

# **HISTORY**

## **Grade 9**

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## The National Anthem of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka Matha

Apa Sri Lanka Namo Namo Namo Namo Matha  
Sundara siri barinee, surendi athi sobamana Lanka  
Dhanya dhanaya neka mal palaturu piri jaya bhoomiya ramya  
Apa hata sepa siri setha sadana jeewanaye matha  
Piliganu mena apa bhakthi pooja Namo Namo Matha  
Apa Sri Lanka Namo Namo Namo Namo Matha  
Oba we apa vidya  
Obamaya apa sathya  
Oba we apa shakthi  
Apa hada thula bhakthi  
Oba apa aloke  
Apage anuprane  
Oba apa jeevana we  
Apa mukthiya oba we  
Nava jeevana demine, nithina apa pubudukaran matha  
Gnana veerya vadawamina regena yanu mana jaya bhoomi kara  
Eka mavakage daru kela bevina  
Yamu yamu vee nopama  
Prema vada sema bheda durerada  
Namo, Namo Matha  
Apa Sri Lanka Namo Namo Namo Namo Matha

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Without limiting to the above mentioned important task, the Educational Publications Department is engaged in producing supplementary reading materials for Advanced Level and other higher examinations. As a result of that process, valuable books with the contribution of subject experts in different fields are sold at a concessionary price.

These supplementary reading materials can be an excellent source of knowledge for those who sit for examinations and for the reading public who is interested in reading different academic books. I would like to compliment the subject experts and the staff of the Educational Publications Department who contributed to produce this book.

I would like to extend my thanks to you who justify the following saying by George R. R. Martin – “A person who reads books lives thousand lives before his death. Those who don't read have only one life”.

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## 1

# CAPTURE OF COASTAL AREAS OF SRI LANKA BY THE DUTCH



## Introduction

The Kandyan kings realized that a considerable naval power was required in order to free the country from the Portuguese who had established their power in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka. Therefore, King Rajasinghe II sought the support of the Dutch to drive the Portuguese from the country. However, after driving the Portuguese, the Dutch broke the agreement that had been entered into with the King and went on to establish their power in many of the areas that had previously been captured by the Portuguese. Consequently, by year 1658, there had established a Dutch rule in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka. Thereafter, the Dutch ruled those areas until 1796. This chapter discusses the establishment of Dutch rule in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka, nature of the relationships that the Dutch maintained with the Kandyan kingdom and the salient features of the political, economic and cultural affairs during the Dutch rule in Sri Lanka.

## 1.1 Capture of Coastal Areas of Sri Lanka by the Dutch

### Arrival of the Dutch in Asia

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Dutch were engaged in the trade of buying at the Lisbon Harbour in Portugal the spices and other commodities that were brought by the Portuguese from Asia and selling them in European countries. Holland, the motherland of the Dutch, was at that time a colony of Spain. The Spanish were Roman Catholics and the Dutch were Protestants; hence, there existed religious controversies between these two nations. The Dutch, therefore, began to rebel against the Spanish for winning independence. Meanwhile, Prince Phillip II, who became the King of Spain, also inherited the kingship of Portugal and got the opportunity to work against the Dutch. Consequently, King Phillip II prohibited the Dutch to arrive at Lisbon Harbour. Since the Dutch ships could not enter the Lisbon Harbour, in order for the Dutch to get the spices and other commodities they needed for their trade, they had no alternative other than reaching Asia where spices and such commodities were produced.



Figure 1.1 – Logo of the Dutch East India Trade Company (VOC)

The Portuguese had taken steps to prevent the knowledge about the sea routes to Asia from being passed to other European nations until a century had passed since their arrival in Asia. During that period they did not allow a single Dutch, English or French national, except for those whom they completely trusted, to come to Asia on their ships. The Dutch, however, succeeded in discovering the sea route to Asia by about year 1595 by employing spies in various ways and by other means. Thus several Dutch Trade Companies had arrived in Asia by year 1602; however, a competition was created among Dutch companies themselves in buying the commodities produced in Asia. Further, none of those Dutch companies had been given any legal authority to act in Asia on behalf of Holland. Having taken this situation into consideration, the Dutch ruler went on to amalgamate several Dutch trade companies and formed the Dutch East India Trade Company or the VOC Company in 1602. According to the royal mandate of this company, it was granted powers to engage in trade activities in Asia on behalf of the Dutch government, to conquer areas, to build fortresses, to appoint governors and to rule the relevant areas.

After year 1602, the VOC Company grew financially stable and hence, the Dutch were able to send very powerful fleets of ships to Asia. The Dutch who arrived in Asia in this manner under the VOC Company, established their headquarters in Batavia in Java Island and established their power in the islands in East Asia and in several locations in the coastal areas of India. In building their trade power in the Indian Ocean, the Dutch inevitably had to fight against the Portuguese.

### Kandyan Kings seeking support of the Dutch

Not long after the arrival of the Dutch in Asia, in 1602, the Dutch Admiral named Joris Van Spilbergen reached the eastern coast of Sri Lanka with three ships and landed at Batticaloa. He then went to Kandy area where he met King Wimaladharmsuriya I in July, 1602. By that time, King Wimaladharmsuriya had been highly disappointed



Figure 1.2 – Admiral Spilbergen meets King Wimaladharmsuriya I

with the activities of the Portuguese. Therefore, the King agreed to get the assistance of the Dutch to drive the Portuguese from the country.

About three months after Spilbergen had left, a delegation led by a Dutch captain named Seebald de Weert met King Wimaladharmasuriya I. When the king got to know that this new emissary, too, was of the same nationality as Spilbergen, the king welcomed him enthusiastically and even had discussions with him about the manner as to how the two parties should act in order to drive the Portuguese from the country. However, at a later occasion, Seebald de Weert spoke to the king in a disrespectful manner which led to a dispute between Seebald and the king's men. This dispute ended resulting in the unfortunate death of Seebald de Weert. Finally, the king had to give up his hopes of getting the support of the Dutch to drive away the Portuguese.

After King Wimaladharmasuriya I, his brother Senarath became king. During his reign, King Senarath had discussions with two Dutch delegations, but those discussions did not yield the results the king had expected.

### The Treaty between King Rajasinghe II and the Dutch

After the reign of King Senarath had ended, his son ascended the throne as King Rajasinghe II. He was strongly determined to drive the Portuguese from this country. Therefore he took action to get the support of the Dutch who had a strong naval power. Accordingly, he had discussions with the representatives from the Eastern Headquarters of the Dutch in Batavia. The king agreed to give to the Dutch the proprietorship of the Cinnamon trade in Sri Lanka and also a harbour in the eastern coast of Sri Lanka in return for the support they would give him to drive the Portuguese. The objective of the king in doing so was not at all to bring another European nation in place of the one already present in the country. Consequent to the discussions that took place between the king and the Dutch, the king's army, together with the Dutch, surrounded the Portuguese fortress in Batticaloa. After launching several attacks on the Portuguese, the troops succeeded in driving the Portuguese from the fortress. Delighted with this victory, King Rajasinghe II entered into an agreement with the Dutch in the month of May in 1638.

### The Key Points of the 1638 Treaty:

- The Dutch agreeing to support the king of Kandy to drive the Portuguese from the country.
- The king agreeing to settle by way of providing the Dutch with commodities such as cinnamon, pepper and beeswax for the amount that the Dutch would spend on battles against the Portuguese.
- Granting the Dutch the monopoly of collecting commodities from the Kandyan areas except for elephants.
- Agreeing to deploy, if the King wished to do so, the Dutch army at the fortresses that would be captured from the Portuguese.

### Battles for driving the Portuguese and Establishment of Dutch Power in the Coastal Areas

After the treaty had been signed in 1638, it took twenty more years to drive the Portuguese from this country. During that period, the Dutch and the Kandyan army went on capturing the Portuguese fortresses in Trincomalee, Negombo, Galle, Kalutara, Colombo, Mannar and Jaffna and other fortresses that were under Portuguese power. After the fortresses in Trincomalee and Negombo had been captured, there arose controversies between the King and the Dutch. Such controversies erupted because the Dutch, after capturing the fortresses in areas which were more advantageous for them, did not take steps to hand over those fortresses to the king, which was a violation of the agreement.

It is evident that, from the very beginning, the Dutch had been very crafty when dealing with the king. In terms of one clause of the 1638 Treaty, “Dutch army may be deployed in fortresses captured from the Portuguese only if the King of Kandy wished to do so”, but the Dutch acted forgetting that clause. Accordingly, the Dutch, without consulting the king, deployed their army at the fortresses they captured from the Portuguese. As cinnamon grew in abundance in Negombo and Galle areas, the Dutch did not hand over those areas to the king, but kept those areas under their control. Because of this controversy, the king refused to pay the salaries of the workers employed at those fortresses saying that it was not his responsibility. The Dutch said in response that they could not hand over the fortresses until the king

paid the amount they demanded in order to cover up their expenses on the battles they had fought. The controversy that erupted between these two parties gradually intensified in this manner. However, King Rajasinghe II seems to have dealt with this matter with great patience as he needed further support of the Dutch to capture from the Portuguese the other fortresses including the Colombo Fort.



Figure 1.3 – Galle Fort

Meanwhile, a huge Dutch army arrived in Sri Lanka headed by a General named Gerard Hulft. Becoming more powerful with their arrival, the Dutch army then positioned artillery on high grounds and surrounded Colombo Fort in order to capture it from the Portuguese. Pleased with the work of General Hulft, King Rajasinghe showed him great respect and sent a huge army to join them. With this move, the Portuguese became utterly helpless and surrendered to the Dutch handing over to them the keys to the fort.

The Dutch who had so far been carrying out their operations from Galle fort made Colombo fort their headquarters and further strengthened it. This was another instance where the Dutch broke the agreement that had been entered into in 1638. This intensely annoyed King Rajasinghe. In 1658 the Dutch captured Mannar and then Jaffna Fort putting an end to Portuguese rule in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka. However, the Dutch retained with them the fortresses they had captured from the Portuguese. After the king had realized that the aim of the Dutch had been to establish their own power in the areas which had been under Portuguese rule, the King implemented a strategy in order to minimize the areas that the Dutch could capture. Accordingly, the king took steps to attach to the Kandyan Kingdom many areas that had been under Portuguese rule and would now be acquired by the Dutch. Because of the king's strategy, the extent of the areas that the Dutch could acquire

was smaller than the extent of the areas that had been captured by the Portuguese. However, since a similar European nation was brought to the country in place of the Portuguese, there created the Sinhala proverb “*Inguru dee miris gaththa wage*” which means an act “like exchanging ginger for chilli”.

### Relationships of the Dutch with the Kandyan Kingdom

Out of the three European nations, namely the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English, it was the Dutch who maintained healthy relationships with the Kandyan Kingdom for the longest period. The policy that the Portuguese adopted towards the Kandyan Kingdom was aggressive. The English captured the Kandyan Kingdom even before a period of two decades had passed since they had established their power in the coastal areas, but the Dutch maintained peaceful relationships with the Kandyan Kingdom from 1658 to 1796 by way of missions and exchanging of communications etc.; however, whenever they got the opportunity, they even did not hesitate to invade the Kandyan Kingdom either. For this reason, there seems to be some diversity in the relationships that existed between the Dutch and the Kandyan kings.

### Relationships between King Rajasinghe II and the Dutch

As described above, King Rajasinghe II brought in the Dutch to drive the Portuguese from the country, but during the period from 1638 to 1658, the areas that the Dutch captured from the Portuguese were not handed over to the king as agreed leading to controversies between the two parties. The Dutch officials who implemented the Dutch polices in this country during the period from 1658 to 1675 did not have any understanding of the power of the Kandyan Kingdom. Therefore, with the intention of surrounding the Kandyan Kingdom on land and by sea, the Dutch captured several areas in the Eastern and Western coasts which had been under the Kandyan Kingdom. King Rajasinghe II, who had been silent about such invasions by the Dutch, began to attack the Dutch on all sides after year 1670. The fact that the Dutch lost almost all the areas that they had captured after year 1658 shows how powerful and how immediate the attacks that the



Figure 1.4 – Jaffna fort

Kandyan armies launched under the guidance of King Rajasinghe II had been. It seems that the series of attacks launched by King Rajasinghe's armies helped the Dutch to gain a proper understanding of the war power of the Kandyan Kingdom and also to formulate their future policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom. After these attacks, the Dutch realized that the Kandyan armies were capable of fighting against them face to face on land, and that, if they tried to capture the Kandyan Kingdom, they would have to engage in an unending war with the Kandyan Kingdom as the Portuguese had done. As a result, the Dutch took steps to deal with the Kandyan Kings showing them respect and fear, and to maintain peaceful relationships with the Kandyan Kingdom as far as possible.

### Kandyan – Dutch Diplomatic Relationships

There existed diplomatic relationships between the Kandyan Kingdom and the Dutch from the time of King Wimaladharmasuriya I. During the reign of King Rajasinghe II, at least eight Dutch emissaries had met him from time to time. Out of the Dutch diplomatic representations that were made during King Rajasinghe II, General Gerard Hulft's meeting with King Rajasinghe II in 1656 was the most significant. By this time, the Portuguese had not been driven from the country and there also existed controversies between the king and the Dutch. The Dutch emissary who went to Kandy on invitation of the king was welcomed by the king with great respect. It has been stated in the records of the Dutch that the General was escorted to the king in a colourful procession. The king, too, was very pleased with the civilities and respect Hulft had extended to him.

After the reign of King Rajasinghe II had ended, such diplomatic representations were made during the reigns of King Wimaladharmasuriya II, King Weeraparakrama Narendra singhe, and King Sri Wijayarajasinghe, too. During this period, diplomatic representations were organized on occasions where controversies arose between the king and the Dutch and when relationships between the two parties deteriorated due to reasons such as closure of gravets. On most occasions, communications from governors were handed over to the kings during such representations. Apart from that, representatives of the king, too, visited the low country and met the Dutch leaders.

During diplomatic representations, the two parties exchanged gifts and showed cordiality, and listening to requests made by each other; discussing the issues that affected the two parties were given prominence.



Figure 1.5 – King Rajasinghe II

As the Dutch governor and the king rarely met each other, such diplomatic representations and exchange of communications were very important in bringing the views of the two parties together. When King Rajasinghe II sent written communications to the Dutch, he referred to himself as the “Emperor of Sri Lanka”. The Dutch in return stated “Three Sinhaladheeshwara”, at least nominally, when referring to the king in their communications. When the king wrote letters to the Dutch, he referred to them with phrases such as “**Dear Dutchmen at my service**” and the Dutch closed the letters they wrote to the king with phrases such as “**Your obedient servant**”. The following table gives some important information about the meetings that several Dutch emissaries had with the king:

Year	Kandyan King	Dutch Envoy	Objective of the Representation
1602	King Wimaladharmasuriya I	Joris Van Spilbergen	Discussing about commercial activities
1656	King Rajasinghe II	General Gerard Hulft	Invitation to meet the king and discussing the issues the two parties were faced with
1688	King Wimaladharmasuriya II	Cullen Albus	Discussing a new agreement between the king and the Dutch
1721	King Weeraparakrama Narendrasinghe	Cornelius Tackle	Offering condolences of the Dutch over the death of the king's queen

Exchanging gifts during diplomatic representations:  
(Representation by General Gerard Hulft in 1656)

Gifts given to the King by the Dutch Emissary	Gifts given to the Dutch Emissary by the King
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flags taken from the Portuguese</li> <li>• Two horses</li> <li>• Two sets of Persian bows and arrows</li> <li>• Sandalwood timber</li> <li>• Two Persian sheep and several other animals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A gold chain</li> <li>• A ring</li> <li>• A shoe-holder made of gold</li> </ul>

### Peace policy and avoiding Conflicts

After King Rajasinghe II in 1687, his son ascended the throne as King Wimaladharmasuriya II. King Wimaladharmasuriya II protected the kingdom that was inherited from his father and also maintained friendly relationships with the Dutch. Some of the measures taken by the two parties are as follows:

- Providing Dutch ships to bring Upasampada Bhikkus (Bhikkus of higher ordination) from Burma
- Lifting the ban that had been imposed on the Dutch to peel cinnamon in Pitigal Korale
- Dutch Company agreeing to buy the king's cinnamon, areca nut, and elephants

After King Wimaladharmasuriya II, his son Sri Weeraparakrama Narendra singhe became king. He had been famous as 'Prince of Kundasaale'. During this period, there occurred several incidents that led to gradual deterioration of the peaceful relationships that had been maintained with the Dutch. The king took steps to engage in more trade by sending areca nut, elephants and ivory to India through Kalpitiya and Puttalam harbours. The Dutch, who considered this to be a great loss for them, closed all the harbours and disrupted the trade activities of the Kandyan kingdom. In response, the king, too, banned transportation of elephants through his areas, and prevented the people in Kandyan areas from selling cinnamon and other spices, and food produced in those areas to the Dutch.

By this time, people who lived in areas under Dutch rule seem to have been disappointed with the activities of the Dutch. The disappointment of the people had been aggravated by the excessive taxation, overcharging of the people by tax collectors, and by the intolerable situation that the cinnamon peelers were faced with. This resulted in eruption of riots in several areas that were under Dutch rule. The Dutch quelled those riots using their powers.

Sri Weeraparakrama Narendrasinghe, too, followed the tradition of the previous kings and brought a South Indian princess of Nayakkar Dynasty and made her the chief queen. Consequently, many members of the Nayakkar Dynasty came to this country and they settled in Kandyan areas having received various high positions in the government. Moreover, their power in the king's palace was increasing, too.

In 1739, King Weeraparakrama Narendrasinghe died and as he did not have any sons, one of the brothers of Nayakkar queen ascended the throne as King Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe. This marks the end of the royal lineage of King Wimaladharmasuriya I.

### Invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom by the Dutch

After King Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe, his Nayakkar Queen's brother ascended the throne as Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe. He implemented various measures to uplift Buddha Sasana which had deteriorated by that time. Ven. Welivita Saranankara Thero gave the necessary advice for the king to implement those measures. The king obtained ships from the Dutch and sent a delegation to Siam in order to bring Upasampada to this country. A group of Buddhist monks headed by Ven. Upali Thero was brought here and Upasampada was established in Lanka in 1753. This marks the beginning of the present Siam Sector.



Figure 1.6 – A painting depicting Dutch soldiers

There seems to have occurred conflicts between the Kandyan Kingdom and the Dutch once again by about year 1762. Now the king wanted to seek the support of some other nation to fight against the Dutch. As a result, in 1762, an English emissary named John Pybus arrived in Kandy. This visit caused fear in the Dutch who then invaded the Kandyan Kingdom sending six brigades along six different routes under the guidance of Governor Baron Van Eck. However, the Kandyans did not allow a single brigade to reach at least close to the City of Kandy. The Kandyans launched attacks on the Dutch using their familiar fighting strategies and the Dutch, having lost all their hopes with the defeat they suffered, retreated to the low country. Before long after this defeat, the Dutch once again invaded the Kandyan Kingdom in 1765. In this invasion both parties suffered heavy losses. When the Dutch entered the City of Kandy in February 1765, the king ran away to Hanguranketha for safety. The king did not agree to the conditions proposed by the Dutch who captured the City of Kandy. However, the Dutch became fed up with the diseases that spread after the beginning of the rainy reason and also with the attacks launched by the Kandyans, and finally returned to the low country.

As these conflicts continued for several years, the king was now looking forward to establish peace in the country.

On the other hand, the conduct of the Nayakkar kings caused disappointment among the Kandyan aristocracy and the Buddhist monks. The king, having come to know of this situation, sent emissaries to the Dutch to negotiate peace. Taking advantage of this situation, the then Dutch Governor Willem Falck put forward a number of conditions that are more advantageous for the Dutch. The king had to agree to those conditions and the treaty that consisted of 25 clauses was signed in 1766. Some of the clauses of this treaty are as follows:

### Some Clauses of the 1766 Treaty

- Jaffna, Mannar, Kalpitiya, Colombo, Galle Korale, and Trincomalee and the surrounding areas belong to the Dutch.
- A distance of a Sinhalese gawwa into the land from the coast belongs to the Dutch.

According to this treaty, the Kandyan Kingdom became like an island within an island. Soon after the treaty had been signed, the king began to realize the evil

effects it had caused. Then the king requested the Dutch to return the coastal areas to him, but the Dutch did not agree. Instead, the Dutch established their power in the coastal areas and also took measures to develop the agriculture and cinnamon cultivation in those areas.

After the signing of the treaty in 1766, the controversies that existed between the Kandyan King and the Dutch began aggravate. The Dutch violated some of the conditions in the agreement and banned the supply of salt to areas that were under the rule of the king. This caused great difficulties to people in the Kandyan Kingdom.

After King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe, his brother ascended the throne as King Rajadhirajasinghe in 1782. The Dutch rule came to an end with the arrival of the English who reached Lanka in 1796 and defeated the Dutch capturing the areas that were under Dutch rule.

## 1.2 Administrative, Economic, Social and Cultural Affairs during the Dutch Rule

### Organization of the Dutch Administration

Since the Dutch was organized as a trade company, the Board of Directors of the VOC Company in Holland was the highest authority who made decisions regarding the areas under Dutch rule in Asia. As Holland was very far away from Asia, in 1609, VOC Company appointed a separate governor for Batavia in order to rule the areas under Dutch control in Asia. Further, an Advisory Council was appointed to assist the Governor in Batavia.

After the Dutch power had been established in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka, a separate governor was appointed by the Trade Company to look into the administrative affairs of this country. Apart from that, a special council consisting of Dutch officers in Sri Lanka was also appointed to assist the governor. Although the Dutch governor in Sri Lanka and the assisting council were under the authorities in Batavia, the governor, according to his capabilities and personality, could seek advice directly from the Board of Directors in Holland. As travelling between Sri Lanka, Batavia and Holland took a long time at that time, and because of the difficulties there existed in maintaining communication, the Governor in this country had the opportunity of making independent decisions, particularly regarding urgent matters.

The Dutch governor and his advisory council in this country had powers to rule

the areas under Dutch control. Accordingly, they could handle the administrative matters in the relevant areas, collect taxes, appoint officers and grant lands. The governor acted on the decisions of the advisory council.

The areas under the rule of the Dutch in this country were divided into three main parts which were called commanderies.

### **Colombo Commandery**

This was administered under the Dutch governor. Coastal areas including Colombo, Kalutara, and Negombo, and the inland areas such as Hanwella, Anguruwathota and Malwana where there were citadels came under Colombo Commandery.

### **Galle Commandery**

A separate commodore had been appointed to look into the affairs of the Galle Commandery. The coastal areas from Bentara River up to Batticaloa and the inland areas belonging to those parts came under Galle Commandery.

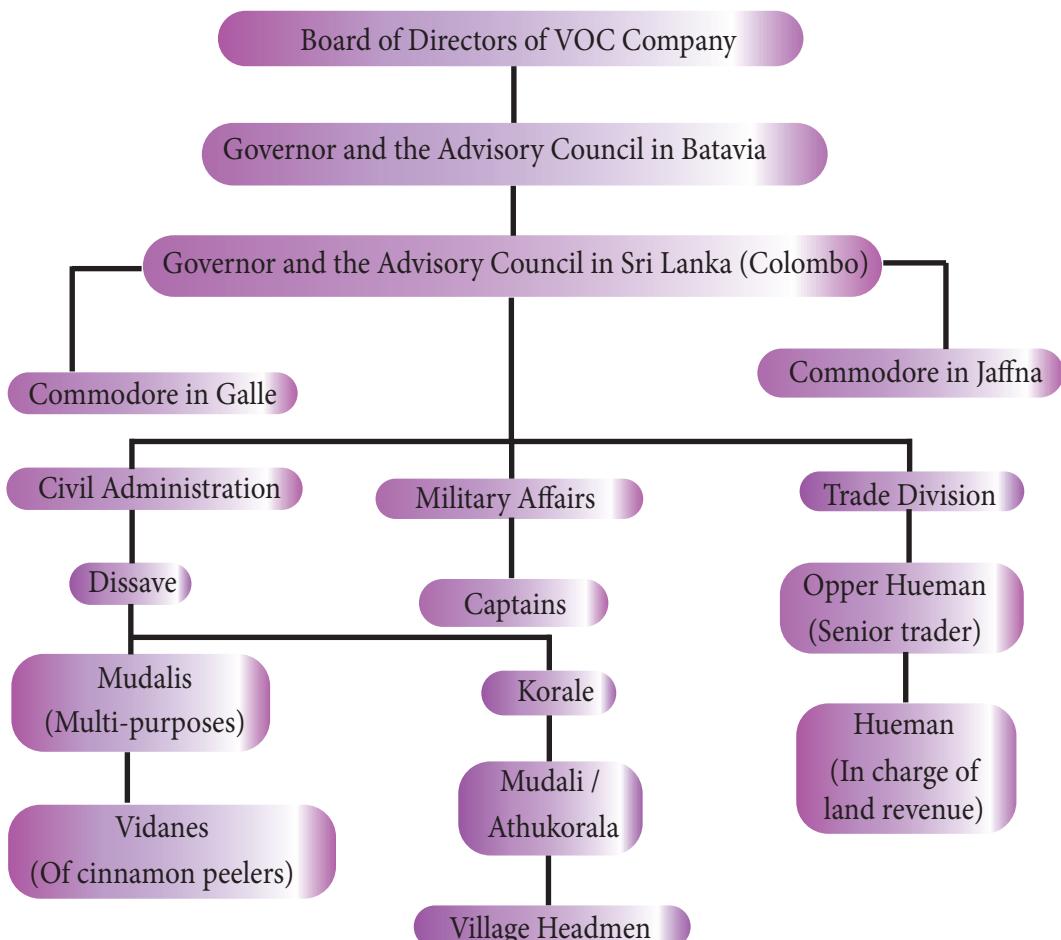
### **Jaffna Commandery**

Jaffna Commandery, too, was administered under a separate commodore. The areas in the coastal belt from Puttalam North to Jaffna, the areas in Jaffna, and the areas up to Batticaloa in the eastern coast which were under Dutch rule came under Jaffna Commandery.

Although it had been an accepted practice that the two commodores in Galle and Jaffna Commanderies should act under the governor in Colombo, they had the opportunity to act independently when practically fulfilling their tasks.

The administration below the governor and the commodores was divided into three parts namely, civil administration, military administration and trade division. For civil administration, there was a Dissavani under each commandery. A Dissavani was divided into Korales and Korales were divided into Paththus. There were Mudalis and Vidanes in charge of various services offered by Disavani. The responsibility of handling all the matters in the Dissavani was vested with the Dissawe. Organizing of the Dutch armies was done under the captains of the armies. For the trade division there were Opper Hueman (senior trader) and under him was Hueman (person in-charge of land revenue). Accordingly, the following chart shows how the administration was organized under Dutch rule:

Administrative structures similar to the one that was in effect in Colombo Commandery under the Dutch governor were in effect in the other commanderies, too, under commodores. When organizing the civil administration under the Dutch, the Dissave was vested with significant powers. There were three Dissaves for the three Commanderies. Dutchmen were appointed as Dissaves while native people were appointed for the positions in the lower levels of the administrative structure.



