akbar left a powerful, economically prosperous and well-administered empire.

The Dutch, followed by the English, arrived in Surat in the early years of the 1600s to begin their trading activities. The Mughal governor permitted them to trade, and to set up their “factories” (as the business premises of the European traders which also functioned as warehouses were termed), but they were not allowed to have any territorial authority over any part of the city. This frustrated their ambitions to follow the Portuguese model.

The English acquired the islands of Bombay in 1668, and set up their headquarters in Bombay in 1687. Their primary objective was to develop Bombay as an alternate base for their operations.

But Surat under the protection of the Mughal state still remained the preferred centre of commercial activity for the merchants.

1600-1650: South India after Vijayanagar

South India, especially the Tamil region, presented a sharp contrast to the centralized stability of the Mughal Empire in these decades. Politically the region was fragmented and unsettled. Under Vijayanagar rule, three Nayak kingdoms had been set up in the Tamil region: in Madurai, Thanjavur and Senji. The objective was to provide financial and manpower resources to the empire. After the defeat of Vijayanagar in 1565 in the Battle of Talikota by the combined forces of the rulers of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda, the central authority of the once dominant kingdom became very weak. The Nayak kingdoms became virtually autonomous, though they made a ritualistic acknowledgment of the authority of the Vijayanagar emperor. In addition to the larger Nayak kingdoms, several local chiefs also controlled some parts of the region. The most notable of them was probably the Setupati of Ramanathapuram, who was also keen to assert his independence. Between 1590 and 1649 the region witnessed several military conflicts arising out of these unsettled political conditions. Madurai and Thanjavur fought several times to establish their superiority. There were also rebellions against the Vijayanagar emperor. Besides these ongoing conflicts, Golkonda invaded the Coromandel in 1646 and annexed the area between Pulicat and San Thome, which also changed the political scenario in the region.

The Dutch and the English were able to acquire territorial rights on the east coast during these years. They realized that they needed a base on the Coromandel Coast to access the piece goods needed for trading with the spice-producing islands of Indonesia. The Dutch had successfully negotiated to acquire Pulicat (Palaverkadu) from the Nayak of Senji and constructed a fort there. The English got a piece of land further south from the local chief, Damarla Venkatadri Nayak on which they built Fort St. George in 1639. Thus an English settlement came up which eventually grew into Chennai (Madras), the capital of the Madras Presidency.

1650-1700: The Mughal Empire

Emperor Aurangzeb began an ambitious programme of extending his empire south to the Deccan, and the kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda were conquered in the 1680s. This extended the Mughal control of the Deccan as far south as Chennai. But the overextended Mughal Empire soon began to reveal its inherent weakness. This became most apparent when the Marathas, under Shivaji, began to grow in power and military strength. They attacked Surat with impunity in 1664, though it was soon abandoned. But their second raid in 1670 devastated Surat and its trade took several years to recover. This seriously challenged the claim of Mughal invincibility and it sounded the beginning of the gradual disintegration of the Mughal Empire.

In the 1660s, after the attack on Surat, Shivaji turned his attention to south India, and defeated the Nayaks of Senji and Thanjavur. Though Senji was conquered by the Mughals a few years later, Thanjavur survived as a Maratha-ruled state. The Maratha kings, with their inclusive policy of assimilating Tamil intellectual and cultural traditions, made Thanjavur the cultural capital of the Tamil region.

1700-1750: The Mughal Empire and the Successor States

Aurangzeb, the last of the “great Mughals”, died in 1707. One of the major developments following his death was the establishment of what have been called ‘successor states’. Mughal viceroys in various parts of the country Oudh, Bengal, Hyderabad and the Carnatic set themselves up as independent rulers. The English and the Dutch had understood this vulnerability of the Mughal state.

In Bengal and the Carnatic, the Nawabs had borrowed heavily from the English, and assigned vast tracts of land to them so that the English could collect the land revenue as repayment for the loans. This marks the beginning of British rule as revenue collectors.

By this time the Dutch had given up Pulicat and moved their headquarters further south to Nagapattinam. They

The name Carnatic originally referred to the region occupied by the Kannada-speaking people. In the eighteenth century it included the region lying between the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats, in the modern Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and southern Andhra Pradesh. The Nawab of Arcot controlled this region.

Had decided to shift their focus to the spice-producing islands of Indonesia and established their capital at Jakarta (Batavia). Chennai, in the meantime, had grown into a prosperous town. The English, after many years of struggle, became a power to reckon with in the region. Surat continued to suffer due to the uncertain political conditions, and by 1750, the local merchants had begun to declare themselves to be “under the protection” of the Dutch or the English in order to feel more secure. Bombay therefore became a viable alternative as a trade centre, attracting merchants from Surat and other parts of Gujarat.

The Economy

Agriculture

India was primarily an agricultural economy. Most of the population lived in the rural areas and they depended on agriculture for their livelihood. In addition to food grains, they grew several commercial crops. These included sugarcane, oil seeds, cotton and indigo. There was a brisk trade in food grains, ghee, jaggery and other food products from the surplus areas to the deficit areas within India. Food grains, particularly, were transported on coastal boats and the Tamil region, for instance, imported food grains from the Andhra region and Bengal.

On the west coast, food grains from Gujarat were exported to the Malabar region in return for pepper, cinnamon and ginger. Food grains were also shipped to the Dutch establishments in Sri Lanka and Batavia.

Cotton Manufactures

India also had a strong manufacturing base and was particularly famous for the variety of cotton fabrics produced at various centres across the country. Weaving was the second most important economic activity in the country, supported by subsidiary activities like spinning and dyeing. Manufacturing – that is, handicraft production – was carried on both in urban and rural areas. Luxury crafts, like metalwork were urban based. Weaving was mostly done in rural areas. India had a great advantage in that cotton was grown in the country. Indian craft communities also possessed specialized knowledge about dyeing cotton using chemicals like alum to produce a permanent colour. The Coromandel region was famous for its painted (kalamkari) fabrics which had designs drawn on the cloth and then dyed. By the sixteenth century these had become staple products for consumers in south-east Asia, especially the Indonesian islands. Cotton fabrics were the most important exports from all parts of India to the rest of the world. This continued well into the eighteenth century.

Marketing

Production for an external market was widespread, so that there was a high degree of commercialization of production beyond subsistence levels. This required the organization of marketing by agencies which were distinct from the producers, that is, a class of merchants. Merchants thus linked producers who were dispersed in the rural areas with urban markets within the country, and with external markets outside the country. The extensive trade network in the country operated in several circuits, from the village markets, to regional markets and large urban commercial centres, culminating in the ports which were the gateways to the markets outside the country.

Merchant Groups

Just as the various kinds of markets functioned at different scales, merchants were also not a homogeneous group. There were traders and retailers who serviced markets in smaller centres. If mercantile activity can be deemed to be a pyramid, this class of merchants

would be at the base of the pyramid. At its top were the great merchants, who were the prime movers in overseas trade with great reserves of capital, who controlled the producers in the hinterland of the ports. They generally employed the services of a network of brokers and sub-brokers to acquire goods from the interior regions or hinterland of the port towns. These agents could be said to form the middle tier of the merchant pyramid.

Banking and Rise of Merchant Capitalists

Commercial institutions were also well-developed to promote such extensive trade. Because a variety of coins were in circulation, there were money-changers or shroffs to test coins for their purity and decide their value in current terms. They also served as local bankers. Instead of transferring money as cash from one place to another, merchants issued bills of exchange, known as hundis which would be cashed by shroffs at different destinations at a specified rate of discount.

This well-developed infrastructure and organization of trade enabled the rich merchants to amass large fortunes. Such merchant princes or capitalists were found in all parts of India - the banias and Parsi merchants of Surat, the nagarseths of Ahmedabad, the Jagat Seths of Bengal, and the merchant communities of the Coromandel. Contemporary European observers noted that these merchants appropriated all the profits from trade to themselves, while the earnings and condition of the weavers and peasants were pitifully poor. This rendered them especially vulnerable to natural calamities like famines. In the Madras region, for instance, famine occurred at least ten times between 1678 and 1750. Sometimes there was widespread famine which lasted for several years on end. This drove the rural poor to sell themselves into slavery. Dutch records from the Coromandel regularly mention male and female slaves among the cargo sent to Batavia.

Overseas Trade

The overseas trade from both the east and west coast was incorporated into Indian Ocean trade which had stabilized into a well-set pattern by the sixteenth century. Shipping in the Indian Ocean was segmented and carried on over several demarcated stages. Ships coming from China and the Far East sailed up to Malacca, where their cargoes were unloaded, and in return, goods from the west were taken back. From Malacca, ships sailed to the west coast of India, to Calicut or Cambay or Surat in Gujarat. Such intermediate ports were known as "entrepots". Goods from Europe and West Asia were exchanged in these ports for goods from the east, as well as locally produced pepper, spices, dyes, clothes and food grains. In the sixteenth century, Calicut gradually lost out to the Gujaratports which were served by a much larger hinterland producing a wider range of products. The ports of the Coromandel coast, like Masulipatnam, Pulicat and other ports further south served as intermediate ports for the ships from Burma and the Malay peninsula.

Advent of Europeans

The arrival of the Europeans, beginning with the Portuguese, was the first major external shock to this well established and regulated system of trade. The primary interest of

the Europeans was in securing spices for Europe directly. In the olden days, the spices were carried to the Persian Gulf ports and then overland to the Mediterranean. They soon learned that a simple bilateral exchange was not workable in the Asian markets. This was mainly because there was no demand in the local economies for the products of Europe, other than gold or silver. On the other hand, because of the universal demand in south-east Asian markets for Indian textiles, clothes from India served as a substitute medium of exchange. The demand for the painted fabrics of the Coromandel Coast in the Indonesian islands, in particular, made the Dutch and the English set up their establishments on the east coast to procure the cloth that could be profitably exchanged for spices.

Collaboration with Indian Merchants

From the beginning of their trading venture in India, the Europeans realized that they could succeed only with the help and collaboration of the leading Indian merchants. The merchants, on their part, saw in the Europeans a great new business opportunity for expansion, and worked with them. In Surat, the merchants were functioning with the security of the Mughal government to support them in case of any problems. But in Pulicat, and later in Chennai under the English and Pondicherry under the French, the merchants also saw in these early colonial enclaves a place of security from where they could carry on business safely, free from the continuing political turmoil in the Tamil region.

The Indian merchants were not at a disadvantage in their dealings with the Europeans till about 1700. In Surat, the situation changed because of the threat posed by the Maratha incursions and the inability of the Mughal state to provide security. In Chennai the English had stabilized and they could put pressure on merchants to accept unviable terms in order to increase their exports of cloth to Europe. Gradually, the power relations between the English and the local merchants began to change. The great merchant princes who were the dominant players on the trading scene in the previous century virtually disappeared.

The expansion of demand from Europe for Indian textiles also had an impact on the indigenous economy. Initially, this increased demand was beneficial to the local economy. The productive resources (labour, raw materials and capital) could respond positively. However, as the demand from Europe continued to grow, the pressure to increase production exponentially began to strain the productive resources. The frequent famines in the south and the shortage of food grains and raw materials, for instance, were additional burdens which the weaver had to bear. Thus, though the increased trade opportunities were beneficial in the short run, the long term effects were not necessarily positive.

Over these one hundred and fifty years, the English in India were gradually undergoing a metamorphosis from being traders to builders of a trading empire, eventually emerging as the virtual rulers of large parts of the country.

II

Arrival of Europeans and the Aftermath Portuguese in India

During his first voyage Vasco da Gama came with 170 men in three vessels. The cordiality of Zamorin, the ruler of Calicut, made him comfortable. He journeyed back on 29 August 1498 with only fifty five surviving men and of the three ships; two were laden with Indian goods. Gama's success made Portugal to send 1200 men with 13 vessels under Pedro Alvarez Cabral. On 29 October 1502 Gama visited Calicut for the second time with a fleet of 20 vessels. Gama moved from Calicut to Cochin as its harbour was better. He soon realized that the monopolistic trade of the Arabs needed to be broken if European trade was to thrive. He used the enmity between the two Hindu rulers of Cochin and Calicut for this purpose. Before he returned to Portugal he established a factory [warehouse] in Cochin and a prison at Kannur.

Consolidation of the Portuguese Trade

The Portuguese stopped yearly expeditions and instead decided to appoint a Viceroy. The first Viceroy was Francisco d' Almeida who followed what is known as 'Blue Water Policy,' and accordingly, he added more ships to strengthen the navy rather than adding more settlements. He destroyed the fleet of Zamorin and a fleet sent by the Sultan of Egypt. He befriended the ruler of Cochin and built fortresses at Cochin, Kannur and other places on the Malabar Coast.

Albuquerque (1509-1515), the successor of Almeida, was the real founder of the Portuguese empire in India. He defeated Yusuf Adil Khan, the ruler of Bijapur in 1510 and captured Goa. He developed Goa into a centre of commerce by making all the ships sail on that route. He encouraged people of all faiths to settle in Goa. He was in favour of Europeans marrying Indian women and settling down in Portuguese controlled territories. His conquest of Malacca (in Malaysia) held by the Muslims, who commanded the trade route between India- China and Mecca and Cairo, extended the empire. He attacked the Arabs and was successful in taking Aden. In 1515 he took control of Ormuz.

Do you know?

Albuquerque attempted to stop the practice of Sati.

Two more viceroys played a significant role in consolidating the Portuguese empire in India. They are Nino da Cunha and Antonio de Noronha. Da Cunha occupied Bassein and Diu in 1534 and 1537 respectively. The port of Daman was wrested from the hands of Imad-ul Mulk in 1559. Meanwhile in the middle of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese control over Ceylon increased with the completion of a fort in Colombo. It was during the period of De Noronha (1571) the Mughal ruler Akbar visited Cambay in Gujarat and the first contacts between the Portuguese and the Mughal emperor established.

In 1580 Philip II, King of Spain, defeated Portugal and annexed it. In India the Dutch defeated the Portuguese in Ceylon and later seized the Portuguese fort on Malabar Coast. Thereafter rather than protecting their settlements in India, Portuguese began to evince greater interest in Brazil.

The Impact of Portuguese Presence

- For the first time in the political history of India the Europeans conquered and seized territories from the Indian rulers.
- Indian rulers remained divided and Europeans took advantage of it.
- The Europeans adopted new methods in the warfare. Gun powder and superior artillery played a significant role.
- The Portuguese could contain the monopolistic trade of the Arabs. But it did not really help them. Instead, it benefited the British who removed pirates on the sea routes and made the sea voyage safe.
- The marriages between Europeans and Indians, encouraged by the Portuguese in the territories occupied by them, created a new Eurasian racial group. They were the ones who were later taken to other Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia.
- The presence of Portuguese is very much evident in Chennai's San Thome. Mylapore was the Portuguese 'Black Town'. (Black Town of the British period was George Town)
- Following the establishment of Portuguese settlements, Jesuit missionaries visited India. Notable among them are: 1. Fr. Roberto de Nobili, whose linguistic ability enabled him to write extensively in Tamil and Sanskrit. He is considered the father of Tamil prose. 2. Fr. Henriques introduced printing in Tamil and is called the father of printing press.

Clashes occurred between the Portuguese and the Muslim groups on the pearl fishery coast in the 1530s over the control of fishing and pearl diving rights and a delegation of Paravas complained to the Portuguese authorities at Cochin about the atrocities inflicted on them by Arab fleets and sought protection. Seizing the opportunity, the Portuguese sent their Roman Catholic priests (Padres) who converted thousands of fisher people to the Catholic religion. Following this St. Francis Xavier, one of the founders of the Society of Jesus, arrived in Goa in 1542 and travelled as far as Thoothukudi and Punnakayal to baptize the converts. Xavier established a network of Jesuit mission centres. His visit is evident from the shrines dedicated to St. Xavier and the towering churches that came up in the fishing villages on the Coromandel Coast.

The Portuguese threatened disruption of trade by violence unless their protection, cartaz, was bought. Under the cartaz system, the Portuguese exacted money from the traders as price for protection against what they termed as piracy. But much of this was caused by Portuguese freebooters themselves and so the whole system was a blatant protection racket.

The Dutch

The first Dutch expedition to the South East Asia was in 1595 by a trader (Jan Huyghen van Linschoten), a merchant from Netherlands who lived in Lisbon. There were several companies floated by the traders and individuals to trade with the East. The state intervened and amalgamated them all and created a Dutch East India company in 1602 [known as the United East Indies Company (in Dutch: Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie-abbreviated to VOC). The newly created company established its hold over the Spice Islands (Indonesia). In 1641 the Dutch captured Malacca from the Portuguese and in 1658 the Dutch forced

Portuguese to part with Ceylon. The Dutch were successful in Spice Islands but they suffered reverses in India at the hands of the British.

The Amboyna Massacre – twenty servants of British East India Company, Portuguese and Japanese were tortured and killed by the agents of Dutch East India Company at Ambon Island in Indonesia in the year 1623.

Dutch in Tamil Nadu

The Portuguese who established a control over Pulicat since 1502 were overthrown by the Dutch. In Pulicat, located 60 kilometers north of Chennai, the Dutch built the Castle Geldria. The remains of this 400 year old fort can be seen even now. This fort was once the seat of Dutch power. The Dutch established control of Masulipatnam in 1605 and they established their settlement at Pulicat in 1610. The other Dutch colonial forts and possessions include Nagapattinam, Punnakayal, Porto Novo, Cuddalore (Tiruppathiripuliyur) and Devanampatinam. Pulicat served as the Coromandel headquarters of the Dutch East India Company. Diamonds were exported from Pulicat to the western countries. Nutmeg, cloves, and mace too were sent from here to Europe. A gun powder factory was also set up by the Dutch to augment their military power.

One less known fact about the Dutch is they were involved in slave trade. People from Bengal and from settlements such as Tengapattinam and Karaikal were brought to Pulicat. The Dutch employed brokers at Madras for catching and shipping slaves. Famines, droughts and war that resulted in food shortage led to the flourishing of the slave trade.

Wil O Dijk, a Ph.D. Scholar at Leiden University in one of her research papers noted that the passenger list of slaves transported in VOC ships within and from the Bay of Bengal from June 1621 to November 1665 showed a total of 26,885 men, women and children – of which 1,379 died. She further wrote that the export of Coromandel slaves surged during a famine caused by the Nayak rulers of Thanjavur, Senji and Madurai, after the fall of Vijayanagara Empire.

A subsequent invasion of the Bijapur army led to the destruction of fertile agricultural lands of Thanjavur pushing more people into slavery. This time (1646) around 2118 slaves, mostly drawn from places situated along the coasts like Adirampattinam, Tondi and Kayalpattinam.

The French

The French attempted to establish a trade link with India as early as 1527. Taking a cue from the Portuguese and the Dutch, the French commenced their commercial operations through the French East India Company, established in 1664. Unlike other European powers which appeared in India through the private trading companies, the French commercial enterprise was a project of King Louis XIV. His minister of finance, Colbert, was instrumental in establishing the French East India Company.

As the French effort was a government initiative, it did not attract the general public of France who viewed it as yet another way to tax people.

Pondicherry through Madagascar

Pondicherry through Madagascar

The French traders arrived in Madagascar (in Africa) in 1602. Though the French colonized Madagascar, they had to abandon it in 1674, excepting a small coastal trading post. Berber, a French agent in India obtained a firman [a royal command or authorization] on September 4, 1666 from Aurangzeb and the first French factory was established at Surat in December 1668, much against the opposition of the Dutch. Within a year the French established another factory at Masulipatnam.

Realizing the need for a stronger foothold in India, Colbert sent a fleet to India, led by Haye (Jacob Blanquet de la Haye). The French were able to remove the Dutch from San Thome in Mylapore in 1672. The French sought the support of Sher Khan Lodi, the local Governor, who represented the Sultan of Bijapur, against the Dutch. The Dutch befriended the King of Golkonda who was a traditional foe of Bijapur. It was Sher Khan Lodi who offered Pondicherry (Puducherry) as a suitable site for their settlement.

Pondicherry in 1673 was a small fishing village. Francis Martin who became the Governor of Pondicherry later had spent four years in Madagascar before arriving Surat. He made Pondicherry the strategic centre of French settlements in India.

“The countryside through which we passed (outskirts of Pondicherry) was well-cultivated and very beautiful. Rice was to be found in abundance... where there was water while cotton was grown....” Francis Martin about the landscape of Pondicherry in his diary.

Rivalry and Wars with the Dutch

French attempts to capture Pondicherry were not easy. They had to deal with their main rivals, the Dutch. From 1672 France and Holland were continuously at war. In India the French lacked men, money and arms, as they had diverted them to Chandranagore, another French settlement in Bengal. Therefore the Dutch could capture Pondicherry easily in 1693. It remained with the Dutch for six years. In 1697, according to the treaty of Ryswick, Pondicherry was once again restored to the French. However, it was handed over to the French only in 1699. Francis Martin remained as its governor till his death in 1706.

The French secured Mahe in 1725 and Karaikal in 1739. The French were also successful in establishing and extending their settlements in Qasim Bazaar, Chandranagore and Balasore in the Bengal region. Pierre Benoit Dumas (1668-1745) was another able French governor in Pondicherry. However, the French had to face the threat of the English who proved too strong for them. Eventually they lost out on their hard earned fortunes to the English.

The influence of the French can still be seen in present day Pondicherry, Mahe, Karaikkal, and Chandranagore.

The Danes

Denmark and Norway (together till 1813) possessed colonial settlements in India and Tamil Nadu. Tarangambadi or Tranquebar in Tamil Nadu, Serampore in West Bengal and Nicobar Islands were their possessions in India. On March 17, 1616 the King of Denmark, Christian IV, issued a charter and created a Danish East India Company. This Company did not get any positive response from the Danish traders. Admiral Ove Gjedde led the first expedition to Ceylon in 1618. The Danes could not get any trade contract in Ceylon. While they were returning in disappointment their main vessel was sunk by the Portuguese at Karaikkal. Thirteen stranded sailors with their trade director Robert Crappe were taken to the Nayak ruler of Thanjavur. Robert Crappe ably negotiated with the Thanjavur King and struck an agreement. According to the agreement signed on 20 November 1620, the Danes received the village of Tarangambadi or Tranquebar and the right to construct a Fort there.

The Danish fort at Tarangambadi was vulnerable to high tidal waves which frequently damaged roads and houses. Despite their involvement in the Thirty Years War and the financial loss they suffered, the Danish managed to set up a factory at Masulipatnam. Small tradingposts were established at Pipli (Hoogly River) and Balasore. Investors in Denmark wanted to dissolve the Danish East India Company, but King Christian IV resisted it. Finally after his death in 1648 his son Frederick abolished it.

A second Danish East India Company was started in 1696. Trade between Denmark and Tarangambadi resumed and many new trade outposts were also established. The Nayak king of Thanjavur gifted three more villages surrounding Tarangambadi. Two Danish Missionaries, the first protestant missionaries, arrived on 9 June 1706. The Danish settled in Andaman and Nicobar in 1755, but due to the threat of malaria they abandoned it in 1848. During the Napoleonic wars the British caused heavy damage to their possessions. Serampore was sold to the British in 1839 and Tranquebar and other settlements in 1845.

The Danes in Tamil Nadu

The Danish Fort built in Tarangambadi is still intact. Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg along with Heinrich Pluetshau arrived in Tranquebar in September 1706, as the first Lutheran missionaries in India. They began preaching, and baptized their first converts within ten months of their stay. Their work was opposed both by Hindus and by the local Danish authorities, and in 1707-08 Ziegenbalg had to spend four months in prison on a charge that by converting the natives he was encouraging rebellion. The Copenhagen Missionary Society wanted to encourage an indigenous Christian Church, and accordingly instructed its missionaries simply to preach the Gospel, and not to bother about other matters. Ziegenbalg, however, contended that a concern for the physical welfare of "others" was implicit in the Gospel.

Ziegenbalg set up a printing press, and published studies of the Tamil language and of Indian religion and culture. His translation of the New Testament into Tamil in 1715 was first in any Indian language. The church building that he and his associates constructed in

1718 is still in use today. He succeeded in establishing a seminary for the training of local clergy. When he died on 23 February 1719, he left behind a full Tamil translation of the complete Bible and of Genesis to Ruth (Bible Story book series), many brief writings in Tamil, two church buildings, the seminary, and 250 baptized Christians.

Advent of the British

The English East India Company

A group of wealthy merchants of Leadenhall Street in London secured a royal charter from Queen Elizabeth I to have a share in the lucrative spice trade with the East. The Company, headed by a governor, was managed by a court of 24 Directors. In 1611, King James I obtained from Mughal Emperor Jahangir through William Hawkins, permission for regular trade. The English obtained some trading privileges in Surat. In 1615–19 Sir Thomas Roe was sent as an Ambassador of the English King James I. The Viceroy of Gujarat, Prince Khurram granted trading privileges, but the British could not operate freely because the Portuguese exercised a powerful influence in the region.

Madras was ceded to East India Company in 1639 by the Raja of Chandragiri with permission to build a fortified factory which was named Fort St. George. This was the first landholding recorded by the Company on Indian soil.

In 1645, the ruler of Golkonda overran the territories under the Company's control in Madras. Aurangzeb conquered Golkonda in 1687 and brought the Company territories under Mughal rule. But the privileges granted to the English continued. Within a short time Madras replaced Masulipatinam as the headquarters of the English on the Coromandel Coast. The island of Bombay, which Charles II had inherited as dowry, was transferred to the Company in 1668. The Charter of 1683 empowered the Company to raise military forces and the right to declare war or make peace with the powers in America, Africa and Asia. In 1688 Madras had a municipal government with a Mayor. In 1693 the Company obtained another grant of three villages surrounding Madras and in 1702 five more villages were granted.

Bengal

In Bengal it was a long drawn struggle for the British to obtain trading rights. The Company obtained trading privileges from Shah Shuja, the second son of Shajahan and the Governor of Bengal, but there was no royal confirmation of such privileges. The trading rights for the British in Bengal were obtained only in 1680. Local officials interfered with the trading rights of the British and this resulted in the Company declaring war with the ruler representing the Mughals. Peace was restored in 1690 and the Company established its first settlement at Sultanuti, a site which became the future Calcutta. The factory was fortified in 1696 and in 1698 the Company secured the zamindari rights over three villages, Sutanuti, Kalikata and Gobindpur in return for a payment of 1200 rupees a year. The fortified factory was called Fort St. William which became the headquarters of the Presidency in 1770.

Norris Mission

Sir William Norris, sent by the English King William III in 1698, met Aurangzeb to get full

English jurisdiction over the English settlements. This was to confirm the existing privileges and to extend their trading rights further. But this request was conceded only during 1714-17, when a mission under Surman sent to the Mughal Emperor Farukhsiyar obtained firman (grant of trading rights) addressed to the local rulers of Gujarat, Hyderabad and Bengal.

The Carnatic Wars

The British had to fight three wars (1746- 1763) with the French to establish their supremacy, which in history are called the Carnatic wars.

The Carnatic is a region in South India lying between the Eastern Ghats and the Coromandel Coast. This region constitutes the present day Tamil Nadu, eastern Karnataka, north-eastern Kerala and southern Andhra Pradesh.

First Carnatic War 1746-48

The Austrian War of Succession and Seven Years War fought in Europe had their repercussions in India. The Austrian ruler Charles VI died in 1740 and was succeeded by his daughter Maria Theresa. France did not support her succession and joined hands with German-speaking territories of Austria such as Bavaria, Saxony and Spain. Frederick II (known as Frederick the Great of Prussia) taking advantage of the emerging political situation invaded and annexed Silesia, an Austrian province, with the support of France. The wars fought between Britain and France in Europe also led to clashes between these two countries over their colonial possessions in North America and India.

When the war broke out, the new Governor of Pondicherry, Dupleix appealed to Morse, the Governor of Madras, to remain neutral. But a British squadron under Commodore Barnett captured some of the French vessels with Indian goods and precipitated the situation. Dupleix, shocked by this incident, appealed to Anwar- ud-din, the Nawab of Carnatic, to help him to avoid war with the English. Calm prevailed for some time.

Meanwhile Dupleix contacted La Bourdonnais, the French Governor of Isle of France, who appeared in the Indian waters with eight warships. Peyton, who led the English squadron with his four ships, intercepted the French squadron and in the battle on 6 July 1746 Peyton suffered reverses and retreated to Hoogly, Calcutta expecting some more ships from Britain.

Fall of Madras

The French squadron succeeded in capturing the undefended Madras on 15 September 1746. Governor Morse was asked to surrender but the Madras Governor turned to Anwar-ud-din for help. Dupleix was clever in convincing the Nawab that he was securing Madras from the British to be handed over to him. On 21 September 1746 the English were forced to part with Madras. But when the Nawab of Carnatic asked the French to hand over Madras to him as promised, the French dodged. Thereupon the Nawab sent a force of 10,000 men under the command of his son Mahfuz Khan.

The Battle of San Thome and Adyar

Nawab's forces blockaded Fort St. George but the French forces pushed the Nawab's forces to San Thome. The French received reinforcement and Mahfuz Khan attempted to halt the progress of the French on the banks of river Adyar. The French forces were able to wade through the water and inflict a severe attack on the Nawab's forces resulting in heavy losses.

Dupleix then set his eyes on Fort St. David at Cuddalore which was in British possession. The English, with the help of the Nawab of Arcot, was trying to regain the places lost but Dupleix again played a diplomatic game by promising that he would hoist the flag of the Nawab in the Fort St. George for a week and after that he requested the Nawab to hand over the town to the French. The Nawab agreed to withdraw his proposed help to the British. Two attempts of the British under Rear- Admiral Boscawen to take Pondicherry failed. By this time, in 1748, France and the English had signed the Treaty of Aix La Chapelle. Under this treaty the British and the French ceased their hostilities in India. It was agreed that the French would hand over Madras to the British in return for Louisburg in North America.

The Second Carnatic War: 1749-54

In Europe peace prevailed between the British and the French. But the twocolonial powers could not live in peace in India. They played one native ruler against the other. Dupleix wanted to enhance the French influence by involving in the wars of succession in both Hyderabad and Arcot.

Dupleix supported the claims of Muzzafar Jung, the grandson of Asaf Jah, who died in 1748 in Hyderabad, as the Nizam of Hyderabad. In the Carnatic, he supported the claim of Chanda Sahib. A triple alliance was formed amongst the French, Nizam and the Nawab of Carnatic.

The English, after losing Madras, a precious possession, had only Fort St. David under their control. In order to reduce the influence of the French, the English supported the rival candidates Nasir Jung for the throne of Nizam of Hyderabad and that of Muhammad Ali after the death of Anwar-ud-din in the Battle of Ambur in 1749.

Anandarangam Diary

Anandarangam (1709-1761), was born to a leading merchant of the time named Tiruvengadam Pillai. After his father's death at Pondicherry, in view of the support given by the French Governors Dumas and Dupleix became the greatest merchant at Pondicherry. Dupleix appointed him the Chief Dubhashi (one who knows two languages) and Chief Commercial Agent (1746). This enabled him to emerge as a man of substantial political influence at Pondicherry. But his real fame rests on his voluminous Diary in Tamil which is a very valuable source of history for the period from 1736 to 1760, particularly for the Governorship of Dupleix. It is also a good summary of Anandarangam's views and impressions on contemporary events.

The Battle of Ambur (1749) the Battle of Ambur:

Muzaffar Jung, the contender for Nizami of Hyderabad, and Chanda Sahib, a claimant to the Nawabi of Carnatic, with the help of the disciplined French infantry inflicted huge casualties on the Nizam and Anwar-ud-din's forces. Anwar-ud-din was killed. Chanda Sahib entered Arcot as the Nawab. Muhammad Ali, son of Anwar-ud-din, escaped to Tiruchirappalli.

The battle of Ambur was followed by the entry of victorious forces to Deccan. Nazir Jung was killed by the French Army and Muzaffar Jung was made the Nizam of Hyderabad in December 1750. Dupleix's dream of establishing a French empire appeared good for some time. Dupleix received huge money and territories both from the Nizam and the Nawab of Arcot. When Muzaffar Jung required French protection, Dupleix sent Bussy, the French general, with a large French force. Muzaffar Jung did not live long and the same people who killed Nasir Jung also killed him. Bussy promptly placed Salabat Jung, brother of Nazir Jung, on the throne. In order to reduce the influence of British and also with a view to capturing Mohammad Ali (who fled to Tiruchirappalli after Anwar-ud-din was killed) Chanda Sahib decided to take Tiruchirappalli, with the help of the French and the Nizam.

Robert Clive was born in September 29, 1725. He had no interest in studies and was expelled from three schools for his indiscipline and lack of interest in studies. However, Clive had developed notoriety for fighting. Disgusted by his behaviour his father secured him a writer's post in the East India Company and sent him to Madras. Clive was later promoted as the governor of Fort St David and was involved in the Carnatic Wars and the siege of Trichinopoly. He won the Battle of Plassey in Bengal from where the British Empire came to evolve in India. Clive returned to India to take up his governorship and secured the Diwani rights from the defeated Mughal emperor in 1765. Clive amassed huge wealth and left India a fabulously rich man, with a personal fortune to the then value of 234,000 pounds. This apart, his jagir in Bengal fetched him an annual rental income of 27,000 pounds. When he returned to England he faced a parliamentary inquiry over allegations of corruption. Though exonerated, Clive committed suicide.

Clive in the Second Carnatic War

Dupleix was also determined to take over Tiruchirappalli with the help of Chanda Sahib. Chanda Sahib's troops were joined by 900 Frenchmen. Muhammad Ali had only 5000 soldiers and not more than 600 Englishmen to help him. Robert Clive's changed the course of history. He suggested the idea of storming Arcot when the French and the Nawab were busy concentrating on Tiruchirappalli.

Clive moved from Fort St. David on 26 August 1752 with only 200 English and 300 Indian soldiers. As expected the English received help from many rulers from small territories. The Raja of Mysore and the ruler of Thanjavur rallied to support Muhammad Ali. Chanda Sahib dispatched a force of 3000 under his son Raja Sahib to take Arcot. Clive seized Arcot on August 31 and then successfully withstood a 53-day siege by Chanda Sahib's son, Raja Sahib, who was helped by the French forces. In the battle of Arni the English and the

Maratha ruler Murari Rao faced an unequal number of French and the forces of Nawab of Arcot. In several battles that followed, including one at Kaveripakkam, Chanda Sahib was captured and executed. Muhammed Ali became the undisputed ruler of Carnatic.

In Europe Britain and France were not involved in any war and so neither of them approved the policy of their Companies fighting in India. The French government recalled Governor Dupleix. The Treaty of Pondicherry was signed in 1755 with the English; both countries agreed not to interfere in the quarrels of the Indian princes. The Treaty also defined their mutual territorial possessions in India, a situation that was maintained for nearly two centuries until Indian independence.

The Third Carnatic War: 1756-1763

The third Carnatic War was an echo of the Seven Years War (1756-1763) which broke out in Europe in 1756. It was a global conflict and was fought between the two arch-rivals Britain and France. The war was fought in North America (resulting in the American War of Independence), and West Africa (which later became the French West Africa). In India it manifested itself in the Third Carnatic war. Before turning our attention to the Third Carnatic War, let us see what happened in Bengal in the meantime.

