

# HISTORY OF INDIA

## 1858-1947

**B.A. (PROGRAMME) HISTORY**

**SEMESTER-VI**

**DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC CORE COURSE (DSC)**

**MINOR PAPER**

As per the UGCF - 2022 and National Education Policy 2020

**FOR LIMITED CIRCULATION**



**DEPARTMENT OF DISTANCE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION  
CAMPUS OF OPEN LEARNING, SCHOOL OF OPEN LEARNING  
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI**



## **For Limited Circulation**

### ***Editorial Board***

*Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary, Dr. Chander Shekhar Singh  
Dr. Shachindra Mohan*

### ***Content Writer***

*Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary*

### ***Academic Coordinator***

*Deekshant Awasthi*

### **Department of Distance and Continuing Education**

**E-mail:** ddceprinting@col.du.ac.in  
history@col.du.ac.in

### **Published by:**

Department of Distance and Continuing Education  
Campus of Open Learning, School of Open Learning,  
University of Delhi, Delhi-110 007

### **Printed by:**

School of Open Learning, University of Delhi



***Reviewer***

*Dr. Chander Shekhar Singh*

***Translator***

*Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary*

- Corrections/Modifications/Suggestions proposed by Statutory Body, DU/Stakeholder/s in the Self Learning Material (SLM) will be incorporated in the next edition. However, these corrections/modifications/suggestions will be uploaded on the website <https://sol.du.ac.in>. Any feedback or suggestions may be sent at the email- [feedbackslm@col.du.ac.in](mailto:feedbackslm@col.du.ac.in)



# SYLLABUS

## History of India: 1858-1947

Syllabus	Mapping
<b>Unit I: Social Issues and Reform Movements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revivalist / Reformist Movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century</li><li>Phule, Ambedkar and the Caste question</li><li>Women</li><li>Peasants, Tribal and the Caste movements</li><li>Arya Samaj</li></ul>	<b>Lesson 1:</b> Social Issues and Reform Movements: Revivalist/Reformist Movements of the 19th Century (1858-1947) <b>(Pages 3-73);</b> <b>Lesson 2:</b> Social Issues and Reform Movements: Phule, Ambedkar and the Caste Question (1858-1947) <b>(Pages 75-98);</b> <b>Lesson 3:</b> Social Issues and Reform Movements: Women's Reform Movement (1858-1947) <b>(Pages 99-117);</b> <b>Lesson 4:</b> Social Issues and Reform Movements: Peasants, Tribal and Caste Movements (1858-1947) <b>(Pages 119-179)</b>
<b>Unit II: Economy Under the Colonial State</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Drain of Wealth</li><li>Modern Industries and Industrialization</li><li>Indian Capitalist Class</li></ul>	<b>Lesson 5:</b> Economy under the Colonial State: Drain of Wealth, Modern Industries and Industrialization, Indian Capitalist Class (1858-1947) <b>(Pages 183-208)</b>
<b>Unit III: Nationalist Politics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Rise and Growth of Nationalism</li><li>Foundation of Indian National Congress</li><li>'Moderates' and 'Extremists' Nationalists</li><li>Mahatma Gandhi and Mass Nationalism: Gandhian Thought, Techniques and Movements</li></ul>	<b>Lesson 6:</b> Nationalist Politics: Rise and Growth of Nationalism (1858-1947) <b>(Pages 211-239);</b> <b>Lesson 7:</b> Nationalist Politics: Foundation of Indian National Congress <b>(Pages 241-274);</b> <b>Lesson 8:</b> Nationalist Politics: "Moderates and Extremists Nationalists" <b>(Pages 275-341);</b> <b>Lesson 9:</b> Mahatma Gandhi and Mass Nationalism: Gandhian Thought, Techniques and Movements <b>(Pages 343-409)</b>





**Unit IV: Other Currents in Nationalism**

- Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) and Bhagat Singh
- Subhas Chandra Bose and INA
- Left: Peasants, Workers Movements, Jayaprakash and Narayans Socialist Party
- Nationalist Politics in Southern India

**Lesson 10:** Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) and Bhagat Singh, and Subhas Chandra Bose and INA

**(Pages 413-445);**

**Lesson 11:** Left: Peasants, Workers Movements, Jayaprakash Narayan's Socialist Party and Nationalist Politics in Southern India  
**(Pages 447-469)**

---

**Unit V: Towards Freedom**

- Overview of the Growth of Communal Politics
- Freedom and Partition

**Lesson 12:** Towards Freedom: Overview of the Growth of Communal Politics

**(Pages 473-492);**

**Lesson 13:** Towards Freedom: Freedom and Partition  
**(Pages 493-534)**

---



# CONTENTS

## Unit I: Social Issues and Reform Movements

<b>Lesson 1</b>	Social Issues and Reform Movements: Revivalist/Reformist Movements of the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century (1858-1947)	3-73
<b>Lesson 2</b>	Social Issues and Reform Movements: Phule, Ambedkar and the Caste Question (1858-1947)	75-98
<b>Lesson 3</b>	Social Issues and Reform Movements: Women's Reform Movement (1858-1947)	99-117
<b>Lesson 4</b>	Social Issues and Reform Movements: Peasants, Tribal and Caste Movements (1858-1947)	119-179

## Unit II: Economy under the Colonial State

<b>Lesson 5</b>	Economy under the Colonial State: Drain of Wealth, Modern Industries and Industrialization, Indian Capitalist Class (1858-1947)	183-208
-----------------	---	---------

## Unit III: Nationalist Politics

<b>Lesson 6</b>	Nationalist Politics: Rise and Growth of Nationalism (1858-1947)	211-239
<b>Lesson 7</b>	Nationalist Politics: Foundation of Indian National Congress	241-274
<b>Lesson 8</b>	Nationalist Politics: "Moderates and Extremists Nationalists"	275-341
<b>Lesson 9</b>	Mahatma Gandhi and Mass Nationalism: Gandhian Thought, Techniques and Movements	343-409



## **Unit IV: Other Currents in Nationalism**

<b>Lesson 10</b>	Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) and Bhagat Singh, and Subhas Chandra Bose and INA	413-445
<b>Lesson 11</b>	Left: Peasants, Workers Movements, Jayaprakash Narayan's Socialist Party and Nationalist Politics in Southern India	447-469

## **Unit V: Towards Freedom**

<b>Lesson 12</b>	Towards Freedom: Overview of the Growth of Communal Politics	473-492
<b>Lesson 13</b>	Towards Freedom: Freedom and Partition	493-534

---

## **Unit I: Social Issues and Reform Movements**

---

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Lesson 1</b> | <b>Social Issues and Reform Movements: Revivalist/Reformist Movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (1858-1947)</b> |
| <b>Lesson 2</b> | <b>Social Issues and Reform Movements: Phule, Ambedkar and the Caste Question (1858-1947)</b>                        |
| <b>Lesson 3</b> | <b>Social Issues and Reform Movements: Women's Reform Movement (1858-1947)</b>                                       |
| <b>Lesson 4</b> | <b>Social Issues and Reform Movements: Peasants, Tribal and Caste Movements (1858-1947)</b>                          |





## LESSON 1

# **SOCIAL ISSUES AND REFORM MOVEMENTS: REVIVALIST/REFORMIST MOVEMENTS OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY (1858-1947)**

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### Structure

- 1.1 Learning Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Historical Reflections on Social and Religious Reform Movements in Colonial India
- 1.4 Social and Cultural Awakening
  - 1.4.1 Nature
  - 1.4.2 Causes
- 1.5 Brahmo Samaj
  - 1.5.1 Raja Ram Mohan Roy
  - 1.5.2 Brahmo Samaj
  - 1.5.3 Principles of Brahmo Samaj
  - 1.5.4 Religious Reform
  - 1.5.5 Social Work
  - 1.5.6 Farmers' Support
  - 1.5.7 Freedom of the Press
  - 1.5.8 Educational Functions
  - 1.5.9 Debendranath Tagore
  - 1.5.10 Keshav Chandra Sen
  - 1.5.11 Impact of Brahmo Samaj
- 1.6 Arya Samaj
  - 1.6.1 Introduction to Arya Samaj
  - 1.6.2 The Early Life of Dayananda Saraswati
  - 1.6.3 Return to the Vedas
  - 1.6.4 Establishment of Arya Samaj
  - 1.6.5 Principles of Arya Samaj
  - 1.6.6 Arya Samaj Reform Movement

Self-Instructional  
Material

3



## NOTES

- 1.7 Prarthana Samaj
  - 1.7.1 Establishment of a Prarthana Samaj
  - 1.7.2 Objectives of the Prarthana Samaj
  - 1.7.3 Social Reformers of Prarthana Samaj
  - 1.7.4 Functions of the Prarthana Samaj
- 1.8 Ramakrishna Mission
  - 1.8.1 Ramakrishna Paramahansa
  - 1.8.2 Swami Vivekananda
  - 1.8.3 Parliament of World Religions
  - 1.8.4 Establishment of Ramakrishna Mission
  - 1.8.5 Mission Teachings
  - 1.8.6 Mission Achievements
- 1.9 Pt. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
- 1.10 Theosophical Society & Annie Besant
- 1.11 The Young Bengal Movement and Henry Vivian Derozio
- 1.12 Muslim Reformist Movement
  - 1.12.1 Aligarh Movement and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
  - 1.12.2 Deoband Movement
  - 1.12.3 Ahmadiyya Movement
- 1.13 Parsi Reformist Movement
- 1.14 Sikh Reform Movement
  - 1.14.1 Sikh Socio-Religious Reform Movement
  - 1.14.2 Gurudwara Movement
  - 1.14.3 Nirankari Movement
  - 1.14.4 Namdhari Movement
  - 1.14.5 Akali Movement
  - 1.14.6 Babbar Akali Movement
  - 1.14.7 Singh Sabha
- 1.15 Reform Movement in India: Nature and Consequences
- 1.16 Summary
- 1.17 Glossary
- 1.18 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 1.18.1 In-Text Questions
  - 1.18.2 Long Answer Questions
- 1.19 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 1.20 References/Suggested Readings



---

## **1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

---

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Get a brief introduction to the reform movement that took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Analyse information about all the leaders and social workers of the reform movement.
- Discuss what was the contribution of Arya Samaj in the reform movement.
- Understand the functions and principles of Arya Samaj.
- Review the work of the Satyashodhak Samaj and to understand it as a non-Brahminical movement.
- Recognize the role of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in the Aligarh Movement.
- Describe the achievements of the Singh Sabha movement.
- Analyse the effects of socio-religious reform movements in India in the nineteenth century.

---

## **1.2 INTRODUCTION**

---

The new social, economic and administrative policies introduced during the British rule brought about major changes in the Indian society. The conflict between these new and old systems led to deep upheavals in society. At the same time, western education was also introduced in India which promoted social and cultural awareness. Although the company adopted a policy of avoiding interference in religious affairs, it was to protect their colonial interests.

Influenced by western education, Indians began to examine the structure of Hindu society, religious beliefs, customs and traditions on the basis of logic and thinking. The result was that many reforms and religious movements started in the society which





## NOTES

aimed to bring about changes in the society and to reshape the thinking of the people. These reform movements were led by Indian social and religious reformers, who were inspired by western education and new ideas. Some British Governor-Generals also supported the reforms.

These reform movements were considered to be a reflection of cultural nationalism in Indian society. When society and religion had come to a standstill, these movements broke this stagnation and provided new energy. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the focus of reforms was mainly on improving the condition of women, while in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these reform movements became focused on the upliftment of the lower castes.

The purpose of these movements was to give a new direction to the society, to create an atmosphere of equality and to give every class its identity. Thus, the western education and reform movements started under the British rule showed the Indian society the path of new thinking and social change. Thus, the influence of modern Western civilization and the consciousness of defeat at the hands of imperialist powers gave rise to a new awakening in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An awakening among thoughtful people was that internal weaknesses led to colonisation. Ways to find out the strengths and shortcomings of Indian society and culture and to overcome those weaknesses began to be searched. These reformists were impressed by humanism and rational theories and modern science because people differed on what kind of reforms should be made and how much should be improved. In religion, it put an end to fanaticism, superstitions and priestly hegemony. In social life, it liberated women, talked about equal rights and abolished caste rigidity and untouchability.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, India experienced several reform movements in various fields. The aim of these movements was to reorganize and modernize Indian society. This section provides an overview and analysis of these socio-religious reform movements, and emphasizes their importance. After the Battle of Plassey in 1757, many events took place in India until the Revolt of 1857. These events affected India very deeply. The British rule brought about major changes in the way people lived and their beliefs. They destroyed Indian politics, transformed the economy and attacked social traditions and culture. This gave the impression that the West was using India only as a base from which it extracts resources and exerts cultural control. People



## NOTES

began to resist this political control and were forced to think in a certain way. Over time, this resistance grew stronger. Western influence targeted India's core belief systems. Since it seemed impossible to remove the British power, Indians concentrated on the social, religious and cultural aspects influenced by the West. This led to the self-introspection and religious reform movements of the early 1800s. In the second half of the century, these movements gained more momentum. Western ideas like Christianity and rationalism forced Hindus and Muslims to rethink their traditions. They realized that their original religions had been tarnished by blind adherence to old customs, meaningless rituals, and harmful superstitions. The goal of both Hinduism and Islam was to free oneself from these negative aspects so that the spiritual life could develop, leading to freedom and happiness for the individual and society. Under the British rule, the socio-religious reform movements in India increased the national awareness among the Indian people and the liberal ideas of the West also influenced the enlightened Indians. The main objective of these movements was to reform and rebuild society and religion at the national level. Social reformers believed that in order to revive their faith they had to get rid of elements that did not match with the original beliefs. All reformers believed that their political failures and problems came from moral decay and social decadence due to the neglect of true religion.

---

### 1.3 HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS ON SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS IN COLONIAL INDIA

---

When thinking historically about the social and religious reform movements in colonial India, it is necessary to understand the complex interactions of colonial consciousness, colonial modernity, and the revivalist and reformist movements. The following aspects are important in understanding these movements:

- **Colonial Consciousness and Modernity:** Colonial consciousness refers to the impact of British colonial rule and its impact on Indian society. Colonial modernity introduced western ideas of governance, science, and education,



## NOTES

which forced Indian reformers to strike a balance between engaging with new ideologies and maintaining traditional cultural heritage.

- **Colonial Modernity:** The British colonial rule brought about significant changes in the social and political structure of India. Modernity, which Western acceptance of science, reasoning, and administrative practices, in the form of these, gave rise to the need to re-evaluate traditional Indian practices and beliefs. Reformers were often caught between embracing these new ideas and maintaining their cultural heritage.
- **Revivalist and Reformist Movements:** The debate between the revivalist and reformist movements highlights the duality of the approaches to change in Indian society. Revival movements attempt to revive old Hindu or Islamic traditions, whereas reformist movements attempt to modernize society and reform traditional practices.
  - **Revivalism vs. Reformism:** Revivalist movements, such as those led by Swami Vivekananda and the Arya Samaj, attempted to revive traditional Indian religions and practices, often as a response to colonial influence. In contrast, reformist movements, such as those led by Raja Rammohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, attempted to criticize and reform traditional social norms and practices in order to modernize Indian society.
  - **Two Sides of the Same Coin:** Revivalist and reformist movements can be viewed as two sides of the same coin. While revivalists strive to reclaim traditional values and practices, reformists strive to adapt and modernize those practices. Both responses were influenced by the colonial experience, as they were trying to address the challenges posed by British rule.
- **Direct Conflict Between Reformers:** The direct conflict between reformers reflects the tension between adopting western ideas and maintaining traditional Indian values. Reformers faced the challenge of integrating new ideas and addressing the needs and expectations of their communities.
  - **Duel:** Reformers between modernity and tradition born stress navigate (Harmonize). They used to face duality while doing so. While supporting social reforms such as the practice of sati or child marriage, for example,



## NOTES

they also faced the challenge of preserving cultural and religious identity. This dichotomy is evident in how reformists balance their reformist plans with respect for traditional values.

- **Internal Tensions of Colonial Modernity:** The internal tensions of colonial modernity refer to the conflicts and contradictions inherent in the process of modernization under colonial rule. These tensions are reflected in social and religious reforms.
  - o **Paradoxes and Conflicts:** Western education and the offering of ideas often conflicted with traditional beliefs and practices. The reformers faced the challenge of addressing social issues in their communities, while dealing with the broader impact of colonial rule. These contradictions are evident in debates on issues such as women's rights, education, and social reform.

The historical thought of social and religious reform movements in colonial India requires taking into account the interplay of colonial consciousness, colonial modernity, and revivalist and reformist movements. The duality between reformers and the internal tensions of colonial modernity highlight the complex and often contradictory nature of the reform process. Understanding these elements provides a nuanced vision of how to meet the challenges of colonial rule and modernity.

---

## 1.4 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AWAKENING

---

### 1.4.1 Nature

British rule in India catalyzed profound social changes, which profoundly influenced Indian life and thought. The influence of western culture gave rise to the spirit of rationalism instead of blind faith in traditions, beliefs and customs. The rational influence of English education initially influenced religious and social thought, eventually this led to the promotion of political consciousness. Western knowledge inspired movements such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj and the Theosophical Society, while the orthodox Indian sentiments led to the formation of the Arya Samaj. During the nineteenth century, significant changes took place in almost every aspect of Indian life

Self-Instructional  
Material

9



## NOTES

and society under British influence. In addition to the emergence of new religious sects, orthodox Hinduism also underwent profound changes, demanding the abolition of social abuses and the introduction of modern social reforms. Revolutionary changes took place in educational paradigms and literary expressions, reflecting the spirit of the socio-religious reform movement and the beginning of the modern era. British imperialism in India catalyzed the complex interplay of cultural exchange and resistance, which shaped the direction of modernity in India. The western influence led Indians to make a critical re-evaluation of their traditions and adopt rationalism. English education, which was initially meant to produce a class of administrators and arbiters, spontaneously began to foster a sense of questioning and enlightenment among the educated elite. This intellectual awakening laid the foundation for social reform movements that challenged entrenched norms and practices.

The impact of British rule on Indian society was multifaceted. On the one hand, it gave rise to a cultural renaissance, which was characterised by the rise of reformist movements such as the Brahmo Samaj, which tried to reconcile Indian spirituality with modern rationality. The Brahmo Samaj, founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1828, advocated monotheism, social reform and abolition of caste distinctions. Similarly, the Prarthana Samaj founded in Bombay in 1867 and the Theosophical Society founded by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steele Allcott in 1875 attempted to explore the spiritual heritage of humanity and promote universal brotherhood. These movements represented attempts to synthesize Western rationalism with Indian spirituality, reflecting a broader trend towards religious and cultural reform in response to British influence.

On the contrary, conservative Indian sentiments united in movements such as the Arya Samaj, which was founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1875 CE. The Arya Samaj attempted to purify Hinduism from alleged corruption and revive Vedic traditions. Rejecting western influence, the Arya Samaj emphasized the ideas of the Vedas and advocated social and religious orthodoxy. The nineteenth century saw a confluence of socio-religious reform movements and the expression of modern political consciousness. These movements were motivated by a desire to challenge social injustice and advocate for progressive change. The influence of British rule extended beyond religious and social spheres to education and literature. The introduction of English education led to a paradigm shift in the methods and curriculum of education. Now English-medium schools proliferated, leading to access to Western knowledge



## NOTES

and ideas. This educational revolution inspired a new generation of Indians to engage critically with their society and the world. Literature changed under the British rule. With the advent of Indian literature in English also, local languages also developed. Writers like Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore and Raja Ram Mohan Roy took up a new literary aesthetic which synthesized Indian themes with Western literary forms. His works grappled with the complexities of modernity, identity, and social change, reflecting the cultural and intellectual turmoil of the time. The impact of British imperialism on Indian society was deep and far-reaching. While it brought about significant social, cultural, and intellectual changes, it also gave rise to resistance and resurgence. The nineteenth century saw a dynamic interplay of tradition and modernity, grappling with the challenges and opportunities presented by Indian colonial rule. Through socio-religious reform movements, educational initiatives and literary expressions, Indians attempted to understand the complexities of the changing world while emphasizing their cultural identity and aspirations for self-determination.

### 1.4.2 Causes

The 19<sup>th</sup> century reform movement in India was driven by a number of factors, chief among which was the establishment of British colonial rule. The British administrative system, which was shaped by its origins as a commercial enterprise, exhibited unique characteristics that fostered an environment conducive to intellectual growth. The council system of government, adopted from the very beginning, facilitated deliberate decision-making through mutual discussion and majority voting. Additionally, the supremacy of civilian authority over the military in the administrative hierarchy contributed to relatively weak administrative behaviour.

The efforts of the orientalist played an important role in rejuvenating the historical consciousness of India. Personalities like Sir William Jones, Charles Wilkins and H.H. Wilson embarked on pioneering work to highlight India's rich past. His scholarly efforts helped revive interest in India's cultural heritage and served as a catalyst for intellectual exploration. Another catalyst for the reform movement was determined missionary activity aimed at Christianizing India. While the early British East India Company refrained from interfering in the socio-religious life of the Indians, the Charter Act of 1813 marked a significant change. These missionaries often used abusive language to

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

11



## NOTES

defame Hindu gods and religious practices, and attempted to convert Indians to Christianity. Their enthusiastic efforts, especially in the early stages, attracted some influential young minds to Christianity. In response to the missionary attack on their religion and social customs, the Indian intelligentsia recognised the inevitability of reform. Under the leadership of people like Raja Rammohan Roy, who attempted to address perceived evils within Indian society, as well as defended its cultural and religious traditions. Raja Ram Mohan Roy emerged as an important figure in this awakening, who advocated religious and social reform while challenging the humiliation of Hinduism by the missionaries. The reform movement of the nineteenth century covered a wide scope of initiatives aimed at revitalizing Indian society. It attempted to reconcile tradition with modernity, address social injustice, and advocate for progressive change. The movement was characterised by a diversity of voices and perspectives, reflecting the complexity of Indian society and the challenges posed by colonial rule.

One of the main objectives of the reform movement was to eradicate social evils and promote social equality. Leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar advocated causes such as the abolition of the practice of sati, the promotion of widow remarriage and the abolition of caste-based discrimination. His efforts paved the way for legislative reforms which tried to transform Indian society along more equitable lines. The reform movement also included religious revivalism and cultural renaissance. Figures like Swami Vivekananda and Dayananda Saraswati attempted to revive Hinduism by emphasizing its philosophical and spiritual dimensions. They tried to counter missionary propaganda by promoting a glorious and vocal Hindu identity rooted in the ancient traditions of India. Besides, the reform movement promoted the growth of nationalist sentiment and paved the way for India's freedom struggle. The awakening of national consciousness was driven by a sense of pride in India's cultural heritage and a desire for self-determination. Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Dadabhai Naoroji mobilized mass support for independence and eventually laid the foundation for the overthrow of the British rule.

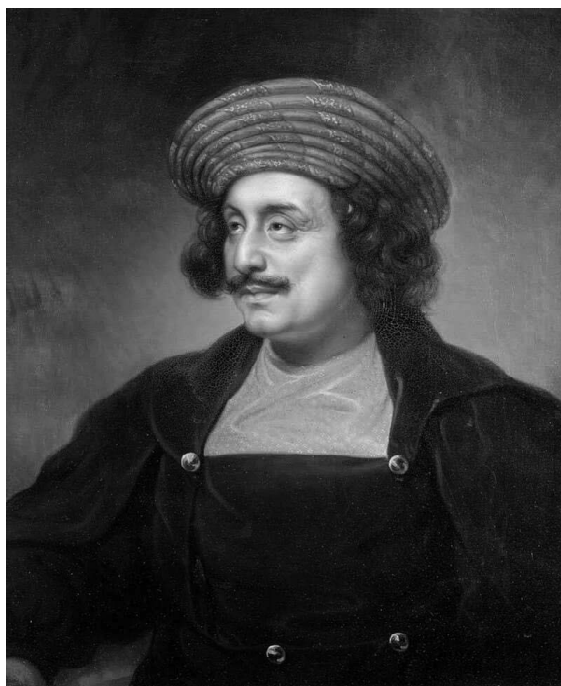
In conclusion, the Indian reform movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a multifaceted phenomenon inspired by a confluence of factors. It represented the challenges posed by colonialism and the quest for social, cultural and political renewal. The legacy of this movement lies in independent India's commitment to democracy, social justice and secularism.



## 1.5 BRAHMO SAMAJ

### 1.5.1 Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is called the “Father of Modern India” because he played an important role in taking India from ancient times to modern times. Even though he grew up in a difficult period of Indian history, he was still special. He was the first to make his fellow Indians realize new ideas. Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj, which believed in monotheism, i.e. believing in one God. It was the beginning of the movement for social and religious change in India. He not only focused on Hinduism, but he also wanted Indians to get western education. He founded newspapers, fought for freedom of the press, pushed for a change in the way politics and functioning was done, and worked hard to eradicate unfair treatment of people.



*Fig. 1.1 Raja Ram Mohan Roy*

**Source:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raja\\_Ram\\_Mohan\\_Roy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raja_Ram_Mohan_Roy)

Self-Instructional  
Material

13





## NOTES

### Atmiya Sabha-Raja

Ram Mohan Roy gave great respect to Hinduism, but he felt that Hindus did not understand their religion properly. He strongly opposed idol worship, rituals, sati pratha, child marriage and other customs. He advocated for gender equality. In 1814 AD, the supporters of his ideas in Calcutta formed a group called Atmiya Sabha.

### 1.5.2 Brahmo Samaj

Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj in Calcutta on August 20, 1828 AD. “Brahmo” means a person who believes in Brahman, and “Samaj” means a group of people. He wanted this group to bring people of different faiths together and make them realize that they are all children of God. Any person could join the society, irrespective of religion, caste or creed. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his followers used to go to a Christian church for prayers. Later, some of his followers started demanding a place for themselves to worship. He started a prayer hall called ‘Brahmo Sabha’ in Calcutta on August 20, 1828 by renting a house from Rama Kamal Basu. It was officially opened to the general public on January 23, 1830 and was later renamed as Brahmo Samaj.

### 1.5.3 Principles of Brahmo Samaj

It includes:

- There is a one God who created the world and God is the one who cares for it. God has infinite power, wisdom, love and goodness.
- People’s spirits live forever and can be reformed forever. They are responsible for their actions to God.
- Persons or man-made thing should not be worshipped as God. Since, God speaks to the souls of people, so there is no need for prophets or scriptures to interact with God.
- For the Brahmo Samaj, truth is the only religion. The Vedas and other holy books are not always correct. All religious teachings and books should be respected only if they are in harmony with what God has told to people’s souls.



## NOTES

- People should worship God every day by loving and obeying according to God's will.
- All are equal to God. Therefore, there should not be unfair treatment towards anyone irrespective of any race, skin colour, race or gender.
- The Brahmo Samaj does not believe in worshipping idols, killing animals for God or performing rituals.

### 1.5.4 Religious Reform

After gaining an adequate understanding of various religious beliefs, Raja Ram Mohan Roy started sharing his religious outlook. Here are some of his important religious reforms:

- **Spread of Monotheism:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy learned about Islam, Christianity and the Upanishads and started promoting monotheism, belief in one God. He taught that there is only one God and encouraged everyone to treat each other like brothers and sisters, irrespective of their background.
- **Opposition to Idol Worship:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy did not like idol worship because he believed that God has no physical form. He believed that the best way to find happiness is to think deeply about spirituality and worship the Supreme Being. He said that the best worship is that which is with patience, love, kindness and without hatred. Anyone could join the Brahmo Samaj, which could help people of different religions to live together better.

### 1.5.5 Social Work

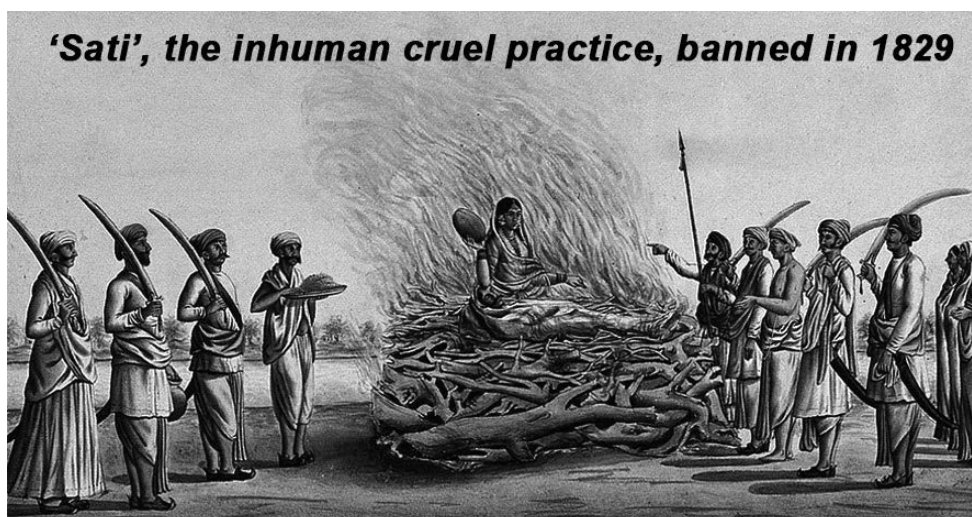
Raja Ram Mohan Roy was very unhappy with the irrational practices present in the Indian society. Many wrongs were justified in the name of religion. Their aim was to eradicate the social evils which had taken root in the garb of religion. Some of the social initiatives launched by Raja Ram Mohan Roy are given below:

- **Abolition of Sati System:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy wanted to improve the lives of Indian women. He did not like the cruel tradition of Sati system, in which widows were burnt alive on the pyre of their husbands. In 1818, he saw his



## NOTES

sister-in-law Alkamanjari becoming Sati and he could not stop her. He was so saddened and sorry that he promised to keep fighting until the practice of Sati was stopped forever. Many people joined him in his fight. Finally, in 1829, the British government led by Lord William Bentinck outlawed the practice of Sati and said that those who did so would be punished. Raja Ram Mohan Roy's hard work paid off and the practice of Sati was abolished.



*Fig. 1.2 A View of the Practice of 'Sati'*

**Source:** <https://modernrationalist.com/laws-for-social-changes/>

- **Opposition to Polygamy:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy did not like the idea of a man having multiple wives or buying girls for marriage. He particularly did not like a system called Kulinabad in Bengal, where girls from the lower castes were married off to men from the upper castes. These men didn't really want to get married, they just wanted more wives for lust and a business deal. Raja Ram Mohan Roy criticized this system because he believed that marriage should be about love and respect and not about business or treating people unfairly on the basis of their caste. Since husbands often left their wives after marriage to look for other spouses, young brides became vulnerable, and had to depend on their fathers or brothers for support. Raja Ram Mohan Roy highlighted that in



the Hindu scriptures men were allowed to remarry only in specific and rare circumstances. He, therefore, opposed the practice of polygamy.

- **Opposition to the Caste System:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy did not like people treating others badly because of their caste or treating some people as “untouchables”. He believed that everyone should be treated equally, irrespective of caste they were born into. He even said that people of different castes should marry each other and eat together. This was a big deal because it was contrary to the perception of many people at the time. Raja Ram Mohan Roy wanted to change the society so that everyone could be treated fairly, irrespective of their background.

### 1.5.6 Farmer Support

Although Raja Ram Mohan Roy owned a lot of land and was rich, he did not like that rich landlords treated their farmers and labourers unfairly. He wanted the government to make such rules that landlords could not charge more rent from the farmers. He believed that there should be a good rapport between the peasants and the landlords, so he asked the British government to enact a law to protect the rights of the peasants to rent land. Rammohan Roy wanted everyone to be treated fairly, whether rich or poor.

### 1.5.7 Freedom of the press

During the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, there was not much freedom for newspapers, and most of the newspapers were in English only. But Raja Ram Mohan Roy changed it by starting two newspapers: one “**Mirat-ul Akhbar**” in Persian and the other “**Samvad Kaumudi**” in Bengali. Indians had to seek permission from the British to publish news. But Raja Ram Mohan Roy felt that a free press was important for freedom. In 1823, he and others asked the British government to make newspapers independent. He said that this will benefit both the rulers and the people. In 1835 AD, Sir Charles Metcalfe, who was in charge at that time, abolished the rules regarding newspapers because of the work of Raja Rammohan Roy. This meant that newspapers were now free to publish whatever they wanted.



## NOTES

### 1.5.8 Educational Functions

Some of their educational functions are as follows:

- **Propagation of Western Education:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy was very fond of western education. He helped establish the Hindu College in Calcutta in 1817 to teach English. He also created the Anglo-Hindu School to promote English learning. He believed that the government should also spend money on teaching western subjects instead of teaching only Sanskrit. In 1835, Lord William Bentinck made a big rule supporting western education. This is what Raja Ram Mohan Roy wanted and it made his dreams come true.
- **Support for Women's Education:** In traditional Indian society, female education was prohibited, and women were not encouraged to receive education. However, Raja Ram Mohan Roy strongly advocated women's education.
- **Literary Work:** From 1815 to 1820 AD, Raja Ram Mohan Roy wrote 14 important books in Bengali and 10 in English. He felt that Hindu religious texts are difficult to understand for ordinary people as they were in Sanskrit. Therefore, he translated them into English, Bengali and Hindi, which he called the abbreviated version Vedantasara. In 1820, he wrote a book titled "**The Precepts of Jesus, The Guide to Peace and Happiness.**" He helped to make Bengali writing not just poetry but also ordinary writing. He also wrote the first Bengali grammar book. For nearly fifty years, the Brahmo Samaj worked for the betterment of Hinduism and espoused ideas that were not just about religion. This group played an important role in bettering Bengal and India. They wanted more freedom for the people, coexistence for all, and a more just society. They were an example for other groups who wanted the same change.

### 1.5.9 Debendranath Tagore

After the death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the task of taking care of the Brahmo Samaj came to Pt. Ramchandra Vidyavagish, but due to lack of a qualified leader, the number of its members kept decreasing. The credit for reviving this institution was given to Debendranath Tagore, father of poet Rabindranath Tagore. In 1842-43 he joined the Brahmo Samaj. He was greatly influenced by the ideas of Ram Mohan Roy. In order



## NOTES

to propagate Roy's ideas, he founded the Tattvabodhini Sabha in 1839, which was attended by the followers of Ram Mohan Roy and eminent Indians like Pt. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Akshay Kumar Dutt. The Sabha also brought out a magazine Tattvabodhini in Bengali and started a Tattvabodhini school. Devendranath, with his talent and efforts, took the Brahmo Samaj forward as a theistic movement. Now the basis of the Brahmo Samaj became "spiritual knowledge arising from the self-experience of the human heart" in place of the scripture. They boycotted idolatry, pilgrimage, rituals, atonement, etc., as reprehensible. Faith and morality were given the highest place in religion. The Brahmo Samaj emphasized on burning social questions such as widow marriage, women's education, etc., and opposed the evil practice of polygamy. In 1856, Debendranath Tagore left the responsibility of the society to Keshav Chandra Sen and went for self-study and meditation.

### 1.5.10 Keshav Chandra Sen (1834-84)

After Debendranath Tagore, Keshav Chandra Sen played an important role in the advancement of the Brahmo Samaj. His efforts led to the rapid growth of the Brahma Samaj movement. Apart from Bengal, its branches also opened in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, and Madras, but this institution also disintegrated during the time of Keshav Chandra Sen. The reason for this was that Sen was very liberal. He considered Hinduism to be narrow and allowed the reading of books of all religions in the society. He began to take more interest in social reforms than religious matters. He opposed the caste system, idol worship and prevented the upper castes from wearing sacrifices. His actions caused a split in the party. In 1865, Debendranath Tagore removed Sen from the post of Acharya of the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj was now clearly divided into two groups: **The Bharatiya Brahmo Samaj** (of Sen's followers) and **The Adi Brahma Samaj** (of Thakur's followers). Despite this, Sen continued to preach his liberal ideas. They were engaged in social work. Due to his efforts (1872) Brahma marriage was declared valid by the Act of 1872. This Act (Brahmo Marriages Act, 1872) allowed inter-caste and widow marriages and fixed the minimum age of marriage for girls at 14 years and for boys at 18 years. Although Sen was instrumental in getting this Act passed, in 1878 he himself married his 13 year old daughter to a 16 year old prince of Cooch Behar. This caused a split in the party. Now a new party was formed, **The Ordinary Brahmo Samaj**, but due to organizational weakness and



## NOTES

lack of able leadership, the Brahmo Samaj lost its importance in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On evaluating the work of the Brahmo Samaj, it appears that the Brahmo Samaj brought religious, political and social consciousness in Bengal. The educated community of Bengal was highly influenced by the works of the Brahmo Samaj. This reduced the influence of mental and religious orthodoxy, improved the condition of women, reduced the rigidity of the caste system and led to the development of education. Although this movement could not become widespread, its importance does not diminish.

### 1.5.11 Impact of Brahmo Samaj

The Brahmo Samaj, founded in 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was a place where people could worship collectively. It was the first modern religious reform movement which interpreted Hindu scriptures and traditions to establish the universality of Hinduism and the Brahmo Samaj as the meeting place of different religions.

With the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj, for the first time a public place of worship was established in India to spread the belief in one God. This led to a split from traditional Hinduism, but it was rectified and given a new and universal identity. The Brahmo Samaj was an Indian theistic church that was open to all castes, religions and cultures. As a “one-god society”, it preached one-god belief, condemning all forms of idolatry and polytheism. It introduced religious and social reforms promoting unity and tolerance among different religious sects. After the death of Raja Rammohan Roy, Debendranath Tagore and then Keshav Chandra Sen took over the leadership of the society. Keshav Chandra was a motivational orator, writer and leader who discovered and promoted the harmony of religions.

---

## 1.6 ARYA SAMAJ

---

### 1.6.1 Introduction to Arya Samaj

Swami Dayanand Saraswati started the Arya Samaj in 1875 AD. It was different from the Brahmo Samaj because it was more traditional and strong-willed. Whereas the



Brahmo Samaj and Prarthana Samaj were influenced by Western ideas and Indian reactions to Western thinking. Swami Dayananda Saraswati's reform movement looked to India's past for inspiration. The Arya Samaj based its main ideas on the old scriptures and religions of India, especially the ideas that have been passed down from the time of the Vedic period.

### **1.6.2 The Early Life of Dayananda Saraswati**

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, an important Hindu scholar and reformer, started the Arya Samaj. He was born on 12th February, 1824, in Tankara, Gujarat. He began questioning traditional Hindu beliefs, especially about God, at a young age. He did not like the idea of many gods or idol worship. After the death of sister and grandfather, he thought a lot about life and death. In 1846, he left home to avoid getting married and to find answers about life. He lived as a wandering ascetic for about fifteen years in search of enlightenment. He settled in Mathura, where he studied the Vedas under the guidance of sage Virjananda. After learning, Virjanand requested him to teach others. Dayananda Saraswati travelled all over India, speaking against the caste system, idol worship, and child marriage. He debated with religious scholars and priests, which demonstrated his profound knowledge of the Vedas. Many people came to listen to him, and even kings consulted with him.



***Fig. 1.3 Swami Dayanand Saraswati***

**Source:** <https://yojnaias.com/swami-dayanand-saraswati/>





## NOTES

### 1.6.3 Return to the Vedas

Dayananda Saraswati was not attracted to Western education or other religions like Christianity and Islam. He believed that the Vedas are the only true source of knowledge. In his book “**Satyarth Prakash**” (The Light of Truth), he explained what in his view the Vedas meant. He believed that Vedic religion was supreme and that there were no bad things in the Vedic society like the caste system or treating some people as untouchables. He also believed that men and women were equal in the Vedic society. He was a true believer in Vedic religion and wanted people to start following it as he felt that it would make people better. That is why he started the Arya Samaj to teach people about the Vedas, improve the Hindu religion and get rid of bad things in the society.

### 1.6.4 Establishment of Arya Samaj

Dayananda Saraswati actually believed in Vedic Hinduism and thought that the Vedas were very important. He did not like that only Brahmins could understand the Vedas, so he started the Arya Samaj in Mumbai on 10th April, 1875. Arya Samaj means “society of nobility”, and its aim was to improve Hinduism. Dayananda Saraswati spent his entire life working to spread the Arya Samaj at various places. He wanted to create a just society where everyone is treated equally through Arya Samaj.

### 1.6.5 Principles of Arya Samaj

The members of the Arya Samaj followed the “Ten Principles”, which are as follows:

1. God is the ultimate source of all real knowledge.
2. God is the embodiment of all truth, knowledge, omnipotence and immortality, and is the only entity worthy of worship.
3. The Vedas represent the true storehouse of knowledge.
4. The Aryans should always embrace the truth and reject the untruth.
5. All actions should be carried out after careful consideration of what is right and wrong.



## NOTES

6. The primary goal of this society is to improve the physical, spiritual, and social well-being of the world.
7. Everyone should be treated with love and fairness.
8. Ignorance must be eradicated and knowledge must be furthered.
9. Each person should prioritize the well-being of others as well as their own.
10. The collective welfare of humanity must take precedence over individual well-being.

### 1.6.6 Arya Samaj Reform Movement

#### Religious Reforms:

Swami Dayananda Saraswati recognized the disordered condition of Hinduism. To address this, he proposed to reintroduce Vedic religion as a means of reforming Hinduism. Here are some of the religious reforms he undertaken:

- **Against Idol Worship:** The Arya Samaj questioned the traditional Brahmin beliefs and said there was no evidence in the Vedas that idols should be worshipped as gods. Swami Dayananda Saraswati explained that God is everywhere and cannot be confined to temples, which he called “religious shops” run by priests. Therefore, he criticized the Hindus who believed in many gods and worshipped idols. They also disliked the idea of sacrificing animals or humans or performing rituals and ceremonies. In 1886 AD, he wrote a pamphlet in Sanskrit called “*Bhagavata Khandanam*” to free Hinduism from the control of priests.
- **Monotheism:** They strongly believed in one God, as described in the Vedas. He believed that Vishnu, Rudra and Agni were not different gods, but different aspects of the same God. He claimed that only the Vedic religion was real, and asked his followers to follow the teachings of the Vedas.
- **Shuddhi Movement:** One of the aims of the Arya Samaj was to withstand the influences of Islam and Christianity, as a lot of Hindus were converting to these religions. Using purification ceremonies, the Arya Samaj successfully reconverted thousands of converted Hindus back to Hinduism.



## NOTES

- **Opposition of the Priestly Class:** The Arya Samaj rejected the hierarchical priesthood associated with idol worship, ritualism and the caste system. It also opposed traditional Hindu practices promoted by the orthodox Hindu priestly class, which often served their own interests. Swami Dayananda Saraswati firmly believed that there was no need for the priestly class to act as mediators between individuals and God, nor were they the custodians of Hinduism. He criticised the ignorance and selfish behaviour of the priestly class who exploited the common people for their personal gains.
- **Opposition to Ritualism:** Swami Dayanand taught that Vedic religion does not include idol worship, belief in divine incarnation, pilgrimage or external rituals. He rejected any belief or tradition that could not withstand rational scrutiny. Thus, he encouraged the people to renounce anything that was not supported by the Vedas.

### Social Reforms:

Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a religious reformer as well as a social reformer. He identified problems such as child marriage and caste system prevailing in the society. The goal of the Arya Samaj was to eradicate such harmful practices and to advocate social welfare. Some of the social initiatives taken by Swami Dayanand are as follows:

- **Opposition to the Caste System:** Swami Dayananda Saraswati disagreed with the idea that people are born into specific castes, and he did not like the caste system. He showed that the Vedas do not support treating some people as untouchables. He believed that a person's worth should be based on his deeds and not on his/her parents. He started a movement against untouchability and encouraged marriages between people of different castes.
- **Preaching of Equality:** Swami Dayananda Saraswati believed that everyone is the same, and the work they choose determines whether they will be seen as a Brahmin, Vaishya, Kshatriya or Shudra. He said that each of these groups needs the other, and that no one is better or worse than the other. In the Arya Samaj, he treated everyone equally, irrespective of their caste or religion.
- **Opposition to Child Marriage:** Child marriage was common before India gained independence. Swami Dayanand Saraswati worked hard to stop this



## **NOTES**

tradition in Hindu society. He wanted to end child marriage. In Arya Samaj, they made rules that boys could not get married before the age of 25 and girls could not get married before the age of 16. Arya Samaj started the first orphanage in Ferozepur, Punjab and then built more orphanages all over India. He also started homes for widows and poor women. The Arya Samaj gave them houses, taught them skills and also contributed to their marriages in good homes.

- **Orphanage:** Arya Samaj started its first orphanage in Ferozepur, Punjab and then established many more orphanages all over the country. They also set up ashrams for widows and needy women where they could live, learn useful skills, and find suitable spouses.

### **Swadeshi Movement:**

He was a firm believer in Swadeshi and encouraged everyone to use only goods made in India. They also called for boycott of goods made in other countries. He strongly supported democracy and self-government.

### **Encouragement of Widow Remarriage:**

Swami Dayanand supported widow remarriage. He requested the people to put an end to the cruel and age-old practice of “Sati-Pratha”. To help widows avoid the difficulties of being forced to remain widows, Swami Dayanand promoted widow remarriage. He recommended the “Niyoga” method for widows.

### **National Awakening:**

Swami Dayananda Saraswati spread the idea that the British rule in India did not help in the progress of our country. Instead, it benefited the British most. Arya Samaj made people more aware of their country and its issues. It also helped in preparing important leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Swami Shraddhanand, Bipin Chandra Pal, Munshi Ramanand and others who were part of the Indian independence movement. This awareness inspired people to come together and work for their freedom.

### **Educational Work:**

Swami Dayananda Saraswati believed that education is the best means to improve society and religion. The Arya Samaj established different Gurukuls to promote education, especially Vedic knowledge. Here are some of the educational efforts made by the Arya Samaj:



## NOTES

- **Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College:** In memory of Swami Dayananda, his followers established many schools, colleges and hostels across the country. With the efforts of Lala Hansraj, the first Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College was opened in Lahore on 1st July, 1886. The college had a blend of western and scientific education, but it ensured to keep Indian culture alive as well. Its main objective was to encourage the study of Hindu literature, classical Sanskrit and the Vedas.
- **Gurukul:** Arya Samaj started Gurukuls to impart education in the traditional Aryan way. A famous Gurukul at Kangri near Haridwar was established by Lala Munshi Ram. Children used to join it at the age of eight and stay for sixteen years to complete the studies. They had to pledge to live a simple life and follow all the rules. During this extensive training period, students were not allowed to go to their homes, unless there were exceptional circumstances. The Kangri Gurukul became a famous centre for Vedic studies.
- **Promotion of Women's Education:** In his speeches, he supported the education of women. He said that in the ancient Vedic period, women were educated and treated equally. He believed that women should get the same education as men and he also suggested teaching them military skills. The Arya Samaj started a number of schools and colleges for girls in Punjab.

---

## 1.7 PRARTHANA SAMAJ

---

Prarthana Samaj was an important movement established in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century for social and religious reform in Indian society. It was established in the year 1867 in Bombay (now Mumbai) in Maharashtra. The main objective of Prarthana Samaj was to promote social reforms as well as religious awareness, so that the evils, superstitions and inequalities prevailing in the society could be removed. This society was formed mainly by people inspired by modern ideology, who were influenced by western education and liberal ideas.

Keshav Chandra Sen's visit to Maharashtra gave impetus to the establishment of Prarthana Samaj (Prarthana Samaj) in Bombay in 1867. Under Dr. Atmaram



## NOTES

Pandurang, R.G. Bhandarkar and M.G. Under Ranade's guidance, the society gained momentum and direction. Emphasizing theistic worship and social reform, the Prarthana Samaj became a beacon of progressive ideals. Its most important contribution was to lead a broad social reform movement. The focus of the Prarthana Samaj was to promote social equality and the abolition of oppressive customs. The society campaigned for the renunciation of caste distinctions, advocating widow remarriage, promoting female education, and against purdah and child marriage. Mahadev Govind Ranade emerged as a prominent leader who highlighted the deviations of contemporary Hindu society from its ancient doctrines. He condemned practices such as subjugation of women, child marriage, widowhood stigma and caste-based restrictions, which were contrary to earlier traditions.

Ranade's vision grew beyond Maharashtra into a nationwide movement for social reform. Additionally, Ranade encouraged converts from other religions to accept and advocated for reducing extravagant expenses incurred in marriage. His leadership garnered support across India, bringing the agenda of social reform to the forefront of national discourse.

In parallel to the efforts of the Prarthana Samaj, Jyotiba Phule emerged as a pioneering social reformer in Maharashtra. In 1851, he, along with his wife, founded a school for girls in Poona with the aim of educating children from marginalized communities. Phule's advocacy extended to facilitating widow remarriage and fighting untouchability, which ignited the anti-Brahmin movement. The aim of his Satya Shodhak Samaj was to end the Brahminical hegemony and empower the oppressed. Phule's activism focused on the plight of villagers, advocating for their social and economic upliftment. He challenged Brahmanical orthodoxy and advocated social justice through the Satya Shodhak Samaj. Phule's work also found resonance outside Maharashtra, inspiring marginalised communities across India to assert their rights and demand equality.

In short, the Prarthana Samaj and Jyotiba Phule's Satya Shodhak Samaj played an important role in India's social reform movement. Their efforts transcended regional boundaries, creating a nationwide awareness of the injustices perpetrated by caste-based discrimination and patriarchal norms. The legacy of these reformers remains in India's ongoing struggle for social equity and inclusive growth.



## NOTES

### 1.7.1 Establishment of a Prarthana Samaj

The credit for the establishment of the Prarthana Samaj goes to Atmaram Pandurang, who was a Marathi Brahmin and social reformer. Atmaram Pandurang belonged to that section of Maharashtra which felt the need for reform and renaissance in society. He believed that the caste system, superstitions and religious fanaticism had held society back, and a strong movement was needed to reform it. The main objective of establishing the Prarthana Samaj was to promote the spirit of monotheism and to establish equality among all sections of the society. The inspiration of this society was also taken from the Brahmo Samaj founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was working for religious and social reforms.

### 1.7.2 Objectives of the Prarthana Samaj

Prayer was the main principle of society, to make society progressive and equal through religious and social reforms. Under this, the following objectives were laid:

- **Monotheism:** The Prarthana Samaj raised its voice against idolatry and superstition and propagated monotheism. The society believed that there is only one God and he should be worshipped with a sincere heart rather than an idol or symbol.
- **Social Reforms:** The society fought against social evils like women's rights, widow remarriage, caste discrimination and child marriage. It aimed to promote social equality and justice, so that all sections of the society could get equal rights.
- **Education:** The Prarthana Samaj acknowledged the importance of education and made efforts to educate the people. The society believed that education is the only means by which ignorance and evils prevailing in the society can be eliminated. Special importance was also given to women's education.
- **Religious Tolerance:** The Prarthana Samaj fostered a spirit of tolerance towards different religions and worked towards ending religious discrimination. The society believed that the aim of all religions is the same, and they should show respect and tolerance towards each other.



### 1.7.3 Social Reformers of Prarthana Samaj

Among the prominent leaders of Prarthana Samaj, the contribution of personalities like Atmaram Pandurang as well as Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade and Gopal Hari Deshmukh is noteworthy. All of them did important work for social reform and furthered the objectives of the Prarthana Samaj.

- **Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade:** Justice Ranade was a prominent leader and thinker of the Prarthana Samaj. He also fought legally for social reforms and tried to raise social issues in the judicial system. He not only gave ideological support but also provided a legal basis for bringing about change in society. He advocated sweeping reforms in the fields of social justice, equality and education. He stood strongly against widow remarriage, women's education and caste discrimination. He adopted a pragmatic and coordinated approach to bring about reforms in the structure of Indian society.



*Fig. 1.4 Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade*

**Source:** <https://organiser.org>

- **Gopal Hari Deshmukh:** Also known as 'Lokhitwadi', was one of the prominent social reformers of the Prarthana society. He raised the need for reform in the society through his writings and speeches and fought against the caste system, superstitions and religious bigotry.





## NOTES

### 1.7.4 Functions of the Prarthana Samaj

- **Widow Remarriage Movement:** The Prarthana Samaj fought vigorously for the right of widow remarriage. At that time, widows were treated inhumanely in the society and their remarriage was a big social issue. The Prarthana Samaj played an important role in changing this practice.
- **Women's Education:** The society conducted special campaigns for women's education and made it a major part of social reform. The efforts of Prarthana Samaj increased the opportunities for education for women and they gained awareness of their rights.
- **Fight against Caste Discrimination:** The society fought against caste discrimination and the feeling of hierarchy and worked towards social equality. The aim of the society was to give equal rights to all castes and to end caste-based inequality.
- **Religious Reforms:** The Prarthana Samaj tried to free the people from superstition and fanaticism through religious reforms. The society raised its voice against idolatry and promoted the spirit of monotheism.

The influence of Prarthana Samaj was profound on Indian society in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It played a major role in the social reform movements of Maharashtra and Western India. This movement started for religious tolerance, social equality, and women's rights, later proved to be significant at the national level as well. Due to the efforts of this movement, reformist ideology spread in India and Prarthana Samaj helped the Indian society to overcome religious and social fanaticism. Even today, the principles and ideologies of Prarthana Samaj are a source of inspiration for those who are struggling for social justice and equality.

---

### 1.8 RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

---

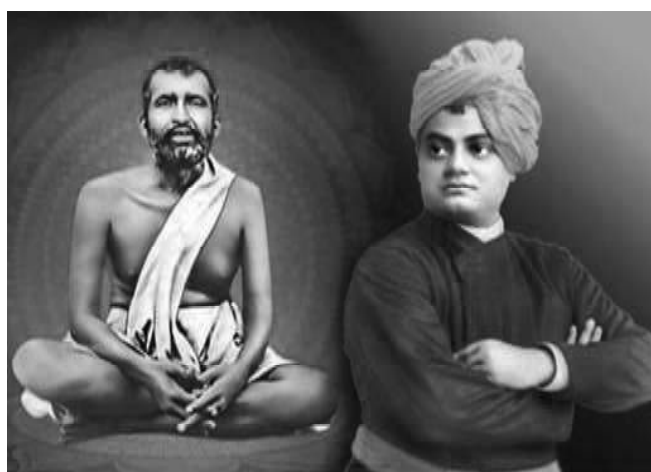
The Ramakrishna Mission brought together two important influences: the first ancient Indian teachings and the second modern Western thought. It was inspired by



Ramakrishna Paramahansa, but it was Swami Vivekananda who started the Ramakrishna Mission.

### **1.8.1 Ramakrishna Paramahansa**

Ramakrishna Paramahansa was born in a traditional Brahmin family in a small village in Bengal. His upbringing imbibed him into spiritual traditions from an early age. He later served as a priest at the Kali Temple in Dakshineswar, Calcutta, where his spiritual journey deepened. Despite not having a formal education, he showed engrossment in profound spiritual practices, drawing inspiration from various Hindu sects, Islam and Christianity. He searched the essence of various religions and discovered the truth that lies between them. Ramakrishna's life was marked by the unity of all religions and a firm belief in the universal presence of God. He believed to serve God through the service of humanity and to see God in every person. His solitary spiritual quest led him to profound insights and experiences that shaped his teachings and philosophy. Ramakrishna Paramahansa's inclusive approach to spirituality and his emphasis on love, compassion and service inspires people around the world. His life is a testimony to the transformative power of spiritual practice and the unity of religious ideals. Through his example, he encouraged others to search for truth and to live a life of dedication and service to humanity.



**Fig. 1.5** Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda

**Source:** <https://navbharattimes.indiatimes.com>



## NOTES

### 1.8.2 Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was born in Calcutta on 12th January, 1863 and had his early education there. Swami Vivekananda's childhood name was Narendranath Dutt. While receiving education in school, he was attracted to the Brahmo Samaj. He then studied the philosophy of Mill and Spencer. In 1881, when he was a student, he went to the Dakshineswar temple, where he met Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Vivekananda accepted Ramakrishna as his guru and received spiritual education from him. Swami Vivekananda was greatly influenced by Ramakrishna Paramahansa and he emerged as his most prominent disciple. He was not only a philosopher and nationalist but also a great reformer. Vivekananda's intellectual curiosity led him to study the works of prominent European thinkers like Kant, Descartes, Hume, Hegel, Darwin and Comte. He was also attracted to the progressive ideals of the Brahmo Samaj, though he felt it was lacking. His meeting with Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa in 1883 changed his life. Ramakrishna became his spiritual guide and after Ramakrishna's demise in 1886, Vivekananda resolved to spread his teacher's teachings. Based on the teachings of Ramakrishna Mission, the philosophy of Upanishads and Gita and the teachings of Buddha, Vivekananda taught human values to the world.

In 1893, Swami Vivekananda led India at the First Conference of World Religions (Parliament of World Religions) held in Chicago, USA. Even before going to this conference, Narendranath Dutt's name was changed to Swami Vivekananda on the suggestion of Maharaj Khetri. With his charisma and deep spirituality, Swami Vivekananda attracted many followers. Together, they established a monastery at Baranagar in 1887, where they lived as ascetics. Later in 1898 Belur Math was established, along with many other monasteries at various places. Vivekananda and his followers led a disciplined life centered on service and devotion. He dedicated himself to spreading the ideals and values of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and laid the foundation of the Ramakrishna Mission.

#### **Vivekananda's Thoughts:**

- According to Vivekananda, religion is the development of the divinity inherent within man, religion is neither in books nor in religious doctrines, it believes only in experience. Everyone can experience their own God.



## NOTES

- Like his Guru, Vivekananda believed in the corporeal and formless forms of God.
- Similarly, he believed in the sanctity of ancient Hindu scriptures and emphasized the study of Vedanta. In his view, India can lead the whole world on the strength of spiritual knowledge propounded by Vedanta.
- He described religion as food for the soul of man, just as the methods of making food from food are different in different countries; in the same way, there are many forms of religion, but there is a fundamental unity among them. Thus, while considering the diversity of different religions as natural and necessary, Vivekananda emphasized the unity inherent in them.
- He strongly opposed orthodoxy and superstitions.
- Vivekananda described true service to mankind as true Godliness. He laid more emphasis on the service of the poor and the downtrodden and said that a monk should do service work along with spiritual work.
- To serve the poor and the afflicted, Vivekananda established the centers of Ramakrishna Mission at many places in India and abroad. In this way, he made social welfare a major part of religion.
- Vivekananda presented the greatness of Hinduism in an impressive manner, in one of his speeches he said that the main basis of our religion is love. He described India as a country where all missionaries were given freedom from the beginning and the policy of intolerance towards any religion was not adopted.
- A compilation of Vivekananda's speeches and writings was published in many books. The Prantha called Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga are famous. These show how deep his faith was towards ancient Hinduism. He published a fortnightly paper called **Prabuddha Bharat** in English and **Udyodhan** in Bengali to propagate his idea.
- Emphasizing the greatness of Indian religion and culture, Vivekananda told the world that India can reach the pinnacle of progress again, but to achieve this goal, it will have to abandon the feeling of separation. According to him, we should give as well as take something. We can impart to the West the good elements of our spiritualism and culture and from there we can adopt a spirit of



## NOTES

honesty in collective effort and business, in addition to scientific and technical knowledge.

- Vivekananda opposed untouchability. According to him, one of the causes of India's downfall is the oppression of most sections of the society. Therefore, the shackles of the caste system should be removed and the poor and untouchables should be elevated from the state of ignorance. In his opinion, this should be done slowly and carefully.
- In Swami Vivekananda's view, the world was passing through a great crisis. In his opinion, the material progress that was being made by scientific investigations in the Western countries in the absence of spiritual ideas was soon going to create a crisis situation in those countries. Therefore, western countries should adopt the spirituality of India, but as long as India is caught in the bondage of poverty and slavery, this is not possible. Therefore, he considered India's independence necessary for material progress.

Although Swami Vivekananda did not directly participate in the political movement, he encouraged the feeling of nationalism through his thoughts and actions. In the opinion of R. C. Majumdar, he started the work of serving and uplifting the poor and inspired virtually every Indian to serve the nation. He instilled the spirit of nationalism in every Indian by showcasing the greatness of the country and the unity of Indians, by inspiring the common people to remove poverty and ignorance and by advising every Indian to be empowered. According to Vivekananda, India should get early independence because it is necessary for the salvation of humanity. He advised them to work fearlessly towards this goal. In fact, Vivekananda contributed immensely to the spiritual foundation of Indian nationalism through his ideas. Swami Vivekananda believed that "Religion is neither in books, nor in reason, nor in intellectual development; Logic, doctrines, books and religious practices are only helpful in understanding religion. Real religion is in self-knowledge". Impressed by his idea, a foreign lady, Margaret Noble, accompanied him to India and became famous as Sister Nivedita.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa also resorted to traditional methods of meditation, renunciation and devotion for religious liberation. He emphasized that the greatest path beyond all these is human service. Swami Vivekananda considered casteism,



## NOTES

untouchability and inequality as the weakness of society. He appealed to the younger generation to be proud of their ancient civilization and dedicate their culture to the service of humanity. Vivekananda also said, “So long as millions of people are hungry and ignorant, I consider every person who gets education at their own expense but does not help them as a traitor.” He is also considered the founder of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Nava Hindu Jagran. Subhash Chandra Bose called Swami Vivekananda the ‘spiritual father of the modern national movement’. According to Rabindranath Tagore, if a man wants to understand India, he should read Vivekananda.

### 1.8.3 Parliament of World Religions

In 1893, Swami Vivekananda attended the famous ‘Parliament of the World’s Religions’ in Chicago, United States. The event was organized by Columbus to commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of America. The House of Parliament was remarkable, with about 10,000 people in attendance, each specializing in their respective religion and philosophy. Initially hesitant, Swami Vivekananda eventually rose to speak, beginning with the words “Sisters and brothers of America”, which was met with applause and encouraged him to speak boldly. He emphasized the unity of all religions at the World Conference of Religions. He said that if the materialism of the West and the spiritualism of the East are combined, it will be the best path for humanity. He referred to Hinduism as the “mother of world religions” and gave a clear explanation of it in a paper he submitted. In another speech, he said, “I have come here to ask for help for my poor people”. The masters greatly impressed the Americans. The press enthusiastically described him as “the greatest figure at the Parliament of the World’s Religions”. Mrs. Annie Besant, who listened to his speech, said he “mesmerized the large crowd.”

Swami Vivekananda received wide recognition and the demand for his teachings grew rapidly. Now he started lecture tours and in 1896 he founded the Vedanta Society in New York. His books on yoga attracted considerable attention in America and Europe. Vivekananda’s travels took him to Paris, London and other cities, where he was given positions teaching philosophy and religion in some universities. During his travels he also befriended many Christian church leaders. It was during this time that



## NOTES

he met Miss Margaret Noble, an Irish lady who later became her disciple and changed her name to Sister Nivedita, which means devoted. Sister Nivedita played an important role in the Ramakrishna Mission and became deeply involved in its activities. Through their collaborations and teachings, Swami Vivekananda and Sister Nivedita left an indelible mark on the expansion of the ideals of Vedanta philosophy and Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad.

### 1.8.4 Establishment of Ramakrishna Mission

After coming back from abroad, Swami Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission on May 5, 1897. About two years later, Belur was made the Head Office of the Mission. It wasn't just a religious group; It had broader goals like:

- To spread the teachings of Ramakrishna Paramahansa.
- Promote an understanding of Vedantic spirituality.
- To work towards unity and peace among different religions.
- To equate service to humanity with service to God.

### 1.8.5 Mission Teachings

Swami Vivekananda used his speeches and writings to throw light on Hindu culture and religion. He did a wonderful job by inspiring the Indian people to be proud of their heritage. He encouraged them to stay away from superstitions and extremist religious beliefs. He believed that it was important to bring Eastern and Western cultures together. Vivekananda did not like the aggressive methods used by the Christian missionaries. Through the Ramakrishna Mission, he worked hard to make Hinduism great again. The focus of the mission was on helping the society, ending discrimination, empowering women, protecting Indian culture, promoting good behaviour and supporting nationalism.

### 1.8.6 Mission Achievements

Some of the achievements are:

- **Social Service on Spiritual Basis:** Social service was not seen only as a form of charity, but it also had a spiritual basis. The Ramakrishna Mission efficiently



## NOTES

established facilities for the sick, needy and elderly, ran schools, colleges, dispensaries and hostels, distributed spiritual literature and served the society in various ways.

- **Social Reforms:** Swami Vivekananda boldly addressed the issues of untouchability and the miserable condition of women. He worked diligently and tirelessly for the betterment of Indians. He believed that serving the oppressed is the most important service to humanity.
- **Reforming Hinduism:** Swami Vivekananda gave great importance to Indian spirituality and philosophy, considering them to be the best globally. He even said that Vedanta should become the religion of all humanity. He believed that the study of Vedanta could increase the faith of both Christians and Hindus. However, he also criticized Hinduism, which aimed to purify it by eliminating excessive attention to superstitions and rituals.
- **Awakening the Feeling of Patriotism:** Swami Vivekananda promoted the rising nationalism of India. He boosted the morale of his countrymen, saw weakness as a defect and encouraged reverence for power. Urges people to worship Bharat Mata for the revival of the nation. His message to the youth of the country was, “Wake up, wake up and do not stop till the goal is achieved.” He strongly criticized the tendency to blindly imitate the West.

Therefore, we see that the Ramakrishna Mission had goals and visions at both the national and international levels. It blended the finest aspects of ancient Indian culture with western ideas.

---

## 1.9 PT. ISHWAR CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR

---

The second great reformer of Bengal in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was Pt. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. He worked tirelessly to improve the social condition of Bengalis and to educate them. He was born in 1820 AD in a poor Brahmin family, but he received higher education. He gained scholarship in Sanskrit language and also became the Principal of Sanskrit College. He did not look at western education, civilization and culture with contempt, but wanted to imbibe its good things too. He was imbued with

Self-Instructional  
Material

37





## NOTES

humane qualities, prudence, humility and sympathy for the poor. Though he remained in government service, he quit the job and devoted his whole life to social service, being aggrieved by undue government interference. He has made an important contribution to the development of Sanskrit language and Bengali literature. He also took steps for the spread of education. For this purpose, he also established a college. His most important work was to improve the condition of women. He launched a vigorous movement in support of widow remarriage. As a result of his efforts, the Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856 and many widow marriages took place in Bengal. He also married his son to a widow and presented an ideal in front of the society. He also tried to prevent child marriage and polygamy. He established many girls' schools for the education of women. The most famous of these schools was the Bethune School established in 1849 in Calcutta. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was also deeply influenced by Derozio and Rammohan Roy. He was also a member of the Tattvabodhini Sabha founded by Debendranath Tagore. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar is one of the pioneers of higher women's education in Bengal.

---

### 1.10 THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND ANNIE BESANT

---

The Theosophical Society also made an important contribution in the field of social and religious reform. It was founded in 1875 in New York. This institution was established by individuals who were influenced by Indian ideas and culture. It was founded by a Russian woman Blavatsky and an American Colonel M.S. Olcott. In 1886, a branch was opened in Adyar near Madras in India. An attempt was made by an Irish lady named Mrs. Annie Besant to develop this institution in India. She came to India in 1893 and settled here. She spent the rest of her life in reform work here. She died in 1933.

The Theosophical Assembly was deeply interested in the ancient religion of India. It sought to revive Hinduism and revive Indian ideals and traditions. Mrs. Besant was very impressed with it. As a result, she adopted Indian ways, clothes, food and became a 'pure Hindu'. In a sense, the gathering was 'reactionary'. The assembly



didn't support the social evils like idol worship, sati system, etc. and condemned the progressive policies of Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj. It also worked for public welfare. It was due to the efforts of Annie Besant that the Central School was established in Banaras, which later became Banaras Hindu University. She also contributed to India's independence. She influenced the national independence movement by establishing the Home Rule League in 1916.

---

### **1.11 THE YOUNG BENGAL MOVEMENT AND HENRY VIVIAN DEROZIO**

---

In the late 1820s and early 1830s there was the rise of the “Young Bengal Movement” in Bengal, which was a revolutionary intellectual tendency among the youth. Led by Henry Vivian Derozio, a young Anglo-Indian who taught at the Hindu College from 1826 to 1831, the movement was even more modern than the reformist efforts of Rammohan Roy. Inspired by the French Revolution, Derozio encouraged his students to think freely, to question authority, to cherish freedom, equality, and liberty, and to challenge decadent customs and traditions. Derozio also advocated for women's rights and education. Derozio is considered to be the first nationalist poet of modern India.

Despite his progressive ideals, Derozio's long-term influence was limited. He did not get support from other social groups or classes and failed to connect with the general public, leading to the neglect of important issues such as the plight of the peasants. His radicalism remained largely theoretical and detached from practical realities. Nevertheless, the Derozis continued Raja Ram Mohan Roy's tradition of public education on social, economic and political issues, laying the foundation for future reform movements in India. Despite his shortcomings, his efforts to promote rational thinking and question traditional norms left a lasting imprint on the intellectual landscape of Bengal.

Rammohan Roy's tradition of public education on social, economic and political issues prepared the basis for future reform movements in India. Despite his shortcomings, his efforts to promote rational thinking and question traditional norms left an indelible



## NOTES

mark on the intellectual landscape of Bengal. The Young Bengal Movement was founded by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-1831), a visionary teacher at Hindu College, Calcutta. Arriving in Calcutta in 1826, Derozio brought with him a wave of intellectual enthusiasm and radical ideas which profoundly influenced the educated youth of Bengal. Although the movement never became a popular mass movement, it played an important role in shaping the intellectual landscape of Bengal in the late 1820s and early 1830s.

### **Ideals of the Young Bengal Movement**

- **Impact of the French Revolution:** This movement was deeply inspired by the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity, which were the foundational principles of the French Revolution of 1789. Derozio encouraged his students to adopt these ideals and apply them in their own context, advocating a society based on these progressive values.
- **Belief in Human Reason:** The movement was centred around belief in human reason and rationality. Derozio and his followers promoted the idea that individuals should use their logic and intellect to question existing norms and beliefs.
- **Freedom of Discussion:** This movement supported the freedom to discuss all topics such as morals, religious and social status without any fear or restriction. Derozio's classes often included intense debates and discussions, challenging students to think critically and independently.
- **Opposition to Social Customs:** The Young Bengal movement opposed many outdated and useless social customs. Derozio and his followers criticized practices such as sati pratha, child marriage, and caste discrimination. He advocated social reforms that would lead to a more equitable and humane society.
- **Advocacy of Women's Rights:** This movement was ahead of its time in support of women's rights. Calls for better treatment of Indian women, both at home and abroad. Henry Vivian Derozio supported women's education and their right to participate in public life, challenging the deeply entrenched patriarchal norms of the time.



## NOTES

- **Freedom of the Press:** The Young Bengal Movement supported freedom of the press, recognizing its importance in shaping public opinion and promoting transparency and accountability. He believed that a free press was needed for the dissemination of new ideas and for promoting social and political reforms.
- **Moral Integrity and Truth:** Derozio urged his followers to live or die for the truth, to practice all virtues, and to abstain from all evil. This emphasis on moral integrity was the cornerstone of the movement, which inspired young Bengalis to live ethical lives and stand up for what is right.
- **Protection of Farmers:** One of the notable aspects of the movement was the protection of farmers from the oppression of landlords. Derozis advocated for the rights of farmers and highlighted the injustice and exploitation faced by them.

### Legacy and Influence

Despite its progressive ideals, the Young Bengal Movement faced considerable opposition. Henry Derozio was accused of misleading the youth with his radical views. In 1831, he was removed from his post at Hindu College and died shortly thereafter. However, his influence continued to resonate among his students and followers, who were collectively known as Derozians. The impact of the movement, although immediate was practically limited, was profound in the long run. S.N. Banerjee, a prominent Indian nationalist Surendra Nath later described Derozian as “the forerunner of the modern civilization of Bengal”. This movement laid the foundation for future social and political reforms in Bengal and all over India. It carried forward the tradition of public education on important social, economic and political questions, which set the stage for subsequent reformist and nationalist movements.

In short, the Young Bengal Movement led by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio played an important role in the intellectual awakening of Bengal. Its advocacy for rationality, social reform and human rights left an indelible mark on the history of modern Indian thought, despite the challenges and limitations it faced in its time.



NOTES

Table 1.1 Socio-Cultural Awakening

S. No.	Name of the Reformer	Concerned Institution	Significant Improvements	Important Books & Letters	Other Important Facts
1.	Rajaram Mohan Roy (1772-1833)	1. Brahmo Samaj (1828) 2. Intimate Assembly (1814) 3. David Hare established the Hindu College in Calcutta, assisted by Rajaram Mohanroy. 4. Establishment of Vedanta College (1825)	Ban on Sati in 1829	1. The Gifts of the Monotheists or Tuhafat-ul-Muwahhidin (1809) 2. He published the Vedas and five main Upanishads in Bengali language. 3. Precepts of Jesus (1820)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first leader of modern India.</li> <li>Opposition to the evils of Hindu society, sati system, polygamy, casteism, etc.</li> <li>East &amp; West attempts to coordinate between.</li> <li>Fluent in more than a dozen languages, he studied Sanskrit in Varanasi and the Quran in Patna and Arabic and Persian languages.</li> <li>Permanent stay in Calcutta since 1914.</li> <li>He was a pioneer in Indian journalism.</li> <li>In 1823, the Mughal emperor Akbar II gave him the title of king.</li> <li>Died in Bristol (England) in 1833.</li> </ul>
2.	Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905)	Gave new life to the Brahmo Samaj, Tattvabodhini Sabha (1839)	.....	Tattvabodhini Magazine in Bengali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 1843, the Brahmo Samaj was reorganized and given a new life.</li> <li>Efforts were made to support widow marriage, women's education, ban on polygamy and reform of ryots.</li> <li>He was the leader of the undisputed Brahmo Samaj till 1866.</li> </ul>



**NOTES**

3.	Keshav Chand Sen (1834-84)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially, the Brahma Sabha</li> <li>Bharatiya Brahmo Samaj</li> <li>Indian Reform Association (1870)</li> <li>Sangat Sabha</li> </ol>	<p>Notive Marriage Act (1872)</p> <p>(Boys and girls aged 18 and 14 years respectively)</p>	Indian Mirror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 1857, he entered the Brahmo Samaj and became Acharya.</li> <li>Brahmo Samaj popular branches opened outside Bengal, in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Madras.</li> <li>In 1865 there were 65 branches in Bengal.</li> <li>Controversies - Propaganda against wearing sacrifices.</li> <li>Debendranath Tagore removed him from the title of Acharya in 1865.</li> <li>In 1878, Sen married his 13 year old daughter to the Raja of Coochbehar.</li> </ul>
4.	Swami Dayanand (1824-1883)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arya Samaj (1875)</li> <li>Establishment of Anglo-Vedic School in Lahore (1886)</li> <li>Establishment of D.A.V. Schools (Lala Hansraj's lead role)</li> <li>Establishment of Gurukul in Haridwar by Swami Shradddhanand</li> </ol>	.....	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satyarth Prakash (Hindi)</li> <li>Veda Bhashya Bhumika (Hindi &amp; Sanskrit)</li> <li>Veda Bhashya (Sanskrit)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Original Name Moolshankar.</li> <li>He received education from Virjanand in Mathura.</li> <li>Establishment of Arya Samaj in Bombay "Back to the Vedas", the main slogan, condemnation of idolatry, anti-incarnationism, polytheism.</li> <li>In 1863, the banner of Hypocrisy Khandini was hoisted in 1877 Lahore Establishment of Arya Samaj.</li> <li>The goal is to unite India religiously, socially and nationally.</li> <li>Shuddhi movement to bring non-Hindus to Hinduism.</li> </ul>

Self-Instructional  
Material



## NOTES

5.	Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)	Ramakrishna Mission (1896)	.....	Prabuddha Bharat (English) Ubodhan (Bengali)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Original name Narendranath Gururamakrishna Paramahansa.</li> <li>In Chicago in 1893 World's Parliament of Religions.</li> <li>Belur was the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission.</li> <li>Irish woman Margaret Nobel aka Sister Nivedita was the chief disciple.</li> </ul>
6.	Jyotiba Phule	Satyashodhak Samaj (1873) Girls' School in Poona (1851)	.....	Gulamgiri (1872) Public True Dharma Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Born in the Mali caste, Brahminical supremacy and struggle against the caste system.</li> </ul>
7.	Mahadev Govind Ranade	Prarthana Samaj Deccan Education Society (1887)	.....	.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major Reformers of Maharashtra.</li> <li>Indian National Social Conference in 1887.</li> <li>Gopal Krishna Gokhale's political mentor.</li> </ul>
8.	Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar	As secretary of Bethune School, she worked for women's higher education.	The Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856.	.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The struggle to improve the condition of women.</li> <li>Opposition to child marriage, polygamy, supporters of women's education.</li> <li>Acharya of Sanskrit College, Calcutta, founder of 35 girls' schools.</li> </ul>



**NOTES**

9.	Gopal Krishna Gokhale	Servant of India Society, Bombay (1905)	.....	.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prominent liberal Congress leader.</li> <li>• Related to Agarkar's Deccan Education Society.</li> </ul>
10.	N.M. Joshi	Social Service League (1911), All India Trade Union Congress (1920), All India Trade Union Federation (1929)	.....	.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active supporter of Servant of India Society.</li> </ul>
11.	Annie Besant (1847-1933)	President of the Theosophical Society led the Home Rule League movement.	.....	.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proponents of Vedanta</li> <li>• The Theosophical Society in India was under the supervision of the Hindus. Re-awakening the movement of establishment of Central Hindu College in Benares in 1898 by the first woman president of Congress.</li> </ul>
12.	Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98)	Aligarh Movement launched the Anglo Muslim School (1875), Muhammadan Educational Conference (1886)	.....	Tehzeeb-ul-Akhlaq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts for social and educational upliftment of Muslims.</li> <li>• Rational interpretation of the Quran and religious law.</li> <li>• Proponents of spreading English education among Muslims.</li> <li>• Hindu-Muslim was described as the two eyes of the society, but at the last moment, pro-British and anti-Congress.</li> </ul>





## NOTES

13.	D.K. Karve	A Widow's Ashram in Poona (1899) Bharatiya Women 's University, Bombay (1906)	.....	.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professor of Fergusson College.</li><li>• Married to a Brahmin widow in 1893.</li><li>• Secretary of the Widow Remarriage Association.</li></ul>
14.	B. M. Malabari	.....	1891, Age of Consent Act passed. Ban on marriage of girls below 12 years of age.	.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Major Zoroastrian reformers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.</li><li>• Campaign against child marriage.</li></ul>

## 1.12 MUSLIM REFORMIST MOVEMENT

Along with Hinduism and social reform, there were reform movements among other castes, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although these reform movements did not have as widespread impact as the Hindu reform movements, they played an important role in improving and elevating the condition of their respective castes.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of deep anxiety and uncertainty for Indian Muslims. Deprived of political power after the Revolt of 1857 and facing economic difficulties, many Muslims were alienated. The challenge before him was twofold: first, to persuade Indian Muslims to adapt to changing circumstances, and second, to win the confidence of the British rulers, who viewed them with suspicion. Among the early Muslim reformers was Maulvi Chirag Ali (1844-95), who attempted to modernize Muslim society and advocate women's rights. He supported the practice of monogamy and advocated a better position for women through his literary works.

However, it was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who emerged as one of the most influential persons in India for the Muslim reform during this period. A man of remarkable foresight and determination, Sir Syed Ahmed undertook the arduous task of reform despite facing opposition from conservative religious leaders and even from some of his colleagues. Sir Syed, who initially served in the judicial service of the British East India Company during the Revolt of 1857, remained loyal to the government. After



## NOTES

retirement, he assumed the role of a socio-religious reformer. His rationalist and non-conformist views are reflected in his publication of **Tahzeeb al-Akhlaq** in 1870 and other writings. He faced great challenges of religious reinterpretation, social reform and education. Rejecting narrow views that called Hindus infidels, Sir Syed emphasised Hindu-Muslim unity and advocated political cooperation between the two communities. He worked tirelessly to reform the Muslims individually and collectively, believing that modern education, with its rational and scientific outlook, was the key to liberating the Muslim.

Sir Syed concentrated his efforts in Aligarh, a predominantly Muslim area, where he founded the Aligarh School on 24th May, 1875, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Queen Victoria. This school, which was later upgraded to the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in 1877. It served as the forerunner of Aligarh Muslim University. The Aligarh Movement, as his series of activities is known, was aimed at the upliftment of Muslims through education and to prevent their alliance with the Congress, which Sir Syed considered to be anti-British and anti-government. Supported by bureaucracy, Sir Syed's efforts to promote modern education received widespread support. He believed that by adopting western education the Muslims could overcome their backwardness and forge harmonious relations with their rulers. His efforts laid the foundation for the intellectual and educational advancement of the Muslim community in India. Sir Syed's legacy lives on through the Aligarh Muslim University, which remains a symbol of Muslim empowerment and academic excellence. His pioneering efforts in religious reform, social upliftment and educational reform are a testimony to his lasting impact on Indian society. In short, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Aligarh movement exemplifies a transformative period in Indian Muslim history, characterized by attempts to reconcile tradition with modernity and overcome the complexities of colonial rule. His visionary leadership and commitment to education will continue to inspire generations of Indians, underlining the abiding relevance of his ideas in contemporary India.

### **1.12.1 Aligarh Movement and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan**

The Aligarh movement was more politically motivated than the Wahabi movement. It made no special effort to improve the condition of the Muslims; but in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were some Muslim reformers who made efforts for the

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

47



## NOTES

upliftment of Muslims. Maulvi Chirag Ali (1844-95) was a pioneer in this direction. He was a supporter of British rule. He called upon the Muslims to accept the British rule and uplift themselves with their help. He also wanted to improve the condition of women. The Muhammadan Literary Society was established in Calcutta in 1863 with the aim of improving the field of education. In 1867, 'Madrassa' was established to educate Muslims in Deoband, but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the biggest reformer of Muslim society was Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-98). He launched a reformist movement with the help of his loyal followers, prominent among them Chirag Ali, Altaf Hussain Hali, Nazir Ahmed, Maulana Shibli Numani, etc. Since its centre was Aligarh, it is called the Aligarh Movement.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was born in 1817 AD in an aristocratic and prosperous family of Delhi. He was educated in the traditional Muslim way, yet he got a government job. At the time of the revolt of 1857, he was in the service of the Company. By nature, he was a devotee and supporter of the British government. He worked tirelessly to spread western education and to uplift the status of Muslims; but at the same time in the later part of his life, he became communal in nature. He demanded special interests for the Muslims and opposed the Congress. He died in 1898.



**Fig. 1.6** Sir Syed Ahmed Khan



Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's main aim was to bring the Muslim elites to the changing circumstances, attracted them to Western education, and to uplift them socially and politically. They wanted to make Muslims self-sufficient. He wanted Muslims to shed their age-old stereotypes and mentality and receive new light. He was influenced by modern scientific thought and wanted to reconcile it with Islam. In 1870, he started the publication of the Urdu magazine **Tehzeeb-ul-Akhlaq** to explain his ideas. He considered the Quran as the basis of Islam. He explained it in scientific light. He condemned the social evils entrenched in Islam and tried to remove them. He also believed in religious tolerance. He was initially opposed to communalism and wanted to establish unity between Hindus and Muslims. Syed Ahmad Khan also asked the Muslims to imbibe western education and scientific achievements. For this purpose, he wanted to establish a special centre for the education of Muslims. For this purpose, the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College was established in 1875. It progressively evolved. It was also helped by the British. Governor Muir of Uttar Pradesh provided land for this college and Lord Northbrook personally donated Rs. 10,000. Aligarh soon became a centre of Muslim education and socio-political activities.

Although Syed Ahmad Khan wanted to improve the condition of the Muslims, there was a reactionary sentiment in them. For example, he did not want to spread education to women. They also did not mind purdah and polygamy. They also did not want to reform the Muslim religion. He had an unwavering devotion to the British state. They wanted to keep Muslims out of politics. He opposed the demand for the establishment of democracy in India. They also opposed competitive examinations and Congress activities. In 1888, he founded the United India Patriotic Association. Its purpose was to oppose the Congress. They presented Muslims as a separate class and demanded special political facilities and reservations for them. The far-reaching consequences of this turned out to be very disastrous. It promoted communalism and separatism. Despite this, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan did the main work of educating the upper class of Muslim society, modernizing them and awakening them of their political rights. This is his biggest achievement.

### **1.12.2 Deoband Movement**

Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi established an Islamic madrasa in Deoband in 1867. It was from this madrasa that the Darul-Uloom or



## NOTES

Deoband movement was launched with the aim of spreading the pure teachings of the Quran and Hadith and giving the slogan of 'Jihad' against foreign rule. This movement was against the British, and there was a complete ban on English education and western culture in the Deoband school. There was resentment in the Deoband movement towards Syed Ahmed, the founder of the Aligarh movement, as Syed Ahmad tried to give a new interpretation of the scriptures while showing loyalty to the British. Among the proponents of the Deoband school was Shibli Nomani (1857-1914), a renowned scholar and writer of Persian and Arabic. Shibli Nomani was in favour of incorporating the English language and European sciences along with formal education to improve traditional Muslim education. Shibli Nomani founded the Nadwat-ul-Ulama and Darul-Uloom in Lucknow in 1884-85. They were supporters of the Congress and showed loyalty to India. Shibli Nomani had said that "Muslims and Hindus can create a state in which both communities can live in equality and peace." He established the 'Nadwat-ul-Uloom Madrasa' in Lucknow in 1894-96, in which English education was also imparted.

### 1.12.3 Ahmadiyya Movement

Apart from the Aligarh movement, the Ahmadiyya movement also tried to improve the condition of the Muslims. The promoter of this reform movement was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani (1839-1908). The centre of this movement was Qadian town in Gurdaspur district of Punjab. He founded the 'Qadiani sect' and called himself 'Muslim Mehdi' (Masih-ul-me-oud). He published his thoughts in his book **Baraheen-i-Ahmadiyya** (1880 AD). He himself used to call himself an incarnation (image) of Krishna. He tried to reform the Muslim religion. Social service and education work were also done. In addition to these movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were also Anjumanhimate-Islam, Nadwatul-Ulema, Khudai Khidmatgar movement and Khaksar movement among Muslims who tried to uplift Muslim society. Similarly, Muhammad Iqbal (1876-1938) also condemned ritualism, though he also promoted communalism.

The **Wahabi Movement (1838-60)** was a religious movement active in north-west, eastern and central India. Its aim was to bring Islam to its original form, as taught by Hazrat Muhammad.



## NOTES

- In India, this movement was popularized by Syed Ahmed Rai Bareilvi. He was inspired by Abdul Wahab of Arabia and Saint Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi.
- The aim of this movement was to transform India from 'Dar-ul-Harb' (country of infidels) to 'Dar-ul-Islam'. Initially, jihad was declared against Sikhs in Punjab. But when the British captured the Sikh kingdom, the movement turned against the British.
- Patna was the main centre of this movement.
- Due to the communal image, the Wahabi movement could never take the form of a national movement.

### 1.13 PARSI REFORMIST MOVEMENT

**Seva Sadan:** In 1885, Parsi social reformer Behramji M. Malabari founded Seva Sadan, an organization dedicated to the care of women in distress.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the wind of religion and social reform also had an impact on the Parsi society and in 1851 AD, 'Rahnumai Majdayasan Samaj' was established under the leadership of people who knew western English language and knowledge like Naoroji Fardonji, Dada Bhai Naoroji, S.S. Bengali and R.K. Cama. Its purpose was to revive the social condition of the Zoroastrians and to regain the pristine purity of Zoroastrianism. A magazine called '**Raast Gofar**' was also published to propagate the ideas of this society. This society worked tirelessly to improve Zoroastrianism, rituals, the condition of women, etc. The purdah system was abolished, the age of marriage was raised and women's education was emphasized. This society tried to mold the followers of Zoroastrianism into the modern environment, they played an important role in the spread of education, especially among girls. He also campaigned against orthodox practices in Zoroastrianism.

**Tarun Stree Sabha:** The missionaries established the Christian Tarun Stree Sabha (Fe-male Juvenile Society) in Calcutta in 1819 AD. Shri J.E. Bethoon led the meeting. She established a girls' school in Calcutta in 1849 AD. This assembly made a unique contribution in the field of women's education.



## NOTES

### 1.14 SIKH REFORM MOVEMENT

Sikhism is the newest religion in the world. Its founder was Guru Nanak Dev. After this, other reformist organizations came forward to reform Sikhism. For example, the Namdhari movement was another Sikh religious reform movement, its beginning was Babaram Singh and his disciple Balak Singh. In 1920, the Shiromani Gurdwara Management Committee was formed. In 1922, the Sikh Gurdwara Act was passed.

#### 1.14.1 Sikh Socio-Religious Reform Movement

The Sikh Social-Reform Movement (Sikh Socio-Religious Reform Movement) began in the late nineteenth century, when the Khalsa College was established in Amritsar. Khalsa College was established in 1892 in Amritsar with the efforts of the Singh Sabha and the assistance of the British Government. The Singh Sabha was formed in the 1870s with the main objective of reforming Sikhism and society. Singh Sabha did important work for the promotion of Gurmukhi script, Sikh education and Punjabi literature. The Sikh society was facing various internal and external challenges at that time. Due to the rule of the British, many changes were taking place in the society and this was weakening the traditional religious and social structures. Apart from this, attempts were also being made by some Hindu and Christian missionaries to convert Sikhs. In this position, the Singh Sabha worked to revive Sikhism and strengthen Sikh identity.

The Singh Sabha also attempted to reform Gurdwaras, restore Sikh traditions and preserve Sikh history. One of the important objectives of this movement was to spread Sikh education. The establishment of Khalsa College was a major step in this direction. Along with the study of Sikhism, Gurmukhi script and Punjabi literature were also promoted in this college and its affiliated schools. The Sikh social-reform movements kept the Sikhs connected to their religious and cultural roots and prepared them to face new challenges. This movement played an important role in promoting education and awareness in Sikh society.

**Background:** With the emergence of the Akali movement in Punjab after 1920, the Sikh reform movements gained momentum. The main aim of the Akalis was to



## NOTES

improve the management of the gurdwaras or Sikh shrines which were under the control of priests or mahants who viewed them as private property. A law was passed in 1925, which empowered the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) to manage the gurdwaras. Baba Dayal Das propagated the concept of Nirankar (formless) God. By the end of the nineteenth century, a new reform movement, known as the Akali movement, emerged to reform the corrupt management of the Gurudwaras.

### 1.14.2 Gurudwara Movement

Prior to 1920, the governance of Sikh Gurdwaras was in the hands of Udasi Sikh Mahants, who treated Gurdwara offerings and other income as their personal income. The British government supported these mahants so as to curb the influence of growing nationalism among the Sikhs. The situation became so bad that the priest of the Golden Temple issued a hukamnama (order) against the Ghadaris, declaring them traitors and then giving the saropa (honorific robe) to General Dyer, the butcher of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. The Gurdwara Reform Movement started the movement to free the Gurdwaras from these corrupt mahants and to hand them over to a representative committee of Sikhs. In November 1920, under increasing pressure from nationalists and gurdwara agitators, the gurdwaras were placed under the control of an elected committee called the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). The movement for Gurdwara liberation quickly transformed into the Akali movement, which later split into three streams: centrist nationalist reformers, pro-government loyalists, and a political organ of Sikh communalism.

### 1.14.3 Nirankari Movement

The Nirankari movement was founded by Baba Dayal Das (1783-1855). The movement was an attempt to purify and return Sikhism to its original roots. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when many social and religious evils were spreading in Sikh society, Baba Dayal Das took the initiative to restore Sikhism to its ancient form.

- **Concept of Nirankar:** Baba Dayal Das laid special emphasis on the worship of Nirankar, i.e. the formless God. He believed that there is no form of God and only one God should be worshiped in Sikhism. He strongly opposed idol worship





## NOTES

and said it was against the teachings of Sikhism. His vision was that Sikhism should be brought back to the original teachings established by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, in which the worship of one God and service to humanity are key.

- **Religious and Social Reforms:** The Nirankari movement was not limited to religious reforms only, but it also included social reforms. Baba Dayal Das also opposed non-vegetarianism, drinking alcohol, lying, cheating, and other social evils. He believed that these evils are against the tenets of Sikhism and symbolize the lack of morality and honesty in the society. He advised people to stay away from these evils and emphasized on adopting simplicity, truth, and honesty in life.
- **Emphasis on Guru Nanak's Teachings:** The Nirankari movement focused on the Sikh teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and his time. Baba Dayal Das believed that through the teachings of Guru Nanak, Sikhism could be brought back in the right direction. He emphasized on Sikh traditions that preceded the establishment of the Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh. This differentiates the Nirankari movement from the Namdhari movement, which gave more importance to the principles of the Khalsa Panth. Baba Dayal Das made it clear that the aim of his movement was not to negate the teachings of the Khalsa but to restore the original teachings of Guru Nanak.
- **Morality and Spirituality:** Morality and spirituality had a special place in the Nirankari movement. Baba Dayal Das emphasized on adopting moral values in life and spreading honesty and truth in the society. He said that the worship of God should not be done only by external rituals, but by inner purity and true heart. He taught people that following the principles of truthfulness, honesty and kindness in life is the true teaching of Sikhism.
- **Impact of Nirankari Movement:** The Nirankari movement started by Baba Dayal Das was successful in bringing a new awareness and reform in Sikh society. This movement inspired people to shun idolatry and other evils and inspired them to return to the basic tenets of Sikhism. The Nirankari movement gave birth to a new thinking in Sikh society, which made Sikhism stronger through social and religious reforms. Even today, the teachings of the Nirankari movement are relevant in Sikh society and it has been seen as a symbol of the revival and purification of Sikhism.



#### 1.14.4 Namdhari Movement

The Namdhari movement was founded by Baba Ram Singh (1816-1885) in 1857. He started this movement in 1841 after becoming a disciple of Balak Singh of the Kuka movement. The movement was an attempt at reforming and rejuvenating Sikhism, with an emphasis on returning to Sikh traditions and basic principles.

- **Adherence to Khalsa Traditions:** The foundation of the Namdhari movement was based on the customs that Guru Gobind Singh adopted at the time of the establishment of the Khalsa Panth. It was compulsory for the followers involved in the movement to wear the five symbols of Sikhism, namely Kesh, Kada, Kangha, Briefs and Kada. However, instead of the rule of holding the sword in the Khalsa Panth, the Namdhari followers used to wear a stick.
- **Challenging the Existence of Worship Practices:** The followers of this movement were strictly instructed to give up the worship of idols, gods, tombs, trees, snakes, etc. Baba Ram Singh insisted on a return to the basic tenets of Sikhism and opposed religious hypocrisy and superstitions. Along with this, he exhorted his followers to abstain from eating meat, stealing, lying, slander, and doing evil against others.
- **Cow progeny Protection and Ban on Non-Vegetarianism:** Cow protection was given utmost importance in the Namdhari movement. The emphasis was on saving and respecting cows, and for this reason a strict ban was imposed on eating beef. The movement emphasized the protection and importance of cows and created a new thinking in this regard in the Sikh society.
- **Social Reforms:** Baba Ram Singh not only emphasized on religious reforms but also raised his voice against many social evils prevailing in the society. He supported women's rights and took steps against their exploitation. Along with this, he taught social justice, equality and morality, and inspired his followers to instill these values in the society.
- **Impact of the Namdhari Movement:** The Namdhari movement brought about significant religious and social reforms in the Sikh society. The movement inspired people to return to the original teachings and traditions of Sikhism and gave a message to shun idolatry and superstitions. At the same time, the movement



## NOTES

also played an important role in cow protection, social reform and promotion of morality. Even today, the Namdhari movement is seen as an important reformist movement in Sikh history.

### 1.14.5 Akali Movement

The Akali movement began in the 1920s as a religious reform movement aimed at reforming Sikh gurdwaras (religious places). But this movement soon took a political form and became an integral part of India's freedom struggle. It is also known as Gurdwara Reform Movement or Gurdwara Movements. The movement was against British imperialism and reflects the Sikhs' long fight to gain control of the Gurdwaras.

- **Struggle for Independence of Gurudwaras:** The main objective of the Akali movement was to free the Sikh Gurdwaras from the control of mahants and priests, who operated these religious places as private property. The British government supported these mahants, as it helped them to suppress the growing nationalist movements among the Sikhs. This situation forced the Sikhs to struggle to gain control over their religious places.
- **Peaceful Movement:** The Akali movement was mainly non-violent. Non-violent demonstrations, religious gatherings (diwans) and marches were held to express the freedom of control over the Sikhs over their religious places. There was an overwhelming support from Sikhs from rural areas, who actively participated in this movement. The British government took strict measures several times during the movement, but the Sikhs carried forward their demands in a peaceful manner.
- **Pressure on the Government and Consequences:** Eventually, the British government had to bow down due to the growing public support and pressure of the movement. Sikhs were allowed to manage their religious places. This conflict resulted in the passage of the Gurdwara Act in 1925, under which the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) was established. SGPC was empowered to manage all major Sikh religious places. This organization is still the main custodian of Sikh religious places.
- **Significance of Akali Movement:** The Akali movement was not only a symbol of religious reform, but it also became an important part of India's freedom



## **NOTES**

struggle. This movement enlightened the Sikhs on both religious and political fronts and inspired them to fight for their rights. This movement is an example of how even through peaceful and organised struggle, major social and political changes can be brought about.

### **1.14.6 Babbar Akali Movement**

The Babbar Akali movement took place between 1921 and 1925. Most of the Babbar Akalis in this movement were Sikhs who returned from Canada. Many of them were also associated with the Ghadar movement and were called “*Ghadri Babbe*”. Babbar was an Akali Guru Sikh who strongly opposed the imperialist policies of the British government. He rejected Mahatma Gandhi’s principles of non-violent and non-cooperation movement. He believed that these policies would not succeed much in removing the British government. One of the main reasons for this movement was the Nankana Sahib tragedy, in which hundreds of innocent Sikhs were killed. This incident put the Babbar Akalis in deep shock and they decided to struggle independently in their own way instead of a peaceful movement. The aim of the Babbar Akali movement was to wage an armed struggle against the British Empire and he did this under his own leadership, without the dominant Akali leadership. This movement gave birth to a new kind of revolutionary spirit in the Sikh society and further intensified the struggle against British rule.