## Judicial Affairs

The Roman Dutch law which is a part of the law that is currently in effect in Sri Lanka was inherited from the Dutch. The Dutch revised the Roman Dutch law to suit the local laws and customs that existed in Sri Lanka and then implemented it in the country. The Dutch made use of the juridical institutes that existed in the country and also introduced a new judicial system. The new judicial system is as follows:

### Raad Van Justitie (High Court)

This was the highest court in the Dutch judicial system. The head of this court was called Huft Administar. The main function of this court was to hear criminal cases. These high courts had been established in all the three commanderies.

### Civiele Raad (Civil Court)

Civiele Raads or Civil Courts had been established in Colombo, Galle and Jaffna Commanderies from the very beginning of the Dutch rule. Civil cases relating to damages below 120 Rix-dollars and cases relating to marriage were heard at these courts.

### Land Raad - Land Court

Land Raads or Land Courts had been established in the centres of Colombo, Galle, Jaffna, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, and Matara. Dissave was the Chairperson of these courts. Some consider this court system to be a simple, less expensive and easy to use system for the local people.

### Fiscal Courts / Dissave Courts / Headman Courts

These courts functioned as courts at the lowest level of the Dutch judiciary. The local officers such as village headman, Vidane, Mudali, and Korala who were officers of the lower levels of the administrative structure had a little judicial power relevant to their positions. The traditional rules and laws that existed among people in Jaffna area were formulated as laws and were then implemented.

### Economic Activities of the Dutch

The Dutch implemented their economic policy in a way that they could gain

maximum economic benefits from the areas that were under their rule in Sri Lanka. They knew that the quality of the cinnamon that was produced in Sri Lanka was very much higher than that produced in the other Asian countries under Dutch rule. Therefore, the Dutch were particularly interested in promoting the cinnamon cultivation and processing and trading cinnamon. At the initial period, the Dutch got the cinnamon that naturally grew in the woods peeled by the local people in the area, but later they cultivated cinnamon in areas such as Colombo, Kalutara, Aluthgama and Matara. Mahabaddle Department, which existed from the time of the Portuguese to handle affairs relating to collection and trading of cinnamon, was brought under a separate captain by the Dutch and it was made function more efficiently. The traditional labour roster method was used to peel cinnamon. The Dutch made a register of the names of cinnamon peelers and took steps to get the maximum service of those peelers. Annually, an adult peeler had to peel a particular amount of cinnamon to the Company free of charge. In this way, the Dutch earned huge profits by trading cinnamon.

Apart from cinnamon, the Dutch also earned profits from the trade of items such as areca nut, pearl, ivory, pepper, nutmeg, cardamom, elephants and beeswax. In addition to that, the taxes they charged from lands were also important to them. The Portuguese had prepared a type of registers called Thombu which contained details of ownership of lands and the taxes to be collected from those lands. The Dutch further regularized those registers and prepared three types of Thombu namely, family, land and school Thombus. A family Thombu contained details of the families that lived in a village. A land Thombu contained details of the lands that belonged to the families of a village, the types of cultivations available in those lands and the taxes to be collected from those lands by the company. In a school Thombu names of the parents of children living in a village, the dates of birth of the children, dates of leaving school, and if moved to another village, such dates were included.

#### Details contained in a Land Thombu of the Dutch

- Dombagahawatta land belonging to Don Bastian Appuhamy of Rathmalanegama, No. of coconut trees – 195. Tax to be collected – 01 Rix-dollar and 24 Stiver.

By preparing Thombu, the Dutch were able to get information about the number of people living in a village, and details of the lands and cultivations available in those

lands, and thereby, they were able to get details of the taxes that could be collected from those lands and the services they could obtain.

Further, the Dutch took steps to reduce the amount of money the Company had to spend on importing rice and textile from other countries, and also to generate some additional income by way of manufacturing in this country the things required for local consumption or for trade. Examples for some of the steps they took in that regard are given below:

- Making arrangements to bring Muthurajawela under cultivation.
- Making efforts to increase the production of rice by renovating tanks such as Yodha Wewa and Kantale Wewa.
- Developing cultivations such as sugarcane, pepper, cardamom, coffee, mulberry and indigo.
- Developing industries such as weaving cloth, dyeing cloth, and making bricks and tiles.
- Constructing canals such as Hamilton Canal in Colombo and using them for transportation of goods.



Figure 1.6 – Hamilton Canal in Colombo

## Social and Cultural Activities of the Dutch

### **Policy on Religion**

The Dutch were protestanists. After they had captured the coastal areas, they implemented various measures to spread their religion in those areas. They brought clergymen from Holland in order to convert people to protestantism. The Dutch used education as an effective strategy in promoting their religion.

### **Education Activities**

The Dutch established a system of institutes called schools for the purpose of promoting their religion. One school was established for several villages and it was made compulsory for all children in those villages to attend that school. Education was provided in the mother tongue of the children. Prayers in protestanism were given prominence in the school curriculum. In addition to that, subjects such as native language, music, and the scriptures were taught and a formal examination system was started, too. They appointed a team of officers to supervise schools. Separate schools were established for the children of the Europeans. Higher education was given in the Dutch language at the seminary in Colombo. In this way, the Dutch took steps to convert people to protestanism through the education provided at schools and also by giving various government positions and titles.

The Dutch brought a printing press to this country for the first time in 1739 and an extract from the bible was printed with that machine and was distributed throughout the country.

## Social and Cultural Impact of the Dutch Rule

The Dutch ruled the coastal areas of Sri Lanka for about 138 years. The impact that was caused to the society and the culture of Sri Lanka by the Dutch rule can be studied in several aspects. They can be briefly analysed as follows:

- Construction of houses with verandahs, upstairs, columns and higher roofs following Roman architecture
- Introduction of a number of types of food. e.g.: cake, pickle, kokis
- Introduction of the judicial system
- Addition of Burghers to the Sri Lankan society



Figure 1.8 – Dutch architectural creations in Sri Lanka



Figure 1.9 – A plate and a coin used during the period of Dutch rule

- Addition of a large number of words into the Sinhala and Tamil languages. Following are some examples:

Architecture and Furniture	Judicial System and Courts of Law	Other
soldaraya (upstairs) tharappu (stairs) balkaya (beam) janelaya (window) kamaraya (room) isthoppuwa (verandah) iskuruppuwa (screw) almariya (almirah)	notharis (notary), tholka (interpreter)	vendesi (auction) iskolaya (school) kuvithansi (receipt) kanthoruwa (office) oppu (deed) budalaya (legacy)

### Exercise

Prepare a short list of questions relating to the following topics:

1. Capture of the coastal areas by the Dutch
2. The relationships that the Dutch maintained with the Kandyan Kingdom
3. Administrative affairs of the Dutch
4. Social and cultural affairs of the Dutch

### Activity

1. Hold a quiz based on the lesson “Capture of Coastal Areas of Sri Lanka by the Dutch”.
2. Make a speech before the class on the following topics relating to new additions to the culture of this country during the Dutch rule:  
words / types of food and drinks / clothes / wares

# 2

## BRITISH POWER IN SRI LANKA



### Introduction

The English came to Sri Lanka after the two Western nations, the Portuguese and the Dutch. The motherland of the English is England or Britain. The British rule in this country commenced in 1796 with the capture of the coastal areas of the country that were under the Dutch rule. In 1815, the English captured the Kandyan Kingdom, too, and made the entire country a British colony. Thereafter, the English ruled this country for 133 years until 1948 and this had an enormous impact on the history of this country. This chapter discusses how the British seized the ruling power of this country, the struggles of the native people against the British rule, and the economy of this country during the colonial rule.

## 2.1 The Arrival of the British in Sri Lanka and Establishment of Their Power in the Country

### Capture of the Coastal Areas by the English

The Portuguese who came to India in 1498 then came to Sri Lanka in year 1505. After the Portuguese, the Dutch came to Asia in early 17th century and came to Sri Lanka in the middle of that century (in 1658). Then the Dutch went on to establish their power in the coastal areas of this country which were under the rule of the Portuguese. The English do not seem to have had any interest in Sri Lanka until about one and a half century had passed since their arrival in India. However, by the end of the 18th century, the English had begun to show an interest in Sri Lanka. There are several reasons as to why the English developed an interest in Sri Lanka. They are as follows:

- The importance of the location of Sri Lanka
- The importance of the Trincomalee harbour
- The importance Sri Lanka had in trade activities

### The Importance of the Location of Sri Lanka

You have already learnt that Sri Lanka is a country that is located as an island in the Indian Ocean. This location was important to the English for three main reasons –

- The English who had established their power in the eastern and western coastal areas of India by the 18th century found Sri Lanka, which is located as a separate island to the south of India, very important in protecting their areas in India from other western nations.
- The location of Sri Lanka was important to the English not only in ensuring the security of India, but also in maintaining dominance in naval power in the Indian Ocean.
- Sri Lanka is located as a center along the Eastern and the Western trade routes.



Figure 2.1 – How the English had positioned artillery guns in order to protect the Trincomalee harbour

### Importance of the Trincomalee Harbour

The Trincomalee harbour seems to have been important to the English due to the following reasons:

- It is a natural harbour that faces the Bay of Bengal and Southeast Asia.
- As it is a natural harbour that protrudes into the land, ships could be protected from dangerous cyclones.
- Trincomalee harbour was strategically important in the naval battles that the English were fighting in the Indian Ocean against the French.

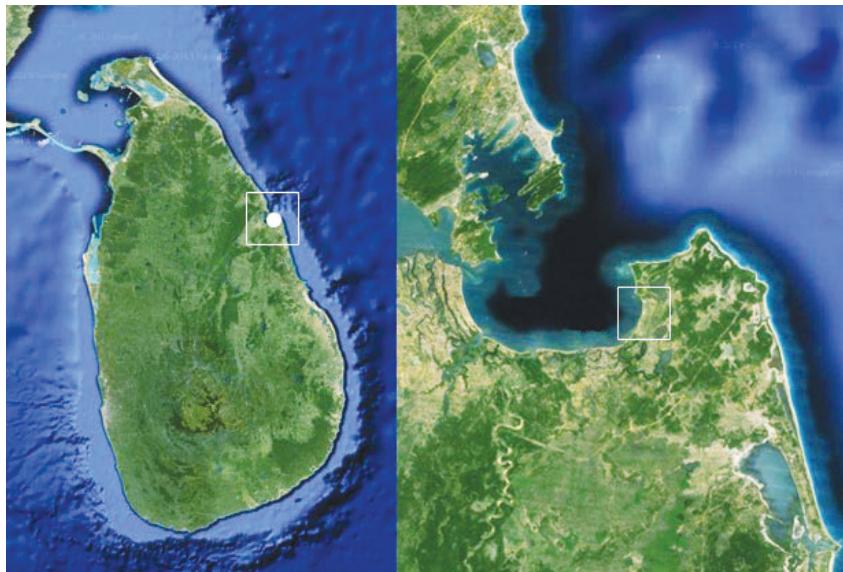


Figure 2.2 - Trincomalee harbour

### Importance in Trade Activities

Sri Lanka was especially important to the English in the trade activities they were engaged in across Asia. There were several reasons for that:

- Cinnamon and other spices of very high quality could be obtained from Sri Lanka (e.g.: pepper, clove, cardamom, etc.)
- Apart from spices, many other items such as elephants, pearl and gems that were very important in their trade were available in Sri Lanka.
- The English had the opportunity to build a market in Sri Lanka for the goods produced by the British.

### Relationships that existed between the English and the Kandyan Kingdom before 1796

At the time when the British arrived in Asia, the coastal areas of Sri Lanka were under the rule of the Dutch and the Kingdom of Kandy existed as a separate, independent state. There had erupted controversies between the Dutch and the Kandyan King because of the troubles and the threats that the Kandyan Kingdom suffered because of the Dutch. Therefore, the rulers of the Kandyan Kingdom sought the support of the English to drive the Dutch from this country.



Figure 2.3 – John Pybus meets King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe

Consequent to this meeting, there occurred several diplomatic representations between the Kandyan Kingdom and the English. They include:

- John Pybus visiting King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe in 1762
- Hugh Boyd visiting King Rajadhirajasinghe in 1782
- Robert Andrews visiting King Rajadhirajasinghe in 1795

At the initial period after the English emissaries had arrived in this country, there were friendly relationships between the English and the Dutch. Therefore the English were reluctant to fight against the Dutch. Hence, the objective of the King could not be achieved during the first two visits of the English emissaries. However, when Robert Andrews met King Rajadhirajasinghe in 1795, the English sought the support of the King to capture the Dutch forts. Although the King had made arrangements to send his troops to assist the English, they did not need the King's support because capturing the Dutch forts was not as difficult as they had thought it to be.

## Establishment of the Power of the English East India Company in the Coastal Areas of this Country

Holland was the motherland of the Dutch who had captured the coastal areas of this country before the English did. As a result of the French Revolution, France invaded Holland and seized power in Holland; consequently, Prince William V fled to Britain. Hence, there established a French rule in Holland and the English feared that the coastal areas in Sri Lanka which were under the Dutch rule would also be captured by the French. Taking advantage of this situation, the English got Prince William to sign a letter granting to the English the coastal areas of Sri Lanka that were under the Dutch rule. As this letter was written at the Kew Palace in England, it came to be called the Kew letter.

When the Kew letter was handed over to the then Dutch Governor Van Angelbeek, he did not agree to act accordingly. In response to the Governor's refusal, the English decided to take to military action. Accordingly, the English launched an attack on the Fredrick Fort in Trincomalee which was under Dutch rule and captured it on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1795. Later the English succeeded in capturing all the forts in Jaffna, Mannar, Kalpitiya and Colombo respectively. By February 1796, all the coastal areas of this country which had been under Dutch rule had been brought under the rule of the English East India Company.

The following are the significant stages of the British rule in coastal areas of this country from 1796 until the capture of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815:

- Rule under East India Company from 1796 to 1798
- Dual control from 1798 - 1802
- Rule under British Crown from 1802 onwards

All of the military expenses on capturing the coastal areas of this country were incurred by English East India Company. Therefore the English Company continued ruling this country with the objectives of covering their military expenses and boosting their income. Accordingly, the officers of the Company took steps to collect more taxes from the coastal areas. Collection of taxes was done by a group of officers called Aumildar who were brought to this country from Madras. People of the coastal areas, who were oppressed with the heavy burden of taxes that had been imposed on them by the company, started a serious riot against the English in 1797.

## The Riot that erupted in the Coastal Areas in 1797

There are several reasons that led to the eruption of the riot against the rule of the English East India Trade Company in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka in 1797:

- Imposing of several new taxes by the English East India Company (e.g.: tax on coconut trees, tax on salt, tax on fish, tax on tobacco)
- The opposition of the people against removal of local officers from collecting taxes and employing of officers called Aumildar, who were brought from Madras, to collect taxes.
- Having to pay taxes in cash instead of the traditional method of paying taxes in goods thereby causing people to terribly suffer because the use of currency was not popular among people.

The English curbed the riot amidst great difficulties and then appointed a commission headed by Colonel Meuron to find out the reasons that led to the eruption of the riot. It was called "**The Meuron Commission**". The Meuron Commission put forward a number of proposals in order to bring the civil life in the coastal areas to normality. Through the recommendations of the Commission it had been explained that such a situation had arisen since officers who had been accustomed to engaging in trade activities had begun to be involved in administration. Accordingly, the Commission had recommended that trade and administration should be handled by separate groups of officers.

### Dual Control (1798 – 1802 AD)

Dual control refers to the system of administration adopted in ruling the coastal areas according to which the trade activities were handled by the English Trade Company and the political affairs were handled with the involvement of the British government. Under this system the Trade Company was allowed to continue to engage in trade activities and to collect revenue, and a governor named Sir Frederick North was appointed in 1798 to handle the administrative and military affairs.

During the period from 1798 to 1802, in which the dual control was in effect, there formed two groups of officers, namely officers of the governor and officers of the Trade Company. The governor did not receive the cooperation that was expected of the officers of the Trade Company. This led to the deterioration of the administration and the dual control system became a failure.

## The Coastal Areas becoming a Colony of the Crown

As the dual control system was proved a failure, full involvement of the British government was needed in order to handle the affairs of this country. Hence the authority that had been granted to the Trade Company was terminated in 1802 and full administration of the coastal areas was undertaken by the British government. As the King was the head of the British Government and as the crown symbolizes the King, such ruling system was called a colony of the Crown.

### Capture of the Kandyan Kingdom by the English

The English invaded the Kandyan Kingdom twice, i.e. in 1803 and in 1815, with the objective of capturing the Kingdom. By year 1803, there had been a healthy relationship between the King and the people and therefore the invasion that the English launched in that year was an utter failure. However, by year 1815, the Kandyan King had lost the faith of his people, and therefore the English could achieve their goal.

#### Invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1803

The English were not happy that Kandyan Kingdom existed as a separate, independent kingdom while the English were ruling the coastal areas of the country. Therefore, Governor Frederick North wanted either to make Kandy a kingdom that was loyal to the English or to capture it. The following can be considered as the causes that led the English to invade the Kandyan Kingdom: people even in the areas under the rule of the English considered the Kandyan King to be their king; the English thought that the Kandyan King will support the riots that erupt in low country areas against the English; the Kandyan Kingdom was a barrier in maintaining relationships between Colombo and Trincomalee along land routes; and the English feared that the Kandyan King would seek the support of the French to fight against the English. After the death of King Rajadhirajasinghe in 1798, Prince Kannasamy ascended the throne as King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe, but there was another prince named Prince Muththusamy who had equal right to the throne. When Prince Kannasamy became King, Prince Muththusamy fled to the English and, with future expectations, the English gave him protection.

In 1800, Governor North sent an army led by General McDowall to Kandy and made efforts at getting King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe agree to conditions that were advantageous for the English, but those efforts did not yield the expected results as the King did not agree to the conditions laid down by the English. Later, Governor

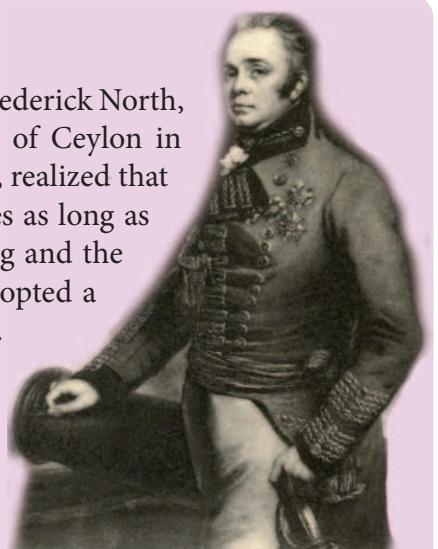
North made arrangements to invade the Kandyan Kingdom in 1803. This invasion was led by General McDowall and Governor North made arrangements to send to Kandy two troops from Colombo and Trincomalee. These armies entered the City of Kandy in February 1803.

The English who captured the City of Kandy declared Prince Muththusamy the King of the Kandyan Kingdom. As King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe had gone into hiding, the Kandyans refused to accept Muththusamy as their king because Muththusamy was loyal to the English.

The Kandyans who were getting ready to attack the English strategically delayed launching their attack until the rainy season arrived. Soon after the rainy season had started, the Kandyans launched their attack on the English blocking all the main routes that had been used to maintain relationships between Colombo and Kandy and prevented the supply of food and armaments to the English army. As a result, the English army got confined to Kandy city and became utterly helpless due to the shortage of food and catching of diseases such as malaria. The English army then realized that they were facing near death and therefore tried to retreat, but they had no chance for retreating because the Kandyans had blocked all the access routes to the city. At this juncture, King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe ordered the English to hand over to him Prince Muththusamy, whom the English had declared the king of Kandy. Although Major Dave immediately fulfilled that order, the Kandyans massacred every one of the English army including prince Muththusamy. In this way, the first attempt of the English to capture the Kandyan kingdom ended resulting in a devastating defeat for the English.

#### Governor Thomas Maitland

After the end of the period of service of Governor Frederick North, Thomas Maitland was appointed as the Governor of Ceylon in 1805. Maitland, who was more strategic than North, realized that the English could not achieve the expected victories as long as a healthy relationship would exist between the King and the people of Kandy. Therefore, Governor Maitland adopted a very strategic policy towards the Kandyan kingdom. Some of the key features of the strategic policy of Maitland were to act in a way that led to the escalation of the existing internal disputes within Kandyan kingdom and to secretly collect all information about the kingdom. In order to implement these policies, he employed a skillful officer called John D'Oyly.



### John D'Oyly

John D'Oyly, who was born in England in 1774, came to Sri Lanka as a government officer after completion of his education. While serving in this country as an officer of the Public Administration Service or the Civil Service, D'Oyly also studied Sinhala language. Being an efficient, young officer, he learnt Sinhala within a short period of time and also gained an understanding about the traditions and customs of the people of this country, and he went on to work as a government translator. Governor Maitland, having understood the capabilities of D'Oyly, employed him to collect intelligence information on the Kandyan kingdom.

D'Oyly first kept company with the Kandyan elites who maintained relationships with the low country people and through those elites he established relationships with high ranking leaders of the Kandyan kingdom. In this way, he had built up relationships with Kandyan leaders such as Pilimathalawwa, Meegasthenna, Ehelepola, and Molligoda. In addition to this, he also collected information about the Kandyan kingdom through spies who had been employed in disguise. Because of D'Oyly's remarkably efficient service, the English succeeded in disclosing even the military secrets of the Kandyan kingdom which no European had been able to do before that. D'Oyly's diary reveals a lot of important information about the relationships he had with the Kandyan kingdom.

### The Internal Power Struggle in the Kandyan Kingdom

The political situation of the Kandyan kingdom was turning very bad after year 1803. The solidarity that existed there between the King and the people at the time when the English attempted to capture the Kandyan kingdom in 1803 had begun to deteriorate by 1815.

Escalation of the power struggle within the Kandyan kingdom during the reign of King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe resulted in the deterioration of the solidarity that had existed so far in the kingdom. Such power struggles can be discussed under several topics as follows:

## Disputes between the King and the High Ranking Nobles

There erupted a dispute between King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe and the Kandyan aristocracy because of the measures taken by the king to limit the power of those aristocrats. Some of the significant incidents that led to such disputes are as follows:

- Duties that had been assigned to some of the aristocrats were assigned by the king to his Nayakkar relatives.
- The king inflicted punishments to aristocrats who harassed or ill-treated citizens.
- Death penalty was imposed on Pilimathalawwe Maha Adhikaram who supported him to become king.
- Some parts of the kingdom where the powers of the aristocracy had increased were divided into small administrative units and new officers and aristocrats were appointed to those units (e.g: dividing Sabaragamuwa Dissawa into two).
- The king made new appointments in a way that led controversies among the aristocracy.  
(e.g: After the death of Pilimathalawwe, Ehelepola was appointed to the vacant position of Maha Adhikarama, and Molligoda, who was an opponent of Ehelepola, was appointed to a lower Adhikarama position)

## Disputes that arose between the King and the Bhikkus

- The king imposed death penalty on some Bhikkus including Paranathala Kuda Thero accusing them to be traitors.
- The king did not obtain the concurrence of the Bhikkus for the modernization activities that were implemented around the Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic).
- The Bhikkus considered the proposal put forward by the king to remove the Poyamalu Temple and Sathara Devala to facilitate the expansion of Bogambara tank as an anti-Buddhist activity.

### Disputes that arose among the Top Nobility

- Because of the controversies that erupted between Molligoda and Ehelepola the political unity deteriorated.
- Some of the chiefs of the administrative divisions belonging to the Kandyan Kingdom began to act against one another and as a result, the relationship between the king and those chiefs broke up.

### Disputes between the King and the General Public

People getting distanced from the king can be considered as the climax of the disputes that had erupted in the Kandyan kingdom. King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe who initially had gentle qualities later took to drink and began to behave in a very cruel manner. He successfully curbed the riot that erupted in Sabaragamuwa, but he went on to impose death penalty on over one hundred people who were suspected to have been involved in the riot. As the king was unable to catch Ehelepola who rebelled against him, he arrested Ehelepola's wife and his children and punished them cruelly which resulted in serious worry among people. People who came to Kandy from areas such as Sabaragamuwa and Sathara Korala to perform their service duties in the city were prohibited by the king to get accommodation in the capital city during the night. It was reported to have been a great inconvenience for the people who came to Kandy from those areas. The general public held the Buddhist monks and the Kandyan chiefs in great respect, and as the king executed some Buddhist monks and suspected the chiefs, the relationship between the king and the people broke up.

### Invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815 and the Arrest of the King

Robert Brownrigg, who was the Governor of Ceylon at that time, understood that the conflict situation that had been created in the Kandyan kingdom by year 1815 was the best opportunity for the English to take advantage of.

On intelligence information that had been collected by John D'Oyly and on the advice of Ehelepola, who had by this time fled to the English for protection, arrangements were made for the invasion of the Kandyan kingdom. Brownrigg strategically took measures to send the English army to Kandy announcing that he was sending the English army to Kandy in order to ensure the safety of the people since the people were highly disappointed with the activities of the king.



Figure 2.4 – Arrest of King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe



Figure 2.5 – Queen Rangamma,  
Queen of King Sri Vickrama  
Rajasinghe

Eight brigades left for Kandy from Colombo, Galle, Negombo, Trincomalee and Batticaloa for the invasion of the Kingdom of Kandy. When the English army entered the city of Kandy without facing any difficulty, King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe realized that the Kandyan people and the aristocracy who had been there for his protection at the beginning were no more with him and therefore he fled to Medamahanuwara with his two queens. The king who was in hiding at a place called Bomure in Medamnahanuwara with his two queens, was caught by a group of Kandyan people. Then the king and the two queens were kept under the custody of D'Oyly and later they were brought to Colombo and were deported to Vellore in India in 1816. While the king was imprisoned in Vellore, he died due to a stomach illness. With the arrest of King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe, the English succeeded in achieving a victory.

that neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch had ever been able to. Such victory could be achieved because of the strategies the English had adopted and due to the internal power struggle that existed in the Kandyan kingdom.