Battle of Plassey (1757)

The East India Company abused the trade permits (dastaks) granted by the Mughal Emperor by not paying taxes to the Nawab of Bengal, and by involving itself in internal trade. This apart, the Company had given asylum to the son of the Nawab Siraj-ud-daula's hostile aunt. As the Company refused to oblige the Nawab, who demanded the return of his nephew, Fort St. William was captured and Europeans imprisoned. Responding to this situation, the Company at Fort St. George despatched a strong contingent under Robert Clive and Watson. The battle that ensued is called the Battle of Plassey.

It was alleged that 146 European prisoners were kept in a room measuring 18 by 15 feet and it is said that all except 23 prisoners died of suffocation. The veracity of this incident, known as the "Black Hole Tragedy of Calcutta" in British accounts, has been debated among historians.

The battle of Plassey (1757) changed the position of the British from being a commercial power to that of a territorial power. It confirmed the privileges obtained by the Company and replaced Siraj-ud-daula with the betrayer Mir Jaffar. The Company's sovereignty over Calcutta was recognized and it was given sufficient land to maintain a military force. Mir Jaffar also agreed for a Company's resident in the court. Mir Jaffar was replaced by Mir Qasim and the latter tried to assert his independence, which was not to the liking of the Company officials.

Battle of Buxar (1764)

After fleeing from Bengal Mir Qasim aligned with the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II and the Nawab of Oudh, Shuja-ud-daulah, who were equally aggrieved by the interference of the Company in their internal affairs. They declared war against the British. The battle was fought at Buxar (1764). By virtue of its superior armed the Company forces won the battle. The victory of the British led to the signing of the Treaty of Allahabad (1765) by Robert Clive with Shah Alam II. By this treaty the Company got the Diwani right to collect land revenue from the princely states of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Besides, the Company obtained three districts, Burdwan, Chittagong and Midnapur, in Bengal and sovereignty over Calcutta. British virtually became the rulers of Bengal.

Outbreak of Third Carnatic War

With the outbreak of the Seven Years War, Clive captured Chandranagore, the French settlement in Bengal. With this the French influence ended in Bengal. But they retained their power in the south. The French government sent Count de Lally as the Supreme Commander of the French forces in India. As the British were active in Bengal, Lally promptly secured Fort St. David after a short siege. Lally's next move was Thanjavur but the French were after money from the Raja which he could not give. Without a penny the siege of Thanjavur was lifted because there was a threat of British attack on Pondicherry.

Lally wanted Bussy to come from Hyderabad to help him to defend Pondicherry in the case of attack. Bussy left Hyderabad and joined Lally. In Deccan the political situation changed quickly and the French lost both Rajahmundry (1758) and Masulipatam (1759). Salabat Jung, the Nizam of Hyderabad, without fighting a battle signed an agreement with the British. The Nizam transferred Masulipatam and Northern Circars from the French to the English.

The combined forces of Bussy and Lally captured Kanchipuram and proceeded to take Madras. As the British were busy in Bengal, Madras had only about 800 Englishmen and 2500 Indian soldiers. The Siege of Madras began on 12 December 1758. The French could not progress till February 1759, but both sides suffered casualties. The French, however, could not continue with the siege as supplies were dwindling. Meanwhile General Pocock brought a fleet to the relief of Madras. Lally was forced to lift the siege and fall back on Kanchipuram.

The Battle of Wandiwash and the fall of Pondicherry

Lally retired to Pondicherry leaving a French contingent in Arcot. The British moved towards Wandiwash but suddenly fell upon Kanchipuram and captured it. A fresh detachment of British forces arrived under the command of Sir Eyre Coote. The last ditch battle was fought between Eyre Coote and Lally at Wandawashi (Wandiwash) in January 1760. Bussy was defeated and taken prisoner. Lally retreated to Pondicherry but it was not besieged immediately. Meanwhile the British captured Senji and proceeded to Pondicherry

and laid siege to it. Lally had reorganized the defences and put up a heroic resistance to the British. The siege of Pondicherry continued for several months and finally on 4 February 1761 Pondicherry fell. In the same year the British took control of Mahe, another French possession in the west coast. All French possessions were now lost. Finally, the hostilities came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Paris (1763) at the end of the Seven Years War. Pondicherry and Chandranagore were restored to the French. The French had to henceforth be content with Pondicherry, Karaikal and Yanaon (Yanam) (all in Union Territory of Puducherry), Mahe (Kannur district in Kerala), and Chandranagore (Chandannagar in Bengal). The English emerged as the undisputed colonial power in India, changing from a trading company into that of a territorial power.



17. Effect of British Rule

Introduction

The general breakdown of the central authority, in the wake of Mughal's fall, resulted in a English trading company taking over India. Initially, the English East India Company's focus was not on administration. Its aim was ensuring smooth trade. However, after the terrible Bengal famine of 1770, they began to exercise power with some responsibility. Notwithstanding their exploitative economic policy, their professed objective was the safety of the people they governed and administration of justice. The justification for their expansionist policy was the extermination of tyranny of the local rulers and the harassment by robbers and marauders in the country. Railways and telegraph, introduced for easier communication, also served the purpose of curbing resistance and the control of the local population. However, their agrarian and commercial policies had a ruinous impact on the economy. India's wealth was drained in several forms. By the 1830s there was large scale emigration of ruined peasants and weavers to plantations in the British Empire countries.

Establishment of British Raj

Buxar was the real foundation battle for British dominion in India. Not only the Nawab of Bengal and Oudh, but the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II and his prime minister were also opposed to the British. As a result of the Battle of Buxar, the Company ceased to be a company of merchants and became a formidable political force. Under the pretext of corruption in Bengal administration Clive was appointed Governor of Fort William. Clive did not like his predecessor Vansittart's decision restoring Oudh to Shah Alam. So he called for fresh negotiation with Shuja-ud-daulah. As a result of this, two treaties of Allahabad were signed. The emperor granted the Diwani (revenue administration) of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the Company. The emperor Shah Alam II was to get the districts of Allahabad and Kora, besides an annual allowance of 26 lakhs of rupees from the revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The province of Oudh was restored to Shuja-ud-daula on the payment of war indemnity. The treaties held the Nawab of Bengal responsible for the governance of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Before the emperor granted the Diwani to Clive, the Nawab of Bengal, successor of Mir Jafar, had practically transferred the Nizamat (civil

to the Company. So the Company had to function as Diwan and the Nizam. The Diwan's duty included the collection of revenue and the control of civil justice. The Nizam's function was to exercise military power and to dispense criminal justice. Thus the Company acquired the real power, while the responsibility of administration was with the Nawab. This arrangement is called Dual System or Double government or Dyarchy.

But soon the dual system began to break down. Governance without responsibility led to the outbreak of a terrible famine in 1770. Nearly one third of Bengal's population perished. The miseries of the province were intensified by the Company servants who had monopolized the sale of rice and realized huge profits. Finally, the Company realized its

responsibility and passed the Regulating Act of 1773. Warren Hastings was appointed the Governor General of Bengal.

The administrative head of East India Company was Governor (of Fort William or of Fort St. George) until 1772. Warren Hastings who was Governor of Fort William was made Governor-General of Bengal according to the Regulating Act of 1773. The Charter Act 1833 designated this post as Governor-General of India and William Bentinck was appointed the first Governor-General of united British India. The Governor-General was selected by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, to whom he was responsible. After the great rebellion of 1857, when the government of India was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown, the title "Viceroy and Governor-General" was first used in the queen's proclamation of 1858. Canning was the first Viceroy and Governor-General of India accountable to the British Parliament.

Land Tenures: Permanent Settlement and Ryotwari Settlement

The Regulating Act of 1773 imposed on the court of Directors the legal obligation of informing all revenue transactions of the Company servants to the British Treasury. The Governor and Council consisting of the Commander-in-Chief and two counsellors sat as a Board of Revenue which discussed revenue matters. The Pitt India Act of 1784 separated the civil and military establishments in India.

Governor-General Cornwallis, himself a big landlord, wanted to create landlords after the British model in India. Cornwallis came to a settlement with the revenue farmers. This resulted in the creation of a new type of middlemen, called zamindars, reducing the cultivators to the position of mere tenants. This settlement that Cornwallis made with the zamindars of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1793, in pursuance of the instruction from the Directors, is called the Permanent Settlement. 'Settlement' refers to the assessment and fixing of the quantum of land revenue to be paid by each zamindar to the government. For Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, this was fixed permanently. Thus the zamindars who were originally tax collectors acquired hereditary rights over the land assigned by the government. The zamindars pocketed whatever they collected over and above the settlement.

The first quarter of the nineteenth century was a formative period in the land revenue history of the Madras Province. First after a great deal of deliberations Permanent Settlement was adopted. The districts of Chengalpattu, Salem and Dindigul were divided into a number of mittahs and sold to the highest bidders. Most of the purchasers, after fleecing the peasants, failed in the course of a year or two. The experiment was therefore abandoned. Then the Board of Revenue tried a system of village leases.

Mahalwari was introduced in 1833 during the period of William Bentinck. Under the system the revenue settlement was made with the proprietor of the estate but the land revenue was collected from individual cultivators

Under the Village Lease system the assessment of each village was to be fixed for a period of three years based on the actual collections over a series of past years. In districts

where mirasi rights existed, the mirasdar was made responsible for the rent collections. In districts where the mirasi rights did not exist, an arrangement was made with the village headman. This system failed due to various reasons such as bad monsoons, low price of grains and the short period of lease. When crops failed entire villages defaulted and fled without paying the revenue. The government had to seek the help of the district collectors to bring back the peasants to the village.

By 1814 the Court of Directors had decided to introduce the ryotwari system. This was a system formulated by Governor Thomas Munro. Under this system the ryot, an Anglicization by the British in India of the Arabic word ra'iyah, meaning a peasant or cultivator, was the proprietor and tax payer of the land. The government dealt with him directly without the intervention of any middlemen. The peasant was entitled to possession of land so long as he paid the land revenue. Apart from eviction, default could result in attachment of livestock, household property and personal belongings. The government assessed the revenue of each cultivated field. The revenue assessment was reviewed once in thirty years, taking into account the changes in grain prices, marketing opportunities, irrigation facilities and the like. The ryotwari system introduced the concept of private property in land. The individual holders were registered and issued pattas. They were permitted to sell, lease, and mortgage or transfer the right over land.

Thomas Munro:

Munro arrived Madras in 1780. In the first 12 years he was engaged in Mysore War as soldier. He worked in the Baramahal (Salem district) from 1792-1799 and Kanara from 1799-1800. He was collector of Ceded Districts: Kadapa, Kurnool, Chittoor, Anantapur. It was during this period that he conceived the idea of Ryotwari Settlement. In 1820 he became Governor of Madras Presidency and served for seven years. In 1822 he officially enforced the Ryotwari System in Madras. During his governorship, he gave attention to education and regarded any expenditure on it as an investment. He also emphasized the need for Indianization of the services. He died of Cholera at Pattikonda (Karnool district) in July 1827. A very popular governor, people constructed shrines in his honour, and named their children after him. His statue was erected at Madras in 1839 by public subscription.

Subsidiary Alliance and Doctrine of Lapse

Governor General Wellesley (1798-1805) pursued a forward policy to establish British supremacy in India. His annexation of territories was not a result of victory in war. It was by assumption of the entire administration of an Indian State, with its rulers retaining his title and receiving a fixed allowance.

Before Wellesley, the Company concluded alliances with Indian princes. The Nizam and the Nawab of Oudh received subsidies for the maintenance of British contingents. Such forces were generally stationed outside the State concerned. Payment was made in cash. Difficulties arose when the payments were not promptly paid. Wellesley broadened the scope of this arrangement by his Subsidiary Alliance System, bringing under it Hyderabad, Mysore, Lucknow, the Maratha Peshwa, the Bhonsle (Kolhapur) and Sindhia (Gwalior).

The provisions of the Subsidiary Treaty are: (a) An Indian ruler entering into Subsidiary Alliance with the British had to dissolve his own armed forces and accept British forces and a British Resident in his territory. (b) He had to pay for the British army's maintenance. If he failed, a portion of his territory would be taken away and ceded to the British. (c) The protected prince was to sever all connections with European powers other than the British, especially the French. (d) No European should be employed without the permission of the British. (e) No negotiation with any Indian power should be held without the Company's permission and (f) No other Indian power to interfere in its internal affairs. Thus the states brought under the system became dependent on the Company in political and military matters, sacrificing their own sovereignty and status.

The Subsidiary System increased the military resources and efficiency of the Company government. The immediate result of this system was the discharge of thousands of professional soldiers by the political powers. The disbanded soldiers indulged in freebooting activities. Pindaris (marauders) began to swell on account of the Subsidiary System. In view of the guaranteed support to the Princes by the Company, the protective States mal-administered and paved the way for the annexation.

Distinction between 'Presidency' and 'Province': The British called Presidency the place where the office of Chief Administrative Head was situated. Madras, Bombay and Calcutta were the three Presidencies. Later when the Presidency became unwieldy for governance, they created provinces like Central and United Provinces.

Doctrine of Lapse

Traditionally Hindu custom allowed the adoption of a son in the absence of male heirs. The adopted son had the right to inherit property. In this context the question raised was whether such an adopted prince holding the state subordinate to the Paramount Power (England) could succeed without the consent of the latter. Before Dalhousie's arrival, the custom was to obtain the sanction of the Company government before or after adoption. Governor General Dalhousie held that the paramount power could legally refuse to sanction adoption in the case of rulers of States dependent on it. This meant that dependent States could be regarded as lapsed to the paramount power, by its refusal to sanction the succession of adopted sons.

By applying this policy known as Doctrine of Lapse, the first state to fall as Satara. Shahji of Satara died (1848) and the son he adopted on the eve of his death was not recognized by Dalhousie. Gangadhar Rao, Raja of Jhansi died in November 1853 and Dalhousie annexed that state immediately. (His widow, Rani Lakshmi Bai, played a prominent role in the Great Rebellion of 1857.) Raghujji Bhonsle III died in 1853 without a child. Nagpur was immediately annexed. In 1851, the last Peshwa died. He had been a pensioner of the Company for thirty-three years, but Dalhousie refused to continue paying the pension to his son, the Nana Sahib. The Doctrine of Lapse, thus, served as an instrument for the pursuit of its annexation policy. When the Crown took over India in 1858 Doctrine of Lapse was withdrawn.

Native States and British Paramountcy

In the aftermath of the Battle of Plassey (Palashi) (1757), when the Company embarked on its career of expansion, it established the system of dual government. Under this system, everything was sought to be done by the Company's servants in the name of some powerless and dependent prince. In theory the Company was only the diwan (the collector of revenue), but in practice it exercised full authority. This authority was asserted by the refusal to continue the payment of annual tribute to the Mughal emperor Shah Alam promised by Clive. Cornwallis even stopped affirming obedience in letters to the emperor. Wellesley carried matters further with his objective of establishing British predominance through his Subsidiary Alliance System. Wellesley made subsidiary alliances with the three of the major States of India: Hyderabad, Poona and Mysore.

Hastings (Moir) who became Governor General in 1813 ordered the removal of the phrase denoting the imperial supremacy from his seal. He refused to meet Emperor Akbar II, unless he waived all authority over the Company's possessions. But Hastings laid down a policy that the Company was in no way responsible for the administration of the Indian States. Thus, under the Subsidiary System, each Prince was secure on his throne, notwithstanding the discontent of his people or by his jealous neighbours. In regions such as Kathiawar and Central India, divided among a great number of petty chiefs, the Company's close supervision became indispensable for prompt action.

The Company army helped the Indian rulers under the Subsidiary system to quell any rebellion or disturbance within the State. In Hyderabad, the authority of the Nizam did not prevail in certain areas, as the Arab troops lived without any control. The assistance of British troops helped reduce the Arabs to obedience. In Mysore state the financial management of the raja provoked a rebellion in 1830 and the treaty of Wellesley only provided authority for the Company to interfere. William Bentinck, as Governor General, relieved the raja of all his powers and appointed Mark Cubbon to administer Mysore. In Gwalior, during a minority, the parties at the durbar quarrelled bitterly among themselves. The army of the State passed out of control. Ellenborough moved with a strong army, but the State army resisted. At the battle of Maharajpur, the State army was defeated and new terms of conditions including the limitation of the military forces maintained by it were imposed in 1843.

Dalhousie's new method of annexing territories, Doctrine of Lapse, as we have seen, increased the territories under British domain. Every accession of territory also increased the influence of the Company over the governments of the Indian princes.

Reforms in Civil and Judicial Administration

Cornwallis organized company administration securing the services of William Jones, a judge and an Orientalist. He set up a machinery for the detection and punishment of crime, thereby ending the dual system of government established by Clive. The collection of revenue was separated from administration and justice. He deprived the collectors of their judicial function and confined them to revenue collection. Civil and criminal courts were

thoroughly reorganized. At the top of the judicial system were the Sadar Diwani Adalat and the Sadar Nizamat Adalat. These two highest civil and criminal courts of appeal at Calcutta were presided over by the Governor General and his Council. Under them were four provincial courts of appeal at Calcutta, Deccan, Murshidabad and Patna. Each was to function under three European judges, aided by Indian advisers. Next came the District and City courts, each presided over by a European judge assisted by Indians. Every district and important city was provided with a court. At the bottom of the judicial system were courts under Indian judges, called munsifs. In civil cases, Muslim law was imposed and followed. In criminal cases, Hindu and Muslim laws were applied according to the religion of the litigants.

The biggest contribution of Cornwallis was the reform of the civil services. Cornwallis provided scope for employing capable and honest public servants. He put an end to the old tradition of the civil service wherein the Company's servants were given a small salary but were permitted to trade. Cornwallis appointed people solely on merit but considered that efficiency required the exclusion of Indians from the Company's service.

Every district was divided into thanas (police circles). Each thana was under adaroga, an Indian officer. Cornwallis' police system was further improved under Warren Hastings. The rigid separation of judicial and revenue powers was given up. The Collector began to function as Magistrate as well.

Cornwallis, who toned up the civil and criminal administration, however, did not pay adequate attention to the education of Company servants. It was Wellesley who emphasized the need for educating and training them. Wellesley thought the civilians should have knowledge of the languages, laws, customs and manners and history of India, in addition to their liberal education in England. With this object, the College of Fort William was founded at Calcutta in 1800. A three year course of study was provided for the Company's civil servants. The college was staffed by European professors and eighty Indian pundits. This became the Oriental School for Bengal civilians. In 1806 the East India College was established in England. In Madras, the College of Fort St George was set up by F.W. Ellis in 1812 on the lines of College of Fort William. It was here that the theory that the South Indian languages belonged to a separate family of languages independent of Sanskrit was formulated.

Education and Development under Company Rule

Education

The establishment of a Madrasa by a learned maulvi with the support of Warren Hastings was the beginning of initiatives of British government to promote education. This Madrasa started with forty stipendiary students. What Warren Hastings had done for the Muslims, his successor was prepared to do for the Hindus. Cornwallis established a Sanskrit college (1791) in Benares. The successive governors in the next twenty years, however, did nothing to follow it up.

Company held the view that it was not desirable in its own interests to encourage education in India. In 1813, when the Company Charter was renewed, it contained a clause intended to force on the Company the initiative for a regular educational policy. Hastings encouraged the foundation of vernacular schools by missionaries. He was the patron of the Hindu College, established at Calcutta in 1817, supported by the Indian public for the teaching of English and of Western science. The cause of education was further promoted by missionaries like Alexander Duff. Thanks to Hastings' liberal outlook, press censorship instituted in 1799 was abolished. It was in such an atmosphere that the Bengali Weekly, the Samachar Darpan was started in 1818.

The Charter of 1833 emphasized the development of the country primarily in the interest of its inhabitants. William Bentinck, appointed the first Governor General of united India reformed the society by suppressing thuggee (robbery and murder committed by the thugs in accordance with their ritual), abolishing sati and introducing English as the medium of instruction in schools and colleges. This he thought would facilitate Indianization of the services. Bentinck founded the Calcutta Medical College in March 1835. The students of this college were sent to London in 1844 to complete their studies. Ten years after the establishment of the Calcutta Medical College, the Grant Medical College in Bombay was founded in 1845. In 1847 the Thomason Engineering College at Roorkee (now IIT Roorkee) came into existence. In 1849 a school for girls was founded in Calcutta.

Macaulay came to India as a law member in 1835. He was appointed President of the Board of Education. He had a poor opinion of indigenous learning. Macaulay recommended and government accepted to make English the literary and official language of India. Dalhousie showed keen interest in education. He approved of the system of vernacular education designed by James Thomason, Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces (1843- 53). The Educational Dispatch of Charles Wood (1854) outlined a comprehensive scheme of education-primary, secondary, collegiate. Departments of Public Instruction and a university for each of the three Presidencies were organized for the purpose. University of Madras was established under this plan (1857), along with universities in Bombay and Calcutta. Dalhousie modified the policy of Macaulay by encouraging educational institutions in vernaculars too. He also agreed to the principle of grants-in-aid to private effort, irrespective of caste or creed.

Macaulay found nothing good in Indian literature, philosophy and medicine. Macaulay, in his minute of 1835 wrote: 'I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic. But I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works. I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.

The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language, we shall teach languages in which, by universal confession, there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own, whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, wherever they differ from those of Europe differ for the worse, and whether, when we can patronize sound

philosophy and true history, we shall countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made of seas of treacle and seas of butter.

It is said that the Sanscrit and the Arabic are the languages in which the sacred books of a hundred millions of people are written, and that they are on that account entitled to peculiar encouragement. Assuredly it is the duty of the British Government in India to be not only tolerant but neutral on all religious questions. ... We abstain, and I trust shall always abstain, from giving any public encouragement to those who are engaged in the work of converting the natives to Christianity. And while we act thus, can we reasonably or decently bribe men, out of the revenues of the State, to waste their youth in learning how they are to purify themselves after touching an ass or what texts of the Vedas they are to repeat to expiate the crime of killing a goat?

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, -a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.

Efforts at Safety and Developmental Measures

Pindari War

Pindaris were freebooters composed of both Muslim and Hindu bands. The Subsidiary Alliance of the Company had led to the disbandment of thousands of soldiers and most of them joined them and swelled their numbers in central India. The British proclaimed Pindari War. But it turned out to be a war against Marathas and the outcome of this prolonged war (1811 to 1818) was that the whole of Central India came under British rule. William Bentinck The villagers burning themselves to avoid Pindaris

Suppression of Thuggee

The Thugs were robbers operating between Delhi and Agra from the fourteenth century. They were bound together by oaths and ritual and murdered unsuspecting travellers in the name of the goddess Kali. Bentinck placed William Sleeman in charge of the operation to eliminate the Thuggee menace. Between 1831 and 1837 more than three thousand Thugs were convicted. Five hundred approvers. By 1860 the problem of thuggee had ceased to exist.

Abolition of Sati

Bentinck showed great courage and humanity by his decision to abolish sati, the practice of burning widows alive with the corpses of their husbands. Previous governors-general were reluctant to prohibit the custom as interference in religion but Bentinck enacted

a law (Sati Abolition Act, 1829) to put an end to this practice. Raja Rammohan Roy's campaigns and efforts played a decisive part in getting this inhuman practice abolished.

Railways, Postal & Telegraph Systems

The first serious proposal for constructing railways was made by the European business community. The Directors were doubtful whether railways could be successfully built in India. Governor General Dalhousie however persuaded them arguing that the railways would bring very considerable economic advantage. Yet before the Great Rebellion less than three hundred miles of track had been laid.

Though several proposals for the laying of telegraph communication between India and London were put forward, the telegraph service was inaugurated only in 1854. During the Great Rebellion of 1857 its importance was realised. In the aftermath of 1857, it became an urgent necessity. The time of communication between London and Calcutta came down from several days to twenty eight minutes. With the opening of Suez Canal in 1869, the journey between Europe and India was reduced by some 4000 miles. By 1870 the government of British India was in effective contact with Secretary of State, India Office, London. Subsequently, with the exception of Curzon, Governor Generals were reluctant to do anything without seeking the permission of Whitehall, the headquarters of the East India Company.

Irrigation

The British neglected irrigation. The irrigation channels and tanks built by Indian rulers fell into disuse and there was little effort on the part of the Company to undertake repairs or renovation works. In Madras, as we will see in the following section, a few irrigation works were carried out because of the personal enthusiasm of Arthur Cotton, an Engineering officer. Against much opposition, Cotton built a dam across the Kollidam (Coleroon) in 1836. In 1853, a dam across the Krishna River had also begun. In the north, before the takeover of India by the Crown, Jumna canal was completed in 1830 and by 1857 the Ganges canal had been extended to nearly 450 miles. In the Punjab area the Bari Doab canal had been excavated by 1856. But the canal water contributed to soil salinity and water logging causing great ecological distress.

Forests

Land revenue was the mainstay of the British Indian government's fiscal system. Therefore, in their effort to extend the areas of cultivable land, forests were destroyed. Zamins were created out of Jungle Mahal forests and auctioned off for regular cultivation. The original inhabitants of this region, the Santhals were evicted. Therefore it was the Santhals who were the first tribal group to resist the British rule in India. Slope cultivation was encouraged in the hilly and mountainous tracts. Land was provided to European enterprises at a throwaway price for slope cultivation. Further, in their enthusiasm to try plantation crops, zamindars and Indian rulers destroyed the forests. Coffee, for instance, did not grow in many places. Yet in the process of attempting coffee cultivation large tracts of

virgin forests were destroyed. Timber came to be exploited with the massive construction of the railway system. In the 1870s, it was calculated that every year one million sleepers were needed to build railway tracks. Indian trees, particularly sal, deodar, and teak, were preferred for their strength over other Indian timbers. These three species were intensively exploited. Much sal was extracted from the forests of the Jungle Mahals of West Bengal and Bihar. Timber went to England too for the building of railways. The myth that India's forests were inexhaustible was exploded. It was in this background that the colonial state, in order to manage and control forest resources, started the Forest Department and passed the Indian Forest Act, 1865. This was a draconian act which restricted the use of forest resources by indigenous groups who resented it. In order to contain protest and resistance the British enacted the dreaded Criminal Tribes Act, 1871. During the entire colonial period there were frequent insurrections by tribal people against the colonial state. The legacy of the colonial forest acts continues to haunt contemporary times as well.

Deindustrialization and Drain of Wealth

Europe had always imported more from the East than was exported here. There was little that the East required from the West in return for the spices, silks, calicos, jewels and the like it sent there. The industrial revolution in textile production that took place in England reversed this relationship for the first time. India was systematically deindustrialized. Rather than being the world's leading exporter of cloth and textiles, India became a market for Lancashire cottons. Cheap machine-made British goods led to the flooding of Indian markets. Indian cotton piece goods began to lose ground gradually given that machine-made goods were more durable and cost less.

The Company government, in the first three decades, followed a policy of allowing unrestricted flow of imports of British goods into India. Without any import duty English goods were much cheaper than domestic products. At the same time, Indian manufactures were shut out from the British market by high protective duties. This policy ruined the Indian weavers and traders.

Contrasting Muslim rule with British governance William Bentinck himself acknowledged the benevolent nature of the former. 'In many respects', Bentinck wrote, 'the Muhammedans surpassed our rule; they settled in the countries which they conquered; they intermarried with the natives; they admitted them to all privileges, the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and conquered became identical. Our policy on the contrary, has been the reverse of this- cold, selfish and unfeeling.'

Military and civil administrative costs in British India consumed an average of eighty per cent of the budget, leaving twenty per cent to be divided among the various departments concerned. Agriculture was left to its deteriorating condition. Irrigation was neglected. Arthur Cotton wanted the colonial state to give priority to irrigation rather than building railway network, but his suggestion was turned down by the imperial government in England. Outbreak of successive famines in the last quarter of the nineteenth century ultimately prompted the government under British Crown to initiate some steps for the building of dams.

The Ryotwari system intended to create a large body of independent peasants, who would be protected from the “corrupt and faithless zamindar,” however, in reality achieved the contrary result of strengthening the position of the big landlords. The government showed little interest in protecting the interests of tenants in ryotwari areas. Since land was the main source of revenue, its rigorous collection became an imperative policy of the British. The Torture Commission, appointed by the Company government in Madras in its report presented in 1855 exposed the atrocities perpetrated by the Indian revenue and police officials in the process of collecting land tax from the cultivators. The Torture Act which justified forcible collections of land revenue was abolished only after 1858.

Famines and Indentured labour

Famine, though no stranger to India, increased in frequency and deadliness with the advent of British colonial rule. Between 1800 and 1825, there were only four famines. But in the last quarter of the century there were 22 famines. It is estimated that over five million died. By 1901, Romesh Chunder Dutt, a former ICS officer and a staunch nationalist, enumerated 10 mass famines since the 1860s, putting the total death toll at 15 million.

The laissez faire (non-intervention) principles to which the colonial state was committed since 1833 was applied to famines also. For years, western-educated Indians had argued that British rule was grossly impoverishing India. The Orissa famine, in which one third of the population died of starvation and disease, served as a patent proof of this thesis. It prompted nationalist Dadabhai Naoroji, to begin his lifelong investigations into Indian poverty.

An eye witness (an Englishman) of the terrible famine in the Guntur district of Madras Presidency in 1833 said: ‘It is dreadful to see what revolting food human beings may be driven to partake of. Dead dogs and horses are greedily devoured by these surviving wretches; and the other day, an unfortunate donkey having strayed from the fort, they fell upon him like a pack of wolves, tore him limb from limb and devoured him on the spot.’

Madras Famine of 1876-78: The failure of two successive monsoons caused a severe famine in the Madras Presidency during 1876-78. The viceroy Lytton adopted a hands-off approach similar to that followed in Orissa. 3.5 million People died in the presidency.

The introduction of plantation crops and slope cultivation in Ceylon, Mauritius, Fiji, Malaya, the Caribbean islands, Natal and South Africa required enormous labour. Initially slave labour was used for this purpose. But after the Company government abolished slavery in India (1843), the system of indentured was used. Under this system, labourers were hired on contract for a period of five years (indenture) and they could return to their homeland with passage paid at the end. Many impoverished peasants and weavers went hoping to earn some money. But in effect it was worse than slave labour. The colonial state allowed agents (kanganis) to trick or kidnap indigent landless labourers. 150 indenture labourers “the innocent victims of a new system of slavery” were first taken from Thanjavur in 1828 to the new British coffee plantations in Ceylon. All of them deserted. Therefore,

recruitment coupled with criminal laws prohibiting desertion started in the 1830s. People courted this new form of slavery to escape starvation deaths.

In 1815, the Governor of Madras received a communication from the Governor of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) asking for coolies to work on the coffee plantations. The Madras Governor forwarded this letter to the collector of Thanjavur, who after enquiry reported back saying that the people were very much attached to the soil and hence unless some incentive was provided it was not easy to make them move out of their native soil. But the outbreak of two famines (1833 and 1843) forced the people, without any prompting from the government, to leave for Ceylon to work as coolies in coffee and tea plantations under indentured labour system. During 1843-1868, nearly 1.5 million people (1,444,407) had gone from Madras to Ceylon as indentured labourers.

Drain of Wealth

Dadabhai Naoroji in his *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* explained how the English rulers were different from the earlier invaders. He said, in the case of former foreign invaders, they plundered and went back. They made, no doubt, great wounds, but India, with her industry, revived and healed the wounds. When the invaders became rulers of the country they settled down in it; whatever was the condition of their rule, there was at least no material or moral drain in the country. But with the English the case was different. There are the great wounds of the first wars in the burden of the public debt and those wounds are kept perpetually open and widening by draining away the lifeblood in a continuous stream. The former rulers were like butchers hacking here and there, but the English with their scientific scalpel cut to the very heart, and yet, there is no wound to be seen, and soon the plaster of the high talk of civilization, progress and what not covers up the wound.

- Naoroji argued that a great deal of wealth was drained to England in the form of Home Charges. The following constituted the Home Charges:
- Incentive to the shareholders of the Company
- Savings and the salaries of European officials, European traders and Planters remitted to England.
- Pensions to those who retired from civil and military services.
- The salaries of the staff and the Secretary to Home Government, India Office at London
- Expenses on wars fought in India and interests for the loans obtained from the banks for the conduct of wars and for the building of railroads.

India's loan to England was 130 million pounds in 1837. It increased to 220 million pounds, of this 18 percent was for conducting wars waged against Afghanistan and Burma. A government report of 1908 informed that on account of railways, India had incurred a debt of 177.5 million pounds. In order to give outlet to the saturated capital the British secured the capital from private enterprise in England. In the form of guaranteed interest of 5 percent, the Colonial state promised to repay the interest in sterling. There was a loss of 220 million pounds to India on this score.

Calling this as drain of wealth Dadabhai Naoroji lamented that had the money drained to England remained in the pockets of Indians, India would have economically progressed. Even Gazni Mahmud's pillage stopped after eighteen times but the British plunder seemed to be unending, he quipped. R.C. Dutt estimated that during the last decade of the reign of Queen Victoria (1891-1901), of the total income 647 million pounds, 159 million pounds drained to England. This worked to 44 percent of the total income of the country.



19. Towards Modernity

Introduction

By the first quarter of the nineteenth century, India had produced a small English-educated intelligentsia, closely associated with British administration or British trade. The ideas and the work of the Christian missionaries had already begun to have its impact. Bengal was the first province to be affected by the British influence and so it was here that several ideas of reform originated. British administration, English education, and European literature brought to India a new wave of thoughts that challenged traditional knowledge. Rationalism as the basis for ethical thinking, the idea of human progress and evolution, the concept of natural rights associated with the Enlightenment, were the new ideas which led to what has been termed as Indian Renaissance. The spread of printing technology played a crucial role in the diffusion of ideas.

Emergence of Reform Movements

The British characterized Indian society in the nineteenth century as being caught in a vicious circle of superstitions and obscurantism. In their view idolatry and polytheism reinforced orthodoxy impelling the people to follow them blindly. The social conditions were equally depressing. And the condition of women was deplorable. The practice of sati came in for particular condemnation. The division of society according to birth resulting in the caste system was also criticized. Most importantly, the British argued that without their intervention there was no possibility of deliverance from these evils for Indians. Needless to say, this was a self-serving argument, articulated by missionaries and Utilitarians to justify British rule.

Utilitarians: believers in the doctrine of greatest happiness of the greatest number

India was a much bigger, more complex and diverse country in the early nineteenth century. Conditions varied vastly across it. The social and cultural evils had been fought by Indian reformers through the ages. But the advent of the British with their Enlightenment ideas undoubtedly posed a new challenge. This chapter looks at how social reform movements emerged in various parts of the country.

The development of the Western culture and ideology forced the traditional institutions to revitalize themselves. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the expression of protest and desire for change were articulated through various reform movements. These movements aimed at reforming and democratizing the social institutions and religious outlook of the Indian people. The emergence of new economic forces, spread of education, growth of nationalist sentiment, influence of modern Western thoughts, ideas and culture, and awareness of the changes taking place in Europe strengthened the resolve to reform.

What gave these reform movements an ideological unity were rationalism, religious universalism and humanism. This perspective enabled them to adopt a rational approach to

tradition and evaluate the contemporary socio-religious practices from the standpoint of social utility. For example, Raja Rammohun Roy repudiated the infallibility of the Vedas and during the Aligarh Movement, Syed Ahmed Khan emphasized that religious tenets were not immutable. As Keshab Chandra Sen said, 'Our position is not that truths are to be in all religions, but that all established religions of the World are true.'