### **1.14.7 Singh Sabha**

The Singh Sabha was formed on 1 October 1873. It was founded by a small group, which included prominent Sikhs such as Thakar Singh Sandhawalia and Giani Gyan Singh. Its main objective was to strengthen Sikhism and restore its original sanctity. The Leo House established a number of goals. First, it aimed to bring Sikhism back to its original sanctity. The Sabha started publishing historical religious books and journals so that Sikhs could get information about the history and culture of their religion. Apart from this, the Sabha also worked to promote the Punjabi language. He attempted to return Sikh priests to their religion and tried to get the British to join the Sikh education program. Given the influence of the Singh Sabha, a new and more democratic body was established, which was called the Lahore Singh Sabha. This Sabha also held the



## NOTES

same objectives to strengthen Sikhism. The Lahore Singh Sabha worked on religious, social and political issues, thereby spreading awareness among the Sikh community. However, after some time, the Singh Sabha was influenced by other organisations, such as the Khalsa Diwani. In 1920, the struggle for control of Sikh places of worship undermined the power of the Singh Sabhas. This conflict created a situation of division in the Sikh community, leading to increased competition among Sikh organizations. The importance of the Singh Sabha is immense in Sikh history. It served to increase religious awareness among Sikhs and inspired Sikhs to organize for their rights. The material published by it made the Sikhs proud of their religion and culture and gave birth to a new thinking and identity within them. The Singh Sabha established a strong identity in Sikh society and is still seen as a turning point in the history of Sikhism. Its efforts made the Sikh community not only religiously but also socially and politically aware. Thus, the contribution of the Singh Sabha was significant in preserving and reviving Sikh religion and culture. In conclusion, the diversity of religious communities in Punjab gave rise to more socio-religious movements than any region of South Asia. In addition, divisions within and between religious communities continued to emerge frequently. The growing realist and progressive ideologies in the nineteenth century could not be ignored by the Sikh community. Various Gurus led religious and social movements in an attempt to bring about a positive change in Sikhism. The Singh Sabha, which was a major cultural movement of the Sikhs, split between the ex-British aristocracy based in Amritsar and the emerging new group in Lahore.

---

### 1.15 REFORM MOVEMENT IN INDIA: NATURE AND CONSEQUENCES

---

The social and religious reform movements that took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century resulted in a change in the mindset of Indians. A new consciousness developed. It influenced Indian religion, society, literature, politics and art skills. As a result, a renaissance-like situation prevailed in India. Reforms and developments were made in every field. As a result of these efforts, Indians underwent radical changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It also helped in the development of nationalism.



## NOTES

- **Changes in Religious Condition:** The religious condition of different communities in India was very complex and conservative. Especially in Hinduism, ritualism, superstitions and traditional thinking had a great influence. For this reason, many religious reformers made efforts for the reform and upliftment of Hinduism. He tried to make religion widespread and acceptable to all. These reformers tried to eradicate superstitions in keeping with ancient traditions. He promoted contemplation based on truth, knowledge, and the Vedas by downplaying the importance of sacrifices, sacrifices, and priests. These efforts led to the renaissance of Indian religion. The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Theosophical Society and the Ramakrishna Mission played an important role in this direction. Their efforts reduced religious inertia among the Indians. Similarly, the Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians also made new reforms in their respective religions and provided new directions.
- **Social Renaissance:** Indian society was also influenced by many bad practices like religion. Evil practices such as caste system, untouchability, illiteracy, child marriage, polygamy, infanticide and purdah system had become major problems for Hindu society. The condition of women and widows was very miserable. These practices had religious recognition, so it was difficult to abolish them. But when religious reform movements began, social reforms were also possible with them. Almost all religious reformers and their institutions also worked for social reform. Some moderate Britishers also helped the Indians in this direction. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, efforts were made to abolish sati, child marriage, polygamy, infanticide, slavery and untouchability. Efforts were made to improve the condition of women, especially widows. The education of men and women was arranged. There was also an attempt to abolish the purdah system and remove religious restrictions on foreign travel. The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission contributed significantly in this direction. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other reformers also brought about changes towards modernizing their societies.
- **Development of a New Mentality:** The Dharma Reform movements made the thinking of Indians open and independent and aroused a new consciousness in them. Under the influence of western education and scientific achievements,



## NOTES

people started abandoning their superstitions and old orthodox beliefs. Now they began to lean towards humanity by resorting to reason and intellect. In place of faith, the ideology based on the intellect began to develop, which strengthened the progress of Indian society. People's narrow thinking also ended. They began to become familiar with and inspired by the political and social revolutions taking place in the Western world. These reform movements instilled the spirit of liberty, equality and fraternity in the hearts of Indians. At the same time, it also ignited a sense of self-respect and patriotism.

- **Revelation of the Past:** It was a significant event of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was an attempt to uncover the forgotten history and glory of ancient India. Along with Western scholars, Indian scholars and religious reformers also contributed to this work. Western scholars took interest in Indian history and philosophy, while Indian scholars did it with the aim of arousing pride in their country and a sense of nationalism against foreign rule. The Asiatic Society established in Calcutta played an important role in highlighting Indian history. Its research continued until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Due to these, ancient Indian history and culture were brought out of the past. Scholars like James Ferguson, Havel, Percy Brown, Bhandarkar, Smith, Mill and Elphinstone helped to understand the history of ancient India through their writings and researches. However, many of these scholars tried to describe ancient India as the 'Golden Age' and the medieval period as the 'Age of Decline'. This was a wrong approach, as it led to the rise of communalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- **Progress in the Field of Literature:** There was also a lot of progress in the field of literature. The development of English education made it possible to translate ancient Indian texts into English. Indian people could get information about their religion and philosophy by reading these translations. At the same time, the western world was also able to get acquainted with Indian knowledge and science. Indians as well as European scholars also translated many ancient texts. For example, Wilkins translated the Gita and Max Müller translated the Vedas. Similarly, Jones translated the Manusmriti and Shakuntala, while Colebrooke compiled Panini's grammar and Hitopadesha. In addition, many other texts were also translated into German and French. People's interest in



## NOTES

Sanskrit literature increased and the whole world could get acquainted with Sanskrit literature. This made Indians realize their cultural pride.

- **Development of Regional Languages:** As a result of the Reformation movement, along with Sanskrit literature, other regional languages and literature also developed. Translations of important ancient texts were also published in regional and regional languages like Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Oriya, Tamil, Telugu, etc. In addition to this, new literature was also composed in these languages which developed a sense of nationalism among the Indians and gave the message of freedom from foreign slavery and social upliftment to the Indians.
- **Research in the Field of Science:** In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, along with the development of literature and language, there was a lot of important research in the field of science as well. Great scientists like Ramanujan, Jagadish Chandra Basu, C.V. Raman, Meghnad Saha, and S. Chandrasekhar illuminated India's name in the world of science through their research and discoveries.
- **Art and Industrial Development:** The Indian Renaissance also gave new life to art and industrial development. The efforts of Havel and Sister Nivedita gave a new direction to Indian painting. Many art centers were established for the development of art, which promoted music, dance, painting and architecture. There was also some progress in the industrial sector. India was a country based on agriculture, but efforts were made to restart the old industries. Reform movements and the propagation of western education made possible the rise of the middle class in India. This class included English-educated people, such as lawyers, doctors, teachers and government employees. In the beginning, this class was a supporter of the English government and civilization. But angered by the discriminatory and racial policies of the British government, and inspired by the movements for nationalism, equality and freedom in the West, this class gradually began to oppose the policies of the government. This middle class played an important role in the national freedom movement and also led it. In this way, the Indian Renaissance of the 19<sup>th</sup> century succeeded in bringing about major changes in Indian society.





**NOTES**

**Table 1.2 Main Reform Movement**

S. No.	Reform Movement	Year	Founder/ Leader	Aim
1.	Brahmo Samaj	1828	Raja Ram Mohan Roy	The Brahmo Samaj raised his voice against idol worship, sati system, child marriage, female foeticide and caste system. The goal of this movement was religious and social reform. Raja Ram Mohan Roy played an important role in abolishing the practice of Sati.
2.	Arya Samaj	1875	Swami Dayananda Saraswati	The slogan of the Arya Samaj was "Back to the Vedas". It opposed idol worship, superstitions, and social evils. Swami Dayanand emphasized the importance of removing caste system and child marriage, and implementing women's education.
3.	Prarthana Samaj	1867	Atmaram Pandurang	The Prarthana Samaj opposed the caste system and superstitions and advocated social equality. It encouraged women's education and widow remarriage.
4.	Ramakrishna Mission	1897	Swami Vivekananda	Swami Vivekananda advocated moral and spiritual upliftment in Indian society. He worked for reforms in the field of social service, education and health.
5.	Ahmadiyya Movement	1889	Mirza Ghulam Ahmad	This movement was founded to bring about reforms within Islamic society. Its purpose was religious renaissance and social reform.
6.	Aligarh Movement	1875	Sir Syed Ahmed Khan	To spread modern education among Muslims. Sir Syed understood the importance of western education and founded the Aligarh Muslim University.
7.	Satyashodhak Samaj	1873	Jyotiba Phule	The Satyashodhak Samaj worked for the rights of Shudras and untouchables. This movement opposed the caste system and Brahmanical domination. Jyotiba Phule's contribution in the field of women's education and equality is noteworthy.
8.	Religious Reform Movement (Sikhism)	1873	Singh Sabha Movement	This movement was organized to bring about religious and social reforms within Sikhism. The Singh Sabha movement emphasized the restoration and education of Sikh traditions.



## Steps Taken for Social Reform

Few of the steps are as follows:

- **Ending Sati Practice:** During the time of Lord William Bentinck, the practice of Sati was banned under Regulation-XVII in December 1829. Earlier it was implemented in Bengal. Raja Ram Mohan Roy played a major role in getting this law passed.
- **Abolishing Child Marriage:** The problem of child marriage in India has been going on for a long time. In modern times, Ishwar Chand Vidyasagar bravely tried to stop it. Due to pressure from Vidyasagar and his supporters, in 1860, the minimum age of marriage for girls was fixed at 10 years, and marrying below that age was considered a crime. The British government enacted three main laws to prohibit child marriage:
  - **The Civil Marriage Act or the Native Marriage Act, 1872:** This law was passed in 1872 at the time of Viceroy Northbrook. Under this law, the minimum age of marriage for girls was 14 years and 18 years for boys. Through this act, the practice of polygamy (more than one marriage) was also abolished.
  - **Age of Consent Act, 1891:** This act was passed by the efforts of the famous Indian social reformer and Parsi Bahramji Malabari of Bombay. In 1891, the Imperial Legislative Council enacted the Age of Consent Act. The Viceroy of India at that time was Lord Lansdowne. Under this law, the minimum age of marriage for girls was 12 years. '*Dadaji Bhikaji vs. Rakhmabai*' had a very important contribution in the formulation of the '*Age of Consent Act, 1891*'.
  - **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 1929 (Sharda Act):** With the efforts of Dr. Harvilas Sharda, a resident of Ajmer and a famous educationist, the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act was enacted, which was called '*Sharda Act*' in his name. The Act was passed in the Imperial Legislative Council of India in September 1929 and came into force from April 1930. The Viceroy of India at that time was Lord Irwin.

## NOTES



## NOTES

Under this law, the minimum age of marriage was 14 years for women and 18 years for boys.

After independence, the Indian government in 1978 amended this law and raised the minimum age of marriage from 18 years to 21 years for boys and from 14 years to 18 years for girls. The law also added a provision for punishment for those who support child marriage.

- **Widow Remarriage Movement:** The widow remarriage movement in Maharashtra was led by Vishnu Parshuram Shastri Pandit. He founded the “Widow Remarriage Society” in 1850.

- **Widow Remarriage Act of 1856:** In 1856, at the time of Lord Canning, the Widow Remarriage Act was passed, also known as “Act XV, 1856”. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar played an important role in passing this act. Under this law, the remarriage of widows got legal recognition.

Lord William Bentinck did the work of ending the cheating system. For this he appointed an officer, Colonel Sleeman.

- **Infanticide:** The abolition of infanticide, in particular Rajput girls, was done soon after birth, which was put to an end in 1795 under Governor General John Shore. Subsequently, in 1804 it was considered common murder at the time of Wellesley, which gradually put an end to the practice.
- **Human Sacrifice Practice:** The credit for abolishing the practice of human sacrifice goes to Hording I. For this, he appointed Campbell. By 1844-45 this practice was abolished. This practice was particularly prevalent among the Khanda tribe.
- **Slavery:** Governor General Lord Ellenborough banned slavery in India in 1843. The ban was imposed under the Indian Slavery Act, 1843. An Act of 833 also directed that slavery be abolished.



***Table 1.3 Social Reform Act: At a Glance***

Act of the Legislature	Year	Governor General/Viceroy	Subject
Infanticide Ban	1795, 1804	Sir John Shore, Lord Wellesley	Infanticide is considered to be common.
Ban on Sati	1829	Lord William Bentinck	Complete ban on the practice of Sati.
Ban on Slavery	1843	Lord Ellenborough	Slavery was banned.
Widow Remarriage Act	1856	Lord Canin	Widow Remarriage Allowed
Civil Marriage Act	1872	Lord Northbrook	The Act fixed the minimum age of marriage for girls at 14 years and for boys at 18 years.
Age of Consent Act	1891	Lord Lansdowne	The marriageable age for the girl was fixed at 12 years.
Saradha Act	1929	Lord Iverine	The marriageable age for girls is 14 years and for boys 18 years.
Hindu Women's Property Act	1937	Lord Linlithgow	Property Rights for Hindu Women

## NOTES

### 1.16 SUMMARY

In Indian history, the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are famous for socio-religious reform movements in addition to political events. At this time Indian society and religion had become plagued by many stereotypes and evil practices. According to some scholars, at the time of the establishment of British power in India, the Indian social structure was mostly 'stable and unchanging'. Indian life was plagued by the evils of caste system, untouchability, sati system, child marriage, purdah system, idol worship, and religious superstition. The British initially made no attempt to remove this system, because they wanted to strengthen their power by taking advantage of the weakness of Indian social life; but due to various reasons, gradually the attitude of Indians towards their



## NOTES

society and religion began to change. The contact with western education and knowledge science also awakened a new sense of consciousness among Indians.

The evils of British rule, the rise of a new Indian social class and the desire of enlightened Indians to remove their social and religious evils gave birth to a social and religious reform movement in India which can be termed as the 'Indian Renaissance'. Thus, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a lot of thinking and work was done with the aim of improving the social and religious condition in India. People were closely observing old ideas and customs, trying to improve them in the light of Western ideas. Many groups worked on making Hinduism more modern and relevant. The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission were particularly important in changing the ideas and practices of Hinduism. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, reformers in India had two main goals. They criticized the evils in Indian society like caste system, sati, widowhood and child marriage. They also raised their voice against superstitions and religious ignorance. These reformers wanted to modernize Indian society by promoting reason, rational thinking and tolerance. They didn't just focus on religion; they wanted to improve the society as a whole. Even though they used different methods and lived at different times, their approaches and goals were similar. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the main objective of the Arya Samaj was to purify the Hindu religion and Indian society and modernize it. The Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, considered the Vedas as the source of true knowledge and opposed superstition, idolatry and the dominance of priests in religion. The Arya Samaj strongly criticized social evils like the caste system, the practice of sati, child marriage and the plight of widows and tried to eradicate them. Along with this, he advocated reforms such as empowering women, promoting widow remarriage and emphasizing the belief in one God. The goal of Arya Samaj was to promote rational thinking, education and social equality in the society, thereby creating a better and progressive Indian society.

## 1.17 GLOSSARY

- **Renaissance:** It is a period of social, cultural, and intellectual awakening. A period when new thinking, art, science and knowledge developed in society. In



## NOTES

this time people came out of the old orthodox ideas and moved towards humanism, reason, and scientific outlook.

- **Sati System:** It is an evil practice in which the widow was forced to burn in her husband's funeral pyre. It was legally abolished in 1829.
- **Polytheism:** It is a religious belief in which many gods are worshipped.
- **Child Marriage Restraint Act:** It is a bill that provides for raising the minimum age for marriage.
- **Infallible:** These are ones whose target never misses.
- **Monotheism:** It is a belief in which only one god is worshipped.
- **Jihad:** It is the struggle to defend religion and justice.
- **Totalitarianism:** It is a system of government in which all the authority is vested in the ruler.
- **Theism:** It is the belief in which the existence of God is accepted, i.e. having faith in God.
- **Trinitarianism:** It is the doctrine in which God is believed to be in three forms (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Christianity believes that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God.
- **Revivalism:** It is an attempt to revive Indian culture, traditions, and religion, which emerged as a reaction against Western influence.
- **Reformism:** It is a movement to eradicate the evils and evils present in the society and to adopt modern ideas.
- **Brahma Samaj:** It is an organization founded in 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, which led a movement against caste, sati and child marriage in the society.
- **Arya Samaj:** It is an organization founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in 1875, which appealed for a return to the Vedas and reform of society.
- **Child Marriage:** It is the practice of early marriage, which social reformers have launched movements to stop. It was declared illegal in 1929 under the Saradha Act.



## NOTES

- **Widow Remarriage:** A woman who has lost her spouse through death and has not remarried. Reformers like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar fought to get widows the right to remarry. In 1856, the Widow Remarriage Act was passed.
- **Non-Violence:** It is the principle promoted by Mahatma Gandhi, which opposed violence in any social or political conflict.
- **Self-Respect Movement:** It is a movement led by Periyar Ramaswamy Naicker in South India, which opposed caste discrimination and Brahmanical domination.
- **Prarthana Samaj:** A Hindu Reform Movement which was founded in Maharashtra in 1867, focused on social reform and women's rights.
- **Islamic Reform Movements:** It is the Aligarh movement led by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, which promoted modern education and social reform among Muslims.
- **Aligarh Movement:** It is a movement for modern education and spreading awareness in the Muslim community.
- **Deoband Movement:** It is a movement started in 1866 to promote the traditional teachings of Islam and to oppose British imperialism.
- **Ramakrishna Mission:** It is an organization founded by Swami Vivekananda in 1897 that worked for social reform through service, education, and spirituality.
- **Women's Education:** Providing for all facilities and opportunities for learning of females on par with those available for the education of males. Pandita Ramabai and other reformers launched movements to educate women. Many schools were opened for this purpose.
- **Feminist Movement:** It is a movement for women's education, equal rights and freedom.
- **Women's Rights:** Advocating for the rights to property, education and freedom for women, which was part of social reform movements.
- **Devadasi System:** It is the evil practice of exploiting women in the name of serving God by priests in temples, which was agitated to end.
- **Exploitation-Free Society:** It is the aim of creating a society that is free from caste, gender, and religious discrimination.



---

## **1.18 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

---

### **1.18.1 In-Text Questions**

1. Who founded the Arya Samaj?
  - a) Raja Ram Mohan Roy
  - b) Swami Vivekananda
  - c) Swami Dayanand Saraswati
  - d) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
2. In which year was the Arya Samaj founded?
  - a) 1828
  - b) 1857
  - c) 1875
  - d) 1885
3. Which scripture is considered supreme by the Arya Samaj?
  - a) Mahabharata
  - b) Ramayana
  - c) Vedas
  - d) Puranas
4. What was the main objective of Arya Samaj?
  - a) Supporting Idolatry
  - b) Promoting Racism
  - c) Purification and Social Reform of Vedic Religion
  - d) Encouraging Religious Rituals
5. Which slogan was promoted by Swami Dayanand Saraswati?
  - a) Jai Jawan Jai Kisan
  - b) Vande Mataram





**NOTES**

- c) Return to the Vedas
- d) Glory to Aryavarta
- 6. Against which social evil did the Arya Samaj raise?
  - a) Child marriage
  - b) Racism
  - c) Sati Pratha
  - d) All of the above
- 7. What was the most important education campaign undertaken by the Arya Samaj?
  - a) Gurukul Education System
  - b) Macaulay Education System
  - c) Madrasa Education System
  - d) Missionary Education System
- 8. In which book did Swami Dayananda Saraswati present his views?
  - a) Satyarth Prakash
  - b) Geetawali
  - c) Self-Realization
  - d) Aryopanishad
- 9. What was the main difference between Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj?
  - a) The Brahmo Samaj supported idolatry
  - b) Arya Samaj considered the Vedas to be supreme
  - c) The Brahmo Samaj was dependent on religious texts
  - d) Arya Samaj did not focus on purification of religion
- 10. Which movement did the Arya Samaj support?
  - a) Swadeshi Movement
  - b) Non-Cooperation Movement



**NOTES**

- c) Harijan Movement
- d) Partition Movement
- 11. Where was Swami Dayananda Saraswati born?
  - a) Gujarat
  - b) Punjab
  - c) Rajasthan
  - d) Uttar Pradesh
- 12. Why did Arya Samaj support widow remarriage?
  - a) Because it was a part of Hinduism
  - b) Because it promoted social equality and women's rights.
  - c) Because this was the policy of the British rule
  - d) Because it was recognized in Vedic religion
- 13. What is the most important religious doctrine of Arya Samaj?
  - a) Monotheism
  - b) Polytheism
  - c) Idolatry
  - d) Yajna
- 14. What was the Arya Samaj's view of casteism?
  - a) He supported racism
  - b) He attempted to eradicate racism
  - c) He did not make any changes to racism
  - d) He considered it to be the cornerstone of society
- 15. In which language did Swami Dayanand Saraswati preach the Vedas?
  - a) Sanskrit
  - b) Urdu
  - c) Hindi
  - d) Gujarati



**NOTES**

**1.18.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. Why was the need for reform movements felt in the Indian society of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and what was the main objective of these movements?
2. For what purpose was the Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, and what were its main principles?
3. What steps did the Arya Samaj take for the eradication of social evils such as the caste system, the practice of sati and child marriage, and what changes did it bring about in Indian society as a result?
4. What was the impact of the Arya Samaj's emphasis on the purity and truthfulness of the Vedas on Indian religious and cultural life?
5. What were the similarities and differences between the Arya Samaj and other reform movements, such as the Brahmo Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission?

---

**1.19 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

---

1. c
2. c
3. c
4. c
5. c
6. d
7. a
8. a
9. b
10. a
11. c
12. b



13. a

14. b

15. a

---

## 1.20 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READINGS

---

- Sarkar, Sumit and Tanika Sarkar. (ed.) *Caste in Modern India, Vol. 1&2*. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Forbes, Geraldine (1999). *Women in Modern India. The New Cambridge History of India - Volume 4*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Jones, Kenneth. (1994). *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Hanlon, Rosalind. (2002). *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Western India*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.
- O'Hanlon Rosalind (2017). *Caste and its Histories in Colonial India: A Reappraisal*. Modern Asian Studies 51, 2.
- Kumar, Radha (1993). *History of Doing New Delhi Kali for Women*.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Joshi, V.C. (1975). *Rammohun Roy and the Process of Modernization in India*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.
- Shukla, R. L. (ed.) (1987). *History of Modern India*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.





## LESSON 2

# SOCIAL ISSUES AND REFORM MOVEMENTS: PHULE, AMBEDKAR AND THE CASTE QUESTION (1858-1947)

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### Structure

- 2.1 Learning Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Mahatma Jyotibharao Phule (1827-1890)
  - 2.3.1 Social Reform Movement
  - 2.3.2 Caste Question
- 2.4 Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar
  - 2.4.1 Ambedkar's Social Issues
  - 2.4.2 Ambedkar's Movements
  - 2.4.3 Ambedkar's Caste Questions and Analysis
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 Glossary
- 2.7 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 2.7.1 In-Text Questions
  - 2.7.2 Long Answer Questions
- 2.8 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 2.9 References/Suggested Readings

## 2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to :

- Understand the important role of Jyotiba Rao Phule and Babasaheb Ambedkar in the social reform movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Study the caste question and analysis of these social reformers.

Self-Instructional  
Material

75



**NOTES**

---

## **2.2 INTRODUCTION**

---

The caste system in India is an ancient and complex social structure, which has given rise to social, economic and political inequality among different sections of society. This system permanently imposed exploitation and oppression, especially on the lower castes and Dalits, which had a massive impact on their rights and opportunities. The nineteenth century saw the rise of many social and cultural movements that aimed at reforming Indian society and traditions and giving them new life. These movements attempted to remove caste inequality and the social discrimination associated with it. The English-educated middle class people started fighting unitedly on these issues. In this period, two important ideologies like rationalism and religious universalism changed the way people thought and inspired reformist thinkers. The reform movements of the nineteenth century consisted mainly of upper-caste Hindu leaders who raised their voice against caste-discrimination, untouchability and social discrimination. However, these efforts were not entirely successful and the improvement could only be partial. Despite this, these movements created a new wave of awareness and change in society.

Some important events in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries awakened the consciousness of self-respect and equality among the lower castes. Despite the 'divide and rule' policy during the British rule, the spread of western education, the imposition of a uniform penal code, the expansion of railways, and the influence of modern political ideas challenged the caste system. The demand for equality and social justice began to grow in the society and it became difficult to justify the caste system. In this environment, many leaders emerged from the lower castes who led the movements for equality and struggled for their identity and rights in the society. These leaders resolved to end caste discrimination in the society and went ahead demanding justice and equality for the lower castes. In this context, social reformers like Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar played an important role in the struggle against the caste system.



---

### 2.3 MAHATMA JYOTIRAO PHULE (1827-1890)

---

Mahatma Jyotirao Govindrao Phule (1827-1890) was one of the major social reformers of 19<sup>th</sup> century in India. He spent the greater part of his life struggling against casteism, religious hypocrisy, and social injustice. Phule's social reform movement was not only to eliminate the inequalities prevailing in the society but to create a society that was based on the ideals of equality, liberty and fraternity. Phule's struggle against caste discrimination and exploitation, in particular, is considered a symbol of revolutionary change in the social history of India. Jyotirao Phule was born in Pune district of Maharashtra. He belonged to a Mali (Kumbhi) caste, which was considered a 'Shudra' in the social system of the time. Casteism was at its peak in Indian society at that time, and Phule experienced this unjust system firsthand. Early in his life, he saw how the upper castes exploited the lower castes and deprived them of education, social dignity, and basic rights to life. Phule understood the importance of education when his friends in a missionary school inspired him to study. During his studies, he found that education could be the most effective way to eliminate inequalities in society. This gave a new twist to his thoughts and he resolved to devote his life to social reform. He was one of the leading social reformers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, who raised his voice against caste discrimination, Brahmanical supremacy and patriarchal social system. Phule advocated for education, especially women's education, and the rights of the lower castes, and through his writings highlighted the injustice done on the basis of caste. He launched a broad movement for social justice through writings like "*Gulamgiri*" and organized the Bahujan Samaj. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar (1891-1956) was the most influential Dalit leader of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the architect of the Constitution and a staunch supporter of caste annihilation. Ambedkar enshrined the values of equality, liberty and fraternity in the Indian Constitution and waged a lifelong struggle for the rights of Dalits. He gave a new direction to the fight against casteist oppression and suggested constitutional and legal measures to give the marginalized people of the society their rights. Both Phule and Ambedkar in their respective times looked at the question of caste not only as a social problem but also as political, cultural and economic issues. His efforts challenged the social fabric of India and led to a massive movement towards annihilation of caste.





## NOTES

### **Abolition of Untouchability and Upliftment of Harijans**

The biggest problem of Hindu society was the caste system and untouchability. It was a system in which society was divided into several classes, and people who were considered untouchables were isolated. The number of untouchables was about 20 per cent of the Hindu population, but strict restrictions were imposed for them in society. It was forbidden for the people of the upper castes to touch them or even to see their shadows. Their rules of eating, drinking, and living were also different and strict.

The untouchables could not draw water from the wells or ponds used by the upper castes. They were not allowed to enter temples, and they could not even study or worship the scriptures. Jobs in high positions were also closed to them, and they could not get rights over land. Their job was to serve the upper castes and perform tasks considered 'impure'.

Due to these rigid rules of caste system, there was internal conflict and division in Hindu society. Some religious reformers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century paid attention to these problems, but could not bring about enough changes. The real reform came in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when several steps were taken to remove these evils. The policies of the British and the efforts of the Indian social reformers helped in weakening the caste system. The development of modern transport (rail, bus, etc.), the process of industrialization and urbanization, the policy of equality in law, and the spread of education loosened the shackles of the caste system. Along with this, reformist organizations like Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj and Ramakrishna Mission also raised their voice against the caste system. In 1917, Vithalbhai Patel tried to abolish the caste system. An organization was established in 1922, which aimed to break the caste-system. The leaders of the national movement and the Congress also struggled to eradicate this social evil, especially for the abolition of untouchability and for the Harijans to be equal in society.

Mahatma Gandhi made special efforts in this direction. He tried to honour the untouchables by calling them 'Harijans' (people of God) and made several efforts for their emancipation. In 1932, he founded the All India Harijan Sangh, through which he drew the attention of the people towards the miserable condition of the Harijans.



## NOTES

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar also dedicated his entire life for the upliftment of Harijans. He founded the 'All India Depressed Classes Federation' and succeeded in getting reservation for Harijans in the assemblies with his efforts. Even before independence, the Congress government had declared untouchability as a crime.

Harijan leaders formed organizations like the 'All India Dalit Classes Council' to demand protection of their interests and rights. In South India, the Harijans launched the 'Self-respect Movement' against the dominance of the Brahmins.

All these efforts resulted in a major change in the condition of the Harijans. They got entry into temples, untouchability was abolished, their economic and social status improved, education spread, and they got the opportunity to participate in politics. After independence, the inequality of the caste system and untouchability were legally abolished in the Indian Constitution. Harijans and other depressed classes were given special facilities, which further improved their condition. Today, Harijans have become an integral part of society and enjoy equal status in society.

These reform movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century provided equality and freedom not only to the Harijans, but also to women. This is a major achievement that played an important role in making Indian society more equitable and equitable.



**Fig. 2.1** Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule

**Source:** <https://www.insightsonindia.com>



## NOTES

### 2.3.1 Social Reform Movements

Some of the social reform movements include:

- 1. Women's Education and Opposition to Casteist Patriarchy:** Phule not only opposed casteism but also made the plight of women in society a major issue. He believed that the caste system and patriarchy are deeply intertwined. He recognised the fact that both women and shudras are being exploited equally in the society. Women were denied education, their freedom was taken away, and their rights were suppressed. Phule along with his wife Savitribai Phule emphasized on women's education. In 1848 she opened the first girls' school in Pune, which was a revolutionary step of the time. Savitribai Phule became the first teacher of this school. Through this step, Phule gave a message to the society that education is necessary for all, whether be it a woman or a Dalit. He believed that real change in society could begin only when women and Dalits get education and fight for their rights.
- 2. Repudiation of 'Slavery' and Brahmanical Supremacy:** Jyotirao Phule's most prominent work is "**Slavery**" (1873), in which he deeply criticized the Brahmanical system and casteist society. In 'Gulamgiri', Phule defined slavery as the exploitation and oppression of Indian society through caste. He argued that the Shudra and ultra-Shudra sections of the society were deliberately deprived of education and social rights. He looked at it from a historical and sociological point of view and argued that this system is against human rights and equality. Phule's possessive case ending book was extremely revolutionary for that time and it was considered an important effort towards Dalit consciousness and social justice.
- 3. Satyashodhak Samaj and Social Awareness:** In 1873, Phule founded the "Satyashodhak Samaj", a social organisation against discrimination on the basis of caste and religion. The main objective of the Satyashodhak Samaj was to organize the exploited and oppressed sections of the society and make them aware of their rights. The Satyashodhak Samaj openly raised its voice against religious rituals, superstitions, and caste discrimination. The main principle of Satyashodhak Samaj was that every person should get equal rights in society



## NOTES

and no one should be a victim of discrimination on the basis of caste or religion. Phule's movement became a powerful medium to organize people from the lower strata of society and fight for their rights.

**4. Opposition to Religious and Cultural Revivalism:** Phule strongly opposed the cultural and religious revival of Brahmanism in Hindu society. He saw this as a threat to the lower strata of society, as this revivalist movement was making caste exploitation even stronger. Phule saw the reforms being carried out by the Arya Samaj and other religious revivalist organisations as conditional reforms that did not address the fundamental problems. Phule argued that social reform should not be confined to the reform of Brahmanical traditions and religious rituals, but should be made a means for attainment of equality and justice for all sections of society. For him, social reform meant a complete abolition of caste, religion, and gender-based discrimination.

**5. Influence of Phule's Ideas and Influence on Ambedkar:** Jyotirao Phule's ideas had a profound impact on the Indian society. His anti-caste views inspired social movements of Dalits and backward classes. Phule's ideas and the movement led by him also had a profound impact on Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar. Ambedkar considered Phule as his guru and carried forward his ideas of annihilation of caste. Ambedkar incorporated Phule's concept of social justice into his movements and the Indian Constitution. Mahatma Jyotirao Phule was a great social reformer who struggled against casteism, religious hypocrisy, and social injustice prevalent in Indian society. The movements and ideas started by him enlightening the Indian society and infused a new consciousness towards social justice. Phule caste questions but the struggle was not limited to the realization of the rights of the lower castes, but their aim was to establish an equal society for all sections of society.

Phule's thoughts and the Satyashodhak Samaj marked a new chapter towards social reform and justice in India. His thoughts are still relevant today and continue to be a source of inspiration in the struggle against caste-based discrimination. Phule's life and work teach us that real change in society is possible only when we imbibe the ideals of equality, liberty and fraternity in our lives and resolutely oppose all forms of exploitation and injustice.



**NOTES**

**2.3.2 Caste Questions**

Jyotirao Phule considered caste as the biggest problem of Indian society. In his view, the caste system was not merely a means of social division, but it was a mechanism that made a large section of society vulnerable to exploitation and oppression.

Mahatma Jyotirao Phule's approach to the caste question was a powerful protest against the deep inequalities of Indian society. He considered the Brahmanical system as the main cause of social injustice and fought to challenge it through education, organization, and awareness. Phule believed that unless caste-based exploitation and discrimination were abolished, true social reforms would not be possible in India. His life and struggle became a source of inspiration against casteism in Indian society, which further firmly established the ideals of equality and justice in Dalit movements and Indian society.

---

**2.4 BABASAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR**

---

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956) was one of the most prominent social reformers, jurists, economists and politicians of Indian society. He is known as the chief architect of the Indian Constitution and a great leader of the Dalit society. Ambedkar spent his entire life in the struggle against caste discrimination, inequality and social injustice in India. His struggle was not limited to social reform, but he also raised his voice for the rights of Dalits and disadvantaged sections of society in economic, political, and religious fields. Ambedkar believed that change in society is possible only when every person gets equal rights, respect and opportunities. He placed education, equality and social justice at the centre of his thoughts and added several provisions to ensure them in the Indian Constitution. Ambedkar's life and work gave a new direction to Dalit consciousness and social reform movements in Indian society and he is still remembered as a symbol of social justice.



### 2.4.1 Ambedkar's Social Issues

Some of the social issues addressed by Ambedkar are:

- **Caste System and Social Injustice:** Dr. Ambedkar's greatest struggle was against the caste system prevailing in Indian society. He described caste as the biggest social injustice in Indian society and waged a lifelong struggle to end it. Ambedkar believed that the caste system was only a means of exploitation and oppression, thereby marginalizing a large section of society economically, socially, and educationally. Ambedkar argued that the caste system not only promotes social inequality, but it also robs a human being of his/her self-respect and dignity. According to him, casteism has divided the society so much that a person's ability and worthiness are evaluated on the basis of his/her birth and not on the basis of his/her talent. He argued that unless the caste system is abolished, real progress and equality cannot be established in the Indian society. In this struggle for annihilation of caste, Ambedkar led many movements for the rights of 'untouchables' and Dalits and made special provisions for them in the Indian Constitution.
- **Opposition to Untouchability:** Untouchability was a centuries-old practice in Indian society, in which Dalits and Shudras were isolated from society. They were denied social, religious and educational rights, and were given an inferior status as human beings. Ambedkar considered untouchability a crime against humanity and launched a strong movement against it. In 1927, during the Chavdar Talab Satyagraha in Mahad, Ambedkar led a movement for the right of Dalits to drink water from public water sources. It was a symbolic movement, an important step against untouchability. Subsequently, Ambedkar also fought for the right to enter the temple, so that Dalits would not be denied their religious rights. Ambedkar's struggle against untouchability enlightened the Dalit society and gave them the courage to stand up for their rights. He emphasized on educating and organizing Dalits to make them aware of their rights.
- **Education and Social Reforms:** Dr. Ambedkar believed that education was the only weapon through which inequalities and injustice in society could be eliminated. Ambedkar realized the importance of education in the early struggle of his life and saw that the lower classes of the society were deprived of their



## NOTES

rights due to lack of education. Ambedkar made many efforts to educate Dalits and backward sections of society. He said that education is the medium which makes a person self-reliant and empowered, and through this only a person can fight for his/her rights. Ambedkar emphasized the importance of education throughout his life and considered it as the most important medium of social reform.

- **Women's Rights and Gender Equality:** Ambedkar was not only against caste-based discrimination, but he also took several steps to improve the status of women in society. He advocated for women's rights and added important provisions to the Indian Constitution to give equal status to women. Ambedkar emphasized the need for equal rights for women in the fields of education, employment, and social security. He argued that the progress of society is not possible without the progress of women. According to him, an equal and just society can be built only when women and men are given equal opportunities and rights. In the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar incorporated several important legislations to ensure the rights of women, such as the provisions for marriage, divorce, property rights and equal pay.



**Fig. 2.2** Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar



## NOTES

- **Religious Reform and Acceptance of Buddhism:** Ambedkar also considered religion as an important medium of social reform. However, he strongly criticized the casteist structure of Hinduism and said that this religion is a tool to perpetuate the caste system and untouchability. Frustrated with the caste structure of Hinduism, Ambedkar converted to Buddhism in 1956 and embraced Buddhism along with millions of Dalits. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism because according to him this religion is based on the values of equality, liberty, and fraternity. There was no place for caste discrimination in Buddhism, and this religion promoted the values of humanity. This decision of Ambedkar gave a new direction to the Dalit society and showed them the way to organize towards social justice. This conversion became a symbol of Ambedkar's social and political thought in the last years of his life.
- **Constitution Making and Social Justice:** Dr. Ambedkar is known for his significant contribution in the making of the Indian Constitution. He created a framework through the Constitution in which all citizens get equal rights and there is no discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, gender, or language. Ambedkar made reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Indian Constitution so that they could get equal opportunities in education and employment. Along with this, he incorporated the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity in the constitution, which was a major step towards social justice. Ambedkar believed that the Constitution should be the medium to provide equal opportunities and rights to all sections of society. He also said that the measure of progress of a society should be how it treats its weakest section.

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar was one of the most prominent reformers of Indian society, who fought against casteism, untouchability and social injustice. His thoughts and actions are still relevant today and promote the ideals of equality, freedom, and social justice in society. Ambedkar's struggle was not just for the rights of Dalits, but he wanted to build a society that ensured equal opportunities and dignity for all. Ambedkar's life and work teach us that social reform requires constant struggle and education. He proved that legal and political reforms are necessary for social justice, but even more necessary is the change of ideas in society. His ideas and contributions have left an indelible mark in the history of Indian society, and his legacy continues to inspire millions.





## NOTES

### 2.4.2 Ambedkar's Movement

Ambedkar's movement began with the struggle for the rights of Dalits. He challenged the caste system prevailing in Indian society and described it as the main reason for the exploitation of Dalits and backward classes. Ambedkar argued that the caste system was not merely a means of social inequality, but it was also the main cause of economic and political exploitation. He said that Dalits and other backward classes can never get equal rights and respect due to the caste system.

- **Mahad Satyagraha (1927):** The first major movement under the leadership of Ambedkar came in the form of Mahad Satyagraha. The movement took place in 1927 in the town of Mahad in Maharashtra, where Dalits did not have the right to drink water from public water bodies. Ambedkar protested against this and along with the Dalits, he organized a satyagraha to drink water from the Chavdar pond. This movement not only spread a wider awareness of the rights of Dalits, but also paved the way for organizing Dalits under the leadership of Ambedkar. The aim of the Mahad Satyagraha was not only to fight for the right to drink water, but through this, Ambedkar gave a clear message that Dalits should be made equal rights in Indian society. This movement proved to be a turning point towards Dalit emancipation and Ambedkar's ideas received widespread support.



**Fig. 2.3** Mahad Satyagraha (Fight for the Right to Drink Water)



## NOTES

- **Political Rights of Dalits and Pune Pact (1932):** Ambedkar's struggle for the political rights of Dalits was also an important part of his movement. He demanded a separate electorate for Dalits so that they could have the opportunity to freely choose their representatives to protect their rights. The British government accepted Ambedkar's demand and announced separate electorates for Dalits, known as the Communal Award. However, Mahatma Gandhi opposed this proposal and he started fasting unto death against it. After Gandhiji's fast, an agreement was reached between Ambedkar and Gandhi, which is called the Pune Pact. Under this agreement, Ambedkar withdrew the demand for separate electorates for Dalits, but in return, Dalits got the right to special political representation in the form of reservation. The Pune Pact was a difficult compromise for Ambedkar, but he accepted it because he wanted to continue a broader movement for Dalit rights. After this agreement, Ambedkar raised the demand for political, social and educational reservations for Dalits even more vigorously.
- **Ambedkar's Constitution Making and Social Justice:** Ambedkar's most important contribution was in the making of the Indian Constitution. After independence, when the Constitution of India was being framed, Ambedkar was appointed the chairman of the drafting committee of the Constituent Assembly. He prominently embodied the ideals of social justice, equality and freedom in the Constitution. Ambedkar believed that the Constitution was the only document through which social inequality and injustice in India could be ended. He prominently placed the principles of reservation, right to education, and equality for Dalits and backward classes in the Constitution. Ambedkar ensured that every individual in Indian society enjoyed equal rights without discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, sex or class.
- **Conversion and Return to Buddhism:** Ambedkar realised that the caste system was only a part of Hinduism and that as long as Dalits were part of Hinduism, they would continue to be exploited and deprived. He gave a message to Dalits that if they want equality and respect, they will have to come out of Hinduism. In 1956, Ambedkar embraced Buddhism along with millions of his followers. This conversion was the most important step in Ambedkar's life,



## NOTES

because through it he made it clear that social emancipation is possible only with religious freedom. By embracing Buddhism, Ambedkar gave a message to Indian society that the path to the emancipation of Dalits was not linked only to social and political rights, but also to religious renaissance.

Dr. Ambedkar's movement was not limited to Dalit rights only, but it was for the establishment of social justice and equality throughout Indian society. Ambedkar contributed significantly towards ending casteism, social inequality, and discrimination in India through his thoughts and movements. His movement was based on the three main pillars of Dalit, consciousness, social reform and political representation. The impact of Ambedkar's movement was not limited to India, but it also became a source of inspiration for movements for social justice and equality at the international level. Ambedkar showed through his thoughts and struggles that real change in society is possible only when the exploited and deprived classes organize and fight for their rights. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's movement was an important revolutionary movement for Indian society. He fought for the rights of the downtrodden, the exploited and the deprived and built a broad social movement against caste-based exploitation. The life and struggle of Ambedkar teach us that equality, liberty, and justice in society are possible only when we fight unitedly against casteism, discrimination and injustice. Ambedkar's movement continues to be a source of inspiration for Dalit emancipation and social justice, and his ideology will continue to be a guiding light for Indian society.

**Table 2.1** Major Movements: A Vision

S. No.	Major Movements	Field
1	Ezhava Movement	Kerala
2	Nadar Movement	Tamil Nadu
3	Parish Movement	Tamil Nadu
4	Nair Movement	Tamil Nadu
5	Self-Esteem Movement	Tamil Nadu
6	Satyashodhak Movement	Maharashtra
7	Mahar Movement	Maharashtra
8	Mahishya Movement	Bengal
9	Namasudra Movement	Bengal



### 2.4.3 Ambedkar's Caste Question and Analysis

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar (1891-1956) was the most prominent leader of the struggle against caste based discrimination in Indian society. His life and struggle became a source of inspiration for innumerable people who had been victims of social injustice, caste oppression and discrimination for centuries. Ambedkar not only fought for the rights of Dalits, but he also challenged the deep-seated casteism in the structure of Indian society and suggested sweeping reforms to eradicate it. His approach to the caste question was deeply rooted in human rights, social justice and equality, which he expressed through his writings, thoughts and struggles.

Ambedkar considered the caste system as the biggest evil of Indian society. In his view, the caste system was not just a social division, but it was a structure that perpetuated inequality, exploitation and injustice in Indian society. He saw it not only from a social point of view, but also from a historical and political point of view. Ambedkar argued in his famous book “*Annihilation of Caste*” (1936) that the caste system is a system which has made India socially and economically weak. He believed that the caste system does not merely determine the social status, but it affects all social, economic and political opportunities of an individual. He cited the Brahminical social system as the root cause of this inequality, which keeps the Shudras and Ati-Shudras (Dalits) on the margins of society.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, the abolition of caste was not possible only through social reforms, but economic and political reforms were also necessary for it. He believed that the exploited classes had to be economically empowered to end caste discrimination. He argued that the caste system is not just a social problem, but it is also an economic problem, in which the lower castes have a severe shortage of resources and property. Ambedkar emphasized on land reforms, spread of education and industrialization. He said that for the eradication of caste, it is necessary to provide economic resources to the marginalized people of the society so that they can stand up for their rights and get equal status in the society. According to him, social and economic reforms were closely intertwined. Unless the downtrodden and backward classes get equal opportunities for education and employment, they cannot attain equal status in the society. Therefore, Ambedkar considered education as the utmost importance and described it as the most effective instrument of social change.



## NOTES

Table 2.2 Lower Caste Movements and Organizations

	Movement/Organization	Year	Place of Origin	Founder
1	Satyashodhak Samaj	1873	Maharashtra	Jyotiba Phule
2	Aravippuram Movement	1888	Aravippuram (Kerala)	Sree Narayana Guru
3	Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam	1902	Kerala	Shri Narayana, Dr. Palpu & Kumaran Asan
4	Depressed Class Mission Society	1906	Bombay	V. R. Shinde
5	Bahujan Samaj	1910	Satara (Maharashtra)	Mukandrao Patil
6	Justice Party	1915-16	Madras (Tamil Nadu)	C.N. Mudaliar, T.M. Nair and P. Thyagaraja Chetty
7	Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha	1924	Bombay	Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar MD
8	Self Respect Movement	1925	Madras (Tamil Nadu)	E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker (Periyar)
9	Harijan Sevak Sangh	1932	Poona	Mahatma Gandhi

## 2.5 SUMMARY

The reformist movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century mainly emphasized reforms in the religious field, although efforts were made to remove social evils along with it, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, efforts were made to improve the condition of socially backward classes. This reform movement was not confined to the upper-middle class, but had a wide impact on all sections of the society. National movements also carried out social reform. Those who were religiously staunch and conservative also contributed to social reform. The two main objectives of this reform movement were to improve the condition of women and the emancipation of the depressed classes and to abolish the feeling of untouchability. Many organizations also contributed to this effort.

The social reform movements of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar and their views on the caste question have been two important pillars of Indian social reform and progressiveness. Phule opposed the caste system and its exploitative aspects from the very beginning of his life. He considered education as an important step towards equality in society and made active efforts to end caste-based discrimination. Phule dreamt of creating a society through social reforms in which all



## NOTES

classes would get equal rights and opportunities. At the same time, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar suggested constitutional and legal measures towards annihilation of caste, taking forward Phule's ideas. Ambedkar enshrined the values of equality, liberty, and fraternity in the Indian Constitution and fought for the rights of Dalits. He led a strong movement against casteist oppression and made a constant effort to get the marginalized people of the society their rights.

Both the reformers raised a strong voice against the caste system through their respective approaches and efforts and contributed significantly towards the change in the society. Phule's emphasis on education and social awareness, and Ambedkar's constitutional reform and legal approach together took important steps towards freeing Indian society from casteism and discrimination. The thinking and actions of these reformers showed the Indian society the way to not only end discrimination on the basis of caste, but also to create a society where the ideal of equality and justice is paramount. His efforts are still relevant today and continue to be a source of inspiration in the struggle against caste oppression. His vision and movements taught the Indian society that true social reforms and equality are possible only when we challenge the casteist and unjust structures and ensure equal opportunities and rights to all sections in the society.

---

## 2.6 GLOSSARY

---

- **Caste:** It is a social system of India, which divides people into categories based on birth. The caste system gave rise to discrimination and social inequality.
- **Untouchables:** It refers to the class of society who were kept at the lowest level in the caste system, and who were socially discriminated.
- **Equality:** It is the principle that all human beings should get equal rights, opportunities and respect is a major ideology against caste discrimination.
- **Dalits:** It is a community that was traditionally seen as a lower caste and faced social injustice. Ambedkar demanded human rights for this community.
- **Reform Movements:** These are movements that attempt to eradicate evils and inequalities in society, such as casteism, untouchability, and gender inequality.



## NOTES

- **Right to Education:** It is a right of every person to receive an education regardless of their socio and economic background. Mahatma Phule and Ambedkar considered education as a means of upliftment of Dalits and women, because only through education can social awareness and independence be achieved.
- **Brahmanism:** It is the ideology that establishes Brahmins as the highest rank in the caste system and supports discrimination against other castes.
- **Bahishkrit Bharat:** It is a newspaper founded by Dr. Ambedkar, which aimed to highlight the problems of the Dalit community and fight for their rights.
- **Satyashodhak Samaj:** It is an organization founded by Mahatma Phule, which fought for casteism and women's rights. Its purpose was to eliminate the evils spread in the society.
- **Ambedkarism:** It is the ideology of social justice and equality promoted by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, which works to protect the rights of Dalits and backwards.
- **Rehabilitation:** It means to provide social and economic support to provide a dignified life to those affected by caste oppression.
- **Constitution:** It is India's supreme law, drafted by Dr. Ambedkar and contains several articles to abolish caste discrimination. It ensures social justice and equality.

---

## 2.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

---

### 2.7.1 In-Text Questions

1. When did Mahatma Jyotirao Phule start his social reform movement?
  - a) 1848
  - b) 1873
  - c) 1860
  - d) 1857



## NOTES

2. In which year was Mahatma Jyotirao Phule's famous book "Gulamgiri" published?
  - a) 1860
  - b) 1873
  - c) 1880
  - d) 1890
3. In which year did Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar adopt the Indian Constitution?
  - a) 1947
  - b) 1950
  - c) 1952
  - d) 1956
4. In which year did Mahatma Phule establish the Satyashodhak Samaj?
  - a) 1868
  - b) 1873
  - c) 1888
  - d) 1890
5. According to Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, what was the main basis of the Indian caste system?
  - a) Social Equality
  - b) Religious Hypocrisy
  - c) Economic Prosperity
  - d) Political Power
6. Phule attempted to raise awareness of which section through education?
  - a) Upper Caste
  - b) Shudras and Ati-Shudras
  - c) Merchant Class
  - d) Kshatriya Class





**NOTES**

7. Which religion did Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar adopt and why?
  - a) Hinduism; Against Racism
  - b) Buddhist Faith; For Social Equality
  - c) Islam; Against Religious Fanaticism
  - d) Sikhism; Against Racism
8. What was the name of Phule's wife who played an important role in the education movement?
  - a) Savita Phule
  - b) Savitribai Phule
  - c) Sharda Phule
  - d) Kashibai Phule
9. Which major social movement against the caste system was led by Dr. Ambedkar?
  - a) Anti-Sati Pratha Movement
  - b) Dalit Movement
  - c) Women's Education Movement
  - d) Freedom Struggle
10. Which class of mental and physical slavery was criticized by Phule in 'Ghulamgiri'?
  - a) Upper Caste
  - b) Shudras and Ati-Shudras
  - c) A man or member of the Kshatriya class or warrior class
  - d) The third main caste of traders and landlords in social hierarchy of Hindus
11. When was it that Dr. Ambedkar took charge as the President of the Constituent Assembly?
  - a) 1947
  - b) 1950



**NOTES**

- c) 1949
  - d) 1951
12. Phule believed that the caste system divided the society on:
- a) Religious Grounds
  - b) Economic Grounds
  - c) Social Grounds
  - d) Political Grounds
13. Dr. Ambedkar started his life with which profession?
- a) Pledership
  - b) Teaching
  - c) Politic
  - d) Journalism
14. Which social institution was founded by Phule, which was against discrimination on the basis of caste and religion?
- a) Arya Samaj
  - b) Satyashodhak Samaj
  - c) Brahmo Samaj
  - d) Deenbandhu Samaj
15. Which movement of Dr. Ambedkar took a major step towards social change in Indian society?
- a) Dalit Movement
  - b) Sarva Dharma Ekta Andolan
  - c) Break the Pangri Movement
  - d) Brahmo Samaj Movement



**NOTES**

**2.7.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. What social and cultural movements did Mahatma Jyotirao Phule lead against the Indian caste system and what kind of changes did these movements try to bring about in the society?
2. What were the major initiatives taken by Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar in the context of the caste system and rights of Dalits in Indian society, and how was his approach in annihilation of caste?
3. What were the similarities and differences between Jyotirao Phule and Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's approach to the caste question, and how did the personal and ideological vision of these two reformers influence the movement for social reform?
4. What was the historical and social background of the movements of Phule and Ambedkar and how did these movements affect different sections of Indian society?
5. What is the long-lasting impact of the social reforms undertaken by Phule and Ambedkar and their relevance in today's context?

---

**2.8 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

---

1. b
2. b
3. b
4. b
5. b
6. b
7. b



## NOTES

- 8. b
- 9. b
- 10. b
- 11. c
- 12. c
- 13. a
- 14. b
- 15. c

---

## 2.9 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

---

- Sarkar, Sumit and Tanika Sarkar. (ed.) *Caste in Modern India*, Vol. 1&2. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Forbes, Geraldine (1999). *Women in Modern India*. The New Cambridge History of India - Volume 4, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jones, Kenneth (1994). *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Hanlon, Rosalind (2002). *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Western India*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.
- O'Hanlon Rosalind (2017). *Caste and its Histories in Colonial India: A Reappraisal*, *Modern Asian Studies* 51, 2.
- Kumar, Radha (1993). *History of Doing New Delhi Kali for Women*, Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.



**NOTES**

- Joshi, V.C. (1975). *Rammohun Roy and the Process of Modernization in India*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.
- Shukla, R. L. (ed.) (1987). *History of Modern India*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.



### LESSON 3

### NOTES

## **SOCIAL ISSUES AND REFORM MOVEMENTS: WOMEN'S REFORM MOVEMENT (1858-1947)**

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### **Structure**

- 3.1 Learning Objectives
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 19<sup>th</sup> Century Women's Reform Movement
- 3.4 Women's Issues of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century
- 3.5 Role of Women in the Freedom Movement
  - 3.5.1 Role of Women in the Early Stages (19<sup>th</sup> century)
  - 3.5.2 Gandhiji and Women's Participation in the Non-Cooperation Movement
  - 3.5.3 Role of Women in Salt Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience Movement
  - 3.5.4 Women's Participation in the Quit India Movement
  - 3.5.5 Role of Women in the Revolutionary Movement
  - 3.5.6 Social and Economic Participation of Women
  - 3.5.7 Status of Women after the Freedom Movement
- 3.6 Improving the Status of Women
- 3.7 Efforts made by Major Reformers, Social and Religious Organizations to Improve the Condition of Women
- 3.8 Summary
- 3.9 Glossary
- 3.10 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 3.10.1 In-Text Questions
  - 3.10.2 Long Answer Questions
- 3.11 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 3.12 References/Suggested Readings



## NOTES

### 3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to :

- Understand the meaning of nationalism and its association with different social groups.
- Analyse the background of the Indian Women's Movement.
- Discuss the major problems faced by women in the nineteenth century.
- Describe the efforts made by the British for the emancipation of women.
- Study the reforms and their impact on Indian women in the nineteenth century.
- Analyse the contribution of social reformers in women's emancipation.
- Discuss the participation of Women in Indian National Movement
- Get a brief introduction to the women's reform movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Discuss the information about all the social reformers, politicians and social workers of this reform movement.
- Understand information about 19<sup>th</sup> century women's issues such as child marriage, sati pratha, widow life and lack of remarriage, lack of education, etc.
- Describe about social and religious bias towards women.
- Analyse the role of women in the freedom movement.

### 3.2 INTRODUCTION

The reformist movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century mainly emphasized reforms in the religious field, although efforts were made to remove social evils at the same time, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, efforts were made to improve the condition of the socially backward classes. This reform movement was not limited to the upper-middle class, but had a wide impact on all sections of society. National movements also carried out social reform. Those who were religiously staunch and conservative also contributed to the



social reform. The two main goals of this reform movement were to improve the condition of women and the emancipation of the depressed classes and to abolish the feeling of untouchability. Many organizations also contributed to this effort.

---

### **3.3 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY WOMEN'S REFORM MOVEMENT**

---

According to religious customs and personal law, Indian women have been the followers of men and often the victims of social oppression. According to traditional viewpoints, women were praised as wives and mothers, but individually they had a very low social position and were considered nothing without the existence of their husbands. In different parts of the country, dreadful practices like sati and self-immolation were prevalent. Widows did not get married and had to lead a restricted life like a monk. In this sense, the condition of upper-caste women was worse than that of lower-caste women. Peasant women enjoyed freedom by sharing in various activities with their husbands and created a good position in the family. There was no difference in the social status and value of Hindu and Muslim women. They were even deprived of education.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, under the influence of western education and democratic ideologies, many social reformers launched powerful movements to raise the social status of women. Some social reformers called for individuality and equality, while others tried to prove that Hinduism, Islam or Zoroastrianism – all of them favoured equality in the social status of women. In the 1820s, Raja Ram Mohan Roy decided to launch a mass movement against the inhuman practice of Sati. Under his influence, the then Governor General completely banned the practice of Sati in 1829 AD. He also attacked polygamy and child marriage, and advocated women's share in ancestral property and women's education. After the death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Brahmo Samaj under the leadership of Devendra Nath Tagore, Keshav Chandra Sen, Ishwar Chand Vidyasagar and Ashwini Kumar Dutta (founder of Tattvavodhini Sabha) continued its movement in favour of widow remarriage, women's education, and abolition of child marriage as well as polygamy. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar launched a very powerful movement which was in support of widow remarriage. His movement





## NOTES

was successful and he was successful in getting a law in its favour in 1855 AD. The Bethune School, established in Calcutta in 1849, was a fruitful result of the powerful movements launched in the fifth and sixth decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for women's education.

In western India (which was brought under British occupation only much later), some institutions also supported women's education. The foremost among them was the Prarthana Samaj, which was led by R.G. Bhandarkar and M.G. Bhandarkar. It was started by Ranade. Apart from this, the Paramahansa Mandali also emphasized on women's education. Its founder was Gopalhari Deshmukh. In 1848, some young men formed the Students' Library and Scientific Society. One of the aims of this society was to establish schools for the education of women. In 1851, Jyotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule established a girls' school in Pune. Soon after, many more schools opened. Jagannath Seth and Mauda Ji were pioneers in the establishment of these schools. Jyotiba Phule was the pioneer of the widow marriage movement in Maharashtra. Vishnu Shastri Pandit founded the Widow Remarriage Association in the 1850s. In 1852, Karsan Das Mool Ji started a magazine called '**Satyaprakash**' to advocate widow marriage.

In 1851, Dada Bhai Naoroji, Ferdon Ji, S.S. Bengali, etc. together established the Rehnumai Majdayasan Sabha. This organization agitated for women's education, for the legal rights of women and for the creation of a common law for Parsi marriage and succession. Dayanand Saraswati and his followers (Arya Samaji) took the lead in the emancipation of women in North India. He worked hard to improve the condition of women and spread education among them. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Aligarh School raised their voice against the poor conditions of women in the Muslim society. He wrote articles in favour of raising the social status of Muslim women, and also advocated the abolition of the purdah system and the spread of education among women. He also criticized the practice of polygamy and divorce.

---

### 3.4 WOMEN'S ISSUES OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

---

Women's issues in India in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were extremely important and complex. Indian society at this time was under traditional and patriarchal structures, where the



condition of women was very miserable. They were discriminated against at social, economic and educational levels, and were subjected to many forms of injustice and exploitation. During this time many reformers and movements tried to improve the condition of women, but the challenges were very high. The major women's issues of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be seen in various aspects:

- 1. Child Marriage (Prevalence of Child Marriage):** Child marriage was common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Girls were married off at a very young age, which hampered their physical and mental development. Deprived of education and independence, these girls often became mothers at an early age, exacerbating their health problems. Child marriage confined women's lives to narrow circles, and deprived them of their rights and freedoms.
- 2. Sati Pratha:** Sati Pratha was one of the most cruel practices against women in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this practice, after the death of the husband, his wife also had to immolate herself on the funeral pyre of the husband. This practice was not only inhumane but also violated the right to exist of women. Reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy raised their voice against this practice, and in 1829 Lord William Bentinck banned it legally.
- 3. Widow Life and Lack of Remarriage:** The condition of widows was very miserable in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Widowed women were isolated from society, and they were not allowed to remarry. Widowed women were forced to wear white robes, shave their heads, and lead a life isolated from society. Widow remarriage was opposed by the religious and cultural norms of the society.
- 4. Lack of Education:** In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, very little attention was paid to women's education. The society believed that education was not necessary for women, and that their main duty was to look after the household and perform traditional roles. The result of depriving women of education was that they could not become aware of their rights and their role in society. To bring about a change in this situation, social reformers like Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule emphasized on women's education and established schools.
- 5. Purdah System:** Purdah was another major social evil that limited women's right to freedom in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In both Muslim and Hindu societies, purdah was practiced. Women were kept locked up in homes and prevented from



## NOTES

participating in public life. This limited their social life and kept them away from public activities.

- 6. Social and Religious Prejudice Against Women:** Social and religious prejudice against women was also a major issue of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Women did not have the right to participate in religious rituals and social decisions. They were placed lower than men in terms of religion and society. Such attitudes towards women in religious texts and traditions legitimized the discrimination and exploitation faced by them.
- 7. Contribution of Social Reformers:** In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many social reformers made efforts to improve the condition of women. Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Jyotiba Phule, and Savitribai Phule launched movements to improve the condition of women. Raja Ram Mohan Roy fought against the practice of Sati, and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar supported widow remarriage. Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule emphasized on women's education and opened schools for girls.
- 8. Legal Reforms:** During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some legal reforms were also carried out to protect the rights of women. The practice of Sati was banned by law in 1829, and the Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. These legal reforms took an important step towards improving the status of women, but more time and effort was needed to change the prejudices and traditions that prevailed in society.

---

### 3.5 ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

---

India's freedom movement was a long and complex struggle in which different sections of the society registered their participation. The role of women in this struggle has been highly significant and inspiring. They not only came out as freedom fighters, but they also fought for equality and rights in society. Women participated in this movement and proved that they are not less than men in any way and their contribution in the independence of the nation is also important.



During the freedom movement, to understand the role of women, we have to look at it at different stages, because at every stage women showed their activism in different ways.

### **3.5.1 Role of Women in the Early Stage (19<sup>th</sup> Century)**

The participation of women was low in the initial phase of the freedom movement, but they played an important role in laying the foundation of the movement through their efforts. During the social reform movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Jyotiba Phule made efforts to improve the condition of women, which led to the attainment of education and social rights to women. The spread of women's education increased awareness among women and they became more aware of the freedom movement. Savitribai Phule realized the importance of women's education during this time, opened schools for many girls and educated them. This was an important step which mentally prepared women for the freedom struggle.

### **3.5.2 Gandhiji and Women's Participation in the Non-Cooperation Movement**

The Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-1922) led by Mahatma Gandhi saw the participation of women in large numbers. Gandhiji inspired women to take active part in the reconstruction of the nation. He inspired women to take up the Swadeshi movement, spinning wheels, and boycott foreign textiles. They made their presence felt by participating in processions, picketing at shops selling foreign cloth and liquor, weaving and propagating khadi, going to jail, bearing the blows of lathis, consuming tear gas and bullets. Women like Sarojini Naidu and Kamala Nehru played an important role in this movement. Women had become an integral part of the movement at this time. They took part in rallies, boycotted British products, and manufactured indigenous textiles by using the spinning wheel in their homes. Prominent leaders like Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Aruna Asif Ali further empowered women's political participation through the Non-Cooperation Movement. After the 1920s, there was a change in the basic nature of the women's movement. So far, intellectuals have made efforts to improve the conditions of women. But reflective and confident women took up the task and



## NOTES

established many institutions to achieve this objective. The most important of these was the All India Women's Conference which was founded in 1927.

### **3.5.3 Role of Women in Salt Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience Movement**

In the 1930s, women played a courageous role in the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhiji started his movement against the salt law, and women showed unprecedented participation in this movement. Sarojini Naidu played an active role in this movement and became the first woman to face arrests for breaking the salt law. Women participated courageously in this movement. They took to the streets, demonstrated, went to jail and confronted the British authorities. Through these movements, women proved that they too are equal partners in this struggle. Prominent women like Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay and Sucheta Kripalani inspired this movement and further strengthened the role of women. Sarojini Naidu became the first woman president of the Indian National Congress. Many other women got the opportunity to become ministers in the cabinet formed in 1937. Women always made their presence felt through trade unions and peasant movements.

### **3.5.4 Women's Participation in the Quit India Movement**

The Quit India Movement of 1942 was a decisive phase of the freedom struggle, and the role of women in this movement was extremely important. On Gandhiji's call of 'Do or Die', thousands of women joined this movement and protested strongly against the British government. Aruna Asif Ali is remembered for her courageous role in this movement. She hoisted the tricolour at the Gwalior Tank Maidan in Mumbai, which became a symbol of this movement. Along with this, Usha Mehta also ran an underground radio station during the Quit India Movement, which was a means of maintaining contact between the freedom fighters by hiding from the British authorities.



### **3.5.5 Role of Women in the Revolutionary Movement**

Women's participation in Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent movements as well as revolutionary movements was noteworthy. A large number of women participated in the protest against the partition of Bengal and through the Home Rule Movement. This gave strength to the women's liberation movement. Revolutionary women like Bhikaji Cama, Kalpana Dutt, Pritilata Waddedar and Durga Bhabhi took active part in violent movements and took up arms against the British government. Bhikaji Cama supported India's independence movement abroad and hoisted the first flag of Indian independence. Durga Bhabhi participated in revolutionary activities along with Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad. Pritilata Waddedar and Kalpana Dutt played an active role in the revolutionary activities in Bengal and became a part of the armed struggle against the British government. These women fought for freedom without caring for their lives.

### **3.5.6 Social and Economic Participation of Women**

During the freedom movement, women not only participated in political movements, but they also played their role on social and economic fronts. They worked on making indigenous textiles, boycotting foreign textiles, and helped in upliftment of the poorer sections of society. Women leaders like Sarojini Naidu went from village to village to strengthen national integration and organized women and made them aware of the freedom struggle.

### **3.5.7 Status of Women After the Freedom Movement**

The active participation of women in the freedom movement played an important role towards improving their rights and their status in the society. After independence, many provisions were made in the Constitution to protect the rights of women. They got rights of equality, education, employment, and political participation, which was possible due to their participation in the freedom movement. After independence, the Indian Constitution guaranteed gender equality (Articles 14-15). The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 ensured that sons as well as daughters have a share in their father's property. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 allowed dissolution of marriage on certain grounds. With this, a marriage was made compulsory for both men and women. Unfortunately,



## NOTES

Muslim Personal Law is still discriminatory in many ways. Though women have proved their mettle in every field, a proper social environment is yet to be created that can remove the invisible obstacle to emancipation.

---

### 3.6 IMPROVING THE STATUS OF WOMEN

---

The condition of women, especially widows, in India was very miserable. After the abolition of Sati in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, their condition improved somewhat, but many evil practices were still prevalent in the society. Polygamy was prevalent in Hindu and Muslim society, where a man could have multiple marriages. There was a strict system of purdah, child marriage was common, and many social restrictions were imposed on widows. Hindu women were not given property and succession rights, and the rules of divorce were misused in Muslim society.

Women's economic and social security depended on men, and their education was also lacking. In view of these circumstances, efforts were started to improve the condition of women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Arya Samaj supported widow marriage and worked to get it recognized in the society. In order to give respect and protection to widows, many widow-ashrams were opened in North and South India. D.K. in South India Karve founded the Hindu Widows' Ashram, and in north India, Sir Ganga Ram set up schools for women's education in Lahore and also a 'widow shelter' and widow-marriage auxiliary assembly for widows. There were also efforts to stop child marriage. In 1901, the state of Baroda fixed the minimum age for marriage for boys and girls at 16 and 12 years, respectively. With the efforts of Harvilas Sharda, the Sharda Act was enacted in 1929, under which child marriage was banned. In this act, the maximum age for marriage of boys and girls was fixed at 18 year and 14 years, respectively. Work was also done to promote women's education. They were given equal rights and efforts were made to abolish the purdah system. Lady Dufferin Hospital was established for the health care of women, and steps were taken to make them financially and commercially self-sufficient. After independence, women got property and inheritance rights, divorce was facilitated, and polygamy and purdah were abolished. Along with education, political consciousness also arose in them. Under the Act of 1919, they got the right to vote, and even before independence, many women could



become members of legislatures. Women also actively participated in the freedom struggle. Many women came forward in the Banga-Movement, the Home Rule Movement and the National Freedom Struggle. He also participated in revolutionary and extremist activities. The All India Women's Conference was founded in 1927 for women's emancipation, which fought for women's freedom and equality. Similarly, the 'All India Muslim Women's Conference' was also founded. There were also efforts to eradicate prostitution and improve the condition of prostitutes.

As a result of these efforts, today women are seen at par with men in every field. Some women have surpassed many men and are making their mark in society. Thus, the reform movements that took place in the 20<sup>th</sup> century provided equality and freedom to women in society, which is a major achievement of Indian society.

---

### **3.7 EFFORTS MADE BY MAJOR REFORMERS, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPROVE THE CONDITION OF WOMEN**

---

Some of the efforts to improve the condition of women are:

- **Rakhmabai and her Struggles:** Rakhmabai was one of the earliest female doctors of British India. She was married to Dadaji Bhikaji at the age of 11, but she continued to live in her mother's house without living with her husband. Her husband then filed a lawsuit against her, claiming "wifehood rights". The initial verdict in the case came in favour of Rakhmabai. However, after several reconsiderations later, the final decision came in favor of Dadaji Bhikaji. Queen Victoria intervened and ended the marriage. The impact of this case was such that it later played an important role in the formulation of the 'Age of Consent Act, 1891'.
- **Arya Mahila Samaj:** Pandita Ramabai Saraswati founded the "Arya Mahila Samaj" in Pune. She promoted girl child education and criticized child marriage. Ramabai established a widow's ashram in Pune for widows and oppressed women. She started "Sharda Sadan", where women and orphan children were given education and vocational training so that they could become self-reliant.





## NOTES

Ramabai also authored a book titled “*The High Caste Hindu Woman*” on the hardships of upper-caste Hindu women.

- **All India Women’s Association:** Margaret Cousins founded the All India Women’s Association in 1927. Its aim was to build a society based on social justice, integrity and equal rights. Its first conference was held at Fergusson College, Pune.
- **Dr. Dhondo Keshav Karve:** Dr. Dhondo Keshav Karve was a renowned social reformer who made significant contributions towards the promotion of women’s education and widow remarriage. He founded the Widow’s Ashram in Pune and the Indian Women’s University in 1906.
- **Bharat Stree Mahamandal:** Sarala Devi Chaudhrani founded the Bharat Stree Mahamandal in Allahabad (now Prayagraj) in 1910. This organization worked for women’s education, opposition to child marriage, and improving the status of women in the family.
- **Tarakeswar Movement:** In 1924, the “*Tarakeshwar Movement*” was started in protest against corruption in temples in Bengal. The aim was to prevent misuse of temple funds.

All these efforts took an important step towards improving the rights, education and status of women in society in India.

## 3.8 SUMMARY

Women’s issues in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were deeply intertwined with the complexities and patriarchal structures of Indian society. These issues kept women socially, economically, and educationally backward. However, the efforts of social reformers and legal reforms worked to improve the condition of women gradually. These efforts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century later became the foundation of the women’s rights movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and paved the way for women to progress towards education, freedom, and rights.

The role of women in the Indian independence movement has been extraordinary and courageous. Through their contribution in social, economic, and political fields,



they proved that they could not only shoulder the responsibilities of home and family, but also contribute significantly to the freedom of the nation. The activism of women during the freedom movement boosted their self-confidence, courage, and awareness of their rights in the society. Women participated in many movements (such as the Non-Cooperation Movement) under Gandhiji's leadership. They made their presence felt by participating in processions, picketing at shops selling foreign cloth and liquor, weaving and propagating khadi, going to jail and bearing the blows of lathis, consuming teargas and bullets.

After the 1920s, there was a change in the basic nature of the women's movement. So far, intellectuals have made efforts to improve the condition of women, but now reflective and confident women took up this task and established many institutions to achieve this objective. The most important of these was the All India Women's Conference which was founded in 1927. Sarojini Naidu became the first woman president of the Indian National Congress. Many other women got the opportunity to become ministers in the cabinet formed in 1937. Women always made their presence felt through trade unions and peasant movements. They were always ahead of them. This movement took an important step towards the empowerment of women and helped in improving their rights and status in the post-independence era.

After independence, the Indian Constitution guaranteed gender equality (Articles 14-15). The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 ensured that sons as well as daughters have a share in their father's property. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 allowed dissolution of marriage on certain grounds. With this, a marriage was made compulsory for both men and women. Unfortunately, Muslim Personal Law is still discriminatory in many ways. Though women have proved their mettle in every field, a proper social environment is yet to emerge that can remove the invisible obstacle to emancipation.

---

### 3.9 GLOSSARY

---

- **Sati Pratha:** It was a practice in which it was customary to burn the wife alive with her husband after his death. It was a very cruel and inhuman tradition towards women.



## NOTES

- **Child marriage:** It means marrying at a young age. In this practice, girls were married off at an early age, which had a negative impact on their education and development.
- **Prohibition of Widow Remarriage:** According to this practice, widows were not allowed to remarry. Due to this, widows had to face hardships throughout their lives and had to remain isolated from society.
- **Purdah Practice:** Purdah system is a practice that prevented women from participating freely outside the home and in social life. In this practice, women had to live in veils, which affected their social status and self-reliance.
- **Dowry System:** It is a system in which, at the time of marriage, the girl's family was demanded to give money or property to the boy's family. This practice promoted discriminatory treatment towards women and put an economic burden on their families.
- **Sexism:** It is the gender discrimination in the society. It is a form of discrimination against women in which they were considered inferior to men. It had an impact on education, health, property, and employment opportunities.
- **Lack of Education:** Lack of skills or not having enough schooling or learning experiences. Education for women was not given importance at that time, depriving them of knowledge and opportunities for development. Because of this, they were unaware of their rights and possibilities.
- **Lack of Independence:** Lack of Independence is the inability to make decision or perform daily tasks without help as women could not freely choose their life partners in the society. They were under the pressure of rigid traditions and rules of family and society, due to which they were not able to make decisions about their lives.

---

## 3.10 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

---

### 3.10.1 In-Text Questions

1. Which social reformer is credited with abolishing the practice of Sati in India?
  - a) Mahatma Gandhi



**NOTES**

- b) Raja Rammohan Roy
  - c) Jyotiba Phule
  - d) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
2. Who founded the “Satyashodhak Samaj”, which worked against women’s education and caste discrimination?
- a) Savitribai Phule
  - b) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
  - c) Jyotiba Phule
  - d) Ramabai Ranade
3. In 1856, the law legalizing widow remarriage in Indian society was passed by the efforts of which reformer?
- a) Raja Rammohan Roy
  - b) Dayanand Saraswati
  - c) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
  - d) Mahadev Govind Ranade
4. Who was the first woman teacher of India, who made significant contribution towards women’s education?
- a) Kasturba Gandhi
  - b) Sarojini Naidu
  - c) Savitribai Phule
  - d) Ramabai Ranade
5. Name the woman freedom fighter who hoisted the national flag at the Gwalia Tank Maidan in Mumbai during the ‘Quit India Movement’.
- a) Kamala Nehru
  - b) Vijayalakshmi Pandit
  - c) Aruna Asaf Ali
  - d) Sucheta Kripalani



**NOTES**

6. Which British Governor General played an important role in passing a law prohibiting the practice of Sati in 1829?
  - a) Lord Dalhousie
  - b) Lord Curzon
  - c) Lord William Bentinck
  - d) Lord Ripon
7. Who founded the “Women’s Indian Association”, which worked for women’s rights?
  - a) Sarojini Naidu
  - b) Annie Besant
  - c) Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay
  - d) Sucheta Kripalani
8. Who founded the “Women’s Reform Assembly” in 1889 for the education and reform of women?
  - a) Savitribai Phule
  - b) Ramabai Ranade
  - c) Annie Besant
  - d) Kamla Devi Chattopadhyay
9. Which reformer fought for women’s rights in Indian society while advocating “gender equality”?
  - a) Raja Rammohan Roy
  - b) Jyotiba Phule
  - c) Dayanand Saraswati
  - d) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
10. Who campaigned against child marriage for the first time in India and called for a law to end this practice and demanded for Possessive case-ending?
  - a) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
  - b) Raja Rammohan Roy



- c) Mahadev Govind Ranade
  - d) Dayanand Saraswati
11. Which woman presided over the session of the Indian National Congress in 1917, reflecting the prominent role of women in the Indian freedom struggle?
- a) Kamala Nehru
  - b) Vijayalakshmi Pandit
  - c) Sarojini Naidu
  - d) Annie Besant
12. Which woman participated in the Dandi March along with Gandhiji and made a significant contribution to the Salt Satyagraha?
- a) Sarojini Naidu
  - b) Kamala Nehru
  - c) Kasturba Gandhi
  - d) Aruna Asaf Ali

### **3.10.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. What was the role and contribution of women in the social reform movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and what improvements did these movements bring about in the status of women?
2. What was the early attitude towards women's education in Indian society, and how did the social reformers try to change it?
3. What was the role of women in the movements against practices such as widow remarriage and child marriage, and what impact did these movements have in society?
4. What were the major social and political movements that women participated in during the freedom struggle, and how did their struggles impact Indian society after independence?
5. What are the major social issues faced by women in India's modern society, and what movements and policies are being implemented to address these issues?



**NOTES**

---

### **3.11 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

---

1. b
2. c
3. c
4. c
5. c
6. c
7. a
8. b
9. b
10. a
11. d
12. a

---

### **3.12 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

- Sarkar, Sumit and Tanika Sarkar. (ed.) *Caste in Modern India*, Vol. 1&2. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Forbes, Geraldine (1999). *Women in Modern India. The New Cambridge History of India - Volume 4*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jones, Kenneth (1994). *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Hanlon, Rosalind. (2002). *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Western India*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.



**NOTES**

- O'Hanlon Rosalind (2017). *Caste and its Histories in Colonial India: A Reappraisal*. Modern Asian Studies 51, 2.
- Kumar, Radha. (1993). *History of Doing New Delhi Kali for Women*. Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Joshi, V.C. (1975). *Rammohan Roy and the Process of Modernization in India*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* Hyderabad: Orient Longman.
- Shukla, R. L. (ed.) (1987). *History of Modern India*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.







## LESSON 4

# SOCIAL ISSUES AND REFORM MOVEMENTS: PEASANTS, TRIBAL AND CASTE MOVEMENTS (1858-1947)

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### Structure

- 4.1 Learning Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 Social Issues and Role of Farmers in Reform Movement
  - 4.3.1 Major Social Issues of Farmers
  - 4.3.2 Rise of the Peasant Movement
  - 4.3.3 Kisan Sabha, Organization & Functions
  - 4.3.4 Peasants in Revitalization Movements
  - 4.3.5 Role of Farmers in Social Reforms
  - 4.3.6 Impact and Significance of Peasant Movements
  - 4.3.7 Nature of Peasant Movements in the Late Nineteenth Century
- 4.4 Adivasis and their Movements
  - 4.4.1 Status of Tribal Society
  - 4.4.2 Major Causes of Tribal Movements
  - 4.4.3 Main Characteristics of Tribal Uprisings and their Response
  - 4.4.4 Tribal Movement
- 4.5 Other Tribal Revolts
  - 4.5.1 Santhal Rebellion (1855-1856)
  - 4.5.2 Kol Rebellion (1831-1832)
  - 4.5.3 Bhil Rebellion (1817-19, 1831, 1836)
  - 4.5.4 Khond Rebellion (1846-48, 1855, 1914)
  - 4.5.5 Meena Rebellion (1860)
  - 4.5.6 Ahom Rebellion
  - 4.5.7 Chuar Uprising
  - 4.5.8 Ho Movement (1820, 1822, 1832)
  - 4.5.9 Khasi Revolt
  - 4.5.10 Khekhar/Sapahar Rebellion (1870)



## NOTES

- 4.5.11 Koli Disturbance (1824, 1828, 1839, 1844-48)
- 4.5.12 Munda Rebellion (1899-1900)
- 4.5.13 Naikada Rebellion (1858-59, 1868)
- 4.5.14 Rompa Revolt (1840, 1845, 1858, 1879-80, 1922-24)
- 4.5.15 Santhal Rebellion (1855-56, 1914)
- 4.5.16 Thadoi Kuki Rebellion (1917-19)
- 4.5.17 Oraon Rebellion (1914-15)
- 4.5.18 Baghera Revolt
- 4.5.19 Ramoshi Rebellion
- 4.6 Caste Movement
- 4.7 Summary
- 4.8 Glossary
- 4.9 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 4.9.1 In-Text Questions
  - 4.9.2 Long Answer Questions
- 4.10 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 4.11 References/Suggested Readings

---

## 4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

---

After reading this lesson, you will be able to :

- Understanding of the role of peasants in the reform movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the tribal movement and the caste movement.
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the history of the above period such as to gain a holistic view by understanding the historical perspective of the peasant, tribal and caste movements that took place during the British reign.
- Analyse the social and economic conditions of the above period, such as to understand the social inequalities, feudal systems and effects of colonial policies prevailing in that period.
- Study the causes of the major movements of the above period such as to identify the root causes behind the emergence of peasant, tribal and caste movements.



- Discuss the role of the major movement leaders of the above period such as to know the strategies, ideologies and leadership skills of the leaders involved in various movements.
- Understand the nature of reform movements of this period, such as the causes of social and religious reform movements, their objectives, major organization and the efforts made by them.
- Evaluate the government policies of this period, such as to understand the effects of land laws, tax system and oppressive policies implemented by the British government.
- Focus on the consequences of the conflicts of the above period, such as to analyse the immediate and long-term social, economic and political consequences of different movements.
- Understand the importance of social equity and justice, such as to understand the concept of social equality by studying the voices raised against casteism and inequality and the reforms inspired by them.
- Analyse the differences in the nature of tribal and peasant movements, such as a comparative study of the similarities and differences between the movements of these two classes.
- Identify the challenges of social reform, such as the challenges faced by social reform efforts, the responses and the possibilities of using them as lessons in the future.

---

## **4.2 INTRODUCTION**

---

The 19<sup>th</sup> century marked a turning point in the social, economic and political history of India. The decade brought about a change in the Indian subcontinent, in which peasant, tribal and caste-based movements played an important role. These movements influenced the structure of society, the governance and the direction of social justice. The peasant, tribal and caste movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were the ones who brought about significant changes in the Indian society. These movements not only highlighted



## NOTES

the social and economic problems of those times but also influenced the direction of India's freedom struggle and social reforms. These movements are still seen as an important chapter in the social structure of Indian society and towards justice. Even before 1857, the peasants and tribals had revolted many times against the government's land policies, the tyranny of the landlords and economic exploitation. The government suppressed them with the help of military power but did not make any satisfactory effort to improve the miserable condition of the farmers and tribals. Therefore, between 1857-1919 also there were many movements of peasants and tribals. The reasons for these movements were almost the same as the earlier movements.

---

### 4.3 SOCIAL ISSUES AND ROLE OF FARMERS IN REFORM MOVEMENT

---

The colonial exploitation of the British wreaked the most havoc on the Indian peasants. The ancient agrarian system gradually broke down under the new administrative structures. The new land system created new kinds of problems. The destruction of the handicraft industries increased the burden on the land. Due to the high share of government taxes and landlords, the farmers fell into the clutches of moneylenders and traders. Absentee Landlordism, parasitic middlemen, greedy moneylenders, all of them combined to push the peasants into the pit of extreme poverty. Now the peasants had to deal not only with foreigners but also with local exploiters and capitalists.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, peasant unrest manifested itself in protests, revolts and resistances, whose main aim was to break or loosen feudal bonds. They protested against high land revenue tax, eviction and interest by moneylenders. The peasant uprisings of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were not political because they had neither class awakening nor well-organised organisation. But in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a class awakening and the establishment of Kisan Sabhas. After this, the national movement also gave direction to the farmers' movement.

The social and political history of India has been agrarian, and the role of farmers has been immensely important in the formation and development of Indian society. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, when social and reform movements emerged, peasants



played an important role in these movements. To understand the participation of farmers in the context of social issues and reform movements, we have to look at it from various angles, such as economic exploitation, land reforms, social inequality and their struggle against British colonialism.

### 4.3.1 Major Social Issues of Farmers

The peasants faced many social and economic problems, which formed the basis of their struggles and reform movements. It includes:

- **Zamindari System:** The zamindari system implemented during the British period was a major problem for the peasants. The landlords used to collect heavy taxes from the peasants, which made the economic condition of the farmers miserable. The land was owned by the landlords, and the peasants were forced to work only as labourers.
- **High Taxes:** The British government had burdened the peasants with excessive taxes. The high rates of “Lagaan” pushed the farmers into a debt trap and robbed them of their economic independence. Despite famine and natural calamities, farmers had to pay taxes, which further aggravated their poverty.
- **Poverty and Indebtedness:** The problem of debt had become a permanent part of the lives of farmers. Farmers who had taken loans from moneylenders to meet their needs lost their land as they were unable to repay. This resulted in a decline in their poverty and social status.
- **Social Discrimination:** Farmers not only faced economic problems, but they also faced caste and class discrimination. The peasants of the lower castes were suppressed by the upper castes, which weakened their social status.

### 4.3.2 Rise of Peasant Movements

These social and economic problems motivated the peasants to organise themselves and fight for their rights and interests. The farmers raised their voice for the solution of their problems through various peasant movements. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the peasants agitated over their miserable



## NOTES

condition, led to several revolts and agitations. Prominent among these are the Indigo Rebellion in Bengal, the Deccan peasant movement or the Maratha revolt, the Pabna and Moplah revolts and the peasant movements in Champaran, Kheda and Darbhanga.

### **The Indigo Rebellion (1859-60)**

Indigo cultivation was a highly profitable business. Therefore, the British initiated its cultivation in India. Farmers were forcibly compelled to grow indigo, leading to their economic and physical exploitation. The Indigo Rebellion was one of the early peasant movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in which Bengal's peasants rose against the forced indigo cultivation contracts imposed by the British. British officials forced farmers to grow indigo, preventing them from using their arable land for other crops. The farmers openly protested against the British administration, and this movement became a symbol of their organized strength.

After the Santhal Rebellion of 1855-56, the indigo movement of Bengal in 1859-60 was significant among the revolts farmers undertook to meet their economic demands. Indigo-producing farmers were compelled to grow indigo under unfavorable terms. Atrocities against farmers who resisted were common. In response to these atrocities, farmers stopped producing indigo, resisted the force exerted by the producers, and also approached the courts. Intellectuals and missionaries of Bengal supported the farmers' movement. It also showcased Hindu-Muslim unity. In 1860, the government established the Indigo Commission, which decreed that tenants could not be compelled to cultivate indigo.

- **Forced Indigo Cultivation:** Following the rebellion of 1857-58, the first organized rebellion in Bengal was led by indigo-cultivating farmers against the atrocities and inhumane treatment by the indigo planters. Indigo was used for dyeing and was a major part of the East India Company's trade. The British began indigo cultivation in India at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Initially, people from the West Indies were brought in to promote indigo cultivation, but later it was handed over to European plantation owners. Indigo cultivation was widespread in Bengal and Bihar. The plantation owners made huge profits, but the condition of the farmers became akin to that of slaves. Farmers were forcibly compelled to grow indigo and faced various



## NOTES

atrocities. The indigo planters bought the indigo at cheap rates and sold it at high prices in England.

- **Dadni System and Exploitation of Farmers:** To facilitate indigo cultivation, the indigo planters implemented the “Dadni system.” Under this system, farmers were given advance money by the plantation owners, in return for which they had to grow indigo on their land. Farmers had to enter into a contract with the plantation owners, specifying the measurement of the land and the price of the indigo. If the crop failed, the farmer had to bear the loss. Farmers had to transport the indigo to the indigo factories themselves. This system made farmers slaves to the plantation owners. Once they took an advance, farmers could not escape indigo cultivation even if they wanted to. Their debt continued to increase, and they were forced to grow indigo generation after generation. If farmers refused to cultivate indigo, they were whipped, their houses were burned, and sometimes they were even killed. They were deceived during the land measurements, and two and a half bighas of land were counted as one bigha. Farmers could not grow any other crop on their land.
- **Government Protection to Planters:** The policies of the government and the protection given to the planters further increased the discontent among the farmers. Instead of protecting the farmers from the atrocities of the planters, the government supported the planters. Several laws enacted between 1819 and 1845 helped the planters to dominate the farmers. Under a law passed in 1830, the planters were given the right to arrest farmers. The Charter Act of 1833 allowed them to buy land in India, and in 1837 they were permitted to purchase Zamindari. They could charge arbitrary rents from the farmers and evict them from the land. During the revolt of 1857, many planters were made unpaid magistrates, enabling them to misuse their power. No hearings were held against them in the courts.

### *Consequences of the Indigo Revolt:*

In these circumstances, dissatisfaction among Bengal’s farmers increased. They began to oppose the atrocities of the indigo planters. This opposition was not peaceful but





## NOTES

rather violent. However, due to government protection and the power of the planters, the farmers' struggle did not last long.

- **Nature of the Rebellion: *Boycott of Planters:*** Although the government was fully aware of the planters' atrocities and the farmers' plight, it paid no attention. Therefore, even before 1859-60, farmers occasionally tried to free themselves from the planters' atrocities. By 1859, their discontent reached its peak. In the districts of Nadia, Barasat, and Pabna, where indigo was primarily cultivated, farmers refused to cultivate indigo and accept advances. Farmers first requested the government to stop indigo cultivation through petitions, but upon failure, they adopted a rebellious attitude. Farmers organized themselves in villages. Whenever the planters' men came to the village, armed groups of farmers drove them out. Additionally, farmers boycotted the plantation owners. They pressured the planters' workers to resign and denied them essential goods. One farmer did not buy another farmer's land at auction. They did not testify against their farmer brothers in court cases. This caused numerous difficulties for the planters and their employees, halted work at many factories due to a lack of labour, and fostered unity among the farmers. Many times, village watchmen also sided with the farmers and did not assist the police.
- **Armed Revolt:** In April 1860, the government took stringent measures to pressure the farmers. However, this had the opposite effect, and the farmers openly adopted the path of rebellion. In Barasat, a large number of farmers gathered, armed themselves, and resolved not to cultivate indigo. Similarly, in areas like Jessore, Khulna, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Malda, and Dinajpur, farmers refused to cultivate indigo.
- **Incidents of the Rebellion:**
  - o Farmers attacked the planters and their men.
  - o Destroyed indigo cultivation.
  - o Looted and set fire to indigo factories.
  - o Clashed with the police in several places.



## NOTES

- **Government Reaction:** To suppress this rebellion, the government launched a campaign of repression. Thousands of farmers were arrested and falsely charged. Despite these harsh measures, the farmers' morale did not wane. They remained steadfast in their fight for rights and continued to resist exploitation.
- **Public Support for the Rebellion:** The Indigo Rebellion received immense public support. Intellectuals from the middle class drew attention to the farmers' plight and the planters' atrocities through newspapers and writings. Shishir Kumar Ghosh and Harish Chandra Mukherjee published hair-raising stories of the planters' atrocities in the newspaper Hindu Patriot. The atrocities of the plantation owners were also highlighted through songs. Dinabandhu Mitra depicted the farmers' plight in the play Nil Darpan. This ignited the flames of discontent throughout Bengal. The then Viceroy, Lord Canning, himself admitted that "I was more concerned about the current rebellion of the indigo farmers for almost a week than I was during the Delhi incident" (the Great Revolt of 1857).
- **Leadership of the Rebellion:** A notable feature of the Indigo Rebellion was that it was led by the farmers themselves. In the Nadia district, Bishwas brothers, Digambar Bishwas and Vishnu Charan Bishwas led the rebellion, while Rafiq Mandal led it in Malda. Both Hindu and Muslim farmers united to resist the planters' atrocities. The farmers also received support from prominent intellectuals in Bengal.

### *Importance and Consequences of the Indigo Rebellion:*

- **Formation of the Indigo Commission:** Alarmed by the farmers' resistance and the support they received, the government formed an Indigo Commission in 1860. The testimonies given by farmers before this commission revealed the planters' atrocities and the farmers' hatred towards indigo cultivation. Many farmers declared before the commission that they would not grow indigo even at the cost of their lives. The magistrate of Faridpur described indigo cultivation as a bloody practice. Not a single farmer spoke in favour of the indigo cultivation process.



## NOTES

- **Government Reforms:** The commission validated the farmers' grievances and suggested that the government take steps to prevent the planters' atrocities and reform the cultivation process. Consequently, the government banned forced indigo cultivation. A new law was enacted in 1860, stating that farmers could not be forced to grow indigo. However, farmers who took advances (loans) were still required to cultivate indigo, and failing to do so could result in punishment. This was a significant victory for Bengal's farmers.
- **Impact on National Liberation Movement:** The Indigo Rebellion is considered an important event in the national liberation movement. Alongside their rebellion, the farmers also adopted constitutional means to protect their rights. It strengthened the discontent against the British government and the national sentiment among Indians.
- **Decline of Indigo Cultivation in Bengal:** Due to the rebellion, indigo cultivation in Bengal became challenging. When the planters planned to increase rents, the farmers decided not to pay rent. This made it impossible for the planters to continue cultivation in Bengal, and they shifted their activities to Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
- **Influence on Gandhi's Satyagraha in Champaran:** Before Mahatma Gandhi launched the Satyagraha against the planters in Champaran, Bengal's farmers had already protected their rights by resorting to strikes and Satyagraha.

### **Discontent of the Deccan Peasants (Maratha Revolt)**

Like in Bengal, the farmers of Deccan were also simmering with discontent. While the farmers in Bengal suffered under the atrocities of the indigo planters, the farmers in the then Bombay Presidency were subjected to exploitation by the government as well as Gujarati and Marwari moneylenders and landlords. When the farmers' discontent reached its peak, they revolted in Maharashtra in 1875. The centers of the rebellion were the districts of Pune and Ahmednagar. Although this rebellion ended within just three weeks, its consequences were highly significant.

### **Causes of Rebellion:**

Some of the causes are as follows:

- The main reason for the Maratha revolt of 1875 AD was the strong desire to get rid of the tyranny and exploitation of moneylenders. In the Bombay



## NOTES

Presidency, the East India Company implemented the ryotwari land system in 1812 AD. Under this system, rent was collected directly from the farmers. If the farmer could not pay the rent, he had to give up his land.

- The farmer had the right to pay the rent by mortgaging his land, selling it or giving it to someone else for cultivation. But there were many flaws in this system. The biggest problem was that the amount of rent was fixed at very high, almost half. In addition, this amount sure wasn't justifiable, and the government increased it at its own will.
- The farmers had to pay the rent amount in cash. No relief was given even if there was crop failure or drought. In such a situation, farmers used to borrow money from moneylenders at high interest to save their land from auction. Mahajan took full advantage of this situation. They charged high interest on loans, and if the farmer was unable to repay the loan, the moneylenders would auction his land. The courts also favoured the moneylenders.
- Mahajan was always conspiring to keep the farmers in a debt trap and take away their land. As a result, the debt burden on farmers increased. In districts like Ahmednagar and Poona, which were the centres of the revolt, the number of cases involving land increased eight-fold between 1851-65.
- The revenue officials were aware of the plight of the farmers, and warned the government of dire consequences. But the government did not take any steps in this direction.
- The severe famine and pestilence of 1868-70 worsened the condition of the peasants. The prices of cotton and other crops fell drastically, further worsening their economic situation. The farmers could neither repay the rent to the government nor the loans of the moneylenders. Their lands were lost, and the mahajans would not even leave their homes.

This situation became unbearable for the farmers. They had a difficult choice between life and death. Therefore, they decided to organize and revolt against this exploitation and injustice.



## NOTES

### *Origin and Nature of the Revolt:*

The first sign of the exodus of the mahajans appeared in December 1874 at the village of Kardeh in Sirur taluka. It started with the excesses of Marwari Mahajan Kaluram. Kaluram auctioned a farmer's house in exchange for a loan of just Rs 150 and started demolishing it. The farmer pleaded that he should be allowed to stay in the house and would continue to pay rent until the loan was repaid. But Kaluram did not listen to him.

Hurt by this injustice, Kisan Baba Saheb Deshmukh organized the peasants against the moneylenders. The people of the village decided to boycott the moneylenders. Everyone stopped working with the moneylenders, even their servants deserted them. To meet their needs, the villagers opened their own shop. Mahajan could not stand in the face of the organized boycott of the villagers and had to leave the village. But the villagers tried to stop them from leaving. Eventually, Mahajan was able to get out of the village with the help of the police. This was the first major victory of the peasants over the moneylenders.

*Migration of Moneylenders and Farmers' Struggle:* Even after this incident, the government did not take any steps to remove the discontent of the farmers. During this time, the farmers began to organize themselves more. In May 1875, a large number of peasants gathered at Supa in Poona district and decided to fight against the Mahajani atrocities. The motive of the farmers was only to scare away moneylenders and snatch loans and land papers from them. Force was used only where the moneylenders resisted. The farmers snatched papers from the moneylenders, burnt them and set fire to their grain and cattle fodder. The revolt spread to many areas of Ahmednagar. The Gujarati and Marwari Mahajans could not withstand this organised opposition and fled the village. The revolt made the condition of the Mahajans miserable, and the movement spread throughout the Ahmednagar district.