### Signing of the Kandyan Convention



Figure 2.6 – Signing of the Kandyan Convention

King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe was arrested by the English because the English received the support of the Kandyan aristocracy. Now the English went on to further establish their victory by entering into an agreement with the Kandyan chiefs. Before this agreement was signed at the Magula Maduwa (Royal Audience Hall) in Kandy on 02 March 1815, an English soldier lowered the Sinhala flag and hoisted the English flag. Legend says that, Wariayapola Sri Sumangala Thero, on witnessing this incident, had bravely come forward saying that the English did not have any right in this country before signing of the treaty, and then he had lowered the English flag and had raised the Sinhala flag again. Robert Brownrigg, on behalf of King George III of Britain, and the chiefs of the Kandyan kingdom were signatories to this agreement that was signed on 02 March 1815. It is called the Kandyan Convention of 1815. According to D'Oyly's diary, some of the chiefs had signed it on 10 March. The Kandyan Convention contains 12 main clauses. Accordingly, the contents of some of the significant clauses are as follows:

- Clause 2 - This clause states that King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe had been ousted from the throne and all the rights that all of his relations had to the throne have been abolished.
- Clause 4 - It is stated in this clause that the positions of the traditional officers of the Kandyan kingdom such as Mohottala, Korala, Vidanes and other chiefs, and the rights relevant to those positions will be protected.
- Clause 5 - It is stated that Buddhism and religions of the citizens, Bhikkus and temples would be protected.
- Clauses 6, 7 - It is stated in these clauses that old systems of punishment such as amputation would be abolished and death penalty would be imposed only under the authority of the governor.

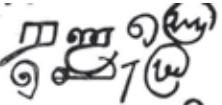
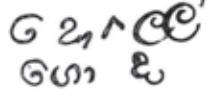
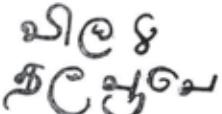
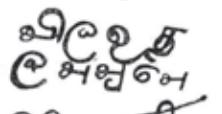
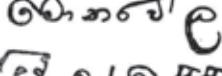
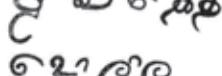
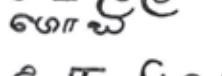
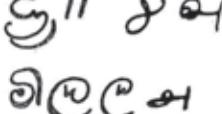
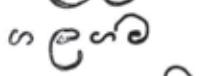
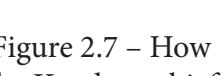
Lyheyle pola	signed	
Molligoda 1 <sup>st</sup> Adikar Disava of the 7 Korles	signed	
Pilama Talawwa Adikar 2 Disava of Sayaparegama	signed	
Pilama Talawwa Disava of the 4 Corles	signed	
Monaravila Disava of Uva	signed	
Ratmalatte Disava of Matale	signed	
Molligoda Disava of the 3 Korles	signed	
Dullewure Disava of Wellawate	signed	
Millawa Disava of Wallapane and Bentlegama	signed	
Galyana Disava of Tamankada	signed	
Galagoda Disava of Nuwara Kalaruwa	signed	



Figure 2.8 – Magul Maduwa in Kandy

Figure 2.7 – How the Kandyan chiefs signed the Kandyan convention

## Activity 01

Write an article to a newspaper on the title “Capture of Sri Lanka by the British”.

### Freedom Struggle in 1818

With the capture of the Kandyan kingdom by the English in 1815, certain changes took place in the administration system that the Kandyans had been familiar with. Under the traditional system that had existed, there had been a king in Kandy to whom the Kandyans could express their grievances and find relief. After the capture of the kingdom, the King of Britain became the King of the Kandyan kingdom, too, but the new king was a person whom the Kandyans had never seen or one who had never lived in this country. Therefore the Kandyans felt that they were experiencing a state of anarchy.

British soldiers marched through the streets of the City of Kandy too often, which was a sight that the Kandyans had not been familiar with before. Their language, customs and traditions, and etiquettes were not familiar to the Kandyans. Under the new administration, the social status of the Kandyan chiefs, too, deteriorated. Although the native Kandyans respected their local chiefs, such respect was not accorded to those chiefs by the British soldiers.

The traditional sources of income of the Kandyan aristocracy were affected by the new tax systems imposed by the English. Further, the Kandyans feared that their religion and culture would be in danger because the country was ruled by foreigners. For all such reasons, the Kandyans made arrangements to launch a rebellion to regain the freedom they had lost.

### Factors that led to the Launching of 1818 Rebellion

- The disappointment the people felt because they did not have a king
- The fear people had felt that Buddhism would be destroyed
- The way of life of the people getting upset because of the administrative and law reforms implemented by the British disregarding the local traditions and customs
- The powers, privileges, and sources of income of the aristocracy becoming unsafe
- The immediate cause that led to the freedom struggle in 1818 was the opposition that was aroused among the Sinhalese because of the appointment of a Muslim named Hadji Marikkar as Muhandiram of Madige in Wellassa where the majority of the people were Sinhalese.

## Beginning of the Struggle and its Expansion

While the Kandyans were disappointed with the rule of the English, one Doraisamy who appeared as the Kandyan king began to mobilize people in Wellassa area. When the Agent of Uva got to know about Doraisamy, he sent a team led by Hadji Marikkar to Wellassa area to arrest Doraisamy, but Marikkar died at the hands of the combatants. Once again, Wilson, who was the Sub-agent of Badulla, and Lieutenant Newman left for Wellassa to arrest Doraisamy, but Wilson was killed by the combatants. After the clash that occurred on this occasion, the English realized that the Uva – Wellassa clashes should not be considered as minor incidents.

When the English realized that the rebellion was on the expansion, they sent Monarawila Keppetipola, who was in-charge-of the Uva Dissawa at that time, to curb the situation. However, Keppetipola accepted the request made by the people in Wellassa to support the rebellion, and therefore he returned the armaments that the English had given to him. He not only joined the struggle, but then went on to lead it. Thereafter, Keppetipola became a prominent leader in the struggle for freedom.

The rebellion that was launched from Wellassa area then spread to Dumbara, Hewaheta, Harispatheruwa, Matale, Nuwarakalaviya, Hathkoralaya, and also to areas in Sabaragamuwa within a very short period of time.

Some of the prominent leaders of the freedom struggle:

- Keppetipola Nilame
- Madugalle Dissawa
- Kivulegedara Mohottala
- Second Adhikaram of Pilimathalawwe
- Butewe Rate Rala
- Kohukumbure Rala

While Keppetipola Nilame led the combatants from Uva Wellassa areas, Madugalle and Udagabada Nilame led Dumbara and Thumpane areas, and Pilimatalawwe led Hathkoralaya area and thus the struggle was carried on.

The English army suffered heavy losses because of the guerrilla strategies adopted by the Sinhala army. The Sinhala troops were further encouraged by the fact they had been able to secretly take out the Sacred Tooth Relic from the Temple of the

Tooth Relic and keep it with them. By the month of May in year 1818, the English were about to lose their power in the Kandyan kingdom, and hence they struggled with all their might to curb the battle.

### Failure of the Struggle

The British who feared that they would lose their power in the Kingdom of Kandy, imposed martial law throughout the kingdom and adopted a policy of destroying lands. Accordingly, they went on to destroy the houses, cultivations, food and other property that belonged to the general public by setting fire to them in order to discourage the rebellion. Consequently, the combatants suffered severe hardships and very soon the struggle became a failure.

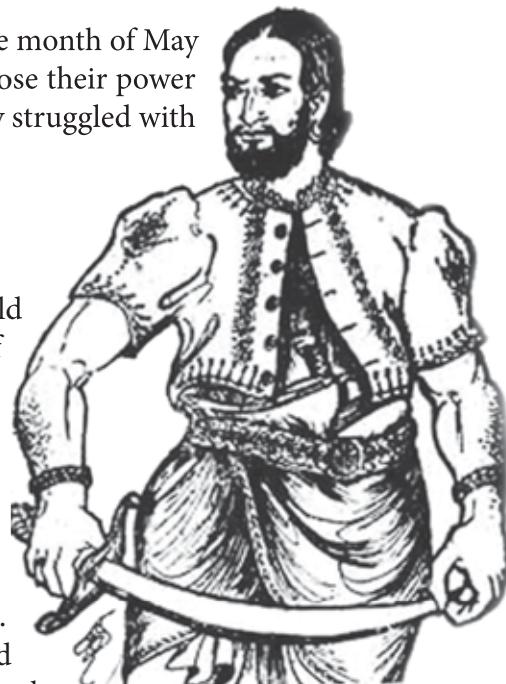


Figure 2.9 – Keppetipola Nilame

### Reasons for the Failure of the Struggle

- The struggle had not been properly organized.
- The combatants failed to effectively withstand the ruthlessly suppressing policy adopted by the English to curb the struggle.
- There existed personal grudges between the leaders who led the struggle.
- The combatants failed to resist the weapon power of the English.
- The combatants were discouraged by the revelation of the fact that Doraisamy who appeared as the king was not the real Doraisamy.

### The Impacts of the Struggle

- Leaders such as Keppetipola and Madugalle, who led the struggle, were convicted through a military court and were beheaded.
- Another group including Ehelepola were exiled to Mauritius island.
- British power was established in the Kandyan kingdom through the Kandy proclamations of 1818 disregarding the Kandyan Convention of 1815.

- The powers and privileges that had been granted to the Kandyan chiefs were abolished and those powers and privileges were granted to English officers.

## Freedom Struggle of 1848

The Kandyans who suffered under the British rule once again rose against the foreign rule in 1848 with the intention of making a king from among themselves. It is called the second freedom struggle. Although the first freedom struggle that was launched in 1818 began under the leadership of the Kandyan chiefs, it was a significant feature of the 1848 struggle that it erupted under the leadership of those who came from among common men.

### Reasons for the Eruption of the 1848 Struggle

#### Impact of the Constitutional Reforms of Colebrooke

Proposals of Colebrook contributed a lot towards the eruption of the freedom struggle of 1848.

Plantations were started under Colebrook reforms and a policy of selling lands was implemented to create the estates required for plantations. In terms of the Lands Act that was introduced in 1840, a large number of lands of which the ownership could not be verified were acquired by the government and thereby many people lost their traditional lands and farmlands.

As the British gave priority to the development of plantations, the traditional agriculture of this country deteriorated and the rural lifestyles were seriously affected.

- With the weakening of village councils which carried out functions such as maintenance of rural irrigation systems and resolving of minor disputes in rural areas, the rural lifestyle collapsed.
- The relationship between the government and the people was further distanced and therefore the rulers were unable to identify the actual needs of the people.
- Under the rule of the British, Buddhism was neglected and liquor shops were opened in the Kandyan areas which led to the deterioration of social ethics.

- The new tax policy of Lord Torrington

By this time, the income that the government could generate through coffee trade had dropped and Lord Torrington, the then governor of Ceylon imposed a number of new taxes. Imposing of new taxes in this manner was the immediate cause of the struggle. Some of those taxes are as follows:

\* stamp duty      \* dog tax      \* boat tax      \* gun tax      \* cart tax  
\* poll-tax      \* shop tax

### Beginning of the Struggle

In many parts of the country, massive protests sparked opposing the new taxes imposed by Lord Torrington. A strong protest came from the people against the poll-tax, dog tax and the gun tax. In July 1848, a group of protesters led by Madugalle, Rate Mahattaya of Dumbara, came to meet the Agent of Kandy in protest against the new taxes. Police officer Lokubanda Dunuwila, who came to disperse these protesters, was assaulted by the protesters until he fell off from horseback. It did not take long for these protests to develop into a rebellion against British rule. The leading centre of this struggle was Matale. By July 1848, the areas namely Matale, Kurunegala, Nuwarakalaviya, Thamankaduwa, and Harispattluwa had fallen into the hands of the combatants. However, the efforts of the combatants to capture Kandy were not successful.

### Some of the leaders of the 1848 freedom struggle:

Gongalegoda Banda (David of Peliyagoda)

Puranappu (Francisco)

Dingirala

Contemporary records indicate that, in July 1848, Gongalegoda Banda was crowned as **Sri Wickrama Sarvasiddhi** at a ceremony held in Dambulla which was attended by a large number of people.

## Failure of the Struggle

- Although protests sparked in many areas in both the upcountry and the low country against the new tax policy of the British, the struggle spread only to a few areas in the upcountry.
- From the very beginning of the struggle, the English led their armies strategically and prevented the spread of the struggle. Therefore it was limited to a few areas such as Matale, Kurunegala and Kandy.
- Governor Lord Torrington imposed martial law and suppressed the struggle within a few days, and arrested the leaders of the struggle.
- Kadahapola Thero, Puran Appu and Dingirala were convicted through a military court and were shot dead. Gongalegoda Banda was lashed with a whip and was expelled from the country.
- After the leaders had been arrested and punished, the second freedom struggle against the British, too, ended with defeat.

## Impact of the Struggle

- After the struggle had ended, a committee headed by Mr. Bailey was appointed to find the causes of the struggle.
- As per the recommendations of the committee, Governor Torrington and Emerson Tennent, the Colonial Secretary, were removed from their posts and were called back to England.
- The shop tax and the dog tax were repealed and the stamp duty, gun tax and poll-tax were revised.
- The government took measures to develop the agriculture and irrigation works.
- The Sacred Tooth Relic was taken back into the custody of the British.

## Activity 02

Answer the following questions.

1. Who was the first English emissary to visit Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe?
2. Who was the Nayakkar king that was ruling the Kandyan kingdom when the British captured the coastal areas of Sri Lanka?
3. Who was the first English governor appointed to this country in 1798?
4. Who was the British officer who collected information about the Kingdom of Kandy together with Governor Maitland?
5. Who was the English governor who captured the Kandyan kingdom in 1815?
6. Who was the King that was ruling the Kandyan kingdom when Sri Lanka was captured by the British?
7. Name a prominent leader who led the first freedom struggle in 1818.
8. Who formulated the constitutional reforms that were implemented in this country in 1833?
9. Who was the British governor of this country during the period when the second freedom struggle erupted in 1748?
10. Name a prominent leader who led the second freedom struggle.

### 2.2 Economic Development that took place under the British Rule

After the British had strengthened their power in this country, they converted the system of economy that had existed in this country into a market economy. The environment required for developing of a market economy was created through the Colebrooke reforms that were implemented in 1833. The economic reforms that were introduced by the British brought about an enormous change not only in the economy of the country, but also in the social patterns.

**The economic situation that had prevailed in this country before the British started plantations .**

When the British arrived in this country, there existed in the Kingdom of Kandy a rural agriculture-based economic system which had been developing since the

times of Rajarata civilization. Under this economic system, which can be called a rural, self-sufficient economy, the food required for the village was produced in the village itself. High-land cultivation, wet-land cultivation and animal husbandry were the key fields of the system of agriculture that existed in the Kandyan kingdom of that period. People produced things only to meet their day-to-day requirements and cultivation of commercial crops was not popular. In addition to agriculture, there also existed trade, industries and provision of services. Such trades, industries and services were mostly organized based on the caste system that existed in the Kandyan society. In this economic system, a system of compulsory labour service was in place in order to obtain the labour required for the government. The low country areas had been under the rule of the Europeans since the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, when compared to the upcountry areas, the use of currency was more popular in the low country areas. As a result of the influence of the Europeans, people of the low country areas seemed to be getting accustomed to the economic changes that were taking place.

### Activity 3

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Collect information about the system of economy that had existed in Sri Lanka before the arrival of the British in this country.

### The British taking to Tea Cultivation

A prominent feature of the colonial policy of the British was that they made maximum use of the resources available in the countries they conquered in order to generate as much profits as possible.

After establishing their power in the entire country having captured the Kandyan kingdom in 1815, the British realized that it was not possible for them to gain the expected profits through the traditional, agricultural economy that was existing in the country. Accordingly, in order to increase their income, the British implemented economic reforms, and as a result, they seem to have taken to cultivation of commercial crops or estate plantations.

The Colebrooke Commission arrived in Sri Lanka in year 1829 in order to identify the reforms that should be introduced in this country with a view to increasing the income level of the country as well as developing the economy. As recommendations of the Colebrooke Commission had been implemented since 1833, the background required for the development of the plantation sector was created in this country.

Some of the recommendations of the Colebrooke Commission which resulted in the advancement in the plantation sector are given below. Those proposals aimed at encouraging the private sector which would result in the development of the economy so that there would be long-term increase in the government revenue.

- Implementing a policy of selling state lands
- Providing opportunity for local as well as foreign private entrepreneurs to buy lands
- Formulation of policies to suit the objectives of the private entrepreneurs

Until 1830s, the British had not been able to generate the expected income from this country under the British rule. The expenses on administration had been very much higher than the income they had been able to generate from the country. Accordingly, the Colebrooke Commission had made the following recommendations to cut down government expenditure:

- Closing down some of the government departments and merging some others in order to cut down expenses on administration.
- Reducing the number of civil servants and reducing their salaries.
- Merging the upcountry and the low country for reducing administrative expenses.

The British expected to reduce the government expenditure by way of implementing the above mentioned proposals.

### The Government Policy of selling Lands

In order to obtain lands required for making estates, the traditional lands of the villagers in the upcountry areas to which there had been no legal documents to prove their ownership, were acquired by the government under the Lands Act of 1840. A policy was formulated for selling lands so that any extent of lands that were acquired by the government in that manner could be bought by any local or foreign entrepreneur.

Through this land policy of the government, both local and foreign planters got the opportunity to buy lands in this country at very low prices. Moreover, the laws that had been imposed restricting foreigners to buy lands in this country and to settle in this country were repealed. Accordingly, planters from foreign countries came to

Sri Lanka and invested money on estate plantations.

### **Formulating Policies to be in line with the Objectives of Private Businesses**

- Providing opportunity for the European business community to represent the Legislative Council
- Ending the monopoly the government had to sell items such as cinnamon and salt
- Implementing the judicial reforms of Cameron
- Taking measures to establish a savings bank
- Abolishing the compulsory labour service system

### **Development of the Estate Plantations**

Implementation of the Colebrook reforms mentioned above facilitated a rapid development in the estate plantations of this country. The forest areas in the upcountry and those in the low country, that had been under natural forest cover and the traditional chenas and farmlands, were soon converted into extensive ranges of estates. Accordingly, the following crops began to be cultivated in the estates thus created:

*coffee, cinchona, cocoa, tea, coconut, rubber*

#### **Coffee**

Coffee was the first cash crop that was cultivated in this country under the British rule. Before the arrival of the British, coffee had been grown as a garden crop, but it had not been cultivated as a commercial crop. It is accepted that a planter named George Bird cultivated a coffee estate for the first time in the history of this country in 1822 in Sinha Pitiya, Gampola. Later in 1824, Governor Edward Barnes cultivated a coffee estate in one of his private lands in Gannoruwa.



Figure 2.10 – A coffee factory

As cultivating coffee became popular, private investors, too, bought lands and took to coffee cultivation. Consequently, the extent of lands that had been brought under coffee cultivation by about year 1848 had exceeded 60,000 acres. Some of the reasons that resulted in the development of coffee cultivation in this country were as follows:

- As drinking coffee had become popular in European countries, the demand for coffee increased and big profits could be earned through coffee cultivation.
- Coffee of very high quality could be produced in this country at a low cost.
- A large number of entrepreneurs took to coffee cultivation after implementation of the Colebrooke reforms.
- Duty that had been imposed on coffee that was exported to England from this country was reduced.

Coffee cultivation, which developed rapidly in this country, began to decline after 1848. There are several reasons that caused such a decline:

- As coffee was exported to the European market from Southeast Asian countries such as Java, the demand that had been there for the coffee exported from Sri Lanka dropped.

- The world economic crisis that took place in 1848 had an adverse impact on coffee trade.
- Large extents of coffee cultivations were destroyed as those cultivations had caught a fungal disease called Hemileia Vastatrix since 1869.

### Cinchona and Cocoa Cultivations

After the deterioration of coffee cultivation in 1848, the planters of estates in this country took to cultivation of other commercial crops. Consequently, planters drew more attention towards cinchona and cocoa cultivations. Cinchona is a herbal plant. It is used to manufacture a type of medicine called quinine which is used to treat malaria patients. Although cinchona was cultivated in many estates, the demand for cinchona in the world market declined and consequently it did not generate long-term profits. Therefore, planters gave up cultivating cinchona.

As an alternative to coffee cultivation, the government introduced cocoa cultivation, but it did not succeed as a commercial crop because, on the one hand, it was very costly to cultivate cocoa, and on the other hand, cocoa could be cultivated only in a very limited area of the country.



Figure 2.11 – Cinchona



Figure 2.11 – Cocoa

Tea cultivation in this country, which was started in a small estate of about 10 acres, had achieved a massive progress by year 1890. It was reported that, by that time tea cultivation had spread to about 220,000 acres. Accordingly, tea became the most prominent export economic crop of this country due to many reasons such as those given below:

- Prevalence of climatic conditions that are highly suitable for tea cultivation in the wet zone of this country.
- There was a high demand in the London market and in the world market for Sri Lankan tea.
- Development of railway tracks and the road system had a great impact on the development of tea cultivations.
- Labour required for tea cultivations could be obtained easily and cheaply because labourers could be brought to this country from South India.
- High profits could be generated at a low production cost.

## Tea Cultivation

After coffee cultivation had deteriorated, and after cultivations of cinchona and cocoa, which were introduced as alternative crops to coffee, had failed, the government was very keen on identifying the crop that is most suitable for this country. As a result, tea was identified as the cash crop that is the most suitable for the climatic conditions of the upcountry areas of Sri Lanka. Growing tea plants in this country was tested for the first time in about 1873 by an Englishman named James Tailor. He planted tea in a few acres in Lulkandura Estate that belonged to him and made efforts to identify the kinds of tea that were suitable for this country.

## Coconut Cultivation

Coconut was another cultivation that was developed under the British rule. Although coconut had been grown in this country since ancient times, it had not been cultivated as an export crop. Literary sources of this country reveal that the rulers of this country from the times of Dambadeniya kingdom to Kotte kingdom had taken steps to expand coconut cultivation in the country. However, developing coconut cultivation as an export crop was started during the British rule. By about year 1910, coconut cultivation had expanded in about 850,000 acres centred around Kurunegala, Gampaha and Chilaw areas. The owners of most of the coconut estates of this country were local businessmen, and export of coconut was handled almost completely by foreign companies. The coconut produced in this country was exported in the forms of coconut oil, copra and poonac. A coconut research institute was established in Lunuwila for the development of coconut cultivation and for research activities as well.

## Rubber Cultivation

Some of the British companies in this country showed an interest in starting rubber cultivation for the first time in Sri Lanka since rubber is another commercial crop that suits the climatic conditions prevailing in this country. A few rubber plants that had been planted in the Kew Garden in England were brought to this country, and they were planted in Peradeniya and Henarathgoda Botanical Gardens in year 1877. This can be considered as the beginning of rubber cultivation in Sri Lanka. After year 1910, local planters drew more attention towards cultivating rubber. Rubber cultivation expanded rapidly during the period from year 1900 to 1906 and the price of rubber, too, increased comparatively during that period. Some planters gave up cinnamon cultivation and planted rubber in those lands. The following are some of the factors that led to the development of rubber cultivation:

- There was a big demand in the USA for the rubber produced in Sri Lanka.
- Price of rubber in the world market increased after the World War I.
- With the development of the automobile industry in Europe, the demand for rubber increased, too.
- The soil and the climatic conditions of this country were very suitable for rubber cultivation.

## Activity 04

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Collect information about estate cultivations that existed during the British rule.

### Development of the Local Agriculture

After the entire country had become a British colony in 1815, the socio-economic system that had existed in this country was subjected to a dramatic transformation. The British rulers realized that a market economy could not be developed through the traditional, agro-economic system that existed in this country. Therefore they adopted a policy of giving priority to estate cultivations neglecting the traditional agriculture of the country. Because of the recommendations put forward by the Colebrook Commission in 1833 for the establishment of an estate economy in this country, the local agriculture was subjected to a serious decline. The following are some of the main factors that caused the collapse of local agriculture:

- Lands Act that was introduced in 1840

Lands which could not be proved before a court of law to have been utilized continuously for 30 years were acquired by the government under the Lands Act. According to the land use system that had existed in this country, there had been no legal documents pertaining to the ownership of lands. Therefore, a large number of agricultural lands were acquired by the government and it resulted in the collapse of the local agriculture.

- The government neglected the maintenance of tanks and irrigation systems of this country which were essential for the agriculture, the livelihood of the majority of the population of this country.
- As a result of the government policy of selling lands, local and foreign businessmen bought the traditional lands in the upcountry and the low country and those lands were utilized for making estates.

- After the natural forests in the upcountry had been cleared and estate cultivations had been started, natural water sources dried up and agricultural lands in the low country were faced with the threat of destruction.
- Compulsory labour service, under which the village council had obtained labour required for the maintenance of rural irrigation systems over a long period of time, was abolished and as a result agricultural activities could not be continued.

### Activity 05

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Collect information about the deterioration of the local agriculture during the period of British rule.

### Efforts of the British at developing the Local Agriculture

The British rulers realized that one of the main causes for the people to rise against the British rule in 1848 was the policy they had adopted neglecting the local agriculture. Accordingly, several Governors who were in charge of the administration of this country after 1850 drew attention towards developing the local agriculture of this country and took steps to renovate the irrigation systems and also looked into the welfare of the farmer communities. Among such activities, the following are significant:

### Renovation of Tanks and Anicuts

- Governor Henry Ward
  - Appointment of a committee in 1855 to look into the condition of irrigation works
  - Renovation of Irakkamam tank and Ampara tank in the Eastern Province
  - Renovation of Kirama tank and Urubokka tank in Giruwapatthuwa in the Southern Province

- Governor Hercules Robinson
  - Appointment of a commission to look into the condition of irrigation works
  - Renovation of Tissamaharama Wewa
- Governor William Gregory
  - Renovation of a number of tanks including Basawakkulama Wewa, Tissa Wewa, Maha Wewa in Medawachchiya, Kalawewa and Kantale Wewa
- Governor Arthur Gordon
  - Renovation of 42 tanks including the renovation of irrigation works connected to River Walawe and Udukiriwala

### **Establishment of the Department of Irrigation**

Establishment of the Department of Irrigation by Governor West Ridgeway in 1900 is a significant event in the irrigation sector of this country. Steps were taken to recruit to this Department officers who had knowledge about the irrigation sector so that the functions of the Department could be performed efficiently. The Department took measures to maintain the irrigation systems that had already been renovated by that time and steps were also taken to identify and develop the irrigation systems that were needed according to the requirement of the population and this greatly benefitted the farmer communities.

### **Establishment of Cooperative Societies**

With the objective of ensuring the well-being and welfare of farmer communities, the cooperative society movement was founded by Governor McCullum in 1911. The following are some of the objectives of creating this movement:

- Providing loans to farmers at low rates of interest
- Reducing the debt burden of farmers and strengthening their economy
- Improving the welfare of the farmer communities in the country
- Developing the rural economy by way of strengthening the cooperative movement

Due to World War I that lasted during the period from 1914 – 1918, the shipping industry was badly affected and there arose difficulties in importing of food items that this country needed. Therefore, after the World War I had ended, the British rulers realized the importance of developing the local agriculture. From the beginning of the 20th century, there also arose the need for creating employment opportunities for the increasing population. Developing local agriculture was also a solution to the problem of unemployment. According to the Donoughmore reforms of 1931, Sri Lankan Ministers were appointed to a number of ministries including the Ministry of Agriculture. Furthermore, as universal franchise was introduced under the Donoughmore constitution, politicians had to pay more attention to the needs of the rural people of the country. As a result, further steps were taken to develop the agriculture. Launching a movement to establish farmer colonies in the Dry Zone by D.S. Senanayake during the period when State Council was in effect is an example for this.