These movements enveloping the entire cultural stream of Indian society brought about significant practices in the realms of language, religion, art and philosophy. These reform movements can be broadly classified into two categories:

1. Reformist Movements
2. Revivalist Movements

Both the movements depended in varying degrees on an appeal to the lost purity of religion. The primary difference between them lay in the degree to which they relied on tradition or on reason and conscience. The social reform movements formed an integral part of the religious reforms primarily because all the efforts towards social ills like caste- and gender- based inequality derived legitimacy from religion. Initially, the social reform movement had a narrow social base - they were limited to the upper and middle strata of the society that tried to adjust their modernized views to the existing social reality. From then on, the social reform movements began to percolate to the lower strata of society to reconstruct the social fabric. Heated debates among the intellectuals expressed in the form of public arguments, tracts and journals played a big role in taking new ideas to large sections of the people, as well as to reformulate older ideas in a new form.

At the start, organizations such as the Social Conference, Servants of India and the Christian missionaries were instrumental in giving an impetus to the social reform movements along with many enlightened individuals about whom we dwell on in the following pages. In later years, especially by the twentieth century, the national movement provided the leadership and organization for social reform.

Brahmo Samaj (1828)

Raja Rammohun Roy was a man of versatile genius. He established the Brahmo Samaj in August, 1828. The Brahmo Samaj was committed to "the worship and adoration of the eternal, unsearchable, immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe". His long term agenda was to purify Hinduism and to preach monotheism for which he drew authority from the Vedas. He emphasized human dignity, opposed idolatry and social evils such as sati. A retired servant of the East India Company, he was conversant in many languages including Persian and Sanskrit. His ideas and activities were aimed at the political uplift of society through social reform. He was a determined crusader against the inhuman practice of Sati. His tract written in 1818, A Conference Between an Advocate for and an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows cited sacred texts to prove that no religion sanctioned the burning alive of widows. His efforts fructified and the Company through an enactment of law (1829) declared the practice of sati a crime.

The overall contribution of Brahmo Samaj can be summed up as follows

1. It denounced polytheism, idol worship, and the faith in divine avatars (incarnations)

2. It condemned the caste system, dogmas and superstitions.
3. It wanted the abolition of child marriage, purdah system and the practice of sati
4. It supported widow remarriage

Inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution, Rammohun Roy left for Europe and died in Bristol. After his death there was a steady decline but for the new lease of life given to it by Devendranath Tagore (father of Rabindranath Tagore). After him the organization was taken forward by Keshab Chandra Sen from 1857. The strength of the organization is known from the number of branches it had in 1865, 54 Samajas (fifty in Bengal, two in North West Province, one each in Punjab and Madras). In course of time, the Brahmo Samaj broke into two namely Devendranath Tagore's, 'Brahmo Samaj of India' and Keshub Chandra Sen's 'Sadharan Brahmo Samaj'.

In Tamilnadu, Kasi Viswanatha Mudaliar was an adherent of the Samaj and he wrote a play titled Brahmo Samaja Natakam to expound the ideas of the Samaj. He also wrote a tract in support of widow remarriage. In 1864, a Tamil journal titled Tathuva Bodhini was started for the cause of the Brahmo Samaja.

The Brahmo Samaj met with great opposition from orthodox elements in Bengal society such as the Hindu Dharma Sabha. However, there were also reformers such as Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, who advocated the same ideas but drew on Hindu scriptures as authority.

Even though the Brahmo Samaj did not win many adherents, it had a big impact on the intellectuals. In the early stages, many young men seized of the radical ideas avidly propagated them. Tagore's family was a Brahmo family and its influence can be seen in his writings and ideas.

The Prarthana Samaj (1867)

An off-shoot of the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, was founded in 1867 in Bombay by Atmaram Pandurang (1823– 98). The Prarthana Samaj as an organization never had any great influence but its members, like M. G. Ranade (1852-1901), R. G. Bhandarkar, and K.T. Telang, were among the great leaders of nineteenth-century Maharashtra and they became the founders of the social reform movement in later years.

Prarthana Samaj was similar to Brahmo Samaj, but it was consciously linked with the bhakti tradition of the Maharashtrian saints. The Prarthana Samaj continued its work mainly through educational work directed at women and workers at the lower level. It concentrated on social reforms like inter-dining, inter-marriage, remarriage of widows, and uplift of women and depressed classes.

The National Social Conference organized at the initiative of M.G. Ranade met each year immediately after the Indian National Congress (1885) annual sessions. Justice Ranade was an erudite scholar with a keen intellect and under his able guidance the Prarthana Samaj became the active centre of a new social reformation in western India. He was one of the founders of the Widow Marriage Association and was an ardent promoter of the famous Deccan Education Society. Its object was to impart such education to the young as would fit

them for the unselfish service of the country. When Ranade died in 1901, his leadership was taken over by Chandavarkar.

Arya Samaj (1875)

The founder of the Arya Samaj was Dayananda Saraswati (1824–83). Dayananda, a Gujarati, left home in his youth to become an ascetic. For seventeen years he wandered around India. In 1863 he became a wandering preacher, and five years later he added the establishment of schools to his activities. In 1872 he met the Brahmos in Calcutta. In 1875 he founded the Arya Samaj and published his major work the Satyarth Prakash. In his view, contemporary Hinduism had become degenerate. Therefore he rejected puranas, polytheism, and idolatry, the role of Brahmin priests, pilgrimages, many rituals and the prohibition on widow marriage. As a good Sanskrit scholar, he made a call to “Back to the Vedas”. He wanted to shape society on the basis of the Vedas. He disregarded the puranas. Like the other social reformers, he encouraged female education and remarriage of widows.

Swami Dayananda’s sphere of influence was largely in the Punjab region where the trading community of Khatri experienced great mobility in colonial times. However, in the Punjab region, there was much communal conflict among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Dayananda’s Shuddhi (purification) movement i.e., conversion of non-Hindus to Hindus was controversial and provoked controversies especially with the Ahmadiya movement.

Arya Samaj is considered to be a revivalist movement. Dayananda’s influence continued into the twentieth century through the establishment of Dayananda Anglo Vedic (DAV) schools and colleges.

Ramakrishna Mission (1897)

As we saw above, the early reform movements in Bengal were radical, questioning and criticising tradition very strongly. In response to this emerged the Ramakrishna Mission as an important religious movement. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886), a poor priest in a temple at Dakshineswar near Kolkata, had no formal education but led an intense spiritual life. He had a deep faith in the inherent truth of all religions and tested his belief by performing religious service in accordance with the practices of different religions. According to him ‘all the religious views are but different ways to lead to the same goal.’ In a backlash, the later generation of Western educated intellectuals were drawn to Ramakrishna’s broad view, mysticism and spiritual fervour. He expounded his views in short stories and admirable parables which were compiled by an admirer as Ramakrishna Kathamrita (The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna).

The most famous among his disciples was a young graduate of the Calcutta University named Narendranath Dutta, afterwards famously called Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902). Emphasising practical work over philosophizing he established the modern institution of the Ramakrishna Mission. He carried Ramakrishna’s message all over India and the world. His learning, eloquence, spiritual fervour and personality gathered round him a band of followers across the country, many of whom also joined the national

movement. He attended in 1893 the famous, 'Parliament of Religions' at Chicago, and made a deep impact on those congregated there. The Mission opened schools, dispensaries and orphanages and helped people during their time of distress caused by calamities.

Theosophical Society (1886)

Even as Indian intellectuals felt challenged by western Enlightenment and rationalistic movements, there was a strain of thinking in the West which looked to the East for spiritual salvation. From this idea emerged the Theosophical Society, founded by Madam H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel H.S. Olcott in the United States of America in 1875. They came to India in 1879 and established their headquarters at Adyar in 1886. Under the leadership of Annie Besant, who came to India in 1893, the Theosophical Society gathered strength and won many adherents. The Theosophical Society started associations across south India. Though involved in many controversies, the Society played an important role in the revival of Buddhism in India. Iyothethoss Pandithar, the radical Dalit thinker, was introduced to modern Buddhism through his interaction with Colonel Olcott who took him to Sri Lanka. There he met many Buddhist monks including the renowned revivalist Anagarika Dharmapala and Acharya Sumangala.

Swami Vivekananda was a personification of youth and boldness and referred to as the Morning Star of the Modern India. In the words of Valentine Chirol, 'the first Hindu whose personality won demonstrative recognition abroad for India's ancient civilization and for her newborn claim to nationhood.'

Satya Shodhak Samaj (1873)

While the movements discussed above were largely focussed on upper castes there were some exceptional movements which mobilized lower castes and articulated their perspective. The most important among them was Jyotiba Phule, who belonged to the Mali (gardener) community. Born in 1827, he received initial education in a mission school but had to discontinue it in 1833. Jyotiba Phule waged a life-long struggle against upper caste tyranny. In his quest for the truth, Phule read the Vedas, the Manu Samhita, the Puranas, and the thought of Buddha, Mahavira and the medieval Bhakti saints extensively. He also acquainted himself with Western thought, and Christian and Islamic religions. Phule judged the whole culture and tradition through the spirit of rationality and equality. While the principle of equality called for a total rejection of caste system, authoritarian family structure and subordination of women, the principle of rationality demanded the removal of superstitions and ritualism.

Phule held radical views on social, religious, political and economic issues. He considered the caste system as an antithesis of the principle of human equality. He sought to raise the morale of the non-Brahmins and united them to revolt against the centuries old inequality and social degradation. Towards this end Phule founded the Satya Shodhak Samaj (Society for Seeking Truth) in 1875. His most important book is Gulamgiri (Slavery).

Phule looked upon education of the masses as a liberating and revolutionary factor.

Since women and deprived and downtrodden were the worst sufferers in the society, Phule argued that women's liberation was linked with the liberation of other classes in society. Equality between classes as also between men and women was stressed by Phule. During marriages he asked the bridegroom to promise the right of education to his bride.

Phule also tried to translate his ideas into actual struggles. He urged the British Government to impart compulsory primary education to the masses through teachers drawn from the cultivating classes. He started a school for girls in Poona in 1851 and one for depressed classes with the assistance of his wife Savitri. He also started schools for the "untouchables" and founded a home for widow's children.

In his work we find the beginnings of the later day non-Brahman movement of Maharashtra.

Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922)

Pandita Ramabai was foremost among the Indian leaders who worked for the emancipation of women. She came from a learned family and was a great scholar of Sanskrit and addressed many learned groups in different parts of the country. She was given the title of "Pandita" and "Saraswati" for her deep knowledge of Sanskrit. After the death of her parents she and her brother travelled to different parts of the country. They went to Calcutta in 1878. Two years later her brother also died. A little later in 1880 she married a Bengali belonging to a family of lower social status. Thus, even at that time she was bold enough to marry a man of a different caste and different language. After the death of her husband two years later she returned to Poona and started the Arya Mahila Samaj with the help of leaders like Ranade and Bhandarkar. 300 women were educated in the Samaj in 1882.

Ramabai started the Sharada Sadan (shelter for homeless) for the destitute widows with the help of Ranade and Bhandarkar. But soon she was accused of converting Hindu women to Christianity and hence had to shift her activities to Khedgoan near Poona. She established a Mukti Sadan (freedom house) there. Soon there were 2000 children and women in the house. Vocational training was given make them self-reliant.

Sri Narayana Guru

This movement emerged in Kerala and was born out of conflict between the depressed classes and the upper castes. It was started by Sri Narayana Guru (1854- 1928) spearheading a social movement of the Ezhavas of Kerala, a community of toddy tappers. The Ezhavas were the single largest group in Kerala constituting 26% of population. A great scholar in Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit, Sri Narayana Guru established the Sri Narayana Guru Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Yogam in 1902. The SNDP Yogam took up several issues such as (i) right of admission to public schools. (ii) recruitment to government services. (iii) access to roads and entry to temples; and (iv) political representation. The movement as a whole brought transformative structural changes such as upward social mobility, shift in traditional distribution of power and a federation of 'backward classes' into a large

conglomeration. As a response to the prohibition on Ezhavas into temples, Sri Narayana Guru established new temples, and empowered the community to modernize itself. Great personalities such as the poet Kumaran Asan Dr. Palpu and Sahodaran Ayyappan emerged from the movement, and made a lasting impact in the democratization of Kerala Society. Even though the Guru himself was not directly involved in the movement, the Vaikom Satyagraha, organized to protest against the ban on the entry of Ezhavas on the templestreets of Vaikom made a deep impact on subsequent temple entry movements.

Islamic Reform Movements

The Revolt of 1857 and its brutal suppression by the British had an adverse impact on the Muslims of South Asia. While they were viewed with suspicion by the British for the 1857 insurgency, the Muslims themselves withdrew into a shell and did not use the opportunities opened up by colonial modernity. Consequently, they lagged behind in education and attendant employment opportunities. In this context, a few decades later some reform movements emerged among the Muslims.

Aligarh Movement (1875)

Aligarh Movement was started by Syed Ahmad Khan in 1875. He wanted to reconcile Western scientific education with the teachings of the Quran. The Aligarh movement aimed at spreading (i) Modern education among Indian Muslims without weakening their allegiance to Islam, and (ii) Social reforms among Muslims relating to purdah, polygamy, and divorce.

Syed's progressive social ideas were propagated through his magazine Tahdhib-ul-Akhluq (Improvement of Manners and Morals). Syed Ahmad Khan's educational programme emphasized from the outset the advantages of the use of English as the medium of instruction. In 1864 he founded a Scientific Society of Aligarh for the introduction of Western sciences through translations into Urdu of works on physical sciences. The same year he founded a modern school at Ghazipur. In 1868 he promoted the formation of education committees in several districts, to initiate modern education among the Muslims.

During his visit to Europe in 1869-70 he developed the plans of his life-work, a major educational institution for Indian Muslims. In order to promote English education among the Muslims, he founded in 1875 a modern school at Aligarh, which soon developed into the Muhammdan Anglo-Oriental College (1877). This college was to become the Muslim University after his death. It became the nursery of Muslim political and intellectual leaders.

In 1886 Syed Ahmad Khan founded the Muhammedan Anglo Oriental Educational Conference as a general forum for spreading liberal ideas among the Indian Muslims. He rejected blind adherence to religious law and asked for a reinterpretation of the Quran in the light of reason to suit the new trends of the time. He attempted to liberalize Indian Islam and made it amenable to new ideas and new interpretations. In this mission he had to face the brunt of vehement attacks of orthodox theologians.

Ahmadiya Movement (1889)

The Ahmadiya movement founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmed (1835–1908) in 1889 established a different trend. While emphasizing the return to the original principles enunciated in the Quran, Ghulam Ahmed became controversial when he claimed to be a Messiah, which was considered heretical by mainstream Islam. But he won many converts. His primary work was to defend Islam against the polemics of the Arya Samaj and the Christian missionaries. In social morals the Ahmadiya movement was conservative, adhering to polygamy, veiling of women, and the classical rules of divorce.

The Deoband Movement (1866)

The Deoband movement was organised by the orthodox section among the Muslim ulemas as a revivalist movement with the twin objective of propagating the pure teachings of the Quran and Hadis among Muslims. The movement was established in Deoband in Saranpur district (by Mohammad Qasim Nanotavi (1833-1877) and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (1828–1905) to train religious leaders for the Muslim community. In contrast to the Aligarh Movement, which aimed at the welfare of Muslims through Western education and support of the British Government, the aim of the Deoband Movement was religious regeneration of the Muslim community. The instruction imparted at Deoband adhered to classical Islamic tradition.

The seminary at Deoband was founded in 1867 by theologians of the School of Wali-Allah. Muhammad Qasim Nanotavi took a prominent part in counter-polemics against the Christian missionaries and the Arya Samajists. The principal objectives of the seminary at Deoband were to re-establish contact between the theologians and the educated Muslim middle classes, and to revive the study of Muslim religious and scholastic sciences. As a religious university Deoband soon became an honoured institution, not only in Muslim India but also in the world of Islam at large.

Nadwat al-'ulama

A school less conservative than Deoband and more responsive to the demands of the modern age was the Nadwat al-'ulama,' founded in 1894 at Lucknow by the historian Shibli Nu'mani and other scholars. The school aimed to offer an enlightened interpretation of religion in order to fight the trends of agnosticism and atheism which had followed the advent of modern Western education.

Farangi Mahal

The third famous traditional school is the much older one at Farangi Mahal in Lucknow. Farangi Mahal accepted Sufism as a valid experience and a valid field of study. Another traditionalist movement was the ahl-i-hadith or of the followers of the dicta of the Prophet.

Parsi Reform Movements

Zoroastrians, persecuted in their Persian homeland, migrated in large numbers to the west coast of India in the tenth century. As a trading community they flourished over the centuries. A close-knit community it too was not left untouched by the reform movements of the nineteenth century.

The Rahnumai Madayasan Sabha (Religious Reform Association) was founded in 1851 by a group of English educated Parsis for the “regeneration of the social conditions of the Parsis and the restoration of the Zoroastrian religion to its pristine purity”. The movement had Naoroji Furdonji, Dadabhai Naoroji, K. R. Cama and S.S. Bengalee as its leaders. The message of reform was spread by the newspaper Rast-Goftar (Truth Teller). Parsi religious rituals and practices were reformed and the Parsi creed redefined. In the social sphere, attempts were made to uplift the status of Parsi women through education, removal of the purdah, raising the age of marriage and the like. Gradually, the Parsis emerged as the most westernised section of the Indian society. They played a key role in the nationalist movement and in the industrialization of India.

Sikh Reform Movement

The Sikh community could not remain untouched by the rising tide of rationalist and progressive ideas of the nineteenth century. The Singh Sabha Movement was formed in 1873, with a two-fold objective (i) to make available modern western education to the Sikhs (ii) to counter the proselytizing activities of Christian missionaries as well as Hindu revivalists. A network of Khalsa Schools was established throughout Punjab. The Akali movement was an offshoot of the Singh Sabha Movement. The Akali movement aimed at liberating the Sikh Gurudwara from the corrupt control of the Udasi Mahants (priests). The Government passed the Sikh Gurudwara Act in 1922 (amended in 1925), which gave control to Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) as the main body.

Reform Movements in Tamilnadu

As we saw earlier, the reform movements of the north India had its own impact on Tamilnadu. Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj had their branches. Keshab Chandra Sen visited Madras and lectured here. But Tamilnadu also saw its own reform movements.

Vaikunda Swamigal (1809-1851)

The Sri Vaikunda Swamigal’s cult, which survives to this day, was organized in the 1830s. Born in a poor family (1809) at Sastankoil Vilai (now known as Swamithoppu), a village then in south Travancore (the present day Kanyakumari district), Muthukutti, spent his childhood in the village pial school, learning religious and moral texts. He also learnt the Bible and became well-versed in Christian theology. At the age of twenty two, Muthukutti, cured of a skin disease, after a holy bath in the sea during his visit to the Murugan temple at Tiruchendur (Thoothukudi district), claimed that Lord Vishnu had given him a rebirth as his

son. On his return from Tiruchendur, assuming the new name of Sri Vaikundar, he practised austerities for two years. Soon his fame spread far and wide.

In his preaching Vaikundar attacked the traditional caste-ridden Travancore society and its ruler for collecting excessive taxes from the lower caste people. He was arrested and jailed by the Raja of Travancore for his “seditious speeches”. When he was released from jail (1838) he became more popular among the people. His followers called him Aiya (father) and his cult came to be known as Aiya Vazhi (path of the father). His teachings were compiled as a text called Akila Thirattu which is recited religiously to this day. Vaikunda Swamy instructed his followers to give up worship of pudams. He also exhorted them not to offer animal sacrifices to their deities. He advocated vegetarianism.

As a symbol of protest, Vaikunda Swamy urged his followers to wear a turban, a right which was permitted only to upper castes in those days. As a part of his effort to practice equality, Vaikunda Swamy regularly organized inter-dining through his Samathuva Sangam, among different castes. In his feeding centres called NilalTangals, caste-based restrictions were broken down. The Vaikunda Swamy cult posed a serious challenge to the spread of Christianity in south Travancore even after his death in 1851.

Vallalar Ramalinga Swamigal (1823-1874)

Ramalinga Swamigal was born in a modest family near Chidambaram and spent his early life in Madras. He never had formal schooling, but exhibited great scholarship. Inspired by the Saiva Thevaram and Thiruvasangam hymns, he began to compose moving poems on his own. In his time, Saiva religion was in the grip of Saiva monasteries such as those at Thiruvaduthurai, Dharumapuram and Thiruppanandal. Ramalinga Swamigal’s poems expressed radical ideas and condemned bigotry and irrationality. He underwent certain mystical experiences which he expressed in his poems. This was resented by the orthodox elements in Saiva religion. He established the Sathya Dharma Salai at Vadalur where he began to feed poor people, especially in the context of the 1860s famine and pestilence, irrespective of caste and creed. He founded the Sathya Gnana Sabhai to organize his followers. This brought him into conflict with established Saivite orders, and matters came to a head when his followers published his poems under the title of Thiruvartupa (Songs of Grace) in 1867. Orthodox Saivites under the Sri Lankan reformer Arumuga Navalarcriticized this as blasphemous and launched a tract war. But ultimately, Ramalinga Swamigal’s contribution was recognized and his writings inspired universal ideas, and undermined sectarianism in Saiva religion.

Buddhist Revivalism and Iyothethoss Pandithar (1845-1914)

As we saw in an earlier lesson, Buddhism had been practically wiped out in the Tamil country by the beginning of the second millennium. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there was a revival of Buddhism. The publication of the complete edition of Jeevaka Chintamani (1887) and Manimekalai (1898) were landmarks in the recovery of heterodox traditions.

But the most important figure was Iyothethoss Pandithar (1845– 1914). A native doctor by profession, he was an erudite scholar. He also came under the influence of Colonel Olcott of the Theosophical Society. In the 1890s he began a movement among the Adi Dravidars arguing that they were the original Buddhists who had been consigned to ‘untouchability’ due to their opposition to Vedic Brahminism. He re-read classical Tamil and other texts to make his case. He also encouraged the conversion to Buddhism. He found the greatest following in north Tamilnadu and among the working classes of the Kolar Gold Fields. In this movement, M. Singavelu and Prof P. Lakshmi Narasu also played an important role. Pandithar ran a weekly journal called Oru Paisa Tamilan (later Tamilan) from 1908 until his death.

Christian Missionaries

The official religious policy of the East India Company was one of neutrality towards the native religions. Their reason for continuing this policy was the belief that the earlier Portuguese rule had come to an end because of their attempts to forcibly convert people to Christianity. As a result of this concern, the Company government prohibited the entry of missionaries into the territories under their control.

In 1793 two English missionaries, William Carey and John Thomas, both Baptists, set out to India with the intention of starting a mission. In view of the ban on missionary activity they settled down in the Danish Colony of Serampore, north of Calcutta. Carey, along with two other missionaries, Joshua Marshman and William Ward established the Serampore Mission in 1799.

The Serampore missionaries were the first evangelical Baptist missionaries in India. They were followed later by other missionary groups belonging to different Protestant denominations. Before the arrival of the Serampore missionaries, several centuries earlier, there were Christian missions in the Portuguese territory of Goa, and also on the Malabar Coast and the Coromandel Coast. The work of the earlier missionaries was limited both geographically and in terms of the number of conversions to Christianity. Thus major attempts at proselytization began during the nineteenth century.

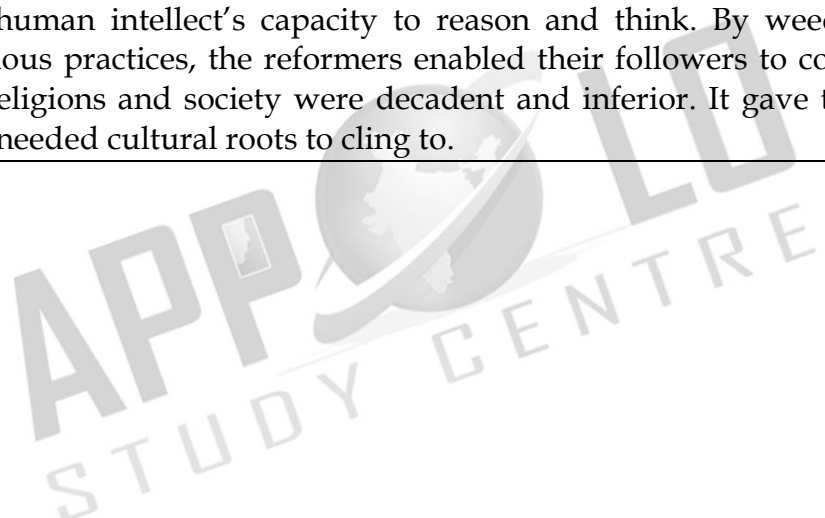
The missionaries organised schools for the socially and economically and pleaded for their economic improvement through employment in the state service. They also fought for their ‘civil rights’ that included access to public roads, and permission for the women of these groups to wear upper garments.

The missionaries gave shelter to orphaned children and other destitute widows in their missions and provided education for them in their boarding schools. Particularly after the famines which were quite common during the nineteenth century, about which we discussed in the previous lesson, the missionaries organized relief. Providing shelter and succour gave these an opportunity to convert people to Christianity. In Tirunelveli district many villages took to Christianity during famines, especially in the last quarter of nineteenth century. The same phenomenon was witnessed in Andhra where Malas and Madigas embraced Christianity in a big way.

The Company government did little to provide modern education for the native population. For a long time, the provision of elementary school facilities to the native population, especially in the interiors for the disprivileged and the poor people, was a responsibility willingly accepted by the Christian missionaries. It must be noted that the Christian Missionaries took the initiative of establishing Hospitals and Dispensaries.

Significance of the Reform Movements

The orthodox sections of the society could not accept the scientific and ideological onslaught of the socio-religious reformers. As a result of this, the reformers were subjected to abuse, persecution, issuing of fatwas and even assassination attempts by the reactionaries. However, in spite of opposition, these movements contributed towards liberation of the individual from the conformity born out of fear. The translation of religious texts into vernacular languages, emphasis on an individual's right to interpret the scriptures, and simplification of rituals made worship a more personal experience. The movements emphasised the human intellect's capacity to reason and think. By weeding out corrupt elements in religious practices, the reformers enabled their followers to counter the official taunt that their religions and society were decadent and inferior. It gave the rising middle classes the much needed cultural roots to cling to.



12TH HISTORY

1. Rise of Nationalism in India

Introduction

The political and economic centralisation of India achieved by the British for the better exploitation and control of India inevitably led to the growth of national consciousness and the birth of the national movement. The history of nationalism in India begins with the campaigns and struggles for social reforms in the nineteenth century followed by the Western-educated Indians' prayers and petitions for political liberties. With the return of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi from South Africa in 1915, and his leadership of the Indian nationalist movement in 1919 Indian nationalism entered a mass phase.

Prior to Gandhi, prominent leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and others took the early initiative to educate the Indians about their national identity and colonial exploitation. In this chapter, while tracing the origin and growth of Indian Nationalism, we focus on the contribution of these leaders who are known as the early nationalists.

Broadly, nationalism means loyalty and devotion to a nation. It is a consciousness or tendency to exalt and place one nation above all others, emphasising promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations

Socio-economic Background

(a) Implications of the New Land Tenures

The British destroyed the traditional basis of Indian land system. In the pre-British days, the land revenue was realised by sharing the actual crop with the cultivators. The British fixed the land revenue in cash without any regard to various contingencies, such as failure of crops, fall in prices and droughts or floods. Moreover, the practice of sale in settlement of debt encouraged money lenders to advance money to landholders and resorting to every kind of trickery to rob them of their property.

There were also two other major implications of the new land settlements introduced by the East India Company. They institutionalised the commodification of land and commercialisation of agriculture in India. As mentioned earlier, there was no private property in land in pre-British era. Now, land became a commodity that could be transferred either by way of buying and selling or by way of the administration taking over land from holders, in lieu of default on payment of tax/rent. Land taken over in such cases was auctioned off to another bidder. This created a new class of absentee landlords who lived in the cities and extracted revenue from the lands without actually living on the lands. In the traditional agricultural set-up, the villagers produced largely for their consumption among themselves. After the new land settlements, agricultural produce was predominantly for the market.

The commodification of land and commercialisation of agriculture did not improve the lives and conditions of the peasants. Instead, this created discontent among the peasantry and made them restive. These peasants later on turned against the imperialists and their collaborators.

(b) Laissez Faire Policy and De-industrialization: Impact on Indian Artisans

The policy of the Company in the wake of Industrial Revolution in England resulted in the de-industrialization of India. This continued until the beginning of the World War I. The British Government pursued a policy of free trade or laissez faire. Raw materials like cotton, jute and silks from India were taken to Britain. The finished products made from those raw materials were then transported back to the Indian markets. Mass production with the help of technological advancement enabled them to flood the Indian market with their goods. It was available at a comparatively cheaper price than the Indian handloom cloth. Prior to the arrival of the British, India was known for its handloom products and handicrafts. It commanded a good world market. However, as a result of the colonial policy, gradually Indian handloom products and handicrafts lost their market, domestic as well as international. Import of English articles into India threw the weavers, the cotton dressers, the carpenters, the blacksmiths and the shoemakers out of employment. India became a procurement area for the raw material and the farmers were forced to produce industrial crops like indigo and other cash crops like cotton for use in British factories. Due to this shift, subsistence agriculture, which was the mainstay for several hundred years, suffered leading to food scarcity.

The Indigo revolt of 1859-60 was one of the responses from the Indian farmer to the oppressive policy of the British. Indian tenants were forced to grow indigo by their planters who were mostly Europeans. Used to dye the clothes indigo was in high demand in Europe. Peasants were forced to accept meagre amounts as advance and enter into unfair contracts. Once a peasant accepted the contract, he had no option but to grow indigo on his land. The price paid by the planter was far lower than the market price. Many a times, the peasants could not even pay their land revenue dues. Hoping that the authorities would address their concerns, the peasants wrote several petitions to authorities and organised peaceful protests. As their plea for reform went in vain, they revolted by refusing to accept any further advances and enter into new contracts. Peasants, through the Indigo revolt of 1859-60, were able to force the planters to withdraw from northern-Bengal.

(c) Famines and Emigration of Indians to Overseas British Colonies

Famines

As India became increasingly de-industrialised and weavers and artisans engaged in handicrafts were thrown out of employment, there were recurrent famines due to the neglect of irrigation and oppressive taxation on land. Before the arrival of the British, Indian rulers had ameliorated the difficulties of the populace in times of famines by providing tax relief, regulating the grain prices and banning food exports from famine-hit areas. But the British extended their policy of non-intervention (laissez faire) even to famines. As a result, millions of people died of starvation during the Raj. It has been estimated that between 1770 and

1900, twenty five million Indians died in famines. William Digby, the editor of Madras Times, pointed out that during 1793-1900 alone an estimated five million people had died in all the wars around the world, whereas in just ten years (1891-1900), nineteen million had died in India in famines alone.

Sadly when people were dying of starvation millions of tonnes of wheat was exported to Britain. During the 1866 Orissa Famine, for instance, while a million and a half people starved to death, the British exported 200 million pounds of rice to Britain. The Orissa Famine prompted nationalist Dadabhai Naoroji to begin his lifelong investigations into Indian poverty. The failure of two successive monsoons caused a severe famine in the Madras Presidency during 1876-78. The viceroy Lytton adopted a hands-off approach similar to that followed in Orissa. An estimated 3.5 million people died in the Madras presidency.

Indentured Labour

The introduction of plantation crops such as coffee, tea and sugar in Empire colonies such as Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Mauritius, Fiji, Malaya, the Caribbean islands, and South Africa required enormous labour. In 1815, the Governor of Madras received a communication from the Governor of Ceylon asking for “coolies” to work on the coffee plantations. The Madras Governor forwarded this letter to the collector of Thanjavur, who reported that the people were very much attached to the soil and unless some incentive was provided it was not easy to make them move out of their native soil. But the outbreak of two famines (1833 and 1843) forced the people, without any prompting from the government, to leave for Ceylon to work as coolies in coffee and tea plantations under the indentured labour system. The abolition of slavery in British India in 1843 also facilitated the processes of emigration to Empire colonies. In 1837 the number of immigrant Tamil labourers employed in Ceylon coffee estate was estimated at 10,000. The industry developed rapidly and so did the demand for Tamil labour. In 1846 its presence was estimated at 80,000 and in 1855 at 128,000 persons. In 1877, the famine year, there were nearly 380,000 Tamil labourers in Ceylon. Besides Ceylon, many Indians opted to emigrate as indentured labour to other British colonies such as Mauritius, Straits Settlements, Caribbean islands, Trinidad, Fiji and South Africa. In 1843 it was officially reported that 30,218 male and 4,307 females had entered Mauritius as indentured labourers. By the end of the century some 500,000 labourers had moved from India to Mauritius.

Indentured Labour: Under this penal contract system (indenture), labourers were hired for a period of five years and they could return to their homeland with passage paid at the end. Many impoverished peasants and weavers went hoping to earn some money. It turned out to be as worse than slave labour. The colonial state allowed agents (*kanganis*) to trick or kidnap indigent landless labourers. The labourers suffered terribly on the long sea voyages and many died on the way. The percentage of deaths of indentured labour during 1856-57, in a ship bound for Trinidad from Kolkata is as follows: 12.3% of all males, 18.5% of the females, 28% of the boys 36% of the girls and 55% of the infants perished.

(a) Education in Pre-British India

Education in pre-colonial India was characterised by segmentation along religious and caste lines. Among the Hindus, Brahmins had the exclusive privilege to acquire higher religious and philosophical knowledge. They monopolised the education system and occupied positions in the society, primarily as priests and teachers. They studied in special seminaries such as Vidyalayas and Chatuspathis. The medium of instruction was Sanskrit, which was considered as the sacred language. Technical knowledge – especially in relation to architecture, metallurgy, etc. – was passed hereditarily. This came in the way of innovation. Another shortcoming of this system was that it barred women, lower castes and other under-privileged people from accessing education. The emphasis on rote learning was another impediment to innovation.

(b) Contribution of Colonial State: Macaulay System of Education

The colonial government aided the spread of modern education in India for a different reason than educating and empowering the Indians. To administer a large colony like India, the British needed a large number of personnel to work for them. It was impossible for the British to import the educated lot, needed in such large numbers, from Britain. With this aim, the English Education Act was passed by the Council of India in 1835. T.B. Macaulay drafted this system of education introduced in India. Consequently, the colonial administration started schools, colleges and universities, imparting English and modern education, in India. Universities were established in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta in 1857. The colonial government expected this section of educated Indians to be loyal to the British and act as the pillars of the British Raj.

T. B. Macaulay was India's first law member of the Governor General in Council from 1834 to 1838. Before Macaulay arrived in India the General Committee of Public Instruction was formed in 1823 with the responsibility to guide the East India Company on the matter of education and the medium of instruction. The Committee was split into two groups. The Orientalist group advocated education in vernacular languages. The Anglicists advocated Western education in English.

Macaulay was on the side of Anglicists and wrote his famous 'Minute on Indian Education' in 1835. In this Minute, he argued for Western education in the English language. His intention behind supporting the Anglicists was that he wanted to create a class of persons from within India who would 'be Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect'.

The British created an educated Indian middle class for their own ends but sneered at it as the Babu class. That very class, however, became the progressive intelligentsia of India and played a leading role in mobilising the people for the liberation of the country.