In such a situation, the government showed sympathy not with the peasants but with the moneylenders and resorted to the police force to quell the uprising. A large number of police were sent to the villages in Poona and Ahmednagar district to maintain law and order. The police failed in the face of the mass movement. Therefore, the Government had to take the help of the Army also. Collective fines were imposed in villages and hundreds of farmers were arrested. The poor peasants could not stand in the face of government crackdown and atrocities. As a result, their power gradually



## NOTES

began to weaken, yet the peasants continued to oppose the moneylenders sporadically till July 1875. The peasants acted with utmost restraint during this revolt. They thought that they would be able to get rid of their sufferings only by snatching the debts and land related papers from the moneylenders, but in reality this did not happen.

### *Aftermath of the Revolt and its Significance:*

- **Formation of Commission:** The revolt of the Maratha peasants could not bring any significant change in their condition. Nevertheless, their rebellion forced the government to pay attention to them. The government appointed the 'Deccan Riots Commission' to find out the causes of the farmers' unrest. This Commission also opined that the condition of the peasants was so deteriorating that they had no other remedy but to revolt. It also criticised the excessive amount of rent. The Commission also suggested measures to improve the condition of farmers and to prevent atrocities by moneylenders.
- The government passed the Agriculturists Relief Act in 1879. Accordingly, some restrictions were imposed on the snatching of land from farmers. The system of arresting farmers for non-payment of loans was also stopped. Thus, the farmers were able to get some relief through their organized efforts. That was a victory.
- Though the Maratha revolt lasted for a very short time, this does not diminish its importance. This revolt had popular support. Therefore, the Commission could not find any evidence against any of the rebellious farmers. The intelligentsia also supported the farmers. Articles were written in newspapers in support of the farmers' agitation, which created a feeling among the farmers to fight for the protection of their rights and interests. During this movement, the peasants adopted a policy of non-cooperation with the moneylenders. This policy of non-cooperation was later used during the freedom struggle. The farmers forced the government to pay attention to their genuine hardships. Farmers also began to take a more belligerent stance. The Maratha peasant movement served as a source of inspiration for the later peasant movements. In 1879, Vasudev Balwant Phadke again revolted and tried to establish Hindu Raj.
- Apart from these two uprisings, there were other peasant movements till 1919. Prominent among these were the peasant movements of Pabna and Moplah and the agitations of the peasants of Darbhanga, Champaran and Kheda.



## NOTES

### **Pabna**

The peasant struggle began in 1873 with the formation of a peasant union in Pabna district. The struggle was legal and most of the peasants got their rights through the courts. It was only a struggle against the zamindars and that is why the government kept itself within the limits of law. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, peasants in the Pabna region of Bengal revolted against the exploitation of the landlords. This revolt was mainly against the landlords and not against the usurers and moneylenders. In the 1870s-80s, the peasants of East Bengal (today's Bangladesh) raised their voice against the arbitrary taxes imposed by the landlords.

Pabna was an economically thriving region at that time. In 1859 the peasants were given certain ownership rights over the land, so that they could not be dispossessed of the land and there was a limited increase in the rent. In spite of this, the landlords would arbitrarily increase the rent and exploit the peasants in other ways as well.

#### ***Pabna Peasant Movement:***

In 1873 the peasants of Pabna formed a union against the exploitation of the landlords. This association organized the peasants and held meetings in the villages. Funds were collected to fight cases against the landlords and the peasants refused to pay the rent for some time.

Inspired by the Pabna movement, peasants from Dhaka, Mymensingh, Tripura, Faridpur and Rajshahi also protested against the landlords. Although the zamindars opposed it, the agitation remained peaceful. The peasants peacefully put forward demands to protect their rights and their movement was not even anti-government.

#### ***Government and Movement:***

The Pabna movement received indirect support from the government as it was not against the government. In 1873, Campbell, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, justified the peasant organisations. However, the zamindars tried to give communal colour to this movement. His newspaper, '**The Hindu Patriot**' described it as a Muslim peasant movement against the Hindu landlords, but this was not true. Both Hindus and Muslims were involved in the movement. Among the leaders of the movement were names like Ishan Chandra Rai, Shambhu Pal and Khudi Mallah, who belonged to both communities.



**Result:**

This movement resulted in the passing of the Bengal Tenancy Act in 1885. This law gave some relief to the farmers and arrangements were made to protect their rights.

**Moplah Rebellion**

The Moplah Rebellion also took place in the Malabar region of the Madras Presidency, which was similar to the peasant movements of East Bengal. Malabar was a Muslim-dominated area, where Muslims were called “Moplahs”. The Moplah people were a Muslim community living in the Malabar region of Kerala, who were of Arab and Malayali origin. In the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, some Arab people settled in the Malabar region, which was called ‘Moplah’. The Moplah were mostly small farmers, traders, farm labourers or people working in tea and coffee plantations. They lived under the influence of religious leaders (Qazis and Maulvis) due to poverty and illiteracy. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, between 1836 and 1854, the Moplah community revolted 22 times. This revolt was an example of rural extremism and had its roots in the agrarian system. This was called the first phase of the Moplah Revolt. Due to illiteracy, there was more religious frenzy among them. The Moplah were troubled by the foreign rule, the tyranny of the Hindu zamindars and moneylenders. The Moplah revolts also took place in 1882-85, 1896 and 1921.

In 1870, the government set up a committee to investigate the causes of the repeated revolts in Malabar. The committee pointed out that the main reason for these revolts was the eviction of peasants from the land by the landlords and a steep increase in rent. Between 1862-1880, the prosecutions for rent and eviction increased by 244% and 441%, respectively. From this, the economic exploitation of farmers and labourers can be gauged.

The Moplah rebellion was not like the peaceful peasant movement of Pabna, but it was violent. Although the main reason behind this was economic discontent, it also reflected religious frenzy. The Moplahs looted the property of the zamindars and killed many landlords. Temples and properties of moneylenders were also targeted. The Moplahs created unrest in Malabar by forming small groups.

The government used force to suppress the rebellion. The Moplah were not afraid of police bullets and were ready to die laughing. They believed that by martyring





## NOTES

in this struggle, they would attain heaven. But their rebellion was suppressed due to the weakness of the organization and the government force.

The Second Moplah Revolt took place in 1921. It began with agrarian discontent, but after the non-cooperation movement was suspended, it took communal and political form. In 1921, the peasants of Malabar district revolted against the landlords. The revolt was fuelled by the Malabar Congress Conference held at Manjeri in 1920. The leaders of the Khilafat movement such as Shaukat Ali, Gandhiji and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad supported the Moplah rebels. On 15 February 1921, the government imposed prohibition in the region and arrested the leaders of the Khilafat and the Congress. Mosques were raided in an attempt to arrest the religious leader, Ali Musliyar, further intensifying the uprising. Several people were killed in clashes between police and rebels. To suppress it, the government had to resort to the army. The Moplahs also got support from some big peasants in this revolt, but they could not continue the struggle for long. Seeing the ferocity of the revolt, the government imposed military rule and suppressed the rebellion vigorously by the end of 1921. The upper-caste Hindu zamindars (Namboothiri and Nair) in Malabar had the support of the administration, the police and the court. The Moplah rebellion became communal because most of the landlords were Hindus and the cultivators were Muslims. The Moplah rebellion also showed suicidal tendencies, as the Moplah believed that they would go straight to heaven if they were killed in battle. Due to taking violent and communal form, this revolt was alienated from the Congress and the all. By the end of 1921, the government completely crushed the rebellion by the use of force and the Moplahs ceased to be active.

### **Champaran's Peasant Movement**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was an important movement of the peasants of Champaran, the echoes of which were heard all over India. This movement is also special because it was from here that Mahatma Gandhi started playing an active role in Indian politics. Satyagraha also started from Champaran.

Indigo cultivation was going on for a long time in Champaran, adjacent to the Nepal border in North Bihar. In this area, the land of Ramnagar and Bettiah Raj was given on lease to the British planters. The 'Tinkathia' system was in force, under which



## NOTES

farmers had to cultivate indigo in 15% of their land (3 kathas = 3/20 parts in 20 kathas). In addition, the peasants could not sell the indigo outside. They had to sell it to the plantation owners at a fixed price, which was much lower than the market. This system led to economic exploitation of the peasants.

After 1900, when the demand and price of indigo decreased, the planters began imposing new taxes on the peasants to compensate for their losses. Farmers who wanted to get rid of indigo cultivation had to pay a large amount of money in the form of 'tawan'. Peasants were forced to work and were subjected to physical torture. The condition of the farmers of Champaran was worse than that of the indigo farmers of Bengal.

The peasants of Champaran protested several times against the atrocities of the Nilahs. Between 1905 and 1908, the peasants in the areas of Motihari and Bettiah agitated on a large scale for the first time. There was also violence during this period, but it did not have much effect on the government and the Nilahs. Farmers were prosecuted and many farmers were punished, but they did not give up and continued their struggle.

Some affluent farmers and Congress workers also helped the farmers in this movement. In 1916, Rajkumar Shukla called Mahatma Gandhi to Champaran and urged him to see the condition of the peasants. Gandhiji came to Champaran in 1917. Accompanied by Rajendra Prasad and other Congress workers, he examined the problems of the farmers. A large number of farmers approached Gandhiji with their grievances. Gandhiji inspired them to adopt the path of non-violence and non-cooperation movement. This brought a new enthusiasm and a sense of unity among the farmers.

Gandhiji's popularity worried the government. He was arrested and prosecuted, but soon released. The government formed a committee in June 1917 to investigate the grievances of the peasants, in which Gandhiji was also included. Based on the recommendations of the committee, the Champaran Agriculture Act was enacted, which abolished the Tinkathia system.

This brought great relief to the farmers. This movement awakened a new consciousness among the peasants, and they became a part of the national movement.



## NOTES

### **Peasant Movement of Kheda**

Apart from Champaran movement, in 1918 AD, there was also a peasant movement in Kheda, Gujarat. Here too, Mahatma Gandhi worked to improve the condition of farmers. The farmers in Kheda were upset with the increase in rent and other exploitations. Many times they would express their protest by stopping to pay rent.

Due to drought in 1918 AD, crops were spoiled, which increased the problems of the farmers. According to the land tax rules, if the crop is less than 25 per cent in a given year, farmers should have been given a complete rebate in land tax. But the Bombay government officials were not ready to accept that the harvest had been reduced in spite of the drought, and they refused to give exemptions to the farmers. On the contrary, pressure was put on the farmers to collect the rent.

After Champaran, Gandhiji helped the farmers of Kheda. He organized the peasants and inspired them to do satyagraha against government injustice. Gandhiji's leadership had a profound impact on the farmers. The farmers stopped paying rent without worrying about the consequences. Even the farmers who were able to pay the rent stopped paying the rent. Farmers were not deterred by government strictness and threats of confiscation. A large number of peasants participated in the Satyagraha movement, and many farmers were jailed.

By June 1918, the peasant movement in Kheda had become widespread. Eventually, the government had to bow to the farmers' protest and give them relief in rent. During this movement, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel came in contact with Gandhiji and later became his staunch follower.

The peasant movements of Champaran and Kheda have special significance. These movements were peaceful, and the peasants forced the government to improve their condition through satyagraha. Farmers won in both places. These movements boosted the confidence of the farmers. After 1919, the peasants became more organized and launched movements and established a strong organization like "Kisan Sabha".

### **Peasant Movement in Darbhanga**

Apart from Champaran in Bihar, there was also a peasant movement in Darbhanga Raj. The main cause of this movement was the exploitation of the peasants by the Raj authorities and small landlords. Rising inflation after the First World War worsened the



condition of farmers. At the same time, the peasants had disputes with the landlords over matters such as pasture and timber.

The zamindars not only collected rent but also other types of taxes extorted. These exploitations were causing dissatisfaction among the peasants. In 1919, the peasants began to organise against these injustices. They held meetings and held protests in front of the Darbhanga Raj.

Swami Vidyananda had an important contribution in organizing the farmers. Under his leadership, the farmers started this movement. Though incidents of violence were reported in some places, the agitation remained mostly peaceful.

In 1920, the Darbhanga Raj gave some relief to the peasants. After that, the movement came to an end. The movement was mainly of large farmers, but its impact was widely felt.

### **Deccan Movement**

At the same time, in 1875, peasant uprisings took place in Poona and Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. The farmers here used to repay the rent by taking loans from Gujarati and Marwari. The moneylenders were trying to take over the farms, properties and houses of the farmers by manipulation. At the same time, the fall in the price of cotton and a 50 per cent increase in rent forced the farmers to revolt. The farmers attacked the houses of the moneylenders and burnt the agreements, promissory notes and documents. The government suppressed the movement, but in 1879, the peasants got some protection against the moneylenders by the Deccan Peasants' Relief Act.

### **Peasant Movement in Punjab**

Similarly, the government was worried about the hegemony of the land of the farmers of Punjab because of the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab, the migration of Sikhs to Canada and America could affect recruitment in the military service. In 1900, the Punjab Land Alienation Act came into force which prevented the transfer of cultivator land to non-agriculturists.

### **Ekka Movement (1921-1922)**

The discontent of the peasants with the support of the Congress and the Khilafat leaders came out in the form of the Ekka Movement. This movement was against the increase in rent and the collection of rent as produce. Its centers were Hardoi, Bahraich



## NOTES

and Sitapur. But this movement soon went into the hands of the backward caste people and was no longer disciplined and non-violent as the Congress. As a result, it broke away from the nationalist movement and continued even after the end of the Non-Cooperation Movement. The leadership of this movement was in the hands of Madari Pasi. The government also put an end to this movement by the force of repression until March of 1922.

### **Phadke Movement**

- Around 1879, Vasudev Balwant Phadke emerged in Maharashtra. He reconciled the conscious nationalism of the intellectuals of Maharashtra and the militant nationalism of the masses.
- The reasons that prompted Phadke to start the movement were:
  1. Mahadev Govind Ranade's lecture on the outflow of money.
  2. In 1876-77 there was a severe famine in western India.
- These events deeply affected Phadke. He formed an organization in collaboration with farmers in rural areas of Maharashtra. Through this organization:
  1. Robbery was committed to raise funds.
  2. The communication system was disrupted.
  3. Attempted rebellion.
- Phadke gave the slogan of establishing a 'Hindu Rajya'. His movement can be considered the beginning of revolutionary extremism.
- Phadke was arrested and imprisoned in 1880, where he died three years later. Even after his death, the Ramosian gang remained active under the leadership of Daultaramosi until 1887.

### **Bardoli's Peasant Movement (1928)**

In 1928, there was a movement in Bardoli, Gujarat, not to pay rent. Since Gandhiji was going to launch the movement of Lagaan Bandi in 1922 from here, a suitable environment was prepared for it. Local leaders like Kalyan Ji and Kunwarji Mehta raised their voice against bonded labour and opposed the exploitation of untouchables by the landlords. In 1926, when the rent was increased, the peasants protested. Sardar Vallambhai Patel led this movement. Meetings, speeches, magazines on 'Bardoli



Satyagraha' and the immense contribution of women created awareness among the farmers. There was a social boycott of the tax payers and government officials. Seeing the scale of the movement and public support, the government agreed not to insist on the recovery of increased rent.

### **Krishak Jagran in Bihar**

Sahajanand was the pioneer of Krishak Jagran in Bihar and he got the support of Karyananda Sharma, Panchanan Sharma, Yadunandan Sharma and Rahul Sanskritayan. The demands of the peasants of Bihar were the abolition of the zamindari system, an end to illegal extortion and eviction of tenants, and the return of the remaining land. The Congress cabinet enacted a law related to the land of the Bakhyats, which was not accepted by the leaders of the Kisan Sabha. As a result, the peasants adopted the approach of satyagraha and forced sowing and harvesting. They also clashed with the police and landlords. But after the arrest of some facilities and activists in 1939, the movement against Bakasht land slowed down, but there was a movement again in 1945 for the abolition of the zamindari system, which continued till the end.

### **Tebhaga Movement of Bengal**

At this time, the Tebhaga movement started in Bengal. In 1945, the sharecroppers announced to give one-third of the landowners in lieu of half the rent and keep the produce in their barns. He also talked about giving rent in cash. The Tebhaga movement took place in Bengal, where the peasants demanded two-thirds of their produce from the landlords. This movement played an important role in improving the condition of the peasants and fighting against the zamindari system. The movement was led by the Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha. As a result, the peasant struggle began. The government also tried to suppress the movement. In 1950, the Congress passed the Bargadar Bill, which incorporated most of the demands of the Tebhaga movement.

- **Peasants and National Movements:** Farmers not only fought for their rights but also played an important role in the Indian National Movement. The Indian National Congress and other political parties raised the issues of the farmers at the national level and the farmers also showed active participation in the freedom struggle.
- **Swaraj and Peasant Movement:** When the demand for Swaraj arose under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the peasants linked it to their economic and



## NOTES

social freedom. The peasants felt that it was not possible to improve their economic condition without attaining independence. He actively participated in major movements like the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement, and the Quit India Movement.

### 4.3.3 Kisan Sabha – Organization and Functions

Peasant movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries created new awareness among the peasants. They took a stand of struggle to protect their social and economic rights. Along with the national movement, the peasant movements also gained momentum, and peasants' organizations began to be formed. Mahatma Gandhi carried out successful satyagrahas in Champaran and Kheda and inspired the farmers to become self-confident and join the mainstream of the national movement.

**Table 4.1** Various Farmer's Movements: At a Glance

Agitation	Year	Affected Areas	Leadership	Factor	Progress, Direction & Results
Rangpur Rebellion	1783	Dinajpur (Bengal)	Dheeraj Narayan, Nuruluddin	The East India Company increased the tax on the zamindars which ultimately burdened the peasants.	The peasants attacked the courts, food stores and government officials and formed their own government.
Moplah Rebellion (First Phase)	1836	Malabar	.....	Introduction of a new revenue system by the British.	In 1836 AD, there was a revolt, British officers and middlemen were attacked. For many years, the British army could not suppress this rebellion.
The Indigo Rebellion	1859-60	Bengal	Digambara Biswas, Vishnu Biswas	Europeans forced the farmers to cultivate indigo.	Initially, petitions were filed and peaceful demonstrations were held. People stopped paying rent. The rebellion ended in 1860 AD.

Self-Instructional

## Social Issues and Reform Movements: Peasants, Tribal and ...



### NOTES

Pabna Uprising	1873-76	Bengal	Ishan Chandra Rai, Shambhunath Pal and Keshav Chandra Rai	Conspiracy and eviction against exorbitant rent and possession of land of tenants under the Act of 1859.	The fight was mainly confined to the legal level. Violent incidents were negligible. In 1885, relief was provided by enacting the Bengal Tenancy Act.
Deccan Rebellion	1874-75	Poona, Ahmednagar Solapur and Satara districts of Maharashtra	Babasaheb Deshmukh	The farmers of the Ryotwadi area fell into the trap of moneylenders over loan repayment. Steep increase in the rate of rent despite falling cotton prices and famine.	The Deccan Peasants Relief Act, 1879 provided protection to the peasants against moneylenders.
Champaran Satyagraha	1917	Champaran, Ramnagar, Motihari, Bettiah, Madhubani	Mahatma Gandhi	Against the Tinkathia system.	Gandhiji arrived in Champaran in 1917 AD on the request of a farmer named Rajkumar Shukla and the plantation owners agreed to return 25 percent of the illegal collection by a commission.
Kheda Satyagraha	1918	Field	Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel	Recovery of wages by the government in spite of crop failure.	Gandhiji said that if the government waives the rent of the poor farmers, then those who are able to pay the rent will pay the full rent.
Awadh Peasant Movement	1920	Pratapgarh, Rae Bareilly, Sultanpur, Faizabad	Jhinguri Lal Singh, Baba Ramchandra	Illegal Rent and Eviction Act applies. Increase in Passion from Oudh Malguzari (Amendment Act).	Barber-washer service closed and social boycott in Pratapgarh. Protest against Baba Ramchandra's jailing.
Eka Movement	1921-22	Barabanki, Hardoi, Bahraich, Sitapur	Madari Passi	Increase in rent.	Small landlords also joined this movement.

Self-Instructional  
Material

141





**NOTES**

Moplah Rebellion (Phase II)	1921	Malabar	Ali Musliar	More rent and eviction.	Attacks on police stations, government offices and landlords' houses. Later it became communal in nature. The revolt was crushed in 1921 AD.
Bardoli Satyagraha	1928	Bardoli Taluka of Surat	Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel	Increase in rent.	Under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai, the weapon of social boycott of the farmers who paid rent was used.
Farmers' Agitation in Bihar	In several stages	Bihar	Swami Sahajanand	Zamindari abolition, illegal recovery, eviction of tenants, and return of outstanding land.	In 1929 AD, Bihar Regional Kisan Sabha was formed by Swami Sahajanand, Karyananda Sharma launched a movement for the return of Bakasht land in Bahria Tal of Munger. In Gaya, Yadunandan Sharma launched the movement.
Farmers' Agitation in Punjab	1930-40	Jalandhar, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Lailapura, Sheikhpura	Sohan Singh Bhakna, Jwala Singh, Tej Singh, Master Hari Singh, Baba Rur Singh	Deduction of land revenue, moratorium on payment of loans, re-assessment of land revenue in Amritsar and Lahore due to the then cause, re-assessment of canal tax revenue, and increase in canal tax.	The movement was launched with the efforts of Naujawan Bharat Sabha, Kirti Kisan, Congress and Akali Dal.



**NOTES**

Tebhaga Movement	1946	Dinajpur, Rangpur, Jalpaiguri, Midnapore	Kamparam & Bhawan Singh	The sharecroppers decided that instead of half, they would give one-third of the produce to the jotedars.	The Suhrawardy cabinet gave legal legitimacy to the movement by publishing the Bengal Burgdar Temporary Regulation Bill.
Telangana Movement	1946-51	Telangana	.....	Struggle against Nizams, Zamindars, Moneylenders and Merchants.	It was the biggest peasant guerrilla movement. The illegally occupied land was returned to the farmers. Several steps were taken for redistribution of land.

**Establishment of Kisan Sabha**

Around 1920, peasant organisations were formed in Bengal, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. The aim of these movements was to oppose feudal exploitation. In Uttar Pradesh's Rae Bareilly and Faizabad, farmers refused to pay illegal taxes and launched a "Ekka Andolan". Peasant revolts also took place in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, and Rajputana, such as the Rampa Rebellion, the Moplah Rebellion, and the Bhil Rebellion, which were essentially peasant movements.

The peasants demanded abolition of zamindari and reduction in rent, and fair distribution of produce between the peasant and the landowner. The sharecropping movement in Bengal was very influential. The Congress leaders also opposed the hike in taxes. Some leaders also personally tried to improve the condition of the farmers. N.G. Ranga formed Andhra Provincial Ryot's Association. He is also known as father of Indian Peasant Movement. The global economic depression of 1920-33 had a worse effect on the farmers. Now the need was felt to organize the farmers in a more powerful manner, which could give the various farmers' organizations a united hand to try to solve their problems. The most important step in this direction was the formation of the All India Kisan Sabha.

In April 1935, the Provincial Farmers' Union was formed in the United Province. After this, N.G. Ranga and Nebudarivad intensified efforts for the establishment of the All India Kisan Sabha. In April 1936, the first session of the All India Kisan Sabha

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

**143**



## NOTES

was held in Lucknow under the chairmanship of Sahajanand Saraswati. The Sabha set up a Farmers' Council and decided to bring out a **Farmers' Bulletin**. The responsibility of editing it was entrusted to Indulal Yagnik. In August 1936, the Farmers' Manifesto was issued. The manifesto encouraged the peasants to participate in the freedom struggle, but the main demand was related to the condition of the peasants. Demands were made to abolish zamindari, make farmers owners of land, abolish forced labour, abolish debts and reduce the amount of rent by 5%, give forest rights to farmers, etc.

On 1st September, 1936, the peasants organized demonstrations in support of their demands and celebrated Farmers' Day all over the country. The farmers enthusiastically participated in the activities of the Kisan Sabha. They faced the atrocities of the landlords and the police and also established unity with the workers. In Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, there were agitations against the landlords. In November 1936, a major agitation started in Barahia in Munger district of Bihar against the conversion of peasants' land into bakash land by the landlords. Seeing the growing power of the farmers, the Congress also showed sympathy for them. Jawaharlal Nehru drew attention to the problems of the peasants at the fifth session of the State People's Conference. Here he demanded reduction in rent, and debt. At the Congress conventions in Karachi and Faizpur, programmes for improving the condition of peasants were approved.

The All India Kisan Congress (AIKC) was formed in Lucknow in 1936 due to the unity of the leaders of the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the Left forces. Swami Sahajanand of Bihar was its president and N.G. Ranga, the leader of the farmers' movement of Andhra, was the general secretary. Prior to this, Sahajanand had formed the Bihar Kisan Sabha in 1934 and the Regional Kisan Sabha in Uttar Pradesh in 1935. The Socialists extended full support to the Kisan Sabha. In 1927, the Faizpur Congress expressed its solidarity with the peasants by placing demands like reduction in rent, protection from eviction, abolition of feudal collection, recognition of unions, etc. In 1937, the peasant movement gained momentum with the formation of Congress governments in the majority provinces of the country. The Congress cabinet took some concrete steps for relief in debts, return of land to landless farmers and protection of tenants.

*Self-Instructional*



### **Formation of All India Kisan Sabha**

In April 1936, the All India Kisan Sabha was established in Lucknow under the chairmanship of Sahajanand Saraswati. The meeting raised several demands for the farmers, such as:

- Abolition of Zamindari System
- Making farmers owners of land
- Abolishing the practice of forced labour
- Reducing Debt and Rent
- Giving farmers rights over forests

The Sabha started a magazine called the **Kisan Bulletin** and tried to organize the peasants.

### **Expansion of Peasant Movements**

In 1936, the peasants launched several major movements. An agitation started in Barahia in Munger district of Bihar to protest against the snatching of land from farmers by landlords. The Congress also supported the farmers' demands. Jawaharlal Nehru, while drawing attention to the problems of the peasants, demanded reduction in rent and land reforms.

### **Strength of the Kisan Sabha**

By 1938, the Kisan Sabha had become very powerful. Its members grew in millions. There was an unprecedented increase in its membership. In 1938, the number of members of the Kisan Sabha had reached about 250,000 in Bihar, about 73,000 in Punjab, about 60,000 in Uttar Pradesh, about 53,000 in Andhra and about 40,000 in Bengal. It was under pressure from the peasants that happened during 1937-40 AD. In the 1960s AD, the Provincial Congress governments adopted land and rent reform programmes, but later the Congress took an illiberal stand against the peasants and the Kisan Sabha. The right-wing Congressmen also tried to break the Kisan Sabha. In Bihar, the Khet Mazdoor Sabha was formed in comparison to the Kisan Sabha. The Provincial Congress and the District Congress Committees were banned from participating in the proceedings of the Kisan Sabha by the Congressmen. The ban was



## NOTES

withdrawn at the Haripura session of the Congress. In 1938, efforts were made to provide more relief to the farmers in the Chief Minister's Conference.

Under pressure from peasants, provincial governments implemented land reforms and rent reduction programs. However, the Congress later took a harsh stance towards the Kisan Sabha.

The peasant movements continued before and after independence. The influence of the communist and socialist ideology of the peasant movement helped a lot. In 1946-47, the Communist-controlled Kisan Sabhas intensified the struggle of the peasants in Bengal, Kerala, Hyderabad and other states. In September 1946, the Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha launched the Tebhaga Movement. There was a demand to give the farmers a share of the produce. The thrust of this movement was in North Bengal, but this movement did not have an impact in South Bengal. Suhrawardy's government made rules regarding bargadar, but they could not be fully implemented before 1950. In the fire of growing communal riots, this movement ended without any special achievement.

Peasant agitations continued even after independence. The zamindari system in Bihar was abolished after independence. These movements not only organized the peasants but also played a big role in improving their rights and condition.

### **4.3.4 Peasants in Revitalization Movements**

Even after independence, the issues of the farmers could not be fully resolved. There were attempts at land reform, but their impact was limited in many places due to social inequality and caste structure. Land reform movements and peasant unions in various states continued to fight for the rights of farmers even later.

### **4.3.5 Role of Farmers in Social Reforms**

Farmers also contributed significantly to social reforms. Whether it was the abolition of the caste system, or the struggle for land reforms, the peasants also fought against the unjust traditions and practices of the society. Social reformers also linked the issues of farmers with the big questions of social justice.

*Self-Instructional*



***Struggle against the Caste System:***

Social reformers like Mahatma Phule, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar and Gandhiji tried to end the caste discrimination among the peasants. Peasants have been victims of the caste system, especially the lower caste peasants, who have been denied land rights and social equality. These reformers organised the peasants and tried to liberate them from caste oppression.

***Farmers in the Women's Reform Movement:***

Women from many peasant families also joined social reform movements, especially against education and child marriage. These movements tried to improve the condition of rural women and made them partners in social reforms.

**4.3.6 Impact and Significance of Peasant Movements**

The peasant movements had a deep impact in Indian society. It laid a strong foundation for social justice, land reforms and economic equality. The struggle of the peasants not only protected their rights but also created a wider consciousness against the injustice and inequality prevailing in society. Peasant movements contributed significantly to the freedom struggle and social reforms, and their impact can still be felt in Indian society and politics today.

**4.3.7 Nature of Peasant Movement in the Late Nineteenth Century**

It includes:

- The greatest force of the peasant movement after 1858 was the peasants themselves. They fought directly for their demands. Their opponents were planters, landlords and moneylenders.
- The movement was primarily a surge of anger against the social oppression of the peasants. The strong desire to save and protect their traditional way of life led the farmers to revolt.
- The aim of these movements was not for any major change but only for the maintenance of the existing status quo. Most of these uprisings were due to eviction and high rent.



## NOTES

- The attitude of the government towards the peasant movements after 1858 was different and liberal than before. While the peasant and tribal revolts that took place before 1858 were suppressed by the government by directly challenging them, after 1858, the government adopted a conciliatory approach and partially contributed to the success of the movement. This was because these movements did not directly challenge the government.

---

## 4.4 ADIVASIS AND THEIR MOVEMENTS

---

The tribals of Chhotanagpur and Santhal Parganas in Bihar had revolted against government policies, exploitation of moneylenders (dikus) even before 1857 AD. These revolts did not yield any permanent results. Their condition remained as miserable as before. This compelled the tribals to revolt in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. During these revolts, for the first time, an attempt was made to organize the tribals in the name of religion. Three of the major revolts that took place during this period are the major ones. These revolts were the Sardar and Munda movement (Chhotanagpur) and the Kherwar movement (Santhal Pargana).

### 4.4.1 Status of Tribal Society

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, tribal society mainly lived in forests and hilly areas. Their economic structure was based on agriculture, hunting, and forests. They lived collective lives and saw their lands and forests as shared resources. But many laws and policies were implemented during the British rule, which had a negative impact on the lives of the tribals. The British government established government control over the forests, which hindered the traditional lifestyle of the tribals.

The tribal society faced three major problems:

- **Eviction from Forests:** Under the British Forest Act and other laws, tribals were evicted from their forests. This had a profound impact on their livelihoods.



## NOTES

- **Impact of Zamindari System:** During the British rule, the zamindari and malguzari system was introduced, which increased the occupation of tribal lands by outsiders. Many tribal farmers became victims of exploitation by middlemen, landlords and moneylenders.
- **Cultural Intervention:** British missionaries went to tribal areas and made conversion attempts, which generated discontent and opposition among tribal communities. Their traditional customs and religious beliefs were threatened.

### 4.4.2 Major Causes of Tribal Movements

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the tribals revolted most fiercely. The colonial administration abandoned their relative isolation and brought them completely into the colonial periphery. The main causes of tribal discontent were as follows:

- **Loss of Rights Over Forests:** The forest was the mainstay of the life of the tribals. When the colonial government started taking control of the forests, the tribals were deprived of their livelihood.
- **Economic Exploitation:** An excessive burden of taxes was imposed on tribal farmers. At the same time, landlords and moneylenders took possession of their land by trapping them in debt.
- **Cultural and Religious Intervention:** The conversion efforts made by the missionaries threatened the religious and cultural identity of the tribals, leading to discontent among them.
  - The colonial administration recognised tribal princes as zamindars and introduced a new system of land revenue and taxation of tribal produce.
  - This encouraged the arrival of Christian missionaries who were posing a threat to the religion and culture of the tribals.
  - Intermediaries (merchants and moneylenders) were brought in among the tribals in large numbers. These visitors grabbed tribal lands and the tribal people fell into their debt trap. This trapped the tribal people in the vortex of colonial economic exploitation.





## NOTES

- The influx of a large number of outsiders into the tribal areas posed a threat to the identity of the tribals.
- The British government tightened control over forest areas for the purpose of revenue generation. They made efforts to ban jhum cultivation, pasture and timber facilities (from 1867 onwards). The result was that the very basis of the tribal economy was eroded.
- The extortion of the exploiters and the police and the petty actions of other officials added to the woes of the tribals. The practice of forced labour (forced labour without paying wages) was extended.

These problems resulted in several tribal revolts and movements during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **4.4.3 Main Characteristics of Tribal Uprisings and their Response**

The intensity of the tribal revolt varied from region to region. But the peasant system of the tribal communities was completely dissolved. This became the same reason for the tribal revolt.

The reaction of the tribals has from time to time manifested in violent rebellions and sometimes it has also taken the form of socio-religious cultural reform. The rebels spontaneously attacked the outstation inhabitants (dikus) and looted their property and eventually drove them out of their village. This led to the struggle of the tribals with the colonial power.

But most of the non-tribals who played a supporting role in the rural economy had social relations with the tribals. As a result, they were not harassed. The basic feature of the tribal revolt was the caste bond between them. The tribals saw themselves not as a rational class but as a tribal identity. Unless someone colluded with the enemies, they could not be attacked.

Often, religious and charismatic leaders emerged on the stage, promising divine intervention and an end to problems and asking their people to use force against foreigners.



There was an unequal conflict between the tribal rebels and the armed British army, resulting in millions of casualties.

The revivalist movement (religious and socio-cultural reforms) drew inspiration from Christianity and Hinduism and promised ushering in a golden age. This movement was the main feature of the period from 1860 to 1920. This was usually seen after the suppression of rebellions and the death of tribal leaders. In the same vein, the Santhal movement was followed by the Sapahar (Khekhar) rebellion in 1870, which preached monotheism and emphasized internal reforms. During this time, the tax ban movement was also seen.

#### 4.4.4 Tribal Movements

##### **The Sardar Movement (1858-1895)**

The Sardar movement took place on a large scale after 1857 in Chhotanagpur, in which people from Munda, Oraon and Christian communities joined in large numbers. Usually, 'sardar' means leader, but in this movement, 'sardar' was called those who were striving to get back the traditional land rights of the tribals. This movement lasted from 1858 to 1895 in several phases.

##### ***Causes of Movement:***

- **Influence of Christian Missionaries:** The main reason for this movement was the land system of Chhotanagpur and the circumstances arising out of the propagation of Christian missionaries. From 1845, Christian missionaries started preaching in Chhotanagpur. Until 1857, German Luther missionaries mainly did this work. These missionaries helped the tribals and also propagated religion, which led to the conversion of the Munda and Oraon tribes to Christianity. After 1857, the number of tribals converting to Christianity increased rapidly. With the help of missionaries, the tribals tried to take back their snatched land from the landlords. In the process, violent incidents also took place. In 1859 there were violent conflicts between the landlords and the tribals.
- **Survey of Land:** The British government started the survey work of Bhuinhari land (hereditary land of the tribals, whose rent amount was very low) in 1860.



## NOTES

The task was entrusted by the government to Loknath Shahi, a relative and zamindar of the Maharaja of Chhotanagpur. Although the Mundas accused the Shahi of favouring the landlords, the survey resulted in the return of most of the Bhuinhari land to the tribals.

After the survey was over in the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act-1862, the Mundas began to express their resentment. These people were later called 'Sardars'. In 1867, around 14,000 tribals submitted an application to the Bengal government with their signatures. In it, they alleged that the Maharaja of Chhotanagpur was evicting them from their land. To address this problem, the government passed the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 1869. In this act, a provision was made to re-survey the land of the tribals.

Under the new system, large-scale survey work started again in Chhotanagpur, which lasted from 1869 to 1880. This time there was a clear classification of Bhuinhari and Zamindari lands. Survey officials also quickly resolved disputes related to land. Taking advantage of this, the tribals tried to convert their lands into Bhuinhari, in which the chieftains supported them. Despite this, the land-related problems of all the tribals were not fully resolved. Due to this, they started putting pressure on the government and the landlords.

In 1876, the Luther Mission submitted a memorandum to the government on land related problems on behalf of the tribals, but the government ignored it. On the contrary, the Mission was advised to stay away from these matters. During this time, there were also disputes about the increasing amount of rent and giving labour to the landlords. In the 1880s, the influence of the Roman Catholic Mission began to grow in Chhotanagpur. The Jesuit clergyman Lievens began to take an interest in the land issues of the aborigines. With their support, the tribals and chieftains began to demand more for their facilities. As a result, the conflict between the landlords and the tribals intensified.

### ***Purpose and Nature of the Movement:***

The tribals believed that they had an ancestral right over the land and the king or the diku had no right to collect the rent. They considered it wrong to collect rent and eviction from land. To protect these rights, Munda and Oraon tribes started the Sardar



## NOTES

movement. The chieftains gave the slogan 'half work, half charity', which meant that they were willing to pay begar for half of their land and rent for the other half. They also asserted their right over forests and opposed arbitrary rent hikes. The chieftains were willing to pay rent to the British government, but did not recognise the zamindars.

The Sardar movement was not violent and anti-royal. The Sardars submitted applications to convey their grievances to the government. They went from village to village holding meetings, organising the tribals and encouraging them to apply, fight cases and take direct action if necessary. Funds were also raised for the lawsuits.

However, sometimes the tribals abandoned the path of the court and took the path of struggle. They would forcibly occupy the land, and when the landlords and the police tried to evict them, violence would ensue. In 1889 the conflict intensified. The tribals divided the land on their own and stopped paying rent. They would deposit only as much money in the government treasury as they thought fit, but would not give anything to the landlords.

The Sardar movement never challenged the British authority, but some chieftains spoke of the establishment of a tribal state or a change in local rule. Christian tribesmen boycotted mission churches and schools. Sometimes the agitation became so violent that the government had to resort to the police and many tribals were sent to jail.

Disturbed by the growing influence of the movement, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal visited Chhotanagpur in 1890 and promised to provide facilities to the tribals, but the promises were not fulfilled. For this reason, after 1895, the Mundas started a more radical movement under the leadership of Birsa Munda.

The leaders of this movement were mainly Munda and Christian tribals. Oraon and non-Christian tribals also supported it. Among the non-tribals, the lawyers of Calcutta, who fought the cases of the tribals, were the most supportive. Christian missions also supported the movement. But due to limited resources and weaknesses of the organization, this movement weakened by 1895.

### **Birsa Munda Movement**

After 1857 the Mundas started the Sardar movement, but this did not lead to any major improvement in their condition. Failing to achieve their goals by peaceful means,

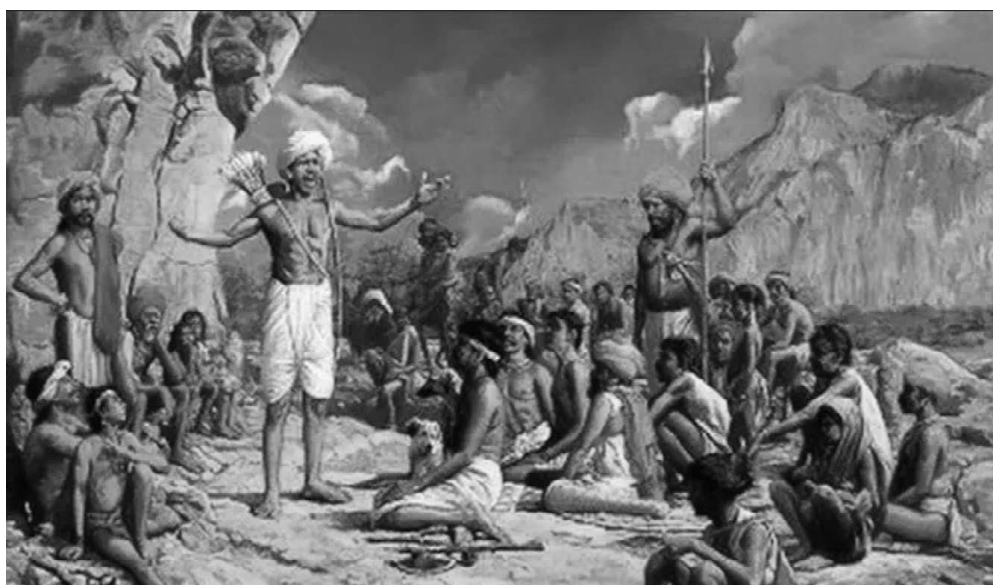


## NOTES

the Mundas took a furious stance. The Birsa movement was different from the Sardar movement because it was more fierce and violent. It started to fulfill many purposes, so its format was also diverse. The movement demanded economic and political change as well as religious revival.

Economically, its main objective was to get back the tax-free land grabbed by the Diku landlords, for which the tribals had been struggling for a long time. When Mundas failed to get justice from the government, they started dreaming of ending the British rule and establishing Munda Raj. They wanted all British officers and Christian missionaries to leave Chhotanagpur.

From a religious point of view, the goal of the movement was to establish a new religion for the Mundas. This movement was led by Birsa Munda, who organized the Mundas by resorting to religion. Under his leadership, the Mundas revolted in 1899-1900 AD and fought for their demands.



**Fig. 4.1** “Birsa Munda” emerged as a fearless leader who united India’s tribal communities against colonial oppression

**Source:** <https://hi.wikipedia.org/wiki>



## NOTES

### ***Leadership of Birsa Munda:***

Birsa Munda (1874-1900) was an educated and enthusiastic youth leader. Seeing the miserable condition of the tribals, he was inspired to fight against the jagirdars and contractors. He saw that it was not possible to get justice through peaceful means, so he started organizing the youth. Birsa was influenced by Vaishnavism, and he declared himself to be God and the master of supernatural powers. Impressed by his words, a large number of Mundas joined him and considered him as their saviour and God. Every word of Birsa was accepted by the Munda community as truth and order.

Birsa announced that the cataclysm was coming, the British Raj had ended and the Munda Raj had been established. He said that no one should pay tax to the government. The Mundas fully complied with this order.

In 1895, Birsa Munda was arrested on charges of inciting rebellion and hatching anti-Raj conspiracies and was sentenced to two years in jail. After his release from prison in November 1897, he began to organize the Mundas with even more vigor than before. There were secret meetings at night in the jungles, where the Mundas prepared for revolt.

Birsa himself would practice archery by shooting arrows at the effigy of Queen Victoria and prepare the Mundas to struggle against the vassals, contractors, government officials and Christians. The message of revolt was conveyed to every household through songs. Birsa assured the Mundas that the government would be able to do no harm to them and the bullets of the police and army would be ineffective against them. This energized the Mundas, and they were fully prepared for the revolt.

### ***Revolt and Repression:***

On Christmas Day in 1899, the Mundas began a widespread and violent uprising. Initially, they targeted the Hindu-turned-Mundas and supporters of the government, but later their anger turned towards the government and missionaries. Several churches and police stations were attacked in Ranchi and Singhbhum. The police became the main target of the Mundas anger. The revolt led to panic in Ranchi and surrounding areas, and its impact was felt throughout Chhotanagpur.

The government decided to suppress the rebellion and took the help of the police and the army. The Mundas adopted guerrilla warfare tactics, but the arrows

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

155



## NOTES

and axes could not last long in front of the guns. In February 1900, Birsa Munda was arrested and lodged in Ranchi jail. He was tried for treason, but during the trial, Birsa contracted cholera in jail and died on 9 June, 1900.

Birsa's arrest and death broke the back of the movement. The government prosecuted and punished many Mundas. Three of Birsa's key associates were hanged, while many others were given Kalapani and long jail sentences.

The movement did not immediately bring any major benefit to the tribals, but the government could not ignore their problems. A survey of tribal land was conducted and in 1908, the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908) was enacted. This freed the Mundas from land rights and forced labour.

Birsa Munda is still considered a god for the tribals. Folk songs are sung from house to house in his praise, and he is always remembered.

### **Tana Bhagat Movement**

In addition to the Munda movement in Chhotanagpur, the Oraon tribals also launched the Tana Bhagat movement. During the First World War, Jatra Bhagat started a new movement. The objective of this movement was to solve the problems related to land of the tribals and establish a new system by ending the social and religious evils spread in the Oraon society.

Gradually, this movement became very widespread. This movement also played an important role in Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha movement and contributed to the freedom struggle.

### **Kherwar Movement**

After 1857, Chhotanagpur as well as Santhal Pargana remained disturbed due to the activities of the Santhals. Earlier, in the Santhal Rebellion of 1855, the Santhals had revolted against the exploitation of the Dikus (outsiders). After this, the government created a district called Santhal Pargana and kept it separate from the prevailing laws of Bengal. Efforts were also made to solve the problems of the Santhals.

However, during the revolt of 1857, the government's attention was diverted from the region and gradually all the laws of Bengal were implemented here. This made the condition of the Santhals as bad as before. The zamindars began to arbitrarily



increase the rent and dispossess the Santhals from their lands. This led to discontent among the Santhals.

At the same time, some Santhal leaders began to organize people by resorting to religion. They initiated the Kherwar Movement, which aimed at improving the social and economic condition of the Santhals and resisting the exploitation of the landlords. This movement was non-violent like the Sardar movement and there was little resort to violence.

- **Dissatisfaction Against Economic Exploitation:** From 1861, dissatisfaction among the Santhals began to grow. They began to protest against economic exploitation. They were inspired by the revolt of indigo cultivators. In view of the opposition of the Santhals, the government abolished the increased rent, which calmed the situation for some time.

In 1865, a chief of the Santhals tried to organize them in the name of religion, but the government arrested him, wiping out his influence.

In 1871, the discontent of the Santhals flared up again. They became angry because of the increased rent and the removal of their chiefs. They held several meetings and protested by registering their grievances to the government authorities. Seeing the aggressive attitude of the Santhals, many non-tribals fled from Santhal Parganas.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal decided to set up a committee to investigate the problems of the Santhals.

- **Santhal Parganas Settlement Act, 1872:** This act was passed in 1872. In Santhal Pargana, an attempt was made to resolve the land-related dispute by surveying the land. The endowment authorities gave back the rights of the Santhal chiefs and returned the lands of those who had been forcibly taken away. Peasants were given permanent and secure rights over the land. One weakness in this arrangement was that the endowment officers were given wide powers which they misused. As a result, the number of endowment-related lawsuits increased exponentially. Despite this, peace prevailed.

At the same time, the Santhal movement took a new form under the leadership of Bhagiratha. The influence of religion and politics increased in this movement,





## NOTES

while issues related to land began to lose their importance. In 1874-75 Bhagiratha's movement became quite widespread and influential among the Santhals.

Bhagirath was a Santhal chief, who initially served in the army. But when the discontent of the Santhals grew, they began to actively participate in the Santhal movements. He was also involved in the Santhal rebellion of 1855. In 1868, he was imprisoned on charges of creating unrest. He also played an important role in the land-related movements of 1871-72.

In 1874-75, Bhagirath tried to awaken new religious consciousness among the Santhals and organize them. He ordered the Santhals to kill their pigs and hens to avoid divine wrath. The Santhals obeyed this order. Bhagirath built a place of worship in the Godda subdivision, where Santhals began to gather in large numbers.

Bhagirath was considered by the Santhals as a god and a king. He was also anointed as a king, and the Santhals started paying their rent to him. Bhagiratha's influence grew rapidly, and many of his supporters became apparent.

After the famine of 1874, the Santhals resisted government relief works. They also opposed surveys and endowments and refused to pay rent to the government. This increased the difficulties in collecting the rent. Bhagiratha's movement became religiously, politically and economically important.

The government took strict measures to suppress this movement. Bhagirath was arrested along with many of his supporters. Troops were deployed in Santhal Parganas to control the situation. The movement slowed down after 1875, and Bhagirath died in 1880.

- **Leadership of Dubiya Gosai:** The movement started by Bhagirath did not end completely. His supporters adopted the ancient name of Santhals 'Khakherwad' and carried forward his ideas. The new leader of this movement was Dubiya Gosain, a Hindu cleric from Hazaribagh. He pushed the Santhals towards religious reforms and had a wide influence in 1880-81.



## **NOTES**

Gosain asked the Santhals to stop rearing chickens and pigs and follow certain rules. He promised that obeying him would fulfill all their desires, and that they would face divine wrath if they did not. Dharmbhiru Santhal was impressed by this and became his supporter.

When the census began in November 1880, the Santhals opposed it. In Jamtara and Godda, this protest took a big form. Rumours were spread among the Santhals that they would be sent to work in tea plantations or send their women to Afghanistan. This further provoked the discontent of the Santhals. They stopped paying rent.

The government made land and administration reforms to deal with the situation. Between 1888-1894 a new settlement of land was made and the land was declared non-transferable. Despite this, the exploitation of Santhals by moneylenders continued.

Some Santhals took recourse to courts against exploitation, while some forcibly took away their land from moneylenders. The government arrested these Santhal leaders and used the courts to settle land disputes.

After these efforts, the Santhal movement almost came to an end by 1895.

### ***Objectives of the Movement and its Characteristics:***

The Kherwar movement, like the Sardar movement, was based on certain principles. The Kherwar leaders were regarded as God's chosen guides for the Santhals. The Santhals were instructed to follow the path shown by these leaders and follow special religious practices. In doing so, there will be a golden age in Santhal Parganas, in which exploiting government officials, landlords and Christians will leave the land of the Santhals.

The Santhals were made to believe that external forces would try to thwart the Kherwar movement, so it was necessary to oppose them. They were asked to give up the worship of traditional Gods and worship Simhavahini Durga. Instructions were also given to stop drinking alcohol completely.

The Kherwar leaders also paid attention to the problems of Santhal farmers related to land and rent. They demanded a fixed rent on the land cleared by the Santhals and raised their voice against the exploitation of dikus (outsiders).



## NOTES

During this movement the Kherwars abandoned traditional practices. They stopped killing pigs and chickens to purify themselves and stopped consuming alcohol. They started wearing tilak and janeu like Hindus. The Kherwars sent orders (parwanas) to the Santhals in Gupta script on paper, which were required to be obeyed. He conveyed his views to the Santhals through meetings.

In this movement, the Santhals opposed the British rule, although this protest was not very fierce and violent. Over land issues, the Santhals forcibly occupied the land and stopped paying rent. They also complained to the authorities against the exploitation.

Some Hindu religious leaders also joined the Kherwar movement. Most of the Santhal leaders were village heads and headmen. The movement also received support from the Santhals living outside Santhal Parganas. However, the Santhals, who had converted to Christianity, stayed away from this movement. Christian missionaries opposed the movement and informed the government about it.

From 1857 until World War I, the causes of the peasant and tribal movements were the same: economic exploitation and loss of traditional rights. During this time, religion was resorted to, but most of the tribal movements were non-violent. The government tried to solve the problems, but the situation did not change completely. This attracted the peasants towards the national movement. After 1919, the Kisan Sabhas were formed, which fought for the rights of the peasants.

---

## 4.5 OTHER TRIBAL REVOLTS

---

### 4.5.1 Santhal Rebellion (1855–1856)

The Santhal rebellion was one of the most important tribal revolts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This revolt was carried out by the Santhal tribals against the atrocities of the landlords, moneylenders and the British government. The Santhal tribe inhabited the regions of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Bihar. The Santhals of Rajmahal hills in Bihar revolted against the outsiders under the leadership of Sidhu and Kanhu. They also established



## **NOTES**

their own government (1855). This revolt was the most effective of all tribal revolts. The revolt was suppressed after extensive military action and the creation of a new district called Santhal Parganas.

Due to the land wagering policy of the British Government and the zamindari system, the condition of the Santhal peasants had become miserable. The outsiders (dikus) started grabbing the land of the Santhals and trapped them in a debt trap. Against this exploitation, the Santhals revolted in 1855 under the leadership of Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu.

The Santhals openly resisted the British officials and zamindars and attacked their properties. Although the British army brutally suppressed this rebellion, it became an important example of tribal resistance.

### **4.5.2 Kol Rebellion (1831-1832)**

The Kol tribe revolted under the leadership of Buddhobhagat in 1831-32 against the transfer of tribal lands to Sikhs and Muslims (outsiders) by the British rule. This revolt took place mainly in the areas of present-day Jharkhand. The occupation of the lands of the Kol tribals began to increase by outsiders, and they began to fall prey to exploitation.

The Kol rebellion was also against the British property system and the tyranny of outside landlords. The Kol tribals attacked the British officials and local moneylenders. However, this rebellion was also eventually suppressed by the British army, but it was one of the important events of tribal resistance. The rebellion was suppressed after extensive military operations and Bhagat's death.

### **4.5.3 Bhil Rebellion (1817-19, 1831, 1836)**

The Bhils living in the Khandesh region revolted against the British occupation and misrule. Finally, it was suppressed by military campaigns and compromise measures.

The Bhil tribe, which mainly inhabited the regions of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, also revolted against the British rule several times. From 1822 to 1857 the Bhils staged small rebellions several times.



## NOTES

The Bhils revolted due to the atrocities and economic exploitation committed by the British authorities and the local landlords. The Bhils struggled against the British power to save their traditional lands and lifestyles.

### **4.5.4 Khond Rebellion (1846-48, 1855, 1914)**

The Khond Rebellion was carried out by the Khand tribals of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh against the British rule. The Khond tribals were dissatisfied with the interference in their traditional lives and the conversion efforts being carried out by the missionaries. In Orissa, the Khodmal Khond revolted against the British misrule under the leadership of Dora Bisai and Chhekri Bisai (1846). They could be suppressed with great difficulty.

There were two major reasons behind this revolt: the loss of rights over the forests and the conversion of tribals by missionaries. This rebellion was also crushed by the British army, but the tribals continued to struggle to protect their identity and resources.

### **4.5.5 Meena Rebellion (1860)**

The Meena tribals of Rajasthan also revolted against the British power. The Meena community lived mainly in forests and mountains and their main source of livelihood was agriculture and hunting.

The British rule interfered with their traditional lifestyle and imposed heavy taxes on them, making their life difficult. The Meenas revolted against the British in 1860 and fought for the rights to their land and forests.

### **4.5.6 Ahom Revolt**

This revolt took place in Assam in 1828 AD under the leadership of Gomidhar Kunwar. They rebelled against the company's attempts to seize their territory after the Burmese War. The revolt came to an end with the military operation and the handing over of Upper Assam to Maharaja Purandar Singh.



#### 4.5.7 Chuar Uprising

The tribals of Midnapore revolted against increased land tax and economic exploitation. It was led by Jagannath Dhal (1798-99) and Ganga Narayan (1832). The revolt continued until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 4.5.8 Ho Movement (1820, 1822, 1832)

The Ho tribals of Chhotanagpur and Singhbhum region revolted against the occupation of their land by the British. The area remained insurgency till 1837 and could be pacified only after extensive military action.

#### 4.5.9 Khasi Revolt

The Khasis of the Jaitia Garo Hills revolted under the leadership of Raja Tirath Singh and Barmanik. The reason for this was the British plan to build a road connecting Assam and Sylhet through this area. Due to severe repression, its leaders surrendered.

#### 4.5.10 Khekhar/Sapahar Rebellion (1870)

This was a revolt in the Chhotanagpur region, which initially taught internal reforms and monotheism. But later it turned into a revolt against the new land revenue system. In the end, it was suppressed.

**Kutcha Nagas:** In 1882, the Kutcha Nagas of the Chachar region of Assam revolted under the leadership of Shambhudan against the British misrule. It was suppressed by the British army.

#### 4.5.11 Koli Disturbance (1824, 1828, 1839, 1844-48)

The Koliyas of Shahyadi Hills (Gujarat and Maharashtra) revolted due to the imposition of British rule, the breakdown of their interests and widespread unemployment. The rebellion subsided after the leaders were arrested.



**NOTES**

**4.5.12 Munda Rebellion (1899-1900)**

The Munda tribals of Chhotanagpur revolted under the leadership of Birsa Munda due to the harassment of their religious leader by the British administration. The revolt was quelled after a massive military operation and the arrest of Birsa.

**4.5.13 Naikada Rebellion (1858-59, 1868)**

The Nayakdas of Panchmahal revolted under the leadership of Rupsingh and Joriya Bhagat with the aim of establishing a religious state (Dharma-Raj). Eventually the revolt was suppressed and its leaders were executed.

**4.5.14 Rompa Revolt (1840, 1845, 1858, 1879-80, 1922-24)**

The Koya tribals of the Rompa region revolted against increased taxes, extortion and chalk moneylenders. It was led by Alluri Sitarama Raju. It was suppressed after Raju was arrested and hanged.

**4.5.16 Thadoi Kuki Rebellion (1917-19)**

The Kukis of Manipur revolted against the British misrule under the leadership of Joondonang and his niece Rani Gadinliu.

**4.5.17 Oraon Rebellion (1914-15)**

Jatra Bhagat (1914) led a monotheistic revolt in Chhotanagpur, Bihar. Bhagat converted the rebellion into a radical political movement aimed at driving out the British. It could be suppressed only after severe repression.

**4.5.18 Baghera Revolt**

The Baghers of Okaha Division revolted against the imposition of British power and misrule, and also entered the British territories (1818-19). A peace agreement was concluded in November 1920.

*Self-Instructional*



### 4.5.19 Ramoshi Rebellion

The hill tribes of the Western Ghats revolted under the leadership of Chittur Singh due to British misrule. The revolt lasted till 1840-41 before a powerful British army established order. In Maharashtra, a group of Ramoshis and Dhagras led by Balwant Phadke, who became Vasudev, tried to establish Hindu Raj. Even after Phadke was arrested, a group of Ramoshi led by Daulat Ramosi remained active until 1883.

*Table 4.2 Major Tribal Movements*

		Aborigine		Revolt	
Name of the Movement	Year	Affected Areas	Leadership	Factor	Direction & Results
Santhal	1855-56	Rajmahal Hills (Bihar)	Sidh & Kanhu	Initially monotheistic and social reform movements, but later revenue settlement.	The news of the defeat of the British in Burma increased the enthusiasm of the Bhils. The government tried to quell the rebellion by repressive and compromise policy, but it did not succeed.
Kherwar & Sapahar	In the 1870s	Hills of Rajmahal	Herculean	Initially monotheism and social reform movements, but later campaigns against revenue settlement.	The British crushed this revolt.
Naikada	1858, 1868	Panchmahal (Gujarat)	Roop Singh, Joria Bhagat	Attempt by the Naikada forest tribe to establish faith in Sahasravada and Dharmarajya.	In 1858, peace was established on the rebellion of Roop Singh. Attempt to establish theosophy in 1868. Roop Singh and Joria Bhagat were both killed.





**NOTES**

Kachhanaga	1882	Moist Lowland	Sambudan	The magician Sambudan believed that even a bullet could not harm his followers.	The British were attacked, but the revolt was suppressed by force.
Munda (Ulgulan)	1899-1900	Chhotanagpur	Birsa Munda	The collapse of the Khuntkatthi system, against forced labour and outlying landowners.	When the appeal in the court proved futile, the revolt turned violent. The rebels were defeated in the Sal Stirkab hills. Birsa died of cholera in jail.
A Scheduled Tribe living in Gujarat and surrounding area	1913	Banswara, Dungarpur	Govind Guru	Initially, the Shuddhi movement was set but later the goal was to establish Neel Raj.	The British crushed this revolt with a repressive policy.
Oraon	1914-15	Chhotanagpur	Jatra Bhagat	Initially, this movement was of monotheistic nature, but later its aim became to drive out the British.	The revolt was crushed by the British.
Kuki	1917-19	Manipur	Jadonung and Queen Gaidinliu	An attempt by the British to recruit tribals for petty work. Protest against the closure of Pothang and Jhum cultivation.	The British were harmed by guerrilla warfare. Ultimately, Queen Gaidinliu was captured and the rebellion was crushed. The queen was released in 1947.
Chenchus	1921-22	Nannamalai Hill	.....	Increasing British control over forests.	The revolt was crushed.

Self-Instructional



## 4.6 CASTE MOVEMENT

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a time of significant change in the social and religious scenario of India. The caste system, which has been a prominent feature of Indian society, was at the centre of various social and religious reform movements at that time. The aim of the caste movement was to end caste-based discrimination and inequality and establish equality in the society. During this period many social reformers raised their voice against the caste system and made efforts for social reform. During the British period, one of the main targets of the propagation of social reform movements was the caste system. At that time, Hindus were divided into many castes, which was based on the relative ritualistic notion. The sole basis of membership of a caste was birth. The Brahmins were at the top of the social hierarchy and the Harijans at the bottom. Harijans were 20 per cent of the Hindu population. They had to suffer in many walks of life due to innumerable and harsh disabilities and restrictions.

The caste system was not only based on the anti-democratic principle of degrading, being inhuman and showing inequality due to birth but also led to social disintegration. It became a major obstacle in the development of united national spirit and the spread of democracy.

The influence of British rule, especially western culture, created many forces that gradually weakened the caste system. The advent of modern industries and railways and buses, and increasing urbanization, made possible public contact between different castes, especially in cities. Modern commerce and industry opened up new areas of economic activity, thus removing the restrictions of occupation based on caste. In addition, by establishing equality before the law in the field of administration, the doors of administrative services were gradually opened to all.

The spread of modern democratic and rational ideas among the people strengthened the voice against the caste system. Most of the social organisations (Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission and Theosophical Society) attacked the caste system. They particularly condemned the inhuman practice of untouchability. Most of them accepted the Vedic concept of the Chaturvarna system based on the profession of the individual as the alternative, which was more logical.



## NOTES

From the very beginning, the national movement was against all those institutions which had a tendency to divide the Indian people. The Indian National Congress was opposed to caste privileges from the very beginning. They fought for equal civil rights and equal freedoms for the development of all Indian citizens without discrimination of caste, gender or religion. Gandhiji made strenuous efforts to eradicate untouchability. For this purpose, he founded the All India Harijan Association in 1932. He made it an integral part of the Congress's constructive programme. Equal participation in public meetings further weakened caste consciousness among the people.

However, the most important factor in this field was probably the new education method which was completely secular and against the caste system. With its spread, the lower castes became aware of their basic rights and started standing up for their rights. They gradually built a powerful movement against the traditional oppression of the upper castes. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the domination of Brahmins over services and general cultural life in Maharashtra and Madras gave rise to anti-Brahmin movements. For this purpose, Jyotiba Phule did not establish the Satyashodhak Samaj. A short time later, similar struggles were waged by the Tamil Vellalo, Telugu Radios and Kammas in Madras against the domination of the Brahmins over education and services, and the Nairs in Kerala. In this direction, the Justice Movement (the Central Caste Movement against Brahmin domination in education, government services and politics in 1915-16 by C.M. Mudaliar, T.M. Nair and P. Thyagaraja Chetty) and the Self-Respect Movement are noteworthy. In Kerala, Sree Narayana Guru waged a lifelong struggle against the caste system. He created one religion, one race, one God for the whole of humanity that is famous. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, who himself belonged to an untouchable caste, spent all his life fighting against caste oppression. For this purpose, he founded the 'All India Dalit Classes Association'. Ambedkar led the Mahar Satyagraha demanding water, temple entry and separate space for Dalits in councils. Other leaders of the Scheduled Castes founded the All India Dalit Varga Parishad at the same time. The Dalit castes launched several Satyagraha movements, such as the Mahar Satyagraha and the Ezhava Temple Entry Movement, to protest against the ban on temple entry and other similar restrictions throughout India. But the struggle against untouchability could not be fully successful during foreign rule. The British government feared that the opposition of the conservative people of the society would flare up. Apart from this, the policy of 'divide and rule' of the British government



further increased the separation between the upper castes. It conducted censuses on the basis of caste and also made caste the basis for social importance. It was the government of independent India that abolished untouchability and other caste-based disabilities through constitutional provisions.

Some of the roles of reformers in major Dalit and caste reform movements are as follows:

- **Jyotiba Phule (1827-1890) :** Jyotiba Phule's name is very important among the major social reformers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He worked hard to eradicate many evils spread in Indian society. He did many great things for the emancipation of the untouchables, women's education, widow marriage, and the good of the peasants. He particularly criticized the Brahmanical caste system and fought for the protection of the rights of the lower castes. Jyotiba Phule established the *Satyashodhak Samaj* (Truth-Seeker Society) in 1873 in Pune.

In his personal life, he had to face a lot of difficulties due to the caste system. After leaving school, he completed his studies by staying at home. With the help of neighbours and knowledgeable scholars he studied Arabic and Persian texts. This instilled in them a sense of reform towards the evils spread in the society.

That is why he tried to improve the condition of weaker sections, such as women and Dalits. In 1873, he formed an organization called 'Satyashodhak Samaj'. He opened schools for the education of Dalits and girls in many places. He also campaigned for the rights of farmers.

One of his famous compositions is '*Gulamgiri*'. The purpose of this book was to convince the Dalits and untouchables that the claim of superiority of the Brahmin class is false and irrational.

***Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth-Seeker Society):*** Jyotiba Phule established the Satyashodhak Samaj in 1873 in Pune, whose main objective was to end caste discrimination and establish equality in society. Under this movement, he worked towards education and social reform for the lower castes. He adopted the principles of "Truth Education" and "Truth Social Revolution" and campaigned against caste discrimination.



## NOTES

- **Savitribai Phule:** She was the wife of Jyotiba Phule, she also played an important role in this movement. She did significant work in the field of women's education and opened many schools, where girls from the lower castes were given education.

- **Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883):** He launched an important reform movement against the caste system in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He founded the Arya Samaj, which aimed to eradicate casteism, superstitions and religious discrimination.

**Objectives of Arya Samaj:** Arya Samaj protested vociferously against casteism and worked towards equality in society. Dayananda Saraswati raised his voice against the caste system as a part of religious beliefs and criticized casteism while maintaining his allegiance to the Vedas. He took several corrective steps against casteism, such as establishing equality in marriage and social gatherings.

- **Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahansa:** Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) adopted a comprehensive approach against casteism. He was a disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and he thought deeply for the reform of the society.

**Swami Vivekananda's View:** Swami Vivekananda criticized casteism and social inequality. He worked towards solidarity and social equality, rejecting casteism from the point of view of Indian culture and Vedanta. He raised his voice against the caste system, considering it a religious and social stigma and talked about unity in society.

- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833):** He founded the Brahmo Samaj with the aim of bringing about reforms in the society and ending casteism. The Brahmo Samaj initiated several movements for social reform and struggled against the caste system.

The Brahmo Samaj launched several movements against casteism, such as opposition to the practice of sati and support for widow remarriage. Raja Ram Mohan Roy criticized casteism and worked towards social equality.

- **Mahatma Gandhi and Dalit Muktiwar:** Gandhiji did many things for the upliftment of untouchables. First of all, they were named Harijan (God's



## NOTES

people) and for their welfare, in 1932, Gandhiji established the 'All India Untouchability Prevention Association', which was renamed as 'Harijan Sevak Sangh' in 1933 AD. Its founding president was Ghanshyamdas Birla. In 1932, Gandhiji founded the All India Depressed Classes Association. In 1933, Gandhiji started the weekly newspaper 'Harijan'.

- **Self-Respect Movement:** In South India in 1920 AD, E. V. Narasimha Rao was born. Ramaswamy Naicker's alias Periyar and Baliga Naidu started the Swasamman or Self-Respect Movement. He composed 'Sachhi Ramayana' in Tamil language.
- **Guruvayur Satyagraha:** Another movement in Kerala against the entry of Dalits and OBCs into temples started at the instigation of K. Kelppan. On November 1, 1931, the Kerala Congress Committee celebrated 'All Kerala Temple Entry Day'. Leaders like P. Krishna Pillai, A. K. Gopalan provided leadership to this movement. In 1936, an agreement was reached with the Maharaja of Travancore. After which all the temples were opened to all Hindu castes.
- **Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar (1891-1956) and Bahujan Movement:** Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar initiated a strong and effective movement against the caste system in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was born in 1891 in a district of Madhya Pradesh in the Mahar caste. In 1924, he formed the 'Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha', which aimed at the material and moral advancement of the untouchables.

He made significant contributions towards the Bahujan movement and fought against casteism. He deeply criticized the caste system and made many efforts towards social equality. He started publishing a magazine in Marathi language called 'Mook Nayak' in 1920 and 'Bahishkrit Bharat' in 1927. In 1930, Ambedkar entered national politics and demanded separate suffrage for the untouchables. He was invited as a representative of the untouchables in all the three Round Table Conferences (1930-32) held in London. In the Second Round Table Conference, he demanded a separate electorate system for the lower castes, which the British Prime Minister agreed to and gave a communal decision. Gandhiji went on a fast unto death in protest against

Self-Instructional  
Material

171



## NOTES

this, which ended in 1932 with the 'Poona Pact'. In 1927, he formed the 'Samaj Samata Sangh' to propagate equality between Hindus and untouchables, and in 1936 founded the 'Independent Labour Party' to protect the interests of the working class. In 1942, he founded the All India Scheduled Castes Federation. He played a key role in the framing of the Indian Constitution and made legal provisions to protect the rights of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. He became the chairman of the drafting committee of the Constituent Assembly and later embraced Buddhism.

- **Dr. B.R. Shinde:** He founded the Depressed Classes Mission Society in 1906. The first president of this society was N.G. Chandravarkar. Due to his continuous efforts, the first All India Dalit Classes Conference was held in 1918.

In 1920 AD in South India, V. Ramaswamy Naicker started the self-respect movement. C.N. Mudaliar, T.M. Nair and P.T. Chenney founded the 'Justice Party' in the South.

In 1917, the Congress included Dalit reform in its agenda for the first time. In March 1918, the All India Anti-Untouchability Manifesto was issued for the first time at the All India Dalit Classes Conference.

In 1931, the Fundamental Rights Declaration passed at the Karachi session where Congress talked about equality by removing caste and creed for the first time.

---

## 4.7 SUMMARY

---

Farmers have always played a leading role in social issues and reform movements. Their struggle helped bring about sweeping changes in the society and paved the way for economic and social reforms. The struggle of the peasants against the zamindari system, excessive burden of taxes, and social inequality proved crucial in the reconstruction of Indian society. The farmers' movement was not only a fight for their



## NOTES

rights, but it was also a part of broader social reforms that brought about lasting changes in Indian society. Tribal movements have made a significant impact in the social and political life of India. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of significant changes in the history of India, when British colonialism had a massive impact on Indian society, economy, and politics. In this period, not only were changes taking place in the mainstream society, but there were also major changes in the lives of tribal communities. The tribal communities, who had been living with their traditions and customs since ancient times, began to face serious challenges due to the colonial rule and policies. This discontent resulted in a number of revolts and agitations by the tribals, which became symbols of their resistance against the colonial power.

These movements not only protected the rights of tribal communities, but they also gave voice to marginalized communities in society. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the caste movement made a deep impact on Indian society. Social reformers and movements struggled against casteism and took many important steps towards equality and justice in society. The efforts of these reformers created a widespread awareness against casteism and gave impetus to the process of reform in Indian society. The caste movement not only challenged caste discrimination but also laid a strong foundation for social equality and justice in Indian society.

---

## 4.8 GLOSSARY

---

- **Peasant Movement:** It was a movement that was carried out by Indian farmers for land rights, compensation, and good payment. Its purpose was to give the farmers their rights.
- **Tribal Movements:** These are the movements used by the people of tribal society to participate in various movements to protect their land, culture and rights.
- **Caste System:** It is the practice of dividing people on the basis of castes in Indian society. This practice used to cause inequality and discrimination in the society.





## NOTES

- **Untouchables:** These are people who were considered 'inferior' in Indian society, and who suffered untouchability.
- **Salt Satyagraha:** This movement was launched in 1930 by Mahatma Gandhi against the British rule, protesting against the imposition of a tax on salt.
- **Dalit Rights Movement:** This movement was launched by various leaders demanding the rights and equality of Dalits, such as Babasaheb Ambedkar.
- **Civil Disobedience Movement:** It is a movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930 to fight for peace and non-violence against the unjust laws of the British Empire.
- **Swaraj:** Swaraj meant 'our rule', and it was the main objective of the Indian freedom struggle.
- **Arrest of Agitators:** During the agitations, it is the process of arresting leaders and activists by the British government.
- **Agrarian Reforms:** These were reforms that aimed at solving the problems of Indian farmers, such as land reforms, climate change, and increasing productivity.
- **Social Equality:** This principle says that all people are equal and there should be no place for discrimination in society, whether it is on the basis of caste, religion, or gender.
- **Conversion:** It is the process of changing from one religion to another, which at times took place due to social and political reasons, especially among Dalits and Adivasis.
- **Congress Socialist Party:** It is a stream inside the Indian National Congress, which worked to protect socialism and the rights of peasant-workers.
- **Equality and Freedom:** Equality implies the elimination of disadvantage while freedom is the ability to act without restriction. As these words were the main objectives of the freedom struggle, in which it was talked about ending caste and class discrimination and giving equal rights to every Indian citizen.



## **4.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

### **4.9.1 In-Text Questions**

1. What was the tribal revolt against in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
  - a) Indian Kings
  - b) British Administration and Zamindars
  - c) Religious Organizations
  - d) Foreign Traders
2. Who led the 'Santal Revolt' in 1855-56?
  - a) Birsa Munda
  - b) Sidhu Kanu
  - c) Mahatma Gandhi
  - d) Pandit Nehru
3. Which movement during the 19<sup>th</sup> century gave prominence to the voice of farmers for land rights?
  - a) Champaran Satyagraha
  - b) Kheda Satyagraha
  - c) Indigo Revolt
  - d) Quit India Movement
4. The 'Indigo Movement' was opposed to the cultivation of which crop?
  - a) Wheat
  - b) Paddy
  - c) Neil
  - d) Tide



**NOTES**

5. Which major reformer advocated widow remarriage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
  - a) Raja Rammohan Roy
  - b) Jyotiba Phule
  - c) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
  - d) Mahatma Gandhi
6. Which movement played an important role in the protest against land acquisition and displacement against tribals in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century?
  - a) Carnatica Rebellion
  - b) Munda Rebellion
  - c) Gujjar Rebellion
  - d) Rajput Rebellion
7. Titles like 'Dharohar' and 'Punjab Kiledar' were part of the tribal movement led by whom?
  - a) Birsa Munda
  - b) Jambhal Baba
  - c) Sidhu Kanu
  - d) Santal
8. Who founded the 'Satyashodhak Samaj' for the betterment of the Satyashodhak Samaj?
  - a) Mahatma Gandhi
  - b) Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar
  - c) Jyotiba Phule
  - d) Swami Vivekananda
9. What was the objective of 'Champaran Satyagraha' in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
  - a) Against Child Marriage
  - b) Against Indigo Cultivation



## NOTES

c) Against Caste Discrimination

d) For Land Reforms

10. What was the main cause of the 'Peasant Movement' in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?

a) High Tax Rates and exploitation of Farmers

b) Religious Intolerance

c) Lack of Education

d) Caste Discrimination

### **4.9.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. What were the main problems faced by the Indian peasantry during the colonial rule (1858-1947), and how did these problems affect the peasant movement?
2. How did the tribal communities resist the British rule? Discuss the main causes and consequences of their movements.
3. What were the organisations that tried to bring about changes in the Varna system in the context of social reform movements, and what were the major outcomes of these efforts?
4. In what ways was the role of leaders important in the peasant movements? Explain in detail with the example of one major peasant movement.
5. What kind of policies, movements and reforms were undertaken during the freedom movement to end caste discrimination? Discuss their social impacts.
6. How do you see the role of the British administration in the process of tribal uprisings and their repression? Did it have any far-reaching consequences? Write in detail.
7. What challenges did the farmers and tribals face due to the land laws enacted by the British? What social and economic changes did these laws bring?
8. What were the similarities and differences in the characteristics of the tribal and peasant movements in the period 1858 to 1947? What was the impact of these movements on the then Indian society?



NOTES

## 4.10 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. c
5. c
6. b
7. c
8. c
9. b
10. a

## 4.11 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

- Sarkar, Sumit and Tanika Sarkar. (ed.). *Caste in Modern India*, Vol. 1&2. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Forbes, Geraldine (1999). *Women in Modern India. The New Cambridge History of India - Volume 4*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jones, Kenneth (1994). *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Hanlon, Rosalind (2002). *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Western India*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.
- O'Hanlon Rosalind (2017). *Caste and its Histories in Colonial India: A Reappraisal*. *Modern Asian Studies* 51, 2.



## NOTES

- Kumar, Radha (1993). *History of Doing New Delhi Kali for Women*. Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Joshi, V.C. (1975). *Rammohan Roy and the Process of Modernization in India*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.
- Shukla, R. L. (ed.) (1987). *History of Modern India*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.



---

## **Unit II: Economy under the Colonial State**

---

**Lesson 5      Economy under the Colonial State: Drain of Wealth, Modern Industries and Industrialization, Indian Capitalist Class (1858-1947)**







## LESSON 5

# ECONOMY UNDER THE COLONIAL STATE: DRAIN OF WEALTH, MODERN INDUSTRIES AND INDUSTRIALIZATION, INDIAN CAPITALIST CLASS (1858-1947)

---

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### Structure

- 5.1 Learning Objectives
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 Colonial State in India
- 5.4 Economy in the Colonial State
- 5.5 Drain of Wealth
- 5.6 Modern Companies in the Colonial State
- 5.7 Destruction of Native Industries
- 5.8 Emergence of New Industries
  - 5.8.1 Textile Industry
  - 5.8.2 Jute Industry
  - 5.8.3 Other Industries
  - 5.8.4 Industrial Policy of the Government
- 5.9 Colonial State and Industrialisation
- 5.10 Indian Bourgeoisie in the Colonial State
- 5.11 Summary
- 5.12 Glossary
- 5.13 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 5.13.1 In-Text Questions
  - 5.13.2 Long Answer Questions
- 5.14 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 5.15 References/ Suggested Readings



## NOTES

### 5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the nature of industrialisation in colonial India.
- Evaluate the economic structure in colonial India.
- Get information about the impact of colonial rule in India.

### 5.2 INTRODUCTION

Analysis of the economy under the colonial state is a complex and important subject. During colonial rule, economic structures and policies were generally designed to benefit the colonial country, adversely affecting the local economy. The colonial powers exploited the natural resources to the utmost for their motherland. Local resources such as minerals, agricultural products, and vegetation were sent to the colonising country, while local development was neglected. Under colonial rule, the economy of the colonial country was combined with the economy of the colonial country. In this situation, local industry and production declined, and the local market became dependent on textiles and other products of the colonial country.

The colonial powers implemented policies to control trade and levy taxes. Trade policies were unfavourable to the local traders and promoted the goods of the colonial country. At the same time, the burden of taxes fell on the local people, which increased their economic pressure. Under colonial rule, the infrastructure required for local development, such as roads, railways, and educational facilities, was few or non-existent. As a result, the local people received fewer employment opportunities and economic development benefits. During the colonial rule, social and cultural structures were also affected. Local economic activities and cultural traditions were transformed under the influence of the colonial powers, which led to changes in the social fabric.

Local economies usually suffered during colonial rule, and the repercussions were felt for a long time. After independence, many countries have made efforts to manage the colonial legacy and reinvigorate their economies.

*Self-Instructional*



### 5.3 COLONIAL STATE IN INDIA

Colonial rule differed from the pre-existing polities in India in two principal ways: the way it organised military power and how India mobilized its economic resources. This regime indirectly adopted radical policies for social change and tried to serve their interests by compromising with various Indian social groups. Since it was an external power, it was not possible to maintain colonial rule in India without the methods of use of force and repression. The colonial rulers firmly believed that strong and decisive action was necessary to maintain peace and order in the colonies. For example, to suppress the Kuka Rebellion (1872) in Punjab, the rebels were shot, cannon-tied, and crucified. The Jallianwala Bagh incident is also well-known to all of us. Thus, the army and forces were the means of sustaining the colonial rule. But autocratic regimes also need legitimacy. The British rule resorted to a number of measures and policies to legitimize and rationalize itself before the Indians. Although the colonial state had an efficient bureaucracy and a deep knowledge of Indian society, it lacked financial and military resources. Such a large and turbulent area could not be governed by the use of force alone. This colonial rule emerged in historical circumstances and its structure was also influenced by British ideology. The British described their rule as the medium of modernization in India. They propagated the benefits of colonial rule in the name of rule by law, modern education system, and efficient administration.

Although the colonial state brought about some reforms and interventions in Indian society, these were inspired by liberal principles. As they enforced the right to private property, which was protected through legislation. The colonial state promoted freedom of markets and established the necessary legal frameworks. Nevertheless, some British thinkers feared that unregulated markets could be harmful to rural society and certain social classes, leading to political instability.

It is difficult to say how much the legitimacy of colonial rule depended on the consent of the Indian people. The regime tried to win the consent of the Indians by various means and was partially successful in presenting itself as the power that upholds justice and order. Although ideals such as “rule by law” and “individual liberty” were propagated, in reality, the state established its authority only by the use of force. Although this use of force took place openly only in times of crisis, its symbolic significance



## NOTES

always remained. The British regime accepted the principle of equality before the law, which was not the case in pre-colonial Indian regimes. For example, the system of punishment under the Peshwa rule was according to caste and social status. The British standardised Hindu and Muslim personal laws under the Indian Penal Code. However, the colonial administration preferred uniformity and codification in laws.

The structure of the colonial state was based on formal legal equality, enforced by the police and the courts. This provided some control over the autocratic rule, but these reforms agreed with the colonial needs and were not made by the Indian masses under the democratic process. Many laws, such as the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, were meant to curb the freedom of Indians. Under this law, censorship was imposed on Indian newspapers and they could be easily convicted. In the field of justice, the Ilbert Bill controversy (1882-83) highlights the racial discrimination of the colonial rulers. The bill gave Indian magistrates the right to hear cases from the British, but anti-British opponents argued that India's legal and social systems were different from those of Europe, so such equality could not be enforced. In the 1870s and 1880s, the colonial state attempted to institutionalize liberal ideology by establishing local bodies, such as municipal and district boards. However, seats in these bodies were divided based on religious and business groups. Its objective was to increase revenue from local taxes and to involve influential Indian communities in administration. These reforms were aimed at preparing Indians for self-rule, but they also deepened communal divisions.

The challenge of gaining the legitimacy of colonial rule was associated with accommodating foreign concepts in India's traditional society. The need to compromise with the influential Indian communities led to contradictions in colonial principles, as seen in the permanent settlement of Bengal.

---

## 5.4 ECONOMY IN THE COLONIAL STATE

---

One of the major concerns of the early colonial state was to collect land revenue without any hindrance, as it was its main source of income. To achieve this goal, different types of land revenue systems were implemented in different parts of India. In 1793, Lord Cornwallis introduced a permanent settlement in Bengal, under which the



## NOTES

right to collect land tax was given to the zamindars. This right was hereditary and transferable. The demand for revenue was fixed permanently, and the zamindars were expected to collect rent from the peasants and deposit a part of it in the Company's treasury.

However, initially, the demand for land revenue was so high that many zamindars were unable to pay on time, forcing them to sell to their landlords. In the early nineteenth century, the colonial state also gave rights such as evicting and imprisoning peasants to make them economically powerful. In the Madras Presidency, particularly in the territories derived from the Kingdom of Mysore, the colonial state adopted a policy of direct settlement between the peasants and the state, as the influential peasantry classes were weakened due to the policies of Tipu Sultan. The objective of this policy was to collect more and more produce, which was also supported by the utilitarian ideology.

Two-thirds of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies were under the ryotwari system, where the colonial state retained the right to reset the rates of land revenue at an interval of 30 years. Initially, the Company's rule was based on the collection of taxes in a repressive manner directly from the Indian revenues. This revenue was used for the purchase of Indian industries, especially cotton cloth. In 1765, the company's income was 3 million pounds, which by 1818, reached 22 million pounds.

The colonial state abolished the traditional exemption given to peasants by adopting the principle of private property. This resulted in greater power to the wealthier classes. After the Industrial Revolution in England, the share of Indian cotton textiles in the global market began to decline. Meanwhile, the industrialists of Lancashire and Manchester demanded the end of the East India Company's trading monopoly, which resulted in the abolition of the Company's monopoly in Indian trade under the Charter Act of 1813. The company's focus shifted from Indian cotton textiles to more lucrative goods such as Chinese tea and silk. Indian farmers were forced to cultivate indigo and opium to trade with China.

Although industrial products from Britain began to flow into Indian markets in the early nineteenth century, India gradually transformed into a colonial economy where the main agricultural products such as cotton, jute, tea, and rice were exported. The transfer of resources from India to England by the colonial state was called 'house-duty'. This payment was not made to the Indians in return for their goods and services



## NOTES

but was used in activities such as the British army, administration and railway investments. By 1893, the Indian rupee was devalued, increasing the real burden of payments made to England. The British rejected this resource extraction and saw it as a fair return on their investment. The evacuation of Indian resources was done through the 'Council Bill'. British merchant companies used to convert the revenue receipts of the Indian government through exchange banks and it was then used in the production and trade of export goods in India. Through this cycle, there was a transfer of resources from year to year.

The main objective of the colonial state was to expand Indian markets for its industrial products. The low purchasing power of the Indian agricultural population was a major obstacle to its expansion. Therefore, the colonial state laid emphasis on the production of mercantile crops, built canals for irrigation and kept the land tax rates under control. Under this, the peasants were forced to increase their dependence on moneylenders, which resulted in the famine of the 1890s.

The priorities of the colonial state were always guided by the interests of the empire. The Indian Railways, often considered the epitome of modernization, were created to serve British military and economic interests. These helped in the transportation of British goods and military force and also facilitated the transportation of agricultural products to the ports. Railways became the principal means of reaping the benefits of British investment, with losses being compensated by the colonial state in the form of guaranteed interest. There have also been economic effects of colonial rule, some of which are:

- **Misuse of Indian Resources:** The British took advantage of Indian resources and destroyed local industries.
- The Indian economy became mainly **dependent on agriculture**.
- Due to the decentralization of Indian industries, India had to **export raw materials to Britain**.
- **Famine and Poverty:** Famines and poverty spread during colonial rule. Between 1850 and 1900, about 28 million people died in famines.
- **More Burden on Indian Farmers:** The burden of taxes on Indian farmers increased and Britain's economic-political moves severely impacted the Indian economy, making India a slave to Britain's strategies.



- **Stopping India's Growth:** India was forced to remain an underdeveloped country, as its resources were used by England for its own economic development.

## NOTES

### 5.5 DRAIN OF WEALTH

All the national movements of the colonial countries, the Indian National Movement (1885-1947) was the most deeply rooted in understanding the nature and character of colonial economic exploitation and domination. Its early leaders, called 'centrists', were the first to develop an economic critique of colonial rule in the 19th century. Indian nationalists and economists described the continuous flow of money from India towards England as a "drain of wealth", in return for which India received neither substantial economic nor commercial benefits. The early nationalist like Dadabhai Naoroji made it clear that the colonial government was utilising Indian resources, whether natural or human resources, such as land revenue, agriculture and industry, not for the development of India but for industrial development and expansion in Britain. The withdrawal of wealth was seen as a kind of indirect tax or tribute which was being taken from India year after year by the British Empire.

The theory of drain of wealth was first systematically introduced by Dadabhai Naoroji in 1867. Later, other leaders like R. P. Dutt and M. G. Ranade explained and developed it in more detail. Their main argument was that due to colonial rule, large amounts of wealth and capital of India were being sent to Britain. This included the salaries and pensions of British officials working in India, interest on loans taken by the Indian government, profits of British capitalists, and the expenses of the Indian government in Britain (such as home charges).

From 1600 to 1757, the East India Company's role in India was that of a trading corporation, bringing goods and precious metals to India and trading them in exchange for commodities such as Indian textiles and spices. The company made huge profits by selling Indian goods abroad. However, after the Battle of Plassey (1757), there was a qualitative change in the nature of the Company's trading relations with India. Subsequently, the Company used its political control over Bengal to acquire a monopoly over Indian trade by legal and illegal means. The Company's employees





## NOTES

started looting huge wealth from the Indian rulers, landlords, merchants and common people and taking them home.

According to business theory, if gold and silver go out of the country due to an unfavourable balance in trade, it is considered an economic loss. In the fifty years preceding the Battle of Plassey, the East India Company imported £20 million worth of metals (bullion) into India to maintain the import balance in return for exports from India. In order to control this situation, the British Government adopted a number of measures to limit or restrict the import of Indian textiles. Among other measures, in 1720 the British government banned the wearing or use of Indian silk and calico in England and warned of punishing the weaver and seller if they did so.

After Plassey, the East India Company extended its territorial invasion of India and began to administer territories, as well as gain control of India's surplus revenue. The Company repeatedly derived surplus profits from the oppressive land-revenue policy, the profits of trade derived from monopoly control over Indian markets, and the extortion made by the Company's officials. The entire surplus was utilised by the company as an 'investment', i.e., for the purchase of exportable goods in India and other places. India did not get anything in return for the exports made from this investment. This is how the "withdrawal of funds" began, which was a one-way transfer of funds. Early nationalist leaders made it the focal point of their economic critique of British colonialism.

In 1765, the Company obtained the Diwani (diarchy) of Bengal and thus gained control over the political and economic structure. The company soon organized this evacuation directly. It started sending the revenue of Bengal directly to England in the name of investment. Thus, the Company did not invest any money from Britain for its business in India but traded using Indian money and made huge profits, which went entirely to Britain. Besides, the Company oppressed the Indians in many ways and collected maximum revenue from the peasants to augment its resources, monopolized the salt trade and sold it at 1,200 to 2,000 per cent profits, and sold Indian opium in China at huge profits. The Company plundered the wealth of India by every possible means and sent it to Britain in various forms.

Dadabhai Naoroji made it clear that the outflow of money amounted to more than the imports of India's exports, for which India did not receive any return.



## 5.6 MODERN COMPANIES IN THE COLONIAL STATE

The development of modern industries in colonial India was mainly driven by British economic interests. The British rule established industries in India, but they aimed to serve the economic interests of the British Empire rather than the economic progress of India. Following are some of the major aspects of this industrial development:

- **Textile Industry - Cotton Mills:** The first modern textile industries in India were set up in Bombay (Mumbai) and Ahmedabad in the 1850s. These mills were started mainly for the purpose of supplying raw cotton to British mills. The textile industry in India developed in competition from the mills of Britain, but it was controlled and limited by the policies of the colonial rule.
- **Jute Mills:** The jute industry flourished in Bengal, especially in Calcutta (Kolkata), where British traders set up mills for the processing of jute. The purpose of this industry was to export jute, especially to Britain.
- **Iron and Steel Industry:** The modern iron and steel industry in India developed mainly in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1907, the Tata Iron and Steel Company was established in Jamshedpur, the first modern steel plant in India. However, this industry did not receive substantial government support, as the British government did not want the Indian steel industry to become a challenge to the British steel industry.
- **Coal Industry:** The coal industry developed in India in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Coal became a major energy source for the railroad industry and other industrial activities. Coal mining was concentrated in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, and it was produced mainly to meet the needs of railways and British companies.
- **Railway Industry:** The Indian Railways was developed for the interests of the British Empire. It was a major part of industrial development, but its purpose was mainly to facilitate the transport of British troops and goods and to transport Indian raw materials to ports. British companies made huge profits in railway construction, and much of the cost of its construction was passed on to Indian taxpayers.



## NOTES

- **Tea and Indigo Industry:** Tea and indigo were produced by the British, especially in Assam and Bengal. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, tea production began on a large scale and was exported to Britain and other countries. The production of indigo was also important, but its importance declined in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- **Shipping Industry:** The British made policies to control and weaken the Indian shipping industry. Heavy taxes were imposed on Indian shipping companies, while many concessions were given to British companies. It was aimed at weakening the Indian shipping industry and giving a boost to the British shipping industry.
- **Chemical and Other Industries:** Chemical, cement, and sugar industries also flourished during the colonial period. However, the growth of these industries was slow and mostly controlled by British companies. Indian industrialists had very little freedom and resources available in these areas.
- **Banking and Insurance:** The banking and insurance industries were also dominated by British companies during the colonial period. British banks and insurance companies played an important role in the Indian economy and controlled Indian capital. The development of the Indian banking industry was gradual, and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a few Indian banks were established.
- **Condition of Industrial Workers:** The condition of industrial workers was very bad. They suffered extreme exploitation, wages were very low, and work conditions were insecure. The British companies did not care about the rights of Indian workers and they were not provided even minimum facilities.

The development of modern industries in colonial India was mainly to satisfy British business and economic interests. It was a challenging period for the Indian industrialists and workers towards industrial progress, as colonial policies limited and controlled the growth of Indian industries. The Indian National Movement strongly criticized this economic policy of British rule and emphasised the development of indigenous industries.



## 5.7 DESTRUCTION OF NATIVE INDUSTRIES

British economic policies had a very bad effect on India. These policies destroyed the rural economy of India. Farming conditions deteriorated and traditional cottage industries came to an end. The process of making goods with machines started in place of cottage industries, which led to the development of modern industries.

The worst affected by these policies were cottage industries, artisans and craftsmen. They lost their jobs and fell into poverty. Initially, the British used to make profits by selling the goods made by these craftsmen, which were in great demand abroad. In return, they would bring finished goods or precious metals from foreign countries to India. This greatly benefited the British. In the beginning, they created markets for Indian goods abroad and promoted native industries. They used to pay advance money to craftsmen to produce goods, which were then sold in foreign markets. But this situation did not last long. With the increasing popularity of Indian textiles in England, there was a crisis in the textile industry there. Fearing that their industry might shut down, the British manufacturers put pressure on the government. The government implemented protective policies to protect the English textile industry. Restrictions were imposed on Indian textiles and heavy duties were imposed on their imports. Due to this, the clothes of the loom made by the Indian weavers became expensive and their demand decreased. Gradually the Indian cottage industries collapsed and were replaced by English machine-made cloths.

After establishing power in Bengal, there was a major change in the economic policy of the Company. Now the company's interest became less in exporting finished goods from India and more in sourcing raw materials for industries in England. This task became easier after the authority of Bengal was established. For this, it was considered necessary to eliminate cottage industries, and the company implemented it in a planned manner. The Company officials forced the weavers of Bengal to sell their finished goods at a very low price. Artisans and workers associated with the textile industry were forced to work for the Company at low wages, and they were barred from working for native merchants and industrialists. Strict rules were imposed for this. The Company's monopoly on the cotton trade made it difficult for the weavers to



## NOTES

obtain raw materials. Out of compulsion, many weavers abandoned their traditional occupation and took up other jobs. The company adopted another strategy to completely eliminate the cottage industry. The Company's workers began to sell cheap machined cloth made in England to Bengal and other Indian markets. Since the price of these clothes was less than handmade clothes, the demand for indigenous clothes started decreasing. The result was that by the 19th century, the indigenous textile industry was almost extinct and was replaced by English textiles. The Charter Act of 1813 further accelerated this process, leading to the complete collapse of the Indian cottage industries.

By the time of the Charter Act of 1813, major changes had taken place in England's economy. England had found a large market in foreign countries and colonies where they could make profits by selling their products. The merchant and industrial class wanted to increase production, for which they needed cheap raw materials and the protection of their industries. They could have got all this from India. For this reason, the industrial capitalists and producers of England put pressure on the government and made a change in economic policy. As a result, the trading monopoly of the East India Company was abolished by the Charter Act of 1813 and a policy of 'free trade' was adopted. As a result, British-made goods began to flow freely into India without any duty or nominal customs duty. These goods were cheaper than the goods made by Indian artisans. As a result, the demand for native goods began to decline and the native industries gradually weakened.

The development of the railway system also played a big role in the destruction of indigenous industries. Goods made in Britain began to reach every corner of India easily through rail. The effect of this was that people started buying cheap goods from Britain and other countries, which brought the work of Indian artisans and craftsmen to a standstill. Indigenous industries such as textiles, glass, paper, leather and dyeing were affected. Handcrafted goods were expensive, while machine-made goods were cheaper. Therefore, the common people were attracted to the cheap goods of Britain. Apart from this, other reasons also led to the decline of Indian industries. From the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to the policies of England, the demand for Indian textiles in the European markets started decreasing. At the same time, with the merger of princely states, those artisans who patronized them and the customers of their goods also disappeared. In the absence of this protection, the indigenous industries could not survive.



Another major reason was the large-scale export of raw materials to England. A large amount of raw materials was sent from India to run the industries of England. This led to higher prices of raw materials in India and made it difficult for artisans to get raw materials for their industries. As a result, native industrial centres began to decay. Artisans and craftsmen were forced to give up their traditional occupations and turn to farming, and many of them became agricultural labourers.

---

## **5.8 EMERGENCE OF NEW INDUSTRIES**

---

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the traditional industries of India suffered a severe blow due to the British colonial policies, especially the handloom industry. Instead of developing Indian handicrafts, the British government promoted the machine-made textiles of their country in the Indian markets, due to which the native industries could not survive. However, after this destruction, the process of industrialization started in India. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, textile and jute mills were established, especially in Bombay (Mumbai) and Bengal. Also, ginning and pressing factories in central India were set up in the 1850s-70s. Despite this, the real beginning of industrialization in India took place after 1870. At that time, priority was given to the jute industry and cotton textile manufacturing. These factories were set up mainly by British capitalists, who used the Indian labour power and sent the profits to Britain. Thus, the early industrialization of India was under British control and colonial structure.