#### Activity 06

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Collect information about the development of local agriculture during the period of British rule.

# 3

## Religious and National Revival of Sri Lanka



### Introduction

The social systems and culture that had existed in Sri Lanka over a long period of time was subjected to various changes with the arrival of the Europeans, namely Portuguese, the Dutch and the English. The Portuguese spread Roman Catholicism while the Dutch spread Protestantism in the areas that were under their rule. The entire country became a colony of the British Empire in 1815 AD and various missionary organizations that arrived in the country during the rule of the British went on to spread Christianity. Consequently, the traditional religions and cultures that had existed in the country began to get affected in numerous ways.

Because of the damages that were being caused to the religions and cultures of the Lankans, there sparked towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a great revival in the religions and cultures of the Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims in Lanka. This revival is discussed in this lesson as the religious and national revival of Sri Lanka.

### 3.1 Missionary Organizations and Their Activities

During the rule of the British, members of a number of volunteer organizations arrived in Sri Lanka for the purpose of spreading Christianity. Those volunteer organizations were engaged in missions of spreading their religion and therefore, were called missionary organizations. The following are some of the missionary organizations that had arrived in Sri Lanka by early 19<sup>th</sup> century:

- London Missionary Society
- Baptist Missionary Society
- Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society
- American Ceylon Mission
- Church Missionary Society

These missionary organizations, while receiving state patronage, implemented various measures to spread their religion throughout Ceylon; that is called the Missionary Movement. In order to spread their religion, they implemented various programmes such as provision of education, distributing writings, giving lectures and implementing social service activities, etc.

#### Education



Figure 3.1 – Richmond College, Galle (Established by the Wesleyan Missionaries)

The missionary organizations adopted various strategies to spread Christianity through education. The missionaries who studied Sinhala and Tamil languages managed the education in rural schools in local language mediums while others managed the education in urban schools in English medium. The education provided at missionary schools was aimed at spreading religion in this country and inculcating the Western culture in Lankan society.

During the period of British rule, knowledge of English language was a prerequisite for obtaining government employment. Because of this requirement, some youths from Sinhala and Tamil families that belonged to higher social classes who had received education in the English medium, abandoned their traditional religions, names and surnames, embraced Christianity and got high positions in the government.

The missionaries divided among themselves the different parts of this country and carried out their activities of providing education. This resulted in the establishment of a number of missionary schools throughout the country and consequently, a considerable development took place in the education of Lankans. This was a positive impact of the missionary movement on this country.

### Using writings and lectures

Missionary organizations took measures to establish presses in Lanka and they published material such as books and magazines which contained writings on their religion, and distributed them among people throughout the country. Various books on the Bible and Christianity were translated into Sinhala and Tamil languages. Missionaries made use of these publications to inculcate in the minds of the Lankans the ideas that those who followed Buddhism and Hinduism were heathens that worshipped images, and their religious practices and rituals were futile acts. The following are the titles of some of the publications printed by the missionaries to spread their religion:

- Masika Thegga
- Uragala
- Lanka Nidhanaya

Moreover, missionary priests travelled to places such as temples and other places where people gathered, and presented lectures in Sinhala and Tamil languages in order to inculcate their religious beliefs in the minds of people.

## Carrying out Social Service Work

Missionaries made attempts to get closer to people by way of engaging in social service work such as offering of gifts to the poor and helpless and caring for the sick.

However, such measures implemented by the missionaries to spread their religion did not have a considerable impact on the people in rural areas of the country, but many Sinhalese and Tamils who were from well-to-do families in urban areas seemed to have embraced Christianity. The following are some of the reasons that led to the success of the activities implemented by the missionaries:

- receiving state patronage
- using education for spreading religion
- establishment of presses
- having finances necessary for making various publications such as books, newspapers and periodicals
- the organizational power the missionaries possessed.

## Revival in Religion

Towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, there sparked a religious revival not only among the Buddhists in this country, but among the Hindus and the Muslims as well. There were several reasons that resulted in a religious revival in this manner:

- spread of Christianity by the missionaries had an adverse impact on the local religions that had existed in Lanka.
- not directing sufficient attention by the government towards developing education in Sinhala and Tamil mediums in vernacular schools.
- the fear people had developed that their culture would be destroyed under the rule of the British.

### 3.2 Buddhist Revival Movement

The Buddhist monks of this country led the Buddhist revival movement that was launched towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Later, educated lay men, too, supported this movement.

There are several significant features of the Buddhist revival movement:

- establishment of Pirivenas
- establishment of presses and using printed material
- conducting debates
- establishment of Buddhist schools
- taking steps to protect the local culture

#### Establishment of Pirivenas

Establishment of a number of new Pirivenas led by several scholarly Buddhist monks was one of the most significant measures taken during the Buddhist revival movement. The Pirivenas thus established produced many scholars who had gained a thorough knowledge of languages such as Sinhala, Pali and Sanskrit and their contribution to the Buddhist revival movement was great.

Founder Buddhist Monk	Name of the Pirivena
Walane Siddhartha Thero	Paramadhammachetiya Pirivena -Ratmalana
Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero	Vidyodaya Pirivena, Maligakanda
Ratmalane Sri Dharmaloka Thero	Vidyalankara Pirivena, Peliyagoda

## Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero.

Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero was born in 1827 in Hikkaduwa in the Galle District and became a Buddhist monk in 1840. Sri Sumangala Thero received education under Walane Sri Siddhartha Thero and became an eminent scholar in the country of that time. Establishment of Vidyodaya Pirivena in Maligakanda in 1873 was an outstanding service done by Sri Sumangala Thero who also acted as an influential leader in the Buddhist revival movement that was launched towards the end of the 19th century. Moreover, the Thero also wrote many books such as Sidath Sangara Sannaya and Kavyasekara Sannaya. The service rendered by Sri Sumangala Thero towards the improvement of education of this country in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century is invaluable.



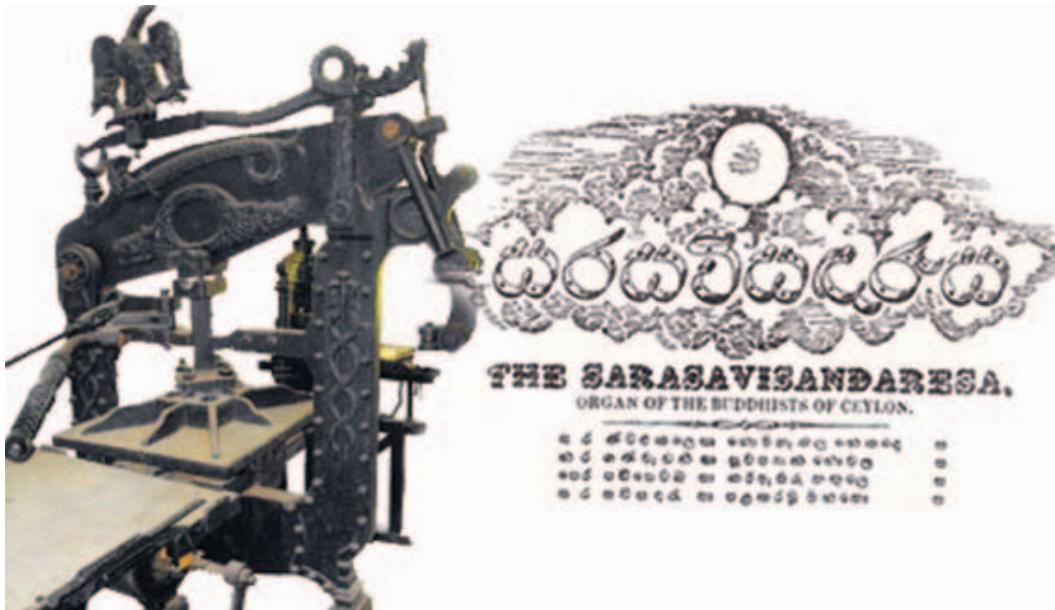
### Establishment of Presses and using Printed Media

By the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there had established by Missionary organizations a number of presses in this country, but Buddhists did not have any press. Therefore, Bulathgama Dharmalankara Siri Sumanathissa Thero raised funds enduring great hardships and established a press for the Buddhists. This press was established in Galle in 1862 and was named Lankopakara Press. Later, many other presses were established by Buddhists.

After the establishment of these presses, the Buddhists were able to publish newspapers, periodicals, and various other publications. The titles of some of those publications are as follows:

*Lakmini Pahana  
Sinhala Jathiya*

*Sarasavi Sandaresa  
Sinhala Bauddhaya*



*Figure 3.2 - The old printing machine preserved in Ranwella Purana Vihara, Kathaluwa and the illustration appeared in the first page of "Sarasavi Sandaresa"*

These newspapers, periodicals and other publications issued by Buddhists as if in competition with the missionaries resulted in stimulating an interest among Buddhists and those publications were also useful in responding to criticism leveled by missionaries.

### Conducting Debates

In addition to the use of printed media as described above, some Bhikkus went on to conduct public debates with the missionary priests. Migettuwatte Gunananda Thero led these debates. The scholars such as Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero, Waskaduwe Subuthi Thero and Ratmalane Dharmaloka Thero also supported these debates. Five of these public debates that were held in five locations in Lanka became famous as The Five Great Debates. A large number of people had gathered at these locations with intense interest to listen to these debates. The debates resulted in stimulating a deep interest in the minds of the Buddhists as the Buddhists' party won in the debates.

## The Five Great Debates

- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Baddegama Debate – 1865 | 2. Varagoda Debate – 1865 |
| 3. Udanwita Debate – 1866  | 4. Gampola Debate – 1871  |
| 5. Panadura Debate – 1873  |                           |

Out of these debates, the debate called panaduraawadaya (Panadura Debate), which was held in Panadura area, became famous internationally. After reading a booklet that was written about this debate, Henry Steel Olcott and Madam Blavatsky, who were Americans, got highly influenced and came to Lanka.

### Migettuwatte Gunananda Thero

Migettuwatte Gunananda Thero was born in a village called Migettuwatta close to Balapitiya in the South. Gunananda Thero rendered an invaluable service towards promotion of Buddhism during the period of religious and national revival in Lanka. Holding public debates on Buddhism with missionary priests was a great service done by Gunananda Thero. Panadura Debate that was held in 1873 led by Gunananda Thero became famous internationally. Five debates that were held by Gunananda Thero have come to be known as Pancha Maha Vaadaya (The Five Great Debates). Further, Migettuwaththe Gunananda Thero rendered a valuable service in the establishment of Parama Vignanaratha Society (Buddhist Theosophical Society) in Colombo and also in the movement to establish Buddhist schools.



### Establishment of Buddhist Schools

In 1880 AD, Henry Steel Olcott and Madam Helena Blavatsky, who were American nationals, arrived in Lanka and embraced Buddhism. Under the guidance of Henry Steel Olcott, an organization named Parama Vignanaratha Society was established in this country and it became an organization in which both Bikkhus and laymen could work together in collaboration.

Until this time, Buddhists had not had the capacity to establish and maintain Buddhist schools mainly due to lack of funds and lack of necessary organizational skills. Henry Steel Olcott acted as a pioneer in establishing Buddhist schools in this country.

A number of Bhikkus and lay men, too, actively supported in this course. Some of those who contributed immensely in establishing Buddhist schools are as follows:



Figure 3.3 – Henry Olcott and Madam Helena Blavatsky

- Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero
- Migettuwatte Gunananda Thero
- Ratmalane Dhammadolka Thero
- Anagarika Dharmapala

As a result of the launch of the movement to establish Buddhist schools in this country with the revival in Buddhism, a number of Buddhist schools were established in main cities of the country with the intervention of Parama Vignanartha Society (Buddhist Theosophical Society). Some of those schools include the following:

- Ananda Vidyalaya in Colombo
- Dharmaraja Vidyalaya in Kandy
- Mahinda Vidyalaya in Galle
- Anuruddha Vidyalaya in Nawalapitiya
- Musaeus College in Colombo

With the establishment of Buddhist schools, measures were also taken to print new school textbooks and to distribute them among children, and also to teach English language to children. Commencement of Dhamma Schools on Sundays, making Vesak Full Moon Day a public holiday, and creation of Buddhist flag, too, are some of the significant events of the Buddhist revival movement.

### **Colonel Henry Steel Olcott**



Colonel Henry Steel Olcott was born on 02 August 1832 in the State of New Jersey in America. He received his primary education at a school in New York and later he entered Colombia University and obtained a degree. Then Henry Olcott joined the Navy of America and worked in the capacity of a Colonel. Later, he pioneered the establishment of Parama Vignanartha Society together with Helena Blavatsky in order to carry out social service work in New York. When he read a booklet on Panadura Debate, he was highly influenced by the content of that booklet and then exchanged letters with Hikkaduwe Sumangala Thero and Miggettuwaththe Gunananda Thero. Consequently, he arrived in Lanka in 1880.

### **Services rendered to this Country by Henry Steel Olcott**

- pioneering the setting up of a fund to establish Buddhist schools
- commencement of Dhamma schools on Sundays
- pioneering in getting Vesak Full Moon Day declared as a public holiday
- working in collaboration with Bhikkus as well as with lay men in designing the Buddhist flag
- starting the newspaper titled ‘Sarasavi Sandaresa’ and taking measures to educate Buddhists

## Taking Steps to protect the Local Culture

The Buddhist chiefs including Anagarika Dharmapala were concerned about the unfortunate situation that had been created due to the challenges that the local culture had faced during the rule of the British. Therefore, these chiefs acted with great commitment to educate people on the value of the local culture fostering patriotic pride. In addition to Anagarika Dharmapala, many others such as Walisinghe Harischandra, Piyadasa Sirisena and John De Silva were among the outstanding leaders who took steps to educate people on the value of the local culture.

Sir D.B. Jayatilake pioneered the establishment of Young Men's Buddhist Association in Colombo and thereby took steps to inculcate in the minds of the youth a feeling of patriotic pride. Apart from that, the Bhikkus and other elites started a temperance movement against establishment liquor shops throughout the country by the English government and that contributed immensely towards preventing people from taking to drinking.

Moreover, another movement was launched to restore the stupas and statues that had fallen into ruin throughout the country and to develop them. Further, Walisinghe Harischandra initiated a movement to protect the Buddhist sacred places in Anuradhapura that had fallen to ruin. Anagarika Dharmapala went to India and took steps to protect the Buddhist sacred places in India. Meanwhile, eminent playwrights such as John De Silva wrote plays based on themes related to History and Buddhism, and staged them. Writers such as Piyadasa Sirisena wrote fictions and they also wrote to newspapers highlighting the value of the local culture.

### Anagarika Dharmapala

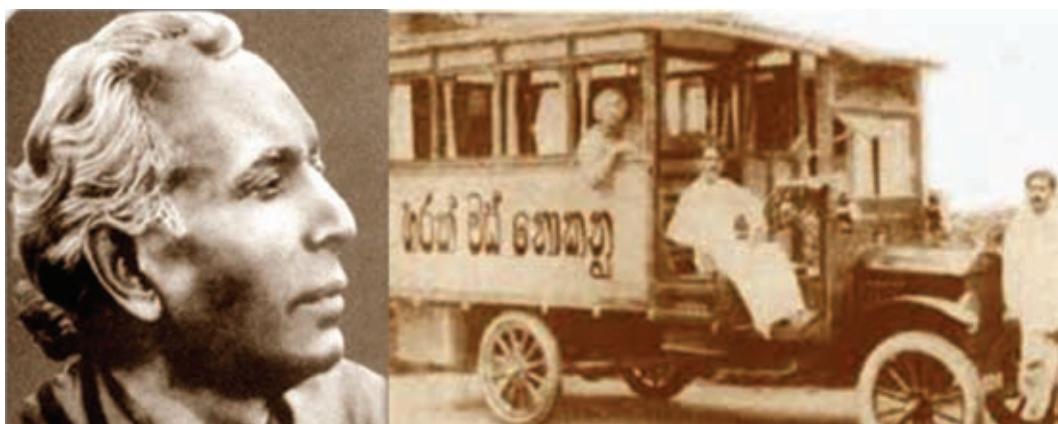


Figure 3.4 – Anagarika Dharmapala and the vehicle he used

Anagarika Dharmapala was born in Colombo in 1864 . His name was Don David Hewavitharana, and later he adopted the name Anagarika Dharmapala. He received primary education at St. Thomas' College and secondary education at St. Benedict's College and Royal College in Colombo.

He then went on to study Pali and also the thripitaka from Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero and from other Buddhist monks. Later he joined the Buddhist Parama Vignanartha Society and adopted a new name as Dharmapala. He spent a homeless life and acted with deep commitment for Buddhism. He enlightened the Lankans on the value of protecting their language, culture and the traditional heritage. Towards the end of his life, when he lived in India, he became a Buddhist monk adopting the name Siri Devamiththa. In 1933, Siri Devamiththa Thero passed away at Saranath in India.

### **Services rendered to the nation by Anagarika Dharmapala**

- implementing measures to establish Buddhist schools
- taking action to protect the local culture
- acting as a leader of the temperance movement to prevent Lankans from consuming liquor
- taking steps to protect Bodhgaya and other Buddhist sacred places in India
- launching publications such as the Sinhala Bauddhaya newspaper and Mahabodhi magazine

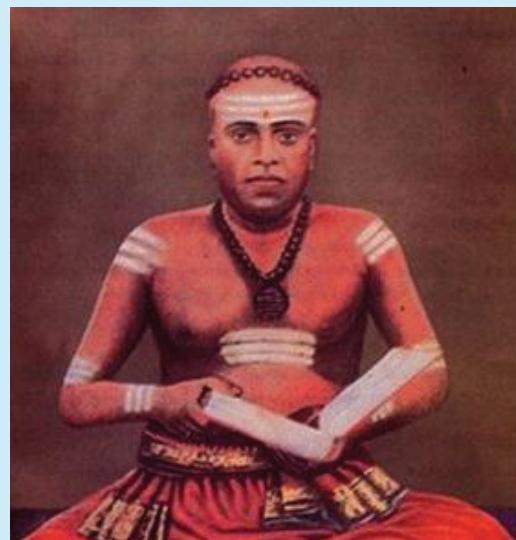
### **3.3 Hindu Revival Movement**

The Hindus, too, were affected by the activities of the missionary organizations in this country. Hinduism was faced with serious challenges as the missionary movement was spreading very strongly, particularly in the Jaffna District. There arose a religious and cultural revival among the Hindus because of the measures implemented in response by the Hindu religious leaders. Establishment of presses, educating people through printed material and public lectures, and establishing schools for Hindu children were the significant features of the Hindu revival movement. It was Arumuga Navalar who led the Hindu revival movement. Arumuga Navalar first started a newspaper entitled “Udayabhanu” in order to educate Tamil people on the value of the Hindu religion and culture. In order to provide religious education to Hindu

children, he launched a movement to establish Hindu schools which commenced with the establishment of “Saiva Prakasha” Vidyalaya in Vannarpannai. Even after the death of Arumuga Navalar, leaders such as Ponnambalam Arunachalam and Ponnambalam Ramanathan continued with the movement to establish Hindu schools.

### **Arumuga Navalar**

Arumuga Navalar was born in 1822 AD and received primary education at a missionary school. Later he served under a clergyman of the Methodist Church. For this very reason, he had a very good understanding about the activities of the missionaries. Arumuga Navalar often emphasized the need for establishing Hindu schools and establishing a press in order to publish reading material for Hindu children to educate them on Hindu religion and also to teach them practices and rituals of the Hindu religion. Accordingly, with the support of donors, Arumuga Navalar established in Jaffna a Hindu school named Saiva Prakasha Vidyasalai. Because of the experience he had gained at missionary schools, he was able to prepare the curriculum for these schools to suit the need of the time. Later on, a number of Hindu schools were established throughout the Jaffna District, but those established by Navalar were the leading ones among them. Saiva administrative council and Hindu education council were established, and steps were taken to establish Hindu schools through those councils. In order to teach English to Tamil children, Shivangala Vidyalaya was established in Jaffna in 1872. Later it became famous as Hindu College in Jaffna. Arumuga Navalar who rendered a valuable service to the Tamil community as described above, passed away in 1879.



### **Services done by Arumuga Navalar to the Nation**

- giving leadership to the Hindu revival movement in Sri Lanka
- pioneering the establishment of Hindu Schools
- taking steps to protect the language, literature and culture of the Hindus
- writing the textbook series titled ‘Bala Patham’ and translating into Tamil the books such as Skanda Puranam and Periya Puranam.



Figure 3.5 – Hindu College in Jaffna

### Ponnambalam Ramanathan

Ponnambalam Ramanathan was born in 1851 and received school education from Royal College, Colombo. Later he worked as an attorney-at-law. He was a great leader who donated money generously to establish schools in order to develop the education of the Hindu children. Ponnambalam Ramanathan established schools such as Parameshvara Vidyalaya and Ramanathan Vidyalaya and worked for the progress of the education of Hindu children.

In 1879, Ponnambalam Ramanathan was selected as a Member of the Legislative Council. In terms of Crewe-McCallum reforms, he was elected as the first educated Lankan Member in 1912.



During the riots between the Sinhalese and Muslims in 1915, he raised his voice on behalf of the Buddhists against the unfair treatment and injustices caused to the Buddhists by the government.

### Ponnambalam Arunachalam

Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam was born in 1853. He was a brother of Ponnambalam Ramanathan. He received education at Royal College in Colombo and graduated from Cambridge University in Britain. He studied law and history for his degree. He became more famous as a politician and social service worker.



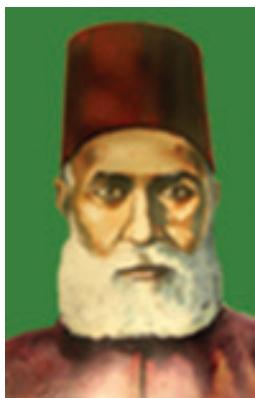
Figure 3.6 - First pages of ' Indusadanam' and 'Muslim Nation', newspapers started during the revival period.

### 3.4 Islamic revival movement



Figure 3.7 – Zahira College in Maradana

## Siddhi Lebbe



At the same time as Buddhist and Hindu revival movements were launched, there also erupted an Islamic revival movement. The Islamic revival movement of this country was led by M.C. Siddhi Lebbe who was a lawyer by profession. Urabi Pasha, who was exiled from Egypt by the English, arrived in Lanka in 1883 and supported Siddhi Lebbe in the Islamic revival movement. In order to educate the Muslim community through printed media, Siddhi Lebbe started publishing a magazine titled Muslim Nesan. Siddhi Lebbe also took steps to provide Muslim children with education that was in compliance with the teachings of Islam by way of establishing schools such as Zahira College in Colombo. After Siddhi Lebbe, leaders such as T.B. Jaya worked with great commitment for the development of education of Muslim children.

## T.B. Jaya



T.B. Jaya was born in January 1890 in Galagedara. After completing his school education, he worked as a teacher at a number of schools such as Prince of Wales College and Ananda Vidyalaya. Sharing the experience he had gained in the education sector, he contributed immensely towards the movement for establishing and developing Muslim schools. He also wrote articles to the magazine titled Ceylon Muslim Review. Later he

became the principal of Zahira College in Colombo and went on to establish branches of Zahira College in many parts of the country. Also, T.B. Jaya acted as a Representative in the Legislative and, joining hands with the Sinhala and Tamil leaders, worked for promoting national unity.

## Activity

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Present a speech before the class on the title ‘ Leaders of the National and Religious Revival’.

# 4

## Independence Movement of India



### Introduction

Arrival of the Portuguese national Vasco da Gama and his team in India in 1498 in search of countries during the exploration age was a significant event in the political history of Asia. After Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the French arrived in India from time to time and established their power in the coastal areas of India. However, of all those Europeans, it was only the English that were able to establish a stable political power in India. By adopting various strategies, the English spread their power throughout the entire country and made India a colony of the British Empire. Towards the end of the 19th century, a national independence movement was launched against the rule of the British in India and, by the beginning of the following century, it had developed into a very strong patriotic movement. An outstanding feature of the independence movement of India was that all Indians, who spoke different languages and who belonged to various ethnic groups, got united and rose with extreme patriotism against the British to win independence for their motherland. Because of such features, the independence movement in India was an example to the other British colonies in Asia. The impact of the Europeans on India, spread of power in India by the English, the nature of the independence movement of India and the outstanding leaders who led that movement are discussed in this lesson.

## 4.1 The Impact of the Europeans on India

After the arrival of the Portuguese in India, the trade activities that had so far been carried out by the Arabs around the Indian Ocean severely declined. After the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the French arrived in India and then there arose disputes among those groups themselves on trade activities and spread of political power in India. Even by that time, several European nations had established warehouses and fortresses along the coastal areas of India and therefore the conflicts that erupted between those groups had an impact on India, too. At the early period after the arrival of the European nations in India, their main intentions were to earn profits through trade and to spread religion; however, with the eruption of conflicts between themselves, they took an intense interest in spreading political power in India. In the process of spreading political power in India, the English were doing well ahead of the other nations. As a result, India became a colony of the British Empire.

### Arrival of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the French in India

By the time Vasco da Gama arrived in India, there was no political unity in the country. Apart from the Vijaya Nagar State in the South, there were a number of independent kingdoms in various parts of the country. Further, there were several small kingdoms such as Calicut and Goa along the coastal parts of India. Lack of unity among these kingdoms paved the way for the English to establish their power in several parts along the coast.

Alfonzo de Albuquerque, who was appointed the Portuguese Viceroy in the East in 1509, contributed a lot towards the establishment of Portuguese power in India and in the Indian Ocean region. He captured Goa in 1510 and not only made Goa the Eastern Center of the Portuguese, but went on to establish Portuguese trade power around the Indian Ocean, too. During the later period, the Portuguese spread their power to many areas in India, but they did not succeed in going beyond the coastal areas into the country to establish their power in areas inside the country. However, they made Goa their Centre and maintained trade monopoly in the Indian Ocean for over a century.