(c) Role of Educated Middle Class

The economic and administrative transformation on the one side and the growth of Western education on the other gave the space for the growth of new social classes. From within these social classes, a modern Indian intelligentsia emerged. The “neo-social classes” created by the British Raj, which included the Indian trading and business communities, landlords, money lenders, English-educated Indians employed in imperial subordinate services, lawyers and doctors, initially adopted a positive approach towards the colonial administration. However, soon they realised that their interests would be better served only in independent India. People of the said social classes began to play a prominent role in promoting patriotism amongst the people. The consciousness of these classes found articulation in a number of associations prior to the founding of the Indian National Congress at the national level.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghose, Gopala Krishna Gokhale, Dadabhai Naoroji, Feroz Shah Mehta, Surendra Nath Banerjee and others who belonged to modern Indian intelligentsia led the social, religious and political movements in India. Educated Indians had exposure to ideas of nationalism, democracy, socialism, etc. articulated by John Locke, James Stuart Mill, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Rousseau, Thomas Paine, Marx and other western intellectuals. The right of a free press, the right of free speech and the right of association were the three inherent rights, which their European counterparts held dear to their heart, and the educated Indians too desired to cling to. Various forums came into existence, where people could meet and discuss the issues affecting their interests. This became possible now at the national level, due to the rapid expansion of transport network and establishment of postal, telegraph and wireless services all over India.

(d) Contribution of Missionaries

One of the earliest initiatives to impart modern education among Indians was taken up by the Christian missionaries. Inspired by the proselytizing spirit, they attacked polytheism and caste inequalities that were prevalent among the Hindus. One of the methods adopted by the missionaries, to preach Christianity, was through modern secular education. They provided opportunities to acquire education to the underprivileged and the marginalised sections, who were denied learning opportunities in the traditional education system. However only a very small fraction converted to Christianity. But the challenge posed by Christianity led to various social and religious reform movements.

Social and Religious Reforms

The English educated intelligentsia felt the need for reforming the society before involving the people in any political programmes. The reform movements of nineteenth century are categorised as 1. Reformist movements such as the Brahmo Samaj founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Prarthana Samaj, founded by Dr Atmaram Pandurang and the Aligarh Movement, represented by Syed Ahmad Khan; 2. Revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Deoband Movement. 3. There were social movements led by Jyotiba Phule in Pune, Narayana Guru and Ayyankali in Kerala and

Ramalinga Adigal, Vaikunda Swamigal and later Iyothee Thassar in Tamilnadu. All these reformers and their contributions have been dealt with comprehensively in the XI Std. text book.

The reformers of nineteenth century responded to the challenge posed by Western Enlightenment knowledge based on reason. Indian national consciousness emerged as a result of the rethinking triggered by these reforms. The Brahmo Samaj was founded by Ram Mohan Roy in 1828. Other socio-cultural organisations like the Prarthana Samaj (1867), the Arya Samaj (1875) were founded subsequently. Roy's initiative was followed up by reformers like Keshav Chandra Sen and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. Abolition of sati and child marriage and widow remarriage became the main concerns for these reformers. The Aligarh movement played a similar role among the Muslims. Slowly, organisations and associations of political nature came up in different parts of British India to vent the grievances of the people.

(a) Memories of 1857

Indian national movement dates its birth from the 1857 uprising. The outrages committed by the British army after putting down the revolt remained "un-avenged". Even the court-martial law and formalities were not observed. Officers who sat on the court martial swore that they would hang their prisoners, guilty or innocent and, if any dared to raise his voice against such indiscriminate vengeance, he was silenced by his angry colleagues. Persons condemned to death after the mockery of a trial were often tortured by soldiers before their execution, while the officers looked on approvingly. It is worth recalling what Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay Presidency, wrote to Sir John Lawrence, future Viceroy of India (1864) about the British siege of Delhi during June-September, 1857: '...A wholesale vengeance is being taken without distinction of friend or foe. As regards the looting, we have indeed surpassed Nadirshah.'

(b) Racial Discrimination

The English followed a policy of racial discrimination. The systematic exclusion of the Indians from higher official positions came to be looked upon as an anti-Indian policy measure and the resultant discontent of the Indian upper classes led the Indians to revolt against the British rule. When civil service examinations were introduced the age limit was fixed at twenty one. When Indians were making it, with a view to debarring the Indians from entering the civil services, the age limit was reduced to nineteen. Similarly, despite requests from Indian educated middle class to hold the civil service examinations simultaneously in India, the Imperial government refused to concede the request.

(c) Repressive as well as Exploitative Measures against Indians

Repressive regulations like Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (1870), punishing attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government, and the Vernacular Press Act (1878), censoring the press, evoked protest. Abolition of custom duty on cotton manufactures imported from England and levy of excise duty on cotton fabrics manufactured in India

created nationwide discontent. During the viceroyalty of Ripon the Indian judges were empowered through the Ilbert Bill to try Europeans. But in the face of resistance from the Europeans the bill was amended to suit the European interests.

(d) Role of Press

The introduction of printing press in India was an event of great significance. It helped people to spread, modern ideas of self-government, democracy, civil rights and industrialisation. The press became the critic of politics. It addressed the people on several issues affecting the country. Raja Rammohan Roy's Sambad Kaumudi (1821) in Bengali and Mirat-Ul-Akbar (1822) in Persian played a progressive role in educating the people on issues of public importance. Later on a number of nationalist and vernacular news papers came to be launched to build public opinion and they did yeomen service in fostering nationalist consciousness. Among them Amrit Bazaar Patrika, The Bombay Chronicle, The Tribune, The Indian Mirror, The Hindu and Swadesamitran were prominent.

(e) Invoking India's glorious Past

Orientalists like William Jones, Charles Wilkins and Max Muller explored and translated religious, historical and literary texts from Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic into English and made them available to all. Influenced by the richness of Indian traditions and scholarship, many of the early nationalists made a fervent plea to revive the pristine glory of India. Aurobindo Ghose would write, 'The mission of Nationalism, in our view, is to recover Indian thought, Indian character, Indian perceptions, Indian energy, Indian greatness and to solve the problems that perplex the world in an Indian spirit and from the Indian standpoint.'

(a) Madras Native Association

One of the first attempts to organise and vent the grievances against the British came through the formation of the Madras Native Association (MNA) on 26 February 1852. An association of landed and business classes of the Madras Presidency, they expressed their grievances against the Company's administration in the revenue, education and judicial spheres. Gajula Lakshminarasu, who inspired the foundation of MNA, was a prominent businessman in Madras city.

The Association presented its grievances before British Parliament when it was discussing the East India Company's rule in India before the passing of the Charter in 1853. In a petition submitted in December 1852, the MNA pointed out that the ryotwari and zamindari systems had thrown agricultural classes into deep distress. It urged the revival of the ancient village system to free the peasantry from the oppressive interference of the zamindars and the Company officials. The petition also made a complaint about the judicial system which was slow, complicated and imperfect. It pointed out that the appointment of judges without assessing their judicial knowledge and competence in the local languages affected the efficiency of the judiciary. The diversion of state funds to missionary schools, under the grants-in-aid system, was also objected to in the petition.

The MNA petition was discussed in the Parliament in March 1853. H. D. Seymour, Chairman of the Indian Reform Society, came to Madras in October 1853. He visited places like Guntur, Cuddalore, Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Tirunelveli. However, as the Charter Act of 1853 allowed British East India Company to continue its rule in India, the MNA organised an agitation for the transfer of British territories in India to the direct control of the Crown. MNA sent its second petition to British Parliament, signed by fourteen thousand individuals, pleading the termination of Company rule in India.

The life of MNA was short. Lakshminarasu died in 1866 and by 1881, the association ceased to exist. Though the MNA did not achieve much in terms of reforms, it was the beginning of organised effort to articulate Indian opinion. In its lifetime, the MNA operated within the boundaries of Madras Presidency. The grievances that the MNA raised through its petitions and the agitations it launched were from the point of view of the elite, particularly the landed gentry of Madras Presidency. What was lacking was a national political organisation representing every section of the society, an organisation that would raise the grievances and agitate against the colonial power for their redress. The Indian National Congress filled this void.

(b) Madras Mahajana Sabha (MMS)

After the Madras Native Association became defunct there was no such public organisation in the Madras Presidency. As many educated Indians viewed this situation with dismay, the necessity for a political organisation was felt and in May 1884 the Madras Mahajana Sabha was organised. In the inaugural meeting held on 16 May 1884 the prominent participants were: G. Subramaniam, Viraraghavachari, Ananda Charlu, Rangiah, Balaji Rao and Salem Ramaswamy. With the launch of the Indian National Congress, after the completion of the second provincial conference of Madras Mahajana Sabha, the leaders after attending the first session of the Indian National Congress (INC) in Bombay amalgamated the MMS with the INC.

(c) Indian National Congress (INC)

The idea of forming a political organisation that would raise issues and grievances against the colonial rule did not emerge in a vacuum. Between 1875 and 1885 there were many agitations against British policies in India. The Indian textile industry was campaigning for imposition of cotton import duties in 1875. In 1877, demands for the Indianisation of Government services were made vociferously. There were protests against the Vernacular Press Act of 1878. In 1883, there was an agitation in favour of the Ilbert Bill.

But these agitations and protests were sporadic and not coordinated. There was a strong realisation that these protests would not impact on the policy makers unless a national political organisation was formed. From this realisation was born the Indian National Congress. The concept of India as a nation was reflected in the name of the organisation. It also introduced the concept of nationalism.

In December 1884, Allan Octavian Hume, a retired English ICS officer, presided over a meeting of the Theosophical Society in Madras. The formation of a political organisation that would work on an all India basis was discussed and the idea of forming the Indian National Congress emerged in this meeting. The Indian National Congress was formed on 28 December 1885 in Bombay. Apart from A.O Hume, another important founding member was W C. Bonnerjee, who was elected the first president.

Though the activities of the INC then revolved around petitions and memoranda, from the very beginning the founders of the INC worked to bring every section of the society into its ambit. One of the main missions of the INC was to weld the Indians into a nation. They were convinced that the struggle against the colonial rule will be successful only if Indians saw themselves as the members of a nation. To achieve this, the INC acted as a common political platform for all the movements that were being organised in different parts of the country. The INC provided the space where the political workers from different parts of the country could gather and conduct their political activities under its banner. Even though the organization was small with less than a hundred members, it had an all- India character with representation from all regions of India. It was the beginning of the mobilisation of people on an all-India basis.

The major objectives and demands of INC were

Constitutional

Opportunity for participation in the government was one of the major demands of the Indian National Congress. It demanded Indian representation in the government.

Economic

High land revenue was one of the major factors that contributed to the oppression of the peasants. It demanded reduction in the land revenue and protection of peasants against exploitation of the zamindars. The Congress also advocated the imposition of heavy tax on the imported goods for the benefit of swadeshi goods.

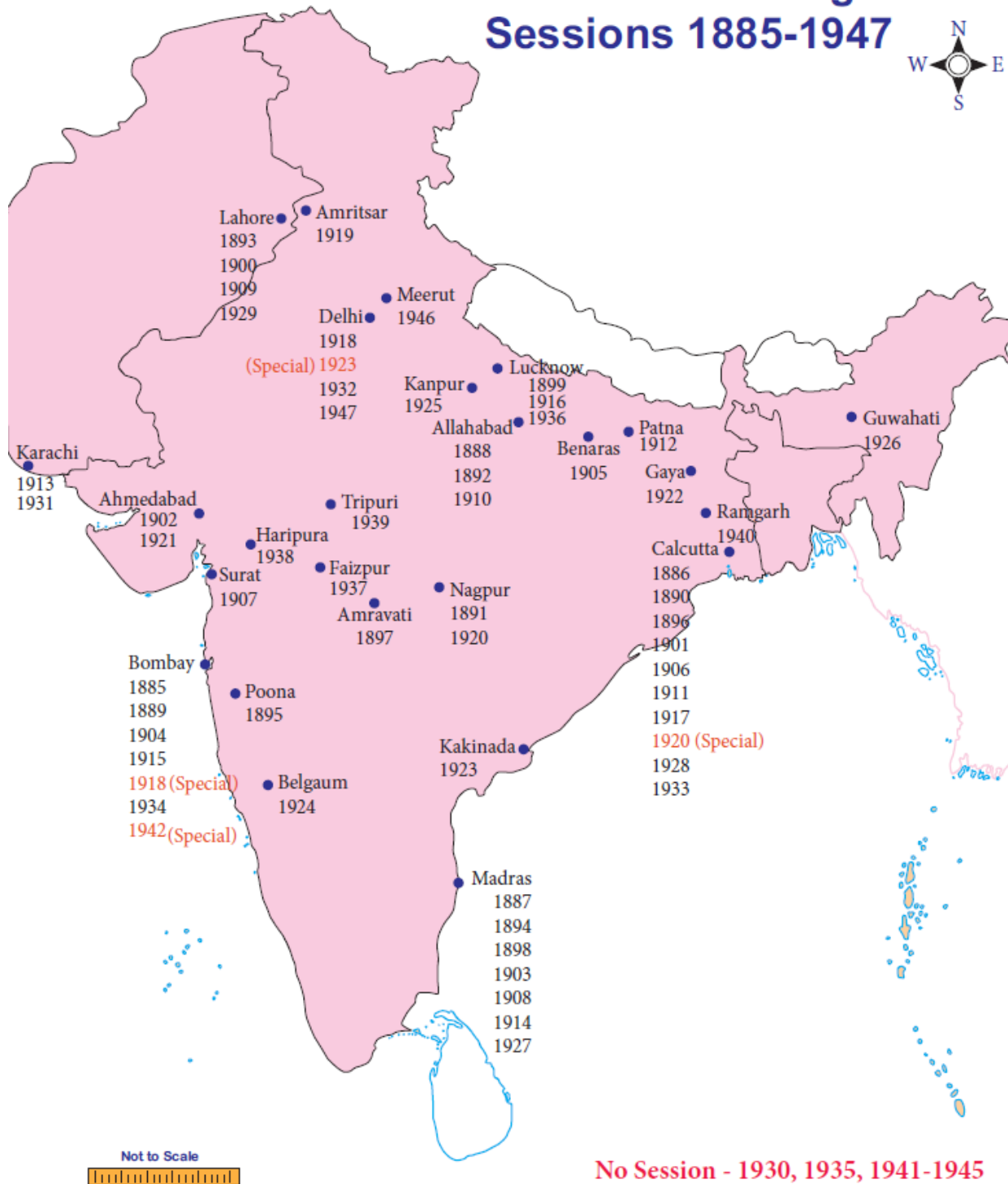
Administrative

Higher officials who had responsibility of administration in India were selected through civil services examinations conducted in Britain. This meant that educated Indians who could not afford to go to London had no opportunity to get high administrative jobs. Therefore, Indianisation of services through simultaneous Indian Civil Services Examinations in England and India was a major demand of the Congress.

Judicial

Because of the partial treatment against the Indian political activists by English judges it demanded the complete separation of the Executive and the Judiciary.

Indian National Congress Sessions 1885-1947



(d) Contributions of Early Nationalists (1885-1915)

The early nationalists in the INC came from the elite sections of the society. Lawyers, college and university teachers, doctors, journalists and such others represented the Congress. However, they came from different regions of the country and this made INC a truly a national political organisation. These leaders of the INC adopted the constitutional

methods of presenting petitions, prayers and memorandums and thereby earned the moniker of “Moderates”. It was also the time some sort of an understanding about colonialism was evolving in India. There was no ready-made anti-colonial understanding available for reference in the late nineteenth century when the INC was formed. It was the early nationalists who helped the formulation of the idea of *weas* a nation. They were developing the indigenous anti-colonial ideology and a strategy on their own which helped future mass leaders like M. K Gandhi.

From the late 1890s there were growing differences within the INC. Leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai were advocating radical approaches instead of merely writing petitions, prayers and memorandums. These advocates of radical methods came to be called the “extremists” as against those who were identified as moderates. Their objective became clear in 1897 when Tilak raised the clarion call “Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it”. Tilak and his militant followers were now requesting Swaraj instead of economic or administrative reforms that the moderates were requesting through their petitions and prayers.

Though they criticised each other, it would be wrong to place them in the opposing poles. Both moderates and militants, with their own methods, were significant elements of the larger Indian nationalist movement. In fact, they contributed towards the making of the swadeshi movement. The partition of Bengal in 1905, by the colonial government, which you will be studying in the next lesson, was vehemently opposed by the Indians. The swadeshi movement of 1905, directly opposed the British rule and encouraged the ideas of swadeshi enterprise, national education, self-help and use of Indian languages. The method of mass mobilisation and boycott of British goods and institutions suggested by the radicals was also accepted by the Moderates.

Both the Moderates and the Radicals were of the same view when it came to accepting the fact that they needed to fulfil the role of educators. They tried to instil nationalist consciousness through various means including the press. When the INC was founded in 1885, one-third of the members were journalists. Most stalwarts of the early freedom movement were involved in journalism. Dadabhai Naoroji founded and edited two journals called Voice of India and RastGoftar. Surendra Nath Banerjea edited the newspaper called Bengalee. Bal Gangadhar Tilak edited Kesari and Mahratta. This is the means that they used to educate the common people about the colonial oppression and spread nationalist ideas. News regarding the initiatives taken by the INC were taken to the masses through these newspapers. For the first time, in the history of India, the press was used to generate public opinion against the oppressive policies and acts of the colonial government.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a firm believer that the lower middle classes, peasants, artisans and workers could play a very important role in the national movement, He used his newspapers to articulate the discontent among this section of the people against the oppressive colonial rule. He called for national resistance against imperial British rule in India. On 27 July 1897, Tilak was arrested and charged under Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code. Civil liberty, particularly in the form of freedom of expression and press became the significant part of Indian freedom struggle.

Naoroji and his Drain Theory

Dadabhai Naoroji, known as the 'Grand Old Man of Indian Nationalism', was a prominent early nationalist. He was elected to the Bombay Municipal Corporation and Town Council during the 1870s. Elected to the British Parliament in 1892, he founded the India Society (1865) and the East India Association (1866) in London. He was elected thrice as the President of the INC.

His major contribution to the Indian nationalist movement was his book *Poverty and Un-British Rule of the British in India* (1901). In this book, he put forward the concept of 'drain of wealth'. He stated that in any country the tax raised would have been spent for the wellbeing of the people of that country. But in British India, taxes collected in India were spent for the welfare of England. Naoroji argued that India had exported an average of 13 million pounds worth of goods to Britain each year from 1835 to 1872 with no corresponding return. The goods were in lieu of payments for profits to Company shareholders living in Britain, guaranteed interest to investors in railways, pensions to retired officials and generals, interest for the money borrowed from England to meet war expenses for the British conquest of territories in India as well as outside India. All these, going in the name of Home Charges, Naoroji asserted, made up a loss of 30 million pounds a year.

2. Rise of Extremism and Swadeshi Movement

Introduction

By the last decade of the nineteenth century, there was conspicuous resentment against moderate politics within the Indian National Congress. This feeling of resentment eventually evolved into a new trend, referred to as the 'Extremist' trend. The extremist or what we may call radical or militant group was critical of the moderates for their cautious approach and the "mendicant policy" of appealing to the British by way of prayers and petitions. This form of militancy developed under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Maharashtra, Bipin Chandra Pal in Bengal and Lala Lajpat Rai in the Punjab. The primary reasons for the rise of this trend were: factionalism in the Congress, frustration with the moderate politics, anger against Lord Curzon for dividing Bengal.

The partition of Bengal in 1905 - a prime example of the British divide and rule policy - acted as the catalyst for the growth of anti-colonial swadeshi nationalism. The partition plan was first opposed by moderates but as the movement progressed, different techniques were improvised for the Swadeshi campaign. Swadeshi constructive programme included boycott of foreign goods and government-administered educational institutions. The Swadeshi movement (1905-1911) is the most important phase of the Indian National Movement in the pre-Gandhian era, as, during the course of the movement, the character of the Indian national movement changed significantly in terms of the stated objectives, methods and in its social base.

The mass base of the movement was expanded by exposing the problems of various social groups under the British governance and the underlying commonality in their lives - that is colonial exploitation. For the first time, in the history of Indian national movement, women, workers, peasants, and marginalised groups were exposed to modern nationalist ideas and politics. It was a period when the elite made a conscious effort to address the common people, calling upon them to join politics. The other prominent development during the Swadeshi period was the growth of the vernacular press (newspapers published in Indian languages) in various parts of India. The nationalistic tone of the vernacular press became more pronounced during this time. The role played by Swadesamitran in Tamil Nadu, Kesari in Maharashtra, Yugantar in Bengal are a few examples.

As the movement gained support among the people, the government passed a series of repressive Acts such as the Public Meetings Act (1907), the Explosive Substance Act (1908), the Newspaper (Incitement and Offence Act 1908) and the Indian Press Act (1910) to crush the nationalistic activities of any nature. One such measure was recording and monitoring of public meetings which were considered a matter of judicial scrutiny. (Shorthand was used by the police for the first time to record political speeches.) In this lesson, while discussing the Bengal as well as national scenarios, the Swadeshi Campaigns conducted in Tamil Nadu with particular focus on the role played by V.O. Chidambaram, V.V. Subramaniam, Subramania Siva and Subramania Bharati.

Partition of Bengal

On January 6, 1899, Lord Curzon was appointed the new Governor General and Viceroy of India. This was a time when British unpopularity was increasing due to the impact of recurring famine and the plague. Curzon did little to change the opinion of the educated Indian class. Instead of engaging with the nationalist intelligentsia, he implemented a series of repressive measures. For instance, he reduced the number of elected Indian representatives in the Calcutta Corporation (1899). The University Act of 1904 brought the Calcutta University under the direct control of the government. The Official Secrets Act (1904) was amended to curb the nationalist tone of Indian newspapers. Finally, he ordered partition of Bengal in 1905. The partition led to widespread protest all across India, starting a new phase of the Indian national movement.

Bengal Presidency as an administrative unit was indeed of unmanageable in size; the necessity of partition was being discussed since the 1860s. The scheme of partition was revived in March 1890. In Assam, when Curzon went on a tour, he was requested by the European planters to make a maritime outlet closer to Calcutta to reduce their dependence on the Assam– Bengal railways. Following this, in December 1903, Curzon drew up a scheme in his Minutes on Territorial Redistribution of India, which was later modified and published as the Risely Papers. The report gave two reasons in support of partition: Relief of Bengal and the improvement of Assam. The report, however, concealed information on how the plan was originally devised for the convenience of British officials and the European businessmen.

From December 1903 and 1905 this initial idea of transferring or reshuffling some areas from Bengal was changed to a full-fledged plan of partition. The Bengal was to be divided into two provinces. The new Eastern Bengal and Assam were to include the divisions of Chittagong, Dhaka, parts of Rajshahi hills of Tippera, Assam province and Malda.

Aimed at Hindu Muslim Divide

The intention of Curzon was to suppress the political activities against the British rule in Bengal and to create a Hindu–Muslim divide. The government intentionally ignored alternative proposals presented by the civil servants, particularly the idea of dividing Bengal on linguistic basis. Curzon rejected this proposal as this would further consolidate the position of the Bengali politicians. Curzon was adamant as he wanted to create a clearly segregated Hindu and Muslim population in the divided Bengal. Curzon, like many before him, knew very well that there was a clear geographical divide along the river Bhagirathi: eastern Bengal dominated by the Muslims, and western Bengal dominated by the Hindus and in the central Bengal and the two communities balancing out each other. There was a conscious attempt on the part of British administration to woo the Muslim population in Bengal. In his speech at Dhaka, in February 1904, Curzon assured the Muslims that in the new province of East Bengal, Muslims would enjoy a unity, which they had never enjoyed since the days of old Muslim rule.

The partition, instead of dividing the Bengali people along the religious line, united them. Perhaps the British administration had underestimated the growing feeling of Bengali identity among the people, which cut across caste, class, religion and regional barriers. By the end of the nineteenth century, a strong sense of Bengali unity had developed among large sections in the society. Bengali language had acquired literary status with Rabindranath Tagore as the central figure. The growth of regional language newspapers played a role in building the narrative of solidarity. Similarly, recurring famines, unemployment, and a slump in the economic growth generated an anti-colonial feeling.

Anti-Partition Movement

Both the militants and the moderates were critical of the partition of Bengal ever since it was announced in December 1903. But the anti-partition response by leaders like Surendranath Banerjee, K.K. Mitra, and Prithwishchandra Ray remained restricted to prayers and petitions. The objective was limited to influencing public opinion in England against the partition. However, despite this widespread resentment, partition of Bengal was officially declared on 19 July 1905.

With the failure to stop the partition of Bengal and the pressure exerted by the radical leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal, Aswini Kumar Dutta, and Aurobindo Ghose, the moderate leaders were forced to rethink their strategy, and look for new techniques of protest. Boycott of British goods was one such method, which after much debate was accepted by the moderate leadership of the Indian National Congress. So, for the first time, the moderates went beyond their conventional political methods. It was decided, at a meeting in Calcutta on 17 July 1905, to extend the protest to the masses. In the same meeting, Surendranath Banerjee gave a call for the boycott of British goods and intuitions. On 7 August, at another meeting at the Calcutta Town Hall, a formal proclamation of Swadeshi Movement was made. However, the agenda of Swadeshi movement was still restricted to securing an annulment of the partition and the moderates were very much against utilizing the campaign to start a full-scale passive resistance. The militant nationalists, on the other hand, were in favour of extending the movement to other provinces too and to launch a full-fledged mass struggle.

Spread of the Movement

Besides the organized efforts of the leaders, there were spontaneous reactions against the partition of Bengal. Students, in particular, came out in large numbers. Reacting to the increased role of the students in the anti-partition agitation, British officials threatened to withdraw the scholarships and grants to those who participated in programmes of direct action. In response to this, a call was given to boycott official educational institutions and it was decided that efforts were to be made to open national schools. Thousands of public meetings were organized in towns and villages across Bengal. Religious festivals such as the Durga Pujas were utilized to invoke the idea of boycott. The day Bengal was officially partitioned - 16 Oct 1905 - was declared as a day of mourning. Thousands of people took bath in the Ganga and marched on the streets of Calcutta singing Bande Mataram.

Boycott and Swadeshi Movements in Bengal (1905-1911)

Such efforts, both organized and spontaneous, laid the foundation for a sustained campaign against the British. The boycott and swadeshi were always interlinked to each other and part of a wider plan to make India self-sufficient. G. Subramaniam, a nationalist leader from Madras, succinctly explained the aim of the swadeshi movement as 'a revolt against their state of dependence...in all branches of their national life'. In the words of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, 'the swadeshi movement is not only for the improvement of our industry but for an allround enhancement of our national life ...' As the movement progressed, different definitions of Swadeshi appeared. However, for the larger part, the movement of Swadeshi and Boycott was practiced as an anti-colonial political agitation and not as a viable method to achieve dignity and freedom in life, a definition which would be later infused with the entry of Mahatma Gandhi.

Evolution of the idea of Swadeshi

During the freedom struggle, the idea of Swadeshi movement was conceptualized first during 1905 by a string of Congress leaders and then later in the 1920s under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Swadeshi means 'of one's own country'. The origin of the idea can be traced to 1872 when Mahadev Govind Ranade, in a series of lectures in Poona, popularised the idea of Swadeshi. According to Ranade, the goods produced in one's own country should be given preference even if the use of such goods proved to be less satisfactory.

In the 1920s Gandhi gave a new meaning to the idea of Swadeshi by linking it to the fulfilment of a duty that all Indians owed to the land of their birth. For Gandhi, Swadeshi did not merely mean the use of what is produced in one's own country. Gandhi defined Swadeshi in following words "Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of more remote. I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they may be found wanting."

(a) Constructive Swadeshi

The constructive Swadeshi programmes largely stressed upon self-help. It focused on building alternative institutions of self-governance that would operate entirely free from British control. It also laid emphasis on the need for self-strengthening of the people which would help in creating a worthy citizen before the launch of political agitations.

Rabindranath Tagore was one of the central figures who popularised such ideas through his writings. He outlined the constructive programme of atmashakti (self-help). Tagore called for economic self-development and insisted that education should be provided in swadeshi languages. He also made the call for utilising melas, or fairs, to spread the message of atmashakti. This became the creed of the whole of Bengal and swadeshi

shops sprang all over the place selling textiles, handlooms, soaps, earthenware, matches and leather goods.

The idea of education in vernacular language made its appearance much before the swadeshi movement with the foundation of Dawn Society by Satish Chandra in 1902

On 5 November 1905, at the initiative of the Dawn Society, the National Council of Education was formed. In August 1906, Bengal National College and a School were founded. A passionate appeal was made by Satish Chandra to the students to come out of 'institutions of slavery.' Such efforts, however, failed to attract many due to the bleak job prospects.

(b) Samitis

The other successful method of mass mobilization was the formation of samitis (corps of volunteers). The samitis were engaged in a range of activities such as physical and moral training of members, philanthropic work during the famines, epidemics, propagation of Swadeshi message during festivals, and organization of indigenous arbitration courts, and schools. By its very nature boycott was passive action and its aim was to refuse to cooperate with the British administration.

But these mass mobilization efforts failed to flourish as they could not extend their base among the Muslim peasantry and the "Depressed Classes". Most of the samitis recruited from the educated middle class and other upper caste Hindus. Besides this, the swadeshi campaigners often applied coercive methods, both social and physical. For instance, social boycott of those purchasing foreign goods was common and taken up through caste associations and other nationalist organisations.

(c) Passive Resistance

From 1906, when the abrogation of partition was no longer in sight, the Swadeshi Movement took a different turn. For many leaders, the movement was to be utilized for propagating the idea of the political independence or Swaraj across India. The constructive programmes came under heavy criticism from Aurobindo Ghose, Bipin Chandra Pal, and other militant leaders. Under their new direction, the swadeshi agenda included boycott of foreign goods; boycott of government schools and colleges; boycott of courts; renouncing the titles and relinquishing government services; and recourse to armed struggle if British repression went beyond the limits of endurance. The programme of this nature required mass mobilization. Using religion, combined with the invocation of a glorious past, became the essential features of their programmes.

Militant Nationalism

As pointed out earlier, thanks to the campaigns conducted by Bal Gangadhar Tilak Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, often referred to as the Lal-Bal-Pal triumvirate, Maharashtra, Bengal, Punjab, emerged as the epicentres of militant nationalism during the

Swadeshi phase. Aurobindo Ghose was another influential figure in the militant leadership. The nationalism of this form was more assertive compared to the early Indian nationalism.

Both the groups, moderate and militant, were well aware of the evils or the wrong doings of the British rule. The moderates, however, worked under the belief that the British rule in India could be reformed by convincing the rulers through representation and petitioning. The militant nationalist, on the other hand, was of the opinion that the colonial rulers would never be amenable to reason, as they would not like to give up the advantages of an empire.

Sometime around 1905, Aurobindo Ghose was asked by a man as to how to become a patriot. In response Aurobindo pointed to a wall map of India, and said "Do you see this map? It is not a map but the portrait of Bharat Mata: its cities and mountains rivers and jungles form her physical body. All her children are her nerves, large and small.... Concentrate on Bharat as a living mother, worship her with nine-fold bhakti."

Militant nationalism also changed the nature of political pressure from the earlier force of public opinion of educated Indians to the protesting masses. Despite these changes, the militant nationalism phase retained a continuity from the moderate phase. This continuity was evident in the inability to transcend the peaceful method of struggle and for the most parts militant nationalism remained tied to the idea of non-violence. However, they appealed to the patriotic sentiments of the people using the religious symbols.

Swaraj or Political Independence

One of the common goals of the militant leaders was to achieve Swaraj or Self Rule. However, the leaders differed on the meaning of Swaraj. For Tilak, Swaraj was restricted to the Indian control over the administration or rule by the natives, but not total severance of relation with Britain. In Bipin Chandra Pal's view, Swaraj was the attainment of complete freedom from any foreign rule.

The other point of departure of the militants from the moderates was over the rising extremism in Bengal, Punjab, and Maharashtra. Unlike the moderates, who were critical of the reckless revolutionaries, militant nationalists were sympathetic towards them. However, the political murders and individual acts of terrorism were not approved of by the militant leaders and they were cautious of associating themselves with the cause of revolutionaries.

The patriotism glued with the assertion of Hindu beliefs was not acceptable to the Muslims. Also much like their predecessors the leaders of the swadeshi movement failed to penetrate the larger section of the society. By 1908 militant nationalism was on the decline. The Surat split of 1907 was another contributing factor to this decline.

Surat Split

The tension between the militants and the moderates became more pronounced with the appointment of Lord Minto as the new Secretary of State to India in 1906. As the tension

was rising between the two groups, a split was avoided, in the 1906 Calcutta session, by accepting demands of moderate leaders and electing Dadabhai Naoroji as president. Most of the moderates, led by Pherozeshah Mehta, were defeated in the election. The militants managed to pass four resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education, and Self-Government.

The next session of Congress was originally planned to be held in Poona, considered to be a stronghold of the militants. Fearing a repeat of the Calcutta session, the moderates shifted the venue to Surat. The militants proposed Lala Lajpat Rai's name for the next Congress presidency opposing the moderate's candidate Rash Behari Ghosh. Lala Lajpat Rai, however, turned down the offer to avoid the split. The matter finally boiled down to the question of retaining the four resolutions that were passed in the Calcutta session in 1906. The Pherozeshah Mehta group sought removal of those items from the agenda. In order to counter Mehta's manoeuvring, the militants decided to oppose the election of Rash Behari Ghosh as president. The session ended in chaos.

The Indian National Congress, born in December 1885, was now split into two groups – militant and moderate. The Congress which emerged after the Surat split was more loyal to the British than they were before. The new Congress, minus the militants, came to be known as Mehta Congress and the 1908 session of the Congress was attended only by the moderates who reiterated their loyalty to the Raj. The politics of militants, on the other hand, could not crystallize into a new political organization. The primary reason was the repressive measures of the government by putting all the prominent leaders in jail.

Revolutionary Extremism

Around 1908, the decline of the militant nationalists and the rise of revolutionary activities marked an important shift from non-violent methods to violent action. It also meant a shift from mass-based action to elite response to the British rule. In Bengal, revolutionary terrorism had developed even earlier; around the 1870s, when the akharas or gymnasiums were setup in various places to develop what Swami Vivekananda had described as strong muscles and nerves of steel. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's novel, *Anandmath* also had a significant impact. *Anandmath* was widely read by the revolutionaries in Bengal. The Bande Mataram song, which is part of the novel, became the anthem of the swadeshi movement.

During the Swadeshi movement three factors contributed to the upsurge in the individual acts of violence:

The apolitical constructive programmes had little acceptance among the youth who was growing impatient under the repressive foreign rule.

The failure of the militant nationalists to lead the young people into a long-term mass movement also contributed to the growth of individual action.

The revolutionary action was part of an effort towards the symbolic recovery of Indian manhood, which the revolutionaries believed was often challenged and looked down upon by the British.

Such actions, however, did not lead to any organised revolutionary movement as was the case in Russia. The revolutionary actions were mostly attempts to assassinate specific oppressive British officers.

(a) Alipore Bomb Case

In Bengal, the story of revolutionary terrorism begins in 1902 with the formation of many secret societies. Most notable among them all was the Anushilan Samity of Calcutta, founded by Jatindernath Banerjee and Barindarkumar Ghose, brother of Aurobindo Ghose. Similarly, the Dhaka Anushilan Samity was born in 1906 through the initiative of Pulin Behari Das. This was followed by the launch of the revolutionary weekly *Yugantar*. The Calcutta Anushilan Samity soon started its activities and the first swadeshi dacoity, to raise funds, was organised in Rangpur in August 1906.