### **5.8.1 Textile Industry**

The second major industry that developed in India was the textile industry. Between 1851 and 1854, this industry was started in Bombay (Mumbai) and Ahmedabad. The first textile mill was opened in Bombay in 1853 with the efforts of Kavasji Nanabhai. Bombay, Ahmedabad and Kanpur became major centres of the textile industry. These places got this advantage because there was a good arrangement of raw materials and labour. Also, the merchants of these cities had sufficient capital to open mills. These centres were also connected by means of transportation, which made it easier to transport raw materials and send finished goods. The effect of this was that the textile



## NOTES

industry grew rapidly. In 1853, there was just one textile mill in India, but by 1905, the number had risen to about 206, employing about 196,000 people. In the 1930s, arrangements were made to protect the Indian textile industry from Japanese competition. At the same time, the impact of the national movement also gave a boost to the indigenous textile industry. The policy of boycott of foreign textiles further strengthened the domestic industry.

### 5.8.2 Jute Industry

The jute industry developed due to several reasons. With the increase in trade, the problem of packing goods arose, due to which the need to make sacks, mats, etc. from jute was felt. For this reason, in 1855, the first jute mill was opened at a place called Rishra in Bengal. Since then, the industry has grown rapidly. The jute industry was most developed in the Hooghly district of Bengal, where jute cultivation was very high. By 1901, there were more than 36 jute mills in operation in Bengal, employing about 115,000 people. The industry continued to grow and the economic depression of 1929-31 did not affect it much. In this way, the jute industry became one of the major industries of India.

### 5.8.3 Other Industries

Apart from the jute and textile industries, many other industries also developed in the 19th and 20th centuries. These included coal, cotton ginning and pressing, rice, flour, timber, leather, woollen textiles, paper, sugar, iron and steel, mica, saltpetre, cement, matchmaking, glass, etc. Indian capitalists and industrialists also participated in these industries, but there were some industries which were monopolised by the Europeans.

Among such industries, indigo, tea, and coffee plantations were prominent. Indigo production began in Bengal and Bihar in the late 18th century. The indigo merchants (Nilhas) opened their kothis and forced the farmers to cultivate indigo. Inhuman atrocities were also committed on the peasants by the Nilhas.

The invention of chemical dyes in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century dealt a severe blow to the indigo industry, and it gradually came to an end. At the same time, tea plantations flourished in Assam, Bengal, Himachal Pradesh and South India. Coffee plantations



were also established in South India. The government made a lot of profit from the export of tea and coffee.

#### **5.8.4 Industrial Policy of the Government**

There was discrimination in the industrial policy of the Government of India, which benefited the British the most. Although industrialization gave some employment opportunities to the people of India, it resulted in the large-scale expulsion of the country's wealth to Britain.

Most of the industries were owned and controlled by the British capitalists, and the government provided them with protection. On the contrary, Indian industrialists were neither given adequate facilities nor help. They hardly got loans and raw materials from banks. The machines and their parts also had to be imported from Britain.

Railways also used to charge more fares from Indians for transporting foreign goods. Special preference ('imperial preference') was given to British imported goods, which caused considerable difficulties to the native industries.

Industrial growth was limited to only a few areas, leading to inequality and discrimination in the country. It also had an impact on the unification of the country. Apart from this, the government did not make any special arrangements for technical education.

According to Professor Bipan Chandra, "Industrial growth in India was not only low in comparison to the growth of other countries in terms of production and employment, but it could also not meet the needs of India. It also did not compensate for the decline of native handicrafts."

---

### **5.9 COLONIAL STATE AND INDUSTRIALISATION**

---

The process of industrialisation in India was deeply intertwined with the political and economic goals of the colonial British state. British policies were primarily designed to benefit the economy of the empire, with India seen as a source of raw materials and a market for British manufactured goods. This type of policy shaped the nature and extent of industrialisation in India during the colonial period.





## NOTES

- **Colonial Economic Policies and Industrialisation:** The initial role of the British East India Company was focused on trade, but after gaining political control after 1757 (Battle of Plassey), the British government began to use Indian resources to stimulate Britain's Industrial Revolution. British policies discouraged the growth of indigenous industries and encouraged the import of British goods. For example, the textile industry, known as a global leader in India, was destroyed through heavy duties and restrictions on Indian exports, while British textiles were sold freely in Indian markets. The focus of the colonial state was more on extracting money from India and ensuring industrialization in Britain than on promoting industrial development in India. This was evident in the policies promoting raw materials such as cotton, jute and rubber that were meant for British industries, rather than supporting industrial manufacturing in India.
- **Limited Development of Modern Industries:** Despite British economic control, some modern industries emerged in India in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These were mostly concentrated in areas that coincided with British interests.
  - i) **Textile Industry:** In the 1850s, cotton mills started coming up in cities like Bombay and Ahmedabad. These mills were established mainly to provide cotton yarn for British mills. However, Indian textile production was always kept on a smaller scale than British production.
  - ii) **Jute Industry:** The jute industry developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century around Bengal, especially Calcutta (Kolkata). Jute was in high demand in Britain and Indian jute mills produced goods that were exported to Europe.
  - iii) **Iron and Steel Industry:** Tata Iron and Steel Company was founded in 1907 by Jamsetji Tata. It was one of the only examples of an Indian-led industrial initiative that produced steel for domestic and international markets. However, the British government did not make any special effort to support heavy industries such as iron and steel.
- **Role of Railways in Industrialisation:** Railways were started in India in 1853 and it became one of the largest infrastructure projects undertaken by the British. However, its main objective was to satisfy British interests, such as transporting raw materials such as cotton, jute, and coal to ports so that they



## NOTES

could be exported to Britain. The development of railways opened up new markets for British manufactured goods in the Indian countryside, thereby ensuring deep penetration of British products.

- **Exploitation and Flow of Wealth:** The economic flow theory propounded by Indian nationalists such as Dadabhai Naoroji showed how wealth was systematically transferred from India to Britain. Indian industry, labour, and natural resources were exploited for British benefit, and there was little reinvestment in India's economic development. Indian workers were exploited to the extent in these industries. Conditions in the factories were harsh, wages were low, and workers had no legal protections. British-owned industries, especially textiles and jute, often used Indian workers to maximise profits, while industrialisation in India was minimised.
- **State Support to Indigenous Industries:** The colonial state provided little support for the development of indigenous industries in India. Indian entrepreneurs often faced difficulties in gaining access to capital, modern technology, and favourable market conditions. British business enterprises, on the other hand, had access to significant state support and favourable trade policies. The indigenous industries that developed were often limited to small-scale operation, as the colonial state gave priority to British industry. For example, British monopolies were maintained in industries such as salt, iron and shipping, which led to the loss of Indian enterprises.
- **Impact of Industrialization on Indian Society:** Industrialization created some urban centers and employment opportunities, it also led to widespread economic disruption. Traditional crafts and cottage industries, which employed millions of Indians, were destroyed by the cheap influx of British textiles. The focus on export-oriented cash crops also led to severe famines, as agricultural land was diverted from food production to the cultivation of crops for British factories. The extraction of wealth through high land revenue demand led to widespread poverty in India.
- **Indian National Movement and Industrialization:** The Indian National Movement, with leaders such as Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and later Mahatma Gandhi criticized the British economic policies that were blocking the industrial development of India. Gandhi's call for Swadeshi



## NOTES

(Swavalamban) was towards reviving traditional Indian industries such as handloom weaving and reducing dependence on British imports. In the early 20th century, Indian entrepreneurs such as Jamsetji Tata and J.D. Birla pitched for more significant industrial development in India, but British colonial policies limited their prospects.

The colonial state's vision of industrialization was exploitative and squeezing. While some industries developed, they were primarily designed to serve British economic interests, without paying attention to the extensive industrial development of India. The focus was on using India as a supplier of raw materials and a market for British goods, which stunted the growth of indigenous industries and made India economically weak at the time of independence.

---

### 5.10 INDIAN BOURGEOISIE IN THE COLONIAL STATE

---

The growth of the Indian bourgeoisie in colonial India was deeply influenced by the economic structure and policies of the British colonial rule. Despite the colonial exploitation and mercantile policies of the British government, an indigenous bourgeoisie emerged in India, which not only made its mark economically but also played an important role in the national movement against colonial rule.

- **Indian Rise of the Bourgeoisie:** In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the rise of the capitalist class among Indians began. This class is mainly Western India flourished, especially in Bombay (Mumbai), Bengal and Madras (Chennai). In the beginning, the Indian capitalists were engaged in trade and commerce. They were associated with cotton, jute, tea, and other trading activities. They got an opportunity to expand trade in sync with the colonial economy. The Indian bourgeoisie consisted of prominent names such as the Tatas, the Birlas, the Godrejs, and the Dalmias families, who made significant contributions to Indian industry. Jamsetji Tata founded the Tata Iron and Steel Company in 1907, one of the largest and most successful industries established by Indian capitalists.
- **Impact of British Policies:** The main objective of the economic policies of the colonial government was to control the Indian markets and to promote British industries. Under this, the Indian bourgeoisie had to face many difficulties. Due



## NOTES

to British industrial policies, Indian industries received less encouragement. Indian entrepreneurs not only faced foreign competition, but they also received less support from the colonial government. Privileges were granted to British capitalists, while Indian capitalists struggled due to a lack of capital, technology, and business opportunities. In spite of this, Indian capitalists established and successfully expanded domestic industries. The textile industry, jute industry, and steel industry are prime examples.

- **National Movement and Bourgeoisie:** The Indian bourgeoisie also played an important role in the freedom struggle. While they tried to adjust to the colonial rule to safeguard their commercial interests, gradually the nationalist consciousness was awakened in them. A close relationship developed between Indians and organizations such as the Indian National Congress and the capitalists. Leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Mahatma Gandhi made the capitalist class a part of the national movement. In the 1920s, the Indian bourgeoisie started a campaign to promote Indian industries and supported the Swadeshi Movement. They made efforts towards industrial self-sufficiency, boycotted foreign textiles and products and played an active role in the movements.
- **FICCI and Indian Bourgeoisie:** In 1927, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) was established under the leadership of Ghanshyamdas Birla and Purushottamdas Thakurdas. This institution was formed to represent the interests of Indian businessmen and industrialists. With the formation of FICCI, the Indian bourgeoisie gained a platform to put forth its demands before the colonial government. This organisation continued to demand changes in industrial and economic policies that could provide greater freedom and encouragement to Indian industries.

### Status of Indian Bourgeoisie After Independence

After independence, the Indian bourgeoisie played a major role in the Indian economy. Under the industrial policies of the Government of India, such as the Industrial Policy Resolution (1948) and the Licence Raj System, Indian capitalists got more freedom and encouragement in the development of domestic industries. The Indian bourgeoisie established large-scale industries in independent India, which proved to be crucial for the industrial and economic development of the country.



## NOTES

The rise and development of the Indian bourgeoisie in colonial India took place despite difficult circumstances. Despite the exploitative and oppressive character of the British colonial policies, the Indian capitalists not only strengthened their commercial position but also actively participated in the Indian freedom struggle. After independence, this class became an important component in the development of the Indian economy.

---

### 5.11 SUMMARY

---

The structure of the economy under British colonial rule in India was developed keeping in mind the British interests as a whole. Its main objective was to transform India into a raw material supplier and a market for finished goods to the UK. The economy under British colonial rule in India was mainly exploitative and unbalanced. Its impact is visible in long-term economic backwardness and poverty. India's agricultural system suffered heavily during British rule. High taxes were imposed on the cultivators, and most of the peasants were burdened with debt.

The British emphasized Indian agriculture mainly on the cultivation of cash crops (such as jute, cotton, tea, and indigo), which was necessary for their trading profits, while food became scarce for the Indians. After the Industrial Revolution, Britain weakened the Indian textile industry. The Indian handloom industry, once world famous, was badly subdued by the competition of British machine-made textiles. Raw materials from India were taken cheaply and finished goods from Britain were sold in India at expensive prices. Railways and other infrastructure were developed in India during British rule, but this development was mainly done to satisfy British trading interests. Railways were used to facilitate the rapid passage of Indian resources to Britain, not for the benefit of Indians. India's trade balance with the British Empire was very negative. Huge amounts of money and resources were sent from India to Britain, which weakened the Indian economy.

British companies captured Indian markets, while Indian industry and trade were affected. The British government implemented the zamindari system, under which heavy taxes were collected from the peasants. This tax was not only the main source of revenue, but it further worsened the condition of the peasants, and agricultural productivity also decreased. During British rule, there were frequent famines, in which



## NOTES

millions of people died. The British administration did not do enough relief work during these famines, and their trading policies further deepened the food crisis. During the famines, food grains continued to be exported, due to which the Indian people continued to die of hunger. During the British rule, India's policy of drain of wealth was emphasized, under which money and resources were sent from India to Britain, and India's domestic capital did not develop. As a result, the prospects for economic growth became limited, and India gradually turned into a backward economy. Indian resources were exploited in a huge amount by the British colonial rule and a prosperous Indian economy was pushed towards poverty and economic backwardness.

---

## 5.12 GLOSSARY

---

- **Lessee:** The class of old cultivator owners who have now become tenants of the zamindar, and the zamindar can remove them from the land if they do not pay the rent.
- **Middleman:** A person who lives between the landlord and the farmer and collects land tax or rent.
- **Tenancy:** A farmer who has obtained the right to cultivate the land of the landlord by paying rent to him.
- **Spontaneous:** That which arises on its own, emerges without any assistance.
- **De-cultivation:** The process in which land is taken away from small landholding farmers, making them agricultural labourers.
- **Differentiation:** Dividing the cultivators into different classes, which makes certain classes more affluent.
- **Demographic Statistics:** Population statistics.
- **Imperialist Support:** People with a positive attitude towards imperialism, who cover up its exploitative aspects and do not hold it responsible for the economic condition of India.
- **Dysfunction and Police Raj:** A policy of non-interference in economic processes, and police raj means that the job of the government is only to maintain law and order, thereby avoiding the government from other responsibilities.



## NOTES

- **Total National Product:** The total output of the industry, agriculture, and service sectors.
- **Per-capita Income:** Income derived by dividing the total national income with the population.
- **Per capita Production:** The production rate obtained by dividing the total output by the population.
- **Primary Sector:** Agriculture, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Forest Products.
- **Producer:** Having the ability to produce.
- **Sharecroppers:** The class that cultivates the land of others and receives a share of the harvest in return.
- **Secondary Sector:** Service sector combining trade and traffic.
- **Mahajan:** The class of money payers in rural areas, who sometimes broker between the farmer and the market.

---

## 5.13 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

---

### 5.13.1 In-Text Questions

1. What was the primary economic goal of British colonial rule in India?
  - a) Developing Indian Industries
  - b) Withdrawing funds from India to the UK
  - c) Promotion of Indian Agriculture
  - d) Establishing equality between India and Britain
2. Which Indian nationalist was the first to systematically present the theory of the drain of wealth?
  - a) A holy or pious man name of a Gujarati trading community
  - b) Jawaharlal Nehru
  - c) Dadabhai Naoroji
  - d) Bal Gangadhar Tilak



## NOTES

3. Which industry of India was most affected by the British colonial policies?
  - a) Iron and Steel
  - b) Textiles
  - c) Shipbuilding
  - d) Chemical
4. What was the British policy that discouraged the growth of Indian industries and promoted British imports?
  - a) Mercantilism
  - b) Free Trade Policy
  - c) Protectionism
  - d) Monopoly Policy
5. Which of the following was a major cash crop which was promoted by the British for export purposes?
  - a) Rice
  - b) Wheat
  - c) Indigo
  - d) Maize
6. When was the first railway line started in India, and what was its primary purpose?
  - a) 1830, for passenger transport
  - b) 1853, to facilitate trade and export of raw materials
  - c) 1860, for military purposes
  - d) 1890, for domestic travel
7. Which of the following Indian industries grew remarkably despite the colonial policies?
  - a) Textile Industry
  - b) Jute Industry
  - c) Iron and Steel Industry
  - d) Chemical Industry





**NOTES**

8. Why did the British mainly implement the Permanent Settlement System in India?
  - a) To improve agricultural production
  - b) To ensure continuous revenue flow
  - c) To remove the poverty of farmers
  - d) To promote industrialization
9. What was the primary purpose of railways in India during the British rule?
  - a) Promotion of domestic trade and travel
  - b) Strengthening military control
  - c) Transportation of raw materials to ports for export
  - d) Facilitating communication between Indian states
10. When was the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO), which was one of India's first major industrial initiatives, established?
  - a) 1897
  - b) 1907
  - c) 1912
  - d) 1920
11. Why did the British government impose heavy taxes on Indian textiles?
  - a) To protect Indian manufacturers
  - b) To promote free trade
  - c) To protect British textile manufacturers
  - d) To increase the export of Indian goods
12. Which essential commodity did the British monopolize during the colonial rule and reap huge profits from it?
  - a) Salt
  - b) Opium
  - c) Cotton
  - d) Coal



13. Which system of land revenue collection was introduced by the British in 1793 in Bengal?
  - a) Mahalwari system
  - b) Ryotwari System
  - c) Permanent Settlement
  - d) Zamindari System
14. What was India primarily seen as under British colonial rule?
  - a) Centre of Industrial Development
  - b) A source of raw materials and a market for British goods
  - c) Self-reliant economy
  - d) Supply of workers for British factories
15. For what purpose did the Indigenous movement begin in 1905?
  - a) To promote British goods in India
  - b) To support foreign investment in Indian industries
  - c) To revive Indian industries by boycotting British goods
  - d) Development of Indian Railways

### **5.13.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. How did the British colonial state use the natural and human resources of India for the industrial development of Britain?
2. What was the “drain of wealth” theory, and how did it explain the economic impact of British colonial rule on India?
3. How did the British economic policies affect Indian traditional industries, such as textiles, and what was the role of tariffs and trade restrictions in these policies?
4. How did the development of railways in India serve British economic interests, and how did it serve British interests rather than promoting India’s industrial development?
5. How did the leaders of the Indian National Movement, such as Dadabhai Naoroji and Mahatma Gandhi, criticise British economic policies, and what kind of alternative economic approaches did they propose for India?



NOTES

## 5.14 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. b, 2. c, 3. b, 4. a, 5. c, 6. b, 7. c, 8. b, 9. c, 10. b, 11. c, 12. a, 13. c, 14. b, 15. c

## 5.15 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READINGS

- Chandra, Bipan (1966). *The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India: Economic Policies of Indian National Leadership, 1880–1905*. New Delhi, India: People's Publishing House.
- Mukherjee, Aditya (2002). *Economic Policies of Indian National Leadership, 1880-1905*. New Delhi: People's Publishing House.
- Imperialism. *Nationalism, and the Making of the Indian Capitalist Class, 1920-1947*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Bagchi, Amiya Kumar (2002). 'The Other Side of Foreign Investment by Imperial Powers: Transfer of Surplus from Colonies'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXXVII (23).
- Bagchi, Amiya Kumar (1972). *Private Investment in India, 1900-1939*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rai, Rajat Kanta. (ed.) (1994). *Entrepreneurship and Industry in India, 1800 1947*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Bahl, Vinay (2009). 'Attitude of the Indian National Congress Towards the Working-Class Struggle in India, 1918-1947', in Sekhar Bandyopadhyay (ed.). *Nationalist Movement in India: A Reader*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi (2008). *Economic History of Modern India (1850-1947)*. Delhi, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* Hyderabad: Orient Longman.

---

### **Unit III: Nationalist Politics**

---

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Lesson 6</b> | <b>Nationalist Politics: Rise and Growth of Nationalism (1858-1947)</b>                |
| <b>Lesson 7</b> | <b>Nationalist Politics: Foundation of Indian National Congress</b>                    |
| <b>Lesson 8</b> | <b>Nationalist Politics: “Moderates and Extremists Nationalists”</b>                   |
| <b>Lesson 9</b> | <b>Mahatma Gandhi and Mass Nationalism: Gandhian Thought, Techniques and Movements</b> |





## LESSON 6

# NATIONALIST POLITICS: RISE AND GROWTH OF NATIONALISM (1858-1947)

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### Structure

- 6.1 Learning Objectives
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 Reasons for the Rise of Indian Nationalism Spirit
  - 6.3.1 Discontent against British Imperialism
  - 6.3.2 Spread of English Education
  - 6.3.3 Political Integration of India
  - 6.3.4 Impact of Socio-Religious Reform Movements
  - 6.3.5 Knowledge of Ancient Culture
  - 6.3.6 Policy of Racial Distinction
  - 6.3.7 Contacts from Abroad
  - 6.3.8 Economic Background of Indian Nationality
  - 6.3.9 The reactionary policy of Lord Lytton and Lord Ripon
  - 6.3.10 Contribution of Political Institutions
  - 6.3.11 Contribution of Literature and Newspapers
- 6.4 Evolution of the Consciousness of the Middle Class
- 6.5 Early Literary and Organisational Expression of Nationalism
- 6.6 Impact of Socio-Religious Reform Movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century
- 6.7 Lytton and Ripon's Regressive Policies
- 6.8 The Rise of Revolutionary Nationalism
- 6.9 Summary
- 6.10 Glossary
- 6.11 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 6.11.1 In-Text Questions
  - 6.11.2 Long Answer Questions
- 6.12 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 6.13 References/Suggested Readings



## NOTES

### 6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the rise of Indian nationalism
- Understand the Indian middle class' response to challenge colonial rule
- Assess how national consciousness took shape
- Understand the role of educated Indians in the organisation of the Congress
- Understand the genesis of the Indian National Congress and its involvement in the growth of national consciousness
- Learn about the Swadeshi movement and the rise of revolutionary nationalism after the Partition of Bengal
- Understand the rise of Indian Nationalism

### 6.2 INTRODUCTION

The most important event in the Indian history of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the rise of the spirit of nationalism. It changed the course of Indian history and eventually freed India from the clutches of the British. Several factors contributed to the growth of nationalism.

The most important reason for the development of the feeling of nationalism was the growing resentment and dissatisfaction with the British imperialist policies. British political, economic, and social policies forced Indians to understand that their interests could not be protected under British rule. The British government was exploiting India inspired by its interests. Peasants, artisans, the working class, and the educated middle class were all affected by this exploitation. Only princely states, jagirdars, talukdars, mahajans and zamindars were satisfied and benefited from British rule. This class was also exploiting the Indians along with the British. The intelligentsia was agitated against the growing unemployment, the lack of individual freedom and freedom of



expression and political rights. Similarly, the bourgeoisie was also dissatisfied with the British economic policies. The entire Indian society, barring a few selfish ones, considered the British imperialist policy as a curse for India and aspired to change or end it. People understood very well that as long as the British remained, they would not be benefited. They also understood that the end of British occupation required more public support than power. Therefore, national consciousness and a sense of nationalism began to find a home in the hearts of the people.

---

### **6.3 REASONS FOR THE RISE OF INDIAN NATIONALISM SPIRIT**

---

Given below are the main reasons for the rise of Indian Nationalism Spirit:

#### **6.3.1 Discontent against British Imperialism**

Dissatisfaction against British imperialism was the greatest cause of the growth of the feeling of nationalism. The growing resentment and dissatisfaction among Indians due to the imperialist policies of the British became the main cause of nationalism. The political, economic, and social policies of the British government forced the Indians to understand that their interests were not secure under the British rule. The British government was exploiting India for its own selfishness. Peasants, artisans, the working class, and the educated middle class were all affected by this exploitation.

Only a few were satisfied with the British rule, such as princes, jagirdars, taluqdars, mahajans and zamindars. These people were exploiting Indian society in collaboration with the British. The intelligentsia was troubled by unemployment, lack of personal freedom, lack of freedom of thought and expression and lack of political rights. The capitalists were also suffering from the economic policies of the British rule, due to which they were also dissatisfied. Thus, most of the Indian society considered the British rule as a curse for itself and wished to get rid of it.

People had understood that as long as the British lived in India, they could not be benefited. The British rule ruined the Indian economy, exploited the farmers and





## NOTES

craftsmen, and destroyed local industries. The peasants had to bear the burden of heavy taxes, which plunged them into poverty and debt. The condition of the artisans was also poor because they were in no demand due to cheap goods made by British machines. The labourers were also paid very low wages and their condition was miserable.

In British rule, only the officials holding high positions were in profit. The princely states and vassals maintained their power in connivance with the British, while the general public was struggling with exploitation and poverty. This situation had created deep discontent in the society.

The educated middle class also began to be disappointed with the policies of the English government. The British spread education, but its object was to keep the Indians away from high positions. The educated class did not get jobs and they could not use their potential properly. This led to unemployment and dissatisfaction among them. The bourgeoisie was also unhappy with the British rule. The British policies harmed Indian industries and the trade was taken over by the British. This caused great damage to Indian businessmen and industrialists.

For all these reasons, discontent grew among most sections of Indian society. The growing discontent against the British rule united the people and awakened the feeling of nationalism among them. People began to understand that without liberation from the British, their welfare could not be achieved. He also felt that public support was needed more than the power to end the British rule. Therefore, national consciousness and a sense of nationalism began to dwell deeply in the hearts of the people. The feeling of patriotism united them and strengthened their resolve to get independence from the British. It was the rise of nationalism that became the foundation of the Indian freedom struggle and ultimately paved the way for freeing India from the clutches of the British.

### 6.3.2 Spread of English Education

The spread of English education was done by the British in India for their own selfishness, but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the spread of English education and Western ideology created great awareness in Indian society. This education helped in changing the old thinking of



## NOTES

Indians and gave them an opportunity to adopt rational approaches. Indians were now beginning to understand the importance of principles such as liberty, equality, and representation.

English education helped Indians to understand the political events of the Western countries. He gained knowledge about the American War of Independence, the Great Revolution of France, and the revolutions of Italy, Spain, and Greece and understood their political significance. This also increased awareness of freedom and rights in Indian society.

Similarly, the Indian educated class was greatly influenced by the ideas and works of scholars and revolutionaries like Milton, Shelley, Byron, Voltaire, Rousseau, Mill, Mazzini, and Garibaldi. His philosophy and revolutionary ideas infused new energy and awareness among the Indians. This education made people realise the importance of freedom and equality and inspired them to fight for their rights.

Due to English education, a uniform education system developed, which also helped in the unification of the country. This connected people of different regions with the same language and ideology, which strengthened the feeling of unity. As a result, the Indian people began to look upon foreign rule as an insult and began to organise for the realisation and protection of personal and political rights.

British historian Ramsay MacDonald also acknowledged that Indian leaders sought individual rights and liberty from the British government after learning the principles of individual rights and liberty from Western philosophers. It is clear from this that English education played an important role in awakening the feeling of nationalism in Indian society.

English education taught Indians that liberty, equality, and rights are the birthright of every individual. Earlier, there were many evils in Indian society, such as caste discrimination and social inequality. But English education helped people understand that all human beings are equal and should get equal rights.

Western education not only gave modern ideology to Indian society but also inspired them to organise and fight for their rights. This developed a feeling of nationalism in India and increased the desire among the people to get rid of foreign rule. English education helped Indians to understand their situation and resolve to change it, which later became the basis of the freedom struggle.



## NOTES

### 6.3.3 Political Integration of India

One of the advantages of British rule was that it united India politically and economically. Though the British did this work for their selfishness, it eventually became a boon for the Indians. There was a lack of political unity in India before the arrival of the British. Different principalities and kingdoms were under different rulers, and there was no coordination among them. However, the British ruled the whole of India and tied it into a single political and administrative unit. The British implemented a uniform administrative system throughout the country and made the Viceroy the head of the whole of India. This led to an understanding among the people that they were all under the same rule. This aroused a sense of unity among Indians and made them realise that they are all part of one country. This political unity later proved to be very important for Indian nationalism and freedom struggle.

The rail and postal telegraph system also played an important role in this integration. The British started the rail network and postal telegraph services to facilitate their trade and administrative work. This increased the contact between people living in different parts of the country. They could easily meet each other and exchange their ideas. This strengthened the feeling of unity among the people and led to the development of national consciousness.

Railways connected different parts of the country, which made it easier to trade and travel. Earlier, people used to find it very difficult to move from one place to another, but through rail, this work became very easy. This not only boosted trade but also increased interaction between people from different regions. This awakened the feeling of love and unity among Indians towards their country.

The postal telegraph system also played an important role in connecting the people of the country. This made the exchange of messages faster and simpler, and people could stay connected to each other. This arrangement also helped in a big way during the national movement, as through this the leaders could quickly convey their messages to different parts of the country.

The British also established law and justice systems across India, enforcing the same legal system in all regions. This made the people feel that they were all subject to a common law, which increased the feeling of national integration. Besides, the English



language also helped to unite the Indians. People speaking different languages could communicate with each other through the English language, which strengthened the sense of nationalism.

Thus, the British rule may have unified India for its own selfishness, but the process gave Indians the motivation to fight for their rights as a nation. The political and economic integration gave rise to a sense of unity and nationalism among the Indians, which ultimately laid the foundation of the freedom struggle and gave India a chance to organise against the British.

### **6.3.4 Impact of Socio-Religious Reform Movements**

The socio-religious reform movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century played an important role in promoting the feeling of nationalism in India. These movements had a wide impact in Bengal, Maharashtra and northern India. Organisations like Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Ram Krishna Mission, and Theosophical Society instilled a sense of love for the country and self-respect in Indian society.

These reformers made efforts to reduce the growing influence of Anglicisation and Christianity and worked to restore the importance of Hinduism, Vedas, etc. They tried to inculcate a sense of self-respect, pride and nationalism among Indians. These movements made people realise that their religion and culture are great and they should be proud of their past. This boosted the confidence of Indians and inspired them to fight for their rights.

Some critics believe that these reform movements were reactionary and led to the growth of communalism. But we must also understand that at a time when India was in the chains of slavery for centuries and had lost its existence and importance, such steps were necessary to instil self-respect and self-confidence in society. The reform movements taught the Indians to be proud of their culture and traditions and to stand up for their rights instead of bowing down before the foreign rulers.

According to Dr M.S. Jain, “The feeling of nationalism in those countries of the world, which have had to struggle against a foreign power, has been awakened only by finding pride in the past.” Similarly, the reform movements in India sought to rediscover the glorious past and awaken it among the masses. These movements



## NOTES

convinced Indians that they were the inheritors of their cultural heritage and that they should be proud of it.

Organisations like Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj also tried to eradicate the evils spread in the society. These raised their voice against social evils like child marriage, the sati system, the caste system, and superstitions. This improved society and developed new thinking among the people. This new thinking proved helpful in uniting Indians and moving towards independence.

The aim of these reform movements was not only religious and social reform, but they also instilled a feeling of patriotism and nationalism among the people. He helped Indians understand that they belonged to the same country and that they should fight together against foreign rule. Thus, these reform movements infused a new consciousness in Indian society and deeply established the feeling of nationalism.

As a result, the socio-religious reform movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century instilled a sense of nationalism in the Indian psyche. These movements gave a new direction to Indian society and developed the sense of self-confidence and unity required for the freedom struggle.

### 6.3.5 Knowledge of Ancient Culture

Along with the reform movements, knowledge of India's ancient civilisation, history and culture also promoted the feeling of patriotism among the Indians. The discovery of the ancient culture of India gave people an opportunity to be proud of their past. The Asiatic Society established in Calcutta presented ancient literature and culture to the world. Through this Society, ancient texts of Indian culture were translated into English and other languages, making Indians aware of their rich history.

Reading ancient scripts, and exploring historical monuments and sites gave Indians an insight into their glorious past. The efforts of scholars like Max Muller, Monier Williams, Colebrooke, Harprasad Shastri, Rajendralal Mitra, Ranade, and Bhandarkar increased the curiosity of Indians about their past. These scholars studied ancient texts and historical sites and brought out their importance. This instilled a sense of respect and pride in the past among Indians.



## **NOTES**

Knowing about the achievements of ancient India, Indians realised that their country was once great and had made wonderful contributions to the fields of science, art, literature and culture. This increased the feeling of love and self-respect for their country among the Indians. They began to understand that they were the heirs of a rich and glorious tradition and should be proud of their history.

The knowledge of history also made people understand that India has given a lot to the world, such as yoga, ayurveda, mathematics, and astronomy. This boosted the confidence of Indians and inspired them to preserve their culture and heritage. This self-respect inspired him to struggle against British rule and strengthened his sense of nationalism.

The efforts of these scholars enabled Indians to understand that their country has not merely been a slave to foreign rulers, but has achieved many great achievements in the past. This knowledge strengthened the feeling among the people that they could take their country back to the heights where it had been. This had a direct impact on the national movement and increased the enthusiasm for independence among the Indians.

Knowledge of ancient culture and history became a source of inspiration for the Indians. This gave them the confidence that they too could put an end to foreign rule with their strength and unity. These insights reminded Indians of their glorious past and instilled in them a sense of freedom and self-respect. Thus, knowledge of ancient culture and history played an important role in strengthening the feeling of nationalism and patriotism in Indian society.

### **6.3.6 Policy of Racial Distinction**

The policy of racial discrimination by the British further increased the resentment and dissatisfaction among the Indians. The British considered themselves superior and looked down upon the Indians. They used to call Indians by derogatory terms such as “black” or “native”. This hateful thinking and the behaviour of the British made Indians feel inferior.

Many restrictions were imposed on the Indians. They were not allowed to travel in the first class of the railway or in the compartment in which the British were travelling.



## NOTES

The entry of Indians into European clubs was prohibited. Even in the court of law, there was discrimination. Indian judges could not hear the cases of the British. Indians were punished harshly even for the same offence, while the British received lesser punishment. Such discriminatory treatment made the Indians realise that they could never get equal rights under British rule.

This discriminatory policy of the British created deep resentment in Indian society. There was a growing feeling among the people that the British were letting them down and doing injustice to them. This led to the development of a sense of unity and nationalism among the Indians. People began to understand that if they wanted respect and equality, it was necessary to get rid of British rule.

This discrimination united Indians and inspired them to fight for their rights. Irrespective of caste, religion, and language in Indian society, everyone's anger towards the British was the same. This anger brought them on a platform and strengthened their sense of nationalism among them. This unjust behaviour of the British aroused a sense of unity among the people and they resolved to fight together against the British.

This discriminatory behaviour of the British inspired Indians to protect their self-respect. People realised that only if they organised and fought for their rights, they could get rid of this discrimination. This increased the awareness among the people for the freedom struggle and they understood that unity and struggle are necessary to end the foreign rule.

Thus, the policy of racial discrimination of the British strengthened the feeling of resentment, unity, and nationalism among the Indians. Due to this policy, hatred of the British increased among the Indians and they were inspired to organise and struggle for their rights. The result was that gradually the movement of the Indian freedom struggle intensified and eventually paved the way for liberation from the rule of the British.

### 6.3.7 Contacts from Overseas

Due to the spread of English education, many Indians had the opportunity to go abroad. There they experienced a new type of political thought and revolutionary ideas. The



## NOTES

movements for freedom, equality and nationality in the Western countries influenced them deeply. These ideas inspired the minds of Indians to fight for freedom and equality.

When these Indians returned from abroad, they shared their experiences with their countrymen. They spoke of the freedom movements in the West, such as the American War of Independence and the Great French Revolution. These incidents made Indians understand that freedom can be fought for and it is necessary to raise their voices for their rights. This promoted a sense of freedom and equality in the Indian society.

These foreign returned Indians made various efforts to promote the feeling of nationalism in their country. They gave speeches, wrote articles and propagated new thinking in the society. Attempts were made to explain to the people that they could never experience equality and freedom under British rule. Such thoughts created awareness in the minds of Indians about their rights and inspired them to organise against British rule.

The experiences abroad also taught Indians that all sections of society should unite and fight for their rights. He saw that in Western countries, people fought for freedom and equality, irrespective of caste, religion, or language. It also made Indians understand the importance of the power of unity and inspired them to unite.

Contact with foreign countries also made Indians aware of modern thinking. They understood the importance of democracy, equal rights, and social justice and tried to implement these in India as well. This created a wave of awareness and change in Indian society. People began to understand that the development of society is not possible without freedom and equality, and for this, it is necessary to put an end to British rule.

These ideas gave a new direction to the Indian freedom struggle. Earlier, many people in Indian society had accepted the British rule, but now the feeling of opposition arose among them. They understood that if the people of the West could fight for their rights and get freedom, they could too. This boosted the confidence of Indians and they resolved to fight for their rights.

Thus, contact with foreign countries developed new thinking, self-confidence and a sense of struggle among Indians. This contact became an important impetus for





## NOTES

the Indian independence movement and helped strengthen the sense of nationalism. This strengthened the feeling of freedom, equality, and unity in the Indian society, which was ultimately a major step towards freeing the country from British rule.

### 6.3.8 Economic Background of Indian Nationality

Economic factors contributed a great deal to the growth of Indian nationalism. After 1857, economic unity along with political unity began to be established in India. Now the economic policies of the British began to affect the whole country equally. The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a major paradox in the Indian economy. On the one hand, trade, communication and means of transport were developing rapidly, on the other hand, the situation of agriculture was deteriorating and the pressure on land was increasing. The condition of the people in the rural areas started deteriorating.

The growth of trade promoted capitalist production, but its benefits did not reach the masses. With the increase of foreign trade, the colonial nature of the Indian economy became even more evident, in which the Indian people and their resources were exploited on a large scale. Only the upper class of society could benefit from the British economic policies, while most of the Indians were affected by it. Even the Indian bourgeoisie was not satisfied with this arrangement. They wanted to develop the economic resources of the country properly, but due to the policies of the British, this was not happening.

Industrialisation and the rise of trade brought prosperity to the country, but its benefits did not reach the farmers, artisans and labourers. On the contrary, domestic industries were destroyed, wealth was drained, inflation increased, and famine and epidemics had a fatal effect on the poor people. The number of indebted in the countryside began to increase rapidly, and grain prices rose far more than the growth of wages. The burden of taxes on the public also increased, but there was no increase in national income. The poverty and economic deprivation of the countryside also affected the merchants, bankers and people engaged in various professions, such as lawyers, in the cities.

All these factors led to growing discontent in rural areas, which emerged through the politically aware and educated middle class living in urban areas. Economic



## NOTES

discontent gave rise to political excitement. All Indian classes, with a few exceptions, were affected. Everyone saw that they had a common enemy, who was exploiting them in the form of British rule. Thus, due to the English policies, the feeling of unity and nationalism began to grow across the country.

The poverty and exploitation of the general public united them against British rule. People began to understand that as long as the British ruled, their economic condition could not improve. Farmers were not getting the right price for their crops, the indigenous industries of artisans were destroyed, and the workers were not getting proper wages. This led to growing anger among all classes against the British and they understood that they had to get rid of this unjust rule.

The urban middle classes, which included lawyers, teachers, and businessmen, took the lead in expressing this economic discontent in an organised manner. They organised the masses and inspired them to raise their voice against the British rule. These leaders gave impetus to the national movement and tried to convince the people that the solution to their economic miseries lies only in freedom. This increased awareness among the public and the feeling of nationalism gained momentum.

According to Professor Bipan Chandra, “Anti-imperialist sentiment itself became an important factor in the unification of the country and the rise of a common national outlook.” People realised that as long as the British ruled, they would all remain exploited and oppressed. This understanding united different sections of the country and laid the foundation for the freedom struggle. This dissatisfaction against British rule and the realisation of economic problems began to play an important role in the growth of Indian nationalism.

Thus, the economic background of the Indian nationality taught the people that English rule was the biggest obstacle to their economic development. People from all walks of life understood that they had to fight for their rights and get freedom. This economic discontent enlightened the Indian society and inspired them to fight for freedom. Gradually, all classes united and decided to fight against the British, which strengthened the feeling of nationalism even more.

Thus, economic reasons contributed significantly to the rise of Indian nationalism. Economic inequality, poverty, and exploitation arising out of the policies of the British



## NOTES

forced Indians to understand that freedom was the solution to their miseries. This increased the feeling of nationalism and the desire to struggle against British rule prevailed among all sections of the country.

### 6.3.9 The Reactionary Policy of Lord Lytton and Lord Ripon

The reactionary policies of Lord Lytton and Lord Ripon played an important role in the rise and growth of Indian nationalism. Lytton had humiliated and annoyed the Indians by his actions. He removed the import duty on cloth coming from Britain, which caused great harm to Indian weavers and artisans. He met the expenses of the Second Afghan War from the Indian revenue, which caused resentment among the Indians. In addition, the possession of arms by native people was prohibited by the “Arms Act”, which made Indians feel more pressured.

Lytton also took away the freedom of the press, which stifled the voice of the Indians. The saddest part was that when the whole of India was suffering from starvation and famine, he organised the ‘Delhi Durbar’ and spent a large amount of money on it. This created a lot of discontent among the public. He reduced the age of entry into the civil service and made it even more difficult for Indians to enter it. All these steps filled the Indians with great disappointment and anger. These actions of Lord Lytton caused a reaction all over the country. Describing the situation at that time, Surendranath Banerjee said, “Lord Lytton’s reactionary administration has awakened the people from their apathy and inspired public life to move forward. That is, Lytton’s policies made Indians aware of their situation and inspired them to fight for their rights.

During Lord Ripon’s period, the controversy over the “Ilbert Bill” and the “White Revolt” also further aroused the feeling of nationalism among the Indians. The purpose of the ‘Ilbert Bill’ was that Indian judges could hear the cases of the British. But the British strongly opposed it, which became known as the ‘White Rebellion’. This protest made the Indians realise that the British were not ready to give them equal rights. This strengthened the spirit of united struggle among Indians for their rights.

After the ‘Ilbert Bill’ controversy and the ‘White Revolt’, the need to organise among the Indians was felt, and this resulted in the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885. It was the Congress that went on to lead the Indian freedom struggle



and eventually led India to independence. Thus, the policies of Lytton and Ripon acted as a catalyst in promoting the Indian national movement.

The rise of the Indian National Movement was not only due to the oppressive policies of the British, but this movement was also the result of the social and economic forces generated within Indian society. The exploitative policies of imperialism gave rise to deep discontent in the Indian society and the struggle against these policies united the Indians. Thus, Indian nationalism developed out of social and economic contradictions which motivated the Indians towards fighting for their rights and attaining independence.

The policies of Lytton and Ripon made the Indians understand that the English rule was not in their interest. The English policies hurt the self-esteem of the Indians and worsened their economic condition. This strengthened the spirit of a united struggle among Indians for their rights and freedom. Thus, the policies of Lytton and Ripon awakened the spirit of Indian nationalism and proved to be an important step towards the freedom struggle.

The main reason for the Indian National Movement was the oppressive and exploitative policies of the British rule, but the social and economic changes within the Indian society were also important in the development of this movement. This movement united the Indians and inspired them to fight for their rights. The goal of the Indian National Movement was not just to achieve independence but also to establish a prosperous and equal society.

### **6.3.10 Contribution of Political Institutions**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of socio-religious reforms as well as some political organisations which made organised efforts to protect the rights of Indians. These organisations proved to play an important role in the development of a sense of nationalism in the country. These organisations included the Landholders' Society, the British Indian Association, the Madras Native Association, and the Bombay Association. These organisations worked to put pressure on the government for political rights and facilities.



## NOTES

Through their work, these institutions instilled confidence in Indians that by organising they could face government oppression. They put forth their demands by sending representations and memoranda to the Government and raised their voice for their rights. These organisations showed the Indians that if they worked unitedly, they could get their rights.

These institutions contributed significantly to raising political awareness in Indian society. They used to organise meetings and discussions to make people aware of their rights and government policies. This increased awareness among the Indian masses about their rights and inspired them to work organised.

These organisations tried to explain that the problems of Indians can be solved only when they unite and raise their voice. Through their struggles, they proved that through organised efforts, pressure can be put on the government and their rights can be secured. The efforts of these organisations made Indians understand the importance of organisation and promoted the spirit of nationalism.

The work of these organisations proved that the organisation is a source of power and through it any problem can be solved. The feeling developed among the Indians that they could get their rights on the strength of unity and organisation.

Thus, these political organisations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century promoted the spirit of nationalism and inspired the Indian masses to organise and struggle. It was through the efforts of these institutions that the Indian national movement was strengthened and steps were taken towards independence in the country.

These organisations played an important task of strengthening the spirit of nationalism and spreading political awareness in Indian society. They showed the way to Indians to unite and fight for their rights and took important steps in this direction. The efforts of these organisations laid the foundation of the Indian freedom struggle and inspired the Indian masses to struggle for independence.

Thus, these political organisations not only spread political awareness among the Indians but also strengthened the feeling of nationalism. Their efforts increased the self-esteem and awareness of their rights among Indians, which later formed the basis of the Indian independence movement.



### **6.3.11 Contribution of Literature and Newspapers**

Literature and newspapers have played a major role in spreading political consciousness. According to Prof Bipan Chandra, the press was the principal medium through which nationalist-minded Indians spread their message of patriotism and modern economic, social and political thought. This led to the emergence of an all-India consciousness. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the number of newspapers in India was very small and they were not given much importance. However, these developed rapidly after the revolt of 1857, which increased political awareness in the country.

The influence of newspapers gradually began to grow and several periodicals were published in different English and regional languages. It had major English newspapers like 'Times of India', 'Statesman', 'Englishman', 'Friend of India', 'Madras Mail', and 'Civil and Military Gazette', which supported the British government and was against the interests of Indians. But at the same time, other newspapers were also published that criticised the British policies, highlighted the Indian point of view, and tried to create a sense of nationalism and unity among Indians.

These newspapers included 'Hindu Patriot', 'Amrit Bazar Patrika', 'Indian Mirror', 'Bengali' (published in Bengal), 'Raast Gofar', 'Native Opinion', 'Maratha', 'Kesari' (published from Bombay), 'Hindu' (from Madras), 'Hindustani', 'Azad' (from Uttar Pradesh), and 'Tribune' (from Punjab). These newspapers played an important role in enlightening the Indian masses and developing national consciousness. These letters promoted the spirit of freedom, equality and unity among the Indian masses and raised their voice against government atrocities.

Along with this, literature also developed in Indian languages which awakened the feeling of nationalism and patriotism. Patriotism was propagated through novels, essays and poems in Bengali, Assamese, Marathi, Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, etc., languages. These literary works filled people with a sense of love and pride for their country.

Great litterateurs like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Bhartendu Harishchandra, Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, Subramaniam Bharati and Altaf Hussain Hali ignited the flame of patriotism through their writings. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's song 'Vande Mataram' enthused the people during the freedom struggle and inspired them to unite and fight. The poems and stories of Rabindranath Tagore



## NOTES

contained the message of patriotism and humanity. Bhartendu Harishchandra awakened the feeling of nationalism among the people through his contribution to Hindi literature.

The works of these litterateurs fostered a sense of self-esteem and independence in the Indian society. He made people feel that they are part of a great culture and heritage and they should organise and fight for their rights. Literature and newspapers played an important role in exchanging ideas among people and in fostering a sense of patriotism.

Thus, literature and newspapers played an important role in the Indian freedom struggle. They not only made people aware but also inspired them to organise and struggle against the British rule. Their contribution in the development of the spirit of nationalism is incomparable. Newspapers amplified the voice of the Indian masses and literature infused passion and love in that voice. Together, these two mediums strengthened the Indian independence movement and spread the feeling of patriotism to the masses.

---

## 6.4 EVOLUTION OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

---

In the nineteenth century, apart from mass-based popular movements and revolts, a new consciousness was emerging among the educated Indian middle class. This awakening consciousness in the middle class gave a clear direction to popular discontent and played an important role in the development of national consciousness. The educated middle class saw a lot of shortcomings in the Indian society and this enlightened class started a lot of positive efforts to improve it. These reform movements were mainly limited to the middle classes, but in this respect, they awakened the Indian masses at the middle national level and strengthened the feeling of belonging to a common culture. As stated earlier, the Indian educated class, which included traders, lawyers, teachers, journalists, doctors, etc., was facing hardships during the British rule. Along with social consciousness, political consciousness was also developing. This class could understand and analyse the aims of colonial rule and imperialism more clearly than the peasants and workers.



Initially, this class thought that the development of means of communication, railways, etc., would benefit the Indians. It was with this view that he supported the British policies. But gradually they came to know that the administrative methods adopted by the British were actually to strengthen the British rule and their economic policies were also in the interest of the English merchants and capitalists only, so the Indian middle class started opposing the colonial rule, but the peasants, workers and the masses middle class adopted two innovative measures

1. This class wrote articles, and books criticizing the English laws and tried to create public awareness through newspapers.
2. In order to create joint programs, the establishment of various organisations and committees, this class adopted the second measure.

---

## **6.5 EARLY LITERARY AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPRESSION OF NATIONALISM**

---

When referring to the works of the middle class in the literary field, one must first talk of the advent of the printing press, which facilitated the dissemination of ideas. Raja Ram Mohan Roy is considered to be the forerunner in this direction. He published a magazine called ‘Samvad Kaumudi’ in Bengali language, in which articles were written on various subjects.

The play ‘Neel Darpan’ written by Dinabandhu Mitra was also important in Bengali literature. It mentioned the difficulties of indigo farmers. National sentiment inspired Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay to write a book called ‘Ananda Math’.

Urdu writers also highlighted the miserable condition of the Indian masses and the decline of traditional Indian cities in their writings. Similarly, such articles were published in Marathi, Hindi and Tamil languages. Apart from English, newspapers were also published in other Indian languages.

Some of the famous newspapers of that time were ‘Kesari’, ‘Maratha’ and ‘Native Opinion’ of Bombay, ‘Hindustan’ and ‘Azad Province’; Bengal’s ‘Hindu





## NOTES

Patriot', 'Amrit Bazar Patrika', 'Bengali' and 'Sanjeevani'; Madras's 'Hindu', 'Andhra Patrika' and 'Kerala Patrika' etc.

By 1877, a total of 169 newspapers were being published in Punjab along with vernacular papers like 'Tribune' and 'Akhbar-e-Aam'. During this period, many great litterateurs emerged, whose works gave a new voice to the national consciousness. Prominent among these litterateurs were Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Subramaniam Bharti, Bhartendu Harishchandra, Altaf Hussain Hali and Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar.

The middle class took the second approach: The establishment of a number of organisations and committees.

- In Bengal: Land Holder Society (1838) Bengal India Society (1843)
- British India Association (1851)
- Bombay Association (1852)
- Madras Native Association in Madras
- Deccan Association in Maharashtra (1852) etc.

The main aim of these organisations was to jointly oppose such English policies which hurt their self-interests; However, the method of opposing it was perfectly legal, such as complaining in the court, complaining to the government or appealing to the English Parliament. They wanted sweeping reforms to be implemented in the Company Charter of 1853, but this charter could not meet their demands. The middle class of India got new hope in 1858 when the British Raj took over the administration of India directly. They thought that the British would end the economic exploitation of India and work in the interest of Indians, but they soon realised that the exploitation of India was going on all the time. So middle-class political activity intensified and new compromises were made. Indians formed the London India Association in England, which merged with the East India Association in 1866. In 1870 the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was formed in Maharashtra, the Indian Association in Bengal (1878), the Indian National Conference (1883), and the Madras Mahajan Sabha were formed. These organisations were certainly motivated by political motives if compared with the first organisations formed by the middle class. Their main objective was to oppose the English policies. He adopted public meetings to awaken the people. National issues



were also debated and opinions were given in these meetings. In fact, these organisations formed the Indian National Congress in 1885. At that time the English government also enacted oppressive laws, such as the Vernacular Press Act and lowering the age limit for the Indian Administrative Services. Such laws were made by Viceroy Lord Lytton (1876-80). Such repressive laws had imposed a harsh procedure on the Indians.

---

## **6.6 IMPACT OF SOCIO-RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

---

The national spirit also arose out of the reform movement. These movements influenced Bengal, Maharashtra and northern India. Various institutions, such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Theosophical Society, instilled the spirit of patriotism. These reformers helped in reducing the growing influence of Hinduism, the Vedas and Anglo-grams and in re-establishing the importance of Hinduism and the Vedas, which instilled a sense of self-respect, pride and nationalism among Indians. Some critics believe that the reform movement was reactionary and led to communalism, but we should also remember that this step was necessary to awaken the confidence of a country that had lost its existence and importance in the chains of slavery for centuries. Dr. M.S. Jain said that “the feeling of nationalism in those countries of the world, which have had to struggle against foreign domination, has been awakened only by finding pride in the past; Therefore, India also searched for this important time. Then the reform movement instilled a national feeling among the people. Apart from getting to know more about the history, culture and civilization of India, the ancient culture reform movements also instilled a feeling of patriotism among the Indians. The Asiatic Society established in Calcutta showed the old culture and literature to the world. Many old books, including English, were translated. Historical monuments and places were discovered, and ancient scripts were read. The efforts of Max Müller, Monier Williams, Colebrooke, Haraprasad Shastri, Rajendralal Mitra, Ranade, Bhandarkar and others made Indians more curious about their past. Knowing this gave him a sense of patriotism and pride. After the spread of English education, many Indians went abroad. There they saw revolutionary



## NOTES

ideas and new political ideas. They became acquainted with the struggles for freedom, equality, and nationalism in the West. They also came to India and awakened new ideas and the spirit of patriotism.

***Policy of Racial Discrimination:*** The policy of racial discrimination of the British fanned the fire. The British believed that they were the best. They humiliated and despised Indians. They were simply called ‘black’ or ‘native’. Many restrictions were imposed on Indians. They could not go to European clubs, they could not travel in the first class of the railway or in that compartment. The Indian judges could not hear the cases of the British. The British were also given lesser punishment for similar crimes. India was affected by this discriminatory policy. As a result, they began to despise unity, nationality and the British.

---

## 6.7 LYTTON AND RIPON’S REGRESSIVE POLICIES

---

The reactionary policies of Lytton and Ripon are no less in the growth of Indian nationalism. Lytton despised and humiliated the Indians by his actions. It removed import duty on textiles imported from Britain into India. Indian revenue was spent in the Second Afghan War. The ‘Arms Act’ prohibited the countrymen from carrying weapons. Freedom of love was taken. The saddest thing was that when the whole of India was suffering from famine and starvation, he organised the ‘Delhi Durbar’, in which money was showered. He lowered the age for Indians to enter the civil service. Lytton’s actions evoked a widespread reaction. Surendranath Banerjee, while describing that situation, said, “Lord Lytton’s reactionary administration has awakened the people from his attitude of indifference and has inspired the life of the people to move forward. Similarly, the debate on the Ilbert Bill and the ‘White Revolt’ during Lord Ripon’s reign inspired Indians to unite and fight for their rights. The Indian National Congress, under whose leadership India gained independence, was formed after this. That is why “the Indian national movement arises out of social contradictions, from the condition of imperialism and its system of exploitation, and from the social contradictions that arise within Indian society under that condition of exploitation”.



## 6.8 THE RISE OF REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM

The success of any movement depends on the large participation of the people in it. Despite this, the Swadeshi movement lacked it. By the middle of 1907, the Swadeshi movement failed to achieve success partly from the peasants and labourers and resolved communal discontent, so it could not turn into a full-fledged mass movement. Moreover, as a powerful anti-imperialist movement, it had to fall prey to the brutal moves of its influential rival. The administration banned the chanting of “Vande Mataram” slogans in public places, declared those participating in the agitation in any way unfit for government jobs and students were fined or fired for participating in the agitation. In Barisal, Gorkha teams were sent to teach the agitators a lesson, while the officials and the police were given a free hand. She arrived in April 1906 when the police lathi-charged the delegates attending the provincial assembly at Barisal. This was followed by repressive action. The question of how to confront force naturally arose. The middle-class youth of Bengal also favoured the violent method, who kept finding solace in personal valour when the people’s movement did not succeed and if open politics could not influence the government, then pinned their hopes on secret meetings. Those who had exhausted their stamina were resorting to violence. In August 1907, Yugantar said that if we sit quietly and refuse to stand in protest until all people are disheartened, we will sit for eternity. The only option available to the advanced elite was to take up arms against the oppressors so that they could intimidate the British officers and their henchmen and create a model of fighting to the death in front of the general public. Soon some committees, especially limited ones, began to plan and carry out political robberies to raise money to buy weapons. The Yugantar Group of Calcutta and the Anushilan Samiti of Dhaka led these revolutionary events.

## 6.9 SUMMARY

In this lesson, you have seen how India’s national consciousness gradually grew during the British rule. This consciousness arose mainly from the British policies in India,



## NOTES

which confined the middle class to the middle. The Indian National Congress, founded in 1885, ushered in a new era. This was a clear example of the growing sense of unity among the Indians. Initially, the Congress was not a political party. It had no central office or regular members. Its views were very calm and generous. But someone rightly pointed out that big institutions often start small. The Swadeshi movement marked the old nationalist idea of “petitioning and praying” to Raj to obtain concessions, as well as rejecting the political programme of the moderate party. It kept Indians away from the desire for self-rule or independence and inspired them to struggle against British imperialist India. The rise of revolutionary nationalism troubled the British in India, but it could not challenge their authority, as Swadeshi open politics did, nor did it pose any great threat of mass gaining.

---

## 6.10 GLOSSARY

---

- **Nationalism:** Nationalism is an ideology in which people’s love and pride for their nation increases. In this, the independence, self-respect, and unity of the country are considered important.
- **Swaraj:** Swaraj means self-rule. This was a major idea floated by Mahatma Gandhi, demanding India’s political independence and independence.
- **Home Rule Movement:** The Home Rule Movement was a major movement of the Indian freedom struggle, which was led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Annie Besant. Its purpose was to demand self-government from the British government.
- **Non-violent non-cooperation:** Non-violent non-cooperation was a strategy adopted by Gandhiji, in which the method of peaceful non-cooperation towards the British government was adopted. Under this, people boycotted foreign clothes, did not pay taxes and gave up government jobs.
- **Indian National Congress:** The Indian National Congress was the major political party of India that played an important role in the freedom struggle. Its leaders led various movements for independence.



## NOTES

- **Swadeshi Movement:** The Swadeshi Movement was a movement in which the use of goods made in the country was promoted by boycotting foreign textiles. This movement was aimed at increasing nationalist sentiment.
- **Satyagraha:** Satyagraha was a principle of Gandhiji in which opposition is opposed on the basis of truth and non-violence. Its purpose was to fight against injustice in a peaceful manner.
- **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre:** The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a significant event in which the British army in 1919 opened fire on peaceful protesters and killed many people. This incident made Indian nationalism more fierce.
- **Lal-Bal-Pal:** Lal-Bal-Pal was the group of three prominent leaders of the Indian freedom struggle Lal Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Bipin Chandra Pal, who supported radical nationalism and intensified the demand for Swaraj.
- **All India Kisan Sabha:** The All-India Kisan Sabha was an organisation that fought for the rights of Indian farmers. It played an important role in organising the peasants against the British government and the landlords.

---

## 6.11 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

---

### 6.11.1 In-Text Questions

1. Who is known as the father of Indian nationalism?
  - A. Raja Ram Mohan Roy
  - B. Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - C. Dadabhai Naoroji
  - D. Lala Lajpat Rai
2. In which year was the Indian National Congress (INC) found?
  - A. 1857
  - B. 1885
  - C. 1905
  - D. 1919



**NOTES**

3. Who coined the slogan “Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it”?
  - A. Mahatma Gandhi
  - B. Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - C. Subhash Chandra Bose
  - D. Jawaharlal Nehru
4. What was the main objective of the Swadeshi Movement?
  - A. Promotion of Indian Textiles
  - B. Boycott of British textiles
  - C. Increasing agricultural production
  - D. Both A & B
5. Who was the Viceroy of India at the time of partition of Bengal?
  - A. Lord Curzon
  - B. Lord Mountbatten
  - C. Lord Ripon
  - D. Lord Wellesley
6. Which Act introduced separate electorates for Muslims in India?
  - A. Indian Councils Act, 1892
  - B. Morley-Minto Reforms, 1909
  - C. Government of India Act, 1935
  - D. Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, 1919
7. In which year was the Non-Cooperation Movement launched?
  - A. 1919
  - B. 1920
  - C. 1925
  - D. 1930



**NOTES**

8. Which of the following was not the reason for the rise of Indian nationalism?
  - A. British Economic Policies
  - B. Western Introduction to Education
  - C. Social Reforms by the British
  - D. Racial discrimination by the British
9. The Lucknow Pact of 1916 was signed between which two groups?
  - A. Indian National Congress and British Government
  - B. Indian National Congress and Muslim League
  - C. Extremists and moderates
  - D. The British Government and the Muslim League
10. Who were the leaders of the moderates in the Indian National Congress?
  - A. Lala Lajpat Rai
  - B. Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - C. Gopal Krishna Gokhale
  - D. Bipin Chandra Pal
11. Which Indian leader authored the book titled “Poverty and Un-British Rule in India”?
  - A. Jawaharlal Nehru
  - B. Dadabhai Naoroji
  - C. Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - D. Gopal Krishna Gokhale
12. What was the purpose of the formation of All India Muslim League in 1906?
  - A. Demanding Pakistan
  - B. Increasing allegiance to the British government
  - C. Promoting Hindu-Muslim unity
  - D. Fighting for Swaraj





**NOTES**

**6.11.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. Describe the economic, political, and social factors in the rise of Indian Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century.
2. Discuss the significance of the Partition of Bengal (1905) and its impact on the Indian Nationalist Movement.
3. Discuss the role of Indian National Congress in the rise and growth of Indian Nationalism. How did it evolve from a liberal to a radical one?
4. What was the role of Swadeshi movement in the growth of Indian Nationalism? Throw light on its objectives and consequences.
5. Analyse the role of prominent nationalist leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Dadabhai Naoroji and Gopal Krishna Gokhale in shaping the initial phase of Indian nationalism.

---

**6.12 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

---

1. C, 2. B, 3. B, 4. D, 5. A, 6. B, 7. B, 8. C, 9. B, 10. C, 11. B, 12. A.

---

**6.13 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

- Sarkar, Sumit. (1983). *Modern India 1885-1947*. Delhi: Macmillan.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Chandra, Bipan. (1989). *India's Struggle for Independence*. Delhi: Penguin, (Also in Hindi)
- Pandey, Gyanendra. (2002). *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*. New Delhi: Anthem Press (Second edition).



**NOTES**

- Bose, S and Ayesha Jalal. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee. (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Tripathi, Amlesh. *The Challenge of Extremism in Indian Politics*. New Delhi: Granth Shilpi Prakashan.
- Halidar, Mohat Kumar. *Indian Renaissance and Revivalist Consciousness*. New Delhi: Granth Shilpi Prakashan.
- Singh, Hiralal. (1971). *Tableau of the Non-Cooperation Movement*. Delhi: Publications Division.
- Kisai, A. R. (2018). *The Social Background of Indian Nationalism*. New Delhi: Sethi Publications.
- Mittal, Satish Chandra. *India's Struggle for Independence (1858–1947)*. New Delhi: Graffy World.
- Pandey, Pratip Kumar. (1990). *Gandhi's Economic and Social Thought*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.
- Gopal, Ram. (1986). *The Indian War of Independence*. Lucknow: Sulabh Prakashan.





## **LESSON 7**

# **NATIONALIST POLITICS: FOUNDATION OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

---

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### **Structure**

- 7.1 Learning Objectives
- 7.2 Introduction
- 7.3 Birth of Indian National Congress
- 7.4 The Purpose of the establishment of the Indian National Congress
- 7.5 The Process of the Establishment of the Indian National Congress
- 7.6 Reasons for the Formation of Indian National Congress
- 7.7 Political Institutions Before 1885
- 7.8 Government Response
  - 7.8.1 Lytton
  - 7.8.2 Ripon
- 7.9 First Session of Congress
- 7.10 Resolution Passed in the First Session
- 7.11 Aims and Objectives of the Congress
- 7.12 Controversies Related to Congress Origins
  - 7.12.1 Memorable Facts Related to Congress
  - 7.12.2 Special Remarks about Congress
- 7.13 Rivalries and Ambitions of the Indian Elite
- 7.14 Need for an All-India Institution
- 7.15 Summary
- 7.16 Glossary
- 7.17 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 7.17.1 In-Text Questions
  - 7.17.2 Long Answer Questions
- 7.18 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 7.19 References/Suggested Readings



## NOTES

### 7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the circumstances before the establishment of the Indian National Congress
- Understand the circumstances that led to the establishment of the Indian National Congress.
- Learn about the role of A.O. Hume in the establishment of the Indian National Congress.
- Understand the aims and goals of the Indian National Congress.
- Get information about the First Session of the Indian National Congress.
- Analyse the resolutions passed in the First Session of the Indian National Congress.
- Study the British attitude towards the Indian National Congress.
- Explain intellectual awakening of the 19<sup>th</sup> century contributed to the origin and spread of modern ideas in India.

### 7.2 INTRODUCTION

Before the British rule, India was an economically self-sufficient nation, but due to the establishment of British rule and their economic policies, India's economic condition became miserable. As a result, due to economic deprivation, there was a lot of dissatisfaction among the people of India, which was visible from time to time through various movements. However, in the movements that have taken place so far, political participation has been almost negligible. A beginning was made to bridge this gap with the establishment of the Indian Indian National Congress in 1885. With the establishment of the Indian National Congress, the struggle for the liberation of India from foreign



## NOTES

rule began, albeit on a small scale, but in an organised manner. The Indian National Congress represented the aspiration of politically conscious Indians to form a political organisation working for their economic and political progress. This institution was the first planned expression of nationalism at the all-India level.

The founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was neither an unexpected event nor a historical accident. It was only from the 1860s and 1870s that political consciousness began to develop among the Indians. The establishment of the Congress was the culmination of this growing consciousness. By the late 1870s and early 1880s, the Indian public had become quite politically aware. In 1885, this political consciousness took a turn. The intellectuals active in Indian politics, instead of raising their voice for narrow interests, were reluctant to fight for national interests at the national level. The culmination of this effort was the formation of the Indian National Congress. The British were aware of the activities that were taking place for the formation of this national party. They felt that a period of non-cooperation, sedition and Ireland-like movements was about to begin. There was also a solid historical basis for the suspicion of the English government. The national demands of the time were not to reduce the duty on imported cotton cloth, to give the right to bear arms, freedom of the press, reduction in military expenditure, Indianization of the civil service, increase in the authority of Indian judges, to campaign among the British voters in such a way that they vote for the party which takes care of the interests of Indians. The British government felt that if their demands were accepted, then the grip of the British rule on the Indian people would be loosened. At the Centre of the initial Congress leadership were those from Bombay and Calcutta who had been influenced by Dadabhai Naoroji while studying in London. Most of them took the initiative to form local organisations in different parts of the country, such as the Landholders' Society (1837), the British India Association (1852): the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha (1870), the Indian Association of Calcutta (1876), the Madras Mahajan Sabha (1884) and the Bombay Presidency Association (1885). Their leadership was mainly in the hands of middle-class businessmen and not with landlords. Many suggestions were given and many efforts were made to form an All-India Organisation for coordination among these local organisations. The Indian Association even organised national conferences in 1883 and 1885. But incidentally, the effort made at the initiative of A.O. Hume was



## NOTES

permanently successful which led to the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885 AD.

As the apex nationalist organisation, the Indian National Congress functioned as a platform, organisation and headquarters. It gave expression to the symbol of politics and new nationalist sentiments. The Congress was founded under the leadership of A.O. Hume, whose first session was held in Bombay in 1885. The first session was presided over by Womesh Chandra Banerjee.

In India, different political parties spread the national sentiment rapidly. It did not extend only to the budding middle class, but different sections of the society, such as the English-educated middle class, landlords, peasants, workers, and others, took the path of struggle and organisation to protect their interests. In order to protect the interests of different sections all over the country and to lead the movement it was necessary that all of them should be gathered and organised. The Indian National Conference started efforts in this direction, but the real work was done only with the establishment of the Indian National Congress. According to Shri Ayodhya Singh, “The Congress was born because the British rulers and their advocates understood the need for it. This was not the result of the natural development of the national movement but the intervention of the imperialists and colonialists in the national movement. It is indisputably certain that the Congress was founded through the efforts of A.O. Hume, who was a retired Secretary to the Government of India. In this he also had the direct or indirect support of Lord Ripon and Dufferin. Hume was worried about the growing movement and unrest in India. The apprehension of the revolutionary movement and the disenchantment of middle-class Indians with the liberals in England were events that alarmed the sympathies of Hume and other well-wishers of the British government. The question arose before them as to how to avert a situation of danger by reducing the anti-British government movements. Therefore, A.O. Hume, as the Indian National Congress, decided to arrange for a ‘safety valve’ which could prevent the national movement of India from going on the path of armed struggle adopted by the US and Italy. Hume expressed the hope that, “The National Congress would arrange a peaceful and constitutional exit route for the discontent of the educated Indians.” Thus, it will not allow a people’s revolt to erupt. Similarly, it cannot be accepted that the Congress was created only as a ‘safety tube’. In fact, there were political motives behind the establishment of the Congress.



---

### **7.3 BIRTH OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

---

With the efforts of various political organisations, the feeling of nationalism began to grow rapidly in India. This feeling was not limited to the budding middle class but spread to other sections of the society as well. The English educated middle class, landlords, peasants and labourers all began to resort to movements and organisations to protect their interests.

There was a need to unite all these efforts and establish a national institution which could protect the interests of different sections of the country and give leadership to the movements. The Indian National Conference took the initiative in this direction, but the real result was seen with the establishment of the Indian National Congress.

---

### **7.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

---

There is a difference of opinion among scholars about the aims and reasons for the establishment of the Indian National Congress. As already discussed in the introduction of this lesson, according to Shri Ayodhya Singh, The Indian National Congress was formed under the needs of the British rulers and their supporters. This was not the result of the natural development of the national movement, but the intervention of the imperialists and colonialists in it. It is indisputable that the Indian National Congress was founded by the efforts of A. O. Hume, who was a retired Secretary to the Government of India. In this he had the direct or indirect support of Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin. Hume was worried about the growing agitation and unrest in India. The prospect of revolutionary movements and the disillusionment of educated Indians with the liberals of England were events which alarmed Hume and other British supporters. The question before him was how to curtail the agitation against the British government and avert a situation of danger. Hume, therefore, decided to establish the Indian National Congress as a “safety valve” so that India’s national movement did not go down the path of armed struggle like the US and Italy. Hume hoped that the Indian National





## NOTES

Congress would provide a peaceful and constitutional instrument for the discontent of educated Indians and thus succeed in preventing mass uprising.

Some scholars believe that the Indian National Congress was founded by Hume to defend against a possible Russian invasion. According to Dr. Nandalal Chatterjee, Hume put forward the idea of setting up the Congress at a time when India was under threat of Russian aggression. However, this argument does not seem strong. Similarly, it cannot be fully accepted that Congress was created only as a “safety valve”. In fact, there were political motives behind the establishment of the Congress. Hume, though he belonged to the British ruling class, had genuine sympathy for the Indians and was in favour of improving their condition. This was the reason that the Indian leaders of that time, who were becoming aware of the feeling of nationalism and political rights, were ready to cooperate in Hume’s efforts.

Another reason behind this was that the Indian leaders did not want to become a victim of opposition to the government at the outset by forming a political organisation of their own. If Hume or any other Englishman had formed such an institution, the government would not have doubted it.

Therefore, while Hume attempted to see Congress as a “safety tube”, the early leaders of Congress used Hume as an “electrical deterrent” (lightning conductor) to accomplish their purpose safely and effectively.

---

## 7.5 THE PROCESS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

---

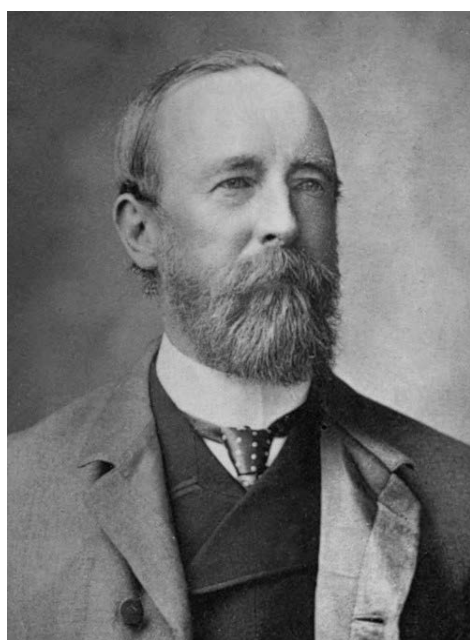
The first Indian National Congress President, Shri Womesh Chandra Banerjee, outlined the objectives of the Congress, which were as follows:

- To establish personal intimacy and friendship among all persons engaged in the interest and advancement of the country.
- To fully develop the spirit of national integration by eradicating caste, provincial or religious differences.



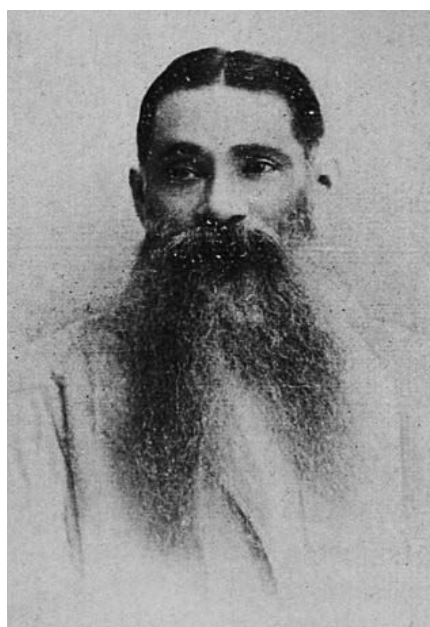
**NOTES**

- To express the views of the educated classes on political and social questions.
- To Chalk out the future political programmes.
- There was no criticism or opposition to government policies during the meeting.
- A.O. Hume ended the meeting by warmly praising Queen Victoria.
- According to Coopland, the Congress was created not as an enemy but as a friend of British rule in India.
- Olcott claimed that the Theosophical Society started the Indian National Congress, but that's not true.
- The Congress was actually founded by Mr. Hume with the help of progressive Indians and supportive British people.



***Fig. 7.1 Allan Octavian Hume***

***Source:*** <https://en.wikipedia.org>



***Fig. 7.2 Wyomesh Chandra Banerjee***

***Source:*** <https://en.wikipedia.org>



**NOTES**

## **7.6 REASONS FOR THE FORMATION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

In the 1870s and early 1880s, the political awakening that began in the 1860s and 1870s continued to mature. During this time, politically conscious people rose above regional and narrow interests and presented themselves as advocates of national interest. As a result, an all-India nationalist organisation emerged, which became the platform, organisation, headquarters and symbol of new national sentiments and politics.

The reactionary policies of Lord Lytton (Vernacular Press Act of 1878, Arms Act) and the arrogance of the British led the Indians to struggle against the Ilbert Bill. The direct result of this was the establishment of the Indian National Congress. However, it should also be remembered that the liberal policy of Lord Ripon also helped in shaping the Congress. The rise of the national awakening was the active participation of the young educated class, who started taking interest in provincial and national issues through various organisations like the Indian Association, the Bombay Association, the Poona Public Assembly. It was the Indian Association that organised the All India National Conference in December 1883.

Efforts were on since 1875 to establish a national organisation, in which Allan Octavian Hume (a retired British officer) played an important role. Hume tried to form a national organisation with the help of moderate Indian leaders. Between 1884-1885, Hume met nationalist leaders active in Bombay, Pune, Calcutta, and other parts of the country. He felt that a representative organisation was needed to stop the growing unrest and improve the conditions of the people. It was for this purpose that he wrote an open letter to the graduates of the country in 1883 calling upon them to come forward to form an all-India organisation. In this sequence, the foundation of the “Indian National Association” was laid.

The main objectives of the Indian National Union were:

1. Merging all the different elements of India’s population into one national unit,



## NOTES

2. Gradual revival of developments in spiritual, moral, social, and political Dimensions
3. To strengthen the Judiciary Between England and India association by ensuring modification of its conditions which may be unjust or harmful.

The main objective of the Indian National Union was defined in these terms to oppose by all constitutional means, high or low, all officials here or in England, whose actions are contrary to the principles laid down by the British Parliament and the Government of India supported by the British Sovereign. In the advent of the first Indian National Congress, the Indian National Union played an important role.

## 7.7 POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS BEFORE 1885

- **Landholders' Society Zamindar Sabha** – This institution was established in 1837 AD in Calcutta. This institution belonged to the zamindars of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. Though it was primarily built to protect the interests of the landlords, its objective was “to safeguard the collective interests of the zamindars without any discrimination on the basis of colour, caste, place of birth or religion and to establish friendly relations among all classes connected with the land”. Its prominent leaders were Prasanna Kumar Thakur, Raja Radha Kant Dev, and Dwarkanath Thakur. It also included the British landlords. The assembly made several demands to the Company government, including stopping the acquisition of free land, using the Bengali language in the courts, reducing court costs, and banning the transportation of Indian workers to Mauritius. This organisation did not confine its activities to India but also appointed its representative, John Crawford, in London. It attempted to gain support for its proposals in the British Parliament in collaboration with the British India Society.

Reviewing the work of this institution, renowned scholar Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra said, “I consider the Landholders’ Society as the harbinger of freedom in this country. It taught the first lesson to the people to fight legitimately for their rights and to voice their claims with determination and courage and express their



## NOTES

views. However, in 1843 AD after the division of this institution in 1947, this institution began to weaken.

- **Bengal British India Society**-The second important institution established in Bengal was the Bengal British India Society, which was founded in 1843 AD. In this institution, along with Indians, non-government Britishers were also included. Its president was an Englishman, George Thompson. This institution mainly belonged to the upper middle-class people. Its object was “to obtain and disseminate information about the actual condition of the people of India under the British rule, as well as to use peaceful and legal means which may advance the people, expand their just rights, and promote the interests of all classes.”

Some members of this organisation were critical of the zamindari system and talked about the rights of farmers. Dissatisfied with this, many big landlords separated from this institution. As a result, this institution began to weaken and after 1846 AD its importance ceased.

- **British Indian Society**- In 1851, the Landholders’ Society and the Bengal British India Society merged to form a new body, the British Indian Association or Society. Members and leaders of the earlier two institutions joined this new institution. However, this gathering was mainly under the influence of the landlords, but it also took some moderate steps.

At the time of the renewal of the Charter of 1853, it produced a newspaper demanding democratisation of Indian administration and representation of Indians in it. In 1856, they again raised the demand for representation of Indians in the central and provincial administration. Though its activities slowed down during the Revolt of 1857-59, it continued its work thereafter. It became the most prominent political institution of Bengal, and its branches were established outside Bengal as well. However, its influence began to decline after 1870, and by 1880 the institution remained merely a family organisation of some of the affluent landlords of Bengal.

- **Madras Native Association** —Like Bengal, many political organisations were formed in Madras, the most prominent of which was the Madras Native Association. It was founded in 1852 AD and was inspired by the political organisations of Bengal. This institution submitted a memorandum during the



## NOTES

renewal of the charter of 1853 AD. However, it did not receive public support due to its condemnation of the Revolt of 1857 and it soon lost to oblivion.

- **Bombay Association** - The Bombay Association was established in 1852 AD. It was attended by wealthy businessmen and middle-class people of different castes and religions of Bombay. Initially, this institution also condemned the revolt of 1857 and supported the British. But after 1857 it started opposing the British because of the additional taxes imposed on the merchants and the middle class.

This organisation presented its suggestions to the government regarding issues related to Indians such as conducting the Civil Services Examination in India, the appointment of Indians to government posts, and government economic policies. It contributed to raising Indian issues by contacting the East India Association of London and other organisations in India. This institution became defunct around 1878 AD.

- **The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha** - The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was established in 1870 AD. Its purpose was to act as a bridge between the government and the people. This organisation wanted to make the public aware of their rights and the policies of the government. Its membership rules were quite stringent. Initially it focused on local problems, but later also raised political issues. It voiced issues such as the relationship between the Indian princes and the British government, the rights of Indian and European soldiers in the army, and the representation of Indians in the British Parliament. This institution played an important role in spreading political awareness in the Bombay Presidency.
- **Indian National Conference** - A political organisation for the whole of India along with active institutions at the regional level, was felt for a long time. However, there were some efforts in this direction like the Landholders' Society and the British Indian Association, but these institutions remained confined to territorial boundaries and could not take an all-India character. In 1883, aggrieved by the opposition to the Ilbert Bill and the events that followed, Ananda Mohan Basu, secretary of the Indian Association, convened a meeting of representatives of all political organisations in Calcutta on 29<sup>th</sup>–30<sup>th</sup> December. Demands such as reform of the rules of the Civil Services Examination, abolition of the Arms Act,



## NOTES

and establishment of representative assemblies in India were raised in this conference. It was for the first time that there was an attempt to bring various political organisations on one platform and organise them. This effort later became the basis for the establishment of the Indian National Congress.

### Other Political Organisations

In addition to the above-mentioned organisations, a number of other regional political organisations were also established in the 19th century. Some institutions were also created abroad. Prominent among them were **the Society for Acquisition of General Knowledge** (Calcutta), **the Students Literary and Scientific Society** (Bombay), **the Patriotic Association** (Calcutta), **the Deshwhiteshini Sabha** (Calcutta), **the Rent-Payers Association** (Bombay), **the Reform Party** (Bombay), **the British Indian Association** (Awadh), **the Poona Association** (Poona), **the London India Committee**, **London India Society**, **East India Association** (London), **Indian Association**, **Indian League** (Calcutta), **Calcutta Students Association**, **Madras Mahajan Sabha** **Bombay Presidency Association** etc.

These organisations played an important role in awakening national consciousness among Indians and fighting for the protection of their rights. These organisations were formed to accomplish definite objectives in their respective fields and were successful to some extent in their efforts. However, there was no central institution for safeguarding the interests of all classes at the national level. The Indian National Conference inspired these organisations to work together and united, but there was still a lack of a national central organisation which could strive to advance the larger objectives and common interests. Ultimately, these efforts resulted in the formation of the Indian National Congress.

---

## 7.8 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

---

In fact, all these activities of educated Indians were not in vain. The government took serious note of the growing political discontent and quickly turned violent, as reflected in the policies of Lord Lytton who came to India in 1876.



### **7.8.1 Lytton**

Lytton began to adopt reactionary and anti-Indian policies. This was a golden opportunity for the Indian Association and it inspired many political struggles across the country. Lytton launched a costly campaign on Indian revenue in Afghanistan. He imported cotton cloth from the British textile industry, which hurt the nascent Indian textile (cotton) industry. Politically awakened Indians expressed their dissatisfaction with these moves. The major organs of the British rule, the royal princes and the zamindars got protection under the internal policies of the Viceroy. They hated the aspirations of educated Indians. At that time, the age limit for appearing in the Indian Civil Service Examination was reduced from 21 years to 19 years. Indians found it difficult to appear in this examination as it took place in London. A planned measure to not allow Indians to appear in this examination was to lower the age limit. The Indian Association picked it up and launched demonstrations across the country. In 1877–78, Surendranath himself toured the country and became popular all over India. The Association sent a well-known Bengali barrister, Lal Mohan Ghosh, to England to submit a memorandum. Public meetings were held against the implementation of the Vernacular Press Act and the Arms Act. Newspapers and magazines published in Indian languages were banned as before. Indian society was angered by this. By that time, Bengali-speaking *Amrita Bazar Patrika* was being published in English overnight to avoid the ban of the Act. The Arms Act exempted European citizens from possessing arms, but Indians had to pay a licence fee. The landlords got special concessions. At various places, large public meetings were held in the cities of the district on these issues during the agitation, in which ten to twenty thousand people participated.

### **7.8.2 Ripon**

In 1880, Lord Lytton stepped down. Ripon's policy was entirely different. He felt that educated Indians should respect the oaths of the British Parliament and their teachings. He argued that Lytton's rule, rightly or wrongly, had created a feeling among the Indians that all their interests would be lost in the interest of England. He wanted to use the knowledge of the educated people to strengthen the British rule. He ended the Afghan war, abolished the Vernacular Press Act, promoted local self-governing institutions





## NOTES

and education. The British rule had imposed many restrictions in India, so their policies could not grow much.

The Anglo-Indians (Britishers living in India) launched a strong movement on the issue of the Ilbert Bill against themselves and their pro-Indian policies. The Criminal Law Amendment Bill (also known as the Ilbert Bill), named after a law member of the Viceroy's Council, made the rights of Indian judges in all the cases of the Bengal Presidency equal to those of European judges. Its purpose was to investigate crimes committed by European citizens in eligible Indian mofussil tehsils. The bill was brought in as the number of people in the judicial service in India was increasing. This increased the possibility of Indian judges hearing all European criminal cases without a jury. European citizens were given the right to appeal to the High Court in the event of dissatisfaction. The Anglo-Indians were furious at this. Ripon found that civil service employees were also sympathetic to opponents. Indian character and culture received much criticism in newspapers and public meetings. Ultimately, the government had to bow down to the vote of protest and the amendment of the bill was done in such a way that its main purpose was defeated. The whole controversy takes place at a time when an organisation was developing on an all-India basis. It is often said that the Indians learnt the first lesson of political agitation from the Anglo-Indians on this occasion. That is not true. Indians had already realized the importance of this method and had also organised an all-India agitation on the question of Civil Services Examination. In fact, he knew from experience that the Anglo-Indians could never support his demands for rights and better facilities. The reaction of Indians to the anti-bill movement was the same all over the country. The Indian press made it clear that the educated Indian public respected the basic tenets of the Bill and would vehemently oppose its abandonment. When the basic tenets of the Bill were abandoned, the Indian press started discussing the urgent need for national unity, self-reliance, and a strong organisation. In the early 1880s, the Indian press felt the need for a national organisation. The Ilbert Bill controversy made this even more urgent. About 10,000 people attended a meeting of the Indian Association in July 1883. The meeting decided that a national fund would be created for the political development of the country by agitating in India and England. The proposal was welcomed everywhere. The Indian Association failed to get support from other political institutions in the country, in some places it was condemned. Only Rs 20,000 could be deposited in the national treasury. But there



was a lot of discussion about it in the press. During the discussions, the need for a joint political initiative was repeatedly emphasised and it was pointed out that representatives of various political organisations should meet once a year in the big cities of the country. The International Exhibition was scheduled to take place in Calcutta in December 1883. The India Association decided to take advantage of this opportunity and extended an invitation to prominent individuals and entities from across the country to meet to discuss issues of public interest. The national conference ran from 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December. The conference was not so impressive as no distinguished delegates attended it. But it is important to note that the programmes laid down in it were similar to those set by the Indian National Congress. Educated Indians from 45 different regions got a golden opportunity to come together and discuss. It has been clearly stated that it was the predecessor institution of the Indian National Congress.

---

## **7.9 FIRST SESSION OF CONGRESS**

---

Preparations for the First Congress began in 1885. The invitation letter was issued in March 1885. It was decided that a conference would be held in Poona from 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December. It is interesting to note that the name Congress was suggested only a few days before the meeting took place. The circular stated that the conference should include representatives of prominent politicians from Bengal, Madras and Bombay Presidencies well versed with the English language. However, fate deprived Poona of the honour of hosting the first session of the Indian National Congress as the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha had completed all arrangements for the intended conference. But unfortunately, just a few days before the conference, several cases of cholera were reported in Poona. On the eve of the conference, due to the outbreak of cholera epidemic, its first session was shifted from Poona to Bombay. According to official reports, it was decided to hold the Congress in Bombay. The office bearers of the Bombay Presidency Association accepted the responsibility of the first session of the Congress. Due to the efforts of the Bombay Presidency Association and the generosity of the managers of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College and the Boarding Trust, everything was ready by the morning of 27<sup>th</sup> December 1885. The first session of the



## NOTES

Indian National Congress was held from 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> December 1885 at Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College, Gwalia Tank, Bombay. Initially, it was named 'Indian National Union', but later on the suggestion of Dadabhai Naoroji, it was renamed as 'Indian National Congress'. The Viceroy of India at the time of the founding of the Indian National Congress was Lord Dufferin.



**Fig. 7.3** First Session of Indian National Congress (INC), 1885

**Source:** <https://inc.in/brief-history-of-congress>

Most of the leaders who attended the first convention in Bombay were lawyers and journalists. The number of members who participated in this conference was 72, representing most of the classes. The highest number of members were from Bombay province (38 members). The first president of this convention was Wyomesh Chandra Banerjee and the secretary was A.O. Hume. It is noteworthy that people from different corners of the country came to the foundation session of the Indian National Congress. Its prominent members included Ferozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, W.C. Banerjee, Ananda Mohan Bose, Romesh Chandra Dutt, Dadabhai Naoroji, M.G. Ranade, Ananda Mohan Bose, Narasimha Raoji, Swami Vivekananda, M.G. Ranade, G.G. Agarkar, K. T. Telang, Dinsa Vacha, B.M. Malabari, N.C. Chandavarkar, Manmohan Ghosh, Jal Mohan Ghosh, Veer Raghupani Subramaniam Aggar, P. Ananda Sanu, P. Ruyiya

Self-Instructional

256 Material



## **NOTES**

Naidu, Era, Subramaniam Agar, Prasanpegi Banerjee, Lala Baijnath, Narendra Nath Sen, Dewan Raghunath Rai and Allan Octavian Hume were some of the prominent members of the first convention.. Vyomesh Chandra Banerjee was elected as the president of the convention. He expressed his loyalty to the British rule. He praised England for the gift of modern education and expected the government to expand its scope for the people. Dadabhai Naoroji said that England is the father of seven democratic governments. Therefore, the leaders of the first batch of the Congress had a firm belief in the British rule.

---

### **7.10 RESOLUTION PASSED IN THE FIRST SESSION**

---

The nature of resolutions passed in the first session of the Congress shows the mentality of the people gathered on this occasion. In the first session, resolutions were passed according to the aims and goals of the Congress. In the first session of the Congress, nine resolutions were discussed and passed.

- (1) Appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the functioning of Indian administration
- (2) Abolishing the Indian Council of the Secretary of State for India.
- (3) Expansion and reform of the royal and local legislative councils established under the Indian Councils Act, 1861.
- (4) Formation of Legislative Councils for the North-West Provinces, Assam and Punjab, and constitution of a Standing Committee in the House of Commons to consider formal adversaries of councils.
- (5) Introduction of simultaneous civil service examinations in England and India and increasing the age of candidates.
- (6) Reduction in military expenditure.
- (7) Protests Upper Burma's Gilay and its proposed merger with India.
- (8) All the proposals being sent to political associations led to discussion of ideas across the country.



## NOTES

- (9) The next session of the Congress was to be held in Calcutta on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1886.

Though Indian leaders met for the first time on a political platform, their knowledge of the common problems of the time was vastly expanded in many dimensions. He displayed remarkable knowledge about administration in his speeches. The Indian National Congress had unwavering faith in the spirit of British justice and demanded political reforms in its first session in 1885.

---

### 7.11 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CONGRESS

---

Its aims and objectives were made clear by the speeches made at the first session of the Congress. In his opening remarks at the Presidential address, W.C. Banerjee outlined the objectives of the Congress:

- (1) To promote personal intimacy and friendship among all the most honest workers working for our country in different parts of the Empire.
- (2) The elimination by direct, friendly, personal contact of all possible caste, creed or provincial prejudices among all lovers of our country and the full development and strengthening of those agreements of national unity, which originated in the ever-memorable reign of our beloved Lord Ripon.
- (3) This authentic record, after a thorough discussion, eloquently exposes the mature views of the educated class of India on some of the more pressing social questions of that time.
- (4) During the next twelve months it is desirable for native politicians to determine various methods and policies to work in the public interests. The early leaders of the Congress were liberals. He had faith in British justice and administration.
- (5) To promote nationalism among the people to transform the country into a nation. In the twentieth century, India was colonised due to lack of cohesion among people. The country was described as a geographical expression rather than a nation.



## **NOTES**

- (6) One of the main objectives of the Congress was to create a national political platform for the masses. People had grievances with some aspects of British rule. The Congress wanted to provide a forum for such grievances so that they could be conveyed to the British Parliament by way of petitions.
- (7) Political education of the people was the principal objective. People should be trained in the art of democracy. Its objective was to organise political workers in various parts of the country so that they could run political activities by educating the people.
- (8) The aim of the Congress was to eradicate caste, religious and other prejudices. The programme of a secular and democratic nation was his main agenda. The Congress followed secular politics in its early stages.

---

## **7.12 CONTROVERSIES RELATED TO CONGRESS ORIGINS**

---

The Indian National Congress has made a significant contribution to the history of India, so it was only natural that historians express their views on the reason behind its establishment. In fact, this question has been considered since the inception of the Congress. Many historians have tried to theorise that it was the result of one person, many people, or some specific circumstances. But all the evidence obtained contradicts each other. We shall explain the establishment of the Indian National Congress through the following alternative principles.

It would have been natural and logical if the Indian National Congress had been founded by an Indian. But in fact, an Englishman, A. O. Hume, gave shape to the plan of an all-India political organisation, which has become the subject of many debates. Why did it happen that an Englishman started the Congress? Also, Hume was an Englishman and an administrative officer in the Indian Civil Service. In the course of his employment, he came to know of many important facts which showed that the alienation of the sufferings of the public from the intelligentsia had created a great deal of resentment which could threaten the British rule. Memories of the Great Revolt of 1857 are still



## NOTES

vivid today. Besides, Hume himself had said that his aim was to create a safety valve to prevent any major revolt against the British. The fact that they were acting with the direct advice of Hume Dufferin was further confirmed by Banerjee's speech. A study of these two facts revealed that the British Government created the Indian National Congress to remove the discontent among educated Indians in a peaceful and constitutional manner and to remove the danger of British Raj. But today historians have refused to accept this idea, and many reasons have been given for it. Hume's influence on government decisions has increased greatly. From the secret documents now available, written by the Governor General Lord Dufferin, it is clear that the British authorities did not take Hume's views very seriously. At the same time, Hume's aim was more genuine and innocuous than just building a "safety valve" to dispel the discontent of educated Indians. He too had humane sympathy for Indians, and he was engaged in making the Congress a strong and active institution for many years. He was the General Secretary of the Congress from 1885 to 1906 and contributed to the recording, definite shape, cooperation, and direction of its activities. Hume agreed in his work for the Renaissance of the Indian masses and in enlightened imperialist ideas, but he believed that enlightened remote imperialism could bring about a social and cultural renaissance of the Indian masses. Finally, in the other incidents that have been mentioned, the need for the establishment of a national organisation was felt and some efforts were also made in this direction. We could not, in any way, be held responsible for the change in the social and political environment that made the establishment and sustenance of the national organisation a reality. There were many different reasons behind the establishment of the Congress, which have been discussed first. Hume was just the medium of fulfillment of the aspirations of the middle class, which was eager to participate in the rule of the British government.

In this context, the question of accepting Hume's leadership arises. This question becomes even more important when we see that some of them have been quite active in their field for nearly a decade now. This may also be one of the reasons why these were British, so they were free from regional discrimination. But the Indian leaders wanted to proceed cautiously so as not to disturb the authorities, which seemed to have a more important reason than that. Being a former British civil servant, such an attempt was less likely to cause anger in the official circles. Under the then circumstances, the Indian leaders knew very well what could have happened. In such a situation, they



did not want to suspect the rulers. The Speaker clearly mentioned these issues in his speech. He said that “the statements made by many gentlemen on many occasions should have deliberately condemned the Congress and not just assumed that it is a nest of conspirators and traitors. If its founder was an Englishman, malice was less likely. It is in this context that the statement of the great leader G.K. Gokhale is often quoted. “No Indian could have started the Indian National Congress... Had it not been for the founder of the Congress, a great Englishman and a distinguished former officer, the way political movements were viewed in those days, the authorities would have suppressed the movement on one basis or the other. “

### **7.12.1 Memorable Facts Related to Congress**

- The term congress (group of people) has its origin in the history of North America.
- The idea of establishing the Indian National Association (the predecessor body of the Congress) first came to Dufferin’s mind.
- The ‘Indian National Association’ was given the form of an organisation by Allan Octavian Hume.
- The Indian National Union was named ‘Indian National Congress on the suggestion of Dadabhai Naoroji.
- The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Gokul Das Telpal Sanskrit School in Bombay.
- The first president of the Congress was Wyomesh Chandra Banerjee. Surendra Nath Banerjee did not attend the first session of the Congress.
- The father of the Congress is considered to be Allan Octavian Hume, who was the first secretary of the Congress.

### **7.12.2 Special Remarks about Congress**

- “It represents a minority of the people who are subtle in number,” Dufferin said.
- Viceroy Curzon said about the Congress that “the Congress is counting its death, one of my greatest wishes in India is that I can help it die peacefully.” Curzon called the Congress a “dirty thing” and a “seditious organisation”.





## NOTES

- Bankim Chandra Chatterjee said, “Congress people are hungry for posts.”
- Tilak said about the Congress that “if we flutter like frogs once a year, we will get nothing.”
- Lala Lajpat Rai termed the Congress conferences as “the annual national fair of educated Indians”.
- Ashwini Kumar Dutt called the Congress conventions a “three-day farce”.
- Bipin Chandra Pal called it a “petitioning institution”.
- Tilak described the Congress as a “conference of sycophants” and its session as a “holiday entertainment”.