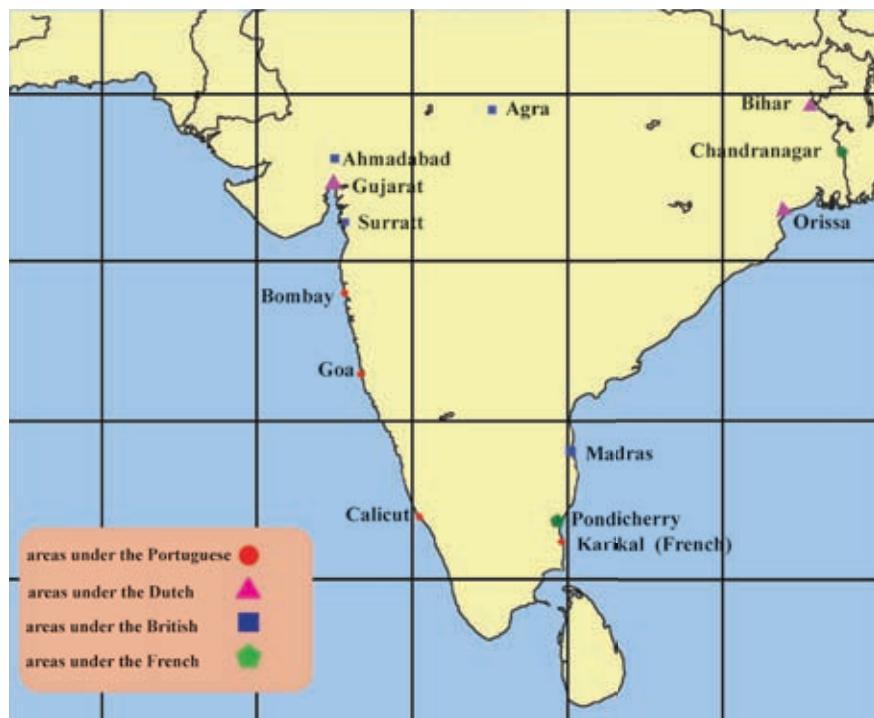
It was from the Dutch that a threat was posed to the Portuguese power in the coastal areas of India for the first time. The Dutch Established the East India Company (VOC) in 1602 and took steps to send to the Indian Ocean a powerful fleet of ships. With the arrival of the Dutch, there erupted conflicts between the Portuguese and the Dutch regarding trade and spreading of political power. The Dutch first directed their attention towards the southeastern countries where spices grew in abundance. After driving the Portuguese from the islands where spices grew, the Dutch then turned towards India. In the same way as Albuquerque implemented measures to spread Portuguese power, the Dutch national Pieterszoon Coen took steps to spread the Dutch power in Asia. Consequently, Dutch power was established in areas such as Gujarat, Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar in India.

The English, whose motherland is Britain, established the British East India Company and arrived in Asia in the early part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Initially, the English directed their attention towards countries such as Java and Sumatra, but when conflicts erupted with the Dutch, they began to turn towards India, too. At the time the English reached India, the Mogul Empire in India was very powerful. Therefore, after obtaining permission from the Mogul Emperor Jahangir, the English established a warehouse in Surat in 1613. With the passage of time, the English, however, succeeded in establishing their power in many areas such as Ahmadabad, Agra, and Madras in India. When King Charles II of England married Princess Catherine of Portugal, the Portuguese handed over to the English as dowry, the area of Bombay which had been under Portuguese rule.

It was after the other European nations that the French directed their attention towards India. The French who established Eastern French Company in 1664 arrived in India in 1668 and built a warehouse in Surat. Later, they built fortresses in many areas such as Pondicherry, Karaikal and Chandranagar in India.

## The Mogul Empire

It was a ruler named Babur who laid the foundation for the Mogul Empire. In 1526, he captured many areas in the north of India and established a separate rule in those areas. King Akbar the Great, who was a grandson of Babur's, expanded Mogul power to the status of an empire. He ruled the empire during the period from 1556 to 1605 and spread his power in a large part of the north of India. Emperors Jahangir and Sha Jahan, who came to power after Akbar were outstanding emperors, too. King Sha Jahan was the creator of the world famous construction the 'Taj Mahal'. However, during the rule of Aurangzeb who came to power after Sha Jahan, the Mogul empire began to suffer its downfall.



Map 4.1 Distribution of European Power in India

## India becoming a Colony of the British Empire

The English and the French were two nations that often came into conflict in Europe. Therefore, arrival of the French in India was a threat to the power of the English in India. By the mid 18th century, the power of the Portuguese and the Dutch had declined. Therefore, establishing power in the inland of India became a conflict between the English and the French.

After the death of India's last Mogul emperor, Aurangzeb, in 1707, the powerful Mogul empire that had spread its power in a large part of India started to suffer its downfall. As a result, various ethnic groups in India that had been tolerating the rule of the Mogul empire established independent states resulting in the creation of a number of regional kingdoms in India. Lack of unity between these small kingdoms was very advantageous for the English. The naval power the English possessed and the support the British East India Company received from the government of England were very useful for the English in India in fighting against the French.

In this way, the English, based in Madras, and the French, based in Pondicherry, fought against each other in order to establish power in the coastal parts of India. It was only after the capture of Pondicherry by the English that the battles between the English and the French came to an end. With this defeat, the power of the French in India became very weak.

Establishment of the power of the English in the inland parts of India began from Bengal. The English, who took advantage of the disunity and dissents that existed between Bengal and its surrounding areas, succeeded in bringing Bengal under the rule of British East India Company towards the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. The English governors who were appointed to India after that went on to expand their power in the inland parts of India by way of war and by adopting various other strategies as well. In addition to expanding their power through wars, adoption of strategic policies such as subsidiary agreements and bona vacantia theory, was significant.

Under the subsidiary agreement strategy, the British East India Company entered into agreements with native leaders who were engaged in internal disputes or those who



Figure 4.1 – A troop of Sepoy soldiers

were faced with threats from enemies outside and deployed the English army for the security of those kingdoms. In terms of the agreements, if the kingdoms which obtained the services of the English army failed to pay to the Company the charges for obtaining such security services, a part of those kingdoms had to be given to the Company. Through this strategy, the English were able to capture many parts of India including Hyderabad and Mysore.

According to bona vacantia theory, the kingdoms of which there was no rightful heir to the throne from the royal lineage after the death of the king were considered to be belonging to the English company. The English in this manner established their power in a number of small kingdoms such as Jaipur and Nagpur. In this way, towards the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the English succeeded in capturing the entire India through their war power and by adopting various other strategies.

#### 4.2 Sepoy Rebellion of 1857



Map 4.2- Areas where Sepoy Rebellion spread

The Indians who were enlisted in the army under the English were called Sepoy soldiers. As India is a very large country, the English army alone was not sufficient to provide security to the country. Therefore the English enlisted to their army as many Indians as three times the number of English soldiers that had been brought to India.

Most of the Indians in the Sepoy army were Hindus and Muslims. In 1857, these Sepoy soldiers launched a massive rebellion against the rule of the English. It was called the Sepoy rebellion.

From the very beginning the Indians did not like the rule of the British East India Company in India. Therefore, there erupted from time to time in India rebellions against the rule of the British East India Company. During the period from 1763 to 1856, there erupted over twenty five of such rebellions.

The English crushed such rebellions that erupted in various parts of India from time to time before they further expanded to other parts. However, the rebellion that was launched by the Sepoy soldiers in 1857 was not limited to the army, it expanded outside the army and spread among the general public.

The English had to strive hard to suppress that rebellion. In some areas, the Sepoy soldiers joined civilians and drove away the English from those areas, and they tried to establish a rule by the natives. Because of these reasons, the 1857 rebellion stimulated feelings of independence in the minds of the Indians and therefore it is considered to be a landmark event in the history of the independence movement of India. There were a number of factors that caused the eruption of the Sepoy rebellion:



Figure 4.2 – A painting of the Sepoy rebellion

### Reasons that led to 1857 Rebellion:

- The strong dissension that Indians had against the policy that the English had adopted in capturing the areas in India
- The disappointment that the Indians felt against the rule that was carried out by the English for the benefit of the English
- Crippling of local industries and loss of job opportunities because of the economic policies adopted by the British Company
- Patronage given by the English government to spread Christianity neglecting the rituals and beliefs of the native people
- The disappointment felt by Sepoy soldiers towards the English

The immediate cause for the Sepoy rebellion was created from within the army itself. The English introduced a new type of rifle called Enfield rifles for the use of the Sepoy army. The cartridges used for such rifles came in a packing which had to be broken open with the teeth in order to take the cartridges out. A rumour spread among Sepoy soldiers that beef tallow or lard (pork fat tallow) had been applied on those cartridges. Hindus considered the cow to be a sacred animal while the Muslims considered the pig to be an unclean animal. Sepoy soldiers believed it to be degrading treatment by the English to make them break open such fat smeared packaging with the mouth. Therefore Sepoy soldiers refused to use this new type of rifle. As English officers imposed penalties on Sepoy soldiers who refused to use those rifles, the conflict between the English and Sepoy soldiers escalated. That was the immediate cause of the Sepoy rebellion. Meanwhile, a Sepoy soldier named Mangal Pandey shot an English military officer. As the English imposed penalty on Mangal Pandey, the disappointment of the Sepoy soldiers seemed to have further intensified. Consequently, on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1857, the Sepoy soldiers in the Meerut military camp shot the English military officers, kept them in confinement, freed the other Indian soldiers and launched the rebellion.

Sepoy soldiers who rose against the English army broke into the City of Delhi and soon captured the Delhi City. This resulted in the rebellion, which had been within the army, spread among the civilians, as well. The rebels rose against the English rule and declared Bahadur Shah, who was a Mogul ruler in Delhi, as the Emperor of India. The news of this political revolt in Delhi spread throughout India and



Figure 4.3 – Mangal Pandey

the rebellion spread to many of the areas in the north of India. Rulers in those areas who were native Indians joined the rebels and took to fighting against the English rule causing the English to suffer severe hardships. In this way, many of the areas in the north of India were under the rule of the rebels for nearly a year.

It was considered degrading for the English to lose a city like Delhi. Therefore the English army fought with all their might and recaptured the city of Delhi. In this battle the rebels suffered heavy losses. Ultimately the English succeeded in suppressing the rebellions that had started in each of the areas that the English had lost and finally they managed to bring all

those areas under their rule. In this way, the rebellion failed and, by July 1858, the English had once again established their rule in all areas in the North of India.

### Reasons that led to the Failure of the Rebellion

Although the rebellion spread very fast because of the general disappointment that the Indians felt against the English, the rebels failed to continue to safeguard the areas they had captured from the English. The rebels neither had a vision required for establishing a stable administration in the areas they captured nor did they have a long-term plan for establishing their rule in those areas. Except for the firearms the rebels had plundered from the armouries belonging to the English, the rebels did not have any means of providing the required weaponry either. For these reasons, the rebels had to fight against the English under very difficult circumstances. The facts that nearly one half of the Indian soldiers continued to support the English army and that some of the citizens did not join the rebellion also contributed to the suppression of the rebellion by the English. The Indians who joined the rebellion did not lack fighting spirit, commitment to fight and dissension against the English, but the attacks the English launched could be resisted only because of the courage the Indians had. Thus the reasons that led to the failure of the rebellion can be summarized as follows:

- lack of a general plan or a future plan for the rebels
- not having a central leadership
- lack of weaponry to resist the attacks of the English army
- poor exchange of messages and communication among rebels
- support of some of the Indians being given to the English

### The Impact of the Rebellion

Although the 1857 rebellion became a failure, it resulted in a number of positive impacts which were crucial for the future of India. Some of them are as follows:

- The rule of the British East India Company was put to an end and the responsibility of governing India was taken over by the British government
- Britain agreeing not to capture areas in India any further and to recognize the rights of the Maharajas
- Granting religious freedom to Indians
- Indians beginning to manage the independence movement in a more organized manner

### 4.3 Significant Features of India's Independence Movement

#### The Background to the Establishment of National Association

The period of about half a century after the failure of Sepoy rebellion was a period during which feelings of nationalism were stimulated in the minds of all Indians dominating different aspirations that were unique to each community. There seemed to have been great interest in protecting the traditional local cultures from the influence of the western culture that spread in India during that time under the rule of the English. It is also seen that a number of organizations were established during this period with the objective of bringing about religious and social reforms. On the one hand, it took the form of a religious and cultural revival that sparked in India.

The eminent scholar Ram Mohan Roy, who had mastered western languages as well as the eastern languages, laid the foundation for a religious revival from the very

beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The organization named Brahmo Samaj, which was established by Ram Mohan Roy, paved the way for a religious and cultural revival among the Hindus. Therefore he is considered to be the pioneer of the Hindu revival movement. Further, organizations such as Prarthana Samaj and Arya Samaj were prominent among the organizations that worked towards bringing about the Hindu religious and cultural revival. In addition to them, organizations such as Ahmadiyya movement and Aligarh movement contributed towards bringing about a cultural revival among the Muslims while organizations such as Singh Sabha brought about a cultural revival among the Sikhs. These organizations functioned in a humanitarian manner and, towards the end of the 19th century, they were actively engaged in working towards shaping the thinking of the Indians to suit the time. During the rule of the British, the highway system and communication in India were developed and as a result the entire country was administratively combined. This situation contributed immensely towards creating an Indian nationalism dominating the identities of different communities such as Hindus, Muslims, Bengalese, and Punjabis, that had existed up to that time. During the period of the religious revival, steps were taken to raise awareness among people by way of assembling people belonging to various ethnic communities and addressing them and also through printed media including newspapers. This also resulted in a revival in the field of education in line with the religious revival. At this time there was a great interest in establishing new schools in India, giving education to women and improving the education of women.

Because of the opportunities for education that were created in India during the rule of the British, some Indians went to Europe and received their education there. Through these opportunities, the educated Indians gained understanding about the western attitudes towards freedom, democracy and human rights etc. The educated Indians, who received education from countries such as England and France, highly valued the freedom enjoyed by the people in European countries. However, they were disappointed that people in their motherland had lost their freedom because of the rule of the English in India. However higher the education the Indians received was, up to that time, the English had not given the opportunity for Indians at least to enter the civil service of India. For this reason, the educated people of India came forward to organize people and to form various organizations with the objective of working towards winning their rights. As discussed above, by the beginning of the 20th century, a number of factors that contributed towards stimulating patriotic feelings were identified.

### Factors that resulted in stimulating Patriotic Feelings among Indians

- India getting politically united under the rule of the British, and evoking the feeling of unity among Indians because of the development of Highways and communication
- Looking down on Indians by the English
- Knowledge that existed in Western countries on freedom, equality and democracy being transferred to India through the scholars who received their education in western countries
- Taking steps by the educated middle class in India to stimulate patriotic feelings in the minds of people by way of establishing various organizations and using mass media

### Establishment of Indian National Association

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a number of political organizations of various types had been established by the educated people and the business community in India because of the political consideration they had. However, none of these organizations had the capacity to carry out their political activities throughout the entire country because India was such a large country, and they did not have the ability to bring the political views of all the scholars, who lived in various parts

of the country, on to one platform either. Under these circumstances, there had arisen the strong need for creating one powerful organization which was capable of carrying out political activities throughout the entire country and of which all Indians could get membership without any differences.



Figure 4.4 – Allan Octavian Hume



Figure 4.5 – The first meeting of the Indian National Association

By year 1885, the mutual understanding and the solidarity that were required for forming a national association among the educated people in India could be developed. Accordingly, Allan Octavian Hume, who was a retired officer of the civil service of India, implemented necessary measures to form such an organization in which the entire country was represented. Hume, who was the founder of the Indian National Association, was given the necessary support by the English government as well. The English thought that, if all the scholars in India were brought together into one association, the government could easily learn the opinion of those scholars. Accordingly, under the guidance of Hume, a number of representatives who represented various organizations that existed in India gathered in Bombay in December 1885 and formed the Indian National Association. It was a landmark event in the history of the independence movement of India. W.C. Banerji, who was a Bengali national, was appointed as the first President of the Indian National Association. Thereafter, it became the key organization which led the political protests in India.

## Objectives of Indian National Association

Indian National Association was an organization which functioned disregarding all ethnic, religious and caste differences. Although this Association was limited to the educated and the business community at the initial stage, it later developed into a very powerful organization that was spread throughout the entire India and was well represented by all groups of people. Moreover, Indian National Association was the organization that led all activities of India's independence struggle movement from 1885 to 1947 until India won independence. The objectives of this Association, which led political protest campaigns for over six decades, broadened from time to time. Towards the final stage, the key objective of this organization was to win full independence for India. At the initial period after the National Association had been formed, the objectives of the Association had not been as developed as to that of working towards winning full freedom.

The main objectives of the Indian National Association at the initial stage were as follows:

- working towards promoting solidarity and cooperation among all Indians
- working towards stimulating patriotic feelings in all Indians irrespective of their caste, creed, ethnicity and areas they lived in
- taking measures to collect views and proposals that the educated Indians possessed and also to study the social issues that prevailed in Indian society
- presentation of proposals and ideas for future plans required for working towards the wellbeing of the Indians

## Functioning of Indian National Association

At the initial stage, the Indian National Association was limited to the educated people such as lawyers, engineers and doctors. The representatives of the Association were not those who came from the village; they came from urban areas. Expecting that the English rulers would do justice to India and be fair to all Indians, these educated people tried as far as possible to be cooperative with the English government. They were called the moderates in the Association. W.C. Benerji, the first president of the Indian National Association, Dadabhai Naoroji, who became the second president of the Indian National Association, and Surendranath Banerjee are examples for some of the moderates. During the period from 1885 to 1905, the Indian National Association functioned under the influence of those moderates. The requests that

the Association submitted to the English government at the initial period after the establishment of the Association were as follows:

- broadening the legislative council and increasing its powers
- giving the opportunity for Indians to represent the Executive Council
- increasing the number of Indians that were recruited to the civil service of India
- holding the examinations for recruitment to the civil service not only in England, but in India as well
- reducing government expenditure on war related activities

As far as the requests that had been submitted to the government by the Indian National Association are taken into consideration, it is clear that they had been focused on getting more opportunities for Indians to increase their involvement in administrative affairs. Also, they made efforts to get the government agree to their demands by implementing measures such as submitting petitions to the authorities, having discussions with the authorities, holding meetings, and giving publicity to their activities through writings, which did not disturb the activities of the government or cause any inconvenience to the government, either. However, when the government did not accommodate their demands, it became clear to the members of the Association that such limited activities were not effective in getting their demands fulfilled by the government. During the period from 1905 to 1919, there was a change in the policies of the Indian National Association and also in their activities as well. Such changes seemed to have been caused by the facts that the powers of the moderates within the association had weakened by that time and a group of youth who were radicals had become more powerful within the Association. These youths rejected the policies of those moderates and, hence, they were called extremists. These extremists believed that, rather than being cooperative with the government, more aggressive measures would have to be taken against the government in order to get their demands fulfilled.



Figure 4.6 – Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy

Further, these extremists criticized the acts of submitting petitions to the English government, and sending representatives for discussions, and they considered such acts of pleading before authorities as political begging. Therefore, they took steps to take the Indian National Association to a more aggressive path. Some of the writers who wrote about the freedom struggle of India have stated that it was Lal, Bal and Pal who promoted the extremist thinking. Here they referred to the three nationalists, Lal Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Bipin Chandra Pal, who led the extremist groups.

A campaign was launched to boycott the goods imported from Britain. This campaign in which people boycotted using goods produced in Britain and promoted using of Indian products was called Swadeshi (domestic) movement. The leaders of the Indian National Association took measures to spread throughout the entire India the Swadeshi movement that was started in Bengal.

While promoting the use of Indian products, there also was an interest in developing local industries. Therefore, the Swadeshi movement also resulted in the development of the thinking on economic freedom, too. Getting accustomed to the use of local

products by the Indians contributed immensely towards the development of local industries and other businesses in India even after winning independence.

While the Independence movement was being implemented in India, the English introduced several reforms. Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 and Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1919 are examples for such reforms. Through these constitutional reforms participation of the natives in the administration process was gradually increased. However, the Indian National Association was not satisfied with those reforms. By year 1920, the key objective of the Association had been to win self-rule rather than effecting such minor reforms. Self-rule meant a system of government in which India was ruled by Indians themselves while the country still remained under the British Empire. On the one hand, it was similar to a Dominion status. Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Annie Besant are examples for leaders who promoted the concept of self-rule.

In 1919, the English government introduced a special act called the Rowlatt Act and made efforts at restricting the freedom of the Indians. In terms of the Rowlatt Act, the government had the powers to imprison any person for a period of up to two years without trial at a court of law. The Indian National Association, with the support of Mahatma Gandhi, launched a Satyagraha campaign against this law. The term 'Satyagraha' is defined as a means of making the opponent understand the reality by showing the power of truth. It is a means of nonviolent protest introduced by Mahatma Gandhi. Dissent against the Rowlatt Act was shown throughout the country and it resulted in the creation of a strong public protest. Meanwhile, in April 1919, the army shot at a gathering of thousands of Indians who had gathered at the town of Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar for a meeting. About 400 Indians were killed in this shooting while many other Indians were injured. This is called the 'Jallianwala Bagh tragedy'.

Around 1920, antigovernment feelings of the Indians heightened due to several reasons such as imposing of Rowlatt Act, Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and imposition of martial law in Bengal. Some Indians considered it to be cowardice to suffer all sorts of such degrading treatment by the English government without acting against the steps taken by the English government to suppress the people engaged in the independence movement. In December 1920, the Indian National Association, having realized the political situation that existed in the country at that time, made arrangements to launch a non-cooperation movement – a movement to stop extending their cooperation to the government. By January 1921, the non-cooperation movement had spread throughout the country. Under this

movement, Indians gave back to the English government the titles and honorary titles the English had awarded to them, boycotted imported goods, boycotted courts of law and other government offices, boycotted the Legislative Council, and took many such measures. Leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and C.R. Das travelled round the country and got actively involved in implementing those measures. The English government was greatly inconvenienced because of such non-violent measures implemented by the Indian National Association. Through such struggles, the Association could get closer and closer to the ordinary masses. In this way, in the struggle for freedom, people throughout India had been rallying round the Indian National Association since 1920. Some of the measures implemented by the Indian National Association after 1920 are as follows:

- launching the non-cooperation movement
- launching a Hartal campaign against the Simon Commission that was appointed in 1928 to examine the constitutional reforms in India and make necessary recommendations
- convening an all-party conference with the participation of all political parties in India and taking measures to formulate a constitution that suited India
- in 1929, making 'gaining full self-rule status' or winning independence the key objective of the Indian National Association and taking steps to achieve that goal
- organizing a civil disobedience campaign against the government
- by 1942, launching a Satyagraha campaign with the slogan 'Englishmen, quit India'

The period from 1920-1947 was the most active period of the Indian National Association. During this period, not only the Indian National Association, the entire independence movement had come under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian National Association seemed to have taken to non-violent protest strategies such as holding Satyagraha campaigns, non-cooperation with the government, holding protest marches, and civil disobedience. For these very reasons, it is evident that the Association had become closer and closer to the general public of India and was also getting closer to their target of winning independence.

## Establishment of the Muslim League

When the English governed their colonies, they adopted a policy of governing countries so that the citizens become divided and are prevented from getting united against the rule of the English. The English had realized that, when the majority of the people act against the government, the government could obtain the support of the minority communities by way of dividing the people of the country based on religious and ethnic differences.

The majority of the Indians are Hindus and there also live a considerable number of Muslims. At the early period after the establishment of the Indian National Association, the educated Hindus and the Muslims were faced with the same problems and therefore they seemed to have acted in unity within the Association. Later, however, when the Association was going ahead with its activities, some of the Muslim leaders thought that problems related to the rights of the Muslims are not given due consideration as against those of the Hindus. Among the youths who later joined the Indian National Association, there also was a group who believed that the traditional Hindu morality was spiritually greater than the modern western culture. For these reasons, it seems that some of the Muslim leaders had wanted to organize themselves separately in order to win the rights of the Muslims. As a result, in 1906, All India Muslim Association or the Muslim League was formed under the leadership of Aga Khan.

## Strategies adopted by the English

In the same way as the English had adopted various strategies when they captured India, they also employed all possible strategies to cripple the independence movement of the Indians. The strategy the British used mostly to intimidate Indians and also to cripple the freedom struggle was to arrest people and to imprison them. Therefore, thousands of Indians were arrested including the leaders of the Indian National Association, too. Outstanding leaders of the Association such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were arrested from time to time and were imprisoned. Such acts further strengthened the struggle instead of crippling it and protests thus escalated. During the period when Indians had implemented the non-cooperation campaign, C.R. Das, who was a leader of that campaign, was arrested in 1921. At that moment, the youth in Bengal got so annoyed that thousands of youths were reported to have come forward demanding that they be arrested. Therefore, arresting of people was not successful as a strategy of crippling the freedom struggle.

Apart from arresting people, the English on various occasions seemed to have used a number of other strategies such as disturbing protest campaigns and meetings using the police and the military forces, and declaring the martial law. The English rulers also went on to incite racial differences in order to prevent people from getting united against the government.

Partitioning of Bengal in 1905 is an example for such strategies. The English, who believed that, if Hindus and Muslims got united and rose against them, it would be very disadvantageous for the English, and therefore they encouraged Muslims to form a separate association. As a result, the Muslim League was formed in 1906.



Bengal, which was located to the northeast of India, had been the largest province of India by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Hindus as well as Muslims and several other minority communities lived in Bengal. As millions of people lived in Bengal, which was very large in extent of land area, the English government decided that it should be divided into two parts in order to make administration easier. By this time, activities of the freedom struggle of India

had been well spread throughout the province of Bengal. Therefore the Indians had the belief that the English were trying to create conflicts between different communities in order to divide Bengal so that the independence movement could be crippled through that. As a result, there erupted very heavy protests against dividing Bengal. However, the English government did not pay heed to such protests and finally divided Bengal in 1905.

Another strategy that the English adopted with the view to crippling the independence movement was to introduce constitutional reforms. The rulers appointed a number of committees and, on many occasions, public representations were obtained on constitutional reforms and discussions were held. However, the leaders of the inde-

pendence movement were not satisfied with such constitutional reforms. The Indian National Association never changed its stance and never moved away from its target of winning self-rule status or a full self-rule. Hence, they went on to organize people to achieve their target. Once Bal Ganghadar Tilak said, "Self-rule is my heritage by birth, and I will achieve it". Such statements show how strong the determination of Indians was for winning independence.

### Activities of Mahatma Gandhi



Figure 4.7 – Mahathma Gandhi addressing a meeting

Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest of the leaders of the independence movement of India. He worked paying no heed to race, creed, caste or class and valued non-violence. Further, it was Mahatma Gandhi who turned the freedom struggle of India into a non-violent movement. After completing his education Mahatma Gandhi became a lawyer and served in South Africa. He returned to his motherland, India, in 1915. During the first few years after his return to India, he got involved in solving the problems faced by the labourer and farmer communities.