In the same year, Hemchandra Kanungo went abroad to get military training in Paris. After his return to India in 1908, he established a bomb factory along with a religious school at a garden house in Maniktala. In the same garden house, young inmates underwent various forms of physical training, reading classic Hindu text, and reading literature on revolutionary movement across the world

A conspiracy was hatched there to kill Douglas Kingsford, notorious for his cruel ways of dealing with the swadeshi agitators. Two young revolutionaries - 18-year-old Khudiram Bose and 19-year-old Prafulla Chaki - were entrusted with the task of carrying out the killing. On 30 April 1908, they mistakenly threw a bomb on a carriage, that, instead of killing Kingsford, killed two English women. Prafulla Chaki committed suicide and Khudiram Bose was arrested and hanged for the murder.

Aurobindo Ghose, along with his brother Barinder Kumar Ghose and thirty-five other comrades, were arrested. Chittaranjan Das took up the case. It came to be known as the Alipore Bomb case.

The judgement observed that there was no evidence to show that Aurobindo Ghose was involved in any conspiracy against the British rule. Ghose was acquitted of all the charges. Barindra Ghose and Ullaskar Dutt were given the death penalty (later commuted to the transportation of life), with the rest being condemned to transportation for life. The year-long hearing of Alipore Bomb case made a great impact and portrayed the nationalist revolutionaries as heroes to the general public.

Trial and the Aftermath

After his acquittal, Aurobindo Ghose took to a spiritual path and shifted his base to Pondicherry, where he stayed until his death in 1950. The idea of bringing an armed

revolution, envisaged by Aurobindo Ghose, never materialized. The reason for the gradual decline in the revolutionary activities in Bengal was a combination of government repression and alienation from the people. Beside this, revolutionary terrorism suffered from certain social limitations too as most of the revolutionaries were drawn from the three upper castes – Brahmin, Kayastha, and Vaishya.

(b) British Repression

In December 1908 the Morley-Minto constitutional reforms were announced. The moderates welcomed the reforms. However, they soon realised that there was hardly any shift of power. In fact, measures taken by Minto were highly divisive as it institutionalised communal electorates creating Hindu-Muslim divide. Beside this, the colonial government also introduced certain repressive laws such as:

The Newspapers (Incitement to Offence) Act, 1908. This act empowered the magistrate to confiscate press property which published objectionable material making it difficult to publish anything critical of British rule.

Indian Press Act 1910 made it mandatory for publishers and the printers to deposit a security that could be seized in case they printed 'obnoxious material'.

The Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act allowed summary trials and also imposed the prohibition of 'association dangerous to the public peace'. Even with the widespread repression, the charm of revolutionary action never disappeared from the Indian national movement. The centre of activities moved from Bengal to Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

Swadeshi Campaign in Tamil Nadu

Swadeshi movement in Tamil Nadu, notably in Tirunelveli district, generated a lot of attention and support. While the Swadeshi movement in Tamil Nadu had an all India flavour, with collective anger against the British rule remaining the common thread, it was also underpinned by Tamil - pride and consciousness. There was a deep divide in the TamilNadu congress between the moderates and the extremists.

(a) Development of Vernacular Oratory

Initially, the movement was more of a reaction to the partition of Bengal and regular meetings were held to protest the partition. The speakers, in such meetings, spoke mostly in the vernacular language to an audience that included students, lawyers, and laborers at that time. The shift from English oratory to vernacular oratory was a significant development of this time, which had a huge impact on the mass politics in Tamil Nadu.

Swadeshi meetings at the Marina beach in Madras were a regular sight. The Moore Market complex in Madras was another venue utilised for such gatherings. During the period (1905- 1907) there are police reports calling students dangerous and their activities as seditious. Europeans in public places were greeted by the students with shouts of Vande

Mataram. In 1907, Bipin Chandra Pal came to Madras and his speeches on the Madras Beach electrified the audience and won new converts to the nationalist cause. The visit had a profound impact all over Tamil Nadu. The public speeches in the Tamil language created an audience which was absent during the formative years of the political activities in Tamil Nadu.

(b) V.O.C. and Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNC)

The Swadeshi movement in Tamil Nadu came to national attention in 1906 when V.O. Chidambaram mooted the idea of launching a swadeshi shipping venture in opposition to the monopoly of the British in navigation through the coast.

In 1906, V.O.C. registered a joint stock company called The Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNC) with a capital of Rs 10 Lakh, divided into 40,000 shares of Rs. 25 each. Shares were open only to Indians, Ceylonese and other Asian nationals. V.O.C. purchased two steamships, S.S. Gallia and S.S. Lawoe. When in the other parts of India, the response to Swadeshi was limited to symbolic gestures of making candles and bangles, the idea of forging a Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company was really spectacular. V.O.C. invoked the rich history of the region and the maritime glory of India's past and used it as a reference point to galvanize the public opinion in favour of a Swadeshi venture in the sea.

The initiative of V.O.C. was lauded by the national leaders. Lokmanya Tilak wrote about the success of the Swadeshi Navigation Company in his papers Kesari and Mahratta. Aurobindo Ghose also lauded the Swadeshi efforts and helped to promote the sale of shares of the company. The major shareholders included Pandithurai Thevar and Haji Fakir Mohamed.

The initial response of the British administration was to ignore the Swadeshi company. As patronage for Swadeshi Company increased, the European officials exhibited blatant bias and racial partiality against the Swadeshi steamship.

(c) The Coral Mill Strike

After attending the session of the Indian National Congress at Surat, V.O.C. on his return decided to work on building a political organisation. While looking for an able orator, he came across Subramania Siva, a swadeshi preacher. From February to March 1907, both the leaders addressed meetings almost on a daily basis at the beach in Tuticorin, educating the people about swadeshi and the boycott campaign. The meetings were attended by thousands of people. These public gatherings were closely monitored by the administration.

In 1908, the abject working and living conditions of the Coral Mill workers attracted the attention of V.O.C and Siva. In the next few days, both the leaders addressed the mill workers. In March 1908, the workers of the Coral Cotton Mills, inspired by the address went on strike. It was one of the earliest organised labour agitations in India.

The strike of the mill workers was fully backed by the nationalist newspapers. The mill owners, however, did not budge and was supported by the government which had

decided to suppress the strike. To further increase the pressure on the workers, the leaders were prohibited from holding any meetings in Tuticorin. Finally, the mill owners decided to negotiate with the workers and concede their demands

This victory of the workers generated excitement among the militants in Bengal and it was hailed by the newspapers in Bengal. For instance, Aurobindo Ghosh's *Bande Matram* hailed the strike as "forging a bond between educated class and the masses, which is the first great step towards swaraj.... Every victory of Indian labour is a victory for the nation...."

(d) Subramania Bharati: Poet and Nationalist

The growth of newspapers, both in English and Tamil language, aided the swadeshi movement in Tamil Nadu. G. Subramaniam was one of the first among the leaders to use newspapers to spread the nationalist message across a larger audience. Subramaniam, along with five others, founded *The Hindu* (in English) and *Swadesamitran* (which was the first ever Tamil daily). In 1906 a book was published by Subramaniam to condemn the British actions during the Congress Conference in Barsal. *Swadesamitran* extensively reported nationalist activities, particularly the news regarding V.O.C. and his speeches in Tuticorin.

Subramania Bharati became the sub-editor of *Swadesamitran* around the time (1904) when Indian nationalism was looking for a fresh direction. Bharati was also editing *Chakravartini*, a Tamil monthly devoted to the cause of Indian women.

Two events had a significant impact on Subramania Bharati. A meeting in 1905 with Sister Nivedita, an Irish woman and a disciple of Vivekananda, whom he referred to as Gurumani (teacher), greatly inspired his nationalist ideals. The churning within the Congress on the nature of engagement with the British rule was also a contributory factor.

As discussed earlier in this lesson, the militants ridiculed the mendicancy of the moderates who wanted to follow the constitutional methods. Bharati had little doubt, in his mind, that the British rule had to be challenged with a fresh approach and methods applied by the militant nationalists appealed to him more. For instance, his fascination with Tilak grew after the Surat session of the Congress in 1907. He translated into Tamil Tilak's *Tenets of the New Party* and a booklet on the Madras militants' trip to the Surat Congress in 1907. Bharati edited a Tamil weekly *India*, which became the voice of the radicals.

(e) Arrest and imprisonment of V.O.C. and Subramania Siva

On March 9, 1907, Bipin Chandra Pal was released from prison after serving a six-month jail sentence. The swadeshi leaders in Tamil Nadu planned to celebrate the day of his release as 'Swarajya Day' in Tirunelveli. The local administration refused permission. V.O.C., Subramania Siva and Padmanabha Iyengar defied the ban and went ahead. They were arrested on March 12, 1908, on charges of sedition.

The local public, angered over the arrest of the prominent swadeshi leaders, reacted violently. Shops were closed in a general show of defiance. The municipality building and the police station in Tirunelveli were set on fire. More importantly, the mill workers came out in large numbers to protest the arrest of swadeshi leaders. After a few incidents of confrontation with the protesting crowd, the police open fired, and four people were killed.

On 7 July 1908, V.O.C. and Subramania Siva were found guilty and imprisoned on charges of sedition. Siva was awarded a sentence of 10 years of transportation for his seditious speech whereas V.O.C. got a life term (20 years) for abetting him. V.O.C. was given another life sentence for his own seditious speech. This draconian sentence reveals how seriously the Tirunelveli agitation was viewed by the government.

In the aftermath of this incident, the repression of the British administration was not limited to the arrest of a few leaders. In fact, people who had actively participated in the protest were also punished and a punitive tax was imposed on the people of Tirunelveli and Tuticorin.

Excerpts from the Judgment in the case of King Emperor versus V.O.C. and Subramania Siva (4 November 1908). "It seems to me that sedition at any time is a most serious offense. It is true that the case is the first of its kind in the Presidency, but the present condition of other Presidencies where the crime seems to have secured a foothold would seem to indicate that light sentences of imprisonment of a few months or maybe a year or two are instances of misplaced leniency. ...The first object of a sentence is that it shall be deterrent not to the criminal alone but to others who feel any inclination to follow his example. Here we have to deal with a campaign of sedition which nearly ended in revolt. The accused are morally responsible for all the lives lost in quelling the riots that ensued on their arrest".

(f) Ashe Murder

Repression of the Swadeshi efforts in Tuticorin and the subsequent arrest and humiliation of the swadeshi leaders generated anger among the youth. A plan was hatched to avenge the Tirunelveli event. A sustained campaign in the newspapers about the repressive measures of the British administration also played a decisive role in building people's anger against the administration.

In June 1911, the collector of Tirunelveli, Robert Ashe, was shot dead at Maniyachi Railway station by Vanchinathan. Born in the Travancore state in 1880, he was employed as a forest guard at Punalur in the then Travancore state. He was one of the members of a radical group called Bharata Mata Association. The aim of the association was to kill the European officers and inspire Indians to revolt, which they believed would eventually lead to Swaraj. Vanchinathan was trained in the use of a revolver, as part of the mission, by V.V. Subramanianar in Pondicherry.

After shooting Ashe at the Maniyachi Junction, Vanchinathan shot himself with the same pistol. A letter was found in his pocket which helps to understand the strands of inspiration for the revolutionaries like Vanchinathan.

The aftermath of the Assassination

During the course of the trial, the British government was able to establish that V.V.S and other political exiles in Pondicherry were in close and active association with the accused in the Ashe murder conspiracy. The colonial administration grew more suspicious with the Pondicherry groups and their activities. Such an atmosphere further scuttled the possibility of nationalistic propaganda and their activities in Tamil Nadu. As a fall-out of the repressive measure taken by the colonial government, the nationalist movement in Tamil Nadu entered a period of lull and some sort of revival happened only with the Home Rule Movement in 1916.



MILITANT MOVEMENTS

3. Impact of World War I on Indian Freedom

Movement

Introduction

Several events that preceded the First World War had a bearing on Indian nationalist politics. In 1905 Japan had defeated Russia. In 1908 the Young Turks and in 1911 the Chinese nationalists, using Western methods and ideas, had overthrown their governments. Along with the First World War these events provide the background to Indian nationalism during 1916 and 1920.

Europe was the main theatre of the War, though fighting took place in other parts of the world as well. The British recruited a vast contingent of Indians to serve in Europe, Africa and West Asia. After the War, the soldiers came back with new ideas which had an impact on the Indian society. India had to cough up around £ 367 million, of which £ 229 million as direct cash and the rest through loans to offset the war expenses. India also sent war materials to the value £ 250 million. This caused enormous economic distress, triggering discontent amongst Indians.

The nationalist politics was in low key, since the Indian National Congress had split into moderates and extremists, while the Muslim league supported British interests in war. In 1916 "the extremists" led by Tilak had gained control of Congress. This led to the rise of Home Rule Movement in India under the leadership of Dr Annie Besant in South India and Tilak in Western India. The Congress was reunited during the war. The strength of Indian nationalism was increased by the agreement signed between Hindus and Muslims, known as the Lucknow Pact, in 1916.

During the War, western revolutionary ideas were influencing the radical nationalists and so the British tried to suppress the national movement by passing repressive acts. Of all the repressive acts, the most draconic was the Rowlatt Act. This act was strongly criticized by the Indian leaders and they organised meetings to protest against the act. The international events too had its impact on India, such as the revolution in Russia. The defeat of Turkey

In World War I and the severe terms of the Treaty of Sevres signed thereafter undermined the position of Sultan of Turkey as Khalifa. Out of the resentment was born the Khilafat Movement.

India and Indians had taken an active part in the War believing that Britain would reward India's loyalty. But only disappointment was in store. Thus the War had multiple effects on Indian society, economy and polity. In this lesson we discuss the role played by Home Rule League, factors leading to the signing of Lucknow Pact and its provisions, the

repressive measures of the British culminating in Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, the Khilafat Movement and the rise of an organized labour movement.

All India Home Rule League

We may recall that many foreigners such as A.O. Hume had played a pivotal role in our freedom movement in the early stages. Dr Annie Besant played a similar role in the early part of the twentieth century. Besant was Irish by birth and had been active in the Irish home rule, fabian socialist and birth control movements while in Britain. She joined the Theosophical Society, and came to India in 1893. She founded the Central Hindu College in Benaras (later upgraded as Benaras Hindu University by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in 1916). With the death of H. S. Olcott in 1907, Besant succeeded him as the international president of the Theosophical Society. She was actively spreading the theosophical ideas from its headquarters, Adyar in Chennai, and gained the support of a number of educated followers such as Jamnadas Dwarkadas, George Arundale, Shankerlal Banker, Indulal Yagnik, C.P. Ramaswamy and B.P. Wadia.

In 1914 was when Britain announced its entry in First World War, it was claimed that it fighting for freedom and democracy. Indian leaders believed and supported the British war efforts. Soon they were disillusioned as there was no change in the British attitude towards India. Moreover, split into moderate and extremist wings, the Indian National Congress was not strong enough to press for further political reforms towards self-rule. The Muslim League was looked upon suspiciously by the British once the Sultan of Turkey entered the War supporting the Central powers.

It was in this backdrop that Besant entered into Indian Politics. She started a weekly The Commonweal in 1914. The weekly focussed on religious liberty, national education, social and political reforms. She published a book How India Wrought for Freedom in 1915. In this book she asserted that the beginnings of national consciousness are deeply embedded in its ancient past.

She gave the call, 'The moment of England's difficulty is the moment of India's opportunity' and wanted Indian leaders to press for reforms. She toured England and made many speeches in the cause of India's freedom. She also tried to form an Indian party in the Parliament but was unsuccessful. Her visit, however, aroused sympathy for India. On her return, she started a daily newspaper New India on July 14, 1915. She revealed her concept of self-rule in a speech at Bombay: "I mean by self-government that the country shall have a government by councils, elected by the people, and responsible to the House". She organized public meetings and conferences to spread the idea and demanded that India be granted self-government on the lines of the White colonies after the War.

On September 28, 1915, Besant made a formal declaration that she would start the Home Rule League Movement for India with objectives on the lines of the Irish Home Rule League. The moderates did not like the idea of establishing another separate organisation. She too realised that the sanction of the Congress party was necessary for her movement to be successful.

In December 1915 due to the efforts of Tilak and Besant, the Bombay session of Congress suitably altered the constitution of the Congress party to admit the members from the extremist section. In the session she insisted on the Congress taking up the Home Rule League programme before September 1916, failing which she would organize the Home Rule League on her own.

In 1916, two Home Rule Movements were launched in the country: one under Tilak and the other under Besant with their spheres of activity well demarcated. The twin objectives of the Home Rule League were the establishment of Home Rule for India in British Empire and arousing in the Indian masses a sense of pride for the Motherland.

(a) Tilak Home Rule League

Tilak Home Rule League was set up at the Bombay Provincial conference held at Belgaum in April 1916. Its League was to work in Maharashtra (including Bombay city), Karnataka, the Central Provinces and Berar. Tilak's League was organised into six branches and Annie Besant's League was given the rest of India.

Tilak popularised the demand for Home Rule through his lectures. The popularity of his League was confined to Maharashtra and Karnataka but claimed a membership of 14,000 in April 1917 and 32,000 by early 1918. On 23 July 1916 on his 60th birthday Tilak was arrested for propagating the idea of Home Rule.

Home Rule: It refers to a self-government granted by a central or regional government to its dependent political units on condition that their people should remain politically loyal to it. This was a common feature in the ancient Roman Empire and the modern British Empire. In Ireland the Home Rule Movement gathered force in the 1880s and a system of Home Rule was established by the Government of Ireland Act (1920) in six counties of Northern Ireland and later by the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921) in the remaining 26 counties in the south.

(b) Besant's Home Rule League

Finding no signs from the Congress, Besant herself inaugurated the Home Rule League at Madras in September 1916. Its branches were established at Kanpur, Allahabad, Benaras, Mathura, Calicut and Ahmednagar. She made an extensive tour and spread the idea of Home Rule. She declared that "the price of India's loyalty is India's Freedom". Moderate congressmen who were dissatisfied with the inactivity of the Congress joined the Home Rule League. The popularity of the League can be gauged from the fact that Jawaharlal Nehru, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, B. Chakravarti and Jitendralal Banerji, Satyamurti and Khaliqzaman were taking up the membership of the League.

As Besant's Home Rule Movement became very popular in Madras, the Government of Madras decided to suppress it. Students were barred from attending its meetings. In June 1917 Besant and her associates, B.P. Wadia and George Arundale were interred in Ootacamund. The government's repression strengthened the supporters, and with renewed determination they began to resist. To support Besant, Sir S. Subramaniam renounced his knighthood. Many leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Surendranath Banerjea who had earlier stayed away from the movement enlisted themselves. At the AICC meeting convened on 28 July 1917 Tilak advocated the use of civil disobedience if they were not released. Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Shankerlal Banker, on the orders of Gandhi, collected one thousand signatures willing to defy the internment orders and march to Besant's place of detention. Due to the growing resistance the interned nationalists were released.

On 20 August 1917 the new Secretary of State Montagu announced that 'self-governing institutions and responsible government' was the goal of the British rule in India. Almost overnight this statement converted Besant into a near-loyalist. In September 1917, when she was released, she was elected the President of Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in 1917.

(c) Importance of the Home Rule Movement

The Home Rule Leagues prepared the ground for mass mobilization paving the way for the launch of Gandhi's satyagraha movements. Many of the early Gandhian satyagrahis had been members of the Home Rule Leagues. They used the organisational networks created by the Leagues to spread the Gandhian method of agitation. Home Rule League was the first Indian political movement to cut across sectarian lines and have members from the Congress, League, Theosophist and the Laborites.

(d) Decline of Home Rule Movement

Home Rule Movement declined after Besant accepted the proposed Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and Tilak went to Britain in September 1918 to pursue the libel case that he had filed against Valentine Chirol, the author of Indian Unrest.

The Indian Home Rule League was renamed the Commonwealth of India League and used to lobby British MPs in support of self-government for India within the empire, or dominion status along the lines of Canada and Australia. It was transformed by V.K. Krishna Menon into the India League in 1929.

Impact of the War

During the years prior to First World War the political condition of the India was in disarray. In order to win over the "Moderates" and the Muslim League with a view to isolating the "Extremists" the British passed the Minto-Morley Reforms in 1909. The Moderates observed a policy of wait and watch. The Muslim League welcomed the separate

electorate accorded to them. In 1913 a new group of leaders joined the League. The most prominent among them was Muhammad Ali Jinnah who was already a member of the Congress and demanded more reforms for the Muslims.

The First World War provided the objective conditions for the revolutionary activity in India. The revolutionaries wanted to make use of Britain's difficulty during the War to their advantage. The Ghadar Movement was one of its outcomes.

The First World War had a major impact on the freedom movement. Initially, the British didn't care for Indian support. Once the war theatre moved to West Asia and Africa the British were forced to look for Indian support. In this context Indian leaders decided to put pressure on the British Government for reforms. The Congress and Muslim League had their annual session at Bombay in 1915 and spoke on similar tones. In October 1916, the Hindu and Muslim elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council addressed a memorandum to the Viceroy on the post-War reforms. The British Government was unmoved. The Congress and the League met at Calcutta in November 1916 and deliberated on the memorandum. It also agreed on the composition of the legislatures and the number of representation to be allowed to the two communities in the post-War reforms.

Parallel to this, Tilak and Besant were advocating Home Rule. Due to their efforts the Bombay session accepted to take back the extremist section and, consequently, the constitution of the Congress was altered. 1916 was therefore a historic year since the Congress, Muslim League and the Home Rule League held their annual sessions at Lucknow. Ambika Charan Mazumdar, Congress president welcomed the extremists: "... after ten years of painful separation ... Indian National Party have come to realize the fact that united they stand, but divided they fall, and brothers have at last met brothers..." The Congress got its old vigour with extremists back into it.

Besant and Tilak also played an important role in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together under what is popularly known as the Congress-League Pact or the Lucknow Pact. Jinnah played a pivotal role during the Pact. The agreements accepted at Calcutta in November 1916 were confirmed by the annual sessions of the Congress and the League in December 1916.

Lala Hardayal, who settled in San Francisco, founded Pacific Coast Hindustan Association in 1913, with Sohan Singh Bhakna as its president. This organization was popularly called Ghadar Party. ('Ghadar' means rebellion in Urdu.) The members of this party were largely immigrant Sikhs of US and Canada. The party published a journal called Ghadar. It began publication from San Francisco on November 1, 1913. Later it was published in Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and other languages.

The Ghadar Movement was an important episode in India's freedom struggle. A ship named Komagatamaru, filled with Indian immigrants was turned back from Canada. As the ship returned to India several of its passengers were killed or arrested in a clash with the British police. This incident left a deep mark on the Indian nationalist movement.

Provisions of the Lucknow Pact

- i) Provinces should be freed as much as possible from Central control in administration and finance.
- ii) Four-fifths of the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils should be elected, and one-fifth nominated.
- iii) Four-fifths of the provincial and central legislatures were to be elected on as broad a franchise as possible.
- iv) Half the executive council members, including those of the central executive council were to be Indians elected by the councils themselves.
- v) The Congress also agreed to separate electorates for Muslims in provincial council elections and for preferences in their favour (beyond the proportions indicated by population) in all provinces except the Punjab and Bengal, where some ground was given to the Hindu and Sikh minorities. This pact paved the way for Hindu-Muslim cooperation in the Khilafat Movement and Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement.
- vi) The Governments, Central and Provincial, should be bound to act in accordance with resolutions passed by their Legislative Councils unless they were vetoed by the Governor-General or Governors-in-Council and, in that event, if the resolution was passed again after an interval of not less than one year, it should be put into effect;
- vii) The relations of the Secretary of State with the Government of India should be similar to those of the Colonial Secretary with the Governments of the Dominions, and India should have an equal status with that of the Dominions in any body concerned with imperial affairs.

The Lucknow Pact paved the way for Hindu Muslim Unity. Sarojini Ammaiyar called Jinnah, the chief architect of the Lucknow Pact, "the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity".

The Lucknow Pact proved that the educated class both from the Congress and the League could work together with a common goal. This unity reached its climax during the Khilafat and the Non-Cooperation Movements.

Repressive Measures of the Colonial State

Parallel to the Congress there emerged revolutionary groups who attempted to overthrow away the British government through violence methods. The revolutionary movements constituted an important landmark in India's freedom struggle. It began in the end of the nineteenth century and gained its momentum from the time of the partition of Bengal. The revolutionaries were the first to demand complete freedom. Maharashtra, Bengal, Punjab were the major centers of revolutionary activity. For a brief while Madras presidency was also an active ground of the revolutionary activity.

In order to crush the growing nationalist movement, the government adopted many measures. Lord Curzon created the Criminal Intelligence Department (CID) in 1903 to secretly collect information on the activities of nationalists. The Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act (1908) and the Explosives Substances Act (1908), and shortly thereafter the Indian Press Act (1910), and the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act (1911) were passed. The British suspected that some Indian nationalists were in contact with revolutionaries abroad. So the Foreigners Ordinance was promulgated in 1914 which restricted the entry of foreigners. A majority of these legislations were passed in order to break the base of the revolutionary movements. The colonial state also resorted to banning meetings, printing and circulation of seditious materials for propaganda, and by detaining the suspects.

The Defence of India Act, 1915

Also referred to as the Defence of India Regulations Act, it was an emergency criminal law enacted with the intention of curtailing the nationalist and revolutionary activities during the First World War. The Act allowed suspects to be tried by special tribunals each consisting of three Commissioners appointed by the Local Government. The act empowered the tribunal to inflict sentences of death, transportation for life, and imprisonment of up to ten years for the violation of rules or orders framed under the act. The trial was to be in camera and the decisions were not subject to appeal. The act was later applied during the First Lahore Conspiracy trial. This Act, after the end of First World War, formed the basis of the Rowlatt Act.

Khilafat Movement

In the First World War the Sultan of Turkey sided with the Triple Alliance against the allied powers and attacked Russia. The Sultan was also the Caliph and was the custodian of the Islamic sacred places. After the war, Britain decided to weaken the position of Turkey and the Treaty of Sevres was signed. The eastern part of the Turkish Empire such as Syria and Lebanon were mandated to France, while Palestine and Jordan became British protectorates. Thus the allied powers decided to end the caliphate.

The dismemberment of the Caliphate was seen as a blow to Islam. Muslims around the world, sympathetic to the cause of the Caliph, decided to oppose the move. Muslims in India also organised themselves under the leadership of the Ali brothers - Maulana Muhammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali started a movement known as Khalifat Movement. The aim was to support the Ottoman Empire and protest against the British rule in India. Numerous Muslim leaders such as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, M.A. Ansari, Sheikh Shaukat Ali Siddiqui and Syed Ataulah Shah Bukhari joined the movement.

The demands of the Khilafat Movement were presented by Mohammad Ali to the diplomats in Paris in March 1920. They were:

1. The Sultan of Turkey's position of Caliph should not be disturbed.

2. The Muslim sacred places must be handed over to the Sultan and should be controlled by him.
3. The Sultan must be left with sufficient territory to enable him to defend the Islamic faith and
4. The Jazirat-ul-Arab (Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Palestine) must remain under his sovereignty.

Gandhi had been honoured with Kaisari- Hind gold medal for his humanitarian work in South Africa. He had also received the Zulu War silver medal for his services as an officer of the Indian volunteer ambulance corps in 1906 and Boer War silver medal for his services as assistant superintendent of the Indian volunteer stretcher-bearer corps during Boer War of 1899–1900. When Gandhi launched the scheme of non-cooperation in connection with Khilafat Movement, he returned all the medals saying, '...events that have happened during the past one month have confirmed in me the opinion that the Imperial Government have acted in the Khilafat matter in an unscrupulous, criminal and unjust manner and have been moving from wrong to wrong in order to defend their immorality. I can retain neither respect nor affection for such a government.'

The demands of the movement had nothing do to with India but the question of Caliph was used as a symbol by the Khilafat leaders to unite the Indian Muslim community who were divided along regional, linguistic, class and sectarian lines. In Gail Minault's words: "A pan-Islamic symbol opened the way to pan- Indian Islamic political mobilization." It was anti-British, which inspired Gandhi to support this cause in a bid to bring the Muslims into the mainstream of Indian nationalism. Gandhi also saw this as an opportunity to strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity.

The Khilafat issue was interpreted differently by different sections. Lower-class Muslims in U.P. interpreted the Urdu word khilaf (against) and used it as a symbol of general revolt against authority, while the Mappillais of Malabar converted it into a banner of anti-landlord revolt.

Rise of Labour Movement

Introduction of machinery, new methods of production, concentration of factories in certain big cities gave birth to a new class of wage earners called factory workers. In India, the factory workers, mostly drawn from villages, initially remained submissive and unorganised. Many leaders like Sorabjee Shapoorji and N.M. Lokhanday of Bombay and Sasipada Banerjee of Bengal raised their voice for protecting the interests of the industrial labourers.

In the aftermath of Swadeshi Movement (1905) Indian industries began to thrive. During the War the British encouraged Indian industries which manufactured war time goods. As the war progressed they wanted more goods so more workers were recruited. Once the war ended workers were laid off and production cut down. Further prices increased dramatically in the post-War situation. India was also in the grip of a world-wide

epidemic of influenza. In response labourers began to organize to fight and trade unions were formed to protect the interests of the workers.

The success of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 also had its effect on Indian labour.

A wave of ideas of class consciousness and enlightenment swept the world of Indian labours. The Indian soldiers who had fought in Europe brought the news of good labour conditions. The industrial unrest that grew up as a result of grave economic difficulties created by War, and the widening gulf between the employers and the employees, and the establishment of International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations brought mass awakening among the labours.

Madras played a pivotal role in the history of labour movement of India. The first trade union in the modern sense, the Madras Labour Union, was formed in 1918 by B.P. Wadia. The union was formed mainly due to the ill-treatment of Indian worker in the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Perambur. The working conditions was poor. Short interval for mid-day meal, frequent assaults on workers by the European assistants and inadequate wages led to the formation of this union. This union adopted collective bargaining and used trade unionism as a weapon for class struggle.

This wave spread to other parts of India and many unions were formed at this time such as the Indian Seamen's Union both at Calcutta and Bombay, the Punjab Press Employers Association, the G.I.P. Railway Workers Union Bombay, M.S.M. Railwaymen's Union, Union of the Postmen and Port Trust Employees Union at Bombay and Calcutta, the Jamshedpur Labour Association the Indian Colliery Employees Association of Jharia and the Unions of employees of various railways. To suppress the labour movement the Government, with the help of the capitalists, tried by all means to subdue the labourers. They imprisoned strikers, burnt their houses, and fined the unions, but the labourers were determined in their demands.

Nationalist leaders and intellectuals were moved by the plight of the workers, and many of them worked towards organizing them into unions. Their involvement also led to the politicization of the working class, and added to the strength of the freedom movement as most of the mills were owned by Europeans who were supported by the government.

On 30 October 1920, representatives of 64 trade unions, with a membership of 140,854, met in Bombay and established the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) under the Chairmanship of Lala Lajpat Rai. It was supported by national leaders like Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, C.R. Das, Vallabhbhai Patel, Subhash Chandra Bose and others from the Indian National Congress.

The trade unions slowly involved themselves in the national movement. In April 1919 after the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre and Gandhi's arrest, the working class in Ahmedabad and other parts of Gujarat resorted to strikes, agitations and demonstrations. Trade unions were not recognised by the capitalists or the government in the beginning. But the unity of the workers and the strength of their movement forced the both to recognise them. From 1919-20 the number of registered trade unions increased from 107 to 1833 in 1946-47.



4. Advent of Gandhi and Mass Mobilisation

Introduction

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in the coastal town of Porbandar in 1869. When he returned to India in 1915 he had a record of fighting against inequalities imposed by the racist government of South Africa. Gandhi certainly wanted to be of help to forces of nationalism in India. He was in touch with leaders India as he had come into contact with Congress leaders while mobilizing support for the South African Indian cause earlier. Impressed by activities and ideas of Gopala Krishna Gokhale, he acknowledged him as his political Guru. On his return to India, following Gokhale's advice, Gandhi, who was away from India for over two decades, spent a year travelling all over the country acquainting himself with the situation. He established his Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad but did not take active part in political movements including the Home Rule movement.

While in South Africa, Gandhi, gradually evolved the technique of 'Satyagraha,' based on 'Satya' and 'Ahimsa' i.e, truth and non-violence, to fight the racist South African regime. Even while resisting evil and wrong a Satyagrahi had to be at peace with himself and not hate the wrongdoer. A Satyagrahi would willingly accept suffering in the course of resistance, and hatred had no place in the exercise. Truth and nonviolence would be weapons of the brave and fearless and not cowards. For Gandhi there was no difference between precept and practice, faith and action.

Gandhi's Experiments of Satyagraha

(a) Champaran Movement (1917)

The first attempt at mobilizing the Indian masses was made by Gandhi on an invitation by peasants of Champaran. Before launching the struggle he made a detailed study of the situation. Indigo cultivators of the district Champaran in Bihar were severely exploited by the European planters who had bound the peasants to compulsorily grow indigo on lease on 3/20th of their fields and sell it at the rates fixed by the planters. This system squeezed the peasants and eventually reduced them to penury. Accompanied by local leaders such as Rajendra Prasad, Mazharul Huq, Acharya Kripalani and Mahadeva Desai, Gandhi conducted a detailed enquiry. The British officials ordered Gandhi to leave the district. But he refused and told the administration that he would defy the order because it was unjust and face the consequences.

Subsequently an enquiry committee with Gandhi also as a member was formed. It was not difficult for Gandhi to convince the committee of the difficulties of the poor peasants. The report was accepted and implemented resulting in the release of the indigo cultivators of the bondage of European planters who gradually had to withdraw from Champaran itself.

(b) Mill Workers' Strike and Gandhi's Fast at Ahmedabad (1918)

Thus Gandhi met with his first success in his homeland. The struggle also enabled him to closely understand the condition of peasantry. The next step at mobilizing the masses was the workers of the urban centre, Ahmedabad. There was a dispute between the textile workers and the mill owners. He met both the parties and when the owners refused to accept the demands of the low paid workers, Gandhi advised them to go on strike demanding a 35 percent increase in their wages. To bolster the morale of the workers he went on fast. The worker's strike and Gandhi's fast ultimately forced the mill owners' to concede the demand.

(c) The Kheda Struggle (1918)

The peasants of Kheda district, due to the failure of monsoon, were in distress. They had appealed to the colonial authorities for remission of land revenue during 1918. As per government's famine code, in the event of crop yield being under 25 percent of the average the cultivators were entitled for total remission. But the authorities refused and harassed them demanding full payment. The Kheda peasants who were also battling the plague epidemic, high prices and famine approached the Servants of India Society, of which Gandhi was a member, for help. Gandhi, along with Vithalbai Patel, intervened on behalf of the poor peasants and advised them to withhold payment and 'fight unto death against such a spirit of vindictiveness and tyranny.' Vallabhbhai Patel, a young lawyer and Indulal Yagnik joined Gandhi in the movement and urged the ryots to be firm. The government repression included attachment of crops, taking possession of the belongings of the ryots and their cattle and in some cases auctioning them.

The government authorities issued instructions that revenues shall be collected only from those ryots who could afford to pay. On learning about the same, Gandhi decided to withdraw the struggle

The three struggles led by Gandhi, demonstrated that he had understood where the Indian nation lay. It was the poor peasants and workers of all classes and castes, who constituted the pith and marrow of India, whose interests Gandhi espoused in these struggles. He had confronted both the colonialist and Indian exploiters and by entering into dialogue with them, he had demonstrated that he was a leader who could mobilize the oppressed and at the same time negotiate with the oppressors. These virtues made him the man of the masses and soon he was hailed as the Mahatma.