## Congress Session

Fig. 7.1 Congress Sessions

Sl. No.	Year	Place of origin	Head	Highlights of some important conventions
First	1885	Bombay	Vyomesh Chandra Banerjee	The first president, only 72 delegates, participated.
Second	1886	Calcutta	Dadabhai Naoroji	436 representative
Third	1887	Madras	Syed Badruddin Tayabji	First Muslim President
Fourth	1888	Allahabad	George Yule	The first British president
Fifth	1889	Bombay	Sir William Wedderburn	Franchise age 21 years
Sixth	1890	Calcutta	Ferozeshah Mehta	The word 'National' was added to the name of the Congress
Seventh	1891	Nagpur	P. Anand Charlu	
Eighth	1892	Allahabad	Vyomesh Chandra Banerjee	
Ninth	1893	Lahore	Dadabhai Naoroji	
Tenth	1894	Madras	Alfred Webb	
Eleventh	1895	Poona	Surendranath Banerjee	
Twelfth	1896	Calcutta	Mohammad Rahimatullah Sayani	The song Vande Mataram, composed by Bankim Chandra, was sung by him himself
Thirteenth	1897	Amravati	Sankaran Nair	
Fourteenth	1898	Madras	Anandmohan Bose	
Fifteenth	1899	Lucknow	Ramesh Chandra Dutt	
Sixteenth	1900	Lahore	Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar	
Seventeenth	1901	Calcutta	Read Dinsha Idalji	
Eighteenth	1902	Ahmedabad	Surendranath Banerjee	
Nineteenth	1903	Madras	Lalmohan Ghosh	
Twentieth	1904	Bombay	Sir Henry Cotton	
Twenty-first	1905	Banaras	Gopalkrishna Gokhale	

## Nationalist Politics: Foundation of Indian National Congress



### NOTES

Twenty-second	1906	Calcutta	Dadabhai Naoroji	Use of the word Swaraj for the first time
Twenty-third	1907	countenance	Rash Behari Bose	Congress split into soft and hot party
Twenty-fourth	1908	Madras	Rash Behari Bose	Framing of the Constitution in Congress
Twenty-fifth	1909	Lahore	Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya	
Twenty-sixth	1910	Allahabad	Sir William Wedderburn	
Twenty-seventh	1911	Calcutta	Pt. Vishan Narayan Rate	The national anthem 'Jana Gana Mana' composed by Rabindranath Tagore was sung
Twenty-eighth	1912	to be filled	R. S. Madhulkar	
Twenty-ninth	1913	Karachi	Syed Muhammad Bahadur	
Thirtieth	1914	Madras	Bhupendra Nath Bose	
Thirty-first	1915	Bombay	Satyendra Prasanna Singh	
Thirty-second	1916	Lucknow	Ambika Charan Majumdar	Compromise between Congress and Muslim League, soft and hot parties reunite (Lucknow Accord)
Thirty-third	1917	Calcutta	Annie Besant	First Female President
Thirty-fourth	1918	Bombay Delhi	Syed Hasan Imam Madan Mohan Malaviya	Special Session Regular Session, S.N. Banerjee and several moderates resign
Thirty-fifth	1919	Amritsar	Motilal Nehru	
Thirty-sixth	1920	Calcutta Nagpur	Lala Lajpat Rai C. Vijayaraghavachari	Special Session, Non-Cooperation Resolution was moved by Gandhiji Changes in the constitution of the Congress, formation of a 15-member executive committee, announcement of the establishment of Tilak Swaraj Fund
Thirty-seventh	1921	Ahmedabad	Hakim Ajmal Khan (Executive)	C.R. Das elected as Speaker
Thirty-eighth	1922	went	C. R. Das	Establishment of Swaraj Party
Thirty-ninth 39th	1923	Delhi Kakinada	Abul Kalam Azad Maulana Mohammad Ali	Special Session, Youngest President Swaraj Party allowed to participate in council snatches, decision to set up All India Khadi Board, regular sessions
Fortieth	1924	Belgaum	Mahatma Gandhi	First- and last-time president
Forty-first	1925	Kanpur	Sarojini Naidu	First Indian Mahila Congress President
Forty-second	1926	Guwahati	Srinivasa Iyer	Mandatory for Congress workers to wear khaddar
Forty-third	1927	Madras	M. A. Ansari	Gandhi abstains from opposing Simon Commission, passes independence resolution for first time

Self-Instructional  
Material

263



## NOTES

Forty-fourth	1928	Calcutta	Motilal Nehru	First All India Youth Congress, Nehru Report Presented
Forty-fifth	1929	Lahore	Jawaharlal Nehru	Resolution of Purna Swaraj passed
Forty-sixth	1931	Karachi	Vallabhbhai Patel	Resolution passed on Fundamental Rights and National Economic Programme
Forty-seventh	1932	Delhi	R. D. Amritlal	
Forty-eighth	1933	Calcutta	Smt. Nalini Sen Gupta	
Forty-ninth	1934	Bombay	Dr. Rajendra Prasad MD	Establishment of Congress Socialist Party
Fiftieth	1936	Lucknow	Jawaharlal Nehru	
Fifty-first	1937	Faizpur	Jawaharlal Nehru	At the first convention which was held in the village, the Congress decided to take part in the next election
Fifty-second	1938	Haripura	Subhash Chandra Bose	
Fifty-third	1939	Tripuri	Subhash Chandra Bose	Subhash Chandra Bose's resignation due to Gandhiji's continued opposition, Rajendra Prasad President for the remaining period, establishment of Forward Bloc by Bose
Fifty-fourth	1940	Ramgarh	Abul Kalam Azad	
Fifty-fifth	1946	Meerut	J. B. Kripalani	President at the time of independence
Fifty-sixth	1948	Jaipur	Pattabhi Sita Ramaiah	

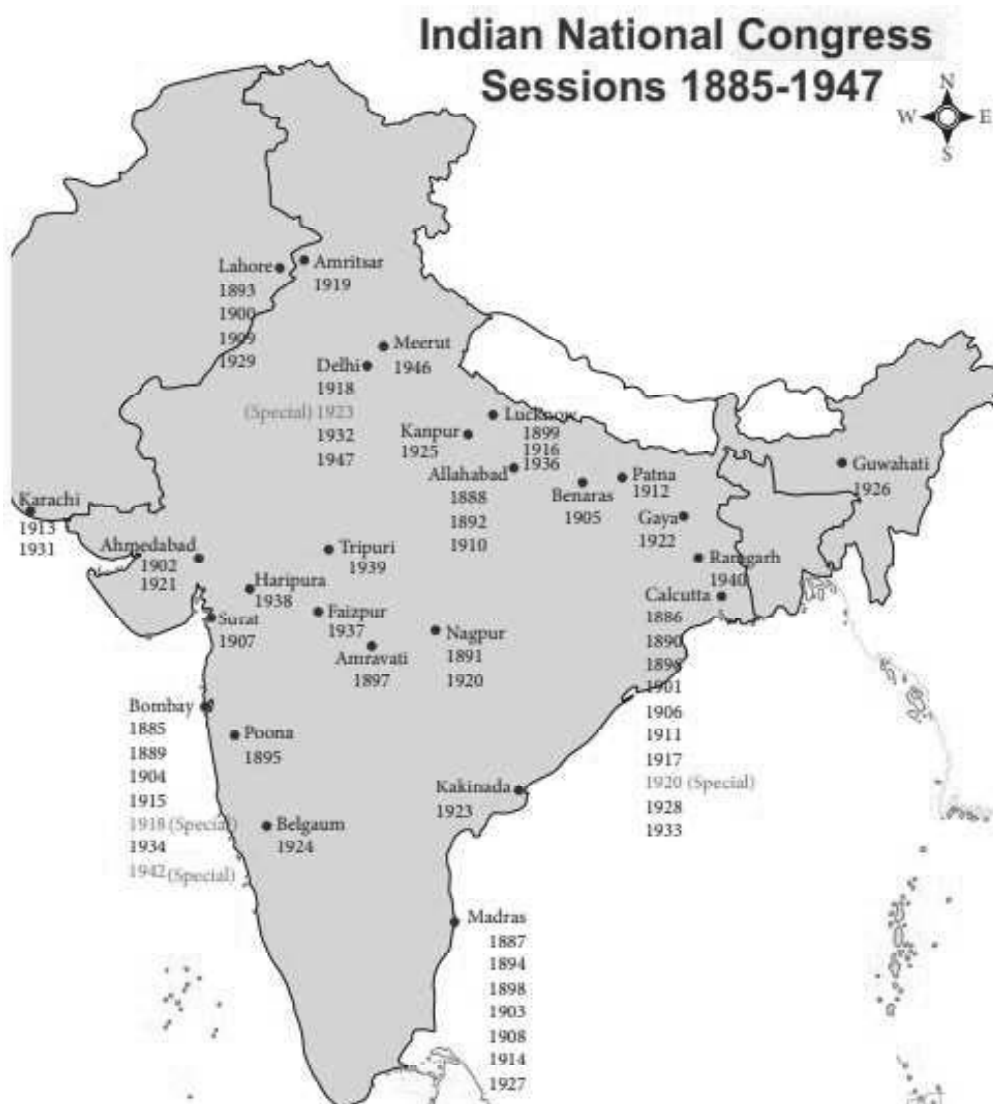


Fig. 7.4 Indian National Congress Sessions from 1885 to 1947

Source: <https://www.andedge.com>



**NOTES**

---

### **7.13 RIVALRIES AND AMBITIONS OF THE INDIAN ELITE**

---

In the last two decades, many historians, especially Cambridge scholars, have argued that the Indian National Congress was in some ways not a national but a movement run by selfish individuals and served as an instrument for their economic interests and the fulfilment of narrow disputes (the most influential historian who expressed these views is Anil Seal). But this idea has been challenged in India. It is true that everyone wants to get power to fulfill their own interests. But several other broader reasons cannot be ruled out. Such discourse ignores the hurt feelings of apartheid, a sense of pride in the achievements of the countrymen and the realisation that the interests of their countrymen will be served by the restructuring of relations between India and Britain.

The nationalist ideology gave rise to many other institutions including the Indian National Congress which put the interests of oneself, family, caste, and community before the interests of the Indian nation. They engaged in the search for new ways to turn the vision of the country into reality. The first generation of Congress leaders always knew that they were controlled by the British government, which had brought many liberal values to India and it could not be in the interest of the countrymen to be completely separated from them. On the other hand, they were trying to create a system that could meet the needs of their countrymen.

---

### **7.14 NEED FOR AN ALL INDIA INSTITUTION**

---

Overall, it appears that the establishment of the Indian National Congress was a reaction to the current political and socio-economic situation. As we have seen, the idea of creating a national organisation was greatly changed in the 1880s. In the last ten days of 1885 about five conferences were held all over the country. From 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> December, the Madras Mahajana Sabha held its second annual conference. This was



done at this time so that the members of the committee could attend the Congress meeting to be held in Poona. The Second Indian National Conference of the Indian Association was held in Calcutta.

In early December of 1885, Surendranath Banerjee was advised to postpone the conference. But he expressed his inability to do so. In 1886 it joined the Indian National Congress. At that time, the Eurasian people in Jabalpur and the Prayag Central Hindu Samaj held two separate conferences in Allahabad. The formation of the national number was almost certain by the educated class, their ideas and organisational changes. The Indian National Congress represented the awareness of the need for the educated class to work together for political goals and it is a symbol of political ideas. It is interesting that the then participants and observers knew two things. One thing is that they were making history, and the other thing is that the Congress developed the spirit of nationalism. History has confirmed his views.

---

## 7.15 SUMMARY

---

The Indian National Congress, founded in 1885, ushered in a new era which fulfilled the country's dreams of independence, sovereignty and self-determination in 60 years. It was a clear indication of the spirit of unity in India. The Congress was not a systematic political party initially. It had no central office and no regular membership. Its thoughts were also very soft and steady. But one man rightly said that great institutions always have small beginnings.

---

## 7.16 GLOSSARY

---

- **Indian National Congress:** The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885 by A. O. Hume. It was the first political party in India that became the voice of the Indian masses against the British rule and led the freedom struggle.



## NOTES

- **A.O. Hume:** A. O. Hume was a British officer who played a major role in the establishment of the Indian National Congress. He laid the foundation of the Congress so that the discontent of the Indians could be conveyed to the British Government.
- **Dadabhai Naoroji:** Dadabhai Naoroji is considered to be one of the founding leaders of the Indian National Congress. He presented the “Drain of Wealth Theory”, which shows the economic plight of India under British rule.
- **Wyomesh Chandra Banerjee:** The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay (now Mumbai) in 1885, in which 72 delegates participated. The convention was presided over by Wyomesh Chandra Banerjee.
- **Liberals:** In the early stages of the Congress, liberals were leaders who demanded gradual and constitutional reforms from the British government. Prominent among their leaders were Dadabhai Naoroji, Ferozeshah Mehta, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale.
- **Garam Dal:** The Garam Dal was a faction of the Congress which favoured a more radical and direct struggle. Its leaders were Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai, who were immediate opponents of British rule and demanded Swaraj.
- **Practical Politics:** After the formation of the Congress, the objective of practical politics was to present the problems and needs of Indians to the British government. Under this, an attempt was made to convey the voice of the people to the government through peaceful means.
- **Division of Moderates and Extremist:** In 1907, there was a split between moderate and extremist parties in the Congress. Liberals were in favour of constitutional reforms, while conservative parties supported militant and outright opposition.
- **Goal of Swaraj:** In the beginning of the Congress, the objective of Swaraj (self-rule) was not there, but under the influence of leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, this idea emerged prominently. Tilak’s famous slogan was, “Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it.”



---

## **7.17 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

---

### **7.17.1 In-Text Questions**

1. Who was the founder of Indian National Congress (INC)?
  - A) Mahatama Gandhi
  - B) A.O. Hume
  - C) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - D) Subhash Chandra Bose
2. In which year was the Indian National Congress (INC) founded?
  - A) 1875
  - B) 1885
  - C) 1905
  - D) 1915
3. In which city was the first session of the Indian National Congress held?
  - A) Bombay
  - B) Calcutta
  - C) Madras
  - D) Delhi
4. Who presided over the first session of the Indian National Congress in 1885?
  - A) Dadabhai Naoroji
  - B) W.C. Banerjee
  - C) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
  - D) Surendranath Banerjee





**NOTES**

5. How many delegates attended the first session of the Indian National Congress?
  - A) 72
  - B) 100
  - C) 50
  - D) 150
6. What was the initial purpose of forming the Indian National Congress?
  - A) Demand for complete independence
  - B) Providing a platform for civil services
  - C) Creating a platform for dialogue with the British rulers
  - D) Promoting industrialization
7. Who among the following was not associated with the founding of Indian National Congress?
  - A) A.O. Hume
  - B) W.C. Banerjee
  - C) Dadabhai Naoroji
  - D) Bhagat Singh
8. Who among the following is known as the 'Old Man of India'?
  - A) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
  - B) Lala Lajpat Rai
  - C) Dadabhai Naoroji
  - D) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
9. In which session of the Congress was the demand for Swaraj (self-rule) raised for the first time?
  - A) 1906
  - B) 1916
  - C) 1920
  - D) 1929



**NOTES**

10. What was its main objective in the early years of the Congress?
  - A) Achieving Instantaneous Independence
  - B) Educating the public
  - C) Promotion of Indian Textiles
  - D) Demanding reforms in the British administration
11. Which group dominated the Indian National Congress in the early years?
  - A) Extremist
  - B) Moderates
  - C) Revolutionary
  - D) Socialist
12. A holy or pious man Name of a Gujarati trading community Who is known as the political guru of the BJP?
  - A) Jawaharlal Nehru
  - B) Dadabhai Naoroji
  - C) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - D) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
13. Under which act was the Congress's demand for separate electorates for Muslims accepted for the first time?
  - A) Indian Councils Act, 1909
  - B) Government of India Act, 1919
  - C) Government of India Act, 1935
  - D) Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, 1919
14. Which British Viceroy played an important role in encouraging the formation of the Indian National Congress?
  - A) Lord Curzon
  - B) Lord Ripon
  - C) Lord Dalhousie
  - D) Lord Mountbatten



**NOTES**

15. In which year did the Indian National Congress adopt the resolution of 'Purna Swaraj' (complete independence)?

- A) 1929
- B) 1935
- C) 1919
- D) 1942

**7.17.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. Under what historical background and circumstances was the Indian National Congress founded in 1885? Discuss this.
2. Analyse the role of A.O. Hume in the establishment of the Indian National Congress. Why did a British civil servant take the initiative to form this organisation?
3. What were the aims and objectives of the Indian National Congress at the time of its formation? What kind of development did these objectives take place over time?
4. Evaluate the contribution of leaders of the Indian National Congress such as Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjee, and Ferozeshah Mehta in the initial phase.
5. What was the significance of the first session of the Indian National Congress held in Bombay in 1885? Discuss the key outcomes of this session.
6. What challenges did the Indian National Congress face in its formative years, including opposition to the British authorities and divisions within Indian society?
7. How did the establishment of the Indian National Congress in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century influence the broader Indian nationalist movement?



---

## 7.18 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

---

1. B. A.O. Hume, 2. b. 1885, 3. A. Bombay, 4. b. W.C. Banerjee, 5. C. 72, 6. c. Creating a platform for dialogue with the British rulers, 7. D. Bhagat Singh, 8. c. Dadabhai Naoroji, 9. A. 1906, 10. d. Seeking Reforms in British Administration, 11. B. Moderates, 12. d. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, 13. a. Indian Councils Act, 1909, 14. b. Lord Ripon, 15. c. 1929

---

## 7.19 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

---

- Sarkar, Sumit. (1983). *Modern India 1885-1947*. Delhi: Macmillan.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Chandra, Bipan. (1989). *India's Struggle for Independence*. Delhi: Penguin, (Also in Hindi)
- Pandey, Gyanendra. (2002). *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*. New Delhi: Anthem Press (Second edition).
- Bose, S and Ayesha Jalal. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee. (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Tripathi, Amlesh. *The Challenge of Extremism in Indian Politics*. New Delhi: Granth Shilpi Prakashan.
- Halidar, Mohat Kumar. *Indian Renaissance and Revivalist Consciousness*. New Delhi: Granth Shilpi Prakashan.



**NOTES**

- Singh, Hiralal. (1971). *Tableau of the Non-Cooperation Movement*. Delhi: Publications Division.
- Kisai, A. R. (2018). *The Social Background of Indian Nationalism*. New Delhi: Sethi Publications.
- Mittal, Satish Chandra. *India's Struggle for Independence (1858–1947)*. New Delhi: Graffy World.
- Pandey, Pratip Kumar. (1990). *Gandhi's Economic and Social Thought*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.
- Gopal, Ram. (1986). *The Indian War of Independence*. Lucknow: Sulabh Prakashan.



## **LESSON 8**

# **NATIONALIST POLITICS: “MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS NATIONALISTS”**

---

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### **Structure**

- 8.1 Learning Objectives
- 8.2 Introduction
- 8.3 Composition of Congress
  - 8.3.1 Middle-Class Organisations
  - 8.3.2 Methodology
- 8.4 Demands for Administrative Reforms
- 8.5 Criticism of Civil Rights Protection and Foreign Policy
- 8.6 Economic Interpretation of Imperialism
- 8.7 The Question of the Functioning of the Congress and the Support of the People
- 8.8 Discontent against the Moderates
- 8.9 Government Attitude towards Congress
- 8.10 Review of the Works of the Congress between 1885-1905
- 8.11 Liberal Parties
  - 8.11.1 Ways of Liberal Leaders Doing Political Work
  - 8.11.2 Success/Contribution of Moderates
  - 8.11.3 Demands & Programmes
  - 8.11.4 Evaluation of Work
- 8.12 Important Moderate Leaders of the Congress
- 8.13 Revolutionary Extremism 1905-1919 (Extremist Party)
- 8.14 Causes of the Growth of Extremism
  - 8.14.1 Emergence of Revolutionary Extremist Leaders
  - 8.14.2 Impact of Foreign Events
  - 8.14.3 The Growth of Extremism



## NOTES

- 8.14.4 Growth of Revolutionary Extremism within the Congress and split in the Congress
- 8.14.5 Partition of Bengal and Brewing of Public Anger
- 8.14.6 Growth of Extremism in Maharashtra and Elsewhere
- 8.15 Boycott and Swadeshi Movement
  - 8.15.1 Bengal Partition Movement and its Tendencies
  - 8.15.2 Bengal Divide and the Growth of the Swadeshi Movement
  - 8.15.3 Activities of the Movement
  - 8.15.4 Social and Religious Pressures
  - 8.15.5 Role of Congress
  - 8.15.6 Spread and Impact of Swadeshi Movement
- 8.16 Major Revolutionary Leaders (Important Extremist Leaders)
- 8.17 The Revolutionary Movement
  - 8.17.1 Emergence of the Revolutionary Movement and Evolution in India
  - 8.17.2 The Start and Spread of the Revolutionary Movement in Maharashtra
  - 8.17.3 Evolution of the Flame of the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal
  - 8.17.4 Revolutionary Activities in Punjab and Delhi
  - 8.17.5 Revolutionary Activities in Other Parts of India
  - 8.17.6 Revolutionary organisations and Revolutionary Activities Spread from India to Abroad
  - 8.17.7 Preparations for the First World War and Armed Revolt 1914-1919: Revolutionary Extremism the First Phase and the End
- 8.18 Reasons for the Failure of the Revolutionary Movement
- 8.19 Evaluation of the Revolutionary Movement
- 8.20 Moderate and Extremist: An Analysis
- 8.21 Result
- 8.22 Summary
- 8.23 Glossary
- 8.24 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 8.24.1 In-Text Questions
  - 8.24.2 Long Answer Questions
- 8.25 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 8.26 References/Suggested Readings



---

## **8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

---

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the beginning of the middle stage.
- Understand the methods and techniques of liberals.
- Understand the achievements of liberals.
- Know about the work of liberal leaders in India.
- Understand the reasons for the rise of extremism in India.
- Understand the ideology of extremism.
- Understand the contribution of Lokmanya Tilak.
- Understand the four-pronged programme of the militants.

---

## **8.2 INTRODUCTION**

---

The early years, 1885-1905, the Indian National Congress flourished. During this period, the Moderate party's leaders dominated the Congress. Gradually, a party emerged which did not agree with the policies of the moderate party and believed in an aggressive programme. Due to its aggressive approach, this party was called the Extreme Party.

Both the parties believed in different political methods to oppose the British rule. Their mutual differences led to the division of the Congress in 1907. In this chapter, we will study this early period of the Congress and how the split in the Congress affected the national movement.





**NOTES**

## **8.3 COMPOSITION OF CONGRESS**

The first session of the Congress was held in Bombay in 1885 and by the time its second session was held in Calcutta in 1886, it had become national. In 1885, a total of 72 delegates attended the Congress session, while in 1886, the total number of delegates was 439. These representatives were elected by various local organisations and units. It was decided that the annual session of the Congress would be held annually in different parts of India.

### **8.3.1 Middle-Class Organisations**

Since the Congress represented the whole country, it was necessary to include people of all castes, religions, professions, and all provinces. But such a broad definition or superficial description is unable to explain its true form. There was a very unequal representation of people belonging to different castes, religions, occupations, and regions. Among the various classes, the educated middle-class people were the largest among them. Its members included people from different professions, most of whom were lawyers. It had a large number of upper classes in terms of caste. As Anil Seal writes in his book *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1968). Among the provinces, the presidencies of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras participated prominently. The common people remained out of it. Similarly, the class associated with the land remained separate from it. Thus, the Congress was, by and large, a middle-class institution.

In the first session of the Congress, half of the members were lawyers, and in all subsequent sessions of the Congress, the representation of lawyers was more than one-third of the total membership. There were also a large number of journalists, doctors, and teachers. In the first convention, there were only two teachers, but in the fourth convention, their number increased to 50. Many did not participate directly, but they were also sympathetic to this movement. Although the archaic aristocracy (zamindars, jagirdars, rajas, etc.) were not interested in public works, the Congress



tried to get their support. This step was taken because the support of the kings and the aristocracy would have shown that there was unity in British India and India under Indian princes. This could have made a good impression on the Conservative people of Britain and the capital needed to run the movement could also be obtained from that class.

### **8.3.2 Methodology**

Initially, the Congressmen had full faith in the efficacy of a peaceful and constitutional movement. The press and the forum of the annual convention were his means of publicity. The propaganda work of the Congress was done throughout the year through the press. Many leaders were editors of newspapers in English or Indian languages and they used their writings effectively. Holding a session every year was another method of campaigning for the Congress. In these meetings, the policies of the government were discussed and resolutions were passed effectively. These annual conventions attracted the attention of both the middle-class educated community and the government. The biggest drawback, however, was that the convention was held once a year for only three days. The Congress, which worked within the span of two sessions, did not have any other organisation of its own. The Congressmen firmly believed in the basic fairness and bona fides of the British nation. They were working in the belief that if the British in England got the correct picture of the Indian condition, everything would be alright. They understood that bureaucracy was standing in the way of citizens and their rights. Therefore, his aim was to awaken the Indian masses so that they could understand their rights. It also wanted to inform the British people of the difficulties of Indians and also remind them of their duty towards India. Delegations of prominent Indian leaders were sent to Britain with the intention of presenting the correct picture of India's plight to the British. In 1889, the British Committee of the Indian National Congress was established. In 1890, this committee started its mouthpiece 'India' for its propaganda work. Dadabhai Naoroji spent a large part of his life in England with the aim of presenting an Indian point of view to the British power. He was elected to the British House of Commons and there he formed an influential party of well-wishers of India.



## NOTES

### **The Growth of National Movement: 1885-1905-Moderates and Extremists**

India's freedom struggle began with the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Initially, this movement moved slowly. The reason for this was that this was the early period of the Congress (1885-1905). This time is also called the reformist and legislative era. The Congress was dominated by the Moderates at that time. These liberals adopted the policy of 'political beggary', but their policy led to the rise of revolutionary ideology in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The main objective of the Congress between 1885 and 1905 was to demand constitutional, economic, and administrative reforms and to ensure the protection of civil rights. At that time, the Congress did not get widespread support from the public. Its influence was mainly confined to the educated middle class.

**Early Policies and Programmes:** The early leaders of the Congress believed that the right time had not yet come to launch a direct political struggle for independence. Therefore, it was necessary, first of all, to strengthen the spirit of nationalism, to create interest in political issues among the masses, and to organise public opinion.

The second objective of the Congress was to put forward the demands related to public issues before the government and to develop a sense of national unity among the conscious citizens, leaders, and workers of the country. As the freedom struggle states, "The leaders of the early period made their economic and political demands in such a way that they could unite the Indian masses and organise them in a common programme."

### **Demand for Constitutional Reforms**

The liberal leaders knew that India should be free from British rule, but they wanted to achieve this slowly and systematically. In the early days of the Congress, they avoided open protesting against the government, because they feared that it could endanger the very existence of the Congress. Therefore, they adopted a policy of moving forward slowly.

The first demand was that the Legislative Councils should be reformed and the Indian people should get more representation in them. They also demanded increasing



the powers of the Legislative Council, and the right to discuss the budget and criticise the administration. This had an effect, and the Indian Councils Act of 1861 was amended to pass a new Indian Councils Act in 1892. Under this Act, the number of members in the central and provincial legislatures was increased, arrangements were made to indirectly elect some members and the members were given the right to debate the budget. However, they could not vote on it.

But this Act of 1892 could not satisfy the Congress. They demanded more rights and representation. Their most important demand was that ‘private Indians should control public money’. Congress gave the slogan of “No taxation without representation” on the lines of the US.

These demands of the Congress were mainly focused on the interests of the upper and middle class. They did not demand voting rights for the general public or women.

### **Demand for Self-Rule**

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Congress placed an important demand before the government, which gave impetus to the freedom movement. It was a demand that India, like Australia and Canada, should be given the right of self-government under the British Empire and that India should have full control over both finance and law. This demand was raised by Dadabhai Naoroji in 1904 and Gopal Krishna Gokhale in 1905. This further intensified the national movement.

---

## **8.4 DEMAND FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS**

---

The Congress demanded reforms in administration. They emphasised the need to eliminate corruption and inefficiency in administration and to bring about a change in repressive policies. The Congress demanded the appointment of Indians to high administrative positions and also called for an increase in the salaries of low-paid Indian employees.

The Congress criticised the oppressive and tyrannical behaviour of the police and demanded reforms. At the same time, they demanded the separation of the powers



## NOTES

of the judiciary and the executive, the reduction of the rights of the jury, the provision of speedy justice and the right to bear arms to Indians.

The government was also requested to make public welfare work its responsibility. The Congress demanded concrete steps for the development of education, technical education, medicine, health, industry, and agriculture. Apart from this, the demand for improving the condition of Indian labourers settled abroad was also raised. However, no movement was launched to improve the conditions of the workers in the country. Perhaps the reason for this was to protect the interests of the Indian capitalists.

---

## 8.5 CRITICISM OF CIVIL RIGHTS PROTECTION AND FOREIGN POLICY

---

In the early days, the second major task of the Congress was to demand the protection of civil rights. Disturbed by the criticism of government policies and to stop the growing nationalist movement in India, the British government imposed restrictions on the thought, expression, and organisation of Indians. Newspapers were also prohibited from criticising government policies.

In 1897, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and many other leaders were arrested by the Bombay government based on their speeches and writings. He was tried for treason and sentenced to prison. Some people, such as the Nattu brothers of Poona, were deported out of India without trial. These repressive steps caused deep discontent among the people.

There were agitations across the country, in which Congress played a key role. The government was forced to impose more stringent laws on discourse and the press, and increased the powers of the police. These new laws brought nationalists and anti-social elements to the same level. As a result, the demand for protection of civil rights intensified. This led to a new phase of national agitation which gave rise to radical nationalism.



The Congress also sharply criticised the aggressive foreign policy of the government. For example, the Congress expressed its displeasure against the annexation of Burma, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the post-western border policy. But it did not have effect on the government.

---

## **8.6 ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION OF IMPERIALISM**

---

According to some scholars, the most important political work of the early nationalists was the analysis of the economic aspects of imperialism. They focused on the three main forms of economic exploitation of the time—trade, industry, and finance. They understood that British economic imperialism was designed to keep the Indian economy under its control.

These nationalists attributed India’s poverty to government policies. Dadabhai Naoroji wrote in depth the economic effects of British imperialism in his famous book **“Poverty and Un-British Rule in India”**. Recognising the problem of expulsion as serious, the nationalists demanded a change in government economic policies.

They demanded the government stop to the extortion of wealth, reduce the tax burden on the farmers, stop the inflow of foreign capital, and develop Indian industries. The Congress also raised the demand for improving the condition of plantation workers and abolishing the salt tax.

The nationalists promoted Swadeshi ideology so that Indian industries could develop. The trend of wearing Khadi began, and in 1896, the burning of foreign clothes on Holi was organised in Maharashtra. The Congress also proposed reducing wasteful expenditures on the army and administration.

Although the government did not heed to these demands, the Congress strengthened the feeling of nationalism by criticising government policies. This helped the Indian masses become aware of their rights and freedoms.



**NOTES**

## **8.7 THE QUESTION OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CONGRESS AND THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE**

In its early stages, the Congress sought reforms within constitutional limits. Their main job was to submit petitions and memoranda. At the same time, they tried to create public opinion for India in Britain as well. For this purpose, Dadabhai Naoroji established the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London in 1889.

Initially, the Congress could not get public support in India. It attracted upper and middle-class people only. The general public had not yet been influenced by the feeling of nationalism. The Congress had to face many difficulties at this time. Its organisation was weak, it lacked funds, and the anti-Congress Indians and the government tried to end it.

For example, the government made efforts to make the Allahabad Congress session of 1888 unsuccessful. Government orders prohibited employees from collecting donations for political organisations. Organisations like the Raja of Banaras, the Nawab of Hyderabad, Sir Syed Ahmed, Dinsha Manakji Petit, and the Indian Association also joined the government in dismantling the Congress. The British officials tried to keep Muslims, Parsis, Hindus, zamindars, and large sections of the wealthy class away from the Congress.

Sir Syed Ahmed formed two organisations, the Mohammedan Education Congress and the United Patriotic Association, to keep Muslims separate from the Congress. However, these efforts did not succeed, and the Congress continued its growth despite all the opposition.

According to historian **Tarachand**, “Though small in numbers and weak in resources, the Congress represented the ideas and feelings of modern India.” Its deliberations reflected the goal of India’s political, social, and economic well-being. Its proposals demanded a more independent and higher life for India. The Congress was the symbol of modern India and in the course of time it became the shape of the political aspirations of British India and the medium of the freedom struggle.”

*Self-Instructional*



---

## 8.8 DISCONTENT AGAINST THE MODERATES

---

Between 1885-1895, dissatisfaction with the policies of the moderate leaders of the Congress began to grow among a section of the Congress. In 1893, Aurobindo Ghosh wrote an article under a pseudonym in the magazine *Indu Prakash*, published from Bombay, criticising the Congress. *“I submit that the Congress has wrong goals and the spirit with which it works to achieve them is neither sincere nor whole-hearted. Her chosen methods are not perfect and the leaders she trusts are not qualified. We are like blind people led by blind people, if not blind.”*

Similarly, leaders like Tilak, Damodar Hari Chapekar, Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Shraddhanand strongly criticised the liberal policies, class interests, and relaxed attitude of the Congress. The result was that in 1895 a confrontation broke out between the Liberals (Naram Dal) and the Extremists (Garam Dal). Quarrels broke out between the followers of Tilak, Gokhale, and Ranade. In 1897, Tilak’s supporters protested against Gokhale during the Amaravati Congress session.

By 1902, leaders like Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai became prominent in the Congress and the influence of the Liberals began to decline. The partition of Bengal in 1905 further aggravated the differences within the Congress. Finally, at the Surat session of 1907, the Congress was divided into two parts—the moderate party and the hot party. (Moderate & Extremist)

---

## 8.9 GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS CONGRESS

---

Although the British had cooperated in establishing the Congress, their attitude gradually began to change with the Congress’ promotion of the national movement. British leaders like Dufferin and George Hamilton began to view the rise of the Congress with suspicion. Dufferin ridiculed the Congress’ demand for self-rule in Kolkata. He then enacted a law prohibiting government officials from collecting funds for political organisations.





## NOTES

The British officers became bitter critics of the Congress and its policies. The nationalists were addressed with derogatory terms like ‘Namkaharam Babu’, ‘traitor Brahmin’, and ‘violent villain’. The Congress was called a ‘factory of sedition’, and its leaders were branded ‘frustrated candidates who did not get office’ and ‘disgruntled lawyers’. The Congress was also accused of representing only the minority class. Lord Curzon went so far as to say that he would help end the Congress peacefully.

The Congress was also accused of secretly taking money. The British, besides criticising the Congress’ leaders and their actions, made active efforts to weaken it. Influential people like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Raja Shivprasad ‘Sitarehind’, Nizam of Hyderabad, and Sir Dinsha Manakji Petit were misled and tried to distance themselves from the Congress.

To reduce the influence of Congress, the government adopted the policy of ‘divide and rule’ and adopted the method of ‘scolding and cuddling’ at the same time. On the one hand, an attempt was made to placate the moderates by pretending to make modest reforms, and on the other, fear and force were displayed. Viceroy Elgin clearly stated that India was conquered by the sword and would remain under British rule only by the sword.

The government tried to crush the spirit of nationalism by imposing restrictions on education and the press. But these repressive actions reinforced the feeling of nationalism on the contrary. Despite all efforts, the government could not finish the Congress. Ultimately, the Congress succeeded in achieving its objectives.

---

### **8.10 REVIEW OF THE ACTIONS OF THE CONGRESS BETWEEN 1885-1905**

---

The main objective of the Congress in the liberal era was to spread national political awareness in India. At the same time, Congress demanded political rights for certain classes, attempted to reform the administrative system, and fought for the protection of civil rights. While criticising the British economic policies, the Congress also promoted the Swadeshi spirit and adopted the agitating path.



Even in difficult circumstances, the Congress strengthened the spirit of national unity. However, many critics questioned the early policies and actions of the Congress. Lala Lajpat Rai had said that in the movement that the Congress launched for more than twenty years in an attempt to redress its grievances and get concessions, it got stones instead of bread. From this, it appears that the initial attempt of the Congress was unsuccessful, but in reality, it was not.

The greatest success of the Congress was that it awakened the feeling of nationalism among the Indian masses, which grew stronger with time. Adopting a liberal and soft policy was the demand of the circumstances of that time. The Congress faced opposition from the government and certain sections of the public. Even Lord Curzon had said, that Congress is counting its death tolls. My greatest wish is to be able to help it die peacefully. But this wish of Curzon was not fulfilled.

Prof. Bipan Chandra, Amlesh Tripathi, and Varun Dey have rightly pointed out that the period from 1885 to 1905 was the period of laying the foundations of Indian nationalism. Instead of basing nationalism on superficial sentiments or memories of the past, the leaders of this period made an in-depth analysis of the complex structure of modern imperialism. They exposed the conflict between British rule and the interests of the Indian people and offered a common political and economic programme that united India's divided society. Later, under this programme, the Indian masses started a strong struggle which ultimately paved the way for independence.

---

## **8.11 LIBERAL PARTIES**

---

The Congress marked the first phase of its existence known as the liberal phase (1885-1905). During this time, the Congress worked for limited purposes and focused more on building its organisation. Dadabhai Naoroji, P.N. Mehta, D.E. Vacha, W.C. Banerjee, S.N. Banerjee, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who used to be the main leaders of the Congress at this time, believed in liberalism and liberal politics and the then British government, hence they came to be called moderates.



## NOTES

The main aim of the moderates was to achieve self-government within the British Empire. They believed in patience and reconciliation (mediation) rather than violence and confrontation, thus relying on constitutional and peaceful means to achieve their goals. The programme of the Congress in its first phase (1885-1905) was very limited. Its demands were limited to minor constitutional reforms, financial aid, administrative reorganisation, and protection of civil liberties.

### 8.11.1 Ways of Liberal Leaders Doing Political Work

- They held meetings and discussions on social, economic, and cultural matters to educate the people, arouse their political consciousness, and build public opinion.
- They held annual sessions with delegates participating from all parts of the country. After the deliberations, resolutions were passed, which were forwarded to the government for information and appropriate action.

### 8.11.2 Success/Contribution of Moderates

The moderates wanted to educate people in modern politics, arouse national and political consciousness, and forge a united public opinion on political questions. The critics often accuse them of using begging methods through prayers and petitions. However, if they had adopted revolutionary or violent methods, the Congress would have been crushed at its very outset. They laid a solid foundation for a more vigorous, revolutionary, mass-based national movement in the years that followed.

- They represented the most progressive forces at that time.
- They were able to create a broad national awakening for all Indians with common interests.
- They trained the people in political work and popularised modern ideas.
- They exposed the fundamentally exploitative character of colonial rule, thus weakening its moral foundations.
- Their political work was based on harsh realities, not on shallow emotions, religion, etc.



## ***Nationalist Politics: “Moderates and Extremists Nationalists”***

---

### **NOTES**

- They were able to establish the basic political truth that India should be ruled in the interest of Indians.
- The early nationalists did much to arouse national sentiment, even though they could not draw the masses to their side and failed to broaden their democratic base and the scope of their demands.
- They could not understand the real nature of British rule.
- The liberal phase of the national movement had a narrow social base and the masses played a passive role in it.
- This was because the early nationalists did not have political confidence in the masses; they felt that there were many divisions and sub-divisions in the Indian society and the masses were generally ignorant and held conservative views.
- The moderates felt that these heterogeneous elements had to be brought together before they could enter the political arena.
- But they failed to understand that only during a freedom struggle and with political participation could these diverse elements come together.
- Due to the lack of public participation, the moderates could not take a belligerent political position against the authorities. Later nationalists differed from the moderates on this point. Nevertheless, the early nationalists represented the emerging Indian nation against colonial interests.
- Politics like prayers, petitions and protests did not work
- The partition of Bengal was against the wishes of the people.

### **8.11.3 Demands and Programmes**

Their main demands were as follows:

- Constitution of Provincial Councils,
- The Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination to be conducted in India as well.
- Repeal of the Arms Act,
- Separation of judiciary from executive,



## NOTES

- Appointment of Indians to the post of Commissioned Officers (2nd Lieutenant and above) in the Army;
- Reduction in military expenditure, and
- Practice of permanent settlement of land in all parts of India.

These demands were repeated every year, but the government seldom paid heed to them. In the first twenty years (1885-1905) there was no significant change in the programme of the Congress. Its main demands remained more or less the same as those presented at its first three or four sessions. This period of the Congress is called the era of the moderate party (the era of liberals). During this period, the leaders used to put their demands very soberly. They did not want to offend the government and did not want to risk the government getting angry and suppressing their activities.

From 1885 to 1892, the demands of the moderate party and the extreme party were that the legislative councils should be expanded and improved, the members of the councils should be elected representatives of the people, and the rights of these councils should be increased. The British government was forced to pass the Indian Councils Act of 1892, but it could not satisfy the Congress leaders with the sections of this act. The Congress leaders demanded that Indian (public sector) wealth should be controlled by India and repeated the slogan of the American War of Independence, “No taxes without representation”. In 1905, the Congress demanded “Swaraj” or “self-government” for Indians under the British Empire. This demand for self-government was made on the model of self-governing Australia and Canada.

This demand for self-government was first put forward by Gopal Krishna Gokhale in 1905 (Benares) and later by Dadabhai Naoroji in 1906 (Calcutta) in more explicit terms. Dadabhai Naoroji saw the British rule as a relentless and daily foreign invasion that was slowly destroying India. The nationalist vote held the British responsible for the destruction of Indian industry. The diagnosis of India’s dependency was possible only with the development of modern industry. The government could have helped in its development by adopting a policy of conservation and direct financial assistance and concessions. However, when they saw that the government was not doing anything in this regard, they propagated the concept of Swadeshi as the sole



## NOTES

means of development of Indian industry, i.e., the use of goods produced in India and boycott of British goods. They demanded an end to the economic exploitation of India, a reduction in land revenue to reduce the tax burden on the peasants, an improvement in the working conditions of plantation labourers, an abolition of the salt tax, and a reduction in the excessive military expenditure of the Indian state. They fully understood the importance of freedom of press and expression and criticised any attempt to restrict it.

In fact, this movement for the removal of restrictions imposed on the press became an integral part of the nationalist freedom movement. The progressiveness of these demands, and their direct connection to the needs and aspirations of the Indian middle class, makes it clear that the Congress was primarily a middle-class institution in the early years. Most of the Congress leaders, both economic and political, opposed the infusion of foreign capital into railways, plantations and industries on a large scale, as well as the special facilities given by the government to foreign capital in these sectors. By criticising the expenditure on the army and the civil service, they indirectly challenged the very legitimacy of British rule in India. By denouncing land revenue and tax policies, they tried to weaken the financial base of the British administration. They described the use of the Indian army and Indian revenues for British imperialist interests in Asia and Africa as another example of economic exploitation. Some of them even objected to the justification of imposing the total economic burden of British rule on the Indian exchequer. As a theory of economic exploitation, they presented to the people a strong symbol of foreign exploitation. Indian leaders were concerned about the overall economic development of the country rather than economic progress in sporadic areas. The biggest question for them was India's economic prosperity. The progress made in various fields was to be judged based on how much it helped in the economic development of the country. Even the problem of poverty was seen as a result of a lack of production and economic backwardness.

Although the political demands of the early leaders of the Congress were limited, their economic demands demanded fundamental changes in the region. Theoretically, Indian leaders supported economic policies such as anti-imperialism. They emphasised the need for a fundamental change in the economic relations between



**NOTES**

India and England. They criticised the government's customs, trade, communication, and tax policies. These were seen as hindrances rather than helping the growth of Indian industry.

**8.11.4 Evaluation of Work**

Whatever may have been the shortcomings in the demands put forth by the Congress, it cannot be denied that it was a national institution in the true sense of the term. There was nothing in its programme which was against the interests of any particular class. Its doors were open to all classes and communities. It may be said that it was not just a political party, but a movement as a whole. The nationalist leaders will be commended for the fact that while belonging to the urban, well-educated middle class, they did not think only for the interests of their class. Their vision was for the larger and common good, not for narrow and narrow self-interest. Their economic policies were above the opportunistic middle-class narrow outlook. The political tone of the Indian National Congress may have been soft, but it is remarkable that from the fourth session of the Congress, the government adopted a hostile attitude towards it. Over time, the Congress did not get much from the government.

The British encouraged anti-Congress elements. For example, they encouraged the Aligarh movement against the Congress. In the last years of the nineteenth century, the British attitude towards the Congress during the period of Lord Curzon became very hostile. Lord Curzon's greatest wish was to help in the peaceful demise of the Congress. But the steps taken by him further inflamed the discontent of the nationalists. He adopted a dictatorial method and wanted to take government control over university education and announced the partition of Bengal. As a result, there was a strong wave of national awakening all over the country. This work done by Curzon encouraged national awakening. During this period, there was a general perception about the moderate party that they were political beggars who kept begging for small concessions from the British government through petitions and prayers. But in fact, the moderate party played an important role in the delicate period of the Indian national movement.



---

## 8.12 IMPORTANT MODERATE LEADERS OF THE CONGRESS

---

In the infancy of the Congress, the responsibility of running its policies came to the responsibility of liberal leaders. Prominent among these leaders are Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjee, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Ferozeshah Mehta and A.O. Hume.

- **Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917)** – Dadabhai Naoroji was a distinguished and senior leader of the Congress. He is counted among the great patriots. From the inception of the Congress till his death, he was associated with this institution. He was born on September 4, 1825 in Bombay.

He also worked as a headmaster in the education department. In 1885, he was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly of Bombay. He became the President of the Second Session of the Congress held in Calcutta in 1886. In 1892, he was also elected a member of the British Parliament. He became the President of the Congress three times in his life.

Dadabhai Naoroji, like Ferozeshah Mehta and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, believed in the British Empire based on justice and morality. However, he studied the British imperialist economic policies in depth and exposed their ill effects. In his book “*Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*”, he gave details of the process of extortion and its consequences. He attempted to show that British policies were against his stated goals.

He hoped that the British would improve their policies, but this did not happen. Therefore, after 1900 his attitude towards the government began to change. As Congress President in 1906, he demanded more appointments of Indians in the public services, greater representation in legislative assemblies, and a balanced economic relationship between India and Britain. He also called for the boycott of foreign goods, the promotion of indigenous goods, and the development of national education. He died in 1917. C.Y. Chintamani described him as a “great soul, liberal-minded and Ajatashatru”.





## NOTES

- **Ferozeshah Mehta (1845-1945)** – Another distinguished leader of the Congress was Sir Ferozeshah Mehta. He was one of the prominent followers of Dadabhai Naoroji. He was born in 1845. He was a famous lawyer of Bombay.

During his student days, he came in contact with Dadabhai Naoroji in England. Under his influence, Sir Mehta got involved in public service works. His political career began around 1870. In 1872 he became a member of the Bombay Corporation and in 1886 was elected a member of the Bombay legislature. In 1890 he became the President of the Congress.

Sir Ferozeshah Mehta also believed in the justice, truthfulness and honesty of the British. He considered the British Empire as a ‘symbol of progress’ and a ‘divine gift’ for India. He wanted the Congress to always follow the legal and peaceful path.

He was also a supporter of English education. He was a very powerful speaker. Due to his impressive oratory style and amazing reasoning, he had the ability to attract even his opponents. He died in 1945.

- **Surendranath Banerjee (1848-1925)** – Surendranath Banerjee’s name is at the forefront of the prominent leaders of Bengal of the initial phase. He was born in 1848 in an aristocratic Brahmin family of Bengal. He was extremely intelligent since childhood. After completing his education, in 1869 he participated in the ICS (Indian Civil Service) examination held in London and passed it as the first Indian. But the government accused him and removed him from service. Subsequently, he started his career as a professor of English and simultaneously became active in political and social work. In 1876 he founded the Indian Association in Calcutta. He also edited a Bengali magazine and toured the entire country to awaken national consciousness. He also played an important role in the establishment of the Congress. He became a member of the Bengal Provincial Legislative Assembly and was twice elected President of the Congress. Surendranath Banerjee, like other liberals, considered the British rule as a ‘divine boon’. He hoped that the government would show the way to self-government by eliminating India’s social and moral evils. That is why he wanted Congress to



## NOTES

be limited to a legislative movement only. He participated in a nationwide movement to increase the maximum age limit for admission to the ICS examination.

He contributed significantly to raising political and national consciousness in Bengal. However, he became a strong critic of the violent demonstrations during the Partition of Bengal, which damaged his popularity. When the plan for the partition of Bengal was canceled in 1911, he became an even bigger supporter of the British government.

Surendranath Banerjee did not support the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920-21 launched by Mahatma Gandhi. Due to this, he was given the title of ‘Sir’ and he was made the Minister of Bengal. He advised stern action against militants, which further reduced their popularity. They had to face protests and demonstrations from place to place.

In the assembly elections in 1923, he lost to Swaraj Dal member Bidhan Chandra Roy. He died in 1925. Despite being a supporter of the British government, he occupies an important place as a forerunner of Indian nationalism. His contribution to Congress and the country will always be remembered.

- **Gopalkrishna Gokhale (1860-1915)** - The name of Gopalkrishna Gokhale is the most important among the liberal leaders. He was born in 1860 in a village in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra. His childhood was full of struggles. After hard work and hardships, he completed his education.

After completing his education, he got a job as a professor at Fergusson College, Poona. Along with his job, he was also active in country and social service. He *skillfully edited the journal “Sudharak”* of the *Poona Sarvajanik Sabha*.

In 1900 he was made a member of the Central Legislative Assembly. In 1905, he was elected president of the Indian National Congress at Banaras. By this time, differences had begun between moderate and extremist ideological leaders. For this reason, Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society in 1905.



## NOTES



*Fig. 8.1 Gopal Krishna Gokhale*

**Source:** <https://www.indianetzone.com>

Gokhale, like other liberal leaders, considered the British rule to be a “divine boon” for India. For him, loyalty to the British was patriotism. He aimed to establish self-government in India under the British rule. He was in favour of a constitutional movement and considered an open struggle against the government to be unjustified.

Although they supported the Swadeshi movement, they were against the policy of exclusion. He also tried to broker a compromise between the soft and the hot party of the Congress. He died in 1915. Gokhale played an important role in the national movement. His greatness can be gauged from the fact that Mahatma Gandhi considered him his political guru.

- **A. O. Hume** - A. O. Hume, a native of Scotland, played an important role in the establishment and early development of the Indian National Congress.



## NOTES

The real credit for the establishment of the Congress is given to him. He was a liberal and had deep sympathy for India and Indians. Hume made many efforts to improve the condition of Indians. He started magazine called People's Friend, in which articles were published on the problems of Indians. He also worked to develop a sense of nationalism among Indians.

Even after the establishment of the Congress in 1885, Hume gave it his full support and cooperation. His efforts increased the strength and influence of the Congress. His contribution to the Indian National Movement will always be remembered.

---

### 8.13 REVOLUTIONARY EXTREMISM (1905-1919)

---

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, discontent against the moderate policies of the Congress began to grow. The begging policy of the old leaders of the Congress made the position of the organisation weak and ridiculous. The result was the emergence of a new young party in the Congress, which was strongly critical of the ideas and ideals of the old leaders. This led to the Congress splitting into two factions: liberals (moderates) and extremists (extremists). This partition began in 1895, when Tilak and his supporters challenged their rights at the Poona public meeting against Gokhale and Ranade. Over time, this disagreement grew. The partition of Bengal and the Congress' response to it further deepened this divide. At the Surat session in 1907, the Congress was clearly divided into two factions—the moderate party and the extreme party. This split gave rise to radical nationalism, which later led to the development of the revolutionary movement. The revolutionary movement played an important role in the Indian freedom struggle. Several factors contributed to the growth of militant nationalism.

---

### 8.14 CAUSES OF THE GROWTH OF EXTREMISM

---

The birth of the revolutionary extremist movement in India did not happen suddenly. It was the result of years of simmering discontent and despair. Many political, economic, religious and social factors contributed to its development.



## NOTES

**1. Political Reasons** – Political reasons were the most important in the development of ideology. The main reasons behind the growth of militant nationalism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were the following:

- **Failure of the Congress:** The Congress adopted a policy of begging towards the government from the beginning. They placed the demand for constitutional and administrative reforms in front of the British government, but the government did not pay enough attention to them. The Congress amended the Act of 1861 and passed the Indian Councils Act of 1892. Although this Act gave some rights to the Indians, which were very limited and inadequate. This act could not satisfy the Congress and the public. Dissatisfaction with the liberal policies of the Congress began to grow. Many believed that abandoning the policy of begging was the only way to go back to the path of struggle. It was considered futile to expect anything from the government without a struggle. This thinking gave rise to revolutionary extremist ideology.
- **Administrative policies of the Conservative Party:** Between 1888 and 1905, the Conservative Party was in power in England. Its reactionary policies played an important role in increasing discontent and anger among Indians. During this time, the Indian Viceroy and the English bureaucracy took several steps to suppress the feeling of growing nationalism among Indians. The policies of Lord Lansdowne, Elgin and Curzon caused deep mental trauma to the Indians. They adopted a policy of mistrust and racial discrimination towards Indians. The biggest example of this was the arrangement of provincial civil service for Indians by not giving equal rights to Indians in ICS (Indian Civil Service). The repression intensified during 1896-97. People were forcibly evacuated from their homes during the plague in Mumbai. The Latu brothers of Poona were punished without trial and Tilak was imprisoned. Admission of Indian students in Roorkee Engineering College was banned. These events made Indians feel that it was futile to expect fair justice from the British. Fighting for their rights is their only way out.



## NOTES

- **Curzon's Policies:** Lord Curzon's policies promoted radical nationalism at a rapid pace. He adopted an anti-Indian attitude and suppressed Indian sentiments. Curzon's aim was to consolidate the British power in India. He was a staunch opponent of the Congress and the spirit of nationalism. Instead of giving constitutional and administrative rights to the Indians, Curzon tried to concentrate all the power in his hands. He disqualified Indians for high government posts. *The Calcutta Corporation Act* reduced the number of its members. The *Indian Universities Act* increased government control over higher education. *Newspapers were banned through the Official Secrets Act*. Curzon's most controversial act was the partition of Bengal. This plan was made on a purely political basis. Its aim was to crush the spirit of nationalism in Bengal. After this incident, militant and anti-government activities intensified in Bengal. Curzon's harsh policies also increased the discontent among the Indians. His policies facilitated the rise of revolutionary extremism in Indian politics.
- 2. Economic Reasons** - Due to the economic policies of the government, dissatisfaction among the public was increasing. Due to these policies, India was being exploited economically, and poverty and impoverishment were increasing. Natural Disasters, Famine and epidemics also troubled the public, But the government had no sympathy for them. The main objective of the government was to collect more and more money and raw materials from India and send it to England, So that the economic situation there is strengthened and the industry is encouraged. Also, such policies were made to suppress Indian industries, which hindered their development. For example, clothes made in England came to India at no tax or nominal tax, whereas heavy excise and export taxes were imposed on clothes made in India. The Indian capitalist class was also disappointed and dissatisfied with the industrial and economic policies of the government. This section also supported the radical nationalists. The government did not take any concrete steps to provide relief to the people suffering from famine and epidemics. On the contrary, Indian money was misused for administrative and other purposes. In 1897, a severe plague broke out in Poona. The steps taken by the



## NOTES

government to prevent this further increased the discontent among the public. There were riots in many places. In a fit of rage, a young man murdered the plague commissioner, Mr. Rand, for which he was sentenced to death. The editor and the printer of Kesari were arrested and many innocent people were punished. These events further fuelled the spirit of revolt.

- 3. Socio-Religious Reasons:** A number of social and religious factors contributed to the growth of militant nationalism. At this time the policy of racial discrimination of the British was at its peak. The British abroad and in India looked down upon the Indians and did not leave any opportunity to humiliate them. Indians were treated inhumanly in South Africa. They were denied property rights and were denied normal civil rights. These unjust incidents further increased the feeling of anger and dissatisfaction in the minds of Indians. Religious institutions and religious reformers also contributed to the development of this spirit. The Hindu resurgence weakened the western influence and strengthened the sense of nationalism. Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, and through organisations like the Theosophical Society, religious reformers like Dayananda Saraswati and Swami Vivekananda were instilling in Indians a sense of love and self-pride towards the past. In addition to this, dissatisfaction with government policies was highest among the educated unemployed. This discontent became another reason for the growth of fiery nationalism.

### 8.14.1 Emergence of Revolutionary Extremist Leaders

Many Indian leaders played an important role in the development of the spirit of militancy. From the very beginning of the national movement, militant nationalist ideology began to spread in the country.

Rajnarayan Bose and Ashwini Kumar Dutt in Bengal, and Vishnushastri Chiplunkar in Maharashtra were promoting extremist ideology. It was further carried forward by Bal Gangadhar Tilak (Lokmanya Tilak) through his speeches and writings. He intensified the protest against the British in Maharashtra by making Chhatrapati Shivaji an ideal.



**NOTES**

Tilak’s two newspapers, **Maratha** (English) and **Kesari** (Marathi), played an important role in this work. He also promoted a spirit of radical nationalism through events such as the ‘Ganpati Festival’ and ‘Shivaji Festival’.



**Fig. 8.2** Moderates and Extremist Leadership of Congress

**Source:** <https://fairgaze.com>

Apart from Tilak, militant leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh, and Lala Lajpat Rai also inspired Indians to sacrifice their lives for the country. His ideas left a deep impact on educated Indians and the general public.

As a result, people were attracted to revolutionary extremism as they were disillusioned with the soft ideology of the Congress.





**NOTES**

**8.14.2 Impact of Foreign Events**

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were many foreign events that had a profound impact on India. These events gave rise to revolutionary extremist ideology.

These included the defeat of Italy in the Italy-Abyssinian War, Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, the Russian Revolution (1904-05), the Boer War in Africa, the Boxer Rebellion in China, and the freedom struggles of Egypt, Iran, and Turks.

These events proved that the imperialist powers could be defeated. It was amazing for a small country like Japan to defeat a big power like Russia.

These events had a profound impact on Asia and particularly on India. Many newspapers and articles in India highlighted the defeat of the imperialists. This gave Indians the confidence that they too could defeat British imperialism through struggle.

**8.14.3 The Growth of Extremism**

The development of extremism in Indian politics took two main forms. First, the rise of militancy within the Congress and its impact on the Congress, and second, the spread of revolutionary extremism and their activities.

**8.14.4 Growth of revolutionary extremism within the Congress and split in the Congress**

From 1895 onwards, discontent against the moderate policies of the Congress began to emerge. By 1902, leaders of revolutionary extremist or nationalist ideologies like Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai had joined the Congress. These leaders began to openly challenge the views and working style of the moderates.

During the Benares Congress session in 1905, Lala Lajpat Rai and Tilak strongly opposed the issue of welcoming the Prince of Wales (George V) on his arrival in India. Tilak gave the slogan of Satyagraha against the partition of Bengal and described it as "statutory and judicial".



At the Calcutta session in 1906, the differences between the two parties, liberal and revolutionary extremism, increased. The two groups clashed over the question of whether to implement the boycott policy all over India or to limit it to Bengal only.

At the Surat Congress session of 1907, the Congress was divided into two parties—moderate and nationalist. They both chose different paths. The liberals adopted a policy of cooperation and compromise with the British government, while the revolutionary extremists chose the path of struggle.

Gradually, the influence of moderates in the Congress began to decline and revolutionary extremists took their place. The repressive policies of the government and subsequent events made even the liberals understand that it is futile to cooperate with the government.

In 1910, the Lucknow session re-established unity between the two groups. Tilak was elected President of the United Congress. This struck a balance between revolutionary extremism and liberalism within the Congress.

#### **8.14.5 Partition of Bengal and Brewing of Public Anger**

In December 1903, Lord Curzon, motivated by political interests, announced the Bengal divide Plan. This announcement had a profound effect on the Bengalis. The Congress and the public vehemently opposed it. Bengal's leading newspaper *Bengali* called it a “**National Calamity**”.

Protest meetings were held all over Bengal, in which thousands of people participated. Between 1903 and 1905, more than 2,000 anti-government meetings took place. Around 70,000 people signed an application to the Secretary of India demanding scrapping of the scheme. At some places, effigies of Curzon were also burnt, but the government remained firm on its decision.

In response, the people of Bengal raised the slogan of boycott of foreign goods. However, despite the public outcry, it had no effect on the government.

On 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1905, the government decided to implement the partition of Bengal and started repressive actions to suppress popular protest. These repressive policies also gave rise to extremist and revolutionary movements.



## NOTES

### 8.14.6 Growth of Extremism in Maharashtra and Elsewhere

Revolutionary extremism was not confined to Bengal; its second major center was also Maharashtra. In fact, revolutionary ideology in Bengal reached from Maharashtra itself. Bal Gangadhar Tilak is considered to be the father of the revolutionary movement. He promoted militant nationalism by presenting Shivaji's ideal in Marathi.

Through his newspapers **Maratha** and **Kesari**, he instilled the spirit of patriotism and freedom among the Marathi youth. He took several steps to develop self-confidence and self-reliance among Indians. He set up anti-cow slaughter committees, lathi clubs and akhadas. Through the Ganpati festival, the youth were organised and given political education. Through the Shivaji festival, he instilled the spirit of sacrifice and valour among the youth.

During 1897-98, there was a severe outbreak of plague and famine in Maharashtra. There was widespread protest against the government's relief policies. Meanwhile, some revolutionaries shot and killed Poona's plague commissioner Rand. After this, the guilty youth was hanged and Tilak was sentenced to 18 months in jail. The sentence was later pardoned, but in 1908 he was tried for treason and exiled to Mandalay for 6 years.

Revolutionary movements took place in other parts of India as well. Policies of boycott of foreign goods and national education were adopted. In Punjab, Lala Lajpat Rai and Sardar Ajit Singh instilled a sense of patriotism and self-respect among the youth. The trial of Bipin Chandra Pal in Bengal added to the public outrage. The workers of Bombay went on strike to protest Tilak's arrest. The government took repressive measures to crush the movement.

Although the movement slowed down with the arrest of revolutionary leaders, it did not end. Revolutionary and radical agitators carried forward this struggle.

---

## 8.15 BOYCOTT AND SWADESHI MOVEMENT

---

### 8.15.1 Bengal Partition Movement and its Tendencies

During the partition of Bengal movement, there were three major trends in Indian politics. First, liberal-minded people, who wanted to get their rights through applications and



appeals to the government. Second, the self-reliant class, which wanted to weaken the English economy and administration by the policy of indigenism and exclusion. Third, the extremist ideological class, which believed that the rule of the British could be removed only by force. This class embraced the revolutionary movement and opposed the moderate policies.

### **8.15.2 Bengal Divide and the growth of the Swadeshi Movement**

With the Bengal divide plan, the spirit of Swadeshi and Swaraj in Bengal became stronger. In order to respond to the policies of Lord Curzon the people of Bengal adopted the boycott of foreign goods and the use of Swadeshi. The movement spread rapidly throughout Bengal.

The feeling of Swadeshi and exclusion was already in place, but Bang-Bhang gave it a concrete form and made it a strong weapon of the freedom struggle. The boycott was first aimed at putting economic pressure on British imperialism, but later it became a symbol of non-cooperation.

### **8.15.3 Activities of the Movement**

Soon after the announcement of the partition of Bengal on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1905, the well-wishers of Barisal and the Sanjeevani papers of Calcutta gave the slogan of boycott. On 7<sup>th</sup> August, a huge gathering was held in the Town Hall of Calcutta, where people took an oath to boycott foreign goods.

Holi of foreign clothes was burnt, and people stopped using foreign shoes, paper, medicines, sugar, cigarettes, and even salt. Students and teachers started going to school barefoot. The students refused to participate in the examinations as they had to write on foreign paper. A sick child refused to take English medicine.

The working class like cobblers, cooks and washermen refused to work for the British or those who used foreign goods. The students protested against the shops selling foreign clothes.

### **8.15.4 Social and Religious Pressures**

Social and religious pressures were exerted to make the boycott effective. There was a social boycott of those who sold foreign goods. No one played or talked with their



## NOTES

children, and they were not included in social or religious events. Doctors, lawyers, and priests also boycotted them.

Even the sepoys of Barrackpore and Fort William refused to wear foreign clothes. Workers and railway workers went on strike and supported the boycott.

By 1906 the movement had spread throughout Bengal. Despite government pressure, many Muslim leaders such as Liaquat Hussain, Abdul Rashid, and Ismail Chaudhry also took part in this movement.

### 8.15.5 Role of Congress

The movement was supported in the Congress session of 1905, and the Congress also approved the boycott of foreign textiles. This movement gave a new direction to the Indian freedom struggle.

### 8.15.6 Spread and Impact of Swadeshi Movement

The Swadeshi movement began to spread rapidly along with the boycott. Its prominent leaders in Bengal were Rabindranath Tagore, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh. Rabindranath Tagore through his essay in 1904 called for increasing self-power and encouraged the use of indigenous goods. He believed that Indians should become self-sufficient by getting organised without foreign help. This required the establishment of indigenous industry, national education and self-government.

Due to this movement, the textile industry was greatly affected. Handloom and cloth factories grew. A fund was created to impart technical knowledge to Indians and to set up their own factories. In 1905, the first industrial conference was held in Benares under the chairmanship of Ramesh Chandra Dutt. Many factories of cotton cloth, porcelain, soap, leather and cigarettes opened in Bengal. P.C. Roy established **the Bengal Chemical Swadeshi Stores**, and Rabindranath Tagore also supported the opening of Swadeshi stores.

This movement strengthened the domestic economy. The demand for domestic goods increased and the import of foreign goods declined drastically. The use of imported goods such as salt, cotton cloth, shoes and cigarettes decreased.



## NOTES

- **Social Reforms and Development of Villages:** The Swadeshi movement did not only focus on the economic sector but also on social reforms. Rabindranath Tagore called for the revival of villages. Inspired by him, Ashwini Kumar Dutt started the work of development of villages through his organisation ***Swadesh-Bandhav Samiti*** in Barisal. Cases were settled by the panchayats, and efforts were made to abolish evil practices such as untouchability, dowry system, child marriage and alcoholism.
- **Development of National Education:** Plans were made to promote national education as opposed to the increasing control of the government. Under this, national schools and colleges were opened. In November 1905 the first national school was started in Rangpur, which became a symbol of the Swadeshi movement. The Anti-Circular Society was established under the leadership of Sachindranath Basu against the oppressive actions on the students, which motivated the students to participate in the movement.

In Bengal, ***the Don Society*** played an important role in promoting national education. The National Council of Education was formed in Calcutta in November 1905, with the aim of promoting literary, scientific, and technical education under national control. The ***Bengal National School and College*** was established by raising funds from donations. During this time ***the Society for Promotion of Technical Education*** and ***the Bengal Technical Institute*** were also established.
- **Influence of National Literature and Songs:** National education also encouraged national literature in Bengal. Poems, prose and newspapers full of national sentiment were published. The national songs of Rabindranath Tagore, Rajinikanth Sen and Mukunddas took the feeling of patriotism among the people to the peak. Thus the Swadeshi movement enlightened and organised the Indians in all economic, social and cultural fields.
- **Effect of the Movement Outside Bengal- National Expansion of Partition of Bengal Movement:** The partition of Bengal movement was not limited to Bengal only, but it shook the whole country. A comprehensive program of boycott, indigenous and national education was carried out across India. The movement gained momentum in Bombay and Madras



## NOTES

Presidencies. Even in places like Chandranagar, Mandalay (Burma), Agra and Rawalpindi, meetings were held to protest against and boycott the partition.

By 1906 the movement had spread almost all over India. In Maharashtra, Tilak further strengthened this movement. He burnt foreign textiles in Poona and founded *the Swadeshi Vastu-Pracharini Sabha* for the promotion of indigenous goods. Promoted indigenous goods by opening cooperative stores. Tilak was not satisfied with the boycott alone, but he described Swadeshi as the way to attain self-rule and demanded self-rule.

In Punjab, the Arya Samaj carried forward this movement. The impact of the movement was also seen in Uttar Pradesh and Madras. Many cotton textile factories opened in Bombay and Ahmedabad. In Jamshedpur, *Tata Iron and Steel Company* refused to accept government and foreign aid. Ship companies were set up in Bombay and Madras.

- **Development of National Education** – Many schools and colleges were opened during this movement. The boycott and the Swadeshi movement awakened the feeling of patriotism and self-respect all over the country. This made the demand for self-rule an important issue in Indian politics.
- **Impact of Swadeshi Movement on Congress Politics** - The Swadeshi Movement had a profound impact on the internal politics of the Congress. This further aggravated the rift between the moderates and the extremists (nationalists), which ultimately led to the split of the Congress.

After the partition of Bengal, the Congress session was held in Banaras, which was presided over by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. The divide between moderates and extremists was clearly visible at this convention. The moderates wanted to confine the Swadeshi and Boycott movement to Bengal only, while the extremists wanted to spread it all over the country.

The extremists were not satisfied with mere exclusion and indigenesness. They wanted self-government and complete self-government. Lala Lajpat Rai wanted to start a satyagraha, but the moderates were not ready for it. Under pressure, the Congress accepted the boycott and Swadeshi, but confined it to Bengal only. This further increased the discontent of the extremists.



## NOTES

1. **Calcutta Convention and Differences** - This difference of opinion deepened in the Calcutta Session of 1905. Dadabhai Naoroji, a revolutionary, in order to satisfy the nationalists, declared that the Congress aimed to achieve self-government within the British state. But the extremists were not satisfied with this. They wanted complete independence and disagreed with the objectives and policies of the moderates.

The extremists wanted to prepare the Congress for a revolutionary struggle. Aurobindo Ghosh at this time took over the nationalist leadership.

2. **Surat Session and Partition** - The confrontation between the two groups came out in the open at the Surat session of 1907. All attempted compromises failed. The session ended amid uproar. Tilak and his associates parted ways with the Congress, And the influence of the moderates on the Congress continued.

The extremists broke away from the Congress and continued the freedom struggle in their own way. Thus, the Swadeshi movement led to deep divisions within the Congress and a new era in Indian politics.

3. **Agitation and Government Response Repression of the government and influence on the Swadeshi Movement** - Initially, the government did not take the Swadeshi movement seriously. They believed that the enthusiasm of the Bengalis would soon cool down. But as the movement intensified, the government began to adopt strict repressive policies.

**Carlyle Circular and restrictions on students** - On 10<sup>th</sup> October 1905, the government issued the Carlyle *Circular*. It ordered the principals of government-aided schools and colleges to keep students away from the agitation, otherwise the government aid and recognition of the schools would be withdrawn. They also threatened to terminate students' scholarships and deprive them of government jobs.

The government also banned **Vande Mataram** songs, sankirtans and troupes. But students and teachers resisted these orders. Students left schools and colleges, wearing yellow turbans and red shirts, and staged a sit-in at shops selling foreign goods.





## NOTES

**Atrocities and Protests:** The government committed inhuman atrocities to suppress the movement. Students were whipped, fines were imposed, and special police were appointed to spread terror. Officers were appointed to crush the agitation at Barisal and other places.

The government tried to crush the boycott movement by branding it as seditious and anti-Muslim. New laws were enacted to ban seditious gatherings, provocative articles, and explosive substances. But these measures could not suppress the Swadeshi spirit.

**Rise of Revolutionary Activities-** In response to government repression, secret committees were formed and revolutionary activities increased. Leaders like Arvind Ghosh, Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal were arrested. Thousands of people were put in jail. This slowed down the movement, but it did not end completely. Eventually, in 1909 the government had to scrap the plan of partition.

**Government's diplomacy and formation of Muslim League -** The government also used diplomatic tricks along with repression to crush the movement. On the one hand it lured the Muslims with special privileges, and on the other it tried to incite them against the Hindus.

Initially, Muslims participated in the movement, but as the movement became Hindu-religion centric, they began to withdraw from it. The government assured Muslims of proper representation in communal electorates and government jobs.

In October 1906, a Muslim delegation led by the Aga Khan met Lord Minto. In support of their demands, it was decided to establish the All India Muslim League under the leadership of Nawab Salimullah in Dhaka in *December 1906*.

**Influence of Muslim League:** In 1909, under the *Morley-Minto reforms*, Muslims were given separate representation. This increased the influence of the Muslim League. But the plan dashed the hopes of moderate Congress leaders. The movement gradually came to an end, and the role of the Muslim League in Indian politics became stronger.



---

## 8.16 PROMINENT REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS (IMPORTANT EXTREMIST LEADERS)

---

In the early stages of the Congress, the influence of liberal leaders was high. But dissatisfied with his policy of petition, a revolutionary radical party was formed within the Congress. This party gave a new direction to Indian politics and gave a militant form to the freedom struggle.

The main leaders of the revolutionary radical movement were Bal Gangadhar Tilak (Bal), Bipin Chandra Pal (Pal), and Lala Lajpat Rai (Lal) [**Lal-Bal-Pal**]. Along with them, Shri Aurobindo Ghosh also played an important role in this movement.

- **Bal Gangadhar Tilak 1856-1920** – Bal Gangadhar Tilak is ranked first among the militant leaders of the Congress. He imparted new momentum and intensity to the national movement. Tilak was dissatisfied with the soft policies of the Congress. He believed that self-government would be achieved not only through petitions and proposals, but through struggle. His role in Indian politics in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century was immense. The Indian public used to call him ‘Lokmanya’ with reverence and love.

Tilak was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1856 in a highly Chitpavan Brahmin family in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra. His father was a teacher, and his ancestors were in the service of the Peshwa. Tilak was brilliant since childhood. From his father, he learnt stories of brave Maratha chieftains and the events of the revolt of 1857, which instilled in him a sense of patriotism. Considering foreign rule as a curse, he resolved to serve the country at a young age.

In 1876, Tilak passed the first-class graduation examination in mathematics and studied law. They were greatly influenced by ancient Indian civilisation and culture. He tried to awaken among Indians self-respect and love of ancient glory and to organise and activate the general public for achieving political objectives.



## NOTES

### Tilak's Tenure: Split into Two Phases

Tilak's tenure can be divided into two phases:

1. **1880-1900:** During this time his activities were mainly confined to Maharashtra.
2. **1900-1920:** In this phase he played an active role in national politics.

**First phase (1880-1900)** - Tilak first tried to eradicate the feeling of inferiority from the minds of Indians. He founded the New English School in Poona with his friends in 1880 to spread patriotism and morality. This school infused new life into the Fatherland. Later, his efforts led to the establishment of *the Deccan Education Society* and *Fergusson College*.

Tilak published magazines called *Kesari* (Marathi) and *Maratha* (English) to arouse public opinion. These letters praised Indian culture and criticised the blind imitation of western civilization. He wrote articles on the birthplace of the Aryans to enhance Indian pride and taught Indians the lesson of morality and karma while interpreting the Gita. While in Mandalay jail, he wrote a book called *Gita Rahasya* in Marathi, in which he analysed the messages of the Gita.

**Religious and Social Renaissance-** Tilak resorted to religious festivals to organise the masses. He initiated the celebration of **Ganpati festival** and **Shivaji festival** on a large scale. Through these festivals, he spread political awareness in Maharashtra. For the physical and moral development of the youth, he established anti-cow slaughter committees and lathi-akhara clubs.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak joined the Congress in 1890, but his thinking was different from the moderate policies of the Congress from the beginning. He believed that the main objective of the Congress should be to achieve Swaraj and not to focus on social reforms that could be implemented even after independence.

Tilak put pressure on the Congress to adopt a programme that could get public support. He believed that the goal of Swaraj could be achieved only through popular resistance. He presented a four-point programme of national education, swadeshi, boycott and swaraj. Gandhi later adopted these programs, but the differences between the moderate and extremist factions of the Congress grew.

**Differences within Tilak and the Congress:** From 1895, the conflict between the moderate and extremist parties began to deepen. During the Amaravati session in



## NOTES

1897, Tilak's supporters demonstrated against Gokhale. Despite this confrontation, by 1902 Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Bipin Chandra Pal increased their influence over the Congress.

**Plague and Suppression of Government:** During the plague and famine in Maharashtra in 1897-98, the negligence of the government increased public resentment. The Plague Commissioner in Poona Mr. Rand was murdered. Tilak was accused of spreading anti-government agitations and was sentenced to 18 months in jail.

**The Surat Session and separation from Congress** - In 1907, the differences between the moderate and extremist parties reached a peak in the Surat session. Tilak had to leave the Congress and he launched a separate revolutionary extremist movement. In 1908, Tilak was tried for sedition, in which he was sentenced to six years in Mandalay Jail.

After his return from jail in 1914, Tilak resumed political activities. In 1916 he returned to the Congress and presided over the Lucknow session. He founded the Home Rule League with Annie Besant and promoted the Home Rule Movement in Maharashtra and Central India. His famous slogan, "Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it," reverberated throughout the country.

**Tilak and National Politics**-The announcement of constitutional reforms in 1917 was welcomed by Tilak but he also realised that by promoting communalism the government could slow down the pace of the movement. He collaborated with Gandhi to maintain the unity of the Congress and supported the Khilafat Movement.

In 1920, Tilak founded the Congress Democratic Party, which aimed at the creation of the Indian Union, establishing secularism, national wages, making Hindi the national language, and abolishing untouchability. But he died on August 1, 1920. On the same day, Gandhi started the Non-Cooperation Movement.

**Importance of Tilak** - Tilak was one of the great personalities of India. Gandhi admitted that no one had propagated Swaraj as strongly as Tilak. Tilak was not only a revolutionary leader but also a philosopher of a high order. He dreamt of an independent India, which included a Constituent Assembly, adult suffrage, women's rights, and social reforms.



## NOTES

Although Tilak could not fulfill all his objectives, he laid the foundation of the freedom struggle and paved the way for Gandhi. His contribution to Indian politics and freedom movement is invaluable. Tilak awakened a new consciousness in Maharashtra and converted it into active politics. His efforts gave a new direction to the Indian freedom struggle and inspired the masses to struggle for Swarajya.

- **Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928)** - Lala Lajpat Rai's name is prominent among the revolutionary extremist leaders of the Congress. Like Tilak, he also tried to bring new social and political consciousness in Punjab. The people of Punjab used to call him "Punjab Kesari" with respect.

Lala Lajpat Rai was born in 1865 in Punjab. His father was a school inspector. Lajpat Rai was of sharp intellect since childhood. He was deeply influenced by ancient Indian civilisation and culture and studied religion and culture. Lajpat Rai's political philosophy was inspired by the ideas of Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

After completing his education, Lala Lajpat Rai joined the Congress in 1888. But he was dissatisfied with the moderate leaders and their begging policy. Together with Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal, he formed a revolutionary extremist group and opposed the peaceful policies of the Congress.

In 1905, at the Benares Congress session, the revolutionary extremists held a separate meeting from the Congress pandal. Lajpat Rai said, "If India wants to attain freedom, she will have to give up alms and stand on her own feet."

After the split of the Congress in 1907, Lala Lajpat Rai separated from the Congress. He started a major movement against the "Colonisation Act" in Punjab. Together with Lala Hardayal, he also participated in revolutionary movements. Due to this, the government arrested him and deported him from India.

During his exile, Lajpat Rai moved to America, from where he continued to work against British rule. He also wrote a book on the plight of India, which was banned by the government.



## NOTES

Lajpat Rai returned to India in 1920. At that time Mahatma Gandhi was preparing for the Non-Cooperation Movement. Lajpat Rai participated in the movement and made it successful in Punjab. Angered by his actions, the government arrested him and sent him to jail. In 1923 he was elected a member of the Central Assembly. He joined the Swaraj Dal but later broke away and formed the National Party. In 1925, he became the president of the Calcutta session of the Hindu Mahasabha.

Lajpat Rai also participated in the boycott of the Simon Commission in 1928. He led a procession to protest against the Simon Commission in Lahore. During this, the police lathi-charged the protesters, in which they suffered serious injuries. He died on November 17, 1928 as a result of these injuries.

The untimely death of Lala Lajpat Rai stunned the entire country. His sacrifice and contribution gave new energy to the freedom struggle. He was a fearless leader, a true nationalist and a source of inspiration. His role in the Indian freedom struggle was invaluable.

- **Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932)** – Bipin Chandra Pal was born in 1858 in the Sylhet district of Assam. He considered foreign rule to be a curse and was full of a sense of nationalism in them. Soon he joined the freedom movement and joined the Congress. His political views were similar to those of Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai.

**Role in the Congress** - Within the Congress, Bipin Chandra Pal opposed the moderate ideology and supported the radical leaders. He strongly opposed the partition of Bengal made by Lord Curzon in 1905. His role was important in the anti-partition movement of Bengal. He also took active part in the spread of the Swadeshi Movement.

In 1908, the government asked him to testify in the trial of Aurobindo Ghosh, which he refused. As a result of this, the government prosecuted him for contempt of court. In this case, he was sentenced to six months in jail.

After his release from jail, he went abroad and continued activities against British rule from there. Returning to India three years later, he again joined active politics.



## NOTES

Bipin Chandra Pal did not agree with Mahatma Gandhi's peaceful policies and non-cooperation movement. Therefore, during the Non-Cooperation Movement he separated from the Congress. However, his political activities continued even after being outside the Congress.

**Opportunistic Ideas and Contributions** - This great revolutionary radical leader died in 1932. He, along with Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai, gave a strong place to the revolutionary extremist ideology in Indian politics. He was an independent thinker and a proponent of gentle nationalism. He believed that self-government should be achieved by the people's own efforts and not by accepting it as a gift or reward from the government.

**Democratic Swarajya and Contribution** - He wanted to establish democratic self-government in India. His role in the freedom movement of Bengal was extremely important. Bipin Chandra Pal was the foremost leader of the Indian freedom struggle and gave a new direction to the freedom movement.

- **Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950)** – Aurobindo Ghosh was a great philosopher and politician. Chittaranjan Das called him “a poet of patriotism, a messiah of nationalism and a lover of humanity”. His intellect was extremely sharp. He was born on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1872 in Bengal. His father's name was Dr. Krishna Ghosh.

Aurobindo Ghosh meditated deeply in his early education and acquired knowledge of many languages. He also learned English, Latin, French, German and Italian languages along with Bengali and Sanskrit. He was greatly influenced by the great revolutions and history of the world. They considered British culture to be materialistic and suicidal. Inspired by Bankim Chandra's book *Anandmath*, he idolised the worship of *Bharat Mata* and *Vande Mataram*.

In 1889 he entered Cambridge University for higher education. In London, he sat for the ICS examination but could not succeed. At the same time, he joined a secret organisation called **Kamal and Katar** and pledged to serve the country for life.



## NOTES

In 1893, he returned to India and became a professor of English at Baroda College. He was dissatisfied with the moderate policies of the Congress. In 1893-94, he wrote an article in the magazine *Indu Prakash* under a pseudonym criticising the policies of the Congress. At the time of the partition of Bengal, he opposed the British and promoted the Swadeshi movement.

He was also associated with revolutionary secret committees and did not believe in non-violence. He was accused in the Alipore bomb case. His edited newspaper **Vande Mataram** carried the message of revolution from house to house. His life goal was nationalism, freedom, and spiritual advancement.

**Pondicherry Migration and Spiritual Life** - In 1910, he left Calcutta and moved to Pondicherry. There he established an ashram and spent his time in spiritual contemplation. He propagated his ideas through a magazine called *Karma*.

Even while living in Pondicherry, he did not completely withdraw from politics. Leaders like Chittaranjan Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Purushottam Das Tandon went there for consultation with him.

**Later life and contribution** - In 1932, he criticised the acceptance of communal electorate by the Congress. He supported Britain during the Second World War and congratulated the Cripps Mission on its arrival in India. He expressed happiness over India's independence.

He died on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1950 in Pondicherry. He continued to work for the spiritual and national upliftment of Indians throughout his life.

**Importance and Ideas** - Aurobindo Ghosh deeply influenced Indian politics and philosophy. He was a true worshipper of nationalism and humanity. His escape from Calcutta in 1910 was criticised, but he continued to work for nationalism and spiritual development.

According to Tarachand, Aurobindo Ghosh envisioned the ideals and programmes which Mahatma Gandhi gave practical shape to and culminated in the attainment of independence. His life and contribution will always be remembered in Indian history.





NOTES

## 8.17 THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

### 8.17.1 Emergence of the Revolutionary Movement and Evolution in India

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, India witnessed the rise of revolutionary extremism as well as revolutionary extremist movements. The same reasons that led to the rise of revolutionary extremism gave rise to revolutionary extremism in Indian politics. A group of radical nationalists emerged as radical revolutionaries. The aim of this group was to end the British power by force.

**Stages of Movement** - This movement can be divided into two stages:

1. Before the First World War.
2. After the First World War.

**Revolutionary activities** - Revolutionaries formed secret organisations and collected weapons. They looted government treasuries and murdered British officials or traitors. Their activities were mainly concentrated in Maharashtra, Bengal and Punjab.

**Organisation and Expansion** - Revolutionary organisations were established in other parts of the country and abroad as well. These organisations aimed to end British rule through armed struggle. Their plans were based on secret conspiracies and revolutionary activities. Thus, revolutionary radicalism gave a new dimension to the Indian freedom struggle and further intensified the struggle against the British.

### 8.17.2 The Start and Spread of the Revolutionary Movement in Maharashtra

The first wave of extremism started in Maharashtra and soon spread across India. The first revolutionary organisation was founded in Poona in 1896-97 by Damodar Hari Chaphekar and Balkrishna Hari Chapekar. Its name was *Vayayam Mandal*. The aim of this organisation was to create a group of youth who are ready to sacrifice their lives for the country.



## NOTES

**The Chapekar brothers and their revolutionary activities** - This organisation demonstrated its protest by spraying on the statue of Queen Victoria in Bombay. Subsequently, they murdered two British officers named Rand and Amherst. After these murders, the Chapekar brothers were hanged and Tilak was arrested.

In 1904, an organisation called Mitra Mela was established in Nasik, whose prominent members were Ganesh Damodar Savarkar and Damodar Savarkar. Later, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar formed a secret revolutionary organisation called Abhinav Bharat. The organisation also established branches outside Maharashtra in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.

**Revolutionary Activities and Punishment** - This organisation imported weapons from abroad to fulfill its objectives and made bombs with the help of Russians. Nasik was the main centre of this organisation. Many clandestine institutions were also active in places like Bombay, Poona, Nasik, Kolhapur and Nagpur.

The government became aware of these activities and launched repressive action. Ganesh Damodar Savarkar was exiled from India. Several people, including Damodar Savarkar, were tried in **Nasik conspiracy case** for the murder of District Magistrate Jackson. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and sent to Kalapani.

**Downfall of the revolutionary Movement** - The revolutionary extremists also planned to kill Gopal Krishna Gokhale, but it was postponed. These revolutionaries received covert help from the merchant class and feudatories. But by 1910, due to the repressive policies of the government and lack of funds, revolutionary extremist organisations disintegrated in Maharashtra.

### 8.17.3 Evolution of the Flame of the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal

Like Maharashtra, revolutionary extremist ideology was propagated in Bengal too. The plan for partition of Bengal, the public anger against it, and the repressive policies of the government gave rise to extremist activities.

**Establishment and activities of Anushilan Samiti** - Anushilan Samiti was established in 1903. It was supported by Pramathanatha Mitra, Chittaranjan Das,



## NOTES

Aurobindo Ghosh and Sister Nivedita. This committee openly taught exercise to the youth, but also secretly trained them in revolutionary work.

This committee grew rapidly during the Swadeshi Movement of Bengal. An office of the committee was also opened in Dhaka. Its members were taught guerrilla warfare and armed struggle was said to be necessary for independence. The organisation also propagated revolution in Bihar, Madras, and Orissa.

**Media and Message of Revolution** - The committee published a magazine called *Yugantar*, which took the message of revolution to every household. Apart from this, books like *Bhavani Mandir*, *Current Strategy*, and *Mukti Kaun Path* carried forward the revolutionary ideology.

**Revolutionary activities** - Due to these activities, extremism intensified in Bengal.

- **1907:** Plans were made to blow up the train of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal near Mendingipur.
- **1908:** Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose threw a bomb at District Judge Kingsford of Muzaffarpur, but he escaped. Khudiram was hanged, and Chaki shot himself to evade arrest.

**Alipore Conspiracy and its Effects** - After these incidents, the government raided the hideouts of the revolutionaries in Calcutta. Several persons were arrested and prosecuted under the Alipore Conspiracy. In this case, a revolutionary Narendranath Gosai became an informer, who was shot dead in jail by Kanhailal Dutt and Satyendra Bose.

The killings of the public prosecutor and the deputy superintendent of police were also part of these incidents. Many revolutionaries were hanged and many were sentenced to Kalapani.

**Dacca and Howrah Conspiracy:** In 1910, the *Dhaka Conspiracy* and the *Howrah Conspiracy* took place. Revolutionary activities intensified in Barisal and other places as well.



**Table 8.1** Indian Revolutionary Organisation: At a Glance

Organisation	Installing as of an idol	Founder	Installation Location
Vyayam Mandala	1896-97 AD	Damodar and Balkrishna Chapekar brothers	Pune (Maharashtra)
Mitra Mela	1899 A.D.	V.D. Savarkar	Nashik (Maharashtra)
Abhinav Bharat Samaj	1904 A.D.	V.D. Savarkar and Ganesh Savarkar	Maharashtra
Dhaka Anushilan Samiti	1905 A.D.	P. Mitra & Pulin Das	Bengal
Anushilan Samiti	1907 A.D.	Barindra Kumar Ghosh, Bhupendranath Dutt, Prabodh Mitra, Pulin Das and Satish Chandra Bose	Calcutta
Hindustan Republican Association	1924 A.D.	Sachindranath Sanyal	Kanpur
Hindustan Socialist Republican Association	1928 A.D.	Chandra Shekhar Azad	Delhi
Indian Republican Army	1930 A.D.	Surya Sen	Chittagong

## NOTES

**Repression of the government and the collapse of the movement** - The government launched a cycle of repression on the revolutionary extremists. Many revolutionaries were hanged, arrested, or exiled. Due to these repressive policies, extremist organisations were weakened and the movement began to disintegrate.

### Conclusion

In Bengal, the revolutionaries gave a new direction to the freedom movement. Although government repression attempted to break these organisations, their spirit and sacrifice left an indelible mark in the Indian freedom struggle.

#### 8.17.4 Revolutionary Activities in Punjab and Delhi

The revolutionary activities of Bengal also had an impact on Punjab and Delhi. Around 1907, discontent spread among the peasants of Punjab due to the colonial bill. It was led by Ajit Singh and Syed Haider Raja.



## NOTES

**Revolutionary activities in Punjab-** Ajit Singh established a revolutionary organisation called *Mahibbane Watan*. Lala Hardayal and Lala Lajpat Rai were also active in these activities. The government arrested Lajpat Rai, but Ajit Singh managed to escape. The revolutionaries wrote provocative books and articles, including magazines such as *Qaumi Islah*, *Peshwa* and *Bedari*. These were distributed through *Vande Mataram* Book Agency and Bharat Mata Book Agency.

The government raided these agencies and shut them down. After the arrest of Lajpat Rai and Lala Hardayal's departure abroad, extremist activities in Punjab slowed down. Rashbehari Bose tried to save these activities.

**Revolutionary activities in Delhi-** The revolutionaries in Delhi were led by Master Amirchand. In 1912 a bomb was thrown at Lord Hardinge, injuring the Viceroy and killing one of his servants.

**Government's Response:** After this incident, the government arrested the suspects and prosecuted them. Master Amirchand and the bomb throwers (Basant Biswas and Manmath Biswas) were sentenced to death. Rashbehari Bose fled to Japan and continued revolutionary activities from there.

### Conclusion

In Punjab and Delhi, **the revolutionaries** played an important role in the freedom struggle. Although these activities were slowed down by the repression of the government, the spirit and sacrifice of the revolutionaries gave new impetus to the freedom struggle.

### 8.17.5 Revolutionary Activities in Other Parts of India

Revolutionary extremist activities were continuing in other parts of the country as well.

**Movement in Madras-** This movement in Madras was led by Bipin Chandra Pal. Inspired by his ideas, many people joined this movement. In 1911, Mr. Ash, the District Magistrate of Tinneyveli, was shot dead at the railway station. Neelkanth Iyer and V. V. S. Iyer promoted revolutionary activities in Madras.

**Movement in Rajasthan-** In Rajasthan, Arjun Lal Sethi, Kesari Singh Barhath and Rao Gopal Singh organised revolutionary activities. In Ajmer, Pratap Singh kept the spirit of revolution alive.



**Movement in Madhya Pradesh-** Ganesh Shri Krishna Khaparde of Amravati was a prominent revolutionary in Madhya Pradesh.

**Movement in Uttar Pradesh (United Provinces)** - Banaras became the main center of revolutionaries of Agra and Awadh in Uttar Pradesh. Sunderlal *propagated revolutionary ideas through magazines called Swarajya and Karmayogi.*

**Movement in Bihar- Revolutionary activities spread rapidly** in places like Patna, Deoghar, and Dumka in Bihar. Teachers of the B.N. college and Patna Law College Kamakhya Nath Mitra, Sudhir Kumar Singh, Puneetlal, and Babu Mangala Charan actively supported the revolutionary movement.

These revolutionary leaders and their activities gave impetus to the Indian freedom struggle and ignited the flame of revolution all over the country. His sacrifice became an inspiration in the Indian independence movement.

#### **8.17.6 Revolutionary organisations and Revolutionary Activities Spread from India to Abroad**

**Revolutionary** activities were not limited to India alone. Many revolutionaries went abroad to escape the grip of the British and continued their movement from there. It also resulted in the formation of revolutionary organisations in places such as London, Paris, North America, Germany, Japan, Burma, Malaya, Bangkok and China.

**Revolutionary organisations in London- In 1905**, Shyamji Krishna Varma founded the *India Home Rule Society* in London. He started a journal called *Indian Sociologist* and declared Swaraj in India as his goal. He *founded* the India House, which became the hub of extremist activities.

The government's eyes fell on them, and they went to Paris. He was replaced by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Savarkar wrote his famous book *The War of Indian Independence of 1857*. Revolutionary activities increased in London. In July 1909, Madan Lal Dhingra was appointed the ADC to the Secretary of State, Colonel Sir William Curzon Wylie was shot. Dhingra was hanged, and Savarkar was arrested and sent to India, where he was exiled to the country.



## NOTES

Sardar Singhji Reva Bhai Rana and Smt. Bhikhaji Cama were leading the revolutionary activities in Paris and other foreign centres.

**Ghadar Party and Revolution in North America** - Lala Hardayal and his associates founded the **Ghadar Party** in San Francisco. He published a weekly called “**Ghadar**”, which encouraged the movement. The aim of the Ghadar Party was to promote revolt against the British rule.

### Other foreign efforts

- A revolutionary paper called **Talvar** was published in Berlin.
- Revolutionaries met Kamal Pasha in London.
- Indian and Egyptian revolutionaries held a joint conference in Brussels.
- Gurudwaras in Bangkok and China became major centers of revolutionary ideas.

### Conclusion

Indian revolutionaries gave a new direction to the freedom struggle in India and abroad. Their clandestine activities and the establishment of organisations abroad gave recognition to the Indian independence movement on the international stage.

**Table 8.2** Revolutionary organisations Operating Abroad: At a Glance

Constitution of the Body	Year of Establishment	Founder	Place of Origin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• India Home Rule Society</li><li>• Indian Independence</li><li>• Hind Association</li><li>• Ghadar Party</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1905 A.D.</li><li>1907 A.D.</li><li>1913 A.D.</li><li>1913 A.D.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shyamji Krishna Varma</li><li>Taraknath Das</li><li>Sohan Singh Bhakna</li><li>Lala Hardayal, Ramchandra, Barkatullah</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>England</li><li>America</li><li>America</li><li>San Francisco (USA)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indian Independence League and Independent Government</li><li>• Indian Independence League</li><li>• Azad Hind Fauj</li><li>• Paris-Indian Society</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1915 A.D.</li><li>1942 A.D.</li><li>1942 A.D.</li><li>1905 A.D.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Raja Mahendra Pratap</li><li>Rash Behari Bose</li><li>Mohan Singh</li><li>Madam Cama</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Afghanistan</li><li></li><li>Japan</li><li>Japan</li><li>Paris</li></ul>



**Table 8.3** Important Newspapers, Magazines, and Books Related to Revolutionary and Extremist Activities

Newspapers/Books	Editors & Publications
Epochal	Varindra Kumar Ghosh, Bhupendra Nath Dutt
evening	Mukhda Charan
Bandematararam	Arvind Ghosh
landowner	Sirajuddin
Bharat Mata	Ajit Singh
Indian Sociologist	Shyamji Krishna Varma
Vande Mataram	Madame Cama (London)
mother	Hardayal (New York)
Captive Life	Sachindra Nath Sanyal
Indian Freedom Struggle	B.D. Savarkar
Bhavani Mandir	Arvind Ghosh
Current Strategy	Barindra Kumar Ghosh
Pather Davi	Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay
Bomb Manual	P.L. Bapat

## NOTES

### 8.17.7 Preparations for the First World War and Armed Revolt 1914-1919: Revolutionary Extremism the First Phase and the End

By 1913 the revolutionary movement had weakened. The reason for this was government repression, organisational weakness, lack of funds and public support, and the failure of plans due to some traitors. But when the First World War broke out in 1914, the revolutionaries again got a golden opportunity.

**Planning of Revolt and Role of Institutions** - A plan was made to overthrow British power through armed rebellion in India and abroad.

- The Indian Independence Committee, which was established in Berlin, and the Ghadar Party of America inspired Indians to revolt.
- The Ghadar Party planned to send a large number of Indians to India so that they could revolt with the help of local revolutionaries and the army.
- Weapons were arranged and expenses were arranged.
- Secret contacts were established with soldiers in India, South-East Asia, and the Far East, preparing them for rebellion.





## NOTES

21<sup>st</sup> February 1915 was fixed as the day to start the revolt in Punjab. The ***Komagata Maru incident*** further fuelled the public anger. Unfortunately, the Government came to know of these schemes and crushed them with a stern hand.

- Many revolutionaries and soldiers were arrested.
- A large number of revolutionaries were hanged.
- The Fifth Light Infantry Battalion in Singapore revolted in February 1915, which the government brutally suppressed.

**Other uprisings and failures** - Rebellion attempts in Siam, Andaman,, and Burma also failed.

- The occupation of Andaman and Burma was planned, which was unsuccessful.
- The first provisional government of India was formed in December 1915 by the efforts of Raja Mahendra Pratap, Barkatullah, and Obaidullah in Kabul. Mahendra Pratap was its president.
- This government sought assistance from Germany, Russia, and Nepal, but to no avail.

**Revolutionary Movement and Repression in Bengal** - A plan was made to liberate Bengal. During this time, Jatin Mukherjee (*Bagha Jatin*) was killed by police bullets in Balasore. The government took drastic measures to suppress the revolutionaries.

- Thousands of people were arrested in Punjab.
- ***The Lahore Conspiracy Trial*** broke the power of the revolutionaries of Punjab.

By 1919, international and Indian politics had changed.

- England's victory in the First World War dealt a severe blow to the revolutionary movement.
- Many leaders were arrested, killed, or hanged.

Thus, by 1919, the first phase of revolutionary extremism had ended. Although this movement may have been unsuccessful, it strengthened the spirit of revolution and sacrifice in the freedom struggle.



## NOTES

- **The Second Phase of Revolutionary Movement** - By 1919, the revolutionary activities had weakened, but the spirit of revolt did not end. The failure of the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1921 gave a fresh impetus to extremist activities. This time the influence of socialist ideology increased in the movement. The old secret institutions of Bengal became active again.