Mahatma Gandhi intervened in addressing the grievances of the farmers who cultivated indigo in the District of Champaran in the State of Bihar. The struggle he carried out to solve the problems of those farmers was called the **Champaran peasant movement**. Further, the struggle he carried out to provide relief to the people who had been unable to pay taxes due to the spread of epidemics and the prolonged drought in Kheda area in the State of Gujarat was called the **Kheda movement**. The life of Mahatma Gandhi is full of such non-violent struggles.



4.8 Dandi march

During the period from 1920 – 1947, Mahatma Gandhi acted as the leader of the independence movement of India. With the objective of winning independence for India, Mahatma Gandhi implemented a number of non-violent strategies such as carrying out Satyagrahas, non-cooperation with the government, civil disobedience, engaging in protest marches, and carrying out Upavasas. These strategies were carried out without any bloodshed or any violent activities. Not only the rich, but also the poor farmers and labourers in India could join these struggles easily.

For these reasons, hundreds of thousands of Indians, without feeling any difference, joined the struggles carried out by Mahatma Gandhi. Accordingly, it was Mahatma Gandhi who built up the relationship between the Indian National Association and the general public of the country.



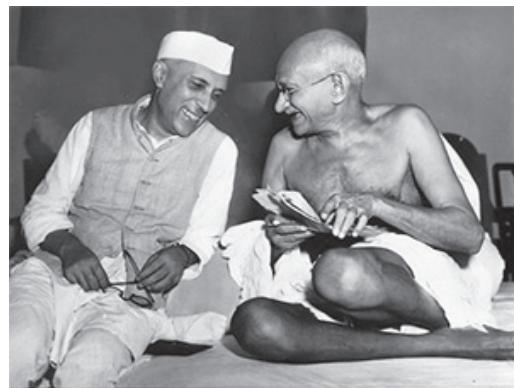
How people launched the non-cooperation campaign in 1921 under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi was described above. Taking a further step, a civil disobedience campaign was launched under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in 1930. Although salt was produced at a very low cost in India, the government had imposed very high taxes on salt and thereby earned huge profits through the sale of salt. Under the civil disobedience campaign, Mahatma Gandhi took steps to violate the laws related to salt in protest of the government. It was called the **Dandi march**.

The march from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi beach, which was of a distance of about 400 miles, was started in March, 1930. Thousands of Indians, headed by Mahatma Gandhi, took part in this march which showed the Indians that they could obtain salt without paying taxes to the English, and, therefore, the march was a great success. Such marches were held throughout India. While engaged in the civil disobedience campaign, textile and liquor that were imported from Britain were boycotted, too. The English faced severe difficulties because of such protests. Consequently, the English took steps to arrest thousands of Indians including Mahatma Gandhi. The protests that were launched throughout the country came to an end only after an agreement was entered into between Mahatma Gandhi and the Viceroy of India. It is called Gandhi-Irwin pact of 1931.

Since such non-violent struggles that were launched under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi with the support of the National Association were spread throughout India, the English found it difficult to suppress those struggles using either the police or the army. Moreover, through these struggles, Mahatma Gandhi succeeded in getting the aspirations of all Indians centralized on the noble target of winning independence.

### India becoming Independent

The English government was greatly inconvenienced because of the civil disobedience campaign launched by the Indians in 1930. Therefore, several rounds of round-table discussions were held between the English government and the leaders of the independence movement. Thereafter, in 1935, the English introduced a new Government of India Act for India.



In terms of the provisions of that act, there established in India a ruling system that consisted of a federal structure that also involved representatives of Indians. Although the National Association was not in full agreement with this system,

the National Association, as well as the Muslim League, contested in the elections that were held under this system. At the election that was held in 1937, the Indian National Association won power in most of the states and cabinets of ministers were appointed for those states, too. After that system of government had been in effect for about two years, World War II broke out in 1939. As the English connected India to the war without consulting the views of the Indians, the Indian National Association was strongly against the measures taken by the English and therefore, the Ministers who represented the Association resigned their positions.

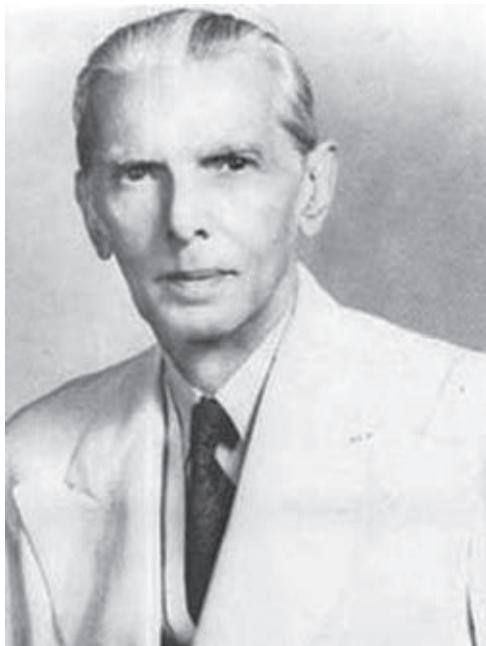


Figure 4.9 – Mohammed Ali Jinnah

As the English needed the support of the Indians in the World War, the English gave the pledge to the Indians that they would establish a system of ruling in which the powers of internal administration would be vested with the Indians after the World War was over. As the National Association was opposed to any other system of government that would be established other than giving independence to India, protests erupted once again. Since Japan joined the war in 1941, the English feared that the Indians would support the Japanese if Japan invaded India. Therefore, the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill expressed his willingness to consider the request of the Indians and sent Stafford Cripps as a special envoy to India. As Indians were opposed to the mission of the English envoy, it did not yield the expected results. By this time, the Muslim League, under the leadership of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, had launched a huge campaign for establishing a separate country named Pakistan for the Muslim people. The leaders of the National Association, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, had launched a massive campaign under the slogan 'Englishmen, quit India'. In response the government declared the National Association an illegal organization and arrested the leaders of the Association.

World War II ended in 1945. At the parliamentary elections held in Britain, Churchill's party was defeated and a Labour Party government came into power. As far as the period from the beginning of the World War II to the time India was given independence is taken into consideration, several significant features of the independence movement of India can be noted as follows.

- the protests that were launched demanding independence for India intensified,
- the British understood that they could no longer keep India as one of their colonies,
- the British government had discussions with the Indians and made arrangements to grant independence to India.
- the Muslim league implemented a separate campaign demanding that a separate country named Pakistan be established.

Consequent to the discussions that took place for a long time since 1945 between the British authorities and Indian leaders, a temporary government was established in India in September 1946. Lord Mountbatten, who acted as the last British Viceroy in India, expedited the process of giving powers to Indians. Accordingly, on 15 August 1947, India became an independent country that is completely free from the rule of the British. By the time India was granted independence, it had to be divided into two countries as India and Pakistan as a result of the conflicts that had escalated between the Hindus and the Muslims. As Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, who was a prominent leader of India's independence movement, had stated, the ethnic conflicts that existed between the Hindus and the Muslims did not end. As far as the independence movement of India is concerned, it is also evident that, although the British who had established a vast empire succeeded in defeating the great dictator of German, Hitler, in the World War II with the support of its allies, they failed to defeat the non-violent movement of Gandhi of India.

#### 4.4 Prominent Leaders of India's Independence Movement

##### Dadabhai Naoroji

Dadabhai Naoroji was born in Mumbai in 1825, and after completing his education he worked as a professor of mathematics at Elphinstone College in Mumbai. Later, he went to London where he acted with commitment to implement measures to raise awareness among people in England on the political and economic situation of India. Naoroji was a pioneer member of the Indian National Association and became the president of the Association on a few occasions. He was a moderate and was particularly interested in the economic development of India. Naoroji is also famous as a leader who first explained how India was gradually becoming a poor country because of the economic policy adopted by the English. Naoroji was a great scholar and was one of the oldest members of the Independence Movement of India. Hence, he was called The Grand Old Man of India.



### Surendranath Banerjee

Surendranath Banerjee, who was born in 1848 in Calcutta, was a Bengali national. He obtained his first degree from India and went to England for higher education where he passed the Civil Service examination which was considered to be a very high examination. Thus, Banerjee became the first Indian to join the civil service of India, but his appointment was terminated shortly after being appointment to the civil service. However, he was not disappointed by that and he worked bravely towards winning the rights of the Indians. Banerjee became famous as an educationist and he established a new school called Ripon College. Also, he launched a new newspaper titled 'The Bengalee' and took steps to educate Indians through that.



In 1876, Banerjee established the nationalist organization which created the background for the establishment of Indian National Association. Banerjee was a neutralist and was an outstanding leader of the Independence Movement. He became the president of the Indian National Association on two occasions.



### Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was born in Maharashtra in 1856. He was a very clever student at school. He obtained his first degree with a distinction pass for Mathematics, continued his higher education and became a scholar. He strongly believed that a good education is

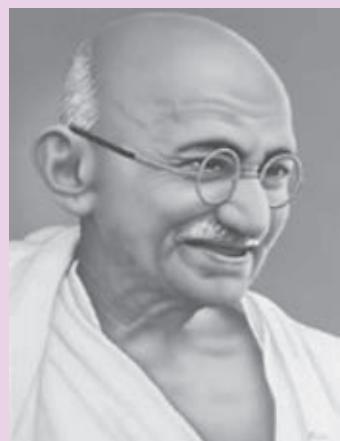
required for an individual to become a good citizen and therefore, he established an organization named Deccan Education Society. He also pioneered the establishment of several schools. He dared to criticize the injustices caused to the Indians at the hands of the English rulers and also founded two newspapers entitled 'Kesari' and 'Maratha'.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who, having been given the honorary title of 'Lokamanya', was called 'Lokamanya Tilak', was one of the outstanding leaders of the independence movement of India who directed that movement towards a more aggressive path. He said, "Self-rule is my heritage by birth" and he was committed towards educating people on winning self-rule for India.

Because of his activities, he was imprisoned on several occasions. Lokamanya Tilak believed that sending petitions to the English government, holding discussions with authorities, and pleading with the English rulers were not effective ways of getting their demands fulfilled. He was of the opinion that, in order to win independence, all Indians should be united and should be engaged in a continuous struggle. Although he valued being aggressive, he hated violence. Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a great leader of India's independence movement who was as stable as a huge rock before any obstacle.

### Mahatma Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who became famous as Mahatma Gandhi, was born in 1869 and after completing his school education he left for England for higher education. There he passed the examinations in Law and went to South Africa to work as a lawyer. When he was in South Africa, he understood how the Europeans who had come to South Africa had seized power there and were discriminating the black people very badly adopting the apartheid policy. At that time, traveling on certain compartments of trains had been prohibited for black people. Even Mahatma Gandhi had been removed while he was travelling on such a compartment. While Mahatma Gandhi was in South Africa, he took steps to organize people against such injustices.



Mahatma Gandhi returned to India in 1915 and joined the independence movement of India. During the early period after he had returned to India, he was involved in finding solutions to the problems faced by the farmer

communities in the country. His involvement in the independence movement contributed immensely in getting the participation of the ordinary people in the movement. After Mahatma Gandhi had joined the movement, he showed the people how the struggle could be implemented adopting non-violent strategies without causing any violence to the Englishmen or to those who were loyal to them.

Holding sathyagraha campaigns, non-cooperation with the government, civil disobedience campaign and organizing street marches were the non-violent strategies adopted by Mahatma Gandhi. All Indians, irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, caste or class, could participate in those campaigns. Therefore, Mahatma Gandhi was the leader who turned India's Independence Movement into a struggle of the people.

Mahatma Gandhi acted paying no heed to ethnic, religious or caste differences that existed in India at that time and he believed that all Indians should have equal rights. He was a very humble person and led a very simple and exemplary life. He said that Indians should value the products of their own country and he gave an example to all Indians by wearing clothes made by himself using the cotton material woven by himself. Weaving cotton, disregarding caste differences, refusing liquor, bringing unity between Hindus and Muslims, and giving equal opportunities for women were the significant features of the thinking of Mahatma Gandhi. He believed that such factors would contribute a lot towards the development of the country.

He acted as the leader of the independence movement of India to free the country from the rule of the British Empire and he became a leader who was loved and respected by all Indians alike. Mahatma Gandhi became famous all over the world because of his non-violence policy. However much he was busy when he was in India, he even spared time to visit Sri Lanka in 1927. He stayed in this country for a period of about three weeks. During his stay, he travelled to many areas such as Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Kandy and Jaffna, and addressed people. Wherever he travelled to in this country, he was warmly welcomed by the people of this country.



### Maulana Abul Kalam Asad

Maulana Abul Kalam Asad was born in 1888. When he was a schoolboy, he had a knowledge matured for his age. He was an outstanding Muslim leader in the Indian National Association and was committed to creating a united India through unity between the Hindus and the Muslims. At a young age he started writing to newspapers and magazines, and became an able writer. Later he started a newspaper titled 'Alhilal'. It became very popular among Muslim people.

After joining the Indian National Association, Maulana Abul Kalam Asad acted with great commitment towards the independence movement of India. Therefore he got the very rare opportunity of working as the President of the Association. He earned the respect of all members of the Association and also became a very close friend of Mahatma Gandhi. He gave his fullest support to all the campaigns led by Mahatma Gandhi. Even on occasions where certain controversies erupted between the members of the National Association he took steps to settle them so that the independence movement could be continued without any hindrance.

During the time when India was about to get independence, he participated in various discussions that were held with authorities and he also travelled to many parts of the country encouraging people to calm down. In this way the service rendered by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad towards the success of the independence movement was invaluable.

### Jawaharlal Nehru

Jawaharlal Nehru was born in Allahabad in 1889 and, after completing his school education, he went to England for higher education and then became a lawyer. After returning to India, he joined the Indian National Association and acted as a leader of the independence movement of India. Nehru was a scholar and an able organizer of the National Association. After India had gained independence, Nehru acted as the Prime Minister of India and did an invaluable service towards the building up of modern India. He was also the author of several books and his book entitled 'World History' has been translated into many languages. Indira Gandhi, who became a Prime Minister of India, was a daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru's.



#### Activity 1

Collect information about the following leaders: Mahatma Gandhi, Dadabhai Naoroji, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Surendranath Banerjee and Jawaharlal Nehru.

#### Activity 2

The following are some of the occasions of the Independence Movement of India. Write a description about each occasion and the lessons that can be learnt from each of those occasions.

1. Need for unity and establishment of the Muslim League
2. 'Swadeshi' movement
3. Non-violent movement
4. reaching the target with perseverance
5. winning independence through collaborative efforts

# 5

## Constitutional Reforms and the National Independence Movement of Sri Lanka



### Introduction

The monarchical rule that had existed in this country came to an end with the conquest of the Kandyan kingdom by the British in 1815. Thereafter, the British ruled this country for a period of 133 years until Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948.

Because of the protest campaigns constantly launched by Lankans, British rulers had to introduce constitutional reforms from time to time. Lankans, who were not satisfied with the powers that were granted to them through such reforms, continued to carry out protest campaigns. It was as a result of such protests that Sri Lanka was able to gain independence in 1948. This chapter discusses the political protests that were made during the rule of the British and the nature of the constitutional reforms that were introduced by the British rulers.

## 5.1 Colebrooke – Cameron Reforms of 1833

After the conquest of the Kandyan kingdom by the British in 1815, the entire country of Lanka became a colony of the British Empire. Thereafter, by about year 1828, the government expenditure of this country had rapidly exceeded government revenue due to several reasons such as carrying out the administration of the country by dividing it into two parts as the upcountry and the low country and having to incur a huge expenditure on paying salaries to the officials who came from Britain and on providing the necessary facilities to them. Therefore, under such circumstances, the mother government of Britain had to spend out of its own funds to cover up the expenses of the government of this country. Up to that time it had not been the policy of the Government of Britain to spend out of the funds of the mother government on the expenses of its colonies. Therefore, the Colonial Secretary appointed a special commission to come to Sri Lanka and to examine the revenue situation and the expenditure of the government, to study the existing shortcomings of the administration system and to make necessary recommendations. The commission that was appointed was headed by W.M.G. Colebrooke and therefore was called the Colebrooke Commission. Colebrooke was assigned the responsibility to examine the nature of economic and administration affairs. Later, Charles Hay Cameron was appointed to look into the judicial affairs of this country and to make necessary recommendations.

### Areas that were studied by Colebrooke Commission

Sources of government revenue and government expenditure and the Governor's administration system of this country – W.M.G. Colebrooke

The judiciary sector – Charles Hay Cameron

The duo Colebrooke and Cameron arrived in this country and studied facts related to the administration system and the judicial system of the country. They also consulted some Sri Lankans and submitted a set of proposals including their recommendations. It was called Colebrooke – Cameron reforms and was implemented from year 1833.

## Significant Features of Colebrooke – Cameron Reforms

- establishment of the Legislative Council and the executive council
- introducing a system of government in which the upcountry and the low country are merged
- dividing the country into five provinces for administration affairs
- abolishing of compulsory personal service
- expanding the English education

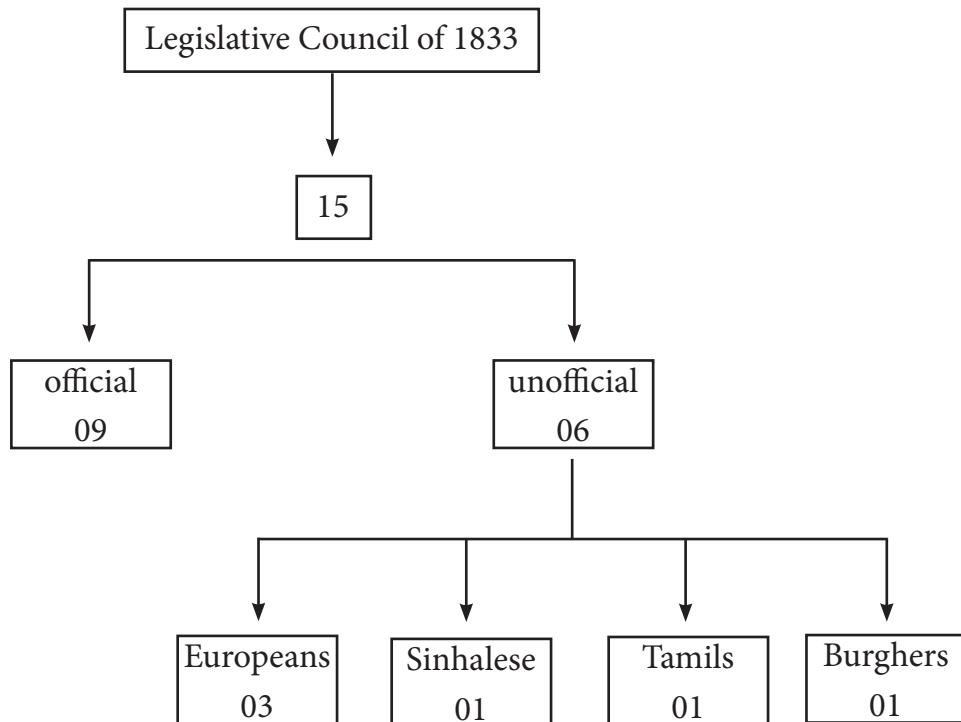
Let us now briefly study each of the above features:

- **Establishment of the Legislative Council and the Executive Council**

By the time the Colebrooke Commission arrived in Lanka, the legislative powers, executive powers and the judicial powers had been centralized with the Governor of Lanka. Such an arrangement amazed Colebrooke and he therefore proposed the establishment of the Legislative Council and the executive council with a view to limiting the powers of the Governor.

### The Legislative Council

The Legislative Council, which was established as per Colebrooke proposals for the purpose of creating laws, consisted of 15 members. They were divided into two categories as official members and unofficial members. Accordingly, there were 9 official members who were high ranking government officials and were appointed ex-officio. There were 6 unofficial members who were nominated by the Governor on communal basis. These unofficial members included 3 representatives from the Europeans and one representative each from Sinhala, Tamil and Burgher communities. The Legislative Council was presided over by the Governor. It is accepted that the system of representing ethnic communities at the Legislative Council introduced under Colebrooke reforms paved the way for controversies between different ethnic groups in this country at a later stage.



The Legislative Council that was established in 1833 was subjected to reform from time to time and the powers vested in Lankans gradually increased. This laid the foundation for the parliamentary system that was introduced later. Therefore, introduction of the Legislative Council under the Colebrooke system of government was a landmark event in the political history of this country.

### The Executive Council

The executive council that was established under Colebrooke proposals consisted of high ranking government officials such as the Governor and the Surveyor General of the government. The Governor presided over the executive council. It was required that the Governor consults this council with regard to all administration and financial affairs of the country.

- **Introduction of a system of government in which the upcountry and the low country were merged**

After the British had captured the Kandyan kingdom in 1815, they adopted a policy of governing the upcountry and low country separately. Colebrooke pointed out that this system had resulted in the increase of government expenditure and

proposed that the two parts should be merged and a unitary government should be established in the country.

- **Dividing the Country into Five Provinces for Administration**

Until 1833, Lanka had been divided into 16 provinces for administration purposes. Colebrooke pointed out that the government expenditure had increased because there were too many provinces and a lot of money had to be spent on employing officials and on providing facilities necessary for those officials. Therefore, in order to cut down government expenditure, Colebrooke proposed dividing the country into five administrative areas and to establish five administration centres for those five provinces. It was decided to appoint a Government Agent for each of those provinces.

The provinces proposed by Colebrooke and the administration centres of those provinces

Province	Administration Centre
Northern Province	Jaffna
Southern Province	Galle
Eastern Province	Trincomalee
Western Province	Colombo
Central Province	Jaffna

- **Abolishing of Compulsory Personal Service System**

Providing service to the government free of charge by all adult males in the country for a specific number of days per year was called the compulsory personal service system. This system was used in the past to obtain the services of people for public works of the country. In villages, public activities such as restoration of tanks, canals, anicuts and roads were done according to this system. Colebrooke pointed out that this system, in which services of the people were obtained without making any payment to them, was a hindrance for people in enjoying their freedom as well as in working for their development. Therefore Colebrook recommended that this system should be abolished.

- Expanding English Education

One of the main reasons for the increase of the government expenditure at the time when Colebrooke came to Lanka was that the officers required for the administration affairs of this country had to be brought from Europe. Hence the government had to spend a lot of money on paying salaries to them and on providing accommodation and other facilities to them. Therefore Colebrooke proposed that, in order to cut down expenses, local official should be employed instead of bringing officers from Europe. In order to be able to do so, there arose the need for expanding English language education. Colebrooke believed that officers needed for administration affairs of the government could be provided by way of giving a good education in the English medium to local people who could afford to pay for their education.

## 5.2 Protests launched by Lankans

After the Colebrooke reforms of 1833 had been implemented, it was the Europeans who lived in this country that launched protests first demanding that certain reforms should be made to the Colebrooke constitution. These Europeans were the rich people who had come to Lanka for cultivating crops and had engaged in plantation activities in upcountry areas. By that time there had arisen the need for them to get the required funds allocated by the Legislative for developing the road system, postal and communication services and other facilities in the areas where their cultivations were located. As stated above, three unofficial members had been appointed to the Legislative Council to represent these Europeans. However, they launched such protests because the number of official members in the Legislative Council was greater than that of the unofficial members and because the Legislative Council had not been given sufficient powers. In order to carry out those protests, they formed an organization called Planters' Association of Ceylon in 1865. Europeans such as William Digby and George Wall were the prominent leaders of those protests.

Consequent to the development of the plantation sector resulting in the creation of an export-import economy after Colebrooke reforms had been implemented, even Lankans got the opportunity to engage in certain businesses and to generate income. During the rule of the British, some Lankans took to businesses such as plantation activities, wholesale and retail trade and the graphite industry, and they earned profits through such businesses. The Lankans who became rich in this manner provided their children with higher education in this country and also by sending them to foreign countries thereby giving rise to an educated middle class.

At the beginning of the 20th century, this middle class launched protests demanding constitutional reforms. That is considered to be the beginning of political protests of Lankans.

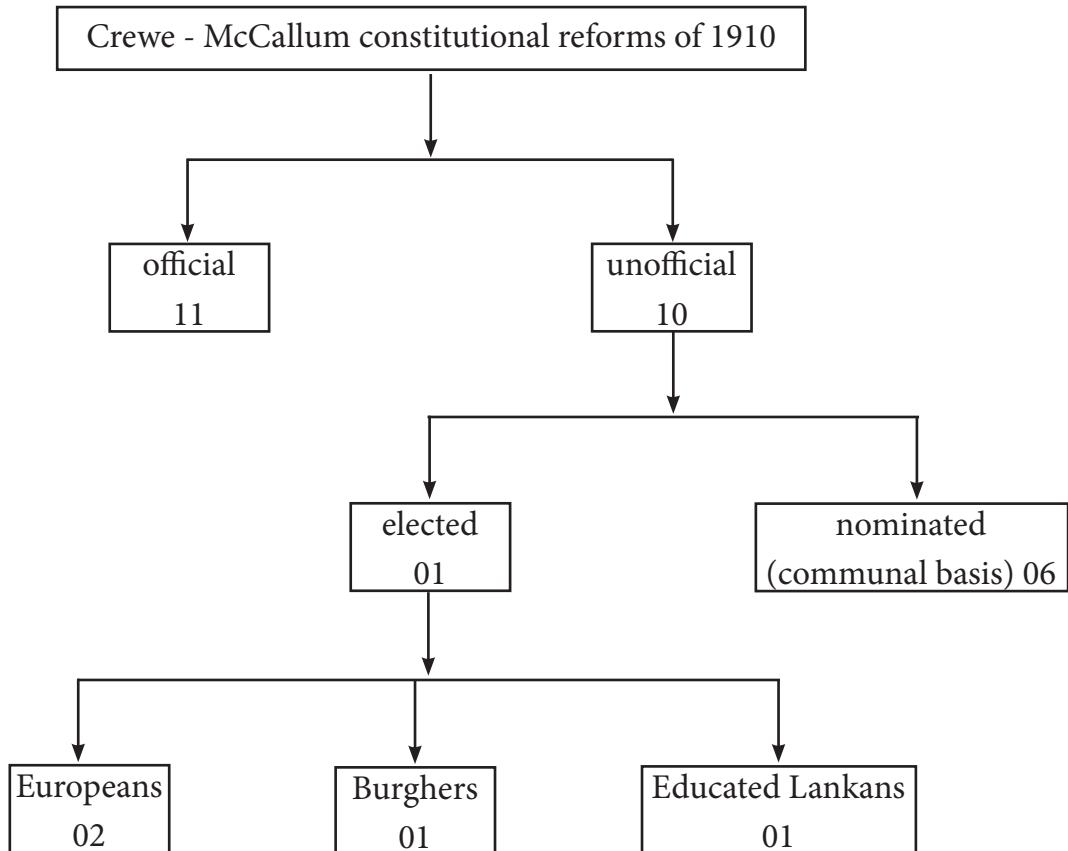
Out of the educated middle classes who led the political protests at the early stage, leaders such as Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Sir James Peiris, and H.G.C. Perera were prominent. Out of the organizations that were formed to handle the protests that were launched at the early stage under the leadership of the educated Lankans, Low Country Products Association of Ceylon, Chillaw Association, and Jaffna Association were some of the leading ones.