Servants of India Society was founded by Gopal Krishna Gokhale in 1905 to unite and train Indians of different castes, regions and religions in welfare work. It was the first secular organization in the country to devote itself to the betterment of underprivileged, rural and tribal people. The members involved themselves in relief work, the promotion of literacy, and other social causes. Members would have to go through a five-year training period and agree to serve on modest salaries. The organization has its headquarters in Pune (Maharashtra) and notable branches in Chennai (Madras), Mumbai (Bombay), Allahabad and Nagpur.

Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms

Edwin Montagu and Chelmsford, the Secretary of State for India and Viceroy respectively, announced their scheme of constitutional changes for India which came to be known as the Indian Councils Act of 1919. The Act enlarged the provincial legislative councils with elected majorities. The governments in the provinces were given more share in the administration under 'Dyarchy.' Under this arrangement all important subjects like law and order and finance 'reserved' for the whitemen and were directly under the control of the Governors. Other subjects such as health, educations and local self-government were 'transferred' to elected Indian representatives. Ministers holding 'transferred subjects' were responsible to the legislatures; but those in-charge of 'reserved' subjects were not further the Governor of the province could overrule the ministers under 'special (veto) powers,' thus making a mockery of the entire scheme. The part dealing with central legislature in the act created two houses of legislature (bi-cameral).

The Central Legislative Assembly was to have 41 nominated members, out of a total of 144. The Upper House known as the Council of States was to have 60 members, of whom 26 were to be nominated. Both the houses had no control over the Governor General and his Executive Council. But the Central Government had full control over the provincial governments. As a result, power was concentrated in the hands of the European / English authorities. Right to vote also continued to be restricted.

The public spirited men of India, who had extended unconditional support to the war efforts of Britain had expected more. The scheme, when announced in 1918, came to be criticized throughout India. The Indian National Congress met in a special session at Bombay in August 1918 to discuss the scheme. The congress termed the scheme 'disappointing and unsatisfactory.'

The colonial government followed a 'carrot and stick policy.' There was a group of moderate / liberal political leaders who wanted to try and work the reforms. Led by Surendranath Banerjee, they opposed the majority opinion and left the Congress to form their own party which came to be called Indian Liberal Federation.

The Non-Brahmin Movement

The hierarchical Indian society and the contradictions within, found expression in the formation of caste associations and movements to question the dominance of higher castes. The higher castes also were controlling the factors of production and thus the middle and lower castes were dependent on them for livelihood. Liberalism and humanism which influenced and accompanied the socio-religious reform movements of the nineteenth century had affected the society and stirred it. The symptoms of their awakening were already visible in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Namasudra movement in the Bengal and eastern India, the Adidharma movement in North Western India, the Satyashodhak movement in Western India and the Dravidian movements in South India had emerged and

raised their voice by the turn of the century. They were all led by non Brahmin leaders who questioned the supremacy of the Brahmins and other 'superior' castes.

It first manifested itself, through Jyoti Rao Phule's book of 1872 titled *Gulamgiri*. His organization, Satyashodak Samaj, underscored the necessity to relieve the lower castes from the tyranny of Brahminism and the exploitative scriptures. The colonial administrators and the educational institutions that were established indirectly facilitated their origin. Added to the growing influence of Brahmin - upper caste men in the colonial times in whatever opportunity was open to natives, the colonial government published census reports once a decade. These reports classified castes on the basis of 'social precedence as recognized by native public opinion'. The censuses were a source of conflict between castes. There were claims and counterclaims as the leaders of caste organizations fought for pre-eminence and many started new caste associations. These attempts were further helped by the emerging political scenario.

Leading members of castes realized that it was important to mobilise their castes in struggles for social recognition. More than the recognition, many of them, as years passed by, started providing for education of their caste brethren and helped their educated youth in getting jobs. In the meantime, introduction of electoral politics from the 1880s gave a fillip to such organisations. The outcome of all this was the expression of socio-economic tensions through caste consciousness and caste solidarity.

Two trends emerged out of the non- Brahmin movements. One was what is called the process of 'Sanskritisation' of the 'lower' castes and the second was a radical pro-poor and progressive peasant-labour movements. While the northern and eastern caste movements by and large were Sanskritic, the western and southern movements split and absorbed by the rising nationalist and Dravidian-Left movements. However all these movements were critical of what they called as 'Brahmin domination' and attacked their 'monopoly', and pleaded with the government through their associations for justice. In Bombay and Madras presidencies clear-cut Brahmin monopoly in the government services and general cultural arena led to non-Brahmin politics.

The pattern of the movement in south was a little different. The Brahmin monopoly was quite formidable as with only 3.2% of the population they had 72% of all graduates. They came to be challenged by educated and trading community members of the non-Brahmin castes. They were elitist in the beginning and their challenge was articulated by the Non- Brahmin Manifesto issued at the end of 1916. They asserted that they formed the 'bulk of the tax payers, including a large majority of the zamindars, landlords and agriculturists', yet they received no benefits from the state.

The colonial government made use of the genuine grievances of the non-Brahmins to divide and rule India. This was true with the Brahmanetara Parishat, and the Justice Party of Bombay and Madras presidencies respectively at least till 1930. Both the regions had some socially radical possibilities as could be seen in the emergence of a radical Dalit-Bahujan movement under the leadership of Dr Ambedkar and the Self-Respect Movement under the leadership of Periyar Ramaswamy.

The nationalists were unable to understand the liberal democratic content in the awakening among the lower strata of Indian society. While a section of the nationalists simply ignored the stirrings, a majority of them and particularly the so-called extremists-radicals were opposed to the movements. A few of them were even hostile and labelled them as stooges of British, anti-national etc. The early leaders of the non- Brahmin movement were in fact using the same tactics as the early nationalist leaders in dealing with the colonial government.

Non-cooperation Movement

(a) Rowlatt Act

It was as part of the British policy of 'rally the moderates and isolate the extremists' that the Indian Councils Act 1919 and the Rowlatt Act of the same year were promulgated. Throughout the World War, the repressive measures against the terrorists and revolutionaries had continued. Many of them were hanged or imprisoned for long terms. As the general mood was restive, the government decided to arm itself with more repressive powers. Despite every elected member of the central legislature opposing the bill, the government passed the Rowlatt Act in March 1919. This Act empowered the government to imprison any person without trial.

Gandhi and his associates were shocked. It was the 'Satyagraha Sabha' founded by Gandhi, which pledged to disobey the Act first. In the place of the old agitational methods such as meetings, boycott of foreign cloth and schools, picketing of toddy shops, petitions and demonstrations, a novel method was adopted. Now 'Satyagraha' was the weapon to be used with the wider participation of labour, artisan and peasant masses. The symbol of this change was to be khadi, which soon became the uniform of nationalists. India's Swaraj would be a reality only when the masses awakened and became active in political work. Almost the entire country was electrified when Gandhi called upon the people to observe 'hartal' in March-April 1919 against the Rowlatt Act. He combined it with the Khilafat issue which brought together Hindus and Muslims.

(b) Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

The colonial government was enraged at the mass struggles and the enthusiasm of the masses as evidenced in the upsurge all over the country. On 13th April 1919, in Amritsar town, in the Jallianwala enclave that the most heinous of political crimes was perpetrated on an unarmed mass of people by the British regime. More than two thousand people had assembled at the venue to peacefully protest against the arrest of their leaders Satyapal and Saifudding Kitchlew. Michael O'Dwyer was the Lt. Governor of Punjab and the military commander was General Reginald Dyer. They decided to demonstrate their power and teach a lesson to the dissenters. The part where the gathering was held had only one narrow entrance. Dyer ordered firing on the trapped crowd with machine guns and rifles till the ammunition was exhausted. While the official figures of the dead was only about 379 the real

number was over a thousand. Martial law was imposed all over Punjab and people were subject to untold indignities.

The entire country was horrified at the brutalities. In Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Lahore there were widespread protests against the Rowlatt Act where the protesters were fired upon. There was violence in many towns and cities. Protesting against the brutalities many celebrities renounced their titles, of whom Ravindranath Tagore was one.

Rabindranath Tagore renounced his knighthood immediately after the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. In his protest letter to the viceroy on May 31, 1919, Tagore wrote "The time has come when the badge of honour makes our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation, and, I for my part, wish to stand shorn of all special distinctions, by the side of those of my countrymen who for their so-called insignificance are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings."

The two immediate causes responsible for launching the non-cooperation movement were the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. While the khilafat issue related to the position of the Turkish Sultan vis-a-vis the holy places of Islam, the Punjab issue related to the exoneration of the perpetrators of the Jallianwalla massacre. While the control over holy places of Islam was taken over by non-Islamic powers against the assurances of the British rulers, the British courts of enquiry totally exonerated Reginald Dyer and Michael O'Dwyer of the crime perpetrated at Jallianwalla.

Gandhi and the Congress, who were bent upon Hindu-Muslim unity, now stood by their Muslim compatriots who felt betrayed by the British regime. The Ali brothers - Shukha and Muhammed - and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were the prime movers in the Khilafat movement.

A Sikh teenager who was raised at Khalsa Orphanage named Udham Singh saw the happening in his own eyes. To avenge the killings of Jallianwalla Bagh, on 30 March 1940, he assassinated Michael O'Dwyer in Caxton Hall of London. Udham Singh was hanged at Pentonville jail, London

(c) Launch of Non-Cooperation Movement

The Khilafat Conference, at the instance of Gandhi, decided to launch the non-cooperation movement from 31 August 1920. Earlier an all party meet at Allahabad had decided on a programme of boycott of government educational institutions and their law courts. The Congress met in a special session at Calcutta in September 1920 and resolved to accept Gandhi's proposal on non-cooperation with the colonial state till such time as Khilafat and Punjab grievances were redressed and self-government established.

Non-cooperation movement included boycott of schools, colleges, courts, government offices, legislatures, foreign goods, return of government conferred titles and awards.

Alternatively, national schools, panchayats were to be set up and swadeshi goods manufactured and used. The struggle at a later stage was to include no tax campaign and mass civil disobedience, etc. A regular Congress session held at Nagpur in 1920 endorsed the earlier resolutions. Another important resolution at Nagpur was to recognize and set up linguistic Provincial Congress Committees which drew a large number of workers into the movement. In order to broad base the Congress, the workers were to reach out to the villages and enroll the villagers in the Congress on a nominal fee of four annas (25 paise). The overall character of the Congress underwent change and an atmosphere where a large majority of the masses could develop a sense of belonging to the nation and the national struggle developed. But it also led to some conservatives who were opposed to mass participation in the struggle to leave the Congress. Thus the Congress under Gandhi was shedding its elitist character, becoming a mass organization and in a real sense 'National'.

(d) Impact of Gandhi's Leadership

Thousands of schools and hundreds of colleges and vidyapeethas were established by the natives as alternatives to the government institutions. Several leading lawyers gave up their practice. Thousands of school and college students left the government institutions. The Ali brothers were arrested and jailed on sedition charges. The Congress committees called upon people to launch civil disobedience movement, including no tax movements if the Congress committees of their region were ready. The government as usual resorted to repression. Workers were arrested indiscriminately and put behind bars. The visit of Prince of Wales in 1921 to several cities in India was also boycotted. The calculation of the colonial government that the visit of the Prince would evoke loyal sentiments of the Indian people was proved wrong. Workers and peasants had gone on strike across the country. Gandhi promised Swaraj, if Indians participated in the non-cooperation movement on non-violent mode within a year.

South India surged forward during this phase of the struggle. The peasants of Andhra, withheld payment of taxes to the zamindars and the whole population of Chirala-Perala refused to pay taxes and vacated the town en-mass. Hundreds of village Patels and Shanbagues resigned their jobs. Non-Cooperation movement in Tamil Nadu was organised and led by stalwarts like C. Rajagopalachari, S. Satyamurthi and Periyar E.V.R. In Kerala, peasants organized anti-jenmi struggles.

The Viceroy admitted in a letter to the Secretary of State that the movement had seriously affected lower classes in certain areas of UP, Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa the peasants have been affected. Impressed by the intensity of the movement, in a special session the Congress reiterated the intensification of the movement. In February 1922 Gandhi announced that he would lead a mass civil disobedience, including no tax campaigns, at Bardoli, if the government did not ensure press freedom and release the prisoners within seven days.

(e) Chauri Chaura Incident and Withdrawal of the Movement

The common people and the nationalist workers were exuberant that Swaraj would dawn soon and participated actively in the struggle. It had attracted all classes of people including the tribals living in the jungles. But at the same time sporadic violence was also

witnessed along with arson. In Malabar and Andhra two very violent revolts also took place. In the Rampa region of coastal Andhra the tribals revolted under the leadership of Alluri Sitarama Raju. In Malabar, Muslim (Mapilla) peasants rose up in armed rebellion against upper caste landholders and the British government.

Chauri-Chaura, a village in Gorakhpur district of UP had an organized volunteer group which was participating and leading the picketing of liquor shops and local bazaar against high prices. On 5 February 1922, a Congress procession, 3000 strong, was fired upon by police. Enraged by the firing, the mob attacked and burnt down the police station. 22 policemen lost their lives. It was this incident which made Gandhi announce the suspension of the non-cooperation movement.

The Congress Working Committee ratified the decision at Bardoli, to the disappointment of the nationalist workers. While the younger workers resented the decision, the others who had faith in Gandhi considered it a tactical retreat. Both Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose were critical of Gandhi, who was arrested and sentenced to 6 years in prison. Thus ended the non-cooperation movement.

The Khilafat issue was made redundant when the people of Turkey under the leadership of Mustafa Kamal Pasha rose in revolt and stripped the Sultan of his political power and abolished the Caliphate and declared that religion and politics could not go together.

Swarajist Party and its Activities

Following the suspension of Non-cooperation the question was what next? Chittaranjan Das and Motilal Nehru proposed a new line of activity. They wanted to return to active politics which included entry into electoral politics and demonstrate that the nationalists were capable of obstructing the working of the reformed legislature by capturing them and arousing nationalist spirit. This group came to be called the 'Swarajists and pro-changers'. In Tamil Nadu, Satyamurti joined this group.

There was another group which opposed council entry and wanted to continue the Gandhian line by mobilizing the masses. This team led by Rajagopalachari, Vallabhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad was called 'No changers.' They argued that electoral politics would divert the attention of nationalists and pull them away from the work of mass mobilization and their issues. They favoured the continuation of the Gandhian constructive programme of spinning, temperance, Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and mobilise rural masses and prepare them for new mass movements. The pro-changers launched the Swarajya party as a part of the Congress. A truce was soon worked out and both the groups would engage themselves in the Congress programmes and their work should complement each other's activities under the leadership of Gandhi, though Gandhi personally favoured constructive work.

The Swarajya party did reasonably well in the elections to Central Assembly by winning 42 of the 101 seats open for election. With the cooperation of other members they

were able to stall many anti-people legislations of the colonial regime, and were successful in exposing the inadequacy of the Act of 1919. But their efforts and enthusiasm petered out as time passed by and consciously or unconsciously they came to be co-opted by the Government as members of several committees constituted by it.

In the absence of nationalist mass struggle, fissiparous tendencies started rising their head. There were a series of communal riots with fundamentalist elements occupying the space. Even the Swaraj party was affected by the sectarianism as one group in the name of 'responsivists' started cooperating with the government, claiming to safeguard "Hindu interests". The Muslim fundamentalists similarly seized the space created by the lull in national struggle and started fanning communal feeling. Rise of Left Radicalism Gandhi was pained at the developments. To contain the communal frenzy he went on a 21 day fast.

Left Movement

Meanwhile socialist ideas and its activists also had filled some space through their work among peasants and workers. The labour and peasant movements were organized by the 'leftists'. Marxism as an ideology to criticise colonialism and capitalism had gained ground. It manifested itself in the organization of students and youth apart from trade unions. Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose contributed to the spread of leftist ideology. They argued that both colonial exploitation and the internal exploitation by the emerging capitalists should be fought. A group of youngsters with S A. Dange, M.N Roy, Muzaffar Ahmed along with elderly persons such as Singaravelu from Tamilnadu founded the peasants and worker's parties. The government came down heavily on the communist-socialists and the revolutionaries a series of 'conspiracy cases' such as Kanpur, Meerut, Kakori were booked.

It was at this juncture Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekar Azad, Rajguru and Sukhdev emerged on the scene. The Naujawan Bharat Sabha, Hindustan Republican Association were started and thousands of youngmen and women became active anti-colonialists and revolutionaries. Youth and student conferences were organized all over the country. Meanwhile Ramprasad Bismil and Ashfaq-ullah were convicted to death and 17 others were sentenced to long term imprisonment in the Kakori conspiracy case. Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekar Azad and Rajguru, enraged at the police brutality and death of Lajpat Rai, killed Saunders, the British police officer who led the lathi charge at Lahore. Bhagat Singh and Batukeswar Dutt threw a bomb into the central Assembly hall on 8 April 1929. In 1929 the Meerut conspiracy case was filed and three dozen communist leaders were sentenced to long spells of jail terms. All these developments and incidents are discussed in detail in the next lesson.

Simon Commission- Nehru Report - Lahore Congress

The British were due to consider and announce another instalment of constitutional reforms some time in 1929-30. In preparation, it announced the setting up of Indian Statutory commission (known as 'Simon Commission' after its chairman). The commission had only whitemen as members and it was an insult to Indians. The Congress at its annual

session in Madras in 1927 resolved to boycott the commission. The Muslim league and the Hindu Mahasabha also supported the decision. A series of conferences were held and the consensus was to work for an alternative proposal. Most of the parties agreed to challenge the colonial attitude towards India and the result was the Motilal Nehru Report. However the All- Parties meet held in 1928 December at Calcutta failed to accept it on the issue of communal representation.

Simon Go Back

But the most important development was the popular protest against the Simon Commission. Whenever the commission went protests were held and the slogan 'Simon Go Back' rent the air. The movement demonstrated that the masses were gearing up for the next stage of the struggle. It was at Calcutta that the Congress met in December 1928. To conciliate the left wing it was announced that Jawaharlal would be the President of the next session in 1929. Thus Jawaharlal Nehru, son of Motilal Nehru, who presided over Congress in 1928, succeeded his father.

Lahore Congress Session-Poorna Swaraj

Lahore session of the Congress has a special significance in the history of the freedom movement. It was at the Lahore session that the Congress declared that the objective of the Congress was the attainment of complete independence. On 31 December 1929 the tricolour flag of freedom was hoisted at Lahore. It was also decided that 26 January would be celebrated as the Independence day every year.

It was also announced that civil disobedience would be started under the leadership of Gandhi

Dandi March

As a part of the movement Gandhi announced the 'Dandi March'. It was a protest against the unjust tax on salt, which is used by all. But the colonial government was taxing it and had a near monopoly over it. The Dandi March was to cover 375 kms from Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi on the Gujarat coast. Joined by a chosen band of 78 followers from all regions and social groups, after informing the colonial government in advance, Gandhi set out on the march and reached Dandi on the 25th day i.e. 6 April 1930. Throughout the period of the march the press covered the event in such a way that it had caught the attention of the entire world. He broke the salt law by picking up a fist full of salt. It was symbolic of the refusal of Indians to be under the repressive colonial government and its unjust laws.

Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha

In Tamilnadu, a salt march was led by Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) to Vedaranyam. Vedaranyam, situated 150 miles from Tiruchirapalli from where march started was an obscure coastal village in Thanjavur district. Rajaji had just been elected president of the Tamilnadu Congress. The march started on 13th April and reached Vedaranyam on 28th April 1930.

The Thajavur collector J.A Thorne had warned the public of severe action if the marchers were harboured. But the Satyagrahis were warmly welcomed and provided with food and shelter. Those who dared to offer food and shelter were severely dealt with. The Satyagrahis marched via Kumbakonam, Semmangudi, Thiruthuraipoondi where they were given good reception.

The Vedaranyam movement stirred the masses in south India and awakened them to the colonial oppression and the need to join the struggle.



The Round Table Conferences

The Simon Commission had submitted the report to the government. The Congress, Muslim league and Hindu Mahasabha had boycotted it. The British regime went ahead with the consideration of the report. But in the absence of consultations with Indian leaders it would have been useless. In order to secure some legitimacy and credibility to the report, the government announced that it would convene a Round Table Conference (RTC) in London with leaders of different shades of Indian opinion. But the Congress decided to boycott it, on the issue of granting independence. Everyone knew, more so the government, that it would be an exercise in futility if the Congress did not participate.

Thus negotiations with Congress were started and the Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed on March 5, 1931. It marked the end of civil disobedience in India. The movement had generated worldwide publicity, and Viceroy Irwin was looking for a way to end it. Gandhi was released from custody in January 1931, and the two men began negotiating the terms of the pact. In the end, Gandhi pledged to give up the *satyagraha* campaign, and Irwin agreed to release tens of thousands of Indians who had been jailed during the movement.

That year Gandhi attended the Second Round Table Conference in London as the sole representative of the Congress. The government agreed to allow people to make salt for their consumption, release political prisoners who had not indulged in violence, and permitted the picketing of liquor and foreign cloth shops. The Karachi Congress ratified the Gandhi-Irwin pact. However the Viceroy refused to commute the death sentence of Bhagat Singh and his comrades.

Gandhi attended the Second RTC but the government was adamant and declined to concede his demands. He returned empty handed and the Congress resolved on renewing the civil disobedience movement. The economic depression had worsened the condition of the people in general and of the peasants in particular. There were peasant protests all over the country. The leftists were in the forefront of the struggles of the workers and peasants. The government was determined to crush the movement. All key leaders including Nehru, Khan Abdul Gafar Khan and finally Gandhi were all arrested. The Congress was banned. Special laws were enacted to crush the agitations. Over a lakh of protesters were arrested and literature relating to nationalism was also declared illegal and confiscated. It was a reign of terror that was unleashed on the unarmed masses participating in the movement.

The movement started waning and it was officially suspended in May 1933 and withdrawn in May 1934.

Emergence of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the Separate Electorates

Dr. Ambedkar came to the centre stage of the struggles of the oppressed world in the 1920's. Born in the then so-called "untouchable" caste called Mahar in Central India as the

son of an army man, he was a brilliant student and was the first to matriculate from his community.

Ambedkar's Academic Accomplishments

Ambedkar joined the Elphinston College, with the help of a scholarship and graduated in 1912. With the help of a scholarship from the Maharaja of Barona he went to United States and secured a post-graduate degree, and doctorate, from the Columbia University. Then he went to London to study law and economics.

Ambedkar's brilliance caught the attention of many. Already in 1916, he had participated in an international conference of Anthropology and presented a research paper on 'Castes in India', which was published later in the *Indian Antiquary*. The British government which was searching for talents among the downtrodden of India invited him to interact with the Southborough or the Franchise Committee which was collecting evidence on the quantum and qualifications to be fixed for the Indian voters.

It was in these interactions that Ambedkar first spoke about separate electorates. He argued the untouchables be given separate electorates and reserved seats. Under this scheme only untouchables could vote in the constituencies reserved for them. Ambedkar felt that if any untouchable candidate contesting elections were to depend on non-untouchable voters he or she would be more obliged to the latter and would not therefore be in a position to work at freely for the good of the untouchables. If only untouchable voters were to vote and elect in the reserved seats, those elected would be their real representatives.

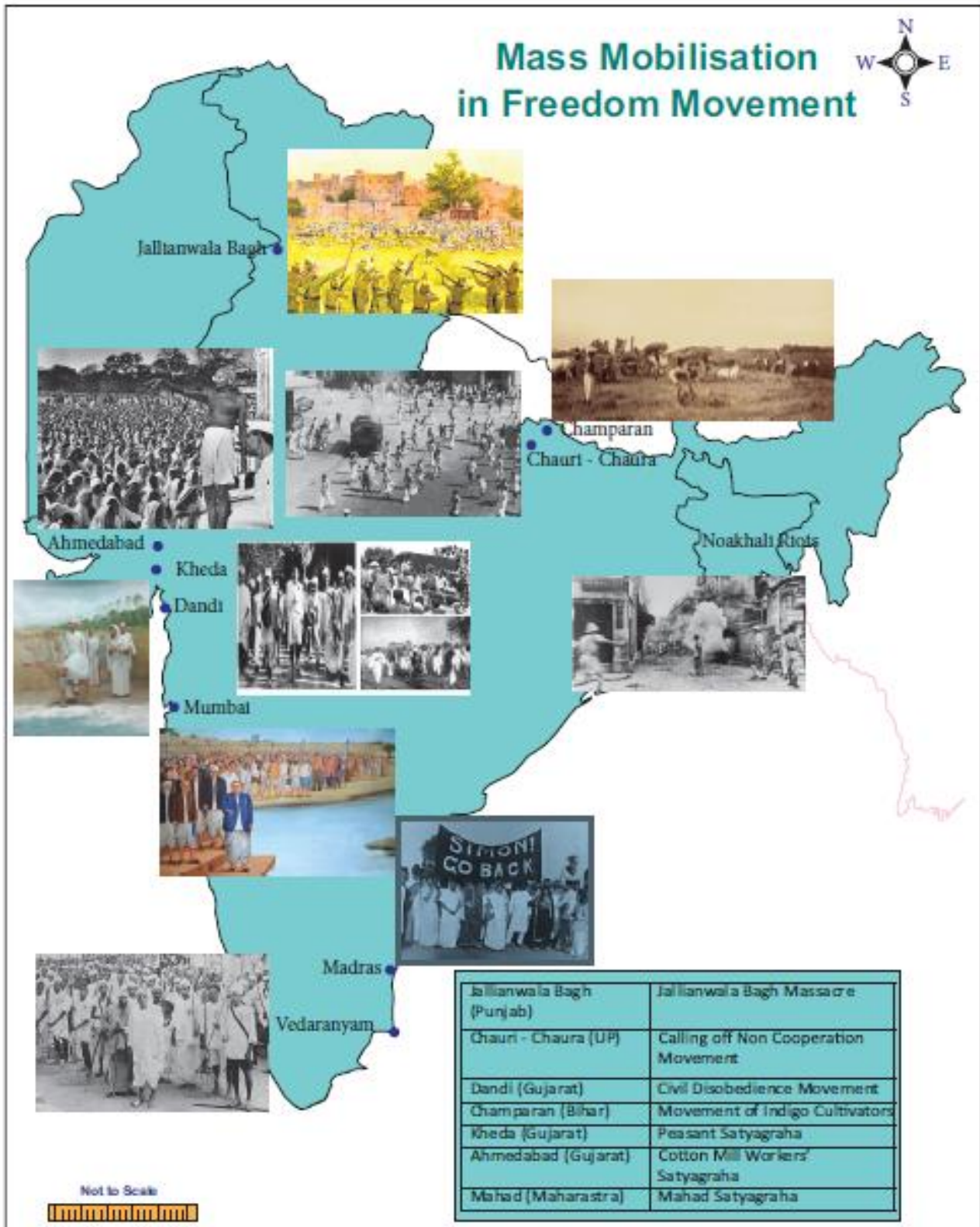
Ambedkar's Activism

Ambedkar launched news journals and organizations. Mook Nayak (leader of the dumb) was the journal to articulate his views and the Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha (Association for the welfare of excluded) spearheaded his activities. As a member of the Bombay legislative council he worked tirelessly to secure removal of disabilities imposed on untouchables. He launched the 'Mahad Satyagraha' to establish the civic right of the untouchables to public tanks and wells. Ambedkar's intellectual and public activities drew the attention of all concerned. His intellectual attacks were directed against leaders of the Indian National Congress and the colonial bureaucracy. In the meanwhile the struggle for freedom under Congress and Gandhi's leadership had reached a decisive phase with their declaration that their objective was to fight for complete independence or 'Purna Swaraj'

Ambedkar on Separate Electorate for "Untouchables"

Ambedkar was concerned about the future of "untouchables" and the oppressed in an independent India which was certain to be under the control of Congress under the hegemony of the caste Hindus. He renewed his demand for separate electorates, be it before the All-Parties conference or the Simon commission or at the Round Table Conference. The Congress and Gandhi were worried that separate electorates for untouchables would further weaken the national movement, as separate electorates to Muslims, Anglo Indians and other

special interests had helped the British to successfully pursue its divide and rule policy. Gandhi feared that the separation of untouchables from other Hindus politically would also have its social impact.



Communal Award

A meeting between Gandhi and Ambedkar on this issue of separate electorates before they went to London to attend the Second Round Table Conference ended in failure. There was an encounter between the two again in the RTC about the same issue. It ended in a deadlock and finally the issue was left to be arbitrated by the British Prime Minister Ramsay McDonald. The British government announced in August 1932 what came to be known as the Communal Award. Ambedkar's demands for separate electorates with reserved seats were conceded.

Poona Pact

Gandhi was deeply upset. He declared that he would resist separate electorates to untouchables 'with his life'. He went on a fast unto death in the Yervada jail where he was imprisoned. There was enormous pressure on Ambedkar to save Gandhi's life. Consultations, confabulations, meetings, prayers were held all over and ultimately after a meeting with Gandhi in the jail, the communal award was modified. The new agreement, between Ambedkar and Gandhians, called the 'Poona Pact' was signed.

The Poona Pact took away separate electorates but guaranteed reserved seats for the untouchables. The provision of reserved seats was incorporated in the constitutional changes which were made. It was also built into the Constitution of independent India.

Ambedkar and Party Politics

Ambedkar launched two political parties. The first one was the Independent Labour party in 1937 and the second Scheduled Caste Federation in 1942. The colonial government recognizing his struggles and also to balance its support base used the services of Ambedkar. Thus he was made a member of the Defence Advisory Committee in 1942, and a few months later, a minister in the Viceroy's cabinet.

The crowning recognition of his services to the nation was electing him as the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the independent India's Constitution. After independence Ambedkar was invited to be a member of the Nehru cabinet.

5.Period of radicalism in Anti-imperialist Struggles

Introduction

The influence of the Left-wing in the Indian National Congress and consequently on the struggle for independence was felt in a significant manner from the late 1920s. The Communist Party of India (CPI) was formed, by M.N. Roy, Abani Mukherji, M.P.T. Acharya, Mohammad Ali and Mohammad Shafiq, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan then in the Soviet Union in October 1920. This opened a new radical era in the anti-imperialist struggles in India.

Even though there were many radical groups functioning in India earlier the presence of a Communist state in the form of USSR greatly alarmed the British in India. The first batch of radicals reached Peshawar on 3 June 1921. They were arrested immediately under the charges of being Bolshevik (Russian communist agents) coming to India to create troubles. A series of five conspiracy cases were instituted against them between the years 1922 and 1927. The first of these was the Peshawar Conspiracy case. This was followed by the Kanpur (Bolshevik) Conspiracy case in (1924) and the most famous, the Meerut Conspiracy case (1929). Meanwhile, the CPI was formally founded on Indian soil in 1925 in Bombay.

Various revolutionary groups were functioning then in British India, adopting socialist ideas but were not communist parties. Two revolutionaries - Bhagat Singh of the Hindustan Revolutionary Socialist Association and Kalpana Dutt of the Indian Republican Army that organised repeated raids on the Chittagong Armoury in Bengal will be the focus of the next section. The Karachi Session of the INC and its famous resolutions especially on Fundamental Rights and Duties is dealt with next. The last two topics are about the world-wide economic depression popularly known as Great Depression and its impact on India and Tamil Society and the Industrial Development registered in India in its aftermath. The Great Depression dealt a severe blow to the labour force and peasants and consequently influenced the struggle for independence in a significant way.

Kanpur Conspiracy Case, 1924

The colonial administrators did not take the spread of communist ideas lightly. Radicalism spread across the British Provinces - Bombay, Calcutta and Madras - and industrial centres like Kanpur in United Province (UP) and cities like Lahore where factories had come up quite early. As a result, trade unions emerged in the jute and cotton textile industries, the railway companies across the country and among workers in the various municipal bodies. In order to curb the radicalisation of politics, especially to check what was then called Bolshevism, repressive measures were adopted by the British administration. The Kanpur Conspiracy case of 1924 was one such move. Those charged with the conspiracy were communists and trade unionists.

The accused were arrested spread over a period of six months. Eight of them were charged under Section 121-A of the Indian Penal Code - 'to deprive the King Emperor of his sovereignty of British India, by complete separation of India from imperialistic Britain by a

violent revolution', and sent to various jails. The case came before Sessions Judge H.E. Holmes who had earned notoriety while serving as Sessions Judge of Gorakhpur for awarding death sentence to 172 peasants for their involvement in the Chauri Chaura case. In the Kanpur Conspiracy case, Muzaffar Ahmed, Shaukat Usmani, Nalini Gupta and S. A. Dange were sent to jail, for four years of rigorous imprisonment. The trial and the imprisonment, meanwhile, led to some awareness about the communist activities in India. A Communist Defence Committee was formed in British India to raise funds and engage lawyers for the defence of the accused. Apart from these, the native press in India reported the court proceedings extensively.

The trial in the conspiracy case and the imprisonment of some of the leaders rather than kill the spirit of the radicals gave a fillip to communist activities. In December 1925, a Communist Conference of different communist groups, from all over India, was held. Singaravelu Chettiar from Tamil Nadu took part in this conference. It was from there that the Communist Party of India was established, formally, with Bombay as its Headquarters.

13 persons were originally accused in the Kanpur case: (1) M.N. Roy, (2) Muzaffar Ahmad, (3) Shaukat Usmani, (4) Ghulam Hussain, (5) S.A. Dange, (6) M. Singaravelu, (7) R.L. Sharma, (8) Nalini Gupta, (9) Shamuddin Hassan, (10) M.R.S Velayudhun, (11) Doctor Manilal, (12) Sampurnananda, (13) Satyabhakta. 8 persons were charge-sheeted: M.N. Roy, Muzaffar Ahmad, S.A. Dange, Nalini Gupta, Ghulam Hussain, Singaravelu, Shaukat Usmani, and R.L. Sharma. Ghulam Hussain turned an approver. M.N. Roy and R.L. Sharma were charged in absentia as they were in Germany and Pondicherry (a French Territory) respectively. Singaravelu was released on bail due to his ill health. Finally the list got reduced to four.

M. Singaravelu (18 February 1860 – 11 February 1946), was born in Madras. He was an early Buddhist, and like many other communist leaders, he was also associated with Indian National Congress initially. However, after sometime he chose a radical path. Along with Thiru. V. Kalyanasundaram, he organised many trade unions in South India. On 1 May 1923, he organised the first ever celebration of May Day in the country. He was one of the main organisers of the strike in South Indian Railways (Golden Rock, Tiruchirappalli) in 1928 and was prosecuted for that.

Meerut Conspiracy Case, 1929 Communist Activities

The Meerut Conspiracy Case of 1929, was, perhaps, the most famous of all the communist conspiracy cases instituted by the British Government. The late 1920s witnessed a number of labour upsurges and this period of unrest extended into the decade of the Great Depression (1929–1939). Trade unionism spread over to many urban centres and organised labour strikes. The communists played a prominent role in organising the working class throughout this period. The Kharagpur Railway workshop strikes in February and September 1927, the Liluah Rail workshop strike between January and July 1928, the Calcutta scavengers' strike in 1928, the several strikes in the jute mills in Bengal during July-August

1929, the strike at the Golden Rock workshop of the South Indian Railway, Tiruchirappalli, in July 1928, the textile workers' strike in Bombay in April 1928 are some of the strikes that deserve mention.