This time the need for an all-India revolutionary organisation was felt. In October 1924, a revolutionary conference was held in Kanpur. Leaders like Sachindranath Sanyal, Ramprasad Bismil, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Bhagwati Charan Verma, and Chandrashekhar Azad attended the meeting. This was followed by the establishment of the **Hindustan Republican Association**.

The main objectives of this organisation were:

1. To create public opinion against Gandhi's non-violent policies.
2. Taking direct action for freedom.
3. Establishment of a Federal Republic in India.

**Major Activities and Kakori Conspiracy** - To fulfill its objectives, the organisation planned to manufacture weapons and loot the government treasury.

- In 1925 there was a Kakori train robbery, in which the English treasury was looted.
- After this incident, four people, including Ramprasad Bismil, and Ashfaqullah Khan, were hanged, and many were imprisoned for life.
- This incident weakened the organisation, but did not break the moral of the revolutionaries.

**Hindustan Socialist Republican Association** - In 1928, Chandra Shekhar Azad took over the leadership and changed the name of the organisation to **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association**.

- In the same year, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Chandrashekhar Azad killed Assistant Police Captain Saunders in Lahore. Saunders was the same officer who lathi-charged Lala Lajpat Rai in protest against the Simon Commission, which led to his death.



## NOTES

- In April 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw a bomb at the Central Legislative Assembly of Delhi. They surrendered after throwing the bomb.

**Chittagong Revolt and other incidents** - In 1930, Surya Sen attacked the government armory of Chittagong and killed many British officers. He declared himself the head of the provincial independent Indian government in Chittagong. Women also participated in the campaign.

### **Repression of the Government and Sacrifice of Revolutionaries**

The government frightened by these events intensified the repression.

- The revolutionaries continued to struggle even in prisons. Jatin Das gave up his life after a 63-day hunger strike to protest against the mismanagement of the jail.
- **Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, and Rajguru** were hanged on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1931 in the Lahore conspiracy case.
- Chandra Shekhar Azad was martyred in a police encounter in Allahabad in February 1931.
- Surya Sen was hanged in 1933.

**End of the Movement** - After these events, revolutionary extremist organisations disintegrated. Until 1947, there were occasional revolutionary activities, but organised efforts could not take place.

### **Conclusion**

The revolutionaries breathed life into the freedom struggle with their courage and sacrifice. His activities further reinforced the spirit of freedom in India. Their sacrifice is etched in golden letters in Indian history.

---

## **8.18 REASONS FOR THE FAILURE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT**

---

The attempt to overthrow the British power by force in India could not succeed. The revolutionary movement failed for several reasons.



### **1. Lack of public support**

- The revolutionaries could not get widespread support from the masses.
- Most of the people stayed away from these activities and some even helped the government in arresting the revolutionaries.

### **2. Weakness of the organisation**

- The revolutionary organisations were not strong.
- They had a severe shortage of money, weapons and means of communication.

### **3. Dominance of the government machinery**

- The revolutionaries had to work in extreme conditions.
- They could not cope with the powerful government machinery.

### **4. Impact of Gandhiji's Non-Violence**

- Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent policy and his movement influenced the public.
- Due to this, the influence of the revolutionaries gradually began to decrease.

---

## **8.19 EVALUATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT**

---

Even though the revolutionaries could not achieve their main objectives and their success was limited to the attack and assassination of some British officers, the importance of their sacrifice was not diminished.

### **1. Strengthening the spirit of patriotism and freedom**

- Their sacrifice strengthened the spirit of patriotism and freedom in the public mind.
- Their work inspired the youth and energised the freedom struggle.



## NOTES

### 2. Psychological and emotional impact

- The sacrifices of the revolutionaries had a profound emotional and psychological impact on the masses.
- Their martyrdom boosted the moral of the people who fought for freedom.

### 3. Support for the Moderates

- Moderate leaders also lauded his contribution.
- Mahatma Gandhi also praised revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh.

### 4. Inspirational Role

- According to a historian, “The revolutionary added an inspiring and vivid chapter in the history of the freedom movement.”
- Their bold plans, fearlessness in the face of dangers, and instinct to accept death simply immortalised them in the memory of the nation.

### Conclusion

Although the revolutionaries may not have achieved their goal completely, their sacrifice and courage became a symbol of inspiration and pride in the history of the Indian freedom struggle. Their contribution will always be remembered.

---

## 8.20 MODERATE AND EXTREMIST: AN ANALYSIS

---

The moderate party and the extreme party had many things in common, but there was a difference in their political approach and methodology. We shall consider the differences that led to the division of the Congress at Surat in 1907. It will also be considered how this division affected the national movement. Tilak had said that as far as appealing to reforms from the bureaucracy was concerned, both the old (moderate parties) and the new (extreme parties) considered it ineffective and futile. The old party believed in the meaningfulness of appealing to the British nation, but the new party did not believe in it. Like the moderate party, Tilak also believed that industries had been destroyed under British rule and the country's wealth had been sucked out



## NOTES

and Indians had been brought to the lowest line of poverty, but Tilak believed that these problems could not be solved by petitions. The Garam Dal believed that the Indians themselves should have the keys to their houses and that self-government should be the goal of the Indians. The new party wanted Indians to understand that their future lay in their own hands and that they could not be free unless they determined themselves to be free. Tilak did not want Indians to resort to arms to achieve self-rule, but he wanted Indians to develop their power of self-sacrifice and self-restraint in such a way that foreign power would not help them to rule over them. Tilak advised the countrymen to set up their courts (e.g. gram panchayats etc.) and also stop paying taxes to the government when the need of the hour arose. Tilak claimed, “Swarajya is my birthright, I shall have it.” Aurobindo Ghosh’s philosophical fanaticism aimed higher than Tilak. According to him, the Indian government was corrupted by corrupt Western influence. To avoid this corruption, the present deplorable conditions of India have to be changed and we have to return to our great and noble culture. In his view, the goals of nationalism were to achieve Swaraj for India, so that the pollution of the political sphere would end. The mite of social and political malice that is eating all over Europe should be completely eradicated in India, and it should be ensured that when Swaraj is achieved, it is Swadeshi Swaraj and not any foreign style imported from Europe. That is why, in his view, the first expression of Swaraj was in the Swadeshi spirit. This Swadeshi sentiment was not only against the use of foreign goods but also against foreign conduct, behavior, dress, etiquette, and foreign education and aimed at orienting the countrymen towards their civilisation.

From the above discussion, it is seen that although the extremists used more aggressive and sharp language, there was no significant difference between the moderate party and the target as far as the target was concerned. As mentioned earlier, Gokhale in his Presidential Address (Benares, 1905) and Dadabhai Naoroji in his Presidential Address (Calcutta, 1906) had mentioned self-government and Swaraj respectively as the goals of the Congress, the difference being in the way the two parties had achieved. Clash of Personalities Apart from the differences mentioned above in approach and priorities, the differences between the moderate party and the extreme party were about Tilak’s personality. Both Tilak and Gokhale were from Poona. Tilak was a fanatic and he used to speak ill of the government in every possible way. His writings



## NOTES

were very powerful and he influenced the public through his letters “**Maratha**” and “**Kesari**”. Gokhale was polite and soft-spoken. He had a good grasp of Indian financial problems.

His skills in the Imperial Legislative Council were noticeable. He was adept at showing the hollowness of the government’s claims of achievements, especially in the economic field. In the eyes of the people, he was the honorable Mr. Gokhale (Mahamana Gokhale). He founded the Servants of India Society in Poona with the aim of training a team of dedicated workers to serve the motherland. The members of the society had to take an oath and lead a life of poverty and had to strictly observe purity of conduct. They had to do hard labour and got money only for subsistence in the name of salary. To know the differences between Tilak and Gokhale, one has to go back a bit. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the two men clashed vigorously in Poona. Tilak and G. G. Agarkar had developed animosity, although both were colleagues in the Deccan Education Society. In the end, Tilak was expelled from this society. Since then, there has been a continuous fight between Tilak’s followers and his opponents. Tilak’s opponents were followers of Mahadev Govind Ranade and Gokhale and had the support of Ferozeshah Mehta of Mumbai in Congress events. Gokhale also had the support of the Congress organisation. As the popularity and influence of the moderate party declined, and the growth of extremism captured the hearts and minds of the countrymen, the conflict between the two rival parties in Maharashtra, particularly in Poona, became more and more bitter and more pronounced and clear. Excitement was raging all over India.

Under the leadership of Aurobindo Ghosh, the echo of Vande Mataram not only challenged the right of the British government to rule India but also challenged the right of the veteran leaders to speak on behalf of the Indian people. Tilak was the first leader outside Bengal who recognised the provocation and inherent power of Bengal. In Tilak’s view, the partition of Bengal was a mistake of the British, but more than that, it was an opportunity when Indians could increase their power (through organisation and unity), they extended their support to the movement against the partition of Bengal and encouraged the emerging extremist leaders in Bengal. From the 1905 session of the Congress in Benares, Gokhale had seen an alliance between Tilak and the extremists of Bengal. This alliance of Tilak and Pal had created a formidable problem for the

*Self-Instructional*

332 *Material*



## NOTES

government, as well as a headache for many Congress leaders. Tilak was at least seen as a disgruntled leader, if not a rebel. Ferozeshah Mehta, D.E. Wacha, and the entire Bombay faction looked at Tilak with disbelief right from the time of the controversies that arose in the last decade of the 19th century. These differences were partly due to differences in temperament. For at least the last fifteen years, there was a cold war going on in the Congress organisation with the Mehta-led faction on one side and Tilak and his followers on the other.

---

### 8.21 RESULT

---

Due to the failure of the revolutionary movement, the attempt to overthrow the British government in India by force could not succeed. The revolutionaries failed in this task. There were many reasons for their failure. The biggest reason was that the revolutionaries could not get public support. Most people abstained from these activities. Not only this, many Indians also helped the government in catching the revolutionaries. The organisation of revolutionary extremists was weak. Their means were limited. They lacked money, weapons, and communications. They had to work in very difficult conditions. As a result, they failed to cope with the government machinery. Even with the propagation of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent policy, the influence of extremist on the masses began to diminish. As a result, the revolutionary militancy gradually came to an end. Though the revolutionaries could not succeed in their objectives, their success was limited to the attack and assassination of a few British officers, but this does not diminish the importance of their martyrdom. Their sacrifice furthered the spirit of patriotism and freedom. The sacrifices of the revolutionaries had a psychological and emotional impact on the masses. Moderates also praise their contribution to the national freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi himself praised Bhagat Singh. According to one historian, "The revolutionary nationalists added a new and inspiring chapter in the history of the freedom movement. Their perilous deeds, bold plans, measured actions, and the incongruity of death earned them a permanent place in the memory of the nation."





## NOTES

### 8.22 SUMMARY

The first twenty-five years of the Congress were very important because it was during this period that the main demands of the national movement were presented. Initially, the Congress made liberal demands and adopted a polite and constitutional method to achieve them. The early leaders analysed and showed how the British were systematically draining India's wealth. They understood that due to this economic exploitation, the poverty of the people was increasing continuously. Within a few years, a section in Congress began to consider the methods of the moderate party as ineffective. This class wanted to actively oppose the British. Its main demand was swaraj (self-rule). This internal strife led to the division of the Congress in 1907. For a while, this split weakened the Congress. The Congress' greatest achievement in its first phase was that it was able to mobilise significant sections of the Indian people against the British through the Swadeshi movement (which was launched to protest against the partition of Bengal). By the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, there was growing discontent against the moderate policies of the Congress. The old leaders of the Congress and their begging policy had made the position of the Congress ridiculous. As a result, a new young party emerged in the Congress which became a strong critic of the hypocrisy and ideals of the old leaders. As a result, the Congress began to split into two factions, liberals and extremists or moderates and extremists. The process of this split started in 1895 AD when Tilak and his associates fought with Gokhale and Ranade in the Poona public meeting and challenged their rights. Gradually, this difference between the two parties increased. This divide was further intensified by the partition of Bengal and the Congress' response to it. At the Surat session in 1907, the Congress was clearly divided into two parties, the moderate party and the extreme party. This partition gave rise to fierce nationalism in India. This radical nationalism eventually led to the development of the revolutionary movement which played an important role in the Indian freedom struggle. Many factors contributed to the growth of militant nationalism.

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the 'extreme party' that emerged in the Congress was strongly critical of the ideals and methods of struggle (petition,

*Self-Instructional*

334 *Material*



## NOTES

correspondence, etc.) of the old leaders. The motto of extremists was ‘Swaraj’ which they wanted to achieve through self-reliance and self-confidence. However, these nationalists did not have any well-organised political philosophy. The political ideals and practices of its main leaders – Arvind Ghosh, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai were also different, such as Tilak’s Swaraj was a kind of ‘self-rule’ but Aurobindo’s Swaraj was completely independent from the control of the British. Not only this, but the views of some of these leaders also changed according to the time, such as Tilak, who was a staunch opponent of the government from the beginning, who agreed to cooperate with the government in the last round.

However, all the members of the Garam Dal spoke of democracy, constitution, and swadeshi and wanted to continuously expand the social base of the national movement. These people brought out many newspapers and spread their message to a large section of society. These people had a firm belief that the British would not leave India without any direct action and pressure. That is why they inspired people to adopt tools like non-cooperation, resistance, mass movement, social boycott, self-reliance, use of indigenous products, power to bear suffering. They also wanted the maximum participation of Indians in the administration of India and an end to government exploitation.

---

## 8.23 GLOSSARY

---

- **Inclusion:** Living together or in one place, one thing being under another.
- **Elite:** Elite.
- **Goodwill:** Gentleman, good-minded.
- **Bureaucracy:** A government in which all authority is in the hands of the top bureaucrats.
- **Expiration:** Termination.
- **Follow:** Trailing.
- **Syncretist:** One who is in harmony with cause and effect, who is in harmony.



## NOTES

- **Spiritual:** Spiritual or soul-related. Brahma and Jiva relatives.
- **Determination:** A resolution made.
- **Inevitability:** That which is going to happen, that which is not postponed.
- **Exile:** Expulsion from the village, town, country, etc., as a punishment.
- **Beginning:** The beginning or commencement of a task.

---

## 8.24 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

---

### 8.24.1 In-Text Questions

1. Who is known as the leader of the moderates in the Indian National Congress?  
A) Bal Gangadhar Tilak  
B) Lala Lajpat Rai  
C) Dadabhai Naoroji  
D) Bipin Chandra Pal
2. In which year the Surat session of the Congress was attended by the moderates and There was a split among the extremists?  
A) 1905  
B) 1906  
C) 1907  
D) 1911
3. What was the main objective of the moderates?  
A) Complete independence from British rule  
B) Gradual Reforms within the British Rule  
C) Violent resistance against colonial rule  
D) Establishment of the Socialist Republic

*Self-Instructional*



**NOTES**

4. Who is known as the father of Indian discontent?
  - A) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - B) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
  - C) Subhash Chandra Bose
  - D) Mahatma Gandhi
5. What methods did the extremists believe in to achieve their goals?
  - A) Petitions and Dialogues
  - B) Fierce protests and boycotts
  - C) Participating in the British administration
  - D) Peaceful Dialogue
6. What was the major difference between the moderates and extremists?
  - A) The Role of Women in Politics
  - B) Support for British rule
  - C) Methods of struggle
  - D) Religious Beliefs
7. Who among the following was a prominent moderate leader?
  - A) Arvind Ghosh
  - B) Lala Lajpat Rai
  - C) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
  - D) Bipin Chandra Pal
8. What was the main demand of the moderates?
  - A) Tatkal Swaraj
  - B) Complete independence
  - C) Expansion of Legislative Councils
  - D) Fierce resistance to British rule



**NOTES**

9. In Bengal, who were the leaders of the extremists?
  - A) Bipin Chandra Pal
  - B) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
  - C) Surendranath Banerjee
  - D) Dadabhai Naoroji
10. What is the famous slogan associated with extremist leaders?
  - A) “Swaraj is my birthright.”
  - B) “Glory be to the king.”
  - C) “Vande Mataram”
  - D) “Divide and rule.”
11. Who led the extremist group?
  - A) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
  - B) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
  - C) Annie Besant
  - D) Jawaharlal Nehru
12. What philosophy did the moderates believe in?
  - A) passive resistance
  - B) Armed Rebellion
  - C) Constitutional Reforms
  - D) Complete independence
13. In Indian Politics what event marked the beginning of the rise of extremists?
  - A) non-co-operation movement
  - B) Partition of Bengal, 1905
  - C) Civil disobedience movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi against the British rule
  - D) Quit India Movement



**NOTES**

14. Which of the following organisations was founded by the extremists?
  - A) Indian National Congress
  - B) Home Rule League
  - C) Indian Union
  - D) Indian National Army
15. What was the main reason for the split in Congress among moderates and extremists?
  - A) Religious differences
  - B) Ways to attain Swaraj
  - C) British education support
  - D) Economic Policies

**8.24.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. What were the main differences in the ideology and strategies of moderates and extremists within the Indian National Congress? How did these differences affect the freedom struggle?
2. Discuss the laying of the foundation of the Indian National Congress and the major contribution of the moderates to India's early nationalist movement.
3. Explain the reasons for the rise of extremists within the Indian National Congress. What were the reasons for the split between the moderates and the extremists in 1907?
4. Analyse the role of prominent extremist leaders such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal in India's freedom struggle. How did their methods differ from those of the moderates?
5. What were the main achievements and limitations of the moderates for constitutional reform and the realisation of political rights under British rule?
6. How did the Partition of Bengal (1905) catalyse the rise of revolutionary nationalism in India? What impact did this have on the Indian National Congress?



**NOTES**

7. What role did the Surat partition of 1907 play in the growth of the Indian National Congress? How did the division of moderates and extremists shape the future of the nationalist movement?

---

**8.25 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

---

1. C, 2. C, 3. B, 4. A, 5. B, 6. C, 7. C, 8. C, 9. A, 10. A, 11. B, 12. C, 13. B, 14. B, 15. B

---

**8.26 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

- Sarkar, Sumit. (1983). *Modern India 1885-1947*. Delhi: Macmillan.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Chandra, Bipan. (1989). *India's Struggle for Independence*. Delhi Penguin,
- Pandey, Gyanendra. (2002). *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34. A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*. New Delhi: Anthem Press (Second edition).
- Bose, S and Ayesha Jalal. (1998). *Modern South Asia History, Culture, Political Economy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi Cambridge University Press.
- Sarkar, Sumit (2009) *Modern India*, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* Hyderabad: Orient Longman.
- Tripathi, Amlesh. *The Challenge of Extremism in Indian Politics*. New Delhi: Granth Shilpi Prakashan.



## NOTES

- Halidar, Mohat Kumar. *Indian Renaissance and Revivalist Consciousness*. New Delhi: Granth Shilpi Prakashan.
- Singh, Hiralal. (1971). *Tableau of the Non-Cooperation Movement*. Delhi: Publications Division.
- Kisai, A. R. (2018). *The Social Background of Indian Nationalism*. New Delhi: Sethi Publications.
- Mittal, Satish Chandra. *India's Struggle for Independence (1858–1947)*. New Delhi: Graffy World.
- Pandey, Pratip Kumar. (1990). *Gandhi's Economic and Social Thought*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.
- Gopal, Ram. (1986). *The Indian War of Independence*. Lucknow: Sulabh Prakashan.







## **LESSON 9**

# **MAHATMA GANDHI AND MASS NATIONALISM: GANDHIAN THOUGHT, TECHNIQUES AND MOVEMENTS**

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### **Structure**

- 9.1 Learning Objectives
- 9.2 Introduction
- 9.3 Gandhi in Indian Politics
- 9.4 Gandhi's Ideological Tools and Methods of Mass Mobilization
  - 9.4.1 Satyagraha
  - 9.4.2 Non-Violence
  - 9.4.3 Dharma (Religion)
  - 9.4.4 Hind Swaraj
  - 9.4.5 Swadeshi
- 9.5 Gandhiji's Struggle in South Africa and the Condition of Indians
  - 9.5.1 Status of Indians
- 9.6 Gandhiji's Arrival in India
- 9.7 Gandhiji's Rise in Indian Politics
  - 9.7.1 Champaran
  - 9.7.2 Kheda
  - 9.7.3 Ahmedabad
- 9.8 Non-Cooperation Movement
  - 9.8.1 Background of the Non-Cooperation Movement
- 9.9 Khilafat Movement
- 9.10 Preparation for the Non-Cooperation Movement
  - 9.10.1 Main Phases of Non-Cooperation Movement
  - 9.10.2 Success in Creative Work
  - 9.10.3 Postponement and Consequences of the Movement



## NOTES

- 9.11 Civil Disobedience Movement and Causes
- 9.12 Dandi March
- 9.13 Gandhi-Irwin Pact
  - 9.13.1 Gandhi-Irwin Pact and its Effects
  - 9.13.2 Karachi Session and Gandhi-Irwin Pact
- 9.14 Three Round Table Conferences
  - 9.14.1 First Round Table Conference (12<sup>th</sup> November 1930 – January 1931)
  - 9.14.2 Second Round Table Conference (7<sup>th</sup> September 1931 – 1<sup>st</sup> December 1931)
  - 9.14.3 Third Round Table Conference (17<sup>th</sup> November – 24<sup>th</sup> December, 1932)
  - 9.14.4 Failure of the Round Table Conferences and the Rise of Communalism
- 9.15 MacDonald's Communal Decision
  - 9.15.1 British Attempts to Suppress the Nationalist Movement
  - 9.15.2 Self-interest of Classes in the National Movement
  - 9.15.3 Second Round Table Conference and Communalism
- 9.16 McDonald's Announcement (14<sup>th</sup> August 1932)
  - 9.16.1 Review and Response to the Communal Decision
  - 9.16.2 Gandhiji's Reaction and Fast unto Death
- 9.17 Poona Pact (26<sup>th</sup> September 1932)
- 9.18 White Paper
  - 9.18.1 British Government's 'White Paper' and Indian Leaders' Response
  - 9.18.2 Criticism of the White Paper
  - 9.18.3 Government of India Act, 1935
  - 9.18.4 End of Civil Disobedience Movement
  - 9.18.5 Criticism and New Tactics
- 9.19 August Resolution (8<sup>th</sup> August 1940)
  - 9.19.1 War Conditions and the Tilt of the British Government
  - 9.19.2 August Proposal' and its Responses
- 9.20 Individual Civil Disobedience Movement
  - 9.20.1 Congress Cooperation and Individual Civil Disobedience Movement
  - 9.20.2 'August Proposal' and the Government's Position
  - 9.20.3 Combat Conditions and the Japanese Threat
  - 9.20.4 Proximity of Congress and Government
  - 9.20.5 Arrival of the Cripps Mission



## **NOTES**

- 9.21 The Cripps Mission: 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1942
  - 9.21.1 Immediate Measures of the Cripps Mission and Indian Response
  - 9.21.2 Indian Response
  - 9.21.3 Failure of the Cripps Mission
  - 9.21.4 Churchill Benefits from Failure
- 9.22 Quit India Movement of August 1942: The August Revolution
  - 9.22.1 Failure of Cripps Mission and Background of Quit India Movement
  - 9.22.2 Causes of the Quit India Movement
  - 9.22.3 Dissension in Congress and Gandhiji's Leadership
  - 9.22.4 August Resolution and Quit India Movement
  - 9.22.5 Call to 'Do or Die'
  - 9.22.6 Quit India Movement: A New Direction and Government Repression
- 9.23 Government Repression
  - 9.23.1 The Brutality of Government Repression
  - 9.23.2 Significance and Impact of the Movement
- 9.24 Summary
- 9.25 Glossary
- 9.26 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 9.26.1 In-Text Questions
  - 9.26.2 Long Answer Questions
- 9.27 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 9.28 References/Suggested Readings

---

## **9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

---

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand Mahatma Gandhi and the rise of mass nationalism, Gandhian thought, technology and movement
- Explain Gandhian Ideas and Methods and Techniques of Mass Mobilisation
- Describe the problems of the Indian diaspora in South Africa
- Analyse the efforts Mahatma Gandhi make in South Africa to improve the condition of overseas Indians



## NOTES

- Discuss the reasons behind peasant movement that took place in Champaran and Kheda and state the efforts made by Gandhiji for the benefit of the farmers
- Discuss Gandhiji's role during the strike of workers in Ahmedabad
- State Gandhiji's contribution to the Rowlatt Satyagraha, and his ideology

---

## 9.2 INTRODUCTION

---

Mahatma Gandhi's name is at the top of the main leaders of the Indian freedom struggle. After the First World War, it was under his leadership that India achieved a clear victory in the freedom struggle. His full name was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1869, in Porbandar, Gujarat. His father, Karamchand Gandhi, was the Diwan of Rajkot princely state and his mother's name was Putlibai. Since childhood, Gandhiji lived in discipline and was taught truth and non-violence. He did his early studies in Rajkot and then went to England to study barrister/law. After completing his studies in 1891, he returned to India and started advocating in Mumbai. In 1893, he got an opportunity to go to South Africa in connection with a trial. There he worked for the rights of Indians and fought against the apartheid policy of the British government. It was there that he adopted the method of civil disobedience for the first time, which forced the British government to give some facilities to the Indians.

Mahatma Gandhi played an important role in changing the ideology, direction and form in the Indian National Movement. His arrival in India in 1915 AD marked the beginning of a new phase of struggle in Indian politics. Now the basis of this struggle was to unite the masses against the British. From that time till independence, Gandhiji played a leading role in the national movement. He remained the key figure in the national movement with a shift in the direction of mass mobilisation and played an important role in leading the struggle against British imperialism. Gandhiji embraced new forms of struggle while entering Indian politics and tried to understand the economic, social and political situation of the country. Gandhiji fought against racial discrimination



## **NOTES**

during his stay in South Africa, which denied Indians the human rights necessary to live a decent life. That was why he had experience in the methods of political mobilisation. After returning from South Africa, Gandhiji emerged as the most prominent leader of the Indian National Movement. He was able to increase the participation of poor peasants, youth and women and used his innovative technique of mass mobilisation, which is evident in his series of civil disobedience, non-cooperation and the Quit India Movement.

---

### **9.3 GANDHI IN INDIAN POLITICS**

---

At the outbreak of the First World War, Gandhiji returned to India and devoted his full time to the service of the country. He made Sabarmati Ashram the center of his activities. His first successful satyagraha was the Champaran Satyagraha of 1917 in the Champaran district of Bihar. His efforts improved the condition of the farmers who were protesting against having to grow indigo with hardly any payment for it. During the war, Gandhiji helped the British government, inspired Indians to join the army, and formed volunteer groups. He considered it his duty to help the government in crisis.

After the end of the war, Gandhiji was deeply shocked by the attitude of the British. The Rowlatt Act, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, and the Khilafat movement made him lose sympathy for the British government. By this time Tilak had died, and the leadership of the Congress came into the hands of Gandhiji. Between 1920-22, he led the Non-Cooperation Movement, in which the public supported him wholeheartedly. But saddened by the violent incident of Chauri-Chaura, he stopped the movement. This decision was criticised and there was a split within the Congress. Chittaranjan Das and Motilal Nehru formed a separate Swaraj Party. In 1922, Gandhi was arrested and sentenced to six years' imprisonment but was released early due to poor health. After this, he stayed away from active politics and focused on constructive work.

Gandhiji's second political phase began in 1928. In the Lahore Congress session, he said that the objective of the Congress was to achieve complete independence. In



## NOTES

1930, he undertook the historic Dandi March and broke the Salt Law. The national sentiment was encouraged in the country through the Civil Disobedience Movement. After the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, he withdrew the movement and went to London to attend the Round Table Conference. His attempt to resolve communal issues was unsuccessful and he returned to India disappointed. He then focused on the upliftment and service of the Harijans, which improved their condition.

Although Gandhiji resigned from the Congress in 1934, he again became active in politics in 1939. In 1940, he started the Individual Satyagraha movement. In 1942, he gave the slogan “Britishers Quit India” and “Do or Die”. This led to him being arrested and released in 1944. The demand for partition and communal riots made Gandhiji very unhappy. He fasted for Hindu-Muslim unity, which had a profound impact on the public and stopped the riots.

But these efforts of Gandhiji angered some fundamentalist Hindus. On 30 January 1948, Nathuram Godse shot him dead at Birla Bhawan in Delhi. The whole world was plunged into mourning by his death. Mahatma Gandhi’s life will always remain a source of inspiration in India’s freedom struggle.

---

## 9.4 GANDHI’S IDEOLOGICAL TOOLS AND METHODS OF MASS MOBILISATION

---

Before we go into the major aspects of Gandhiji’s ideology, it is important to know that his ideology was influenced by many influences and propagated in a specific direction. Gandhiji wrote in his autobiography that the views of his parents and the social and religious conditions prevailing in his place of residence had a great influence on him. The traditions of “Vaishnavism” and Jainism had particularly influenced his first thinking. The “Bhagavad Gita” also influenced Gandhi. The Sermon on the Mount of Tolstoy, Thoreau, Ruskin, and Jesus Christ also influenced his views. Along with this, his personal experiences contributed the most to the development and direction of his ideology.



### **9.4.1 Satyagraha**

Satyagraha was the most important part of Gandhiji's ideology. As stated earlier, Gandhiji developed this system in South Africa. But after 1919 it became an important part of India's freedom struggle. Gandhiji believed that Satyagraha should be adopted instead of violence. While walking on the path of Satyagraha, one himself endures hardships, so that the opponent's heart can be changed and he is motivated to accept the truth. Gandhi differentiated satyagraha and passive resistance. He wrote, "Passive resistance is the weapon of a weak person in which violence and physical force are used to accomplish his cause, whereas satyagraha is the weapon of a powerful person and does not use violence of any kind." Gandhiji's satyagraha was a part of his philosophy of life and principles, and not just a political weapon. Gandhiji believed that the search for truth is the ultimate goal of life and since no one can understand the real truth, one should not hinder the search for another.

### **9.4.2 Non-Violence**

Gandhiji believed that non-violence was a satyagraha. He said the common man should undertake non-violent Satyagraha to achieve his political goals. Individual satyagraha could have been of many forms, such as fasting, non-violent, various forms of non-cooperation, and civil disobedience, knowing that legal penalties would be faced. Gandhiji firmly believed that the methods of Satyagraha were the right thing to achieve the true objective.

### **9.4.3 Religion**

While discussing Gandhiji's ideology, it is important to know his views on religion. For Gandhiji, religion was not a theoretical explanation of a particular religious community, but a fundamental truth inherent in all religions. Gandhiji explained religion as a struggle for truth. He believed that religion cannot be changed by describing it as an individual's personal opinion because religion influences all the activities of people. He believed that religion drives political activities in India.





## NOTES

This is the reason why Gandhi made the Khilafat a point of struggle to inspire the Muslims to revolt against the British government. Gandhiji also used religious ideas such as “Ram Raj”, but his actions were described as communal.

### 9.4.4 Hind Swaraj

An important part of Gandhi’s philosophy comes out in his 1909 book “Hind Swaraj”. In this book, Gandhiji points out that the Western civilisation, which is gripping India gradually, is not the political dominance of the British. He believed that Indian Western-educated people, such as lawyers, doctors, teachers, and capitalists, were destroying the ancient culture of India by spreading modern methods. In his book, Gandhiji criticised the train because it helped in the export of food items and the spread of famine. He considered Swaraj and self-government as a condition of life that could last only if Indians continued to follow their traditional civilisation and did not deviate from modern civilisation. “The salvation of Indians lies in forgetting what they have learned in the last 50 years. Forget railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors and other modern equipment and the so-called upper class will have to learn to live like ordinary farmers.”

Later, Gandhiji tried to give a definite direction to his social and economic thought, by formulating programmes of Khadi, rural restructuring, and Harijan welfare. Gandhiji’s programme did not completely solve the problems of the people of the village, but there is no doubt that it succeeded in improving their condition to some extent. Gandhiji awakened the vital consciousness for economic and social reforms in the country through this program.

### 9.4.5 Swadeshi

Gandhiji promoted the Swadeshi spirit. The word Swadeshi meant to use goods made in their own country. For example, in England, using khadi instead of machine-made cloth. He believed that farmers could overcome poverty by increasing their income by spinning. The drain of money from India to England could also be stopped if the use of foreign cloth was reduced.



## **9.5 GANDHI'S STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE SITUATION OF INDIANS**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi, was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1869 in Porbandar in present-day Kathiawar, Gujarat. In 1881, Gandhiji went to England, to receive an education, passed matriculation in London, and qualified to become a lawyer. He returned to India in 1891 and started practicing in the High Court of Bombay. When he did not succeed in becoming a lawyer, he started writing petitions in Rajkot, which earned him around Rs 300 per month. He then traveled to South Africa in connection with the trial of an Indian firm, Dada Abdullah & Co. The company operated in South Africa. Gandhiji stayed there till 1914. During his stay in South Africa, he saw that the British government there used to treat Indians with unjust apartheid policies and inhuman treatment. Gandhiji fought against apartheid in South Africa and succeeded. The apartheid policy of the government there did not even give Indians all the human rights necessary to live a civilised life.

### **9.5.1 Status of Indians**

About two lakh Indians were living in South Africa in those days. Most of them were independent labourers or contract labourers. Some people were merchants, while some people were clerks and assistants. The farm planters treated the indentured labourers like semi-slaves. The policy of apartheid caused many problems with the civil, business, and property rights of Indians. Indians were called porters. They had to face many types of humiliation every day. They were not allowed to walk on the pavement and not allowed to go out at night without a permit, even not allowed to travel in first and second class on Indian trains, and were often forced to travel standing on the foot of the railway compartment. The Indians were given a special territory to live and trade in the Transvaal. The area was poor for health as there was no electricity, water, and drains. The pre-contracted employees had to pay three pounds of counting.



**NOTES**

---

## **9.6 GANDHIJI'S ARRIVAL IN INDIA**

---

Gandhiji went to England before coming to India. When the First World War started, he considered it his duty to help the British government. He decided to form an ambulance group of Indians, but they withdrew from it after a dispute with the British authorities. When Gandhi returned to India on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1915, he received an enthusiastic welcome. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was his political mentor in India. Gokhale wanted Gandhi to join the 'Servants of Indian Society', but it was not possible due to the strong reaction of some members.

Gandhi promised Gokhale at this time that he would not express his views on political issues in India for one year. Keeping the promise, Gandhiji spent most of his time in 1915 and 1916 in different places in India. He went to Sindh, Rangoon, Benares, and Madras. He also visited Haridwar and Kaumudi Melas, as well as Rabindranath Tagore's visit to Santiniketan. All these visits revealed to Gandhiji a lot about Indians and their status. In 1915, Gandhiji built his ashram on the banks of the Sabarmati River in Ahmedabad. Here he lived with colleagues trained as a true satyagrahi. Gandhiji was not taking much interest in politics at this time. In most of the meetings, he discussed his South African experiences and views. Gandhiji told Annie Besant that he did not want to disturb the British government during the war when he said that he would help form the "Home Rule League".

Gandhiji also participated in the Congress session of 1915 but refrained from speaking on an important issue like self-governance. Gandhiji welcomed the efforts to bring the extremists back into the Congress, but he also made it clear that he was not in any faction. He attended the conventions of the organised congress but refused to speak on certain issues that he might have belonged to any particular faction. Here he gave a speech only on the recruitment of contractual employees and a demand to abolish this practice.



## 9.7 GANDHIJI'S RISE IN INDIAN POLITICS

The end of the First World War marked the beginning of a new era in Indian politics. This era is called the “Gandhian era”. Mahatma Gandhi was a great leader of his era. At the time when he came to Indian politics, he believed in the fairness of the British government despite being alert to the attitudes and shortcomings of the Indian government and was a devotee and ally of British rule. He, like his political mentor Mr. Gokhale, regarded the British as a just caste. That is why he appealed to the Indian people during the First World War to help the British government with money, saying that the participation of the Empire is our goal. We must suffer according to our strength and give our lives in defense of the empire. If the empire perishes, our desires will be destroyed along with it. Therefore, cooperating in the task of protecting the empire is the easiest and most direct way to attain self-rule. (Italics) In this way, on Gandhiji’s appeal, the Indian people provided full support to the British Empire. As a result of this, the British government honoured Gandhiji with the title of “*Kaiser-e-Hind*” in 1915 and gave him a gold medal. But within a year after the end of the war, some such incidents took place that the Indian people, including Gandhiji, began to feel that the policy of mercy adopted towards Indians during the First World War was a diplomacy of the British. That is why Gandhiji’s heart was very disturbed. He thought it appropriate to abandon the policy of cooperation with the British government and adopt the path of non-cooperation. In 1920, Gandhiji came to the fore of Indian politics as the commander of the national movement. At this time, due to Tilak’s illness, Gokhale’s death, and the lack of enthusiasm of other leaders, the reins of Indian politics automatically came into the hands of Gandhiji and before entering Indian politics, Gandhiji successfully experimented with the Champaran Satyagraha, the movement in Kheda and the fast unto death in Ahmedabad. During 1917-18, Gandhiji resolved three local issues in Indian politics. The peasant struggle in Champaran and Kheda and the workers’ struggle in Ahmedabad were these problems. Here Gandhi adopted the method of Satyagraha and with these local struggles he became the leader of the whole of India.



## NOTES

### 9.7.1 Champaran

Champaran in the Tirhut division of north Bihar was a place where there was long-standing discontent among the farmers. From the early nineteenth century, European planters built indigo plantations and factories in the region. In 1916-17 most of Champaran was under the control of only three men. These landlords were the kings of Bettiah, Ramnagar, and Madhuban. The jagir of Bettiah was the largest, comprising about 1500 villages. Instead of looking after the jagir (land), the landowners leased it out, which benefited the European planters.

The main reason for the discontent here was that the farmers did not get permanent land rights. They had to obtain pattas of land from the planters, but on the condition that they would cultivate indigo only in a certain area. The planters also gave some money to the farmers in return. The cultivation of indigo was called “Tinkathia”. In this, the farmer had to cultivate indigo on 3/20 of his land, mostly on the most fertile part. In 1908, an attempt was made to reform the Tinkathia system, but it did not improve the plight of the peasants. The planters forced the farmers to sell their produce only at a certain amount, which was very low.

Over time, German scientists developed artificial indigo, which reduced the demand for Indian indigo in the international market. The plantation owners of Champaran felt that the trade of indigo would no longer be profitable. But to maintain the profits, they started passing on their losses to the farmers. For this, they told the farmers that they (the farmers) could get rid of indigo cultivation if the farmers had given them a bigger compensation. Apart from this, they imposed many illegal taxes on the farmers and increased the rent substantially.



## NOTES



*Fig. 9.1 Champan Satyagraha, 1917*

**Source:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Champan\\_Satyagraha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Champan_Satyagraha)

In the Congress session held in Lucknow in 1916, the problems of the peasants of Champaran were mentioned, but Gandhi did not look into it. But eventually, Gandhi was forced to come to Champaran by Raj Kumar Shukla, a peasant from Champaran. When Gandhiji reached Motihari (Champaran's district office), the government thought that his presence was a threat to public peace. He was ordered to leave Champaran, but Gandhi, understanding his responsibility towards the people there, refused to accept it. He was immediately arrested and tried in the District Court.

However, the Bihar government ordered the commissioner and the district court to withdraw the case and help Gandhiji get information. In addition, Gandhiji was warned that he would not argue of any kind. But they were given full permission to get information about the problems of the farmers.

The government established the "Champaran Agrarian Committee". Gandhi was also on this committee. The committee recommended that many additional taxes levied on farmers should be removed and the three-odd system should be abolished. 25

Self-Instructional  
Material

355



## NOTES

percent of the illegal collection from farmers should be returned and reduce the rent rates. In 1919, these recommendations of the Committee were passed as the Champaran Agrarian Act. The movement was concerned with the problems of the peasants, but most of Gandhiji's associates were from the educated middle class, such as Rajendra Prasad, Gorakh Prasad, and Acharya Kripalani. Gandhiji was also helped by local leaders and moneylenders, but it was the peasants and their local leaders who helped the most. Gandhiji lived a very simple life there. They would go on foot or bullock carts and converse with the farmers in their language. Thus Gandhiji's first experiment of Satyagraha was successful.

### 9.7.2 Kheda

In Gujarat's Kheda district, Gandhi worked in favour of the farmers for the second time. Here he again got an opportunity to experiment with the system of Satyagraha. Kheda was more fertile, giving food crops, tobacco, and cotton a good market in Ahmedabad. There were many wealthy peasants who were called pattidars. Besides, there were many small farmers and landless peasants. In 1917, excess rains ruined the kharif crop. At that time the prices of kerosene, iron, cloth, and salt also increased, which greatly affected the lives of farmers. The farmers demanded revenue compensation for not having a full crop at this time. The revenue law stated that the entire revenue could be ceded if the total yield was only 25 percent of the normal produce. In this case, two lawyers from Bombay, Mr. V. J. Patel & G. K. Parakh, concluded that a large part of the produce had been destroyed, although the government did not agree. The Kheda collector decided that the demand for revenue ceding was futile.

The government believed that it was not the farmers who had made the demand, but the people who came from outside, who were associated with the 'Home Rule League' and the 'Gujarat Sabha', had instigated them. At that time Gandhiji was the President of the Gujarat Assembly. Neither Gandhiji nor the politicians of Ahmedabad started the movement here. Local leaders like Mohan Lal Pandya had raised this demand. After the test, Gandhi thought that the government officials had increased the price of the produce and that the farmers had the legitimate right to suspend the revenue and were not sympathetic to it. After some hesitation, Gandhi launched the Satyagraha by holding a meeting in Nadiad on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1918. Gandhiji advised the farmers in



## NOTES

this meeting not to give their revenue. Gandhiji visited many villages to enthuse the farmers and remove the fear of the government from their minds.

Indulal Yagnik, Vithalbhai Patel, and Anasuiya Sarabhai also helped Gandhiji in this satyagraha. On 21<sup>st</sup> April, the Satyagraha reached its peak. As many as 2,337 farmers took an oath not to pay revenue. Most of the leaseholders participated in the satyagraha, but the government obliged a few poor peasants to pay the revenue. The issue of revenue generation was somewhat weakened at this point because the rabi crop was good. Gandhi understood that the peasants were tired of doing satyagraha.



*Fig. 9.2 Kheda Satyagraha, 1918*

**Source:** <https://www.timesnownews.com>

Gandhiji announced the abolition of Satyagraha when the government said that revenue should be collected only from those farmers who can give it and that poor farmers should not be pressurised for it. The impact of this satyagraha was not the same in all

Self-Instructional  
Material

357





## NOTES

villages. It was successful in only 70 of the 559 villages of Kheda, so Gandhiji withdrew the satyagraha only after getting some concessions. Despite this, this satyagraha built Gandhi's social base in the rural areas of Gujarat.

### 9.7.3 Ahmedabad

Gandhiji launched his third campaign in Ahmedabad when he joined hands to participate in the struggle between the employers and the workers. Ahmedabad was developing as an important industrial city in Gujarat, but the mill owners often faced a shortage of staff and had to pay high rates of wages to attract them. In 1917, the plague broke out in Ahmedabad. Many workers left the city and went to Mahatma Gaon. The mill owners decided to give the workers a "plague bonus," sometimes around 75 percent of the ordinary wage, to prevent them from leaving the city. This allowance was abolished by the mill owners when the pandemic ended. The employees protested against it. The workers believed that the allowance also met the earnings made during the war. The mill owners were ready to give a 20 percent hike, but the workers wanted a 50 percent hike.

A secretary of the Gujarat Sabha informed Gandhiji of the conditions of the workers working in the mills of Ahmedabad. He had a personal acquaintance with Ambalal Sarabhai, the mill owner who had funded Gandhi's ashram. Ambalal's sister Anusuyya Sarabhai also respected Gandhiji very much. Gandhiji decided to resolve the issue after discussions with Ambalal Sarabhai. The workers and mill owners agreed that the entire problem be left to an arbitration board, which would be composed of three representative employees and three mill owners. The chairman of this board was the English Collector. Gandhiji was presented on this board as a representative of the employees, but the owner suddenly left the board. He, therefore, said that there was no guarantee that the workers would accept the decision of this board and no authority was given to Gandhiji. On 22<sup>nd</sup> February, the mill owners decided to close their mills.

In such a situation, Gandhiji decided to study the whole incident in detail. He came to know the economic condition of the mills and compared their wage rates with the wage rates of Bombay. Gandhiji concluded from this study that instead of a fifty percent increase, the employees should demand thirty percent. Gandhi started a satyagraha against the mill owners. The employees were given a pledge that they



would not work and would continue to perform satyagraha peacefully till wages were increased by 35 percent. Gandhiji gave speeches at many places.

He also wrote articles on this situation. On 12<sup>th</sup> March the mill owners announced that they were lifting the lockout and would be back to work with a 20 percent increase. On 15<sup>th</sup> March, Gandhiji announced the opposite that he would go on a hunger strike until a compromise was reached. Gandhiji's aim at this time was to prevent the employees who had taken the oath from going back to work.

Finally, an agreement was reached on March 18, according to which the workers were to get a 35 percent hike on the first day, and a 20 percent hike on the second day, given their pledge, which the mill owners had proposed. On the third day itself, they were supposed to get an increase of 27.5%, until the arbitration was decided. Finally, accepting Gandhiji's proposal, the arbitrator decided to increase the tax by 35 percent in favour of the workers. In this way, Gandhiji's Satyagraha was successful in its objective here too.

---

## **9.8 NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT**

---

The most important event of the national freedom movement after the First World War was the entry of Shri Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi into Indian politics and taking over the leadership of the Congress. Under Gandhiji's leadership, the Congress got a new form and a new direction. They were against foreign rule from the very beginning. He successfully struggled against the discrimination and apartheid policy against Indians in South Africa.

When he returned to India in 1915, he supported the British in World War. In return for his services, he was given the title of 'Kaiser-e-Hind'. After returning to India, he started public service work. Truth and non-violence were his main weapons. In 1916 he established the Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad, which became the center of all his activities. His entire focus was on helping the poor and vulnerable people of India.

In 1917, he launched a Satyagraha in Champaran, Bihar to save the peasants from the tyranny of indigo-cultivating landlords, which was completely successful.



## NOTES

After this, in 1918, his attention was turned to Kheda in Gujarat, where crops were damaged due to lack of rain. However, the government was adamant about collecting taxes from the farmers. Gandhiji organised the peasants and inspired them to take up Satyagraha. Farmers stopped paying taxes in the face of atrocities and threats. Eventually, the government had to bow down and compromise with the farmers.

In the same year, he began a hunger strike to resolve the dispute between mill owners and workers in Ahmedabad. Due to his satyagraha, the mill owners agreed to increase the wages of the workers. These successful experiments of Satyagraha inspired Gandhiji towards the national movement and he joined active politics. Some incidents that took place at the same time inspired him to start the Non-Cooperation Movement.

### **9.8.1 Background of the Non-Cooperation Movement**

Gandhiji launched various types of movements for independence based on truth, non-violence, and satyagraha. He awakened political consciousness in the entire country and converted the national movement into a mass movement. He first decided to launch the Non-Cooperation Movement against the British Government in 1920.

### **Rowlatt Act Satyagraha**

During the war, on the one hand, the government was pretending to give political rights to Indians through the Montague Declaration, and on the other hand, it was repressing the revolutionaries and militants strictly.

To this end, in 1917, the Government of India set up a committee under the chairmanship of Justice Sidney Rowlatt to enquire into the activities of revolutionaries and to frame laws for their suppression. In view of the situation, the Rowlatt Committee suggested several changes to the law. This committee recommended some strict rules, such as arresting any person on the basis of mere suspicion, keeping a watch on his activities, conducting secret prosecution, and punishing him. The report of the committee came in April 1918.

On 6<sup>th</sup> February 1919, the Indian Government presented two bills before the National Council keeping these suggestions in mind.



## NOTES

Despite opposition from Indian leaders, the government passed the Rowlatt Act on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1919. Indians called it a 'Black Act' and chanted slogans against it, "No lawyers, no pleas, no appeals."

The government has said that the bill will be temporary to prevent conspiratorial crimes. These bills were created to make the restrictions permanent imposed during the war. Under this, criminals could be prosecuted, which was made up of three High Court judges. The proceedings of the courts were not to be held openly and there was no right of appeal against the decision of this court. Without a warrant, someone could be arrested or searched. Without trial, one could be jailed for up to two years.

Indian nationalists believed that the bill was brought to satisfy government and non-official public opinion which opposed the Montague reform proposals. These bills were criticised across the country. Gandhi also campaigned against him. Gandhi himself organised a Satyagraha meeting in Bombay on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1919 to protest against these bills. The House took an oath that they would oppose these bills in a civilised manner, which would be decided by a committee. On 6<sup>th</sup> April 1919, a movement was planned across the country. The success of the strike was different in each region, city, and rural area. Leaders like Madan Mohan Malviya and Mazharul Haq resigned from the Central Legislative Assembly in protest. Mahatma Gandhi also strongly opposed this law. On his suggestion, the Congress called for a strike across the country.

There was a strike in Delhi on 30<sup>th</sup> March, in which 10 people were killed in police firing. On 6<sup>th</sup> April, a strike was organised in other big cities in which the public cooperated a lot. After this, Gandhiji left Bombay for Delhi and Punjab. The government understood that their entry into Punjab could be dangerous. Gandhi was deboarded near Delhi and sent back to Bombay. The news of Gandhi's arrest spread immediately. This led to tension in Bombay and violence in Ahmedabad and Veerangam. Martial law had to be imposed in Ahmedabad. Punjab witnessed the most violence, particularly in Amritsar. This resulted in strikes, demonstrations, and meetings in Delhi, Amritsar, Lahore, Ahmedabad, and other cities. The government resorted to repression to suppress these protests. In many places, the police opened fire on the unarmed crowd, killing many people. The situation was most serious in Punjab. When Gandhiji was



## NOTES

about to go to Punjab to know about the incidents, his entry was banned. The Deputy Governor General of Punjab, O'Dyer, created an atmosphere of terror in the entire state. On 9<sup>th</sup> April, on the occasion of Ram Navami, Hindus and Muslims together took out a large procession, which panicked the government. Two prominent leaders, Dr. Satyapal and Kitchlew, were arrested and sent out of Amritsar. The arrest further sparked public outrage. Angry people staged a big protest, on which the police opened indiscriminate fire. Angry mobs set fire to government buildings, post offices, and banks and killed some Britishers. The police proved helpless in handling the situation.

The arrest of two local leaders, Satyapal and Kitchlew led to public violence, and some government offices were burnt. There were also 5 British murders and mistreatment of an English woman. Civil rights in the city almost ended. On 13<sup>th</sup> April, General Dyer opened fire on a peaceful gathering of unarmed people in Jallianwala Bagh. General Dyer fired without warning, Dyer further stated that his aim was not just to dissolve the House, but to intimidate the public. 379 people were killed in this shooting, but unofficial figures show much more than that. The agitation against the Rowlatt Act was not planned. The Satyagraha Sabha was merely collecting literature or signatures against the Act. The Congress did not see any form of organisation. Due to social and economic problems, people in most of the areas participated on their own against British rule. However, Gandhiji's satyagrahas brought people from different classes and communities together. However, the biggest impact of this movement was that Gandhiji emerged as a national leader.

### **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**

In April 1919, there was a terrible massacre in Amritsar. General Dyer reached Amritsar on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1919 to control public anger. As soon as he arrived, he imposed military law in the entire city but did not formally announce it. Many people were arrested and put in jail.

On the evening of 13<sup>th</sup> April, a meeting was held in Jallianwala Bagh against the exile of leaders and police atrocities. The garden was originally a piece of open land surrounded by houses and a narrow passage inside. About 20,000 people gathered in the garden that day. The mob was unarmed and included women and children.



## NOTES



*Fig. 9.3 Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar*

**Source:** <https://amritsar.guide>

At about 5 pm, General Dyer arrived there with 100 soldiers and two armoured vehicles. He ordered to open fire on the crowd without warning. About 1,650 shots were fired in 10 minutes. There was a stampede, but there was no way out. As a result, close to a thousand people were killed and countless injured. Dyer left the injured in the same condition and no arrangements were made for the treatment of the injured.

Although the situation was calm on 14<sup>th</sup> April, martial law was imposed in Amritsar on 15<sup>th</sup> April. To suppress the events in Punjab, the news was not allowed to go out and outsiders were banned in Punjab. Despite this, inhuman atrocities were committed on the people. People were flogged, and forced to crawl on their stomachs, and students and teachers were also persecuted. Even processors were beaten.

These incidents led to widespread protests in Punjab. The British government appreciated Dyer's works and gave him a reward of 20,000 rupees, which further increased the discontent among the Indians. The Congress formed a committee to investigate this massacre. Later, the government also set up the "Hunter Committee", which said Dyer's actions were unfair.



## NOTES

Commenting on these events, Gilbert Slater said, Dyer saved Punjab but lost India. Mahatma Gandhi also said on the events in Amritsar, “Plassey laid the foundation of the British Empire, but Amritsar shook it.”

---

## 9.9 KHILAFAT MOVEMENT

---

Along with the Amritsar incident, the issue of Khilafat also emerged as a big question in Indian politics. This issue deeply affected Mahatma Gandhi and inspired him to launch the Non-Cooperation Movement.

- 1. The reason for the Khilafat Movement** - The “Caliph” of the Turks was considered to be the religious leader of Sunni Muslims around the world. His prestige in the Islamic world was the highest after the Prophet. Indian Muslims were also attached to the Khalifa because of religious and emotional loyalty. As soon as the First World War started, Indian Muslims were in a dilemma. Before the war, Muslims were loyal to the British Empire. The British government had assured to get their support. Prime Minister George Lloyd assured Muslims that Turkey’s integrity and its status would be maintained.

After the war, Turkey supported Germany in the First World War. When the Allies won the victory in 1918, Germany and Turkey had to concede defeat. After this, Britain’s attitude changed towards Turkey and the Caliphate. Britain and France, along with other conquering countries, partitioned the Turkish Empire. Britain incited the Arabs against the Caliphate, causing them to revolt. The holy lands of Islam, such as Mecca and Medina, were occupied by the English and French under the “Madet method”.

- 2. Reaction of Indian Muslims** - These incidents increased the anger of Indian Muslims against the British government. They agreed to fight to re-establish the power and prestige of the Turkish Caliphate. This anger emerged in Indian politics in the form of the Khilafat movement and Gandhiji linked it with the national movement and gave it the form of the Non-Cooperation Movement.



## NOTES

- 3. Objectives of the Khilafat Movement** – The main objective of the Khilafat movement was to restore the supremacy and power of the Caliphate. This movement was initially reactionary, but soon it became a part of the anti-imperialist and national movement. Protests were launched against the mistreatment meted out to the Caliphate, and Khilafat committees were formed in place. The goal of these committees was to build public opinion against the partition of the Turkish Empire and to strengthen the movement.
- 4. Beginning and Expansion of the Khilafat Movement** - In December 1918, the Congress and the Muslim League met together. Dr. M.A. Ansari demanded the return of Arab territories under the Caliphate. Congress leader Hakim Ajmal Khan also supported him. The issue of Khilafat brought the Congress and the League closer and strengthened Hindu-Muslim unity. Nationalist Muslim leaders like Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Shaukat Ali, and Muhammad Ali joined this movement. Lokmanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi saw it as a great opportunity to promote Hindu-Muslim unity and to involve Muslims in the national movement. Gandhiji supported this movement as based on truth and justice. In 1919, Gandhiji was elected president of the “All India Khilafat Conference” held in Delhi. He warned that if justice was not done to the Caliph, he would not cooperate against the British government. He said the issue of Khilafat was more important than the constitutional reforms and even the Punjab incidents.
- 5. Non-Cooperation Movement and Khilafat Movement** - In January 1920, Hindu and Muslim leaders met the Viceroy and put forward their demands, but it did not yield any positive results. After this, in June 1920, the Khilafat Committee in Allahabad decided on non-cooperation. It decided to return government titles and honours, quit jobs, and not pay taxes. At the Khilafat Conference in Sindh in July 1920, Gandhiji suggested non-cooperation with the government. The Non-Cooperation Movement was started on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1920. The Khilafat Committee also extended its support to this movement.
- 6. Non-cooperation and end of the Khilafat Movement** - Non-cooperation and the Khilafat movement went together, but the influence of the Khilafat





## NOTES

movement decreased in the face of the growing popularity of the Non-Cooperation Movement. The leaders of the caliphate also had to face the repression of the government. Their institutions were outlawed and the leaders were arrested. In 1924, Turkish leader Mustafa Kamel Pasha abolished the post of caliphate, which automatically ended the Khilafat movement.

- 7. Achievement of Khilafat Movement** - Gandhiji's linking of the Khilafat movement with the national movement was considered by many to be a political mistake, but this movement strengthened Hindu-Muslim unity, even for a short time. It allowed liberal Muslim leaders to join the national struggle, which was its greatest achievement. The economic crisis arising after the war, famine, epidemics, dissatisfaction with the reforms of 1919, the agitations of the peasants and workers, the repressive policies of the government, and the growing feeling of nationalism in India created a suitable atmosphere for the Non-Cooperation Movement.

---

## 9.10 PREPARATION FOR THE NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

---

In 1920, at a special session of the Congress, Mahatma Gandhi announced a policy of boycott and non-cooperation on the question of Khilafat. On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1920, the Khilafat Committee started the movement. Gandhiji returned his title of 'Kaiser-e-Hind' to the government.

- 1. Nagpur Congress Session (December 1920)** - In December 1920, the Congress session held in Nagpur approved Gandhiji's proposal for a non-cooperation movement. This convention completely handed over the leadership of the national freedom movement to Gandhiji. The Congress declared Purna Swaraj as its goal. Along with this, a detailed outline of non-cooperation and boycott was also prepared.



## NOTES

2. According to Dr. M.S. Jain, there were two aspects of the Non-Cooperation Movement – **constructive and destructive**.

The Creative Side	The Destructive Side
1. Promotion of indigenous textiles.	1. Renunciation of government titles and positions.
2. Raising an amount of Rs 1 crore for the “Tilak Fund”.	2. Resigning from local bodies.
3. Mobilising a team of volunteers.	3. Resigning from local bodies.
4. Encouraging spinning wheel and spinning-weaving.	4. Boycott of government courts, festivals, ceremonies, schools and colleges, courts.
5. Establishment of National Schools.	5. Boycott of foreign textiles and goods.
6. Strengthening Hindu-Muslim unity.	6. Opposition to military recruitment in the Mesopotamian War.
7. Prevention of untouchability.	7. Protest against the elections to be held in 1920 and not paying taxes.

3. **Changed the Nature of Congress** - The Nagpur session completely changed the nature of the Congress. ‘Bharatiya Janata Party’s Congress’ was made, in which the participation of the general public increased. This convention gave a strong foundation to the Non-Cooperation Movement and made it an important phase of the national freedom movement.

4. **The Non-Cooperation Movement** - The Non-Cooperation Movement was led by Mahatma Gandhi himself. He returned his ‘Kaiser-e-Hind’ title to the government. Inspired by Gandhiji’s move, many influential leaders also joined this movement. Many people, including poet Rabindranath Tagore, returned their government titles. Famous lawyers like Motilal Nehru, and Chittaranjan Das and Congress leaders like Rajendra Prasad left the practice. Thousands of students left schools and colleges and supported the movement. Foreign clothing and goods were boycotted. In many places, Holi of foreign clothes was burnt, and there was a discussion of adopting Swadeshi in every house. Under the movement, many national schools were established, such as Kashi Vidyapeeth, Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Bihar Vidyapeeth, Maharashtra Vidyapith, and Jamia Millia University. Lakhs of volunteers joined the movement and the necessary amount for the “Tilak Fund” was also deposited soon. Demonstrations and strikes took place all over the place, which caused the movement to gain momentum throughout the country.



## NOTES

**5. Government Suppression and End of Non-Cooperation Movement -** By 1921, the Non-Cooperation Movement had taken a widespread form throughout the country. Meanwhile, in November 1921, the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay. Processions, demonstrations, and strikes were held at various places opposing their reception. To suppress these protests, the police opened fire, in which many people were killed. The government decided to crush the agitation. The Congress was outlawed and thousands of agitators and leaders were arrested. Prominent leaders like Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Motilal Nehru, Chittaranjan Das, and Lala Lajpat Rai were also sent to jail. Prisons became “places of pilgrimage” for agitators, and people began to voluntarily give arrested. So many people were arrested that the jails ran out of space.

### 9.10.1 Main Phases of Non-Cooperation Movement

As early as 1921, there was widespread propaganda for non-cooperation and boycotts. At every stage of the movement, the main issues kept changing. In the first phase from January to March 1921, the main emphasis was on the use of the spinning wheel in schools, colleges, legal courts and the use of the spinning wheel. There was widespread unrest among the students, and lawyers such as C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru gave up advocacy. After this stage, the second stage began in April 1921. The original target of the second phase was to install one crore charkhas for the Tilak Swaraj Fund by August 1920 and 20 lakh charkhas by 30 June. The third phase, which began in July, focused on the following issues: foreign clothes, the visit of the Prince of Wales, the heir to the British throne in November 1921, the popularisation of charkha and khadi, and the Jail Bhara movement by Congress volunteers. Violence escalated in the final phase in November 1921. The country was on the brink of revolt when Congress volunteers mobilised the masses. Gandhi campaigned for not paying revenue in Bardoli and also decided to launch a massive civil disobedience campaign for freedom of speech, press, and institutions.

### Gandhiji's Warning Letter and the Chauri Chaura Incident

In February 1922, Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy warning that if the government did not stop the cycle of repression, he would launch a mass civil disobedience movement



in Bardoli (Gujarat). The government was already in crisis, but in the meantime, on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1922, a terrible incident took place in Chauri-Chaura, Gorakhpur. There, the police opened fire on the non-violent protesters. When the bullets ran out, the policemen hid in the police station. After this, furious protesters set fire to the police station, in which many policemen were burnt to death.

### **End of Movement and Reaction**

Gandhiji was deeply saddened by this violent incident. He immediately decided to call off the Non-Cooperation Movement. This decision caused disappointment and anguish across the country. Subhash Chandra Bose called it “the misfortune of the nation”. Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, and Chittaranjan Das were also stunned by this decision.

### **Gandhiji's View**

Gandhiji called off the movement because he believed that the masses had become directionless and violent after the arrest of the leaders. He believed that the government could not be fought through violence. Therefore, it was only appropriate to call off the movement.

### **Significance and Response of the Non-Cooperation Movement**

Indian business groups supported the economic boycott because the textile industry benefited from the nationalists' emphasis on indigenous cloth. The students and women responded very effectively. Thousands of students left government colleges and entered national schools and colleges. Recently established Jamia Millia Islamia, Gujarat Vidyapeeth, and Kashi Vidyapith recruited many students, but many students were disappointed due to lack of places. The students became dynamic volunteers in the national movement. Women also participated in this movement and donated their ornaments to the Tilak Fund. They joined many movements and actively participated in dharnas in front of foreign textile and liquor shops. The involvement of farmers and labourers in this movement was very important. In rural areas, traders and farmers turned against them. This gave an entirely new look to the movement of 1921-22. Police in Chauri-Chaura opened fire, when they ran out of bullets, resulting in an angry



## NOTES

mob killing 22 police officers. Gandhiji was disappointed by this violent incident and stopped the non-cooperation movement. They also suspended civil disobedience violations in Bardoli. Gandhiji's decision surprised many Congressmen. The Congress Working Committee meeting held at Bardoli on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1922 criticised the inhuman treatment of the mob at Chauri-Chaura. This led to the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement. From that day onwards, Gandhi began a fast to protest against the incident. This was the first Non-Cooperation Movement. Gandhi was arrested on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1922 and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. The Non-Cooperation Movement succeeded only partially in its declared objectives. In the case of the boycott of assemblies, this movement could not be fully successful. The Congress did not participate in the elections, but they were unable to keep the public away from voting and the election process. The panchayat system could not make much impact on the judicial system. Although some people returned to government titles, there was no significant decrease in the number of government servants.

### 9.10.2 Success in Creative Work

The Non-Cooperation Movement was successful in its creative work. It provided a new direction to the Congress and dealt a blow to imperialism. The movement broadened the spirit of patriotism and sacrifice throughout the country, which increased awareness among the masses and strengthened the national spirit.

### 9.10.3 Postponement of the Movement and Consequences

The decision to suspend the movement affected Gandhiji's popularity. This situation was like a political exile for them. Soon, on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1922, Gandhiji was arrested. He was tried for treason and sentenced to 6 years.

---

## 9.11 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT AND CAUSES

---

In March 1930, the national movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi took a new direction. It started with the Civil Disobedience Movement and the Dandi March.



## NOTES

Mahatma Gandhi decided to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement for various reasons. The political situation in India at that time and the harsh attitude of the British government prompted Gandhiji to take this step.

- 1. Political Situation of India** - In 1928, after the disagreement in the All-Party Conference over the Nehru Report, events began to change rapidly. This report did not satisfy both the Congress and the Muslim League. New political forces were emerging in India, and a spirit of revolt was brewing within the Congress. Revolutionary activities were increasing, student activism was increasing, and socialist and communist ideologies were spreading. The peasant and labour movements had gained momentum. Communalism was also increasing and at the same time, the repression of the government had also intensified. The people of the country were no longer satisfied with false promises. The demand for independence was growing rapidly within and outside the Congress. To take these conditions in the right direction and to make a concrete program, Gandhiji started the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- 2. Impact of Worldwide Economic Depression** - During 1930-32, the global economic depression had a profound impact on India. According to Shri Ayodhya Singh, another sharp wave of national movement arose in India during 1930-32. At this time, the global economic crisis shook the whole world, while the socialist success of the Soviet Union and the Chinese revolution created an atmosphere of revolution in many countries. This economic recession had a profound impact on India. India's economy weakened, the condition of farmers became worse due to decreasing grain production, and inflation increased. Exports declined, but the British continued to drain funds from India. The glut of foreign goods brought production in Indian factories to a standstill, leading to the closure of many factories and the bankruptcy of many industrialists. Both workers and capitalists were aggrieved by government policies. The peasantry, which was already struggling with poverty, came into more trouble. This led to a rapid increase in the anti-government atmosphere in the country. According to Shri Ayodhya Singh, this economic crisis led to conflicts between the Indian people and



## NOTES

the British Empire, between workers and capitalists, between peasants and landlords, and between various classes. However, the biggest opposition was between the Indian masses and the British rule. Mahatma Gandhi took advantage of this situation and diverted the discontent of the masses towards the Civil Disobedience Movement, which proved to be an important step in the Indian freedom struggle.

- 3. Explosive situation in India** - The situation in India at that time was very turbulent. Revolutionary activities were on the rise. The 'Meerut Conspiracy Case' and the 'Lahore Conspiracy Case' further raised ideologies against the government. Similar attitudes were formed among the peasants, workers, and revolutionaries, which led to an atmosphere of violence and fear. Gandhiji, who believed in non-violence, tried to divert these ideologies towards peaceful struggle. He adopted the path of the civil disobedience movement, in which workers, peasants, and people of every class could participate.
- 4. Dissatisfaction among the people with government repression:** The government was troubled by the growing sense of nationalism and patriotism. It used to try new ways to suppress it. In 1929, the government introduced the 'Public Safety Bill' (Black Law), which had already been rejected by the Legislature. This law created more discontent among the public.
- 5. Announcement of Lord Irwin** - On 31<sup>st</sup> October 1929, Viceroy Lord Irwin made an announcement realising the seriousness of the Indian situation. He said the Declaration of 1917 implied that India would get the status of "colonial self-government". His announcement gave new hope to Indians. Leaders like Gandhi, Jinnah, Sapru, Vithalbhai Patel met the Viceroy. But the Viceroy could not give any concrete assurance to the Indian leaders. Moreover, the declaration of Irwin was opposed in the British Parliament, which caused deep disappointment to the Indian leaders.
- 6. Lahore Session and Demand for Complete Independence** – The Lahore session of the Congress was held in this depressing atmosphere. Gandhiji chose Jawaharlal Nehru to preside. The government had rejected the Nehru Report, so Nehru raised the demand for complete independence. "Our only aim is independence, which means complete freedom from British



## NOTES

hegemony and imperialism,” he said. On the night of 31<sup>st</sup> December 1929, Nehru hoisted the tricolour flag on the banks of the Ravi river and read out the ‘Declaration of Independence’. On 26<sup>th</sup> January 1930, it was announced to celebrate Purna Swarajya Day. Subsequently, in February 1930, the Congress Working Committee empowered Mahatma Gandhi to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement at an appropriate time. A new wave of enthusiasm swept across the country. The impact of the Lahore session was so great that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan also decided to join the Congress.

**7. Gandhiji’s attempt to compromise:** Before starting the movement, Gandhiji tried to compromise with the Viceroy. In an article in *Young India* on 30 *January* 1930 and a letter to Viceroy Irwin on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1930, he presented his 11-point demands. They said they will suspend the agitation if the government accepts these demands. These demands talked about solving the basic problems of the people. Gandhiji’s main demands were as follows:

- Reduce the exchange rate to 1 shilling 4 pence.
- The amount of rent should be halved.
- Reduce military expenditure by 50%.
- There should be a reduction in the salaries of civilian employees.
- Defensive duties should be imposed and import of foreign textiles should be controlled.
- Indian coastline should be safe only for Indian ships.
- The intelligence department should either be abolished or it should be under public control.
- Indians should have the right to possess firearms for self-defence and permission should be given for this.
- Salt tax should be abolished.
- The sale of drugs should be stopped.
- Release all political prisoners and allow exiled Indians to return home.

Gandhiji wrote in his letter to Viceroy Irwin that if his demands were not addressed, he would break the Salt Law and start a civil disobedience movement. But

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

373





## NOTES

the Viceroy neither responded to his letter nor expressed his desire to meet him. During this time, the government intensified repressive steps. Subhash Chandra Bose and other activists were arrested. In such a situation, Gandhiji decided to launch the movement with the 'Dandi March'.

### 9.12 DANDI MARCH

Gandhiji decided to start the Civil Disobedience Movement in the village of Dandi by making salt from seawater. On 12<sup>th</sup> March 1930, he left for Dandi, 200 miles from Sabarmati Ashram with 78 colleagues. Inspired by his move, many enthusiastic individuals, activists, farmers, and labourers also joined him. Subhash Chandra Bose compared this Dandi March to Napoleon's 'Paris March' and Mussolini's 'Rome March'. During this time the arrest of Sardar Patel had further agitated the people of Gujarat, but Gandhiji kept everyone calm and on the path of non-violence. On reaching Dandi on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1930, he broke the British government's salt law in a peaceful manner by making salt from seawater. Gandhiji's move caused a wave of enthusiasm across the country. People started non-cooperating against the government from where they were.



**Fig. 9.4** Dandi March, 1930 (To break the Salt Law)

Self-Instructional

374 Material

**Source:** [https://500kstepchallenge.in/dandi\\_salt\\_march.php](https://500kstepchallenge.in/dandi_salt_march.php)



## **NOTES**

Thousands of students had left schools and colleges. Many people left government jobs. The peasants stopped paying rent and the workers started strikes and demonstrations. Holi of foreign clothes was burnt and dharnas were held at government shops. The movement took the country by storm.

Initially, the government did not take this movement seriously, but soon realised its intensity. The government took repressive measures to suppress it. The satyagraha were arrested and put in jails. Many people fell victim to police and army bullets. The Congress was outlawed. Gandhiji was also arrested on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1930, but his arrest intensified the movement.

In Chittagong, Surya Sen and his comrades revolted. The Garhwali troops refused to fire at the protesters. Revolts also erupted in Sholapur and Nagaland. Nagaland's youth leader Rani Gaidinliu led the revolt. In the frontier region, the '*Frontier Gandhi*' (Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan) put the government in trouble through the 'Khudai Khidmatgar' and 'Red shirts' movement among the Pathans.

These circumstances forced the government to understand the importance of Gandhiji and the Congress. It became clear that the movement could not be suppressed by repression alone. Talk of constitutional reforms started and for this, the first Round Table Conference was held in London. But the Congress boycotted it, which led to its failure. Finally, the government negotiated with Gandhiji, which led to the 'Gandhi-Irwin Pact'.

---

## **9.13 GANDHI-IRWIN PACT**

---

### **9.13.1 Gandhi-Irwin Pact and its Effects**

The failure of the first Round Table Conference held in London and the prevalence of the Non-Cooperation Movement convinced the government that it was not possible to solve India's political problems without Gandhiji and Congress. Therefore, Viceroy Lord Irwin tried to compromise with Gandhiji. On 26<sup>th</sup> January 1931, Gandhiji was released from jail. Negotiations between Gandhi and Irwin began in Delhi on 17<sup>th</sup> February and on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1931, the Gandhi-Irwin Pact (Delhi Pact) was signed.

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

**375**



## NOTES

### Terms of the agreement

Under this agreement, the government made the following promises:

1. All political prisoners will be released.
2. Properties confiscated during the agitation will be returned.
3. The government will withdraw all ordinances and prosecutions issued during the repression and agitation.
4. Indians will be allowed to make salt.
5. Those who had left government jobs during the agitation will be considered for withdrawal.

In return, Gandhiji said:

1. Ending the Civil Disobedience Movement,
2. Participating in the Second Round Table Conference,
3. Not investigating police atrocities,
4. Not to boycott British goods and
5. Agrees to give up boycott policy.

### Reactions to the agreement

The Gandhi-Irwin pact evoked mixed reactions. Many considered it ignorant of the Congressional Resolution of Independence and the Pledge of 26<sup>th</sup> January. Nehru and other leftist leaders were deeply disappointed. The government did not accept any major demands in the agreement, ignoring even the appeal to stop the hanging of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, and Rajguru.

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1931, these three revolutionaries were hanged, which spread outrage across the country. Leader of the Opposition in the Central Assembly Sir Abdur Rahim and Independent Party Vice President Kavasji Jahangir staged a walkout in protest against this. Nehru lamented Bhagat Singh's body will stand between us and the British government.

Gandhi and the Congress were severely criticised. Ayodhya Singh wrote that this agreement was only in the interest of the bourgeoisie, while the mass movement of the masses was stopped at a time when it was at its peak.



### 9.13.2 Karachi Session and the Gandhi-Irwin Pact

A few days after the agreement, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1931, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged, causing a wave of mourning across the country. Many attributed this to the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. When Gandhi arrived at the Karachi session on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1931, protests were held against him and black flags were shown to him. Bhagat Singh 'Naujawan Sabha' also raised slogans of 'Gandhi go back'.

Despite opposition, the Gandhi-Irwin pact was adopted at the Karachi session. A resolution was also introduced in memory of the martyrs in the session, which Gandhiji accepted only after amendment. The most important event of this session was the passage of the resolution relating to fundamental rights and economic policies, which was a revised and expanded version of the Nehru Report. Accordingly, the Congress set the following objectives:

- (i) Assurance of Fundamental Rights by the People, Gathering, Creating an organisation, Right to take out processions, etc.).
- (ii) Ending racial and religious discrimination.
- (iii) Organisation of provinces on a linguistic basis and development of national languages.
- (iv) Protect domestic industries and impose import duties on foreign goods.
- (v) Reduction of taxes.
- (vi) Abolish the practice of forced labour.
- (vii) Policy of secularism.
- (viii) Abolition of salt tax.
- (ix) Provision of adult suffrage.
- (x) Provision of free primary education.
- (xi) Protection of workers' rights.

According to Professor Bipan Chandra, 'The Karachi Congress may not have been able to demand the abolition of the jagirs of big zamindars and semi-feudal landowners, but it started formulating its programme related to land reforms.' On the



## NOTES

one hand, the session shows the success of Gandhian philosophy, which helped in reconciling internal and external differences through dialogue and persuasion. On the other hand, it marks the beginning of the effective entry of socialist and transformative ideas into the Congress programme. In this session, Gandhiji was also allowed to participate in the Second Round Table Conference and represent the Congress.

---

### 9.14 THREE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES

---

When the civil disobedience movement was gaining momentum in India and the repression of the government was intensified, at the same time Viceroy Lord Irwin and Mr. Simon pressed the British government to negotiate with Indian leaders and representatives of various classes to find a solution to the constitutional problems of India. For this purpose, three Round Table Conferences were held in London between November 1930 and December 1932. However, these conferences could not reach any concrete conclusion. On the contrary, these led to dissension and communalism among different classes and sects of India.

#### 9.14.1 First Round Table Conference (12<sup>th</sup> November 1930 – January 1931)

The first Round Table Conference was held in London with the efforts of Lord Irwin. Its purpose was to consider the proposals of the Simon Commission. It was attended by Indian leaders and representatives of the British government. However, Gandhiji and the Congress boycotted the conference. Despite this, communal classes (Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha, Sikhs, Christians, Scheduled Castes), landlords, industrialists, princely states, European representatives, and various political parties of England participated in it. The Indian delegates at the conference were selected in such a way that the influence of the Congress was less visible and no unanimous decision could be taken. A total of 89 delegates participated. The conference was inaugurated by King George V of Britain and presided over by Prime Minister Sir Ramsay MacDonald. There were three sessions of this conference.



## NOTES

During the inauguration, George V assured to protect the interests of different sections and minorities. But from the very beginning, the differences among the members present were palpable.

- The Indian delegates insisted on the establishment of a federation in India, while many British delegates were opposed to giving India the status of “Dominion States”.
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar demanded separate elections for the Scheduled Castes.
- The Muslim representatives were demanding separate elections to communal, joint electorates, representation in proportion to population, and over-representation.

Due to these various demands and differences, the Conference could not arrive at a consensus decision. The Prime Minister explained the British Government’s position on Indian constitutional questions, but it did not yield any concrete results. According to him, the objectives of the government were as follows:

- (i) The central legislature should be made responsible for the administration of India, but there should be proper arrangements to protect the interests of minorities.
- (ii) A federal government should be established in India, which included the British Indian provinces and the princely states.
- (iii) The executive should be made accountable to the legislature in matters other than security, foreign affairs and emergency powers.
- (iv) There should be a fully responsible government in the provinces and there should be a clear division of central and provincial powers.
- (v) Communal questions should be left to different communities.

The first Round Table Conference failed. The boycott of the Congress made it insignificant. Prof. Bipan Chandra expressed it as, “A conference on Indian affairs without the Congress was like Ramlila without Ram.” The Indian delegates present at the conference could not arrive at a unanimous decision. Except for important issues like independence and colonial self-rule, the members were only entangled in communal questions, but there was no solution to that.



## NOTES

Subhash Chandra Bose said, “This conference brought two bitter pills for India – reservation and federal structure. They were given a sweet cover of responsibility to make these bitter pills fit for food.”

### 9.14.2 Second Round Table Conference (7<sup>th</sup> September 1931 – 1<sup>st</sup> December 1931)

The first Round Table Conference was followed by the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, which was adopted by the Karachi session of the Congress. Under this, the Congress decided to participate in the Round Table Conference and appointed Gandhiji as its representative. In the meantime, Lord Willington had become the Viceroy of India in place of Lord Irwin.



*Fig. 9.5 Second Round Table Conference*

**Source:** <https://ml.wikipedia.org/wik>

In England, the Labour government had been replaced by an all-party government, weakening the position of Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald. At the same time, the new Viceroy in India did not take the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact seriously. Instead, he laid more emphasis on increasing class differences and taking



## **NOTES**

oppressive measures. There were also violent riots in India. Despite these difficult circumstances, Gandhiji decided to go to London in August 1931 after long thinking.

### **Beginning of the Conference and Gandhi's Role**

The Second Round Table Conference began in London in September 1931. Gandhiji tried his best to protect Indian interests and played an important role in the conference. He tried to prove that the Congress represented the entire Indian nation. He demanded the establishment of a fully responsible government in India and the abolition of unnecessary powers of the Viceroy.

### **Dominance of Communal Issues**

However, the intention of the British from the very beginning was not positive. He gave priority to communal issues, further deepening the divide among the minorities. Indian communal classes also did not take Gandhiji's words seriously. Representatives like the Aga Khan, Hindu, and Sikh leaders, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar focused on their class interests and formed a united front against Gandhiji.

### **Failure of the Conference**

Gandhiji's idealistic words and efforts ultimately proved futile. The conference could not reach any concrete conclusion on the proposed structure of the Indian Union and the questions of minorities. Taking advantage of this failure, Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald presented a plan of constitutional reforms for India. The proposal emphasised the following:

- (i) Federal Centre and System of Autonomy
- (ii) Limited autonomy rights for provinces
- (iii) The monopoly of the English Parliament and the Viceroy in matters relating to finance, foreign trade, and war and security

### **Return of Gandhiji and Repression of the Government**

In December 1931, Gandhiji returned to India, disappointed with the attitude of the government. During this time, the Viceroy Lord Willingdon took drastic steps to suppress

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

**381**





## NOTES

the feeling of nationalism. Even before Gandhiji returned to India, prominent leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Purushottam Das Tandon, and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had been arrested.

The government started harassing the nationalists by encouraging anti-social elements in Bengal. Gandhiji met Viceroy Willington and appealed to him to stop the oppressive action, but he refused. When Gandhiji threatened to launch an agitation, he and many other leaders were arrested.

### **Repressive Measures and Restrictions on Congress**

The government tortured the arrested leaders in jails. The Congress was once again outlawed. Police atrocities increased, the press was severely restricted, and the rule was governed through ordinances instead of the law.

### **Individual Disobedience Movement and Termination of Movement**

In the changing circumstances, Gandhiji planned a 'Personal Disobedience Movement', but the communal decisions of the government discouraged him. Finally, in May 1933, the Congress suspended the movement and called it off completely in May 1934.

### **A Period of Despair and Gandhiji's New Purpose**

The end of the movement led to despair across the country. Gandhiji took a break from politics for a while and focused his attention on the upliftment of the Harijans and protecting their rights.

### **9.14.3 Third Round Table Conference (17<sup>th</sup> November – 24<sup>th</sup> December 1932)**

In 1932, another Round Table Conference was held in London. Supporters of the British government and reactionary elements took part in this conference, but the Congress did not participate in it. Even Britain's Labour Party kept a distance from the conference.

The conference raised the demand to limit the fundamental rights of Indians and the rights of the Governor General, but the government did not pay any attention to them. As a result, this conference was also a complete failure.



#### **9.14.4 Failure of Round Table Conferences and the Rise of Communalism**

The three Round Table Conferences only pretended to find a solution to India's constitutional questions, but no concrete result was reached. These conferences failed because of government policies and class interests.

With their failure, the threat of communalism in India increased further. This communalism proved to have a profound impact on the events to come and on the political future of India.

---

### **9.15 MACDONALD'S COMMUNAL DECISION**

---

Let us discuss this in detail.

#### **9.15.1 British Attempts to Suppress the Nationalist Movement**

To suppress the growing nationalist sentiment in India, the British resorted to deceit diplomacy along with the use of force. He laid special emphasis on the policy of 'divide and rule' so that Indian unity could be broken and its position could be strengthened. The rulers of the princely states and the bourgeoisie had already become supporters of the British. At the same time, with the efforts and support of the British, a large section of Muslims under the leadership of the Muslim League was breaking away from the Congress and doing their politics. Besides, the Sikh, Harijan, and Anglo-Indian communities were also demanding special privileges.

#### **9.15.2 Self-Interest of Classes in the National Movement**

Although the Indian national movement appeared to be organised from above, the leaders of different classes were adopting a soft and sometimes hot attitude towards the government for their interests. British politicians understood this situation.



**NOTES**

**9.15.3 Second Round Table Conference and Communalism**

The problem of constitutional reforms was to be discussed at the Second Round Table Conference held in London in 1931. However, the British paid most of their attention to the solution of communal questions. British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald was more interested in solving the communal problem than in constitutional reforms. Aga Khan, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, and other class leaders were also directly or indirectly supporting the British government. Gandhiji did not give much importance to communal issues and emphasised independence and constitutional questions, but he could not succeed against the coalition of selfish classes.

Gandhiji's only success was that communal issues could not be settled immediately. However, Gandhiji returned disappointed with the draft constitutional reforms that were prepared. In the end, the Second Round Table Conference proved to be unsuccessful.

---

**9.16 DECLARATION OF MACDONALD (AUGUST 14<sup>TH</sup>, 1932)**

---

After the Round Table Conference, the British Government decided to further widen the gap between the Indians. Inspired by this objective, British Prime Minister MacDonald made his famous announcement on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1932, which is known as the Communal Award or Macdonald Award. As per this scheme, the following arrangements were made:

- (i) The number of members of the provincial legislative assemblies was doubled.
- (ii) The number of minority and special-interest seats was increased. It now included Muslims, Sikhs, Dalits, backward castes, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, and business and industrial classes.
- (iii) Separate electorates were provided for the minorities.
- (iv) The untouchables were treated differently from the Hindus and were also given the right to elect and representation.



## **NOTES**

- (v) Some seats were also reserved for women.
- (vi) Separate elections were also arranged for labour, commerce, industry, tea garden associations, zamindars, and universities and seats were reserved.
- (vii) In areas where Hindus were in the minority, they were not given the same concessions as Muslims were given where their population was less. In provinces where Muslims were smaller, they were over-represented as a proportion of the population. But in Punjab and Bengal, where Muslims were in the majority, separate electorates were arranged. Similarly, in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madras, Muslims were given almost double the proportion of the population.

### **9.16.1 Review and Response to Communal Judgments**

While the representatives of those sections were happy with the communal decision of the government, whose interests were being served, the Congress, nationalist leaders, and especially Gandhiji were deeply unhappy. This decision was planned in such a way that real responsible governance could not be developed in the provinces. There was no major change in the central legislature either. The decision was biased, with special concessions being made to Muslims and Europeans. Also, separate electorates were arranged for the untouchables (Dalits) to divide the Hindus. Gandhiji was deeply hurt by this decision. The most serious consequence of this decision was that Muslim communalism got a further boost. The Muslim League started demanding more facilities for the Muslims. Gradually, plans began to be made for the partition of the country, which ultimately led to the partition of India.

### **9.16.2 Gandhiji's Reaction and Fast unto Death**

The separation of Dalits from Hindus and the system of separate electorates for them was a deep blow to Gandhiji. He strongly opposed this decision by writing a letter to British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1932. Gandhiji warned that if the government did not withdraw this decision, he would begin a fast unto death on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1932. The government ignored Gandhiji's warning and instead accused him of being against the upliftment of Dalits. Meanwhile, the announcement of Gandhiji's fast alarmed the Indian leaders. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr.

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

**385**



## NOTES

Rajendra Prasad, and other leaders started talks with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. To resolve this dispute, a conference was held in Pune, in which many prominent leaders participated. This agreement played an important role in stopping Gandhiji's fast and finding a balanced solution for the Dalits.

---

### 9.17 POONA PACT (26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 1932)

---

#### 1. Poona Pact: The Role of Gandhiji, Ambedkar and Indian Leaders

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar took advantage of Gandhiji's grave situation and the compulsion of Indian leaders to put forth his conditions. They demanded more representation and safe seats in provincial assemblies, central legislatures, and other institutions in exchange for the abolition of separate electorates for Dalits. Apart from this, he also laid down conditions to provide other facilities for Dalits. Ambedkar put forward the same plan that he had put forward during the Second Round Table Conference. In view of Gandhiji's deteriorating health condition and the atmosphere of mourning and despair spread in the country, Indian leaders signed an agreement with Ambedkar on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1932, which is known as the Poona Pact. On the same day, Mahatma Gandhi accepted the agreement and ended his fast unto death. The agreement assured political representation to the Dalit community and marked a turning point in the socio-political history of India. The following decisions were taken by this agreement:

- (i) The separate electorate system for untouchables was abolished. Instead, 148 seats were reserved for them instead of 71. Arrangements were made to conduct the elections for these reserved seats in two parts. In the first phase, the untouchables had to choose 4 candidates for each reserved seat. In the second phase, the untouchables could elect a member together with the upper-class Hindus.
- (ii) In the central legislature also, 18 seats were reserved for Harijans or untouchables.
- (iii) There was also talk of giving proper representation to untouchables in local bodies and public services.



- (iv) Arrangements were made to make efforts for their proper educational and economic development.

## **2. Gandhiji's attention to Harijan**

After the Poona Pact, Gandhiji focused his attention mainly on the upliftment of the Harijans (Dalits). He felt that the pace of the Civil Disobedience Movement was slowing down, so he intensified efforts for the welfare of the Harijans. With Gandhiji's efforts, welfare schemes were made for the Harijans, and concrete steps were taken to eradicate untouchability. He also kept fast for the rights of untouchables and their equality in society.

## **3. Third Round Table Conference and its failure**

Meanwhile, the Third Round Table Conference was held in London in 1932. However, the Congress and Gandhiji did not participate in it. This conference also failed due to his absence.

After the failure of the conference, the British government issued a 'White Paper', which tried to clarify its policy regarding India's constitutional reforms. However, this did not satisfy the Indian leaders.

---

## **9.18 WHITE PAPER**

---

Let us discuss its various aspects in detail.

### **9.18.1 British Government's 'White Paper' and Indian Leaders' Response**

In March 1933, a few months after the conclusion of the Third Round Table Conference, the British Government issued a 'White Paper'. It proposed constitutional reforms and the creation of a new constitution for India. However, the provisions made in it were not acceptable to the Indians. The proposals in the White Paper were considered 'regressive' because they sought to increase the powers of the Governor General or the Viceroy, but did not pay any attention to the establishment of responsible governance. Indian leaders strongly opposed this proposal.



**NOTES**

**9.18.2 Criticism of the White Paper**

They are listed as follows:

- The Indian Liberal Federation (ILF) criticised it for ignoring Indian demands and giving priority to imperial interests.
- The All India National Trade Union termed it a ‘double ruler’, saying the government tried to suppress imperialism and nationalism through this proposal. However, these criticisms had no effect on the government.

**9.18.3 Government of India Act, 1935**

The British Government constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Lord Linlithgow, which included representatives of Britain’s parliamentarians, Indian princely states, and British Indian provinces. Based on the recommendations of this committee, the Government of India Act, of 1935 was finally passed, which was considered a major step towards constitutional reforms of India.

**9.18.4 End of the Civil Disobedience Movement**

In the midst of the above events, Gandhiji focused all his attention on the upliftment of the Harijans. On 8<sup>th</sup> May 1933, he decided to fast for 21 days to pay attention to the Harijan problem and for the self-purification of his comrades. After his announcement, the government was forced to release him from jail.

Gandhiji suggested postponing the civil disobedience movement to save the general public from the oppressive policies of the government. Finally, in May 1934, at the Patna session, the Congress decided to call off the Civil Disobedience Movement.

**9.18.5 Criticism and New Tactics**

Gandhiji and the Congress were severely criticised for the decision to end the Civil Disobedience Movement. After the end of the agitation, some Congress leaders again demanded the adoption of the policy of ‘Council Entry’.



The Congress accepted this demand and decided to participate in the council elections. In the elections held in 1934, the Congress participated and won a majority in all the provinces except Punjab. This re-established the lost prestige of the Congress.

---

## **9.19 AUGUST RESOLUTION (8<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 1940)**

---

Let us discuss this in detail.

### **9.19.1 War Conditions and the Tilt of the British Government**

Although Churchill made sarcastic remarks towards the Congress, the British Government ultimately had to bow down before the Congress and Indian public opinion. By this time, Germany was consistently winning World War II. Countries like Denmark, Norway, Holland, and France came under the occupation of Germany. Britain was in grave danger, and its economy was badly affected by the war. As such, the British government was in dire need of India's support. At the same time, it was clear that the Congress was willing to cooperate with the government in exchange for some concrete assurances. Gandhiji and Nehru also clearly stated that they did not want to gain independence by taking advantage of the destruction of Britain. In view of this circumstance, the British rule decided to take advantage of this opportunity to get the sympathy and support of India.

To satisfy the Indians by obtaining permission from Churchill, Viceroy Linlithgow submitted his August proposal on August 8, 1940. The following proposals were made:

- (i) The British government aims to establish colonial self-government in India.
- (ii) The Governor General's Advisory Committee (Executive Council) will be expanded to accommodate more Indians.
- (iii) In the absence of the approval of the minorities, the government will not implement any constitutional change nor will the government suppress those minorities by force.





## NOTES

- (iv) After the end of the war, a meeting of representatives of all classes and political parties will be convened to discuss the problem of constitutional development.
- (v) A War Advisory Committee would be set up to advise the government on war-related matters, which would include Indians.

### **9.19.2 August Proposal' and its Responses**

The Congress rejected the August Resolution as it did not meet their key demands of independence and self-rule. The Congress could no longer be satisfied by the inclusion of Indians in the Viceroy's Advisory Committee and War Advisory Committees or by luring them with Dominion status. The biggest drawback of this proposal was that it gave too much importance to minorities. This later led to communalism and division of the country. The Congress strongly opposed this proposal, but the Muslim League was inwardly happy with it. Although Pakistan's demand was not accepted in this resolution, the Muslim League got a weapon with which it could move forward towards its objective – the establishment of Pakistan.

---

## **9.20 INDIVIDUAL CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

---

Let us discuss this in detail.

### **9.20.1 Congress Cooperation and Individual Civil Disobedience Movement**

The Congress sincerely desired to cooperate with the British Government and had no intention of harassing him. In May 1940, Jawaharlal Nehru himself said, 'It would be against the honour of India to launch a civil disobedience movement at a time when Britain is in a battle of life and death.' But frustrated with the harsh attitude of the government, the Congress was forced to take the path of agitation again.

Due to the policies of the Congress, its prestige in the public was decreasing, for which it was necessary to resort to the movement. In August 1940, it was decided



## **NOTES**

to launch an individual civil disobedience movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The movement began on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1940. The first Satyagrahi became Vinoba Bhave, and many leaders and common people, including Jawaharlal Nehru, participated in the Satyagraha. Thousands of people went to jail, although Gandhiji maintained control over the satyagrahis and guided the movement by staying out of jail himself.

### **9.20.2 ‘August Proposal’ and the Government’s Position**

Under the August Resolution, the Viceroy’s Executive was expanded and the number of Indian members was increased. However, the Congress and the Muslim League refused to be a part of it. Despite this, in 1941, the government, under the influence of Indian members, released political prisoners.

### **9.20.3 Combat Conditions and the Japanese Threat**

Meanwhile, Britain’s position in World War II was weakening. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and Japan’s growing advance in East Asia alarmed the British government. In an effort to liberate India from British Rule Subhas Chandra Bose collaborated with the Japanese military to organize and lead a resistance movement. The position of the British in Burma was also deteriorating.

### **9.20.4 Proximity of Congress and Government**

In view of a possible Japanese invasion at this critical time, the Congress at the Bardoli session decided to call off the Civil Disobedience Movement. Britain, on the other hand, was desperate and wanted India’s full cooperation to contain Japan and help in war preparations.

### **9.20.5 Arrival of the Cripps Mission**

To achieve this cooperation and to find a solution to India’s political problems, the British Government sent the ‘Cripps Mission’ to India. There was also pressure from the US and China that Britain should get its support by giving India a political solution.



**NOTES**

---

## **9.21 THE CRIPPS MISSION: 30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 1942**

---

Compelled by the above circumstances, Churchill planned to send a member of the wartime cabinet (Sir Stanford Cripps) to India. Cripps reached Delhi on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1942 and presented his famous plan on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1942. There were two parts to this scheme:

- (i) Proposals to be implemented after the war
- (ii) Proposals to be implemented immediately in wartime situations. By these proposals, the Government accepted that it would give India a post-war–
  - (i) Dominion will grant status.
  - (ii) India will have the right to live or not to live in the Commonwealth.
- (iii) After the war, a Constituent Assembly would be formed to frame a new Constitution of India, the members of which would be elected by the provincial assemblies and some by the rulers of the princely states.
- (iv) Any province or princely state of British India will have the right to get Dominion Status separate from the Indian Union.
- (v) There would be a treaty between the British Government and the Constituent Assembly which would describe the assurances and protection given by the British Government to the Indian religious and minority castes. That is, those features will have to be retained in the new constitution.

### **9.21.1 Immediate Measures of Cripps Mission and Indian Response**

The Cripps Mission suggested some temporary measures for India, but the security and defense of the country were kept completely under the control of the British. Indians were said to be included at various levels of the government, but no real power was given to them.



## **NOTES**

For example, the post of Minister of Security was offered to Indians, but its real power was planned to be kept in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief of Britain. In addition, the Cripps Mission spoke of granting the right to secede provinces and princely states from the Indian Union, which was more emboldened by the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan.

### **9.21.2 Indian Response**

The Cripps Mission could not satisfy the Indians. On the contrary, it increased the feeling of distrust and hatred of the Congress and the Indian public towards the British. It became clear that the British wanted to give Indians a share in power only for the sake of show, and they had no intention of handing over real power.

The Congress rejected the proposal and demanded immediate self-rule. However, it accepted the democratic principle of self-determination. The Muslim League was happy with its demand for an independent existence separate from the Sangh but remained dissatisfied with the constitution-making process.

Other leaders like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Sikh community, Dr. Ambedkar, and C.M. Raja could not accept it due to their interests.

### **9.21.3 Failure of the Cripps Mission**

The Cripps mission failed in April 1942, and all parties rejected it for different reasons. Mr. Cripps withdrew his proposal and went back, blaming the Indian leaders for it.

### **9.21.4 Failure Benefits Churchill**

The biggest beneficiary of this failure was British Prime Minister Churchill. He convinced the US President Roosevelt that constitutional reforms could not be done in India because Indian leaders were not ready for them. This put an end to Roosevelt's pressure on Churchill.



**NOTES**

---

## **9.22 QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT OF AUGUST 1942: THE AUGUST REVOLUTION**

---

Let us discuss this in detail.

### **9.22.1 Failure of Cripps Mission and Background of Quit India Movement**

The failure of the Cripps Mission caused disappointment and resentment among the Indian leaders and the public. Meanwhile, the position of the Allies in World War II was weakening, while the Axis powers were growing rapidly. Japan's invasion of Malaya and Burma was alarming the Indians, and the threat of a Japanese attack on Bengal had increased.

The British government also planned to adopt a 'scorched earth policy', which threatened to destroy Bengal's industrial establishment and economy. These conditions increased nervousness and restlessness among the Indian public.