Out of the Educated Lankans, it was Sir James Peiris who first submitted a formal memorandum to the Colonial Secretary in 1909 explaining in detail the need for constitutional reforms. After that, several other petitions were submitted by various organizations and persons. Some of the reforms that the Lankans proposed through such petitions were as follows:

- increasing the number of unofficial members in the Legislative Council
- electing representatives to the legislative
- abolishing the communal representation system

### Crewe – McCallum Constitutional Reforms of 1910

Based on the recommendations made by Governor Henry McCallum, who had been the Governor of Ceylon by 1910, Lord Crewe, the Colonial Secretary, introduced new constitutional reforms to this country in November 1910. It was called the Crewe – McCallum constitution. Under this constitution, the number of members in the constitutional council was increased up to 21. The number of official members was 11 and that of the unofficial members was 10. Out of these 10 unofficial members, 6 were appointed by the Governor on communal representation basis and the remaining 4 were elected (2 Europeans, 1 Burgher and 1 educated Lankan).



As far as Crewe - McCallum reforms are taken into consideration, it can be noted that providing space for electing representatives to the Legislative Council and giving opportunity to select one member to represent the educated Lankans are significant features of these reforms.

The provision for selecting one representative from the educated Lankans provided the opportunity for the middle classes of this country to represent the Legislative Council. It was Ponnambalam Ramanathan who was first appointed to this office.

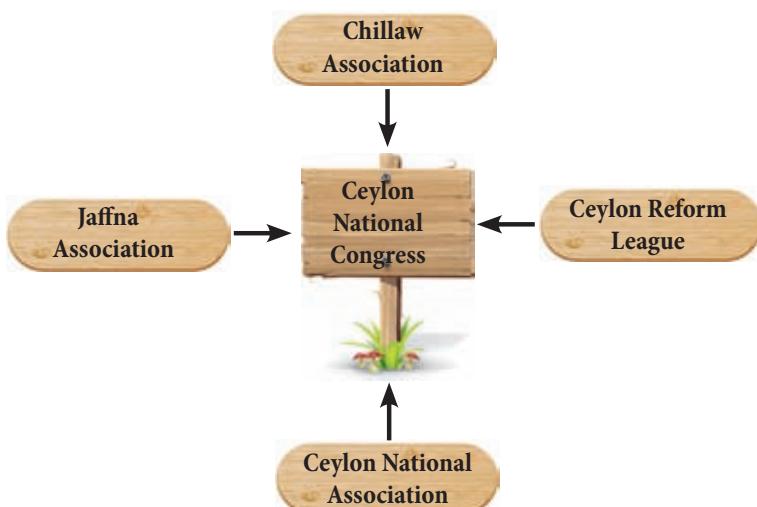
## 5.4 Ceylon National Association

As mentioned above, when submitting requests to the Colonial Secretary before the time when Crewe McCallum reforms were implemented, various organizations and persons had submitted their requests separately. The educated people of the middle classes understood that, submitting petitions separately as small organizations would have no impact on the colonial rulers and therefore, all those groups had to get together and form one common organization with the cooperation of all groups in order to raise a strong voice. How the Indians formed the Indian National Association and worked in unity was an example to the Lankans at this point. It was as a result of such initiatives that Ceylon National Congress was formed in 1919. Ponnambalam Arunachalam, who was an outstanding leader of the constitutional reform protest campaign of that time, was the founding president of Ceylon National Congress.

Some of the smaller organizations that joined together to form Ceylon National Congress were as follows:



Figure 5.1 Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam



A number of organizations that represented the different ethnic communities in this country such as the Sinhalese, the Tamils and the Muslims joined together for a common purpose with a common objective and formed Ceylon National Congress (Lanka Jathika Sangamaya) which is a Landmark event in the political history of this country.

The main objective of Ceylon National Congress was to launch a very forceful protest campaign with the view of gaining political power into the hands of the Lankans. The key expectations of the Lankans in doing so were to get the number of Lankan members in the Legislative Council increased through future reforms, get the powers vested in the Legislative Council increased, get the opportunity to elect more members, and to get more opportunities for local leaders to get involved in administration affairs.

The measures adopted by Ceylon National Congress to achieve the above mentioned objectives were not at all aggressive and was of a very peaceful nature. Those measures included petitioning to the British government, petitioning to the Colonial Secretary, holding meetings to raise awareness among people, presenting various arguments in the legislature, making efforts to gain the favour of the Governor, and writing to newspapers explaining the need for reforms.

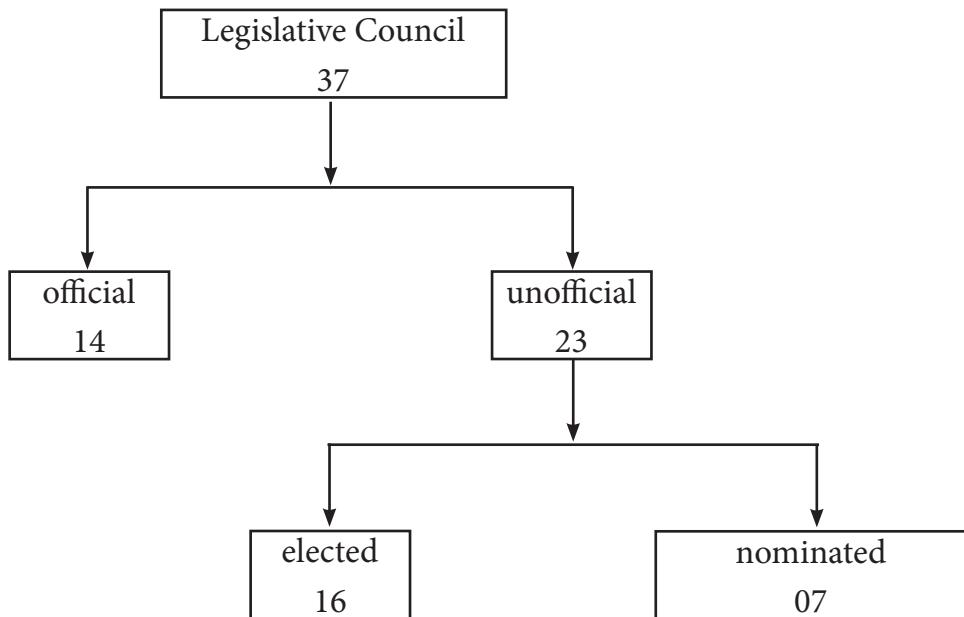
### 5.5 Manning Constitutional Reform of 1920

The Lankans who were not satisfied with the constitutional reforms of 1910 continued to protest and as a result of such protests constitutional reforms were introduced again in 1920. This constitution was drawn up on the recommendations of the Governor of Ceylon, William Manning, and therefore was called Manning constitution.

#### Legislative Council under Manning Reforms

Under the Manning constitution the number of members in the Legislative Council was increased up to 37. Out of them 14 were official members while 23 were unofficial members. Out of the 23 unofficial members, 7 were nominated by the Governor. The other 16 were elected, which was a very significant feature of this constitution. The composition of the 1920 Legislative Council was as shown in the chart below:

## Constitutional Reforms of 1920



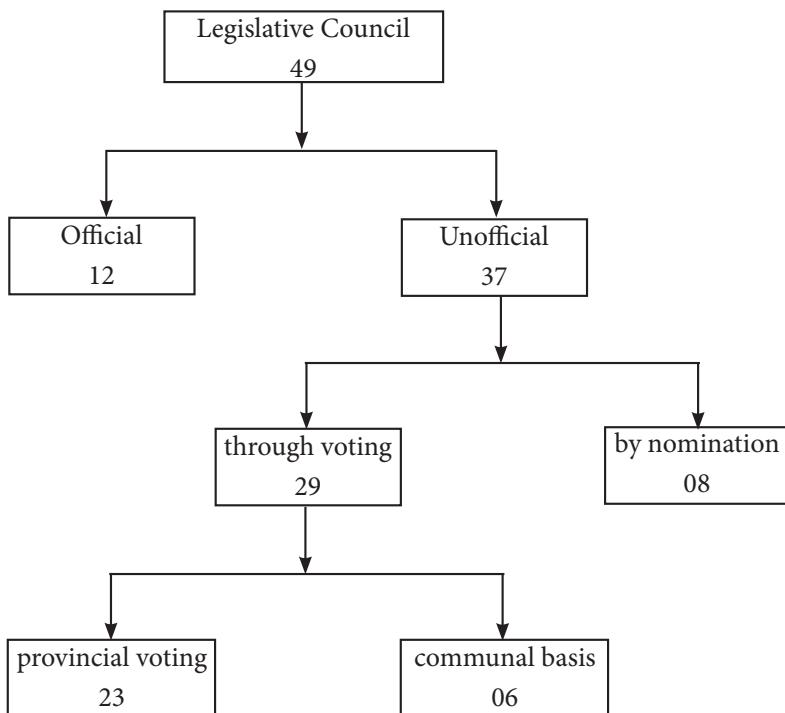
According to this chart, it seems at a glance that the number of unofficial members in the Legislative Council was greater than that of the official members, but when there was a division, the seven members who were nominated by the Governor joined the official members and therefore the Governor had more votes as against the 16 elected members.

### Manning – Devonshire Constitutional Reforms of 1924

The expectations of the Lankans were not fulfilled through the constitutional reforms of 1920. Therefore, Ceylon National Congress was against these reforms. The Congress was also making arrangements to boycott the election that was to be held under the 1920 reforms. During this period, severe public agitations were growing in India against the rule of the English. The English feared that a similar situation would occur in Sri Lanka, too. Therefore, Governor Manning gave the promise to the Ceylon National Congress that another reform would be introduced very soon if the National Congress agreed to the 1920 reforms and acted accordingly. It was as a result of this promise that constitutional reforms were introduced once again in 1924. These reforms were drawn up by the Colonial Secretary Devonshire on the recommendation of the Governor William Manning and therefore were called Manning – Devonshire reforms.

Under Manning – Devonshire reforms, the membership of the Legislative Council was increased up to 49 members. Out of them, 12 were official members and 37 were unofficial members. Out of the 37 unofficial members, 29 were elected and 8 were nominated by the Governor. Out of the 29 members who were elected, 23 were elected on a territorial basis and 6 were appointed on communal representation basis.

### Manning – Devonshire Constitutional Reforms of 1924



According to these reforms, the total of the 12 official members and the 8 nominated members formed a minority as against the 23 elected members. Therefore, within the Legislative Council there was no majority vote for the governor. When this constitution was put into operation, this situation put the Governor in a very difficult situation.

Lankans were dissatisfied about the requirements that a person had to fulfill in order to become eligible to cast vote at elections to elect members to the Legislative Council under the 1924 reforms as well as under the 1920 reforms. In order to become a voter, one should have got the ability to read or write in some language and should also have possessed property or some means of income. This had greatly limited the number of eligible voters.

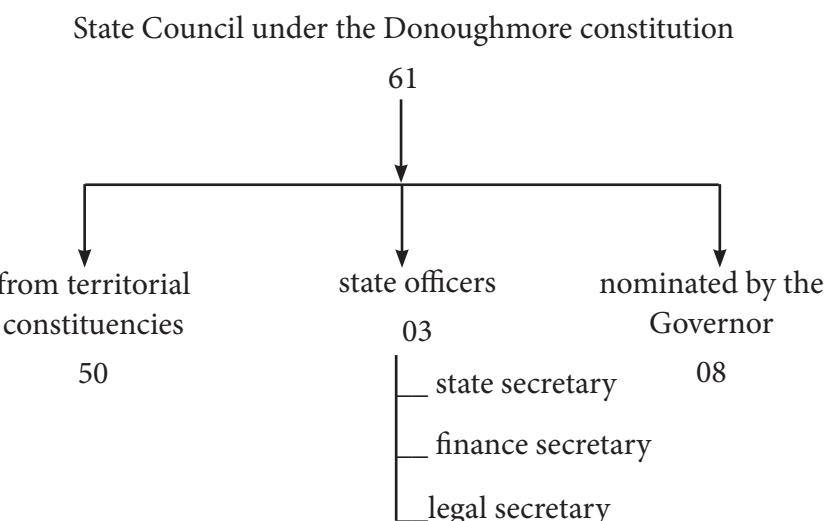
## 5.7 Donoughmore Constitutional Reforms 1931

As Lankans got the majority of seats in the Legislative Council under Manning – Devonshire constitution, the Governor had to act very strategically. The Governor of Lanka complained about this situation to the Colonial Secretary and consequently the Donoughmore commission was appointed in 1927 to study the situation in Lanka and to submit necessary recommendations. This commission which was headed by Lord Donoughmore arrived in Lanka, collected evidence from Lankans and submitted its recommendations after carrying out extensive investigations. The constitutional reforms that were made based on those recommendations are called the Donoughmore Constitution.

Let us now study some of the Donoughmore reforms separately.

### Establishment of a State Council

The Legislative Council that was established under the Donoughmore constitution was called the State Council. The number of members in the State Council was 61. Out of them, 50 members were elected by the public on territorial basis and 8 were nominated by the Governor to represent the minority communities that were not represented through vote. The remaining 3 members were state officers, namely the State Secretary, the Finance Secretary and the Legal Secretary.



The Chair of the State Council went to the Speaker who was elected by the members of the Council. Accordingly, A.F. Molamure was elected as the first Speaker of the State Council. The term of office of the State Council was 5 years.

### **Granting of Universal Franchise**

Although people had been enfranchised for electing members to the Legislative Council since Crewe – McCallum reforms of 1910, it was limited to a very small portion of the population. One needed to have received education up to a certain level and should also have possessed wealth in order to get qualified to vote at elections. Therefore, ordinary people did not have the right to vote at elections; thus the number of those who were eligible to vote was as small as 4% of the total population. The Donoughmore commission pointed out that, when ordinary people were kept out of the political platform in this manner, the attention of the politicians would not be directed towards the needs of the ordinary people. Therefore, the commission recommended that universal franchise should be granted in order to politically empower ordinary people and to make politicians draw their attention towards the wellbeing of ordinary people. Accordingly, both males and females over 21 years were given the right to vote at elections. This can be considered as a great victory achieved by the ordinary people. In this way, out of all colonies of the British Empire, Sri Lanka became the first Asian country to gain universal franchise without any difference.

### **Establishment of Executive Committees**

The State Council functioned as a board that carried out legislative and executive functions. Legislative functions that had been assigned to this Council were implemented by the Council by meeting as a whole House. For carrying out executive functions, the State Council were divided into seven committees. Accordingly, out of the 61 members who were appointed to the State Council after a general election, except for the Speaker and the 3 state officers, the remaining 57 members were divided into 7 committees. The 7 committees were as follows:

- Committee on Home Affairs
- Committee on Agriculture and Lands
- Committee on Local Government
- Committee on Health
- Committee on Education
- Committee on Labour, Industry and Commerce
- Committee on Transport and Public Works

Each committee had to meet separately and select a chairperson for the committee. Each of these chairpersons were appointed as the Minister in charge of the relevant subject of the committee.

These seven chairpersons and the three state officers were considered as ministers.

Because of the executive committees that functioned under the Donoughmore constitution, Lankan politicians got the opportunity to get some training on government affairs. It was a distinctive landmark in the journey towards parliamentary government.

### **The Governor and the Three State Officers**

In comparison with the constitutions that had been in effect up to this time, the powers that had been vested in the Governor were largely reduced through Donoughmore reforms. Donoughmore commissioners did not expect to assign the Governor with all responsibilities of the government and wished to assign with Lankans a part of the responsibility of government. Accordingly, the Governor was assigned with responsibilities such as of granting the final approval for the acts passed by the State Council, appointing officers to the public service, and making decisions regarding affairs that relate to the British Empire.

Under the Donoughmore constitution, important aspects of government such as security, finance, and law were assigned to the three state officers, namely the Chief Secretary, the Finance Secretary and the Legal Secretary.

### **Abolishing of Communal Representation System**

When selecting members to the Legislative Council, the British had implemented the communal representation system. This was a system which led to various controversies between different ethnic communities in the country. Therefore, Lankans had been raising their voice until 1931 demanding that communal representation system be abolished. It is praiseworthy that the communal representation system was abolished and territorial representation system was strengthened under the Donoughmore constitution.

## 5.8 Soulbury Constitutional Reforms of 1947

### Appointment of the Soulbury Commission

Although Lankans were granted powers with regard to seven of the ten ministries that were established under the Donoughmore constitution, they were not happy about assigning of three important ministries to the three state officers and about the powers that had been vested in the Governor. Therefore, soon after the Donoughmore constitution had been implemented, protests were launched demanding that this constitution be reformed and a new constitution be introduced. Some of the key objectives of such protests were as follows:

- vesting in Lankans the powers of the ministries that had been assigned to the state officers
- increasing the powers that had been granted to the Lankan ministers
- getting a system of cabinet established instead of the executive council system

The board of ministers and representatives of the people in the State Council played a leading role in carrying out these protests. Organizations such as Ceylon National Congress supported the board of ministers.

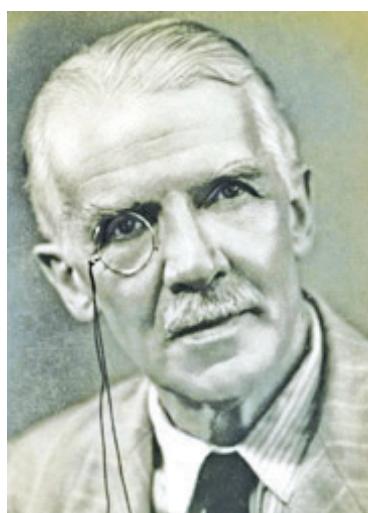


Figure 5.2 – Lord Soulbury

As World War II broke out in 1939, the British needed the support of the Lankans for fighting in the war. Britain played a prominent role among the countries that fought against Germany in this war. In this difficult situation, the board of ministers extended the cooperation of this country to the British. The objective of the Lankans in extending their cooperation to the British was to get implemented constitutional reforms through which Lankans got more powers. While the war was being fought, the Ministers of this country got the opportunity to work in close collaboration with the Governor and other British officers. Consequently, the British officers seemed to have developed a more flexible attitude towards the political requests of the people.

In May 1943, the Governor of Ceylon issued a statement explaining the policy of the Government of Britain on the constitutional reforms of Sri Lanka. According to that statement, the British were making arrangements to introduce reforms through which Lankans would be given the responsibility of handling the internal affairs of the country. Accordingly, the board of ministers was given the powers to prepare a suitable draft constitution. When preparing the draft constitution, the board of ministers took steps to get the assistance of Sir Ivor Jennings, who was an expert in the field of constitutional law.

Preparing of the draft constitution of the board of ministers was completed in February 1944. In July 1944, the Government of Britain appointed a special commission to study the draft constitution prepared by the board of ministers, to discuss that constitution with the minority communities and other parties, and to submit a report to the Government of Britain. This commission was headed by Lord Soulbury and therefore was called Soulbury Commission.

In December 1944, Soulbury Commission arrived in this country and, having studied the necessary areas, issued its report in 1945. The constitution that was prepared based on the recommendations of that report was implemented in this country from 1947. It was called the Soulbury constitution.

### Key Features of the Soulbury Constitution

- abolishing the office of Governor and establishing the office of Governor General
- establishing a bicameral parliament (House of Commons and the Senate)
- establishing a Cabinet of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister
- establishing the Public Service Commission and the Judicial Service Commission

## Governor General

The office of the Governor that had existed up to that time was abolished under the Soulbury constitution. Even under this constitution, the Queen of Britain was accepted as the head of state of Ceylon, and therefore, the office of Governor General was created to represent the Queen. The Governor General was appointed by the Queen. Although the Governor General was granted a lot of legislative, executive and judicial powers, he had to act on the advice of the Prime Minister and therefore this became merely a nominal executive position. The then Governor Sir Henry Monck Mason Moore was appointed as the first Governor General of Lanka.



Figure 5.3 – Sir Henry Monck Mason Moore

## Parliament

Under the Soulbury constitution, the legislative or the institution that is responsible for making laws was called ‘parliament’. As the parliament consisted of both the House of Commons and the Senate, it was called a bicameral parliament.

House of Commons, which was the first House of the parliament, consisted of 101 members. Out of them 95 were elected by the people on a constituency basis and the remaining 6 were appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister to represent the minority communities that were not represented through the election. The term of office of Parliament was 5 years.

The second House of the parliament was the Senate or the Upper House. This House consisted of 30 members. Out of them, 15 members were appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. The remaining 15 were elected by the House of Commons. The term of office of the Senate was 6 years.



Figure 5.4 – Old parliament building

#### The Cabinet of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister



Figure 5.5 – The first Cabinet of Ministers

Under the Soulbury Constitution, the Cabinet of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister was vested with executive powers or the powers of implementing laws. The Prime Minister was the Head of the Cabinet of Ministers. The member who won the confidence of the majority of members was appointed to the office of Prime Minister by the Governor General. Further, the Governor General appointed the cabinet of ministers on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. The Cabinet of Ministers was selected from among the members who represented the government in the House of Representatives and from among the members of the Senate. In terms of the Soulbury constitution, two members of the senate had to be appointed to the cabinet of ministers and one of these two should be the Minister of Justice. Maintaining the independence of the judiciary was the objective of setting out such provisions. Collective responsibility to Parliament was a significant feature of the Cabinet of Ministers.

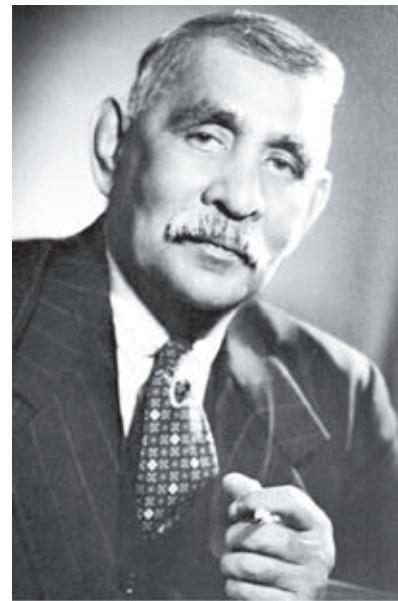


Figure 5.6 – D.S. Senanayake

### Public Service Commission

Under the Soulbury Commission, appointment of public officials of the highest ranks such as the Attorney General, the Auditor General and the Permanent Secretary was done by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. In addition to that, a Public Service Commission was appointed to make appointments to the lower positions in the public service and to remove and take disciplinary action regarding the officers in such positions. The Public Service Commission consisted of three members.

### Judicial Service Commission

Under the Soulbury Commission, appointment of the Chief Justice and the Judges of the Supreme Court, which was the highest court, was done by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. A judicial Service Commission was appointed for the purpose of appointing judges to the lower courts and for removing and taking disciplinary action regarding such judges. The Judicial Service Commission consisted of the Chief Justice and two other judges.

### Activity

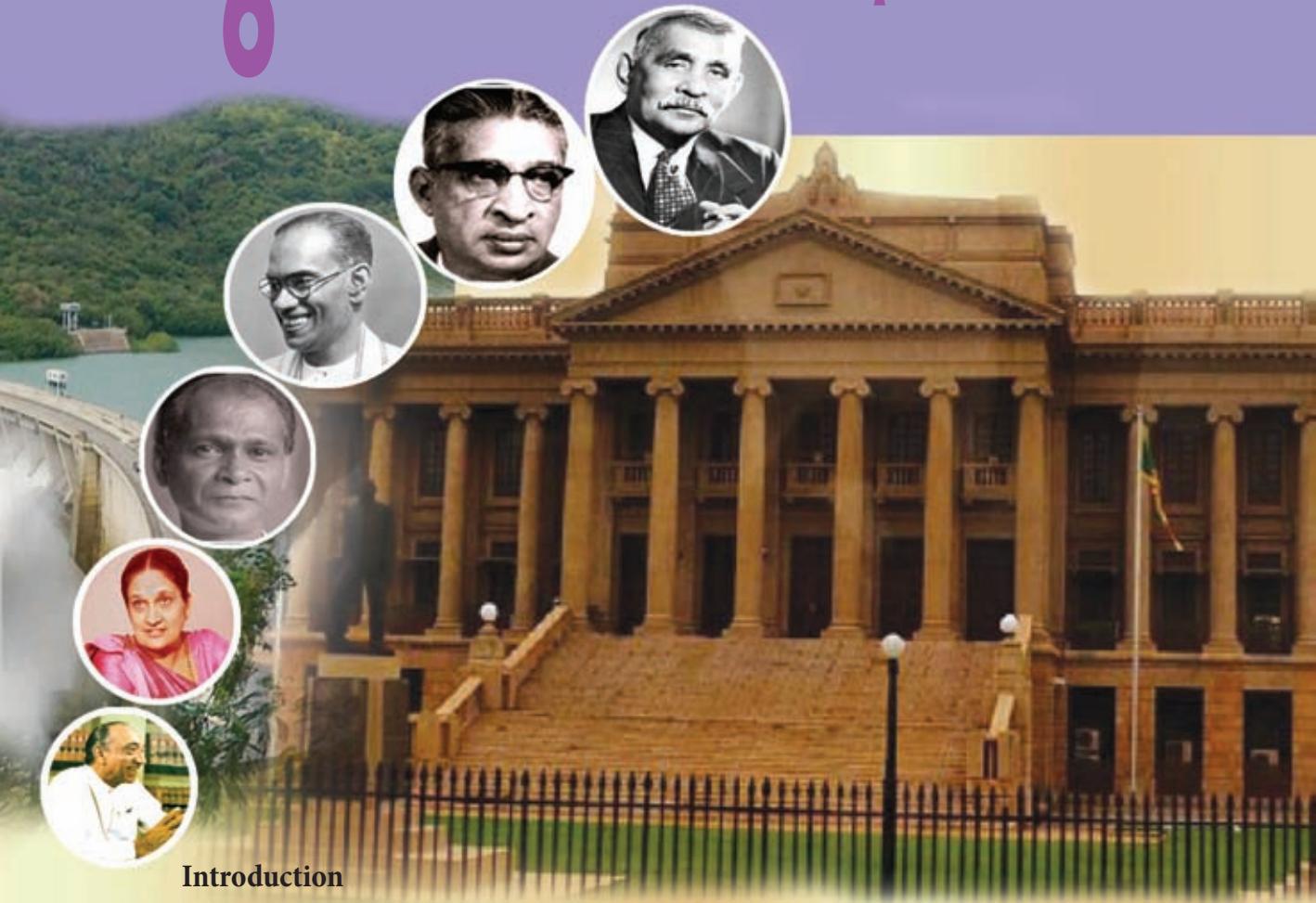
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Prepare a leaflet including the following information about the constitutional reforms that were implemented in Sri Lanka by the British rulers.