Government Repression

Alarmed by this wave of strikes and the spread of communist activities, the British Government brought two draconian Acts - the Trade Disputes Act, 1928 and the Public Safety Bill, 1928. These Acts armed the government with powers to curtail civil liberties in general and suppress the trade union activities in particular. The government was worried about the strong communist influence among the workers and peasants.

Determined to wipe out the radical movement, the government resorted to several repressive measures. They arrested 32 leading activists of the Communist Party, from different parts of British India like Bombay, Calcutta, Punjab, Poona and United Provinces. Most of them were trade union activists though not all of them were members of the Communist Party of India. At least eight of them belonged to the Indian National Congress. The arrested also included three British communists-Philip Spratt, Ban Bradley and Lester Hutchinson - who had been sent by the Communist Party of Great Britain to help build the party in India. Like those arrested in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case they were charged under Section 121A of the Indian Penal Code. All the 32 leaders arrested were brought to Meerut (in United Province then) and jailed. A good deal of documents that the colonial administration described as 'subversive material,' like books, letters, and pamphlets were seized and produced as evidence against the accused.

The British government conceived of conducting the trial in Meerut (and not, for instance in Bombay from where a large chunk of the accused hailed) so that they could get away with the obligations of a jury trial. They feared a jury trial could create sympathy for the accused.

Trial and Punishment

Meanwhile, a National Meerut Prisoners' Defence Committee was formed to coordinate defence in the case. Famous Indian lawyers like K.F. Nariman and M.C. Chagla appeared in the court on behalf of the accused. Even national leaders like Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru visited the accused in jail. All these show the importance of the case in the history of our freedom struggle.

The Sessions Court in Meerut awarded stringent sentences on 16 January 1933, four years after the arrests in 1929. 27 were convicted and sentenced to various duration of transportation. During the trial, the Communists made use of their defence as a platform for propaganda by making political statements. These were reported widely in the newspapers and thus lakhs of people came to know about the communist ideology and the communist activities in India. There were agitations against the conviction. That three British nationals were also accused in the case, the case became known internationally too. Most importantly, even Romain Rolland and Albert Einstein raised their voice in support of the convicted.

Under the national and international pressure, on appeal, the sentences were considerably reduced in July 1933.

Bhagat Singh and Kalpana Dutt

Bhagat Singh's Background

Bhagat Singh represented a distinct strand of nationalism. His radical strand complemented, in a unique way, to the overall ideals of the freedom movement.

Bhagat Singh was born to Kishan Singh (father) and Vidyavati Kaur (mother) on 28 September 1907 in Jaranwala, Lyallpur district, Punjab, now a part of Pakistan. His father was a liberal and his family was a family of freedom fighters. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre happened when Bhagat Singh was 14 years. Early in his youth, he was associated with the Naujawan Bharat Sabha and the Hindustan Republican Association. The latter organisation was founded by Sachin Sanyal and Jogesh Chatterji. It was reorganised subsequently in September 1928 as the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (H.S.R.A) by Bhagat Singh and his comrades. Socialist ideals and the October Revolution in Russia of 1917 were large influences on these revolutionaries. Bhagat Singh was one of the leaders of the H.S.R.A along with Chandrashekhar Azad, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar.

"I began to study. My previous faith and convictions underwent a remarkable modification. The romance of the violent methods alone which was so prominent among our predecessors was replaced by serious ideas. No more mysticism, no more blind faith. Realism became our cult. Use of force justifiable when resorted to as a matter of terrible necessity: non-violence as a policy indispensable for all mass movements. So much about methods. The most important thing was the clear conception of the ideal for which we were to fight..... from Bhagat Singh's "Why I am an Atheist".

Bhagat Singh's Bomb Throwing

The image that comes to our mind at the very mention of Bhagat Singh's name is that of the bomb he threw in the Central Legislative Assembly on April 8, 1929. The bombs did not kill anybody. It was intended as a demonstrative action, an act of protest against the draconian laws of the British. They chose the day on which the Trade Disputes Bill, an anti-labour legislation was introduced in the assembly.

Lahore Conspiracy Case

Bhagat Singh along with Rajguru, Sukhdev, Jatindra Nath Das and 21 others were arrested and tried for the murder of Saunders (the case was known as the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case). Jatindra Nath Das died in the jail after 64 days of hunger strike against the discriminatory practices and poor conditions in jail. The verdict in the bomb throwing case had been suspended until the trial of Lahore Conspiracy trials was over. It was in this case that Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were sentenced to death on 7 October 1930.

A letter from them to the Governor of Punjab shows their courage and their optimism over the future of India even while facing death for the cause of freedom of their country. It says, 'the days of capitalism and imperialism are numbered. The war neither began with us nor is going to end with our lives... According to the verdict of your court we had waged a war and we are therefore war prisoners. And we claim to be treated as such i.e., we claim to be shot dead instead of being hanged.'

Some narratives describe Bhagat Singh and his fellow patriots as terrorists. This is a misconception. The legendary Bhagat Singh clarified how his group is different from the terrorists. He said, during his trial, that revolution is not just the cult of bomb and pistol... Revolution is the inalienable right of mankind. Freedom is the imperishable birth-right of all. The labourer is the real sustainer of society.. To the altar of this revolution we have brought our youth as incense, for no sacrifice is too great for so magnificent a cause.' Symbolically, they also shouted Inquilab Zindabad after this defence statement of his in the court.

Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were hanged early in the morning of March 23, 1931 in the Lahore Jail. They faced the gallows with courage, shouting Inquilab Zindabad and Down with British Imperialism until their last breath. The history of freedom struggle is incomplete without the revolutionary strand of nationalism and the ultimate sacrifice of these revolutionaries. One more name in the list of such fighters is Kalpana Dutt.

Kalpana Dutt (1913–1995)

In the late 1920s a young woman, Kalpana Dutt (known as Kalpana Joshi after her marriage to the communist leader P.C. Joshi), fired the patriotic imagination of young people by her daring raid of the Chittagong armoury.

To understand the heroism of Kalpana Dutt, you should understand the revolutionary strand of nationalism that attracted women like her to these ideals. You have already learnt that there existed many revolutionary groups in British India. The character of these organisations gradually changed from being ones that practiced individual annihilation to organising collective actions aimed at larger changes in the system.

As Surya Sen, the revolutionary leader of Chittagong armoury raid, told Ananda Gupta, 'a dedicated band of youth must show the path of organised armed struggle in place of individual action. Most of us will have to die in the process but our sacrifice for such noble cause will not go in vain.' When revolutionary groups like the Yugantar and the Anushilan Samiti began stagnating in the mid-1920s, new groups sprang out of them. Among them, the most important group was the one led by Surya Sen, a school teacher by profession, in Bengal. He had actively participated in the Non-cooperation movement and wore Khadi. His group was closely working with the Chittagong unit of the Indian National Congress.

The H.S.R.A was a renewed chapter of the Hindustan Republican Association. Its aim was the overthrow of the capitalist and imperialist government and establish a socialist society through a revolution. The H.S.R.A involved a number of actions such as the murder of Saunders in Lahore. In that, Saunders was mistaken for the Superintendent of Police, Lahore, James A. Scott who was responsible for seriously assaulting Lajpat Rai, in December 1928, and Rai's subsequent death. They also made an attempt to blow up the train in which Lord Irwin (Governor General and Viceroy of India, 1926-1931) was travelling, in December 1929, and a large number of such actions in Punjab and UP in 1930.

Chittagong Armoury Raid

Surya Sen's revolutionary group, the Indian Republican Army, was named after the Irish Republican Army. They planned a rebellion to occupy Chittagong in a guerrilla-style operation. The Chittagong armouries were raided on the night of 18 April 1930. Simultaneous attacks were launched on telegraph offices, the armoury and the police barracks to cut off all communication networks including the railways to isolate the region. It was aimed at challenging the colonial administration directly.

The revolutionaries hoisted the national flag and symbolically shouted slogans such as Bande Matram and Inquilab Zindabad. The raids and the resistance continued for the next three years. Often, they operated from the villages and the villagers, gave food and shelter to the revolutionaries and suffered greatly at the hands of police for this. Due to the continuous nature of the actions, there was an Armoury Raid Supplementary Trial too. It took three years to arrest Surya Sen, in February 1933, and eleven months before he was sent to the gallows on 12 January 1934. Kalpana Dutt was among those who participated in the raids.

On 13 June 1932 in a face-to-face battle against government forces, two of the absconders of the Armoury Raid were killed, while they in turn killed Capt. Cameron, Commander of the government forces in the village of Dhalghat in the house of a poor Brahmin widow, Savitri Debi. After the incident the widow was arrested together with her children. Despite many offers and temptations, not a word could the police get out of the widow. They were uneducated and poor, yet they resisted all the temptation offers of gold and unflinchingly could bear all the tortures that were inflicted upon them.

– From Kalpana Dutt's autobiography Chittagong Armoury Raiders' Reminiscences.

Women in Action

While Bhagat Singh represented young men who dedicated their lives to the freedom of the country, Kalpana Dutt represented the young women who defied the existing patriarchal set up and took to arms for the liberation of their motherland. Not only did they act as messengers (as elsewhere) but they also participated in direct actions, fought along with men, carrying guns.

Kalpana Dutt's active participation in the revolutionary Chittagong movement led to her arrest. Tried along with Surya Sen, Kalpana was sentenced to transportation for life. The charge was "waging war against the King Emperor." As all their activities started with the raid on the Armoury, the trial came to be known as the Chittagong Armoury Raid Trial.

Kalpana Dutt recalls in her book *Chittagong Armoury Raiders Reminiscences* the revolutionary youth of Chittagong wanted “to inspire self-confidence by demonstrating that even without outside help it was possible to fight the Government.

Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress, 1931

The Indian National Congress, in contrast to the violent actions of revolutionaries, mobilised the masses for non-violent struggles. The Congress under the leadership of Gandhi gave priority to the problems of peasants. In the context of great agrarian distress, deepened by world-wide economic depression, the Congress mobilised the peasantry. The Congress adopted a no-rent and no-tax campaign as a part of its civil disobedience programme. Under the pressure of Great Depression, socio-economic demands were sharply articulated in its Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress.

The freedom struggle was taking a new shape. Peasants organised themselves into Kisan Sabhas and industrial workers were organized by the trade unions, made their presence felt in a big way in the freedom struggle. The Indian National Congress had become a mass party during the 1930s. The Congress leadership, which was now taking a left turn under Nehru’s leadership, began to talk about an egalitarian society based on social and economic justice.

The Karachi session held in March 1931, presided over by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, adopted a resolution on Fundamental Rights and Duties and provided an insight into what the economic policy of an independent India. In some ways, it was the manifesto of the Indian National Congress for independent India. These rights and the social and economic programmes were derived from a firm conviction that political freedom and economic freedom were inseparable.

Even a cursory look at the fundamental rights resolution will tell you that all the basic rights that the British denied to the Indians found a prominent place in the Resolution. The colonial government curtailed civil liberties and freedom by passing draconian acts and ordinances. Gandhian ideals and Nehru’s socialist vision also found a place in the list of rights that the Indian National Congress promised to ensure in free India.

The existing social relations, especially the caste system and the practice of untouchability, were also challenged with a promise to ensure equal access to public places and institutions.

The Fundamental Rights, in fact, found a place in the Part III of the Constitution of India- Fundamental Rights - and some of them went into Part IV, the Directive Principles of the State policy. You will study more on these in unit 13 of the second volume in the discussion on the Constitution of India.

The Great Depression and its Impact on India

The Great Depression was a severe and prolonged economic crisis which lasted for about a decade from 1929. The slowdown of the economic activities, especially industrial production, led to crises like lockouts, wage cut, unemployment and starvation. It began in North America and affected Europe and all the industrial centres in the world. As the world was integrated by the colonial order in its economic sphere, developments in one part of the world affected other parts as well.

The crash in the Wall Street (where the American Stock Exchange was located) triggered an economic depression of great magnitude. The Depression hit India too. British colonialism aggravated the situation in India. Depression affected both industrial and agrarian sectors. Labour unrest broke out in industrial centres such as Bombay, Calcutta, Kanpur, United Province and Madras against wage cuts, lay-offs and for the betterment of living conditions. In the agriculture sector, prices of the agricultural products, which depended on export markets like jute and raw cotton fell steeply. The depression brought down the value of Indian exports from Rs. 311 crores in 1929–1930 to Rs 132 crores in 1932–33. Therefore, the 1930s witnessed the emergence of the Kisan Sabhas which fought for rent reduction, relief from debt traps and even for the abolition of Zamindari.

The only positive impact was on the Indian industrial sector that could use the availability of land at reduced prices and labour at cheap wage rates. The weakening ties with Britain and other capitalist countries created a condition where growth was recorded in some of the Indian industries. Yet only the industries which fed the local consumption thrived.

Industrial Development in India

The British trade policy took a heavy toll on the indigenous industry. Industrialization of India was not part of British policy. Like other colonies, India was treated as a raw material procurement area and a market for their finished goods.

Despite this, industrial expansion took place in India, because of certain unforeseen circumstances, first during the course of the First World War and then during the Great Depression.

The first Indian to start a cotton mill was Cowasjee Nanabhoy Davar (1815–73), a Parsi, in Bombay in 1854. This was known as the Bombay Spinning and Weaving Company. The city's leading traders, mostly Parsis, contributed to this endeavour. The American Civil War (1861–65) was a boon to the cotton farmers. But after the Civil War when Britain continued to import cotton from America, Indian cotton cultivators came to grief. But Europeans started textile mills in India, taking advantage of the cheapness of cotton available. Ahmedabad textiles mills were established by Indian entrepreneurs and both Ahmedabad and Bombay became prominent centres of cotton mills. By 1914, there were 129 spinning, weaving and other cotton mills within Bombay presidency. Between 1875–76 and 1913–14, the number of cotton textile mills in India increased from 47 to 271.

An important landmark in the establishment of industries in India was the expansion of the railways system in India. The first passenger train ran in 1853, connecting Bombay with Thane. By the first decade of the twentieth century, railways was the biggest engineering industry in India. This British-managed industry, run by railway companies, employed 98,723 persons in 1911. The advent of railways and other means of transport and communication facilities helped the development of various industries.

Jute was yet another industry that picked up in India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The first jute mill in Calcutta was founded in 1855. The growth of jute industry was so rapid and by 1914, there were 64 mills in Calcutta Presidency. However, unlike the Bombay textile industry, these mills were owned by Europeans. Though the industrial development in the nineteenth century was mainly confined to very limited sectors like cotton, jute, etc., efforts were made to diversify the sectors. For example, the Bengal Coal Company was set up in 1843 in Raiganj by Dwarkanath Tagore (1794–1847), grandfather of Rabindranath Tagore. The coal industry picked up after 1892 and its growth peaked during First World War years.

It was in the early twentieth century, industries in India began to diversify. The first major steel industry – Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) – was set up by the Tatas in 1907 as a part of swadeshi effort in Sakchi, Bihar. Prior to this, a group of Europeans had attempted in 1875 to found the Bengal Iron Company. Following this, the Bengal Iron and Steel Company was set up in 1889. However, TISCO made a huge headway than the other endeavours in this sector. Its production increased from 31,000 tons in 1912–13 to 1,81,000 tons in 1917–18.

The First World War gave a landmark break to the industrialisation of the country. For the first time, Britain's strategic position in the East was challenged by Japan. The traditional trade routes were vulnerable to attack. To meet the requirements, development of industries in India became necessary. Hence, Britain loosened its grip and granted some concessions to the Indian capitalists. Comparative relaxation of control by the British government and the expansion of domestic market due to the War, facilitated the process of industrialisation. For the first time, an industrial commission was appointed in 1916. During the war-period, the cotton and jute industries showed much growth. Steel industry was yet another sector marked by substantial growth.

Other industries showing progress were paper, chemicals, cement, fertilisers, tanning, etc. The first Indian owned paper mill – Couper Paper Mill – was set up in 1882 in Lucknow. Following this, Itaghur Paper Mill and Bengal Paper Mill, both owned by Europeans, were established. Cement manufacturing began in 1904 in Madras with the establishment of South Indian Industries Ltd. Tanning industry began in the late nineteenth century and a government leather factory was set up in 1860 in Kanpur. The first Indian-owned National Tannery was established in 1905 in Calcutta. The gold mining in Kolar also started in the late nineteenth century in the Kolar mining field, Mysore.

The inter-war period registered growth in manufacturing industries. Interestingly the growth rate was far better than Britain and even better than the world average. After a short

slug in 1923–24, the output of textile industry began to pick up. During the interwar period, the number of looms and spindles increased considerably.

In 1929–30, 44 per cent of the total amount of cotton piece goods consumed in India came from outside, but by 1933–34, after the Great Depression, the proportion had fallen to 20.5 percent. Other two industries which registered impressive growth were sugar and cement. The Interwar years saw a growth in the shipping industry too. The Scindia Steam Navigation Company Limited (1919) was the pioneer. In 1939, they even took over the Bombay Steam Navigation Company Ltd., a British concern. Eight Indian concerns were operational in this sector. A new phase of production began with the Second World War, which led to the extension of manufacturing industries to machineries, aircrafts, locomotives, and so on

Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, popularly known as J. N. Tata (1839– 1904), came from a Parsi (Zoroastrian) business family in Navsari, Baroda. The first successful Indian entrepreneur, he is called the father of the Indian modern industry. In order to help his father’s business, he travelled all over the world and this exposure helped him in his future endeavours. His trading company, established in 1868, evolved into the Tata Group. A nationalist, he called one of the mills established in Kurla, Bombay “Swadeshi”. His children Dorabji Tata and Ratanji Tata followed his dream and it was Dorabji Tata who finally realised the long term dream of his father to establish an iron and steel company in 1907. His enthusiasm was such that he spent two years in US to learn from the American Iron Industrialists. His yet another dream to set up a hydroelectric company did not materialize during his life time. However, the first major Hydroelectric project – Tata Hydroelectric Company–was set up in 1910. With great foresight the Tatas founded the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

Industrial Development in Tamilnadu during the Depression

The industrial growth in the Madras Presidency was substantial. In Coimbatore, after Stanes Mill (Coimbatore Spinning and Weaving Mills) was established in 1896, no other mill could come up. The objective conditions created by the Depression like fall in prices of land, cheapness of labour and low interest rates led to the expansion of textile industry in Coimbatore. Twenty nine mills and ginning factories were floated in the Coimbatore area during 1929-37. A cement factory started at Madukkarai in Coimbatore district in 1932 gave fillip to the cement industry in the state. The number of sugar factories in the province rose from two to eleven between 1931 and 1936. There were also proliferation of rice mills, oil mills and cinema enterprise during this period.

6. Religion in Nationalist Politics

Introduction

Before the establishment of British Raj, Mughals and their agents had ruled large parts of the country. Large sections of the Muslims therefore enjoyed the advantages of being the co-religionists of the ruling class many of whom were sovereigns, landlords, the generals and officials. The official and court language was Persian. When the British gradually replaced them they introduced a new system of administration. By the mid-nineteenth century English education predominated. The 1857 rebellion was the last gasp of the earlier ruling class. Following the brutal suppression of the revolt, the Muslims lost everything, their land, their job and other opportunities and were reduced to the state of penury. Unable to reconcile to the condition to which they were reduced, the Muslims retreated into a shell. And for the first few generations after 1857 they hated everything British. Besides they resented competing with the Hindus who had taken recourse to the new avenues opened by colonialism. With the emergence of Indian nationalism especially among the educated Hindu upper castes, the British saw in the Muslim middle class a force to keep the Congress in check. They cleverly exploited the situation for the promotion of their own interests. The competing three strands of nationalism namely Indiannationalism, Hindu nationalism, and Muslim nationalism are dealt with in this lesson.

Origin and Growth of Communalism in British India

(a) Hindu Revivalism

Some of the early nationalists believed that nationalism could be built only on a Hindu foundation. As pointed out by Sarvepalli Gopal, Hindu revivalism found its voice in politics through the Arya Samaj, founded in 1875, with its assertion of superior qualities of Hinduism. The organization of cow protection leagues in large parts of North India in the late nineteenth century gave a fillip to Hindu communalism. The effort of organizations such as Arya Samaj was strengthened by the Theosophical movement led by Annie Besant from 1891. Besant identified herself with Hindu nationalists and expressed her ideas as follows: 'The Indian work is first of all the revival, strengthening and uplifting of ancient religions. This has brought with it a new self-respect, a pride in the past, a belief in the future and as an inevitable result, a great wave of patriotic life, the beginning of the rebuilding of a nation.'

(b) Rise of Muslims Consciousness

Islam on the other hand, to quote Sarvepalli Gopal again, was securing its articulation through the Aligarh movement. The British, by building the Aligarh college and backing Syed Ahmed Khan, had assisted the birth of a Muslim national party and Muslim political ideology. The Wahabi movement had also created cleavage in Hindu-Muslim relations. The Wahabis wanted to take Islam to its pristine purity and to end the superstition which according to them had sapped its vitality. From the Wahabis to the Khilafatists, grassroots activism played a significant role in the politicization of Muslims.

Muslim consciousness developed due to other reasons as well. The Bengal government's order in the 1870s to replace Urdu by Hindi, and the Perso-Arabic script by Nagri script in the courts and offices created apprehension in the minds of the Muslim professional group.

(c) Divide and Rule Policy of British

The object of the British was to check the development of a composite Indian identity, and to forestall attempts at consolidation and unification of Indians. The British imperialism followed the policy of Divide and Rule. Bombay Governor Elphinstone wrote, 'Divide at Impera was the old Roman motto and it should be ours.' The British government lent legitimacy and prestige to communal ideology and politics despite the governance challenge that communal riots posed. The consequence of such sectarian approaches by all parties led to increasing animosity between Hindus and Muslims in northern India which had its fall out in other parts of India as well. The last decades of the nineteenth century was marked by a number of Hindu-Muslim riots. Even in south India, there was a major riot in Salem in July-August 1882.

(d) Cow Slaughter and Communal Riots

In July 1893, a dispute arose between Hindus and Muslims in Azamgarh district in the North-West Provinces. The riots that followed spread over a vast area, encompassing the United Provinces, Bihar, Gujarat and Bombay, claiming over a hundred lives. Gaurakshini Sabhas (cow protection leagues) were becoming more militant and there were reports of forcible interference with the sale or slaughter of cows. The riots over cow-slaughter became frequent after 1893 and 15 major riots of this type brokeout in the Punjab alone between 1883 and 1891. Cow protectionists in the Punjab, the activities of Gaurakshini Sabhas in the Central Provinces, the campaigners for the recognition of Devanagiri as official language in courts and government offices in the United Provinces were also involved in the Congress organization.

(e) Failure of Congress and Government to combat Communalism

The Indian National Congress, despite its secular and nationalist claims was unable to prevent the involvement of its members in the activities of Hindu communal organisations. This was a major factor in the Muslim distrust of the Congress. Congressmen's participation in shuddhi and sangathan campaigns of the Arya Samaj further estranged Hindus and Muslims. The British government could have adopted measures to outlaw Cow Protection Associations or to arrest the rank communalists who were causing distrust among the people. But the British deliberately dodged the issue, as the identification of the Congressmen with revivalist and communal causes provoked anti-Congress feelings among Muslims in North India. The Secretary of State Hamilton considered the development a happy augury for he was earlier worried over the growing solidarity among various social and religious groups in the context of the foundation of the Indian National Congress.

'One hardly knows what to wish for, unity of ideas and action would be very dangerous politically; divergence of ideas and collision are administratively troublesome. Of the two, the latter is the least risky, though it throws anxiety and responsibility upon those on the spot where the friction exists.' - Hamilton to the Viceroy Elgin

(f) Moves of the Congress

Though many congress men had involvement in Hindu organisations like Arya Samaj, the Congress leadership was secular. When there was an attempt by some Congressmen to pass a resolution in the third session of the Indian National Congress, making cow killing a penal offence, the Congress leadership refused to entertain it. The Congress subsequently resolved that if any resolution affecting a particular class or community was objected to by the delegates representing that community, even though they were in minority, it would not be considered by the Congress.

(g) Role of Syed Ahmed Khan

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the founder of Aligarh movement was initially supportive of the Congress. Soon he was converted to the thinking that in a country governed by Hindus, Muslims would be helpless, as they would be in a minority. However, there were Muslim leaders like Badruddin Tyabji, Rahmatullah Sayani in Mumbai, Nawab Syed Mohammed Bahadur in Chennai and A. Rasul in Bengal who supported the Congress. But the majority of Muslims in north India toed the line of Syed Ahmed, and preferred to support the British. The introduction of representative institutions and of open competition to government posts gave rise to apprehensions amongst Muslims and prompted Syed and his followers to work for close collaboration with the Government. By collaborating with the Government Syed Ahmed Khan hoped to secure for his community a bigger share than otherwise would be due according to the principles of number or merit.

The foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was an attempt to narrow the Hindu-Muslim divide and place the genuine grievances of all the communities in the country before the British. But Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other Muslim leaders like Syed Ameer Ali, the first Indian to find a place in London Privy Council, projected the Congress as a representative body of only the Hindus. Of theseventy-two delegates attending the first session of the Congress only two were Muslims. Muslim leaders opposed the Congress tooth and nail on the plea that Muslims' participation in it would create an unfavourable reaction among the rulers against their community.

(h) Religion in Local Body Elections

Democratic politics had the unintended effect of fostering communal tendencies. Local administrative bodies in the 1880s provided the scope for pursuing communal politics. Municipal councillors acquired vast powers of patronage which were used to build-up one's political base. Hindus wresting the control of municipal boards from the Muslims and vice-versa led to communalisation of local politics.

Lal Chand, the principal spokesperson of the Punjab Hindu Sabha and later the leader of Arya Samaj, highlighted the extent to which some Municipalities were organised on communal lines: 'The members of the Committee arrange themselves in two rows, around the presidential chair. On the left are seated the representatives of the banner of Islam and on the right the descendants of old Rishis of Aryavarta. By this arrangement the members are constantly reminded that they are not simply Municipal Councillors, but they are as Muhammedans versus Hindus and vice-versa....'.

(i) Week-kneed Policy of the Congress

At the dawn of twentieth century, during the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal (1905-06), Muslim supporters of the Swadeshi movement were condemned as "Congress touts." The silence of the Congress and its refusal to deal with such elements frontally not only provided stimulus to communal politics but also demoralized and discouraged the nationalist Muslims. Hindu communalism had also gathered strength round this time. It derived its sustenance from the view that the history of Muslim rule in India was characterised by degradation of the Hindus through forcible conversion, imposition of jizya, strict application of the shariat and the destruction of the places of worship. History textbooks and literature based on the prejudiced views of British writers added fuel to such views.

Hindu and Muslim Communalism were products of middle class infighting utterly divorced from the consciousness of the Hindu and Muslim masses. — Jawaharlal Nehru

The situation took a turn for the worst in the first decade of the twentieth century when political radicalism went hand in hand with religious conservatism. Tilak, Aurobindo Gosh and Lala Lajpat Rai aroused anti-colonial consciousness by using religious symbols, festivals and platforms. The most aggravating factor was Tilak's effort to mobilise Hindus through the Ganapati festival. The Punjab Hindu Sabha founded in 1909 laid the foundation for Hindu communal ideology and politics. Lal Chand spared no efforts to condemn the Indian National Congress of pursuing a policy of appeasement towards Muslims.

Formation of All India Muslim League

On 1 October 1906, a 35-member delegation of the Muslim nobles, aristocrats, legal professionals and other elite sections of the community mostly associated with Aligarh movement gathered at Simla under the leadership of Aga Khan to present an address to Lord Minto, the viceroy. They demanded proportionate representation of Muslims in government jobs, appointment of Muslim judges in High Courts and members in Viceroy's council, etc. Though the Simla deputation failed to obtain any positive commitment from the Viceroy, it worked as a catalyst for the foundation of the All India Muslim League (AIML) to safeguard the interests of the Muslims in 1907. A group of big zamindars, erstwhile Nawabs and ex-bureaucrats became active members of this movement. The League supported the

partition of Bengal, demanded separate electorates for Muslims, and pressed for safeguards for Muslims in Government Service.

Objectives of All India Muslim League

The All India Muslim League, the first centrally organized political party exclusively for Muslims, had the following objectives:

To promote among the Muslims of India feelings of loyalty to the British Government, and remove any misconception that may arise as to the instruction of Government with regard to any of its measures.

To protect and advance the political rights and interests of Muslims of India, and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government.

To prevent the rise among the Muslims of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the aforementioned objects of the League.

Initially, AIML was an elitist organization of urbanized Muslims. However, the support of the British Government helped the League to become the sole representative body of Indian Muslims. Within three years of its formation, the AIML successfully achieved the status of separate electorates for the Muslims. It granted separate constitutional identity to the Muslims. The Lucknow Pact (1916) put an official seal on a separate political identity to Muslims.

Separate Electorate or Communal Electorate: Under this arrangement only Muslims could vote for the Muslim candidates. Minto-Morely Reforms, 1909 provided for eight seats to Muslims in the Imperial Legislative Council, out of the 27 non-officials to be elected. In the Legislative Council of the provinces seats reserved for the Muslim candidates were: Madras 4; Bombay 4; Bengal 5.

(a) Separate Electorates and the Spread of Communalism

The institution of separate electorate was the principle technique adopted by the Government of British India for fostering and spreading communalism. The people were split into separate constituencies so that they voted communally, thought communally, judged the representatives communally and expressed their grievances communally.

That the British did this with ulterior motive was evident from a note sent by one of the British officers to Lady Minto: 'I must send your Excellency a line to say that a very big thing has happened to-day. A work of statesmanship, that will affect Indian History for many a long year. It is nothing less than pulling of 62 million people from joining the ranks of seditious opposition.'

Communalism: Organising a religious group on the basis of its hostility towards the followers of other religions to fight even material issues. Communalism as an ideology or movement has been defined in various ways by various scholars. According to Nehru, communalism is one of the obvious examples of backward-looking people trying to hold on to something that is wholly out of place in the modern world and is essentially opposed to the concept of nationalism. According to another scholar, communalism denotes 'organised attempt of a group to bring about change in the face of resistance from other groups or the government through collective mobilisation based on a narrow ideology.'

The announcement of separate electorates and the incorporation of the principle of "divide and rule" into a formal constitutional arrangement made the estrangement between Hindus and Muslims total.

Emergence of the All India Hindu Mahasabha

In the wake of the formation of the Muslim League and introduction of the Government of India Act of 1909, a move to start a Hindu organisation was in the air. In pursuance of the resolution passed at the fifth Punjab Hindu Conference at Ambala and the sixth conference at Ferozepur, the first all Indian Conference of Hindus was convened at Haridwar in 1915. The All India Hindu Mahasabha was started there with headquarters at Dehra Dun. Provincial Hindu Sabhas were started subsequently in UP, with headquarters at Allahabad and in Bombay and Bihar. While the sabhas in Bombay and Bihar were not active, there was little response in Madras and Bengal.

Predominantly urban in character, the Mahasabha was concentrated in the larger trading cities of north India, particularly in Allahabad, Kanpur, Benares, Lucknow and Lahore. In UP, the Mahasabha, to a large extent was the creation of the educated middle class leaders who were also activists in the Congress. The Khilafat movement gave some respite to the separatist politics of the communalists. As a result, between 1920 and 1922, the Mahasabha ceased to function.

The entry of ulema into politics led Hindus to fear a revived and aggressive Islam. Even important Muslim leaders like Ali brothers had always been Khilafatists first and Congressmen second. The power of mobilisation on religious grounds demonstrated by the Muslims during the Khilafat movement motivated the Hindu communalists to imitate them in mobilising the Hindu masses. Suddhi movement was not a new phenomenon but in the post-Khilafat period it assumed new importance. In an effort to draw Hindus into the boycott of the visit of Prince of Wales in 1921, Swami Shradhananda tried to revive the Mahasabha by organizing cow-protection propaganda.

Before the World War I, Britain had promised to safeguard the interests of the Caliph as well the Kaaba (the holiest seat of Islam). But after Turkey's defeat in the War, they refused to keep their word. The stunned Muslim community showed its displeasure to the British government by starting the Khilafat movement to secure the Caliphate in Turkey.

The bloody Malabar rebellion of 1921, where Muslim peasants were pitted against both the British rulers and Hindu landlords, gave another reason for the renewed campaign of the Hindu Mahasabha. Though the outbreak was basically an agrarian revolt, communal passion ran high in consequence of which Gandhi himself viewed it as a Hindu-Muslim conflict. Gandhi wanted Muslim leaders to tender a public apology for the happenings in Malabar.

(a) Communalism in United Provinces (UP)

The suspension of the non-cooperation movement in 1922 and the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 left the Muslims in a state of frustration. In the aftermath of Non-Cooperation movement, the alliance between the Khilafatists and the Congress crumbled. There was a fresh spate of communal violence, as Hindus and Muslims, in the context of self-governing institutions created under the Act of 1919, began to stake their political claims and in the process vied with each other to acquire power and position. Of 968 delegates attending the sixth annual conference of the Hindu Mahasabha in Varanasi in August 1923, 56.7 % came from the U.P. The United Provinces (UP), the Punjab, Delhi and Bihar together contributed 86.8 % of the delegates. Madras, Bombay and Bengal combined sent only 6.6% of the delegates. 1920s was a trying period for the Congress. This time the communal tension in the United Province was not only due to the zeal of Hindu and Muslim religious leaders, but was fuelled by the political rivalries of the Swarajists and Liberals.

In Allahabad, Motilal Nehru and Madan Mohan Malaviya confronted each other. When Nehru's faction emerged victorious in the municipal elections of 1923, Malaviya's faction began to exploit religious passions. The District Magistrate Crosthwaite who conducted the investigation reported: 'The Malaviya family have deliberately stirred up the Hindus and this has reacted on the Muslims.'

(b) The Hindu Mahasabha

In the Punjab communalism as a powerful movement had set in completely. In 1924 Lala Lajpat Rai openly advocated the partition of the Punjab into Hindu and Muslim Provinces. The Hindu Mahasabha, represented the forces of Hindu revivalism in the political domain, raised the slogan of 'Akhand Hindustan' against the Muslim League's demand of separate electorates for Muslims. Ever since its inception, the Mahasabha's role in the freedom struggle has been rather controversial. While not supportive of British rule, the Mahasabha did not offer its full support to the nationalist movement either.

Since the Indian National Congress had to mobilize the support of all classes and communities against foreign domination, the leaders of different communities could not press for principle of secularism firmly for the fear of losing the support of religious-minded groups. The Congress under the leadership of Gandhi held a number of unity conferences during this period, but to no avail.

(c) Delhi Conference of Muslims and their Proposals

One great outcome of the efforts at unity, however, was an offer by the Conference of Muslims, which met at Delhi on March 20, 1927 to give up separate electorates if four proposals were accepted. 1. the separation of Sind from Bombay 2. Reforms for the Frontier and Baluchistan 3. Representation by population in the Punjab and Bengal and 4. Thirty-three per cent seats for the Muslims in the Central Legislature. Motilal Nehru and S. Srinivasan persuaded the All India Congress Committee to accept the Delhi proposals formulated by the Conference of the Muslims. But communalism had struck such deep roots that the initiative fell through. Gandhi commented that the Hindu-Muslim issue had passed out of human hands. Instead of seizing the opportunity to resolve the tangle, the Congress chose to drag its feet by appointing committees, one to find out whether it was financially feasible to separate Sind from Bombay and the other to examine proportional representation as a means of safeguarding Muslim majorities. Jinnah who had taken the initiative to narrow down the breach between the two, and had been hailed the ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity by Sarojini, felt let down as the Hindu Mahasabha members present at the All Parties Convention held in Calcuttain 1928 rejected all amendments and destroyed any possibility of unity. Thereafter, most of the Muslims were convinced that they would get a better deal from Government rather than from the Congress. In despair Jinnah left the country, only to return many years later as a rank communalist.