Gandhiji studied the situation in depth and felt that the time had come to make the masses self-sufficient. He said Indians must believe that they were the masters of their own nation and could not depend on Britain for their security. Gandhiji demanded the government to 'Quit India' and hand over power to Indians.

### **9.22.2 Causes of the Quit India Movement**

The causes are discussed as follows:

- **Failure of Cripps Mission** - Due to the failure of the Cripps talks, the withdrawal of the Cripps proposals and the summoning of Sir Stafford Cripps to England, there was an atmosphere of great disappointment in India. It was clear from Cripps's statement, 'accept or leave' that the British government was not willing to resolve India's constitutional impasse, it was only pretending. Not only this, the responsibility of the failure of the mission was put on the Congress. Therefore, the purpose of the Cripps Proposal was to satisfy its war allies – the US, China, and not India. Under such circumstances, the Congress



## NOTES

decided to start a new movement to remove the disappointment spread among the people and to achieve independence.

- **Inhuman Treatment towards Indians in Myanmar** - Only after Japan's conquest of Myanmar, Indian refugees who were coming from Myanmar came here and told that discrimination had been created between Indians and Europeans. The Indians were given different and painful routes to come and different paths were given to them. At the same time, Indian refugees were being treated as inhumanly. This incident also inspired Gandhiji to start the movement.
- **Miserable Economic Condition** - At this time, the prices of commodities had increased very much. Due to this, the economic sufferings of the people also increased, due to which the feeling of dissatisfaction with the British rule increased greatly. Due to the war situation and the skyrocketing prices of commodities, people were losing faith in paper notes. There was discontent all around the country, and as a result, Gandhi was forced to start the Quit India Movement.
- At this time, there was a reign of fear and terror in East Bengal. The government had taken over the land of many peasants there for military purposes. Similarly, hundreds of country boats that ferried thousands of families were destroyed. The misery of the people was greatly increased by these actions of the government. Saddened by these sufferings, Gandhiji decided to use his last Quit India Movement against the British Government.
- In World War II, Japan's forces were constantly advancing toward India after defeating the British in Singapore, Malaya, and Myanmar. Therefore, the threat of a Japanese invasion of India was increasing every moment. Mahatma Gandhi and other Indian leaders felt that the British were unable to protect India. At the same time, he also thought that if the British left India as a rule, Japan might not invade India. For this reason, Gandhiji said that the British should not leave India to Japan, but leave India in an orderly manner for the Indians. In one of his articles in Harijan, Gandhiji wrote: 'Whatever may be the consequences for India, the real security of India and Britain lies in the timely departure of England from India.' Thus, for the above reasons, the Congress decided to launch the 'Quit India Movement' under the leadership of Gandhiji.



## NOTES

The bad conditions of the war and international pressure forced the British to enter into an amicable settlement with India and to actively cooperate in the war with her. Sir Stafford Cripps interacted with the leaders of several political parties in India with some proposals

### 9.22.3 Dissension in Congress and Gandhiji's Leadership

Gandhiji also proposed that if the British government transferred power immediately, the English army could remain in India and conduct the war from Indian bases. Otherwise, he warned, 'I will build a movement from the sands of India, which will be bigger than the Congress itself.'

However, there were differences of opinion in the Congress over this proposal. Nehru, Maulana Azad, and some other leaders considered it impractical, especially when the war situation was serious. However, with the efforts of Sardar Patel and Gandhiji, the Congress General Committee approved Gandhiji's program of 'non-violent rebellion' in July 1942.

### 9.22.4 August Resolution and Quit India Movement

On 7<sup>th</sup> August 1942, the Congress session was held in Mumbai, where the 'August Resolution' was presented. The proposal stated:

- The end of British rule is necessary in the interest of India and the United Nations. After independence, a provisional government will be formed in India.
- India will become a friend of the United Nations and will use its resources against Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism.
- The Muslim League was assured that the Constitution would be such that it would give maximum autonomy to the units involved in the Sangh, while the rest of the powers would be vested with the Centre.

To achieve these objectives, the proposal to launch a 'non-violent and mass movement' under the leadership of Gandhiji, called the 'Quit India Movement', was accepted.



*Fig. 9.6 Quit India Movement or August Revolution, 1942*

*Source:* <https://www.99notes.in>

#### **9.22.5 Call to ‘Do or Die’**

On the night of 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1942, Gandhiji said in his historic speech: “I want freedom immediately, if possible, tonight, before dawn. I cannot be satisfied with anything less than complete freedom. Let me give you a little mantra – ‘Do or Die’. We will either liberate India or die in this attempt.” We will not live to see slavery become permanent.

#### **9.22.6 Quit India Movement: A New Direction and Government Repression**

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1942, soon after the announcement of the Quit India Movement, the British government arrested Mahatma Gandhi, members of the Congress Working Committee, and many other leaders. Gandhiji was house-arrested along with Sarojini Naidu at the Aga Khan Palace in Poona, while the other leaders were imprisoned in the Ahmednagar Fort. Jayaprakash Narayan was kept in Hazaribagh jail.





## NOTES

The public was shocked and outraged by the arrest of the leaders. Their anger took the form of violence. Strikes, protests, and sloganeering against the British began. Students, workers, farmers, and common people took part in the movement. The demand for the release of the arrested leaders reverberated everywhere.

### **Violence and People's Revolt**

The repressive policies of the government further fueled the anger of the people. Agitators uprooted railway tracks, cut telephone wires, and set post offices and government buildings on fire. In many places, the agitators overthrew British rule and established parallel governments.

Jayaprakash Narayan escaped from Hazaribagh jail and led the armed struggle and people's revolution. In many parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, the British rule came to an end temporarily. The "Quit India Resolution" was passed by the All India Congress Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942. The Congress appealed to the people of India after a comprehensive discussion on the national and international situation. Gandhi asked the British to leave India in the hands of God. "Every Indian who seeks freedom and wants to strive for it must be his leader. "Do or die" was his message. This was the beginning of the "Quit India Movement". In the initial stages, the movement was non-violent. However, the repressive policy of the government inspired people to commit violence. People embraced Gandhiji's message of non-violent struggle. These included attacks on government buildings, police stations, and post offices, cutting railway stations, railway tracks and telegraphs, telephones, and electrical wires, disrupting road traffic by destroying bridges, and striking employees. Most of these actions were to stop the movement of the army and police, which the government was using to crush the movement. In many areas, the local people created "Swaraj" where the government had no control. For instance, in Satara, Maharashtra, there was a parallel government, which continued for a long time. The Tamluk Jatiya government was in the Midnapore district in Bengal for a considerable time. This national government also had the postal service and arbitration courts in addition to law and order, health, education, agriculture, and other departments. Talcher, Orissa, was an independent state. In eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (including Azamgarh, Ballia, Ghazipur, Munger, and Muzaffarpur), the public occupied police stations and arrested government officials.



## NOTES

The movement began in urban areas, but it quickly spread to rural areas as well, where the flag of rebellion had been flying for a long time. The movement received widespread support throughout the country. In Bombay, the socialist leaders led by Aruna Asif Ali continued their underground activities. The establishment of Congress Radio, which was proclaimed by Usha Mehta, was the most courageous action of the underground movement. The radio was active for a long time. The students participated in the movement. They spread out into the countryside and gave guidance to the villagers.

### **Quit India Movement: Facts to Remember**

Some of them are listed as follows:

- The resolution was presented in Congress Working Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> July, 1942.
- The proposal was ratified by the Congress on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1942.
- The resolution was passed at the historic Gwalior Tank Ground in Bombay.
- This was the first such movement of the national movement, which was completely leaderless.
- At the same time, Gandhi gave a timeless slogan “do or die.”
- The longest surviving government was that of Satara (Maharashtra) among the self-governing parallel governments established during the 1970 AD.
- T. Vikenden (ICS), the head of the commission of inquiry appointed to investigate the movement, was a judge from the Central Provinces. Its report on November 29<sup>th</sup> was submitted to the government in 1943.
- During the movement, Gandhiji was arrested and kept in the Aga Khan Palace.
- The British government had made preparations for Gandhiji’s funeral at the Aga Khan Palace during the Quit India Movement.
- During the movement of 1942, Jayaprakash Narayan took part in the movement by scaling the walls of Hazaribagh Central Jail.
- Gandhiji received the news of the death of his wife Kasturba and personal secretary, Mahadev Desai.
- During the movement, the secret radio of the Congress was established.



**NOTES**

---

## **9.23 GOVERNMENT REPRESSION**

---

Let us discuss this in detail.

### **9.23.1 Brutality of Government Repression**

The government had tried its best to crush the mass movement. The government adopted measures such as arrests, detentions, police firing, setting fire to Congress offices, etc. By the end of 1942, 16,089 people had been arrested in UP. By the end of 1943, 91,836 people had been arrested in India.

By September 1942, the number of people shot by police was 658, which had risen to 1060 by 1943. But these figures were official. Far more people died and far more were injured. In Midnapore alone, government forces burnt down 31 Congress camps and 144 private houses. As many as 74 cases of rape have been registered. On 9 January 1943, 46 of them were killed by the police in a single village in a single day.

The government allowed aeroplanes to be used to shoot people in five places. These places were Girik, Bhagalpur, Nadia, Ranighat, Munger, and Talcher near Patna. There were many incidents of detention, lathi-charge, and flogging. Fines were collected from people in agitation-affected areas. For example, the total amount of such fines in UP was Rs 28,32,000, and by February 1943 Rs 25,000 had been recovered. The Quit India Campaign was unsuccessful. But it made clear the strong desire of the people to get rid of the British.

The British government showed brutality to crush the movement. Bullets were fired at unarmed people, bombs were dropped from aeroplanes in many places. An estimated 10,000 people were killed and thousands were arrested in the police and military crackdowns. The press was censored, collective punishments were imposed on the villages, and the villagers were brutally tortured.

Many political parties and leaders were against the movement. The Muslim League stayed away from it and later gave the slogan of 'divide and run' in response



to 'Quit India'. The Communist Party also did not support it and stood in favour of the government. The princely states also kept a distance from it.

For these reasons, and in the face of government repression, the movement did not succeed in 1942 and was brutally suppressed by the government.

### **9.23.2 Significance and Impact of the Movement**

Great achievements of the movement though the movement was unsuccessful, however, its importance was immense.

- According to Prof. Bipan Chandra, this movement clearly reflects the determination of the Indian masses against imperialism and the aspiration for freedom.
- The movement signaled to the British rule that their imperialism could no longer survive in India.

The Revolt of 1942 was the last major movement of the Indian freedom struggle. Jayaprakash Narayan gave it equal importance to the revolutions of France and Russia. He said, "The revolution of 1942 gave a new direction to the politics of the country, and created a new India. The fortress of the English rule, which looked strong, suddenly began to weaken. The public understood that this fort was made of sand walls and it could be demolished."

This movement was not only going to pave the way for independence but also proved to make the Indian masses realise their self-confidence and organising power.

---

## **9.24 SUMMARY**

---

In this lesson, we saw how Gandhiji fought against the policy of apartheid and his arrival in Indian politics started an era of mass movement. He first raised local issues and then emerged as a national leader. It is necessary to mention here that there is a difference of opinion among scholars about the significance of Gandhiji's ideology, but the truth is that his ideology greatly influenced the national movement and gave it a



## NOTES

specific direction. The participation of different social classes and groups made it a real mass movement. Several factors were involved in this development. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who came to India after a massive mass mobilisation against racial discrimination in South Africa, was one of them. Gandhi used innovative ideas and technology to make it easier for the common people to participate in the movement. He was the indispensable leader of the national movement till 1920 and remained so until it gained independence in 1947. All his campaigns and movements had a proper inclusion of the issues and grievances of the common people, and his movements were linked to the moral fabric. Therefore, his call was evident in the three major movements, as well as some local movements. He transformed Indians into effective weapons of satyagraha and non-violence, and used against the oppressive colonial state.

---

## 9.25 GLOSSARY

---

- **Expeditions:** Expeditions, Expeditions, Expeditions
- **Emergence:** manifestation, coming forward, being revealed
- **Satyagraha:** Gandhiji's movement based on the urge for truth, truth and non-violence
- **Footing:** An iron object used in aces, gigs, etc., on which passengers climb and descend by placing their feet.
- **Passed:** A motion, Bill, etc. which is deemed to be correct in accordance with the rules and in accordance with which the work is to be done
- **Vasinda:** People living in a country
- **Registered:** The booklet for writing accounts or accounts is written or plated on the gym
- **Oppressive:** An act done to suppress or restrain
- **Apparently:** Manifest
- **Lessee:** Fraternity, equal rights



## NOTES

- **Concession:** Discount
- **Mediation:** To resolve any dispute or conflict in the middle
- **Disregard:** disdain, lack of attention, inattention
- **Passive:** in which there is an action, effort, or trade

## 9.26 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

### 9.26.1 In-Text Questions

1. Mahatma Gandhi's first active participation in the Indian freedom struggle was from which movement?  
A) Non-co-operation movement  
B) Quit India Movement  
C) Champaran Satyagraha  
D) Civil disobedience movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi against British rule
2. What was Gandhiji's main resistance against British rule?  
A) Armed Rebellion  
B) Passive resistance (Nonviolent resistance)  
C) Economic sanction  
D) Diplomatic Talks
3. Dandi March was a part of which larger movement?  
A) Quit India Movement  
B) Non-co-operation movement  
C) Civil disobedience movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi against British rule  
D) Khilafat Movement



**NOTES**

4. What does Gandhian Philosophy “swaraj” mean?
  - A) self-rule
  - B) complete independence
  - C) Non-violence
  - D) Truth and Justice
5. Which movement was started by Gandhiji in response to the Rowlatt Act?
  - A) Non-co-operation movement
  - B) Quit India Movement
  - C) Civil disobedience movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi against British rule
  - D) Satyagraha against Rowlatt Act
6. Which of the following principles was not a part of Gandhian ideology?
  - A) Satya (Truthfulness)
  - B) Non-violence (non-violence)
  - C) Untouchability
  - D) Civil disobedience
7. Who gave the title of “A holy or pious man” to Gandhi?
  - A) Jawaharlal Nehru
  - B) Rabindranath Tagore
  - C) Subhash Chandra Bose
  - D) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
8. The Khilafat movement supported by Gandhi was mainly related to which issue?
  - A) Hindu-Muslim Unity
  - B) Economic Reforms
  - C) Defense of the Ottoman Caliphate
  - D) Agrarian Reform

*Self-Instructional*



**NOTES**

9. During which movement was Gandhiji's slogan "Do or Die" given?
  - A) Quit India Movement
  - B) Non-co-operation movement
  - C) Salt March
  - D) Civil disobedience movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi against British rule
10. Which of the following was a newspaper edited by Mahatma Gandhi?
  - A) The Hindu
  - B) A person of the Scheduled Castes
  - C) Young India
  - D) B and C both
11. With whom did Gandhiji's first major mass struggle in India take place?
  - A) Kheda Satyagraha
  - B) Non-co-operation movement
  - C) Champaran Satyagraha
  - D) Salt Satyagraha
12. When did the Non-Cooperation Movement start?
  - A) 1920
  - B) 1925
  - C) 1919
  - D) 1930
13. When did Gandhiji return to India from South Africa?
  - A) 1913
  - B) 1915
  - C) 1916
  - D) 1919





**NOTES**

14. Which British law inspired Gandhiji to start the Civil Disobedience Movement?
  - A) Rowlatt Act
  - B) Government of India Act, 1935
  - C) Vernacular Press Act
  - D) Salt Law
15. What was the main objective of the Non-Cooperation Movement?
  - A) Complete independence from British rule
  - B) Promoting local industries
  - C) Boycott of British goods and institutions
  - D) Religious Unity
16. Where did Gandhiji first use Satyagraha in India?
  - A) Ahmedabad
  - B) Kheda
  - C) Champaran
  - D) Bardoli
17. Which of the following economic practices was supported by Gandhiji?
  - A) Industrialisation
  - B) Urbanisation
  - C) Self-reliance and Khadi spinning
  - D) Foreign Investment
18. What was the main feature of Gandhian movements?
  - A) Armed Conflict
  - B) Non-Cooperation and Non-Violence
  - C) Economic sanction
  - D) Diplomatic Talks



**NOTES**

19. What was the significance of the Chauri Chaura incident for Gandhiji?
- A) It postponed the Non-Cooperation Movement.
  - B) It started the Quit India Movement.
  - C) It inspired the Salt Satyagraha.
  - D) It was a victory for the Congress.
20. What is the main element of Gandhian ideology?
- A) Armed Resistance
  - B) Communal Divide
  - C) Non-violence
  - D) Industrialisation
21. What was Gandhiji's reaction to the British declaring war on behalf of India in 1947?
- A) Support for the British war effort
  - B) Complete silence
  - C) Protests and demands for Indian self-determination
  - D) Armed Rebellion
22. By what name did Mahatma Gandhi address the untouchables?
- A) Member of the fourth class in Hindu social hierarchy
  - B) A person of the Scheduled Castes
  - C) Oppressed or downtrodden person
  - D) Aborigine
23. Which of the following methods was used by Gandhiji to promote Swadeshi?
- A) Import of British goods
  - B) Promotion of Khadi
  - C) Establishment of British-style schools
  - D) Boycott of Indian products



**NOTES**

24. In which year did the Quit India Movement begin?
- A) 1939
  - B) 1942
  - C) 1945
  - D) 1922
25. In which year did Gandhiji start the Champaran Satyagraha?
- A) 1917
  - B) 1915
  - C) 1919
  - D) 1921

**9.26.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. Explain the main tenets of Gandhian thought, such as truth (truth) and ahimsa (non-violence). How did these principles shape India's freedom struggle?
2. What role did Mahatma Gandhi play in transforming the Indian National Congress from an elite organisation to a mass movement? What strategies did they adopt to involve the masses in the nationalist struggle?
3. What was the impact of the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22) led by Gandhi on the Indian freedom struggle? Why did Gandhi withdraw from the movement, and what were its consequences?
4. What was the significance of the Salt March (Dandi March) in the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930? How did it establish the symbol of mass nationalism in India?
5. Examine the methods of satyagraha used by Gandhi during India's freedom struggle. How was this technique different from violent protest methods, and how effective was it?
6. How did Gandhian movements, particularly the Quit India Movement (1942), contribute to India's final war of independence? What challenges did the movement face?



## NOTES

7. How did Gandhiji's emphasis on village industries and self-reliance (Swadeshi) relate to his broader vision of Indian independence? How did these ideas affect the nationalist economy?
8. How did Mahatma Gandhi's movements and techniques influence the worldview of colonialism and other international freedom struggles?

---

## 9.27 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

---

1. C, 2. b, 3. c, 4. a, 5. d, 6. c, 7. b, 8. c, 10. d, 11. c, 12. a, 13. b, 14. d, 15. c, 16. c, 17. c, 18. b, 19. a, 20. c, 21. c, 22. b, 23. b, 24. b, 25. a

---

## 9.28 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

---

- Sarkar, Sumit. (1983). *Modern India 1885-1947*. Delhi: Macmillan.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2004). *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Chandra, Bipan. (1989). *India's Struggle for Independence*. Delhi Penguin.,
- Pandey, Gyanendra. (2002). *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34. A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*. New Delhi: Anthem Press (Second edition).
- Bose, S & Ayesha Jalal. (1998). *Modern South Asia History, Culture, Political Economy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Dubey, Ishita Banerjee (2015). *A History of Modern India*. Delhi Cambridge University Press.
- Sarkar, Sumit (2009) *Modern India*, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar (2012). *History of Modern India from the Partition of Plassey*. Delhi: Orient Longman.



---

## **Unit IV: Other Currents in Nationalism**

---

- Lesson 10**     **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) and Bhagat Singh, and Subhas Chandra Bose and INA**
- Lesson 11**     **Left: Peasants, Workers Movements, Jayaprakash Narayan's Socialist Party and Nationalist Politics in Southern India**





## **LESSON 10**

# **HINDUSTAN SOCIALIST REPUBLICAN ASSOCIATION (HSRA) AND BHAGAT SINGH, AND SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE AND INA**

---

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### **Structure**

- 10.1 Learning Objectives
- 10.2 Introduction
- 10.3 Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) and Shaheed Bhagat Singh
  - 10.3.1 Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA): Formation and Purpose
  - 10.3.2 Bhagat Singh's Early Life
  - 10.3.3 Revolutionary Ideology and Bhagat Singh
- 10.4 Bhagat Singh's Ideology and Martyrdom
- 10.5 Bhagat Singh's Legacy
- 10.6 Simon Commission and Lala Lajpat Rai's Death
- 10.7 Circumstances of the Establishment of the Indian National Army (INA)
- 10.8 Establishment of the Indian National Army (INA) and its Early Struggles
- 10.9 Leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose
- 10.10 The INA Trial Movement and the Three Revolts
- 10.11 Naval Mutiny of 1946
- 10.12 Imphal Campaign
- 10.13 The INA: Causes of Failure
- 10.14 Causes of the Naval Mutiny
- 10.15 His Majesty Indian Ship (HMIS) Talwar
- 10.16 Beginning and Spread of the Revolt
- 10.17 Consequences of the Naval Mutiny
- 10.18 Summary
- 10.19 Glossary





## NOTES

- 10.20 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 10.20.1 In-Text Questions
  - 10.20.2 Long Answer Questions
- 10.21 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 10.22 References/Suggested Readings

---

## 10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

---

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Know about the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)
- Understand the circumstances responsible for the establishment of the INA
- Discuss the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose
- Explain the achievements of the INA
- Analyse the reasons for the failure of the INA
- Describe the causes of the Naval Mutiny
- Understand the consequences of the Naval Mutiny

---

## 10.2 INTRODUCTION

---

Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) was the symbol of revolutionary thinking during the Indian freedom struggle. It was formed in 1928 by revolutionaries including Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad and Ram Prasad Bismil. The goal of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association was not only to liberate India from British rule, but also to create a socialist society where a society free from exploitation could be created. The revolutionaries believed that it was impossible to end British imperialism without violence. Bhagat Singh, the leading thinker and leader of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association, made a significant contribution to making the Indian youth aware.



## **NOTES**

the British, such as throwing bombs in the Central Assembly, in which his aim was not to kill anyone but to challenge colonial rule. Bhagat Singh and his fellow revolutionaries thought that their sacrifices would awaken the countrymen to freedom. Bhagat Singh was hanged in 1931, but his sacrifice became immortal in the history of Indian freedom struggle. The HSRA gave a new direction to the Indian independence movement, which combined socialist principles and revolutionary ideas.

One of the biggest and most influential leaders of the Indian freedom struggle, Subhas Chandra Bose, had a different approach from other Congress leaders as he believed that it is not possible to achieve freedom through non-violence alone. He thought that British imperialism could be defeated only through armed struggle.

In 1939, Bose resigned from the Congress and embarked on an independent path. He believed that India could be given independence by taking advantage of the weakness of the British Empire during World War II. A previous version of the Indian National Army, known as first Indian National Army was established in 1942 by Iwaichi Fujiwara and captain Mohan Singh. However, in 1943, Subhas Chandra Bose reformed the Indian National Army (INA), also known as Azad Hind Fauj, with the support of Japan and gave the slogan 'Delhi Chalo'. The objective of the INA was to bring independence to India through armed struggle. Bose inspired the Indian soldiers and fought against the British army.

Though his efforts could not succeed directly, he strengthened the feeling of defiance towards the British Empire in the minds of the Indian army and the masses. His ability of leadership and patriotism made him a great hero of the Indian freedom struggle. He believed that armed struggle and international support could ensure India's independence. His life and contributions are still inspiring today.

---

### **10.3 HINDUSTAN SOCIALIST REPUBLICAN ASSOCIATION (HSRA) AND SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH**

---

Many great men and organisations made significant contributions to India's freedom struggle, one of which was the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) and its prominent member, Shaheed Bhagat Singh. Bhagat Singh's name emerged in



## NOTES

the history of the Indian freedom struggle as a symbol of valour, sacrifice, and revolutionary struggle. He and his associates dedicated their lives to the freedom of the country and chose the path of armed struggle against British rule.

### **10.3.1 Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA): Formation and Purpose**

The Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) was formed in 1924, but the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) was founded in 1928. The main goal of the HRA was to liberate India by making an armed revolution against British rule. Its founders were Chandrashekhar Azad, Ashfaqullah Khan, and Ram Prasad Bismil. After the Kakori incident in 1925, many members of the HRA were arrested and some were sentenced to death, so the organisation needed a new leadership. After this, young revolutionaries like Sukhdev, Bhagwati Charan Vohra, and Bhagat Singh joined it.

The name of this organisation was changed to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) in 1928. The new name of the organisation suggests that its goal was to make India independent and free from exploitation with socialist values.



**Fig. 10.1** Shaheed Bhagat Singh

Self-Instructional

416 Material

**Source:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhagat\\_Singh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhagat_Singh)



**NOTES**



Chandra Sekhar Azad  
*Fierce Patriotic and Courageous Fighter*

**Fig. 10.2** Chandra Sekhar Azad

**Source:** <https://www.pinterest.com>



## NOTES



**Fig. 10.3** Kakori train incident & Ram Prasad Bismil, Rajendranath Lahiri, Ashfaqulla Khan and Roshan Singh

**Source:** <https://www.patrika.com>

### 10.3.2 Bhagat Singh's Early Life

Bhagat Singh was born on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1907 in Banga village of Layalpur district of Punjab (now in Pakistan). His family was already nationalist and active in the freedom struggle. Both his father, Kishan Singh and his uncle, Ajit Singh were active in the movement against British rule. Bhagat Singh had developed a sense of patriotism since childhood. Bhagat Singh's ideas were greatly influenced by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre (1919). He was just twelve years old at that time, but this incident aroused in him a deep hatred of British rule. After this, Bhagat Singh decided to participate in the freedom struggle.



### **10.3.3 Revolutionary Ideology and Bhagat Singh**

Bhagat Singh was earlier inclined towards the non-cooperation movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. However, after the Chauri-Chaura incident in 1922, Mahatma Gandhi withdrew the policy of non-violence, which disappointed many young people like Bhagat Singh. They understood that a military revolt would be needed to drive the British out of India. In 1923, Bhagat Singh went to study at the National College in Lahore, where he met Sukhdev, Yashpal and Bhagwati Charan Vohra. He was influenced by Marxist and socialist ideas. He felt that along with India's independence, social and economic equality was also necessary.

---

## **10.4 BHAGAT SINGH'S IDEOLOGY AND MARTYRDOM**

---

Bhagat Singh was a revolutionary as well as a deep thinker and writer. While in prison, he wrote many articles and letters, in which he presented his views on subjects such as imperialism, capitalism, and social justice. Bhagat Singh believed that mere political freedom was not enough; social and economic equality was also necessary. His dream was of an India where all sections of people would enjoy equal rights. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1931, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged. His martyrdom shook the entire country and generated deep resentment against the British government. Bhagat Singh's death made him an immortal hero among the youth of India.

His martyrdom infused a new energy in the freedom struggle and inspired the youth to take up armed struggle.

---

## **10.5 BHAGAT SINGH'S LEGACY**

---

Bhagat Singh's thoughts, sacrifices, and martyrdom gave a new direction to the Indian freedom struggle. His sacrifice showed that a real patriot can do anything for the freedom of a country. Bhagat Singh's life and thoughts continue to inspire young people



## NOTES

even today. Bhagat Singh was not just a revolutionary; he was also a thinker who fought for economic and social equality. His humanist and socialist ideology makes him different from other revolutionaries of India. He believed that every person in society was entitled to equal opportunities and that social and economic freedom was necessary in addition to political freedom.

### **Important Facts about Bhagat Singh**

Some of them are listed as follows:

- Bhagat Singh was of sharp intellect. He was the most educated among all the political leaders of his time and was the first one to put ‘revolutionary philosophy’ in front of the revolutionaries.
- At the time of his appearance in the Lahore court, Bhagat Singh said, ‘The edge on the sword of revolution comes only by rubbing it on the ideological stone.’
- Bhagat Singh believed that a revolution cannot be brought about by individual effort. It can become the medium of a revolution of a broad movement. He was more inclined towards Marxism.
- Subhas Chandra Bose said about Bhagat Singh that Bhagat Singh Zindabad and Inquilab Zindabad had the same meaning.
- Mahatma Gandhi said about Bhagat Singh, ‘As far as I remember, no person has so much adventure associated with his life as Bhagat Singh’s life.’
- Bhagwati Charan Vohra released a document titled ‘*The Philosophy of the Bomb*’.
- Speaking in the Lahore court, Bhagat Singh said, ‘A blood-stained struggle is not necessary for a revolution. There is no place for personal hatred, it is not the worship of bombs and pistols. By revolution, we mean that the existing system based on injustice must end.’



---

## 10.6 SIMON COMMISSION AND LALA LAJPAT RAI'S DEATH

---

In 1928, when the British government sent the Simon Commission to India, this commission was boycotted by all political parties because it had no Indian member. Agitations against the commission broke out all over India. On 30<sup>th</sup> October 1928, a large demonstration was organised in Lahore against the Simon Commission, which was led by Lala Lajpat Rai. During this demonstration, the English police lathi-charged, in which Lala Lajpat Rai was seriously injured and died a few days later.

This incident caused great pain to Bhagat Singh and his associates. He vowed to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai. On 17<sup>th</sup> December 1928, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Chandrashekhar Azad killed British police officer JP Saunders, whom they believed was guilty of killing Lala Lajpat Rai. After this incident, the identity of Bhagat Singh and his associates emerged as a new revolutionary group.

**Assembly Bomb Case:** Bhagat Singh and his associates were not limited to armed struggle. They also understood the importance of public awareness. Bhagat Singh believed that revolutionary thinking should be spread among Indians to overthrow British rule. He did a lot for this. On 8<sup>th</sup> April, 1929, Batukeshwar Dutt and Bhagat Singh threw a bomb at the Central Legislative Assembly of Delhi. The bomb was not to kill anybody but to convey to the British government that the Indian people would not tolerate injustice anymore. After throwing the bomb, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt arrested themselves and used the incident to spread their ideas. He expressed his views openly in the court and strongly criticised the policies of the British government.

---

## 10.7 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY (INA)

---

The Indian National Army (INA) was established in South-East Asia during World War II. It mainly comprised Indian officers and soldiers who had surrendered to the Japanese army. Its goal, as in other revolutionary wars, was to shift political power





## NOTES

from the British colonial government to the Indians. The Indian Independence League (IIL) was formed in all the countries of Japanese-ruled South-East Asia to support the Indian National Army. The INA needed support from the Indian community, especially men and money. Thus, the complex nature of the INA was influenced by Indian nationalist forces in East and South-East Asia, as well as external factors such as Japan's policy and the overall situation in the Second World War.

Before the establishment of the Indian National Army (INA), many big Indian nationalists tried to unite the Indians in East and South-East Asia, especially when the Pacific War broke out. Rash Behari Bose was the best among these leaders. He was a militant and believed in complete independence for India. Rash Behari Bose, like other revolutionaries, believed in violent measures for India's independence. During the First World War, Rash Behari Bose contacted the German Council General in Shanghai who tried to give arms and ammunition to the Indian revolutionaries. This mission was unsuccessful, but due to his anti-British activities, he had to seek refuge in Japan. In Japan, Rash Behari Bose met Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Republic of China, who introduced him to Mitsuru Toyama. Mitsuru Toyama was the head of a powerful Japanese secret organisation that helped Bose in Japan.

Rash Behari Bose, while living in Japan, did a lot to tell the problems of India to the Japanese. They believed that if there was a war between Japan and England, assistance could be obtained for the independence of India from Japan. Before the Pacific War began, there were several Indian organisations in Thailand, including religious and educational institutions. Giani Pritam Singh, who had been a Sikh missionary in Thailand since 1933, was the most active figure among these groups. Baba Amar Singh, the great Sikh revolutionary, founded a secret organisation, the 'Independent League of India' while in jail during World War I.

Until the outbreak of the Pacific War, Pritam Singh's followers continued to operate as a secret organisation. The group came into contact with Japanese intelligence as the war approached. The Japanese Navy reached the shores of Thailand and northeastern Malaya at midnight on 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941 and launched a surprise attack on the opposing forces. Pritam Singh had already done some work in the 'Independent League of India' along with the Japanese army, although this league had not formally started.



## **NOTES**

The landing of the Japanese army in Thailand led to the inauguration of this league. In a meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1941, Mohan Singh said that ten thousand Indian prisoners of war had been handed over to him by the Japanese army before the fall of Singapore. After the fall of Singapore, he came under his control by forty-five thousand Indian soldiers.

In a meeting held at Farrar Park in Singapore, Mohan Singh expressed his plan to raise the Indian National Army for the first time in front of all Indian POWs (prisoners of war). This proposal of Mohan Singh made an immediate impression on the ordinary soldiers, and they were immediately relieved of the fear of cruel treatment from their victorious enemy. According to reliable sources, the proposal to set up the INA was accepted with great enthusiasm among the troops of the Indian Army.

After Japan started the war on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941, Rash Behari Bose and his team planned to liberate India by participating in the Pacific War. After Singapore's independence on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1942, Prime Minister Tojo of Japan told Indians in a speech that they would undertake the 'Greater East Asia War' (fight for India's independence). Tojo's support generated a lot of enthusiasm among the Indians. Rash Behari Bose immediately established the headquarters of the Indian Independence League in a small hotel in Tokyo. He published a manifesto expressing his intention to launch a movement for India's independence in East Asia. He initiated the convening of a conference of representatives of the Indian communities of the Japanese-occupied East-Asian countries to agree on a common plan and leadership which would guide the Indian independence movement in East Asia.

---

## **10.8 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY (INA) AND ITS EARLY STRUGGLES**

---

In March 1942, the leaders of Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Japan and other Indian POWs held a meeting in Tokyo. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the launch of a movement for India's independence in East Asia. At this conference, it was proposed to choose Rash Behari Bose as the leader of the Indian



## NOTES

independence movement in East Asia. However, disagreements arose between civil and military leaders of Malaysia and Singapore over this proposal.

After long deliberations, the conference decided to establish the 'Indian Independence League' (IIL). All the existing Indian nationalist organisations were merged and new branches were established. An elected body called the 'Council of Action' was created, which included representatives of the Indian community and the military. Rash Behari Bose was made the chairman of this council.

Another additional meeting was held in Bangkok in June 1942. In this meeting, 35 resolutions were passed and Indian delegates gave speeches in support of independence. It was decided in the meeting that the Indian National Army would be formed immediately, comprising Indian soldiers and civilians. This army would be known as the army of independent India and would be completely subordinate to India.

As soon as he returned from the Tokyo conference, Mohan Singh started organising the army. Consisting of Indian officers, he established the headquarters of the Indian National Army (INA) in Singapore in 1942. 400 officers and more than 40,000 Indian soldiers expressed their desire to join the army.

All was going well at the beginning of the INA, but in December 1942, some problems occurred. On 8<sup>th</sup> December, the Japanese army arrested Colonel Gill, a close associate of Mohan Singh. On the same day, three members of the Council of Action resigned from office. By the end of the month, the army was disbanded and Mohan Singh was removed from command.

There were many differences of opinion between Mohan Singh and the Japanese officers, especially regarding the treatment of the Indian POWs. At the same time, Mohan Singh suspected that the Japanese authorities wanted to keep the INA in their hands. The contrast between Rash Behari Bose and Mohan Singh also deepened. Mohan Singh tried to capture the INA completely, but Rash Behari Bose removed him from the post and the Japanese army arrested him. Later, Mohan Singh ordered the disbandment of the INA.

The soldiers were frustrated by the disbandment of the INA, but Rash Behari Bose turned down Mohan Singh's order and tried to control the situation. In order to



## NOTES

re-establish discipline in the INA, he created an administrative committee of high-ranking officers. The situation began to improve in February 1943. Japanese Prime Minister Tojo said Japan had no territorial claims on India and supported India's independence. This declaration gave a new direction to India's freedom struggle.

The period from 1942-45 was a period of passive politics in Indian politics. During this time, the country's prominent leaders were imprisoned. The government was busy with the war. There was no one to provide leadership to the people. Thus, apart from sporadic incidents, no significant incident took place in India. This does not mean that the opposition to the British was over. Subhas Chandra Bose was actively leading this revolt.

---

## 10.9 LEADERSHIP OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

---

Subhas Chandra Bose was a prominent leader of the Indian freedom struggle and the Gandhian era. He was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1897 in Cuttack, Odisha. He was a brilliant student. He passed the Indian Civil Service (Indian Civil Service) examination. He was inspired by patriotism and was upset with the racist policies of the British, and therefore he left the English job. After this, he started serving the country. Inspired by Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, he joined the Congress and gradually became an influential leader. Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose promoted leftist ideology in the Congress. Subhas Chandra Bose also played an important role in the establishment of the Swaraj Dal. However, he was not satisfied with the Nehru Report and the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. To oppose the Nehru Report, he formed an organisation called 'Independent League'. He sharply criticised Gandhi's policies on the boycott of the Simon Commission. Due to ideological differences, the relationship between Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose soured.

In this background, the Congress session was held in Tripuri in 1939. Mahatma Gandhi wanted Pattabhi Sitaramayya to be the Congress President, while the Left leaders were in support of Subhas Chandra Bose. For this reason, an election was held for the post of president, in which Subhas Chandra Bose won. Subhas got 1575 votes and Sitaramayya got 1376 votes. The victory of Subhas Chandra Bose in this



## NOTES

election made Gandhi and the right-wing faction of the Congress nervous. They felt threatened by their leadership. Gandhi considered it his defeat and said, 'The defeat of Subhas's opponent is my defeat.' In this situation, 12 out of 15 members of the Congress Working Committee, including Jawaharlal Nehru, resigned. The differences between the right-wing and left-wing groups increased so much that there was a danger of splitting the Congress. To handle this tense situation, Subhas Chandra Bose resigned from the post of Congress President in April 1939. After this, Dr. Rajendra Prasad was made the President of Congress. Subhas Chandra Bose established a new block named 'Forward Block' within the Congress. But the Congress barred him from holding any post for three years and also removed him from the post of President of the Bengal Congress Committee. Finally, on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1940, Subhas Chandra Bose was arrested in Calcutta under the Defense of India Act.

- **Exodus from India and Formation of Azad Hind Fauj:** Subhas Chandra Bose was imprisoned in the Presidency Jail of Calcutta. In November 1940, he started a hunger strike in jail. After his health deteriorated, he was released from the jail in December and put under house arrest. On 17<sup>th</sup> January 1941, Subhas Chandra Bose escaped from Calcutta in disguise after dodging the police. He went out of India via Peshawar. From there, he reached Berlin on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 1941 via Russia (Moscow). In Berlin, he met Hitler's aide Ribbentrop and proposed launching anti-British propaganda on Berlin radio and forming an Azad Hind Fauj with the help of Indian POWs. The German government agreed to this to some extent, but they disagreed with Subhas's proposal that Germany and Italy declare the independence of India. In Germany, Subhas Bose received the title of 'Netaji'. Initially Netaji planned to liberate India through Russia with German assistance. He also raised two squads of Indian soldiers in Germany. Along with this, the 'Free India Center' was established in Rome and Paris.
- **Bose's arrival in Japan and the establishment of a provisional government (formation of the Azad Hind Fauj and the Indian Independence League):** At the end of 1941, Japan began to achieve rapid success in the war. The British lost control over Singapore, Burma, and Malaya, and their sphere of influence began to diminish. Seeing this progress



## NOTES

in Japan, the famous revolutionary, Rash Behari Bose organised the Tokyo Conference in March 1942. At this conference, he planned to form the Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauj) and establish the Indian Independence League. In June 1942, the session of the Indian Independence League was held in Bangkok, in which about 100 delegates from South-East Asia participated. The conference was presided over by Rash Behari Bose. He invited Subhas Chandra Bose to visit East Asia. Subhas accepted it, as there were many Indian prisoners of war in Japan, with whose help armed rebellion and war could be fought against the British. Meanwhile, the English army had to face defeat in Malaya. An Indian military officer there, Captain Mohan Singh, who had surrendered, formed the Indian National Army (INA) in collaboration with Rash Behari Bose. After the fall of Singapore, 40,000 Indian soldiers became prisoners of the war. All of them were planned to be included in the Azad Hind Fauj.

- **Formation of Azad Hind Fauz and Contribution of Netaji:** On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1942, the Azad Hind Fauj was formally formed, and Mohan Singh became its first commander. On 13<sup>th</sup> June 1943, Subhas Chandra Bose reached Tokyo via a submarine, where he was warmly welcomed by Japanese Prime Minister Tojo. On 4<sup>th</sup> July 1943, Rash Behari Bose handed over the leadership of the Indian independence movement of East Asia to Subhas Chandra Bose. Netaji took charge of the army and the Indian Independence League. He announced the formation of a provisional government of independent India and the army would go to India. He gave the slogan 'March to Delhi' and inspired Indians, saying, 'Give me blood, I will give you freedom.'

On 21<sup>st</sup> October 1943, the provisional government of independent India was established in Singapore. On this occasion, Netaji explained the objectives of the government, saying: 'Our Provisional Government aims to completely expel the British and their supporters from the soil of India. We call upon the people of India to unite, fight, and persevere under our banner until the enemy is driven out of the country and India is free again. This struggle will have to be fought with patience, strength, and confidence till the final victory.'



## NOTES

- **Activities of the Provisional Government and the Azad Hind Fauj:**  
The Provisional Government accepted Hindi as the national language, 'Jai Hind' as the national salutation, the tricolour flag of the Congress as the national flag, and Rabindranath Tagore's poem 'Jana Gana Mana' as the national anthem.



*Fig. 10.4 Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose*

**Source:** <https://www.britannica.com>

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose planned an invasion of India with the help of Japanese and declared war against Britain and America. Japan handed over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government. Subhas changed his name to 'Shaheed' and 'Swaraj' and took over the administration there. Under the leadership of Shahnawaz Khan, the Azad Hind Fauj was sent to fight the Allied forces on the Indo-Burma border. In 1944, the army captured an Indian outpost called Madok near Cox's Bazar, where the



## **NOTES**

tricolour was hoisted and 'Jana Gana Mana' was sung. The tricolour flag was also hoisted at Kohima. In May 1944, Japan's combat position began to weaken, and the Japanese army had to retreat from Burma. The British started torturing the Japanese allies and the soldiers of the Azad Hind Fauj. Many soldiers were killed and many were arrested. Due to the changed circumstances in Japan, the Azad Hind Fauj could not get full support, and the dream of liberating India remained incomplete. Subhas had to leave Rangoon. On 18<sup>th</sup> August 1945, he died on his way to Tokyo as a result of a fire in his aircraft.

After Japan's defeat in World War II, the British government decided to arrest the officers of the Indian National Army. They were charged with treason and breach of trust. Colonel Shahnawaz, Captain Dhillon, and Lieutenant Sehgal were put on trial at the Red Fort in Delhi in November 1945. This action of the government was strongly opposed all over the country. People took to the streets, and demonstrations and processions were held, and the demand for the release of these officials gained momentum. Even those Congress leaders, who were earlier against Subhas Chandra Bose, began to oppose this government's action. On behalf of the Congress, Bhulabhai Desai, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Kailash Nath Katju, and Jawaharlal Nehru argued the case on behalf of these officers.

Although the Muslim League took a neutral stance, many Muslim leaders like Asif Ali were in support of their release. Due to strong protests and agitations of the people, it was not possible for the government to implement their punishment. Despite being convicted, these officers had to be released. It was a big victory for the struggle and unity of the Indian people.

### **Contribution of Netaji and Azad Hind Fauj**

Although Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the Azad Hind Fauj could not achieve their goal completely, they gave new energy to the Indian freedom struggle. He instilled courage and confidence in determined and hopeful nationalists. His patriotism and courage inspired every section of the Indian Army and the masses and set an example of patriotism.





**NOTES**

## **10.10 THE INA TRIAL MOVEMENT AND THE THREE REVOLTS**

Let us discuss this in detail.

**The INA Trial Movement:** After the peak of the war in 1945, India's freedom struggle entered a new phase. The Quit India Movement and the Azad Hind Fauj revealed the valour and determination of the Indian people. With the release of the national leaders from jail, the people began to wait for another possibly final freedom struggle. The new struggle took the form of a vigorous movement against the prosecution of soldiers and officers of the Azad Hind Fauj. They were accused of breaking the oath of loyalty they had taken to the British Crown. All the political leaders demanded the release of officers Shah Nawaz, Gurdial Singh Dhillon, Prem Sehgal, and Rashid Ali to the Azad Hind Fauj. They were welcomed like national heroes. In fact, Congress set up an INA rescue committee to defend these national heroes. These included Bhulabhai Desai, Tej Bahadur Sapru, N. Katju, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Asaf Ali. The Azad Hind Fauj Relief and Inquiry Committee was formed to provide financial assistance and employment to the released soldiers. Now the British Government was not in a position to defy Indian public opinion. Despite the fact that the Indian National Army prisoners were declared criminals by a military court, the government thought it was time to release them.

**Important:** The INA is known for several reasons. The (lawsuit) movement is known as an epoch-making event:

- The unprecedented movement for the release of prisoners of the Azad Hind Fauj, the priority received in the press, the publicity done through pamphlets and posters, etc.
- Apprehension of revenge, public meetings, celebration of Azad Hind Fauj Day on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1945 and Azad Hind Fauj Week from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> November 1945.
- The movement spread over wide geographical areas (it reached remote areas like Coorg, Balochistan and Assam), the involvement of various

*Self-Instructional*

**430** *Material*



## NOTES

opposite social groups and political parties (Muslim League, CPD, Unionist Party, Akali, Justice Party, Ahrar of Rawalpindi, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha and Sikh League) that supported the Azad Hind Faujis for different reasons and above all large groups of government employees, and people loyal to the government and even the soldiers of the armed forces supported the Azad Hind Fauj movement.

### • Three Incidents of Revolt

The growing nationalist sentiment reached its climax during the trial of the Azad Hind Faujis. It manifested itself in three revolts in Calcutta and Bombay in November 1945 and February 1946. These uprisings were accompanied by violent confrontations with the authorities (contrary to the national expression of earlier revolutionary opposition). The general nature of these revolts was of one kind. In the initial phase, the students (Calcutta) and sailors (Bombay) challenged the suzerainty but were suppressed. In the second phase, people from all over the city joined in support of their demands. As a result, there were violent incidents against the British and Calcutta and Bombay came to a standstill. The third phase saw an expression of sympathy and solidarity from people in other parts of the country.

In November 1945, lakhs of people in Calcutta demonstrated for the release of prisoners of the Azad Hind Fauj. The government machinery was at a standstill for three days. Again, in February 1946, there were public demonstrations for the release of the Azad Hind Fauj officer, Rashid Ali. After this, on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1946, the Royal Indian sailors went on strike in Bombay. The sailors were probably inspired by the example of the Azad Hind Fauj and protested against racial discrimination and inedible food.

The most important of these is the revolt of the Royal Indian Navy. On 22<sup>nd</sup> February, there was a complete strike in Bombay and a general strike was also held in the factories and offices in support of the sailors. The sailors fought a 77-hour battle with the army and marines and surrendered on February 23 only at the behest of national leaders (Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Jinnah). In Bombay, in all, 228 civilians were killed and 1046 injured. Karachi was the second most important centre in the revolt of the Royal Indian Navy after Bombay. Symbolic strikes were held in the military cantonments of Madras, Calcutta, Delhi, Jamnagar, Andamans, Bahrain, and



## NOTES

Aden in sympathy. The Royal Indian Army Force also went on strike in sympathy at several places.

### Significance

These revolts gave popular expression to the courage and courageous nature of the people. It showed that the Indian masses were no longer prepared to bear the humiliation of foreign rule. The revolt of the Royal Indian Navy had a particularly symbolic significance. Its dramatic impact can be measured in terms of the liberating effect it has on the minds of the masses. The mutiny in the armed forces marked the end of British rule almost as much as Independence Day (1947).

### Limitations

There were some limitations to this direct extremist, violent confrontation with power. They are discussed as follows:

- It could only involve relatively more militant sections of society. These actions could not involve liberal, traditionalist groups, men and women from small towns and villages (as was the case with the Indian National Army and other people's movements in the past).
- These revolts proved to be short-lived. A week after the disturbances of 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> February 1946, peace was established in Calcutta.
- The revolt was concentrated in urban areas (Calcutta, Bombay, Karachi, etc.) while the civil struggle involving the Azad Hind Fauj spread to distant villages. Its suppression became easier as the revolts were confined to urban areas.
- The communal unity that was seen during these revolts was more organisational unity and less people's unity. This organisational unity was driven by a definite purpose. In Calcutta, there were massive communal riots which took place only six months after Rashid Ali's trial. The communal unity of the Royal Indian Navy's mutiny was also limited. The national leaders were appealing to the people of their respective religions to end the agitation.



Committee and Commission set up to investigate the death of Subhash Chandra Bose: At a glance	
Commission	Year of Formation
(i) Shahnawaz Committee	1956 A.D.
(ii) Justice G.D. Khosla Commission	1970 A.D.
(iii) Justice Manoj Mukherjee Commission	1999 A.D.
(iv) Justice Vishnu Sahai Commission	2016 A.D.

**Facts to Remember**

- Subhash Chandra Bose left India- July 17, 1941
- The Azad Hind Fauj was established- December 15, 1941
- Leadership of the Azad Hind Fauj was handed over to Subhash Chandra Bose- July 7, 1943
- Provisional government was established by Subhash Chandra Bose in Singapore- October 21, 1943
- Japanese Army handed over Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Azad Hind Fauj- November 6, 1943
- For the independence of India, the Azad Hind Fauj along with the Japanese army invaded the northeastern region of India- March 18, 1944
- Subhash addressed Gandhi as the Father of the Nation for the first time- July 6, 1944
- The Azad Hind Fauj surrenders to the British army at Rangoon along with the Japanese army- May 1945
- Subhash Chandra Bose died in Taiwan in an air crash- August 18, 1945
- Subhash Chandra Bose was called Netaji for the first time in Germany.
- The slogan of Jai Hind was coined by Subhash Chandra Bose in Germany.
- Mahatma Gandhi called Subhash Chandra Bose a 'patriot of patriots'.
- 'Kadam-kadam badhaye ja khushi ke geet gaye ja' was the national song of the Azad Hind Fauj.
- The INA flag has a picture of a 'roaring tiger' on it.
- The idea of the Azad Hind Army first came to Mohan Singh's mind.
- 'Give me blood and I will give you freedom.' The famous slogan was given by Subhash Chandra Bose while addressing the Azad Hind Army in Malaysia.
- Rash Behari Bose joined Subhash Chandra Bose as a member of the India Independence League and the INA.
- The first commander of the Azad Hind Fauj was Subhash Chandra Bose. The slogan 'Delhi Chalon' was coined by Subhash Chandra Bose at this time.
- Subhash Chandra Bose inspired his soldiers to follow 3 ideals- (i) Truth, (ii) Duty and (iii) Sacrifice.



## NOTES

### • Reactions of Political Parties

These uprisings were led by the Communists, the Socialists or the Forward Bloc, or all three. Their relations with each other or with the Congress were one of antagonism or non-cooperation. It seemed that the explosive situation would go out of control, which became a matter of concern for the political parties because disciplined armed forces were necessary for independent India and soon these parties were to rule.

In a way, these revolts were an extension of the early nationalist activities of the Congress. In fact, it was an expression of the anti-imperialist sentiment declared by the Congress. Though Congress sparked these anti-British sentiments through its election campaign, for example, demonstration of solidarity with the Azad Hind Faujis, and the excesses of 1942 during Quit India Movement. However, neither did the Congress call for these revolts nor did other parties. People spontaneously gathered to express sympathy and anger against the oppression of sailors and students. Though the Congress welcomed the sentiment of the people and condemned government repression, it did not officially support the uprising because its manner and timing were wrong. It was clear to the Congress leaders that the government was capable and determined to crush the rebellion. So Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel asked the sailors to surrender and the Communists in Calcutta appealed to the people to return to their homes. Such attempts by the Congress showed that treaties and compromises were an integral part of the Congress's method of struggle and were tried before launching the mass movement and that it was necessary to examine the alternative to compromise before launching the movement in 1946 because it seemed that Britain would leave India very soon. At the same time, it was necessary to keep pressure on Britain for a compromise. At the same time, the anti-British preparations for the movement (its organisation, propaganda and fashion during the INA movement of 1945) were to be maintained.

**Mahatma Gandhi's Response:** It was a matter of great satisfaction for Gandhi that the sailors of Bombay listened to Sardar Patel's advice and surrendered. Their objection was that the rebels had revolted without the call of any revolutionary party. In Gandhi's view, the attainment of self-rule could not only be achieved by the events of Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi and the unity established in the barracks, but for this, unity on the constitutional front was also necessary.



**Government's Response:** Special care needs to be taken while interpreting the 'official' response to these revolts, especially the Royal Indian Navy's mutiny. A popular belief in this regard is that the sailors' mutiny shook the root of the mighty British Empire. However, doing so is far from reality. In fact, despite the deterioration of bureaucracy and the attitude of the armed forces, the British machinery of repression remained intact.

Further, to say that the Cabinet Mission (18<sup>th</sup> February 1946) was sent to India because of the revolt of the Royal Indian Navy is not justified. The decision to send the Cabinet Mission to India was taken on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1946 and it was announced a week in advance.

---

## **10.11 NAVAL MUTINY OF 1946**

---

The political situation in India in 1946 was extremely turbulent. The demand for Pakistan was intensifying, and communal riots were erupting everywhere. There were labour movements and strikes all over the country, which were adversely affecting the economy. The prosecution of the officers of the Azad Hind Fauj had also caused discontent in the army. Soldiers in Jabalpur and Air Force personnel in Bombay went on strike. The police also went on strike in Delhi and Bihar, but the biggest mutiny was the Royal Indian Navy Marines in Bombay.

---

## **10.12 IMPHAL CAMPAIGN**

---

At the beginning of the planning of the Imphal campaign, it was purely a military operation. However, this plan was developed between July 1943 and January 1944, when the Indian independence movement was gaining momentum in East Asia. The propaganda carried out by the Provisional Government emphasised the political implications of any military operation towards India. Subhas Chandra Bose succeeded in persuading the officers of the Japanese army that an INA was not in operation. The regiment was able to take part in the Imphal campaign.



## NOTES

The significance of the Imphal Campaign for the INA was that it was the only war in which it participated to gain India's independence. On 7<sup>th</sup> January 1944, Bose transferred the main departments of the provisional government to Rangoon. INA entered Burma from North Malaya in early January 1944, and on January 25, it entered Rangoon on the 1st of January. The headquarters of the Supreme Command was established.

The main expedition of Japan was directed towards Imphal and Kohima, and it was to be launched a month after the start of the Arakan Campaign. The main operation, three times larger than the Arakan campaign, was to be carried out by three divisions of Japan. Two battalions of the INA and two brave units of the Indian National Army (INA) were to join the Japanese forces in this campaign from the beginning. Under the Japanese plan, the main force, which included Japan's 33<sup>rd</sup> Division, would attack first and advance to the line beyond Kalmyo. The 33<sup>rd</sup> Division began its campaign on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1944.

---

### 10.13 THE INA: CAUSES OF FAILURE

---

The INA took part in the Imphal Campaign, which was mainly a campaign of the Japanese army. The failure of the Japanese army at Imphal ended all chances of a breakthrough of the INA. The Japanese plan of the Imphal campaign was based on three fundamental weaknesses: inadequate administrative facilities, air and infantry power.

The timing of the Imphal campaign was not suitable. By 1944, the situation in World War II had turned against the Axis powers (Germany, Japan and Italy). At this time, the Allied Powers had strengthened their position, making the chances of success of the Imphal campaign even less.

Germany was facing war situations that were beyond its control. Italy surrendered on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1943, and Japan was struggling with serious difficulties in the Pacific. The military situation on the Indo-Burma border also became unfavourable for the Japanese army. In September 1944, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose attacked the wounded INA returning from the front, inspected the troops and understood the



## NOTES

comprehensive situation of the Imphal disaster. He admitted that the failure of his army was mainly due to the failures of the Japanese army. The commanders of the U.S. expressed displeasure at the inability of the Japanese coordinating agencies to ensure a minimum supply of munitions and rations. In addition to the INA, regiments were assigned the tasks of the labour force, which affected their combat capability.

The absence of Subhas Chandra Bose from the war zone also proved to be an important reason. The command structure of the Japanese-INA army did not allow the INA commanders to make independent decisions. As the supreme commander of his army, Bose could exert his influence on the Japanese commander and solve to some extent the problems faced by his subordinate commanders. However, their contact with the INA-operated areas was never regular and was completely cut off after wireless communications were broken. Although the INA's role in the Imphal campaign became less influential than expected due to the reasons stated above, Japanese sources did not underestimate the INA. Regarding the INA's performance, the Japanese newspaper 'Seonan Shimbun' quoted a Japanese soldier as saying that 'the INA's fighting capability is in no way inferior to that of the Nippon Army. The high morale of the INA in the Imphal campaign was also acknowledged by the Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Army, Field Marshal Count Terauchi. It was also recognised that in its defensive role, the division played an important role in the final part of the campaign.

When Japan announced its surrender in August 1945, Subhas Chandra Bose was in Singapore. His cabinet colleagues urged him not to surrender in Singapore. Bose himself thought of taking refuge in the territory of Russia and resuming his struggle from there. On 16<sup>th</sup> August 1945, he was on his way to Saigon via Bangkok. Their movements could be accurately traced until they reached Saigon. According to the official source of the INA, Subhas Chandra Bose had to constantly reach the higher Japanese headquarters to receive official Japanese guidance about the surrender. His cabinet colleagues believed that he was on his way to Darren in Manchuria. He was reported to have died in an accident near Taihoku Airport on August 18, 1945. Later, a report of a commission set up by the Government of India confirmed the news of his death.

The INA occupies an important place in the history of India's freedom struggle. The formation of this army and its heroic deeds proved that the British could no longer





## NOTES

rely on the Indian soldiers to maintain their occupation of India. When the officers of the INA were tried for treason at the Red Fort in Delhi, the sympathy expressed towards them all over India dealt a deep blow to the British rule. The respect and prestige bestowed upon the members of the INA by every Indian showed a stark contrast to the open resentment and hatred towards the soldiers who refused to join the INA. All these aspects made the British realise their dangerous position in India. They understood that they were sitting on the edge of the volcano, which could erupt at any time. This thought played an important role in his final decision to leave India. Thus, the members of the INA did not suffer in vain and their deaths were not in vain, and their leader, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose attained a place of honour in the history of India's freedom struggle.

An important factor when reviewing the INA's performance is its true power. The total number of INAs participating in the Arakan, Imphal, and Kohima campaigns in 1944 was about eight thousand, while there were about eighty-seven thousand Japanese soldiers and 155 thousand Allied troops.

The INA's No. 1 Division lacked properly trained officers and sufficient weapons and ammunition. Battalion commanders and higher officers, mainly from the officer ranks of the Indian Army, were competent officers. However, platoon and company commanders, most of whom were promoted from the ranks in 1942, did not receive adequate training. The division's weapons and equipment were outdated, inadequate, and irreplaceable and the ammunition was also inadequate.

In April, the commander of the No. 1 regiment reported to Bose that the reserve rations could not be delivered to the frontline units due to a complete breakdown of the transport system. By May, the situation had worsened. The situation became worse with the arrival of the monsoon. The soldiers of the No. 1 Regiment in Kalawa suffered from malaria and about seventy per cent of them were hospitalised.

---

## 10.14 CAUSES OF THE NAVAL MUTINY

---

The navy expanded during the war, and civilians were also recruited into it, who were politically aware. Contact with non-Indians at the time of the war and their miserable



condition filled them with discontent. The trials of the officers of the Azad Hind Fauj and the racist policies of the British Empire increased their anger. The political turmoil in India after the Second World War also had a profound impact on him.

---

### **10.15 HIS MAJESTY INDIAN SHIP (HMIS) TALWAR**

---

On 18<sup>th</sup> February 1946, the sailors of the ship ‘Talwar’ of Bombay started a hunger strike to protest against the poor quality of food. H.M.I.S. Talwar was an important training centre in Indian naval history, imparting combat skills to Indian soldiers. It was established during the Second World War and had been the centre of many historical events. It later became a symbol of the development of the Indian Navy and its support to the freedom struggle.

---

### **10.16 BEGINNING AND SPREAD OF THE REVOLT**

---

The mutiny spread to other ships and barracks the next day. The sailors hoisted the tricolour and the moon-beam flag on their ships. The ‘Naval Central Strike Committee’ was formed under the leadership of M.S. Khan. They raised demands such as good food, equal pay for Indian and European sailors, the release of Indian Hind Fauj soldiers, and the withdrawal of Indian troops from Indonesia.

#### **Conflict and Impact**

The government resorted to military force to suppress the rebellion. The rebels received support from the general public and political parties. In Bombay, the Communist Party and the Congress Socialist Party called for a total strike. On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1946, Bombay was completely closed. Hundreds of people were killed and thousands injured in clashes between police and civilians. Despite this, the morale of the soldiers was not broken.



## NOTES

### 10.17 CONSEQUENCES OF THE NAVAL MUTINY

On the assurance of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the naval troops called off the mutiny on 23rd February 1946 and returned to barracks and ships. This revolt shook the British government and they felt that their rule was now indefensible. After this, the process of constitutional agreement with India was accelerated. For this purpose, the Cabinet Mission was sent to India in March 1946.

The naval mutiny contributed significantly to the Indian freedom struggle. It made the British government realise that the Indian masses would no longer tolerate their rule.

### 10.18 SUMMARY

During World War II, the INA (Azad Hind Fauj) was formed in South-East Asia under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose. It was formed by Indian soldiers and revolutionaries with the assistance of Japan. These included prominent people like Rash Behari Bose, Pritam Singh and Baba Amar Singh, who formed the Indian Independence League and helped in strengthening the Azad Hindi Fauj. The INA under the leadership of Bose with the help of Japan and Germany fought against British rule through campaigns in Imphal, Kohima, Arakan and Singapore and attempted to liberate India. However, the Azad Hind Fauj could not succeed due to many reasons. Similarly, the Indian Navy also revolted against British rule and tried to drive them out of India.

### 10.19 GLOSSARY

- **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA):** A revolutionary organization founded by Bhagat Singh and his comrades in 1928, which aimed to end British rule and establish a socialist republic in India.



## NOTES

- **Simon Commission Protest:** The protest against the Simon Commission's visit to India in 1928, in which Lala Lajpat Rai was injured during the lathi charge and later died.
- **Central Assembly Bomb Case:** In 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt protested against the British government by throwing bombs in the assembly, in which there was no loss of life and property, but it was a symbolic protest against the British rule.
- **Lahore Conspiracy Case:** Bhagat Singh and his associates were tried in 1929, in which they were convicted of the murder of British police officer Saunders.
- **Inquilab Zindabad:** The famous slogan of Bhagat Singh and his comrades, which means 'Long live the revolution.'
- **Execution:** On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1931, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were hanged by the British government, which gave them the status of martyrs in India.
- **Kakori Conspiracy Case:** The incident of looting of the British train by the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) in 1925, which was an important part of the freedom struggle.
- **Socialism:** The main basis of the ideas of Bhagat Singh and the HSRA, which spoke of economic equality and the end of class struggle.
- **Indian National Army (INA):** An army formed by Subhas Chandra Bose during World War II that aimed to end British rule.
- **Azad Hind Government:** An independent Indian government established in Singapore by Subhas Chandra Bose, which was recognised by many countries.
- **You Give Me Blood, I Will Give You Freedom:** Subhas Chandra Bose's famous slogan, inspired millions of Indians to fight for freedom.
- **Delhi Chalo:** The slogan of the INA, which was coined with the aim of liberating India's capital Delhi from British rule.



**NOTES**

---

## **10.20 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

---

### **10.20.1 In-Text Questions**

1. Who was the founder of the INA (Indian National Army, also known as Azad Hind Fauj)?
  - a) Mahatma Gandhi
  - b) Jawaharlal Nehru.
  - c) Captain Mohan Singh
  - d) Subhas Chandra Bose
2. In which year was the INA reformed under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose?
  - a) 1940
  - b) 1941
  - c) 1942
  - d) 1943
3. What was the famous slogan given by Subhas Chandra Bose?
  - a) Vande Mataram
  - b) Jai Hind
  - c) Zindabad
  - d) Quit India
4. Which war is considered to be the main campaign of the INA?
  - a) Battle of Plassey
  - b) Battle of Imphal
  - c) Battle of Panipat
  - d) Battle of Buxar



**NOTES**

5. Which country contributed to the formation of the INA?
  - a) Germany
  - b) Italy
  - c) Japan
  - d) Russia
6. By what title was Subhas Chandra Bose known?
  - a) Mahatma
  - b) Bapu
  - c) Netaji
  - d) Pundits
7. Under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose, what was the main purpose of the INA (also known as Azad Hind Fauj)?
  - a) Compromising with the British
  - b) Promoting non-violence
  - c) Expelling the British from India
  - d) Establishing business relationships
8. Which Island was declared independent by Subhas Chandra Bose during 1900 AD?
  - a) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
  - b) Lakshadweep
  - c) Maldives
  - d) Sri Lanka
9. Who among the following was with the assistance of Subhas Chandra Bose involved in the formation of Azad Hind Fauz (INA)?
  - a) Bhagat Singh
  - b) Rash Behari Bose
  - c) Jawaharlal Nehru.
  - d) Lala Lajpat Rai



## NOTES

10. Where did Subhas Chandra Bose reportedly die in 1945?

- a) Tokyo
- b) Berlin
- c) Moscow
- d) Taipei

### 10.20.2 Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the formation and objectives of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). How did Bhagat Singh and his associates shape the revolutionary struggle against British rule?
2. Explain the role of Bhagat Singh in India's freedom struggle. Also, discuss his ideologies, methods, and the significance of his martyrdom.
3. How did Bhagat Singh's actions, especially the assembly bomb scandal and the assassination of Saunders, impact the freedom movement and inspire the Indian youth?
4. Analyse the contribution of Subhas Chandra Bose to the Indian independence movement. How did his approach differ from that of the Congress-led non-violent movement?
5. Discuss the formation and importance of the Indian National Army (INA). How did Subhas Chandra Bose mobilise support for the INA, and what role did he play in India's freedom struggle?
6. What was the impact of Subhas Chandra Bose's leadership on the Indian National Army (INA)? Analyse the major challenges faced by the INA and how these challenges helped in the direction of India's independence.

---

### 10.21 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

---

1. c, 2. d, 3. b, 4. b, 5. c, 6. c, 7. c, 8. a, 9. b, 10. d

Self-Instructional

444 Material



## 10.22 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

- Moffat, Chris (2019). *India's Revolutionary Inheritance; Politics and the Promise of Bhagat Singh*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 21-114.
- Habib, S. Irfan (2007). *To Make the Deaf Hear: Ideology and Programme of Bhagat Singh and his Comrades*, New Delhi: Three Essays, 2007.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2017). *From Plassey to partition and after: A History of Modern India*, New Delhi Orient Blackswan, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Also, in Hindi).
- Marston, Daniel (2014). *The Indian Army and the end of the Raj*, CUP.
- Stephen P. Cohen. (1963). 'Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army', *Pacific Affairs*, pp. 411-429.
- Sarkar, Sumit (1983). *Modern India: 1885–1947*, Delhi, Macmillan (Also in Hindi).
- Barnett, M. Ross (2015). *The Politics of Cultural Nationalism in South India*, Princeton University Press.
- Basu, Raj Sekhar. 'The making of Adi-Dravid Politics in early twentieth century Tamil Nadu', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 39, No. 7/8, July-August 2011.
- Blackburn, Stuart (2001). *Print, Folklore and Nationalism in Colonial South India*. Delhi, Permanent Black.
- Sarkar, Sumit (2009). *Modern India*, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India* Hyderabad: Orient Longman.
- Shukla, R. L (ed.) (1987). *History of Modern India*, Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.







## LESSON 11

# LEFT: PEASANTS, WORKERS MOVEMENTS, JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN'S SOCIALIST PARTY AND NATIONALIST POLITICS IN SOUTHERN INDIA

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### Structure

- 11.1 Learning Objectives
- 11.2 Introduction
- 11.3 Rise of Communist Ideology in India
  - 11.3.1 Government Response
  - 11.3.2 Split in Indian Trade Unions Congress
- 11.4 The Peasant Movements
- 11.5 The Movement of the Working Class
- 11.6 Growth of Socialist Movement in India
- 11.7 Nationalist Politics in South India (1857-1947)
- 11.8 Summary
- 11.9 Glossary
- 11.10 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 11.10.1 In-Text Questions
  - 11.10.2 Long Answer Questions
- 11.11 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 11.12 References/Suggested Readings

## 11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, students should be able to:

- Understand the peasant and workers movements

Self-Instructional  
Material

447



## NOTES

- Explain how various peasant and worker movements affect the social and economic structure of the country
- Discuss the founding of Jayaprakash Narayan's Samajwadi Party, his ideology and influence of the party and the social and political contribution of the party
- Analyse the growth of nationalist movements in southern India, prominent leaders and their contributions

---

## 11.2 INTRODUCTION

---

Leftist movements, Jayaprakash Narayan's Samajwadi Party, and nationalist politics in southern India are important topics that highlight important and diverse aspects of Indian politics. While studying this topic, we need to understand how various social and political movements affect the social and political direction of the country.

Peasant and workers movements have had a deep impact on Indian society. During and after the freedom struggle, farmers and workers demanded their rights and a better life. These movements not only fought for economic justice but also raised their voice against social inequality and exploitation. These movements presented new challenges and opportunities to Indian politics.

Jayaprakash Narayan's Samajwadi Party plays an important role in this context. Jayaprakash Narayan, who was one of the leading socialist leaders of Indian politics, presented a clear view of socialist ideology. His party worked for social and political reforms and gave impetus towards a new social order. Under his leadership, the socialist movement united the youth and the struggling classes in particular and gave birth to new political thinking.

Nationalist politics also has a special significance in southern India. The nationalist movement in southern India played an active role in various phases of the freedom struggle. The leaders of this region fought for India's independence and contributed significantly from social, cultural and political perspectives. The local conditions and social structures of southern India influenced the strategy and development of the freedom struggle, giving a distinctive identity to the politics of the region.

*Self-Instructional*

448 *Material*



By studying these aspects, we can understand the role of various constituents of Indian society and their contributions. An in-depth examination of these movements and ideologies gives us a better overview of the complexities of Indian politics and society.

---

### **11.3 RISE OF COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY IN INDIA**

---

The communists tried to take Indian workers on the revolutionary path, and they also succeeded to a great extent. After the Russian Revolution, the influence of communist ideology increased worldwide. During this time, organisations such as Communist International and Red Trade Union International were formed. Some Indian revolutionaries, notably M.N. Roy were involved in these activities. He founded the Communist Party of Hindustan in Tashkent on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1920. This party worked to give a new direction to the working class movement in India. Communist groups were formed in different parts of the country such as Calcutta (now Kolkata), Bombay (now Mumbai), Madras (now Chennai) and Lahore.

In 1924, all the communist groups were merged to form the Communist Party of India in Kanpur, which came into existence in December 1925. Its aim was not only to liberate India from British imperialism but also to establish a workers' and peasants' republic on the basis of socialisation of the means of production and distribution.

The communist ideology led to a revolutionary spirit in the trade unions. The Fourth Congress of the Communist International Organisation urged the All India Trade Union Congress to raise its voice against capitalism and imperialism, but liberal leaders did not take much interest in it. The Communist International instructed the Indian communists to make the trade union movement class-based. Its purpose was to organise the exploited classes like labourers and peasants.

The government kept a close watch on the communists because they opposed imperialism. In view of this, M.N. Roy suggested the formation of a party in which all the farmers, labourers, working people and the middle class are included. For this purpose, organisations such as the Peasants and Workers Party in Bengal, the Shetkari Kamgar Party in Bombay, the Kirti-Kisan Party in Punjab, and the Mazdoor Kisan Party in the United Provinces were established, which were inspired by the communist ideology.



## NOTES

The influence of the communists on the workers and peasants increased. The number of strikes increased after the Non-Cooperation Movement ended. These strikes now become more organised and prolonged than before. There were strikes in Bombay, Ahmedabad and other places. The economic depression of 1929 worsened the condition of the workers, which intensified the series of strikes. Industrial unrest was at its peak in 1928. There were 203 strikes this year, in which 5,06,851 workers participated and more than 3 crore man-days were lost. There were not only economic but also political reasons behind these strikes. Workers were now raising their voices against the capitalist system.

### 11.3.1 Government Response

The government sent the Whitley Commission to India in 1928 to investigate the growing effects of strikes and their causes. The move sparked protests across the country. The government passed the Labour Disputes Act on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1929 to prohibit strikes. The law made it mandatory for services such as postal, railways, water and electricity to give one month's written notice before going on strike.

Protesting against the legislation, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw bombs in the Central Assembly. On 20<sup>th</sup> March 1929, the government arrested the leaders of the Communist Party, the Workers' Peasant Party and the Trade Union Congress. The Meerut Conspiracy Case was tried against these leaders, which lasted from 1929 to 1933. During the trial, the accused were given harsh punishment, which led to worldwide criticism.

In 1934-35, the government outlawed the Communist Party and its affiliates. This caused a setback to the labour movement, but the workers began to make efforts to regroup.

### 11.3.2 Split in Indian Trade Unions Congress

The communist ideology also had an impact on the Indian Trade Union Congress. This organisation split into two factions – reformists and revolutionaries. The reformist faction wanted to link the trade union congress with the Amsterdam-based international trade unions, while the revolutionary faction wanted to link it to the Moscow-based Red International Workers' Union.



## NOTES

This difference of opinion led to the moderate leader, N.M. Joshi breaking away from the Trade Union Congress and forming the All India Trade Union Federation. In 1931, programmes for the upliftment of the workers were made under the influence of the leftist and socialist leaders of the Congress. The Red Trade Union Congress was formed in 1934, but efforts for the unity of labour unions continued. In 1935, the three organisations were merged to form the All India Trade Union Congress. This helped to unite the labour movement.

---

### 11.4 THE PEASANT MOVEMENTS

---

In the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the twentieth century, the peasants, agitated over their miserable condition, led to several revolts and agitations. Prominent among these are the indigo revolt in Bengal, the peasant movement in the Deccan or the Maratha revolt, the Pabna and Moplah rebellions and the peasant movements in Champaran, Kheda and Darbhanga. This has been already discussed in detail in Lesson 4.

---

### 11.5 THE MOVEMENT OF THE WORKING CLASS

---

In the 19th and 20th centuries, Indian industrialisation gave birth to two new classes in society—the bourgeoisie and the working class. There was a deep disparity between these two classes. Also, government policies were not in favour of the workers. As a result, the working class had to suffer from the imperialist system of rule on the one hand and exploitation by capitalists on the other. In order to protect their needs and rights, it became necessary for the workers to organise and struggle.

- **Meaning of Trade Unionism:** A trade union is an association of workers formed with the aim of improving the condition of workers working in mills and factories. Trade unionism mainly focused on two issues, i.e., trade unions and workers' ideology. The workers were mostly illiterate. Initially, they had no idea of forming a trade union. But later the efforts of some intellectuals paved the



## NOTES

way for the formation of trade unions. Trade unionism in India is not the product of any pre-existing social institution. It was only after the establishment of modern industries in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the primitive labour consciousness began in India. With the industrial development in India, the position of the Indian working class was strengthened. Later, the working class movement associated itself with the political struggle to achieve national liberation. Initially, the Indian working class and the proletariat had to face various types of exploitation, such as low wages, long hours of work, use of child labour, lack of health facilities in factories and lack of all other types of facilities, etc. Even before the Indian intelligentsia joined the struggle of the working class, the labour movement started in different parts of the country. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, workers in Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Surat, Madras, Coimbatore and Wardha started striking cotton mills.

The working class emerged with the construction of railways in India in 1853 AD. During this time a large number of labourers were hired. In coal mines, plantations and factories, along with unskilled labourers, educated people were appointed as clerks. With the expansion of industries, the number of workers increased. However, the mill owners and industrialists used to make the workers do the entire work, but they were not given any kind of facilities. The workers had to work long hours in unhygienic environments at low wages. Even small children were made to work.

The availability of cheap labour in India made Lancashire's textile producers worried that the Indian textile industry could become competitive with them due to cheap labour. Due to this fear, some controls were established in the name of improving the condition of the workers. The Factory Act of 1881 prohibited children under the age of 7 from working in factories. The working hours of children under 12 years of age were limited and provision was made for fencing around dangerous machines.

After this, the second factory law was enacted in 1891, in which the working hours of women were fixed at 11 hours (with a half-hour rest) and the minimum age of children was increased from 7-12 to 9-14 years. In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many laws were enacted to improve the condition of workers, in



## NOTES

which the Factory Act of 1911 AD was prominent. Under this, the working hours of workers above 14 years of age were reduced to 12 hours.

However, despite these reforms, there was no major change in the condition of the workers. Their exploitation continued as before. Gradually, awareness of their rights began to increase among the workers. They launched a struggle against both the British imperialists and the Indian capitalists, who were responsible for their economic exploitation. During the Bengal Partition movement, workers went on strike in Calcutta's roads, rail, tram and municipal corporation. They took advantage of the weak position of the government and demanded a salary hike and better facilities. Although these strikes yielded some benefits, the government strictly suppressed them, terming them as political strikes. This further strengthened the spirit of struggle among the workers.

Before the First World War, there were many important strikes in India. Notable among them are the railway strike of 1907 and the strike of the workers of Bombay in protest against Tilak's arrest in 1908. Along with these strikes, the workers also made efforts to form their own unions.

- **Impact of the First World War:** The First World War had a profound impact on the Indian economy. The number of factories and labourers increased rapidly during the war. The number of workers employed in factories increased from 9,50,973 in 1914 to 1,122,922 in 1918. Similarly, in 1913, the number of textile mills was 272, employing 2,53,786 workers; by 1923, the number of mills had increased to 333 and the number of workers to 3,47,380. The same trend was observed in jute mills. This growth of factories benefited the bourgeoisie immensely, but there was no improvement in the condition of the workers; rather, their condition worsened. Inflation made their situation more miserable. The working conditions were also poor, and they had to work excessive hours, which made their lives difficult. Under these circumstances, the workers began to raise their voice against exploitation and oppression. Meanwhile, two important events took place in world politics. In 1917, there was a great revolution in Russia, which ended the tsarism and established a communist government. The international communist organisation emerged, which called upon the workers of the world to unite and struggle against the capitalists. It also had an impact on





## NOTES

the Indian working class, and intensified the organisational efforts. It was only in 1917 that Mahatma Gandhi entered Indian politics with the weapon of truth and non-violence. He also involved workers and peasants in his movement and fought for their rights. As a result, the Indian workers also developed a belligerent tendency. They used the strike as a medium to fulfil their demands. Now the strikes began to become more organised, widespread and long-term.

- **Strikes:** Workers in India were largely disgusted with the effects of the Russian Revolution and the Indian system in 1917. They started strikes. There was a strike of textile workers in Bombay. They were demanding a wage hike to compensate for the damage caused by inflation. In 1917, there were more than 30 strikes. In 1918, there was a mill workers' strike in Ahmedabad, which was led by Gandhi himself. They also had to fast to get the demands of the workers accepted. This resulted in a 35% increase in their salaries. This was the first major victory for the workers. In 1918-19, the strike spread like an epidemic. The jute mill workers of Bengal, the textile mill workers of Bombay, the railway employees, the dock workers, the mint, the printing press, the electricity and municipal employees, etc., went on strike. These strikes also yielded some positive results. This increased the wages of the workers and fixed working hours.
- **Workers' Organisation:** The initial efforts to improve the condition of workers were started by some important persons. In 1877, the first strike by the workers in the cotton mill of Nagpur was over the issue of wage rates. Sorabji Shaproji Bengali introduced a bill in the Bombay Legislative Council in 1878 to reduce the working hours of workers, but his attempt was unsuccessful. Shasipada Banerjee founded the 'Working Men's Club' (workers' club) in Bengal in 1870 and started a monthly magazine called 'Bharat Shramjeevi' in 1874. Its purpose was to educate the workers and protect their interests. N.M. Lokhande, who is regarded as the first leader of Indian workers, founded the Bombay Millhands Association in Bombay in 1890. It is also known as the first trade union of India. The union (though not a trade union) made the following demands: (i) reduction in working hours, (ii) weekly off, and (iii) compensation for accidents while working in the factory. N.M. Lokhande also started a magazine called Deenbandhu in 1880. The Great Indian Provincial Railway Strike of 1899 is



## NOTES

perhaps regarded as the first organised strike of the working class. Their main demands were related to wages, hours of work, service conditions, etc. The second organised protest of the workers was the Bombay cotton mill strike of 1908. The strike was called to protest against the arrest of Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

B.P. Wadia, a close associate of Annie Besant, founded the Madras Labour Union in April 1918. This was the first trade union in India. Gandhi founded the Mazdoor Mahajan in 1920 to establish peaceful relations between employers and workers. The mainstream of the national movement was still indifferent to the question of workers' problems. Along with the strikes, workers' unions began to be formed to maintain the unity and strength of the workers. By 1920, there were about 125 trade unions in India, with about 250,000 members. Every major industry had its own trade union. In such a situation, it was felt that there should be an all-India organisation of workers, which could unite all the labour organisations and launch an organised movement against the imperialist government and the exploiting capitalists.

At the same time, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) was established, with the aim of solving the problems of workers and bringing unity among them. Seeing the need for a central organisation of workers in India, the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) was formed on 31 October 1920 in Bombay under the chairmanship of Lala Lajpat Rai. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Annie Besant and CF Andrews were among its vice-presidents. This organisation formed the N.M. Smith Foundation at the ILO conference in 1920.

Initially, AITUC was influenced by moderate leaders, but later big leaders like Chittaranjan Das, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose also joined it. In 1920, a resolution was passed at the Nagpur session of the Congress to improve the condition of workers and peasants. Subsequently, the Congress constantly paid attention to the problems of the labourers. In 1922, Chittaranjan Das, president of the Gaya session, insisted on bringing the workers and peasants closer to the Congress. In the Kanpur session of 1925, the Congress decided to organise the workers. In 1927, the Congress General Committee planned to form an organisation by appointing propagators among the industrial workers.

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

455



## NOTES

At the same time, the Trade Union Congress was also active in organising workers. By 1926, it had 57 trade unions with 125,000 members. After the First World War, there was a new awareness among the workers and the labour movement intensified, but the approach of the Trade Union Congress was reformist, not revolutionary.

It was influenced by the socialist ideas of the British Labour Party. Moderate leaders like N.M. Joshi wanted the trade union to be limited to improving the economic condition of the workers. Gandhiji's ideas of non-violence and class cooperation kept workers away from political movements. This was the reason that workers were not included in the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920-22.

**Table 11.1** The Factories Act brought in by the government of British-India

Act of the Legislature	Regime	Key Takeaways
The Factory Act of 1881	Lord Ripon	There was a ban on working for children under 7 years of age and leaves for 4 days were given a month.
The Factory Act of 1891	Lord Lansdowne	There was one day off a week, children below 9 years of age were banned from working in the factory, and working hours were fixed at 11 hours per day.
The Factories Act of 1911	Lord Hardinge	Men's working hours were fixed at 12 hours.
The Factories Act of 1922	Lord Reading	The working hours of children were fixed at 7 hours per day and children between 12 and 15 years of age were allowed to work in the factory.
The Factories Act of 1934	Lord Willingham	A distinction was made between seasonal and off-season factories, the working hours of young children were fixed at 5 hours, and medical and rest arrangements were made for the workers.
The Factories Act of 1944	Lord Babel	An arrangement for working hours and a canteen was made for the workers in the regular factories.



## NOTES

Trade Union	Founder	Year of Establishment	Key Features
Bombay Mill Hand Association	Narayan Meghaji Lokhande	1890 A.D.	India's first trade union
Social Service League	N.M. Joshi	1911 A.D.	.....
Madras Labour Union	B.P. Wadia	1918 A.D.	The first real and systematic trade union
Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association	Mahatma Gandhi	1918 A.D.	Formulation of Trusteeship Principle
All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)	N.M. Joshi, Joseph Baptista, Lala Lajpat Rai, V.M. Pawar	1920 A.D.	Its first session was held in Bombay under the chairmanship of Lala Lajpat Rai. Dewan Chaman Lal (General Secretary).
All India Railwaymen's Federation	V. V. Giri	1924 A.D.	.....
Federation of Indian Trade Unions (ITUF)	N.M. Joshi	1929 A.D.	Split of AITUC
Red Trade Union Congress	Deshpande and Randibe	1931 A.D.	Split of AITUC
Hindustan Mazdoor Sabha	Sardar Patel and Rajendra Prasad	1938 A.D.	.....
Indian Federation of Labour	M.N. Rai, Jamna Lal Mehta	1941 A.D.	.....
Indian National Trade Union Congress	Sardar Patel & V.V. Giri	1947 A.D.	Separate from AITUC
United Trade Union Congress	Pro. K. T. Shah	1979 AD	.....

- **British Attitude towards Workers:** The British imperialists understood the strength of the growing unity of the Indian working class and considered it a threat to themselves. They, therefore, took measures to bring the workers under their influence. During 1919-20, Labour Departments were set up in Madras and Bombay. In 1921, the Bengal Committee was formed to investigate industrial unrest. In 1922, the Bombay Industrial Disputes Committee was established.



## NOTES

The main objective of these efforts was to solve the problems of the workers and keep them under their control. The most important step in this direction was the Trade Unions Act of 1926. Under this Act, strikes were recognised as the statutory right of workers, although some restrictions were also imposed on strikes. At the same time, the political parties of Britain also began to show interest in the Indian working class. Leaders of the British Labour Party and British trade unions came to India and tried to establish a Labour Party there. However, they had some degree of success and some organisations under their influence joined the reformist Amsterdam-faction, but the Labour Party could not be established in India. The leftist faction of the British trade unions also attracted Indian workers and inspired them to follow the left-wing revolutionary path. However, the government thwarted their attempts.

---

## 11.6 GROWTH OF SOCIALIST MOVEMENT IN INDIA

---

Let us discuss this in detail.

- **Reason:** The Socialist movement started in India in the third decade of the 20th century. The worldwide economic depression of 1929 dealt a severe blow to the capitalist system. There was a drastic decline in production and foreign trade, leaving millions of people unemployed and severely threatening their livelihood. On the other hand, Soviet Russia made rapid progress with the success of its five-year plans, which attracted people from all over the world, especially youth, workers and peasants. At this time, Marxism, socialism and economic planning seemed to be the way to liberate people from poverty and slavery. India too could not live without being impressed by this new thinking.

The economic recession also affected the condition of the workers and peasants of India. By 1932, the prices of agricultural commodities had fallen by more than 50%. Employers tried to reduce wages. This led to an intensification of demands among the peasants for the abolition of land, reduction in land revenue and rent, land reforms and indebtedness. Workers in factories and plantations demanded better working conditions and rights to organise themselves (trade unions).



These events led to growing discontent and impatience in the country. The youth, inspired by socialist ideology, made these problems a national issue and called upon the people to get rid of them.

The leftist tendency or socialist current within the Congress was expressed by leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, Jayaprakash Narayan, and Narendra Dev. In the opinion of these people, the faulty production system here was responsible for the economic misery of India. Those who controlled production wanted to maximise profits by paying minimum wages. Those who were rich wanted to be richer. For this, they were exploiting the poor and hard-working labourers. He had no hesitation in this. Therefore, it was impossible to build an egalitarian society in India without ending this unequal and exploitative system. Therefore, these socialists tried to improve the condition of the poor and the labourers.

- **Lahore Congress:** In 1929, the Lahore Congress session was held, in which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was made the president. His leftist leanings and socialist ideology were the main reasons for this decision. This gave great enthusiasm to socialist supporters. In his presidential address, Nehru declared himself a socialist. At Nehru's insistence, the Congress declared in Bombay that India's poverty was not only due to foreign rule but also due to the economic exploitation within the country. To end this, major changes need to be brought in the society. In the same year, Nehru was elected the President of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), which further strengthened the socialist movement. The Karachi Congress session of 1931 called for the adoption of the socialist programme. It discussed the fundamental rights of the society and economic policies, which were the result of the consensus between Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. The declaration emphasised the need for nationalisation of large industries and ending exploitation in the production process.
- **Establishment of Socialist Party:** By 1934, the socialists started organising themselves within the Congress. In May 1934, Jayaprakash Narayan founded the All India Socialist Conference in Patna. Apart from Jayaprakash Narayan, prominent persons who participated in this movement included Achyut Patwardhan, Ashok Mehta, M.R. Narayan and others. Masani, N.G. Gore, S.M. Joshi and M.L. Dantewala were the chiefs. All these people were lodged



## NOTES

in Nashik jail in connection with the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1932. The results of the debate between them led to the formation of the Congress Socialist Party. These socialists did not like the policies of the Congress. These people also termed the Congress's proposal incomplete. Jayaprakash Narayan was of the view that the Congress should solve the fundamental problems of the country in favour of the proletariat. Despite disagreeing with the policies of the Congress, these people did not think of establishing any institution outside the Congress. Jayaprakash Narayan himself admitted that his aim was not to convert the entire Congress into a Socialist Party but to change its principles.

- **Socialists and Communists:** Like the Communists, the Congress Socialists also believed in class struggle, but they did not intensify like the Communists. According to them, the class struggle that was going on in India was going to give a broad base to the Indian national movement. These socialists participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement believing in Gandhi's leadership, while the Communists had sidelined themselves from the national movement by calling Gandhi a reactionary. When the Civil Disobedience Movement was going on, Jayaprakash Narayan was the General Secretary of the Congress. In short, the Congress Socialist Party was founded in 1934 with the aim of broadening the national movement by strengthening socialist forces in the country.

Jawaharlal Nehru welcomed the establishment of the Congress Socialist Party. In 1947, he nominated three prominent socialists, namely Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev and Achyut Patwardhan, as members of the Congress Working Committee. In his presidential address, he urged the Congress to 'accept scientific socialism as its goal and to bring it closer to the working class.' He felt that socialism lay the only key to the solution to the world's problems and India's problems and that he used the word socialism not in a vague humanistic sense but in a scientific, economic sense; for him, we have to bring about major and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure; the elimination of vested interests in land and industry, and the abolition of the feudal and autocratic system of Indian princely states. It will be. This means abolishing private property and replacing the present system of profit with a higher ideal of cooperative service. This ultimately means a change in our innate



intellect, habits and desires. In short, it means that a new civilisation is radically different from the present capitalist system.

- **Importance of Socialism:** In 1938-39, Subhash Chandra Bose became the Congress President. Some communist leaders, such as A.K. Gopalan and E.M.S. Namboodiripad joined the Congress Socialist Party, but he could not stay in it for long. The socialists often faced criticism from the communists because of their policies. The communists said that the socialists were distorting Marxism and were in fact supporters of the capitalist forces. The socialists, on the other hand, accused the communists of being chauvinistic supporters of Soviet Russia. He slammed the communists for distancing themselves from the national movement and being puppets of foreign powers. In December 1939, Jayaprakash Narayan accused the communists and said that the Communists had made every effort to break the Congress Socialist Party. Therefore, they are sworn enemies of the Communist Socialist Party.

The socialist movement has a special significance in the Indian national movement. Due to this movement, the Congress led the Indian people to an unbiased and non-communal and took the organised struggle for the independence of the country to a successful conclusion.

---

## 11.7 NATIONALIST POLITICS IN SOUTH INDIA (1857-1947)

---

Nationalist politics has played an important and diverse role in the freedom struggle of South India. In the period from 1857 to 1947, the masses struggled against colonial exploitation and tyranny in different parts of South India. The freedom fighters here contributed to the struggle for India's independence with their distinct cultural and political background. Although the major movements of the freedom struggle took place in northern India, the leaders, organisations and movements of South India moulded nationalist politics into a new dimension.

1. **Early Nationalist Awakening (1857 onwards):** The Revolt of 1857, called the First War of Independence, was not as influential for South India as it was





## NOTES

for North India. Despite this, the revolt was seen as the first mass struggle against British rule. The rise of nationalist ideologies in South India took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Later it began in 1900 AD, when the discontent against the colonial rule began to grow in the Indian society. Intellectual and social movements in cities like Madras (now Chennai) began to question the economic and political effects of British rule. In the 1870s, Justice M. Veeraraghavachariar and other thinkers criticised British policies. The local press and academics also encouraged a sense of nationalism and independence against British rule.

2. **Formation of Congress and South India (after 1885):** The founding of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 was a turning point for the Indian freedom struggle. The Congress also took roots in South India and provided a platform to the people there to raise their voice against colonial policies. The Madras Presidency, which was a major part of South India, became the centre of the early movements of the Congress.

In the 1890s, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and other prominent Congress leaders propagated the ideals of the Congress in South India. National awareness began to grow, and major sections of South Indian society such as the educated class, lawyers, and journalists began to be attracted to the ideals of nationalism.

3. **Swadeshi Movement and South India (1905):** The Swadeshi movement against the partition of Bengal in 1905 also had an impact in South India. The movement in South India led to a boycott of British goods and support for Swadeshi products. In particular, efforts were made to revive the textile industry and local handicraft industries.

Poets and writers like Subramania Bharati propagated the Swadeshi movement and enriched it culturally and literarily. The movement in the Madras Presidency paved the way for a new kind of nationalist struggle, which not only fought for economic independence but also wanted a cultural revival.

4. **Home Rule Movement and South India (1916):** The Home Rule Movement launched by Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1916 was particularly effective in South India. Annie Besant, who was an Irish woman but an ardent supporter of India's independence, made Madras her base. The aim of the



## NOTES

Home Rule Movement was to give the Indians the right to self-rule, and it deepened the spirit of nationalism in South India.

Annie Besant and her colleagues created widespread public awareness in South India. She organised the masses and spread the message of freedom through education, press, and gatherings. This movement further increased the political consciousness in the South Indian society and it became a part of the activities of the Indian National Congress.

- 5. Non-Cooperation Movement and South India (1920-1922):** Under the leadership of Mahatama Gandhi, the Non-Cooperation Movement, started in 1920, spread rapidly in South India as well. His policy of non-violence and satyagraha attracted the people of South India. In Madras Presidency, the public protested against government institutions through boycotting them, such as courts, schools and Government Universities.

Prominent leaders like A. V. Patabhirama Reddy and T. Prakasam played a leading role in the Non-Cooperation Movement. T. Prakasam led a large mass movement against foreign cloth in Madras and made the masses aware by wearing indigenous clothes. This movement further raised the national consciousness in different regions of South India.

- 6. Peasants and Labour Movements (1930-1940):** In the 1930s, an important dimension of nationalist politics emerged in South India in the form of peasants' and workers' movements. Peasants and workers began to organise against the exploitative policies of the British government and the landlords. Organisations like the All India Kisan Sabha and trade unions were leading these movements. Malabar Peasant uprisings such as the Moplah Rebellion (1921) and the Telangana Movement (1946-51) also took place in the region during this period. These movements broadened the freedom struggle and also mobilised the lower classes of Indian society.

- 7. Indian National Army (INA) and South India:** The influence of the Indian National Army (INA), of Subhash Chandra Bose, was also seen in South India. People from different parts of South India joined the INA and took part in the armed struggle against British rule. Many young men from Madras and Kerala



## NOTES

fought against the British army by joining the INA on the call of Subhash Chandra Bose.

The influence of the INA was particularly felt in Madras and Kerala, where the public held massive demonstrations in support of the INA soldiers. This movement was a turning point in the freedom struggle of South India.

**8. Dalits and Social Reform Movements in South India:** Along with nationalist politics in South India, Dalit and social reform movements also played an important role. The self-respect movement, which began under the leadership of Periyar, E.V. Ramaswamy, fought for the rights of Dalits and backward classes. This movement promoted social and political consciousness in South India.

Periyar and his followers protested vehemently against caste-based discrimination and Brahmanical superiority. His movement gave a new dimension to the politics of social justice in South India, which became a part of the freedom struggle as well as the movement of social reform.

The struggle for independence of South India from 1857 to 1947 was a complex and diverse movement. The nationalist politics here contributed towards a wider freedom struggle through social reforms, peasant and labour movements, swadeshi and non-cooperation movements, and armed struggles. The leaders and the masses of South India made their mark in the fight for national unity and independence and played an important role in the creation of an independent India.

---

## 11.8 SUMMARY

---

Considering the Left movements, Jayaprakash Narayan's Socialist Party and nationalist politics in Southern India, it becomes clear that the study of these aspects is of the utmost importance for understanding the complexities of Indian society and politics. All these factors shaped Indian politics and set the direction of social change.

The peasant and labour movements not only exposed social and economic inequalities but also gave rise to an effective political discourse. Through these movements, farmers and workers raised their voice strongly and protected their rights.



## NOTES

This struggle showed how people's movements for social justice and equality were important and how they could influence the political landscape. The contribution of Jayaprakash Narayan's Samajwadi Party is particularly significant in this context. His socialist ideology gave a new direction to Indian politics and presented an alternative for the underprivileged sections of society. The Samajwadi Party under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan not only raised the political consciousness but also presented an alternative political approach which was helpful in solving the existing problems of the society. His party underlined the need for social and economic reforms in the society and this infused a new energy in India's freedom struggle.

Nationalist politics in southern India reshaped various aspects of the freedom struggle. The leaders of southern India not only struggled for independence, but they also gave prominence to issues of regional cultural identity and social justice. The movements and ideologies of the region emerged as an important part of the Indian freedom struggle and played an important role in the politics of southern India.

Overall, the study of all these aspects helps us understand how various social and political movements shaped Indian society. This understanding gives us a deep and comprehensive understanding of Indian polity and the continuity of the struggle for social justice and equality. By understanding these historical perspectives, we can become more aware and equipped to face the challenges of the present and the future.

---

## 11.9 GLOSSARY

---

- **Leftism:** A political ideology that emphasises equality in society, the rights of labourers and peasants, and social justice.
- **Socialism:** A system in which all the resources and means of production of society are collectively owned and equitable.
- **Peasant Movement:** Organised protests by peasants against the zamindari system, over-rent, and other exploitative policies.
- **Labour Movement:** Movements for workers' rights, improvement in wages, and better working conditions.