1. Constitutional reforms implemented by the British rulers
2. Significant proposals contained in such constitutional reforms
3. The good and the harmful impacts that those constitutional reforms exerted on Sri Lanka.

## 6

# Sri Lanka after Independence



## Introduction

As Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948, a system of government with parliament democracy was established in the country. Introduction of a republican constitution in 1972 in place of the Soulbury constitution that had been in effect up to that time and implementation of a new constitution with executive presidency in 1978 were landmark events in the political history of this country. This chapter discusses the nature of the governments that came into power during the period of about three decades after gaining independence, policies adopted by those governments and some of the key sectors in the development of the country. Further, this chapter also focuses on the key features of the constitutions that were introduced in 1972 and 1978.

## 6.1 The Election of 1947

The election for electing 95 members to the Parliament that was established under the Soulbury constitution was held in August 1947. It was the first parliamentary election that was held in Sri Lanka. At this election, the United National Party (UNP) was able to win 42 seats in Parliament. After the UNP, it was the Lanka Sama Samaja Party that won the highest number of seats; it won 10 seats. The total number of seats that all the other parties won was 22. It is significant to note that 21 independent candidates who contested at this election won their seats. D.S. Senanayake, who was the leader of the UNP, the party that won the highest number of seats, formed a government with the support of several independent candidates. Accordingly, D.S. Senanayake became the first Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

Even before the election of 1947, D.S. Senanayake had had discussions with the Government of Britain regarding gaining independence for Sri Lanka. By this time, the Government of Britain was making arrangements to grant independence to India. D.S. Senanayake's representatives explained to the Government of Britain that, as a country that supported Britain in its difficult times during the World War II, Sri Lanka, too, has the right to get independence. The English, who admitted that the arguments put forward by the Lankans were reasonable, stated even before the election of 1947 that action would be taken by the Government of Britain to give independence to Sri Lanka after the election was over. Even the British were pleased that the UNP won in the election of 1947 and that D.S. Senanayake became the Prime Minister of the country. As the newly elected Prime Minister, D.S. Senanayake entered into an agreement with Britain on security matters. In terms of this agreement, Britain agreed to take necessary action to ensure the security of Lanka and Sri Lanka agreed to allow Britain to use the harbours, airports and other places in Sri Lanka for military activities if Britain required. After the said agreement had been signed, in November 1947, the Parliament of Britain passed the Ceylon Independence Act which contained provisions for giving independence to Sri Lanka. As per the order issued by the King, this act came into effect from 4<sup>th</sup> February 1948. With the enactment of this Act, Sri Lanka once again became an independent country.

## 6.2 General Elections that were held in Sri Lanka after gaining Independence and the Policies implemented by the Governments that came into Power after that

### General Election of 1952

D.S. Senanayake, the first Prime Minister of independent Sri Lanka, died in March 1952. In order to fill this vacant position, the Governor General appointed Dudley Senanayake, the son of D.S. Senanayake, as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. By this time, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike had left the UNP and had formed a new political party named Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). On the advice of Dudley Senanayake, the Governor General dissolved Parliament even before the due date, and this resulted in holding the general election of 1952.

#### Results of the General Election of 1952

- The number of seats to be elected through the election - 95
- The number of seats won by the UNP - 54
- The number of seats won by the SLFP - 09
- The number of seats won by the other parties and independent groups - 32

The UNP, which won the majority of the seats in Parliament through the election of 1952, formed a government and Dudley Senanayake, who was the leader of the UNP, became the Prime Minister.

The following are some of the significant events that took place in the political arena of this country during the period from 1952 – 1956:

- eruption of a Hartal campaign in 1953 against Dudley Senanayake's government in response to the increase of the price of food items including rice,
- executing of this Hartal campaign with the support of the leftist parties and trade unions,

- resignation of Dudley Senanayake as Prime Minister and appointment of Sir John Kotelawala, who was a senior member of that party, as the Prime Minister,
- Sri Lanka getting the membership of the United Nations Organization in 1955 during the rule of Sir John Kotelawala,
- dissolving the parliament before the due date,
- accordingly, holding an election in 1956.



Fig. 6.1 Hartal Campaign

### General Election of 1956

It is significant to note that, at the general election of 1956, the UNP contested as a single party while the SLFP, together with a number of parties such as the Sama Samaja Party (revolutionary) and the Sinhala Language Front (Bhasha Peramuna), and with the support of a number of independent candidates, contested as Mahajana Eksath Peramuna. By this time, Mahajana Eksath Peramuna was supported by five forces, namely the Bhikkus, doctors, teachers, farmers and workers.



Fig. 6.2 Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike

### Results of the General Election of 1956

- The number of seats to be elected through the election - 95
- The number of seats won by Mahajana Eksath Peramuna - 51
- The number seats won by the UNP - 08
- The number of seats won by the other parties and independent groups - 36

Having won the majority of seats in Parliament, Mahajana Eksath Peramuna formed a government and S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, who was the leader of Mahajana Eksath Peramuna became the Prime Minister.

### Policies of the Government formed in 1956

- taking steps to develop local industries and agriculture
- nationalization of the harbour, nationalization of the privately owned bus services and starting nationalized enterprises
- making Sinhala language the official language

In 1956, Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was assassinated by a gunman. After his death, Wijayananda Dahanayake was appointed as the Prime Minister. However, before long, there erupted internal conflicts within the government and therefore the government had to be dissolved. Consequently, an election was held again in March 1960.

### General Election of 1960

By year 1960, the delimitation commission which determines the boundaries of constituencies had decided that the number of seats in the Parliament that are elected through the general election should be 151. It was a significant feature of this election that the parties that had been organized as Mahajana Eksath Peramuna in the 1956 election contested at the 1960 election as separate parties and individuals.

## Results of the General Election of 1960

- The number of seats to be elected through the election - 151
- The number of seats won by the UNP - 50
- The number of seats won by the SLFP - 46
- The number of seats won by the other parties and independent groups - 55

### General Election of July 1960

By the time of the election of July 1960, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike had been appointed as the leader of the SLFP. It was a significant event that the SLFP contested in this election having entered into a non-compete agreement with the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party.

## Results of the General Election held in July 1960

- The number of seats to be elected through the election - 151
- The number of seats won by the SLFP - 75
- The number of seats won by the UNP - 30
- The number of seats won by the Lanka Sama Samaja Party - 12
- The number of seats won by the other parties and independent groups - 34

Sri Lanka Freedom Party, together with the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party, organized themselves as the United Front (Samagi Peramuna) and formed a government after this election. Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike was appointed as the Prime Minister of this government. Accordingly, she became the first woman Prime Minister in the world.

## Policies of the government that was formed through the election of July 1960:

- Going ahead with the programme of nationalizing enterprises that was started by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike government in 1956. Under this programme all the schools were taken over by the government.
- Adopting reforms that were focused on developing the local economy.
- Under these reforms, People's Bank was established in 1961.

Through these measures the farmer communities got the opportunity to obtain loans for agricultural purposes.

### General Election of 1965

The government that came into power in 1960 had to be dissolved before the completion of its term of office due to several reasons such as the resignation of 14 members led by C.P. Silva and because of the severe economic crisis that the government had to face. Accordingly, an election was held in 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1965.

#### Results of the General Election of 1965

• The number of seats to be elected through the election	- 151
• The number of seats won by the UNP	- 66
• The number of seats won by the SLFP	- 41
• The number of seats won by the Federal Party	- 14
• The number of seats won by Lanka Sama Samaja Party	- 10
• The number of seats won by the other parties and independent groups	- 20

In this election no party won a majority of seats to form a government. However, the United National party, together with the Federal Party and a number of other small parties, formed a coalition government. Dudley Senanayake, the leader of

the United National Party, became the Prime Minister for the third time. It is a significant feature that this government ruled the country until the completion of its entire term of office.

### 6.3 Introduction of the First Republican Constitution in 1972 and Sri Lanka's becoming a Republic

Soulbury constitution, which was introduced by the British, was implemented in this country from 1948 to 1972. However, it was the view of Lankans that the freedom given to Sri Lanka was not complete because the Queen of England continued to be accepted as the head of state of this country and because there were various limitations with regard to making of laws by the Parliament. Therefore, the need for making a new constitution for the country was pointed out by various sections of society such as politicians, scholars and critiques. However, since there were legal restrictions with regard to replacing of Soulbury constitution, it could not be done until 1972.



Fig. 6.3 Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike

Through its election manifesto of 1970, the United Front requested people to give them the mandate to act as a constitutional assembly for the purpose of preparing a new constitution and getting it passed. Consequently, the United front was able to win a 2/3 majority in the parliament and accordingly, necessary arrangements were made to prepare a new constitution. Under the leadership of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who became the Prime Minister of that government, the Parliament met as a constitutional assembly and a new constitution was passed on 22 May 1972. It is called the first republican constitution. Through this constitution, all obstacles that prevented Sri Lanka from enjoying full independence were removed and Sri Lanka became a republic.

**D.S. Senanayake**  
1947 – 1952



**Dudley Senanayake**  
1952 – 1953  
March – July 1960  
1965 – 1970



**Sir John Kothalawala**  
1953-1956



**Mr.S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike**  
1956-1959



**Mr.W. Dahanayake**



1959-1960

**Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike**



1960 – 1965  
1970 – 1972  
1972 – 1977  
1994 – 2000

Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka until 1972

## Key Features of the First Republican Constitution of 1972

### National State Council

In terms of the first republican constitution of 1972, the legislative or the institution that is responsible for making laws was called the National State Assemble. This was an institution that consisted only of representatives that were elected by people. Therefore it can be called as a unicameral legislature. The National State Assembly consisted of 168 members. This Assemble had full powers to make laws. The term of office of this Assembly was 6 years. The following are some of the functions of the National State Assembly.

- creating laws
- financial management
- controlling the executive

### Office of President

The office of President was introduced under the constitution of 1972 in place of the office of Governor General that had been in effect in terms of the Soulbury constitution. Until that time, the Governor General had acted as the representative of the Queen of England, but under the 1972 constitution, the President was the leader of the people of Sri Lanka. The President was appointed by the Prime Minister and the person appointed as the President had to be a citizen of Sri Lanka. Under the new constitution, the President was granted most of the powers that had been previously granted to the Governor General. The President had to exercise those powers on the advice of the Prime Minister. Therefore, under the 1972 constitution, the President held a nominal executive position. The term of office of the President was 4 years. William Gopallawa, who had been the Governor General until that time, was appointed as the first President of this country.



Fig. 6.4  
Mr. William Gopallawa

## Cabinet of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister

Under the first republican constitution of 1972, executive powers or the power to implement laws was vested in the Cabinet of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister. This was also called the true executive. The Prime Minister was the head of the Cabinet of Ministers. The member who gained the highest confidence of the National State Assembly was appointed as the prime minister by the President. The President appointed the other Ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister. It was a significant feature that the Cabinet of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister was collectively accountable to the National State Assembly.



Fig . 6.5 The Supreme Court

## The Judiciary

Under the first republican constitution of 1972, a system of courts had been established in order to dispense justice. It was consisted of a numbers of courts as follows:

- supreme Court
- high court
- district court
- magistrate court
- constitutional court

The Supreme Court and the high court were the two higher courts that were established under the first republican constitution of 1972. Although the power to hear appeal cases of this country was granted to the British Privy Council under the Soulbury constitution, that power was vested in the Supreme Court under the constitution of 1972.

- The district court was given the power to hear civil cases of all types while the power to hear criminal cases of all types was vested in the magistrate court.
- The constitutional court was established to examine whether the bills presented to parliament were in consistence with the constitution.

## Second Republican Constitution of 1978

After the death of Dudley Senanayake in 1973, J.R. Jayawardane became the leader of the United National Party. The United National Party contested in the 1977 general election under the leadership of J.R. Jayawardane and won a 5/6 majority in the National State Assembly. Tamil United Front had won 18 seats, but the Sri Lanka



Fig. 6.6 Mr. J.R. Jayawardane – The first Executive President of Sri Lanka

Freedom Party was able to win only 8 seats. Because of the strong mandate given to the UNP, the UNP government took steps to get a new constitution passed. This new constitution was adopted since 1978 and was called the Second Republican constitution.

According to the constitution of 1978, Sri Lanka is called the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and the constitution also states that Sri Lanka is a unitary state. It is a special feature that, unlike in the constitutions that had previously been in effect, this new constitution states that the parliament is not the only institution that exercise legislative powers, even people have such powers in a referendum.

### Key Features of the 1978 Constitution

#### **Executive Presidency**

The most significant feature of the 1978 constitution was the introduction of the office of Executive President, which had full executive powers, in place of the titular executive presidency.

In terms of the constitution of 1978, the President is the head of the state, the head of the executive, the head of the government and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of Sri Lanka. Accordingly, the office of President is the highest executive position of the country with full executive powers. The President is directly elected by the people and a separate Presidential election is held for electing the President. Originally the term of office of the executive President was 6 years, but through the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution, it was reduced to 5 years.

The President is conferred with a lot of powers in the fields of the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. Although the



Fig 6.7 Opposition Leader

Mr. A. Amirthalingam

President is not a member of the parliament, he has a lot of powers related to the parliament. Some of those powers are as follows:

- calling the parliament to convene, and proroguing and dissolving the parliament
- presiding over the first meeting of the parliament
- presenting the manifesto of the government to the parliament
- attending the meetings of the parliament and addressing the parliament on any occasion

Some of the executive powers vested in the President are as follows:

- appointing the Prime Minister
- appointing the Cabinet of Ministers and assigning subjects and tasks to the ministers
- appointing officers to high posts of the government
- acting as the head of the Cabinet of Ministers
- appointing the Chief Justice and other judges of the Supreme Court
- appointing the president and the other judges of the court of appeal
- appointing the Judicial Service Commission
- granting pardon to offenders

In addition to these, the President, as the head of the state, has been assigned a number of tasks. The following are some of them:

- taking the Chair of national celebrations
- keeping the Public Seal of the republic and signing the documents which need to be signed putting the public seal
- representing the republic internationally
- appointing diplomats and receiving diplomats appointed to this country

### **Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Ministers**

In terms of the constitution of 1978, the Cabinet of Ministers also functions as a part of the executive in addition to the Executive President. The President acts as the head of the Cabinet of Ministers and appoints the Prime Minister and the other ministers. It is a significant feature that the powers that had been vested in the Prime Minister under the constitution of 1972 have been given to the executive President under the constitution of 1978. Implementing the laws that are passed by the parliament and being responsible for the relevant subjects assigned are examples for the functions of the ministers of the cabinet.

## Parliament

The legislative or the law making institute that was established under the second republican constitution of 1978 was called the parliament. As the parliament consists of a house of representatives only, it is a unicameral legislative. The parliament consists of 225 members. Out of the 225 members, 196 members are elected by the people under the proportional representation system and 29 members are appointed from the national list. Members are selected from the national list based on the proportion of the total number of votes that each party obtained at the general election. The term of office of the Parliament was 6 years (It was reduced to 5 years through the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution).

The following are some examples for the functions of the parliament:

- formulation of laws
- financial management
- moving impeachments against the President
- presenting grievances of the public

## The Judiciary

A judiciary system has been introduced under the 1978 constitution to dispense justice. It is as follows:

Supreme Court  
court of appeal  
high court  
district court  
family court  
magistrate court  
primary court

Except for the Supreme Court and the court of appeal, all the other courts are courts of first instance. Courts before which cases that are not referred to the Supreme Court or the court of appeal are called first instance courts.

In Sri Lanka, the highest court of law and the court of final appeal is the Supreme Court. This consists of the Chief Justice, who is the head, and a number of

judges that is not less than six and not more than ten. The Chief Justice and the other judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President.

The following are some of the functions of the Supreme Court:

- hearing of cases related to fundamental rights
- hearing of impeachments that are presented to parliament against the President
- hearing of cases related to election petitions
- acting as the court of final appeal

The court of appeal has the power to hear the appeal cases that are filed against the determinations issued by lower courts.

### Fundamental Rights

Chapter III of the constitution relates to fundamental rights. It is significant that the fundamental rights have been comprehensively set out when compared to the constitution of 1972. The following are some of the rights set out in the constitution:

- freedom of speech and expression
- freedom of occupation
- freedom of religion
- freedom from torture
- right to equality before law

The constitution of 1972 did not specify the action that could be taken in case of a violation of rights due to some cause. Correcting this shortcoming, the constitution of 1978 provides that, in case of a violation of fundamental rights, justice can be sought through the Supreme Court or through the ombudsman.

### Development Programmes of Sri Lanka after Independence

During the rule of the British, the economy of Sri Lanka had been organized with the objective of fulfilling the needs of the English. The politicians who came to power after gaining independence in 1948 carried the responsibility of managing the economy of the country in a way that the needs of the local people could be fulfilled. Therefore, every government that came to power after 1948 took steps to

implement various measures to improve the living conditions of the people of this country. Accordingly, various policies and programmes have been drawn up and implemented for the purposes of developing the agriculture and other industries, for developing the education sector and for improving social welfare, etc.

### Developing Paddy Cultivation

Under the rule of the British, there was a severe decline in paddy cultivation since the central focus of the government was on export agriculture that was centred round estate plantations. Because of this reason, by the time the Donoughmore reforms were introduced, a considerable amount of food items including rice had to be imported from other countries.

D.S. Senanayake, who was the Minister of Agriculture during the period from 1931 to 1947 at the time of the State Council, had realized the importance of developing paddy cultivation and acted accordingly. After 1948, the responsibility of solving issues of this country was assigned to Lankans themselves and therefore, every government that came into power took steps to develop paddy cultivation. Some of the policies that have been implemented with the view to developing paddy cultivation and improving the wellbeing of farmer communities are as follows:

- establishing Govi Janapadas (farmer's colonies) in the Dry Zone
- implementing the Mahaweli development project
- establishing the Paddy Research Institute and introducing new varieties of paddy to farmers
- establishing Agrarian Service Centres and introducing a guaranteed price system
- taking steps to provide loan facilities to farmers through state owned banks

Govi Janapada movement that had been launched by D.S. Senanayake during the period of the State Council was continuously implemented even after gaining independence. Under this project, people were selected from the Wet Zone of the country and they were provided with lands from the Dry Zone so that they could settle there and cultivate those lands. There were several objectives in establishing such colonies:

- increasing the food production of the country
- restoration of the old tanks and irrigation systems in the Dry Zone and utilizing the lands in those areas for the economic development of the country

- reducing the escalating population density and lack of employment opportunities in the Wet Zone
- A number of farmers' colonies were established in this country before and after gaining independence. Some of them include the colonies in Devahuwa, Gal Oya, Kanthale, Iranamadu, Minneriya, Minipe, Padaviya, and Rajanganaya.

After the establishment of farmers' colonies, there awakened a great interest in restoration of old tanks and bunds and construction of irrigation systems. Gal Oya development project, which was started in 1949, is an example for such newly constructed irrigation schemes. This project, which was implemented for achieving a number of objectives, is the first multi-purpose development project of this country.



Fig. 6.8 Victoria Reservoir

### Mahaweli Development Project

The Mahaweli Development Project is an outstanding one among the projects that were implemented with the objectives of developing the paddy cultivation and the agriculture of this country by the governments that came into power after gaining independence. Mahaweli project was implemented with the objective of utilizing for the economic development of the country the waters of the Mahaweli river, which is nourished by a large number of tributaries. The following are some of the objectives of implementing the Mahaweli project:

- providing a regular water supply to the agricultural lands in the Dry Zone,
- generating electricity,
- providing lands through new settlements to people who did not own lands and expanding the cultivation of food crops thereby creating a satisfied farmer community,
- breeding freshwater fish,
- generating employment opportunities.

As the first phase of the Mahaweli project, the Polgolla project was commenced in 1970 by constructing a dam across the Mahaweli river. It was planned to provide water to Kala Oya, Nachchaduwa Tank, Nuwara Wewa and a number of other tanks through this scheme.

Originally it had been planned to complete the construction of the Mahaweli project in 30 years, but J.R. Jayawardane government, which came into power in 1977, took measures to complete it within a period of 6 years. A number of projects such as Victoria, Randenigala, Rantembe, Kotmale, Ulhitiya, Rathkinda and Maduru Oya were implemented and under these projects vast extents of lands were agriculturally developed. The waters of the Mahaweli river were collected in the reservoirs and, having utilized for generating electricity, were then sent to the Dry Zone to provide water to the lands that had already been cultivated and also to bring new lands under cultivation.

### Development in the Industrial Sector

Before 1931, the industries of Sri Lanka had been limited to the production or processing of tea, rubber, coconut and other crop-related products. Producing tea from tender tea leaves, producing sheet rubber from latex, and producing copra or coconut oil from coconut are examples for such industries. There were factories for weaving cloth and for making implements necessary for plantations, etc. and there also were several industries. In addition to that, there were a number of traditional cottage industries such as blacksmith's work, pottery, and making cane furniture as well as handicrafts. However, as there was no significant progress in the industrial sector, industrial goods required for the country had to be imported from other countries.

During the period from 1939 to 1945, in which World War II was being fought, importation of goods from other countries became difficult. Therefore industries were established in this country itself in order to produce goods such as crockery, paper, soap and perfume required for the people of this country. However, after the

war had ended, there were no obstacles for the shipping industry and therefore, foreign products began to be imported to this country once again. As the imported goods were produced using the latest technology, they were of higher quality, and local products could not compete with the imported ones. This resulted in a gradual decline in the local industries.

Under the first government that came into power after independence, a separate ministry for industry and fisheries, and a department of industry were established. Because of the policy adopted by the government of that time, it was accepted that large-scale industries such as cement, paper, chemical fertilizer, sugar, iron and steel had to be established as public enterprises. Therefore, there were minimum opportunities for the private sector to establish large-scale industries. Further, even the government lacked sufficient funds to start large-scale industries. For these reasons, there was no substantial progress in the industrial sector until the lapse of about five years since independence.

However, the government was able to set up the cement factory in Kankasanturai during this period.

A group of representatives from the World Bank arrived in Sri Lanka, and having examined the development activities that had been implemented in this country, they presented a report in 1952. Through that report they had recommended that the government should go into small and medium scale industries rather than establishing large-scale ones. The report of another commission, which had been appointed by the government to examine and report the situation of the commercial enterprises of the government, was published in 1953. This report also included recommendation regarding some of the principles that should be followed by the government in developing the industrial sector. These reports were very helpful in developing the government policy on industry. Accordingly, the government policy on industries was declared in year 1954. It included the policy of making government intervention in setting up small industries rather than large-scale ones and encouraging the private sector to establish other industries. The government policy that was prepared based on these facts for attracting foreign investments into the country was explained through a White Paper that was presented to parliament in 1955. Accordingly, doors were opened for the private sector, too, to invest in setting up industries in this country. Some of the significant events that took place in the industrial sector of this country after 1956 were as follows:

- establishment of the first industrial estate in Ekala in 1959, and the establishment of Ratmalana industrial estate in 1960,

- setting up of industries such as iron and steel, plywood, and sugar with the intervention of the government under the ten-year project of 1958 – 1968,
- development of cottage and small-scale industries during the period from 1970 to 1977 because there was more focus on making alternative products in place of imported ones.

There was a rapid development in the garment industry sector and in export oriented industries because of the policies adopted by the government after 1977 to attract investors and to encourage the private sector to develop export oriented industries.

### Development of the Education Sector

When compared with the other countries of the South Asian region, there has been a remarkable development in the education sector and the literacy of this country during the period of about four decades after independence. The main factor that contributed to this development was the free education policy of the government or the policy of providing free education from Grade 1 of school up to completion of university education. The free education policy, which was introduced by C.W.W. Kannangara during the period of State Council, was continuously implemented by all the governments that came into power after independence.



Fig. 6.9 University of Peradeniya

The following are some of the steps taken by the government to develop the education sector of this country:

- providing funds for the establishment of government schools and expansion of education
- development of curricula and modernizing of teacher training activities
- expansion of school laboratory facilities and library facilities

- developing students' welfare – Under this, steps have been taken to provide all students with the mid-day meal, school textbooks, school uniform material, and medical and dental facilities free of charge. Action has also been taken to provide transport facilities at concessionary rates.
- expanding the education sector by establishing vocational education institutes,
- establishing the University of Ceylon in Colombo in 1942,
- shifting the University of Ceylon to Peradeniya in 1952,
- establishing the University of Moratuwa in Katubedda in 1972,
- establishing the University of Jaffna in 1974,
- awarding the Mahapola Scholarship and the bursary to university students
- establishing the open university for school leavers and for those who were not qualified to enter the university to receive higher education

## Social Welfare

Under the rule of the British, sufficient attention was not paid towards the social welfare of this country. During that period measures were taken to develop the education and health sectors. Further, the government paid its attention towards prevention of diseases, improvement of the nutrition of people, and renovation of the irrigation systems in order to address the issues that arose from time to time. However, more attention was drawn towards improving public welfare during the period of State Council (1931 – 1947) due to reasons such as granting of universal franchise in 1931 and the appointment of Lankan Ministers for a numbers of ministries related to the fields of welfare. After gaining independence in 1948, powers of government were vested in Lankans and the politicians got the opportunity to develop and implement policies to improve the welfare of people. Although the governments changed from time to time after gaining independence, every government that came into power has continued to implement the welfare policy. The following are some of the key features of the welfare activities that were implemented after 1948:

### **Improving healthcare facilities;**

- establishing new medical colleges in order to produce the doctors required for the country, developing the services of the specialist doctors and nurses.
- developing hospitals, developing operation theatre facilities, establishing new hospitals, implementing immunization and disease prevention programmes
- developing the midwifery and maternal care services
- expanding the dentists' service
- appointing health inspectors covering all areas of the country

## Providing subsidies

From the time of the colonial rule, a considerable part of the population of this country has been low income earners due to reasons such as inequality in income distribution, dearth of lands, lack of sufficient employment opportunities, and indebtedness of people in rural areas. Therefore, there arose the need to provide subsidies to improve the living conditions of the low income earners. Some of the programmes implemented for that were as follows:

- providing the rice subsidy,
- implementing a ration card system to provide food items,
- providing housing aid and constructing new houses for low income earners,
- providing financial aid to small land owners to cultivate crops such as tea and rubber.

## Development of Facilities in Rural Areas

By the time when Sri Lanka gained independence, a majority of the population had been living in rural areas and, when compared to urban area, the facilities available in rural areas were minimal. Therefore, every government took steps to improve the living conditions of rural people. The following are some of the examples of such steps:

- developing the road system in rural areas and commencing new bus services in those areas,
- providing electricity supply to rural areas,
- implementing various programmes to provide drinking water to rural people,
- expanding postal and telecommunication facilities to rural areas, and
- introducing co-operative shops and banking services to rural areas.