Expressing anguish over the development of sectarian nationalism, Gandhi wrote, 'There are as many religions as there are individuals, but those who are conscious of the spirit of the nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in a dream land. The Hindus, the Sikhs, the Muhammedans, the Parsis and the Christians who have made their country are fellow countrymen and they will have to live in unity if only for their interest. In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms nor has it ever been so in India.'

(d) Communal Award and its Aftermath

The British Government was consistent in promoting communalism. Even the delegates for the second Round Table Conference were chosen on the basis of their communal bearings. After the failure of the Round Table Conferences, the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald announced the Communal Award which further vitiated the political climate.

The R.S.S. founded in 1925 was expanding and its volunteers had shot upto 1,00,000. K.B. Hedgewar, V.D. Savarkar and M.S. Golwalker were attempting to elaborate on the concept of the Hindu Rashtra and openly advocated that 'the non-Hindu people in Hindustan must adopt the Hindu culture and language...they must cease to be foreigners or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu Nation claiming nothing.' V.D. Savarkar asserted that 'We Hindus are a Nation by ourselves'. Though the Congress had forbidden its members from joining the Mahasabha or the R.S.S. as early as 1934, it was only

in December 1938 that the Congress Working Committee declared Mahasabha membership to be a disqualification for remaining in the Congress.

First Congress Ministries

The nationalism of the Indian National Congress was personified by Mahatma Gandhi, who rejected the narrow nationalism exemplified by the Arya Samaj and the Aligarh movement and strove to evolve a political identity that transcended the different religions. Notwithstanding the state-supported communalism of different hues, the Indian National Congress remained a dominant political force in India. In the 1937 elections, Congress won in seven of the eleven provinces and formed the largest party in three others. The Muslim League's performance was dismal. It succeeded in winning only 4.8 per cent of the Muslim votes. The Congress had emerged as a mass secular party. Yet the Government branded it a Hindu organisation and projected the Muslim League as the real representative of the Muslims and treated it on a par with the Congress.

Seeing this dismal performance, the Muslim League was convinced that the only choice left to it was to whip up emotions on communal lines in provinces like Bengal and Punjab. The over confidence of the Congress, given its overwhelming victory in the elections, made it misjudge Muslim sentiment. Jinnah exploited the emotional campaign of 'Islam in danger' to gain mass Muslim support after the 1936-37 elections - a divisive cause in which the Hindu Mahasabha came to its help through coalition ministries.

Observation of Day of Deliverance

The Second World War broke out in 1939 and the Viceroy of India Linlithgow immediately announced that India was also at war. Since the declaration was made without any consultation with the Congress, it was greatly resented by it. The Congress Working Committee decided that all Congress ministries in the provinces would resign. After the resignation of Congress ministries, the provincial governors suspended the legislatures and took charge of the provincial administration.

The Muslim League celebrated the end of Congress rule as a day of deliverance on 22 December 1939. On that day, the League passed resolutions in various places against Congress for its alleged atrocities against Muslims. The demonstration of Nationalist Muslims was dubbed as anti-Islamic and denigrated. It was in this atmosphere that the League passed its resolution on 26 March 1940 in Lahore demanding a separate nation for Muslims.

Neither Jinnah nor Nawab Zafrullah Khan then had considered creation of separate state for Muslims practicable. However, on March 23, 1940, the Muslim League formally adopted the idea by passing a resolution. The text of the resolution ran as under: "Resolved that it is the concerted view of this session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional scheme would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz. that geographically contiguous units are

demarcated into regions which should be constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the area in which the Muslims are numerically in majority should be grouped to constitute Independent State." The League resolved that the British government before leaving India should effect the partition of the country into Indian union and Pakistan.

Though the idea of Pakistan came from the Muslim League platform in 1940 it had been conceived ten years earlier by the poet-scholar Mohammad Iqbal. At the League's annual conference at Allahabad (1930), Iqbal expressed his wish to see a consolidated North-west Indian Muslim State. It was then articulated forcefully by Rahmat Ali, a Cambridge student. The basis of League's demand was its "Two Nation Theory" which first came from Sir Wazir Hasan in his presidential address at Bombay session of League in 1937. He said, "the Hindus and Mussalmans inhabiting this vast continent are not two communities but should be considered two nations in many respects."

Direct Action Day

Hindu communalism and Muslim communalism fed on each other throughout the early 1940s. Muslim League openly boycotted the Quit India movement of 1942. In the elections held in 1946 to the Constituent Assembly, Muslim League won all 30 seats reserved for Muslims in the Central Legislative Assembly and most of the reserved provincial seats as well. The Congress Party was successful in gathering most of the general electorate seats, but it could no longer effectively insist that it spoke for the entire population of British India.

In 1946 Secretary of State Pethick-Lawrence led a three-member Cabinet Mission to New Delhi with the hope of resolving the Congress-Muslim League deadlock and, thus, of transferring British power to a single Indian administration. Cripps was primarily responsible for drafting the Cabinet Mission Plan. The plan proposed a three-tier federation for India, integrated by a central government in Delhi, which would be limited to handling foreign affairs, communications, defence, and only those finances required to take care of union matters. The subcontinent was to be divided into three major groups of provinces: Group A, to include the Hindu-majority provinces of the Bombay Presidency, Madras Presidency, the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, and the Central Provinces; Group B, to contain the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab, Sind, the North-West Frontier, and Baluchistan; and Group C, to include the Muslim-majority Bengal and the Hindu-majority Assam. The group governments were to be autonomous in everything excepting in matters reserved to the centre. The princely states within each group were to be integrated later into their neighbouring provinces. Local provincial governments were to have the choice of opting out of the group in which they found themselves, should a majority of their people desire to do so.

Jinnah accepted the Cabinet Mission's proposal, as did the Congress leaders. But after several weeks of behind-the-scene negotiations, on July 29, 1946, the Muslim League adopted a resolution rejecting the Cabinet Mission Plan and called upon the Muslims throughout India to observe a 'Direct Action Day' in protest on August 16. The rioting and killing that took place for four days in Calcutta led to a terrible violence resulting in thousands of deaths.

Gandhi who was until then resisting any effort to vivisect the country had to accede to the demand of the Muslim League for creation of Pakistan.

Mountbatten who succeeded Wavell came to India as Viceroy to effect the partition plan and transfer of power.



COMMUNALISM AND PARTITION

12TH HISTORY

7. Last Phase of Indian National Movement

Introduction

The outbreak of Second World War and Britain's decision to involve India in the War without consulting Congress ministries in provinces, provoked the leaders of Indian National Congress and Gandhi. The Congress ministers resigned in protest. Gandhi launched the individual Satyagraha in October 1940 to keep up the morale of the Congress. In the meantime, the election of Subash Chandra Bose as Congress President upset Gandhi this led to Bose's resignation. Later Bose started his Forward Bloc Party. After his escape to Germany and Singapore formed Indian National Army and carried on his revolutionary activities independent of the Congress movement.

The Cripps Mission arrived in March 1942 to assuage the nationalists. But its proposals bore no fruit. Gandhi decided to embark on the Quit India Movement in August 1942. The British arrested all prominent leaders of the Congress and put down the movement with an iron hand. Gandhi languished in jail until May 1944. Then came the Cabinet Mission, whose plan was eventually accepted by the Congress. However, Jinnah and the Muslim League, persisting in their Pakistan demand, announced Direct Action Day programme that ignited communal riots in East Bengal. Gandhi began his tour in the riot-hit Naokali. Rajaji's compromise formula and Wavell plan and the Simla conference convened to consider the latter's plan did not help to resolve the deadlock. In the meantime, Royal Indian Navy revolted, prompting the British to quicken the process of Independence. Mountbatten was appointed governor general to oversee independence and the partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan.

Individual Satyagraha

Unlike in the past, where Gandhi's campaign had assumed a mass character, Gandhi decided on the strategy of individual Satyagraha so that the war against fascism was not hampered. The satyagrahis were handpicked by Gandhi and their demand was restricted to asserting their freedom of speech to preach against participation in the war. The chosen satyagrahi was to inform the District Magistrate of the date, time and place of the protest. On reaching there at the appointed time, and publicly declare the following: 'It is wrong to help the British War effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war efforts with non-violent resistance' and offer arrest.

The programme began on October 17, 1940 with Vinobha Bhave offering Satyagraha near his Paunar ashram in Maharashtra. Gandhi suspended the Satyagraha in December 1941. It was revived with some changes and groups offered satyagrahas from January 1941 and was eventually withdrawn in August 1941.

August Offer

Individual Satyagraha was the Congress response to the August offer by the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow. On August 8, 1940, Linlithgow offered the following: Dominion status at some unspecified future; expansion of the Viceroy's Council (or the Executive Council) to accommodate more Indians in it; setting up a War Advisory Council with Indians in it; recognition of the rights of the minority; and a promise to recognize the Indian peoples' right to draft a constitution at some future date after the war.

Removal of Bose from Congress

The August offer came too late for the Congress to even negotiate a settlement. The Congress, at this time, was losing its sheen. Its membership had fallen from 4.5 million in 1938-39 to 1.4 million in 1940-41. Subhas Chandra Bose was isolated within the Congress, as most leaders in the organisation's top refused cooperation with him. Bose resigned and the AICC session at Calcutta elected Rajendra Prasad as president. Bose founded the Forward Bloc to function within the Congress and was eventually removed from all positions in the organization in August 1939.

Lahore Resolution

The arrogance displayed by the colonial government and its refusal to find a meeting point between the promise of dominion status at some future date and the Congress demand for the promise of independence after cessation of the war as a pre-condition to support war efforts was drawn from another development. That was the demand for a separate nation for Muslims. Though the genesis of a separate unit or units consisting of Muslim majority regions in the Eastern and North-Western India was in the making since the 1930s, the resolution on March 23, 1940, at Lahore was distinct.

There is ample evidence that the Muslim League and its associates were given the necessary encouragement to go for such a demand by the colonial administrators. The resolution, then, gave the colonial rulers a certain sense of courage to refuse negotiating with the Indian National Congress even while they sought cooperation in the war efforts.

In many ways the Congress at the time was weaker in the organizational sense. Moreover, its leaders were committed to the idea that the British war efforts called for support given the character of the Axis powers – Germany, Italy and Japan – being fascist and thus a danger for democracy. Bose was the only leader who sought non-cooperation with the allied forces and active cooperation with the Axis powers.

All these were the important markers of 1940. Things however changed soon with the Japanese advance in Southeast Asia and the collapse of the British army. It led to a sense of urgency among the colonial rulers to ensure cooperation for the war efforts in India even while not committing to freedom. Winston Churchill, now heading the war cabinet, dispatched Sir Stafford Cripps to talk with the Congress.

Cripps Mission

Japan Storm South-East Asia

The year 1941 was bad for the allied forces. France, Poland, Belgium, Norway and Holland had fallen to Germany and Great Britain was facing destruction as well. Of far more significance to India was Japan's march into South-east Asia. This was happening alongside the attack on Pearl Harbour, where Japanese war-planes bombed the American port on December 7, 1941. US President F.D. Roosevelt and Chinese President Chiang Kai-Shek were concerned with halting Japan on its march. India, thus, came on their radar and the two put pressure on British Prime Minister, Churchill to ensure cooperation for the war from the Indian people.

By the end of 1941, the Japanese forces had stormed through the Philippines, Indo-China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Burma and were waiting to knock at India's doors in the North-East. The way the South East Asian region fell raised concerns to Britain and the Indian National Congress. The British forces ran without offering any resistance. The Indian soldiers of the British Indian Army were left to the mercy of the Japanese forces. It was from among them that what would later on to become the Indian National Army (INA) would be raised. We will study that in detail in this lesson (in Section 7.3). Churchill was worried that Calcutta and Madras might fall in Japanese hands. Similar thoughts ran in the minds of the leaders of the Congress too and they too were desperate to seek an honourable way out to offer cooperation in the war effort.

It was in this situation that the Congress Working Committee, in December 1941, passed a resolution offering cooperation with the war effort on condition that Britain promised independence to India after the war and transfer power to Indians in a substantial sense immediately.

Arrival of Cripps

A delegation headed by Sir Stafford Cripps reached India in March 1942. That Cripps, a Labour party representative in the War cabinet under Churchill, was chosen to head the delegation lent credibility to the mission. Before setting out to India, he announced that British policy in India aimed at 'the earliest possible realisation of self-government in India'. But the draft declaration he presented before he began negotiations fell far short of independence.

Cripps Proposals

Cripps promised Dominion Status and a constitution-making body after the war. The constitution-making body was to be partly elected by the provincial assemblies and nominated members from the Princely states. The draft also spelt out the prospect of Pakistan. It said that any province that was not prepared to accept the new constitution would have the right to enter into a separate agreement with Britain regarding its future status. The draft did not contain anything new. Nehru recalled later: 'When I read these proposals for the first time I was profoundly depressed.'

Rejection of Cripps' Proposals

The offer of Dominion Status was too little. The Congress also rejected the idea of nominated members to the constitution-making body and sought elections in the Princely States as in the Provinces. Above all these was the possibility of partition. The negotiations were bound to breakdown and it did.

Options for Congress in the wake of Pearl Harbour Attack

Churchill's attitude towards the Indian National Movement for independence in general and Gandhi in particular was one of contempt even earlier. He did not change even when Britain needed cooperation in the war efforts so desperately. But he came under pressure from the US and China.

The Indian National Congress, meanwhile, was pushed against the wall. This happened in two ways: the colonial government's adamant stand against any assurance of independence on the one hand and Subhas Bose's campaign to join hands with the Axis powers in the fight for independence. Bose had addressed the people of India on the Azad Hind Radio broadcast from Germany in March 1942. This was the context in which Gandhi thought of the Quit India movement.

Quit India Movement

Sometime in May 1942 Gandhi took it upon himself to steer the Indian National Congress into action. Gandhi's decision to launch a mass struggle this time, however, met with reservation from C. Rajagopalachari as much as from Nehru. Conditions were ripe for an agitation. Prices of commodities had shot up many-fold and there was shortage of food-grains too.

Congress Meet at Wardha

It was in this context that the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress met at Wardha on July 14, 1942. The meeting resolved to launch a mass civil disobedience movement. C. Rajagopalachari and Bhulabhai Desai who had reservations against launching a movement at that time resigned from the Congress Working Committee. Nehru, despite being among those who did not want a movement then bound himself with the majority's decision in the Working Committee.

'Do or Die'

The futility that marked the Cripps mission had turned both Gandhi and Nehru sour with the British than any time in the past. Gandhi expressed this in a press interview on May 16, 1942 where he said: 'Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy. This ordered disciplined anarchy should go and if there is complete lawlessness, I would risk it.' The Mahatma called upon the people to 'Do or Die' and called the movement he launched from there as a 'fight to the finish'.

Quit India

The colonial government did not wait. All the leaders of the Indian National Congress, including Gandhi, were arrested early in the morning on August 9, 1942. The Indian people too did not wait. The immediate response to the pre-dawn arrests was hartals in almost all the towns where the people clashed, often violently, with the police. Industrial workers across India went on strike. The Tata Steel Plant in Jamshedpur closed down by the striking workers for 13 days beginning August 20. The textile workers in Ahmedabad struck work for more than three months. Industrial towns witnessed strikes for varied periods across India.

Brutal Repression

The colonial government responded with brutal repression and police resorted to firing in many places. The army was called in to suppress the protest. The intensity of the movement and the repression can be made out from the fact that as many as 57 battalions were called in as a whole. Aircrafts were used to strafe protesters. The momentum and its intensity was such that Linlithgow, wrote to Churchill, describing the protests as 'by far the most serious rebellion since 1857, the gravity and extent of which we have so far concealed from the world for reasons of military security.'

Though this phase of the protest, predominantly urban, involving the industrial workers and the students was put down by use of brutal force, the upsurge did not end. It spread in its second phase into the villages. A sixty-point increase in prices of food-grains recorded between April and August 1942 had laid the seeds of resentment. In addition, those leaders of the Congress, particularly the Socialists within, who had managed to escape arrest on August 9 fanned into the countryside where they organised the youth into guerrilla actions.

Outbreak of Violence

Beginning late September 1942, the movement took the shape of attacks and destruction of communication facilities such as telegraph lines, railway stations and tracks and setting fire to government offices. This spread across the country and was most intense in Eastern United Provinces, Bihar, Maharashtra and in Bengal. The rebels even set up 'national governments' in pockets they liberated from the colonial administration. An instance of this was the 'Tamluk Jatiya Sarkar' in the Midnapore district in Bengal that lasted until September 1944. There was a parallel government in Satara.

Socialists like Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan, Asaf Ali, Yusuf Mehraly and Ram Manohar Lohia provided leadership. Gandhi's 21 day fast in jail, beginning February 10, 1943, marked a turning point and gave the movement (and even the violence in a limited sense) a great push.

Spread and Intensity of the Movement

The spread of the movement and its intensity can be gauged from the extent of force that the colonial administration used to put it down. By the end of 1943, the number of persons arrested across India stood at 91, 836. The police shot dead 1060 persons during the same period. 208 police outposts, 332 railway stations and 945 post offices were destroyed or damaged very badly. At least 205 policemen defected and joined the rebels. R.H. Niblett, who served as District Collector of Azamgarh in eastern United Province, removed from service for being too mild with the rebels, recorded in his diary that the British unleashed 'white terror' using an 'incendiary police to set fire to villages for several miles' and that 'reprisals (becoming) the rule of the day.' Collective fines were imposed on all the people in a village where public property was destroyed.

Clandestine Radio

Yet another prominent feature of the Quit India movement was the use of Radio by the rebels. The press being censored, the rebels set up a clandestine radio broadcast system from Bombay. The transmitter was shifted from one place to another in and around the city. Usha Mehta was the force behind the clandestine radio operations and its broadcast was heard as far away as Madras.

The Quit India movement was the most powerful onslaught against the colonial state hitherto. The movement included the Congress, the Socialists, and the Forward Bloc. The movement witnessed unprecedented unity of the people and sent a message that the colonial rulers could not ignore.

Release of Gandhi

Gandhi's release from prison, on health grounds, on May 6, 1944 led to the revival of the Constructive Programme. Congress committees began activities in its garb and the ban on the Congress imposed in the wake of the Quit India movement was thus overcome. The colonial state, meanwhile, put forward a plan for negotiation. Lord Archibald Wavell, who had replaced Linlithgow as Viceroy in October 1943, had begun to work towards another round of negotiation. The message was clear: The British had no option but to negotiate!

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the INA

A considerably large contingent of the Indian Army was posted on the South East Asian countries that were part of the British Empire. They were in Malaya, Burma and elsewhere. The forces, however, could not stand up to the Japanese army. The command of the British Indian Army in the South-East Asian front simply retreated leaving the ranks behind as Prisoners of War (POWs).

Mohan Singh, an officer of the British Indian Army in Malaya, approached the Japanese for help and they found in this an opportunity. Japan's interests lay in colonising China and not much India. The Indian POWs with the Japanese were left under Mohan

Singh's command. The fall of Singapore to the Japanese forces added to the strength of the POWs and Mohan Singh now had 45,000 POWs under his command. Of these, Mohan Singh had drafted about 40,000 men in the Indian National Army by the end of 1942. Indians in the region saw the INA as saviours against Japanese expansionism as much as the commander and other officers held out that the army would march into India but only on invitation from the Indian National Congress. On July 2, 1943, Subhas Chandra Bose, reached Singapore. From there he went to Tokyo and after a meeting with Prime Minister Tojo, the Japanese leader declared that his country did not desire territorial expansion into India. Bose returned to Singapore and set up the Provisional Government of Free India on October 21, 1943. This Provisional Government declared war against Britain and the other allied nations. The Axis powers recognised Bose's Provisional Government as its ally.

After the Indian National Congress acted against Bose in August 1939, shunting him out of all offices including as president of the Bengal Congress Committee, Bose embarked upon a campaign trail, to mobilise support to his position, across India. He was arrested by the British on July 3, 1940 under the Defence of India Act. and kept under constant surveillance. As the war progressed in Europe Bose believed that Germany was going to win. He began to nurture the idea that Indian independence could be achieved by joining hands with the Axis powers. In the midnight of January 16-17, 1941, Bose slipped out of Calcutta, and reached Berlin by the end of March, travelling through Kabul and the Soviet Union on an Italian passport. Bose met Hitler and Goebbels in Berlin. Both the Nazi leaders were cold and the only concession they gave was to set up the Azad Hind Radio. Nothing more came out of his rendezvous with Hitler and his aides. With Germany facing reverses, Bose found his way to Singapore in July 1943

Subash and INA

Bose enlisted civilians too into the INA and one of the regiments was made up of women. The Rani of Jhansi regiment of the INA was commanded by a medical doctor and daughter of freedom fighter Ammu Swaminathan from Madras, Dr Lakshmi. On July 6, 1944, Subhas Bose addressed a message to Gandhi over the Azad Hind Radio from Rangoon. Calling him the 'Father of the Nation', Bose appealed to Gandhi for his blessing in what he described as 'India's last war of independence.'

INA with Axis Powers in War

A battalion of the INA commanded by Shah Nawaz accompanied the Japanese army, in its march on Imphal. This was in late 1944 and the Axis powers, including the Japanese forces, had fallen into bad times all over. The Imphal campaign did not succeed and the Japanese retreated before the final surrender to the British command in mid-1945. Shah Nawaz and his soldiers of the INA were taken prisoners and charged with treason.

INA Trial

The INA trials were held at the Red Fort in New Delhi. The Indian National Congress fielded its best lawyers in defence of the INA soldiers. Nehru, who had given up

his legal practice as early as in 1920 responding to Gandhi's call for non-cooperation, wore his black gown to appear in defence. Even though the INA did not achieve much militarily, the trials made a huge impact in inspiring the masses. The colonial government's arrogance once again set the stage for another mass mobilisation. The Indian National Congress, after the debacle at the Simla Conference (June 25 and July 14, 1945) plunged into reaching out to the masses by way of public meetings across the country. The INA figured more prominently as an issue in all these meetings than even the Congress's pitch for votes in the elections (under the 1935 Act) that were expected soon.

It was in this context that the colonial rulers sent up three prominent officers of the INA – Shah Nawaz Khan, P.K. Sehgal and G.S. Dhillon – to trial. The press in India reported the trials with all empathy and editorials sought the soldiers freed immediately. The INA week was marked by processions, hartals and even general strikes across the nation demanding release of the soldiers. The choice of the three men to be sent up for trial ended up rallying all political opinion behind the campaign. The Muslim League, the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Hindu Maha Sabha, all those who had stayed clear of the Quit India campaign, joined the protests and raised funds for their defence. Although the trial court found Sehgal, Dhillon and Shah Nawaz Khan guilty of treason, the commander in chief remitted the sentences and set them free on January 6, 1946. The INA trials, indeed, set the stage for yet another important stage in the history of the Indian National Movement in February 1946. The ratings of the Royal Indian Navy (RIN) raised the banner of revolt.

The Royal Indian Navy Revolt

The economic impact of the war was manifest in rising prices, shortage of food- grains and closure of war time industries causing retrenchment and employment. This merged with the anti-British sentiments evident in the mass scale of the protests revolving around the INA trials. B.C. Dutt, a rating (the designation for the Indians employed in the various war-ships and elsewhere in the Royal Indian Navy) in the HMIS Talwar was arrested for scribbling 'Quit India' on the panel of the ship. This provoked a strike by the 1,100 ratings on the ship. The ratings resented the racist behaviour of the English commanders, the poor quality of the food and abuses that were the norm. Dutt's arrest served as the trigger for the revolt on February 18, 1946. The day after, the revolt was joined by the ratings in the Fort Barracks and the Castle and a large number of them went into the Bombay cities in commandeered trucks waving Congress flags and shouting anti-British slogans. Soon, the workers in the textile mills of Bombay joined the struggle.

The trade unions in Bombay and Calcutta called for a sympathy strike and the two cities turned into war zones. Barricades were erected all over and pitched battles fought. Shopkeepers downed shutters and hartals became the order of the day. Trains were stopped in the two cities with people sitting on the tracks. On news of the Bombay revolt reaching Karachi, ratings in the HMIS Hindustan and other naval establishments in Karachi went on a lightning strike on February 19. The strike wave spread to almost all the naval establishments across India and at least 20,000 ratings from 78 ships and 20 shore establishments ended up revolting in the days after February 18, 1946. There were strikes, expressing support to the ratings in the Royal Indian Air Force stationed in Bombay, Poona,

Calcutta, Jessore and Ambala units. The sepoys in the army cantonment station at Jabalpur too went on strike.

The ratings, in many places, hoisted the Congress, the Communist, and the Muslim League flags together on the ship masts during the revolt.

The colonial government's response was brutal repression. It was, indeed, a revolt without a leadership; nor did the ratings move in an organised direction. While the trade unions came out in solidarity with the ratings in no time and the strikes in Bombay and Calcutta and Madras were strong expressions against British rule in India, these did not last for long and the ratings were forced to surrender soon.

Sardar Vallabhai Patel, then in Bombay, took the initiative to bring the revolt to an end. The RIN mutiny, however, was indeed a glorious chapter in the Indian National Movement and perhaps the last act of rebellion in the long story of such acts of valour in the cause of independence.

The March 23, 1940 resolution read as follows: 'That geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the north-western and eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute "Independent States", in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.' (Source: Sumit Sarkar *Modern India 1885-1947*, Pearson, 2018, p 324)

Rajaji Proposals and the Wavell Plan Demand for a Separate Nation

Meanwhile, the communal challenge persisted and the Muslim League pressed with its demand for a separate nation. The Lahore resolution of the Muslim League in March 1940 had altered the discourse from the Muslims being a 'minority' to the Muslims constituting a 'nation'. Mohammed Ali Jinnah was asserting this right as the sole spokesperson of the community.

Rajaji's Proposals

In April 1944, when the Congress leaders were in jail, C. Rajagopalachari put out a proposal to resolve the issue. It contained the following:

- A post-war commission to be formed to demarcate the contiguous districts where the Muslims were in absolute majority and a plebiscite of the adult population there to ascertain whether they would prefer Pakistan;
- In case of a partition there would be a mutual agreement to run certain essential services, like defence or communication;
- The border districts could choose to join either of the two sovereign states;
- The implementation of the scheme would wait till after full transfer of power.

After his release from prison, Gandhi, in July 1944, proposed talks with Jinnah based on what came to be the 'Rajaji formula'. The talks did not go anywhere.

Wavell Plan

In June 1945 Lord Wavell moved to negotiate and called for the Simla conference. The rest of the Congress leaders, including Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and the Congress president, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were released from jail for this. Wavell had set out on this project in March 1945 and sailed to London. There he convinced Churchill of the imperative for a Congress–Muslim League coalition government as a way to deal with the post-war political crisis.

The Viceroy's proposal before the leaders of all political formations and most prominently the Congress and the Muslim League was setting up of an Executive Council, exclusively with Indians along with himself and the commander-in-chief; equal number of representatives in the council for the caste Hindus and the Muslims and separate representation for the Scheduled Castes; and start of discussions for a new constitution. The proposal displeased everyone. The Simla Conference held between June 25 and July 14, 1945 ended without resolution. The talks broke down on the right of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League to nominate members to the Viceroy's Council.

The Muslim League insisted on its exclusive right to nominate Muslim members to the Council. Its demand was that the Congress nominees shall only be caste Hindus and that the Indian National Congress should not nominate a Muslim or a member from the Scheduled Caste! This was seen as a means to further the divide on communal lines and deny the Congress the status of representing the Indian people. Lord Wavell found a council without Muslim League representation as unworkable and thus abandoned the Simla talks.

The years between the Lahore resolution of 1940 and the Simla Conference in 1945 marked the consolidation of a Muslim national identity and the emergence of Jinnah as its sole spokesperson. It was at a convention of Muslim League Legislators in Delhi in April 1946, that Pakistan was defined as a 'sovereign independent state'. For the first time the League also declared its composition in geographical terms as 'the region consisting of the Muslim majority provinces of Bengal and Assam in the Northeast and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the Northwest. The Congress president Maulana Abul Kalam Azad rejected this idea and held that the Congress stood for a united India with complete independence.

All these were developments after the Simla conference of June–July 1945 and after Churchill was voted out and replaced by a Labour Party government headed by Clement Attlee. Times had changed in a substantial sense. British Prime Minister, Attlee had declared the certainty of independence to India with only the terms left to be decided.

Mountbatten Plan Cabinet Mission

The changed global scenario in the post– World War II context led to the setting up of the Cabinet Mission. Headed by Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, and A.V.

Alexander, the mission landed in India in March 1946 and began work on its brief: to set up a national government before the final transfer of power. The mission proposed to constitute a 'representative' body by way of elections across the provinces and the princely states and entrust this body with the task of making a constitution for free India. The idea of partition did not figure at this stage. Instead, the mission's proposal was for a loose-knit confederation in which the Muslim League could dominate the administration in the North-East and North- West provinces while the Congress would administer rest of the provinces.

Jinnah sounded out his acceptance of the idea on June 6, 1946. The Congress, meanwhile, perceived the Cabinet Mission's plan as a clear sanction for the setting up of a Constituent Assembly. Nehru conveyed through his speech at the AICC, on July 7, 1946, that the Indian National Congress accepted the proposal. Subsequently, Jinnah on July 29, 1946, reacted to this and announced that the League stood opposed to the plan.

After elaborate consultations, the viceroy issued invitations on 15 June 1946 to the 14 men to join the interim government. The invitees were: Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari and Hari Krishna Mahtab (on behalf of the INC); Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Mohammed Ismail Khan, Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin and Abdul Rab Nishtar (from the Muslim League) and Sardar Baldev Singh (on behalf of the Sikh community), Sir N.P. Engineer (to represent the Parsis), Jagjivan Ram (representing the scheduled castes) and John Mathai (as representative of the Indian Christians).

Meanwhile, the Congress proposed Zakir Hussain from its quota of five nominees to the interim council. The Muslim League objected to this and, on 29 July 1946, Jinnah announced that the League would not participate in the process to form the Constituent Assembly. This invited a sharp reaction from the British administration. On 12 August 1946, the viceroy announced that he was inviting Nehru (Congress president) to form the provisional government. After consultation with Nehru, 12 members of the National Interim Government were announced on 25 August 1946. Apart from Nehru, the other members were: Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Asaf Ali, C. Rajagopalachari, Sarat Chandra Bose, John Mathai, Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Jagjivan Ram, Syed Ali Zaheer and Cooverji Hormusji Bhabha. It was stated that two more Muslims will be nominated in due course.

Five Hindus, three Muslims and one representative each from the scheduled castes, Indian Christians, Sikhs and Parsis formed the basis of this list. Later Hare Krishna Mahtab was replaced by Sarat Chandra Bose. The Parsi nominee, N.P. Engineer was replaced by Cooverji Hormusji Bhabha. In place of the League's nominees, the Congress put in the names of three of its own men: Asaf Ali, Shafaat Ahmed Khan and Syed Ali Zaheer.

The League, meanwhile, gave a call for 'Direct Action' on 16 August 1946. There was bloodshed in Calcutta and several other places, including in Delhi. This was when Gandhi set out on his own course to arrive in Calcutta and decided to stay on at a deserted house in Beliaghata, a locality that was worst affected, accompanied only by a handful of followers. Muslims who were hounded out of their homes in Delhi were held in transit camps (in Purana Quila and other places). It was only after Gandhi arrived there (on 9 September 1946) and conveyed that the Muslims were Indian nationals and hence must be protected by the

Indian state (Nehru by then was the head of the interim government) that the Delhi authorities began organising rations and building latrines.

It was in this context that the Congress agreed to the constitution of the interim government. Nehru assumed office on 2 September 1946. Yet another round of communal violence broke out across the country and more prominently in Bombay and Ahmedabad. Lord Wavell set out on another round of discussion and after sounding out Nehru, he proposed, once again, to Jinnah that the League participate in the interim government. The Muslim League accepted the proposal but Jinnah refused to join the cabinet.

The interim cabinet was reconstituted on October 26, 1946. Those who joined on behalf of the League were Liaquat Ali Khan, I.I. Chundrigar, A. R. Nishtar, Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Jogendra Nath Mandal.

But there was no let-up in the animosity between the Congress and the League and this was reflected in the functioning (rather non-functioning) of the interim council of ministers. The League, meanwhile, was determined against cooperating in the making of the constituent assembly. At another level, the nation was in the grip of communal violence of unprecedented magnitude. Naokhali in East Bengal was ravaged by communal violence. The members of the League who were part of the interim government refused to participate in the 'informal' consultations that Nehru held before the formal meeting of the cabinet in the viceroy's presence. The Muslim League, it seemed, were determined to wreck the interim government from within.

While the Congress scored impressive victories in the July–August 1946 elections and secured 199 from out of the 210 general seats, the Muslim League did equally well in seats reserved for the Muslims. The League's tally was 76. All but one of the 76 seats came from the Muslim-reserved constituencies. The League, however, decided against participating in the Constituent Assembly. Hence, only 207 members attended the first session of the Constituent Assembly on 9 December 1946.

Meanwhile the functioning of the interim government was far from smooth with animosity between the Congress and the League growing by the day. The 'informal' meetings of the cabinet intended to settle differences before any proposal was taken to the formal meeting that the Viceroy presided over, could not be held from the very beginning.

The proverbial last straw was the budget proposals presented by Liaquat Ali Khan in March 1947. The finance minister proposed a variety of taxes on industry and trade and proposed a commission to go into the affairs of about 150 big business houses and inquire into the allegations of tax evasion against them. Khan called this a 'socialistic budget'. This, indeed, was a calculated bid to hit the Indian industrialists who had, by this time, emerged as the most powerful supporters of the Congress. The intention was clear: to hasten the partition and prove that there was no way that the League and the Congress could work together towards independence.

British Prime Minister Atlee's statement in Parliament on February 20, 1947, that the British were firm on their intention to leave India by June 1948 set the pace for another stage. Lord Wavell was replaced as Viceroy by Lord Mountbatten on March 22, 1947.

Mountbatten Plan

Mountbatten came up with a definite plan for partition. It involved splitting up Punjab into West and East (where the west would go to Pakistan) and similar division of Bengal wherein the Western parts will remain in India and the East become Pakistan. The Congress Working Committee, on 1 May 1947, conveyed its acceptance of the idea of partition to Mountbatten. The viceroy left for London soon after and on his return disclosed the blueprint for partition and, more importantly, the desire to advance the date of British withdrawal to 15 August 1947. There were only 11 weeks left between then and the eventual day of independence. The AICC met on 15 June 1947. It was here that the resolution, moved by Govind Ballabh Pant, accepting partition, was approved. It required the persuasive powers of Nehru and Patel as well as the moral authority of Gandhi to get the majority in the AICC in favour of the resolution.

The period between March 1946 and 15 August 1947 saw many tumultuous events such as (i) the setting up of the Cabinet Mission, (ii) the formation of the interim government, (iii) the birth of the Constituent Assembly and (iv) the widening of rift between the Congress and the Muslim League leading to the partition and finally the dawn of independence.