## NOTES

- **Communist Party:** A political organisation that solves the problems of workers and peasants through class struggle.
- **Socialist Party:** A party founded by Jayaprakash Narayan and other socialist leaders, who worked for equality in society and the rights of the exploited classes.
- **All India Kisan Sabha:** An organisation founded in 1936 that fought to solve the problems of farmers and protect their rights.
- **Trade Union:** An organisation of workers who work to protect their interests, such as better wages, improvement in working conditions, etc.
- **Red Trade Union:** A revolutionary trade union that worked for left-wing ideology and workers' rights.
- **Zamindari System:** A land management system in which landlords collect rent from farmers. A major issue of the leftist movement was its abolition.
- **Land Reforms:** Efforts made to give farmers ownership of land and to abolish the zamindari system.
- **Proletariat:** The working class, which is the focal point of leftist and socialist movements.
- **Total Revolution:** A slogan given by Jayaprakash Narayan, which called for sweeping changes in society, politics, and economy.
- **Dravidian Movement:** A movement for the preservation of Tamil language and culture in South India, which was based on social and political reforms.
- **Swaraj Party:** A party founded by Chittaranjan Das and Motilal Nehru, which demanded political autonomy against the British government.
- **Satyagraha:** Mahatma Gandhi's policy of non-violent resistance, which also became popular in South India.
- **Anti-Brahmin Movement in South India:** A movement for the rights and social justice of non-Brahmin communities.
- **Swadeshi Movement:** A movement to boycott foreign goods and encourage the use of Swadeshi and Strass.



## NOTES

- **Self-Respect Movement:** A movement led by Periyar Ramaswamy, which focused on the rights of Dalits and women.
- **Tamil Nadu Congress Committee:** The major organisation of the Congress in South India, which was active in the national movement.
- **Justice Party:** Non-Brahmin political organisation in South India, which demanded equality in society.
- **Social Reforms:** Movements to end discrimination on the basis of caste, language, and gender, which were part of nationalist politics in South India.

---

## 11.10 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

---

### 11.10.1 In-Text Questions

1. Who founded the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in 1920?
  - a) B. R. Ambedkar
  - b) Lala Lajpat Rai
  - c) Subhash Chandra Bose
  - d) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
2. Jayaprakash Narayan was the founding member of which Samajwadi Party?
  - a) Indian National Congress
  - b) Congress Socialist Party (CSP)
  - c) All India Forward Bloc
  - d) Communist Party of India



**NOTES**

**11.10.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. Analyse the contribution of Jayaprakash Narayan and the formation of the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) in the 1930s. How did socialist ideas shape the freedom movement?
2. How did the leftist ideology of leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose and Jayaprakash Narayan influence the direction of the Indian National Congress?

---

**11.11 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

---

1. b
2. b

---

**11.12 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

- Moffat, Chris (2019). *India's Revolutionary Inheritance; Politics and the Promise of Bhagat Singh*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 21-114.
- Habib, S. Irfan (2007). *To Make the Deaf Hear: Ideology and Programme of Bhagat Singh and his Comrades*. New Delhi: Three Essays, 2007.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2017). *From Plasey to Partition and After: A History of Modern India*. New Delhi Orient Blackswan, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Also, in Hindi).
- Marston, Daniel (2014). *The Indian Army and the End of the Raj*, CUP.
- Stephen P. Cohen (1963). 'Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army'. *Pacific Affairs*, pp. 411-429.



## NOTES

- Sarkar, Sumit (1983). *Modern India: 1885–1947*, Delhi, Macmillan. (Also in Hindi).
- Barnett, M. Ross (2015). *The Politics of Cultural Nationalism in South India*. Princeton University Press.
- Basu, Raj Sekhar. 'The making of Adi-Dravid Politics in early Twentieth century Tamil Nadu', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 39, No. 7/8, July-August 2011.
- Blackburn, Stuart (2001). Print, *Folklore and Nationalism in Colonial South India*. Delhi, Permanent Black.
- Sarkar, Sumit (2009). *Modern India*. Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.
- Shukla, R. L. (ed.) (1987). *History of Modern India*. Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation, University of Delhi, Delhi.





---

## **Unit V: Towards Freedom**

---

**Lesson 12    Towards Freedom: Overview of the Growth of Communal Politics**

**Lesson 13    Towards Freedom: Freedom and Partition**





## LESSON 12

# TOWARDS FREEDOM: OVERVIEW OF THE GROWTH OF COMMUNAL POLITICS

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### Structure

- 12.1 Learning Objectives
- 12.2 Introduction
- 12.3 Rise of Muslim Communalism and the Birth of Muslim League
  - 12.3.1 The Rise of Communalism
  - 12.3.2 The Concept of Communalism
  - 12.3.3 Reasons that Develop a Communal or Separatist Mindset
- 12.4 Aligarh Movement and the Role of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
- 12.5 Policy of 'Divide and Rule'
- 12.6 Economic and Cultural Backwardness of Muslims
- 12.7 Impact of Reformist Movements of the 19-20th Century
- 12.8 Influence of Communal History Education
- 12.9 Summary
- 12.10 Glossary
- 12.11 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 12.11.1 In-Text Questions
  - 12.11.2 Long Answer Questions
- 12.12 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 12.13 References/Suggested Readings

## 12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Get information about the various causes of the onset of communalism in India and its fatal consequences.

Self-Instructional  
Material

473



## NOTES

- Understand the concept of communalism.
- Evaluate the rise of Muslim communalism and the birth of the Muslim League.
- Know about the Muslim League and its functioning.
- Get information about the role of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in the Aligarh Movement.

---

## 12.2 INTRODUCTION

---

The rise of communal politics during the Indian freedom struggle was an important historical process, which not only influenced the politics of India, but also contributed towards partition. There were many historical, social and political reasons behind the development of communal politics, which were especially manifested in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The development of Indian communal politics was a complex process in the context of the freedom struggle, which was driven by social, religious and political factors. British colonial policy, the revival of religious identity, and political divisions led to growth of communalism. The tragedy of Indian independence as well as partition was the ultimate result of the effects of communal politics, which changed the social and political fabric of India forever.

---

## 12.3 RISE OF MUSLIM COMMUNALISM AND THE BIRTH OF MUSLIM LEAGUE

---

By the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was considerable goodwill between Hindus and Muslims in India. They lived together in harmony. They fought shoulder to shoulder during the uprising of the British in the 1840s. Bahadur Shah Zafar continued to be regarded as the emperor of the whole of India; but due to various reasons, communal sentiment began to develop in India from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It also influenced Indian politics which resulted in the partition of India. Several factors were responsible for the rise of communalism in Indian politics.



### 12.3.1 The Rise of Communalism

The rise of communalism in India dates back to colonial rule, and had a profound impact on the political, social and religious structure of the country. Communalism was promoted by the British rulers under the policy of “divide and rule”. This led to growing distances and antagonism between the Hindu and Muslim communities. This division became more evident in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when a new phase of religious and social reforms began in Indian society. The rise of communalism was a complex and multifaceted process of colonial India. The policies of the British rule, religious and social reform movements, and cultural renaissance laid the foundation for deep divisions between the Hindu and Muslim communities. This development of communal politics eventually led to the partition of India, which had a lasting impact on the politics and society of the Indian subcontinent.

### 12.3.2 The Concept of Communalism

Communalism is basically an ideology. Communalism has three elements or stages. The first place in this order is the belief that the followers of a religion have the same worldly interests. According to this, there is no power called Indian nation and there cannot be, but instead there is only Hindu nation, Muslim nation etc. The second implicit meaning is that the cultural, economic and political interests of the followers of one religion are different from the worldly interests of the followers of another religion. The third phase of sectarianism begins when the interests of followers of different religions or different religious communities are perceived as contradictory and hostile.

Until the 1870s, there was hardly any communal ideology or communal politics in existence. It has its roots in the modern colonial, social, economic and political structure. The rise of communalism is the result of a new, modern politics based on the masses and their participation. This led to an initiative to build a wider relationship with the people and win their trust and establish a new identity. The need was felt to establish a new identity of birth, modern idea of nationality, class and cultural unit. Since this type of identity was new and unfamiliar to India, these new identities also developed slowly and with ups and downs. Too often, people used the old and familiar identities of caste, place, creed and religion to understand the new reality, forged wider



## NOTES

relationships and forged new identities. It happened all over the world. But gradually new, modern and historically necessary identities of nation, ethnicity and class have been established. Unfortunately, in India, even after several decades, this process is still incomplete. India has remained a nation under construction for more than 150 years. Religious consciousness, in particular, has become communal consciousness in some parts of the country and some sections of the people.

Nationalism did not spread as fast among Muslims of the same class as compared to lower middle class Hindus and Parsis. With the rise of Indian nationalism, the post-Muslim British attitude changed in the post-Muslim uprising of the 1870s. They began to pursue the policy of divide and rule even more actively. In order to win over Muslim landlords, landowners and newly educated youth began to strengthen the Muslim side. They also encouraged regionalism by raising the question of Bengali supremacy and tried to use the caste structure to make the Brahmins against the Brahmins and the lower castes against the upper castes. They actively encouraged the movement (in United Province and Bihar) for the replacement of Urdu with Hindi as the language of court. The colonial government saw Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as separate creeds and readily recognised communal leaders.

In the 1880s, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan played a pioneering role in the rise of sectarian separatism. He declared that the political interests of Hindus and Muslims were not the same, but different from each other. He advised the Muslims to be loyal to the British rule and at the same time started a movement in favour of the British government along with Raja Sivaprasad of Benares to oppose the nascent Indian National Congress (INC). They also began to propagate that since Hindus were the majority, they would dominate the Muslims in the event of the weakening of British rule or the return of the British.

### **12.3.3 Reasons that Develop a Communal or Separatist Mindset**

The following reasons were responsible for developing a communal or separatist mentality:

#### **Relative Backwardness of Muslims in Education, Trade and Industry**

In the first 40 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the upper-class Muslims were anti-British and against modern education. Therefore, the number of educated Muslims was negligible



## NOTES

and the influence of modern western thought intellectuals among the Muslim intellectuals led to the spread of modern education among the Muslims. But the proportion of educated people was much lower than that of Hindus, Parsis and Christians. Similarly, the participation of Muslims in the development of trade and industry was very low. Therefore, the small number of educated people, and those associated with commerce and industry among the Muslims, created this situation, as a result of which the liberal minded upper landlords who had a vested interest in the British rule started influencing the Muslim mentality in their own way.

Since modern education was compulsory for appointment to government service, Muslims lagged behind in this field as well. The British government also adopted a deliberate anti-Muslim policy after 1858. Modern educated Muslims were once again attracted to government service as they saw fewer opportunities for service in business and other fields. Therefore, it became easier for the British officials and the royalist Muslim leaders to pit educated Muslims against the educated Hindus. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other leaders announced that if the educated Muslims remained loyal to the British Government, the British Government would provide them government service and other facilities.

### **Historical View**

This also contributed to the growth of communal feeling between Hindus and Muslims. They declared that in the medieval period, all Muslims were rulers and all Hindus were ruled. They did not pay attention to the fact that ancient and medieval politics in India was based on economic and political interests and not on religious considerations. Both the ruling and rebellious classes added the colour of religion to shake off material interests and ambitions. Above all, the British and communal historians have their conception of India based on the fact that Indian society and culture was ideal in ancient times, and reached great heights, while in the Middle Ages, it was in decline due to Muslim rule and dominance. Following the footsteps of British historians, Indian historians also termed the medieval period as a Muslim period. The communal notion of history was propagated through poetry, plays, historical novels, short stories, newspapers, popular magazines and, above all, speeches at public meetings, statements made in the classroom, private conversations.





## NOTES

### **Hindutva Tilt towards Politics and Ideas of Militant Nationalists**

In the speeches and writings of some militant nationalists, there was a lot of emphasis on ancient Indian culture and rejection of medieval Indian culture. They identified the Indian culture and the Indian nation with Hinduism and abandoned the elements of a composite culture. Such activities like Tilak's conducting of Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, the semi-mystic concept of Aurobindo about India with the status of mother and nationalism as religion, the swearing of the agitating terrorists in front of Goddess Kali, the Ganga bath by the agitators in the midst of the anti-Bangabandh movement, the portrayal of Shivaji and Maharana Pratap as heroes who fought against foreign invaders, could never subjugate the Muslims. The British authorities and pro-British royalists carried forward this Hindu inclination and started poisoning the Muslim psyche with communalism. This fact kept a large number of educated Muslims out of the rising national movement, then made them enemies of this movement and led them to separatism. This inclination towards Hindutva opened a new ideological door for the Hindu community, as a result of which, it became difficult to keep the national movement in the hands of Hindu communal, political and ideological elements. It aroused Muslim communal inclination even among Muslim nationalists.

### **Economic Backwardness of the Country**

The conditions of colonial underdevelopment also played a role in the rise of communalism. In the absence of the development of modern industries, the problem of unemployment among the educated masses became acute. Thus, competition for limited employment opportunities became very intense. Many encouraged communal, religious, ethnic and regional sentiments due to short-sightedness and as short-term measures, so that they could get more and more of the available employment opportunities. This narrow appeal attracted a lot of people who wanted to get employment at any cost. Therefore, Hindu and Muslim communal leaders, caste leaders and officials could achieve some success by following the policy of divide and rule.

The British government's harsh attitude towards Turkey led to a wave of pro-Turkish sentiment among young Muslims. But this anti-imperialist sentiment, which was influenced by the ideas of the young Muslims of the Ahrar and Deoband movements, was based not only on modern secular politics but also on religious sentiments, i.e., the imminent threat to the Caliphate and holy places.



### **New Frontier in the Development of Communalism**

With the formation of the Muslim League, separatist and liberal tendencies among a section of the Muslim elites reached their zenith. The Muslim League refrained from criticism of colonialism, supported the partition of Bengal and demanded special protection for Muslims in government service and separate electorates with the help of Lord Minto. It propagated that the interests of Muslims were different from those of Hindus and opposed the nationalist and democratic demands of the Congress. The British government began using the Muslim League to control nascent nationalism and to separate the rising Muslim intelligentsia from the movement. The British government encouraged the Muslim League to wield influence among the Muslim masses and assume their leadership. The Lucknow Pact of 1916 accepted the doctrine of deadly separate representation. This opened the way for the rise of communalism in Indian politics in the future.

The Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 further expanded communal representation to include Sikhs as well. The frustration created by the failure of the Non-Cooperation Movement was taken advantage of by the communal forces and communal riots broke out in many places. Even among the Swarajists, there was a division on the basis of communalism.

Jinnah's fourteen-point demands also had elements of communalism. The basis of the provincial elections of February 1937 also has limited voting and separate representation. This also gave rise to separatist sentiments. In this election result, the communal parties i.e. the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha fared very badly. The election results of the party of Jagirdars and moneylenders were also not satisfactory. Later, these parties also started supporting communal parties. Now the communal parties began to grow stronger. Under the leadership of Jinnah, the Muslim League became a staunch opponent of the Congress. Now he has started propagating that the Muslim minority is in danger of merging with the majority Hindus. He propagated the unscientific and unhistorical theory that Hindus and Muslims were two separate national religions and it was impossible for them to co-exist. In 1940, the Muslim League passed a resolution from Lahore demanding that after independence, the country should be divided into two, and a separate state named Pakistan should be created. The



## NOTES

liberal communalism of pre-1937 later converted itself into a very fascist tendency, due to the following reasons:

- In order to protect their class, the vassal elements turned themselves towards communalism.
- The only option left for the policy of divide and rule was to follow the policy of communalism.
- With the outbreak of the Second World War, the only way for the government to suppress national demands was to promote communalism.
- The Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha performed poorly in the elections, which led to an even more aggressive communalism.

### **Communalism's own Arguments**

#### ***August Resolution:***

In the August Resolution of 1940, Lord Linlithgow said that power could not be transferred to a body which did not have the support of the country's large and powerful minority (Muslim League).

The Cripps Mission (1942) proposed to compromise with the provinces independently which was vehemently opposed by the Congress. At the same time, the League was demanding a declaration regarding the creation of a separate Muslim state called a separate Pakistan and sharing of seats with the Congress in the ratio of 50:50.

Jinnah demanded the monopoly of nominating Muslim members in the new Executive Council and declaring the Muslim League as the sole representative of Muslims in the Shimla Conference. As a result, the Shimla Conference failed. From the Viceroy's statement at this time, it appeared that the Muslim League had officially accepted the right to speak on behalf of all Muslims. This increased the importance of the League in the eyes of the Muslim masses. At this time, the British policy of divide and rule was at its peak.

#### ***National Movement and Communal Challenge:***

The national movement strongly opposed communal forces. However, it could not cope with it completely and it resulted in the partition of India. This happened because,



according to modern logical thought, the nationalists adopted a policy of compromise with communal leaders. In fact, they failed to appease the communal leaders. This policy led to the rise of communalism among other castes. Between 1937-39, Congress leaders repeatedly met Jinnah and tried to convince him, but Jinnah did not present any kind of demand before them. Jinnah was willing to compromise only on the condition that the Congress accepted itself as the representative of the Hindus only. It was impossible for the Congress to accept it. What was needed was a vigorous political struggle against communalism. But the nationalists failed to do so and followed this policy only sporadically.

The nationalist leaders agreed to the partition of India to stop the bloodshed on a large scale. Deadly riots were taking place everywhere. Moreover, the foreigners who were still ruling the country did not make any concrete effort to stop it. Rather, the colonial regime provoked it with its statements and tried to pit the two newly independent nations against each other. However, the nationalist leaders agreed to partition. But they did not accept the two-nation theory. They were not ready to hand over 1/3 of the country as demanded by the Muslim League.

The nationalist leaders agreed to separate the areas where the Muslim League had the greatest influence. Referendums were to be held in the North-West Frontier Province and in the Sylhet district of Assam, where the League's influence was doubtful. The partition of the country was certain, but it was not to be divided on the basis of Hindu and Muslim. The growth of Muslim and Hindu communalism in the country for the last 70 years was a historical reality, consequently the nationalist leaders accepted the partition.

---

## **12.4 ALIGARH MOVEMENT AND THE ROLE OF SIR SYED AHMED KHAN**

---

The Aligarh movement and its leader, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, developed a renaissance among the Muslims, and a sense of consciousness of their rights. Initially, his entire focus was on the spread of education among Muslims, especially the upper-class Muslims. He inspired them to take up modern English education and also made efforts



## NOTES

for it. He was also in favor of Hindu-Muslim unity. He himself said, “Remember that the words Hindu and Muslim connote religious identity, otherwise all human beings, whether they are Hindus or Muslims, and even Christians living in this country, are one in the particular sense that they belong to that one nation – all must unite for the cause of the country which belongs equally to all.” “Unfortunately, over a period of time, **Sir Syed Ahmad Khan**’s views changed. He became conservative and communal. He found the establishment of democracy objectionable, because all sections of the country were not equally educated and progressive. He also feared that as a result of parliamentary democracy, the whole country would be divided into two parties, Hindus and Muslims, in which minority Muslims would never be able to come to power. As a result, he considered the British Raj and the nominated administrators to be appropriate. After the establishment of the Congress, he became its sworn enemy. He believed that the Congress was only an ally of Hindus and Muslims should join it. He tried hard to break this institution during the Allahabad session of the Congress. Failing in this attempt, he founded the United Patriotic Association (1888) and the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association (1893) respectively. The first organization carried out anti-Congress and anti-Hindu propaganda and the second organization presented the political rights of Muslims on the basis of their historical contribution and political significance. The organization demanded equal representation of Hindus, separate electorate system and reservation in Uttar Pradesh. He also objected to the use of Hindi instead of Urdu in courts, saying it would reduce job opportunities for Muslims. He also said in 1888 that Hindus and Muslims are two separate nations with different interests. **These ideas of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan** dug an inseparable chasm between the two communities. Although some Muslims like M. Sayani, Badruddin Tayyab, etc. joined the **Congress** despite the opposition of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, according to a historian, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s decision to oppose the Congress and his advice to stay away from it took the form of a religious ban after his death in 1898 AD.

It was in this background that Lord Curzon planned the partition of Bengal. Its main aim was to crush the feeling of nationalism in Bengal. By his plan, he wanted to make the Bengalis a minority in East Bengal and the rest of the parts. It would have harmed the Bengalis but benefited the Muslims. Therefore, when the Bengalis opposed the dissolution of the Bengal, the Muslims considered it against them. As a result, the divide between Hindus and Muslims became fierce. The Muslims also started trying to



organize to protect their interests like the Hindus. The result of this effort was the establishment of the 'Muslim League' in 1906 AD. The Congress and the League played important roles in Indian politics until independence.

---

## **12.5 POLICY OF 'DIVIDE AND RULE'**

---

The divisive policy of the British can be considered responsible for the emergence and development of communalism in India to a great extent. Perhaps the Mughal emperor's leadership in the revolt of 1857 aroused anger against the Muslims in the minds of the British. It understood very well that it had gained the kingdom of Bengal and eventually India only by defeating the Muslim rulers there. As a result, it was always afraid of the Muslims. Therefore, no stone was left unturned to suppress the Muslims. After 1857, while it treated the Hindus with leniency, the Muslims were treated harshly. An estimated 27,000 Muslims were hanged in Delhi alone. The political, social and economic degradation of the Muslims took place. During this time, the government adopted a sympathetic attitude towards Hindus. Lord Ellenborough said, "This race [the Muslims] is particularly disgusted in principle with us, and that is why our policy is to satisfy the Hindus." Accordingly, their entry into the government and the army was gradually closed.

However, this policy of the government proved to be temporary. With the rise of national consciousness in India, the British had to change their policy. The rise of nationalism in India set off alarm bells for the British. To overcome this threat, they did not see any better weapon than the policy of dividing India by promoting communalism. So, they used it. Now, instead of adopting a harsh policy towards the Muslims, the British pretended to be their supporters and sympathizers. In order to end Hindu-Muslim unity, it claimed to be a sympathiser of Muslims. In order to increase the gap between the two communities, it made the use of Hindi language instead of Urdu in the courts. By extending its support to the movements, the Muslims of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar were alienated from each other. By giving different considerations to the interests of different classes, the government sowed the seeds of communal sentiment in India, which had disastrous consequences.



**NOTES**

## **12.6 ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BACKWARDNESS OF MUSLIMS**

The economic and cultural backwardness of Muslims also proved helpful in the rise of communalism. The economic policies of the government had a very bad effect on the Muslims. The permanent land system of Bengal destroyed the old landlords, many of whom were Muslims. In their place arose a new class of zamindars, which included many Hindus. The destruction of industries in Bengal, especially the textile industry, also wreaked economic havoc on the Muslims. Due to government policies, they also got fewer government jobs. As a result, poverty and unemployment began to grow among them.

On the other hand, Hindus getting government jobs increased the hostility of the educated middle class and the upper class ultra-Muslims. They began to hold Hindus responsible for their poverty and downfall. Similarly, the Muslims, because of their disputes and conflicts, could not take advantage of the development of modern Western education, while the Hindus took full advantage of it. As a result, the number of educated people or English-educated people among Muslims was much lower than among Hindus. As a result, they lagged behind in government jobs. The Muslims did not take interest in industry and trade. Thus, their economic and cultural condition remained deplorable while the Hindus were progressing in the educational and economic fields. This disparity created a feeling of hostility towards Hindus among the Muslims. It was the minority of Muslims, but educationally and economically well-off upper classes, who played an important role in instigating it. They easily became victims of the British conspiracy to protect their own interests by becoming the leaders of the poor and illiterate Muslim masses. These people maintained their allegiance to the British and demanded facilities and rights for themselves. All this led to a lack of Hindu-Muslim unity.



---

## 12.7 IMPACT OF REFORMIST MOVEMENTS OF THE 19-20TH CENTURY

---

In the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, there were reformist movements in almost every religion, Hindu, Sikh, Islam, and Zoroastrianism. One of the characteristics of these religious reformers was that they emphasized on increasing the glory of their respective religions. The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, the Ramakrishna Mission, etc., propagated the stubborn religion and doctrines which had no connection with the foreign races. These people gave the slogan of revival of pure Hinduism. Similarly, there were Wahhabi and Ahmadia movements among the Muslims whose main objective was to establish Islam in its true form. While the Hindu reformers were anxious to establish the superiority of Aryan religion, the Muslims wanted to establish 'Dar-ul-Islam' in this country by giving the slogan of crusade against all non-Muslims. As a result, the two also looked at each other in the eyes with faith and [doubts].

---

## 12.8 INFLUENCE OF COMMUNAL HISTORY EDUCATION

---

The education of history influenced by communal ideology also had a hand in increasing the spirit of communalism. The British and some Indian historians influenced by them were influenced by the imperialist ideology and created a history that sowed the seeds of hatred between Hindus and Muslims. From the religious point of view, Indian history was divided into Hindu and Muslim periods. The British rulers were given the name of modern times. These historians described the Hindu period as the best period in Indian history. The reign of the Guptas, during which the ancient Vedic religion was revived, was **termed as the Golden Age**. An attempt was made to explain to the students that the establishment of a Muslim state in India, whether Turks, Afghans or Mughals, had ended India's glorious past. The Rajputs sacrificed their lives to fight these foreign





## NOTES

invaders. Muslim rulers persecuted the Hindu masses, forced them to convert, destroyed Hindu temples, etc. Such education instilled hatred and suspicion against Muslims in the hearts of Hindus.

---

## 12.9 SUMMARY

---

Thus, we see that communalism started in modern India after the arrival of the British as a result of various causes. The specific socio-economic development of the nineteenth century, the role of colonial rule, its priorities and the steps taken by it to fulfill them, the weaknesses and limitations of the anti-communal forces and the rise of communal forces in the twentieth century such as the partition of Bengal, the formation of the Muslim League, the beginning of separate electorates with the Morley Minto Reforms, and the failure of the Lucknow Pact all contributed to this process. Thus, as a result of the divisive politics and the divide and rule policy of the colonial rule, communalism emerged as a serious problem in India which finally led to the partition of the subcontinent in 1947.

---

## 12.10 GLOSSARY

---

- **Communalism:** An ideology that promotes political and social divisions on the basis of religion.
- **Two-Nation Theory:** The idea propagated by the Muslim League, according to which Hindus and Muslims are two separate nations and they should have separate countries.
- **Separatism:** The demand for separate identities and rights by a particular religious or cultural group.



## NOTES

- **Muslim League:** A political party founded in 1906 that demanded a separate nation for Muslims (Pakistan).
- **Hindu Mahasabha:** Hindu nationalist organization, formed to protect the rights and identity of Hindus.
- **Communal Violence:** Conflicts between religious communities, often caused by communal politics.
- **Khilafat Movement:** The movement of Indian Muslims during 1919-1924, which began in Turkey to save the Khilafat and was an important attempt at Hindu-Muslim unity.
- **Minority:** A portion of the population in a country or region that has a small religious, cultural, or ethnic population.
- **Partition:** The partition of the country into India and Pakistan in 1947, which was the result of communal politics.
- **Shuddhi Movement:** A campaign launched by the Arya Samaj, in which efforts were made to bring Hindus back to their religion.
- **Religious Polarization:** The process of dividing society on religious lines, pitting one community against another.
- **Separate electorate:** A system in which particular religious or ethnic groups were given the right to choose their representatives.
- **Constitutional Reforms:** Reforms undertaken by the British government that were aimed at satisfying communal groups, such as the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909 and the Government of India Act of 1935.
- **Quit India Movement:** The movement led by Gandhiji in 1942, which focused on the demand for Indian independence despite communal politics.
- **Partition Tragedy:** The communal violence, displacement, and death of lakhs of people during the partition was the extreme result of communal politics.



**NOTES**

---

## **12.11 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

---

### **12.11.1 In-Text Questions**

1. Which incident of 1857 is considered to be the first major revolt in the politics of India, in which communal elements were involved?
  - a) Civil Disobedience Movement
  - b) Quit India Movement
  - c) Revolt of 1857
  - d) Simon Commission
2. Which organization was founded in 1885 as India's first major political forum?
  - a) All India Muslim League
  - b) Indian National Congress
  - c) Hindu Mahasabha
  - d) Arya Samaj
3. When was All India Muslim League founded?
  - a) 1885
  - b) 1906
  - c) 1916
  - d) 1940
4. Who was the first president of All India Muslim League?
  - a) Aga Khan III
  - b) Mohammad Ali Jinnah
  - c) Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
  - d) Maulana Azad



**NOTES**

5. Which Compromise of 1916 was an attempt to bring the Congress and the Muslim League together to bridge communal divides?
  - a) Lucknow Agreement
  - b) Poona Agreement
  - c) Delhi Agreement
  - d) Gandhi-Irvine Pact
6. What was the main reason for the 1909's Morley-Minto reforms?
  - a) Granting dominion status to India
  - b) Introduction of separate electorates for Muslims
  - c) Complete freedom demand
  - d) Abolishing the zamindari system
7. Which movement in the early 20th century aggravated the communal divide to a great extent?
  - a) Non-Cooperation Movement
  - b) Civil Disobedience Movement
  - c) Khilafat Movement
  - d) Quit India Movement
8. Who propagated the 'Two Nation Theory', which was the proposal for the establishment of a separate Muslim state?
  - a) Jawaharlal Nehru
  - b) Mahatma Gandhi
  - c) Mohammad Ali Jinnah
  - d) Subhash Chandra Bose
9. Which Act of 1935 provided for separate electorates which led to communal divisions?
  - a) Rowlatt Act
  - b) Indian Councils Act



**NOTES**

- c) Government of India Act
- d) Montford Reforms
- 10. At which session of the Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah formally signed the Pakistan Conference? demand What was it?
  - a) 1937 Lahore Session
  - b) 1940 Lahore session
  - c) 1942 Bombay Session
  - d) 1945 Delhi Session
- 11. In which movement of 1942 did Hindus and Muslims join together against British rule despite rising communal tensions?
  - a) Non-Cooperation Movement
  - b) Quit India Movement
  - c) Salt Satyagraha
  - d) Khilafat Movement
- 12. Which incident of 1923 highlighted the growing division between Hindus and Muslims?
  - a) Khilafat Movement
  - b) Formation of Swaraj Party
  - c) Moplah Rebellion
  - d) Partition of Bengal
- 13. Which controversial decision of the British Government in 1905 deepened the communal divide in Bengal?
  - a) Partition of Bengal
  - b) Rowlatt Act
  - c) Introduction of separate electorates
  - d) Formation of Hindu Mahasabha



**NOTES**

14. Who was the leader of Hindu Mahasabha who propagated Hindu nationalist ideologies during the freedom struggle?
  - a) Jawaharlal Nehru
  - b) Lala Lajpat Rai
  - c) Vinayak Damodar Savarkar
  - d) B. R. Ambedkar
15. Which act of 1947 formalized the partition of India, making India and Pakistan independent nations?
  - a) Montford Reforms
  - b) Government of India Act
  - c) Indian Independence Act
  - d) Rowlatt Act

**12.11.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. Analyse the role of British policies, such as the “divide and rule” strategy, in promoting communal divisions in India between 1857 and 1947.
2. Discuss the significance of the 1905 partition of Bengal in the rise of communal politics. How did this affect Hindu-Muslim relations?
3. How did the introduction of separate electorates in the Morley-Minto Reforms (1909) affect the growth of communalism in India? Analyse it.
4. How did the Khilafat Movement and the Non-Cooperation Movement contribute to Hindu-Muslim unity and later fuel communal tensions?
5. Evaluate the role of the All India Muslim League in shaping communal politics and the demand for a separate Muslim state between 1906 and 1947.
6. What impact did the provincial elections of 1937 have on the rise of communalism in India? How did the actions of the Congress and the Muslim League escalate communal tensions after these elections?



## NOTES

7. How did the “Two Nation Theory” proposed by Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League influence Indian politics and the process of partition?
8. What impact did Direct Action Day (August 16, 1946) have on Hindu-Muslim relations, and how did it hasten the process of partition?

---

## 12.12 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

---

1. c, 2. b, 3. b, 4. a, 5. a, 6. b, 7. c, 8. c, 9. c, 10. b, 11. b, 12. c, 13. a, 14. c, 15. c.

---

## 12.13 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

---

- Sarkar, Sumit. (1983). *Modern India 1885-1947*, Delhi: Macmillan.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2004) *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Pandey, Gyanendra (1990). *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Chandra, Býpan (2008). *Communalism in Modern India*. New Delhi: Har Anand.
- Bose, S. and Ayesha Jalal (1998) *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*, New Delhi: OUP.
- Chandra, Bipan (1979) *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*. Hyderabad Orient Longman.
- Mýsra, Salil (2012) “*Emergence of Communalism in India*” in K. N. Panikkar (Ed.), *Perspectives of Modern Indian History* Mumbai: Popular Prakashan.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe (1996) *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics. 1925 to the 1990s*. London C. Hurst & Company Publishers.
- Sarkar, Sumit (2009) *Modern India*, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*, Hyderabad: Orient Longman.



## **LESSON 13**

# **TOWARDS FREEDOM: FREEDOM AND PARTITION**

---

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Tiwary**

Assistant Professor  
School of Open Learning  
University of Delhi

### **Structure**

- 13.1 Learning Objectives
- 13.2 Introduction
- 13.3 Muslim Politics and Demand for Partition Since 1930
- 13.4 Alexander-Jinnah Pact
- 13.5 'Pakistan Resolution' and Demand for Partition
- 13.6 Rajagopalachari Scheme
- 13.7 Gandhi-Jinnah Talks
- 13.8 Wavell Plan and Shimla Conference
- 13.9 Cabinet Mission Plan
- 13.10 Direct Action Day
- 13.11 The Transfer of Power and Mountbatten's Plan
- 13.12 Responsibility of Indian Partition
- 13.13 Summary
- 13.14 Glossary
- 13.15 Self-Assessment Questions
  - 13.15.1 In-Text Questions
  - 13.15.2 Long Answer Questions
- 13.16 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 13.17 References/Suggested Readings

---

### **13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

---

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the historical events of India's freedom struggle and partition.

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

**493**





## NOTES

- Analyse the main causes, persons and events of the freedom movement.
- Understand the political, social and communal factors behind partition and assess the social, economic and cultural impact that arose as a result.
- Develop the ability to think critically, take a holistic view of history, and understand the impact of these events in the present.
- Understand Muslim politics and the demand for partition since 1930 AD.
- Evaluate the 'Pakistan Proposal' and the demand for partition.
- Get information about who was responsible for the partition of India.
- Know the losses suffered as a result of the partition of India.

---

## 13.2 INTRODUCTION

---

Independence and the Partition of India are important and decisive events in Indian history. After being ruled by the British for 200 years, India became independent on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947. During the freedom struggle, there were many struggles, movements and sacrifices that lit the flame of freedom in the minds of Indians. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, Sardar Patel, and many other leaders played an important role to free the country from foreign rule.

However, independence coincided with the partition of India, which led to the creation of a new country, Pakistan. The decision to partition was sudden and highly painful, affecting the lives of millions. Communal violence erupted as a result of the partition, killing thousands of people and displacing millions.

The partition of 1947 took place along religious lines, creating Pakistan for Muslims and India for Hindus. The partition created social and political instability, resulting in prolonged tensions between India and Pakistan.

Independence and Partition were not only political events, they were also the processes that had a profound impact on the society, economy, and culture of the Indian subcontinent, the effects of which are still felt today.



After the failure of the Cripps Mission, the government blamed Mahatma Gandhi for the violent incidents of the August Revolution of 1942. Gandhi and the Congress were accused by the government of inspiring the people to launch violent agitations. Gandhiji was not prepared to tolerate such a big false charge. Therefore, he demanded from the government that he should be given an opportunity to explain their position and he should be prosecuted, but the government remained silent on this. Gandhi was forced to fast for 21 days (February 10th-March 3rd, 1943) in jail. Concern was expressed across the country for Gandhi's fast and deteriorating health. There was a demand for Gandhi's release. On this question, the members of the Executive Council also resigned to the Viceroy. Yet, the government did not release him. Later, due to poor health, the government itself released him from jail in 1944 AD.

---

### **13.3 MUSLIM POLITICS AND DEMAND FOR PARTITION SINCE 1930**

---

#### **Muslim Politics Before 1930**

Communalism emerged in Indian politics in the second half of the nineteenth century. Before the revolt of 1857 AD, there was unity between Hindus and Muslims. In order to break this unity, the British created a divide between Hindus and Muslims by following the policy of 'divide and rule'. Seeing the growth of the feeling of nationalism in India, the British promoted Muslim communalism. As a result, the Muslim League was founded in December 1906. The Minto-Morley Reforms Plan of 1909 introduced for the first time, provisions for overrepresentation and separate electorate for the Muslims. Despite this, the Muslim League could not take a radical stand until the First World War. In the First World War, the same league of the Congress expressed its allegiance to the British. Jinnah also remained with the Congress. He also joined the Congressional delegation of 1913 AD, which went to London. In 1916 A.D, the Congress League Accord or Lucknow Pact brought the Congress and the League closer to each other. As a result, Gandhi and the Congress supported the Khilafat movement, but gradually the differences between the Congress and the League kept increasing. On September



## NOTES

20th, 1922, Jinnah separated from the Congress. After that, he took a tough stand against the Congress. Between 1923 and 1928, there were severe communal riots in different parts of India due to Hindu reactionaries and Muslim communalists. In 1928, there was a split in the League on the question of boycott of the Simon Commission. The influence of the nationalist Muslim leaders in the League was lost and the control of the pro-British landlords and capitalists came into being. Jinnah emerged as the most powerful leader of the League. The Nehru Report was rejected by the Muslim League and Jinnah. He was convinced that Muslims could not expect justice from the Congress. In March 1929, Jinnah put forward his 14-point demands.

Jinnah's 14 demands later became the basis of Muslim demands in the Round Table Conference which were as follows:

- (1) The future Constitution of India should be federal in which the residuary powers would be vested in the provinces.
- (2) All provinces should have equal autonomy.
- (3) Muslims should be adequately represented in all legislatures and elected bodies.
- (4) The representation of Muslims in the Central Legislative Assembly should not be less than one-third of the total strength.
- (5) Representation of communal classes should be according to separate electorate-system.
- (6) At the time of reorganization of border provinces, care should be taken that Muslims remain in the majority in Punjab, Bengal and North-Western Province.
- (7) Religious freedom should be provided to all communities.
- (8) The Assembly should not pass any law or resolution which is opposed by 3/4th majority of any community.
- (9) Sindh should be separated from Bombay Presidency.
- (10) North-West Reform schemes should be implemented in the border provinces and Balochistan.



## **NOTES**

- (11) There should be a constitutional mechanism to give proper representation to Muslims in government jobs and other self-governing bodies.
- (12) Arrangements should be made to protect the culture, education, language and religion of Muslims.
- (13) There should be at least 1/3rd of Muslim ministers in the central and provincial cabinets.
- (14) The Central Legislative Assembly should not amend the Constitution without the permission of the provinces.

After the rejection of the Nehru Report, the Muslim League took a stand against the Congress and in favour of the British. The League hoped that this could yield some benefit from the British. Therefore, it refused to be a part of the Non-Cooperation Movement of the Congress, but participated in the Round Table Conferences. Communal issues figured prominently in these conferences.

### **Round Table Conferences and Muslim Politics**

The rapid expansion of Muslim communalism in Indian politics took place during and after the Round Table Conferences. Three Round Table Conferences were held in London (November 1930 to December 1932) to find solutions to India's constitutional problems.

In the first Round Table Conference, the Muslim League took a hesitant stand. Two ideologies were dominant among the Muslims – Bengal and Punjab leaders wanted representation in proportion to population, while other regions were demanding more representation. Also, there was a dispute about separate elections and joint elections. No agreement could be reached on these issues. The conference simply proposed that protecting the interests of minorities would be the government's responsibility and that communal disputes would be resolved amicably among communities. This conference was unsuccessful.

The Second Round Table Conference was held in September 1931. Communal issues dominated it as well. Gandhiji tried his best to maintain national unity, but the communal leaders and the British authorities opposed him. Gandhiji said that “the differences of communalism will melt away with the warmth of freedom,” but his plea



## NOTES

fell on deaf ears. In fact, the British were using communalism in India to suppress the demand for constitutional reforms and independence.

British Prime Minister MacDonald argued that there was no unity among the Indian representatives, so the security of minorities and communal issues would be resolved by the government itself by enacting laws. Gandhiji returned to India disappointed with this decision. The second conference also failed.

After the failure of the Second Round Table Conference, the British government played an important role in further provoking communalism in India. British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald announced the plan called “Communal Decision” on 14th August 1932. Under this scheme, along with Muslims, other minorities such as Sikhs, Dalits, backward castes, and Indian Christians (Anglo-Indians) were also given separate electorates.

Dalits were given special representation by segregating them from upper caste Hindus. However, in areas where Hindus were a minority, they were not given the same facilities as the Muslims. At the same time, in provinces where the number of Muslims was less, they were given more representation than their population. But in areas like Punjab and Bengal, where Muslims were in majority, separate electorates were provided for them. In provinces like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madras, attempts were made to appease the Muslims and reduce the influence of the Congress. This decision further encouraged Muslim communalism. Subsequently, the Muslim League started demanding more facilities for the Muslims. Soon, the demand for Pakistan also began to emerge.

### **Government of India Act 1935 and Formation of Provincial Government**

After the Third Round Table Conference, the British Government issued a White Paper in March 1933, on the basis of which, the Government of India Act of 1935 was passed. Neither the Congress nor the Muslim League were satisfied with this act. Both rejected it. However, both took part in the provincial elections held in 1937, in which the Congress had great success.

After the elections, the differences between the Congress and the League came out in the open on the question of forming a government. Jinnah tried to establish the Muslim League as a representative party of the Muslims and to make it influential. The



League hoped that in the provinces where the Congress did not get a majority, the Congress would seek the League's support to form a government.

Congress offered to incorporate the League into the majority provinces, but put on the condition that the League cease its independent existence. The League turned down this condition, as a result of which Congress did not include the League in government. The Congress formed its government in 6 majority provinces. In the North West Frontier Province, Assam and Sindh, the Congress formed governments with the support of other parties, but did not keep the League with it. This angered and disappointed Jinnah. The League could only join government in Bengal and Punjab with the support of the Krishak Praja Party and the Unionist Party, respectively. After this disappointment, Jinnah accused the Congress of alienating Muslims. Now Jinnah's main aim was to strengthen his position and criticise the Congress.

---

### **13.4 ALEXANDER-JINNAH PACT**

---

In 1937, the annual session of the Muslim League was held in Lucknow. During this time, an agreement was reached between Jinnah and the Chief Minister of Punjab, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, which is known as the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact. Under this agreement, members of Sikandar Hayat Khan's Unionist Party in Punjab were planned to join the Muslim League. However, the cabinet was known only as the Unionist Party. This agreement was not a written document, but only a declaration. Both leaders had their own interests. Sikandar Hayat Khan wanted to avoid possible opposition from the Muslim League through this agreement, while Jinnah wanted to strengthen the position of the Muslim League by using Hayat Khan's influence in Punjab. In 1938, a new Muslim League was formed in Punjab, in which the Unionist party had more influence. It was given official recognition, allowing both sides to achieve their respective objectives.

#### **Pirpur Committee**

Jinnah started accusing the Congress governments along with strengthening his position. He dubbed the Congress as an "institution of Hindus" and said its main aim was to oppress Muslims, fabricated stories of atrocities on Muslims.



## NOTES

In 1938, the Muslim League formed an inquiry committee under the chairmanship of Raj Mohammed Mehdi. Its task was to investigate alleged atrocities on Muslims in the Congress-ruled provinces. In its report, the committee accused the Congress of atrocities against Muslims. “The objectives of the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha are the same. The Congress may call itself non-communal, and some Congressmen try to follow a truly nationalist policy, but most Congressmen are Hindus and they wanted to establish a Hindu state. “

Through this report, the Muslim League tried to prove that the rights of Muslims are not safe in the parliamentary system. Like the Pirpur Committee, other committees were also formed to investigate the so-called Congress atrocities. These included the Biharsharif report and the Fazl-ul-Haq report. All these reports accused the Congress of atrocities. Using these reports, the Muslim League claimed itself to be the sole benefactor of the Muslims. Congress leaders tried to convince Jinnah, but it did not have any effect on Jinnah.

In 1938, Jinnah wrote to Gandhiji that “now we must speak clearly, now we have reached a point where we should leave the language of suspicion. You and Congress are only representatives of Hindus. After this, the paths of the Congress and the Muslim League were completely separated.”

### **World War II and League**

World War II started in September 1939. In this war, the Viceroy involved India without consulting the Indian representatives. The Congress strongly opposed this unilateral decision and by November 1939, all the Congress-ruled provincial governments resigned.

On the contrary, the Muslim League adopted a different policy. It was sympathetic to the British government. On 8<sup>th</sup> September 1939, the League’s Working Committee passed a resolution condemning the Nazi invasion and expressing support for the Allies. At the same time, the League put a condition that if the British Government ensured that no constitutional reforms would be carried out in India without the League’s consent, the League would render assistance to Britain in the war. It was clear that the Muslim League, like the right-wing Congressmen, was also bargaining with the government for its own interests.



### **Celebrating Liberation Day (December 22, 1939):**

After the resignation of the Congress governments, the Muslim League and Jinnah saw it as a great success. The League decided to celebrate on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1939, as a “Liberation Day” which they presented as a symbol of the end of Congress rule and freedom from alleged tyranny. Expressing happiness on the occasion, Jinnah said: “At the end of Congress rule, this assembly breathes a sigh of relief and celebrates this day as a day of freedom from authoritarianism, oppression and injustice.” The Muslim League was not content merely to celebrate but adopted a strategy of entry into governments to strengthen its political position. League-led governments were formed in Assam, the North-West Frontier Provinces and Sindh. His government was already active in Bengal. After consolidating its power, the Muslim League took a more rigid stance towards the Congress.

---

## **13.5 ‘PAKISTAN RESOLUTION’ AND DEMAND FOR PARTITION**

---

### **Jinnah and the Muslim League’s Growing Inclination Towards Separatism**

From 1940, Jinnah started making separatist speeches, making his political approach more clear. He said that the Congress and the Muslim League should be given equal rights in the future constitution. He also asserted that Muslims will not accept any system which is dominated by the majority Hindus. Jinnah described Hindus and Muslims as two separate nations. Separatist ideas were already active among the Muslims. The Indian Muslim students of the university, led by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, had clearly put forward the demand for a separate country. He considered Hindustan as a continent and not a nation. According to his plan, “Hindustan” should be renamed as “Diniya” and it should include areas like Bangistan (Bengal), Osmenistan (Hyderabad), Munistan (Rajasthan) to form separate Muslim states and form a federation called “Pakistan”.

Moreover, the famous poet Allama Iqbal also promoted separatist ideas. In 1930, he demanded that the area from Peshawar to Saharanpur should be given to the Muslims.





## NOTES

### 1940: Lahore Session and Pakistan Resolution

In 1940, the Lahore session of the Muslim League passed the “Pakistan Resolution”. However, the resolution did not mention the word “Pakistan”. This proposal was prepared by Sikandar Hayat Khan, Fajj-ul-Haq and Khaliq-uz-Zaman. The resolution stated that the All India Muslim League’s firm Trust said that any constitutional scheme in this country will be acceptable to the Muslims only if the answer is: western, and the Muslim majority areas of eastern India will be geographically separated to form an autonomous and independent state.

The proposal was vague, and the task of drawing up its full contours was entrusted to the League’s working committee. Since then, the Muslim League has intensified its efforts for the partition of India and the demand for Pakistan.

- **Demand for Pakistan:** The sudden demand for Pakistan by the League, which was demanding independence for India like the Congress, seems surprising; but many reasons were responsible for this demand for partition. The main reasons are as follows:

**Policy of British:** One of the main reasons for the demand for the partition of India was the “divide and rule” policy of the British. The aim of this policy was to suppress the spirit of independence, to make the Hindus and the Muslims fight among themselves and to maintain their rule by bringing the Muslims to their side. The British tried to merge the Muslim League and the Muslims with them directly and indirectly. The result was that the Muslims became pro-British. They started considering the British as their benefactors instead of Hindus and Congress. Under the influence of the British, the Muslim League started making demands that were difficult for the Congress and the majority Hindu society to accept. The British kept them under their influence by conceding many just and unreasonable demands of the League. This encouraged communalism and strengthened the demand for Pakistan.

**Failure of the Election of 1937 and Feeling of Communalism:** In the provincial elections of 1937, the Congress achieved great success in most of the provinces, while the performance of the Muslim League was relatively weak. Following the election results, the League expressed its desire to form a government in the provinces in conjunction with the Congress, but



## **NOTES**

the Congress rejected this proposal. This disappointed Jinnah and other League leaders and they began to fear that the Congress governments in the Hindu-majority provinces would discriminate and persecute the Muslims. Due to this fear, the Muslim League became anti-Congress inclined. The Muslim League, by resorting to so-called inquiry committees, propagated that the Congress is only a party of Hindus and is persecuting Muslims. It was also argued that under the parliamentary system in India, Muslims would always be in a minority and their interests would not be protected. Therefore, the demand for a separate country Pakistan was considered necessary to protect the rights of Muslims.

**Partition Plans and Jinnah's Move:** From the 1930s, plans for the partition of India began to emerge. In 1938, a delegation of the Muslim League, consisting of two members of the League's executive committee, arrived in England on the pretext of attending the Palestine Conference in Egypt to know the opinion of the British government on these plans. There he discussed the plans for partition of India with the Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary and returned to India in 1939 with a hint of their consent. This boosted Jinnah's confidence and in 1940, the Muslim League proposed Pakistan, which became the official form of demand for partition.

**Rapid Increase of Muslim League's Strength:** During 1936 to 1939, the Muslim League's strength increased rapidly. According to an estimate, in 1927, where its membership was only 1330, by 1944 this number increased to about 44 lakhs. Most of the Muslims then began to regard the Muslim League as their true political representative. On the contrary, the participation of Muslims in the Congress was very low. There were Muslim League governments in big provinces like Bengal and Punjab. On the basis of this growing power, the League started placing demands before the Congress which was not possible for the Congress to accept. The League claimed that only the Muslim League had the right to represent the Muslims of India, while the Congress was an institution of Hindus only. In August 1938, Jinnah demanded that no Muslim should be included in the committee for Hindu-Muslim unity, which the Congress wanted to form. When Gandhiji arrived



## NOTES

with Abul Kalam Azad to discuss the issue with Jinnah, Jinnah refused to talk. As a result, the distance and hatred between the Congress and the Muslim League grew.

**Policies of the Congress:** The policies of the Congress were also responsible for the demand for the partition of India to a large extent. Due to his vague and vacillating policies, there was constant apprehension among the Muslims. The efforts of the Congress to bring the Muslims to its side created panic among the leaders of the Muslim League. The leaders of the League considered the demand for Pakistan to be the most appropriate step to retain the Muslims with them. The actions and statements of many Congress leaders further strengthened the League's charge that the Congress is an institution of Hindus. Mahatma Gandhi's behaviour was also often reflective of Hindutva. He had called himself a "Sanatani Hindu" and expressed his faith in the Varna system, cow protection, and idol worship. This led the Muslim League to argue that the Congress was a party of the Hindus because Gandhi was its leader. Apart from this, other Congress leaders were also taking such steps, which were distancing Muslims from the Congress. For example: In Uttar Pradesh, Jawaharlal Nehru and Purushottam Das Tandon created circumstances that made it impossible for the Muslim League to join the government, in Mumbai, Sardar Patel prevented the minority Parsi leader from becoming the Chief Minister and made the Hindu leader B. G. Kher the Chief Minister, Patel's influence on Gandhi further made the Muslim League apprehensive that the Congress was adopting Hindu-dominated policies. In such an environment, the Muslim League felt it necessary to plan partition to ensure the safety of the Muslims. After 1940, all its demands were centred around this objective. Ultimately, the Muslim League succeeded in achieving the objective of its partition.

**August Proposal and Cripps Mission:** During the Second World War, the position of Britain and the Allies had become critical. The cooperation of Indians was very important in this war. Therefore, the Viceroy introduced the August Resolution on 8 August 1940 with a view to keep the political



## NOTES

situation calm in India. This proposal took care of the special interests of the Muslims. It was categorically declared that the government would not implement any constitutional changes without the consent of the minorities. At the same time, there was talk of setting up an all-party committee to consider constitutional questions after the end of the war. The Congress was not satisfied with this proposal and opposed it. The Muslim League, on the other hand publicly rejected the offer on the pretext of not accepting Pakistan's demand. But internally, it was satisfied with the proposal, as it had found a political weapon with which it can get its demands met.

**Cripps Mission and the League's Response:** Later, some proposals of the Cripps Mission, especially the right to maintain an independent existence by separating from the Union, satisfied the Muslim League. But it remained dissatisfied with the Constitution-making process. The Muslim League, taking advantage of these circumstances, pushed the demand for Pakistan more strongly.

**Quit India Movement and 'Divide and Leave' Slogan:** In August 1942, the Congress gave the slogan of "Quit India" against the British. This movement was called the 'August Revolution'. However, the Muslim League did not support this movement and took a reactionary stand. Jinnah alleged that the Congress only gave importance to its own self-interest through this movement and ignored the interests of Muslims. The League, therefore, advised the Muslims to stay away from the movement and remained neutral itself. In December 1942, when the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow spoke of maintaining the unity and integrity of India, the League strongly opposed it. At the Karachi session in 1943, the League gave the slogan "Britishers divide and leave" in response to the slogan "British leave India". The Muslim League wanted the British to partition India and hand over Pakistan and then leave India. For this, the League formed committees for the purpose of opposing any constitution that maintained Indian unity. The League clearly established division as its main goal.



**NOTES**

*Table 13.1 Prominent Leaders of the National Movement*

Leader's Name	Political and Social Organization	Books/Letters/ Magazines	Other Important Facts
<b>Dadabhai Naoroji</b> (1825-1917)	Gyan Prasarak Mandali (Bombay), A Women's High School, Bombay Association Bombay (1852), London Indian Association, East India Association, Rahnumai Mazdayan Sabha	Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, (1901)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Popularly known as the Veteran Leader of India</li> <li>2. Presidents of Congress (1886, 1893 and 1906)</li> <li>3. Member of the General Assembly of the British Parliament (Liberal Party) in 1892</li> <li>4. In the Calcutta Congress (1906), Swaraj was presided over by him.</li> <li>5. Gladstone of India, Exponent of the Drain of Wealth Theory</li> </ol>
<b>Gopal Krishna Gokhale</b> (1866-1915)	Servant of India Society. (1905)	The Indian Struggle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He first participated in politics from the stage of the Allahabad Congress session in 1889</li> <li>2. In 1897, he and Dinsha Wacha were asked to give evidence before the Valvi Commission appointed for Indian expenditure</li> <li>3. In 1902, he was elected to the Bombay Constituent Council and later to the Imperial Legislative Council, in 1905 he was elected Congress President</li> <li>4. Assisted in the formulation of the Morley Minto Reforms Act of 1909, Member of the Indian Public Service Commission from 1912-15</li> <li>5. He was the political guru of Gandhiji</li> </ol>

*Self-Instructional*



**NOTES**

<b>Bal Gangadhar Tilak</b> (1856-1920) (Lokmanya)	Poona New English School (1900), Akhadas, Lathi Clubs and Anti-Cow Slaughter Assemblies, Home Rule League (Poona) (1916)	D. Maratha (English), Kesari (Marathi) Arctic Home of Aryans, Gita Rahasya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In 1882, he was imprisoned for four months because he condemned the British for his apathy towards the Maharaja of Kolhapur.</li> <li>2. In 1897, he was given 18 months' rigorous imprisonment</li> <li>3. He gave the famous slogan "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it".</li> <li>4. Rigorous imprisonment of 6 years in 1908.</li> <li>5. Sir Valentine Chirole considered him to be the father of unrest in India</li> <li>6. Dr. Pattabhi Sita Ramaiah compares Gokhale and Tilak.</li> </ol>
<b>Lala Lajpat Rai</b> (1865-1928) (Sher-e-Punjab)	Indian Home Rule and Information Bureau (both in the US) Lok Sevak Mandal established in 1921, Independent Congress Party (1923)	Young India, Punjabi, Bande Mataram, The People, England's Debt to India, Dayanand and Shivaji's Biography	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He was associated with the establishment of D.A.V. College, Lahore.</li> <li>2. He began his political career in 1888 by attending the Allahabad Congress session.</li> <li>3. Injured in demonstrations against Simon Commission in 1928, died shortly afterwards.</li> <li>4. Gandhiji had said on his death – "A star has sunk from the Indian solar system."</li> <li>5. President of the Calcutta session of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1925.</li> </ol>



**NOTES**

<b>Mahatma Gandhi</b> (1869-1948) (Father of the Nation)	Indian Congress (Bhetal), Sabarmati Ashram Talimi Sangh, Gau Raksha Sangh	Young India, Navjivan, Hindswaraj, The story of My Experiment with Truth, Harijan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He went to South Africa in 1893.</li> <li>2. He returned to India in 1915.</li> <li>3. During the Champaran Satyagraha, Rabindra Nath Tagore gave him the title of 'Mahatma'.</li> <li>4. In the wake of British government's assistance during the World War I, the British government awarded him 'Kaiser-A-Hind' title.</li> <li>5. He called Cripps Proposal post-dated Cheque.</li> </ol>
<b>Jawaharlal Nehru</b> (1889-1964) (Chacha Nehru)	All India Congress	Discovery of India, Glimpses of World History, My Story	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He met for the first time with Gandhiji during the non-cooperation Movement in 1921.</li> <li>2. Appointed General Secretary of the Congress in 1923.</li> <li>3. He became Congress President in 1929, 1936, 37.</li> <li>4. He was imprisoned first time due to participation in Peasant Movement in 1921.</li> <li>5. Chairman of the National Planning Committee planned by the Congress in 1938.</li> </ol>



**NOTES**

<b>Subhash Chandra Bose</b> (1897-1945) (Netaji)	Independent League (1928) Forward Bloc (1939)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In 1920, he was selected in the Indian Civil Service.</li> <li>2. He quit his job in 1921 and entered politics.</li> <li>3. Jailed for resisting Prince of Wales' visit to Calcutta in 1921.</li> <li>4. In October 1924, he was exiled to Mandalay Jail for three years.</li> <li>5. Congress President in 1938-1939, but in 1939, he resigned after Gandhiji's protest, founded Forward Bloc</li> <li>6. Escaped from India in January 1941.</li> <li>7. He established provisional government of free India on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1943 in Singapore.</li> <li>8. "Give me blood, I will give you freedom." This popular slogan was given by him.</li> </ol>
<b>Surendra Nath Banerjee</b>	Indian Association (1876)	Bengali	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Born in 1848 in a Brahmin family in Bengal.</li> <li>2. In 1869, he passed the Indian Civil Services Examination.</li> <li>3. He was Congress President in 1895 and 1902.</li> </ol>
<b>Bipin Chandra Pal</b>	.....	Swaraj (England), New India (Calcutta), Vande Mataram (1906)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Great orator and nationalist leader</li> <li>2. Spread the ideas of Brahmo Samaj</li> </ol>
<b>Arvind Ghosh</b>	.....	Yugantar, Karmayogi Dharma	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One of the militant leaders of the Swadeshi Movement.</li> <li>2. Became Principal of National College, Calcutta.</li> <li>3. He left from active politics in 1910.</li> <li>4. Popularized Kali Puja in Bengal</li> </ol>





## NOTES

### 13.6 RAJAGOPALACHARI SCHEME

After his release from prison, Gandhiji once again tried to end the political deadlock. He supported Rajagopalachari's plan to resolve constitutional disputes arising out of communalism.

According to Rajagopalachari's plan-

1. The Muslim League had to support the demand for independence of India.
2. In the interim government, the Congress and the League had to work together.
3. After the end of the war, in the north-west and in the north-east where Muslims were in the majority, the boundaries were to be fixed through a commission.
4. These regions were to decide through a plebiscite whether they wanted to remain in India or break away from it.
5. If there was a partition, issues such as defence, communications, movement and population exchanges would have been sorted out under an agreement.

However, all these conditions could have been applied only if the British transferred the power of India. Gandhiji tried to settle the political dispute through this scheme, but it was not fully accepted.

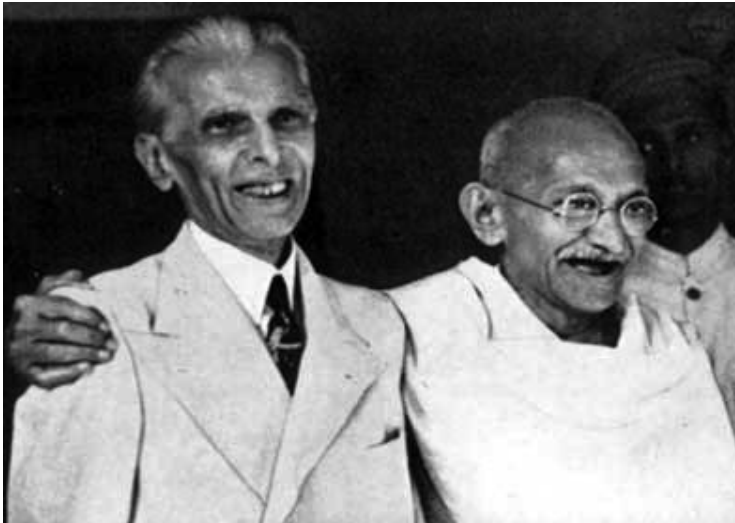
### 13.7 GANDHI-JINNAH TALKS

Based on the Rajagopalachari plan, Mahatma Gandhi met Jinnah and urged him to accept the plan. But the talks, which lasted more than two weeks, failed. Gandhiji was not ready to accept Jinnah's argument that Muslims were a separate "community". Jinnah's demand was that Sindh, North-West Frontier Province, Punjab, Bengal, Assam and Balochistan should be included in Pakistan. Moreover, he wanted the partition process to be completed before independence, while Gandhiji was in favor of doing it



## NOTES

after independence. These differences led to the failure of the negotiations. Jinnah rejected the plan by saying that it would give Muslims “an incomplete, weak and unacceptable Pakistan”. The failure of this dialogue further strengthened the possibility of a split.



**Fig. 13.1** Mahatma Gandhi and Jinnah in Bombay, September 1944

**Source:** <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>

The Gandhi-Jinnah talks further enhanced Jinnah’s political stature. He emerged as the greatest leader of the Muslims. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, while commenting on this, said that “Gandhiji’s conversation with Jinnah at this time was a big political mistake. This gave Jinnah new and additional importance, which he fully utilized to fulfill his purpose.”

---

## 13.8 WAVELL PLAN AND SHIMLA CONFERENCE

---

By the beginning of 1945, events in India and the world were changing rapidly. In October 1943, Lord Wavell was appointed the new Viceroy of India, replacing Lord



## NOTES

Linlithgow. In August 1945, World War II ended, and elections were to be held in England. Churchill's government, in view of the growing influence of the Labour Party, started the drama of constitutional reforms in India.

In March 1945, Churchill summoned Viceroy Wavell to London for consultations. Subsequently, in June 1945, Wavell outlined constitutional reforms. The Shimla Conference was held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1945 to discuss these reforms. All political prisoners were released to attend this conference, and Gandhi's house arrest was also lifted.

### **Shimla Conference and Wavell Plan**

The Shimla conference was presided over by Wavell. Representatives of the Congress, Muslim League, Sikhs, Dalits and European parties of the Central Assembly were invited to the meeting. The purpose of Wavell's proposal was to solve the communal problem, to remove the constitutional deadlock and to reconstitute the Viceroy's Executive Council.

### **Key Points of the Wavell Scheme**

1. Except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, all the members of the Executive Council were to be Indians.
2. It was said that all foreign offices should be handed over to Indians.
3. The purpose of the new executive was to decide the process of administration and constitution making.
4. The powers of the Viceroy were kept intact, but it was assured that he would not use them indiscriminately.
5. A joint meeting of the political parties was to be convened so that a common or separate list of the members of the Executive Council could be prepared.

### **Failure of the Conference**

Although Wavell's plan seemed progressive, it was further promoted rather than reduced communalism. The plan talked about giving equal representation to Hindus and Muslims. This was the first time that British policy officially agreed to the Muslim League's



demand for communal equality. A controversy arose over the formation of the Executive Council.

- The Scheduled Caste leaders demanded the right to separate representation.
- Jinnah demanded that only the Muslim League should have the right to prepare a list of Muslims. On this basis, leaders like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad could not get a place in the executive. Because of Jinnah's stubbornness and Wavell's short-sightedness 'Shimla Conference' failed. On 14<sup>th</sup> July 1945, the Viceroy declared it unsuccessful and ended it.

### **New Attempts at Compromise**

Elections were held in England in July 1945, in which the Labour Party won a majority. After this, Clement Attlee became the Prime Minister of Britain in place of Winston Churchill. The Labour Party had a liberal policy towards India. Attlee called Viceroy Wavell to England to discuss the solution of India's problems and announced the holding of elections to the provincial and central assemblies in India.

In the elections of 1945-46, the Congress won in general seats and the League in seats reserved for Muslims. In the Central Assembly, the Congress got 57 seats and the League got 30 seats. Similarly, the Congress got a majority in the provinces. As a result, Congress cabinets were formed in the Hindu majority provinces. The League government was formed in Bengal and Sindh, but in Punjab, a coalition government (contractual government) was formed under the leadership of Khizr Hayat Khan.

This election made it clear that both the Congress and the League had emerged as the largest representatives of their respective communities.

---

## **13.9 CABINET MISSION PLAN**

---

After the end of the Second World War, the position of the British government was weakened. It wanted to maintain its rule by satisfying the Indians, but the situation was getting out of their control. The biggest problem was that it could no longer depend



## NOTES

completely on the Indian government, army, and police. Labour movements had intensified all over the country, and the subjects of the native states were also bent on revolt. The police went on strike in Delhi and Bihar. On 18th February 1946, the naval sailors mutinied in Bombay. The situation was very serious. With great difficulty, the British government controlled it, but this incident shook the government.

In this critical situation, on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1946, British Prime Minister Clement Attlee announced to send a Cabinet Mission to find a solution to India's problem. He said that India would have the right to determine its own constitution, and whether India would remain independent or remain a member of the British Commonwealth, would be decided by India itself. Attlee also said that the rights of minorities will be protected, but this right will not allow them to stop the progress of the majority society.

The declaration was significant as it used the word "independence" for India for the first time. At the same time, the rights of both the minority and the majority were assured to be protected. It proved to be a turning point in India's freedom struggle.

- On 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1946, the Cabinet Mission arrived in Delhi, India. Its members were:
  1. Secretary of State for India Lord Patrick Lawrence,
  2. Sir Stafford Cripps, Chairman of the Board of Trade,
  3. Minister of the Navy A. V. Alexander.

### **Objective of the Mission**

The main objective of the mission was to work with the Indian leaders to take rapid steps towards complete self-rule in India. To achieve this, the mission held discussions with various political parties and government officials for three weeks.

- **Jinnah's understanding-** During this time, Jinnah understood that even if the Congress did not agree, power could be transferred to the Indians. This was a significant shift in his outlook. On 16<sup>th</sup> May 1946, the Mission presented its plan, in which the following provisions were made:



**(i) Proposals relating to the future Constitution of India;**

- (a) The Union must be a federation of British India and princely states, which would have powers of foreign affairs, defence and transport, but the ability to raise the necessary funds.
- (b) All subjects except federal subjects should remain in the hands of the provinces.
- (c) The princely states shall retain their authority over all subjects other than those entrusted to the Union.
- (d) The proposed Union will have an executive and legislature with representatives of British India and princely states. In the Assembly, there is no major communal questions during the decision, the legislators of both the main sects should decide it by separate voting.
- (e) The provinces were divided into three classes. Madras, Bombay in the first category, Uttar Pradesh and the United Provinces were kept. Punjab in the second category: North Western Frontier Provinces and the Singh were included. Bengal and Assam were placed in the final category. The representatives of the provinces of the three classes were given the right to make constitutions for themselves and the provinces. If a province wishes to move from one class to another, it may do so after the elections held under the Constitution. After ten years, the Constitution will have the right to be amended again.

**(ii) Scheme relating to the Constituent Assembly;**

The Constituent Assembly will have 389 members. Of these, 292 members will be elected by the British Indian Provinces Legislative Assembly indirectly on communal lines. The manner of electing the representatives of the princely states on the remaining 93 seats was to be decided later.

**(iii) The question of princely states.**

As soon as the Constitution comes into being, the paramount would end. The princely states would have the right to establish relations with the Union or with the provinces.



## NOTES

- (iv) The British Indian Treaty Legislatures would have to conclude a treaty with Britain on matters arising out of the transfer of power.
- (v) Question of Pakistan: The Mission did not accede to Pakistan's demand due to practical difficulties.
- (vi) **Arrangement of Interim Government:** Before the framing of the Constitution, the establishment of an interim government with the support of the major political parties was also suggested. Wavell planned that in this government, 40 percent of the seats nominated by the Congress would be given to Hindus, only 40 percent would be given to Muslims nominated by the Muslim League and 20 percent seats would be given to Sikhs, Indian Christians, Scheduled Castes, Parsis, etc. It was also made clear that even if no party joins the interim government, the government will be formed.
- **Review of the Mission-** The Cabinet Mission brought India's independence closer. The most striking feature of this plan was that it attempted to mediate between the Congress and the Muslim League. According to Dr. Jain, "A united India was arranged to satisfy the Congress, while that union was kept weak to keep the Muslim League and the Indian kings happy." All the responsibilities in the interim government were assigned to the Indians, and the Constituent Assembly was given full freedom and authority. However, the plan did not take care of safeguarding the interests of Sikhs. The system of forming factions of the provinces was impractical and flawed. The process of constitution making was also complex. In spite of these limitations, the Cabinet Mission aroused new hope of freedom among the Indians. As a result of this, both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the plan.
- **Establishment of Interim Government-** Initially, both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the plan of the Cabinet Mission. But when the interim government's plan was presented, the Congress could not accept it. The situation was awkward and tensed.



**Table 13.2** *Interim Cabinet (September 2, 1946)*

<b>Interim Cabinet at a Glance (September 2, 1946)</b>	
Viceroy (Wavell)	Head
Jawaharlal Nehru	Vice-President, Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth in the Executive Council
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel	Home, Information & Broadcasting
Dr. John Mathai MD	Industry & Supply
Sardar Baldev Singh	Protection
C. Rajagopalachari	Teaching
C.H. Bhabha	Works, Mines and Ports
Rajendra Prasad	Food & Agriculture
Aruna Asaf Ali	Railways & Transport
Jagjivan Ram	Labour
Liaquat Ali Khan	Finance ( Muslim League)
I.I. Chundrigar	Commerce (Muslim League)
Abdul Rab Nishtar	Communication (Muslim League)
Jogendra Nath Mandal	Law (Muslim League)
Ghazanfar Ali Khan	Health (Muslim League)

- The Muslim League claimed that it could form an interim government even without the Congress. However, the Viceroy rejected the offer. This angered Jinnah. He saw that the position of the Muslim League in the Constituent Assembly was weak. Therefore, on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1946, Jinnah rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and threatened direct action on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1946, so that the demand for Pakistan could be strengthened.

### **Congress's Decision and Formation of Interim Government**

Meanwhile, on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1946, the Congress Working Committee accepted the plan to form an interim government. The Viceroy sent an invitation to the Congress to form the government. Jawaharlal Nehru also urged Jinnah to join the government, but Jinnah refused.

### **NOTES**





## NOTES

### • Communal Riots and Government Formation

On 16th August 1946, during direct action, severe communal riots took place in Calcutta and other places. In the midst of these circumstances, on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1946, the Viceroy announced an interim government consisting of 14 ministers. This government came into office on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946. Jawaharlal Nehru was made the Prime Minister of the interim government. Later, on the suggestion of the Viceroy, Jinnah accepted to join the Interim Government in October 1946.

---

### 13.10 DIRECT ACTION DAY

---

After the Rajagopalachari Plan (10 July 1944), Mahatma Gandhi met Jinnah and asked him to accept this plan but Jinnah rejected it. He did not want to accept an incomplete, limbless and termite infested Pakistan. After the failure of the Shimla Conference, the Cabinet Mission came to India. It arranged for an interim government, but rejected the demand from Pakistan. In return, both the Congress and the League accepted the mission, but a problem arose on the question of joining the interim government. At first, the Congress did not accept its involvement. Therefore, the League claimed that it could form a government without the Congress; but the Viceroy was not in favour of forming a government by keeping the Congress aside, so he rejected the League's claim. Enraged at this, the League rejected the plan of the Cabinet Mission on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1946 and decided to take direct action for Pakistan on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1946. Later, when the Congress was ready to form the government, Nehru suggested joining Jinnah's government as well, but he remained adamant on his stubbornness. On 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1946, there were terrible riots in Calcutta. The League raised the slogan of 'Fight and take Pakistan'. The communal riot took a gruesome turn in which thousands of lives were lost. Suhrawardi's government did not try to suppress the riots but only encouraged communal elements. Similarly, communal riots took place in Noakhali, Bihar and other places.

The league was then in a state of desperation. Anyhow, it wanted to grab power in the government so that the country could be partitioned and the interests of the Muslims could be protected.



## NOTES

- **League's Entry into Government:** After the League's entry into government, it changed its policy. When the interim government was being formed, the Viceroy asked the League to join the government. This time Jinnah accepted the offer. As a result, the League also joined the government. It had joined the interim government with a definite purpose. It wanted to join the government and oppose the policies of the Congress. Liaquat Ali, the leader of the League in the interim government, was assigned the finance portfolio. While presenting the new budget, Liaquat Ali made a budget in which the elements of communalism were hidden. In the new budget, 25% taxes were imposed on industrialists and businessmen, which caused resentment among most Hindus. The work of other departments was also becoming difficult because of the Finance Department. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel also expressed anguish that he could not have appointed a peon in his ministry without the approval of the Finance Department. There was also a difference of opinion between the League and the Congress on the question of language and internal arrangements. It was difficult for both of them to work together.
- **London Conference (December 1946):** In order to overcome the standoff with the interim government, a conference was held in London on December 3-6, 1946, in which Attlee, Wavell, Nehru, and Jinnah participated. In this, an attempt was made to resolve the differences between the two (Congress-League), but success did not come. The League boycotted the meeting of the Constituent Assembly to be held in December 1946.
- **Attlee's Declaration (February 20, 1947):** Concerned about the then situation in India, British Prime Minister Attlee announced on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1947 that the British would hand over power to the Indians before June 1948. The declaration also stated that if the Constituent Assembly could not draw up a constitution by that date, the British government would decide who would be entrusted with power to a central government or to internal governments. Lord Mountbatten was appointed as the new Viceroy in place of Lord Wavell to complete the task of transfer of power.



**NOTES**

### **13.11 THE TRANSFER OF POWER AND MOUNTBATTEN'S PLAN**

The Cabinet Mission brought India's independence closer. The most striking feature of this plan was that it attempted to mediate between the Congress and the Muslim League. According to Dr. Jain, "A united India was arranged to satisfy the Congress, while that union was kept weak to keep the Muslim League and the Indian rulers happy." All the responsibilities in the interim government were assigned to the Indians, and the Constituent Assembly was given full freedom and authority. However, the plan did not take care of safeguarding the interests of Sikhs. The system of forming factions of the provinces was impractical and flawed. The process of constitution making was also complex. In spite of these limitations, the Cabinet Mission aroused new hope of freedom among the Indians. As a result of this, both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the plan.

- **Mountbatten's Partition Plan:** On 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1947, the Mountbatten Plan was published. The sections of this scheme were as follows:
  - (1) Partition of India into the Indian Union and Pakistan.
  - (2) Boundary of these states: A plebiscite shall be held in the North-West Frontier Region and the Sylhet district of Assam. Additionally, a vote in the Sindh Legislative Assembly shall decide to which country they wish to belong.
  - (3) Separate meetings of members of the provincial assemblies of Hindu and Muslim majority districts in Bengal and Punjab should be convened. If any of the parties wants to divide the province, then the division will be done.
  - (4) The Constituent Assembly of India will be divided into two parts, which will prepare their own constitution. Both states will be granted Dominion status.
  - (5) The princely states would have the freedom to merge with whomever they wished, or to maintain their independent existence.



## **NOTES**

This plan was introduced in the British Parliament. From there, it was passed on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1947. While the Congress Working Committee accepted this division only after the vote, the Muslim League passed it unanimously. According to The Indian Independence Act, India got midnight freedom. Pakistan was formed on 14<sup>th</sup> August and India became independent on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947. Jinnah became the Governor General of Pakistan and Liaquat Ali became the Prime Minister. Lord Mountbatten became the Governor General of India and Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister. On 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947, Delhi, the capital of many empires, became the capital of 'whole nation' for the first time. The public went crazy with joy. In the Constituent Assembly, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declared, "Today our misery is over. India has reclaimed itself. Slogans of 'Mahatma Gandhi ki jai' were raised, but Gandhi, saddened by the partition, lay quiet, defeated and tired in Calcutta, far away from Delhi. The joy of freedom was overshadowed by the depression of partition.

---

### **13.12 RESPONSIBILITY OF INDIAN PARTITION**

---

The partition of India was a tragic event. Gandhi, the Congress, and the British government, all wanted to maintain the unity of India, but ultimately the partition could not be prevented. The question is, who was responsible for this? Historians have presented different perspectives for this. Some blamed Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and Jinnah, while some blamed the British government. To be fair, the British Raj, the Congress and the Muslim League were all responsible for the partition of India. The policies and decisions of the three led to divisions from time to time.

This process was initiated by the British Government. Under the Morley-Minto Reform Plan (1909), Muslims were politically encouraged and the term "Muslim nation" was used for the first time. Separate electorates were arranged for Muslims. However, relations between the Congress and the Muslim League continued till 1921. In 1921, Jinnah broke away from the Muslim League and began to doubt the policies of Gandhi and the Congress. The policies of the Congress deepened this rift.

After the Second World War, the demand for partition intensified. Gandhi accepted the principle of partition at the Ramgarh Congress session in 1940 to satisfy

*Self-Instructional  
Material*

**521**



## NOTES

the Muslims and save the integrity of India. He likened it to the “division of property in a joint Hindu family”. Gandhi wanted a Constituent Assembly to be created on the basis of adult suffrage, where Muslims themselves could decide whether they wanted to live separately or as members of a joint family. Their intention was to thwart the divisive moves of the British.

The British government proved to be cleverer than Gandhi and the Congress. In order to maintain the support of the Muslim League during the Second World War and weaken Gandhi’s influence, Lord Linlithgow on 8th August 1940 assured Jinnah that no constitutional changes would be implemented and they would not be suppressed by force without the consent of the minorities. This gave Jinnah the right of “veto”, which he used for his own interests. Indian Secretary of State, Leopold Emery played a key role in this. Jinnah was enthused by this arrangement and waited for the right time.

- **Role of C. Rajagopalachary and Nehru:** C. Rajagopalachari passed a resolution from the Congress Legislature Party in Madras at the end of 1941, in which the Congress was suggested to accept Pakistan proposed in the Lahore session of the Muslim League in 1940. However, Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad rejected it. Nehru also indirectly recognised the idea of partition. In 1942, even though the Congress rejected the Cripps Motion, Nehru said that no one in the proposed Union of India would be held against his will. In an interview, Nehru even said that the Congress, despite rejecting the Cripps proposal, was ready to help the British.
- **Bhulabhai Desai and the Steps towards Partition:** Bhulabhai Desai attempted to reconcile with the League leader Liaquat Ali, which was supported by Gandhi. Desai’s plan was to give equal representation to the Congress and the League in the reconstituted cabinet. Viceroy Lord Wavell called it the partition between Hindus and Muslims. When this proposal failed, Rajagopalachari, with Gandhi’s consent, submitted his plan (CR formula), but Jinnah rejected it as well.
- **British Plan and Pakistan’s Direction:** The “Coupland Plan” had already been prepared in Britain. Under this, it was proposed to divide India into



## NOTES

four parts – the Indus Valley, the Ganges Valley, the delta of the Brahmaputra, and the Deccan. Two of these areas were to be made Muslim-majority and two Hindu-dominated, so that the balance of power was maintained. There was a system of union for native states. Churchill wanted Britain to continue its influence over the subcontinent even after leaving India, and for this, the creation of Pakistan was necessary.

- **Gandhi-Jinnah Dialogue and Partition:** Gandhi met Jinnah and requested him to accept Rajagopalachari's plan, but Jinnah rejected it outright. According to Maulana Azad, negotiating with Jinnah was a major political mistake by Gandhi, as it increased Jinnah's importance. After this, the way for the creation of Pakistan was almost cleared. The role of Nehru, Patel and Dr Rajendra Prasad in facilitating the partition of India cannot be ignored. In March 1947, without Gandhi's consent, the trio proposed to divide Punjab into Hindu and Muslim majority areas, accepting Jinnah's two-nation theory in the Congress Working Committee. Seeing the attitude of these prominent leaders of the Congress, Lord Mountbatten prepared a plan for partition in May 1947. Sardar Patel not only accepted the Mountbatten Plan, but also gave it his full support. Jawaharlal Nehru also supported this plan. On the other hand, Gandhi and Maulana Azad continued to oppose it. Gandhi even said that "Congress will have to divide India over my corpse."
- **Tired Stance of the Congress:** However, the Congress leaders at that time were tired of the long struggle. They wanted independence immediately, even if it cost partition. Eventually, Gandhi also had to accept that the partition of India could no longer be avoided.
- **Mountbatten Plan and Decision of Congress:** On 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1947, the Mountbatten Plan was discussed in the meeting of the All India Congress Committee. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant moved a motion to accept it. Nehru and Patel supported it, while Maulana Azad and some other members opposed. Gandhi urged the members to accept the proposal. He said that he has always been against partition, but now there is no other option left. The motion could not be passed unanimously. Twenty-nine members voted in favor and 15 against. By a margin of only 14 votes, the Congress accepted the partition of India.



## NOTES

It is clear that the partition of India was the result of a long process. In this, the British Raj, Jinnah, Congress, Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and communalism, all played their role. The moves of the British, the stubbornness of Jinnah, and the decisions of the Congress leaders made the partition inevitable. Jinnah's lust for Pakistan and the Congress's desire for immediate independence ultimately pushed India towards partition. It is not fair to blame Jinnah or Nehru and Patel alone for this. Jinnah's longing for Pakistan and Nehru-Patel's desire for early independence finally led to the creation of Pakistan and independent India on 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947.

**Consequences of Partition:** India got independence, but its cost was very heavy. The partition led to severe communal riots in areas like Punjab, Bengal and Delhi, in which thousands of people were killed and lakhs lost their property and homes. After partition, about 15 million people had to leave their homes and migrate to India or Pakistan. People were deprived of their homes, property and livelihood. The second major problem after independence was the merger of princely states into India. Among them, the situation in Kashmir was the most serious. But Sardar Patel overcame these problems with his skill and efforts. Economic problems also emerged with partition, affecting India's industry and trade. Due to partition, the railways, irrigation and administrative structures were divided into two parts. Families were divided and cultural ties were severed due to partition. The partition created a sense of permanent religious and communal division in the society. The partition gave rise to permanent enmity between India and Pakistan. A situation of war and tension arose between the two countries.

It was an extremely difficult time for the Indian government, but it patiently faced the situation and made arrangements to rehabilitate the refugees.

But the Government of India tried to address them with firmness. The biggest and saddest consequence of partition was the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji did his best to establish communal peace, but this angered some Hindu communists. On 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1948, Gandhiji was shot dead by Nathuram Godse in Birla Bhawan in Delhi. Gandhi, under whose leadership India achieved independence, was assassinated by his own countrymen and this became the biggest crime and pain for the country.



**Table 13.3** *Interim Cabinet constituted after Independence*

Interim Cabinet constituted after Independence: At a Glance	
Chakravarti Rajagopalachari	Head
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru	Vice-President and Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs, Commonwealth Relations and Scientific Research
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel	Minister of Home, Information and Broadcasting
Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar	Minister of Law
Sardar Baldev Singh	Defence Minister
Dr. Rajendra Prasad	Minister of Food and Agriculture
MD. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad	Education Minister
Dr. John Mathai	Minister of Railways and Transport
Babu Jagjivan Ram	Minister of Labour
C.H. Bhabha	Minister of Commerce
Rafi Ahmed Kidwai	Minister of Communications
Rajkumari Amrita Kaur	Health Minister
R.K. Shadmukha Chetty	Finance Minister
Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee	Minister of Industry and Supply
N.V. Gadgil	Minister of Works Mines and Energy

**Table 13.4** *The Main Slogans of Indian Freedom Fighters*

Slogan	Person
Do or Die	Mahatma Gandhi
Swaraj is our birthright.	Bal Gangadhar Tilak
Inquilab Zindabad	Hasrat Mohani (The slogan Inquilab Zindabad was popularized by Bhagat Singh through extensive use, although the original author of the slogan is Hasrat Mohani. )
Destroy imperialism	Bhagat Singh
Walk to Delhi	Subhash Chandra Bose
Sare Jahan Se Achcha Hindustan Hamara	Mohammad Iqbal
Purna Swaraj, comfort is haram	Jawaharlal Nehru
Kill Firangi	Mangal Pandey
Jai Jawan Jai Kisan	Lal Bahadur Shastri
Don't do it	Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
Vijayi Vishwa Tiranga Pyara, Jhanda Ucha Rahe Hamara	Shyamlal Gupta 'Councillor'
Vande Mataram	Bankim Chandra Chatterjee
Jana-gana-mana adhinayak jai hey	Rabindranath Tagore
Give me blood and I will give you freedom.	Subhash Chandra Bose
Who lives if India Dies?	Jawaharlal Nehru
Simon Go Back, Quit India	Yusuf Meher Ali (This slogan was popularized by Lala Lajpat Rai)

## NOTES

Self-Instructional  
Material

525





**NOTES**

**Table 13.5 Major Institutions and Organizations of British India**

Institution/Organization	Founder	Place of Origin	Year of Establishment
Asiatic Society of India	William Jones	Calcutta	1784
Calcutta Madrasa	Warren Hastings	Calcutta	1781
Sanskrit College	Jonathan Duncan	Banaras	1791
Atmiya Sabha	Raja Ram Mohan Roy	Bengal	1815
Hindu College (Calcutta)	David Hare and Raja Rammohan Roy	Calcutta	1817
Young Bengal	Henry Vivian Derizio	Bengal	--
Brahmo Samaj	Raja Ram Mohan Roy	Bengal	1828
Dharma Sabha	Radhakant Dev	Calcutta	1830
Landholders' Society	Dwarkanath Tagore	Bengal	1838
Bethune School	J. E. D. Bethune	Calcutta	1849
Rahnumai Majdayasan Sabha	S. S. Bengali, Dadabhai Naoroji	Bombay	1851
Sangat Sabha	Keshav Chandra Sen	-	1860
Radhaswamy Movement	Swami Maharaj (other names: Shiv Dayal Saheb, Tulsi Ram)	Agra	1861
Prarthana Samaj	Atmaram Pandurang, Mahadev Govind Ranade	Maharashtra	1867
Deoband School (Deoband)	Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi, Rashid Ahmed Gangohi	Uttar Pradesh	1866
Indian Reform Association	Keshav Chandra Sen	Calcutta	1870
Poona Sarvajanik Sabha	Mahadev Govind Ranade	Maharashtra	1870
Satyashodhak Samaj	Jyotiba Phule	Pune	1873
Arya Samaj	Dayananda Saraswati	Bombay	1875
Theosophical Society	Colonel Henry Alcott and Madame Petrovna Blavatsky	New York, Adyar (Madras)	1875,82
Mohammedan Angle-Oriental School	Sir Syed Ahmed Khan	Aligarh	1875
Deccan Education Society	Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, Tilak, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Mahadev Ballal Namjoshi	Pune	1884



**NOTES**

Seva Sadan	B. M. Malabari	Bombay	1885
Dev Samaj	Shivnarayan Agnihotri	Lahore	1887
Ahmadia Movement	Mirza Ghulam Ahmad	Gurdaspur (Punjab)	1889
Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam	Sree Narayana Guru, Dr. Palpu	Kerala	1903
Abhinav Bharat	V.D. Savarkar	Maharashtra	1904
The Servant of India Society	Gopalkrishna Gokhale	Pune	1905
Bharat Stree Mandal	Saralabai Devi Chaudhrani	Allahabad (Prayag)	1910
Justice Party	C.N. Mudaliar, T.M. Nair, P. Thiagarayachetty	Madras	1916-17
Visva-Bharati	Rabindranath Tagore	Santiniketan (Bengal)	1921
Indian Society of Oriental Art	Abanindranath Tagore, Gaganendranath Tagore	Calcutta	1907
Mitra Fair	V.D. Savarkar, Ganesh Savarkar	Nashik	1899
Mazur Mahajan Sangh (Textile Labour Association)	Anasuya Sarabhai, Mahatma Gandhi	Ahmedabad	--
Madras Labour Union	B.P. Wadia	madras	1918
Hind Mazdoor Sabha	Ashok Mehta, T. S. Ramanujam, G.G. Mehta	Calcutta	1948
All India Trade Union Congress	Lala Lajpat Rai, Dewan Chaman Lal, Narayan Malhar Joshi	Bombay	1920
All India Women's Conference	--	Pune	1927
Bombay Mill Hands Association	Narayan Meghaji Lokhande	Bombay	--
Naujawan Bharat Sabha	Bhagat Singh, Chhabees Das, Yashpal	Lahore	1926



NOTES

### 13.13 SUMMARY

The history of India's independence and partition is extremely important and complex. The freedom movement freed India from British rule, but partition inflicted deep wounds on the country. Communal riots, migrations, and violence caused by partition affected the lives of millions. However, despite the partition, India established its sovereignty and emerged as a democratic nation on the path of development. This period is marked by struggle, sacrifices, and new challenges for independence, which profoundly impacted India's history and future. The partition of India was not merely a political event, but it had a deep and devastating impact on the society, economy and human life. The partition of India was not just a division of geography, it was going to break the fabric of humanity, culture and society. Its impact can still be seen in the relationship between India and Pakistan and in the community structure of society.

**Table 13.6** Important Dates of National Movement

Important Dates of National Movement
*October 16 <sup>th</sup> , 1905 - Partition of Bengal.
30 <sup>th</sup> December 1906- All India Muslim League was founded.
1907 - First split of Congress (Surat)
December 1911: Partition of Bengal cancelled and Delhi proposed to be replaced with Calcutta as the new capital.
1 <sup>st</sup> April, 1912: Delhi was made the capital of India in place of Calcutta.
28 <sup>th</sup> July 1914 to 11 <sup>th</sup> November 1918 - outbreak of 1 <sup>st</sup> World War



**NOTES**

<p>1916- Tilak founded the Home Rule League.</p> <p>13<sup>th</sup> April, 1919- Jallianwala Bagh massacre.</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> August, 1920- Non-Cooperation Movement started</p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> February, 1922- Non-Cooperation Movement ended.</p> <p>1923- Swarajya Party was founded.</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> February, 1928- Simon Commission arrived in Bombay.</p> <p>17<sup>th</sup> November, 1928- Lala Lajpat Rai died (lathi charge by police while protesting against Simon Commission).</p> <p>8<sup>th</sup> April, 1929- Bhagat Singh and Batu Keshav Dutt bomb each other in the Central Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>13<sup>th</sup> September, 1929: Jatin Das died after fasting for 64 days in jail.</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> December 1929 - The Lahore session of the Indian National Congress set the goal of complete independence for India.</p> <p>The first Independence Day was celebrated on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1930.</p> <p>Indian National Congress met at Sabarmati and passed a resolution on civil disobedience.</p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> March, 1930 - Mahatma Gandhi launched the Civil Disobedience Movement with his historic Dandi March (March 12 to April 5) to make salt against the Salt Law. The first phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement was from March 12, 1930 to March 5, 1931.</p>
<p>March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1931 - The Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed. The Civil Disobedience Movement was called off.</p> <p>March 23<sup>th</sup>, 1931 - Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged.</p> <p>August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1931: British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald announced the notorious communal decision giving separate constituencies to the Harijans.</p> <p>September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1932-34: Gandhiji withdrew from active politics and engaged in constructive programs (1934-39).</p> <p>September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1939- World War II begins.</p> <p>On 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 1939, the Muslim League celebrated the resignation of the Congress governments as Liberation Day.</p>
<p>March 1940: The Muslim League passed the Pakistan Resolution at its Lahore session.</p> <p>On 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1940, the Congress launched the Individual Satyagraha Movement.</p> <p>8<sup>th</sup> August, 1942: The Quit India Movement resolution was passed.</p> <p>9<sup>th</sup> August, 1942 – The Quit India Movement began, known as The Great Revolution of August.</p> <p>On 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1943, Subhash Chandra Bose announced the formation of the interim government of independent India.</p> <p>December 1943 - The slogan 'Divide and Leave' was passed at the Karachi session of the Muslim League.</p> <p>18<sup>th</sup> February, 1946- Mutiny of Indian Marines in Bombay.</p> <p>On 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1946, the first session of the Constituent Assembly began.</p> <p>On 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1946, the Muslim League boycotted it.</p> <p>20<sup>th</sup> February, 1947: British Prime Minister Attlee announced that the British government would leave India before June 1948.</p> <p>June 1947- Mountbatten Plan of Partition of India</p> <p>Declaration of the transfer of British power on 15<sup>th</sup> August (4 June).</p> <p>15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947- The dawn of India's independence.</p>



## NOTES

### 13.14 GLOSSARY

- **Independence Movement:** The struggle of the Indian people to get freedom from foreign rule, which included political, social and economic reforms.
- **Partition:** The partition of the country into India and Pakistan in 1947, which took place on religious lines and led to heavy violence and displacement.
- **Imperialism:** The political, economic, and cultural dominance of another powerful country over a country or region.
- **Nationalism:** The feeling of being organized to gain pride and freedom for one's country, which inspired the freedom movement.
- **Satyagraha:** A policy of non-violent resistance adopted by Mahatma Gandhi, in which injustice is fought against through truth and non-violence.
- **Dominion Status:** The status of an autonomous state under the British Empire, which India enjoyed until 1947.
- **Violence:** Conflicts between Hindu-Muslim communities during the partition, in which lakhs of people were killed and displaced.
- **Pakistan Movement:** The demand for a separate Muslim nation (Pakistan) led by the Muslim League, which became the major cause of partition.
- **Transfer of Power:** The process of transfer of power to India by the British Government on August 15, 1947, which led to India's independence.
- **Refugees:** People who left their homes and land during partition and migrated to India or Pakistan.

### 13.15 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

#### 13.15.1 In-Text Questions

1. In which year did the Congress achieve Purna Swaraj (complete independence)?  
A) 1927



**NOTES**

- B) 1929
  - C) 1931
  - D) 1942
2. Who was the Prime Minister of Britain at the time of partition of India in 1947?
- A) Winston Churchill
  - B) Clement Attlee
  - C) Neville Chamberlain
  - D) Stanley Baldwin
3. In which year was the Quit India Movement started?
- A) 1939
  - B) 1942
  - C) 1945
  - D) 1947
4. India was partitioned into which two countries in 1947?
- A) India and Bangladesh
  - B) India and Pakistan
  - C) India and Sri Lanka
  - D) India and Nepal
5. In which year was the Mountbatten Plan submitted?
- A) 1942
  - B) 1945
  - C) 1947
  - D) 1948
6. Which proposal was proposed by Mohammad Ali Jinnah for a separate nation for the Muslims of India?
- A) Lahore Resolution
  - B) Karachi Proposal



**NOTES**

- C) Delhi Proposal
- D) Mumbai Proposal
- 7. Which agreement laid the framework for the partition of India in 1947?
  - A) The Mountbatten Plan
  - B) Shimla Agreement
  - C) Gandhi-Irvine pact
  - D) Cripps Mission
- 8. Who was the first Governor General of India?
  - A) Jawaharlal Nehru.
  - B) Lord Mountbatten
  - C) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
  - D) Mahatama Gandhi
- 9. Which of the following provinces was divided into both India and Pakistan at the time of partition of India?
  - A) Bengal
  - B) Madras
  - C) Assam
  - D) Punjab
- 10. Who was the first Prime Minister of India?
  - A) Mahatama Gandhi
  - B) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
  - C) Jawaharlal Nehru.
  - D) Rajendra Prasad

**13.15.2 Long Answer Questions**

1. Analyse the causes of the partition of India and discuss the social, political and cultural effects arising out of partition.



## **NOTES**

2. Describe the objectives of the Quit India Movement of 1942 and its successes and failures. What was the impact of this movement on the freedom struggle?
3. What was Mountbatten's plan? What was its contribution to the partition of India? Discuss the main points of this scheme in detail.
4. Explain Mohammad Ali Jinnah's concept of the two-nation theory and state the significance it had in the partition of India.
5. Describe the incidents of riots and exodus that took place at the time of partition of 1947. What long-term effects did these events have on the societies of India and Pakistan?

---

### **13.16 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

---

1. b) 1929, 2. b) Clement Attlee, 3. b) 1942, 4. b) India and Pakistan, 5. c) 1947, 6. a) Lahore Resolution, 7. a) Mountbatten Plan, 8. b) Lord Mountbatten, 9. d) Punjab, 10. c) Jawaharlal Nehru

---

### **13.17 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

- Sarkar, Sumit. (1983). *Modern India 1885-1947*, Delhi: Macmillan.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2004) *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Pandey, Gyanendra (1990). *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Chandra, Býpan (2008). *Communalism in Modern India*. New Delhi: Har Anand.
- Bose, S. and Ayesha Jalal (1998) *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*, New Delhi: OUP.





**NOTES**

- Chandra, Bipan (1979) *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*. Hyderabad Orient Longman.
- Mýsra, Salil (2012) “*Emergence of Communalism in India*” in K. N. Panikkar (Ed.), *Perspectives of Modern Indian History* Mumbai: Popular Prakashan.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe (1996) *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics. 1925 to the 1990s*. London C. Hurst & Company Publishers.
- Sarkar, Sumit (2009) *Modern India*, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*, Hyderabad: Orient Longman.



**DEPARTMENT OF DISTANCE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION  
CAMPUS OF OPEN LEARNING, SCHOOL OF OPEN LEARNING  
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI**

20CUS01485